

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: High-Rise for the ElderlyOther names/site number: Frederic A. Fay Towers; Fay Towers; DHR #127-7673Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. LocationStreet & number: 1202 N 1st StreetCity or town: Richmond State: VA County: Independent CityNot For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☐
Public – Local ☒
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
District ☐
Site ☐
Structure ☐
Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/institutional housing (public housing)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/institutional housing (public housing)

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, CONCRETE, GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The High-Rise for the Elderly (Frederic A. Fay Towers) is an 11-story International Style high-rise apartment building with designed landscape located on an urban lot within the Gilpin Court Public Housing Complex in Richmond, Virginia. The boundary of the historic property encompasses approximately two-thirds of the block bound by N 1st Street, E Federal Street, St. James Street, and E Hill Street; smaller scale multi-family housing buildings occupy the remainder of the block. Although The High-Rise for the Elderly shares a tax parcel with the smaller scale multi-family housing to the south, the resource's historic boundary excludes these buildings. The historic boundary follows the west, north, and east parcel lines along St. James Street, E Hill Street, and N 1st Street, respectively, but the southern boundary runs from N 1st Street and St. James Street along the southside of the building's southern parking lot. The 1971 building is situated within an associated designed landscape which includes a paved walk with mature vegetation and a landscaped patio on the primary (east) elevation of the building. A large stamped concrete patio and grass lawn is located on the north side of the property. The property line along the north side of the property is lined with a brick wall. The west elevation is partially composed of a parking lot and a grass lawn. A concrete path winds around the landscaped portions of the building. To the south of the building is a large parking lot. Large mature trees are

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located on the property. The High-Rise for the Elderly retains a high degree of the seven aspects of integrity.

Narrative Description

Setting

The High-Rise for the Elderly is located in Richmond, Virginia and is part of a larger public housing complex known as Gilpin Court, which is owned and operated by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority and located within the greater Jackson Ward community. The high-rise apartment building and its associated designed landscape are surrounded by smaller scale multi-family housing buildings in the east end of Gilpin Court. The property shares a parcel with several multi-family housing buildings to the south, and is bounded on the west, north, and east by St. James Street, E Hill Street, and N 1st Street, respectively.

A. The High-Rise for the Elderly, 1971, Contributing Building

The High-Rise for the Elderly, constructed ca. 1971, is an 11-story International style apartment building with a concrete foundation, reinforced concrete block structure, and is faced with multi-toned running bond brick veneer. The building has an irregular footprint with opposite facing wings connected by a central core. The building has single-hung aluminum windows vertically separated by aggregate concrete panels that emphasize the height of the building. Concrete piers support an inset porch and create a weightless wing on the north side of the building. Concrete panels wrap the building creating a false watertable and cornice.

The primary façade, or east elevation, has a central entrance with a flat concrete canopy with lettering “Frederic A. Fay Towers” over an aluminum storefront. Aluminum storefront entrances are also located near the garden on the south end of the east elevation, and along inset porch. The south elevation also consists of a secondary storefront entrance and overhead garage doors leading to the building’s workshop. The west elevation has a central covered entrance, with a modern aluminum storefront and ADA access ramp, as well as large openings to the mechanical areas located on the rear of the building. Although typical institutional heating and cooling units are present along the wall at floor level in each living unit, window air-conditioning units were installed as needed to maintain the livability of units and are visible on the exterior.

The first floor is dedicated to community spaces, offices, and mechanical rooms. The front entrance opens into a small vestibule before continuing into the main lobby. The focal point of the lobby is a brick and stone fountain and planter with an engraving of Frederic A. Fay, for whom the building is named. The lobby also consists of the mailroom. The elevator lobby is located to the south of the main lobby and is also the location of the rear entrance. The south end of the first floor is largely composed of mechanical equipment, a laundry area, staff offices, and a workshop. The north end of the first floor includes a large open dining space and lounge, as well as the kitchen. The main lobby floors are finished with square terrazzo; the remainder of the first floor is surfaced with a mix of linoleum vinyl tile or unfinished concrete. In primary spaces, walls are finished with gypsum board, while secondary spaces retained painted exposed concrete block walls. A dropped ceiling grid and acoustical ceiling tiles are located throughout the first

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floor; secondary spaces, mechanical rooms, and the workshop have exposed ceiling structure, plumbing, and electrical conduit.

The floor plan remains consistent from the second to the eleventh floor with a central elevator and stair lobby, and central corridors that run the lengths of each wing of the building. Tile wainscoting covers the lower half of the walls in each elevator lobby. All floors have square vinyl tile floor coverings. In the lobbies and corridors, the floor coloring alternates between orange and white on the even floors and green and white on the odd floors. Individual units have neutral vinyl tile. Walls are primarily covered in painted gypsum board. The corridors feature dropped acoustical tile ceiling grids, while the units have finished, textured ceilings. Each of the units has a wooden door with simple bronze-colored hardware and matching door-knockers. Over each door is a triangular-shaped light that served a key purpose for the residents of the building—to alert neighbors and staff in the event of an emergency. Each of the units consists of a simple layout including one bedroom (or efficiency), living area, bathroom, and kitchen.

B. Designed Landscape, 1971, Contributing Site

Surrounding the High-Rise for the Elderly is an historic landscape designed by prominent local landscape architect Kenneth R. Higgins. Designed in conjunction with the high-rise apartment building, the associated designed landscape includes winding concrete walkways, iron benches with wood seating, concrete patios on the north and east elevations, circular concrete planter wells, a brick pier with concrete planter urn on the east patio, a square brick planter with wooden seating on the east patio, a low stepped brick wall along the property's northeast corner, parking lots to the northwest and south of the building, and chain link fencing enclosing the area north of the southern parking lot. Lamps have been relocated and received replacement components through the years, and metal fencing encloses the south parking lot. Mature hedges, which are shown as part of the historic design on a 1970 rendering, obscure the chain link fencing, and mature trees and plantings are located throughout the site.

Integrity Assessment

The High-Rise for the Elderly retains a high degree of architectural integrity associated with its period of significance. It retains its **location** on N 1st Street in Gilpin Court. The designs by both E. Tucker Carlton and landscape architect Kenneth Higgins remain remarkably intact. The landscaped areas and mature vegetation planned by Higgins also preserves integrity of **setting**. Very few material changes have been made over time, and are primarily limited to those that caused later safety or hazard concerns such as asbestos. Other material changes were due to wear and tear or necessary upgrades over time such as appliances, cabinetry, and fixtures. Notable materials that have been preserved include the exterior brick and concrete, aluminum storefront and windows, main entry lobby and corridor flooring, wooden doors, and in many units the metal accordion closet doors. The building retains integrity of **workmanship** as well, due to the high integrity of its **design** and **materials**. The building retains its **feeling** as a high-rise apartment building for seniors, and its **association** with its areas and period of significance.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1971

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Carlton, E. Tucker, Architect

Higgins, Kenneth R., Landscape Architect

Basic Construction Company (Newport News), General Contractor

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The High-Rise for the Elderly apartment building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance. The property is locally significant under **Criterion A** in the area of **Community Planning and Development**, as a representative example of the implications of the Housing Act of 1959, which authorized Federal loans for the development of housing for the elderly. The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) used the increased funding to construct the eleven-story building specifically to serve the city's aging population reliant on the support of public housing. The High-Rise for the Elderly was RRHA's first purpose-built high-rise apartment building, and was designed specifically with the needs of elderly residents in mind. Prior to its construction, RRHA operated large multi-building complexes with one-to-three-story buildings, and senior residents mostly resided in ground-floor, single-story units or in a smaller, three-story, 24-unit apartment building. With accessibility and safety as high priorities, the building was equipped with elevators and an emergency alert system for each unit. The High-Rise for the Elderly is also locally significant under **Criterion C** in the areas of **Architecture** and **Landscape Architecture** as a representation of the work of prominent Virginia architect, E. Tucker Carlton, and landscape architect, Kenneth R. Higgins. The High-Rise for the Elderly has a period of significance of 1971, the year the building was completed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

The High-Rise for the Elderly is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under **Criterion A** in the area of **Community Planning and Development** as a representative of the local implications of the Housing Act of 1959, which authorized Federal loans for the development of housing for the elderly, and as the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority's first purpose-built high-rise apartment building designed specifically with the needs of elderly residents in mind.

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) and Frederic A. Fay

On October 3, 1940, Richmond's City Council established the Housing Authority of the City of Richmond as a "political sub-division of the Commonwealth" upon the recommendation and approval of the mayor.¹ The Richmond Housing Authority was provided with the powers granted to local authorities under the provisions of the 1938 Virginia Housing Authority Law.² On October 4, 1940, Mayor Gordon Barbour Ambler appointed members to the Board of Commissioners of the Richmond Housing Authority. Chairman of the board, William Shands

¹ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 9.

² Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 9.

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Meacham, had previously served as the associate director of the Richmond Times Dispatch, a former editor of the Danville Register, and for many years was “active in promoting sociological reforms in Virginia,” and “considered an authority on social trends.”³

The first Executive Director of the Richmond Housing Authority was Thomas L. Cockrell of Richmond. Previously an engineer and Chief of the City Bureau of Sewers and Structures, Cockrell was appointed Executive Director of the Housing Authority effective December 1, 1940, earning a salary of \$4,500 a year.⁴ Aligned with the Housing Authority’s mission, Cockrell’s duties centered on taking “direct charge” of the slum-clearance projects in Richmond.⁵ During his tenure, Cockrell oversaw the construction of Gilpin Court, the city’s first public housing project. Cockrell continued as Executive Director until September 1, 1944 when he resigned from the position.⁶

Thomas L. Cockrell was succeeded as executive director by Frederic A. Fay in 1950. Fay previously served as the technical advisor and assistant director of the Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority in Virginia. Fay served RRHA for thirty years, retiring in 1980. He remains the longest serving executive director in the history of RRHA.⁷ During his time as executive director, Fay was responsible for most of the post-Gilpin Court public housing, slum clearance, and redevelopment in Richmond, and oversaw the construction and operation all of the “Big 6” complexes consisting of more than 3,000 housing units. Fay also served as President of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials on October 26, 1965.⁸

Early Public Housing in Richmond

By 1900, Richmond contained almost 16,000 persons per square mile, which made it the most crowded southern city.⁹ In addition to population density and the associated overcrowding, the city was experiencing mass amounts of physical deterioration throughout its residences. Early city planning, however, was less concerned with housing than regulating the city’s physical development.¹⁰ Before 1940, the majority of Richmond’s planning focused on pushing urban settlement into the surrounding suburbs, and utilizing the city core for economic development. Two primary factors contributed to the problems occurring within Richmond’s city center

³ “Housing Reforms in Richmond Led by W.S. Meacham.” *Danville Bee* (October 5, 1940), pg 10.

⁴ “T.L. Cockrell Named Head of Housing,” *Northern Neck News* (November 22, 1940).

⁵ “T.L. Cockrell Named Head of Housing,” *Northern Neck News* (November 22, 1940).

⁶ “A Loss to Public Housing,” *Northern Neck News*, (August 25, 1944).

⁷ Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1969-1970 Annual Report*, 27; Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1980 Annual Report*

⁸ Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1969-1970 Annual Report*, 29.

⁹ Christopher Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond: planning, politics, and race* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 63.

¹⁰ Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond: planning, politics, and race*, 103.

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housing in the early twentieth century. The first was the continuous migration of the city's middle class into the city's suburbs. As Richmond continued to annex and consolidate land, those who were able moved out into the city's suburbs. By 1940, most residents who remained in the core of the city were considered "too poor to get out."¹¹ Previously middle-class neighborhoods saw homes converted into rental units for lower-income residents. Absentee landlords allowed properties to fall into disrepair, which led to poor housing conditions in low-income neighborhoods. The second problem was the creation of a housing market that was racially segregated and restrictive.¹² Restrictive zoning ordinances passed during the first quarter of the twentieth century resulted in more deeply segregated neighborhoods and intensified the concentration of African-American residents to lower-income neighborhoods where poor housing conditions were prevalent.

Segregation in the city had been firmly established prior to 1900 with the largest concentration of the African-American population located in Jackson Ward. Jackson Ward was the center of Richmond's African-American community life. Home to a diverse collection of businesses, churches, and social and educational institutions, Jackson Ward was described by some as "the most progressive Negro business center in the nation."¹³ However, Jackson Ward also had a high concentration of poverty, and many residences in poor physical condition. In 1900, most of the streets in Jackson Ward were unpaved, residences were often overcrowded due to high rental rates for modest income households, and many homes were in deteriorated condition due largely to neglect by absentee property owners who used the properties as investments.¹⁴

In order to address the poor housing conditions in the city, on October 30, 1940, only weeks after the Richmond Housing Authority was established, the United States Housing Authority (USHA) allotted \$1,977,000.00 for two "slum clearance" projects in Richmond. The amount provided by USHA covered ninety-percent of the costs for the two developments, one intended for white residents only, while the other was designated for African-American residents.¹⁵ This USHA program had a dual focus to construct "decent, safe and sanitary dwellings," and to eliminate "a substantially equivalent number of unsafe or insanitary dwelling units."¹⁶ It was determined that the first of the two projects to be undertaken would be for African-American residents.¹⁷ The Richmond Housing Authority commenced its first redevelopment project in Jackson Ward. The project was designated for African American residents, a decision that perpetuated existing racial segregation in the city for decades to come.

¹¹ Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond: planning, politics, and race*, 29.

¹² Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond: planning, politics, and race*, 102.

¹³ Christopher Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond: planning, politics, and race*, 32.

¹⁴ Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond*, 31.

¹⁵ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 10.

¹⁶ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 11.

¹⁷ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*.

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This inaugural Richmond Housing Authority project was bounded “on the east by the west of St. Paul’s Street, on the north by the south lines of Coutts and Calhoun Streets, on the west by the east side of Chamberlayne Parkway, and on the south by the north lines of Charity Street and a line connecting same between Hickory and St. Peter’s Streets.”¹⁸ The project was named “Gilpin Court,” after Charles Sidney Gilpin, a Richmond native and former resident of Jackson Ward. Prior to clearance, this area was composed primarily of residential buildings. Interspersed within the homes and flats were a handful of business and religious buildings, including two churches and the Hickory Hill Mission operated by the Women’s American Baptist Home Missions Society.¹⁹ Approximately 220 families lived in the 150 buildings in the redevelopment area; 70 percent of the families rented their living space.²⁰ RRHA purchased approximately 92 parcels, and another 94 parcels were acquired through condemnation. Efforts to relocate the 220 families that had resided in the Gilpin Court area began April 1, 1941; by October 15, 1941, the site was cleared.²¹ Gilpin Court, Phase 1 was completed in 1942, and until 1946 was home to African American residents working in industries that supported American military efforts during World War II. Following the war, Gilpin Court was opened to all low-income African American residents. However, due to war-time restrictions, very few residents who had been relocated from Jackson Ward in 1941 moved back into Gilpin Court after the war.

During the first two decades following World War II, RRHA constructed five additional public housing complexes, as well as an expansion of Gilpin Court. By 1962, the housing authority operated Gilpin Court, Creighton Court (1952), Hillside Court (1952), Fairfield Court (1958), Whitcomb Court (1958), and Mosby Court (1962). All of these developments, with the exception of Hillside Court (constructed specifically for white occupants), had a high percentage of African American residents due to urban renewal and transportation planning initiatives that concentrated on and largely displaced the city’s Black neighborhoods.

President Eisenhower’s 1954 State of the Union address notably acknowledged that African Americans continued to lack access to decent housing in good neighborhoods, and he expressed a desire to end direct federal support to projects that purposefully excluded minorities.²² Between 1957 and 1968, Congress worked to adopt laws that prohibited second-class citizenship for African Americans in many areas, including public transportation, voting, and employment, but not in housing.²³ It wasn’t until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 that the government

¹⁸ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 18.

¹⁹ Charles H. Fleet, “Property Line Map: Chamberlayne Parkway,” Housing Division, Public Works Administration, 1935; 1925 Sanborn Maps

²⁰ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 18.

²¹ Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*, 19.

²² Arnold R. Hirsch, “Searching for a ‘Sound Negro Policy’: A Racial Agenda for the Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954,” *Housing Policy Debate* (Volume 11, Issue 2), 2000. 420.

²³ Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America*. Liveright Publishing Corporation: New York (2017), 177.

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addressed long-standing inequities in public housing by officially banning housing discrimination. In the same year, the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968 was passed as the first federal measure to ensure accessibility to buildings for people with disabilities, requiring buildings designed, built, or altered with federal money or leased by federal agencies be accessible.²⁴

Accessible Housing for the Elderly and the Development of Fay Towers

Housing for the nation's aging population was first included in Federal legislation in 1954. The Housing Act of 1959 later authorized direct Federal loans for private nonprofits to develop and provide rental housing for the elderly. The 1959 Act also authorized a new FHA mortgage insurance program for privately owned nursing homes.²⁵ Unlike many public housing development projects, which were often topics of public controversy due to required zoning exemptions and racial and social prejudice among neighboring communities, housing for the elderly generally received less opposition.²⁶ In addition to this general community support, Federal funding and legislation for elderly housing coupled with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 paved the way for increased attention to the development of senior housing. Unlike RRHA's earlier housing projects, The High-Rise for the Elderly was also designed and constructed after the Civil Rights Act of 1964/1968 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968, and as such, was not designed to be racially segregated.

Aligned with a nationwide focus to provide low-income elderly housing, RRHA constructed its first high rise apartment building, an eleven-story, 200-unit tower specifically for senior citizens in 1971.²⁷ Although located within Gilpin Court, the high-rise was known as the High-Rise for the Elderly, and was later renamed Frederic A. Fay Towers in 1985 after RRHA's former executive director Frederick A. Fay.²⁸ The High-Rise for the Elderly was not only the housing authority's first high-rise, but it was also the first purpose-built structure for senior residents. Prior to the construction of the High-Rise for the Elderly, RRHA operated large complexes with one-to-three-story buildings. Senior residents, or those requiring additional accessibility considerations, lived in ground-floor, single-story units within these large complexes. Prior to the opening of the High-Rise for the Elderly, RRHA also operated a small 24-apartment building located at 2700 Idlewood Avenue, which had been repurposed for senior housing. Also, in 1971, a small, two-story 24-unit apartment building at Twelfth and Decatur Streets was completed and

²⁴ Pub. L. 90-480 (42 U.S.C. §§4151 et seq.)

²⁵ *A Chronology of Housing Legislation and Selected Executive Actions, 1892-1992*. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington (1994), 79-87.

²⁶ Adam Bickford and Douglas S. Massey, "Segregation in the Second Ghetto: Racial and Ethnic Segregation in American Public Housing, 1977," *Social Forces*, June 1991, Vol. 69, No. 4 (June 1991), 1014.

²⁷ Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1970 Annual Report*, 12; Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1971 Annual Report*, 4.

²⁸ "Ex-RRHA head to be honored," *Richmond Times Dispatch* (July 7, 1985).

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also served as additional senior housing. In total, RRHA operated 248 units of senior housing by 1971, and had plans to continue expanding.²⁹ Later senior housing included a mixture of high- and low-rise buildings, as well as scattered site units, and by 1979, RRHA operated nearly 600 housing units dedicated to low-income senior citizens.³⁰

The High-Rise for the Elderly is notable as RRHA's first high rise, and as the authority's first purpose-built senior residence. Equipped with an elevator, ground-floor mailroom, laundry area, trash shoot on each floor, and a ground-floor mailroom, lounge, and cafeteria, the High-Rise for the Elderly offered senior residents increased accessibility and activities that increased overall quality of life. The building included a mixture of unit sizes including 120 efficiency and 80 one-bedroom apartments and each unit was equipped with an emergency alert system that could be triggered from inside the apartment. The system would trigger an audio alarm, and a light over the door would turn on indicating the location of the resident in need of assistance. Residents also formed a "buddy system" to check in on each other periodically.³¹ RRHA also offered services to residents such as transportation to nearby markets so that residents could purchase essential goods, and hosted group activities in the common areas.

²⁹ Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1971 Annual Report*, 8.

³⁰ Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1979 Annual Report*.

³¹ "Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority High Rise for the Elderly," *Virginia Record*, August 1972.

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Figure 1: The rendering of The High-Rise for the Elderly, drawn by architect E. Tucker Carlton, was published in RRHA's 1970 Annual Report. Courtesy of RRHA.

Criterion C: Architecture/Landscape Architecture

The High-Rise for the Elderly is also locally significant under **Criterion C** for **Architecture** and **Landscape Architecture** for its design by prominent local architect E. Tucker Carlton, and landscape architect Kenneth R. Higgins. As with their other public housing developments, RRHA hired a team of local and regional experts to design the High-Rise for the Elderly, including architect, E. Tucker Carlton, engineers, Austin Brockenbrough & Associates, Hankins, Anderson & Moncrief, and William T. St. Clair, and landscape architect Kenneth R. Higgins.³² In addition to designing works throughout the City of Richmond and the larger region, E. Tucker Carlton and Kenneth R. Higgins also worked together and separately on other commissions for RRHA; Carlton and Higgins both worked on the Gilpin Court Extension (1968), and Carlton designed Whitcomb Court (1957). The designs of both the high-rise apartment building and the

³² E. Tucker Carlton, et. al., Fay Tower, Richmond, VA: Project No. 7-9, 1968.

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associated designed landscape have remained largely unchanged since their design and construction in the early 1970s.

Eugene Tucker Carlton (1900-1975)

Eugene (E.) Tucker Carlton was born in 1900 in Roanoke, Virginia. He studied electrical engineering at Virginia Military Institute and formed an independent architectural practice in 1939. Carlton's works included a wide range of types, such as single-family dwellings, dormitories, military apartments, commercial buildings, and a few institutional buildings; however, he was possibly best known for his work as a prolific designer of residential apartments and Federal Housing Administration (FHA)-funded housing developments in Richmond during the mid-twentieth century. Between 1945 and 1950, thirteen FHA-insured garden apartments were constructed in Richmond; of these thirteen developments, Carlton is credited with designing at least seven.³³ Throughout his career many of his works, especially his residential apartment buildings, were designed in the Colonial or Classical Revival style. Although the High-Rise for the Elderly departed from Carlton's most common designs and styles, it was not his first modern-style high-rise. Carlton's first, and only other currently identified modern style high-rise, was the Carlton Terrace Apartments, a ten-story, 150-unit International Style apartment building designed with modern amenities that opened in Roanoke, Virginia in 1950. Unlike the High-Rise for the Elderly, which was purpose built solely for low-income senior citizens, Carlton Terrace Apartments included a mixture of commercial and office space in addition to its residential units.³⁴

In 1968, Carlton founded the architecture firm of Carlton, Taylor & Clark. Within the same year his firm designed multiple low-rent apartment buildings for RRHA, including the High-Rise for the Elderly. Although the firm designed Gaskins Village, an apartment development in Henrico County, in 1969, the High-Rise for the elderly may have been one of the last designs credited to Carlton during his career.³⁵ In addition to architecture, Carlton also had a prominent career in the Virginia Legislature as a member of the House of Delegates from 1956 to 1962.³⁶

Kenneth R. Higgins, Landscape Architect

Kenneth R. Higgins was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts in 1915, and studied horticulture and landscape architecture at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. There he trained under Frank Waugh, and graduated with a BS in 1937 and a BLA in 1938. During World War II he

³³ Holly Springs Apartments, National Register Nomination (2019): Section 8, page 13.

³⁴ "Carlton Terrace Building and Hall's Produce, Roanoke, Virginia," Photo Record, O. Winston Link Museum, History Museum of Western Virginia. Accessed January 26, 2023.

<https://hswv.pastperfectonline.com/Photo/3189F232-4B69-47FC-8A1B-572146302465>.

³⁵ Holly Springs Apartments, National Register Nomination (2019): Section 8 page 22.

³⁶ Virginia Death Records, Ancestry.Com; American Architects Direction, 1956, 1962, and 1970, <https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/pages/36865143/ahd1006775> (accessed 26 Oct 2020).

High-Rise for the Elderly

Name of Property

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was stationed in Virginia, where he met his wife Mary Douthat Smith and settled in Richmond, Virginia. From 1946 to 1948, Higgins worked for Charles F. Gillette, a prominent landscape architect responsible for most of designs for RRHA's early public housing. Gillette and Higgins worked together on various projects including the University of Richmond campus. Higgins then went to work for the Public Housing Administration (PHA) Richmond Field office from 1948 to 1951, where he influenced landscape design and site development for city wide, while also carrying out the standards established by the PHA. In 1952, Higgins established a private firm.

According to the Cultural Landscape Foundation, Higgins' designs are characterized by their low-maintenance plantings and "sensitivity to historic resources."³⁷ Higgins' intentional selection of low-maintenance plantings in his designs remains visible in the High-Rise for the Elderly's landscape through his use of hedges and trees that required only regular pruning as their primary form of maintenance. Higgins' choices for the design of the High-Rise for the Elderly's landscape were also likely influenced by his time working for the PHA Richmond Field office. In addition to advising on alterations to the historic urban landscapes within Richmond, one of Higgins' best-known projects was his participation in Richmond City Planning's James River Park System project.³⁸ Other Richmond projects included rehabilitating the grounds of the John Marshall House and the Monumental Church.³⁹ Higgins was active in several organizations including the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (now known as Preservation Virginia), the Monument Avenue Commission, and the Potomac Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.⁴⁰

³⁷ "Kenneth R. Higgins," The Cultural Landscape Foundation, <https://tclf.org/pioneer/kenneth-r-higgins> (accessed 26 Oct 2020).

³⁸ "Kenneth R. Higgins," The Cultural Landscape Foundation.

³⁹ "Kenneth R. Higgins," The Cultural Landscape Foundation.

⁴⁰ "Kenneth R. Higgins," The Cultural Landscape Foundation.

High-Rise for the Elderly
Name of Property

City of Richmond, Virginia
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Architectural Drawings

E. Tucker Carlton, et. al., Fay Tower, Richmond, VA: Project No. 7-9, 1968.

Maps

Fleet, Charles H. "Property Line Map: Chamberlayne Parkway." Housing Division, Public Works Administration. 1935.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Map: Richmond, Virginia." 1925.

Newspapers

Danville Bee

Northern Neck News

Richmond Times Dispatch

Legislation

Architectural Barriers Act of 1968. Pub. L. 90-480 (42 U.S.C. §§4151 et seq.).

Other Primary Sources

"Carlton Terrace Building and Hall's Produce, Roanoke, Virginia." Photo Record. O. Winston Link Museum, History Museum of Western Virginia. Accessed January 26, 2023. <https://hswv.pastperfectonline.com/Photo/3189F232-4B69-47FC-8A1B-572146302465>.

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Virginia Death Records, Ancestry.Com; American Architects Direction, 1956, 1962, and 1970, <https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/pages/36865143/ahd1006775>. Accessed 26 October 2020.

RRHA Annual Reports

Richmond Housing Authority, *1940-1941 Annual Report*

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1969-1970 Annual Report*

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1971 Annual Report*

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1979 Annual Report*

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *1980 Annual Report*

High-Rise for the Elderly
Name of Property

City of Richmond, Virginia
County and State

Secondary Sources

Bickford, Adam and Douglas S. Massey. "Segregation in the Second Ghetto: Racial and Ethnic Segregation in American Public Housing, 1977." *Social Forces*, Vol. 69, No. 4. June 1991.

A Chronology of Housing Legislation and Selected Executive Actions, 1892-1992. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington. 1994.

Hirsch, Arnold R. "Searching for a 'Sound Negro Policy': A Racial Agenda for the Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954." *Housing Policy Debate* 11, no. 2. 2000.

Holly Springs Apartments. National Register Nomination. 2019.

"Kenneth R. Higgins." The Cultural Landscapes Foundation. <https://tclf.org/pioneer/kenneth-r-higgins>. Accessed 26 October 2020.

Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America*. Liveright Publishing Corporation: New York. 2017.

Silver, Christopher Silver. *Twentieth-Century Richmond: planning, politics, and race*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. 1984.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository: Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Library of Virginia; Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR #127-7673

High-Rise for the Elderly
Name of Property

City of Richmond, Virginia
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.14

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.553189 Longitude: -77.433961

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the High-Rise for the Elderly includes 2.14 acres within the City of Richmond, Virginia. The rectangular boundary encompasses the north half of the block bounded on the west by Saint James Street, on the north by E Hill Street, on the east by N 1st Street, and on the south by E Federal Street. The boundary follows the parcel lines on the north, east, and west; the southern boundary stretches from N 1st Street to Saint James Street along the southern side of the property's south parking lot. The historic boundary does not include the multi-family residential buildings located in the southern half of the tax parcel. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached scaled Sketch Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The High-Rise for the Elderly boundary follows the historic boundary of the apartment building and its associated historic site. The boundary includes The High-Rise for the Elderly building and the landscape architect designed site that surrounds the building. The boundary intersects the current tax parcel to exclude multi-family housing buildings that are associated with the Gilpin Court Public Housing Development, but are not historically associated with

High-Rise for the Elderly
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the construction of The High-Rise for the Elderly. The property's historic setting and all known associated resources have been included within the historic boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kayla Halberg and Ashlen Stump
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group
street & number: 536 W 35th Street
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23508
e-mail: admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com
telephone: 757-923-1900
date: February 2, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: The High-Rise for the Elderly

City or Vicinity: Richmond

County: n/a

State: VA

Photographer: Kayla Halberg

High-Rise for the Elderly
Name of Property

City of Richmond, Virginia
County and State

Date Photographed: April 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 30.

Photo Number of 30	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
1	Exterior main entrance, east elevation	W	04/2022	KH
2	East elevation	N	04/2022	KH
3	South elevation	N	04/2022	KH
4	Southwest oblique	NE	04/2022	KH
5	Northwest oblique	S	04/2022	KH
6	North patio and site	W	04/2022	KH
7	Exterior porch along south elevation	W	04/2022	KH
8	East garden patio	S	04/2022	KH
9	Interior first floor; Main lobby	W	04/2022	KH
10	Interior first floor; Main lobby	NE	04/2022	KH
11	Interior first floor; Mail area	W	04/2022	KH
12	Interior first floor; Community room	NE	04/2022	KH
13	Interior first floor; Community room	S	04/2022	KH
14	Interior first floor; Prep kitchen window	W	04/2022	KH
15	Interior first floor; Prep kitchen	W	04/2022	KH
16	Interior first floor; Office	N	04/2022	KH
17	Interior first floor; Office	W	04/2022	KH
18	Interior first floor; Workshop	SW	04/2022	KH
19	Interior first floor; Workshop	NE	04/2022	KH
20	Typical floor finish	N/A	04/2022	KH
21	Typical elevator lobby on even numbered floors.	W	04/2022	KH
22	Typical upper floor corridor	N	04/2022	KH
23	Typical unit entry and kitchen	E	04/2022	KH

High-Rise for the Elderly

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24	Typical efficiency unit	W	04/2022	KH
25	Typical efficiency unit	S	04/2022	KH
26	Typical efficiency unit	W	04/2022	KH
27	Typical galley kitchen	W	04/2022	KH
28	Typical one-bedroom unit	N	04/2022	KH
29	Typical elevator lobby on odd numbered upper floors	W	04/2022	KH
30	Typical central stair access.	W	04/2022	KH

Historic Images Log

Figure Number	Caption
1	The rendering of The High-Rise for the Elderly, drawn by architect E. Tucker Carlton, was published in RRHA's 1970 Annual Report. Courtesy of RRHA.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



Legend

 County Boundaries

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

High-Rise for the Elderly

City of Richmond, VA

DHR No. 127-7673



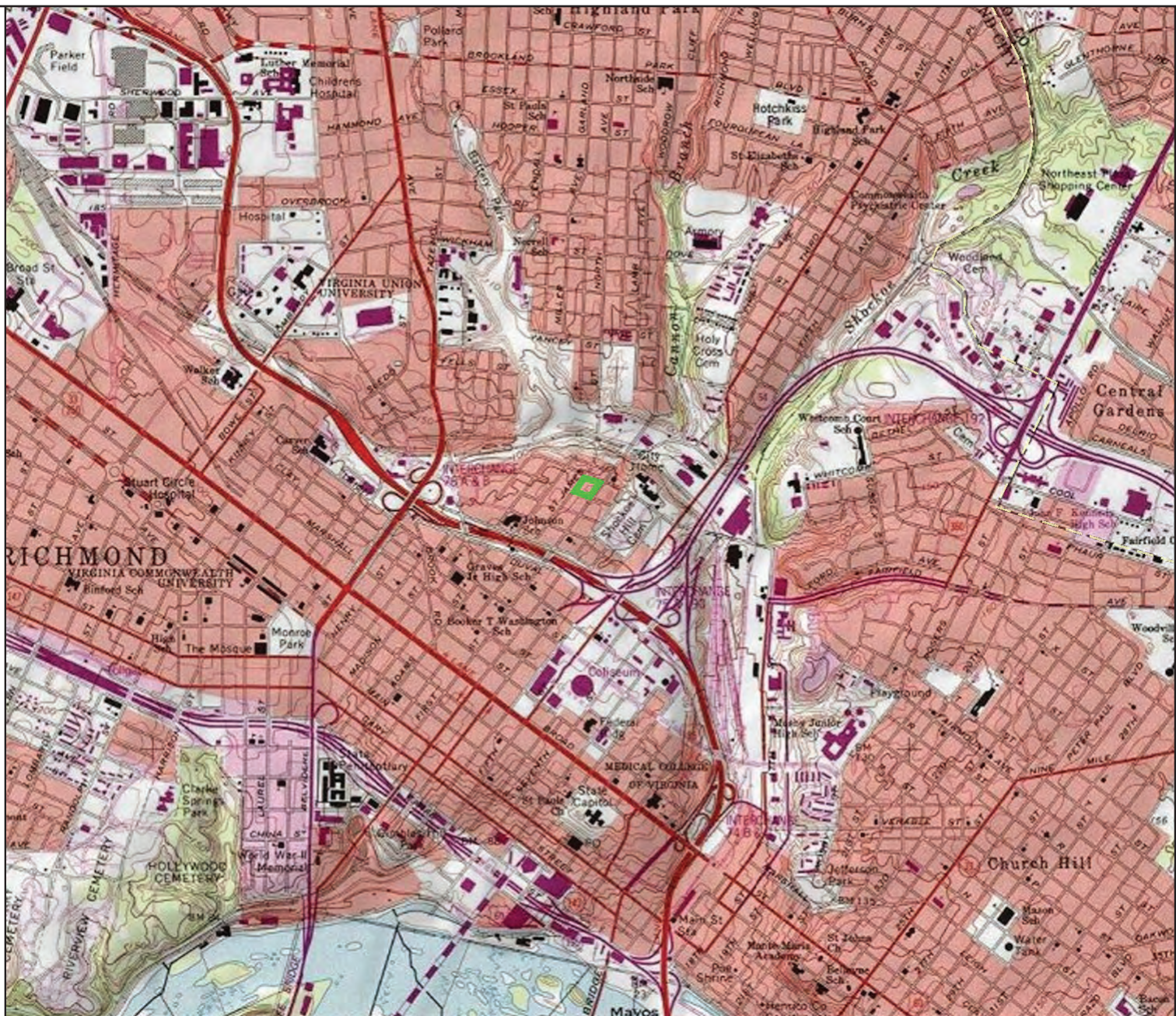
Historic Boundary



Feet

0 600 1200 1800 2400

1:36,112 / 1"=3,009 Feet



Title:

Date: 5/17/2023

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.

 County Boundaries



Feet

0 500 1000 1500 2000
1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.



Legend

County Boundaries

STREET MAP

High-Rise for the Elderly
City of Richmond, VA
DHR No. 127-7673

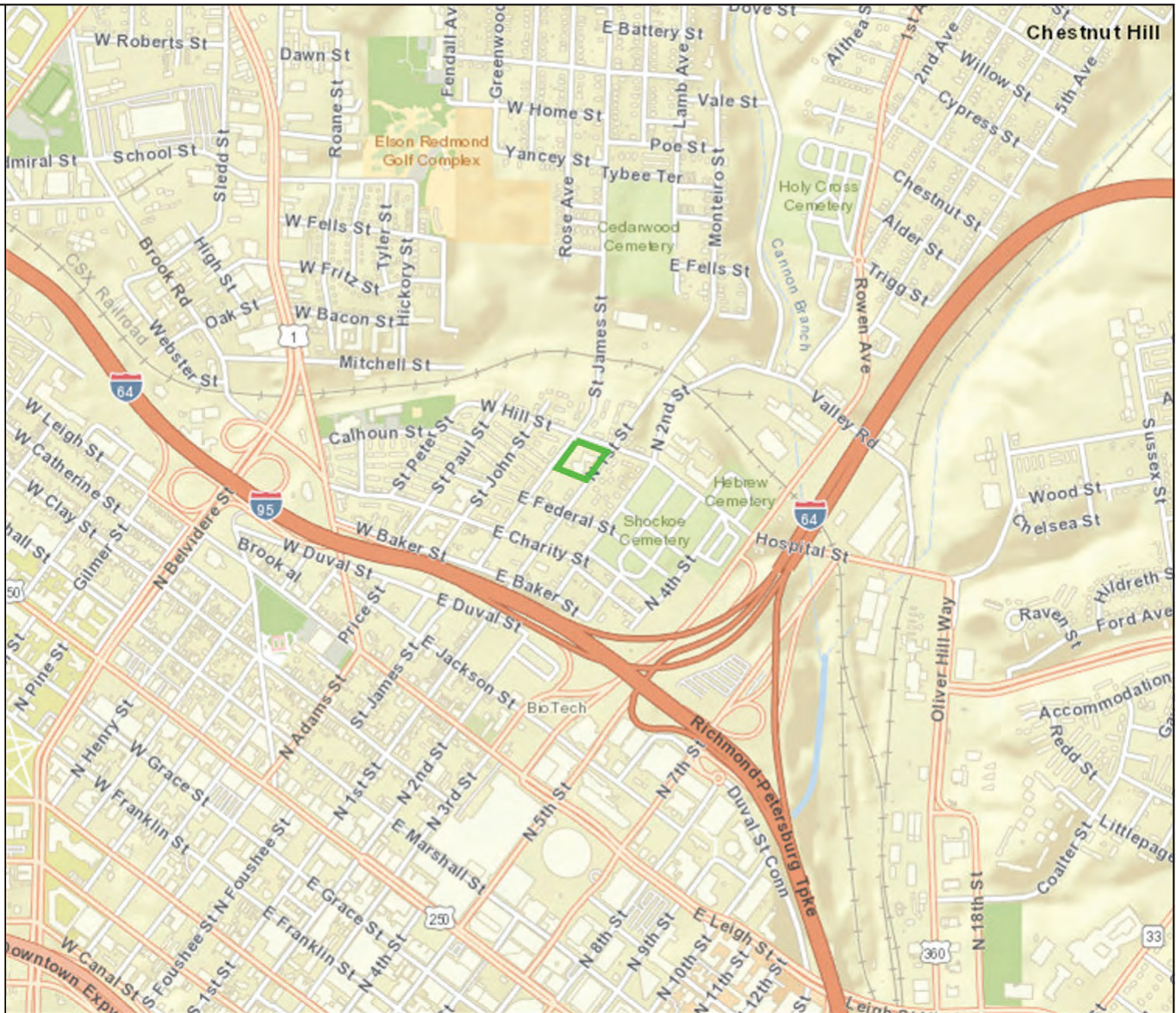


Historic Boundary



Feet

0 500 1000 1500 2000
1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet



Title:

Date: 5/17/2023

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

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Legend

Location Map:

High-Rise for the Elderly
1202 N 1st Street
City of Richmond, VA
DHR #127-7673

Lat: 37.553189
Lon: -77.433961



Feet

0 20 40 60 80
1:1,128 / 1"=94 Feet

Title: High-Rise for the Elderly (127-7673)

Date: 5/24/2022

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

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Legend

Sketch Map/ Photo Key

High-Rise for the Elderly

1202 N 1st Street

City of Richmond, VA

DHR #127-7673

C = Contributing



Photo Number & Direction



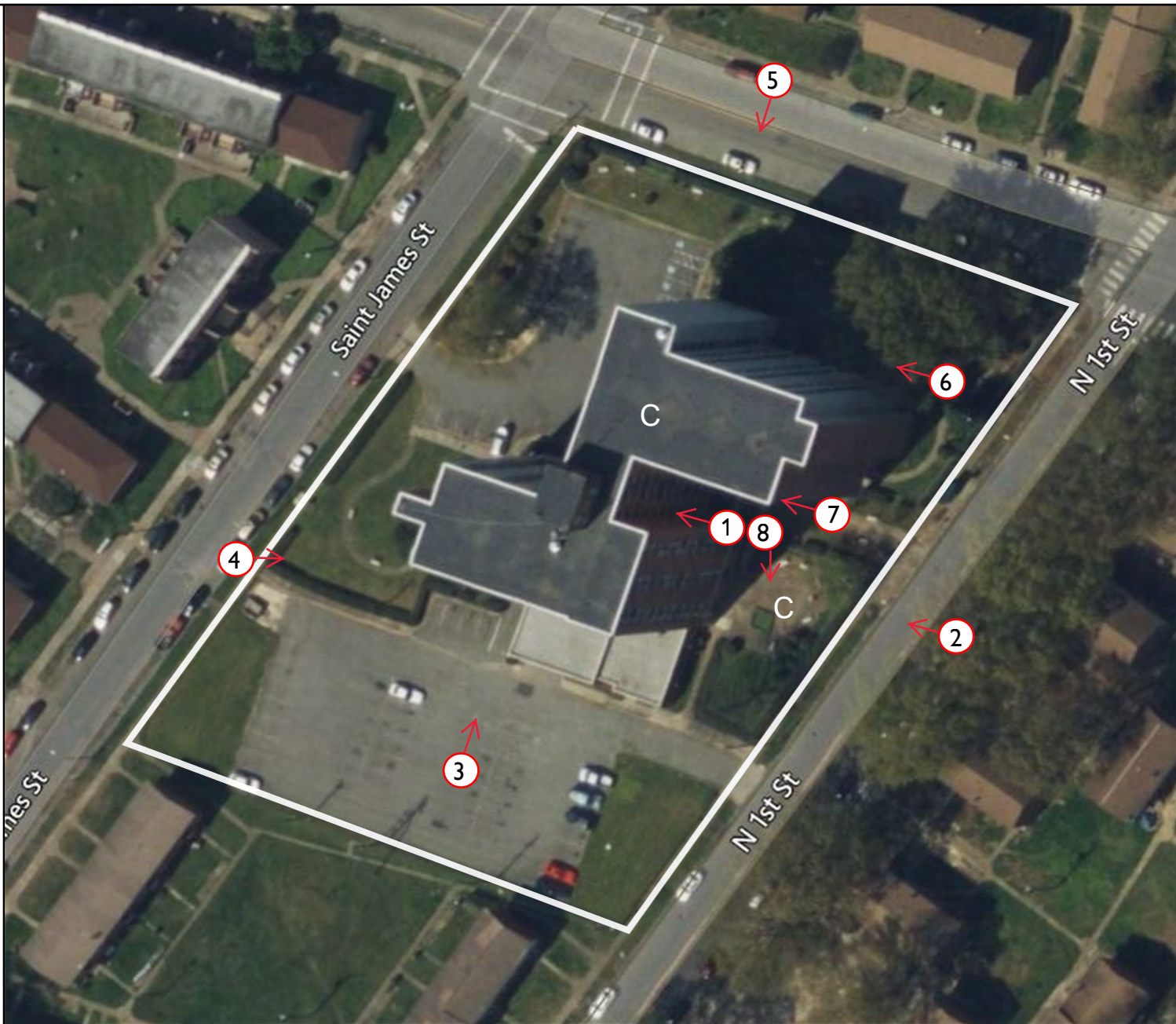
Historic Boundary
(white line on map)



Feet

0 20 40 60 80

1:1,128 / 1"=94 Feet



Title: High-Rise for the Elderly (127-7673)

Date: 5/24/2022

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

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TAX PARCEL MAP

High-Rise for the Elderly

City of Richmond, VA

 Historic Boundary

DHR #127-7673

