

DOWNTOWN SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING STUDY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Introduction

In 2017 the City of Manassas received a Community Impact Grant from the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) to conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing housing conditions and trends in the Downtown South neighborhood. The neighborhood is adjacent to the City's central business district, Historic Downtown Manassas, which has seen an increase in and continued demand for new market-rate housing. Following a thorough assessment of existing conditions, this study provides City staff, leaders, key community partners and community members with a series of detailed neighborhood preservation and revitalization strategies specific to the Downtown South neighborhood.

Neighborhood Profile

The neighborhood profile provides an assessment of demographic and economic characteristics, housing trends, and quality of life indicators in Downtown South. The majority of the data used in developing this profile was sourced from the City of Manassas and the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Data provided by the City was analyzed on a parcel-by-parcel basis, and ACS estimates were examined at the Block Group and Census Tract levels. Key findings from each section of the chapter are highlighted on this page.

Demographic and Economic Characteristics

- Downtown South is much more densely populated compared to the City as a whole. Its population growth between 2010 and 2015 accounted for 44.4% of the City's population increase in that same time period.
- Families with children account for just over half of all households in the neighborhood.
- Residents of Downtown South tend to have lower incomes than those in other City neighborhoods. The City's median income is \$72,890 compared to a median income of \$59,459 in Downtown South.
- The neighborhood is racially and ethnically diverse. About 60% of residents reported their ethnicity as Hispanic compared to 33% in the City overall.
- A majority of households in Downtown South – about 66% of all households in the neighborhood – rent their homes.

Housing Trends

- Most of the housing stock within Downtown South is located within condominium developments governed by homeowners' associations or community councils. The largest development in the neighborhood is Georgetown South, which occupies almost a third of the land area and is comprised of attached brick townhouses.

- Vacancy rates are lower in Downtown South than in the City overall at 1.1% compared to 6.4%, which indicates a high demand for housing within the neighborhood.
- Foreclosures and similar transactions indicating market distress have declined since 2012, but still make up more than half of all sales transactions in Downtown South.

Quality of Life

- About 43% of all households in Downtown South are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.
- According to the Virginia Department of Health, households in Downtown South have lower access to opportunity compared to the City. However, the neighborhood has excellent access to transit and amenities.
- The crime rate in Downtown South decreased by more than 40% between 2013 and 2016.

Housing and Property Conditions

Downtown South's 1,537 parcels were visually surveyed in mid-September of 2017 to develop an understanding of exterior housing conditions in the neighborhood. Each residential structure in the study area was assessed from street level, noting visible deficiencies using a standardized data collection form. Each residential structure was assigned an overall property condition rating – Good, Fair, Poor, or Deteriorating – based on the number and severity of deficiencies. Key findings from the survey are summarized below:

- The field survey found that the vast majority (98.4%) of residential properties in the neighborhood are in good condition. Most of the properties in fair, poor, or deteriorating condition were dispersed throughout the neighborhood.
- There were two clusters of properties in fair to deteriorating condition at the time of the survey: six single-family homes along Liberty Street, and three single-family homes along Grant Avenue. However, the City is proactive with code enforcement and is already working with property owners to address these issues.
- The most common deficiencies found during the field survey were minor issues such as peeling paint or damaged siding.

Existing Resources

Several programs and services related to housing preservation, development, and affordability are available to City residents, including those who live in the Downtown South neighborhood. These include federally-funded programs such as the Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Program and First-Time Homebuyer Program, which are administered by Prince William County, and a rental Housing Choice Voucher program, which is managed by the City. Funding for these programs is extremely limited – roughly five households are assisted through the rehabilitation and homebuyer programs each year, and the waiting list for the voucher program is so long that it is closed indefinitely to new applicants.

Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) is a non-profit organization that serves the entire Commonwealth of Virginia through a multitude of financing and community development programs. Programs active in the City include the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC), which provides developers of affordable rental housing with a federal income tax credit. There are currently two LIHTC developments in the Downtown South neighborhood, Manassas Arms and South Main Commons.

Local community development initiatives include a partial tax exemption program for residents who rehabilitate home in older neighborhoods, proactive blight abatement and property code enforcement, and the provision of links to housing and neighborhood resources on the City's website. Nonprofit housing and community development organizations are also active within the Downtown South neighborhood. Habitat for Humanity, Project Mend-A-House, People, Inc., and Catholics for Housing assist low- and moderate-income residents with home repair and self-sufficiency.

Recommendations

The recommendations chapter builds on the existing resources summarized above and provides additional strategies for neighborhood preservation and revitalization. Target Preservation Areas (TPAs) and Target Revitalization Areas (TRAs) are established in order to focus limited resources in as effective a manner as possible. However, as most strategies require significant resources for successful implementation, it may not be possible to undertake every recommendation without increased funding and staffing levels.

Summary of Recommendations

Target Preservation Area Strategies

Preservation areas are clusters of older housing units that experience some concentration of issues related to property condition and maintenance. Renter occupancy rates are higher compared to the City overall, and thus residents here may be more susceptible to displacement that may occur due to the neighborhood's proximity to the growth in Old Town Manassas.

1. Continue targeted code enforcement
2. Focus housing rehabilitation activities in TPAs
3. Focus homebuyer assistance in select TPAs
4. Preserve affordability of homes in Georgetown South
5. Develop a streetscape plan for the Douglas Street, Ellicott and Garden, and Merrimack TPAs

Target Revitalization Area Strategies

Revitalization areas have one or more of the following characteristics: vacant parcels, clusters of properties in poor or deteriorating condition, functionally obsolete buildings, or land values that are greater than building values. Public and private investments in these areas could improve the quality of life for existing residents, attract new residents, and provide an opportunity for mixed-income housing.

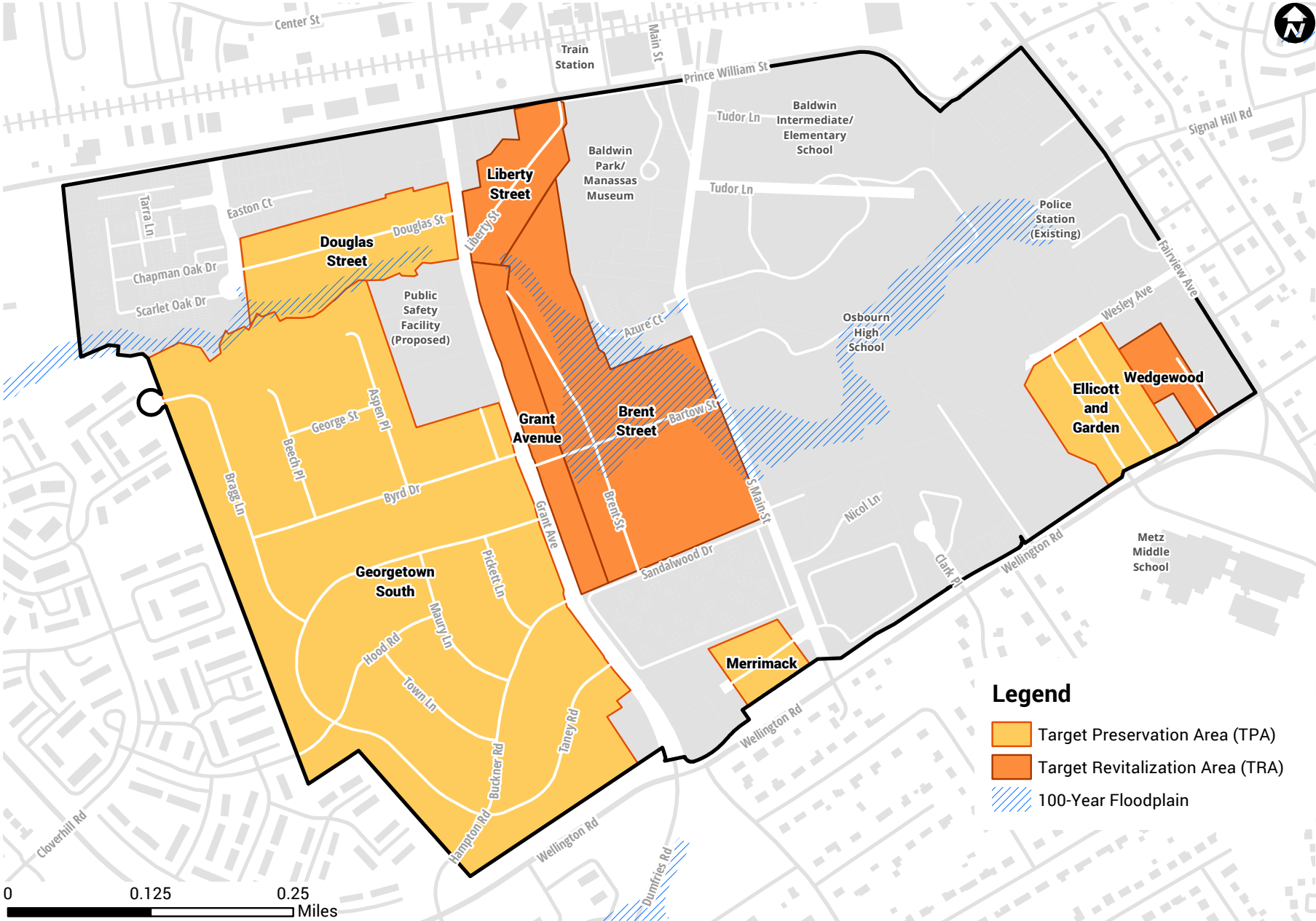
1. Support the development of mixed-income workforce housing
2. Adopt an Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance
3. Develop a streetscape plan for Liberty Street

Neighborhood-Wide Strategies

Several community development strategies and capacity-building efforts apply to both TPAs and TRAs and should be implemented throughout the Downtown neighborhood.

1. Establish a curb appeal matching grant program
2. Establish a pilot matching grant program for Homeowners' Associations
3. Develop design guidelines for infill development and home repair
4. Develop a comprehensive housing assistance guide
5. Incorporate the needs and recommendations outlined in this document into the City's comprehensive plan

Downtown South Neighborhood - Target Preservation and Revitalization Areas



Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Toolbox

Building on the City's existing housing programs will enable the implementation of preservation and revitalization strategies discussed above and provide an institutional structure for implementing the recommendations in the Downtown South neighborhood and the City as a whole. The Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Toolbox includes a variety of tools for preservation and revitalization. This quick reference guide provides a summary of the resources that are discussed in more detail in the Recommendations chapter of this study.

Tool	Areas	Target Audience	Partners	Authorizing Legislation	Additional Information
Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area	Downtown South	Homeowners Renters	County, HUD	24 CFR 91.215(g)	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3329/cdbg-memorandum-neighborhood-revitalization-strategy-areas/
Housing and Redevelopment Authorities	Downtown South	Homeowners Renters	Economic Development Authority	Virginia Code, Section 36-4.1	https://vacode.org/2016/36/1/
Housing Trust Fund	Preservation	Homeowners	VHDA	Local Ordinance	http://www.housingvirginia.org/research-tags/housing-trust-fund/
Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance	Revitalization	Developers	Developers	Virginia Code, Section 15.2-2305	http://www.housingvirginia.org/research-tags/inclusionary-zoning/
Community Land Trusts	Preservation	Homeowners	Lenders, VHDA, Private Foundations Habitat for Humanity, People, Inc., Catholics for Housing	N/A	http://www.housingvirginia.org/research-tags/community-land-trusts/
Land Banks	Preservation	Homeowners	VHDA, Habitat for Humanity, People, Inc., Catholics for Housing	Virginia Code, Section 15.2-7501	https://vacode.org/2016/15.2/IV/75/
Rental Rehabilitation	Preservation	Renters	County, VHDA, HUD, Project Mend-A-House, Habitat for Humanity	N/A	https://www.lynchburghousing.org/programs/rental-rehabilitation.html
Community Homeownership Revitalization Program	Preservation	Homeowners	City, VHDA	N/A	https://www.vhda.com/BusinessPartners/GovandNon-Profits/CommunityOutreach/Pages/Grant-Programs.aspx
Mixed-Income/Mixed-Use Financing	Revitalization	Renters	VHDA, Developers	N/A	https://www.vhda.com/BusinessPartners/MFDevelopers/MFFinancing/Pages/MFFinancing.aspx
New Markets Tax Credits	Revitalization	Renters	People, Inc., Dept. of Treasury, Developers	26 U.S. Code Section 45D	https://www.cdfifund.gov/programs-training/Programs/new-markets-tax-credit/Pages/default.aspx
Public/Private Partnerships	Revitalization	Developers	Developers	N/A	https://americas.uli.org/centers-initiatives/successful-publicprivate-partnerships/

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE



Introduction

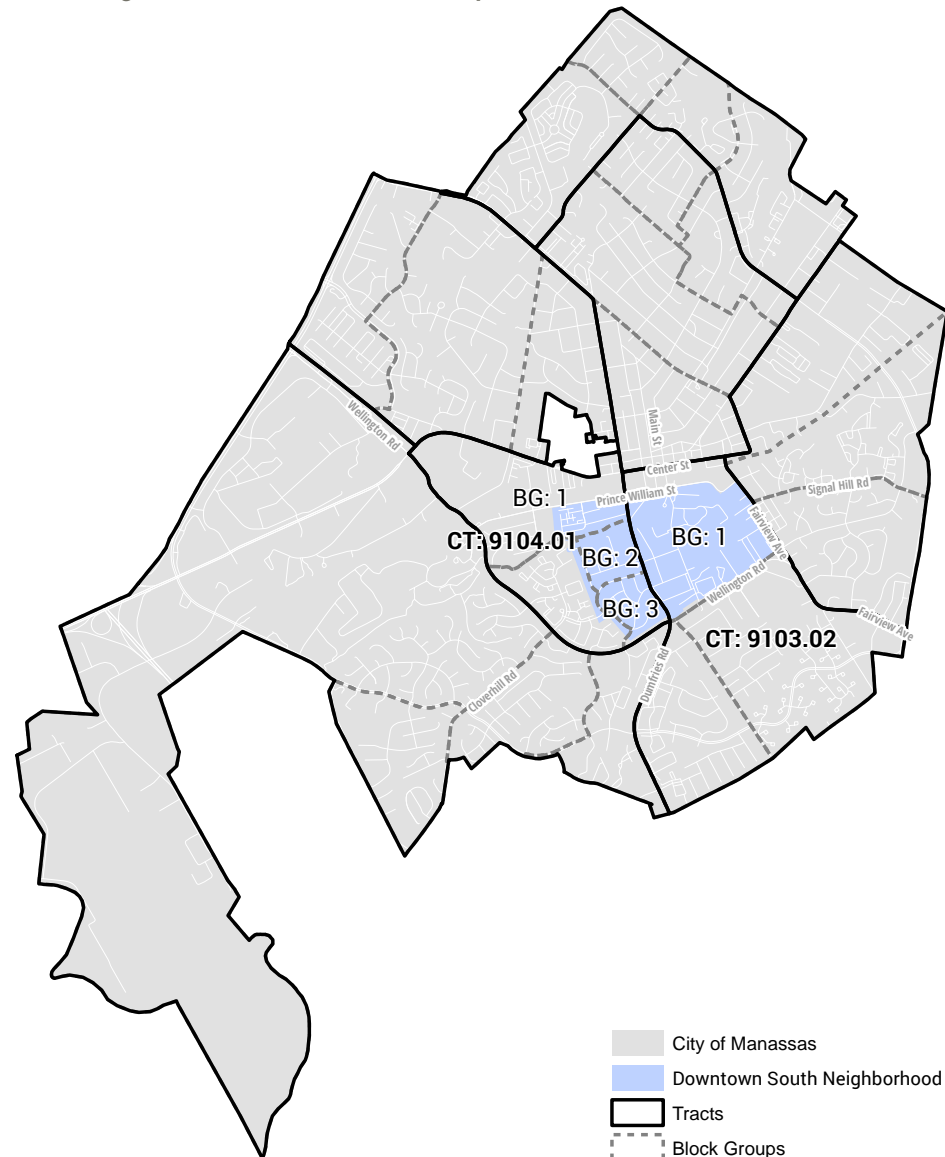
Downtown South is located in the middle of Manassas adjacent to the City's central business district, Historic Downtown Manassas. The neighborhood is primarily residential, and about a third of the land area is occupied by public facilities, including Osbourn High School, Baldwin Intermediate/Elementary School, Manassas Museum, the Police Station, and the site of a new public safety facility. Commercial uses in the neighborhood include two gas stations, convenience stores, and a few cafes and restaurants.

This neighborhood profile provides an assessment of demographic and economic characteristics, housing trends, and quality of life indicators in Downtown South. The majority of the data used in developing this profile was sourced from the City of Manassas and the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Data provided by the City was analyzed on a parcel-by-parcel basis, and ACS estimates were examined at the Block Group and Census Tract levels.¹

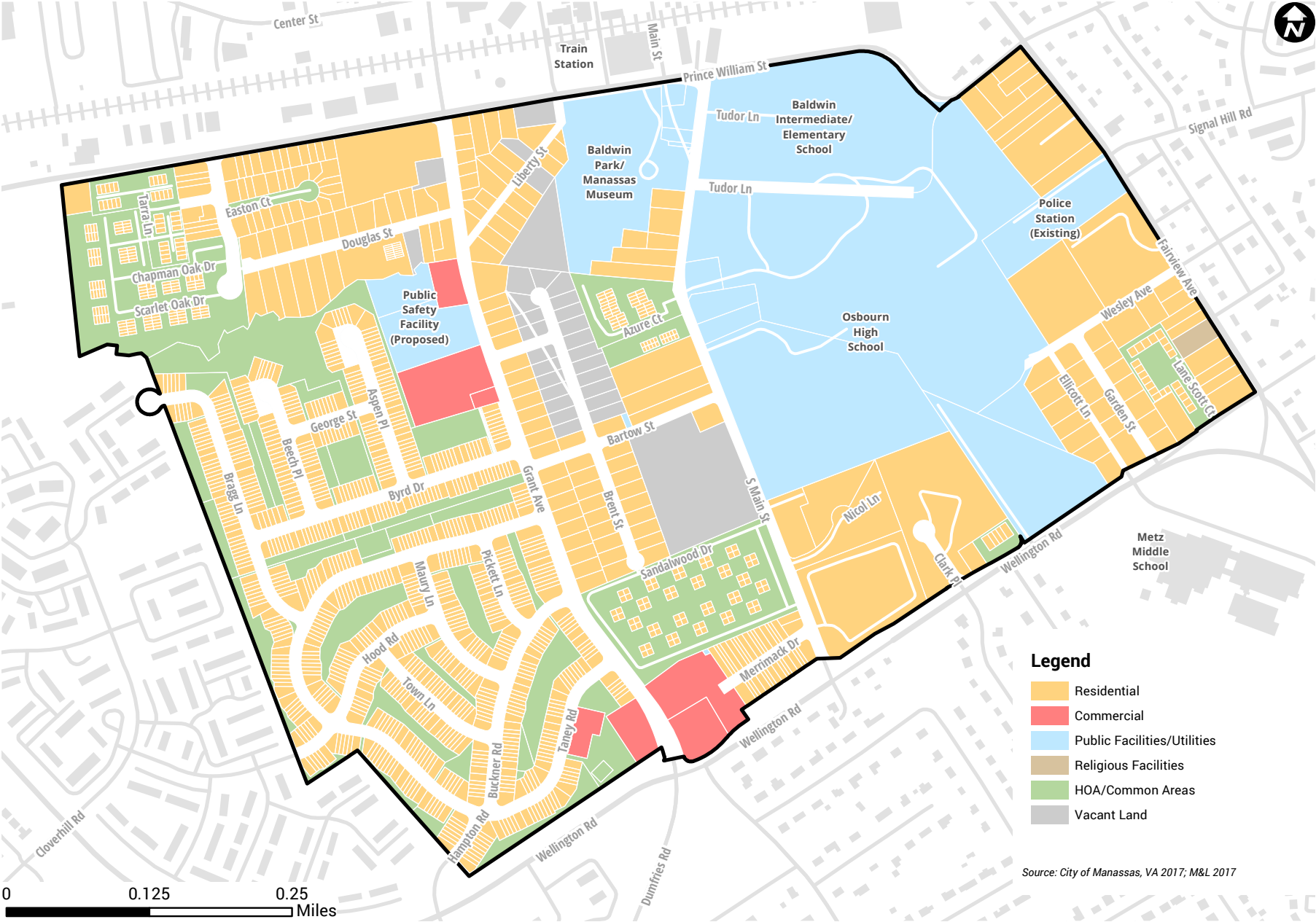
The "Downtown South Neighborhood - Tracts and Block Groups" map displays the Block Groups and Census Tracts within Downtown South. The Block Groups and Census Tracts shown were selected for analysis as their boundaries most closely match those of Downtown South, despite not being coterminous in all cases.

¹ Some datasets were not available at the more detailed Block Group level; where this was the case, Tract level data was used

Downtown South Neighborhood - Tracts and Block Groups



Downtown South Neighborhood - Land Use



Demographic and Economic Characteristics

Population

Downtown South's population is growing at a faster rate than the City's

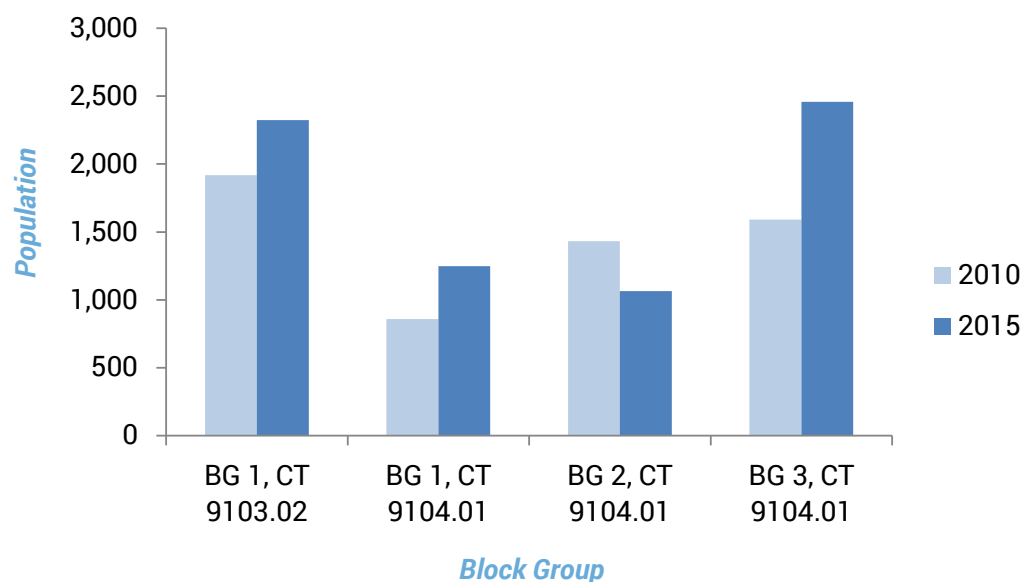
According to ACS estimates, the population in Downtown South grew by 22.4% from 5,798 in 2010 to 7,095 in 2015. By comparison, the population of the City of Manassas grew by 7.7% from 37,821 to 40,743 in the same time period. The largest growth occurred in Census Tract 9104.01, Block Group 3, which is the Georgetown South housing development. Block Group 2 in the same Census Tract, on the other hand, saw a 25.7% decrease in population.

Downtown South is much more densely populated than the City overall, at 8,771 persons per square mile compared to 4,112 persons per square mile. Population density ranges from 3,585 persons per square mile in Block Group 1, Census Tract 9104.01 to 40,001 persons per square mile in Block Group 3, Census Tract 9104.01.

Population Density, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Geography	Population Density
BG 1, CT 9103.02	6,883/mi ²
BG 1, CT 9104.01	3,585/mi ²
BG 2, CT 9104.01	17,302/mi ²
BG 3, CT 9104.01	40,001/mi ²
Downtown South	8,771/mi ²

Population by Block Group, 2010-2015 (Source: ACS)



Age

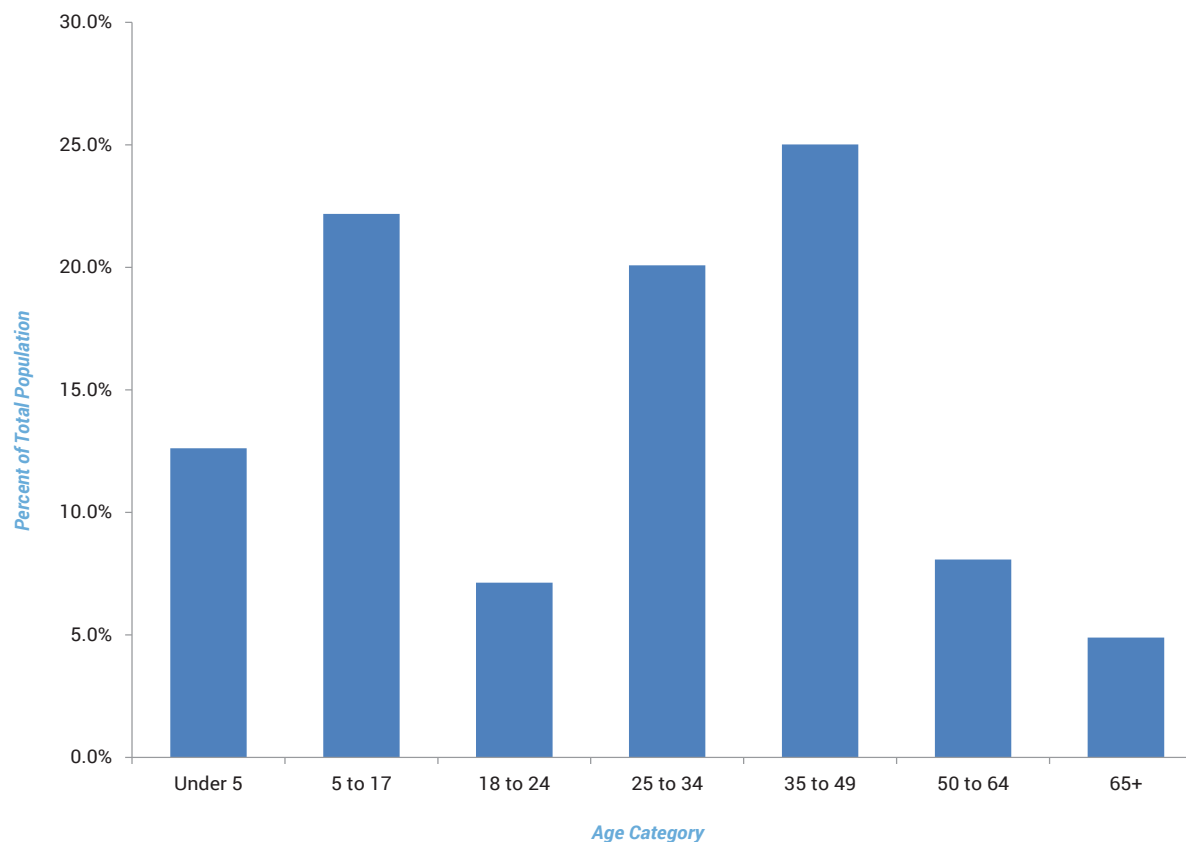
Residents of Downtown South tend to be younger than the rest of the City

The median age in Downtown South is 27, which is several years younger than the City's median age of 33. Median age varied by Block Group, ranging from a low of 20 in Block Group 2, Census Tract 9104.01 to a high of 32 in Block Group 1 of the same Census Tract. Less than 5% of the population is over 65, and over a third of the neighborhood's residents are children under the age of 18 (34.8%).

Median Age, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Geography	Median Age
BG 1, CT 9103.02	28
BG 1, CT 9104.01	32
BG 2, CT 9104.01	20
BG 3, CT 9104.01	27
Downtown South	27

Population by Age Group, 2015 (Source: ACS)



Race/Ethnicity

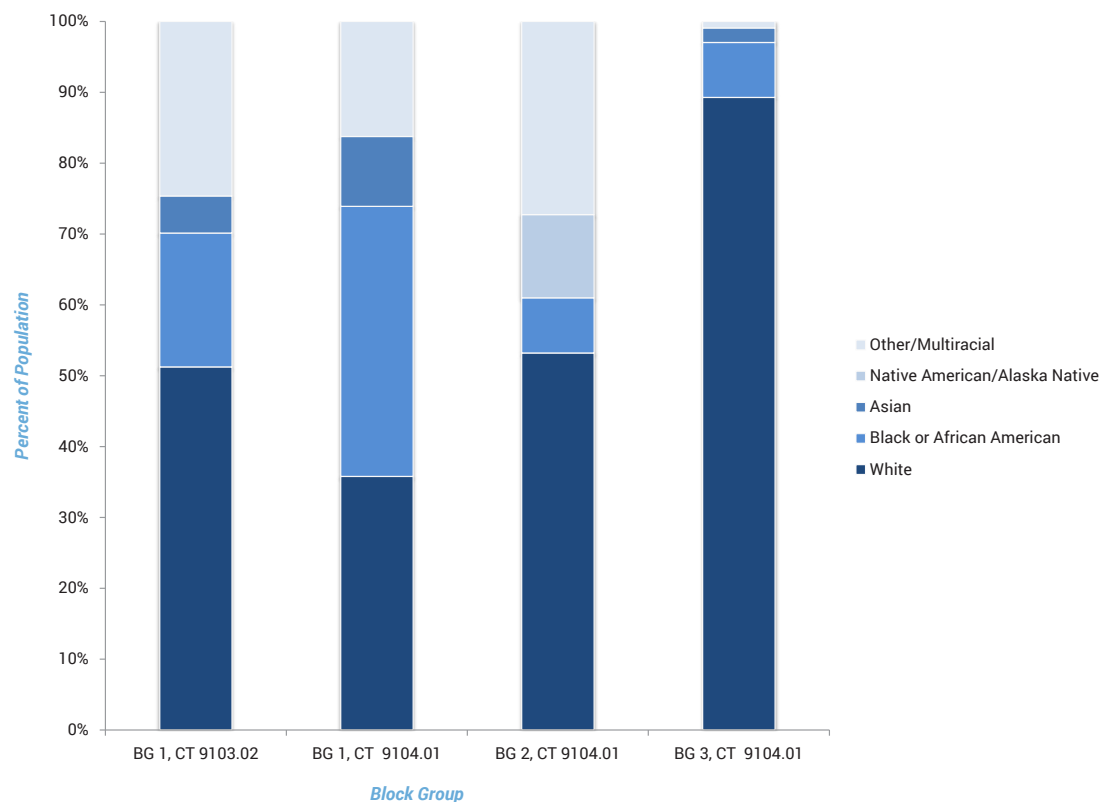
Downtown South is racially diverse...

Downtown South is racially diverse, with 62.0% of the population indicating their race as White, 16.8% as Black or African American, and the remaining 21.2% reporting some other race or a multiracial background. This is more racially diverse than the City overall, which has a White population of 71.4%. Racial composition varied by Block Group. Block Group 3 in Census Tract 9104.01 had the least racial diversity, with nearly 90.0% of the population indicating their race as White.

Race, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Race	City		Downtown South	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	4,398	62.0%	29,104	71.4%
Black or African American	1,189	16.8%	5,809	14.3%
Asian	295	4.2%	2,136	5.2%
Native American/Alaska Native	125	1.8%	138	0.3%
Other/Multiracial	1,088	15.3%	3,556	8.7%

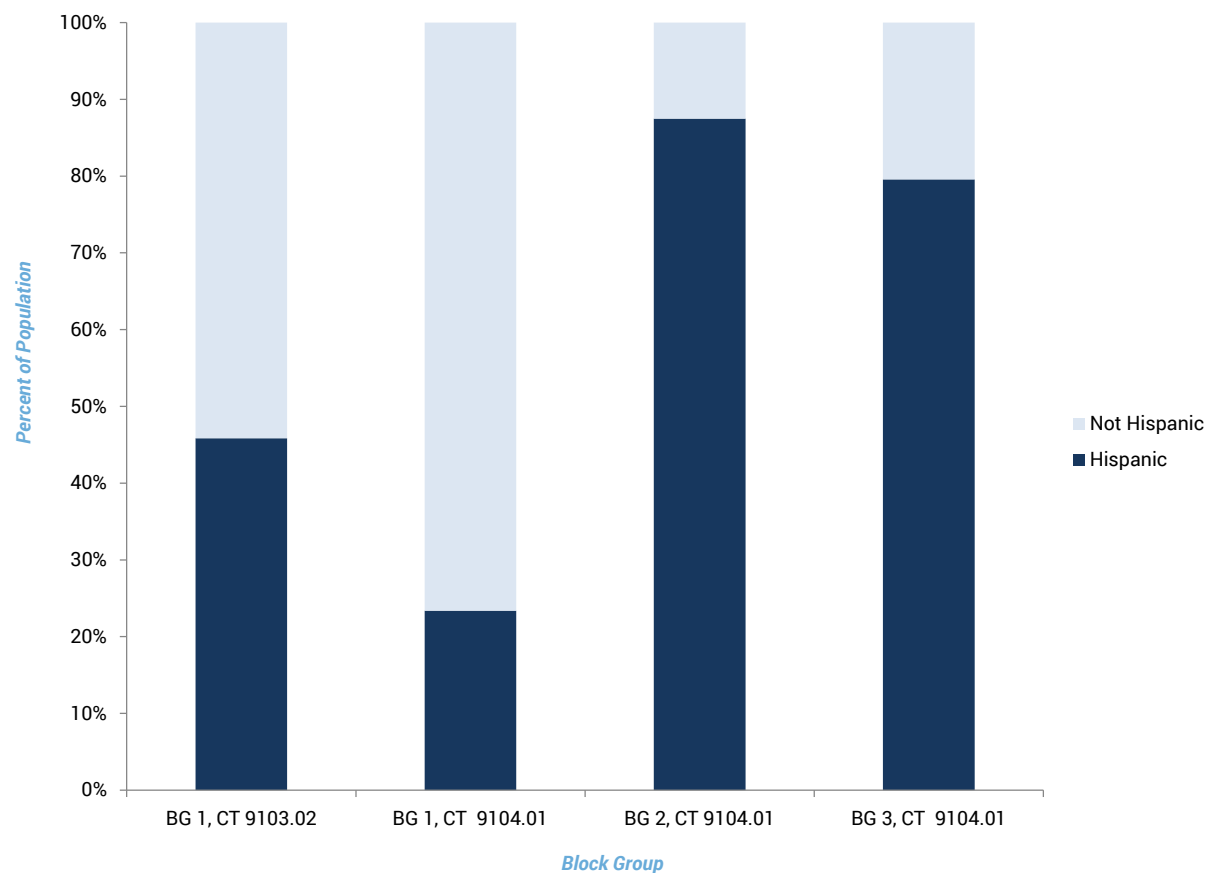
Race by Block Group, 2010-2015 (Source: ACS)



...and the neighborhood has a large Hispanic community

Ethnicity, which is counted independently of race by the U.S. Census Bureau, also varied by Block Group. Almost 80.0% of the population in Block Group 3, Census Tract 9104.01 reported Hispanic ethnicity, compared to less than 25.0% of the population Block Group 1 of the same Census Tract. Neighborhood-wide, 59.8% of residents reported Hispanic ethnicity, compared to 32.9% in the City overall. The majority (75.2%) of the Hispanic residents in Downtown South indicated their race as White, and the majority of the White population in the neighborhood (72.6%) reported Hispanic ethnicity. Downtown South's 4,245 Hispanic residents account for 31.7% of the City's total Hispanic population, 13,403.

Ethnicity by Block Group, 2010-2015 (Source: ACS)



Households, Families, and Children

Households in Downtown South tend to be larger than households in the rest of the City

According to ACS estimates, there are 1,869 households in Downtown South, including 1,296 family households, 949 households with children, and 573 householders living alone. The average household size is 3.9 persons, compared to 3.3 persons per household city-wide. Block Group 3, Census Tract 9104.01 has the largest average household size, at 5.8 persons per household.

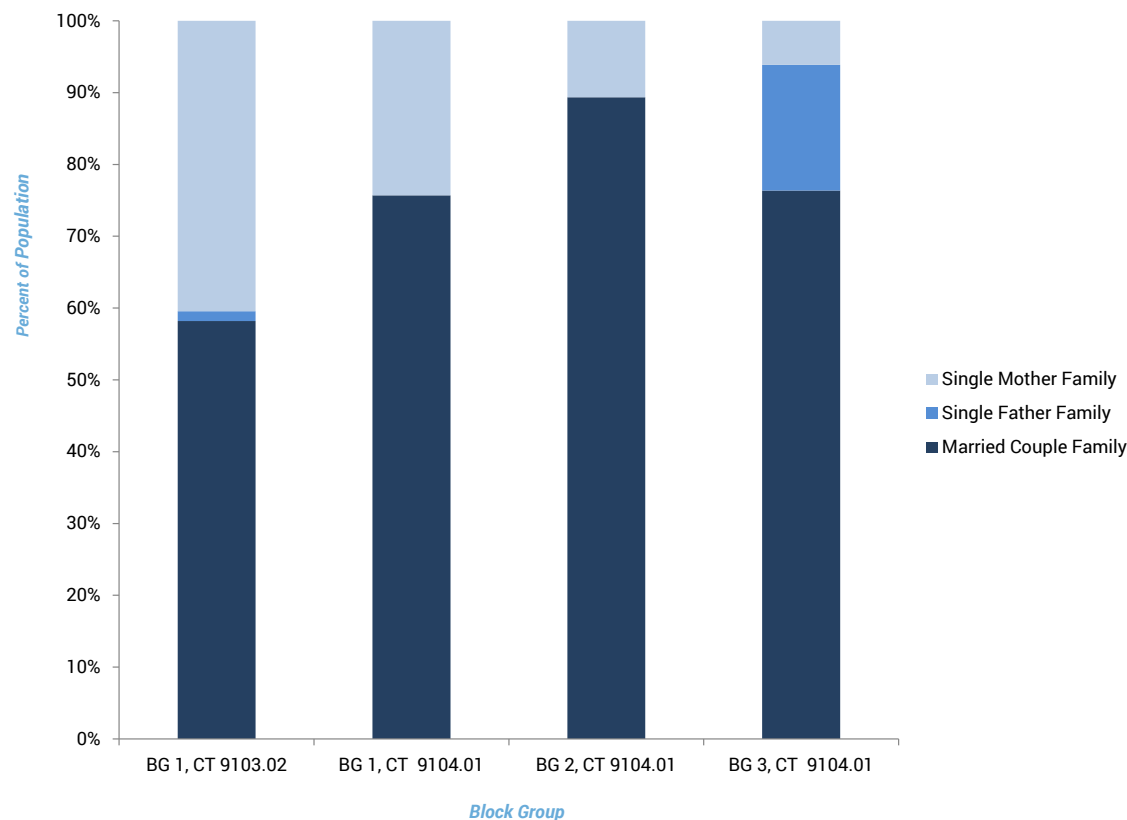
Nearly 70% of all family households in the neighborhood are comprised of married couples, 47.7% of which have children. Comparatively, 77.0% of all family households in the City are married couples, 37.8% of which have children. Most children in Downtown South (72.7%) live in married couple families, compared to 76.5% of children city-wide. Children living in single female-headed households and single male-headed households account for 21.3% and 6.0% of all children, respectively.

These estimates vary greatly by Block Group. In Block Group 1, Census Tract 9103.02, children living in single female-headed households account for 40.5% of all children; however, in Block Group 3 of Census Tract 9104.01, they account for only 6.1% of all children.

Household Size, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Geography	Average Household Size
BG 1, CT 9103.02	3.4
BG 1, CT 9104.01	2.7
BG 2, CT 9104.01	3.7
BG 3, CT 9104.01	5.8
Downtown South	3.9
City	3.3

Children in Families, 2010-2015 (Source: ACS)



Employment, Educational Attainment, and Income

Residents of Downtown South tend to have lower incomes than those in other City neighborhoods

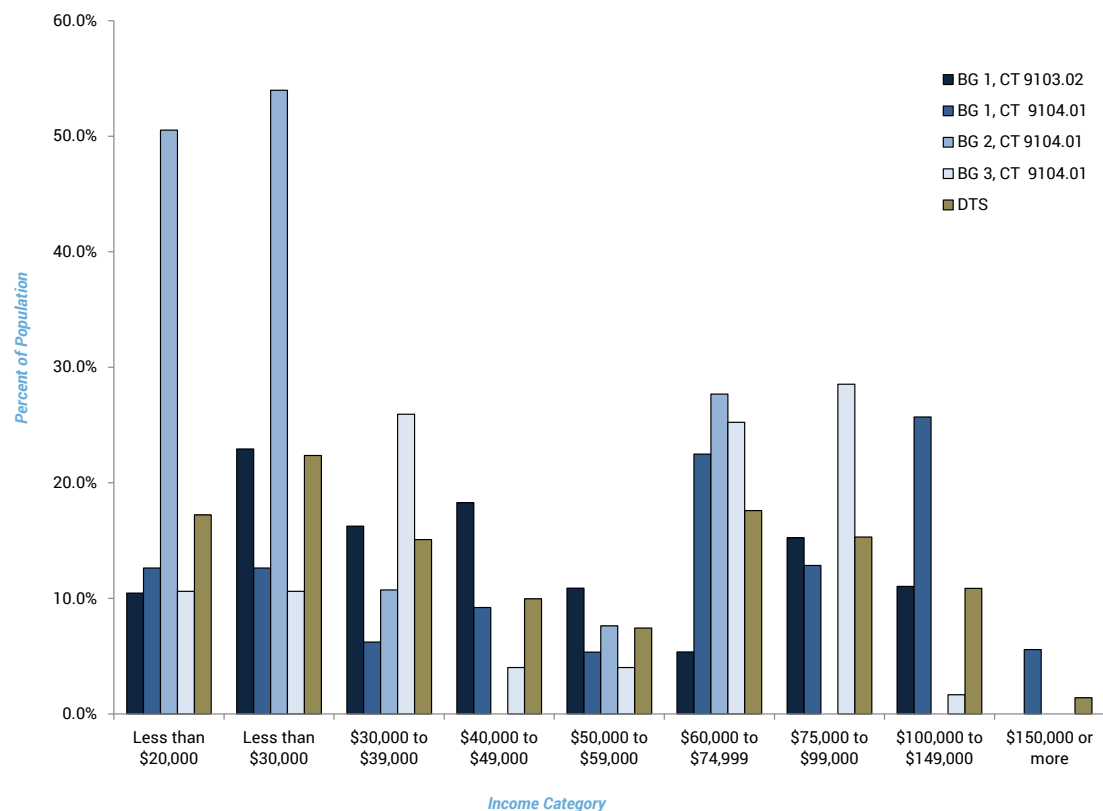
Generally, residents of Downtown South face higher unemployment rates and have lower educational attainment and incomes compared to the City of Manassas as a whole. Economic characteristics vary widely between Block Groups. Less than 1% of the population aged 25 and over in Block Group 2, Census Tract 9104.01 have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to over a quarter of the population of Block Group 1 in that same Census Tract. This Block Group also had the highest median household income, at \$69,406, compared to \$45,549 in Block Group 1, Census Tract 9103.02.

Over half of the households in Block Group 2, Census Tract 9104.01 have median incomes less than \$20,000. In Downtown South, 17.2% of all households fell into the same household income category. Block Group 1, Census Tract 9104.01 has the largest concentration of higher-income households in the neighborhood, with 31.3% of households reporting median incomes of \$100,000 or higher. Higher-income households accounted for 12.3% of all households neighborhood-wide. No households reported median incomes greater than \$200,000.

Economic Characteristics, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Geography	Unemployment Rate	Population 25+ H.S. Graduate	Population 25+ College Degree	Median Household Income
BG 1, CT 9103.02	9.5%	69.1%	14.9%	\$45,549
BG 1, CT 9104.01	11.4%	92.4%	27.1%	\$69,406
BG 2, CT 9104.01	8.6%	63.7%	0.7%	Data unavailable
BG 3, CT 9104.01	18.9%	58.6%	10.6%	\$63,421
Downtown South	12.1%	70.1%	19.3%	\$59,459
City of Manassas	7.5%	81.5%	28.8%	\$72,890

Household Income by Block Group, 2015 (Source: ACS)



Housing Profile

Housing Stock

Townhouses and multifamily units are the most common types of housing

Based on field survey data and tax assessment records, there are 1,849 housing units in the Downtown South neighborhood. The housing stock in this neighborhood is diverse, including single-family homes, townhouses, and large multifamily developments. Townhouses are the most prevalent type of housing in Downtown South, accounting for just over half of all housing units. Multifamily housing is the next most common type of housing.

The majority of the multifamily units are distributed among six apartment complexes, detailed in the "Apartment Buildings, 2017" table.²

Housing Unit Type, 2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

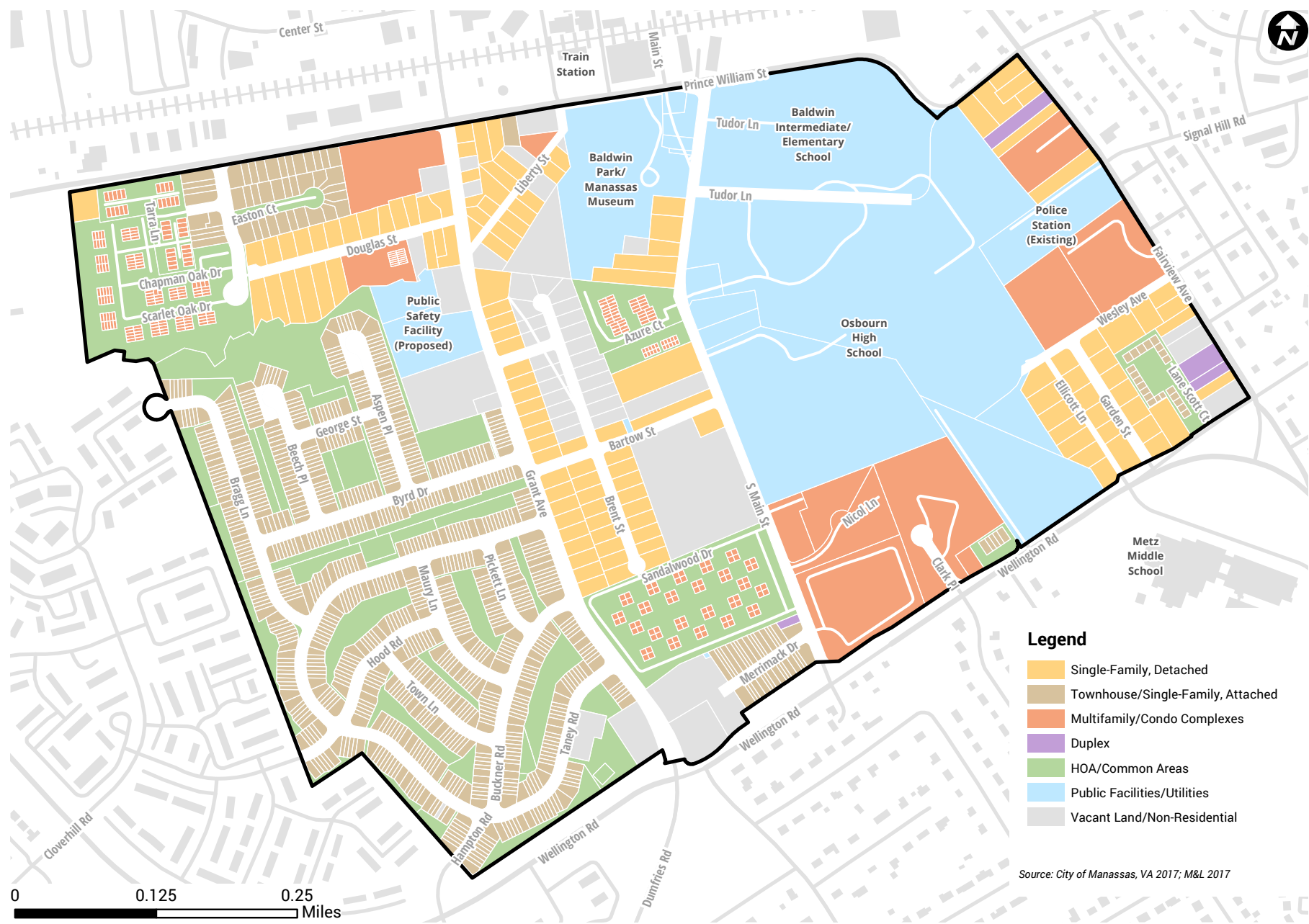
Housing Unit Type	Number	Percent
Single-Family, Detached	125	6.8%
Single-Family, Attached/Townhouses	968	52.4%
Duplexes	8	0.4%
Multifamily (Apartments/Condominium Complexes)	748	40.5%
TOTAL	1,849	-

Apartment Buildings, 2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Housing Type	Buildings	Units
Colonial Village	13	148
Courts at Historic Manassas	3	139
Douglas Street Apartments	1	13
Fairview Arms	3	16
Manassas Arms	1	24
South Main Commons	4	82
Kona Kai Apartments	1	20

² This conflicts with the ACS estimate of 2,045 housing units and households because (a) the Census geographies are not coterminous with the Downtown South boundary and (b) ACS estimates are based on a sample of surveyed residents, so they are never 100% accurate. When ACS data related to housing units and households are used in this neighborhood profile, the 2,045 estimate is used for analysis. The 1,849 figure is used for all analysis based on local data and data produced during the field survey, and to compare data in Downtown South to Citywide data obtained through ACS, as the field survey was limited to the Downtown South neighborhood.

Downtown South Neighborhood - Housing Type



Age of Housing Stock

Downtown South has a mix of historic and modern homes

The majority of Downtown South's housing stock was built prior to 1980, but there has been more recent construction. Generally, multifamily developments and townhouses tended to be of newer construction than detached, single-family housing. The neighborhood's newest housing is located in the Courts at Historic Manassas, a market-rate, phased development constructed in 2008 and 2012. A subsidized housing development, South Main Commons, was constructed using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program in 1999. A few of the smaller townhouse and condominium developments were constructed in the 1990s and early 2000s. Block Group 1 in Census Tract 9103.02 tends to have the newest housing stock.

Tenure

Most households in Downtown South rent their homes

Rental housing units comprise 66.1% of the occupied housing stock in Downtown South. The renter occupancy rate for the City of Manassas, for comparison, is 35.8%. Occupied rental units in Downtown South account for 27.1% of all 4,445 rental units in the City.

Owner-occupied housing tends to be more prevalent in the southeast and northwest corners of the neighborhood, although both these areas are home to large multifamily developments.

Year Structure Built, 2015 (Source: ACS)

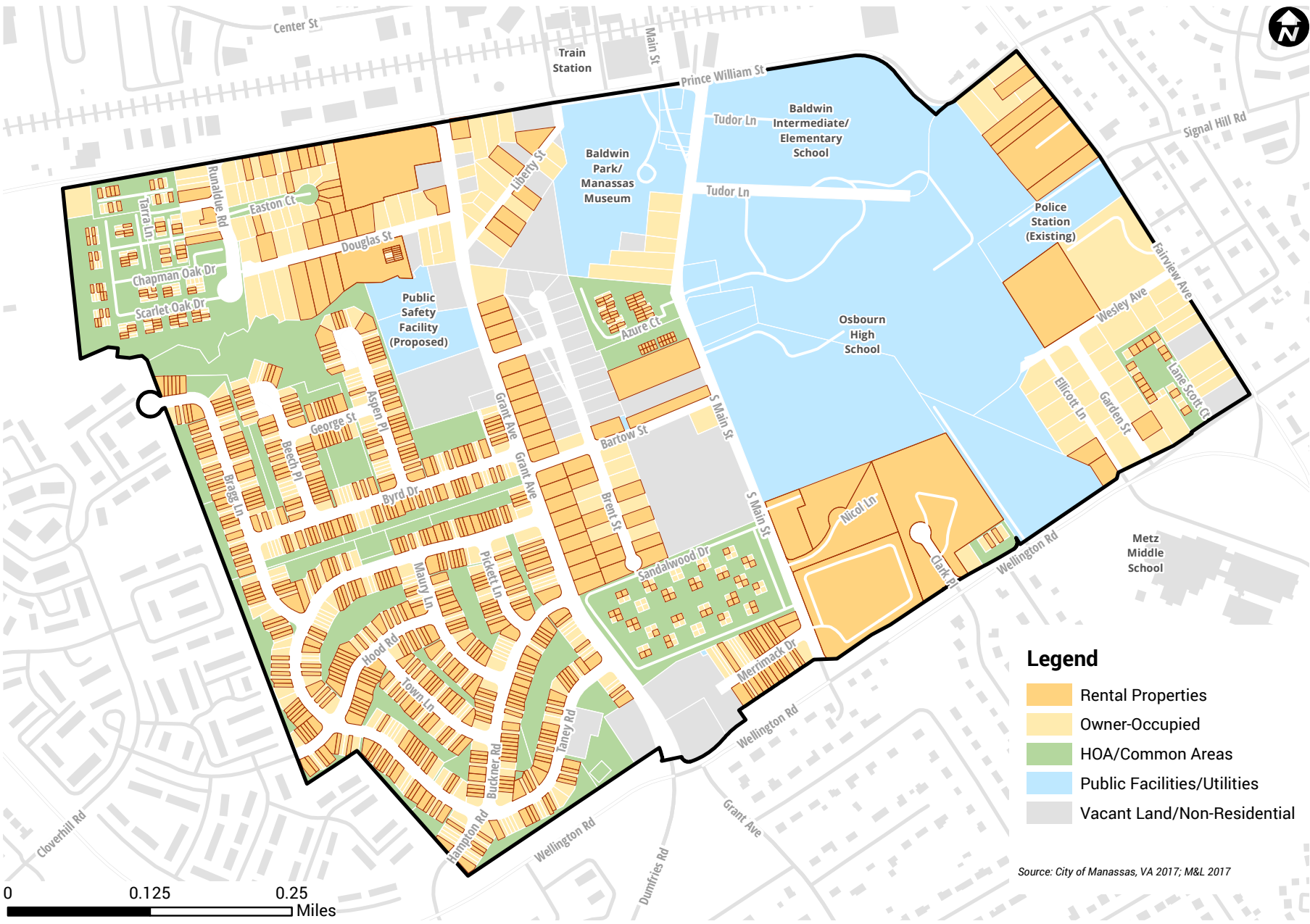
Year Structure Built	BG 1, CT 9103.02	BG 1, CT 9104.01	BG 2, CT 9104.01	BG 3, CT 9104.01	Downtown South	City
2010 or later	2.2%	25.4%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%	1.9%
2000 to 2009	5.1%	23.7%	11.4%	2.1%	10.3%	8.8%
1990 to 1999	41.2%	14.2%	12.1%	10.0%	22.4%	16.4%
1980 to 1989	9.4%	1.5%	0.0%	10.2%	6.1%	36.6%
1970 to 1979	12.4%	15.6%	17.4%	5.4%	12.4%	16.4%
1960 to 1969	7.1%	5.0%	59.1%	59.2%	26.3%	12.1%
1950 to 1959	9.5%	3.7%	0.0%	13.1%	7.4%	3.5%
1940 to 1949	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.9%
1939 or earlier	10.8%	11.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	3.5%
Median Year Built	1988	1999	1968	1966	1980	1984

Tenure, 2015-2017 (Source: ACS and City of Manassas)

Geography	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
BG 1, CT 9103.02	18.3%	81.7%
BG 1, CT 9104.01	63.6%	36.4%
BG 2, CT 9104.01	52.2%	47.8%
BG 3, CT 9104.01	23.3%	76.7%
Downtown South*	34.0%	66.1%

* The percentages for the neighborhood come from local data (2017). The figures for the City Block Groups come from the ACS (2015).

Downtown South Neighborhood - Rental Properties



Vacancy

Vacancy rates in Downtown South are low compared to the City

Housing vacancy rates were assessed using ACS estimates, utility account data, and field observation. Based on inactive utility accounts and field observation, there are 21 vacant residential units in the Downtown South neighborhood, equating to a vacancy rate of 1.1%. Citywide, the vacancy rate is 6.4%. All vacant units are west of Main Street. Data on exactly how long these units have been vacant is unavailable. Field survey results indicated that three properties were vacant and abandoned, as they had boarded windows and doors along with evidence of long-term neglect:

- 9512 Liberty Street
- 9514 Liberty Street
- 9787 Bragg Lane

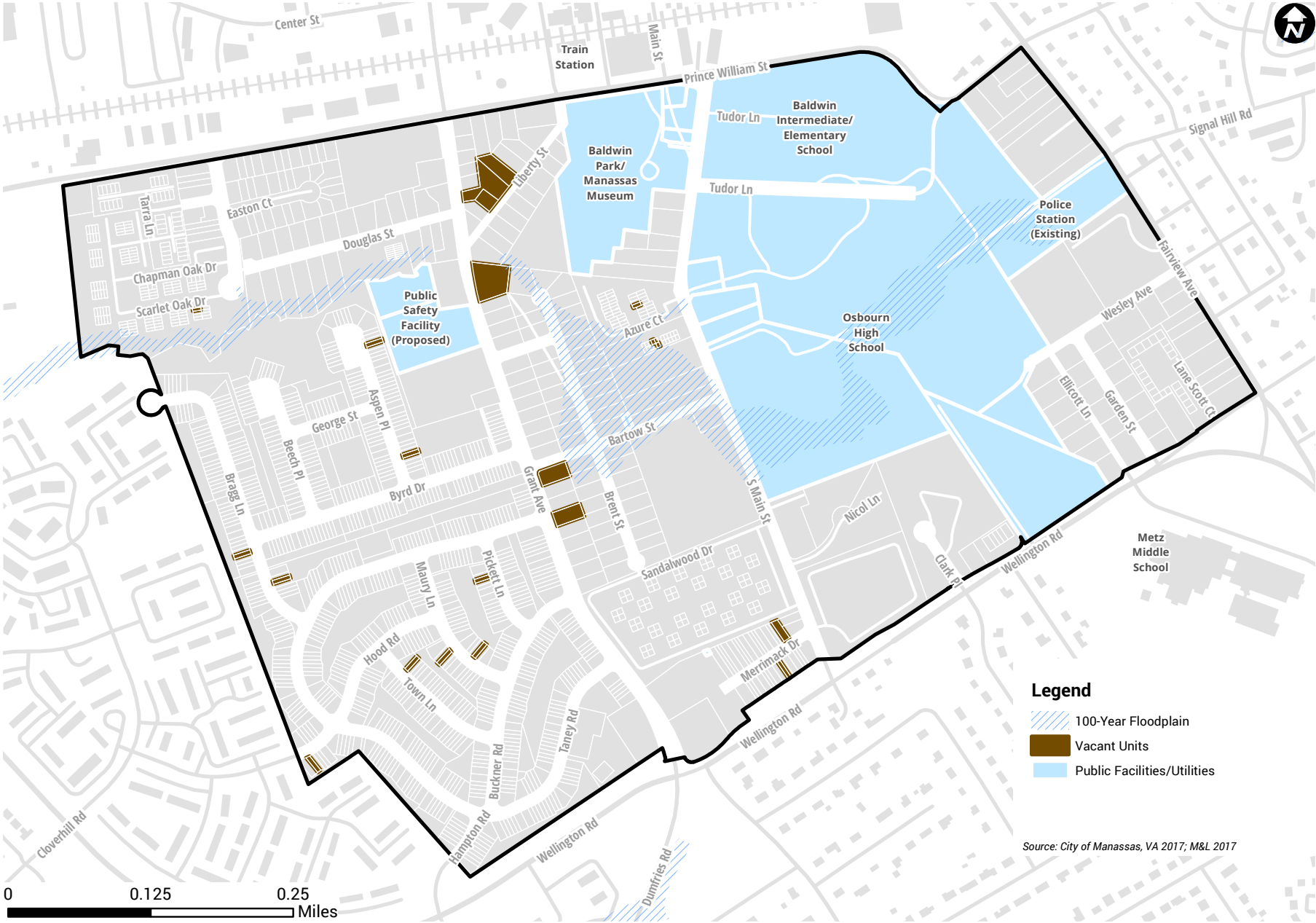
All three abandoned properties have been designated or considered for designation as blighted by the City under Section 70-93 of the City Code regarding dangerous structures, derelict buildings, and spot blight abatement. One property identified as vacant, 9803 Town Lane, had boarded windows and doors but had no evidence of neglect, and utilities appeared to be connected. The remaining vacant properties are likely for sale or rent.³

9514 Liberty Street



³ At the time of publication, three of the properties discussed here are under abatement and the boards on their windows and doors have been removed.

Downtown South Neighborhood - Vacant Residential Units



Building Permits

Downtown South has seen little new construction since 2012

There were a total 501 building permits issued by the City in the Downtown South neighborhood from FY 2012 through FY 2017.⁴ New residential construction accounted for 110 of these permits, 104 were issued for residential alterations, improvements, or additions, and seven were issued for partial residential demolition. The new construction permits were all for the second phase of the market-rate Historic Courts at Manassas development, comprised of two buildings containing 110 rental units.

Residential demolition activity included interior demolition within two structures as a part of improvement projects, demolition of work completed without proper permits on two properties, and demolition of porches on two properties. One residential structure, 9504 Grant Avenue, was demolished in 2013 as part of the City's spot blight abatement program.

Other building permit activity included mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work, as well as commercial construction and alterations.

Building Permit Activity, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Permit Type	Number
New Multifamily	110
Residential Alterations/Improvements	102
Other Residential Demolition	6
Non-Residential Demolition	7
Residential Additions	2
Residential Structure Demolition	1
Other	273

Courts at Historic Manassas



⁴ Rental registrations are issued as building permits for administration purposes, but are not included in this analysis.

Real Estate Trends

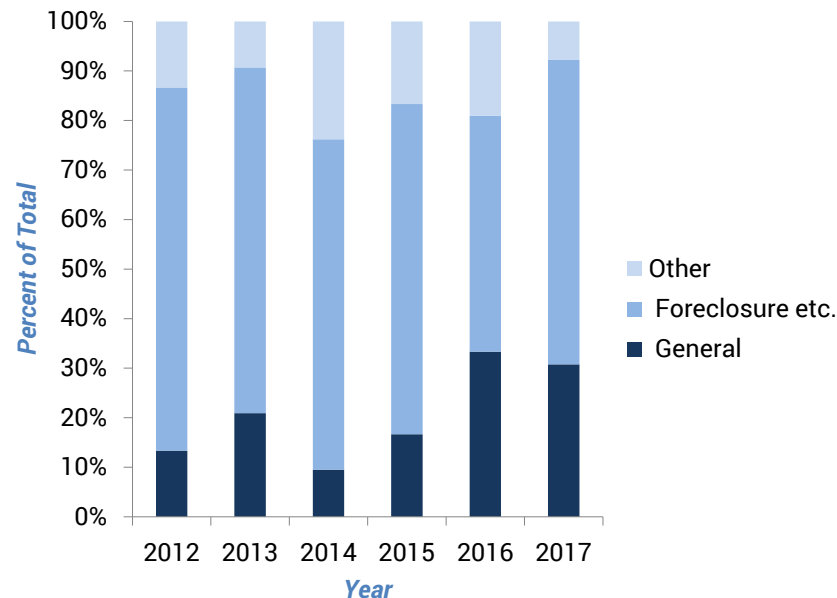
Foreclosures and similar transactions indicating market distress have declined since 2012

Between July 2012 and July 2017, there were a total of 119 real estate transactions involving 60 properties in the Downtown South neighborhood. A total of 41 properties (68.3%) were involved in more than one real estate transaction over this time period.

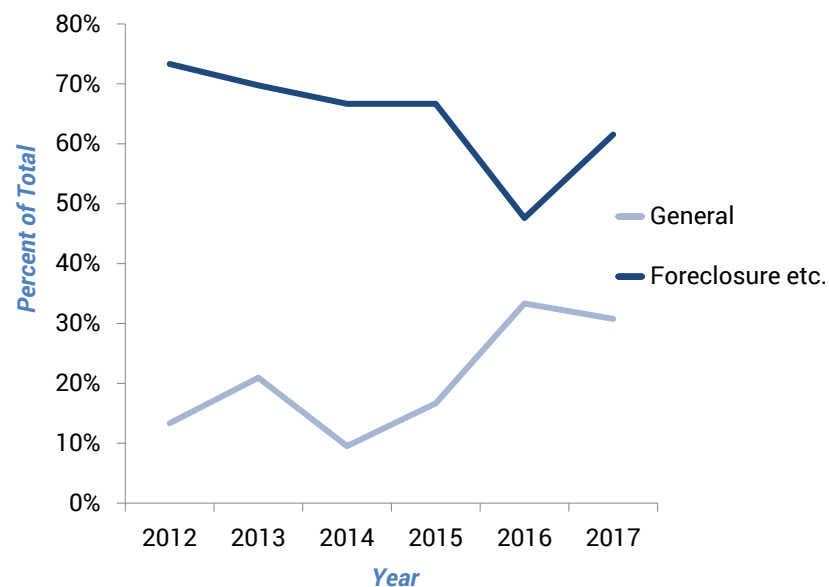
Over half of all transactions were mortgage foreclosures (33), short sales (22), bank sales (10), or properties sold at auction (12). These types of transactions indicate a market dominated by properties sold in distress, and the purchase of properties by investors instead of owner-occupants. However, these transactions have declined since 2012, from 73% of all real estate transactions in 2012 to 62% in 2017. General sales increased from 13% to 31% in the same period, indicating that the housing market in Downtown South is stabilizing and becoming more attractive to homebuyers.

As the following maps show, the vast majority of sales activity occurred west of Grant Avenue. Most sales transactions involved townhouses in Georgetown South, but there were a few single-family and condominium sales between 2012 and 2017, such as in the Wildwood and Rolling Oaks developments.

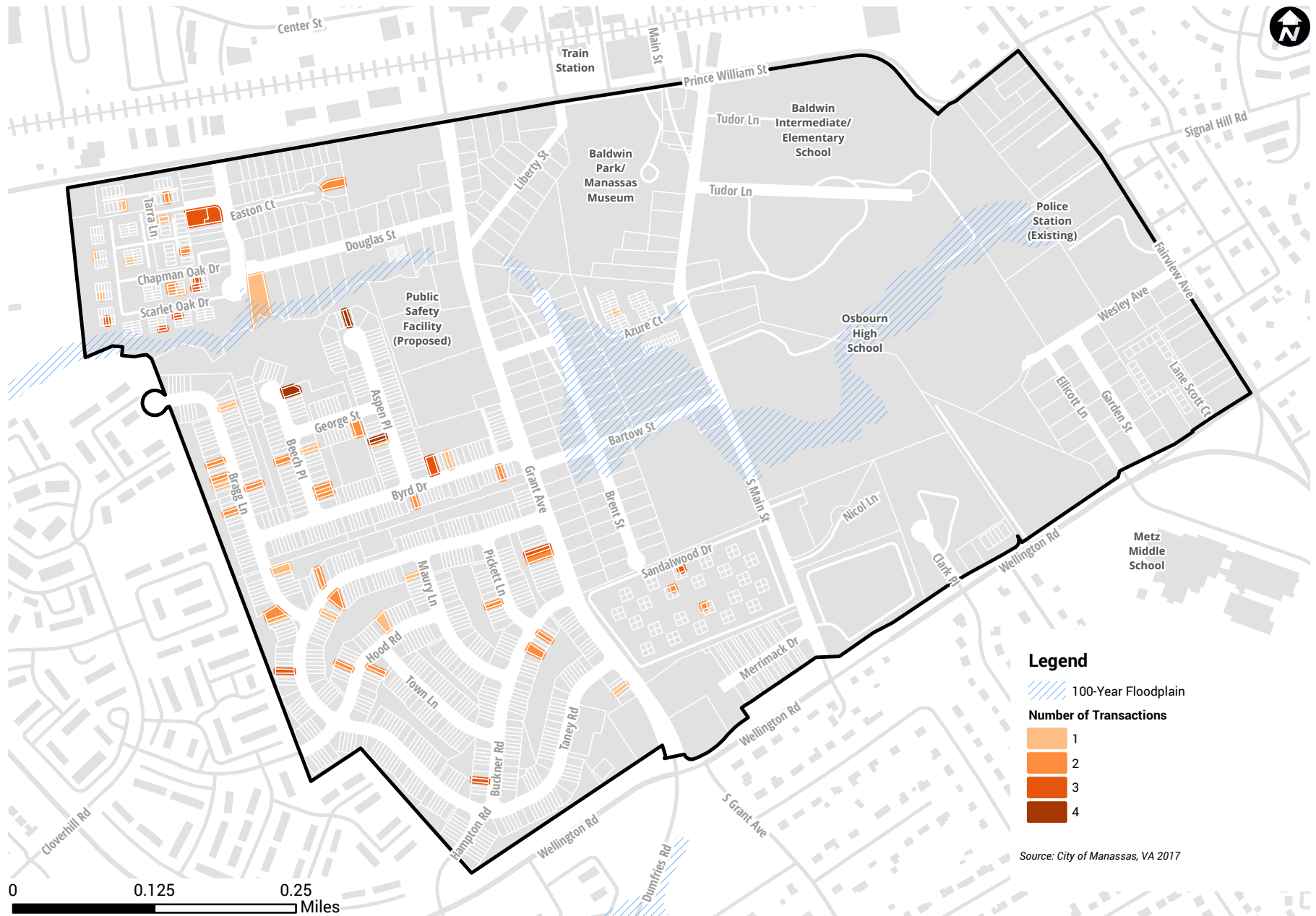
Real Estate Transactions, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)



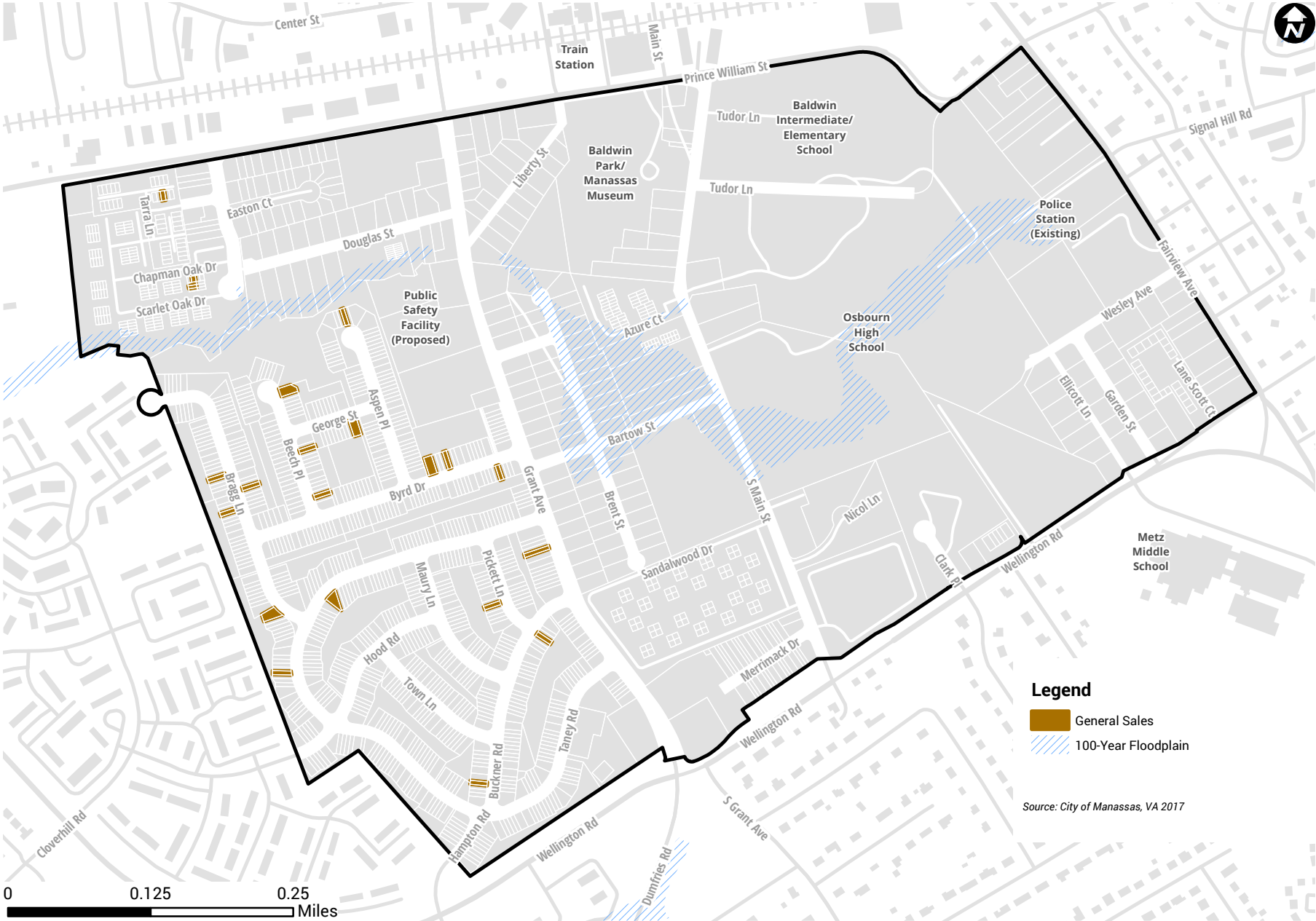
General Sales vs. Foreclosures, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)



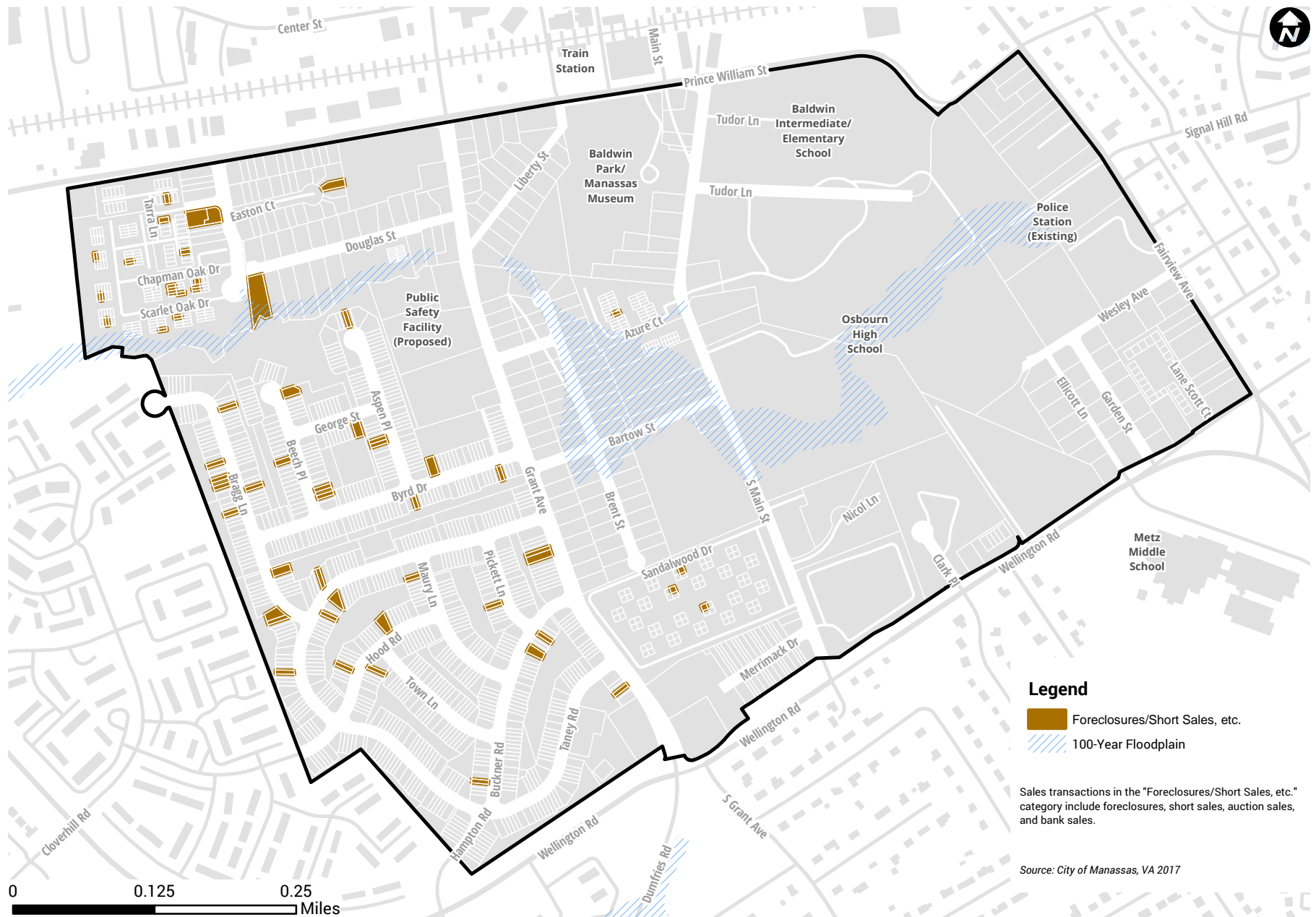
Downtown South Neighborhood - Total Transactions (2012-2017)



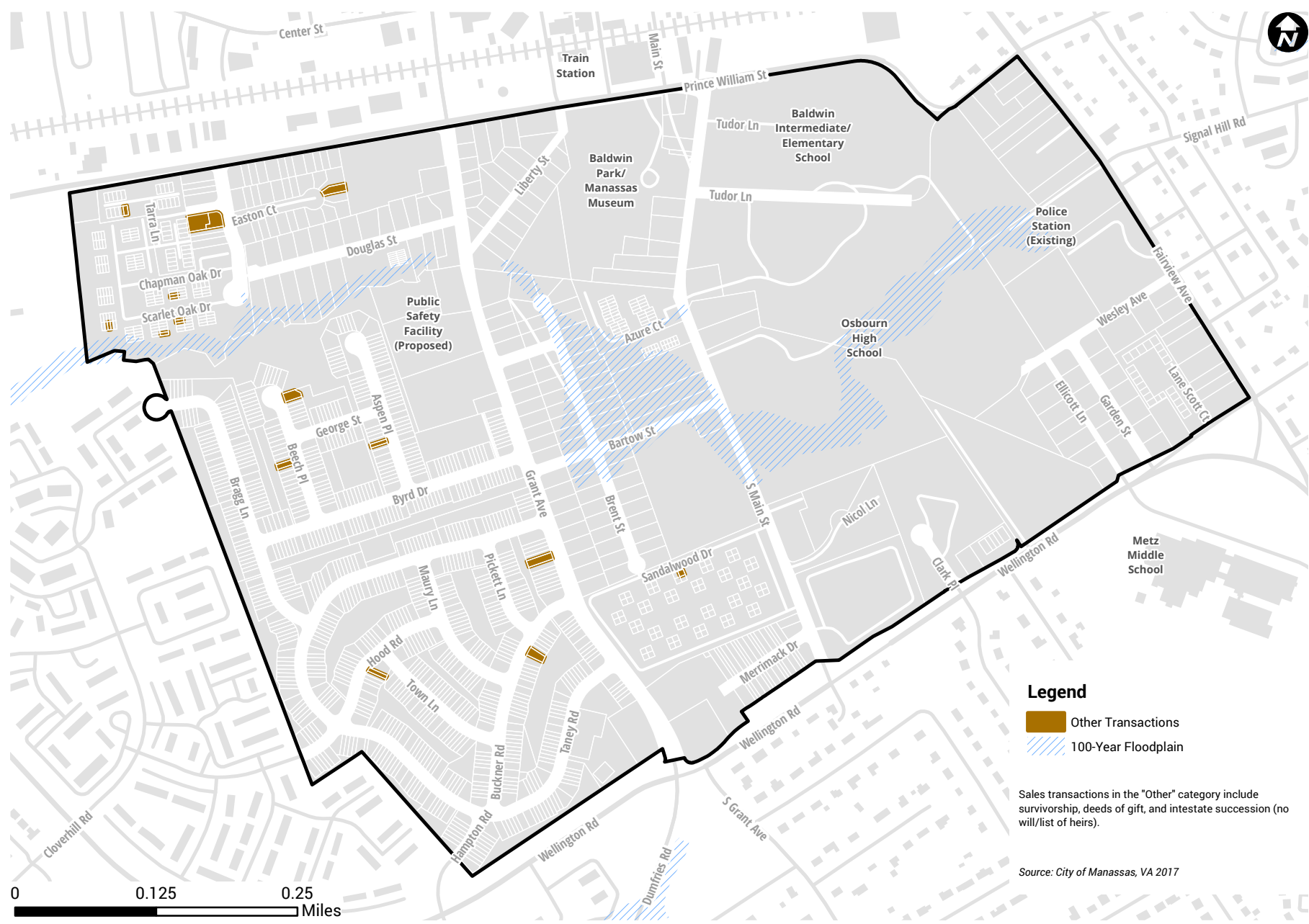
Downtown South Neighborhood - General Sales (2012-2017)



Downtown South Neighborhood - Foreclosures/Short Sales (2012-2017)



Downtown South Neighborhood - Other Sales Transactions (2012-2017)



NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

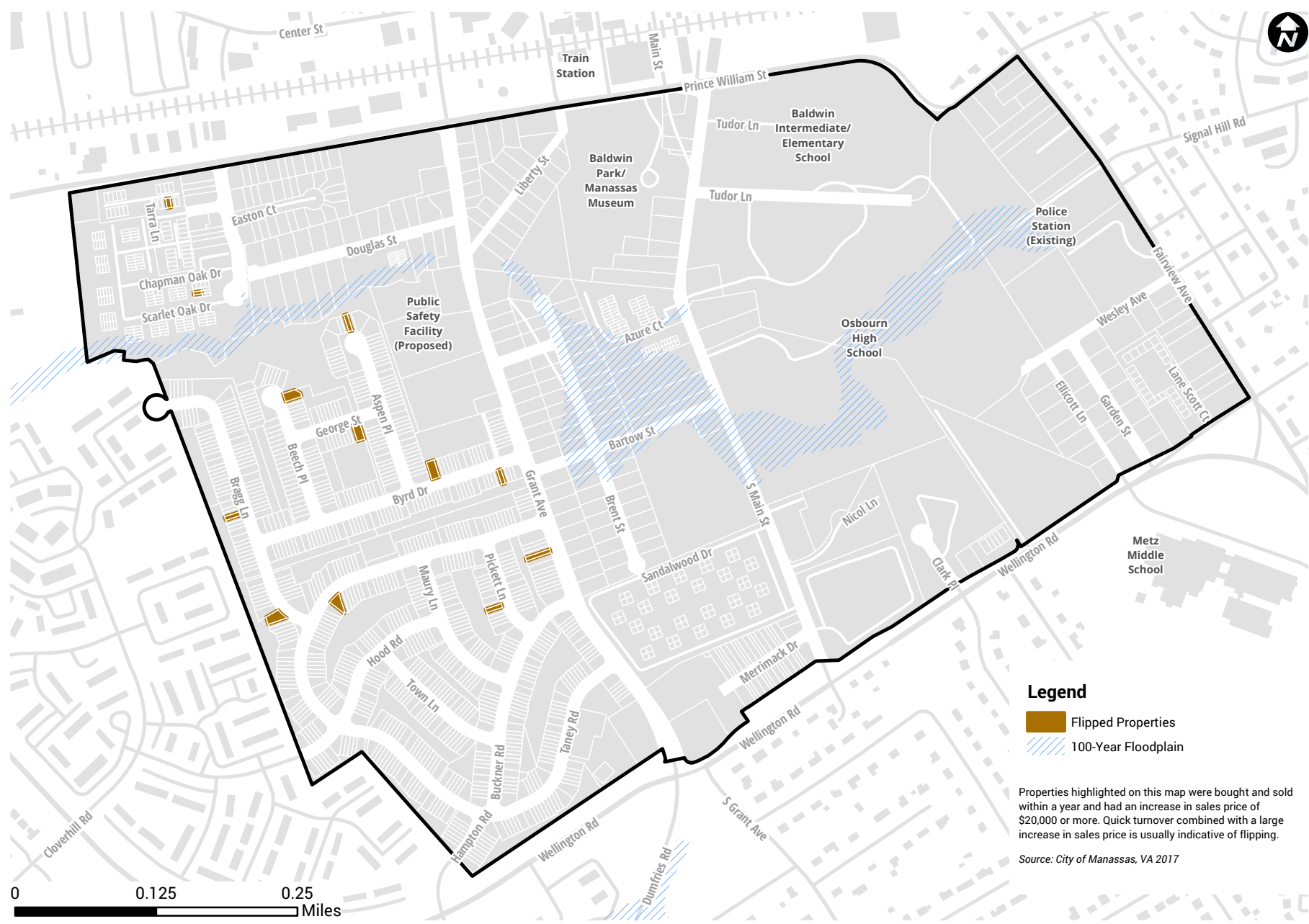
Property flipping is prevalent in Downtown South

Several properties changed ownership multiple times between 2012 and 2017, usually as a result of foreclosures which were sold to investors through auctions or short sales. These investors likely renovated the properties for sale to other investors or homebuyers for significant profit – a process known as flipping. Twelve properties in Downtown South were involved in sales transactions that suggested flipping, i.e. they were bought and sold within a year with a sales price difference greater than \$20,000. The median sales price of flipped properties was \$160,000, and the average sales price difference was \$51,242.

Flipped Properties, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Address	Flip Time (Months)	Purchase Price	Sold Price	Sales Difference
9754 Bragg Lane	1.1	\$114,400	\$155,000	\$40,600
9251 George Street	2.3	\$118,000	\$160,000	\$42,000
9713 Beech Place	2.5	\$157,000	\$215,000	\$58,000
9236 Byrd Drive	3.0	\$120,000	\$143,250	\$23,250
9720 Grant Ave	4.6	\$124,000	\$160,000	\$36,000
9395 Scarlet Oak Drive	4.9	\$106,000	\$154,000	\$48,000
9313 Tarra Lane	5.1	\$115,500	\$174,900	\$59,400
9722 Pickett Lane	5.3	\$107,150	\$150,000	\$42,850
9267 Taney Road	5.9	\$116,000	\$185,000	\$69,000
9800 Bragg Lane	6.8	\$140,000	\$197,000	\$57,000
9601 Aspen Place	8.8	\$98,200	\$187,000	\$88,800
9209 Byrd Drive	10.4	\$110,000	\$160,000	\$50,000

Downtown South Neighborhood - Flipped Properties (2012-2017)



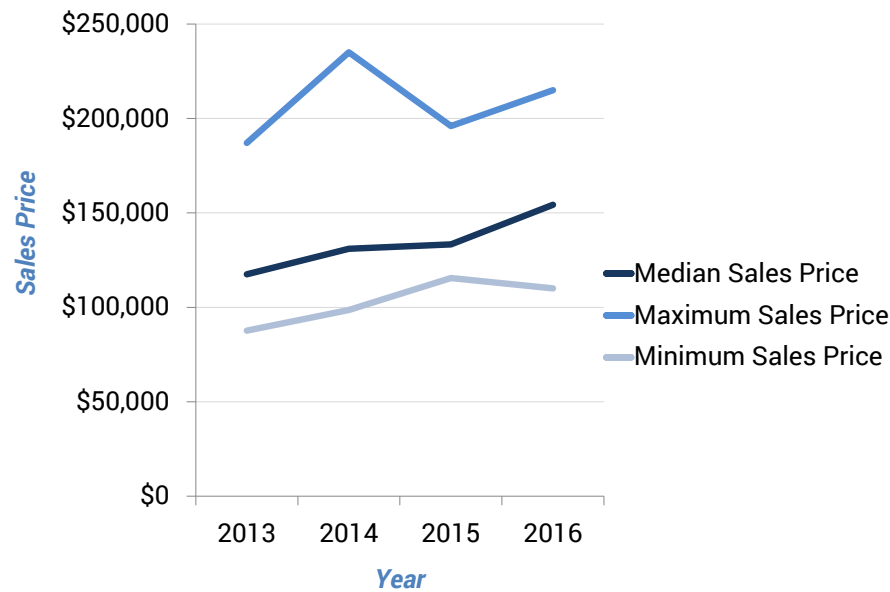
NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

Homes in Downtown South have lower values than the City overall

The median sales price for all real estate transactions in Downtown South between 2012 and 2017 was \$133,356. Sales prices ranged from a high of \$247,000 (a foreclosed condominium unit at 9303 Westfield Road that sold in 2017) to a low of \$87,650 (a townhouse at 9807 Buckner Road that sold in 2013). Median sales prices varied by year, increasing steadily from 2013 to 2016 from \$117,450 to \$154,300.⁵ The minimum and maximum sales prices also rose in this time period, but the rate of increase was less stable than the rate of increase in median sales price.

The median home value in Downtown South is \$145,900, which is 47.3% less than the City's median home value of \$276,700.⁶ These figures refer to the total value of the property, and include land value. Home values are highest along Fairview Avenue and Main Street near the museum and school complex. These homes have values of \$250,000 or higher. The lowest values are in Georgetown South and along the eastern side of Grant Avenue. All but one of the detached single-family homes along Grant Avenue have assessed values of \$125,000 or lower. The exception is 9609 Grant Avenue, which has an assessed value of \$361,000. This home is larger and of superior construction compared to the others on the street, which are all of similar size and material.

Sales Prices, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)



Properties in foreclosure generally sold for less than other properties

The median sales price for properties in foreclosure was \$124,000, compared to \$154,000 for general sales transactions. The majority of general sales were in the \$150,000 to \$199,999 category. Most foreclosed properties sold within the \$100,000 to \$149,999 range.

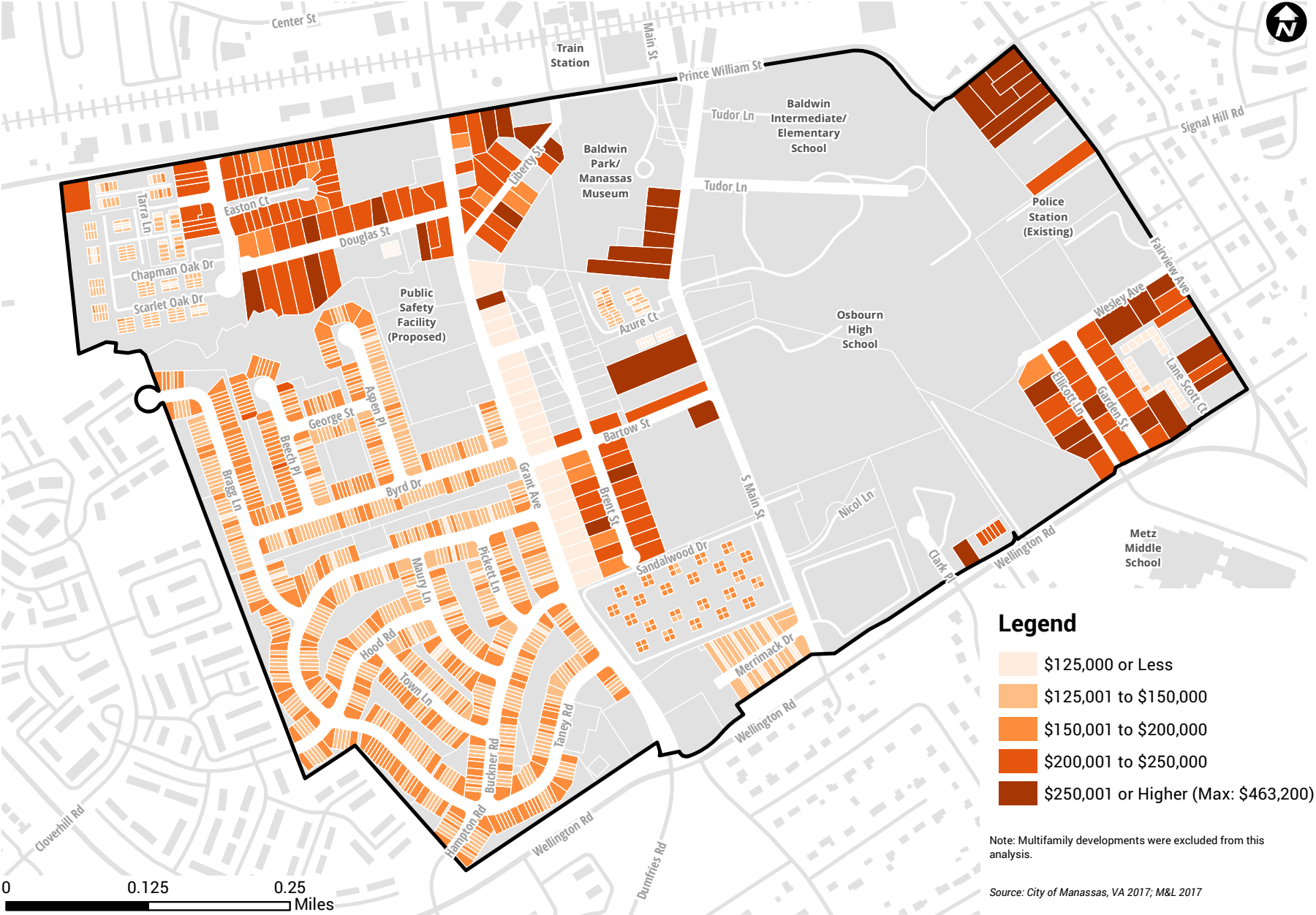
Price Categories, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Sales Price	General	Foreclosure
Less than \$50,000	-	-
\$50,000 - \$99,999	4.0%	6.5%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	32.0%	55.8%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	56.0%	11.7%
\$200,000 or Greater	8.0%	5.2%

⁵ Since full-year data is not available for 2012 and 2017, it is not appropriate to make comparisons between these years and other years.

⁶ City home value figures are from the 2015 ACS, as only neighborhood-level sales and assessment data was analyzed for this report. The ACS does not provide median sales estimates.

Downtown South Neighborhood - Median Home Values



NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

Most of the buildings on the eastern side of Grant Avenue have lower assessed values than the land they occupy

Several residential buildings in Downtown South, 104 properties in total, have lower assessed values than the land they occupy. These include a few townhouses and condominiums, most of the properties on the eastern side of Grant Avenue, and a few older multifamily developments on large parcels:

- 8812 Wesley Avenue (Manassas Arms - The owner of this property has applied for a rezoning to redevelop this property and the adjacent property at 9522 Fairview Avenue.)
- 9510 Fairview Avenue (Fairview Arms)
- 9501 Main Street (includes two buildings that are part of the Colonial Village apartment complex)

Colonial Village Apartments



Downtown South Neighborhood - Land Values vs. Building Values



Rental Market

Most rental properties in the neighborhood have three or more bedrooms

There are 1,207 rental units in Downtown South, the majority of which are in townhouses and multifamily developments. The neighborhood's median gross rent, which includes the cost of utilities in addition to contract rent, is \$1,415 overall. This is \$88 higher than the median gross rent for the City overall, a difference that most likely results from the larger proportion of rental units with three or more bedrooms in Downtown South.

Median Gross Rent, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Geography	Median Gross Rent
BG 1, CT 9103.02	\$1,283
BG 1, CT 9104.01	\$1,476
BG 2, CT 9104.01	\$1,366
BG 3, CT 9104.01	\$1,533
Downtown South	\$1,415
City of Manassas	\$1,327

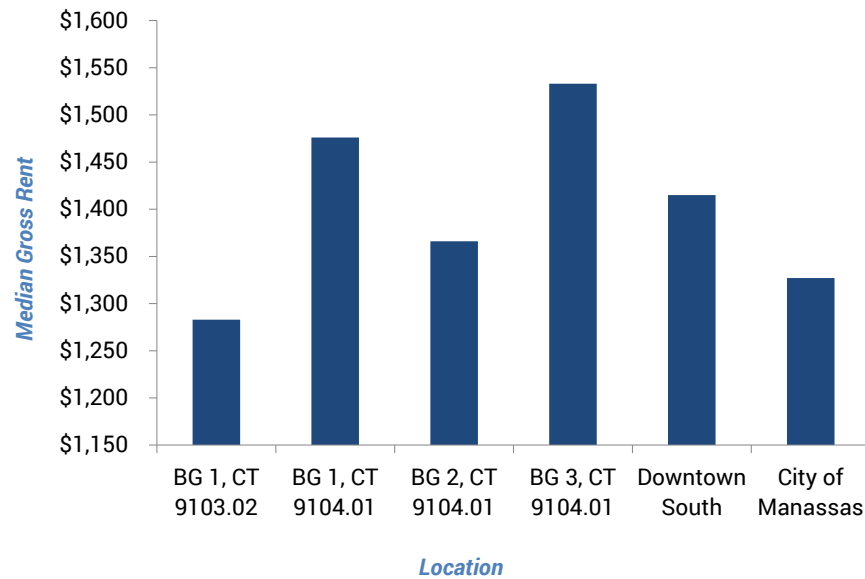
Number of Bedrooms in Renter-Occupied Units, 2015 (Source: ACS)

Number of Bedrooms	Downtown South	City
Studio	0.0%	1.7%
One Bedroom	5.7%	21.3%
Two Bedrooms	35.8%	35.3%
Three Bedrooms	53.9%	29.6%
Four Bedrooms	4.2%	9.6%
Five or More Bedrooms	0.4%	2.5%

Number of Rental Units by Structure Type, 2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Building Type	Units	Proportion
Multifamily Development	442	36.6%
Condominium	151	12.5%
Townhouse	536	44.4%
Detached Single-Family	74	6.1%
Duplex	4	0.3%

Median Gross Rent, 2015 (Source: ACS)



Most available apartments rent for over \$1,000 a month...

Rental prices advertised online are consistent with the median gross rent estimates from the Census Bureau. One-bedrooms ranged from \$1,102 to \$1,457, two-bedrooms ranged from \$1,100 to \$1,464, and three-bedrooms ranged from \$1,344 to \$1,617. Information on inclusion of utilities was not consistently available.

Advertised Rents, October 2017 (Source: Hotpads.com, VHDA)

Name	Building Type	Bedrooms	Rent
Colonial Village	Multifamily Development	1	\$1,102
Colonial Village	Multifamily Development	1	\$1,202
Courts at Historic Manassas	Multifamily Development	1	\$1,457
Kona Kai	Multifamily Development	2	\$1,100
Douglas Street Condominiums	Condominium	2	\$1,100
South Main Commons	Multifamily Development	2	\$1,166
9710 Aspen Place	Townhouse	2	\$1,299
9016 Merrimack Drive	Townhouse	2	\$1,300
9807 Town Lane	Townhouse	2	\$1,300
Colonial Village	Multifamily Development	2	\$1,325
Colonial Village	Multifamily Development	2	\$1,377
Courts at Historic Manassas	Multifamily Development	2	\$1,464
South Main Commons	Multifamily Development	3	\$1,344
Kona Kai	Multifamily Development	3	\$1,500
Colonial Village	Multifamily Development	3	\$1,617

Affordability

Many households in Downtown South spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs

Households that spend over 30% of their income on housing costs are considered “cost burdened,” as they are likely paying more for housing than they can reasonably afford. Those households spending more than half their income on housing are considered severely cost burdened, and may have trouble paying for other basic necessities such as food, transportation, and health care.

Cost burden is common in Downtown South, with 43.0% of all households paying 30% or more of their income towards housing costs, compared to 34.4% of all households in the City overall.

Severely cost burdened households account for 17.5% of all households in the neighborhood, compared to 12.9% city-wide. Cost burden is more common for renter households, over half of which are cost burdened, compared to 28.2% of all homeowner households. Block Group 1, Census Tract 9103.02 has the highest levels of cost-burden overall and for homeowner households. Renters in Block Group 2, Census Tract 9104.02 experience the highest rates of cost burden: just over 70% of all renter households in this Block Group spend more than half their income on housing costs.

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Throughout this document, affordability refers to gross housing costs that do not exceed 30% of household income. Gross housing costs for renters generally include rent and utilities, and gross housing costs for homeowners generally include mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, and homeowners association fees, if applicable.

Cost Burden , 2015 (Source: ACS)

Geography	Owners		Renters		Total	
	Cost Burdened	Severely Cost Burdened	Cost Burdened	Severely Cost Burdened	Cost Burdened	Severely Cost Burdened
BG 1, CT 9103.02	54.0%	18.3%	55.8%	21.5%	55.4%	20.9%
BG 1, CT 9104.01	22.9%	2.4%	50.0%	0.0%	32.8%	1.5%
BG 2, CT 9104.01	9.9%	9.9%	70.3%	70.3%	38.8%	38.8%
BG 3, CT 9104.01	39.4%	0.0%	36.3%	20.0%	37.0%	15.3%
Downtown South	28.2%	6.7%	51.3%	23.7%	43.0%	17.5%
City	25.9%	9.3%	49.8%	19.4%	34.4%	12.9%

Lower income renters have especially high cost burden

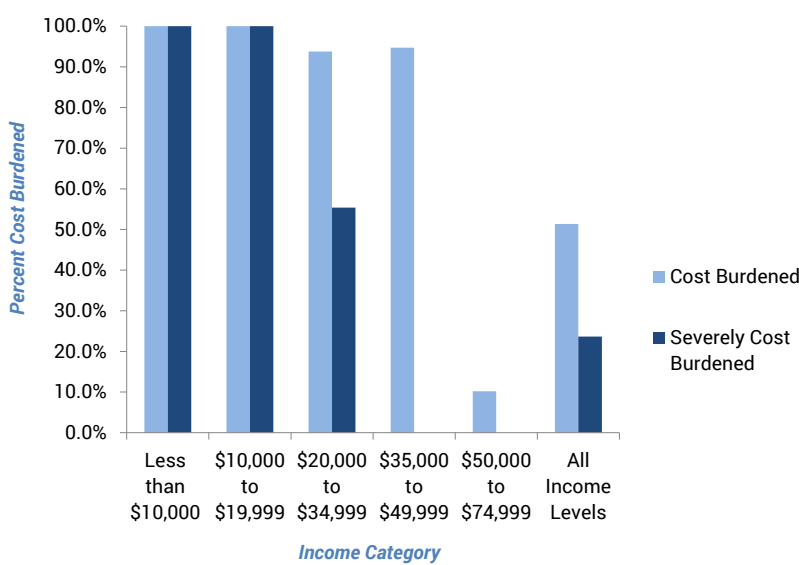
Lower income households are much more likely to experience cost burden than households in higher income brackets. The rate of cost burden for renter households in Downtown South earning \$50,000 or more was 10.2%. This jumped up to 94.7% for the next lowest income category, \$35,000 to \$49,999. According to the ACS estimates, none of the renter households earning \$75,000 or more experienced housing cost burden. Cost burden data by income category is not available for homeowners through the Census Bureau.

Housing options for low-income households are available, but limited

The cost burden information shows that lower income households have trouble affording housing in Downtown South. There are two apartment buildings in the neighborhoods reserved for such households, South Main Commons and Manassas Arms. Both were constructed through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.⁷ South Main Commons was developed in 2000 and is open to households earning less than 60% of Area Median Income. Manassas Arms was developed in 1997 and is also open to households earning less than 60% of Area Median Income. The property owner of Manassas Arms has submitted an application to rezone the property in order to construct a market-rate development once the affordability requirements expire in 2027.

Two multifamily developments, Colonial Village and Douglas Street Apartments, were designated on VHDA's housing locator website as properties that accept Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV). HCVs help lower-income households – those earning 80% of Area Median Income or less - secure housing on the private market by covering a portion of the rent, and are paid directly to the landlord.

Rate of Cost Burden by Income Category for Renter Households, 2015 (Source: ACS)



Subsidized Housing, 2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Housing Type	Units	Subsidies
Colonial Village	148	Accepts Housing Choice Vouchers
Douglas Street Apartments	13	Accepts Housing Choice Vouchers
Manassas Arms	24	Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
South Main Commons	82	Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

⁷ The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program and Housing Choice Voucher programs will be discussed in more detail in the Evaluation of Existing Housing Resources.

Downtown South Neighborhood - Subsidized Rental Developments



Quality of Life

Environmental and Public Health

Households in Downtown South have lower access to opportunity compared to the City overall

The Office of Minority Health and Health Equity of the Virginia Department of Health developed a Health Opportunity Index (HOI)⁸ in 2015 for every Census Tract in the Commonwealth. The HOI explores the social determinants of health via 13 indicators grouped into several profiles:

- Community Environment Profile: Air Quality, Population Turnover, Population Density, Walkability
- Consumer Opportunity Profile : Housing and Transportation Affordability, Education, Food Accessibility, Material Deprivation (overcrowding, unemployment, % of persons without a vehicle, % of persons who rent)
- Economic Opportunity Profile : Employment Accessibility, Income Inequality (Gini Index), Job Participation
- Wellness Disparity Profile: Access to Care, Racial and Ethnic Segregation

The HOI ranks each Census Tract according to its level of opportunity for each profile and overall from “Very Low” to “Very High.” The table below summarizes the HOI data for the Census Tracts that fall within the Downtown South neighborhood. While the City ranks highly in the index – 9th overall in the Commonwealth of Virginia – households in Downtown South have low to average health opportunity.

Health Opportunity Index, 2015 (Source: Virginia Department of Health)

Index/Profile	CT 9104.01	CT 9103.02	City
Health Opportunity Index	Low	Average	Very High
Community Environment Profile	Very High	High	Very High
Consumer Opportunity Profile	Low	Very Low	Average
Economic Opportunity Profile	Very High	Very High	Very High
Wellness Disparity Profile	High	Low	High

A major health issue in the Downtown South neighborhood is the high number of uninsured residents. Over 30% of residents in Tract 9104.02, which contains the largest proportion of Downtown South residents, did not have health insurance in 2015. In Tract 9103.02, roughly 16% were insured. Comparatively, the uninsured rates for the City and Virginia overall are 19% and 11%, respectively.

Environmental health in the neighborhood is generally strong, as indicated by the High to Very High ranking in the Community Environment Profile of the Health Opportunity Index. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, there are no major environmental hazards such as brownfields or Superfund sites in Downtown South.

Transportation and Access to Amenities

Downtown South has good access to transit and many amenities within walking distance

Transit

The Downtown South neighborhood has excellent access to regional transportation. Most residents are within a 20-minute walk of Manassas Station, which is serviced by three Amtrak trains and the Virginia Railway Express, which is a weekday commuter service to D.C. Amtrak’s Cardinal line provides service to New York, Washington D.C., Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Chicago three times a week, and its Crescent line travels south daily from New York through D.C. and Atlanta to New Orleans. The Northeast Regional line provides multiple daily trips to Boston, Providence/Springfield, Hartford, New York, D.C., Lynchburg/Richmond, Petersburg, Norfolk/Newport News and Virginia Beach.

⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/omhhe/hoi/what-is-the-hoi/definitions>

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

Weekday local bus service is also available within the neighborhood through the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC). The OmniLink-South bus travels between Manassas Mall and the Oaks of Wellington with two stops along Grant Avenue. This service connects to the OmniLink-North route, which travels between Manassas Mall and Northern Virginia Community College, and the PRTC Cross County route, which travels from Manassas Mall to the PRTC Transit Center in Dale City. OmniLink buses also connect to the OmniRide commuter service into D.C. and to the Metro Direct bus which travels to the Tyson's Corner Metro Station. Evening service for all fixed routes in Manassas is limited, and weekend service is not available.

[Walkability, Biking, and Access to Amenities](#)

According to the U.S. EPA's National Walkability Index, walkability in the Downtown South neighborhood is "above average." Sidewalks are available through the vast majority of the neighborhood, though the following residential streets lack pedestrian routes: Merrimack Drive, Brent Street, Ellicott Lane, and parts of Garden Street. Pedestrian crossings are somewhat limited along the main corridors within Downtown South. Grant Avenue has one signaled crosswalk at Byrd Drive, Fairview Avenue has one signaled crosswalk at Signal Hill Road and a crosswalk with no signal at Tudor Lane, and Main Street has several crosswalks but no signals.

Several community facilities and amenities are within walking distance of the majority of the neighborhood's residents. Baldwin Elementary, Baldwin Intermediate, Osbourn High School, the Police Station, and the Manassas Museum are located within Downtown South. The Grant Avenue Shopping Center is in the middle of the neighborhood and is home to a laundromat,

gas station, several restaurants, and small retail outfits including a convenience store. Another gas station and small shopping center is located at the southern end of the neighborhood at Grant Avenue and Wellington Road. South of this intersection and just outside the neighborhood are the closest major supermarket and pharmacy at Wellington Station Shopping Center, which is within a 10- to 30-minute walk of most residents. Finally, the Historic Downtown Manassas business district is a 10- to 20-minute walk north of the neighborhood, providing residents with access to City Hall, the Post Office, banks, churches, restaurants, coffee shops, salons, and assorted retailers.

The Downtown South neighborhood is also accessible by bike. Although there are no dedicated bike lanes or paths within the neighborhood, there is a shared use path on Wellington Road, which forms the neighborhood's southern border. Additionally, the entirety of Main Street is a posted shared road, as is Prince William Street from Grant Avenue to Fairview Avenue. The posted speed limit throughout Downtown South is 25 mph or lower, which provides a safer, more comfortable environment for cyclists sharing the road with motor vehicles.

[Open Space and Recreation](#)

The City of Manassas completed a Parks, Recreation and Cultural Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan in late 2016 that examined how well current public facilities are serving the community. This plan found that there are 6.9 acres of parkland/open space per 1,000 City residents, which is lower than the national average of 9.5 acres. In Downtown South, there are approximately 2 acres of parkland/open space per 1,000 residents.

Baldwin Park is the only public park within the boundaries of Downtown South. This 9.5-acre park has a short path, picnic tables, a small playground, and the Manassas Museum. Winterset Park is a 3.9-acre park located about a half mile south of the neighborhood near the Wellington Station Shopping Center, and features basketball courts, a playground, and picnic area. Baseball diamonds, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playground equipment are available on school property within Downtown South, but public access is restricted. Georgetown South, South Main Commons, Colonial Village, and Wildwood Condominiums have small, private recreational facilities for their residents.

The Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan found a deficit of rectangular fields (e.g. soccer, football, lacrosse), playgrounds, tennis courts, and ADA accessible facilities throughout the City. A community survey conducted as part of the planning process noted that the Hispanic community – a community that comprises over 60% of the population in Downtown South - felt underserved by existing parks and recreation facilities and programming, and specifically would like better access to soccer fields and aquatic facilities.

Crime

Crime rates in Downtown South have decreased since 2012, and most crimes are non-violent

Arrest data from July 2012 to July 2017, provided by the City of Manassas Police Department, was analyzed to understand patterns and trends in illegal activity within the Downtown South neighborhood and compared to the City overall. Generally, crime has decreased both Citywide and in Downtown South since 2012. The Citywide crime rate was 56.4/1,000 persons in 2013, and this fell to 39.1/1,000 persons in 2016. Crime rates are higher in Downtown South, but they also decreased in this time period, from 78.2 to 46.7/1,000 persons. Violent crime rates decreased as well, however, violent crimes as a percentage of all crime increased for both the City and Downtown South.

The most common type of arrest in the City and Downtown South between July 2012 and July 2017 was for drunkenness, followed by possession of marijuana. These accounted for a combined 27.1% and 23.1% of all arrests in the City and Downtown South, respectively.

Crime Rates, 2013 - 2016* (Source: City of Manassas)

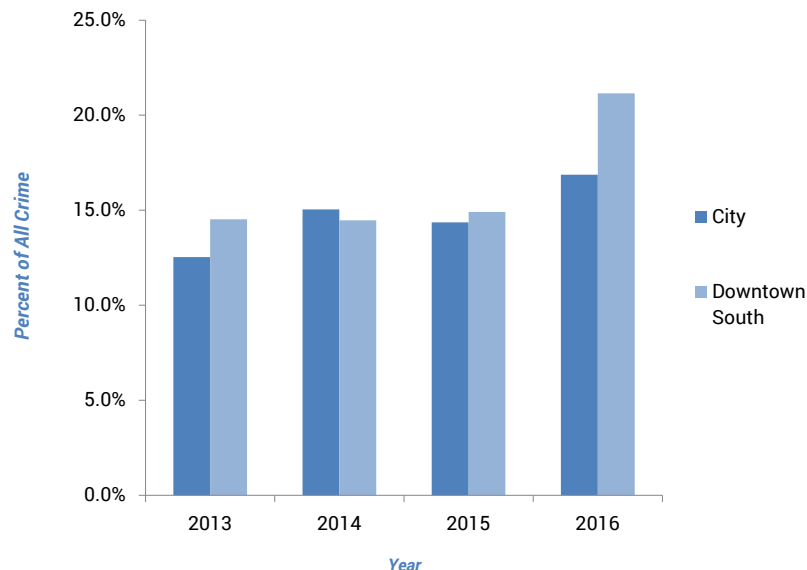
Location	2013	2014	2015	2016
City	56.4	48.7	39.8	39.1
Downtown South	78.2	59.8	38.8	46.7

*When examining trends between years, only full-year data was analyzed (2013 through 2016)

Violent Crime Rates, 2013 - 2016 (Source: City of Manassas)

Location	2013	2014	2015	2016
City	7.1	7.3	5.7	6.6
Downtown South	11.4	8.7	5.8	9.9

Violent Crime as a Percent of All Crime, 2013 - 2016 (Source: City of Manassas)



Top Ten Charges, 2012-2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Charge	City	Downtown South
Drunkenness, M	14.4%	12.2%
Possession of Marijuana, M	12.6%	11.7%
Warrant Arrest, M	11.5%	9.6%
Assault & Battery -Family Member, M	6.6%	7.9%
Warrant Arrest, F	5.8%	3.1%
Disorderly Conduct, M	4.3%	5.1%
Drinking Alcohol in Public, M	3.6%	8.5%
Trespassing, M	3.3%	7.1%
Assault & Battery, M	3.1%	2.9%
Possession Schedule I/II Controlled Substance, F	2.3%	2.4%
Percent of All Arrests	67.5%	70.4%

* M = Misdemeanor; F = Felony

VIOLENT CRIME:

Offenses which involve force or threat of force., i.e. assault, robbery, rape, murder.

Residents living in Downtown South are more likely to witness or be victims of a crime compared to the City overall

Spatially analyzing arrest incidents indicates that the Downtown South neighborhood is a crime hot spot within the City of Manassas. A hot spot is an area where high numbers of arrests are surrounded by other areas with high numbers of arrests. Essentially, this means that residents in Downtown South are more likely to witness or be victims of a crime compared to the City overall. Another crime hotspot in the City, specifically for violent crime, is in the Sudley Road/Godwin Drive area near the Manassas Mall.

Concentration of crime varies within the Downtown South neighborhood. Generally, the Georgetown South area, the Grant Avenue Shopping Center, and Osbourn High School are crime hotspots. However, isolating violent crimes reveals that much of Georgetown South is actually a cold spot for crime compared to the rest of the neighborhood. The violent crime hotspots in the Downtown South neighborhood are near the Manassas Arms apartments and the area around the Colonial Village and South Main Commons apartments.

Methodology

Spatial analysis of local crime data was conducted using ESRI's Spatial Statistics Hot Spot Analysis tool, which uses the Getis-Ord Gi* algorithm to identify statistically significant spatial clusters of crime in the City and Downtown South neighborhood.

First, coincident and clustered crime events were aggregated to generate an input field for analysis using an XY tolerance of 16 feet, the average length of a neighborhood block. Next, the Hot Spot Analysis tool was used to find statistically significant clusters, which refers to clusters that are surrounded by other clusters.

The hot spot analysis uses a fixed Euclidean distance band that represents the distance at which maximum spatial clustering occurs. This distance is calculated using incremental spatial autocorrelation to note where z-scores (standard deviations) appear to peak.

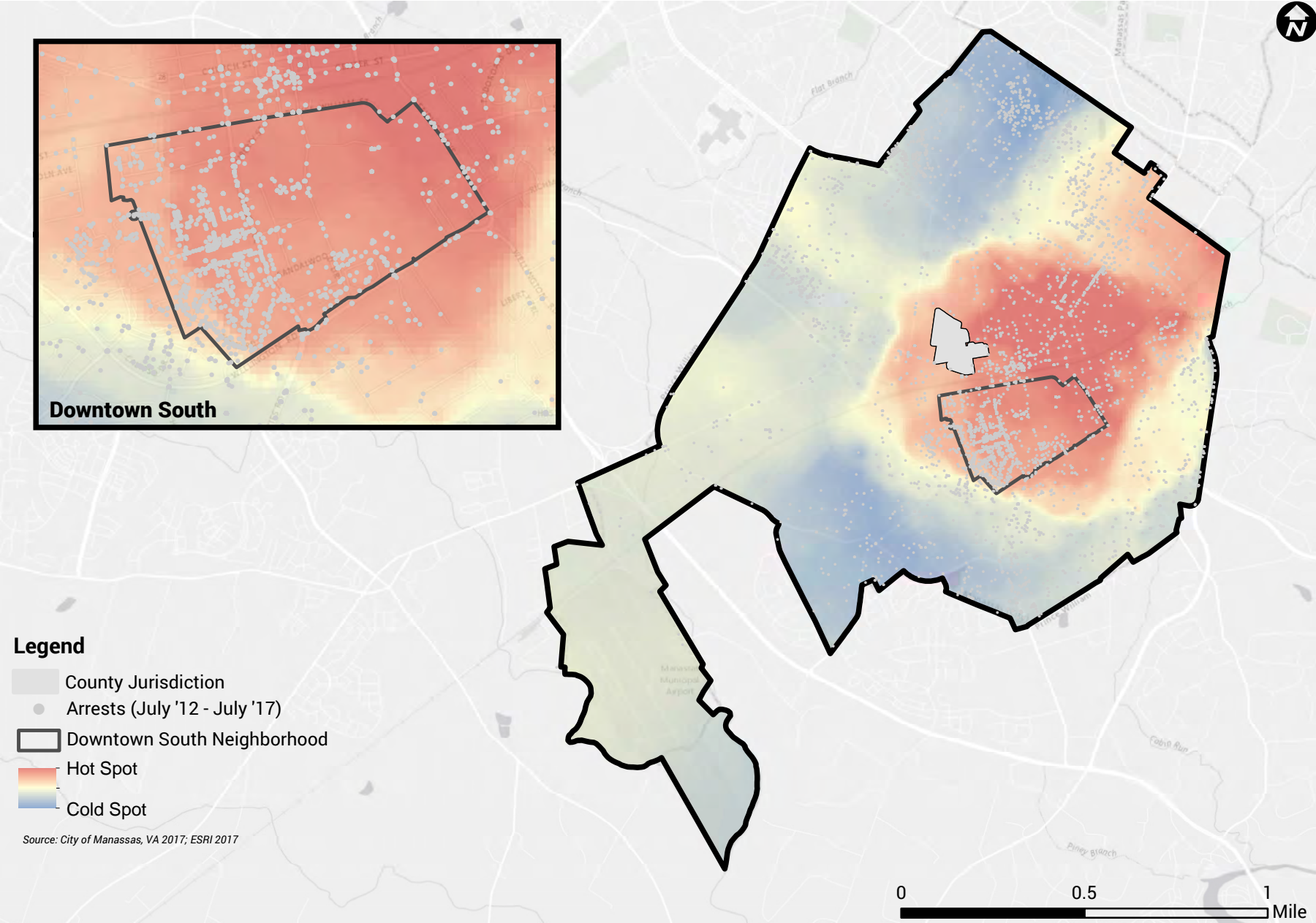
Hot spot analysis generates a z-score and p-value (probability) for each cluster. A high z-score and small p-value for a feature indicates a spatial clustering of high values. A low negative z-score and small p-value indicates a spatial clustering of low values. The higher (or lower) the z-score, the more intense the clustering. A z-score near zero indicates no apparent spatial clustering.

The resulting z-scores were mapped to create a smooth, interpolated surface using an inverse distance weighted technique.

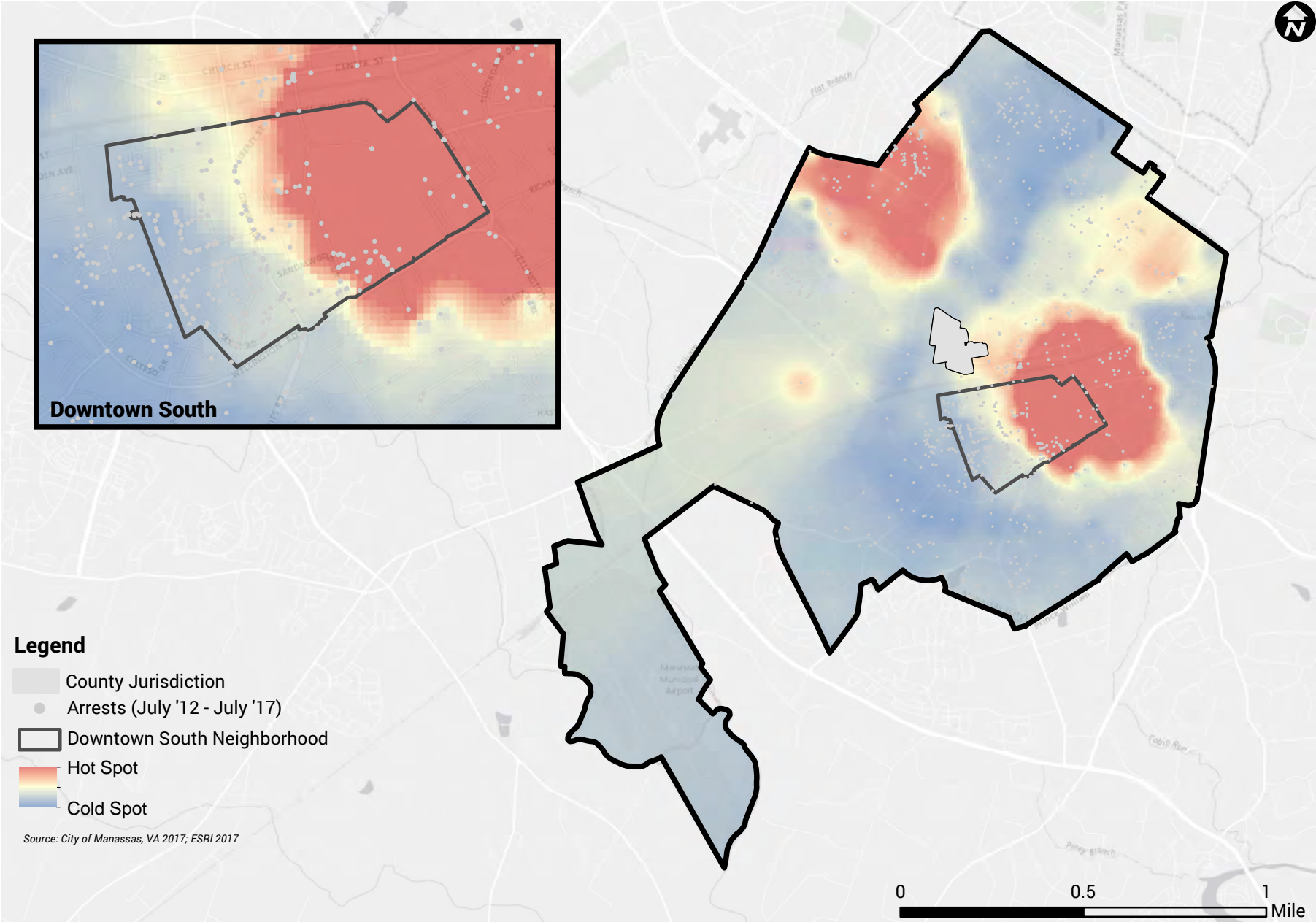
More information about the hot spot analysis and Getis-Ord Gi* algorithm can be found on ESRI's website: <http://desktop.arcgis.com/en/arcmap/10.3/tools/spatial-statistics-toolbox/hot-spot-analysis.htm>

More information about the inverse distance weighted technique can also be found on ESRI's website: <http://desktop.arcgis.com/en/arcmap/10.3/tools/3d-analyst-toolbox/how-idw-works.htm>

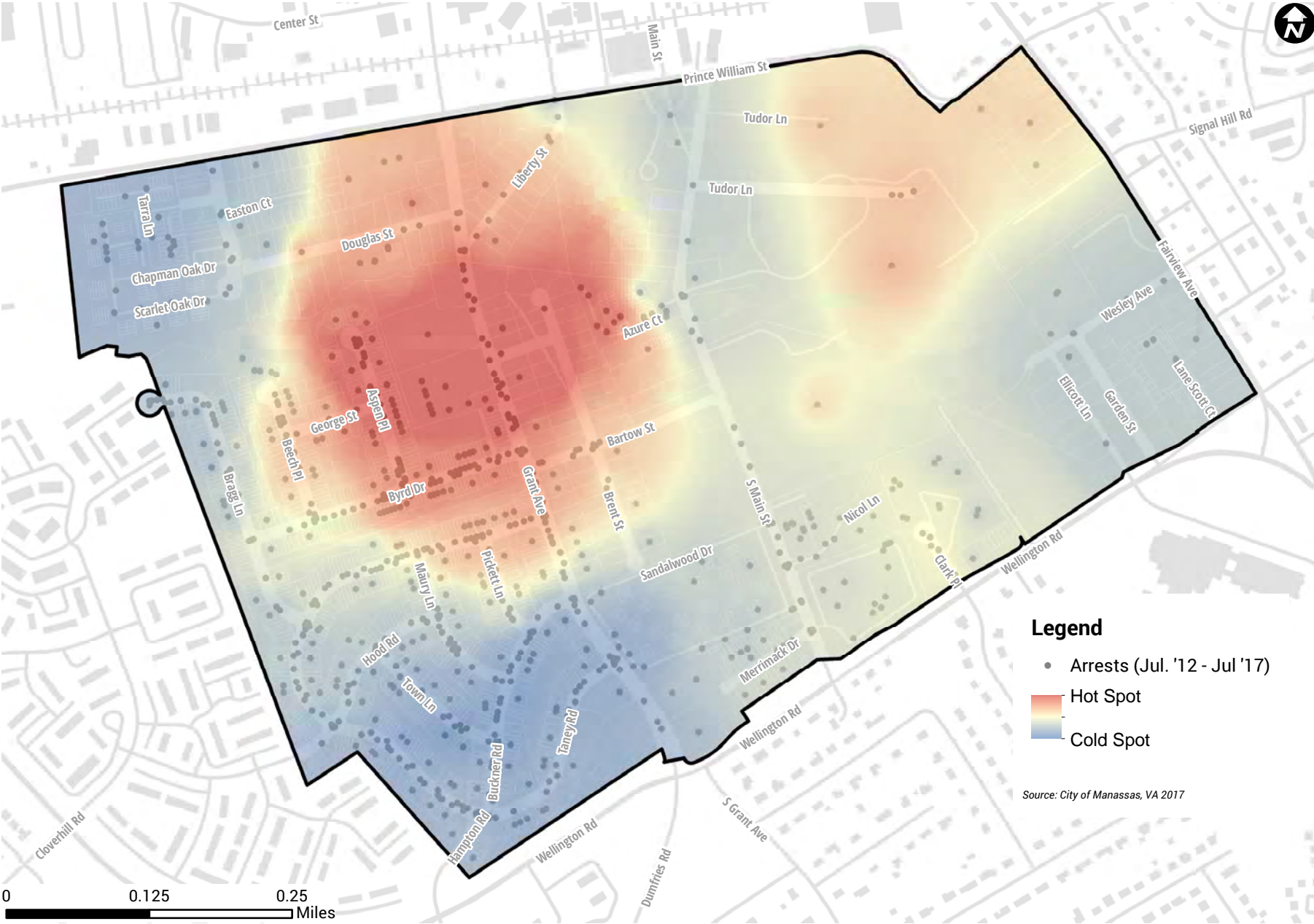
City of Manassas - Crime Hotspots (All Arrests)



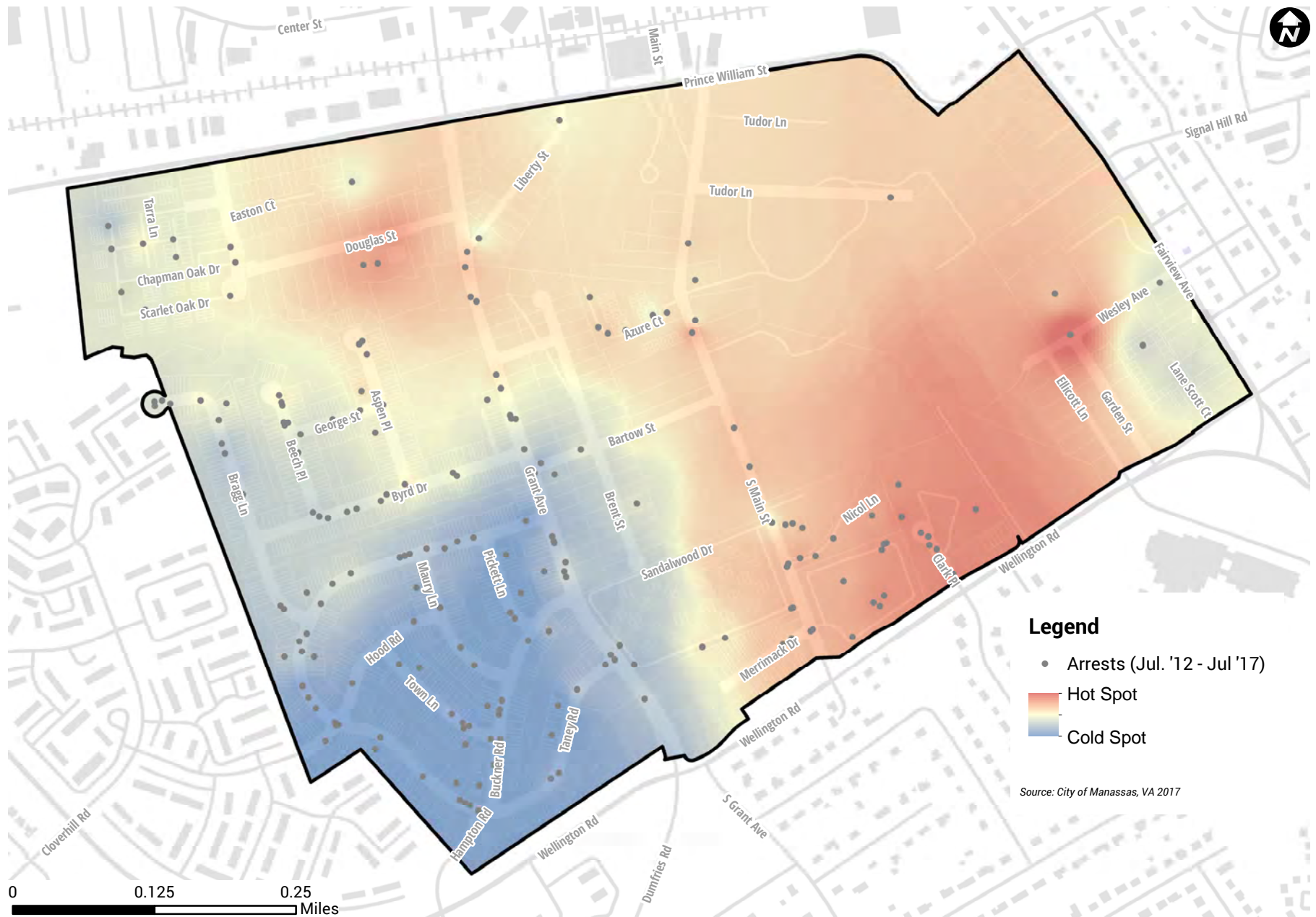
City of Manassas - Crime Hotspots (Violent Crime)



Downtown South Neighborhood - Crime Hotspots (All Arrests)



Downtown South Neighborhood - Crime Hotspots (Violent Crimes)



HOUSING & PROPERTY CONDITIONS



Introduction

Downtown South's 1,537 parcels were surveyed by consultants in mid-September of 2017 to develop an understanding of exterior housing conditions in the neighborhood. The consultant team visually assessed each residential structure in the study area from street level, noting visible deficiencies using a standardized data collection form.

Data Collection Process

The following data was collected for all parcels in Downtown South:

- Parcel ID
 - Address
 - Presence of structure
 - Land Use
- For parcels with residential structures, additional data was collected:
- Structure Type
 - Foundation Condition (Good or Deteriorating)
 - Roof Condition (Good, Shingle Repair, Chimney Repair, Replace)¹
 - Siding/Stucco Condition (Good, Patch/Paint, Replace)
 - Window Condition (Good, Repair/Replace <25%, Repair/Replace 25%-50%, Repair/Replace 50%-75%, Repair/Replace 75%+)
 - Boarded (Yes, No)
 - Overgrown (Yes, No)
 - Graffiti (Yes, No)
 - Accessory Structure Condition (Good, Fair, Poor, Deteriorating, N/A)
 - Junk (None, Vehicle, Other)
 - Condition of Common Areas of Multifamily Structures (Overflowing Trash, Overgrown Landscaping/Frontage, Repave Parking Areas, Deteriorating Structures, Junk, N/A)²

¹ For the Roof Condition category, both Shingle Repair and Chimney Repair were noted if both conditions were present.

² For the Common Area category, multiple conditions were noted if present.

OVERALL PROPERTY CONDITION

Each residential structure was assigned an overall property condition rating - Good, Fair, Poor, or Deteriorating - based on the criteria outlined on this page and the next.

Good



- No major conditions noted (i.e. roof replacement, window replacement, siding replacement, foundation issues)
- One or two minor repairs may be necessary, such as repainting or nailing down a loose shingle
- One or two minor code violations may be present – e.g. tall grass

Fair



- Extent of code violation conditions – such as extreme overgrowth - may have triggered a “Fair” rating
- At least one major condition or several minor conditions noted

OVERALL PROPERTY CONDITION

Poor



- Presence of broken or boarded window/s automatically triggered a “Poor” or lower rating
- Multiple major conditions noted

Deteriorating



- Windows and doors are boarded
- Structure shows severe signs of damage and neglect

Most properties in Downtown South are in good condition, but there are two clusters of properties with deficiencies

The vast majority (98.4%) of residential properties in Downtown South are in good condition overall. Most of the properties in fair, poor, or deteriorating condition were dispersed throughout the neighborhood. However, two clusters of properties in fair to deteriorating condition existed at the time of the survey:

- Six single-family homes along Liberty Street
 - Two in deteriorating condition (both vacant)
 - Two in poor condition (one vacant, but actively being repaired)
 - Two in fair condition
- Three single-family homes along Grant Avenue in poor condition

The City is proactive with code enforcement and is already working with property owners to address these issues, as shown in the Residential Code Enforcement Cases map (p. 56).

Property Condition, 2017 (Source: M&L)

Overall Property Condition	Number	Percent
Good	1,406	98.4%
Fair	9	0.6%
Poor	11	0.8%
Deteriorating	3	0.2%
Parcels with Residential Structures*	1,429	-

This does not include common areas, unless the common area and structure/s were on the same parcel.

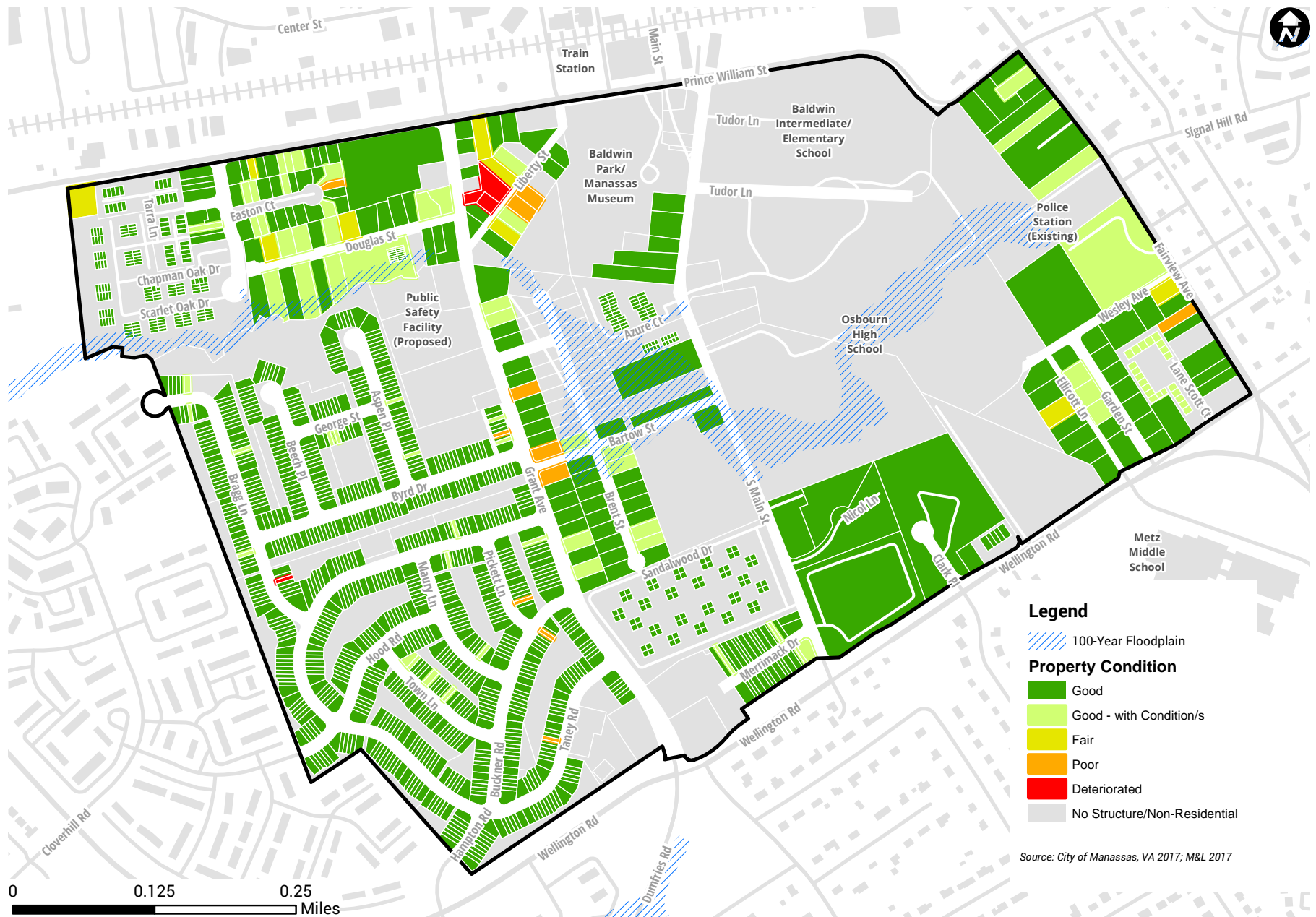
Property Deficiencies, 2017 (Source: M&L)

Overall Property Condition	Number	Percent
Siding/Stucco - Patch/Paint	53	46.9%
Junk - Other	20	17.7%
Overgrown	20	17.7%
Shingles - Repair	14	12.4%
Chimney - Repair	8	7.1%
Roof - Replace	8	7.1%
Siding/Stucco - Replace	8	7.1%
Fence - Repair/Replace**	7	6.2%
Boarded	4	3.5%
Junk - Vehicle	4	3.5%
Windows - Replace 25% - 50%	4	3.5%
Windows - Replace < 25%	3	2.7%
Windows - Replace 50% - 75%	2	1.8%
Accessory < Good	1	0.9%

**Does not add up to 100% because some properties had more than one minor deficiency*

*** This category was not listed on the survey form, but consultants reported fence issues in a general "Notes" section.*

Downtown South Neighborhood - Overall Property Condition



The most common deficiencies were peeling paint and damaged siding

A total of 113 properties in Downtown South had one or more deficiencies. These properties account for 7.9% of all parcels with residential structures or common areas visible from the street.³ The most prevalent conditions were peeling paint and damaged siding, which were found in 46.9% of properties with deficiencies and 3.7% of all residential properties in the neighborhood. Junk, overgrowth, and minor roof repairs were the next most common kinds of deficiencies in Downtown South.

Some properties in good condition overall had minor deficiencies

Of the 1,406 properties in good condition, 83 (5.9%) had one or more minor issues such as peeling paint, broken fences, or overgrown yards. Overall, these properties were dispersed fairly evenly throughout the neighborhood. The Douglas Street and Easton Court developments and Wedgewood Condominiums had higher concentrations of “good” properties with minor deficiencies compared to other parts of Downtown South.

“Good” Properties with Minor Deficiencies, 2017 (Source: M&L)

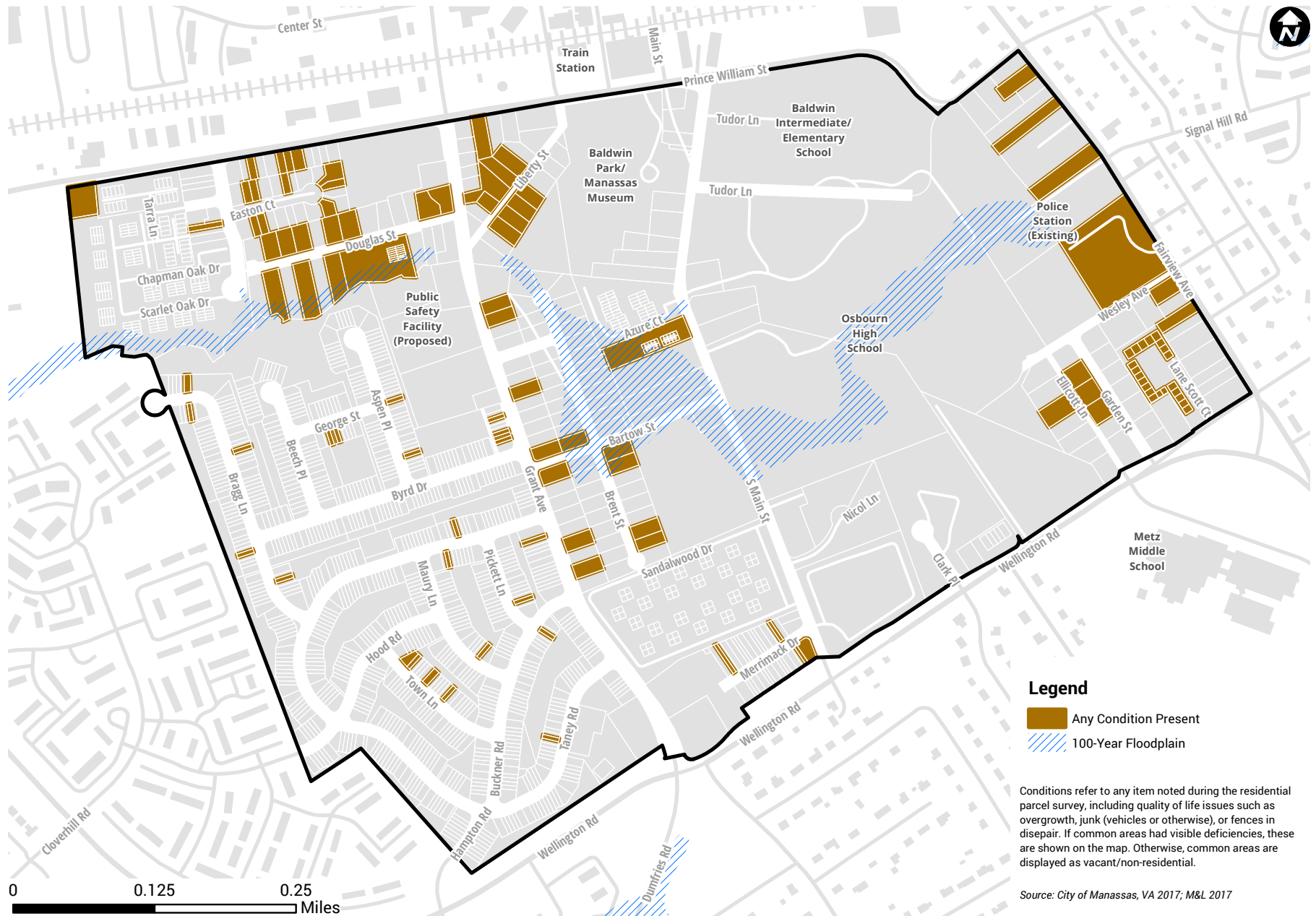
Deficiencies	Number	Percent of all deficiencies
Siding/Stucco – Paint/Patch	39	47.0%
Junk – Other	16	19.3%
Shingles – Repair	11	13.3%
Overgrowth	9	10.8%
Repair/Replace fence**	6	7.2%
Chimney – Repair	4	4.8%
Siding/Stucco – Repair	2	2.4%
Accessory Structure < Good	1	1.2%

**Does not add up to 100% because some properties had more than one minor deficiency*

***This category was not listed on the survey form, but consultants reported fence issues in a general “Notes” section.*

³ This equates to 1,435 parcels in total. Six common were visible from the street and included in this analysis: Tarra Lane, Rolling Oaks, Wildwood Condominiums, Saratoga Springs, Kona Kai Apartments, and Wedgewood Condominiums. Only Kona Kai had visible deficiencies; the fence was damaged and in need of repair.

Downtown South Neighborhood - Any Condition Present



Quality of Life Conditions

About 3% of all properties had visible quality of life issues

A total of 43 residential properties (3.0%) had “quality of life” conditions, which refer to overgrowth, junk (vehicles or otherwise), and/or fences in bad repair. These issues did not impact a property’s overall condition rating, except in the case of extreme overgrowth. However, they are code enforcement violations, and may indicate the need for intervention to prevent further neglect.

Clusters of quality of life conditions in Downtown South were present in the Liberty Street and Douglas Street areas, Brent Street, and Garden Street. These areas also have clusters of properties that have received code enforcement citations in the past five years (FY 2012 to FY 2017).

Code Enforcement

The most common types of code enforcement violations are rental housing maintenance issues, tall grass, and trash

The City’s Property Code Enforcement Division conducts proactive inspections and investigations of possible code violations to ensure that properties meet the minimum standards of the Virginia Maintenance Code and the Manassas Zoning Ordinance. According to the City’s Community Development Division, proactive code enforcement inspections have targeted the Downtown South neighborhood in recent years.

The most common types of violations in the neighborhood are rental housing maintenance issues, tall grass, and trash.

Evidence from the field survey indicates that the City’s proactive code enforcement efforts have been successful. Several areas that have clusters of recent code enforcement citations, as shown in the Residential Code Enforcement Cases map, did not exhibit clustering of quality of life issues in the September 2017 field assessment:

- Merrimack Gardens
- Georgetown South
- Grant Avenue

While the quality of life issues assessed in the field survey do not address every single possible code enforcement violation, they include the most common violations – trash, tall grass, junk vehicles, broken fences, etc.

Properties with Quality of Life Conditions, 2017 (Source: M&L)

Deficiencies	Number	Percent *
Overgrowth	20	46.5%
Junk – Other	20	46.5%
Repair/Replace fence**	7	16.3%
Junk – Vehicle	4	9.3%

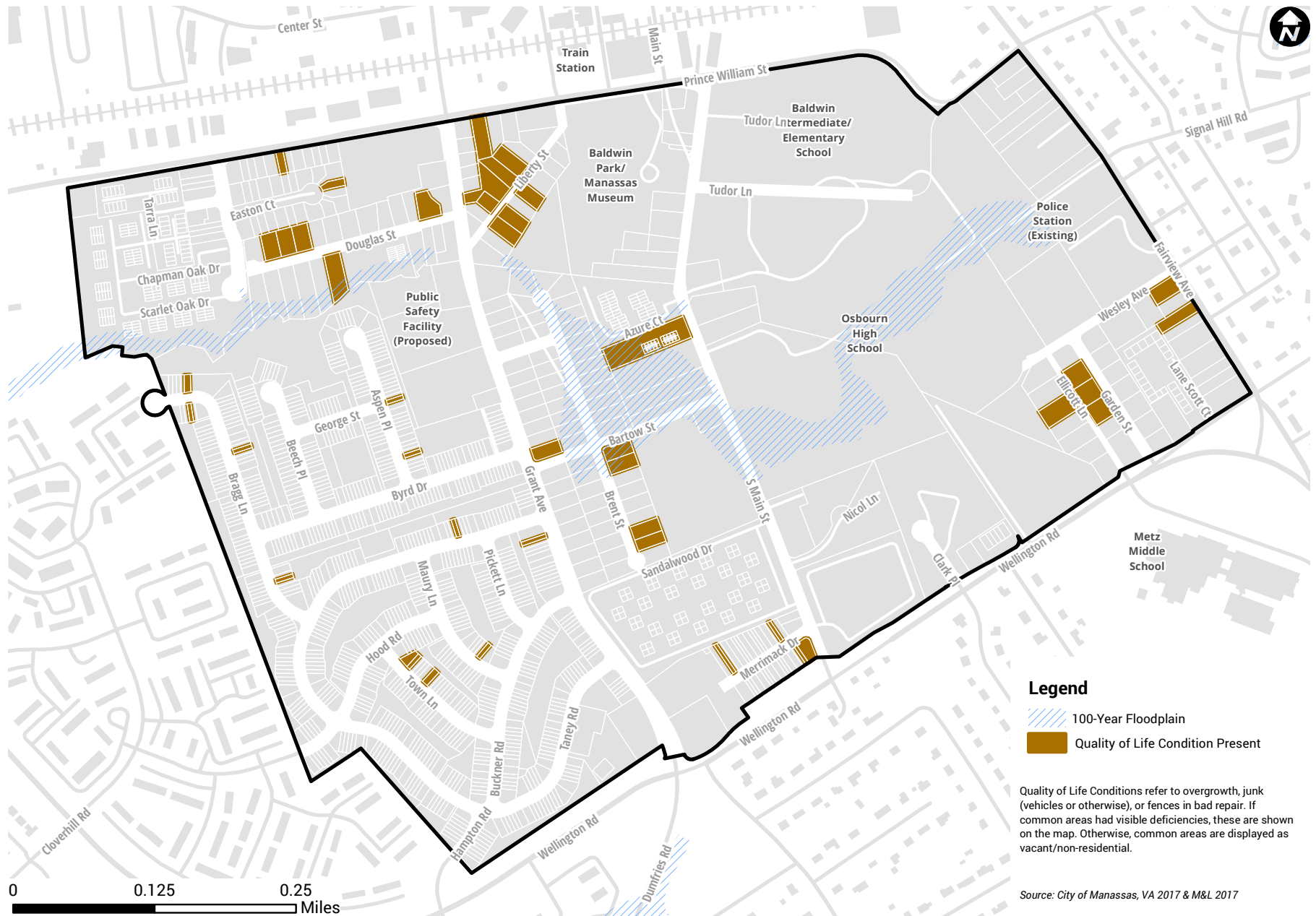
**Does not add up to 100% because some properties had more than one minor deficiency*

***This category was not listed on the survey form, but consultants reported fence issues in a general “Notes” section.*

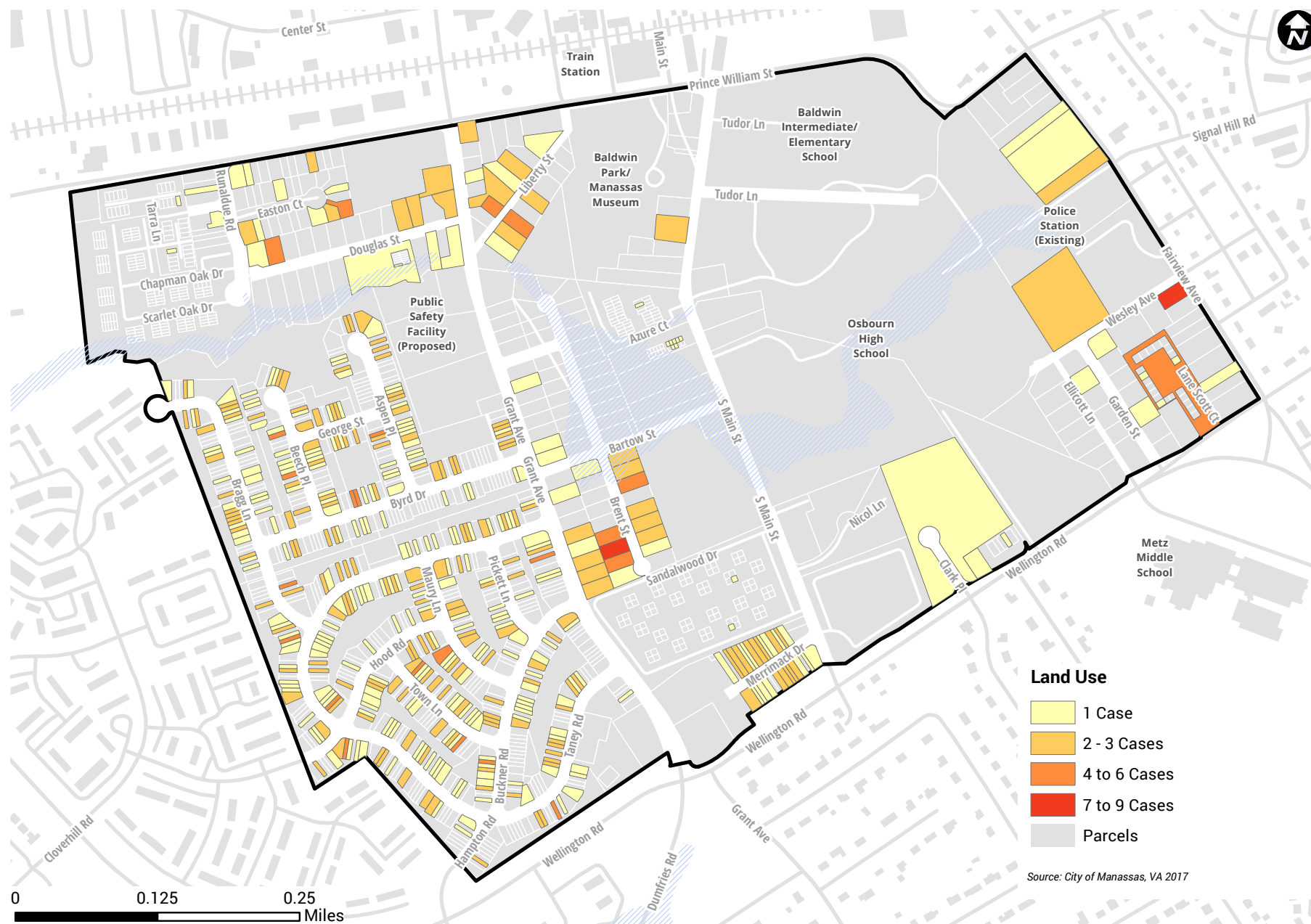
Top Five Code Enforcement Violations in Downtown South, FY 2012 - FY 2017 (Source: City of Manassas)

Deficiencies	Number	Percent *
Rental Housing Inspection or Violation	334	39.9%
Tall Grass/Trash	245	29.2%
Inoperable Vehicle	50	6.0%
Other Virginia Maintenance Code Violation	37	4.4%
Work Without Permits	26	3.1%

Downtown South Neighborhood - Quality of Life Conditions



Downtown South Neighborhood - Residential Code Enforcement Cases



HOUSING & PROPERTY CONDITIONS

This fence is in need of repair.



Parking uncovered trailers in a yard is a code enforcement violation.



This yard is overgrown.



Bilingual signs in Georgetown South inform residents about trash schedules.



EXISTING RESOURCES



Introduction

Several programs and services related to housing preservation, development, and affordability are available to City residents, including those who live in the Downtown South neighborhood. These existing housing initiatives and financial resources are discussed below.

Local Programs

Federal Funding for Housing and Community Development Programs

Federal funds support the majority of the City's housing initiatives, and are administered by Prince William County. The City of Manassas has received federal funding for housing and community development programs on an annual basis through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) since 1992 as part of the Prince William Area Entitlement Urban County. These funds are administered by Prince William County's Office of Housing and Community Development with input from the City of Manassas and the City of Manassas Park.

The City of Manassas receives allocations for the following HUD programs, both of which are targeted to low- and moderate-income individuals and families:

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG): The City is typically allocated \$120,000-\$160,000 annually in CDBG funds. Eligible housing-related activities include housing rehabilitation,

homebuyer assistance, code enforcement, and demolition.

- HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME): The City is typically allocated \$30,000 - \$50,000 annually in HOME funding. These funds can be used for housing rehabilitation and construction, rental assistance, and homebuyer assistance.

These programs support the County's Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Program, First-Time Homebuyer Program, Credit Counseling Program, and Competitive Grants, which are detailed below.

Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Program

The Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Program (NHRP) is funded through the CDBG program. NHRP assists owner-occupied households living in Prince William County, the City of Manassas, and the City of Manassas Park with correcting health, safety, and energy efficiency issues. The program aims to correct exterior and interior deficiencies, make accessibility modifications, correct health and safety violations, improve weatherization and energy conservation, and correct lead-based paint violations. General improvements are also eligible under this program. These include alterations, kitchen, bathroom, accessibility modifications, carpeting, fencing and landscaping.

Eligible applicants must have a gross household income at or below 80% of the Washington, D.C. MSA median income, adjusted for family size. Households with incomes at or below

50% of area median income receive priority for assistance.

The first \$25,000 of assistance is provided as a grant. If additional rehabilitation assistance is provided, the balance is secured by a thirty-year deferred deed of trust on the property. The trust will not be due and payable until the property ceases to be the principal residence, or is sold, or the borrower fails or neglects to pay the taxes, assessments, or premiums for hazard, flood (if required) or mortgage insurance, or terms of the deed of trust are violated.

Generally, funding allows for 4 - 5 Manassas households to receive assistance through this program each year.

First-Time Homebuyer Program (FTHB)

The County's First-Time Homebuyer Program is funded through HOME. FTHB provides loans for down payment and closing cost assistance to First-Time Homebuyers who are low- and moderate-income (incomes at or below 80% of Area Median Income) residents or persons working in the Prince William Area (Prince William County, the City of Manassas or Manassas Park). Funding is in the form of a second mortgage. First trust financing is provided through local private lending institutions who are approved by Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA). Generally, one City household is assisted through this program per year.

Housing Counseling

CDBG funding provides assistance to the Cooperative Extension Service to provide low- and moderate-income residents with credit counseling and post-purchase homeownership counseling. Approximately 25 City residents are assisted through this program each year.

Competitive Grants

The Prince William Area Urban Entitlement County provides a portion of its CDBG funds on a competitive basis to non-profit organizations, faith based organizations, and eligible for-profit and governmental entities. These funds can be used for any eligible activity, but are generally used for public services. Typically, there is a \$50,000 set-aside for projects in the City of Manassas. If no City grants are awarded, the funds are put towards the housing rehabilitation program.

Housing Choice Vouchers

The City of Manassas Housing Office manages a Housing Choice Voucher program that provides rental assistance to low- and moderate-income households. Eligible households pay 30% to 40% of their income to rent a unit, with the remaining portion of the rent covered by the voucher. The City administers roughly 300 units, which are allocated to the City through the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA). The waiting list for vouchers is long and is closed indefinitely to new applicants.

Residential Investment Tax Exemption

The City of Manassas offers a partial tax exemption program for residents who rehabilitate or redevelop homes in older neighborhoods. To qualify for this program, residential structures must be at least 25 years old and the improved or replaced structure's assessed value must

increase by at least 25%. The partial tax exemption is based on the increase in assessed structural value due to rehabilitation or redevelopment, and is awarded over a seven-year period as shown in the table below.

Housing & Neighborhood Resource Information for Residents

The City's Community Development Department website provides links and brochures with information on housing and neighborhood resources for residents. Information available includes:

- How to apply for housing rehabilitation, first-time homebuyer, housing choice voucher, and tax exemption programs
- Resources for home repair and clean-up
- Guides to understanding Homeowner Associations and expectations for management companies
- Landscaping guides
- Fair housing resources (in English and Spanish)

- Resources for foreclosure assistance
- City economic development incentives
- Federal and State historic rehabilitation tax credits

Blight Abatement

The City's Department of Community Development enforces blight abatement provisions of local and state code. The City has made blight declaration on three properties in Georgetown South in the last three years. The FY16 budget appropriated \$225K to assist in potential property acquisition for blight abatement purposes. No funds have been spent to date.

Property Code Enforcement

The City's Property Code Enforcement Division works to improve neighborhoods through proactive inspections, investigations of possible code violations, and outreach to help citizens find code compliance solutions. These inspections ensure that properties meet the minimum standards of the Virginia Maintenance Code and the Manassas Zoning Ordinance.

Residential Investment Tax Exemption (Source: City of Manassas)

Year	Number
1 – 3	100% of increase in assessed structural value
4	80% of increase in assessed structural value
5	60% of increase in assessed structural value
6	40% of increase in assessed structural value
7	20% of increase in assessed structural value

Partner Housing Initiatives

Virginia Housing Development Authority

The Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) is a non-profit organization that serves the entire Commonwealth of Virginia. VHDA programs active in the City include:

- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC): Provides developers of affordable rental housing with a federal income tax credit. The program also serves as an incentive for private investors to participate with developers in the construction and rehabilitation of low-income housing. There are currently two LIHTC developments in the Downtown South neighborhood, Manassas Arms and South Main Commons.
- Community Impact Grant: The funding for this plan was provided through VHDA's Community Impact Grant program, which supports planning initiatives that incorporate mixed use or mixed income development as a major component of revitalization.

Habitat for Humanity – Prince William County

The local Habitat for Humanity serves Prince William County, the City of Manassas, and Manassas Park. Its Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative provides homeownership opportunities, home repair programs, and energy efficiency upgrades to low-income residents. Due to the limited availability of vacant land, Habitat's activities in the City of Manassas are generally restricted to home repair and rehabilitation. Most of their work in the City is in Georgetown

South within the Downtown South neighborhood. The City provides some funding to Habitat for Humanity.

Project Mend-A-House

Project Mend-A-House primarily serves low- and moderate-income seniors and persons with disabilities. Their focus is on housing rehabilitation projects that improve accessibility and allow people to age in place. They serve roughly 30 to 50 clients in the City each year, including residents in Downtown South. The City provides some funding to Project Mend-A-House.

People, Inc.

People, Inc. is a Community Action Agency that serves all of Virginia. Most of their funding comes from the federal Community Services Block Grant program. The City of Manassas is within the organization's Designated Community Action Service Area. Community development programs available to City residents include:

- Homeownership and Housing Counseling: Homeowner/potential homeowner education and counseling and provision of low interest home loans to eligible individuals and families.
- Affordable Rental Housing: Development of affordable apartment units for low- and moderate income families and individuals. People Inc. is seeking to construct a multifamily rental project targeted to veterans just west of the Downtown South neighborhood on Prince William Street.
- Virginia Homeless Solutions Program: Emergency assistance for individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.

- Weatherization: Repairs and improvements to low-income residences to increase the home's energy efficiency and reduce total residential energy expenditures.
- Minor Home Repair: Assists low-income households with electrical, heating, and roof repairs.

Catholics for Housing

Catholics for Housing provides affordable housing opportunities for lower income individuals and families in Northern Virginia. Its activities in Manassas include rental housing acquisition and management, owner-occupied housing rehabilitation and employment and self-sufficiency programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Introduction

In the “Manassas Next: 2032 Comprehensive Plan,” the City set a goal of ensuring that “Manassas neighborhoods will be the building blocks of a sustainable community, assisting in preserving and maintaining quality housing opportunities for the full life-cycle of City residential needs, while creating an environment of supportive and positive community values.” This section of the Housing and Neighborhood study provides recommendations and strategies for working towards this goal in the Downtown South neighborhood by establishing target preservation areas (TPAs) and target revitalization areas (TRAs) and describing resources in the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Toolbox.

TPAs and TRAs are designated for the purpose of utilizing limited resources in as effective a manner as possible. Nevertheless, as most strategies require significant resources for successful implementation, it may not be possible to undertake every recommendation without increased funding and staffing levels.

Summary of Recommendations

Target Preservation Area Strategies

1. Continue Targeted Code Enforcement
2. Focus housing rehabilitation activities in TPAs
3. Focus homebuyer assistance in select TPAs
4. Preserve affordability of homes in Georgetown South
5. Develop a streetscape plan for the Douglas Street, Ellicott and Garden, and Merrimack TPAs

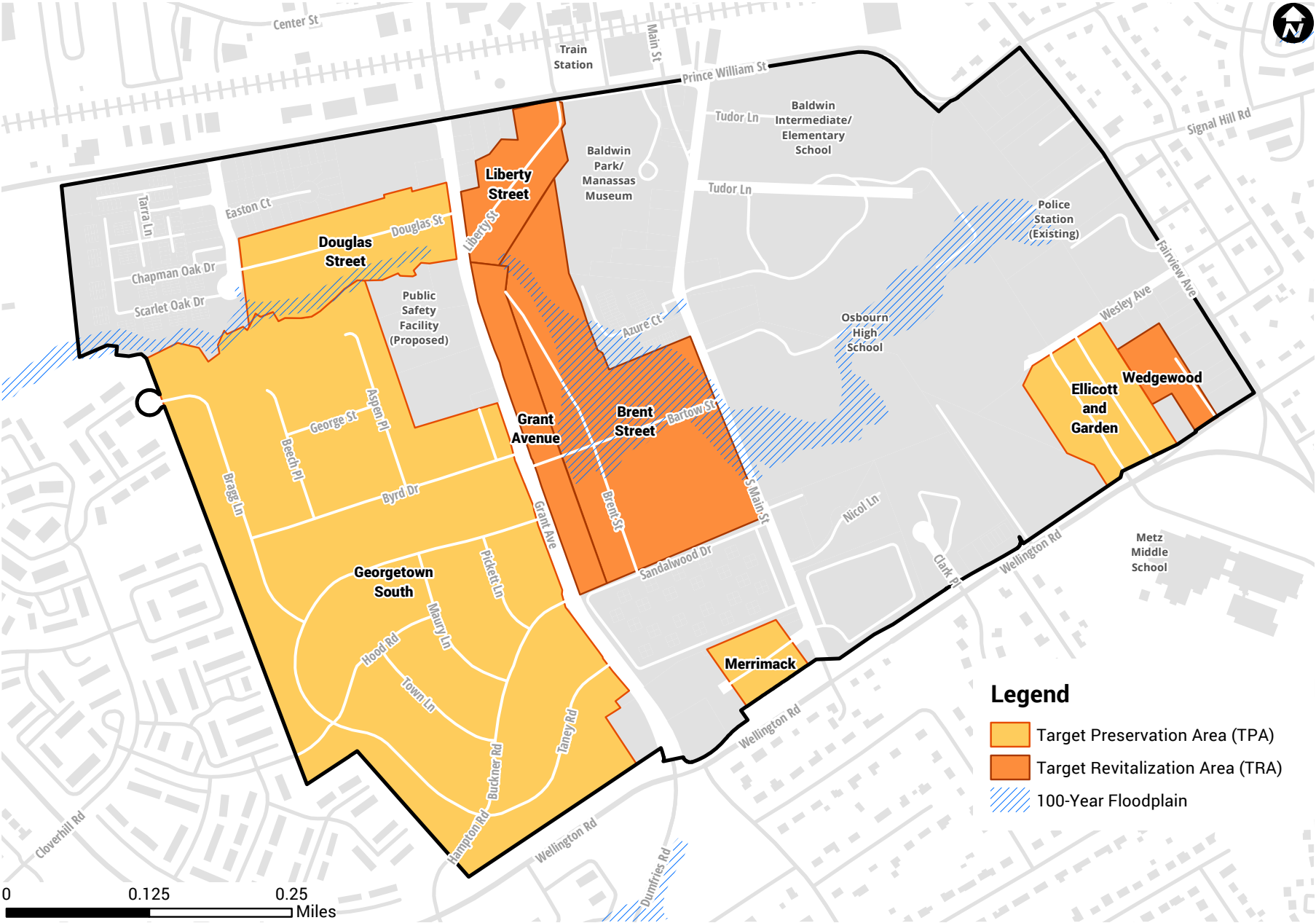
Target Revitalization Area Strategies

1. Support the development of mixed-income workforce housing
2. Adopt an Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance
3. Develop a streetscape plan for Liberty Street

Neighborhood-Wide Strategies

1. Establish a curb appeal matching grant program
2. Establish a pilot matching grant program for Homeowners' Associations
3. Develop design guidelines for infill development and home repair
4. Develop a comprehensive housing assistance guide
5. Incorporate the needs and recommendations outlined in this document into the City's comprehensive plan

Downtown South Neighborhood - Target Preservation and Revitalization Areas



Recommendation One: Establish target preservation areas

Preservation areas are clusters of older housing units with occupancy rates that experience some clustering of issues related to property condition and maintenance. Renter occupancy rates are higher compared to the City overall, and thus residents here may be more susceptible to displacement that may occur due to the neighborhood's proximity to the growth in Old Town Manassas. Code enforcement activities paired with housing rehabilitation and homebuyer assistance will help to improve housing quality and mitigate residential displacement.

Target Preservation Areas (TPA)

[Georgetown South](#)

Georgetown South is a large housing development within Downtown South comprised of large brick townhouses built in the mid-1960s. The development is governed by the Georgetown South Community Council, which operates an active community center with after-school programs, a food pantry, community gardens, and other community resources. Most households in Georgetown South rent their homes, and many are cost-burdened. At the time of the field survey, several properties had minor quality of life deficiencies and four were in poor condition. One property was deteriorated, but is under a spot blight abatement plan agreement with the City. The vast majority of homes

appeared to be in good condition, but may be in need of interior updates according to stakeholder interviews with the local development and real estate community.

[Ellicott Lane and Garden Street](#)

The properties along Garden Street and Ellicott Lane are detached, single-family homes, and primarily owner-occupied. Like Georgetown South, most homes appeared to be in good condition. However, there was a cluster of three properties with minor quality of life deficiencies on Garden Street, and one property on Ellicott Lane was in fair condition. Overgrowth, junk, and damaged fences were the most common deficiencies.

[Merrimack Gardens](#)

This development of brick townhouses built in the 1950s is generally in good condition, but has several properties with quality of life issues. Overgrowth and junk were the most common deficiencies in this area.

[Douglas Street](#)

Douglas Street is part of the City's historically African American neighborhood, and a portion of the street is located within the Manassas Local Historic District. Most homes are detached single-family residences, except for two mid-size multifamily buildings. There are a mix of homeowners and renters along Douglas Street. Like the other TPAs, although most properties are in good condition, quality of life deficiencies were common. Two properties were designated as "fair" in the field survey.

Target Preservation Area Strategies

1. Continue Targeted Code Enforcement

TPAs	Georgetown South, Ellicott Lane and Garden Street, Merrimack Gardens, Douglas Street
Description	Code enforcement violations tended to be more prevalent in these areas than other parts of Downtown South.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue targeted code enforcement, focusing on the TPAs • Connect property owners with violations to housing rehabilitation resources • Map code enforcement violations on a quarterly basis to keep track of trends and allow more efficient targeting of staff resources
Timeline	Ongoing
Cost	Staff time to implement code enforcement mapping
Funding Sources	General Fund, CDBG
Partners	Code Enforcement, City GIS Department

2. Focus housing rehabilitation activities in Target Preservation Areas

TPAs	Georgetown South, Ellicott Lane and Garden Street, Merrimack Gardens, Douglas Street
Description	<p>Targeting the City's limited housing rehabilitation resources in specific areas will likely have more noticeable impact than continuing the Citywide approach. For example, the City of Richmond changed to a targeted investment approach in the late 90s, and two studies on the program (Targeting Investments for Neighborhood Revitalization, 2006 & The Impacts of Targeted Public and Nonprofit Investment on Neighborhood Development, 2005) found that target neighborhoods experienced substantial improvements, such as increased community pride and private investment activity. Moreover, these improvements occurred without substantial displacement of residents and without hurting other distressed neighborhoods. The 2006 study found that Census blocks that received at least \$30,000 in targeted investments over the course of five years (\$6,000 annually) saw the most positive impacts.</p>
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Prince William County, who administers the City's CDBG program, and Habitat for Humanity, which has its own housing rehabilitation program, to implement a targeted approach to housing rehabilitation that includes rental rehabilitation. See the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Toolbox (NPRT) for more detail on rental rehabilitation. • Determine the feasibility of reactivating the City's Housing Trust Fund to collect and oversee any non-Federal sources of funding for housing rehabilitation activities. See the NPRT for more information about housing trust funds. • Work with Prince William County to designate the Downtown South neighborhood as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area, which will give the City more flexibility in its use of CDBG funds. See the NPRT for more detail. • Ensure that City residents who live outside of the target areas know that although the City's housing rehab program is restricted to TPA residents, they can still apply to Project Mend-A-House and Habitat for Humanity funds for emergency repairs and accessibility improvements. Residents inside target areas would still be eligible for this assistance, as well. • Work with Project Mend-A-House and Habitat for Humanity to develop a preliminary eligibility assessment form that residents can complete to see what kinds of housing rehabilitation assistance they are eligible for, and make this form available in print and online. Coordinate with social service organizations so they are aware of this resource.

Focus housing rehabilitation activities in Target Preservation Areas (continued)

Timeline	Begin implementation in 2018. Reassess targeting in 5 years.
Cost	Approximately \$100,000 in CDBG funds annually could rehabilitate up to five homes a year depending on specific improvement needs. Some staff hours would be spent on implementation and outreach to the community.
Funding Sources	CDBG, City of Manassas Housing Trust Fund
Partners	Prince William County, Project Mend-A-House, Habitat for Humanity

3. Focus homebuyer assistance in select Target Preservation Areas

TPAs	Census Blocks that contain Georgetown South, Merrimack Gardens, and Douglas Street
Description	Three target preservation areas have high levels of renter occupancy and lower to moderate household incomes that may make it difficult to purchase a house. Focusing homebuyer assistance that is available through the City's HOME program in these areas could reduce this barrier for prospective homebuyers, as well as mitigate residential displacement should rents increase.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Prince William County, who administers the City's HOME program, to implement a targeted approach to homebuyer assistance. • Apply for funding VHDA's Community Homeownership Revitalization Program (CHRP) to provide additional financial resources for first-time homebuyers. More information about CHRP is available in the NPRT. • Ensure that residents are aware of HUD's Section 203k loan program, which allows homebuyers to incorporate home repair costs into the price of a single mortgage. Identify local HUD-approved lenders who offer this product. • Partner with Catholics for Housing to offer its self-sufficiency program within these areas to help interested households become financially ready to purchase a home.
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2018. Reassess targeting in 5 years.
Cost	Approximately \$40,000 in HOME funds annually could help up to two households a year. Some staff hours would be spent on implementation and outreach to the community.
Funding Sources	HOME, CHRP, private donations
Partners	Prince William County, Catholics for Housing, Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA)

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Preserve affordability of homes in Georgetown South

TPAs	Georgetown South
Description	The housing stock in Georgetown South is some of the most affordable, entry-level for-sale stock in the City, but the majority of residents rent and experience cost-burden, putting them at risk of displacement should housing prices and rents increase. Preserving the affordability of units in Downtown South in tandem with the homebuyer assistance and housing rehabilitation programs will reduce the risk of displacement while stimulating private investment to foster a mixed-income, mixed-tenure neighborhood. Recent sales listings and discussions with housing developers indicate that this area is already experiencing an increase in investment activity, which may lead to displacement if homeownership opportunities are unattainable for existing residents.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a working group comprised of City staff, Georgetown South community leaders, and affordable housing developers to develop a community land trust to purchase and rehabilitate homes in Georgetown South for sale to households with incomes at or below 120% of Area Median Income. The land would be held in perpetuity by the trust to maintain affordability. See the NPRT for more detail on Community Land Trusts.• Seek funding partners for seed money. VHDA, private foundations, and local banks and credit unions have provided funding for community land trusts in Richmond and Alexandria.
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2018. It would likely take at least two years for a community land trust to be established and begin purchasing properties for resale.
Cost	\$150,000 - \$250,000 for acquisition and rehabilitation per house, depending on condition. Sale proceeds would recapitalize the funds available. Blighted and tax delinquent properties could be acquired for little to no cost by working with a land bank. See the NPRT for more detail on land banks.
Funding Sources	Housing Trust Fund, VHDA, local banks and credit unions, private foundations
Partners	VHDA, Habitat for Humanity, People Inc., Catholics for Housing

5. Develop a streetscape plan for the Ellicott and Garden, Merrimack, and Douglas Street TPAs

TPAs	Ellicott and Garden, Merrimack, Douglas Street
Description	These TPAs could benefit from streetscape improvements due to a lack of sidewalks (Merrimack and Ellicott), minor deterioration of sidewalks (Douglas St.), and a lack of pedestrian connectivity (Douglas St.) Streetscape treatments that address these issues would improve functionality and aesthetics, resulting in a higher quality of life for existing residents and encouraging private investment. To save costs, streetscape improvements should be tied into other capital improvement projects such as the proposed sewer improvements on Ellicott.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the Planning Commission and City Council to develop a streetscape plan for these TPAs.• Apply for funding to implement the plan.
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2019.
Cost	\$60,000 - \$100,000 for streetscape plan (includes Liberty St.; see TRA strategies).
Funding Sources	CDBG, VDOT Smart Scale
Partners	Planning Commission, City Council, VDOT

Recommendation Two: Establish target revitalization areas

Target Revitalization Areas (TRAs)

Revitalization areas have one or more of the following characteristics: vacant parcels, clusters of properties in poor or deteriorating condition, functionally obsolete buildings, or land values that are greater than building values. Public and private investments in these areas could improve the quality of life for existing residents, attract new residents, and provide an opportunity for mixed-income housing.

Brent Street north of Bartow Street

This area is adjacent to Baldwin Park and Manassas Museum, and is within a short walking distance of Osbourn High School, Baldwin Elementary, and Old Town Manassas. These parcels are vacant, undeveloped land under single ownership. Most of this area is within the 100-year floodplain, which limits the ability to use Federal funds for redevelopment and may make anything other than market-rate development infeasible without significant local and state incentives. Due to the proximity to Old Town and the Amtrak Station, this location may be attractive for developers of market-rate multifamily or townhouse units.

Wedgewood Condominiums

Wedgewood Condominiums are located in the southeast corner of the Downtown South neighborhood. Although the property is generally in good condition, the development is functionally obsolete, as it was originally constructed as a motel and lacks sufficient parking and amenities for full-time residents.

Additionally, the 22 units here are visibly dated compared to other condominiums and apartment complexes in the neighborhood. These characteristics contribute to low property values. Most of the Wedgewood units have less value than the land they occupy. The land is flat and the area is large enough to accommodate a variety of housing types and densities.

Liberty Street

Liberty Street is the only cluster of properties in poor and deteriorating condition in the Downtown South neighborhood. Most of the properties on this street are single-family homes, and there are few small apartment buildings. Liberty Street is part of the City's historically black neighborhood, and is located in the Manassas Local Historic District. Consequently, any rehabilitation or demolition will have to comply with Architectural Review Board guidelines. One property on this street is being rehabilitated for eventual resale. Two others were listed for sale in November 2017 and are under contract with closing scheduled for January 2018.

Grant Avenue

The single-family homes along Grant Avenue are renter-occupied and under single ownership. Three properties in this area were in poor condition at the time of the field survey, and several others had minor deficiencies. The buildings on Grant Avenue have less value than the land they occupy. The City plans on making streetscape improvements along the Grant Avenue corridor in conjunction with the construction of a new public safety next to the shopping center.

Target Revitalization Area Strategies

1. Support the development of mixed-income workforce housing

TRAs	All
Description	About 43% of all households in Downtown South pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs, and nearly 18% pay more than half of their income. Cost-burdened households include those with incomes up to \$75,000, showing a need for affordable housing at a wide range of income levels. Developing housing that is affordable to low, moderate, and middle income households will likely require incentives and subsidies, which are available through tax credit programs and low-interest loans from VHDA.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate elected officials, residents, developers, and the business community about the need for and benefits of affordable housing at a variety of income levels Partner with VHDA to educate elected officials and developers about tools and funding sources available to incentivize mixed income workforce housing development, such as those mentioned in the NPRT.
Timeline	Ongoing
Cost	Value of staff time and materials
Funding Sources	General Fund; VHDA
Partners	City Council, Planning Commission, VHDA

2. Adopt an Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance

TRAs	All
Description	The demographics section of this report demonstrated the need for affordable housing at a variety of income levels in the Downtown South neighborhood. An affordable dwelling unit ordinance encourages developers to create affordable units in exchange for density bonuses.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Planning Commission and City Council to draft and adopt an affordable dwelling unit ordinance. See the NPRT for more detail on affordable dwelling units.
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2018.
Cost	Value of staff time and materials
Funding Sources	General Fund
Partners	Planning Commission, City Council

3. Develop a Streetscape Plan for Liberty Street

TRAs	Liberty Street
Description	The City is in the process of developing a streetscape improvement plan for the Grant Avenue corridor in the Downtown South neighborhood, building on the Old Town Manassas Sector plan recommendations to optimize traffic flow and improve aesthetics and pedestrian safety. Liberty Street connects to Grant Avenue, and could benefit from streetscape improvements for similar reasons. Utility poles block the sidewalk along Liberty Street in several locations, curb cuts do not meet ADA requirements, and lighting fixtures are not pedestrian scale. Streetscape treatments that address these issues would improve functionality and aesthetics, resulting in a higher quality of life for existing residents and encouraging private investment.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Planning Commission and City Council to develop a streetscape plan for Liberty Street. • Apply for funding to implement the plan.
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2019.
Cost	\$60,000 - \$100,000 for streetscape plan
Funding Sources	CDBG, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Smart Scale
Partners	Planning Commission, City Council, VDOT

Recommendation Three: Implement neighborhood- wide preservation and revitalization initiatives

Several community development strategies and capacity-building efforts apply to both TPAs and TRAs and should be implemented throughout the Downtown neighborhood.

Neighborhood-Wide Strategies

1. Establish a curb appeal matching grant program

Description	Exterior home improvements such as landscaping and painting can improve neighborhood image, increase housing values, and raise overall standards of housing quality by encouraging nearby residents to undertake similar projects. Providing small, matching grants to residents and rental property owners will encourage them to undertake curb appeal projects by making them more financially feasible.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey residents to gauge interest in this program and educate elected officials about the benefits of exterior home improvements • Decide which types of properties will be eligible. For example, should the program be restricted to owner-occupants, or would property owners of small rental units be eligible? • Determine exactly which kinds of projects are eligible for the program and how much funding per property is appropriate. The City of Hampton, VA, for example, provides a matching grant of 50% up to \$5,000 per property. Funding for rental properties could be provided in the form of a loan instead of a grant. • Decide how funding will be awarded, such as through a competitive ranking system or a lottery. A lottery would be more appropriate if the number of eligible applications is expected to greatly outweigh the funding available.
Timeline	Begin planning in 2019; implementation in 2020
Cost	Up to \$5,000 per property assisted
Funding Sources	General Fund; CDBG (in LMI areas only)
Partners	City Council, Planning Commission

2. Establish a pilot matching grant program for Homeowners' Associations

Description	Many properties in Downtown South are common areas owned by Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) that depend on fees to keep up with regular minor maintenance. Some HOAs may have difficulty financing major improvements such as fence repair and repaving. A matching grant program to improve HOA common areas would provide benefits similar to the proposed curb appeal program.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey residents to gauge interest in this program and educate elected officials about the benefits of HOA common area improvements • Determine exactly which kinds of projects are eligible for the program and how much funding is appropriate. • Establish a competitive application process to award funding
Timeline	Begin planning in 2019; implementation in 2020
Cost	Up to \$20,000 in competitive matching grant funds available for a one-year pilot project
Funding Sources	General Fund
Partners	City Council, Planning Commission

3. Develop design guidelines for infill development and home repair

Infill development refers to construction of new buildings on vacant or under-utilized parcels in existing neighborhoods, usually those with an urban character. Implementing design guidelines in these areas will ensure that new development and redevelopment/rehabilitation (including the proposed curb appeal program) is both compatible with and enhances the general character of the neighborhood. Factors to consider when drafting infill development design guidelines include:

Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the use of building materials that are compatible with the character of the neighborhood • Establish uniform build-to lines for consistent setbacks • Ensure that building heights and upper floor setbacks are compatible with existing structures • Discourage dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs to facilitate neighborhood connectivity • Encourage short blocks for improved walkability • Permit on-street parking and locate parking lots behind buildings to improve aesthetics and walkability
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, and City Council to develop general design guidelines for infill development in target preservation areas. • Consider working with an urban design firm to develop detailed design guidelines. • Incorporate the design guidelines into the development review process and application review process for the proposed curb appeal and HOA matching grant programs
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2019.
Cost	Staff time and resources
Funding Sources	General Fund
Partners	Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, City Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Develop a comprehensive housing assistance guide

Description	The demographic analysis in this report found that 43% of all households in Downtown South pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs, and nearly 18% pay more than half of their income. These households may need financial assistance for security deposits to secure an apartment. Additionally, cost-burdened households may have difficulty affording rent or mortgage payments should an unexpected financial emergency such as a major illness occur. Several area nonprofits provide emergency financial assistance to help people with these issues, but there is no singular source that a Manassas resident could go to and determine whether or not they're eligible for a particular source. The City's website does offer some information about financial assistance and housing-related resources, but it should be expanded upon to provide more detailed information and any new programs that are created as a result of this study.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the City's Social Services Department, partner organizations and other area nonprofits such as United Way to develop a comprehensive housing resource guide specific to the City of Manassas. The guide should be available in print and online, and distributed to area schools, libraries, and social service agencies. The City's Community Resources page could be used as a starting point for this guide.
Timeline	Begin drafting document in 2018
Cost	Staff time and materials for printing
Funding Sources	General Fund, CDBG
Partners	Social Services Department, Project-Mend-A-House, VHDA, Habitat for Humanity, Catholics for Housing, United Way, People Inc.

5. Incorporate the needs and recommendations outlined in this document into the City's comprehensive plan

Description	The City's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2013. Virginia requires local comprehensive plans to be reviewed at least once every five years to determine whether or not the plan needs to be amended. Given that this report provides updated data analysis and recommendations pertaining to the Downtown South neighborhood, including a number of strategies that could be applied to other areas in the City, the housing chapter of the plan should be updated to incorporate new information.
Implementation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the Planning Commission to revise the housing chapter of the comprehensive plan.
Timeline	Begin implementation in 2018
Cost	Staff time, consultant cost (TBD)
Funding Sources	General Fund, CDBG
Partners	Planning Commission, City Council

Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Toolbox

Building on the City's existing housing programs will enable the implementation of preservation and revitalization strategies discussed above and provide an institutional structure for such strategies in the Downtown South neighborhood and City as a whole. The Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Toolbox includes a variety of tools for preservation and revitalization.

Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas

HUD allows entitlement communities receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program funds to develop Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA) for specific neighborhoods where new investment would benefit from certain incentives. The designation of an NRSA eases some of the regulatory requirements of the CDBG program as follows:

- Job creation / retention as LMI area benefit: such activities may qualify as meeting area benefit requirements, thereby eliminating the need for individual businesses to track the income of persons considered for, or who fill, such jobs.
- Aggregation of housing units: housing units occupied by non-LMI households can be assisted if at least 51% of the total housing units assisted are occupied by LMI households.
- Aggregate public benefit standard exemption: jobs created with CDBG funds are exempted from the regulatory requirements of requiring the creation of

one job per \$35,000 investment of CDBG funds as outlined at 24 CFR 570.209 (b)(2)(v)(L) and (M).

- Public service cap exemption: public service activities carried out by community-based development organizations are exempt from the regulatory 15% cap on public service activities.

To qualify for NRSA designation, the neighborhood must include a contiguous area, primarily residential in nature, with a population that is at least 70% low- or moderate-income. Low- and moderate-income persons comprise 72.6% of the population in Downtown South, so the entire neighborhood would be eligible for the designation. Designating the entire Downtown South neighborhood as an NRSA would provide the City with flexibility in applying the benefits of the designation. In order to designate Downtown South as an NRSA, the City would have to work with Prince William County to obtain HUD approval, and the County would have to designate the neighborhood as an NRSA in the Consolidated Plan.

[In Practice](#)

The City of Roanoke developed an NRSA for its West End neighborhood in 2012, focusing on homeownership initiatives, housing rehabilitation, and enhancing neighborhood business development and employment opportunities. According to the City, this has resulted in roughly \$4 million in private investment in the neighborhood.

Housing and Redevelopment Authorities

Virginia permits cities and counties to create Housing and Redevelopment Authorities (HRA). HRAs have the following powers:

- Acquire, develop, renovate, and manage housing projects and residential buildings
- Make loans or grants for blight prevention and elimination, housing construction, and housing rehabilitation to private organizations

[In Practice](#)

While the City of Manassas does not have its own HRA, it does have an Economic Development Authority (EDA). In the absence of an HRA, the Commonwealth allows EDAs to conduct HRA activities. Virginia also allows any HRA to finance projects in any locality that does not have an HRA. The Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority provided financing for the Brentwood Apartments redevelopment (formerly known as Village Square Apartments) by Fairfield Village, LP in the City of Manassas.

Housing Trust Fund

The City of Manassas established a nonprofit Housing Trust Fund (HTF) in 1992 to assist low- and moderate-income families with homeownership, primarily through funding from CDBG and VHDA. The HTF has been inactive since 2010. City Council could reactivate the HTF by appointing a new Board of Directors and modifying the bylaws to administer affordable housing initiatives. The HTF would need to be staffed at least part-time, either by a City employee or by a Director paid through the HTF. Administration of CDBG-related activities could be funded through the CDBG program. Other staffing costs would likely have to be paid through the City's general fund.

[In Practice](#)

The City of Alexandria Housing Trust Fund was established in the early 1990s and has constructed or preserved over 1,100 affordable units. The trust fund also supports downpayment and closing-cost assistance, homebuyer education and foreclosure prevention, rental accessibility improvements, and housing and services for people experiencing homelessness. Developer contributions, loan repayments, and interest payments fund these initiatives.

The City of Richmond's Affordable Housing Trust Fund was established in 2008 and funds housing development and housing-related assistance such as homebuyer education and support services for people experiencing homelessness and persons with disabilities. The fund is supported through general fund appropriations and dedications from the expiration of partial real estate tax exemptions.

[Impact of the Proffer Reform Act of 2016](#)

Many housing trust funds in Virginia are supported by developer contributions in the form of proffers, which are voluntary offers that mitigate impacts of development as a result of a rezoning. In 2016, the state's General Assembly restricted the use of proffers to be specifically attributable to the proposed development, and requires any "off-site" proffers (e.g. cash contributions to a housing trust fund) to directly benefit the proposed development and address the need of expanding specific public facilities related to the development. This is limited to transportation, public safety, public schools, and parks and recreation. Consequently, contributions to an affordable housing trust fund would generally not hold up under the new law.

There are a few exceptions to the applicability of the new proffer regulations that seem to offer more flexibility for developers and municipalities in certain instances. The new regulations do not apply to areas that have an associated "small area comprehensive plan" that have also been designated as a revitalization area, involves mass transit, includes mixed use development, and allows densities of 3.0 floor area ratio or greater in portions of the small area. Most of Downtown South is located within the Old Town Manassas Sector Plan, which was created in 2008 and includes most of these elements. The Sector Plan could be updated to include the rest of Downtown South and designate it as a revitalization area to give more flexibility regarding the new proffer regulations.

Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance

Local municipalities in Virginia are authorized to enact affordable dwelling unit ordinances under Section 15.2-2305 of the Virginia Code. These ordinances can encourage developers applying for rezoning or special exception permits to restrict up to 17% of units to lower income households in exchange for up to a 30% density bonus. The state law does not specify income levels for the restricted units. Typically, this can range from 50% to 150% of Area Median Income. The state does require municipalities to impose affordability terms between 15 and 50 years.

[In Practice](#)

The City of Falls Church has an Affordable Dwelling Unit ordinance that provides a 20% density bonus in exchange for a 12.5% (minimum) affordable unit set aside. Developers can also contribute a cash-in-lieu payment to the City's Affordable Housing Fund to receive a density bonus.

Community Land Trusts

A community land trust (CLT) ensures long-term housing affordability by separating ownership of land and housing structures. The CLT maintains ownership of the land, while homebuyers purchase the structure and lease the land from the CLT, typically for 99 years. This reduces house prices, leading to lower downpayments and closing costs, and also ensures long-term affordability because the price of housing in CLTs are not tied to land costs. Home sales are restricted by deed to households below a specific income level that is usually higher than income limits for federally subsidized housing. Resale agreements require equity to be split between the seller and the CLT which allows both entities

to benefit from real estate investment. CLTs are nonprofit organizations typically governed by CLT leaseholders, community members, and representatives from local government and funding agencies. Down payment assistance and ongoing financial counseling are generally offered to CLT leaseholders to make homeownership more accessible and reduce foreclosure risks. The CLT would have to partner with a local financial institution to ensure that homebuyers can secure a mortgage. Participation in this program can help banks meet their Community Reinvestment Act obligations.

[In Practice](#)

The City of Richmond established the Maggie Walker Community Land Trust in 2015, and began constructing its first house in the summer of 2017. The land trust purchased vacant property for \$40,000, and the three-bedroom, two-and-a-half bath house will sell for \$195,000 upon completion. Home sales are restricted to households with incomes at or below 115% Area Median Income. Funding to establish the land trust, purchase land, and for construction was provided by the Bon Secours Richmond Health System, Virginia Credit Union, Dominion Energy, VHDA, and several other companies and private foundations. Donations as of June 2017 totaled \$465,250. The land trust has partnered with Union Bank and Trust to provide mortgages to homeowners, and Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia will assist with income qualification and pre-purchase counseling. Although the trust plans on a model of purchasing vacant land and constructing new housing, they have access to a \$1 million line of credit from Virginia Credit Union to rehabilitate houses.

The Thomas Jefferson Community Land Trust (TJCLT) in Charlottesville acquires and rehabilitates properties in addition to constructing new homes. Prospective homeowners can select an eligible property on the market that the land trust then purchases, rehabilitates, and sells the property to the homebuyer. TJCLT also partners with its local Habitat for Humanity to construct new homes for qualifying families. The land trust restricts home sales to households at or below 80% of Area Median Income.

Land Banks

Virginia's General Assembly passed legislation allowing land banks in 2016. Land banks are governmental entities or nonprofits created to acquire, manage, and repurpose vacant and tax-delinquent properties for active re-use. They have the power to hold land tax-free, clear title, and extinguish back taxes. Land banks can also lease properties for temporary uses and negotiate sales that address community needs such as affordable housing. In Virginia, land banks are created through a local ordinance, and can either be an independent entity or an existing nonprofit entity.

[In Practice](#)

There are currently no land banks in Virginia because the enabling legislation is so new. However, the City of Danville is in the process of establishing one. The City has created a new non-profit, the Danville Neighborhood Development Corporation, to run the land bank, and allocated \$150,000 to the organization.

There are over 170 land banks operating in 14 states across the country. The first land bank was created in 1971 in St. Louis, and prior to Virginia, West Virginia was the most recent state to enact land bank enabling legislation. Land

banks operate in rural, urban, and suburban areas, and vary greatly in their staffing, capacity, portfolio, and funding sources. In Virginia, the enabling legislation allows municipalities to provide land banks with up to 50 percent of the real property taxes collected on property conveyed by a land bank entity for up to 10 years, which would provide a source of ongoing funding. Initial funding would likely have to come from general funds or donations.

Rental Rehabilitation

The City's current CDBG housing rehabilitation program is restricted to income-eligible homeowners, but the majority of residents of Downtown South are renters. Providing opportunities for homeownership helps those who want to purchase a house, but some people prefer to rent, and many households may face difficulty qualifying for a mortgage even with assistance. Expanding the housing rehabilitation program to permit investor owners of 1-4 unit rental structures could address quality of life issues for low- and moderate-income renters while improving the Downtown South neighborhood. If using CDBG funds, at least 51% of the initial occupants post-rehabilitation must be low- or moderate-income. If using HOME funds, the affordability period varies from 5 to 15 years depending on the amount of assistance provided. Assistance offered could be in the form of a low-interest loan to generate income to continue this program.

The City could also partner with VHDA to assist renters with disabilities who require accessibility modifications. VHDA's Rental Unit Accessibility Modification (RUAM) program provides grants of up to \$4,000 per rental unit to tenants with disabilities who earn up to 80% or less of area median income.

RECOMMENDATIONS

[In Practice](#)

The City of Lynchburg issues grants funded through its CDBG program to owners of rental properties for housing rehabilitation in designated neighborhoods. The City caps grants at \$5,000 and prioritizes funding for accessibility improvements. In order to qualify for the program, the property must be located within a “Rental Inspection Zone”, have property maintenance code violations, or include accessibility improvements.

VHDA Community Homeownership Revitalization Program (CHRP)

VHDA’S CHRP program supports local jurisdiction’s targeted revitalization efforts through the provision of affordable first mortgages for first-time homebuyers. Interest rates for these mortgages are one percent below the standard VHDA first-time homebuyer rate. Local governments, nonprofits, for-profit developers, and redevelopment and housing authorities are eligible to receive CHRP funds. Funds are disbursed through a competitive application process and are administered locally, with awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$4,000,000.

[In Practice](#)

Arlington County’s Housing Division has used more than \$76 million in low-interest mortgages to assist over 280 first-time homebuyer families since 2005. The County partners with a non-profit organization, Arlington Home Ownership Made Easier (AHOME), to provide homebuyer education and referrals to lenders and real estate agents.

VHDA Multifamily Development Financing

VHDA has a variety of financing programs for non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable and mixed-income housing.

[Tax-Exempt Bond Financing](#)

This program provides an uninsured loan that facilitates the construction or acquisition, with substantial rehabilitation, of affordable multifamily rental housing to private, for-profit and non-profit developers. Developers must rent units to a minimum of either 20% of renters at 50% of the area median income, or 40% of renters at 60% of the area median income. The remainder must be no more than 150% of the area median income.

[Taxable Bond Financing](#)

VHDA’s Taxable Bond financing provides an uninsured loan used to facilitate the construction and/or acquisition, with or without rehabilitation, of affordable multifamily rental housing. This financing is available for private, for-profit or not-for-profit developers. Tenant income requirements vary.

[Workforce Housing Loan Program](#)

This program provides loans to finance mixed-income and mixed-use/mixed-income developments. There are three loan options that differ in the tenant income eligibility requirements:

- Workforce 20/80: 20% of units reserved for households with incomes at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI); remaining units are unrestricted

- Workforce 40/60: 40% of units reserved for households with incomes at or below 100% AMI; remaining units are unrestricted
- Workforce 100: All units reserved for households with incomes at or below 150% AMI

[Sponsoring Partnerships and Revitalizing Communities \(SPARC\)](#)

SPARC is an uninsured loan program available to private, for-profit and not-for-profit developers to enable the construction or acquisition/ rehabilitation of multifamily rental housing. To qualify for a SPARC loan, 50% of the households in the rental housing development must have incomes that are at or below 50% AMI with the remainder of the tenant population having incomes under 150% AMI.

[Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program \(LIHTC\)](#)

The LIHTC program provides developers of affordable rental housing with a federal income tax credit. The program also serves as an incentive for private investors to participate with developers in the construction and rehabilitation of low-income housing.

New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC)

This program supports economic development in underserved communities throughout the United States. Projects typically focus on creating job and business development opportunities for lower income individuals, but tax credits can be used for a variety of developments include mixed commercial/residential buildings as long as 20% or more of the project income is from commercial real estate. Financing is provided through Qualified Community Development Entities with NMTC allocations such as People Inc., which operates in the Manassas area.

[In Practice](#)

The City of East St. Louis Housing Authority in Missouri partnered with a private investor and Qualified Community Development Entity, People's Ventures, LLC, to use NMTC along with Tax Increment Financing and HUD public housing funds to construct a four-story mixed use transit-oriented rental development for low-income seniors. The project includes 74 rental units and commercial space for a credit union, grocery store, community center, health care center, and office space.

Public/Private Partnerships

Public private partnerships are often formed with the purpose of revitalizing a particular site or neighborhood when projects require significant public infrastructure improvements, easements, and changes to zoning standards. These partnerships can encourage private development by easing municipal regulatory processes and sharing the cost of infrastructure improvements. Private entities generally take on most of the project risk and debt, which means less public funds are required to meet a neighborhood development goal. There are many different types of public/private partnerships – for example, some involve direct subsidies, while others rely only on changes to zoning and development standards.

[In Practice](#)

The Chicago suburb of Bartlett, which has a similar population size to the City of Manassas (roughly 41,000), undertook activities traditionally conducted by a developer - site acquisition, environmental remediation, market studies, and predevelopment planning - to encourage the redevelopment of its historic downtown by reducing costs. Bartlett then recruited a developer in 2003 to carry out the vision and objectives identified through its predevelopment planning process, giving the community more control over the final development.

The City of Berkeley, CA used lease revenue bonds to aid in the development of a new performing arts theater in the 1990s. This involved the City signing a lease with the theater placed with a trustee who then issued certificates of participation in the lease, with bond payments secured by the City's general fund. Proceeds from the sale of COPs were used to build the theater, which pays rent to the City.