

CUP Report

Completion of the Highland Grove community with a robust home ownership component, supporting larger scale reinvestment in the North Side neighborhoods.

The proposed attainable home ownership community at Highland Grove would be built on the former National Guard armory site adjacent to the redevelopment Dove Court public housing. The completion of this community is a vital component of Richmond's northside transformation. The proposed development would provide 135 units of home ownership adjacent to the 128 units of affordable rental housing that has already been developed at Highland Grove. RRHA proposes this second phase development to bolster and build on other key investments in the North Side neighborhoods, being shepherded by the City of Richmond, Richmond Public Schools, Better Housing Coalition, and private development partnerships. These investments include the 6-points roundabout, the Richmond Henrico Turnpike street and Ecological Study multi-use path, renovations at Overby-Sheppard Elementary School, renovation of the CPDC school building, and the Matthew Heights at Chestnut Hill development.

The plan for a second phase of home ownership development at Highland Grove was developed through an inclusive community-based process. This plan provides for attainable homeownership within the community and augments the neighboring revitalization efforts in Highland Park and Highland Terrace. Together with the suite of public and private investments, Highland Grove will continue to serve as a catalyst for this part of the City.

The former National Guard armory site that would be used for the Highland Grove development is approximately 19.88 acres and has already been cleared. No additional demolition is necessary. RRHA and Richmond Public Schools are working in partnership to allocate a portion of the school site for neighborhood development. The proposed plan envisions 135 new homes, along with new, on-site open spaces and opportunities for public art. The program is based on market study findings about price points, size of marketable houses, and the intent to deliver a high-quality neighborhood.

The proposed plan offers opportunities for public art features in prominent locations in the neighborhood, which could honor alumni of Overby-Sheppard, or other neighborhood figures. A large natural park space will encompass the wooded wetland areas at the northwest of the site, adjacent to Richmond Henrico Turnpike and the new multi-use pathway. New houses will front onto this park, establishing a safe, passive open space for walking, cycling, and small gatherings. By establishing and enhancing walkability within the community and creating publicly-accessible amenities with eyes on them, this community will let people enjoy good health, safety and high quality of life. The existing play areas and recreational fields at Overby-Sheppard will be replaced and augmented, to be shared with the community. Wider multi-use pathways would be extended through Highland Grove along Dove Street, Juniper Street, and along the new greenway between the existing rental neighborhood at Highland Grove and the new home ownership portion of the neighborhood. Smaller neighborhood greens and best

management practice features such as rain gardens and bio swales are located throughout the neighborhood.

The new homes have individual front and rear yards with private parking pads or options for carports or garages, all accessed from rear lanes. This allows for pedestrian-friendly streets with street trees and sidewalks. Houses have front porches, stoops, and gardens, keeping with the rich traditions of Richmond's best neighborhoods. All houses and townhouses have both a front and rear door, ensuring residents can access rear yards and parking. All the housing in this phase will be home ownership. The building types range from one- to two-story single family detached homes, duplexes, and short rows of town homes. This mix of housing types will provide a variety of appropriate unit choices for different demographics, including single adults, couples, small families, and seniors.

A new network of streets reconnects the existing street network. Juniper Street is extended west to connect to the Richmond Henrico Turnpike. Together with Dove Street, these form the primary east-west connections. Althea Street is extended past the front of Overby-Sheppard school to connect to Harold Avenue, better knitting the Highland Grove/South Highland Park neighborhoods to the Green Park neighborhood. The enhanced street network will distribute traffic to multiple entry and exit points to relieve congestion. Public safety requirements such as access for fire rescue and other emergency vehicles have been accommodated with proposed street widths, turning radii and geometries to provide circulation within the plan.

The architectural design process began with an exploration of Richmond's great North Side residential neighborhoods, Barton Heights, Belleview, Ginter Park, Providence Park, and Edgewood. Further inspiration was drawn from Church Hill, Church Hill North, Glenwood Park, Shockoe Bottom, Jackson Ward, Oregon Hill, and the Fan District. Houses in the North Side neighborhoods are larger in scale and tend to be primarily Craftsman and simplified Colonial Revival or Victorian. The representative architectural designs for Highland Grove represent the styles found in the North Side neighborhoods. Combined with variety in type, massing, materials (brick and siding) and color, the neighborhood will have an authentic feeling, with each house being unique. The houses and townhouses will incorporate these different styles with architectural elements like covered stoops, front porches, bay windows, decorative columns, door and window trim, and cornices. Many will use the low sloping roof characteristics of the canvassed neighborhoods. The quality of the new houses will fit into the previously completed phase and the larger neighborhood.

The new home ownership component at Highland Grove will continue the pattern of investment in and transformation of the North Side neighborhoods. The proposed design creates walkable streets, humane residential frontages, and world class connections to trail and open space. This comprehensive solution creates a unified vision for the completion of Highland Grove and provides access for residents to jobs and quality of life amenities through the city.