

JACKSON WARD



Neighborhoods in Bloom Retrospective

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

Jackson Ward is a neighborhood with a rich and significant history located immediately west of downtown Richmond. Before the Civil War, the area was home to many of the City of Richmond's German, Italian and Jewish immigrants.

The neighborhood attracted increasing numbers of black residents during Reconstruction, and in 1871, Jackson Ward got its name. In the early 20th century, the neighborhood became predominantly African American. From 1900 to the 1950s, Jackson Ward

served as the political, social, economic, and cultural center for Richmond's African American community. Financial institutions, retailers, theaters and many other establishments were owned and operated by the vibrant community. The neighborhood's nationally recognized importance to African American business, culture and entrepreneurship earned it the nicknames "Black Wall Street" and "Harlem of the South."

By the mid-20th century, development and expansion changed Jackson Ward's appearance and geography.

Map 1: Neighborhoods in Bloom Impact and Target Areas – Jackson Ward



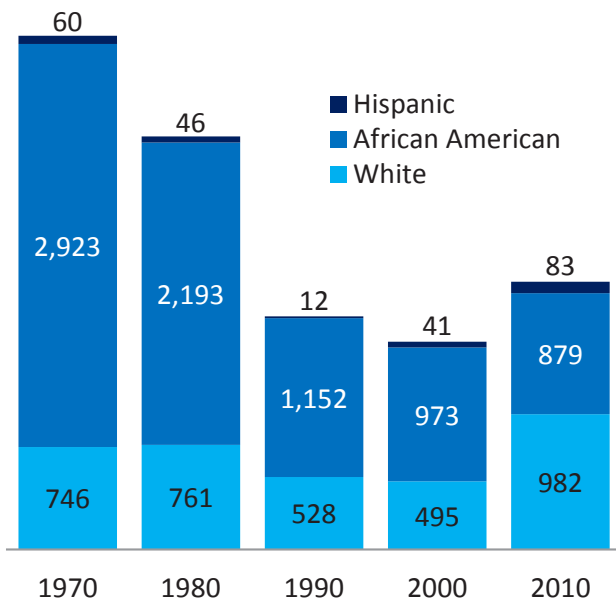
NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

The development of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike (today Interstate 95) in the late 1950s shrank Jackson Ward’s footprint to the north and the construction of the Richmond Coliseum and the Greater Richmond Convention Center (1970 and 2002, respectively) reshaped the neighborhood’s eastern edge.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, this disruption of the Jackson Ward community led to neighborhood blight. Recognition by the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 as a Landmark District helped spur revitalization in Jackson Ward. In the 21st century, federal government historic tax credits prompted neighborhood restoration, and development around Jackson Ward helped spur economic and cultural activity in the neighborhood.¹

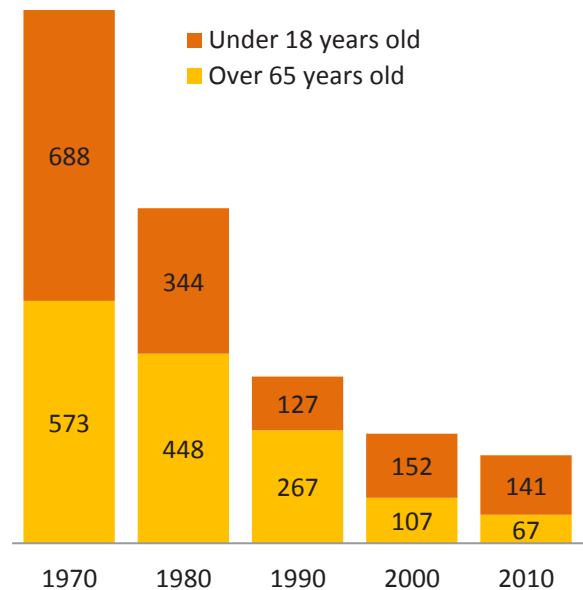
The census tract containing the Jackson Ward target area experienced a population decline of approximately 2,100 individuals from 1970 to 2000, with a population rebound of approximately 500 individuals as of 2010. The area’s African American population has decreased decennially since 1970 (see Figure 1). While the area’s population was 79.5 percent African American in 1970, that percentage decreased to 42.8 percent as of 2010. The census tract surrounding Jackson Ward experienced decreases in the numbers of residents under 18 years old and over 65 years old from 1970 to 2010. Residents under 18 years old decreased from 18.7 percent in 1970 to 6.9 percent in 2010 and residents over 65 years old decreased from 15.6 percent in 1970 to 3.3 percent in 2010.

Figure 1: Racial Composition in Jackson Ward’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Note: Sample only includes individuals who self-identify as one race.
Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Figure 2: Age Composition in Jackson Ward’s Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

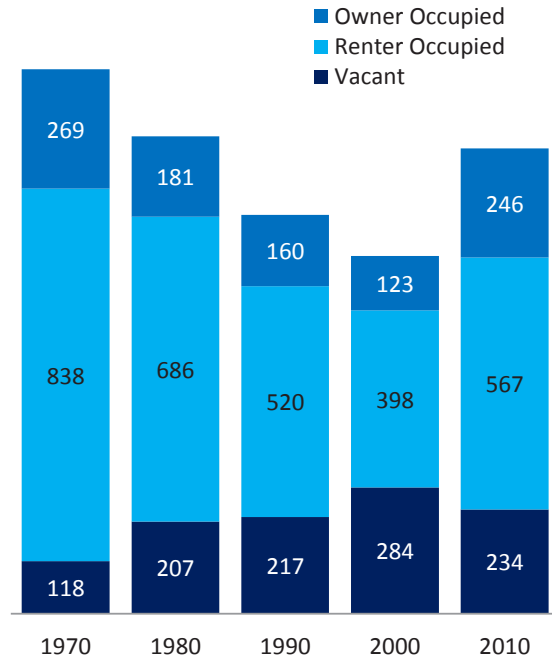
Note: When measuring the investment and impact of NiB in the early 2000s, the City and external researchers defined the Jackson Ward measurement area as the census tract that contained the target area. This profile also uses that definition, and the measurement area includes the following 2010 census tract: 51760030200.



The census tract containing Jackson Ward has consistently had more renter-occupied housing units than owner-occupied housing units (see Figure 3). As of 2010, the tract had its highest percentage of owner-occupied units since 1970 at 23.5 percent. Also as of 2010, 54.2 percent of the tract's housing units were occupied by renters. This is down from a maximum percentage of renter-occupied units at 68.4 percent in 1970.

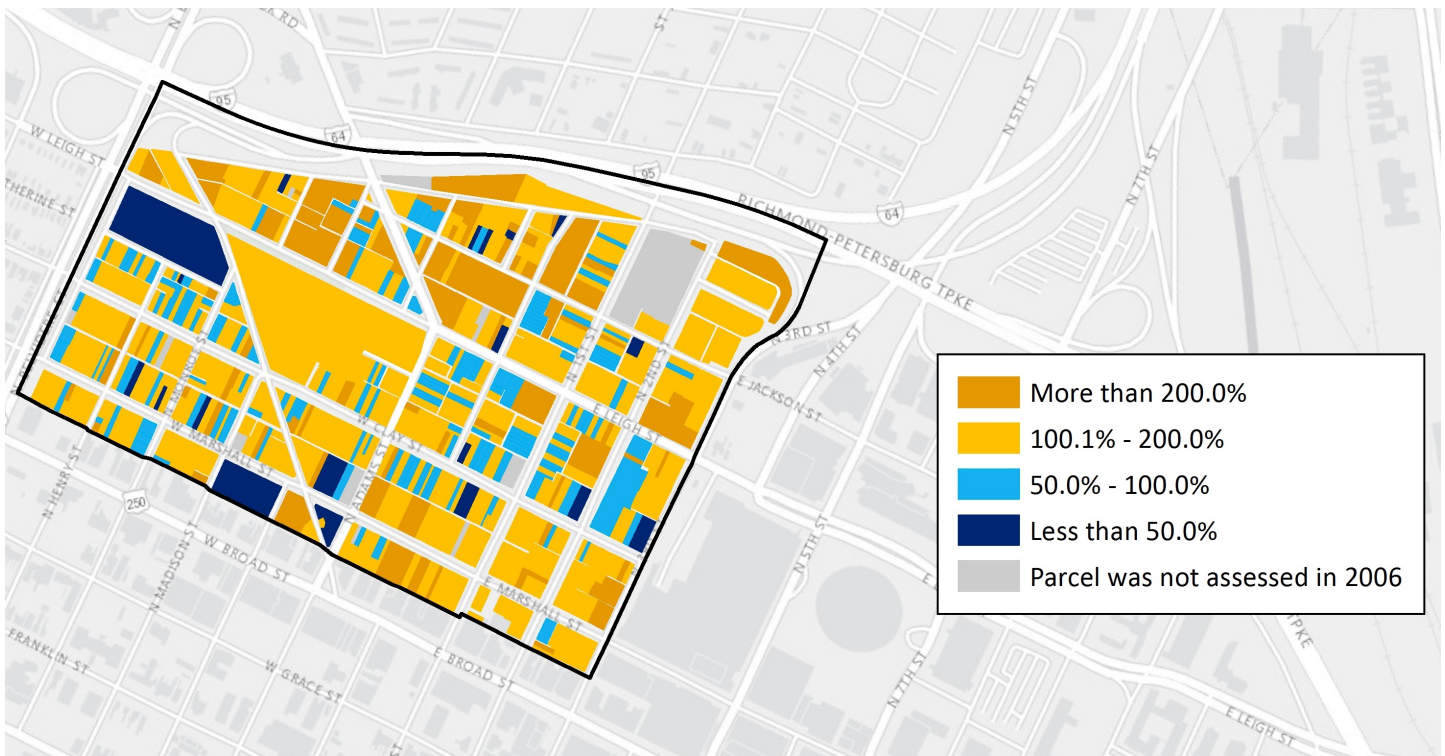
Of the 777 Jackson Ward residential land parcels that were assessed both in FY2006 — immediately following the official end of the NiB program — and in FY2016, 584 (75.2 percent) experienced an increase in nominal assessment value (see Map 2). Of these, 113 parcels (14.5 percent) more than doubled their 2006 assessed value by 2016. One parcel (0.1 percent) experienced no change in nominal assessment value over the 10 year time period and 192 parcels (24.7 percent) had a lower nominal dollar value in FY2016 than in FY2006.

Figure 3: Housing Occupancy in Jackson Ward's Surrounding Census Tract, 1970-2010



Source: GeoLytics, Neighborhood Change Database (1970-2010).

Map 2: 2016 Assessment Value as a Percent of 2006 Assessment Value in Jackson Ward



Source: City of Richmond Assessment Data, FY2006-FY2016.

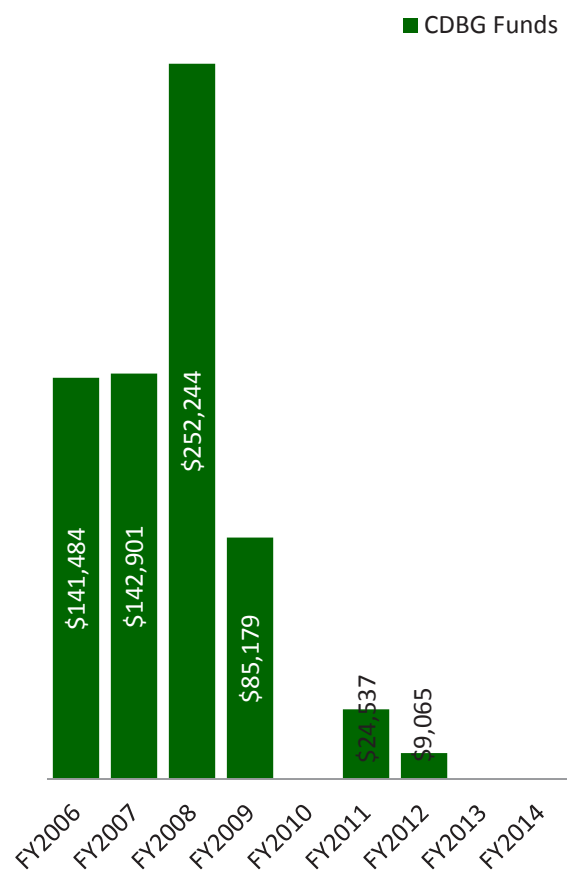


INVESTMENT AFTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM

Public Investment

After NiB, the City invested Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding in Jackson Ward, but did not invest HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding in the neighborhood. Investment in Jackson Ward peaked in FY2008 at \$252,244, but has decreased in recent years. The neighborhood did not receive local fiscal resources in FY2010, 2013 or 2014 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Local Government Investment in Jackson Ward (FY2006-FY2014)



Source: City of Richmond CAPER Reports, FY2006-FY2014.

Nonprofit Investment

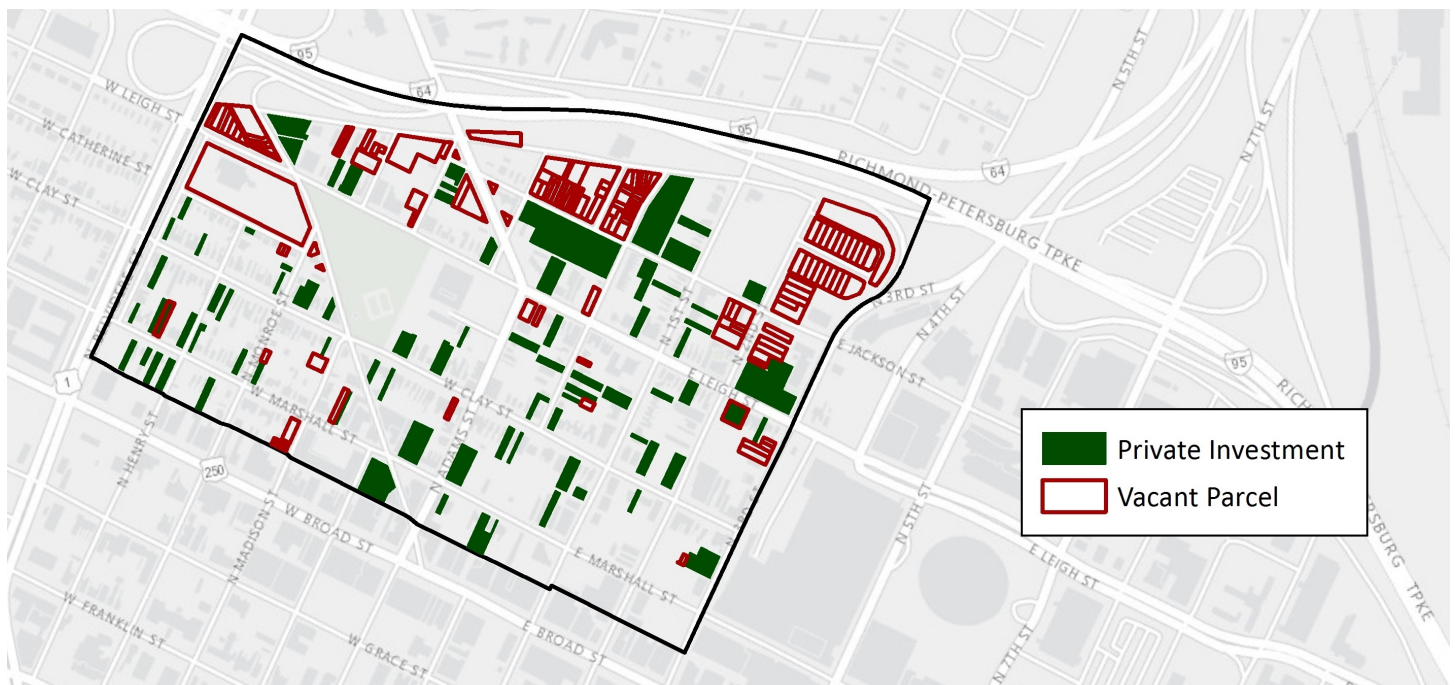
The nonprofit organizations operating in Jackson Ward during NiB included the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), project:HOMES (formerly ElderHomes), Housing Opportunities Made Equal (H.O.M.E.) and the Historic Jackson Ward Association. These organizations invested in Jackson Ward through the construction of new housing units, the rehabilitation of existing units and the provision of housing counseling services. After the culmination of NiB, sales and building permit data from the City indicate that nonprofit development organizations did not make additional place-based investments in the neighborhood. However, 143 parcels in the neighborhood received private investment through resale and renovations, and H.O.M.E. provided \$3,321 in down payment assistance to one Jackson Ward homeowner.

As of 2016, 14.7 percent of the parcels in the Jackson Ward NiB target area were vacant, which is 2.4 percentage points higher than the overall vacancy rate in the City (see Map 3).² The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 54.3 percent of residents in the census tract containing the Jackson Ward target area are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.³ This figure is 8.4 percentage points above the 45.9 percent of housing cost-burdened residents in the City as a whole.

According to the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates, the census tract that contains the Jackson Ward target area has a median family income of \$45,197 and a poverty rate of 16.6 percent. By comparison, the City has a median family income of \$50,307 and a poverty rate of 19.3 percent.



Map 3: Nonprofit Investment and Vacant Parcels in Jackson Ward (FY2006-FY2015)



Note: This map quantifies investment based on property sales and renovations, and thus may underestimate reinvestment.
 Source: City of Richmond Property Sale Data, Building Permit Data and Land Use Data, FY2006-FY2015.

CONTINUING TO BLOOM: JACKSON WARD TODAY

Commercial development on Broad Street and around Virginia Commonwealth University’s campus has encouraged restaurants, breweries, and bakeries to open in Jackson Ward. Additionally, a biotechnology research park has expanded into the neighborhood.⁴ In 2011, the Hippodrome Theater was reopened as a live performance venue after the historic building – which once hosted the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington – had fallen into disrepair.⁵ The revival of culturally significant buildings like the Hippodrome serves as both an economic opportunity for the neighborhood and a celebration of its history.

In early 2016, the City approved a \$32 million mixed-use development along the northern border of Jackson Ward, just south of Interstates 95 and 64. The project, to be named Jackson Place, is a collaboration between the City, RRHA and Community Preservation and Development Corporation, a Washington, D.C.-based developer. Of the planned 182 units to be built, 77 will house elderly residents that will be relocated from the aging RRHA housing project Frederick A. Fay Towers in northern Jackson Ward. A majority of the land will be newly developed and a former convent on the lot will be rehabilitated into apartments.

Cover photo by Emily Wavering

Additional Sources: [Vision and History, Historic Jackson Ward](#). • “Jackson Ward Historic District,” [Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries, Digital Collections](#). • U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, “[Jackson Ward Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form](#)” (July 30, 1976).

1 “Historic Jackson Ward: Reviving ‘Black Wall Street,’” [Community Preservation and Development Corporation](#).

2 The American Community Survey 2015 5-Year Estimates for the City indicate a vacancy rate of 12.3 percent.

3 The share of the population that is housing-cost burdened may be a function of housing supply, housing prices, household incomes and personal preferences.

4 [Burl Rolett, “BioTech park plans \\$18 million expansion,” Richmond BizSense \(June 2, 2013\).](#)

5 [History, The Hippodrome Theater.](#)

