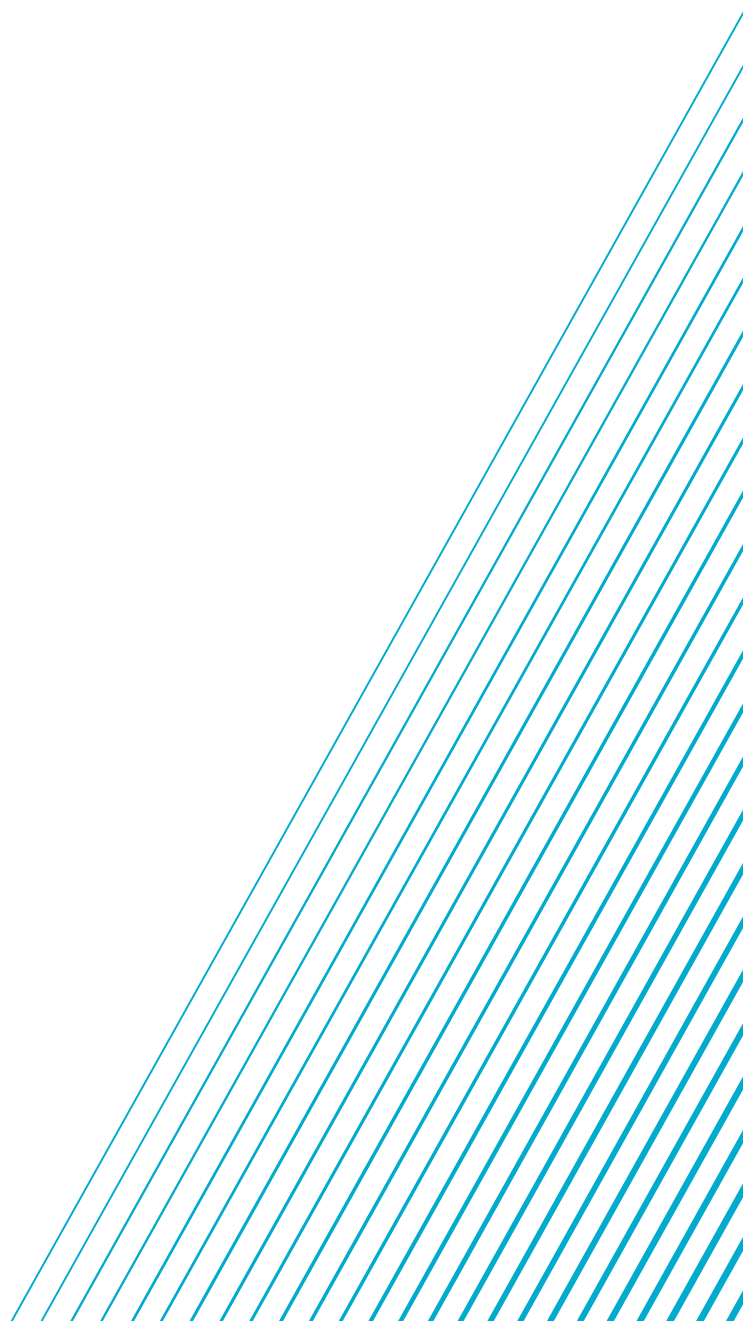


# Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Insights Report

Background information in preparation  
for the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade small area plan  
Draft Report | 2023



DEPARTMENT OF  
**PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
REVIEW**



## Acknowledgments

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Richmond Public Schools

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## Reference Documents

The data described in this report was drawn from numerous books, articles, and reports, and the U.S. Census. The list below is by no means exhaustive but is a summary of some of the documents we consulted in preparing this report.

### Urban Pattern and Demographics

*Land Use, Housing, and Demographic Analysis for Richmond 300* by VCU's Center for Urban and Regional Analysis (CURA), September 2017  
*Urban Design Typology Analysis for Richmond 300* by VCU's CURA, September 2017

### Housing

*Where You Live Makes All The Difference: An Opportunity Map of the Richmond Region* by Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME)  
*The Road Home: Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness and Promote Housing Stability, 2015-2018 Update* by Homeward  
*Addressing the Impact of Housing for Virginia's Economy* by the Virginia Coalition of Housing and Economic Development Researchers, November 2017  
*Affordable Housing Trust Fund 2015-16 Impact Report* by ECD  
*Consolidated Plan FY 2016-2020* by ECD  
*Mayor's Housing Summit Draft Plan* by the Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force, November 2017  
*Excluded Communities: A Spatial Analysis of Segregation in the Richmond Region* by HOME  
*Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, City of Richmond, 2013-2015*, by HOME for ECD  
*Market Value Analysis of the Richmond Region* by the Reinvestment Fund, October 2017

### Transportation

*Bike Master Plan*, DPW, 2012  
*Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan*, VA Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation, 2017  
*Richmond Transit Network Plan*, DPW, 2017  
*Richmond Vision Zero Plan*, DPW, 2017  
*Richmond Connects*, DPW, 2013

### Economic Development and Employment

*Annual Report*, Office of Community Wealth Building, 2016  
Richmond Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2014

### Utilities, Environmental Resources, & Sustainability

*Water Supply Plan*, DPU, 2008  
*RVA Green*, Office of Sustainability  
*Assessing climate risks in Richmond - present trends and future projections*, Jeremy S. Hoffman, Ph.D., Climate and Earth Scientist, Science Museum of Virginia, 2017  
*A Report on the City of Richmond's Existing and Possible Urban Tree Canopy*, Virginia Tech, 2010  
*Street Tree Assessment Report*, Virginia Tech, 2012  
*RVA Clean Water Plan*, DPU, 2017  
*Watershed Characterization Report*, DPU, 2015

### Parks and Recreation

*James River Park System Economic Impact*, CURA, 2017  
*Richmond ParkScore*, Trust for Public Land, 2017

### Historic Resources

*Virginia Historic Tax Credit Report*, CURA, 2014

### Arts & Culture

*Tourism Impact Brochure*, Richmond Region Tourism, 2016  
*Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 in the Richmond & Tri-Cities Region*, Americans for the Arts, 2017  
*VCU's Impact on the Region*, CURA, 2016

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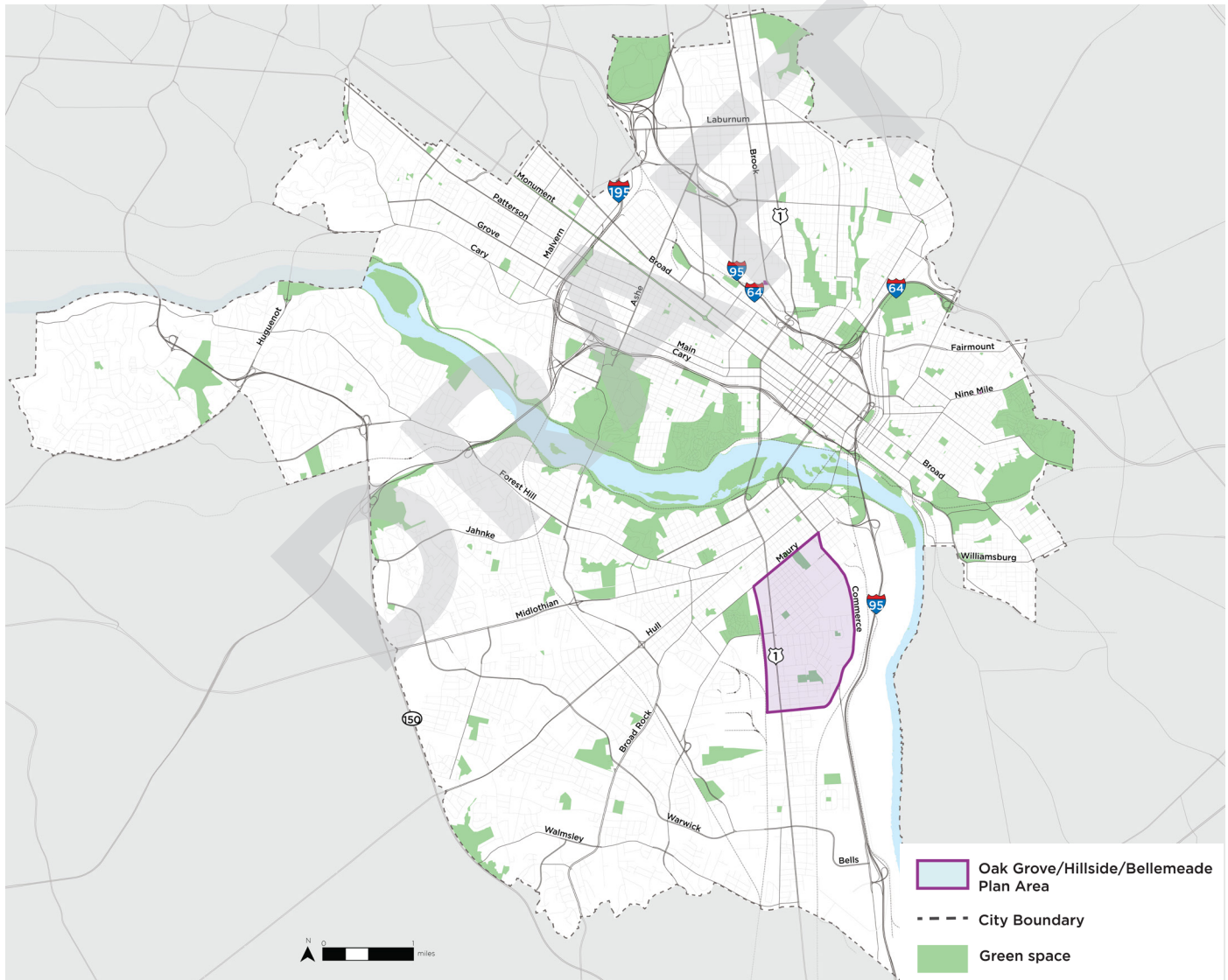
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PLACEHOLDER

# City Context

The Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade (OGHB) study area is located approximately 1 mile south of Downtown Richmond in Richmond's Southside. Manchester and Blackwell are to the north while Clopton and Broad Rock Industrial Park are to the south and southwest respectively. In recent years, Manchester has undergone a rapid transformation, and as the city's population grows, some of that development pressure is mounting further south. That pressure, coupled with the area's attractiveness to newcomers for its accessibility to downtown, nearby public transit, affordable home prices, and proximity to I-95, presents an opportunity for Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade residents to plan for the future growth of their community.

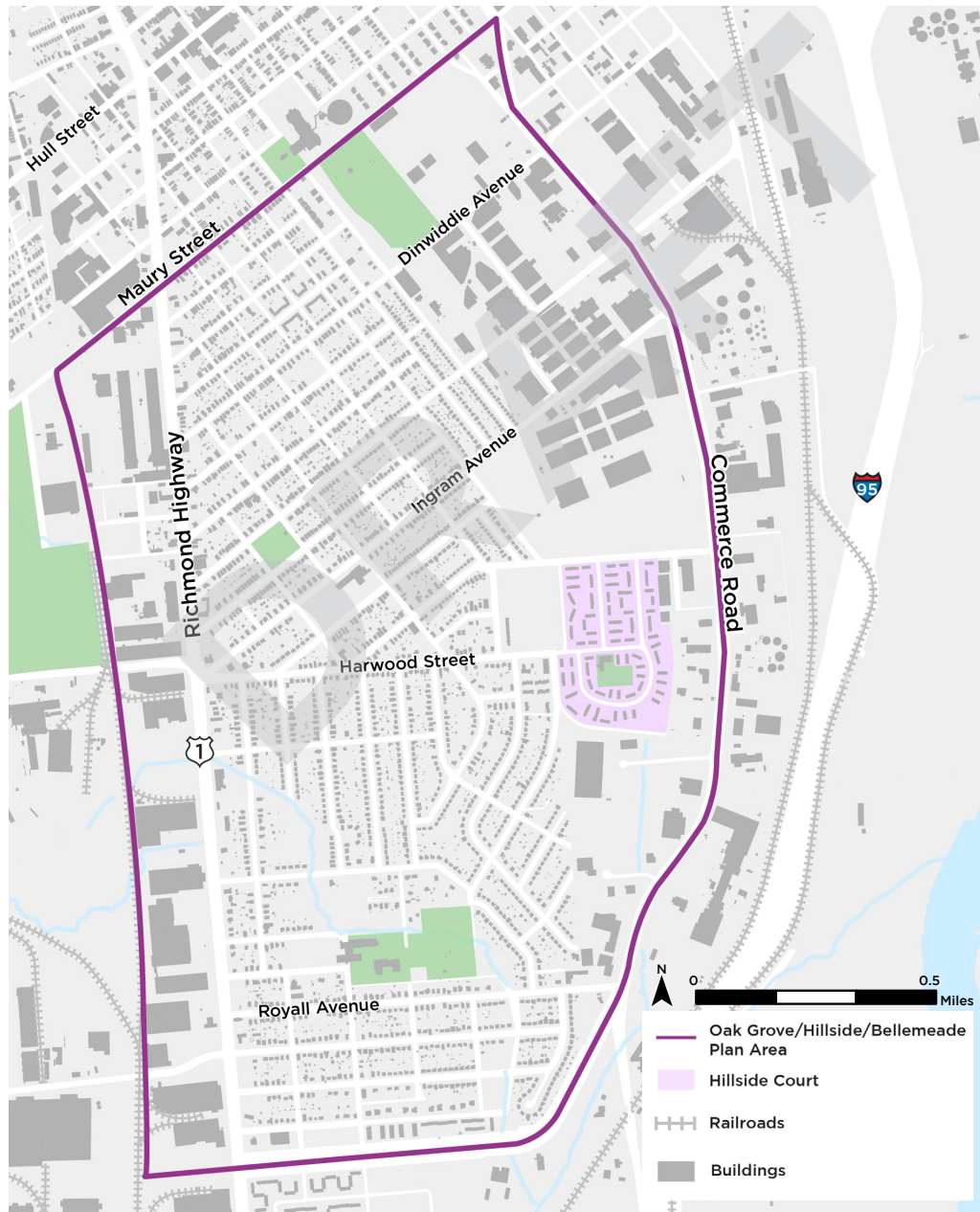


// FIGURE 1. Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade study area within the City of Richmond



# Study Area

The study area includes the neighborhoods of Oak Grove in the north and Bellemeade in the south, as well as a sliver of Blackwell along Maury Street. It is situated between two major industrial corridors along Richmond Highway (Route 1) in the west and Commerce Road in the east. A majority of the area is comprised of single family detached homes built in the mid-20th century with corner commercial and industrial uses along the fringe. Hillside Court, Richmond's only public housing complex in the Southside, is located in the center of the study area. The northern portions of the area fall within the 6th City Council District, while the southern half primarily falls within the 8th.



// FIGURE 2. Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade study area

# Planning Process

---

## What is the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Small Area Plan?

The City of Richmond is partnering with the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority to lead a resident-driven planning process for the Oak Grove and Bellemeade neighborhoods. The Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Plan will outline residents' desired vision statements, strategies, and design for guiding future growth and improvement of the area. The Plan will give a specific focus to the transformation of Hillside Court public housing as a catalyst for equitable development.

## Why plan?

As the city continues to grow, neighborhoods, especially those with lower land values, will face development pressure. Proactive community planning involves current residents and helps ensure that an area's growth and development are centered around their needs and aspirations. Through the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Planning Process, the City, RRHA, residents, and other partners can leverage their collective resources to maximize investment and strategically implement improvements.

## Who creates the plan?

The Department of Planning and Development Review (PDR) is facilitating each of the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Small Area Plan's four phases in collaboration with RRHA and other City

departments.

A **Planning Team** of area stakeholders will work alongside community participants to develop the plan's vision statements, strategies, and design. All area residents, stakeholders, and community groups are invited to participate in all of the plan's process meetings. AECOM will assist with facilitating discussions related to community design and creating renderings and scenarios that represent the plan's strategies. PDR will draft the plan which will undergo iterations of community review and feedback.

## Who approves the plan?

The City Planning Commission (CPC) is responsible for planning the orderly growth and development of the city. Per the City Charter and Virginia Law, the CPC must adopt the City's Master Plan and Small Area Plans. After the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Small Area Plan is adopted by the CPC, it will go before the RRHA Board of Commissioners and the City Council for final approval.

## Who will implement the plan?

An implementation partner/s will be assigned to each strategy in the plan. RRHA will likely select a private development partner to lead the redevelopment of Hillside Court. The City will dedicate funds from both its operating and capital budgets and apply for grant funding

in order to execute improvements to public infrastructure and amenities, economic development opportunities, as well as human service programs and delivery. Community groups, non-governmental organizations, and private businesses will all have a role in realizing the transformation envisioned in the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Small Area Plan.

## How can I get involved?

Some of the ways to get involved are listed below:

- Attend one of the 5 major public meetings for the plan
- Take the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Small Area Plan Survey
- Visit <https://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/oghb> for updates
- Review and provide feedback on draft plans
- Email comments or questions to [richmond300@rva.gov](mailto:richmond300@rva.gov)

The City may adjust its outreach strategies if it is not receiving sufficient community involvement. Our goal is to welcome and connect all residents and stakeholders to the planning process. Please email [Richmond300@rva.gov](mailto:Richmond300@rva.gov) with any outreach questions or suggestions.



# 1

## Prepare

Collecting information, setting the process, and spreading the word.

*November 2022 to April 2023*

- Develop the plan process and timeline
- Develop branding, outreach materials, and community survey
- Establish the Planning Team
- Collect existing data and develop conditions report
- Meet with City staff, City Council, RRHA Board, City Planning Commission, stakeholders, and residents to share process

**Key Documents from this phase:** Process Outline, Insights Report, Community Survey

# 2

## Learn

Sharing and processing neighborhood information. *May 2023 to August 2023*

- **Host Process Kick-Off Meeting\* (TBD)**
- Collect and share Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade community information, insights, stories
- Administer the Community Survey
- Provide community tours of area resources/assets

**Key Documents from this phase:** Story Book

# 3

## Draft

Creating the plan.

*Sept. 2023 to March 2024*

- **Vision Statements and Strategy Meeting\* (TBD)**
- Draft plan's vision statements and strategies
- **Design Meeting\* (TBD)**
- Develop plan design elements
- Vet plan strategies
- Develop draft plan
- **Draft Plan Review\* (TBD)**
- Review and revise draft plan

**Key Documents from this phase:** Draft Plan, Feedback Report

# 4

## Adopt

Finalizing and enacting the plan.  
*April to January 2024*

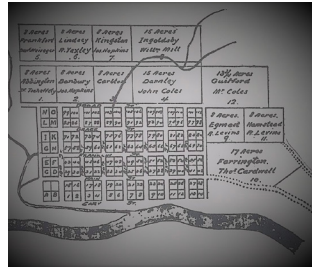
- Edit draft plan based on feedback
- Garner community buy-in for the final plan
- Open House/Celebration Event\* (TBD)
- Celebrate the process and final plan
- Share the plan with the wider Richmond community
- Present final plan to City Planning Commission, RRHA Board, and City Council for adoption
- Publish the City Council-adopted Plan

**Key Documents from this phase:** Final Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Small Area Plan

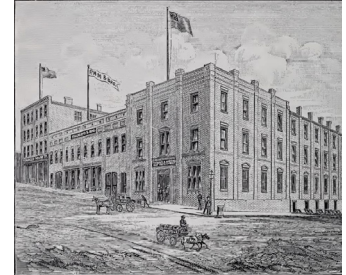
**\*Community Meetings**

# A Very Brief History

**The Powhatan Chiefdom, comprised of 30 tribes,** inhabits the lands known today as Chesterfield and Henrico counties for 12,000 years before English colonization.



William Mayo's original street grid layout (1737).



1600

**1742**

**Richmond** becomes incorporated as a town.

Population: 250  
Area: 0.20 square miles

**1838**

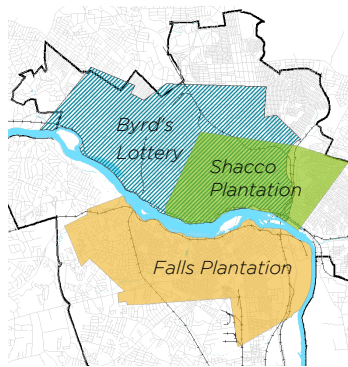
**Richmond-Petersburg Railroad** is built to better connect the two cities, particularly for the coal and cotton trades. The line ends in Manchester's industrial center.

**1874**

**P.H. Mayo & Bros. Tobacco Company** introduces cigarette manufacturing in Richmond.

**1659**

**The Falls Plantation** is established by William Byrd's uncle, Thomas Stegge. Byrd inherits the land and becomes one of the wealthiest men in the 17th century due to the plantation's milling, farming, and mining activities.



**1769**

**Manchester** is incorporated as its own town and is commercially successful due to its mills and docks. It would later become an independent city in 1874 before being merged into Richmond City in 1910.

**1846**

**Drewry's Mansion:** Henry T. Drewry constructs a mansion on 1,500 acres of land, previously part of the Falls Plantation. Over 500 enslaved people maintained the land surrounding the mansion which contained fertile fields and a vista overlooking the James River. In the early 20th century, there were talks of potentially converting the mansion into a new school.



Drewry's Mansion (1920)

After several changes in ownership, it was demolished in 1940. Today, the site of the former mansion is located at Harwood and 18th Streets.



## 1910-1970

### Annexations:

Richmond annexes a large part of Chesterfield county, including Manchester and the neighborhoods of Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade.

Final Annexation:  
Population: 249,621  
Area: 62.5 square miles



## 1952

**Hillside Court** is constructed as an all-White public housing complex as a solution to the overcrowding in inner-city neighborhoods. 402 units are built.

## 2012

**Bellemeade Park** is established by Bob Argabright and volunteers to transform an overgrown park space into an outdoor learning campus that provides educational and recreational opportunities for the area.



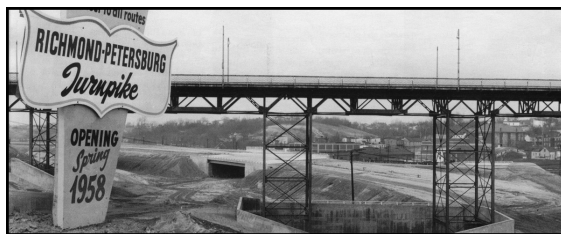
## 2020

**The Fall Line Trail**, a 43-mile shared-use trail from Ashland to Petersburg, is planned to run along Commerce Road.

## 2023

## 1930s-1960s

**New subdivisions** with single family homes are created throughout the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade area, cohering with national trends of suburbanization.



## 1958

**Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike** is completed as a toll road to ease traffic congestion on U.S. Route 1 (Richmond Highway). It is 34.7 miles long and costs \$76.7 million to build.

## 2013

**Oak Grove-Bellemeade Elementary School** open as the former Oak Grove Elementary school on Ingram Avenue becomes structurally obsolete.

## 2022

**Model Tobacco Lofts** opens as a luxury housing development in the former Art-Deco style Model Tobacco factory building along Richmond Highway.



## 1971-1974

**The Oak Grove Federally Assisted Code Enforcement (FACE)** project included the inspection of 172 Oak Grove homes. Property owners were given access to low-interest loans and grants to encourage home rehabilitation. The City combined this with the installation of necessary neighborhood improvements (sidewalks, lights, trees, signs, etc.)

# Demographics

## Subtitle

### Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has been growing since 2010.

In 2020, nearly 7,800 Richmond residents lived in the OGHB Area. Between 2010 and 2020, OGHB grew by 5%, drawing some newcomers from the city's 12% growth during the same period.

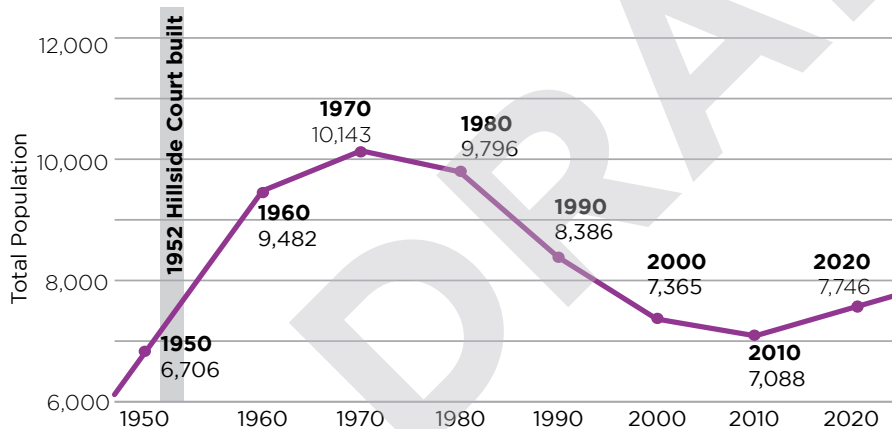
As shown in Figure 4, OGHB's population reached a peak in the 1970s before significantly declining along with city's overall population. The decline followed the regional and national trend of suburbanization that remained consistent until the 2000's.

### Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is relatively young.

OGHB households are slightly larger and younger than the average Richmond household. OGHB's average household consists of 3 people and nearly 30% of its households contain at least one person under the age of 18. Nearly 25% of the OGHB population is under the age of 18, a slightly larger percentage than that of the city (18%). The majority of those residents under the age of 18 are ages 5 to 14 years.

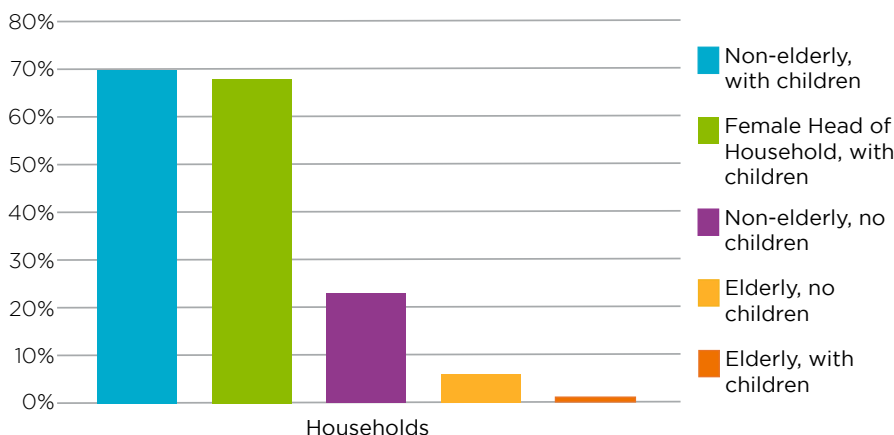
// FIGURE 3. Historic Population in OGHB, 1950-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



// FIGURE 4. Hillside Court Household Distribution

Source: RRHA



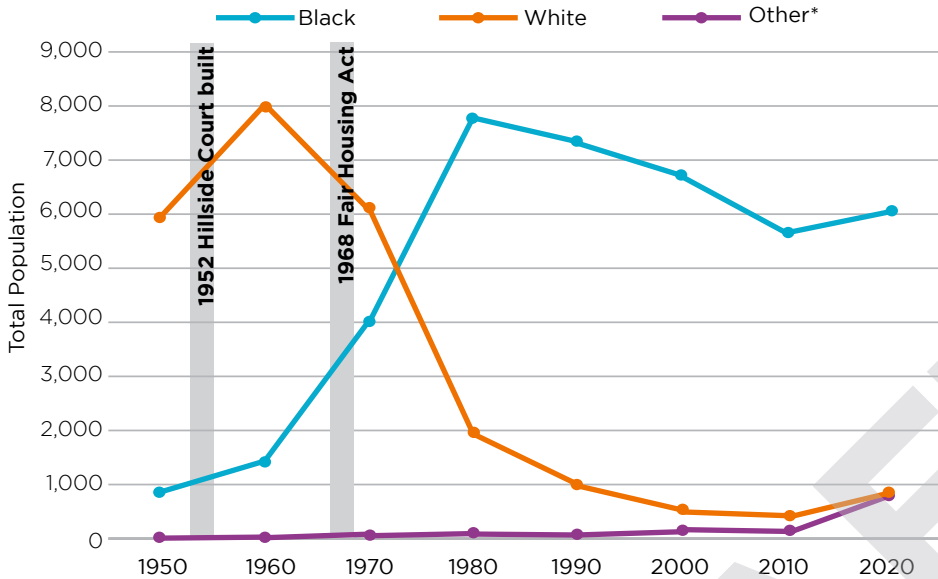
### Hillside households

Hillside Court makes up 14% of the study area's population. Hillside is significantly younger than the overall OGHB population. Over 50% of the Hillside population is under the age of 18 and 70% of Hillside households are headed by non-elderly adults with one or more children. A notably large percentage of these Hillside households are headed by a single female parent.



**// FIGURE 5. Historic Racial Makeup, 1950-2020**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



\*Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and some other race

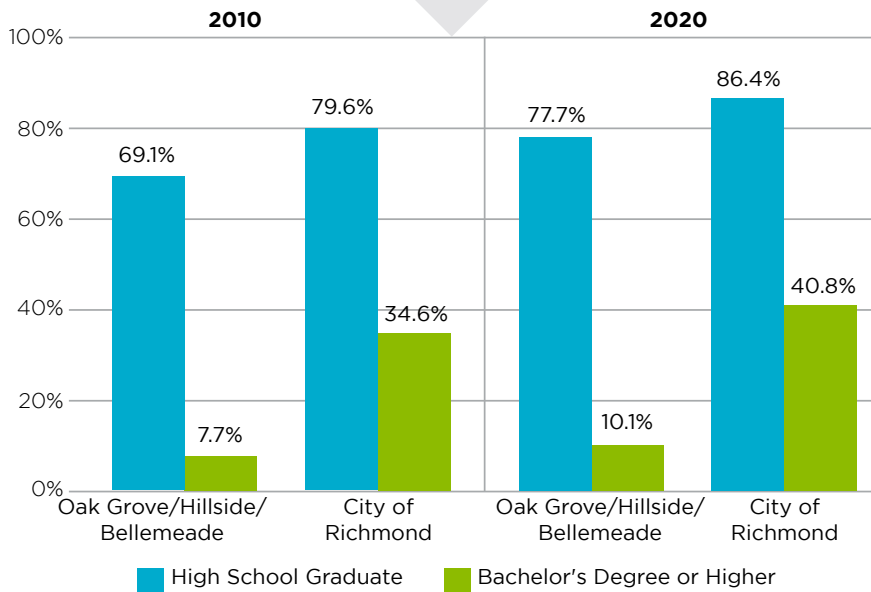
**78%**

of OGHB residents are Black or African American alone

**// FIGURE 6. Educational Attainment, 25 years and older**

Percentages shown are percent of that year's population for those 25 years and older.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: ACS 5-year Estimates (2016-2020) ; ACS 5-year Estimates (2006-2010)



## Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is becoming more diverse.

Prior to 1950, OGHB was primarily composed of White residents. The White population reached its peak in 1960, just 8 years after Hillside Court was built as the first all-White public housing complex in the City of Richmond. However, as national trends of suburbanization and White Flight prevailed, the racial makeup shifted dramatically, with the biggest drop occurring between 1970 and 1980. Today, the OGHB neighborhoods are home to a majority Black population, although recent trends suggest that the area is diversifying. In 2020, 3% of OGHB residents identified as being of Hispanic or Latino origins and 13% identified as a race other than Black or White.

## Bachelor Degree attainment rates lag behind.

Educational attainment rates have improved in both OGHB and the larger city since 2010. But while over a third of Richmonders have Bachelor's degrees, only a tenth of OGHB residents hold one. In general, educational attainment rates in the area appear to lag behind the city even though the percentage of high school graduates from 2010-2020 grew at nearly the same pace as the city overall.

// TABLE 1. Top 5 Employment Sectors, 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: ACS 5-year Estimates (2016-2020)

Top 5 Industries in City of Richmond	Workforce by Industry	Top 5 Industries in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade	Workforce by Industry
Healthcare & Social Assistance	16,661	Retail Trade	548
Educational Services	13,534	Healthcare & Social Assistance	453
Retail Trade	13,036	Accommodation & Food Services	415
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	11,199	Transportation & Warehousing	389
Accommodation & Food Services	10,996	Manufacturing	293

## Employment

The majority of OGHB's workforce is employed in the retail industry, the third largest industry for the city. Nearly 1/3 of the OGHB workforce is employed within the Manufacturing and Transportation & Warehousing sectors, which comes at no surprise due to the industrial corridors on either sides of the area. OGHB's unemployment rate is 9%, which is higher than that of the city (6%).

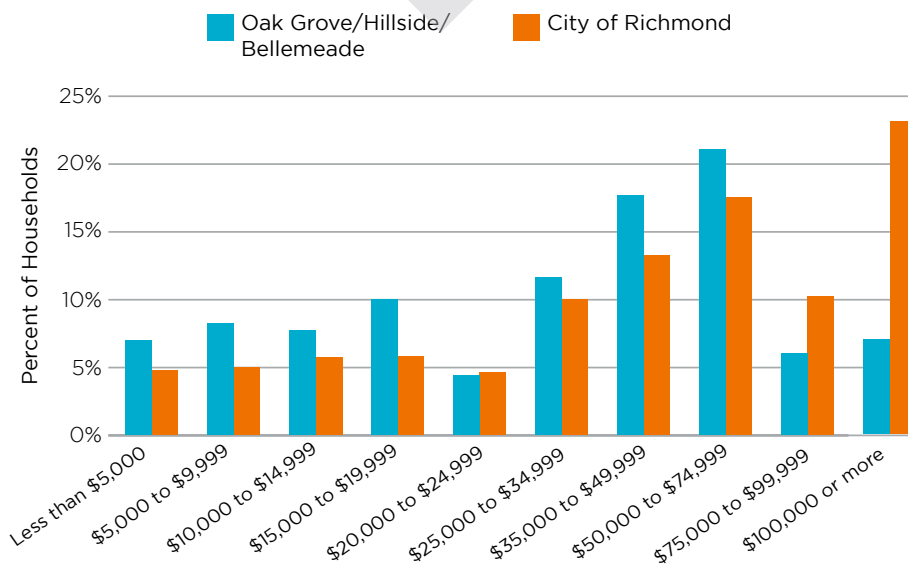
// TABLE 2. Income & Poverty in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade vs. City of Richmond, 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: ACS 5-year Estimates (2016-2020)

Economic Indicator	OGHB	Hillside Court	City of Richmond
Median Household Income	\$35,235	\$8,644	\$51,421
Percent Below Poverty	24.7%	?	20.9%

// FIGURE 7. Income Distribution of Households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: ACS 5-year Estimates (2016-2020)



## Income and Poverty

As shown in Table 2 and Figure 7, OGHB households earn significantly less on average than the average Richmond household. The median household income of Hillside Court residents is only 25% of the Oak Grove and Bellemeade's median household income at \$8,644.

24.7% of OGHB residents live below the poverty line compared to the citywide average, 20.9%. The poverty level is determined by the amount of income required to meet the basic needs of a household in a given area without public assistance.

// FIGURE 8. Food Access in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade

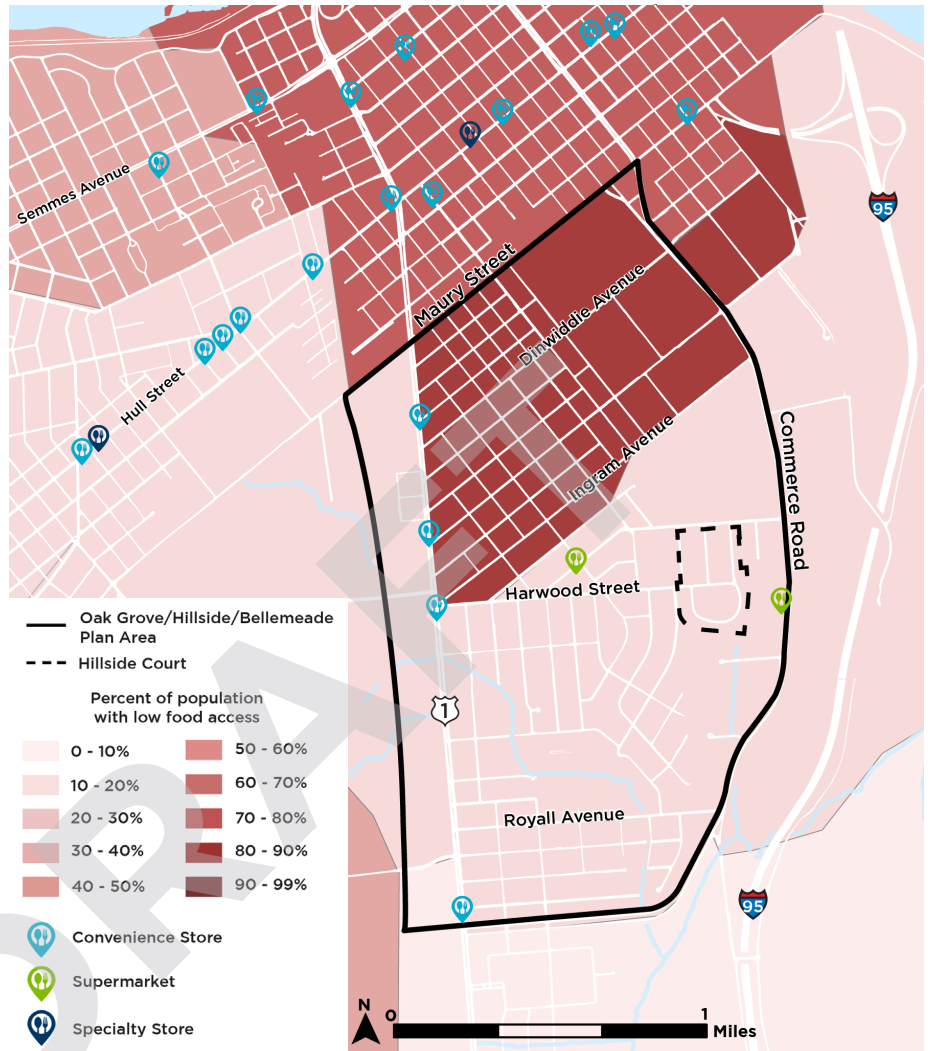
Source: Climate Equity Index, City of Richmond Office of Sustainability

## Food access

Low food access is defined by the USDA as the percent of the population that lives beyond 1 mile from a supermarket.

The map in figure 9 shows census tracts where more than 100 housing units do not have a vehicle and are more than a 1/2 mile from the nearest supermarket. As shown, 81.6% of the population in Oak Grove is identified as having low food access, a substantial leap from Bellemeade's 15.4%

The greater OGHB area does not have adequate and safe access to nourishing, affordable, and suitable food options. And while there are two stores in OGHB identified as supermarkets, both of these establishments primarily offer quick food and deli options with minimal fresh produce and prepackaged foods. Further, 32.5% of OGHB residents are SNAP recipients, double the citywide rate of 14.5%.



## Health

Residents in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade endure higher rates of a multitude of health conditions when compared with the citywide averages. In fact, residents are suffering from high blood pressure and obesity at 11% higher rates. And while many of these conditions are treatable, nearly a quarter of all OGHB residents have no health insurance. Another 48.5% of residents are covered through public health insurance programs such as Medicaid and/or Medicare.

// TABLE 3. Health

Source: City of Richmond Office of Sustainability, Climate Equity Index

Topic	Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade	City of Richmond
Asthma	11.8%	9.8%
COPD	9.3%	6.6%
Coronary Heart Disease	7.5%	5.6%
Diabetes	18.1%	12.3%
High Blood Pressure	45.9%	34.3%
Obesity	43.2%	32.6%
Poor Mental Health	16.4%	12.9%
Poor Physical Health	17.6%	12.3%
Disabilities	19.7%	15.3%
Uninsured	22%	14.6%

# Urban Design & Land Use

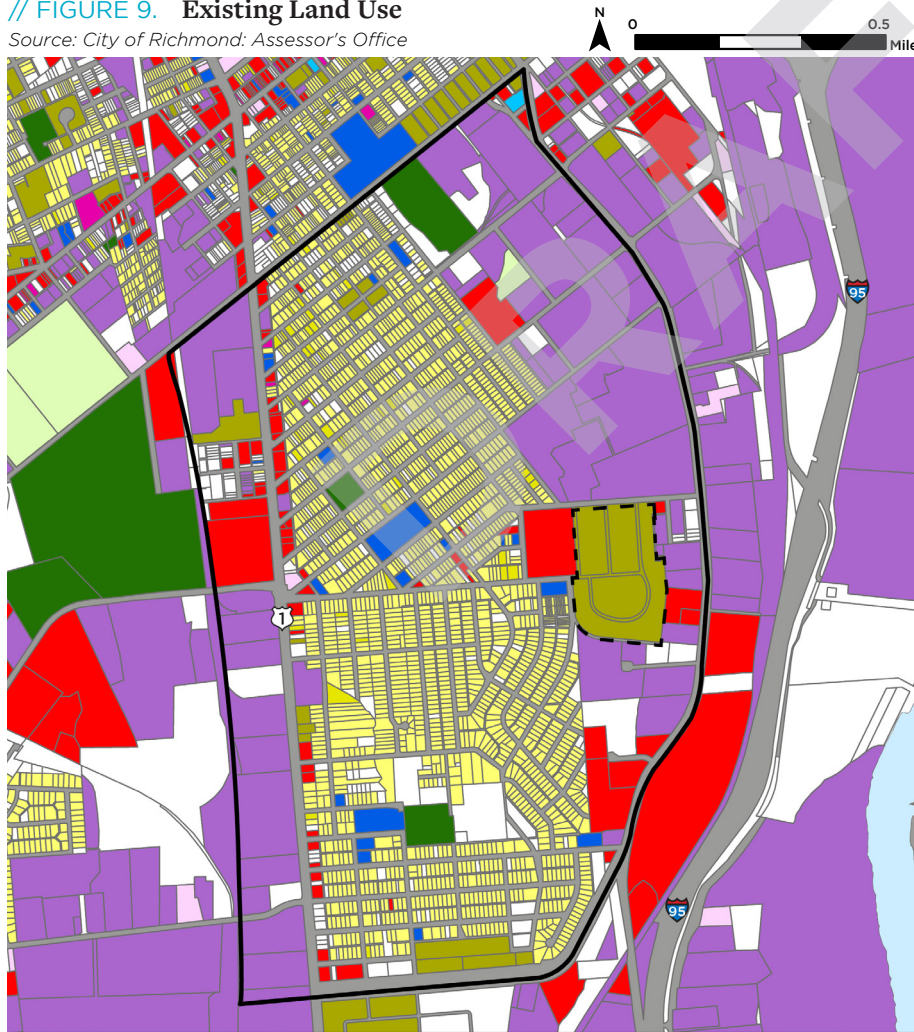
## Subtitle

### Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is predominantly single-family residential.

Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is 2.6 square miles (4.3% of Richmond's total area). Single-family residential homes make up 18% of OGHB's total area, making it the predominant land use. The single-family neighborhoods in the center are surrounded by industrial land uses to the east and west, which comprise 15% of OGHB's total area. This industrial land is primarily located along the area's major North to South thoroughfares - Commerce Road and Richmond Highway. OGHB has a notably higher presence of industrial land uses (15%) compared to that of the entire city (10%). While there are a few instances of small-scale corner commercial uses within the residential center, most commercial uses are located along the fringe of the study area along Commerce Road and Richmond Highway.

// FIGURE 9. Existing Land Use

Source: City of Richmond: Assessor's Office



**15%**

of land in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is industrial

**10%**

of land in City Richmond is industrial

#### Existing Land Use

- |                      |                     |               |                   |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| — OGHB Plan Area     | Single-Family       | Commercial    | Industrial        |
| - - - Hillside Court | Duplex (Two-Family) | Office        | Public Open Space |
| — Roads              | Multi-Family        | Government    | Vacant            |
|                      | Mixed-Use           | Institutional |                   |

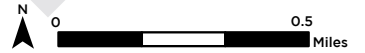


## The Richmond 300 Master Plan envisions Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade as a predominantly residential neighborhood with easy access to major mixed-use corridors.

Figure 10 shows Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade’s future land use as determined in the Richmond 300 Master Plan. The land use map maintains the area’s single-family residential intact and borders it with highly-walkable and urban Community Mixed-Use, Corridor Mixed-Use, and Industrial Mixed-Use land use types. The plan also classifies Hillside Court as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, identifying the opportunity of transforming the homogenous public housing complex into an urban neighborhood with a variety of housing types and small-scale commercial and industrial uses.

// FIGURE 10. Future Land Use

Source: Richmond 300 Master Plan

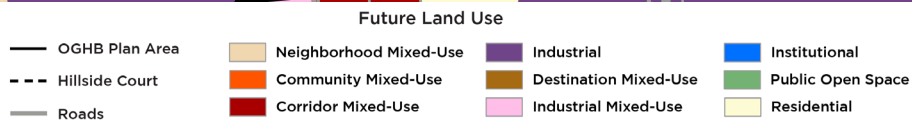
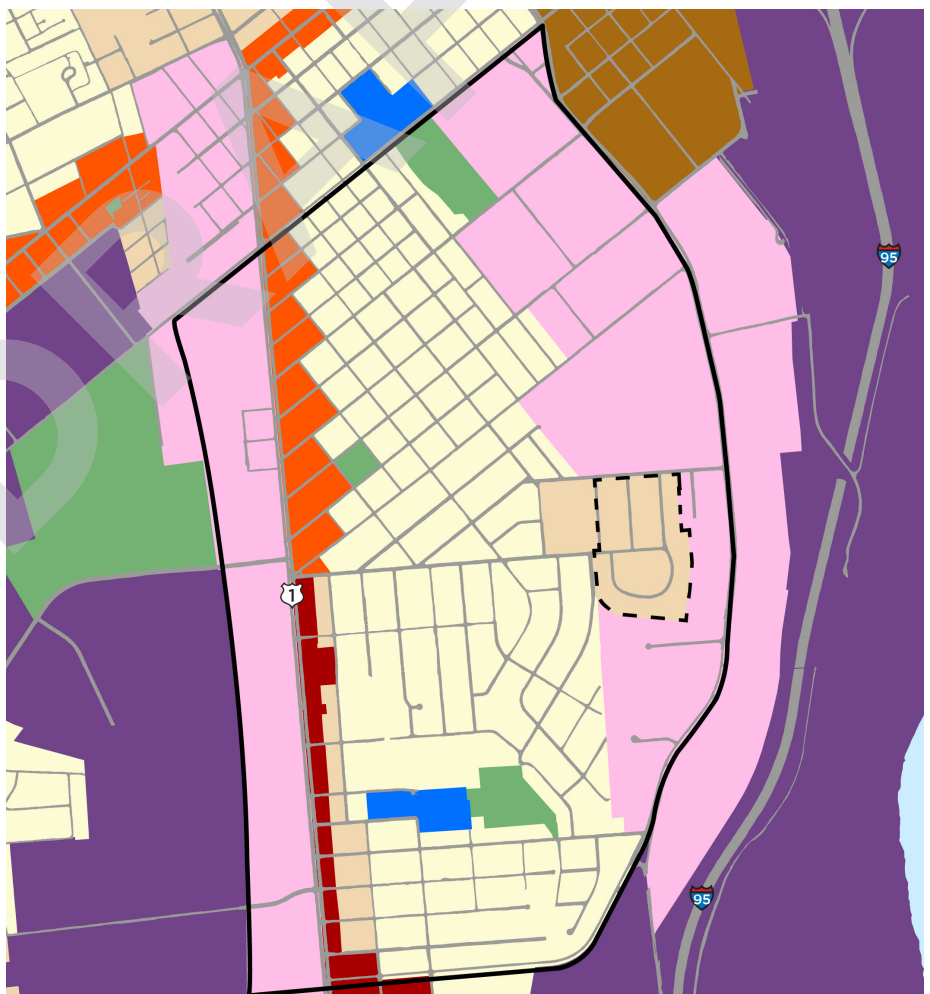


**Industrial Mixed-Use:** Formerly traditional industrial areas that are transitioning to mixed-use because of their proximity to growing neighborhoods and changes in market conditions. These areas may still retain some light industrial uses.

**Community Mixed-Use:** Cluster of medium-density, walkable commercial and residential uses that provide neighborhood services to nearby residential communities and sometimes feature regional attractions.

**Neighborhood Mixed-Use:** Existing or new highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses.

**Corridor Mixed-Use:** Found along major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium- to medium-high-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development.

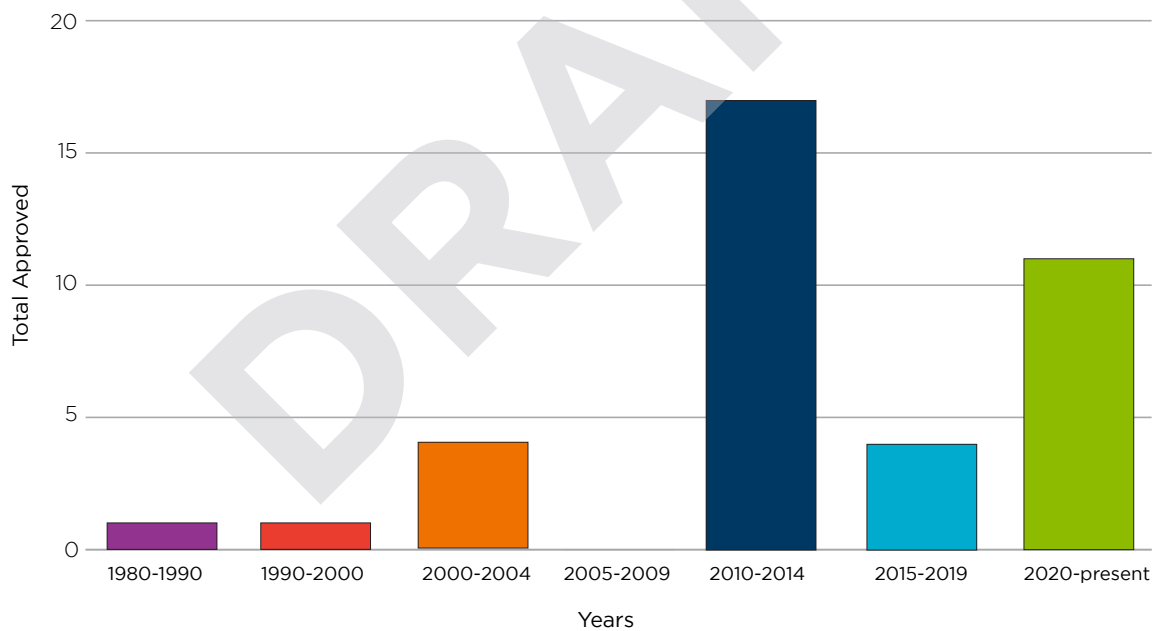


## Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has had over 10 Special Use Permits in the last 3 years.

Much of Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade lies within the R-4 Single-Family Residential Zoning District, which ensures that the current lot sizes, floor area ratios, yard setbacks, and single-family uses are maintained. Within the last three years, there has been an increase in Special Use Permits that have changed the zoning of parcels formerly zoned as R-4 to allow for projects with greater density and different housing types. This trend is likely to continue given the national housing shortage, increased land values in OGHB, and the growing demand for housing in neighborhoods with easy access to Downtown.

// FIGURE 11. Special Use Permits by Year in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade

Source: City of Richmond Department of Planning and Development Review (2023)

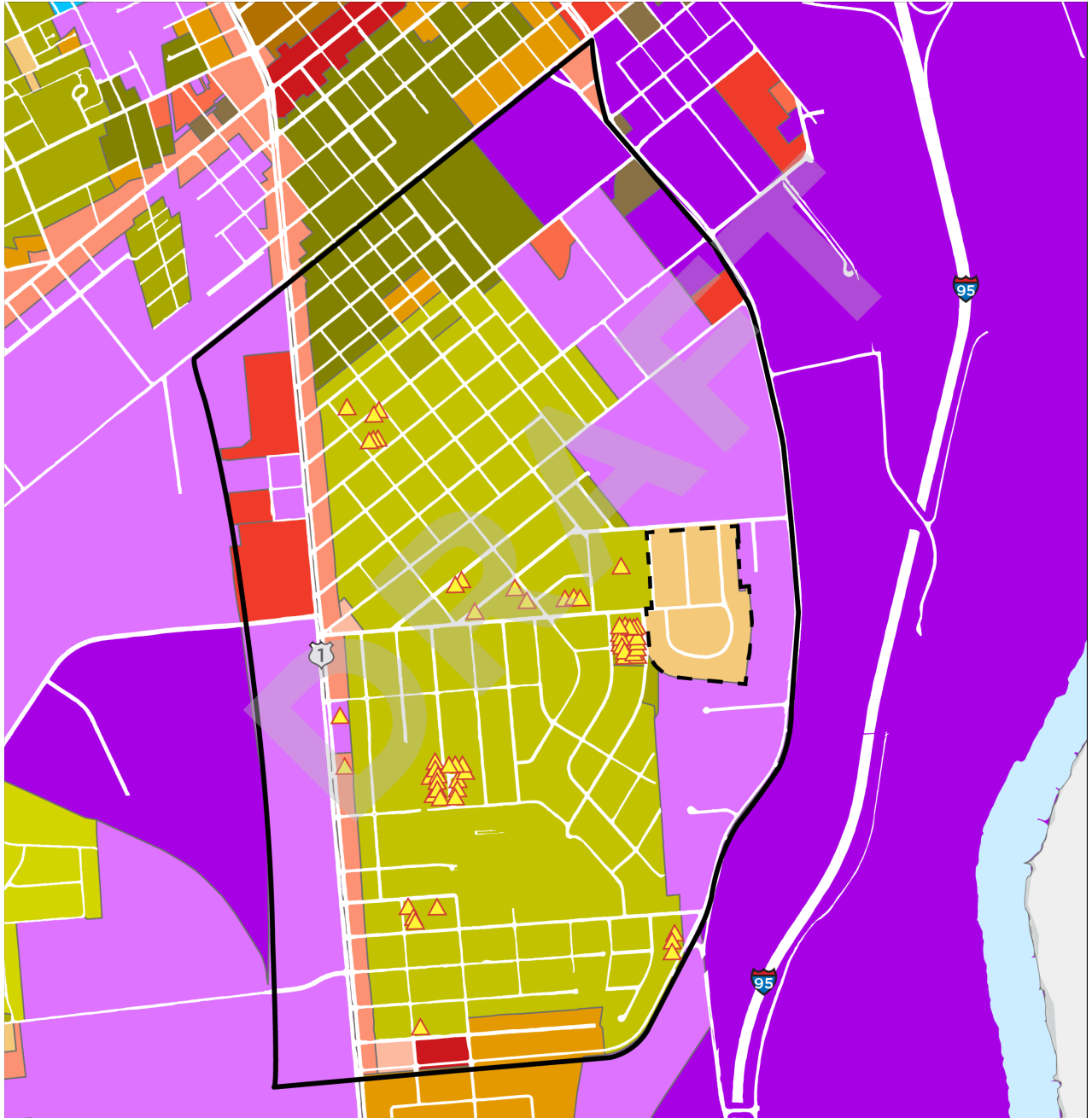
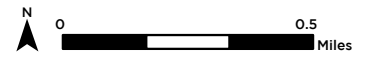


A Special Use Permit (SUP) allows an applicant to receive approval for a development that does not conform to the existing zoning district regulations.



// FIGURE 12. Zoning Districts

Source: City of Richmond, 2023



Zoning Districts

— OGHB Plan Area	B-2	M-1	R-5	R-8
- - - Hillside Court	B-3	M-2	R-53	TOD-1
	B-5	OS	R-6	▲ Special Use Permits
	B-6	R-4	R-63	
	B-7	R-48	R-7	

## Oak Grove/Hillside/ Bellemeade is a Streetcar Neighborhood

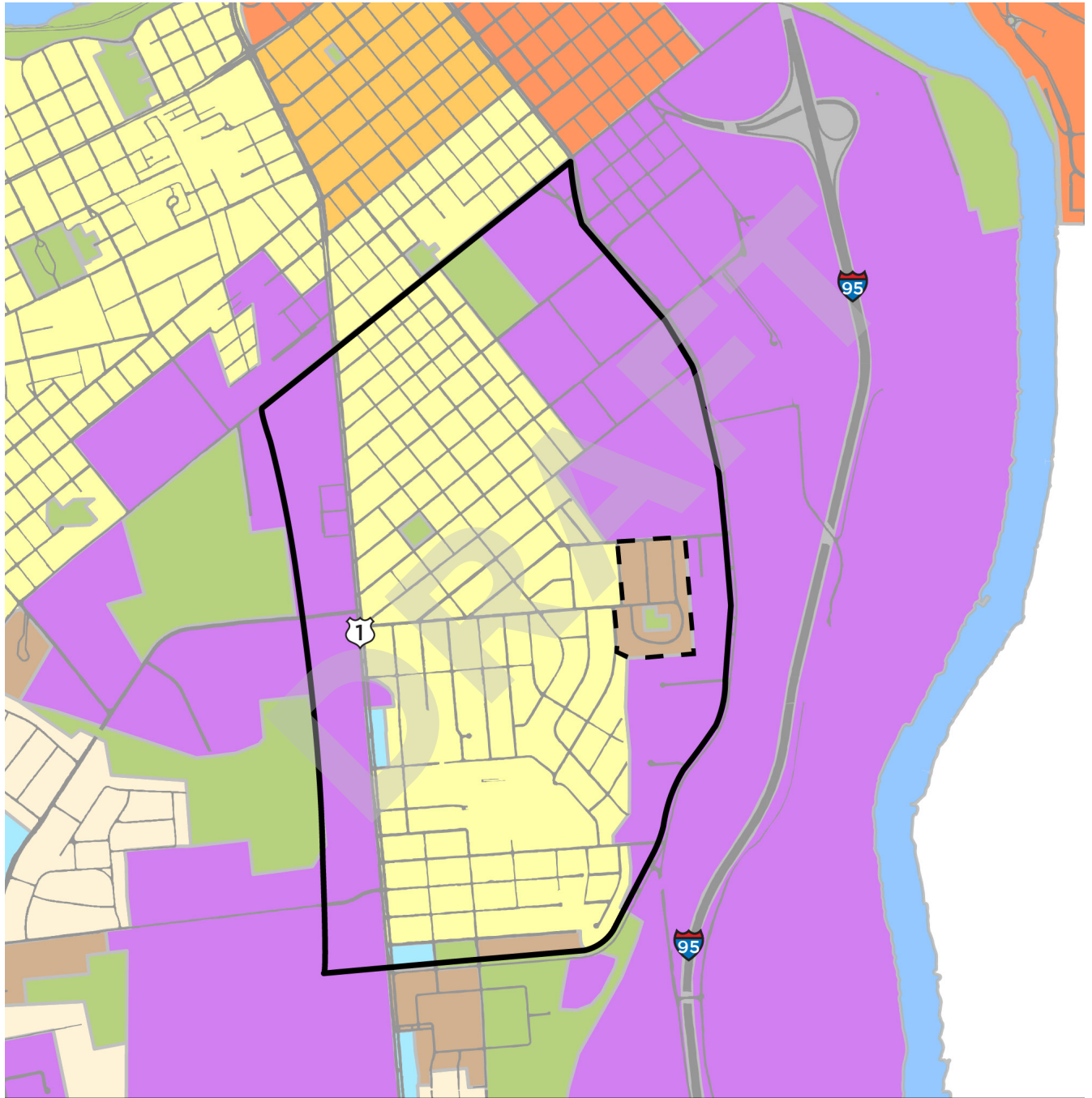
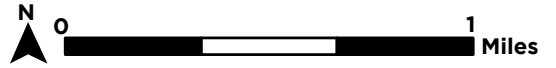
The Center for Urban and Regional Analysis (CURA) at the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) conducted an “urban design typology” analysis of Richmond in (insert year) that defines neighborhoods by how the buildings relate to one another, how the street network is defined, and how the public realm (sidewalks, plazas, parks) is defined. As shown in Figure 13, OGHB primarily contains the following three types of neighborhoods:

- Streetcar Neighborhood: Most of the buildings in streetcar neighborhoods are single-family homes with small yards on streets with sidewalks and street trees. Offices, stores, restaurants, and apartments are located along main roads.
- Industrial Land: Industrial lands are found in areas with access to the various rail lines and highways in the city.
- Apartment Court: Apartment courts are primarily located in the post-suburban areas. The apartment courts feature buildings that create their own private campuses. Oftentimes apartment courts are on superblocks that do not have through streets.



// FIGURE 13. Urban Design Typology Map

Source: CURA at VCU: Urban Design Typology Analysis, 2017



Urban Design Typologies

- |       |   |   |                        |   |                                     |
|-------|---|---|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| —     | Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Plan Area | ■ | Streetcar Neighborhood | ■ | Historic Urban Neighborhood         |
| - - - | Hillside Court                          | ■ | Post-War Suburb        | ■ | Apartment Court                     |
| —     | Roads                                   | ■ | Industrial Land        | ■ | Suburban Shopping and Business Park |
|       |   | ■ | Post-Industrial Zone   | ■ |                                     |
|       |   | ■ | Open Space             |   |                                     |



# Housing

## Subtitle

### Nearly 3/4 of Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade residents are renters.

Following the subdivisions of the early to mid 1900s, OGHB primarily consisted of single-family, owner-occupied homes. While the majority of homes are still single-family detached, an increasing amount have become income-generating properties. Today only 33% of OGHB housing is owner-occupied, a smaller percentage than that of the city (44%). Homeownership rates vary throughout OGHB. The northern blocks between Maury Street and Gordon Avenue have the highest rates (46 - 49%) while the central blocks between Ingram Avenue and Harwood Street have the lowest (18%).

### The majority of renters are cost-burdened.

The majority of renters in OGHB pay between \$1000 and \$1500. Considering that the area's median income is \$35,235, the average renter in OGHB spends over 30% of their income on housing alone. According to U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, these renters qualify as cost-burdened.

// TABLE 4. Tenure, 2000, 2010, 2016

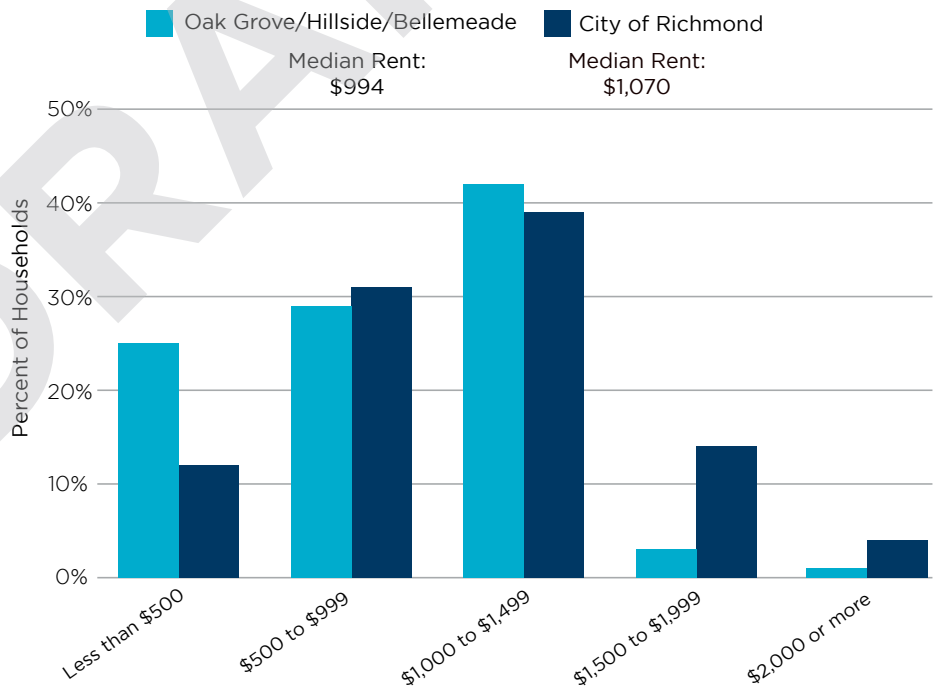
Tenure is a term used to describe if a housing unit is occupied by a tenant or an owner.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2010 Censuses, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

	Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade, 2010		Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade, 2020		City of Richmond, 2020	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Owner-occupied	897	37%	870	33%	39,801	44%
Renter-occupied	1,542	63%	1,795	67%	51,204	56%
<b>Total units</b>	<b>2,439</b>		<b>2,665</b>		<b>91,005</b>	

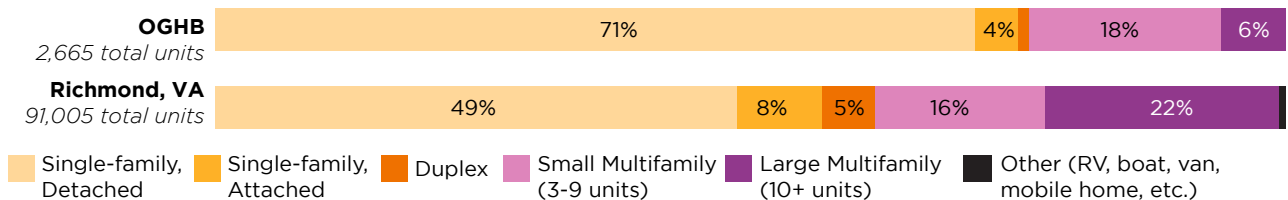
// FIGURE 14. Gross Rent Distribution of Households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2016-2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates



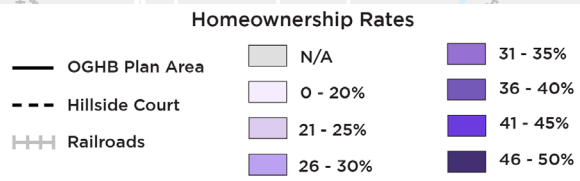
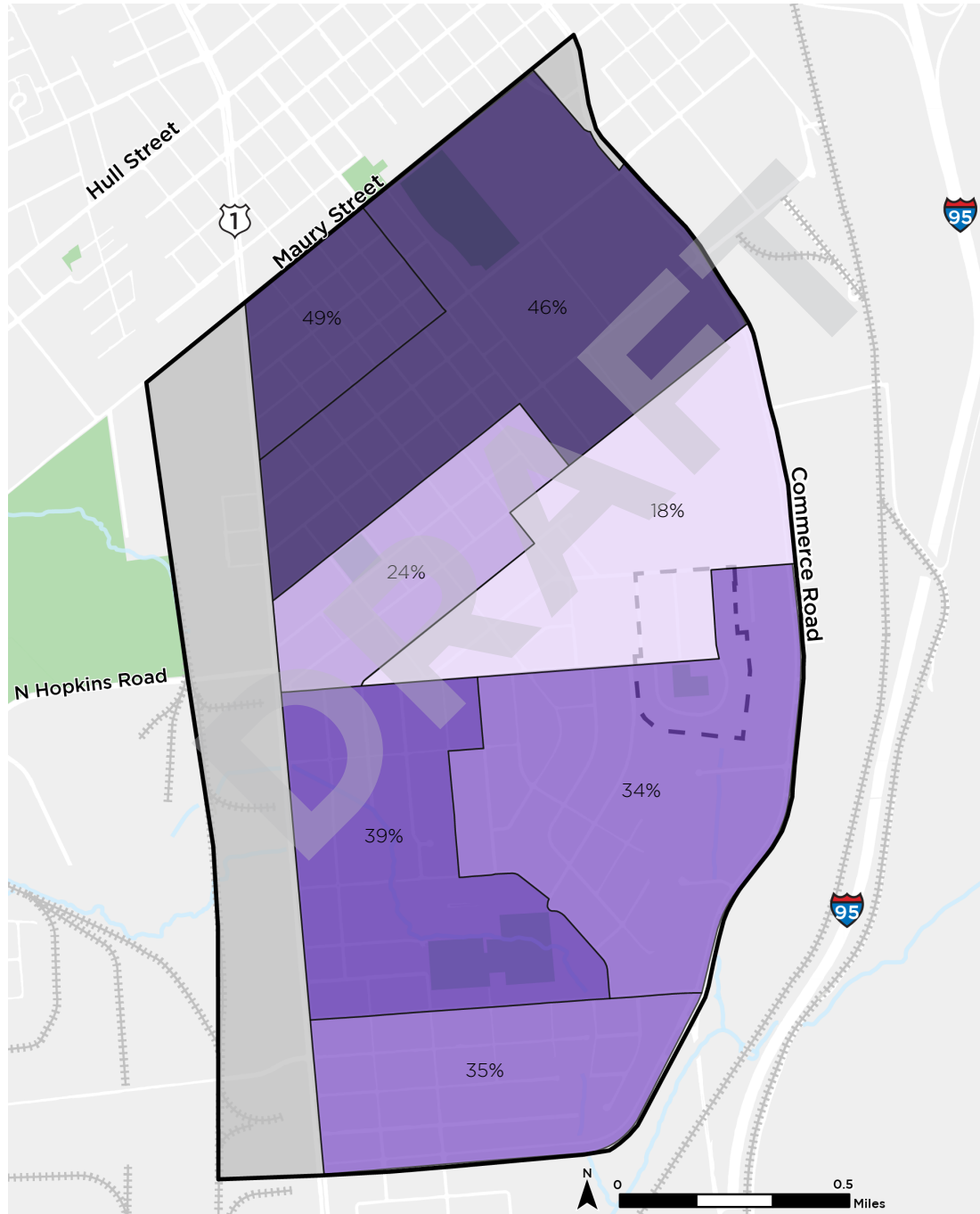
// FIGURE 15. Housing Type Comparison, 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2016-2020 ACS 5-Year Es



// FIGURE 16. Percent Homeownership in OGHB by Census Block Group

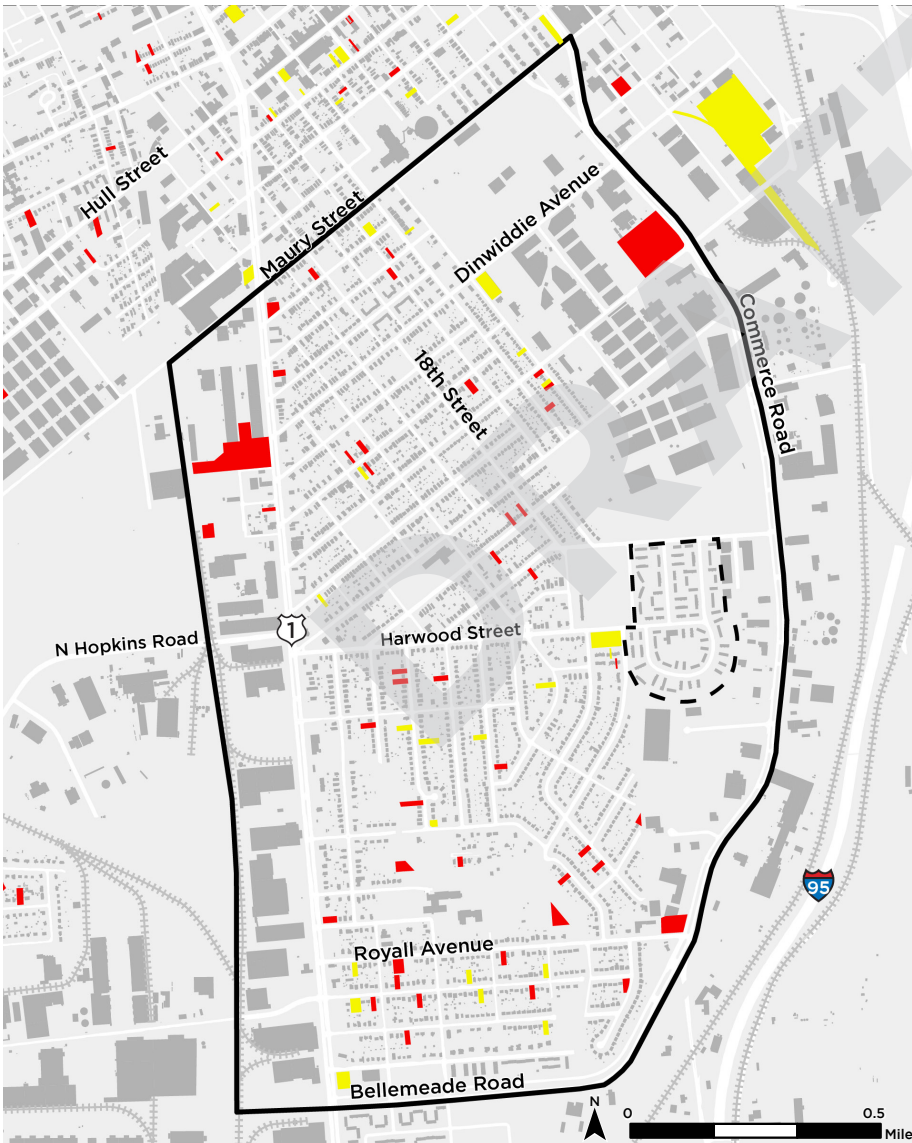
Source: U.S. Census Bureau: ACS 5-year Estimates (2016-2020)



# Home Assessments Doubled between 2019 and 2023

// FIGURE 17. Sale Price vs. Assessment, 2019-2023

Source: City of Richmond Assessor's Office



## Property values are rising

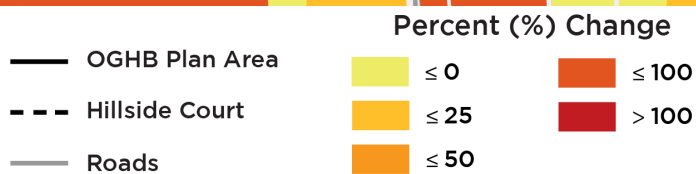
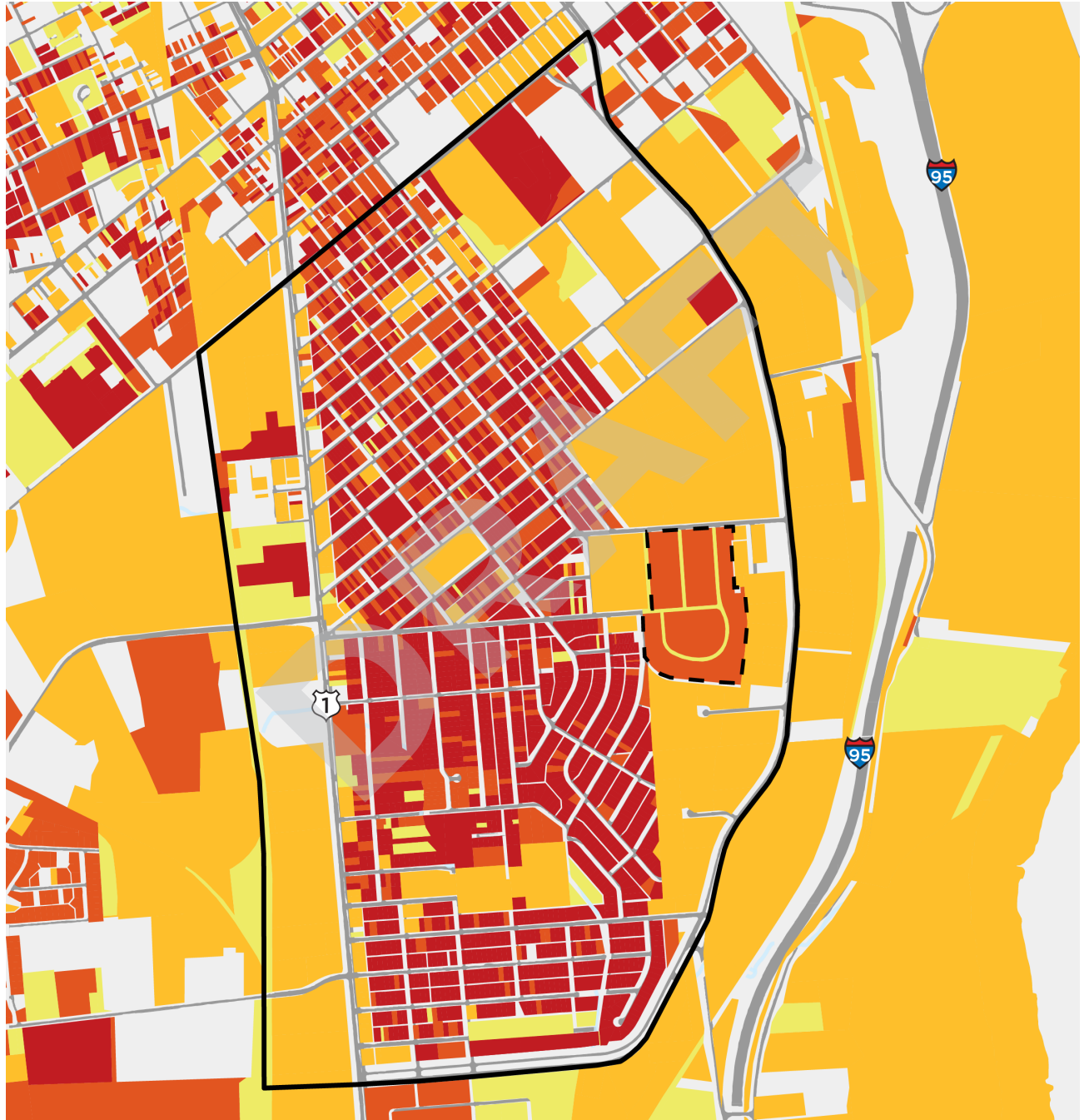
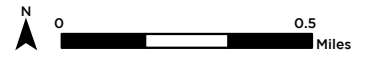
As shown in Figure 18, OGHB has experienced a significant increase in property values. **Most properties have doubled in assessment over the past several years.** The median single family home assessment increased from \$58,000 in 2019 to a current value of \$133,000. Higher assessments have been accompanied by a surge in sale prices. Figure 17 shows that 40% of OGHB properties sold between 2020 and 2023 were sold for more than their assessed values. While the area is attracting new families due to its affordability compared to other Richmond neighborhoods, rising property taxes and new development pose challenges to long-time residents.

- OGHB Plan Area
- Hillside Court
- ⊢⊢⊢ Railroads
- Buildings
- Sale \$ > Assessment \$
- Sale \$ < Assessment \$



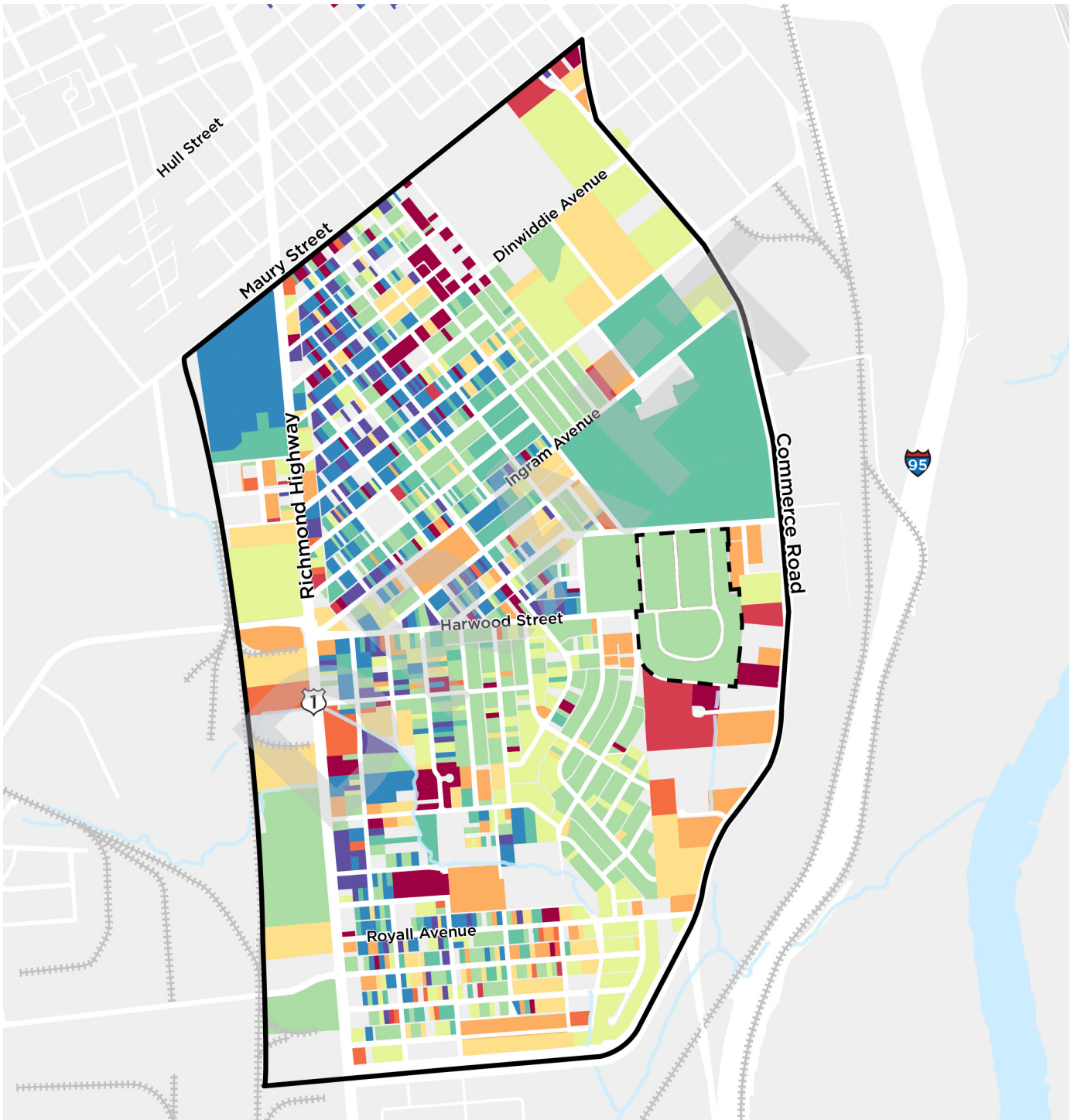
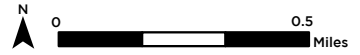
// FIGURE 18. Percent Change of Property Assessments from 2019 to 2023

Source: City of Richmond Assessor's Office

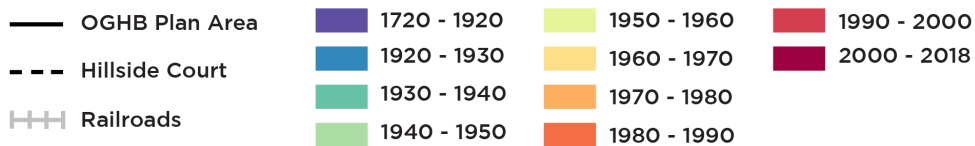


// FIGURE 19. Year of Construction

Source: City of Richmond: Assessor's Office



Year of Construction



## 56% of homes in Oak Grove and Bellemeade were built prior to 1950.

Oak Grove and Bellemeade contain detached, single-family homes of various styles. The diversity of home types can be attributed to the gradual development of the area as shown in Figure 19. While over half of Oak Grove and Bellemeade was built prior to 1950, housing has been developed each decade. Figures 20 - 27 show how Oak Grove and Bellemeade homes have changed over the years, ending with one of the latest subdivisions built in the 2010's by Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation.



// FIGURE 20. Joplin Avenue 1800

Source: City of Richmond



// FIGURE 21. Overlook Street 1400

Source: City of Richmond





// FIGURE 22. Bowen Street 1500  
Source: City of Richmond



// FIGURE 23. Ingram Avenue 1700  
Source: City of Richmond



// FIGURE 24. Overlook Street 1500  
Source: City of Richmond





// FIGURE 25. Harwood Street 2000  
Source: City of Richmond



// FIGURE 26. Gordon Avenue 2100  
Source: City of Richmond



// FIGURE 27. Lynhaven Avenue 1500  
Source: City of Richmond

# Hillside Court

## Subtitle?

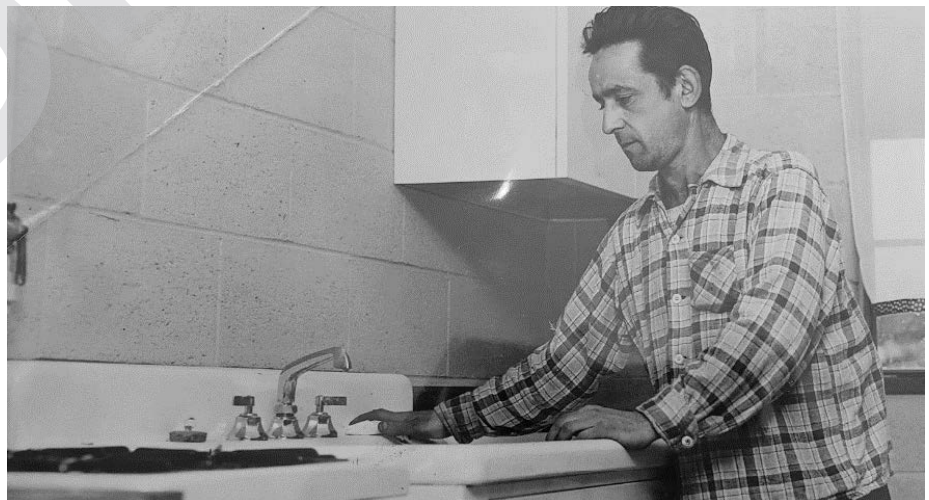
### History

**The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) built Hillside Court in 1952 as public housing for white residents only.** During the same time, RRHA constructed Creighton Court in the east end of Richmond for African American residents, perpetuating long-standing patterns of racial segregation in the city. Hillside Court was located between a redlined district to the west and industrial uses to the east on land less desirable for private housing development. The Colonial Revival Style development contains 402 housing units in a U-shaped pattern, with three rows of parallel streets meeting a circular street that creates an interior, semi-circular block.

In 1987, Hillside received site improvements that included the construction of recreational courts behind the community center, new concrete components throughout the site, and landscape regrading. After 1987, the façade of the Hillside Community Center was redesigned.



// **FIGURE 28.** Hillside Court dedication ceremony on October 9, 1953  
*Source: Library of Virginia*



// **FIGURE 29.** New Hillside Court resident touring a unit following the dedication ceremony  
*Source: Library of Virginia*



## Today

**Over the years, Hillside Court has deteriorated due to neglect and wear.** Its 2022 HUD Inspection report noted poor conditions and at least one life-threatening issue. Due to physical condition assessments, Hillside Court meets HUD's criteria of functional obsolescence. This signifies that 1) the public housing's physical condition, location, or other factors make it unsuitable for housing purposes and 2) no cost-effective means exists for returning the public housing to useful life.



// FIGURE 30. 1412 - 1418 Bruce Street

Source: City of Richmond

**In 2021, Citizen HKS led Hillside Court residents in a community process for the redesign of the Hillside Playground.** The first phase was completed with a \$600,000 renovation of the playground in Hillside Court that sits behind the management office at 1500 Harwood St. The next phases will include a children's playground, walking trail, and other community amenities



// FIGURE 31. Hillside Playground

Source: Citizen HKS

# Market Value Analysis

Identifies and aligns resources to reinvest in communities

## Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has 4 housing market types.

**F** - About 2/3 of the regional average in sales price, with high percentage of bank sales, even split between owner- and renter-occupied households, high amount of publicly-subsidized rental housing options.

**G** - About 1/3 of the regional average in sales price, with high percentage of bank sales, slightly more owner-occupied than renter-occupied households, high vacancy rates, low amount of publicly-subsidized rental housing options.

**H** - Below 1/3 of the regional average in sales price, high percentage of bank sales, low permit activity, majority renter-occupied households, higher amount of publicly-subsidized rental housing options, high vacancy rate.

**I** - About 1/4 of the regional average in sales price, low permitting activity, majority renter-occupied households, high amount of publicly-subsidized rental housing options, low permitting activity.

## Displacement Risk Ratio (DRR).

Displacement Risk Ratio is calculated by taking a ratio between median sales prices over time and the income of a long-term resident at a fixed point in time (2010) and annually adjusted using the Consumer Price Index.

-High or rising DRR values signal longtime residents, or new residents with incomes like those of legacy residents, may be experiencing displacement pressure associated with elevated housing prices.

-Negative or declining DRR values indicate that housing prices are not keeping pace with larger market trends, which in weak or fragile markets may signal housing market decline.

The 2020-2021 Area Average DRR is 4.54 for the City of Richmond. This DRR is high compared to other cities of comparable size and population. The Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade Area is among the areas that experienced the highest increase in DRR in the city between 2015 and 2021 (.76 or more). This means that Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade's longtime residents, or new residents with income like those of legacy residents, are at high risk of being displaced.

## Key Findings of the 2022 MVA:

Compared to the Richmond region, Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has

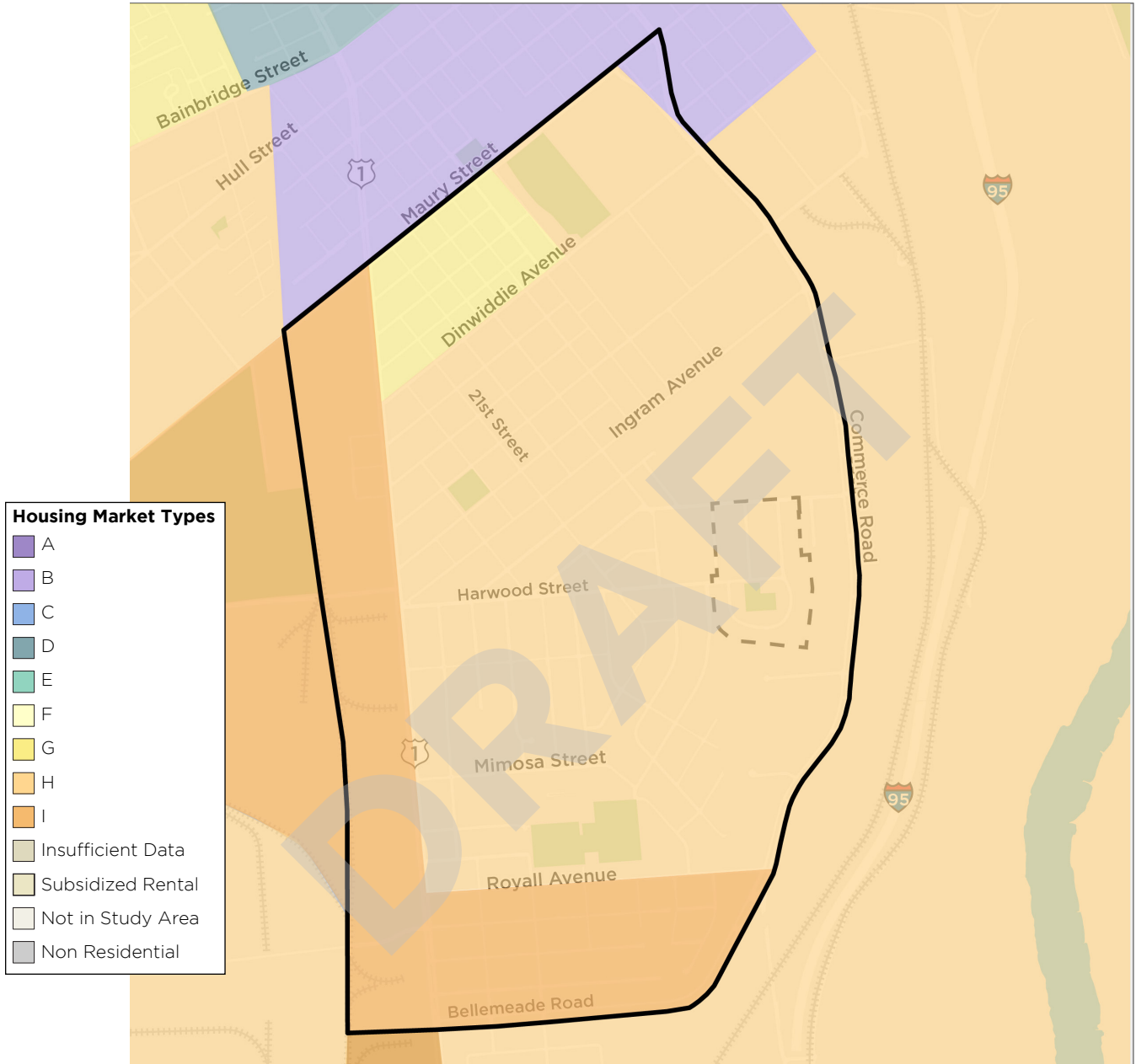
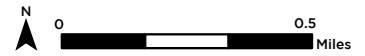
- High percentage of foreclosures
- High percentage of renter-occupied households
- High amount of publicly-subsidized rental housing
- High vacancy rates
- Low permitting activity
- High percentage of home sales to investors

## Summary

Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has a high percentage of renter-occupied single-family housing. Between 2019 and 2021, the number of sales from owners to investors in the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade block groups were among the highest in the city (10 to 20% and 20 to 40%). Although median home sales in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade are significantly less than that of the overall city, the area is becoming increasingly less affordable for its long term-residents.

// FIGURE 32. OGHB Market Value Analysis, 2022

Source: The Reinvestment Fund, 2022



■	A
■	B
■	C
■	D
■	E
■	F
■	G
■	H
■	I
■	Insufficient Data
■	Subsidized Rental
■	Not in Study Area
■	Non Residential

	Number of Block Groups*	Median Sales Price 2019-2021	Sales Price Variance, 2019-2021	Percent Bank Sales, 2019-2021	Owner Occupancy, 2015-19	Percent Subsidized Rental, 2021	Percent Vacant Residential, 2021	Housing Units per Acre, 2015-19	Percent Residential Parcels Built 2008-up	Percent Residential Parcels with Permits 2019-21
<b>A</b>	49	\$576,635	0.63	2%	86%	1%	0%	2.8	12%	17%
<b>B</b>	32	\$478,570	0.94	4%	29%	22%	2%	21.9	2%	10%
<b>C</b>	97	\$327,392	0.37	4%	84%	3%	1%	3.1	4%	9%
<b>D</b>	60	\$258,893	0.80	6%	34%	6%	1%	8.0	5%	8%
<b>E</b>	102	\$ 227,432	0.37	7%	81%	5%	0%	2.5	3%	6%
<b>F</b>	18	\$209,868	0.50	23%	59%	9%	7%	4.9	3%	15%
<b>G</b>	44	\$209,328	0.81	11%	44%	96%	3%	5.0	5%	10%
<b>H</b>	41	\$130,615	0.77	12%	42%	9%	3%	5.3	2%	5%
<b>I</b>	14	\$103,375	1.07	10%	23%	95%	4%	5.7	4%	6%

# Transportation

## Subtitle

### Nearly 1/3 of OGHB residents have no vehicle.

While 36% of residents have at least one vehicle per household, 28% of residents have no access to a vehicle. This means that a substantial percentage of the population are dependent on public transit and/or walk or bike to get where they need to go. Access to important service and amenities may be limited for these residents.

// TABLE 6. Means of Transportation to Work for Workers 16 Years and Over, 2010 and 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2010 Census, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

	2010 Census		2020 5-Year ACS		% change from '10-'20
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Drove Alone	1,543	68%	2,393	68%	0%
Carpooled	245	11%	344	10%	-1%
Public Transit	312	14%	413	12%	-2%
Walked	30	1%	157	5%	4%
Other means (Bicycle, Taxi, Motorcycle)	74	3%	28	1%	-2%
Worked from home	74	3%	94	3%	0%

### OGHB's transportation infrastructure is lacking.

**Sidewalks:** There are many sidewalks that need repair in this area. Unsafe sidewalks decrease walkability in the area and present potential hazards to pedestrians.

**Crosswalks:** Many intersections, including those along Richmond Highway and Commerce Road, lack crosswalks. As a result, pedestrian visibility and safety is impaired.

**Bus Stops:** There are 68 GRTC bus stops in OGHB. Nearly 84% of these bus stops have no shelter or bench. Not only does this discourage use, but it leaves transit users vulnerable to various elements such as rain, wind, and extreme heat.

**Bus Lines:** Frequency within the neighborhood is generally limited to 60 minutes. The 3A, 3B, and 3C GRTC lines along Richmond Highway run every 15-30 minutes.

// TABLE 5. Vehicles Available by Household

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2020 ACS 5-Year Est.

	Households	Percent
No vehicle	736	28%
1 Vehicle	947	36%
2 Vehicles	649	24%
3+ Vehicles	333	12%

### The number of walkers in OGHB is increasing.

Even though the population doubled from 2010 to 2020, the number of OGHB residents driving to work alone remained the same. The number of public transit users and carpoolers dropped whereas those walking to work increased by 4%. While this may indicate that OGHB residents live near their place of employment, Census data shows that the average travel time to work is 26 minutes. In fact, 65% of OGHB's workforce travel between 15-34 minutes to get to work.

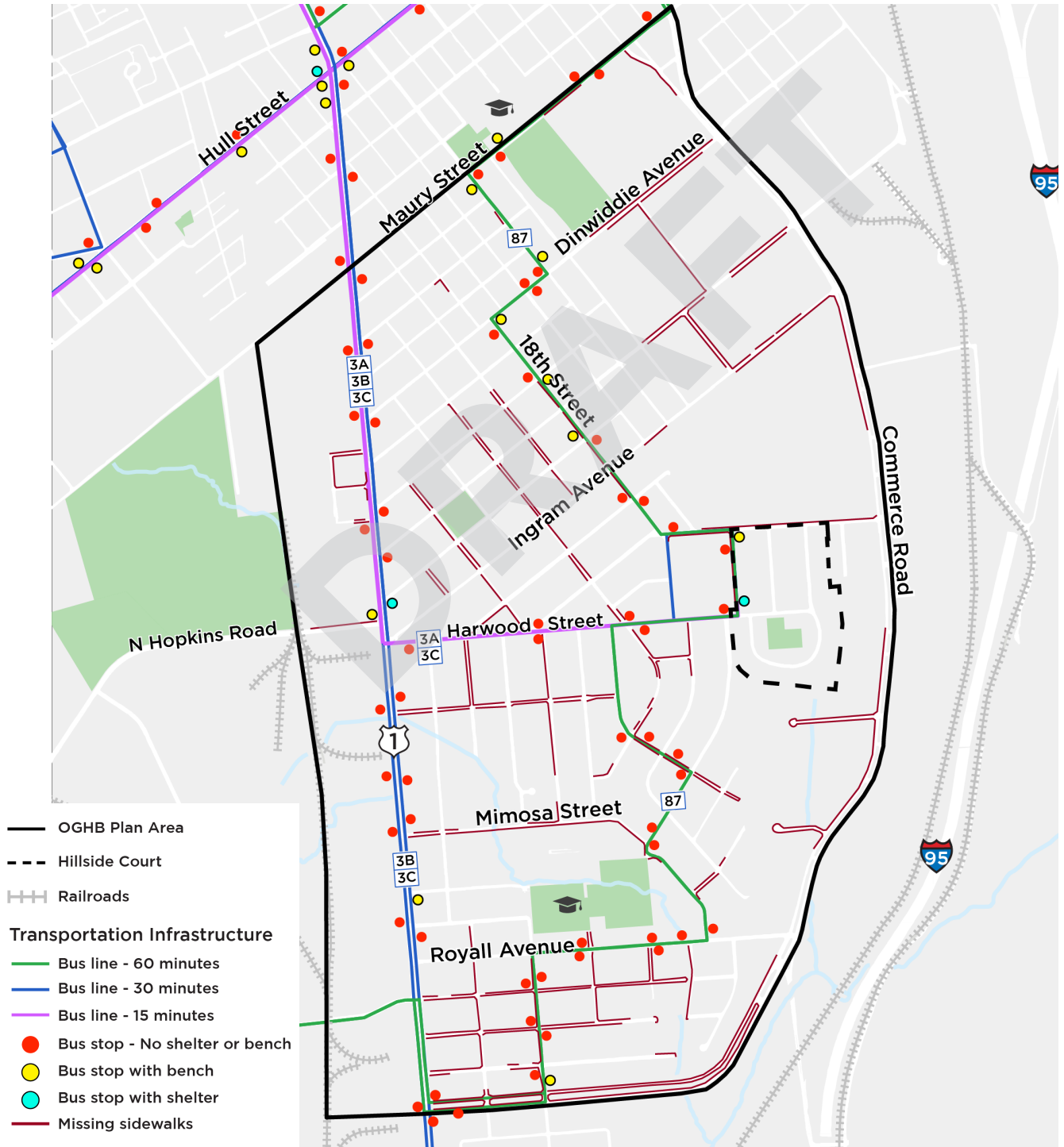
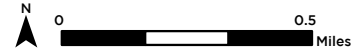
84%

of bus stops in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade have no shelter or bench



// FIGURE 33. Transportation Networks

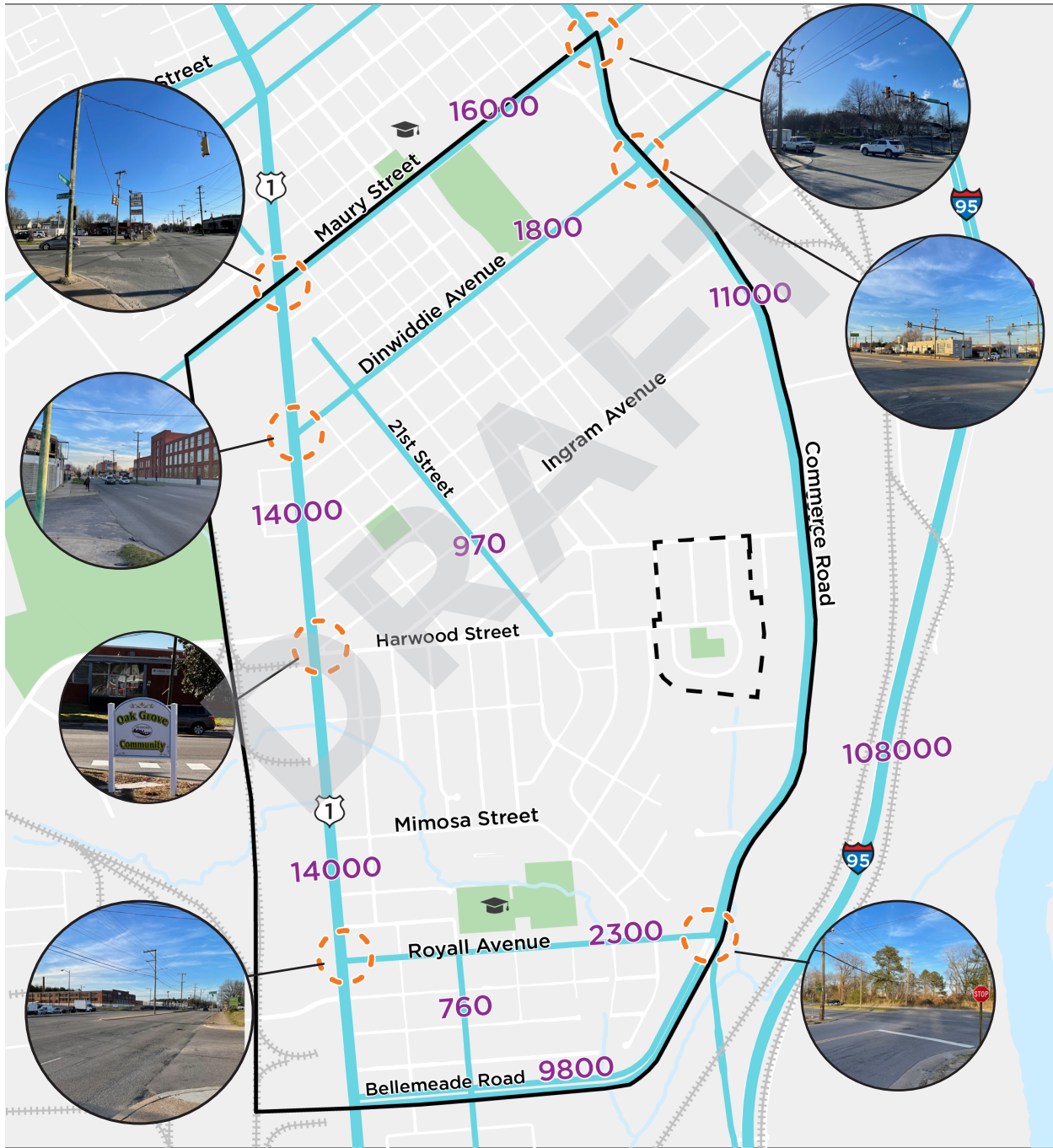
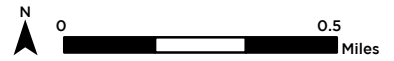
Source: City of Richmond: Department of Public Works, Greater Richmond Transit Co.





// FIGURE 34. Average Daily Traffic Volumes and Neighborhood Gateways

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), 2021



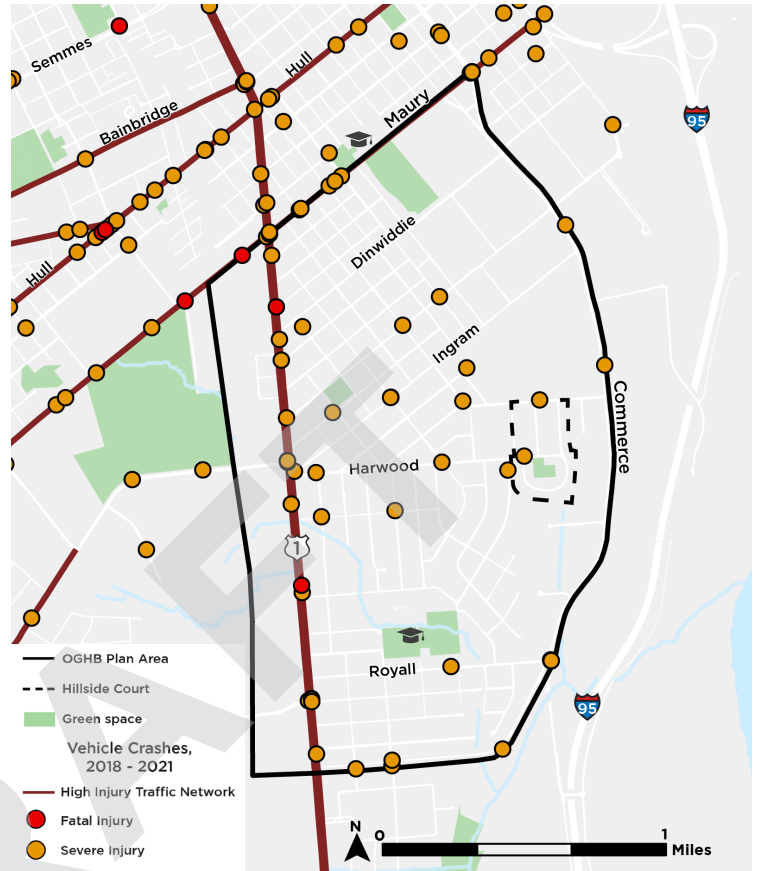
- OGHB Plan Area
- Hillside Court
- +++ Railroads
- Green space
- Major Thoroughfares
- Neighborhood Gateways
- 11000 Average Daily Traffic Volume

## Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has a high rate of severe crashes on residential streets.

Most crashes in OGHB occur along Richmond Highway and along the central streets in the area. Most of these crashes are categorized as "severe injuries" as opposed to "fatalities". Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade has an unusually high frequency of crashes resulting in severe injury on internal residential streets. Richmond Highway and Maury Street are considered High Injury Networks indicating that they have previously been identified as priority corridors for improved traffic safety measures.

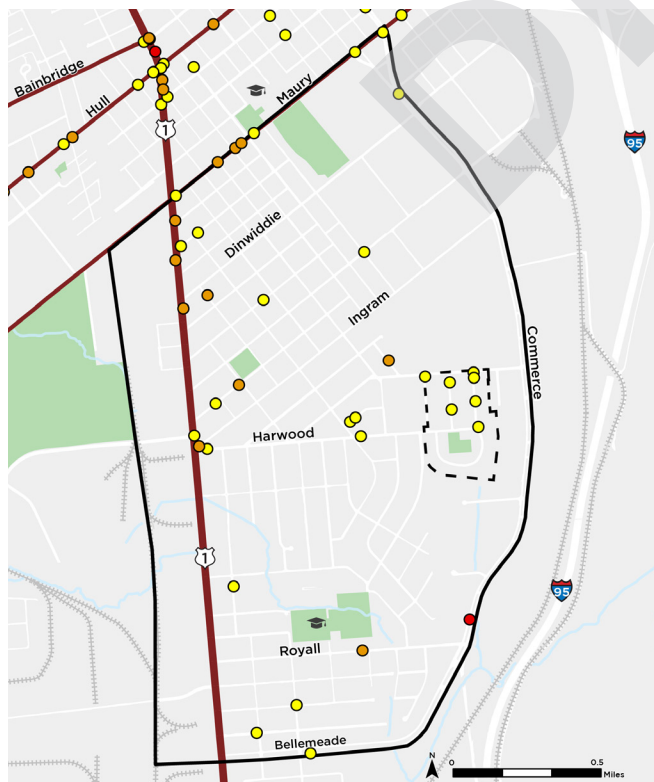
// FIGURE 36. Severe and Fatal Vehicle Crashes, 2018-2022

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), 2023



// FIGURE 35. Pedestrian- and Bicycle-involved Crashes, 2018-2022

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), 2023



// TABLE 7. Crash Data, 2018-2022

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), 2023

	Total
Total Crashes	879
Fatalities	3
Severe Injuries	54
Pedestrian-Involved	23
Speed-Related	68
Within School Zone	14

# Environment & Climate

## Subtitle

### Goode's Creek and the surrounding watershed are crucial environmental assets in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade.

Goode's creek is a 2.1 mile creek that runs through the southern portion of OGHB. The lands immediately adjacent to Goode's Creek are classified as Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Areas meaning that they act as stream banks and buffers to the water that drains directly into the Upper Goode's Creek watershed, the James River, and eventually, the Chesapeake Bay. Development in these areas is regulated in order to reduce any negative impacts to the water quality and ecology of nearby water bodies. The James river is less than a mile from the community but resident access is limited by both I-95 and industrial activities along Commerce Road. The river, as well as the creeks in the area, are underutilized resources that have been impaired by polluted runoff.

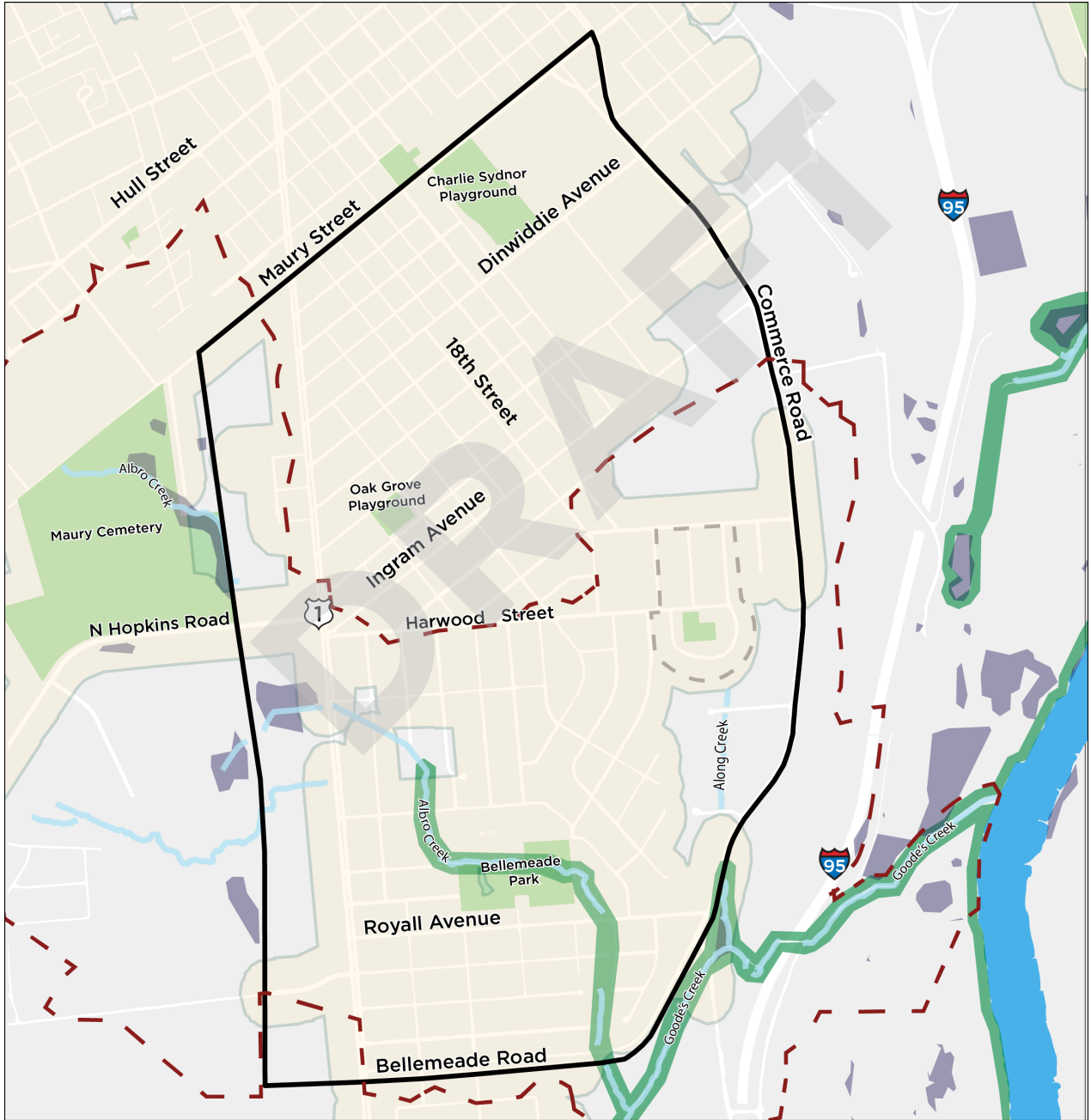
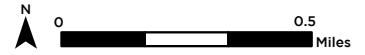
In 2021, the City of Richmond performed an analysis to determine where access to green space was limited. This analysis showed which parts of the population were a 10-minute walk away from public green space. While nearly all of the OGHB population is located within this 10-minute walkshed, access to key environmental assets in and around OGHB is limited due to gaps in transportation infrastructure and a lack of walkability and connectivity. Bellemeade Park is the largest green space in the area though Oak Grove Playground, Charlie Sydnor Playground, and Hillside Community Playground also account for some community green space. As shown in Figure 37, Maury Cemetery, west of Richmond Highway, is the largest green space although it is not currently designed for recreation.





// FIGURE 37. 10-Minute Walkshed to Green Space

Source: City of Richmond

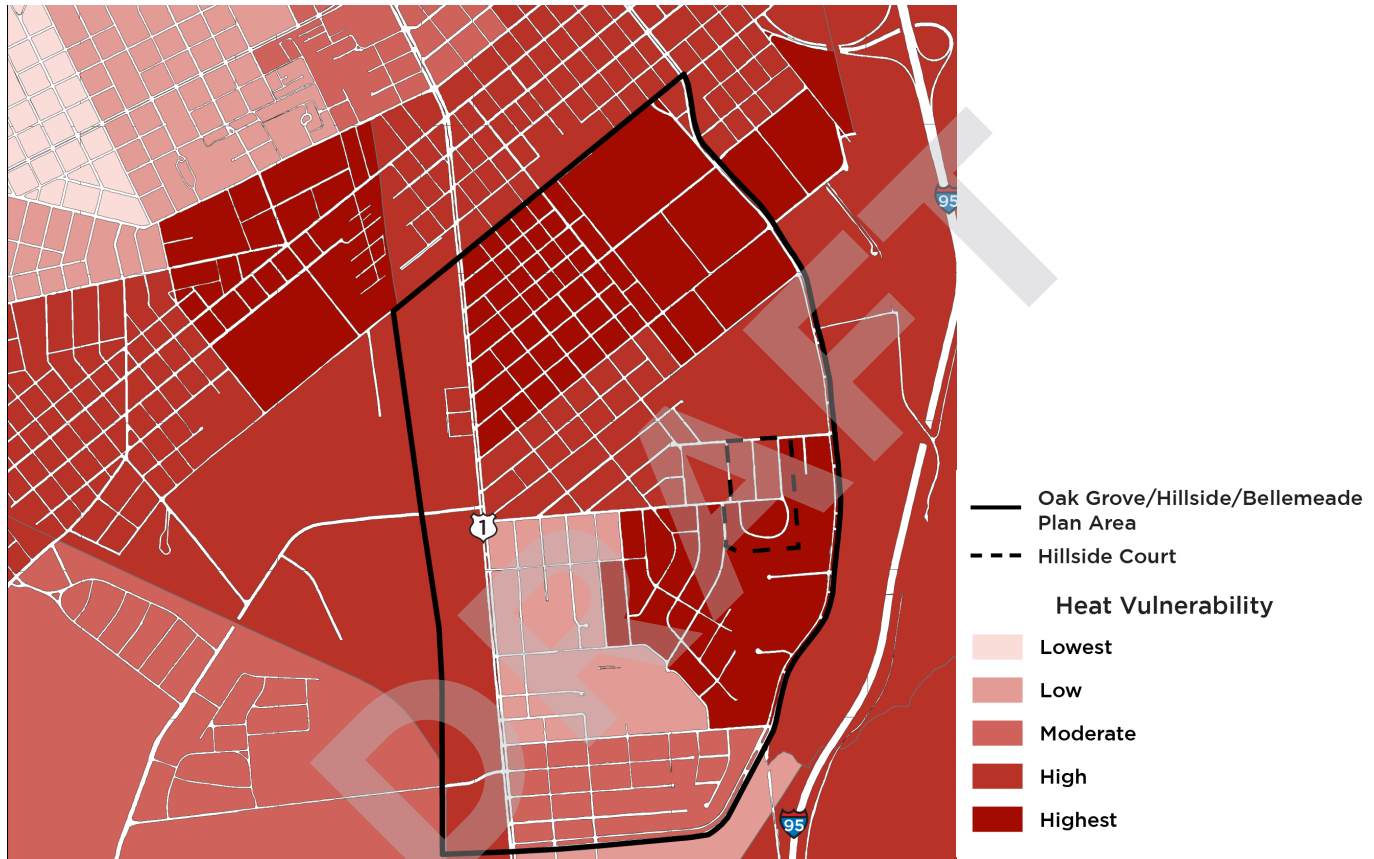


- OGHB Plan Area
- - - Hillside Court
- - - Upper Goode's Creek Watershed
- Streams
- Green space
- 10-minute walkshed to parks
- Wetlands
- Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area
- James River



// FIGURE 38. Heat Vulnerability by Census Block Group, 2019

Source: City of Richmond Office of Sustainability



### Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is an Urban Heat Island.

Urban Heat Islands are urbanized areas that experience significantly warmer temperatures than surrounding areas. They are caused by industrialization, automobile usage, a lack of green space, and a dense concentration of buildings, parking lots, and roads which absorb and retain heat. A majority of OGHB is within the high to highest categorization of Urban Heat Island effects, while the southwestern portion specifically is classified as low to moderate.

The residents in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade are more vulnerable to heat-related impacts such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion, and asthma from increased air pollution. In 2022, the City of Richmond’s Office of Sustainability created a Climate Equity Index which measured climate inequities throughout the city including heat vulnerability. Heat vulnerability describes how likely adverse effects of increased warming will impact a specific location and its residents. This index assesses an area’s susceptibility to the negative impacts of high temperatures and accounts for factors such as the amount of tree canopy, number of impervious surfaces, poverty rates, and the amount of afternoon warming during a heat event. **According to the index, the heat vulnerability of this area is considered high with a score of 10.78.**

## What is Environmental Justice?

Environmental Justice is the non-discriminatory and deliberate inclusion of all people regarding the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The goal of Environmental Justice is to provide equal protection against environmental health hazards and equal access to decision-making processes.

Poor environmental quality has shown to strongly correlate with negative health effects and a decreased quality of life within largely low-income, minority communities.

## Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade is experiencing climate inequities.

Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade was one of many national communities subject to racist policies such as redlining in the 1930s which led to structural disinvestment and neglect. Harmful environmental and health impacts to area residents are still prevalent today, nearly a century later. As shown in Table 8, amounts of particulate matter, cancerous air toxins, and lead paint in this area are much higher than state and national averages.

OGHB is squeezed between industrialized corridors resulting in additional negative environmental impacts to the community like pollution (air, water, and soil), depletion of natural resources, hazardous waste disposal, loss of biodiversity and habitats, and land degradation. Residents also suffer from a lack of adequate and accessible green spaces.

## Justice40 Initiative

The unprecedented Justice40 Initiative requires nearly all federal government agencies to dedicate 40% of all investments to disadvantaged communities who are actively experiencing negative environmentally related impacts to their communities.

These categories of investment include affordable housing, clean water, wastewater infrastructure, clean transit, energy efficiency, pollution remediation, and workforce development.

According to the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, the census tracts that make up the OGHB study area have been officially identified as disadvantaged. This means that the area meets the necessary criteria to benefit from Justice40 programs.

// TABLE 8. Environmental Justice Screen (EJ Screen)

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2022

	OGHB	Virginia	National Average	State Percentile
Particulate Matter (PM 2.5 in ug/m3)	8.14	7.51	8.67	78%
Air Toxics Cancer Risk (risk per MM)	50	31	28	98%
Lead Paint Indicator	0.65	0.2	0.27	91%
RMP Proximity (facility count/km distance)	2.6	0.41	0.77	98%
Hazardous Waste Proximity (facility count/km distance)	3.3	0.71	2.2	96%
Diesel PM (ug/m3)	0.356	0.237	0.294	82%

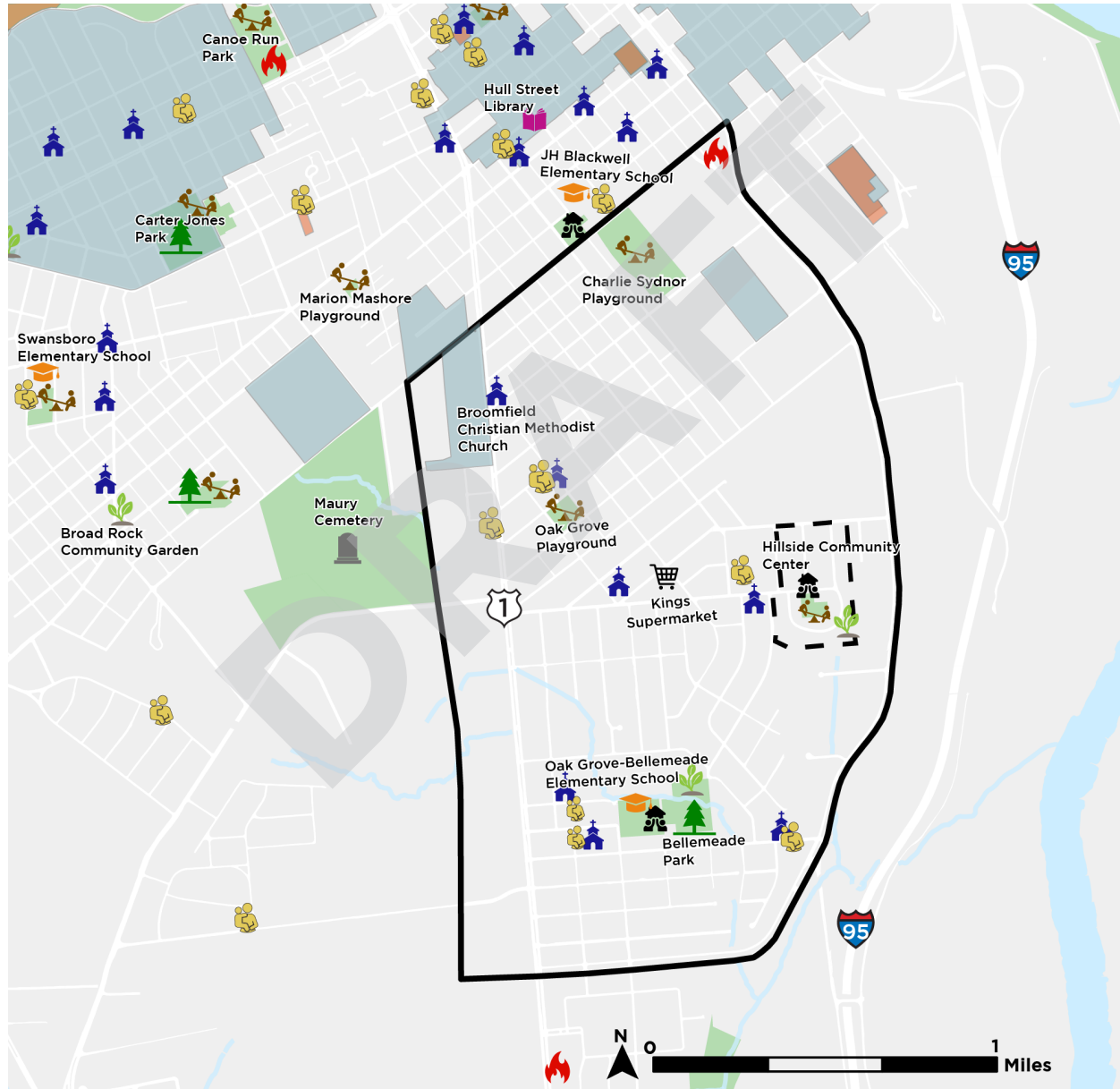
An Environmental Justice Screen or "EJ Screen" is a tool from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that assesses geographic areas by demographic, socioeconomic, and environmental factors to determine areas that have faced exposure to toxins, unjust land use applications, and resource extraction.

# Community Assets

## Subtitle

// FIGURE 39. Community Assets

Source: City of Richmond



- |                                       |                    |                  |             |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| — OGHB Plan Area                      | School             | Community Center | Library     |
| - - - Hillside Court                  | Church             | Park             | Supermarket |
| ■ National Register Historic District | Fire Station       | Playground       |             |
| ■ State/Federal Historic Site         | Childcare Facility | Community Garden |             |



## Oak Grove-Bellemeade Elementary School is the only school in the area.

The original Oak Grove Elementary School was built in 1913 along Ingram Avenue and was later acquired by the City of Richmond through annexation in 1914.

In 2013, the new Oak Grove-Bellemeade Elementary School, a LEED Gold-certified facility with outdoor learning classrooms, opened its doors. The school accommodates 675 students ranging from Pre-K to 5th grade.



Other public schools nearby include:

- Blackwell Elementary School
- Thomas C. Boushall Middle School
- River City Middle School
- Armstrong High School
- George Wythe High School

## Broomfield Christian Methodist Episcopal Church is 1 of 7 churches in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade.

Broomfield CME Church is a prominent historically Black congregation founded in 1926 by Annie Cain and Amelia Harris. In 1989, the congregation moved to its current location on Richmond Highway and changed its name to Broomfield CME Church. The congregation has members from all over Southside Richmond including Blackwell, Bainbridge, and Hillside.

Broomfield CME also helps feed the community through their "Hot Lunch Monday" program in partnership with Richmond Friends of the Homeless.



## Bellemeade Park and Outdoor Learning Center is an essential green space.

Bellemeade Park and Outdoor Learning Center is an 8-acre city-owned space adjacent to Oak Grove-Bellemeade Elementary School and Bellemeade Community Center. Through an award from Virginia Outdoor Foundation's (VOF) "Preservation Trust Fund" the park was granted permanent public access in 2022.

The park features rain gardens, vermiculture bins, a vegetable garden, pollinator habitats, a chicken coop, and more. The park's bicycle shop is run by Groundwork RVA and Rag and Bones Bicycle Cooperative who jointly operate a biking summer camp for girls and gender non-conforming youth.

James River Association and the Blue Sky Fund assist in weekday programming for the park. On Saturdays, Bob Argabright, the park's founder, leads an Outdoor Club for local children and coordinates volunteers who maintain and further develop the outdoor learning campus.





## Childcare

There are six childcare facilities in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade.

Oak Grove Child Care Center has two state-licensed facilities in the area. The center offers various programs and curriculums that support children ranging from 6 weeks to 12 years old.

Summerhill Daycare and Learning Center is located on Webber Avenue and tends to children from birth to 12 years old.

## Playgrounds

The playgrounds in OGHB are Oak Grove, Charlie Sydnor, and Hillside Playgrounds. These three playgrounds account for 75% of the designated public green spaces in the area.

Charlie Sydnor Playground is across from J.H. Blackwell Elementary School and Community Center, separated by Maury Street. The space is athletically-focused with a baseball field, football field, and a basketball court.



Oak Grove Playground is nestled within the intersection of Gordon and 22nd Streets. The playground has a play set, garden space, basketball courts, a sheltered pavilion, open green space, and tennis courts. The City of Richmond recently approved capital improvements to this playground including new benches, improved fencing, and drinking fountains.



In 2021, Hillside Community Playground was built to memorialize the life of 3-year old resident Shamar Hill Jr. Over the past two years, the playground has been renovated and expanded to include athletic fields, volleyball courts, walking trails, and a mural painted by Hillside residents and volunteers. In December 2022, it was announced that another art installation is planned for the space.



## Bellemeade Community Center

Bellemeade Community Center is adjacent to Bellemeade Park and Oak Grove-Bellemeade Elementary School. The center provides meals, programs, and fitness, dance, cooking, and computer classes to residents and students.

Bellemeade Community Center's indoor amenities include a gym, computer lab, kitchen, meeting room, fitness room, swimming pool, and game area. Outdoor amenities include baseball, basketball, and football fields.



## Hillside Community Garden

In 2021, Hillside Community Farm was started by Hillside resident, Asia Goode to improve food access for Hillside residents. Youth-serving nonprofit, Groundwork RVA, employs their Green Team to lead residents and volunteers to enhance this green space and promote urban agriculture in their community.

In 2021, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation granted the project \$25,000.



## Libraries

The Hull Street Branch Public Library opened in 1987 and was renovated in 2011. The library is located in Manchester, 1 mile north of OGHB. In addition to its regular offerings, the library provides employment and resume assistance and GED preparation to adults.

Broad Rock Branch Public Library is the second-closest library to OGHB. This branch is not easily accessible for residents without a car as it is 3 miles west, or a 1-hour walk, of the Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade area.

## King's Supermarket

King's Supermarket is centrally located in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade along Keswick Avenue and 21st Street. The supermarket is one of the only grocery suppliers in this area, and is a significant staple for residents who cannot easily access big box grocers miles away.

Operating in the area for 30 years, the supermarket is a vital neighborhood spot. A fire in February 2023 forced the supermarket to close temporarily. The temporary closure left many residents unable to access groceries.

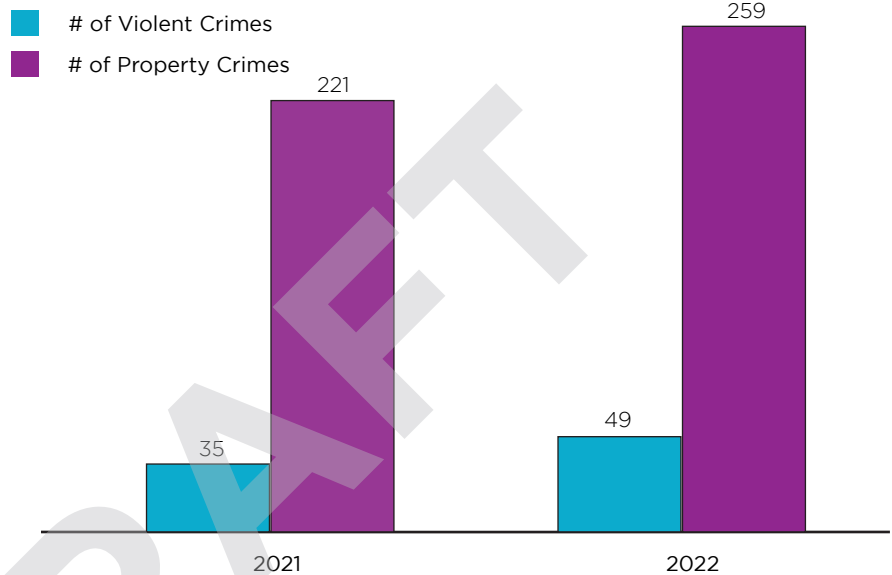
# Public Safety

## Subtitle

### Emergency calls in the area are increasing.

Data from the Richmond Police Department show that both violent and property crimes have increased in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade from 2021 to 2022.

// FIGURE 40. Crime Statistics for Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade  
Source: Richmond Police Department, 2021-2022



### Emergency Facilities in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade:

Fire Station 13 is located along Commerce Road and Albany Avenue, just south of Maury Street. Fire Station 21 is located just below the OGHB study area on Richmond Highway. The latter station will undergo renovations and improvements in the summer of 2023.

Richmond Police Department Second Precinct is the closest police facility and serves residents across many neighborhoods in South Richmond. It is located on E. Belt Boulevard roughly 2.5 miles away from OGHB.





# Existing Planning Documents

## Planning Documents

- Bellemeade Walkable Watershed Plan (2012) - Green Infrastructure Center, Skeo Solutions, City of Richmond
- Strategies to Restore and Revitalize the Upper Goode's Creek Watershed (2013) - Upper Goode's Creek Watershed Coalition
- Community Field Guide for Place-Based Thriving in Richmond's Jefferson Davis Corridor (2017) - Thriving Cities
- Bellemeade Green Street Plan (2019) - 3North
- Report of the Task Force on the Economic Revitalization of South Richmond (2019) - Southside Economic Development Task Force

## VCU Student Projects and Plans

- Increasing Access to the James River Park System: A Community Roadmap with the Blackwell, Oak Grove, and Bellemeade Neighborhoods (2018) - Max Ewart
- Equitable Development on the Richmond Highway Corridor in Richmond, Virginia (2021) - Amelie Rives
- Richmond Highway Plan (2021) - James Smither's Spring 2021 MURP Studio class

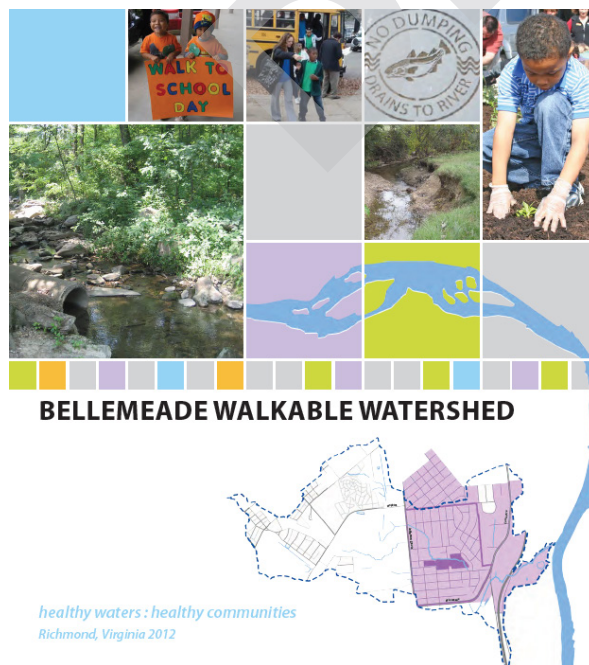
## Additional Information

There are very few planning documents that have been created for the OGHB area. Prior planning processes have focused on the nearby areas of Manchester and Blackwell and often, Southside as a whole. Those that have focused on Oak Grove and/or Bellemeade have been largely environmentally-focused. Similarly, VCU student projects and plans have focused on increasing access to green space and improving transportation infrastructure.

The 2012 Bellemeade Walkable Watershed Plan, shown in Figure 41, was created in part by the City of Richmond. The plan highlights the need for community-driven environmental programs and infrastructural improvements as key to creating a "walkable watershed." The plan identified strategies that could help leverage investment for neighborhood connectivity, environmental quality, green streets, and more.

The 2019 Southside Economic Development Task Force, previously established by City Council in 2017, provided recommendations for revitalization in Southside which included enhancing the transportation network, clean up and beautification programs, and workforce training programs.

Thriving Cities' 2017 report also noted the need for economic revitalization and emphasized the potential for greater access to services, amenities, and work opportunities.



// FIGURE 41. Cover, Bellemeade Walkable Watershed

Source: Green Infrastructure Center, 2012



# Future Development

## Transportation

### Fall Line Trail

This 43-mile shared-use trail will extend from Ashland to Petersburg. One segment in Richmond will run along Commerce Road, making it easier for cyclists and pedestrians to get around.

### GRTC Bus Stop Accessibility Improvements

GRTC is adding ADA-compliant landing pad improvements at 5 bus stops within OGHB.

### North-South Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Discussions are ongoing regarding the future of a GRTC North-South BRT line similar to the Pulse, that would extend rapid transit coverage down Richmond Highway and beyond.

### Speed Tables

The City will install speed tables on Maury Street and Halifax, Ingram, Joplin, Fairfax, Keswick, and Royall Avenues. These tables will complement recent traffic calming measures installed around Oak Grove-Bellemeade Elementary School.

### Harwood and Hopkins Realignment

VDOT will make intersection improvements and better realign Harwood Street and N Hopkins Road.

### Richmond Highway from Maury Street to Hull Street

The City will make multi-modal safety and operations improvements along the 0.4-mile stretch of Richmond Highway between Maury Street and Hull Street.

### Commerce Road from Bellemeade Road to Bells Road

The City's Commerce Road Improvement Project will include new bridges, medians, left-turn lanes, streetlights, and sidewalks.

### Maury Street Streetscape from Commerce Road to Roundabout

The City will make operational and safety improvements to Maury Street along this 0.25 mile corridor. These improvements will complement the I-95 Roundabout Interchange Project gateway feature to Commerce Road which will ultimately calm traffic and accommodate all users.

## Housing



### Old Oak Grove School

The City agreed to sell the former school site to Oak Grove Partners, LLC conditioned on the rezoning of the property and development of 220 multifamily, rental units and 15 for-sale townhomes with income restrictions.



### Afton Avenue Apartments

Genesis Properties has received approval for the construction of 150 affordable apartments along Columbia Street and Afton Avenue.



### The Heights at Brady Square

This multi-phase project will bring OGHB 264 affordable housing units and 2 onsite community buildings.



## Other



### Fire Station 21

Renovations will begin on this station in summer 2023.



### Oak Grove Playground Upgrades

Capital funds have been allocated for improvements including new fencing and benches.

// FIGURE 42. Future Development in Oak Grove/Hillside/Bellemeade

Source: City of Richmond

