

North Richmond

OUR VISION

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We envision a North Richmond where residents enjoy a high quality of life made possible by affordable housing, living-wage jobs, community services and public safety.

Where:

- mixed-use residential and commercial development meets the needs of all segments of the population, with priority given to affordable housing and repurposing of vacant lots;
- the economy offers diverse employment opportunities that promote social mobility, and small and large enterprises contribute to the self-sufficiency (including food security) of North Richmond;
- vital community programs related to homelessness, rehabilitation, education and training, youth and elderly services, are easy to access;
- public infrastructure is upgraded and well-maintained, and the design of the built environment contributes to crime prevention;

Ultimately, a safe and prosperous environment that is home to healthy and engaged residents creates positive opportunities and outcomes for young people.



Image Credit: Richmond Love Your Block

OUR COMMITMENT

We commit to implement this vision in such a way that demonstrates how diverse people can live and work together in unity.

Positive change is achieved through collaboration among many stakeholders and empowerment of resident leaders from multi-racial and multi-generational backgrounds.

A coalition of residents meets regularly to update the community vision, make plans and set priorities, and form partnerships with local officials, developers and other stakeholders to implement the vision. In addition, there is ongoing consultation between the community and developers.

Diverse streams of funding are pursued at the federal, state and local level. Potential financing mechanisms include Community Benefits Agreements, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, grants and local fundraising.

People who have power to bring about change are held accountable to their promises, and the relationship among residents, or between residents and other stakeholders, is coequal and mutually respectful.

The changes that we seek for North Richmond must begin now.

OUR STORY: HOW WE GOT HERE

The history of North Richmond has been characterized by exclusive patterns of development happening “to” residents – instead of “by” and “for” residents. Given this injustice, current and former residents have sought to participate in and influence the planning and development process for their neighborhood. The outcome shall be a shared vision for the future of the North Richmond community, and a quality-of-life plan for the practical implementation of this vision.

The North Richmond Resident Leadership Team (“RLT”) is a group of residents who represent a strong organized voice in North Richmond and have become knowledgeable about development projects impacting the community. Most of the North Richmond RLT have lived in North Richmond for at least ten years and identify as people of color. They include Lynn Abram, Berta Álvarez, Leticia Chávez, Angela Dowell, Karen García, Johana Gurdian, Sara Gurdian, Kapris James, Jannat Muhammad and Camilo Navarro. The North Richmond RLT is supported administratively by Healthy Richmond and Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services.

Over the summer, the North Richmond RLT surveyed the community at large to inform a robust visioning process. They interviewed 108 individuals, asking each person to describe the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) associated with North Richmond. These interviews were open-ended conversations with the purpose of listening actively to the concerns and feelings of many residents. To reach a broad swath of the North Richmond community, the resident leaders canvassed all corners of the neighborhood and attended multiple community events. In addition, Healthy Richmond conducted SWOT interviews of eight focus-groups composed of institutional stakeholders.

In October 2018, the North Richmond RLT staged a community visioning event at Verde Elementary School attended by over 80 people from the community. The resident leaders presented an assessment of the community’s needs based on data collected from the community surveys and focus-groups interviews. The data were organized and presented as eight thematic areas. The event concluded with group discussions among attendees and distribution of a written [report](#) describing the major themes that were most commonly shared across the interviews.

Since November 2018, public planning sessions have been held twice a month to move the community from a general vision to a quality-of-life plan in the four issue areas identified as priorities: housing, business, safety and youth. Institutional stakeholders were invited to join a “Leadership Circle” to work together with residents to identify sponsors, implementing partners, and resources to bring about the community vision. A list of individuals and organizations who have been involved to date in the visioning and quality-of-life planning process is available upon request.

The North Richmond community is interested in learning from equitable development projects and best practices in community economic development. The North Richmond RLT and partnering organizations will jointly introduce a quality-of-life plan for North Richmond at a public rollout event scheduled for March 30, 2019.

For more information, please contact [<northrichmond@liscnet.org>](mailto:northrichmond@liscnet.org).