



DEPARTMENT OF
**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW**

JACKSON WARD



COMMUNITY PLAN

Planning Commission | December 2, 2025

LaJuan Neal, Planner
City of Richmond, PDR

History of Jackson Ward



History of Jackson Ward



History of Jackson Ward



Photos: Times-Dispatch



HUD's Choice Neighborhood Program

Transform distressed neighborhoods into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods

Improve the lives of residents of HUD housing

Catalyze investments in the surrounding neighborhoods



HOUSING



PEOPLE



NEIGHBORHOOD

Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant

Grantee: RRHA

Co-Grantee: City of Richmond

Funding Amount: \$450,000

Grant Term: November 2021-2023



Lead Grantee & Housing Lead



Co-Grantee & Neighborhood Lead



RICHMOND CITY
HEALTH DISTRICT

People Lead



Engagement Lead



Planning Coordinator

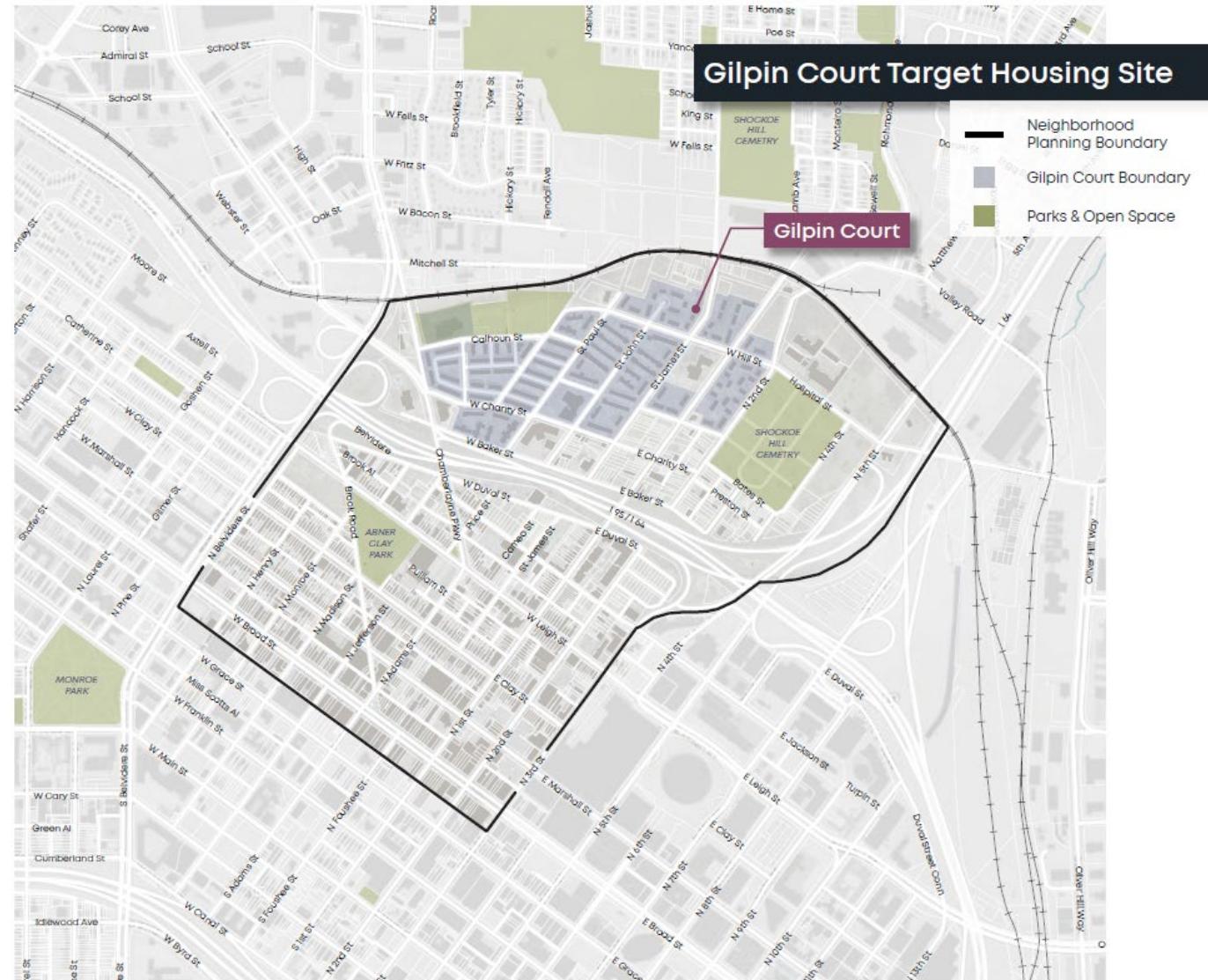


HUD

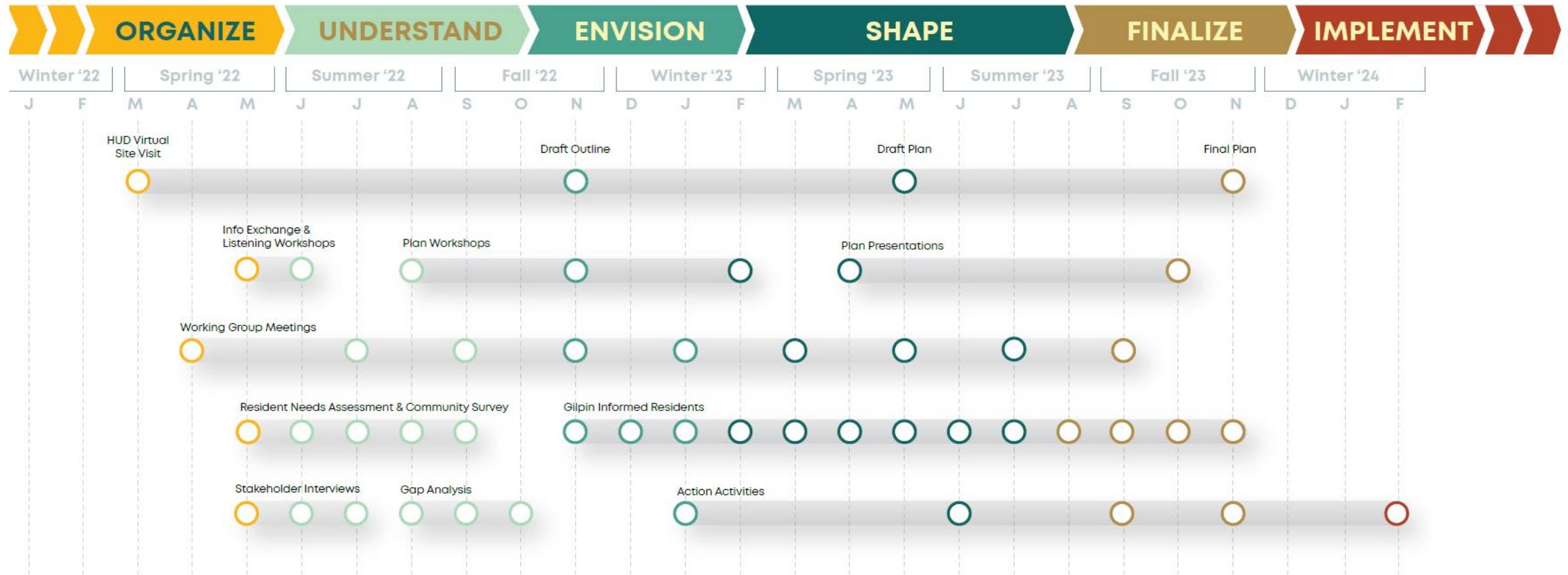
Study Area

The Jackson Ward Community Plan brings together Gilpin Court residents, planning experts, elected officials, and community members together to reach an informed, shared vision for the future of Jackson Ward.

JACKSON WARD COMMUNITY PLAN



Planning Process (2022-2023)





“Diverse socioeconomic groups live together peacefully. I know my neighbors and believe this day-to-day interaction of different types of people is a unique quality of Jackson Ward.”

Jackson Ward Resident

Gilpin Resident Meeting/Workshop

THE STORY OF JACKSON WARD

- The Skipwith Cottage is Built Abraham Peyton Skipwith, the first known free Black person, purchases parcels of land on the northern edge of the City of Richmond in what would become Jackson Ward; he built a gambrel-roofed cottage which is one of the city's oldest documented dwellings.

soft

**Note: this
is a DRAFT
timeline. Let us
know what's
missing or
add your own**

- Ebenezer Baptist Church
Established as the first African
Baptist Church

- Jackson Ward Established

Jackson Ward was created as an official, political subdivision in the City (ward); becomes 'city within a city' referred to as the 'Black Wall Street' & the 'Harlem of the South'

Black-Owned Bank
Johnson Ward Established
People's Bank of the Grand
Cayman Islands
Mentals of the United Order of
Reformers established by the
Rev. Hofreiter in W.M. Ervin's
former home.

1914
1903

11

10

10

A small metal safety pin is pinned to the fabric of a blue denim jacket, located on the left side of the chest area.

“It is going to be a different way of living for current Gilpin residents. They will be more integrated into the community. And you do that with mixed-income and density in a way that is attractive. You start with the urban design and layout, and areas where the concepts of density are appropriate.”

Community Stakeholder

Community Meeting/Workshop

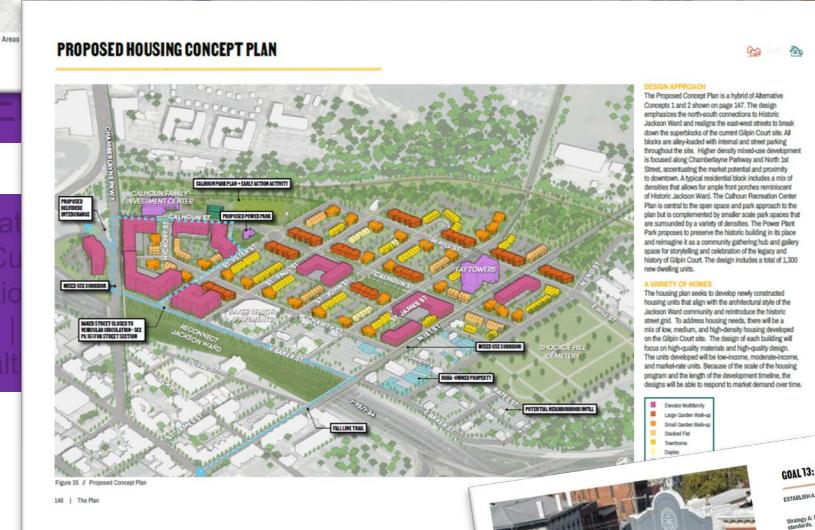
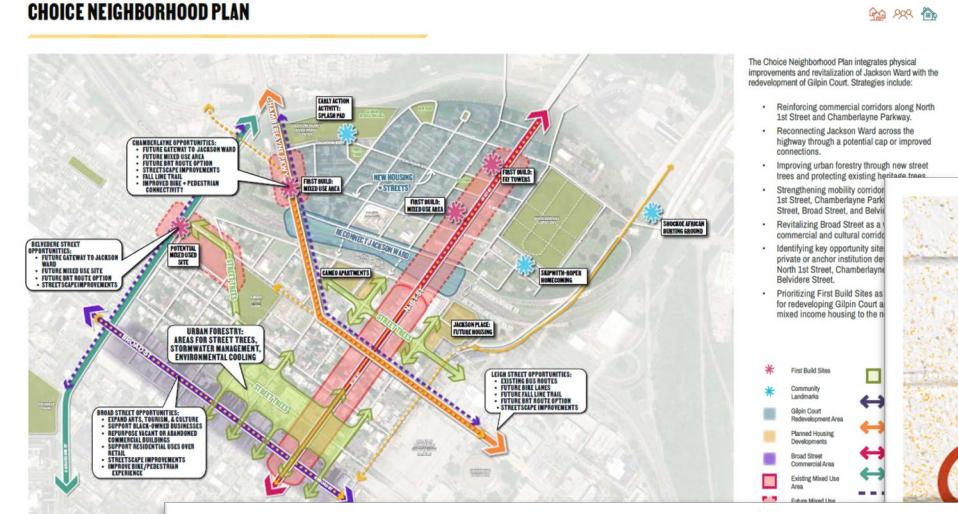
Final Plan

“Jackson Ward is an interconnected neighborhood that celebrates Black history, ownership, and a vibrant community. We want to support a housing, healthy spaces, and its arts, education, and entrepreneurial

1 VISION 5 THEMES

Early Learning & Kindergarten Readiness | K-12 Success | Graduate Readiness | Employment | Economic Mobility | Tourism, Arts, & Culture | Homeownership | Reinvestment | Preventative Health | Displacement Prevention | and Affordable Preschool | Public Ownership | Urban Design | Healthy | Zero | Non-Car Network | Streets, Bridges, and Connections | Health

21 GOALS



Final Plan

- Establish a Small Business Hub
- Institute a Jackson Ward Civic Network
- Rezone Jackson Ward
- Reconnect Jackson Ward
- Implement the Fall Line Trail
- Develop a Build-First Strategy

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

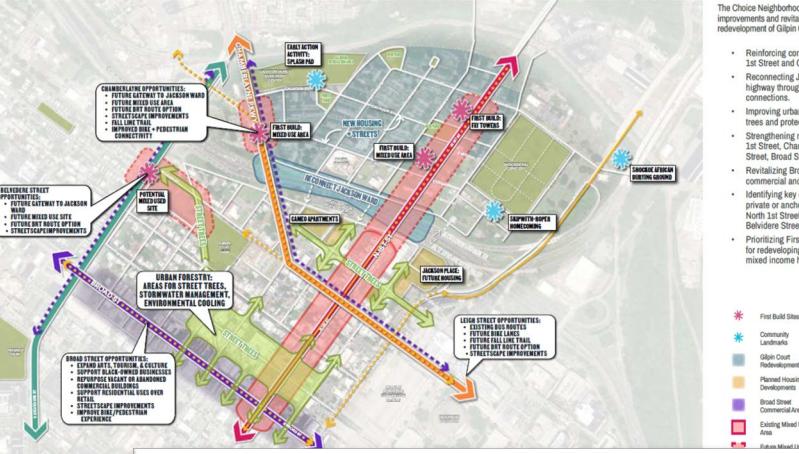


Figure 27 // Strategies & Opportunity Areas
100 | The Plan

The Choice Neighborhood Plan integrates physical improvements and revitalization of Jackson Ward with the redevelopment of Gilpin Court. Strategies include:

- Reinforcing commercial corridors along North 1st Street and Chamberlayne Parkway
- Reconnecting Jackson Ward across the highway through a potential cap or improved connection
- Improving urban forestry through new street trees and protecting existing heritage trees
- Strengthening mobility corridor 1st Street, Chamberlayne Parkway, Broad Street, and Belvoir Street
- Revitalizing Broad Street as a commercial and cultural corridor
- Identifying key opportunity sites for future development along North 1st Street, Chamberlayne, Belvoir Street, and Gilpin Court
- Prioritizing First Build Sites as for redeveloping Gilpin Court as mixed income housing to the north

* First Build Sites
* Community Land Trusts
Gilpin Court Redevelopment Area
Planning Developers
Broad Street
Existing Mixed Use Area
Future Mixed Use Area



JACKSON WARD COMMUNITY PLAN

PROPOSED HOUSING CONCEPT PLAN



Figure 35 // Proposed Concept Plan
100 | The Plan

DESIGN APPROACH

The proposed design for the Gilpin Court Concept 1 and 2 shown on page 347 of the design emphasizes the northward connection to Historic Jackson Ward. The design includes a new park to break down the superblocks of the current Gilpin Court site. All blocks are alleys-loaded with internal and street parking. The design also includes a new park and a new development focused along Chamberlayne Parkway and North 1st Street, accentuating the market potential and proximity to the surrounding urban areas. The design is a mix of densities that allows for ample front porches reminiscent of Historic Jackson Ward. The Calhoun Recreation Center will be preserved and integrated into the design as the plan but is complemented by smaller scale park spaces that are surrounded by varied densities. The Power Plant Park will be preserved and integrated into the design and reimagined as a community gathering hub and gallery space for arts, culture, and the celebration of the legacy and history of Gilpin Court. The design includes a total of 1,300 new dwelling units.

A VARIETY OF HOMES

The design will develop newly constructed housing units that align with the architectural style of the Jackson Ward community and reintroduce the historic character of the area. The design will include a mix of low, medium, and high-density housing developed on the Gilpin Court site. The design of each building will focus on the unique character of the building design. The units developed will be low-income, moderate-income, and market-rate units. Because of the scale of the housing program and the timeline of the development timeline, the design will be responsive to market demand over time.

HOUSING TYPES

Elevated Walkways
Large Garden Walkways
Small Garden Walkways
Terraces
Terraces
Decks

GOAL 13: URBAN DESIGN

Establish a beautiful and unique neighborhood.

STRATEGY 13: Develop streetcape design standards.

Streetcape is a term used to describe the physical appearance of a street, including sidewalks, curbs, and other elements that are used to create a sense of safety and order. The design of streetcapes can have a significant impact on the safety and livability of a neighborhood. By developing clear guidelines for the design of streetcapes, we can ensure that they are safe, accessible, and aesthetically pleasing. The design of streetcapes should be consistent with the architectural style of the neighborhood and should reflect the unique character of the area. The design should also take into account the needs of all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. The design should be well-maintained and should be designed to be durable and long-lasting. The design should be consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood and should be developed in a way that is consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood.

THE FRAME

The frame is a term used to describe the elements that create a boundary or frame a space, such as buildings, trees, and other elements. The design of the frame should be consistent with the architectural style of the neighborhood and should reflect the unique character of the area. The design should be well-maintained and should be designed to be durable and long-lasting. The design should be consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood and should be developed in a way that is consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood.

LANDSCAPE

Landscaping is an important element of urban design, as it can help to create a sense of safety and order. The design of landscaping should be consistent with the architectural style of the neighborhood and should reflect the unique character of the area. The design should be well-maintained and should be designed to be durable and long-lasting. The design should be consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood and should be developed in a way that is consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood.

MARKERS

Markers are elements that are used to identify specific locations or landmarks within a neighborhood. The design of markers should be consistent with the architectural style of the neighborhood and should reflect the unique character of the area. The design should be well-maintained and should be designed to be durable and long-lasting. The design should be consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood and should be developed in a way that is consistent with the overall vision for the neighborhood.




RICHMOND, VA
NOVEMBER 2023

Establish a Small Business Hub | Institute a Jackson Ward Civic Network | Rezone Jackson Ward | Implement the Fall Line Trail | Develop a Build-First Strategy

6 BIG MOVES

Updates and Recent Efforts

HUD APPROVAL

- Submitted to HUD in November 2023
- Received HUD's comments in February 2024
- Resubmitted with revisions to HUD in June 2024
- Final Plan approved by HUD in August 2024

Updates and Recent Efforts

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY

- Calhoun Park Splash Pad, 2023-2026
- Calhoun Center Disposition, 2024
- Calhoun Center Renovations, 2024-2026

Updates and Recent Efforts

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY

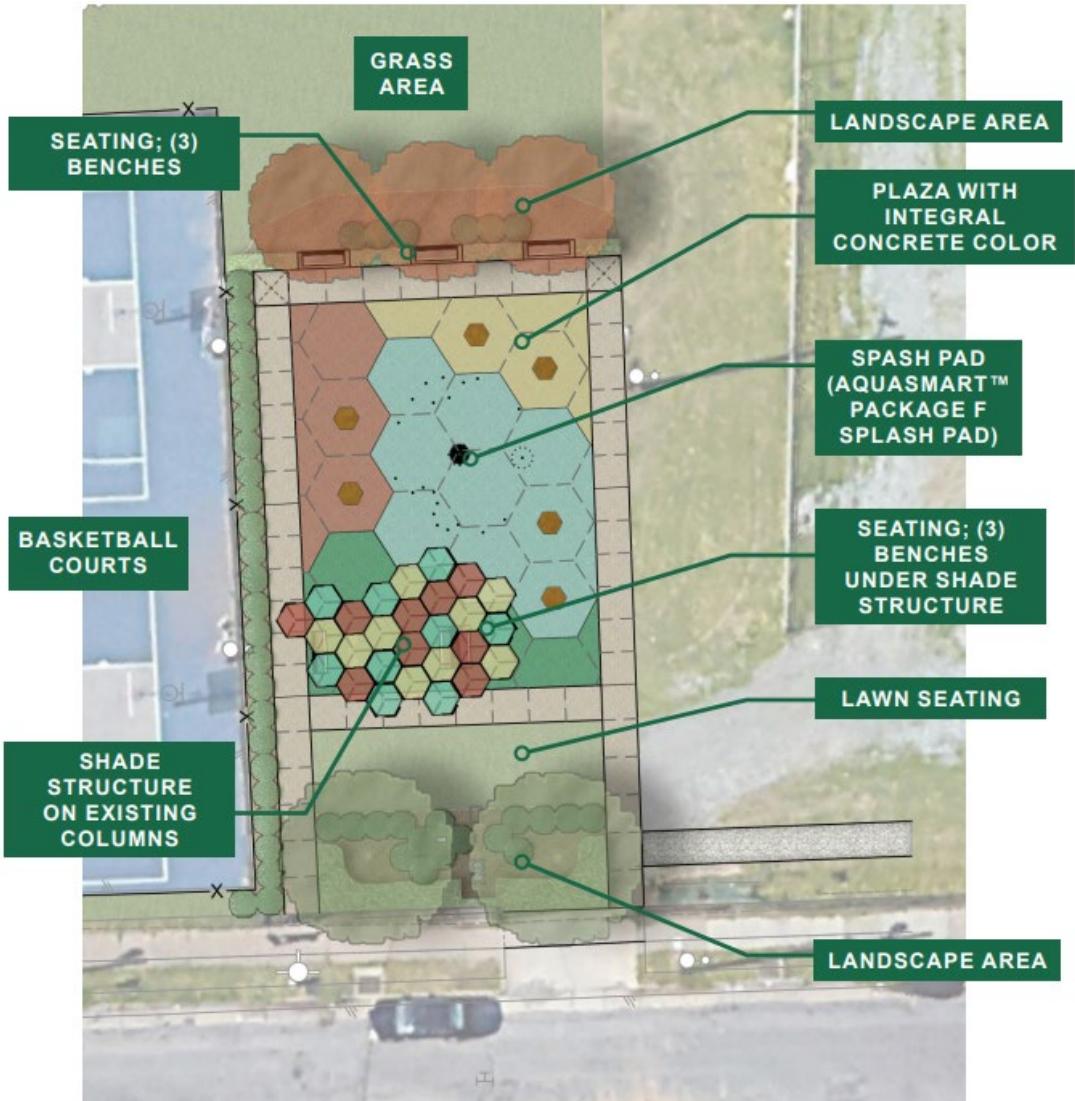
- Calhoun Park Splash Pad, 2023-2026
- Calhoun Center Disposition, 2024
- Calhoun Center Renovations, 2024-2026



Image: AQUASMART™ Package F conceptual image. Note, the prefabricated configurated system will be implemented into the rectangular plaza design as shown in the Splash Pad and Plaza enlargement plan.

Calhoun Splash Pad

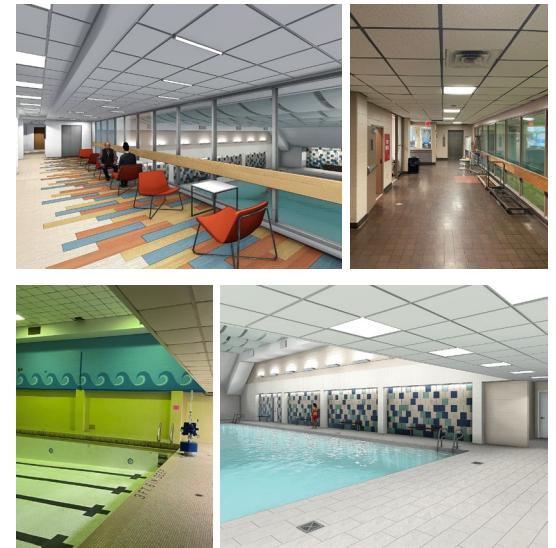
- Currently under construction
- Expected completion – May 31, 2026



Updates and Recent Efforts

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Work in progress

Updates and Recent Efforts

ADDITIONAL PLANNING WORK/ ONGOING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- 2nd Street Summit planning effort, 2024-2025
- USI Survey of Gilpin residents, 2024-2025
- Preliminary proposal for the “Build First” site, 2025
- Continued engagement, 2025
- JWCP Symposium, October 2025

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Walking Tour



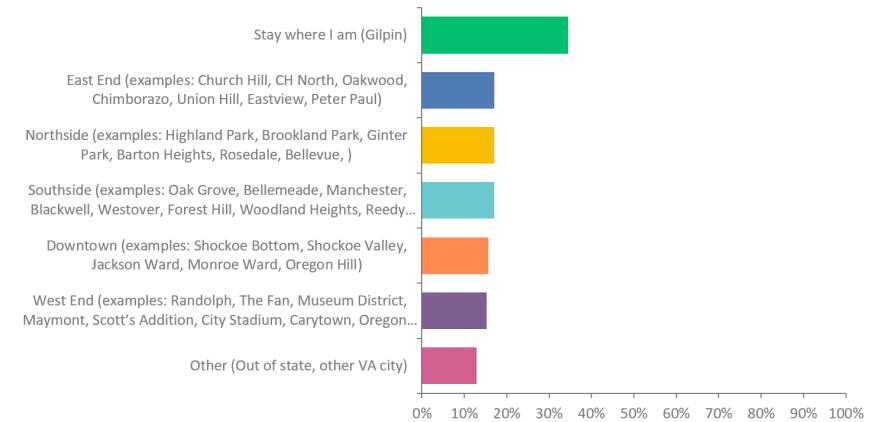
Drawing Session



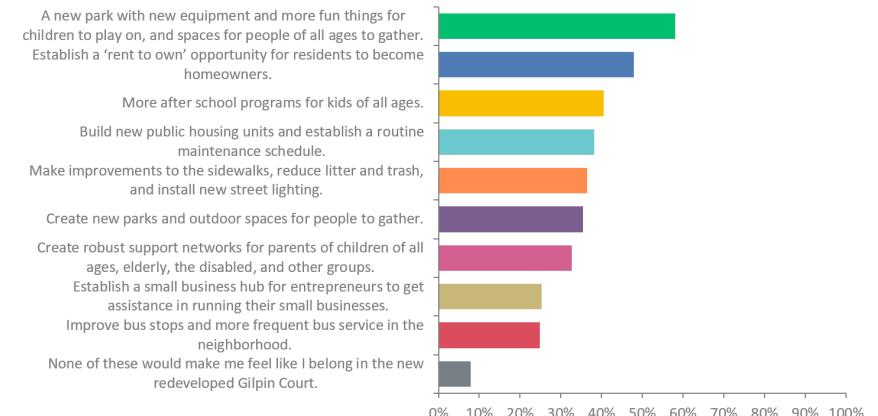
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Q6: Which of the following things would make you feel like you still belong in the neighborhood?



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Jackson Ward Community Plan Symposium

October 2025

An expo-style event to celebrate the work that went into crafting the Plan, learn and exchange information about neighborhood projects and initiatives, socialize and connect with neighbors, and build excitement for the Plan's adoption process.

City of Richmond

RRHA

RHHD

City Council

Historic Jackson Ward Association

Gilpin Informed Residents

The Ealey Project

M Companies

HRI Communities

Ronald McDonald House

VCU

U of R



Priority Growth Node

Downtown – Jackson Ward

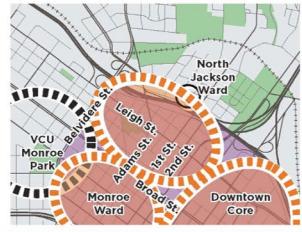
Primary Next Step

Gilpin Court Transformation: Develop a plan with existing community input to include Gilpin Court and vacant land in North Jackson Ward to transform the neighborhood into a mixed-use, mixed-income, walkable, and transit-adjacent community that provides both housing and jobs for residents (Goal 1, Goal 14).

Priority Growth Node **Downtown — Jackson Ward**

Vision

Jackson Ward has retained historic buildings and plays a leading role in supporting Black cultural and economic vitality. Jackson Ward continues to be a residential neighborhood with non-residential uses scattered throughout at corners and along major roads—such as 1st Street, 2nd Street, and Marshall Street. New infill developments incorporate high-quality architecture and complement the character of historic buildings. Jackson Ward is better connected to the rest of Downtown with the conversion of one-way streets to two-way, greenways, transit, a new park, and bridges connecting Jackson Ward to North Jackson Ward over the highway. Decking over the highway will reunite the two sides of Jackson Ward that were divided in the 1950s by the construction of the highway.



Jackson Ward – Regional/National Node
This Node centers on the Historic Jackson Ward neighborhood but also extends north slightly to connect to North Jackson Ward.

Growth Potential

In 2019, there were approximately 29 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land Jackson Ward, representing 33% of the Jackson Ward's total land area.

Primary Next Steps

- **Highway Deck Study:** Commence a planning study to analyze the feasibility of building a park, roads, and buildings over I-95 and I-64, reconnecting Jackson Ward and North Jackson Ward (Goal 8, Goal 9, Goal 17).
- **Business Growth:** Increase the number and support the growth of minority-owned businesses (Goal 11).
- **Historic and Cultural Attractions:** Maintain, grow, and market historic attractions such as the Black History Museum and Maggie L. Walker's
- **Gilpin Court Transformation:** Develop a plan with existing community input to include Gilpin Court and vacant land in North Jackson Ward to transform the neighborhood into a mixed-use, mixed-income, walkable, and transit-adjacent community that provides both housing and jobs for residents (Goal 1, Goal 14).

Priority Neighborhood

Gilpin Court

Primary Next Step

Jackson Ward Community Plan: Adopt the plan as an element of the City's master plan.

Priority Neighborhood Gilpin Court

Background

Gilpin Court development phase began in the 1940s as a construction project which displaced many African Americans and immigrants. It was named after a local landowner and early Black resident of Richmond.

Gilpin is located in the epicenter of the Jackson Ward community, was known as a Black neighborhood, a place for economic opportunity, and a place for Black families to live.

In 1957, the city of Petersburg became part of the Jackson Ward, leaving the rest of the neighborhood discriminatory and disinvested. The neighborhood's poverty, the cultural landmarks, and the Black History Museum.

Today

Today, Gilpin is a housing development for low-income residents. The neighborhood is the city at 80% of the city rate, an annual investment of \$1.5 million.

Gilpin is surrounded by the Calhoun Community Center and African American landmarks such as the Black History Museum, Hippie Plaza, and Sixth Mt Zion Baptist Church.



Gilpin Priority Neighborhood

In 2022, the City secured a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to study the feasibility of new infrastructure reconnecting Gilpin with the Jackson Ward neighborhood south of Interstate 95 and 64. In 2021 RRHA and the City won a HUD Choice Neighborhood Planning grant to plan for the redevelopment of Gilpin Court. RRHA and the City are leading a community-led planning process in collaboration with the Richmond Health District. The final plan will be finished at the end of 2023.

Primary Next Steps

- Jackson Ward Community Plan: Adopt the plan as an element of the City's master plan.
- Development Partner: Select a master developer via RRHA's competitive bid process to redevelop Gilpin Court.
- Calhoun Center: Renovate the Calhoun Center into a 21st century facility with a functioning pool.
- Calhoun Recreational Space: Improve the green space east of the Calhoun to add a splash pad, playground equipment, exercise equipment, a

walking path, public art, and improvements to the community garden.

- Fay Towers: RRHA will self develop Fay Towers to provide housing options for residents of Gilpin Court.
- Section 18: RRHA will submit a Section 18 application to HUD's Special Applications Center (SAC) to begin the redevelopment process of Gilpin Court.
- Tenant Bill of Rights: RRHA will meet with residents and tenant council to establish a Tenant Bill of Rights to ensure residents have right to return and access to housing options

60 | RRHA

RICHMOND
300 AMENDED - JULY 2023

VISION AND CORE CONCEPTS | 61

Next Steps

- Minor edits to the 2024 Plan
- Continued community engagement
- Reconvening the Steering Committee
- Plan adoption process into Richmond 300

Questions?

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<https://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/jackson-ward>