

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: Seatack Historic DistrictOther names/site number: DHR ID 134-0969

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Ackiss Ave, Americus Ave, Beautiful St, Bells Rd, Birdneck Rd, Brooklyn Ave, Burford Ave, Butts Ln, Carver Ave, Frazee Ln, Hope Ave, Hughes Ave, Longstreet Ave, Loretta Ln, Norfolk Ave, Old Virginia Beach Rd, Olds Ln, Owls Creek Ln, Sea St, Summerville Ct, Winterville Ct

City or town: Virginia Beach 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 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 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 local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

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: X

Public – Local X

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District X

Site

Structure

Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing _____ Noncontributing _____

133 _____

191 _____

buildings

5 _____

0 _____

sites

0 _____

6 _____

structures

0 _____

0 _____

objects

138 _____

197 _____

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0 _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling, multiple dwelling, secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE/ business, specialty store

EDUCATION/ school

RELIGION/ religious facility/church

FUNERARY/ cemetery

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ sports facility

LANDSCAPE/ park

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling, multiple dwelling, secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE/ business, specialty store

GOVERNMENT/ government office

RELIGION/ religious facility/church

FUNERARY/ cemetery

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ sports facility

LANDSCAPE/ park

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Colonial Revival, Late Gothic Revival,

Tudor Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/ Craftsman,

Commercial Style

MODERN MOVEMENT/ Ranch

OTHER: Minimal Traditional

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: SYNTHETICS, BRICK, CONCRETE, WOOD, STUCCO, ASBESTOS, STONE

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

This material was produced with assistance from the Underrepresented Communities Grant program, administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

Continuously developed over the course of the twentieth century, and into the twenty-first century, the Seatack Historic District is what remains of a larger historically and predominantly African American neighborhood within what is now Virginia Beach, Virginia. This district is a residential and commercial neighborhood in northern Virginia Beach, Virginia, located approximately 1.3 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean and approximately a half-mile northeast of the Oceana Naval Air Station. The district covers approximately 144 acres, is roughly 1.6 miles north to south, and roughly 0.5 miles east to west. At the northern end of the main body of the district is a discontiguous portion due to the construction of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway (Interstate 264), which opened in 1967. Multiple areas of new residential and commercial development in the southern part of the district have divided remaining contributing residential resources. The majority of the district consists of four areas (herein labeled B, C, D, E) and is located south of I-264, while one area (A) is located on the north side of the expressway and includes four contributing residential buildings and one contributing cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NRHP Listed: 5/28/2024

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The district is largely defined by the north-south main arterial Birdneck Road, with local roads extending out on both east and west sides. The district is bound largely by modern development and infill that has encroached on the historic neighborhood, as well as large areas of undeveloped land. The boundary of the district specifically excludes the surrounding non-contributing buildings as much as possible. The largest area of the district (B) is bound by marsh land to the west, I-264 to the north, and ends at Beautiful Street and Hughes Avenue to the south, with a few contributing resources situated beyond along South Birdneck Road. The northernmost discontiguous area (A) is situated along North Birdneck Road and is bound by I-264 to the south, modern apartment complexes to the west, and Old Virginia Beach Road to the north. The southern discontiguous areas (C, D, E) are all located along the east side of South Birdneck Road and are bound by a combination of modern commercial development to the west, and marshland and forest to the north, east and south. The furthest boundary is also defined by commercial development. Finally, along the east side of South Birdneck Road, modern residential development is interspersed with the discontiguous areas (C, D, E).

Most of the residential buildings are vernacular dwellings with traditional form massing, and fenestration patterns, but no discernable architectural style. Distributed among these are popular residential styles including vernacular Minimal Traditional-inspired resources as well as Craftsman, Ranch, and Colonial Revival. There are also singular examples of Tudor Revival and a religious building in the Colonial Revival style. Only one contributing Commercial style building remains along Birdneck Road, which is associated with automobile-related architecture. Reflecting the period from its earliest extant resource until the incursion of large-scale apartment complexes, the district has a period of significance beginning in 1915 until 1969, although some resources within the district and interspersed between the discontiguous district areas have construction dates into the first quarter of the twenty-first century. Overall, the district consists of 138 contributing resources and of these, 19 are secondary resources such as historic garages and permanent sheds, as well as 5 sites. The district includes 197 non-contributing resources, of which 93 are secondary resources. The result is a district with a majority of its primary resources being contributing. The resources retain a satisfactory degree of architectural integrity associated with the district's period and areas of significance.¹

The central neighborhood as well as the surrounding community of Seatack has seen continuous change and development, the rate of which increased during the 1960s. Originally, the neighborhood was known by local residents to encompass areas north to Laskin Road, south to General Booth Boulevard, and slightly east towards the Atlantic Ocean.² Few resources dating prior to 1969 remain in those areas, while the highest concentration of historic resources is located within the nominated boundaries of the Seatack Historic District.

¹ A more detailed discussion of contributing versus non-contributing resource counts is provided in the "Integrity Analysis" section, later in Section 7 of this document.

² Cypress Avenue, approximately one mile east of Birdneck Road, has been generally described as the historic eastern boundary.

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Narrative Description

SETTING:

The Seatack Historic District consists of approximately 144 acres of historic suburban residential and commercial development located within the City of Virginia Beach, approximately 1.3 miles west of the beachfront, with the majority of the district lying just south of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway (Interstate-264) and centered on Birdneck Road. The largest area (B) of the district is bordered by I-264 to the north, modern development to the east, south and west, and natural marsh and wooded land to the west, with Oceana Naval Air Station abutting the marsh to the southwest. The district includes the main commercial corridor of Birdneck Road, with single-family residences primarily fronting the east-west local streets between I-264 to the north and Beautiful Street and Hughes Avenue to the south. The district also contains four additional discontiguous areas (A, C, D, E); one to the north of I-264 along Old Virginia Beach Road (A) and three to the south of Area B along South Birdneck Road, including resources on South Birdneck Road, Owls Creek Lane, Frazee Lane, Brooklyn Avenue, Olds Lane, and Bells Road. The district includes only a portion of the historic Seatack neighborhood due to modern development in all directions and also the construction of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway (Interstate 264). The historic uses of the contributing resources primarily include residential with a few commercial, institutional, and religious resources as well. The neighborhood is situated on relatively low, flat land that was historically marsh and farm land. The commercial corridor as well as the newly developed and redeveloped local streets to the east have limited vegetation due to the modern development of small-lot residences abutting the historic neighborhood. To the west, where marshland persists, there are greater areas of dense mature trees and vegetative growth that abuts the surrounding parcels. Residential resources have a mixture of landscapes ranging from one or two mature trees and plantings, to parcels lined at the sides and rear of the property with trees, to properties with buildings surrounded by trees. It should be noted that much of the developed and wooded areas to the south were farmland until at least the mid-twentieth century, which played a role in Seatack's post-1950 development patterns.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS:

Discontiguous Area (A)

Located at the northernmost end of the district, Discontiguous Area A is separated from the southern discontiguous areas by Interstate-264, but was once directly integrated with Area B. It is bound by North Birdneck Road to the east, Old Virginia Beach Road to the north, and modern development to the west. The creation of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway (I-264) resulted in the demolition of approximately 10 residences as well as part of the Terrapin Hill Cemetery that served the Seatack community, but inevitably endangered more houses in the now-isolated area north of the corridor.³ As they were effectively cut off from the main

³ This approximation is from comparing the 1958 and 1974 historic aerials and counting buildings within the general area of the Seatack Historic District boundary that are no longer present where the Expressway is now located.

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commercial and residential hub of Seatack, all but four houses north of the Expressway (DHR ID#s 134-0969-0170, 134-0969-0171, 134-0969-0172, and 134-0969-0186) were torn down and the land redeveloped with multiple apartment and condominium complexes.⁴ Today, these four houses, along with the Snowden-Morgan-Hughes Family Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0173) are all the surviving elements of this portion of Seatack. The cemetery is difficult to access, as it is located in a wooded area between the west on-ramp to the Expressway to the south and a multi-building condominium to the north. Currently, there are no signs, parking, or paths that identify the cemetery. However, it is the oldest extant resource in the Seatack Historic District, with a headstone dating to 1915. The houses, consistent with the remainder of the district, include modest one- to two-story dwellings oriented toward Old Virginia Beach Road and with a moderate setback and medium-sized grass lawns. Similar to the southern areas of the district, two of these mid-twentieth century resources were constructed in the Minimal Traditional style while one is Colonial Revival, and the fourth is of historic age and has no discernible style.

Discontiguous Area (B): Main Body of the District

Discontiguous Area B is a neighborhood mostly made up of residential buildings with the main commercial corridor running north to south along Birdneck Road. The neighborhood grew out of a number of farms that were subdivided into smaller parcels over time as the community grew. Because of this, many lots are irregularly shaped and some are extremely deep and narrow to provide access to local roads. These angles and lot shapes are consistent with original parcels of farmland. The local roads of Sea Street, Butts Lane, Burford Avenue, Hughes Avenue, Longstreet Avenue, and Kenya Court all run at forty-five-degree angles to the north-south Birdneck Road corridor. Similarly, Owls Creek Lane, Olds Lane, and Bells Road in the southern discontiguous areas also follow the parcel lines of historic farmland. Where these early roads were developed close to one another, subdivided lots are more even and rectangular while the buildings have various setbacks from roads. Based on historic aerials, some of the deeper setbacks are indicative of buildings that were constructed prior to large-scale parcel subdivision, such as the property at 164 South Birdneck Road (DHR ID# 134-0969-0026). Birdneck Road sees the most variance of setbacks, with a number of dwellings along North Birdneck Road close to the road while the buildings at South Birdneck Road near the edge of the district are more set back.

Further buildings, at least four including a commercial building, were removed in the mid-1990s to add an on-ramp to the northeast side of the road.

⁴ The development of the apartment and condominium complexes also completely destroyed Terrapin Hill Cemetery.

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Figure 1. Historic aerials of the Seatack Neighborhood showing the growth from predominantly rural farmland to developed suburban neighborhood. Left to right, starting at the top left: 1937, 1954, 1974, 1994. (City of Virginia Beach Historic Aerial Viewer <https://virginiatech.gov/services/map-center>)

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Figure 2. Commercial building, 1096 Virginia Beach Boulevard (134-0969-0179).

Up until the early 1990s, much of the core of Seatack along Birdneck Road remained a mixture of small commercial resources, residential buildings, and dense wooded areas. However, only one historic commercial resource remains along the Birdneck Road corridor at 1096 Virginia Beach Boulevard (DHR ID# 134-0969-0179). Displaying typical design characteristics of an automobile-related building of its period, it is a concrete block automobile workshop with multiple garage door openings and a corner storefront facing the intersection of Virginia Beach Boulevard and North Birdneck Road. All other historic-age commercial resources that once stood in Seatack have been lost to redevelopment.



Figure 3. Seatack Elementary School, 411 Integrity Way - currently the Virginia Beach Law Enforcement Training Academy (134-0969-0184).

The district includes a few notable institutional and religious resources. The largest contributing building in the district is the former Seatack Elementary School at 411 Integrity Way (DHR ID# 134-0969-0184), which is typical of many mid-twentieth century, Modern Movement school buildings. Now the Virginia Beach Law Enforcement Training Academy, the 1952 building is a

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multi-winged, concrete block building with brick veneer, horizontal massing, ribbons of large windows, and a flat roof. The former school stands at the north end of the district just south of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway. The school was the first consolidated elementary school for African American students in what was, at the time, Princess Anne County; the County and the City of Virginia Beach consolidated in 19643.

A notable religious resource is St. Stephens Church of God in Christ at 189 South Birdneck Road (DHR ID# 134-0969-0022). This 1930 Colonial Revival sanctuary has a central gable front with a bell tower at the southeast corner. It also features multiple stained-glass, rounded-arch windows on the north, east, and south elevations. Although a large addition was constructed on the rear west elevation that protrudes to the north, its design is differentiated from the main building. This church has been reclad in brick, but retains its form and fenestration pattern. Also important to the community is the historic, contributing site of Mt. Olive Baptist Church at 310 North Birdneck Road (DHR ID# 134-0969-0133). Although the main 1908 Late Gothic Revival church was recently demolished, the site has been home to the community's congregation through several architectural iterations. A new church is being constructed in its place to allow for the congregation to grow and current architectural plans include details that harken back to the 1908 sanctuary that served the community for over one hundred years. Thus, the site will remain an important religious and community gathering location for the Seatack neighborhood. Additionally, the historic church office building remains on the site.



Figure 4. St Stephens Church of God in Christ, 189 South Birdneck Road (134-0969-0022).

Residential development is found along every block, including being interspersed along the commercial corridor of Birdneck Road. The residential resources in the district include nearly a century of continuous development, as well as a range of architectural styles and types. Historic buildings are typically small and modest in design and are made up of single-family residences, with the exception of one duplex at 1138-1140 Beautiful Street (DHR ID# 134-0969-0020).⁵ While most buildings are oriented parallel to their respective roads, a small number of residences along Beautiful Street are oriented at an angle to the road (DHR ID#s 134-0969-0014, 134-0969-

⁵ Another contributing duplex, 145-149 Hughes Avenue (DHR ID# 134-0969-0035), was originally a single-family dwelling that was later subdivided into two residences.

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0015, and 134-0969-0029). In a few other instances, buildings are found behind one another when accessed from the same road. For example, between 1059 and 1063 Hope Avenue (DHR ID#s 134-0969-0121 and 134-0969-0119 respectively) lie two driveways. One is to 1054 Norfolk Avenue (DHR ID# 134-0969-0061), the façade of which faces Norfolk Avenue and the Virginia Beach Trail (originally a railway corridor). The second provides access to 1061 Hope Avenue (DHR ID#134-0969-0120), where the façade is oriented to the side of the parcel.

Most roads in the Seatack Historic District do not have sidewalks, with the exception of Birdneck Road and one side each of Loretta Lane and Hope Avenue. Roads are paved, but generally without curbs except along and near Birdneck Road. There are drainage ditches, sometimes steep, between many of the local roads and buildings. Most residences have driveways that are paved near the road and gravel or grass and dirt the remaining length. However, a number have recently laid concrete driveways. Paved walkways from the street to the house are common as well. Another noticeable feature are mailboxes along the roads, where a number of historic resources have more substantial boxes that are constructed in brick or stone tile. They generally have one or two flower beds on either side of the taller pier with the actual mailbox engaged in the masonry. These mailboxes are present in Area B as well as the southern discontiguous areas (C, D, E). Individual lots feature minimal landscaping, mostly close to the buildings and also along the property lines. More dense vegetation, marshland, and wooded areas are found near the back property lines, especially along the west boundary line of the district.



Figure 5. Detail of a masonry mailbox with planter box at one side. This is at 161 Hughes Avenue (134-0969-0031).

The residential architectural styles represented include Minimal Traditional, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Late Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, and Ranch, but most residences are modest vernacular residences with traditional form, massing, and fenestration patterns but without stylistic ornamentation or detail. The district includes a wide variety of building materials among its residential buildings, including brick, brick veneer, wood, stone, stucco, asbestos, aluminum, and vinyl. All roofs have updated architectural or composite shingle replacements, and many houses have been reclad in vinyl or aluminum siding. The majority of houses have replacement vinyl window sash and metal, wood, or fiberglass doors. Some dwellings retain wood window

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sash and wood doors, such as the singular Tudor Revival example at 401 Birdneck Circle (DHR ID# 134-0969-0183).



Figure 6. Tudor Revival residence, 401 Birdneck Circle (134-0969-0183).

While the majority of residences are vernacular types, there are a few intact examples of popular twentieth-century architectural styles. Craftsman houses at 164 South Birdneck Road, 153 North Birdneck Road, and 1132 Loretta Lane (DHR ID#s 134-0969-0026, 134-0969-0180, and 134-0969-0061 respectively) feature one- and one-and-a-half story residences with deep front porches with battered posts or brick piers and stucco and brick veneer. These examples are some of the more detailed residences in the district.



Figure 7. Minimal Traditional residence, 1055 Norfolk Avenue (134-0969-0047).

The house at 1055 Norfolk Avenue (DHR ID# 134-0969-0047) is a good example of a brick veneer Minimal Traditional style building with wrought iron detailing on a small central porch. Minimal Traditional dwellings combine elements of earlier styles with the emerging Ranch style popularized during the Modern Movement. At 1055 Norfolk Avenue, the house's side-gable form with a right-of-center, intersecting front-gable bay is a feature commonly found on Minimal Traditional dwellings in Virginia. The brick chimney on the façade, which is centered on the bay,

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is another feature often seen with this style. Together these two elements are remnants of vernacular Tudor Revival dwellings of the 1930s-1940s, while the paired sash on the façade is a precursor to the “picture” window that was a near-universal element of Ranch houses. The houses at 110 Hughes Avenue, 1028 Sea Street, and 1140 Carver Avenue (DHR IDs 134-0969-0038, 134-0969-0091, and 134-0969-0140 respectively) are fully developed examples of the common Ranch style within the Seatack Historic District, common features of which are an emphasis on horizontality through wide eaves under low-pitched hipped or cross gable roofs, use of brick and stone veneer, off-centered primary entries, and one-story height. Interior brick chimneys with wide stacks and a band of horizontal brickwork also were common, but not universal to the style. Finally, window openings on Ranch houses tended to be slightly wider and shorter than earlier styles, further adding to the style’s horizontal characteristics.



Figure 8. Ranch style residence, 1140 Carver Avenue (134-0969-0141).

Some residences that retain their original exterior materials display split-face concrete block with brick accents around the windows. In particular, Beautiful Street has three rough-hewn concrete block houses: 1117 Beautiful Street, 1124 Beautiful Street, and 1153 Beautiful Street (DHR ID# 134-0969-0029, 134-0969-0028, and 134-0969-0015 respectively).



Figure 9. Split-face concrete block residence, 1153 Beautiful Street (134-0969-0029).

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The district also includes several residences that are excellent examples of local craftsmanship and self-built structures. At least one local resident who grew up at 1153 Beautiful Street recalled her father making the brick onsite to build their house, which coincides with other oral histories that recount many of the houses were built, at least in part, by the local residents. Another example of local craftsmanship is 153 Sea Street (DHR ID# 134-0969-0083). This modest one-story dwelling has a front hipped roof façade extending from below the main front gable. Part of the hipped-roof portion is enclosed underneath and clad in vinyl with a central metal door. To the side of the entry is a Palladian style window with the central and arch window being vinyl framed while the windows flanking it are wood 6-light casements. The front of the hipped roof is open, supported by fluted columns. It also has a central stair covered by a smaller additional central hipped roof that intersects the main hipped roof with a barrel vault. An excellent example of vernacular design, the house is modest in size, proportion, and form, but detailed with the owner's personalized architectural features.⁶



Figure 10. Residence illustrating local craftsmanship, 153 Sea Street (134-0969-0083).

The diversity of architectural resources reflects the slow but continuous development of the neighborhood. A wide range of property values throughout Seatack is documented in the Virginia Beach Real Estate Assessor's property cards. These provide a snapshot of combined land and improvement property values at various years. The range of property values between 1964 and 1968 was \$660-\$4,640. When cross-referenced against owner occupations, these property values were not necessarily indicative of the owners' professions.⁷ For instance, 173 Hughes Avenue, owned by laborer James T. Freeman, was valued at only \$600 in 1964, while another laborer, Bernard Bridgers, at next-door 169 Hughes Avenue was valued at \$1,800 that same year.⁸ While both resources are no longer extant and, as such, not part of the historic

⁶ Elizabeth GG Mills is the current owner of 153 Sea Street according to her interview with Commonwealth Preservation Group on September 8, 2021. She stated that she was born in the house, which her parents built in 1942 with help of her mother's employer, Mr. Shelley.

⁷ The listed owner occupations were taken from the 1967 City directory, which is the closest date represented to the 1964 and 1968 property cards.

⁸ City of Virginia Beach Real Estate Assessor's Office, "Record of Ownership Parcel ID: 2417 52 2736 0000: 173 Hughes Avenue" & "Record of Ownership Parcel ID: 2417 52 2779 0000: 169 Hughes Avenue", 1964.

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district, they were of similar lot size and building type as many of the district's extant resources. The variation in value suggests that the house at 169 Hughes Avenue was significantly improved as compared to 173 Hughes Avenue. A second comparison relates to woman-owned properties. 116 Hughes Avenue was valued at \$660 and may be indicative of Mrs. Mary C. Sutton's profession as a maid in 1964.⁹ Conversely, another female-owned property, 115 Butts Lane, was owned by Mrs. Helen H. Langford, who had no occupation in 1968. Her property was valued at \$120 in 1964, but in 1968 was improved to one of the highest property values at \$4,640.¹⁰ In all cases, the property value was significantly lower than that of a neighborhood planned and built by and for a professional, middle-class African American population, such as L & J Gardens, also in Virginia Beach, which saw home values alone well above \$10,000 by the 1950s. L & J Gardens is a National Register of Historic Places-listed historic district several miles northwest of Seatack.

As Virginia Beach began to grow west from the oceanfront during the mid-twentieth century, new development continually encroached upon the already-established Seatack neighborhood. Nearby marshlands were infilled, forests cut down, and farmland subdivided to make way for multiple-family housing, industrial, and commercial complexes that were out of scale with Seatack's historic character. These intrusions separate the discontiguous areas of the district.

Beginning in 1970, two large-scale apartment complexes were built; one to the north of Hope Avenue and another to the west of residences along Carver Avenue. Other apartment and condominium complexes soon followed to the north, past the Expressway, completed in 1967, and shrinking the boundaries of Seatack's historic areas. New residential neighborhoods began to abut Seatack to the east as well but, because they were planned with access by main roads outside of the neighborhood, are notably disconnected from the historic neighborhood.

The built environment along all the streets within the Seatack Historic District includes modern residential infill development and new construction. Late-twentieth-century resources appear to have been custom built with features common of their periods. One example at 148 Sea Street (DHR# 134-0969-0087) has cedar shales and a skillion roof style that is indicative of the 1980s, but uncommon for the Seatack Historic District. Houses constructed during the early twenty-first century are generally modest, builder-grade, one- to two-story buildings with few embellishments.¹¹

⁹ City of Virginia Beach Real Estate Assessor's Office, "Record of Ownership Parcel ID: 2417 53 8152 0000: 116 Hughes Avenue," 1964.

¹⁰ City of Virginia Beach Real Estate Assessor's Office, "Record of Ownership Parcel ID: 2417 53 4559 0000: 115 Butts Lane," 1964 & 1968. This property has recently been significantly altered and is not contributing to the district.

¹¹ Three properties along North Birdneck Road between Virginia Beach Boulevard and Norfolk Avenue have houses completed between 2018 and 2020 (DHR ID#s 134-0969-0174, 134-0969-0176, and 134-0969-0126).

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Figure 11. Example of modern infill, 148 Sea Street (134-0969-0087).

Historic aerials show that, by 1994, a collection of Seatack's historic buildings along Birdneck Road, as well as remaining marshland and forest, had been replaced by large industrial complexes and storage facilities that still remain today. Two shopping centers were built between 1987 and 1989; one at the southeast corner of North Birdneck Road and Virginia Beach Boulevard that replaced a smaller single commercial building and another, the Birdneck Community Shoppes (DHR ID# 134-0969-0053), at the southeast corner of South Birdneck Road and Norfolk Avenue that replaced a residential building. One of the most recent alterations to the commercial corridor was in 2019 when the last large swath of wooded area between 19th Street and Virginia Beach Boulevard east of North Birdneck Road was cut down. A large-scale parking lot was finished in 2020 in its place.



Figure 12. Birdneck Community Shoppes at the corner of South Birdneck Road and Norfolk Avenue (134-0969-0053).

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SOUTHERN DISCONTIGUOUS AREAS

Three discontiguous areas (C, D, E) with contributing historic resources are located south of the district's large Area B. The three areas have been separated from each other and the main northern boundary by modern development, but still retain important historical associations and extant resources within the Seatack community.

Discontiguous Area (C)

Discontiguous Area C lies a short distance south of Area B with intervening modern townhouses in between. The majority of Area C's resources are residential and lie along Owls Creek Lane, which was extant prior to 1937 according to historic aerials. Most of the houses along Owls Creek and Gregory Lane have been replaced in the recent past with modern homes and the boundary specifically excludes the surrounding non-contributing buildings to the east and south, as much as possible. Modern development to the north separates this boundary from Area B, while South Birdneck Road borders to the west. A Seatack community member, Donnie LaSalle Gregory, grew up at 1073 Owls Creek Lane and currently lives on Brooklyn Avenue. The Gregory family once owned much of the land along Owls Creek Lane and the adjacent Gregory Lane to the east, which was named after Donnie LaSalle Gregory's grandfather. Gregory relayed that his grandfather would divide up his land and give it to relatives who would then build their own houses on the new parcels. Most buildings were constructed by the family and local residents with building skills.¹² This development pattern appears to have been used in many historic Black communities between the late-19th to late-20th centuries. The Brown Grove Rural Historic District in Hanover County had a similar historic development pattern. Resources within Area C are generally roughly mid-twentieth-century, one-story, frame dwellings with deep, narrow lots that match the historic farmland parcels seen in Area B. Most of the houses are Ranches or side-gable forms with no discernable style. Common exterior materials include vinyl or brick veneer siding, replacement vinyl windows sash, and composite shingle roofs. Some primary resources are located closer to the lane than others. The resources that are set back are sometimes located behind another dwelling, with a narrow driveway from the lane to the rear property. Area C also contains Seatack Park at 340 South Birdneck Road (DHR ID# 131-0969-0246). Local oral history highlights efforts by Aaron Parsons and the Virginia Beach Jaycees in developing a place named "Viking Park" at or near this location. The current park was developed by the City of Virginia Beach in 1970, possibly on the site of Viking Park.¹³ The park currently consists of a parking lot, playground, baseball field, picnic shelter, and a basketball court that was recently painted with a mural with the help of local nonprofit organization ViBe Creative District and artist Troy Summerell.¹⁴ Area C also includes the Rosetta Wheaton Family Cemetery (DHR ID# 131-0969-0244).

¹² Donnie LaSalle Gregory was interviewed by Commonwealth Preservation Group on September 8, 2021.

¹³ Ariel Jones, granddaughter of Paul Sparrow Sr, shared the name of the developers during her interview with Commonwealth Preservation Group on September 8, 2021; "Construction Started on 2 Beach Parks," *Virginian-Pilot*, January 18, 1970, 154.

¹⁴ An informational plaque is located within the park documenting the mural project from 2022.

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Figure 13. Seatack Park, 340 South Birdneck Road (134-0969-0246).

Discontiguous Area (D)

Discontiguous Area D lies just south of Owls Creek Lane and is the smallest of the four discontiguous areas in the Seatack Historic District. It consists of four residential resources along Frazee Lane that are surrounded by more recent construction to the north, South Birdneck Road to the west, and marshland and forest to the east and south. These four residences, three of which are contributing, are similar to historic-age houses within the remainder of the Seatack Historic District. A concrete duplex at 1082 Frazee Lane (DHR ID# 134-0969-0206), built in 1960, is similar in size to the 1966 single-family dwelling next door at 1077 Frazee Lane (DHR ID# 134-0969-0207). Both have flat façades without porches and lack decorative detailing.

Discontiguous Area (E)

Discontiguous Area E is a larger area made up of residential resources that are situated along South Birdneck Road, Brooklyn Avenue, Olds Lane, and Bells Road. Its boundary is surrounded by modern construction to the north and east, South Birdneck Road and commercial development to the west, and marshland, woodland, and commercial development to the south. The majority of resources are along the east side of South Birdneck Road and Brooklyn Avenue. Olds Lane is named after the Olds family, a long-standing family within the Seatack community who historically owned land in this area. The contributing resources here are 1950s and 1960s dwellings with similar attributes to those in the rest of the Seatack Historic District, with the majority being Ranch and Minimal Traditional, with similar form, massing, and fenestration to their counterparts in the remainder of the district, and limited applied ornamentation. Some houses feature the masonry mailbox materials found in Area B, even those with new residential

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buildings, which lends continuity to the streetscape and setting. A 1954 dwelling at 548 South Birdneck Road (DHR ID# 134-0969-0250) has retained the same parcel size since 1937. It is still a narrow lot that is elongated, similar to those in the northern main boundary, while all other parcels in Area E have been subdivided, sometimes multiple times, to create smaller, square parcels. Most of the residential development to the east of Area E is modern.

Cemeteries within the Seatack Historic District

There are four cemeteries, all contributing sites, within the Seatack Historic District: a larger community cemetery and three smaller family cemeteries. The Ackiss and Snowden-Morgan-Hughes family cemeteries (DHR ID#s 134-0969-0185 and 134-0969-0173 respectively) are both quite small, containing between four and 18 known graves. Both are in disrepair and have been vandalized in recent years, according to family accounts and site conditions. The Ackiss family cemetery is on the parcel belonging to 1066 Kenya Lane (DHR ID# 134-0969-0104). Broken grave markers lie in the yard under trees between the residential dwelling to the north and Norfolk Avenue to the south. The highlight of this cemetery is the intact, vertical gravestone of Alexander Ackiss (1833-1912) which identifies him as a former member of the United States Cavalry. The Snowden-Morgan-Hughes family cemetery is located just north of the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway (Interstate 264), hidden between the interstate's drop off and a modern condominium complex. Since initial architectural survey of the district, community members have cleaned the site, cleared a majority of the vegetation, and created a path for easier access. Most of the graves here are marked by ledger-type stones that have been weathered over time. Family members have created smaller metal placards that are situated nearby to supplement the worn stones. During the survey of the southern discontiguous areas in 2023, the Rosetta Wheaton family cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0244) was observed in recent aerials, but because of its location behind private residential dwellings, it was not accessible. Previous photographic documentation of the cemetery on the *findagrave.com* website shows a mixture of concrete grave ledgers and crosses, some of which are embellished with reflective letters set in epoxy or tin placards. The largest of the four cemeteries, Evergreen Terrace Saints Rest Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0129), is located at the end of Beautiful Street and has approximately 170 known graves; of which the earliest identified is 1958 and the latest documented is 2019. These gravesites are much more widely dispersed than those found in the district's family cemeteries, but still have a similar mixture of ledgers and tombstones. Although most of the grave markers are quite austere in their design and lettering, some feature more elaborate decoration, including modern, mass-produced types that have been customized to the decedent with machine-etched photos, epitaphs, and iconography.

Seatack's Discontiguous Areas

The Seatack Historic District consists of five discontiguous areas, stretching along more than a mile of Birdneck Road in the City of Virginia Beach. These separate areas contain collections of historic houses, streets, cemeteries and one commercial building that together display the district's overall historic character, while also telling the story of the neighborhood's development through the twentieth century, including its fragmentation during the last quarter of

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the century. Aerial maps from 1937 and 1954 (Figure 1) show the historic extent of Seatack and the clear development of the five now-discontiguous areas within a landscape composed of farmland interspersed with small pockets of residential and commercial resources, and the 1954 map, in particular, displays the street patterns that have been in place since that period. The former perimeter parcel lines of farmland line up with those of parcels today. Oral history speaks of Area B, the largest of the district's five areas, being the destination to which family members from Areas C, D and E would travel up Birdneck Road (previously Seatack Road) to Paul Sparrow, Sr.'s grocery store. Members of the same families who developed the southern areas of Seatack (C, D, E) still live there today: Gregory and Olds, with streets named after them. An article from 1969, the end of the Seatack Historic District's Period of Significance, describes the routes for the various school busses for local high school students. Bus No. 221 is slated to "serve Seatack with stops along South Birdneck Road at Olds Lane, Brooklyn Avenue, Owls Creek Lane, Beautiful Street, Southern Boulevard and Loretta Lane.¹⁵ This list represents the primary streets of Areas C, D and E, as well as streets in Area B, clearly defining what was considered Seatack in 1969. Another article from 1971 explained the streets that, at that time, defined the Seatack community: Beautiful Street, South Birdneck Road, Olds Lane, Brooklyn Avenue, Owls Creek Lane, Gregory Lane, Burford Avenue, Sea Steet.¹⁶ While the discontiguous nature of the Seatack Historic District is indicative of physically disconnected areas, the history, stories, cultural landscapes, and development patterns of these areas are linked by the common identity of the Seatack community and its residents.



Figure 14. Ackiss Family Cemetery, Kenya Lane (134-0969-0185). Note the recently restored upright tombstone with a broken cross beside it at center. There are also two ledgers present at the right of the photograph.

¹⁵ "Bus Routes for First Colonial High," *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, September 4, 1969, 80.

¹⁶ Bert Rohrer, "Beach to Have 1st Race Busing," *The Virginian-Pilot*, July 30, 1971, 31.

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INTEGRITY ANALYSIS:

The Seatack Historic District retains a satisfactory degree of the seven aspects of integrity, commiserate with developmental and economic pressures placed upon the neighborhood. The overall *location, setting, and design* of the district reflect the development of the community from the early through the mid-twentieth century and convey the evolution of a predominately African American neighborhood from marshes, forests, and farmland just west of the Virginia Beach oceanfront. The majority of the original street pattern has been retained, with the exception of a small dead-end lane (Hyman's Lane) between Burford Avenue and Butts Lane. The 1967 Expressway is a large anomaly in the streetscape, but construction of high-speed thoroughfares through neighborhoods, particularly those occupied by African Americans or otherwise marginalized, was typical of the post-World War II transportation planning process, and today the highway is a physical representation of this unfortunate trend. The rest of the district's streets retain their historic pattern, most indicative of the former farm parcels that originally segmented the land. Some of the marsh area the neighborhood was built around remains to the west and south, with the landscape remaining relatively flat and low, common for a coastal neighborhood. While many of the historic commercial buildings along Birdneck Road have been demolished, it remains the prominent thoroughfare of the neighborhood and serves as the commercial corridor with continued new construction evident from the 1970s to present.

Congruent with this ongoing commercial development is the noticeable continued alterations of the residential areas of the district. Modern residential buildings are interspersed with historic residences, exhibiting almost continual modification trends within the neighborhood since the early twentieth century. This provides a wide variety of building dates and designs. Most of the residential parcels have remained residentially zoned and the same with commercial parcels, maintaining a consistency of use that the integrity of *design and setting* reflects. While many changes have occurred to the built environment, they have been carried out while maintaining the similar building setback patterns and landscape features as the adjacent historic parcels, therefore maintaining the streetscape's integrity of *setting*. Some of the more intact areas within the neighborhood include the west end of Carver Avenue into Winterville Court, the north side of Sea Street, the central section of Burford Road, a group at the east side of Hope Avenue, the central section of Hughes Avenue as well as much of Beautiful Street and the section of South Birdneck Road along the southern boundary of Area B.

As mentioned in the "Summary Paragraph" section, the district includes 138 contributing primary resources versus 97 non-contributing primary resources. The non-contributing primary resources are comprised almost entirely of buildings constructed after the period of significance end date of 1969, with only a few historic resources having been modified beyond a contributing status. The 1967 completion of the Expressway through the northern end of the Seatack neighborhood accounts for some of the lost resources. Post-1969 non-contributing resources vary greatly in age with examples dating from all decades between 1970 to 2022. They are interspersed between contributing resources, with a denser grouping found near the center of the district along the north side of Burford Avenue and Longstreet Avenue. At least some of the non-contributing primary resources were constructed on subdivided parcels of family-owned

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property, thus continuing the historic development pattern that characterizes the district. 138 contributing primary resources All of the streetscapes include resources that postdate 1970 and most are simple in architectural design and features. However, the more recent houses mark a shift from community-based construction to builder-grade residential design found in all kinds of neighborhoods since the 1970s up to today. This shift may reflect both local initiatives such as Virginia Beach's Target Neighborhood project and also a physical manifestation of the socioeconomic changes that took place in many African American communities in response to national events such as the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1968 Fair Housing Act, and the 1972 Equal Employment Opportunity Act. When resulting opportunities arose for improvements to long-standing substandard housing, Seatack's residents made the most of these opportunities by upgrading, remodeling, and/or replacing older buildings. Such changes have affected the district's proportion of contributing to non-contributing resources, and additional historical perspective is needed to understand whether and how these trends may have significance in their own right. Ultimately, however, the history and cohesion of the Seatack community has been sustained with community residents who have banded together to advocate for and to maintain their community's improvement over time.

Due to the modest means and environmental conditions of the coastal neighborhood, the many alterations, repairs, and maintenance over time are woven into the district's integrity of *materials* and *workmanship*. Common material replacements to individual resources in the district include vinyl window sash, exterior door types, vinyl siding, and roofing materials. These alterations are consistent throughout the neighborhood, with only a few resources retaining all of their original materials. However, the majority of these alterations have been performed as part of maintenance of the resource's original structure, with minimal major modifications to the building's footprint, massing, height, plan, fenestration pattern, and size. Although limited, good examples of workmanship have been retained that convey periods of development and the associated style of various residential resources. Historically, workmanship was local, performed by family and friends and those buildings that retain their materials are excellent examples of the craftsmanship distinctive to Seatack. These elements preserve the district's historic sense of *feeling and association* as a predominantly African American residential neighborhood with small-scale, community-oriented commercial resources that developed continually over the twentieth century in response to civil, social, and economic challenges that created a diverse collection of architectural expressions and styles. Streets such as Hughes Avenue, Americus Avenue, and Burford Avenue are named after families who helped the Seatack neighborhood to grow and prosper. Even with the numerous alterations and consistent threat of redevelopment, the neighborhood has retained a strong sense of place that is conveyed in the remaining contributing architecture and community.

INVENTORY:

The inventory below is the result of reconnaissance level survey of 335 resources in the Seatack Historic District conducted in October 2021-January 2022 and also in May of 2023. Surveyors documented all resources within the district including significant secondary resources. The 2021-2022/2023 surveys resulted in the identification of 138 contributing resources, including 133

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buildings (of which, 19 are secondary resources) and 5 sites. The survey also identified 197 noncontributing resources, including 191 buildings (of which 93 are secondary resources) and 6 structures. The inventory is organized according to the 5 discontiguous areas (A-E) that comprise the historic district.

Each entry in the inventory below identifies the primary and secondary (where applicable) resource, the resource type (building, site, structure, or object), number of stories, architectural style, approximate construction date, and contributing or noncontributing status organized by address. Resources within the Seatack Historic District are considered contributing if they were constructed during the district's period of significance (1915-1969), are associated with the district's areas of significance, and retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the historical association. Alterations to contributing resources were evaluated based on the overall impact to the character-defining features of the resource. Because the district is significant under Criterion A, integrity of individual resources was not as highly scrutinized, but rather their contribution to the district as a whole was the primary consideration. Where common material alterations exist, such as roofing material replacement, window sash and door replacement, and recladding in vinyl siding, resources are still considered contributing if they retain a majority of the seven aspects of integrity to convey their association with the district's significance. The information below and detailed architectural descriptions of each primary resource can also be accessed via the Virginia Department of Historic Resources architectural survey archives and/or the Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (V-CRIS). Resources are keyed to the attached Sketch Map by the last four digits of the resource's 11-digit identification number (e.g., -0001, -0002, etc.).

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Discontiguous Area (A)

Old Virginia Beach Road

1105 Old Virginia Beach Road 134-0969-0170

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style Minimal Traditional, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

1109 Old Virginia Beach Road 134-0969-0171

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1960

Contributing Total: 1

1117 Old Virginia Beach Road 134-0969-0172

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

1133 Old Virginia Beach Road 134-0969-0186

Other DHR Id#:134-5259

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Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1958

Contributing Total: 1

Old Virginia Beach Road 134-0969-0173

Snowden-Morgan-Hughes Family Cemetery

Primary Resource: Cemetery (Site), Stories N/A, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1915
Contributing Total: 1

Main Body of District - Discontiguous Area (B)
Ackiss Avenue

117 Ackiss Avenue 134-0969-0063 Other DHR Id#: 134-5541

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Americus Avenue

1137 Americus Avenue 134-0969-0161

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1960
Contributing Total: 1

1141 Americus Avenue 134-0969-0162

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1982

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1145 Americus Avenue 134-0969-0163

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1996

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1153 Americus Avenue 134-0969-0164

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1996

Non-contributing Total: 1

1209 Americus Avenue 134-0969-0165

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional,

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Ca 1960

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1

1220 Americus Avenue 134-0969-0167

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1963
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1

Beautiful Street

1109 Beautiful Street 134-0969-0011

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Colonial Revival, 1985

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1111 Beautiful Street 134-0969-0012

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, 1994
Non-contributing Total: 1

1113 Beautiful Street 134-0969-0013

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2003
Non-contributing Total: 1

1117 Beautiful Street 134-0969-0029

Other DHR Id#: 134-5270

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1124 Beautiful Street 134-0969-0028

Other DHR Id#: 134-5269

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

1138-1140 Beautiful Street 134-0969-0020

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1969

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

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1141 Beautiful Street **134-0969-0017**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1969

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) **Contributing** **Total: 1**

1145 Beautiful Street **134-0969-0014**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Contributing **Total: 1**

1146 Beautiful Street **134-0969-0019**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) **Contributing** **Total: 1**

1153 Beautiful Street **134-0969-0015**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1950

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building) **Contributing** **Total: 1**

1169 Beautiful Street **134-0969-0016**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Vernacular, Ca 1969

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) **Contributing** **Total: 1**

1172 Beautiful Street **134-0969-0018**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1969

Contributing **Total: 1**

Beautiful Street **134-0969-0129**

Evergreen Terrace Saints Rest Cemetery

Primary Resource: Cemetery (Site), Stories N/A, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1958

Contributing **Total: 1**

Birdneck Circle

401 Birdneck Circle **134-0969-0183** *Other DHR Id#: 134-5284*

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Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Tudor Revival, Ca 1940

Secondary Resource: Carport (Structure)
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

405-407 Birdneck Circle 134-0969-0168

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 2009
Non-contributing Total: 1

420 Birdneck Circle 134-0969-0169

Treasurer's Office and Resort Management Parking Division

Primary Resource: Government Office (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1960
Contributing Total: 1

Bishop Thoroughgood Avenue

101 Bishop Thoroughgood Avenue 134-0969-0041

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories: 2, Style: Other, 2004
Non-contributing Total: 1

105 Bishop Thoroughgood Avenue 134-0969-0042

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories: 1, Style: No discernible style, 1991
Non-contributing Total: 1

109 Bishop Thoroughgood Avenue 134-0969-0132

Primary Resource: Meeting/Fellowship Hall (Building), Stories: 1.5, Style: No disc. style, Ca 1940
Non-contributing Total: 1

125 Bishop Thoroughgood Avenue 134-0969-0059

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories: 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940
Contributing Total: 1

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Burford Avenue

108 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0050**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Other, 1989
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) **Non-contributing Total: 1**
Non-contributing Total: 1

113 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0051**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Other, 1983
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) **Non-contributing Total: 1**
Non-contributing Total: 1

116 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0052**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1993
Non-contributing Total: 1

120 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0064**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2003
Non-contributing Total: 1

124 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0068**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1995
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) **Non-contributing Total: 1**
Non-contributing Total: 1

128 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0069**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1997
Non-contributing Total: 1

129 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0070**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940
Contributing Total: 1

132 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0071**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1996
Non-contributing Total: 1

133 Burford Avenue **134-0969-0072**

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Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1985
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

136 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0073

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1986
Non-contributing Total: 1

139 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0074

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1955
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 2

140 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0075

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 2

141 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0077

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1958
Contributing Total: 1

144 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0076

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

145 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0078

Birdneck Triangle Building
Primary Resource: Office/Office Building (Building), Stories 2, Style: Commercial Style, 1990
Non-contributing Total: 1

148 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0079

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 3

156 Burford Avenue 134-0969-0080

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1986

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126 Butts Lane **134-0969-0093**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1940

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Carver Avenue

1104-1106 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0143**

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1989

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1107-1117 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0144**

Primary Resource: Multiple Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Neo-Eclectic, Ca 2010

Non-contributing Total: 1

1108-1110 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0145**

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1989

Non-contributing Total: 1

1114 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0146**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1969

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1121 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0147**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1996

Non-contributing Total: 1

1126 A&B Carver Avenue **134-0969-0148**

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1991

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1128 A&B Carver Avenue **134-0969-0136**

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style,

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Ca 1991

Non-contributing Total: 1

1130 A&B Carver Avenue 134-0969-0137

*Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1990*

Non-contributing Total: 1

1132 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0138

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional,
Ca 1940*

Contributing Total: 1

1133 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0139

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1982*

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1137 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0140

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1998*

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1140 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0141

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1141 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0153

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1999*

Non-contributing Total: 1

1145 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0154

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1940*

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1149 Carver Avenue 134-0969-0155

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal
Traditional, Ca 1967*

Contributing Total: 1

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Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1152 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0156**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Secondary Dwelling (Building)

1153 Carver Avenue **134-0969-0157**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Farrar Street

1088 Farrar Street **134-0969-0044**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1995

Non-contributing Total: 1

1090 Farrar Street **134-0969-0045**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 2002

Non-contributing Total: 1

1094 Farrar Street **134-0969-0046**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Hope Avenue

1059 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0121**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1061 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0120**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1945

Contributing Total: 1

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Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 2

1063 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0119**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1950

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1069 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0118**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1

1075 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0117**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1956

Contributing Total: 1

1081 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0116**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Colonial Revival, 1985

Non-contributing Total: 1

1083 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0181** *Other DHR Id#:* 134-5278

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

1095 Hope Avenue **134-0969-0115**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1950

Contributing Total: 1

Hughes Avenue

110 Hughes Avenue **134-0969-0038**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1955

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

140 Hughes Avenue **134-0969-0037**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Pre 1970

Contributing Total: 1

144 Hughes Avenue **134-0969-0036**

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Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1965
Contributing Total: 1

145-149 Hughes Avenue 134-0969-0035

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1956
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Contributing Total: 1

152 Hughes Avenue 134-0969-0034

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940
Contributing Total: 1

157 Hughes Avenue 134-0969-0033

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1

160 Hughes Avenue 134-0969-0032

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1

161 Hughes Avenue 134-0969-0031

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1

180 Hughes Avenue 134-0969-0030

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1960
Contributing Total: 1

Integrity Way

411 Integrity Way 134-0969-0184 Other DHR Id#: 134-5566

Virginia Beach Law Enforcement Training Academy (formerly Seatack Elementary School)

Primary Resource: School (Building), Stories 1, Style: Colonial Revival, 1952

Seatack Historic District
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Virginia Beach, VA
County and State

Secondary Resource: Government Office (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Kenya Court

108 Kenya Court **134-0969-0109**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 2008

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Kenya Lane

1066 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0104**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1982

Non-contributing Total: 1

1070 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0105**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Pre 1970

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1074 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0106**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1999

Non-contributing Total: 1

1075 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0108**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1980

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1078 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0175**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 2015

Non-contributing Total: 1

1083 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0107**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1

1087 Kenya Lane **134-0969-0110**

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Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2015

Non-contributing Total: 1

1090 Kenya Lane 134-0969-0111

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2016

Non-contributing Total: 1

1093 Kenya Lane 134-0969-0112

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Other, 1979

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1094 Kenya Lane 134-0969-0113

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Other, 2017

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1098 Kenya Lane 134-0969-0114

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2018

Non-contributing Total: 1

Longstreet Avenue

1059 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0039

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 2002

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1060 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0062

Other DHR Id#: 134-5540

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1950

Contributing Total: 1

1063 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0040

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1945

Contributing Total: 1

1064 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0043

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1950

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1088 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0056

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1091 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0055

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1095 Longstreet Avenue 134-0969-0054

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1950

Contributing Total: 1

Loretta Lane

1108 Loretta Lane 134-0969-0122

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1991

Non-contributing Total: 1

1112 Loretta Lane 134-0969-0123

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1988

Non-contributing Total: 1

1113 Loretta Lane 134-0969-0130

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1986

Non-contributing Total: 1

1116 Loretta Lane 134-0969-0124

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 1948

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1117 Loretta Lane 134-0969-0131

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1994

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Non-contributing Total: 1

1132 Loretta Lane **134-0969-0182** *Other DHR Id#: 134-5279*

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Craftsman, 1928
Contributing Total: 1

Norfolk Avenue

1054 Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0061** *Other DHR Id#: 134-5280*

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1949

Secondary Resource: Carport (Structure)
Secondary Resource: Secondary Dwelling (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1

Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0185** *Other DHR Id#: 134-5281*
Ackiss Cemetery

Primary Resource: Cemetery (Site), Stories N/A, Style: No Discernable Style, Pre 1960
Contributing Total: 1

1055 Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0047**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1955

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1067 Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0048**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Other, 1992
Non-contributing Total: 1

1073 Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0049**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1991

Non-contributing Total: 1

1079 Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0060**

Other DHR Id#: 134-5018

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No Discernable Style, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

1091 Norfolk Avenue **134-0969-0053**

Primary Resource: Shopping Center (Building), Stories 1, Style: Commercial Style, 1988

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Non-contributing Total: 1

North Birdneck Road

104 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0174

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2020

Non-contributing Total: 1

110 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0103

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1970

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

141 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0176

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2020

Non-contributing Total: 1

153 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0180

Other DHR Id#: 134-5272

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Craftsman, Ca 1940
Contributing Total: 1

201 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0125

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Craftsman, Pre 1958

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

205 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0126

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2018

Non-contributing Total: 1

209 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0127

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

310 North Birdneck Road 134-0969-0133

Other DHR Id#: 134-0567

Mt. Olive Baptist Church Site

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1963
Contributing Total: 1

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Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Secondary Resource: Church Building (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

Non-contributing Total: 1

315 North Birdneck Road **134-0969-0142**

*Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1997*

Non-contributing Total: 1

325 North Birdneck Road **134-0969-0158**

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1993*

Non-contributing Total: 1

333 North Birdneck Road **134-0969-0159**

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal
Traditional, Ca 1940*

Contributing Total: 1

339 North Birdneck Road **134-0969-0160**

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1940*

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

Sea Street

1028 Sea Street **134-0969-0091**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1965

Contributing Total: 1

125 Sea Street **134-0969-0090**

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 2013*

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

132 Sea Street **134-0969-0089**

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1963*

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

133 Sea Street **134-0969-0088**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,

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1940

Contributing **Total:** 1

140 Sea Street **134-0969-0087**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2.5, Style: No discernible style, 1988

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing **Total:** 1
Non-contributing **Total:** 2

141 Sea Street **134-0969-0086**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Secondary Resource: Shed - Vehicle (Building)

Contributing **Total:** 1
Non-contributing **Total:** 1

145 Sea Street **134-0969-0085**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Contributing **Total:** 1

149 Sea Street **134-0969-0084**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1960

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing **Total:** 1
Non-contributing **Total:** 1

153 Sea Street **134-0969-0083**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1942

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing **Total:** 1
Contributing **Total:** 1

156 Sea Street **134-0969-0082**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2005

Non-contributing **Total:** 1

160 Sea Street **134-0969-0081**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 2005

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Non-contributing **Total:** 1
Non-contributing **Total:** 1

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South Birdneck Road

108 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0002

Primary Resource: Commercial Building (Building), Stories 2, Style: Commercial Style, 2015

Non-contributing Total: 1

118 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0027

Other DHR Id#: 134-0942

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Secondary Dwelling (Building)

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

124 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0003

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1969

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1

141-145 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0001

The Joseph V. Grimstead, Sr. Seatack Community Recreation Center

Primary Resource: Gymnasium (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 1997

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Office/Office Building (Building) **Non-contributing Total: 1**

164 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0026

Other DHR Id#: 134-0939

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Craftsman, 1928

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1

170 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0004

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1974

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Quonset Hut (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

172 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0025

Other DHR Id#: 134-0936

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Colonial Revival, Ca 1940

Contributing Total: 1

182 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0005

Rehoboth Baptist Church

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Primary Resource: Church/Chapel (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1978

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

189 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0022

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Other DHR Id#: 134-0564

St. Stephen's Church of God in Christ

Primary Resource: Church/Chapel (Building), Stories 1, Style: Colonial Revival, 1930

Contributing Total: 1

205 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0023

Other DHR Id#: 134-0565

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1937

Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

208 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0006

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1940

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

209 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0010

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2.5, Style: Neo-Eclectic, 2014
Non-contributing Total: 1

211 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0021

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1958

Contributing Total: 1

212 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0007

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1952

Contributing Total: 1

213 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0009

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1940

Contributing Total: 1

215 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0008

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,

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1940

221 South Birdneck Road **134-0969-0024** *Other DHR Id#: 134-0934*
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Craftsman, Ca 1937
Contributing **Total: 1**
Contributing **Total: 1**

Summerville Court

332-334 Summerville Court **134-0969-0149**
Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 2004
Non-contributing **Total: 1**

333-335 Summerville Court **134-0969-0166**
Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 2006
Non-contributing **Total: 1**

336-338 Summerville Court **134-0969-0134**
Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 2004
Non-contributing **Total: 1**

337-339 Summerville Court **134-0969-0135**
Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, Ca 2014
Non-contributing **Total: 1**

Virginia Beach Boulevard

1096 Virginia Beach Boulevard **134-0969-0179** *Other DHR Id#: 134-5265*
Primary Resource: Commercial Building (Building), Stories 1, Style: Commercial Style, 1953
Contributing **Total: 1**

1101 Virginia Beach Boulevard **134-0969-0128**
Primary Resource: Service Station (Building), Stories 1, Style: Commercial Style, 1989
Secondary Resource: Service Station (Building) **Non-contributing** **Total: 1**
Non-contributing **Total: 1**

1116 Virginia Beach Boulevard **134-0969-0177** *Other DHR Id#: 134-5263*
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,

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1939

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

1125 Virginia Beach Boulevard 134-0969-0178

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1

Other DHR Id#: 134-5264

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, 1934

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

Winterville Court

336 Winterville Court 134-0969-0150

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1940*

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Contributing Total: 1
Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

337 Winterville Court 134-0969-0151

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional,
Ca 1993*

Non-contributing Total: 1

340 Winterville Court 134-0969-0152

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1965

Contributing Total: 1

Discontiguous Area (C)

Owls Creek Lane

Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0244

Rosetta Wheaton Family Cemetery

Primary Resource: Cemetery (Site), Stories N/A, Style: No discernible style, Ca 1932

Contributing Total: 1

1026 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0227

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional,
Ca 1968*

Contributing Total: 1

1029 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0219

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional,

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Ca 1961

Contributing **Total:** 1

1030 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0226

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Neo-Eclectic, Ca 2013
Non-contributing Total: 1

1034 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0225

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Split-Level/Split
Foyer, Ca 1965*

Contributing **Total:** 1

1038 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0224

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Neo-Eclectic, Ca 1980

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1042 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0223

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Neo-Eclectic, Ca 2013

Non-contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1060 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0241

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
Ca 1969*

Contributing **Total:** 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1064 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0240

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1969

Contributing **Total:** 1

1078 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0238

*Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style,
1955*

Contributing **Total:** 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

1084 Owls Creek Lane 134-0969-0237

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1950

Contributing Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

Non-contributing Total: 1

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South Birdneck Road
340 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0246

Seatack Park

Primary Resource: Park (Site), Style: No discernible style, Ca 1963

Contributing	Total: 1
Non-contributing	Total: 2
Non-contributing	Total: 1
Non-contributing	Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Athletic Field/Court (Structure)

Secondary Resource: Playground (Structure)

Secondary Resource: Shelter (Building)

Discontiguous Area (D)

Frazee Lane

1077 Frazee Lane 134-0969-0207

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1966

Contributing	Total: 1
Non-Contributing	Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

1082 Frazee Lane 134-0969-0206

Primary Resource: Double/Duplex (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1960

Contributing	Total: 1
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1088 Frazee Lane 134-0969-0205

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Other, 2018

Non-contributing	Total: 1
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South Birdneck Road

420 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0204

Other DHR ID#:134-0928

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, 1942

Contributing	Total: 1
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Discontiguous Boundary (E)

Bells Road

1060 Bells Road 134-0969-0270

Other DHR ID#:134-0920

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Minimal Traditional, Ca 1958

Contributing	Total: 1
Non-contributing	Total: 1

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)

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1064 Bells Road
0921

134-0969-0269

Other DHR ID#: 134-

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1960
Contributing Total: 1

Brooklyn Avenue

1057 Brooklyn Avenue **134-0969-0211**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1960
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

1065 Brooklyn Avenue **134-0969-0210**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1989
Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1

1073 Brooklyn Avenue **134-0969-0209**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1965
Contributing Total: 1

1079 Brooklyn Avenue **134-0969-0208**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: Neo-Eclectic, 2008
Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Garage (Building)
Non-contributing Total: 1

Olds Lane

1060 Olds Lane **134-0969-0258**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Pre 1958
Contributing Total: 1

1062 Olds Lane **134-0969-0257**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1954
Contributing Total: 1

1080 Olds Lane **134-0969-0252**

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1996
Non-contributing Total: 1

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South Birdneck Road

536 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0248

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1967
Secondary Resource: Garage (Building) Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

544 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0247

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, Ca 1994
Non-contributing Total: 1

546 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0249

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: Neo-Eclectic, 1998
Non-contributing Total: 1

548 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0250

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1.5, Style: No discernible style, 1954
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

556 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0251

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 2002
Non-contributing Total: 1

570 South Birdneck Road 134-0969-0261

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, 1954
Secondary Resource: Garage (Building) Contributing Total: 1
Non-contributing Total: 1

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.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE – African American

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1915-1969

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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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 Seatack Historic District, located in the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia, is a longstanding African American community in southeastern Virginia with a rare level of surviving cohesion and intactness. The roots of the Seatack community, and a significant African American presence near the oceanfront, date back to at least the nineteenth century, and perhaps earlier. The current Seatack community is focused around Birdneck Road, about a mile west of the oceanfront, where the name originally developed. Today, Seatack is a largely residential community with a few nonresidential resources including a commercial property, former elementary school, cemeteries, a park, and a church. The street pattern and housing development evolved organically as families sold or subdivided larger farm parcels and the makeup of the community moved from largely agricultural use to mostly working-class housing. The story of this community and its residents is a vital part of the city's history and underlines Seatack's local significance in Virginia Beach as the largest and most populous historic African community that is still within the City's boundaries. As seen through the historic resources and the statements of current and former residents, the community has been maintained by its members through numerous challenges, including the 1960s construction of an interstate at the northern end of the district, a near-constant threat of demolition and building restrictions imposed from Naval Air Station Oceana as the military installation has expanded since the mid-twentieth century, and the encroachment of new residential, commercial, and industrial redevelopment. The citizens of Seatack, through family and church connections, have kept the community and physical core of the neighborhood intact while other historic African American communities have disappeared from Virginia Beach or have been reduced to vestiges. The Seatack Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage – African American and Social History, with a period of significance beginning with construction of the oldest extant resource in 1915 and continuing until 1969, when large-scale apartment complexes on the northern and western edges of the district changed the character and type of residential development from smaller scale single-dwelling residential housing to multiple-unit apartment blocks.

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

Early History

Like most of rural Virginia, Princess Anne County before the Civil War consisted largely of subsistence agriculture, middling plantations, and small towns and villages. The crops grown in the county did not support the ownership of large numbers of enslaved laborers, so most White farmers owned ten or fewer enslaved persons, or even one enslaved person with whom they worked the fields. There were free African Americans as early as 1700; the first census in 1790 listed sixty-four "free blacks" in Princess Anne County, while one estimate during the antebellum period was a population of 200-350 free African Americans. In 1830, ten free African Americans were recorded as having paid property taxes. These men owned and farmed

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their own land, raised families and lived in a similar fashion to poor White farmers of the time, occupying small, simple homes and living day-to-day without any real accumulation of capital beyond their land. Farmers would travel to the small towns, usually located along a waterway or at a significant local crossroad, to sell their goods and purchase supplies. The population of Princess Anne County remained quite small throughout the nineteenth century, beginning with a population of 2,000 and never exceeding 9,000 by 1900.¹⁷

It was during this early, pre-Civil War period of county history that the community of Seatack may have emerged. The precise date of the creation of the Seatack community is probably lost to history; in all likelihood the community developed organically over time. However, some local research has placed the age of the community at more than two hundred years, with its inception potentially dating to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. In October 2011, the City of Virginia Beach held the Seatack 200th Anniversary Celebration banquet at the convention center. As part of the celebration, October 15, 2011, was designated “Seatack Community 200 Year Celebration Day.”¹⁸

Princess Anne County after the Civil War provided opportunities for freed African Americans to own land, which led to the formation of several Reconstruction Era African American communities. The Burton Station and New Light communities date to approximately 1870. A few small African American communities, such as Seatack, may have existed before the war. The route for most former enslaved persons took them first to farms run by the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen’s Bureau) on land seized from former plantation owners. Obtaining clear title to such lands created many difficulties for people who made improvements after the Bureau was shut down. Some of these former plantation eventually transformed into permanent local African American communities, such as Lake Smith and Newsome Farm. As Reconstruction ended, African American laborers (excepting those few who owned their land) were hired as tenant farmers, which sometimes provided another route to land ownership. During the Reconstruction period, the Freedmen’s Bureau also had established and operated two schools, enrolling adults as well as children because enslaved people had been forbidden literacy prior to the Civil War. A significant post-Reconstruction economic development for Princess Anne County was the emergence of truck farming, which raised the prospects of most residents of the county as demand for county-grown fruits and vegetables increased dramatically in urban areas along the East Coast.¹⁹

¹⁷ Edna Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage, Princess Anne County, Virginia Beach, Virginia, a pictorial history* (Virginia Beach, Virginia: Edna Hawkins-Hendrix, 1998), 38, 41-42; Stephen S. Mansfield, *Princess Anne County and Virginia Beach, a pictorial history* (Norfolk, Virginia: The Donning Company Publishers, 1989), 50-51; Laura R. Purvis and Debra A. McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey Update, City of Virginia Beach, Virginia – Northern Half* (Henrico, Virginia: Cultural Resources Analysts, Inc., 2018), 13-14; Frazier Associates, *City of Virginia Beach, Reconnaissance Level Phase I Architectural Survey Report* (Staunton, Virginia: Frazier Associates, 1992), 6.

¹⁸ Liz Carey, “Seatack: Almost as old as the U.S.,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, October 21, 2012, 1; Jennifer Jiggetts, “Storied Black Neighborhood Turning 200,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, October 14, 2011, 1, 5; “Seatack 200th Anniversary Celebration,” *City Manager’s Update*, October 21, 2011; “Brief History of ‘Seatack,’” *City of Virginia Beach Community Civic League*.

¹⁹ Edna Hawkins-Hendrix and Dr. Joanne H. Lucas, *History of African-American Communities in Princess Anne County/Virginia Beach* (Virginia Beach, Virginia: Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission, 2017), 6;

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Seatack followed the countywide trends, with the area home almost entirely to subsistence farmers and unskilled laborers during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The late-nineteenth century saw most of Virginia's southern coastal areas, such as Princess Anne County, with sparse populations and minuscule economies; as a result, these areas often became accessible locations for African Americans to become landowners. Rates of black land ownership in Tidewater Virginia were much higher than the national average; however, ownership of land did not bring corresponding access to economic or political empowerment. Before the concept of beach resorts, the soil quality, constant threat of storms, and remoteness made these areas less attractive to most Whites farmers and investors with higher economic means; the low-lying land was poorly suited to cash crops such as tobacco and cotton, but effective for the fruits and vegetables in growing demand. Truck farmers were the conduit between the small African American farms and the urban markets on the east coast; this replaced the antebellum, slavery-based system with African American workers and White enslavers.²⁰

In another notable change, during and after the Civil War, the African American communities across Virginia moved to form their own churches, independent of those in White communities. By forming their own congregations and building their own churches, Black people also established independence and autonomy and gained valuable experience with owning and administering property and managing their congregation's financial obligations. On October 20, 1863, the Norfolk Virginia Union Baptist Association was formed by five African American churches located in the cities of Norfolk, Hampton, Chesapeake, and Williamsburg. The association continued to expand after the Civil War to include dozens of churches across the Tidewater region; Mount Olive Baptist Church in Seatack was formed as part of this movement. These churches became a foundation for each community as a meeting place, a source of help for the poor and sick, and a location for early schools.²¹

Seatack's Mount Olive Church was founded September 20, 1894, in a meeting at Chatham Hall that included Enoch Morgan, his brother Americus Morgan, and his uncle Moses Snowden. This new church drew its first fourteen members from First Baptist (Lynnhaven) and Piney Grove Baptist (Holland Road) churches. The first minister was Reverend Jacob Gaskins. Soon the church outgrew its original one-room building, which was then used to house the first Seatack School.²²

“Seatack” is a name that has been linked to two locations within Virginia Beach, during two different periods of time. The older Seatack location is the oceanfront, variously identified as being the entire oceanfront or, once the Town of Virginia Beach was incorporated in 1906, more limited to the area outside the newly built seaside resorts where African American employees

Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History*, 55; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 15; Mansfield, *Princess Anne County*, 67-68, 75-76.

²⁰ Andrew Kahrl, “Sunbelt by the Sea: Governing Race and Nature in a Twentieth-Century Coastal Metropolis,” *Journal of Urban History* 38(3) (March 2012): 490-92.

²¹ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 9-11; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 78-79.

²² Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 78-79.

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lived. The origin of the Seatack name itself also has been a source of great debate and is often linked to an event during the War of 1812 when British ships fired artillery from their ships and may have made a landing. Tradition says that local militiamen called out “sea attack,” which eventually became “seatack.” Another proposed explanation is that the area offshore from Seatack is the location where sailing ships would tack to begin an approach to Hampton Roads, to head into the Chesapeake Bay, or to head out to sea, thus “sea tack.” Seatack was also a term for a type of hard bread used on ships. The definitive origin of the name is likely lost, but the oldest known building associated with the name was the first Seatack Life Saving Station, built in 1878, located at present-day 24th Street and Atlantic Avenue in Virginia Beach. The Seatack community name, however, also was established by that time.²³ While the Seatack Life Saving Station was staffed by White seamen, before the construction of the Seatack Life Saving Station, the Cape Henry Lighthouse had an African American keeper in 1870 and the Life Saving Station had African American “surfmen” serving under a White keeper in 1875. These black surfmen appear as farm laborers in the 1870 census.²⁴

Multiple articles during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century detail events about both White and African American citizens of Seatack, demonstrating that the area was not exclusively occupied by Black residents. Most of these early Seatack articles involved drownings, land sales, crimes by local residents, obituaries, and social events. One particular tragedy involved the capsizing of a boat and all of the crew lost: “Capt. John B. Faunce...his son Percy, and seven colored [sic] boatmen...midway between Seatack and Life Saving Station No. 2, which are five miles apart.”²⁵ One victim, John Lee, was identified as living in Seatack and leaving a wife and child.²⁶ Records such as these establish that African Americans were a significant part of the fishing industry and lived in the Seatack area with their families. By the mid-twentieth century, stories about the Seatack Life Saving Station and drownings had faded, likely due to advances in marine technology and changes in shipping practices.

An untitled announcement on January 20, 1901, states that the Norfolk and Southern Railroad would extend its tracks from Virginia Beach to Cape Henry. The first station was planned for Twentieth Street, about three-quarters of a mile north of the Princess Anne Hotel, and the next station was to be at the Seatack Life Saving Station.²⁷ While the lifesaving station kept the name at the oceanfront, by the early twentieth century the inland area now known as Seatack was already coming into focus. The initial establishment of a railroad to Virginia Beach came in 1882 when the Norfolk and Virginia Beach Railroad and Improvement Company was created to develop railroad service from Norfolk to Virginia Beach. The nineteen-mile narrow gauge line between Norfolk and Broad Creek was completed in 1883. The railroad company went into receivership three times before being consolidated as the Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Southern Railroad in 1887 and transitioning to a standard gauge line in 1898. A separate stop for Seatack

²³ Greg Gaudio, “What’s in a name?”, *The Virginian-Pilot*, July 18, 2008, B3.

²⁴ Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 102-05.

²⁵ “Eight Men Drowned,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, April 11, 1896, 2.

²⁶ “Giving Up Its Dead, Three Bodies of the Drowned Fishermen Recovered Yesterday,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, April 12, 1896, 2.

²⁷ Untitled announcement, *The Virginian-Pilot*, January 20, 1901, 2.

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was listed on a schedule in 1894 as the stop before Virginia Beach, documenting the transition of the name from the oceanfront to an inland area.²⁸

When the village of Virginia Beach was incorporated in 1906 the town leaders purposefully drew its boundaries to exclude the village of Seatack from the growing seaside resort.²⁹ This had the ironic feature of both offering early documentation of the new location of Seatack, as well as demonstrating early on the relationship between the largely African American Seatack community and the oceanfront that had become dominated by White property owners and investors. There are some references to the Seatack area being called Chatham before it was Seatack: a young African American boy in “Chatham” was hit by the 11:30 train to Virginia Beach 1896, and in 1897 the new Hotel Princess Anne needed water for a sewerage system and this was provided by a creek being dammed at “Chatham.”³⁰

This “new” community of Seatack became more clearly identified with the African American community than the previous, broader area of oceanfront which carried that name. Modern Seatack was never a planned or platted community. Today, the primary artery of the community is Birdneck Road, but this road was previously known as Seatack Road and, at least in part, Chatham Road before that. A large portion of the early Seatack community can be traced back to the Williams family. Georgie Anne Williams and William Newton Williams Sr. owned approximately one hundred acres along what is now Birdneck Road. They farmed the land and raised horses. Georgie was a former enslaved person and served as a midwife in the community, still at that time made up mostly of freedmen and -women. Over time, the Williams family subdivided their property and various generations helped develop the Seatack of today.³¹

The evolution of the Seatack of today can be seen through the development of a number of early-to-mid twentieth century plats representing the land holdings of important local African American families along what became Birdneck Road.³² The clearest example of a connection between the earlier farming families and the established Seatack of the mid-twentieth century is the history of the land which became the site for the new Seatack Elementary School in 1952. A plat from October 30, 1912, of “America [sic]and Enoch Morgan’s Farm (formerly owned by the

²⁸ Richard E. Prince, *Norfolk Southern Railroad, Old Dominion Line, and connections* (Millard, Nebraska: R.E. Prince, 1971), 10; Mansfield, *Princess Anne County*, 77-78.

²⁹ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 501.

³⁰ “Brambleton,” *The Norfolk Virginian*, August 2, 1896, 10; “Virginia Beach Opening,” *The New Daily Pilot*, February 2, 1897, 2.

³¹ Mechelle Hankerson, “Descendants of a freed slave to buy back family land,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, September 17, 2017, 3.

³² Mark Reed, Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Virginia Beach has completed research into the early plats of Seatack which demonstrate the development of the community as well as the evolution of the name from Chatham to Seatack, and to Birdneck Road for the main thoroughfare. These plats include the following: America and Enoch Morgan’s Farm (MB 7, Page 52, 1912); Douglas Park (MB 7, Page 157, 1926); Roy Smith (MB 9, Page 57, 1929); Braithwaite Road (MB 9, Page 100, 1932); Beacon Village (MB 12, Page 92, 1940); Sea Street, partial (MB 13, Page 42, 1941); Beautiful Street, Saints Rest Cemetery (MB 17, Page 81, 1946); John Sharpe (MB 21, Page 8, 1947); Buford’s Block (MB 23, Page 44, 1948); Link Stone (MB 24, Page 88, 1950); South Olive Heights (MB 42, Page 5, 1956); South Olive Heights, extended (MB 47, Page 54, 1959); Seatack Elementary School (MB 58, Page 15, 1957). These plats are attached to this nomination.

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Williams family), Near Virginia Beach, VA., Princess Anne County" shows a long parcel (running east to west) which is bounded to the west by a winding Wilkins Creek, and to the east by a distinctive bend in Chatham Road. Forty-five years later, the July 1957 plat created for the Princess Anne County School Board, for the site of what was the Seatack Elementary School, shows a direct link to the Morgan Farm. About half of the former farm parcel (excluding a section to the west) is part of the school parcel. The school site has identical boundaries to the north and south, and the east end is capped by the same distinctive bend in what is then called Old Chatham Road and which only constitutes a small side street off of New Military Highway (which would become Birdneck Road). Still belonging to Americus Morgan is land to the north and west of the school parcel. The land to the west of the former school site is now Seatack North Park, and it still abuts a winding creek with the same basic path as Wilkins Creek on the 1912 plat of the Morgan Farm.³³

Various other plats, including the Douglas Park Plat (1926), the Roy Smith Plat (1929), the Beacon Village Plat (1940, subdividing the first block of Sea Street off of Seatack Road), the 1941 Sea Street Plat, Burford Block (1948, showing what became the first part of Burford Avenue), and South Olive Heights (1956, 1959, which also shows the main road as "Pendleton-Seatack Road, with Camp Pendleton to the south) show the gradual fragmentation of the family farms along Seatack Road, subdividing them into lots for the single-family houses which line the streets of Seatack today. Most of these streets bear the names of the original African American farming families from many years earlier.

The Beautiful Street, Saints Rest Cemetery Plat from 1946 shows several notable features which still clearly exist today. First came the subdivision of Beautiful Street into building lots from what was land belonging to the Williams family; what was shown as Williams land to the south of Beautiful Street remains undeveloped today. The parcels along both sides of Beautiful Street follow the same pattern laid out on the 1946 plat, right up to what was Saints Avenue. The large parcel at the beginning of Beautiful Street (on the north side), abutting "the Highway to Camp Pendleton," is labeled as Church of God & Christ. The Saint Stephens Church of God & Christ is still in that location. Finally, at the back of Beautiful Street, to the west, lies the Saints Rest Cemetery laid out with dozens of 20' x 20' burial plots. This cemetery is at this location today, though the plat seems to have been aspirational on some level as it shows plots on the north side of Beautiful Street, while today that area has single-family dwellings.³⁴

The three discontiguous areas at the southern end of the district were also derived from large agricultural parcels. However, the eventual size of the parcels developed by individual homeowners were generally larger than those seen in the main area of Seatack to the north. Additionally, the modern commercial and residential development seen in large sections today did not start to appear until the 1980s. Large areas of south Seatack remain undeveloped even now, resulting in a much sparser pattern of residential development. Aerial maps reveal a gradual transformation of early farm roads in the 1930s being firmly established as residential lanes by the 1950s.

³³ Princess Anne County Map Book 7, Page 52, 1912; Princess Anne County Map Book 58, Page 15, 1957.

³⁴ Princess Anne County Map Book 17, Page 81, 1946.

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Owls Creek Lane, the focal point of Discontiguous Area C, was largely developed by the Gregory family with parcels divided amongst family members over several generations to build their own houses. The street is a mixture of historic family homes from the mid-twentieth century as well as more recent infill. This area is also the location of Seatack Park, which was developed by the local community in 1963, and then fully developed by the city in 1970. Many members of the community call it Viking Park, which appears to have been the earlier park's name. Discontiguous Area D is a small lane, also developed in the mid-twentieth century, which features the same types of dwellings seen in the rest of the Seatack Historic District. Finally, Discontiguous Area E features Brooklyn Avenue, Olds Lane, and Bells Road, all historic routes which previously were lined with dozens of historic dwellings before modern commercial encroachment as well as residential redevelopment occurred. Olds Lane is named for the Olds family, long-time residents of Seatack.

In July of 1971, the Virginia Beach School Board approved a new busing program to address the issue of racial segregation in the school system. This first-ever effort for the city's "busing of children for racial reasons" concerned Seatack Elementary School, enrollment of which at that time was more than 90 percent African American students. The plan established an exchange of students from Alanton, Cooke, Kingston, Linkhorn Park and Trantwood elementary schools with Seatack Elementary School, resulting in all participating schools having an African American student population of approximately 15-20 percent. Before this program, Seatack Elementary School was the "last predominately black school in the city." This new program also spelled out which areas were considered part of the Seatack community, and included Beautiful Street, South Birdneck Road, Olds Lane, Brooklyn Avenue, Owls Creek Lane, Gregory Lane, Burford Avenue, Sea Street, among others. The intermingling of streets in this plan, from the upper and lower parts of the district, including all of the discontiguous areas, thus establishing the longstanding linkage between the northern and southern areas of the Seatack community.³⁵

Changes in the land use along Seatack Road (Birdneck Road), with the dramatic and rapid transition from an agricultural setting to numerous streets of single-family homes, are reflected in what was happening at the oceanfront as well. A description of the staff at the Princess Anne Hotel in the late-nineteenth century listed African American porters, cooks, waiters, and bellboys with the only White employees being wealthy northern hoteliers; additionally, guests "were amused by African American performers in the pavilion ballroom."³⁶ By the early twentieth century, much of Seatack had transitioned from a more rural, agricultural setting to small, simple dwellings which often housed hotel workers. As was common during this period, the same workers who staffed the hotels or served as domestic servants otherwise were strictly separated from tourists. Hotel staff and performers, and any African Americans who worked in the resort area, were prohibited from being on the beach until late at night, "when the last steam train had whisked Norfolkians away and overnight guests had retired to their quarters."³⁷ This segregation

³⁵ Rohrer, "Beach to Have 1st Race Busing," *The Virginian-Pilot*, July 30, 1971, 31.

³⁶ Jonathan Mark Souther, "Twixt ocean and pines: the seaside resort at Virginia Beach, 1880-1930 (Master's Thesis, University of Richmond, 1996), 35, 37.

³⁷ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 491-92; Souther, "Twixt ocean and pines," 38.

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of African American employees was essentially codified in 1938 when the town of Virginia Beach created an ordinance requiring all hotel and domestic workers to be photographed, finger-printed, and registered with the police. The net result was that any African American on the beach, but not at work, was essentially a criminal; this also had the effect of preventing African Americans from Norfolk from visiting the resorts.³⁸

Another discriminatory policy which affected African Americans significantly was the creation of huge dunes by the Civilian Conservation Corps in answer to a major hurricane in 1933. These dunes created a barrier between the oceans and the back bays. They also reduced the salinity in the water, which caused a dramatic decline in fish populations and the number of marsh plants that local waterfowl consumed, largely eliminating a major source of livelihood and sustenance for local African Americans.³⁹ As a result more local residents moved into African American communities such as Seatack and engaged in hotel or domestic work.

Initially, some African Americans participated in the new beach resort economy and ran businesses along the oceanfront in the 1940s and 1950s. Even more notable was the establishment of Seaview Beach on Shore Drive on May 30, 1945, by Black businessmen from Norfolk and Portsmouth. This beach and large clubhouse were purchased from the Bayshore Beach Club by the African American-owned American Seaview Hotel and Beach Corporation. The African American resort included ballrooms, a starlight plaza, and an outdoor dance pavilion that allowed the facility to host large events. At the time, Seaview Beach was advertised as “America’s Best Equipped Park for Colored Families.” By the early-to-mid 1960s, desegregation had made it difficult for Seaview Beach to compete with larger resorts at prime oceanfront locations; the Black-owned resort closed and the main clubhouse was torn down. Today the site is occupied by the Seagate Colony Condominiums on what is now Shore Drive on the Chesapeake Bay.⁴⁰ Nearby on Shore Drive was Parker’s Beach Motel and Restaurant, another Black-owned business. From 1947-1971, Thomas Parker and his mother operated the motel, which featured cottages for rent and a well-known restaurant.⁴¹

Denied during the Jim Crow segregation to access the resort beaches in Virginia Beach, the African American community was constantly in search of a beach of their own. Before Seaview Beach opened, the Ocean Breeze opened on May 30, 1933. Owned and operated by three White men at a location just off Shore Drive on Lake Joyce, the property is part of Baylake Pines today. Owing to the still rural, undeveloped nature of Princess Anne County, the Ocean Breeze was advertised as a beach for Norfolk, as well as African Americans from Tidewater and nearby North Carolina.⁴²

³⁸ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 491-92.

³⁹ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 492.

⁴⁰ Elizabeth Spach, “The Accidental City: Race and the 1963 Virginia Beach Merger” (undergraduate thesis, University of Virginia, 2018), 15; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 146-48.

⁴¹ Sherry DiBari, “Seaview Beach and Amusement Park: An African-American Gem on Virginia’s Chesapeake Bay,” (Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission, 2017). This paper is likely the definitive source of information on Virginia Beach African-American resorts, and the Seaview Beach in particular; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 149.

⁴² Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 144-45.

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Early Development of the Current Seatack Community

With Seatack established and growing, construction of a school for the community was a major goal for the residents. The early twentieth century was a time when the Princess Anne County School Board did not provide schools for African American communities, despite the state constitutional requirement of all localities to establish segregated public schools. A delegation of parents and community leaders approached the School Board and requested a building to house a new school; the school board offered to provide funding for a teacher and furnishings if the community would find a building. As mentioned previously, Mt. Olive Baptist Church had outgrown its first location in 1908, and the building at 310 North Birdneck Road (no longer extant) was repurposed as the new school. The founder, and first teacher, was 1902 Hampton University graduate Sarah Parsons Daughtry (Figure 15); she was hired by the county on a six-month contract for twenty dollars per month.⁴³



Figure 15. Photograph of Sarah Parsons Daughtry and a pen drawing of the first Seatack School. (Edna Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage, Princess Anne County, Virginia Beach, Virginia, a pictorial history* (Virginia Beach, Virginia: Edna Hawkins-Hendrix, 1998).

This first Seatack School (no longer extant) had no running water, indoor toilets, or central heating system; students used privies, carried water into the building in buckets, and used a stove fueled by wood cut by the male students from nearby trees. The Patrons League of the Seatack School raised local funds (\$702 in 1921) for industrial works and teacher salaries, as Black teachers were paid a fraction of what White teachers earned and public funds for Black schools

⁴³ Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 119. White communities were not expected to provide a building for public schools.

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rarely extended to cover more than the bare minimum of supplies. Over time, the Seatack community raised funds privately to pay for a new school building. In 1923, a three-room school building was constructed at 141 South Birdneck Road on land purchased for \$1800. Although not extant today, the original school building survived as a meeting hall until the late 1940s.⁴⁴ At the same time as the second Seatack School was being constructed, Norfolk Southern Railroad Company had been granted permission by the Princess Anne County Board of Supervisors to erect poles along Seatack Road to supply electricity to residents for lighting. The electricity was pulled from the electric rail line.⁴⁵

A major change for Seatack was the construction of the Norfolk-Virginia Beach Highway (later Virginia Beach Boulevard) beginning in 1916. Virginia Beach Mayor W.J. Wright headed a 1911 commission to find funding and establish a route between the two communities. Soon after work began, it was halted with the entrance of the United States into World War I. The concrete boulevard eventually opened on July 29, 1921, finally linking Norfolk to the beach resort.⁴⁶ This road ran directly past (and through the northern section) of Seatack.

Post-World War II Seatack

African Americans in much of the country, including Princess Anne County and Seatack, faced the terrible specter of racial violence through much of the twentieth century. An article from February 1948 detailed multiple cases of cross burning faced by residents of the area. The local newspaper reported, “Three burning crosses, long the symbol of the Ku Klux Klan, were sighted last week in scattered sections of Princess Anne County. They were accompanied by shotgun blasts...between 11 o’clock and midnight;” “One of the crosses was fired in front of the Negro American Legion headquarters at Seatack;” “The night before there had been a meeting of Negro veterans in the Seatack Legion hut;” “Thursday’s was the second cross to be burned at Seatack in less than two months, it was revealed. Police said they did not know why that particular area...was selected;” “Seatack is the only place in the county where Negro veterans meet in large numbers. In both cross burnings men were seen leaving the area, but police could not identify them.”⁴⁷ These were the first reports of crosses to be burned in Princess Anne County in several years, but that likely didn’t lessen the impact of what was a constant presence of threat in the lives of African Americans. Black military veterans, in particular, raised the ire of White people who resented their service in the U.S. military. After World Wars I and II, in particular, Black veterans in uniform were targets for assaults and lynchings. Having fought for freedom abroad, Whites feared that Black veterans would agitate for changes to the Jim Crow status quo at home.

A less dramatic issue which increasingly affected the community of Seatack was the growth of the Virginia Beach resort as a whole, and the accompanying changes in transportation beginning in the mid-twentieth century. A plan was passed in 1947 to create a “Super Road” which

⁴⁴ Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 119-20.

⁴⁵ Princess Anne County Board of Supervisors Record (1918-1929), 264.

⁴⁶ Mansfield, *Princess Anne County*, 105, 133.

⁴⁷ “Crosses Burn in 3 Areas of Princess Anne,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, February 24, 1948, 1; Note: the term “negro” remained the common use term for African Americans in print until the 1970s in Virginia Beach, so it will appear in quotations regularly in this report.

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involved spending \$1,900,000 to widen Virginia Beach Boulevard and create controlled access roads. By this time the traffic between the Town of Virginia Beach and Seatack was 5,549 daily vehicles and Virginia Beach Boulevard in general was the second most-heavily-traveled highway in the state.⁴⁸

Later in 1947, Norfolk Southern applied to the state Corporation Commission to “abandon railbus schedules between Norfolk and Virginia Beach and substitute road buses to serve the communities affected.” The cause was the financial failings of the railbus system since 1945; patrons were encouraged to switch to using the Norfolk Southern Bus Corporation. The vice president and general manager, G.M. Fletcher, “declared that, with the exception of Seatack patrons now using the railbuses, all other communities will be more adequately taken care of...” by road buses, which seems an odd statement given that Virginia Beach Boulevard bisected Seatack.⁴⁹

Soon after, in 1949, Norfolk Southern requested that the Interstate Commerce Commission grant it the authority to abandon the 18.5 miles of its “North Route” from Camden Heights, through Virginia Beach, and ending at Lake Station south of the resort area. “In anticipation of the removal of tracks through the resort, Town Council has designated an industrial area in the Seatack section.”⁵⁰ This began decades of struggle between Seatack and the Town of Virginia Beach (and later the city) regarding the issue of inappropriate rezoning of land in the Seatack vicinity and the constant work by residents to protect the physical integrity and residential character of their community.

Despite many challenges facing Seatack, the community has consistently taken care of its own and undertaken improvements with little support from government officials. A notable example of this was the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department No.12. During World War II, Civil Defense Units were organized across the region by the Civil Defense Department to provide forest fire services. Seatack hosted one of these units with men from Seatack, Atlantic Park, and Cypress Avenue serving. The Civil Defense Department provided the unit with a wide array of equipment and paid to construct the one-story Oceana Civil Defense Building at 141 South Birdneck Road (the location of the Seatack Community and Recreation Center today). Former Defense Warden, the Reverend David Wright, met with Virginia Beach Fire Chief E. B. Bayne in 1948 about creating a Seatack fire department to have a closer fire station and to avoid paying the fifty-dollar fee whenever Virginia Beach fire services made a call. With the support of Chief Bayne, the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department was created in July 1948 with twenty founding members. They used the former Civil Defense building as the firehouse. The first elected officers were all well-known leaders of the Seatack community: Rev. David Wright (President), Joseph V. Grimstead (VP), John Sharp (Treasurer), and Cylester W. Shaw (Fire Chief). Chief Bayne supervised their training, which included firefighting, first aid, hose drills and, finally,

⁴⁸ “‘Super’ Road Planned for Beach Route,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, May 8, 1947, 15, 26.

⁴⁹ “Railbus ‘Sabotaged,’ Users Tell SCC on Petition to Abandon,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, October, 9, 1947, 16, 26.

⁵⁰ “N.S. Petitions ICC to Quit ‘North Route,’” *The Virginian-Pilot*, August 22, 1949, 20, 24.

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competitions with other volunteer fire departments. The Seatack Department eventually won first place in the hose drill competition, completing the task in twenty-nine seconds.⁵¹



Figure 16. Some of the initial leaders of the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department. ("Seatack Fire Volunteers Win Certificates," Virginia Beach Beacon, February 17, 1995.)

After completing their training, each man was tested and received a "Certificate of Credit in Industrial Education (Elementary Firemanship)" from the state Board for Vocational Education of Virginia. The members of the fire department went on to win advanced fire instruction certificates which were awarded at the Seatack Fire House in a special ceremony. The Seatack Department was the "first and only Negro fire department in Virginia..."⁵² To support the department during the 1950s, the wives of the volunteers formed a twelve-woman auxiliary to raise funds; they went door to door for donations and sold lunches and dinners. At the ceremony for the advanced certificates, Fire Chief Bayne noted that the Seatack department had raised more than \$4,000 since it had been formed two years earlier, a tremendous accomplishment.⁵³

In 1948 the station was able to purchase "Big Bertha," which was compared to something between a tank and a boxcar. By 1951, the Seatack department was able to secure a loan and purchase a proper Chevrolet chassis fire truck for \$5,499. That same year the firemen completed the work themselves to add a second story and additional rooms onto the fire station: the lower floor for the two fire engines and the upper level for an office, meeting room, game room,

⁵¹ Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 155-57.

⁵² "Seatack Fire Volunteers Win Certificates," *The Virginian-Pilot*, 16; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 155-57.

⁵³ "Seatack Fire Volunteers Win Certificates," *The Virginian-Pilot*, 16; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 155-57.

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kitchen and bathroom. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department continued to raise funds and upgrade its equipment and trucks. By the 1970s, the station had integrated but finding a regular contingent of volunteers became increasingly difficult; soon after the department allowed its charter to expire and the station was taken over by the City of Virginia Beach. In 1983, Seatack received a new fire station at the 900 block of South Birdneck Road next to the Fire Training Center, finally replacing the World War II era fire house.⁵⁴

Another point of pride for the Seatack community, even seventy years later, is the former Seatack Elementary School building. As part of the larger equalization and consolidation movement, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) used litigation to push the Virginia Beach school board to equalize its racially segregated schools and update those for African American facilities to bring them on par with those for White students. The board requested a referendum on issuing \$250,000 in bonds for construction of the new school. The school was proposed to consolidate the existing African American schools in the Seatack, Oceana, Great Neck and Lynnhaven communities and would be the first of three consolidated African American elementary schools in Princess Anne County. The Seatack area was selected because it was the central point of a large African American population and “where the need was greatest.”⁵⁵ An editorial noted that recent bonds had been approved for White schools but not for African American schools and that the upcoming bond referendum “will constitute a test of the county’s intent with respect to the existing inequality between white and Negro school facilities.”⁵⁶ One reason that voters had rejected the bond may have been related to the difficulties that Black Virginians had with voting due to poll taxes, a long-standing tactic for denying the franchise that was finally made unconstitutional with ratification of the 24th Amendment to the Constitution in 1964.

The vote for the African American elementary school consolidation bond was close, but succeeded in March of 1950. The new school would be the first consolidated school, and, remarkably, the first public school for African American students for which construction was to be funded by the county. Prior to this, African American schools had been privately financed by the local communities, despite that Black communities paid property taxes just as White communities did. The local newspaper reported that the previous Seatack school was “built in the early 1920s...[a] three-room affair, of frame construction.” Additionally, “there is no running water, and children drink from a bucket with a dipper...” The building was “heated by a coal stove. Cracks in the frame sides of the building furnish plenty of ventilation.”⁵⁷ The circumstances leading up to recognition of the need to improve schools for Black children lay in the NAACP’s legal strategy, begun during the early 1940s, to use lawsuits to force local school boards to make the necessary investment. Fearing that the lawsuits might force an end to segregated schools, Virginia Governor John S. Battle urged the General Assembly to find ways to “equalize” the schools, including through increased state funding.

⁵⁴ Martin C. Grube, *Virginia Beach Fire Department, A Pictorial History, 1906-2006* (Evansville, Ind: M.T. Publishing Company Inc., 2006), 65; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 155-57.

⁵⁵ “Princess Anne Asks Vote on School Bonds: \$250,000 Issue Again Up for Negroes; Twice Defeated,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, December, 20, 1949, 1.

⁵⁶ “Princess Anne’s Negro Schools,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, December 22, 1949, 6.

⁵⁷ “Princess Anne School Issue Vote Tuesday,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, March 5, 1950, Part 2, p.1.

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The journey towards the new, consolidated Seatack Elementary School had started in September 1946 with a Princess Anne County Committee joined by county school board officials created to “improve the Negro schools of Princess Anne.” This was followed by a survey of schools led by *The Norfolk Journal and Guide*, a leading Black-owned newspaper, which revealed “deplorable” school conditions.” This caused G. Tyler Miller, State Superintendent of Public Information, to appoint a special commission to investigate, and the commission confirmed the newspaper reporting. To alleviate the completely inadequate schooling situation, the commission recommended the construction of a new high school building along with “three new strategically located regional elementary schools in the county.”⁵⁸ While it took more than a decade to complete construction of all four new schools, Seatack Elementary School was the direct result of this early action against the unequal school facilities in Princess Anne County and the Town of Virginia Beach.

The new Seatack Elementary School was dedicated on March 1, 1952, at a cost of \$375,000. The school featured twelve classrooms, an auditorium, a cafeteria, a clinic, a library, administrative offices, electricity, central heating, and indoor plumbing. The building had a capacity of five hundred students. In the first year, the local community raised \$4500 to fund the first African American school band in Princess Anne County.⁵⁹ The Junior and Senior women’s clubs made a playground at the new Seatack School their project for that year. While there were over 2,000 African American children in Princess Anne County schools the previous year, there had been no playgrounds or outdoor recreational facilities available to any of them. The playground was fully equipped with a softball diamond, basketball court, swings, seesaws, a merry-go-round and a health ladder. The Negro Boy Scouts, led by teacher J.L. Robinson, laid out the new field and court and the Seatack Fire Department assembled all of the playground equipment.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ “Negro Court Action Imminent Against Princess Anne Schools,” *Virginian-Pilot*, October 21, 1949, 53, 49.

⁵⁹ Charles Rodeffer, “Building Records For Area Falling,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, XJanuary 13, 1952, Sect 5, p.1; “New Negro School Dedicated,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, March 3, 1952, 15; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 126-27.

⁶⁰ Omeda Brockett, “Junior Women Equip Playground in Princess Anne,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, February 10, 1952, Part 3, p.10; “Women to Back Playground at Seatack School,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, September 9, 1951, Part 1, p.12; Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 126-27.

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Mrs. Emma Hairston, Administrator

Figure 17. Mrs. Emma Hairston, First Principal of the consolidated Seatack Elementary School. Courtesy of the Seatack Community Civic League website, <https://seatackcivic.org/historical-photo-gallery>.

Longtime Oceana teacher Mrs. Emma Hairston was the first principal of the Seatack Elementary School. During her tenure, from 1952 until becoming a county elementary Supervisor in 1962, the school grew from twelve teachers and 450 students to thirty-two teachers and more than 1,000 students, more than double the intended enrollment capacity. Mrs. Hairston was also the first person in the area to apply for federal funds and became the director of the local Head Start program. In addition, she was a founding member of the Virginia Beach branch of the NAACP.⁶¹ In 1966, a substantial physical education and recreation addition was completed at the elementary school.⁶²

In 1969, the City of Virginia Beach (which

was established upon the 1963 consolidation of the county and city), changed the Seatack Elementary School name to Birdneck Road Elementary School, but its enrollment continued to be majority African American, which was, in part, indicative of the continued lack of integration in Virginia Beach neighborhoods.⁶³

The issue of education, taken in the context of integration and the rapid demographic changes to the city, was another longstanding challenge for the African American communities in Virginia Beach, including Seatack, during the late twentieth century. In mid-1966, the Virginia Beach School Board had been forced to accept that public-school segregation (for both students and faculty) must end or federal school funding would cease.⁶⁴ The population of Virginia Beach had increased dramatically over the past two decades, with most of that increase being White families, which meant that the majority of additional school enrollment was comprised of White students, while the African American share of the population decreased proportionally. In 1966, there were four African American schools in the city with no plans ever to build another one. Three of the segregated schools served elementary students from traditionally African American communities. Regarding Seatack, it was stated that the community was “near the western border of Virginia Beach Borough, has served as the school for children of families who work in the service trades in the resort borough.”⁶⁵ Another notable change to the Virginia Beach population

⁶¹ Hawkins-Hendrix, *Black History, Our Heritage*, 127-28.

⁶² “\$4 Million in Bonds Sold,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, January 19, 1967, 35.

⁶³ “Va. Beach Mix Plan Approved,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, March 2, 1969, B1.

⁶⁴ “Beach Board Faces 11-Day Mix Deadline,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, April 26, 1966, 15.

⁶⁵ “Beach Board Faces 11-Day Mix Deadline,” April 26, 1966, 15.

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was the influx of more middle-class African American families, and these residents were pressing strongly for an end to racially segregated schools altogether.⁶⁶

During the transitional period between school segregation and integration, and a time of greater African American activism in general, the Revered Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. visited the Hampton Roads community on several occasions. Spanning a period from June 30, 1961, to October 30, 1966, King visited the area four times. On June 30, 1961, he spoke at the Norfolk City Arena to 2,500 people, encouraging participation in the NAACP and warning of the hard struggle ahead to put an end to segregation. On June 28, 1963, King visited with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) leaders at the Golden Triangle Motel in Norfolk before speaking to a crowd of 5,000 at Peanut Park in Suffolk, Virginia, to raise funds for the SCLC. He returned to Norfolk on June 26, 1964, for another speech at the Norfolk City Arena, visited the New Calvary Baptist Church, and toured African American sections of the city, including the Rosemont neighborhood. Finally, on October 30, 1966, King returned to the New Calvary Baptist Church where he installed Milton Reid as pastor.⁶⁷

What is less well known is that, during these visits, King stayed with the Reverend Clarence Morgan in Seatack. James Rivers, a member of the New Calvary Baptist Church at that time, recalled that, since King did not speak in Virginia Beach during these visits, a private home in Seatack provided a much less obtrusive, and therefore safer, place to stay. Additionally, Clarence Morgan was an active member of the Virginia Beach chapter of SCLC, making a natural connection with King. Clarence Morgan's granddaughter, Alethea Morris Morgan, was left with the impression from her grandfather that King's visits to Seatack were as a safety precaution, to keep where he was staying out of the public eye.⁶⁸

The Mid-twentieth Century Seatack Community

From the mid-twentieth century forward, Seatack began a decades-long process of fighting for city improvements (water, sewer, sidewalks, street lighting, paved roads) and simultaneously resisting the encroachments of industrial, commercial, and residential redevelopment and the building restrictions imposed by Naval Air Station Oceana. While this constant struggle must have been disheartening and wearying, another constant over the past several generations has been the positive, supportive attitude of the residents of the Seatack. The documented history of this period, mostly through newspaper accounts and oral history interviews, will be relayed here. In listening to these accounts, one quickly concludes that, despite significant and long-lasting challenges, the community of Seatack has retained a strong, multigenerational sense of pride. Additionally, without exception these residents relayed accounts of a happy, content, fun

⁶⁶ "Beach Board Faces 11-Day Mix Deadline," April 26, 1966, 15. Perhaps the best-known example of the establishment of an African American middle-class community in Virginia Beach is the L & J Gardens neighborhood.

⁶⁷ Michelle Hankerson, "Virginia Beach's black community recalls Martin Luther King, Jr.'s secret visits," *The Virginian-Pilot*, January 16, 2017, 1.

⁶⁸ Hankerson, "Martin Luther King, Jr."

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Mr. Paul Sparrow

Figure 18. Paul Sparrow (right). (Courtesy of the Seatack Community Civic League website, <https://seatackcivic.org/historical-photo-gallery.>)

about Seatack. Ariel Jones offered many details about her grandfather, Paul Sparrow Sr., who ran his own grocery store in Seatack. He sold items on credit and let people pay back their debts when and how they could. Every Saturday, Paul Sparrow would offer a plate of hot food to anyone who was hungry. On Sundays, people relaxed at home, on the porch, walked around the neighborhood; she called it the “black version of *Andy Griffith*.” When she was a kid, she was not involved with, did not know about, understand, or care about Civil Rights activism; she said she was a kid and “just wanted to eat food and play.” Donnie LaSalle Gregory grew up on Gregory Lane, located in the southern areas of Seatack, named after his father. Growing up in Seatack, he explained, there was a “real strong community.” About twelve families lived on his street and each had twelve to fifteen children, totaling over one hundred fifty people living on his small street. His family “ate so good we didn’t even know we was poor...a lot of community caring, self-sufficiency.” Elizabeth GG Mills described a Seatack where everybody knew each other and took care of each other’s children: “you always felt comfortable being with your neighbors. Everybody cooked, so we ate at everybody’s house; all the kids played together...it was just a fun time.” Mrs. Mills’ favorite activity at Seatack Elementary School was May Day:

⁶⁹ The ten interviews were completed in two phases. The first was a group of six interviews completed in 2008 and maintained at the Virginia Beach Library on a DVD. The second group of four interviews was completed by Commonwealth Preservation Group staff in the fall of 2021.

⁷⁰ The quotations and references included in these paragraphs were taken from interviews conducted with Seatack residents by Ashlen Stump and Jessica Archer of Commonwealth Preservation Group on September 28, 2021. The other group of interviews is stored on a DVD at the Virginia Beach Library: “Seatack Remembers,” *Community Memories Project*, Virginia Beach Public Library, February 16, 2008.

childhood seemingly in defiance of the realities of the poverty and prejudices they faced.⁶⁹ Most Black parents attempted to shield their children from the period’s overt racism, at least prior to adolescence.

The positivity towards childhood in Seatack was echoed by multiple residents interviewed in both 2008 and 2021.⁷⁰ Mrs. April Delores King (Smith) attended Seatack Elementary School and said of her time growing up in Seatack that it was “all a positive experience.” Her father and church did not teach her about the racism typical of Virginia at that time; she learned about racism from *Jet Magazine* late in high school. Mrs. King compared living in Seatack to living in a bubble where everyone’s relatives looked out for each other. She described her favorite Seatack memories: the parades when it was time to go back to school and she wore white boots and carried a baton. Her best days were when she and her family went to Seaview Beach. She stated that “everyone” will tell the same positive message

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“we all got dressed up in our furry dresses and we wrapped the May Pole...” Her favorite memories were “hopscotch before and after school, waiting on the bus, mostly on dirt roads...you just wish you could catch it and present it to your kids and grandchildren so they could really see what life was about and how simple it was.” “I can’t put into words how much fun Seatack was.”⁷¹

While the new Seatack Elementary School and adjoining playground were a significant improvement for the community, the residents made the decision that a community center was needed. The Seatack Community Center organization was formed and the then-abandoned 1920s elementary school building was chosen for the project. Several community leaders spelled out the justification for the new facility: “We need it primarily for the children...there must be between three and five hundred children in Seatack. Some of these children have, unfortunately, no home life. This becomes a problem of society.”⁷² The organization also planned to use the building as a location for social club and civic league meetings. Since the property had been purchased by the community to serve as a school, it was already owned by the citizens of Seatack and only needed a renovation. A major contributor to the effort was the Princess Anne and Virginia Beach Citizen’s Committee; the chairman of this organization was Francis Taylor, the head waiter at the Cavalier Hotel. This committee obtained the roofing materials and cinder blocks needed for the renovation. Other groups taking part in the effort were the Seatack Women’s Club as well as several African American social groups: the Esquire, the Carnation, and the Daisy Chain.⁷³

Francis Taylor was not atypical of many Seatack residents. Besides his leadership on the community center renovation, he and his wife also took the lead on cleaning up the overgrown Salem Cemetery on Bird Neck Point Road, near to the community center location. When interviewed about the project, Taylor expanded his comments to generally expound on the pride of Seatack community: “we have six police officers on the police force, the only Negro volunteer fire Dept. in the state, accredited as one of the best in the state.”⁷⁴

Voting was also viewed as a civic obligation and important tool for change by the residents of Seatack. In early 1959, a “kick off meeting” was held at the Seatack Elementary School to address what was viewed as the inevitable upcoming integration of area schools. The participants “were urged to register and pay their poll tax.”⁷⁵ Those at the meeting were also needed to reach out to other residents and “get these people out to register and vote...when you vote you understand the power of the vote and are on the way to first class citizenship.”⁷⁶ These efforts,

⁷¹ Interviews conducted with Seatack residents by Ashlen Stump and Jessica Archer of Commonwealth Preservation Group on September 28, 2021.

⁷² “Seatack Plans Community House Project,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, April 15, 1957, 25.

⁷³ “Seatack Plans Community House Project, April 15, 1957, 25.

⁷⁴ “Seatack Plans Community House Project, April 15, 1957, 25.

⁷⁵ “Registration of Negroes Termed Vital,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, January 28, 1959, 9. A notable part of this article is the mention of residents paying their poll tax. While often thought of as a nineteenth or early twentieth century tool of voter suppression, it was clearly still present in Virginia Beach in the 1950s and was perhaps not eliminated until the passage of the 24th Amendment to the Constitution in 1964.

⁷⁶ “Registration of Negroes Termed Vital,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, January 28, 1959, 9.

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and the general Seatack and larger African American attitude towards the right and need to vote, produced clear results. Mrs. R.H. Fisher, the chairwoman of the Virginia Beach unit of Women Voters, described an analysis of voting in the November 1964 election which had a recorded 92% of registered voters casting ballots. However, one precinct had 97% of registered voters casting ballots: Seatack.⁷⁷

The residents of Seatack, and other African Americans, were also commendable in taking advantage of every opportunity provided to improve their community and, most importantly, enhance the educational opportunities for their children. While only introduced in 1965, the City of Virginia Beach already needed to ask “for additional federal funds to take care of the unexpected response to its Head Start program...heavy response to the Virginia Beach program was in contrast to other cities.”⁷⁸ Incoming first grade children, whose family had an annual income of less than \$3,000, were eligible. There were three centers located in the city for the Head Start program: Seatack Elementary School, Bettie Williams Elementary School and Seaboard Elementary School; these were the three elementary schools for African American children.⁷⁹

Challenges and Changes for Seatack

A watershed event for Seatack, and the Virginia Beach African American community at large, was the consolidation of Princess Anne County and the second-class City of Virginia Beach into the first-class City of Virginia Beach in 1963. African Americans in Princess Anne County generally supported the merger because they saw it as a means of preserving their current status as land and business owners, as well as protecting their existing societal institutions and an opportunity to expand their access to municipal services. They “preferred to work with the devil they knew;” whereas they viewed a proposal to merge with Norfolk as possibly leading to the destruction of their current status. With the long African American history in Princess Anne County, they also identified more with “home” in Virginia Beach than Norfolk, which was widely viewed as an aggressively encroaching town.⁸⁰ This reality is perfectly illustrated by William Watson, an African American landowning farmer in Princess Anne County at the time of the merger. Watson witnessed Black public officials and teachers from Norfolk surveying and planning to take over the Seatack village school; they “would have loved to (have) taken it all...of course we stopped them from doing that.”⁸¹ African Americans in Princess Anne County were voting against Norfolk as much as for consolidation and the City of Virginia Beach. In the final vote for consolidation, Seatack (the only African American voting precinct) voted in favor by more than 95 percent.⁸²

⁷⁷ “Officials Face the Public,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, November 10, 1964, 19. By this point the 24th Amendment had passed and the poll tax, along with other race-based barriers to voting, were no longer in place and the overwhelming voter turnout is a convincing testament to these changes.

⁷⁸ “Extra Funds Requested for Va. Beach Head Start,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, July 7, 1965, 19.

⁷⁹ “Extra Funds Requested for Va. Beach Head Start,” July 7, 1965, 19.

⁸⁰ Spach, “The Accidental City, 6, 49.

⁸¹ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 494-95.

⁸² Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 494-95.

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The African American community judged that Sidney Kellam (leader of the Virginia Beach consolidation effort) and the new local government created through the merger would look out for their interests and institutions. This proved not to be the case as, increasingly, the City extended services to White communities and resort areas, but not to existing African American areas of the city.⁸³ African Americans in Virginia Beach lived through a “honeymoon period” in the first few years after the merger, however, it soon became clear that the new city intended to use redevelopment to support the tourist economy. Access to political power also did not follow the merger. City Treasurer V. Alfred Etheridge declared, in regards to why no African Americans worked in his office: he “hadn’t had a qualified Negro to apply but that we would be happy to have one make an application.”⁸⁴

Another dramatic result of the merger over the next several decades was the movement of tens of thousands of White residents from Norfolk to Virginia Beach to avoid school integration and the proximity to urban poverty. These families filled the exploding number of new subdivisions in the northern half of the Virginia Beach, creating a vast suburban landscape which decimated small historic African American communities and also significantly diluted the African American share of the overall population. On city council, all members were elected at-large, meaning all eligible voters could vote for all council seats. This system served as an impediment to minority communities achieving representation on council due to the need for candidates to mount city-wide campaigns to represent their district and to win a substantial share of White and Black voters. Greatly outnumbered African Americans did not see their preferred candidates elected. The net result for several decades was that African Americans had no representation in what was then called the “World’s Largest Resort City.”⁸⁵ It was not until 1986 that an African American was elected to serve on the Virginia Beach City Council. In 2020, a federal court ruled that Virginia Beach’s at-large system violated the Voting Rights Act and the City is currently transitioning to a system that will only have at-large voting for the mayoral seat.

Additionally, City officials only established special service districts (water, sanitation, utilities) in rural areas if they were targeted for growth.⁸⁶ As a result, Seatack and other historic African American communities in Virginia Beach effectively could not get city services extended into their areas of the city unless they were designated for redevelopment, creating a spiral of social and economic decline as Black residents were forced out of their traditional neighborhoods through eminent domain, demolition, and gentrification. As the City of Virginia Beach became a majority-White, middle-class resort city, and the robust African American neighborhoods and organizations were decimated, many African American residents moved to Norfolk, where the African American neighborhoods and institutions were often stronger.⁸⁷

⁸³ Spach, “The Accidental City, 7.

⁸⁴ Spach, “The Accidental City, 57-58.

⁸⁵ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 495.

⁸⁶ Kahrl, *Sunbelt by the Sea*, 495.

⁸⁷ Spach, “The Accidental City, 7.

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SEATACK FIRE CHIEF, AARON PARSONS and FIREMAN HERBERT WILSON

Figure 19. Seatack Fire Chief, Aaron Parsons (left) and Fireman Herbert Wilson during an awards ceremony. (Courtesy of the Seatack Community Civic League website, <https://seatackcivic.org/historical-photo-gallery>.)

Cypress Avenue.⁸⁸ Bells Road is the southernmost limit of the proposed historic district, while Old Virginia Beach Road is the northernmost limit.

The same survey found outside hand pumps used for water for 105 families; outside privies at 143 homes; two households with fourteen people in a single house and twenty-one homes with more than ten people. Only 127 houses had public water and sixty-two had public sewer services. 217 homes were owned, while 166 were rented with rent ranging from \$10-100 per month. Many residents did not move because of the cost or lack of housing near their work locations. Asked about job training interests, residents offered the following responses: nursing, twenty-eight responses; interior decorating, twenty-two; bookkeeping, eighteen; clerk, fourteen; fewer numbers also responded with electronics, automobile repair, stenography, and welding. Four people simply wanted training in reading and general education.⁸⁹

A significant step in helping the residents of Seatack was the agreement reached to host the new local office of the Southeastern Tidewater Opportunity Project (STOP) at the Seatack Community Center. A leading local citizen at the time (and chief of the Seatack Volunteer Fire

⁸⁸ "Survey of Seatack Pinpoints Poverty," *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, December 3, 1965, 1.

⁸⁹ "Survey of Seatack Pinpoints Poverty," December 3, 1965, 1-2.

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Department), Aaron Parsons negotiated the deal. STOP was the vehicle used to disburse and monitor the federal “war on poverty” funding in the region.

Eventually there would be twenty-five of these centers in the region, but the one in Seatack was the first. A newspaper article at the time stated that Seatack is often mentioned as the first, or a leading example of African American leadership and development, reflecting the decades of strong community involvement by the residents.⁹⁰ Another article stated that “the match between the Seatack leaders and STOP is a natural, because the Seatack leadership is unusually aggressive and cohesive.”⁹¹ STOP’s goal was stated quite simply: “to equip the children of the poor to break the social cycle which up to now has produced one generation of poor people after another,” especially among African Americans. At that time, only one in ten Seatack residents had graduated from high school and the average adult level of education was less than the seventh grade.⁹² The article went on to describe the lack of city sewerage and rarity of septic tanks, with outside privies being the norm; one particular outhouse was shared by six families. In the past, the community featured mostly owner-occupied homes, but with lower-paying service/labor jobs the only option for most residents, more and more families had shifted to renting their homes. These rental houses were not maintained well, if at all, by absentee landlords. However, there were still enough homeowners and professionals living in the community to provide a foundation for community improvement.⁹³ One aspect of the STOP program which particularly resonated with residents was the Volunteers in Service to America, or VISTA, program (often termed the domestic Peace Corps). VISTA started with two volunteers who ran the Seatack community center, helped with morning preschool and supervised after-school recreation for older children. The program also trained local residents to be teachers at the center in hopes of perpetuating the program past its funding. The two VISTA volunteers also recruited thirty high school dropouts to join the Neighborhood Youth Corps, which provided a combination of part-time work and part-time school. Another facet of their efforts was to visit and encourage elderly residents to sign up for Medicare.⁹⁴

Consistently through the 1960s and beyond, articles in *The Virginian-Pilot* that discussed community efforts and federal programs designed to improve schools and facilities included Seatack: “U.S. Dollars To Facilitate ‘Gap Closing;’” “Federal Dollars Boost Libraries.”⁹⁵ But almost as often were articles highlighting the poverty of Seatack and the challenges it faced. A 1967 article in *The Beacon* (a section of *The Virginian-Pilot* newspaper dedicated to Virginia Beach) focusing on the community, its residents and the future set this scene: “Within walking distance of the posh Ocean-front resort strip lies a neighborhood that grapples with poverty, though surrounded by affluence. The Negro citizens of Seatack want to catch up with the rest of

⁹⁰ William K. Stevens, “Seatack Patience Rewarded: Early Target in Poverty War,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, May 8, 1966, 19; “First of STOP’s Child Centers,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, May 19, 1966, 44.

⁹¹ William K. Stevens, “Seatack Patience Rewarded,” May 8, 1966, 19.

⁹² William K. Stevens, “Seatack Patience Rewarded,” May 8, 1966, 19.

⁹³ William K. Stevens, “Seatack Patience Rewarded,” May 8, 1966, 32.

⁹⁴ William K. Stevens, “Seatack Patience Rewarded,” May 8, 1966, 32.

⁹⁵ “U.S. Dollars To Facilitate ‘Gap Closing;’” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, October 13, 1966, vol.5, No.30, 1; “Federal Dollars Boost Libraries,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, October 13, 1966, vol.5, No.30, 1.

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the city.”⁹⁶ Longtime Seatack residents recall that it took a generation for the community to deteriorate and could take another generation to rebound. The changes in Seatack began with arrival of many African American workers from North Carolina to work low-wage jobs during World War II; substandard housing soon followed.⁹⁷ Aaron Parsons, a thirty-year resident, called for a minimum housing code to improve the current and future housing stock as well as, hopefully, to attract some form of public housing accessible to Black residents (during the 1940s, most public housing in Virginia was built for White residents). Other residents felt that participation in the STOP neighborhood programs could be higher, particularly among adults. Unlike the many adult-focused clubs and organizations, there were not many options for youths. Parsons called for the churches and community leaders to do more to promote the job and education programs. The Seatack Fire Department often was the leader in local fundraising and renovation projects, providing a steady force in the community. Some residents recalled two dairies that once had served much of the area of what became Seatack and how different it had become since those lands were developed. Parsons also pushed for neighborhood beautification projects to increase pride in the community.⁹⁸

It was not just government officials and Seatack residents who were aware of and concerned about the problems the residents there faced. Several “letters to the editor” during this time expressed dismay at the conditions endured by the people of Seatack and questioned how such circumstances could exist and when they would be fixed. In 1967, Judith Baker bemoaned the “appalling living conditions...namely the Seatack area. There one finds row after row of tar-paper shacks with no plumbing, inadequate electrical facilities, if any at all, and heat provided by wood-burning stoves. These same stoves, in many cases, are used for cooking.” These were issues that had been raised before, but Baker went further, demanding “Why has nothing been done to improve the housing available to the residents of Seatack?” Baker also raised the issue that a minimum housing code was not the answer because the result would be the eviction of most residents and their houses torn down without providing a solution to the problem: a suitable place to live. Baker finished her letter with a call to action: “I feel it should be a challenge to the residents of Virginia Beach, certainly a progressive city, to...provide for all its people at least a decent place to live.”⁹⁹

David Pactor, a VISTA volunteer in Seatack in 1969, wrote a letter to the editor declaring the obvious that so many of Virginia Beach’s White residents ignored, in reference to Seatack in particular: “Yes, Virginia Beach, there is poverty. It’s right in your city and now is an excellent time to try and do something about it.” Pactor described the role of the VISTA volunteers as “the Government’s domestic anti-poverty workers... we are not sent to middle-class neighborhoods ...We’re sent to poverty-stricken communities, Caucasian and Negro... So, don’t close your eyes to the problems of poverty. It’s there. Where? In Virginia Beach, the world’s largest resort

⁹⁶ Jim Terrell, “Past Is Past; Seatack Eyes Future,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, February 9, 1967, 6.

⁹⁷ Jim Terrell, “Past Is Past,” February 9, 1967, 6.

⁹⁸ Jim Terrell, “Past Is Past,” February 9, 1967, 7.

⁹⁹ “Finds Seatack Appalling,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, September 6, 1967, 14 (letter to the editor by Judith H. Baker, VB).

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city.”¹⁰⁰ City officials could not plead ignorance of the problems facing Black communities, and some City staff were ashamed. Timothy E. Barrow (chief of advanced planning for the planning department) declared that, “It’s extraordinary to me that a problem such as Seatack could exist in such close proximity to the resort area. Seatack, with 2% of the city’s population, accounts for 50% of the unemployment; 20% of the welfare recipients; and 10% of the health problems.”¹⁰¹

However, the antipathy and hypocrisy of many Virginia Beach residents explained why changes took so long and required such a tremendous effort. In 1969, the Virginia Beach City Council authorized City Manager Roger M. Scott “to grant a temporary permit for four bus trips a day from Seatack through Birdneck and the Bay Colony area.” This temporary permit had been a longstanding request by Seatack residents so they could more easily get to work in wealthy White neighborhoods, mostly as domestic workers. The Cavalier Park and Bay Colony Civic League, however, strongly objected to extension of bus service into their neighborhoods.¹⁰²

In addition to “domestic workers,” Seatack residents held a wide variety of professions around this time. The 1967 *Hill's Virginia Beach (Virginia) City Directory* lists a total of 178 individuals across eleven streets in Seatack and their occupations. The most common response was “none given,” with 36 listed, and there were also 9 “retired.” Among the majority who did respond, 24 worked at one of the area’s prolific military facilities in a wide variety of positions. Additionally, “laborer” was listed for 21, 19 were identified as maids, and there were 13 drivers and 9 construction workers. There were also 6 helpers, 4 cement finishers, 4 porters, 4 service station attendants, 3 longshoremen, 3 mechanics, 3 chef/cooks, 2 janitors, 2 warehousemen, 2 brick layers, 2 painters and 2 “cleaners” at the Naval Station. There were 1 each of the following occupations: gardener, plumber, clerk, teacher, and babysitter. A clear majority of the residents listed jobs involving manual labor of some kind, and fell into the broad category of “working class.” However, some of these were skilled positions, such as mechanic, bricklayer, cement finisher, and chef. There were also 2 engineers and 3 pastors.¹⁰³ Some of these professions were seen at a variety of employers including businesses, local government, or a military base: laborer, helper, and driver, including a Mrs. Brunetta C. White who was the driver for Seatack Elementary School.¹⁰⁴ Given the likely number of residents at this time in Seatack, we must assume that there were a large number of children, and also many adult residents (retired or unemployed) who lived at an address but are not accounted for in these lists.

In answer to the many complaints and admonitions, the City’s planning department created a plan for short-term improvements. The Planning Commission unanimously passed “An immediate-action plan for the Seatack area, including street paving, street lights, two vest-pocket parks, a cleanup program and a study looking toward provision of city water and sewer service...” Planning Director Patrick L. Standing informed the commission that these

¹⁰⁰ “Poverty in Seatack,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, September 19, 1967, 14 (letter to the editor by David Pactor, VISTA volunteer in Seatack).

¹⁰¹ “Planners Tell Needs Of Resort,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, June 12, 1969, C8.

¹⁰² “Beach Council Grants Permit for Bus Trip,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, May 20, 1969, A14.

¹⁰³ *Hill's Virginia Beach (Virginia) City Directory*, 1967.

¹⁰⁴ *Hill's Virginia Beach (Virginia) City Directory*, 1967.

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improvements were part of a longer term plan but “that conditions in Seatack are so deplorable that ‘we would like to deviate from what we told you’ and present the immediate action plan.”¹⁰⁵ This plan would include the demolition of twenty-five “vacant/hazardous” structures; the paving of seven unpaved streets and the repaving of four others, and the installation or improvement of all lighting on residential streets until it was considered adequate. Additionally, there would be a joint City-citizen clean-up of the neighborhood, and a clearing of abandoned automobiles. At the same time the City would complete a “cost and engineering study for the extension of sewer service to the area and provision of water service to those streets where service is currently not available.” Timothy Barrow declared that the planning department considered that “action on these recommendations is imperative.”¹⁰⁶

This plan brought about some changes and improvements in Seatack in the short term and galvanized the community. Appropriately called Project Immediate Action, the first stage of the plan resulted in sixty junked autos removed, five structures demolished, seven miles of ditching begun for mosquito control, and 1.5 acres cleared for a future park site. Jim Wilson (directing the project for the Planning Department) declared that “I’ve never seen such a great attitude...terrific representation from the community.”¹⁰⁷ Overall the project involved at least three City departments, two military service branches, a civic league, club workers, a federal agency and, of course, many private citizens all working together.¹⁰⁸ By the end of the project ten months later, one estimate placed the effort at more than 25,000 volunteer hours, including on weekends; if provided as a funded City service the efforts would have cost at least \$250,000. Two hundred thirty tons of trash were taken to a landfill and one hundred forty automobiles had been removed. The York County Board of Supervisors even sent representatives to observe the rare combination of so many different groups in hopes of setting up a similar program. Citizens rallied to complete work on improving private homes and nearly twenty homes won prizes in a Parks and Recreation sponsored competition. To thank the many groups who helped in the effort, the Seatack Civic League sponsored an awards ceremony at the Community Center, with an award presented by Volunteer Fire Department Chief Aaron Parsons to the leaders of each organization.¹⁰⁹

The struggle by the residents of Seatack to protect their community and obtain full City services continued for several decades, but the short period of 1969-1970 brought about dramatic change in the housing and development outlook for the community. Bayside Farms, a new ninety-unit apartment building, was proposed for the area and was the first of several large apartment complexes constructed in Seatack.¹¹⁰ At the end of 1969, the Planning Commission “approved a combination rent subsidy-conventional apartment complex for Seatack which will open the way for the construction of 404 apartments in the neighborhood,” and was viewed as a way of “upgrading conditions in Seatack.”¹¹¹ These apartment complexes did address the dramatic need

¹⁰⁵ Clifford Hubbard, “Project for Seatack,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, July 9, 1969, B3.

¹⁰⁶ Clifford Hubbard, “Project for Seatack, B3.

¹⁰⁷ “Seatack Talk Stops, Action Starts,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, November 9, 1969, 1, 4.

¹⁰⁸ “Seatack Talk Stops, Action Starts, 1, 4.

¹⁰⁹ “Miracle of ‘Action’ and Friendship,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, December 21, 1969, vol.40, 1; Les Lehigh, “Seatack Clean-Up Campaign Comes To A Successful End” *The Virginian Beach Sun*, July 30, 1970, 9.

¹¹⁰ “Seatack Housing,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, July 13, 1969, 2

¹¹¹ “Apartments May Improve Seatack,” *The Virginian-Pilot Beacon*, December 14, 1969, 6.

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for housing in the community. The 1960 Census set the population of Seatack at 3,345 with only 914 housing units available.¹¹² However, while serving as a release valve for the acute housing pressures, these large apartment buildings began to alter the neighborhood's character, first reflected in the dramatic geographic shift with large undeveloped, previously agricultural parcels transformed into apartment complexes housing hundreds of residents within a very small footprint. Just as dramatic was the transformation of Seatack from an intimate, low-density community where families knew and trusted one another with their children to one that increasingly reflected a typical high-density, suburban character. The long-term consequences of this headlong rush into improving conditions in Seatack factor into setting the end date of the district's period of significance 1969, before the completion of the large-scale, multiple-family developments during the early-to-mid 1970s.



Figure 20. Seatack Kenya Lane east toward dead end, near Kenya Court. Target Neighborhood Program, Phase 1. Ca. 1975.
(Courtesy of the City of Virginia Beach.)

However, the story of Seatack did not end in 1969. In 1975, the City of Virginia Beach authorized the “Target Neighborhood Program” with the goal of providing basic services and

¹¹² “Seatack Housing”, 2.

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infrastructure improvements to twelve targeted neighborhoods: Atlantic Park, Beechwood, Burton Station, Doyletown, Gracetown, Lake Smith, Mill Dam, Newlight, Newsome Farm, Queen City, Reedtown and Seatack.¹¹³ All of these neighborhoods were historically African American communities. While this program was eventually largely successful, they required more than twenty years to complete because the City chose to rely on federal block grants, which significantly extended the time frame for the projects. Eventually more than \$40 million in federal and \$10 million in local matching funds was spent on ten of the communities, accomplishing significant change. However, along with their insistence on relying on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds, City officials also skirted the rules of the federal programs repeatedly. In 1978, the City was called out by HUD for charging residents for work that had already been funded by federal dollars. The next year, HUD almost cut off funds because of the refusal by the city to renovate substandard housing, as required by the grants.¹¹⁴



Figure 21. Seatack Buford Avenue, North from Longstreet Avenue. Target Neighborhood Program, Phase 1. Ca. 1975.
(Courtesy of the City of Virginia Beach.)

¹¹³ Karen Weintraub, "Urban Redevelopment On-Target Neighborhood Aid," *The Virginian-Pilot*, February 26, 1996, B1.

¹¹⁴ Weintraub, "Urban Redevelopment," B1.

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Figure 22. Seatack Burford(s) Avenue, North East from Birdneck. Target Neighborhood Program, Phase I. Ca. 1975. (Courtesy of the City of Virginia Beach.)

The two communities of Atlantic Park and Burton Station were eventually excluded from the plan because of their proximity to Oceana Naval Air Station and the Norfolk International Airport respectively.¹¹⁵ For the other ten neighborhoods, the final result was the establishment of City water and sewer services, sidewalks, street lights, paved roads, and other needed improvements. These efforts also resulted in many renovated dwellings as well as a significant amount of new construction and infill development. The contradiction which resulted for a majority of these African American communities was that quality of life improved but at the cost of significant loss of historic fabric and sense of identity.

Since 1970, the Seatack community has seen continued improvements, but also continued change and challenges. The City efforts to provide water, sewer, and other standard public services were finally completed in the 1990s. The streets were all paved and sidewalks and street lights were installed. Vacant and dilapidated buildings were demolished and funds became available for renovations to dwellings. Due to the program guidelines and limited finances of the

¹¹⁵ Karen Weintraub, "Because of Location, Two Beach Communities," *The Virginian-Pilot*, February 25, 1996, B2. Atlantic Park did receive sewer and water service, but none of the street improvements of other communities. Burton Station was essentially abandoned with the City paying residents to leave in hopes of creating an industrial park. The result was a significant amount of resentment in both of these neighborhoods.

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improvement programs, affordable materials, such as vinyl siding and window sash, asphalt shingles, and metal doors were utilized to replace or cover historic exterior materials. As part of concerted efforts to improve housing quality, and with the passage of time and improved understanding of the historical trends in play, these housing improvement efforts may eventually be found to have significance in their own right. Seatack's traditional single-family residential character largely has been retained, but residents have had to reckon repeatedly with pressures from redevelopment, disputes over commercial rezoning, the expansion of Birdneck Road to four lanes, and the growing pressure from expansion of Oceana Naval Air Station. Today Seatack remains an active community with a substantial collection of historic single-family dwellings, the Seatack Elementary School building, St. Stephens Church of God in Christ, a mid-twentieth century community cemetery, Saints Rest, as well as several older family cemeteries, an intact streetscape, and many lifelong residents. The contrast between where Seatack stands as a community today versus the status of many other early African American communities in Virginia Beach is striking. Seatack is intact, active, and significant in the history of Princess Anne County and Virginia Beach, making it eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places historic district in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History.

The Seatack Community

Through its long history the Seatack community has demonstrated an impressive determination to maintain itself in the face of numerous challenges through multiple generations. One of the vital components in this mission has been the Seatack Community Civic League. The current civic league traces its roots to at least the early 1920s, when an assembly of residents came together as the Patrons League of the Seatack School (alternately identified as the Seatack Public School League of Princess Anne County) to purchase land at 141 South Birdneck Road and construct the second Seatack Elementary School at that location. However, the first record of Seatack citizens coming together for a civic purpose is 1908 when the first Seatack Elementary School was created. After the merger of Princess Anne County and the City of Virginia Beach, the civic league changed its name to the Seatack Community Civic League and the current Constitution and Bylaws date to that time. In 1969, the civic league became a member of the Virginia Beach Council of Civic Organizations. In October 2011, the civic league organized the Seatack 200th Anniversary Celebration, which was recognized by the City and eventually included a banquet and a community parade. The event was the first large African American event to be held at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.¹¹⁶

In addition to its historic resources and its community organizations, it is the residents of Seatack which make it such a vibrant, connected and active community. A prime example of this was Joseph Grimstead, who spent his life in Seatack and was an integral part of building the post-World War II community. Grimstead, often called Uncle Joe, was one of the founders of the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department in 1948 and remained a member until it was taken over by the city in 1981. Grimstead was also an active local civil rights leader and part of a group called

¹¹⁶ Carey, "Seatack: Almost as old as the U.S.," 1; George E. Minns, "Message from the President," *The Current* (Fall/Winter Edition, October 2021, vol.1, issue 2), 4; "Brief History of Seatack."

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the “Interested Nine.” These African American men signed a document in 1963, after the formation of the new City of Virginia Beach, calling for the “peaceful integration of all public accommodations and facilities in Virginia Beach.”¹¹⁷ His father donated the land for the volunteer fire department and Grimstead himself donated land for a new Seatack community center in 1997 on the site of the old fire department; the city renamed it the Joseph V. Grimstead Sr. Seatack Community Recreation Center in 2012.¹¹⁸

The Williams family have been contributors to the community for well over a century. As discussed previously, Georgie Anne Williams and William N. Williams Sr. passed approximately one hundred acres to multiple descendants, including the Morgans, who later provided the land for Seatack Elementary School. The Williams-Morgan family had several members who helped to found the Mount Olive Baptist Church and also the New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ. Additionally, Clarence Morgan was the civil rights leader discussed earlier who hosted Martin Luther King Jr. several times during the 1960s.¹¹⁹

The Daughtry-Shaw family also has a long list of contributors to the community. Sarah Parsons Daughtry was previously discussed as the founder and first teacher at the first elementary school in Seatack. Cylester W. Shaw was one of the founders, and the first chief, of the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department. Sadie Shaw, the daughter of Sarah Daughtry and the wife of Cylester Shaw, was named Seatack’s Historian by the Seatack Civic League in 1999. Sadie Shaw’s sister, Ira Watkins, founded and was the first principal of the School for Pregnant Girls in Virginia Beach.¹²⁰

African American Cemeteries

Historic African American cemeteries are often not well documented and can be difficult to locate. Historians and archaeologists have classified African American cemeteries into three main types: slave cemeteries, antebellum free Black cemeteries and postbellum nineteenth and twentieth century cemeteries. The four African American cemeteries in Seatack all fall within the postbellum period. Within the category of postbellum cemeteries, most fall within three subcategories: graveyards of churches, neighborhood cemeteries, and family cemeteries. Family cemeteries are usually small and located on private property, sometimes still in the ownership of the original family who established the cemetery. With family cemeteries sometimes inaccessible, and always at risk of being part of a land sale and potential development, the African American community for the most part shifted to the use of church or community cemeteries by the mid-twentieth century. Today, surviving family cemeteries typically have a small number of graves, some with headstones and some unmarked, and sites which are

¹¹⁷ Mechelle Hankerson, “Man who helped open Oceanfront to black community honored in city,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, February 15, 2017, 3.

¹¹⁸ Rita Frankenberg, “Virginia Beach center named for community leader,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, December 1, 2011; Hankerson, “Man who helped open Oceanfront,” 3.

¹¹⁹ Hankerson, “Descendants of a freed slave,” 3.

¹²⁰ Mary Reid-Barrow, “Seatack Servants,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, January 27, 2005, 28-29.

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overgrown and poorly maintained, if at all. In contrast, later church and community cemeteries are often easily identifiable and well maintained.¹²¹

There are four African American cemeteries within the Seatack Historic District: the larger community Evergreen Terrace Saints Rest Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0129) and three smaller family cemeteries: Ackiss Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0185), Snowden-Morgan-Hughes Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0173), and the Rosetta Wheaton Cemetery (134-0969-0244). At the northern edge of the Seatack Historic District, abutting the Virginia Beach-Norfolk Expressway (Interstate 264), is the Snowden-Morgan-Hughes Cemetery, which holds at least eighteen graves marked by mostly flat concrete headstones. There appear to be several unmarked graves and some of the headstones are illegible. The earliest documented grave belongs to Annis Snowden Morgan Hughes Lewis (1858-1921) while the two most recent identifiable graves date to 1973, perhaps marking the ending period of active use for this family cemetery. Annis was originally a Snowden before marrying Enoch J. Morgan ca 1870. Annis later married William Thomas Hughes on December 29, 1887, the third family namesake for the cemetery. It was Annis Snowden Morgan Hughes Lewis who established the cemetery on land she owned along Old Virginia Beach Road before her death in 1921.¹²² The cemetery is still privately owned and extensive overgrowth has been recently removed.

The Ackiss Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0104) is the smallest of the cemeteries located within the Seatack Historic District. There are only a few graves, with only the grave of Alexander Ackiss (1833-1912) clearly marked by an erect gravestone which identifies him as a former member of the United States Cavalry. The Rosetta Wheaton Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0244) is sited on an approximately .25-acre triangular parcel behind a dwelling along Owl's Creek Lane. The cemetery has at least twenty-two graves marked by a variety of simple stone ledgers and headstones. There are multiple illegible markers, but the earliest identifiable grave dates to 1932. The most recent grave dates to 2009 and online imagery appears to show a maintained cemetery located behind several dwellings and still in use by the family.¹²³

The largest cemetery in the Seatack Historic District is the Evergreen Terrace Saints Rest Cemetery (DHR ID# 134-0969-0129). This community cemetery is well maintained and still in use, with the earliest identifiable marked grave dating to 1958 and the family names matching many of those from the history of the Seatack community. This cemetery was platted in 1946 with 20' x 20' plots on land which was originally owned by the well-known local Williams family.¹²⁴ The Saints Rest Cemetery is directly associated with the movement from family cemeteries to community cemeteries within the African American community during the twentieth century.

¹²¹ Lynn Rainville, *Hidden History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia press, 2014), 12, 16, 78, 94, 101-02.

¹²² <https://snowden-morgan-hughes.weebly.com/about-us.html>;
<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2771354/hughes-family-cemetery>.

¹²³ <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2773604/wheaton-family-cemetery>.

¹²⁴ Princess Anne County Map Book 17, Page 81, 1946.

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Other African American Communities

Seatack is not like planned African American neighborhoods, such as L&J Gardens, which were developed after World War II in multiple Hampton Roads locations beginning in the 1940s. These planned developments are excellent examples of residential communities created by and for African Americans, but they were not comparable to more comprehensive communities which evolved organically beginning much earlier in Princess Anne County's history. Places like Seatack, which had to provide their own services and served as the focal point for almost all aspects of the society (church, commerce, school, social) are a very different type of historic community and historic district from later planned suburban neighborhoods. Separately, the southern half of Virginia Beach, composed of the still-rural area of former Princess Anne County, is home to a handful of crossroads communities, some of which have links to African Americans, including Blackwater, Creeds, Pleasant Ridge, and Pungo. These communities are of a very different nature than the larger, more densely developed neighborhoods in the northern half of the city and also have historic trends and patterns of development dissimilar to Seatack. Multiple neighborhoods in the northern half of Virginia Beach which provide a useful contrast to Seatack as evolved communities with pre-World War II origins. These neighborhoods vary greatly in their number and character of existing resources, and serve to highlight the notable development trends found in the Black neighborhoods of Virginia Beach. Seatack, with its many extant historic residential resources, historic school building, and historic church, is representative of the same patterns.

Beechwood is a small, residential neighborhood which dates to the 1880s and is one of the earlier African American communities in the area. It was begun by Judge Landing D. Wetmore for the purpose of creating housing for freedmen and -women working at the adjoining former plantation. Beechwood's extant date to the early-to-mid twentieth century. Additionally, many resources have been altered through updates and renovations over many decades. While Beechwood has maintained its historic layout (which is largely focused on two streets: Hook Lane and First Court Road) and has resources with good integrity, it does not have a tradition of commerce or local entertainment, the community's historic three-room school has been demolished, and a new Morning Star Baptist Church was constructed in 1993. The original wood frame church still exists and is reclad with brick. The community was part of the city "Target Neighborhood Program" so street improvements were added during the late twentieth century.¹²⁵

Burton Station was originally created by freed people in the 1880s at a site which is now part of the Norfolk Municipal Airport. With the expansion of the airport during the 1940s, the community was forcibly relocated southeast to its current location and architectural resources date to the 1940s and later. The relocation process caused the loss of community organizations and buildings, including two churches. The remnants of the community today consist of large wooded parcels and open fields. Streets have been abandoned as housing was demolished and some remaining roads are unpaved. This community was left out of improvements during the City's "Target Neighborhood Program" and only received City water and sewer services in 2014.

¹²⁵ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 22-25; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 94-96.

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With the neighborhood surrounded by commercial and industrial development, and a decades-long lack of City support, the majority of houses have been demolished.¹²⁶

Doyletown was created in the 1920s by Lucian Doyle for the African American workers of his Eureka Brick company. The original houses were built along Doyle Way, and the neighborhood eventually expanded in the 1940s and beyond onto Robert Jackson Drive (named after one of the original owners) and later Gimbert Drive. Housing stock consists of resources built from the 1920s through the later mid-twentieth century development. The City's "Target Neighborhood Program" furnished City sewer and water services during the 1980s. Doyletown is a rare example of an African American community in the Virginia Beach which retains a dense collection of historic resources as well as a clear link to its historic roots as a working-class neighborhood. Many individuals resources have been altered with repairs and updates, but the overall streetscapes and integrity are intact. This neighborhood has been recommended as a potentially eligible historic district. However, an early store and the only school have been lost, leaving the First Lynnhaven Baptist Church as the only nonresidential resource.¹²⁷

Gracetown began in the 1920s as a farming community. Residents were congregants of the Beechwood Morning Star Baptist Church, attended school at Beechwood's William Skinner School, and were members of the Lake Smith Washington #139 Lodge Hall. As with many other African American communities, Gracetown eventually had City services added through the City's "Target Neighborhood Program." Today the neighborhood is an established community, but most of its historic dwellings have been lost or significantly altered.¹²⁸

Great Neck developed as a farming community during the late 1800s. The Great Neck Community School was a two-room building which served the community, but has now been lost. The community did not have its own social hall or church. The houses that remain today date to the mid-twentieth century (with modern infill) and retain good integrity.¹²⁹

The Lake Smith neighborhood was originally called Hodgman Estates after the man who sold the land to African Americans, who, in turn, formed what was initially a farming community during the early 1900s. There was initially a Lake Smith School, though residents attended the Beechwood Morning Star Baptist Church. There were also a couple of small African American-owned stores which no longer exist. The neighborhood did receive City's "Target Neighborhood Program" funds to add City services during the 1980s. Because of its waterfront location,

¹²⁶ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 26-28; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 104-06.

¹²⁷ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 29-31; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 126-29.

¹²⁸ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 32-35; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 143-45.

¹²⁹ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 36-37; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 147-48.

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redevelopment resulted in the loss of nearly all pre-1970 resources, with a handful of early-to-mid-twentieth century houses remaining.¹³⁰

Little Neck (a small section of the larger peninsula) may have had African American residents as early as 1871. The community at one time had a school and several businesses and was the original location of the First Lynnhaven Baptist Church. Unfortunately, none of these resources remain, with the exception of a few simple commercial buildings. The neighborhood today consists of mid-to-late twentieth century housing with a significant amount of infill. Of the historic resources which remain, the majority have seen substantial alterations or updates.¹³¹

New Light was first occupied by freedmen and -women who had worked on the Princess Anne County Freedmen's Bureau farms and earned the funds to purchase land of their own during the 1880s. These families either farmed their own land or worked on neighboring farms. The initial community was located south of Indian River Road, with further development coming after 1908 when the land around the New Light School north of Indian River Road was subdivided. Eventually the community had dozens of houses, businesses, two churches, and a school. The community was another recipient of funding from the City "Target Neighborhood Program" to establish public water and sewer services. Today, approximately twenty historic residences remain scattered throughout the neighborhood, most with integrity challenges, as well as the New Light Baptist Church and Mount Olivet Church. None of the commercial buildings are extant.¹³²

Newsome Farm may be the earliest African American community in Virginia Beach besides Seatack. The roots of the community date to 1869 when five freedmen purchased approximately 220 acres of land from Lewis Webb for farming. By 1887, the then-named Newsome Farm was surveyed and divided into lots. The neighborhood eventually had seventy houses, but it was not until the City "Target Neighborhood Program" beginning in the 1980s that the community finally had sidewalks, paved streets, streetlights, and public water and sewer services. Over time, the neighborhood has seen many infill dwellings constructed as well as substantial renovations completed on existing houses. Newsome Farm never included institutional resources such as a school, church, social hall, or businesses.¹³³ However, the Newsome Farm Cemetery (DHR #134-5670) was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the Virginia State Review Board in 2022.¹³⁴

Queen City was created in 1904 when John Wise subdivided much of his land into lots which he sold to African Americans. Many of the early residents worked as tenant farmers on neighboring

¹³⁰ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 38-40; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 178-80.

¹³¹ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 41-43; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 205-06.

¹³² Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 50-55; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 219-24.

¹³³ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 56; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 226-30.

¹³⁴ The original 1887 plat denotes "Grave yard" at the current graveyard location.

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White-owned farms. The Greater St. Andrews African Methodist Church was established in 1919 at the center of the neighborhood and there were also several small, locally-owned stores. A handful of pre-World War II houses remain, but most resources date from after the war. While part of the City's "Target Neighborhood Program," improvements to the infrastructure and City services were not completed until the 1990s. However, despite some demolition, the majority of the existing houses are historic and retain overall good integrity. This is one of only four African American communities which has been recommended potentially eligible as a National Register of Historic Places historic district (with L&J Gardens, Doyletown, and Seatack being the others).¹³⁵

An African American farmer named Joseph Reed purchased the George Smith Farm in 1902 for the purpose of founding a community for African Americans. Reedtown began as a place where fishermen and laborers who worked neighboring farms lived. There was a white-owned neighborhood store run by Frank Miller, which is now gone. Similar to several other nearby African American communities, residents attended the Beechwood Morning Star Baptist Church. Older residents remember a one-room log cabin school with a dirt floor, but students are also known to have attended the William Skinner School in Beechwood until 1953. The City's "Target Neighborhood Program" eventually led to public water and sewer services and street paving. However, with the improvements completed after decades of redevelopment, leaving only five pre-1970 resources.¹³⁶

Atlantic Park is a small, largely residential neighborhood between Seatack and the Oceana neighborhood which was likely developed between the 1930s and the 1950s. This traditionally African American community has retained a fair number of historic houses, though many have been modified. However, there has also been substantial demolition, limiting the integrity of the extant historic streetscapes. Additionally, there are no cross streets to connect the neighborhood internally, which is an impediment to a community identity. A handful of simple commercial buildings stand along Virginia Beach Boulevard. Even before decades of redevelopment, Atlantic Park was never a self-sufficient, fully developed community like Seatack with a church, school, or civic organization. Finally, while it did receive public water and sewer service eventually, Atlantic Park was not part of the City's "Target Neighborhood Program," so street and neighborhood improvements were never added to this community.¹³⁷

Unfortunately, a significant challenge that faces the majority of Virginia Beach's African American neighborhoods has been the substantial loss of historic resources. These lost buildings were either the result of externally sourced redevelopment of the communities, or through the gradual process of renovations and replacements of residences by owners over many years. Examples of these patterns include Reedtown and Gracetown, where little is left of the historic fabric, and the challenge is particularly acute for the African American communities with earlier

¹³⁵ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 57-58; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 249-52.

¹³⁶ Hawkins-Hendrix and Lucas, *History of African American Communities*, 59-60; Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 254-57.

¹³⁷ Purvis and McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Northern Half*, 75-77.

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origins, such as New Light and Burton Station. Seatack is the rare, early African American community which has managed to survive the neglect of the post-World War II period and the intensive redevelopment of the late twentieth century in Virginia Beach, and has emerged as a smaller, but viable community with a still-significant number of historic resources and a strong sense of identity.

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History

The Seatack Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History as an independent, thriving community which has existed as a focal point of Black life in the Princess Anne County/Virginia Beach locality for well over a century. Seatack was, and remains, the most prominent early African American community in former Princess Anne County. The origins of the current location of Seatack can be traced to at least the late nineteenth century, and it is a community which transformed from a largely agricultural setting to what was essentially a self-sufficient rural town with its own churches, stores, school, businesses, and civic and social organizations. While the residents of Seatack mostly worked outside their community, and often for the segregated resort businesses of Virginia Beach, they maintained a strong, supportive, vibrant community apart from the larger segregated society. Even after the end of Jim Crow laws during the 1960s, Seatack held together and pushed for improvements from the City of Virginia Beach that historically had been denied to the Black communities within the city. The result is a community which has survived and maintained its identity when many of the other early African American communities have not survived or have seen much of their historic fabric lost to redevelopment forces. During the twentieth century, the residents of Seatack fully funded several elementary schools before the first County-funded school, Seatack Elementary School, was constructed in 1952. Additionally, in 1948 the residents of Seatack created and funded the first African American fire department in Virginia. Seatack has a period of significance which spans more than half a century from 1915, the date of its earliest extant resource until 1969, when the construction of large apartment complexes began to change the character of the community. The district captures the essence of this tight knit community despite the fragmentation that has occurred in the last 50 to 60 years. Its historic core is evident, and the four discontiguous areas are nodes of historic resources that collectively relate to founding families and are a vital part of the community story.

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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 #_____

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Beach-Norfolk Expressway (Interstate 264) which opened in 1967 at the northern end of the district and resulted in isolation of Area A. South of Area B, multiple pockets of new residential and commercial development to the south have divided remaining collections of contributing residential resources in Areas C, D, And E at the southern end of the district. The spine of the district, running north to south, is Birdneck Road. The Seatack Historic District boundary follows the district's historic patterns of development, which include largely single-family residential buildings with varying degrees of density and significant community resources such as the former elementary school, church, and cemeteries along the historic network of neighborhood streets and lanes. The district is bound largely by modern development and infill that has encroached on the historic neighborhood, as well as large undeveloped areas of marsh and woods, particularly to the south. Few resources dating prior to 1969 remain in the greater area historically known as Seatack, particularly areas to the east and south. In the southern area, multiple contributing residential resources are still owned by families that were integral to the development of the Seatack neighborhood. Although separated by new construction, five discontiguous areas collectively document Seatack's historic resources that are still strongly connected to the central community. The highest concentration of historic resources is located within the boundary of each area of the Seatack Historic District and the boundaries of the district exclude the surrounding non-contributing buildings as much as possible.

Discontiguous Area (A): This boundary features the remaining extant historic residential resources that are associated with the historic Seatack neighborhood on the north side of I-264. It is bound by I-264 to the south, North Birdneck Road to the east, Old Virginia Beach Road to the north, and a modern housing development to the east, all which serve as effective physical landmarks for the boundary. Additionally, the four contributing resources and one contributing cemetery in this discontiguous area are all that remain north of I-264 that is associated with the historic district's significance and patterns of development. The discontiguous area is surrounded by large-scale modern commercial and residential development spurred by the construction of I-264.

Main Body of District – Discontiguous Area (B): The majority of the district is located south of I-264. The district is largely defined by the north-south main arterial Birdneck Road, with local roads extending out on both east and west sides. Much of the modern development is out of scale with the historic neighborhood and does not serve the historic functions of the contributing resources. Area B is also bound by marsh land to the west and I-264 to the north, and ends at Beautiful Street and Hughes Avenue to the south, with a few resources extending past the east/west streets along South Birdneck Road. These not only constitute good physical landmarks for the extend of the boundary, they also mark the extent of the historic resources associated with the period of significance. The majority of the resources surrounding the boundary consist of modern, non-contributing, development that falls outside of the district's period of significance and that is not associated with the areas of significance.

Discontiguous Area (C): This boundary area features residential resources and a family cemetery along Owls Creek Lane, as well as a park near to the north along South Birdneck

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Road. It is also bound by marsh land, woodlands, and newer development to the north and east and South Birdneck to the west. This district boundary excludes the surrounding non-contributing buildings also along Owls Creek Lane, predominantly to the east and south.

Discontiguous Area (D): This boundary area features residential resources along Frazee Lane. It is also bound by newer development to the north, with wood to the east and south, and also South Birdneck Road to the west. This district boundary specifically excludes the surrounding non-contributing buildings also along Frazee Lane.

Discontiguous Area (E): This boundary area features residential resources along Brooklyn Avenue, Olds Lane, Bells Road, and South Birdneck Road. It is bound by newer development to the north, east, south and west. This district boundary specifically excludes the surrounding non-contributing buildings also along Brooklyn Avenue, Olds Lane, Bells Road, and South Birdneck Road. Its western boundary consists of South Birdneck Road.

11. Form Prepared By

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e-mail: admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com

telephone: 757-923-1900

date: April 2024

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

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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: Seatack Historic District

City or Vicinity: Virginia Beach

County: N/A

State: VA

Photographer: Jess Archer (JA), Marcus Pollard (MP)

Date Photographed: February 2022, April 2022, June 2023

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

<u>Photo Number of 24</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Camera Direction</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Photographer</u>
1	Area A, 1117 Old Virginia Beach Road, corner of north and east elevations	SW	02/2022	JA
2	Area A, Old Virginia Beach Road, view towards 1105, 1109, 1117 Old Virginia Beach Road	SW	02/2024	MP
3	Area B, Law Enforcement Training Academy at 411 Integrity Way, SE oblique	NW	02/2022	JA
4	Area B, Carver Avenue, view toward 1149 and 1145 Carver Avenue, north elevations	SE	02/2022	JA
5	Area B, North Birdneck Road, view toward 141 North Birdneck Road and 1113 Loretta Lane	SW	02/2022	JA
6	Area B, North Birdneck Road, view towards 153 N Birdneck Road	N	02/2024	MP
7	Area B, Hope Avenue, view toward 1093, 1081, 1075 Hope Avenue	SE	02/2024	MP
8	Area B, Hope Avenue, view toward 1081 and 1075 Hope Avenue	S	02/2022	JA

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9	Area B, Burford Avenue at Longstreet Avenue Intersection, view toward 124, 128, 132, and 136 Burford Avenue	W	02/2022	JA
10	Area B, Longstreet Avenue, view toward 1087, 1091, and 1095 Longstreet Avenue	S	02/2022	JA
11	Area B, Burford Avenue at S Birdneck Road Intersection, view toward Longstreet Avenue	NE	02/2024	MP
12	Area B, Sea Street, view toward 133-153 Sea Street	NE	02/2024	MP
13	Area B, Hughes Avenue, view toward 140, 144, and 152 Hughes Avenue	SW	02/2022	JA
14	Area B, Hughes Avenue, view toward 145, 153, 157 Hughes Avenue	W	02/2024	MP
15	Area B, South Birdneck Road, view toward 124 and 120 South Birdneck Road from across the street	N	04/2022	MP
16	Area B, South Birdneck Road, view toward 213, 215, 221 South Birdneck Road	W	02/2024	MP
17	Area B, Beautiful Street, view toward Saints Rest Cemetery	SW	02/2024	MP
18	Area B, Beautiful Street, view toward S Birdneck Road	E	02/2024	MP
19	Area B, Beautiful Street, view toward 1172-1138 Beautiful Street	E	02/2024	MP
20	Area B, South side of Beautiful Street, view toward 1141, 1145, and 1153 Beautiful Street	SW	02/2022	JA
21	Area C, Seatack Park, view toward playground at the south end	E	06/2023	JA
22	Area C, Southeast corner of Seatack Park, view toward basketball court and playground	NW	06/2023	JA
23	Area C, Seatack Park, baseball field	NW	06/2023	JA
24	Area C, Owl's Creek Lane, toward 1056, 1060, 1064 Owls Creek Lane	N	02/2024	MP
25	Area C, Owl's Creek Lane, at 1046 Owl's Creek Lane, facing E	E	02/2024	MP
26	Area C, Owls Creek Lane looking toward South Birdneck Road	W	06/2023	JA
27	Area D, South Birdneck Road, toward 420 South Birdneck Road	E	02/2023	JA

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28	Area D, Frazee Lane, toward 1082-B and 1077 Frazee Lane	NE	02/2024	MP
29	Area E, Brooklyn Avenue, toward 1057, 1065, 1073 Brooklyn Avenue	W	02/2024	MP
30	Area E, South Birdneck Road, view toward 548 and 556 South Birdneck Road	S	06/2023	JA
31	Area E, Olds Lane, toward 1060-1062 Olds Lane	NW	02/2024	MP
32	Area E, Bells Road, 1060 Bells Road, SW oblique	NE	06/2023	JA
33	Area E, Bells Road, toward 1064, 1060 Bells Road	E	02/2024	MP

Figures and Historic Images Log

1. Historic aerials of the Seatack Neighborhood showing the growth from predominantly rural farmland to developed suburban neighborhood. Left to right, starting at the top left: 1937, 1954, 1974, 1994. (City of Virginia Beach Historic Aerial Viewer <https://virginiabeach.gov/services/map-center>).
2. Commercial building, 1096 Virginia Beach Boulevard (134-0969-0179).
3. Seatack Elementary School, 411 Integrity Way - currently the Virginia Beach Law Enforcement Training Academy (134-0969-0184).
4. St. Stephens Church of God in Christ, 189 South Birdneck Road (134-0969-0022).
5. Detail of a masonry mailbox with planter box at one side. This is at 161 Hughes Avenue (134-0969-0031).
6. Tudor Revival residence, 401 Birdneck Circle (134-0969-0183).
7. Minimal Traditional residence, 1055 Norfolk Avenue (134-0969-0047).
8. Ranch style residence, 1140 Carver Avenue (134-0969-0141).
9. Split-face concrete block residence, 1153 Beautiful Street (134-0969-0029).
10. Residence illustrating local craftsmanship, 153 Sea Street (134-0969-0083).
11. Example of modern infill, 148 Sea Street (134-0969-0087).
12. Birdneck Community Shoppes at the corner of South Birdneck Road and Norfolk Avenue (134-0969-0053).
13. Seatack Park, 340 South Birdneck Road (134-0969-0246).
14. Ackiss Family Cemetery, Kenya Lane (134-0969-0185). Note the recently replaced upright tombstone with a broken cross beside it. There are also two ledgers present at the right of the photograph.
15. Photograph of Sarah Parson Daughtry and a pen drawing of the first Seatack School. (Edna Hawkins-Hendrix, Black History, Our Heritage, Princess Anne County, Virginia Beach, Virginia, a pictorial history (Virginia Beach, Virginia: Edna Hawkins-Hendrix, 1998).

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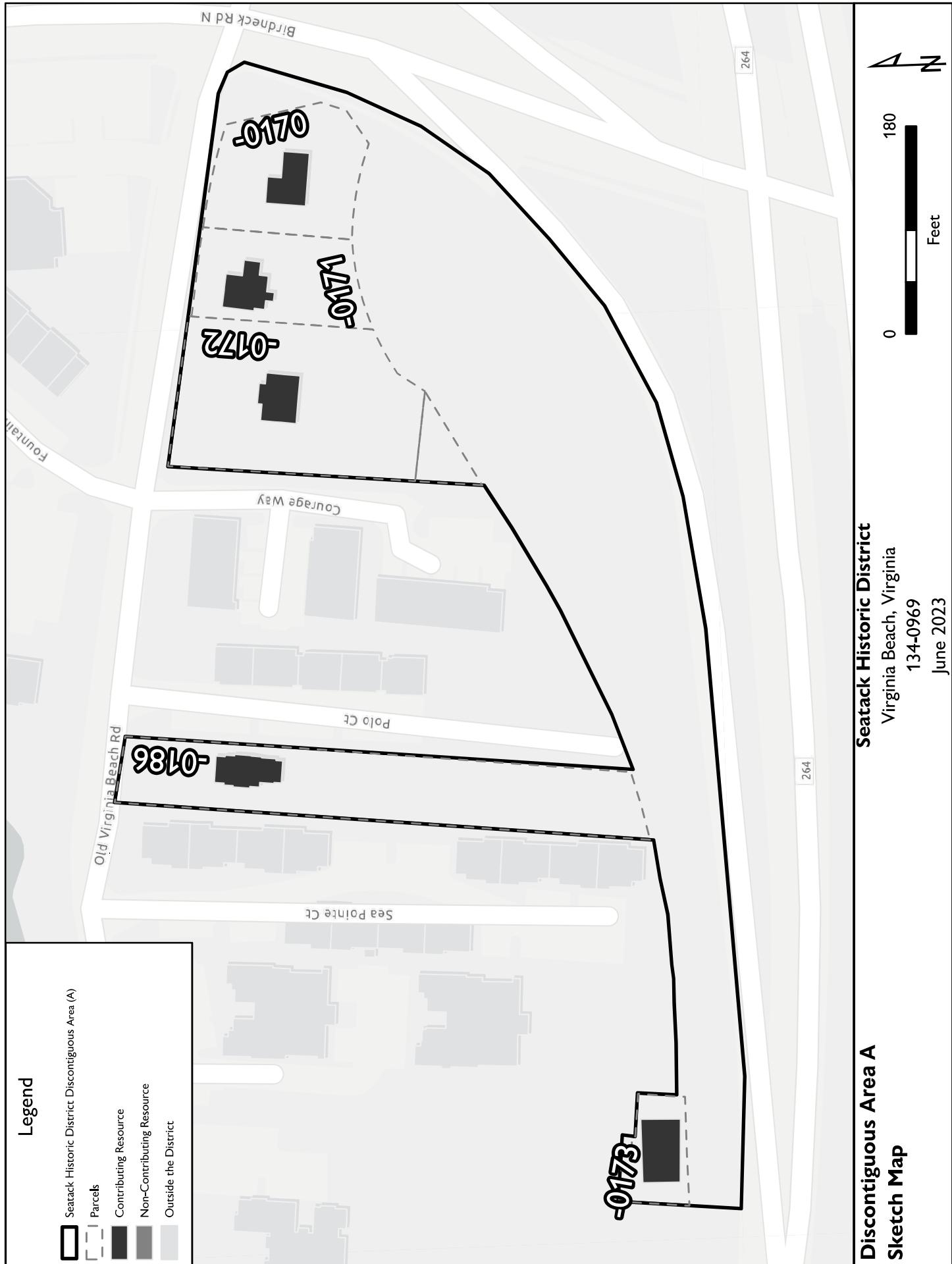
16. Some of the initial leaders of the Seatack Volunteer Fire Department. ("Seatack Fire Volunteers Win Certificates," Virginia Beach Beacon, February 17, 1995.)
17. Mrs. Emma Hairston, First Principal of the consolidated Seatack Elementary School. Courtesy of the Seatack Community Civic League website, <https://seatackcivic.org/historical-photo-gallery>.
18. Paul Sparrow (right). (Courtesy of the Seatack Community Civic League website, <https://seatackcivic.org/historical-photo-gallery>.)
19. Seatack Fire Chief, Aaron Parsons (left) and Fireman Herbert Wilson during an awards ceremony. (Courtesy of the Seatack Community Civic League website, <https://seatackcivic.org/historical-photo-gallery>.)
20. Seatack Kenya Lane east toward dead end, near Kenya Court. Target Neighborhood Program, Phase 1. Ca. 1975. (Courtesy of the City of Virginia Beach.)
21. Seatack Bu[r]ford Avenue, North from Longstreet Avenue. Target Neighborhood Program, Phase 1. Ca. 1975. (Courtesy of the City of Virginia Beach.)
22. Seatack Burford(s) Avenue, North East from Birdneck. Target Neighborhood Program, Phase 1. Ca. 1975. (Courtesy of the City of Virginia Beach.)

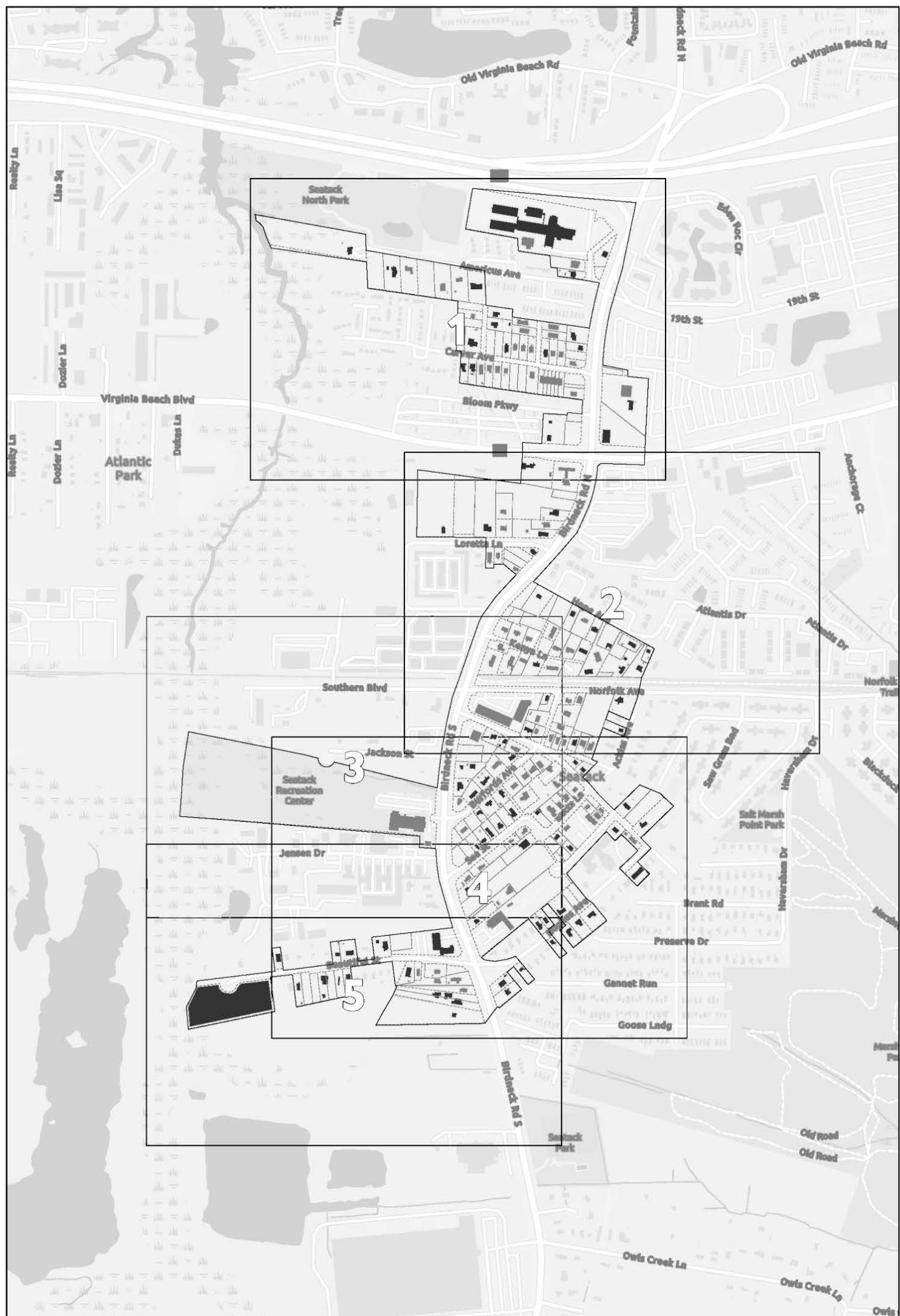
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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.



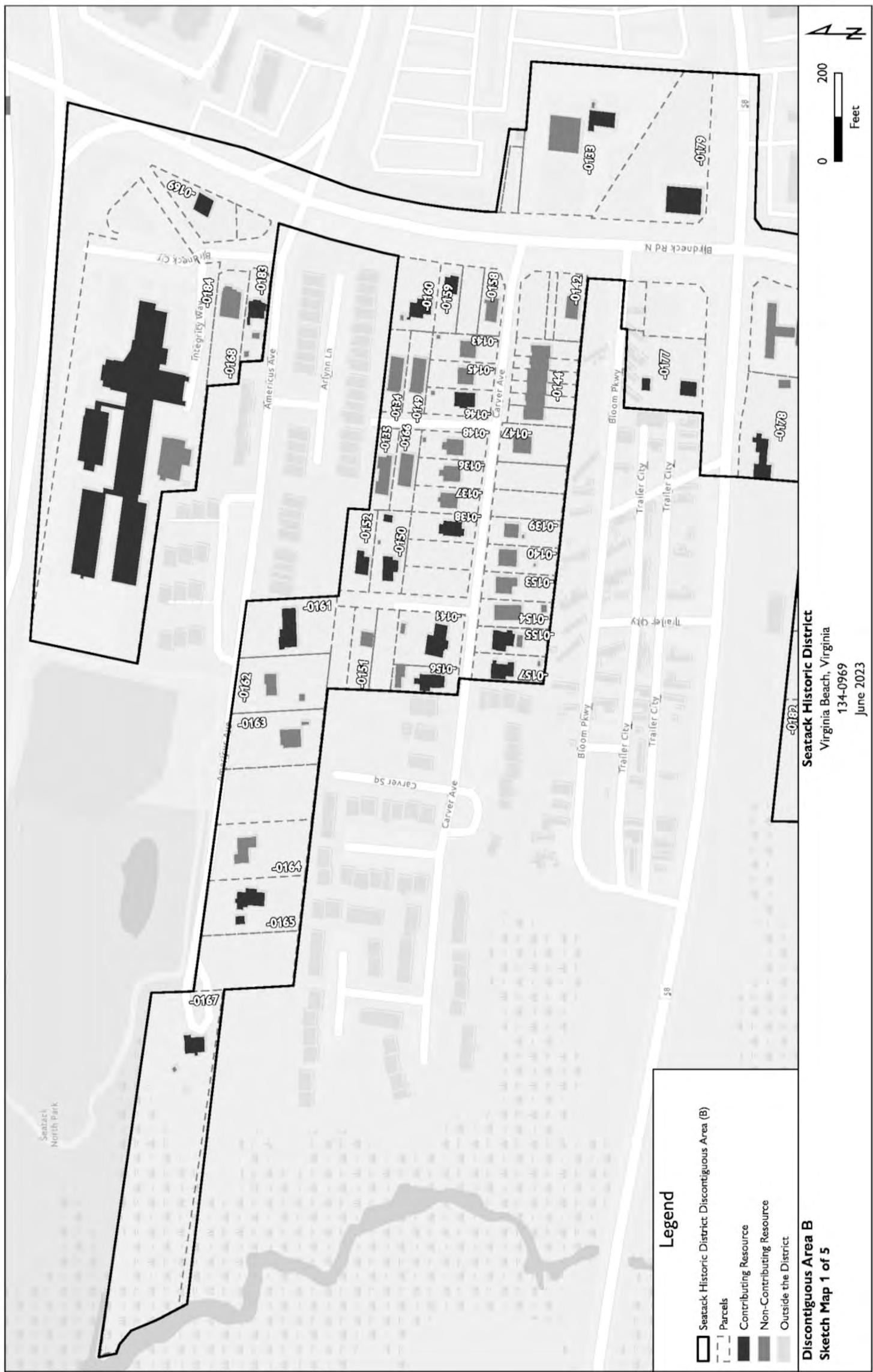


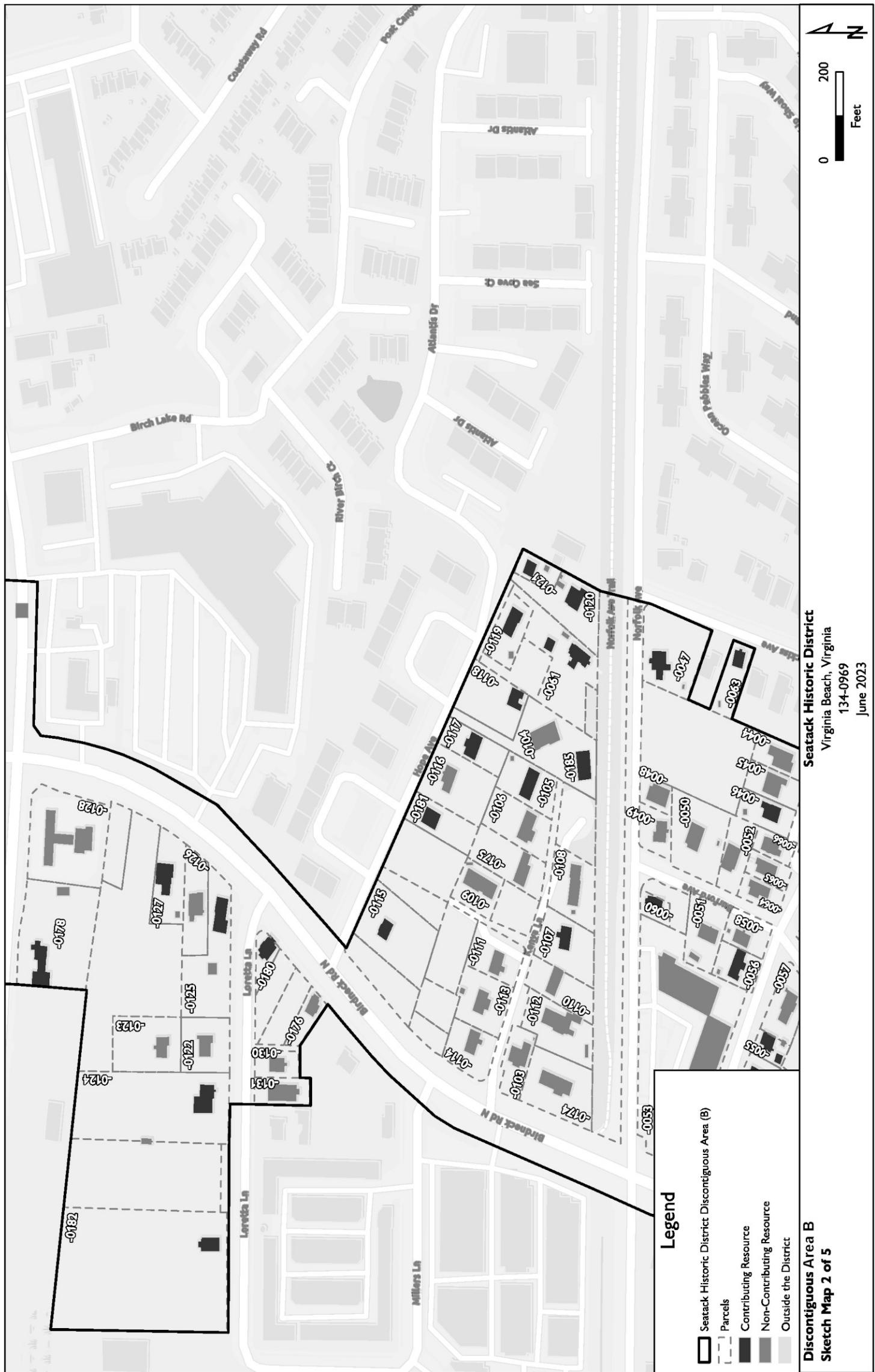
**Discontiguous Area B
Sketch Map Index**

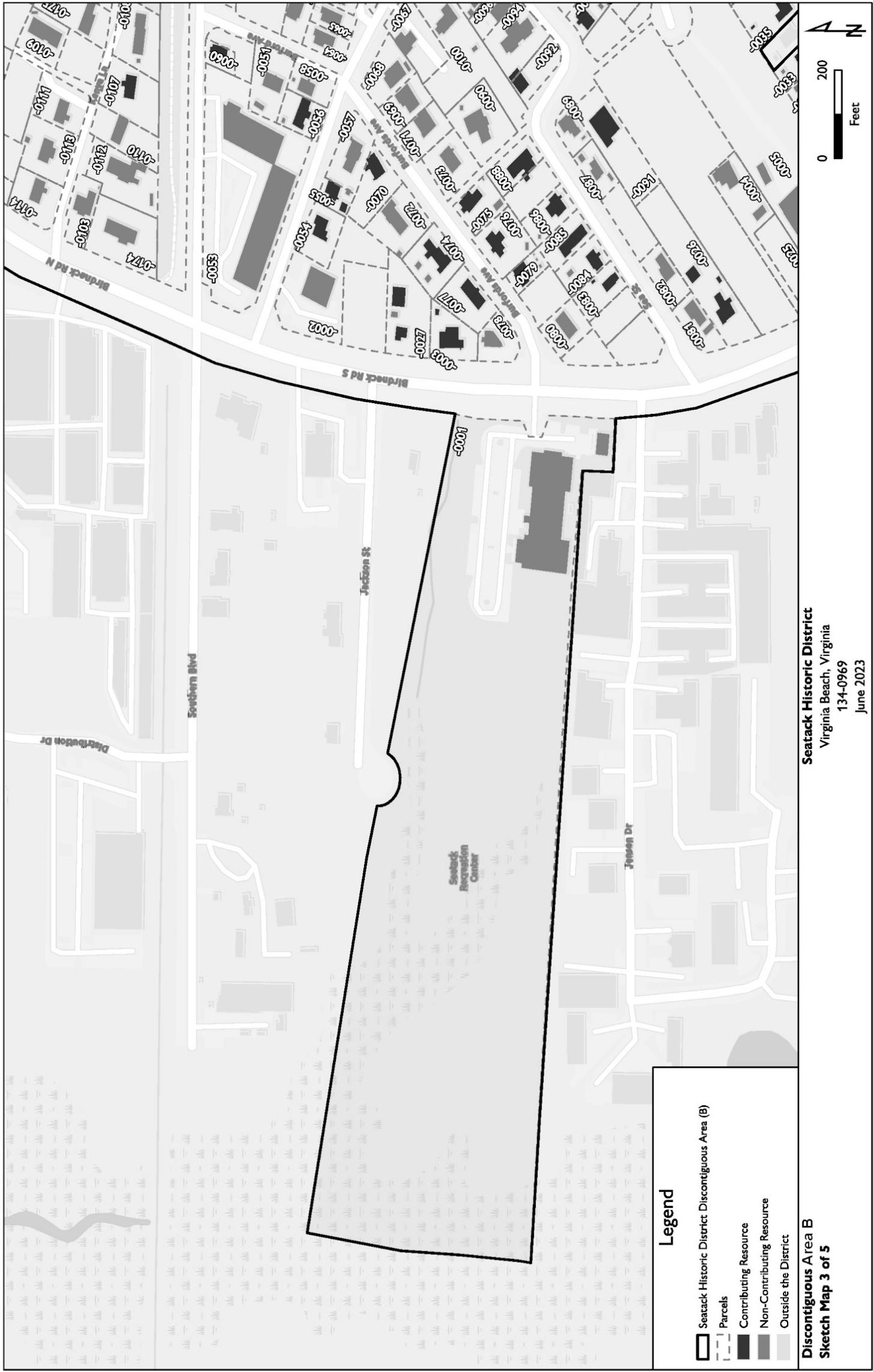
Seatack Historic District
Virginia Beach, Virginia
134-0969
June 2023

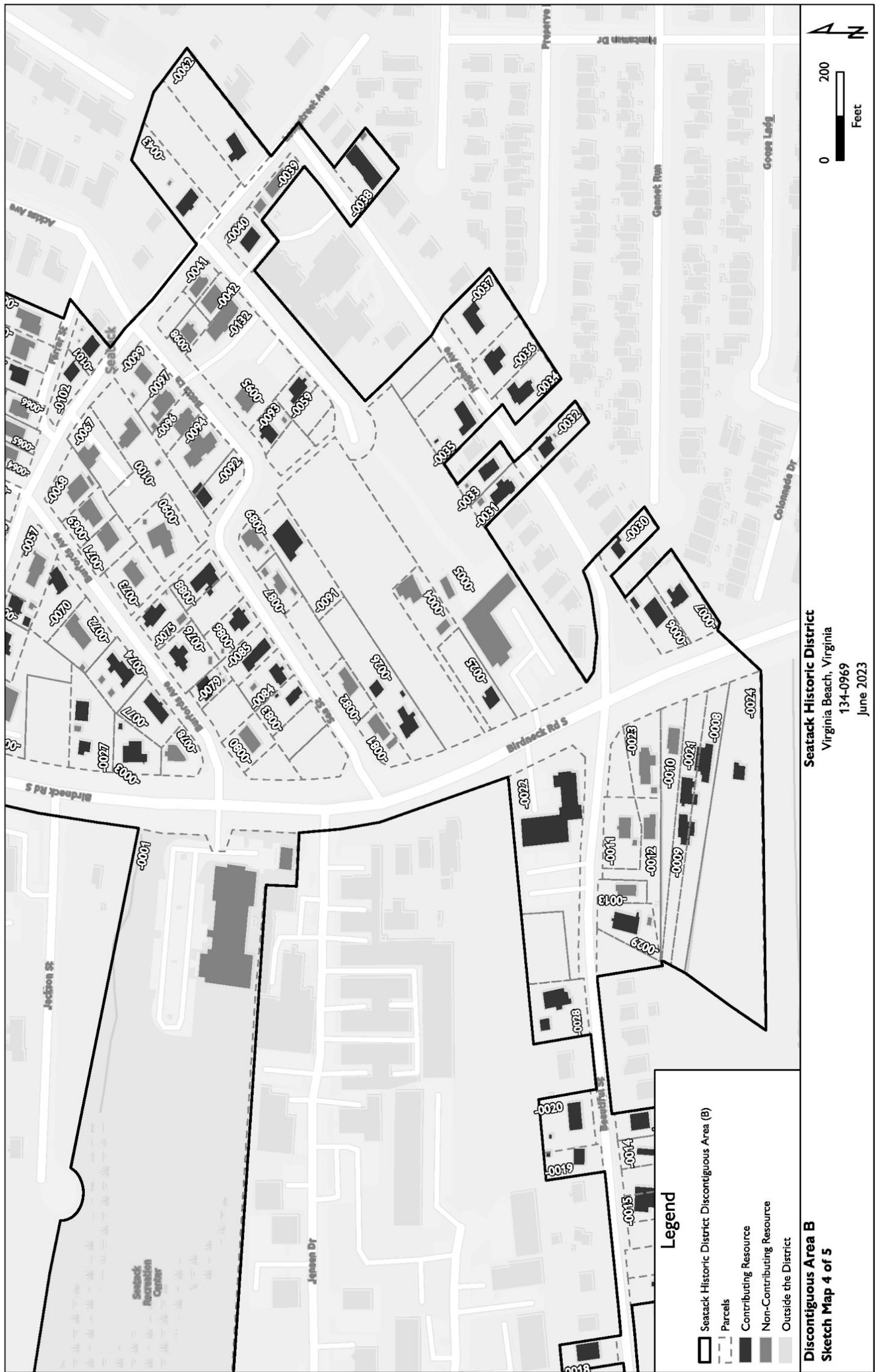
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Feet

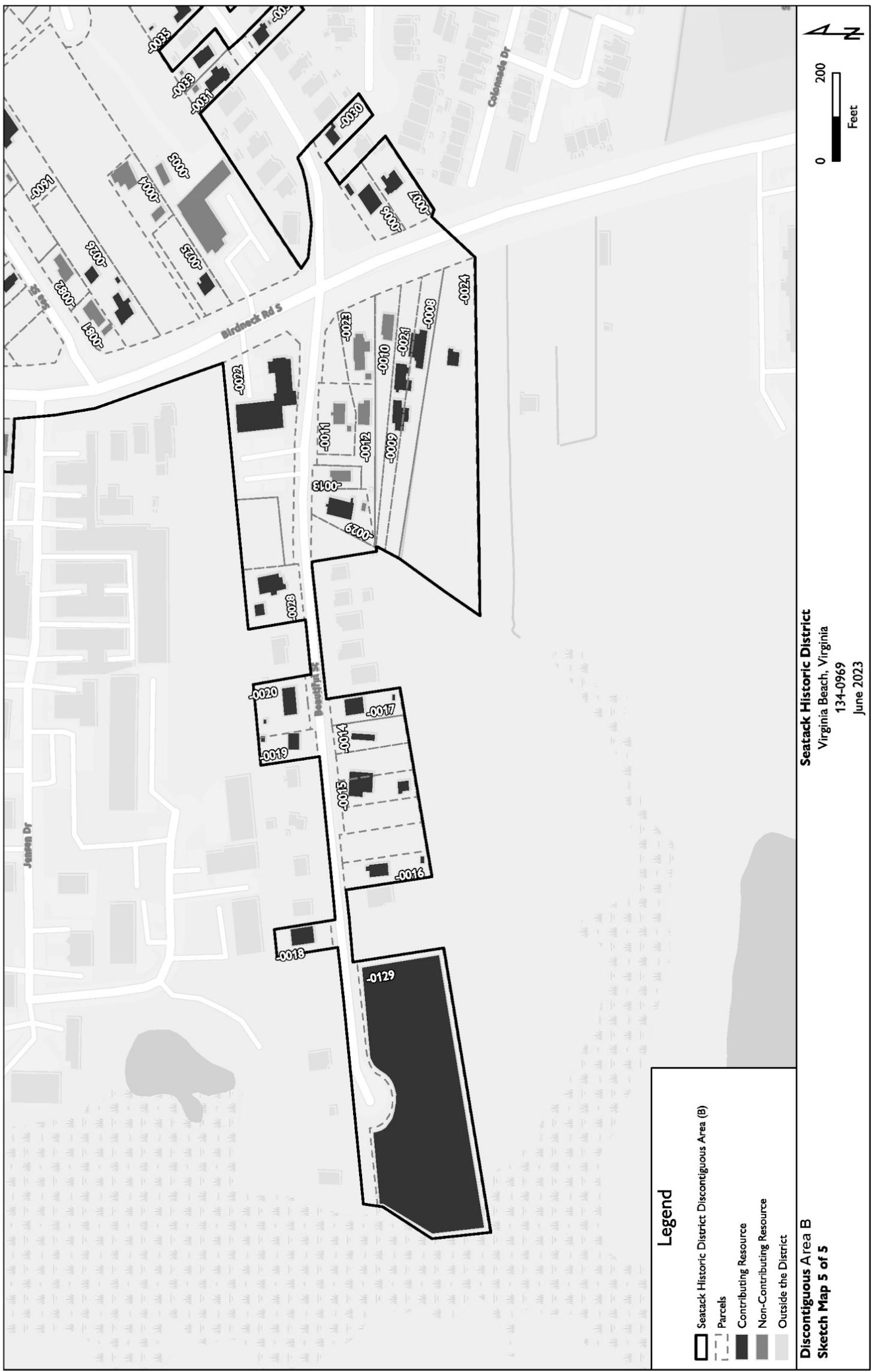


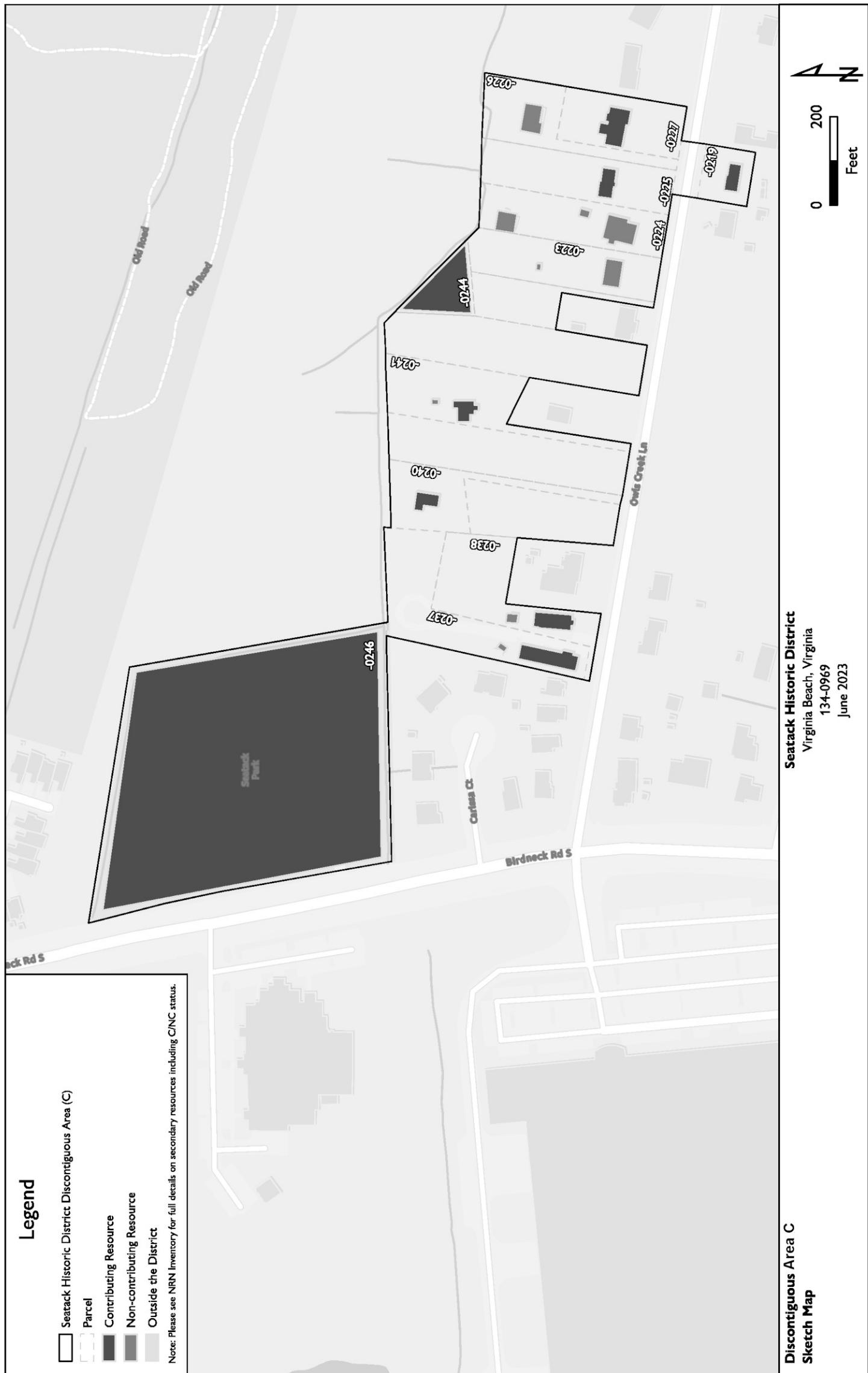


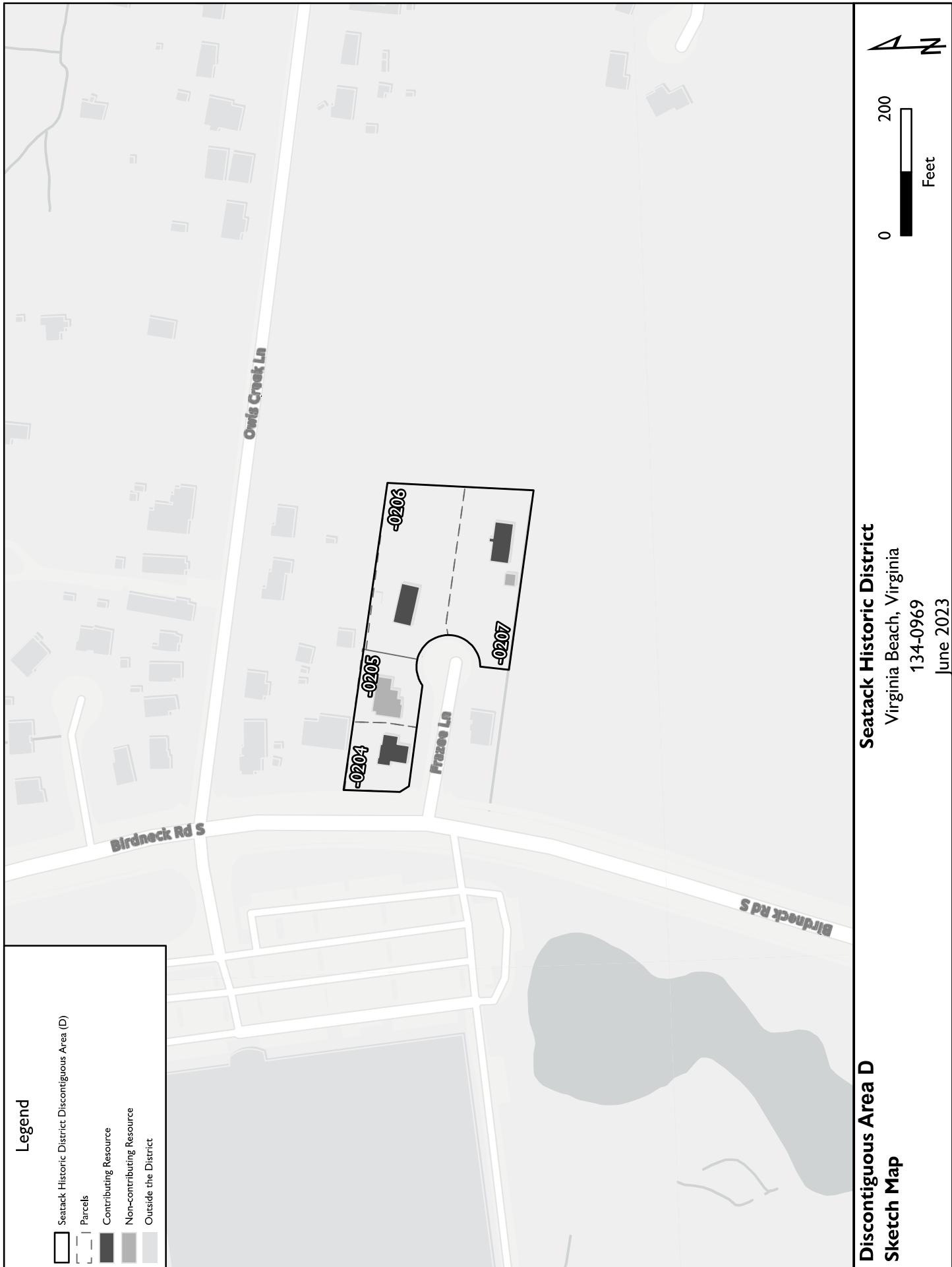






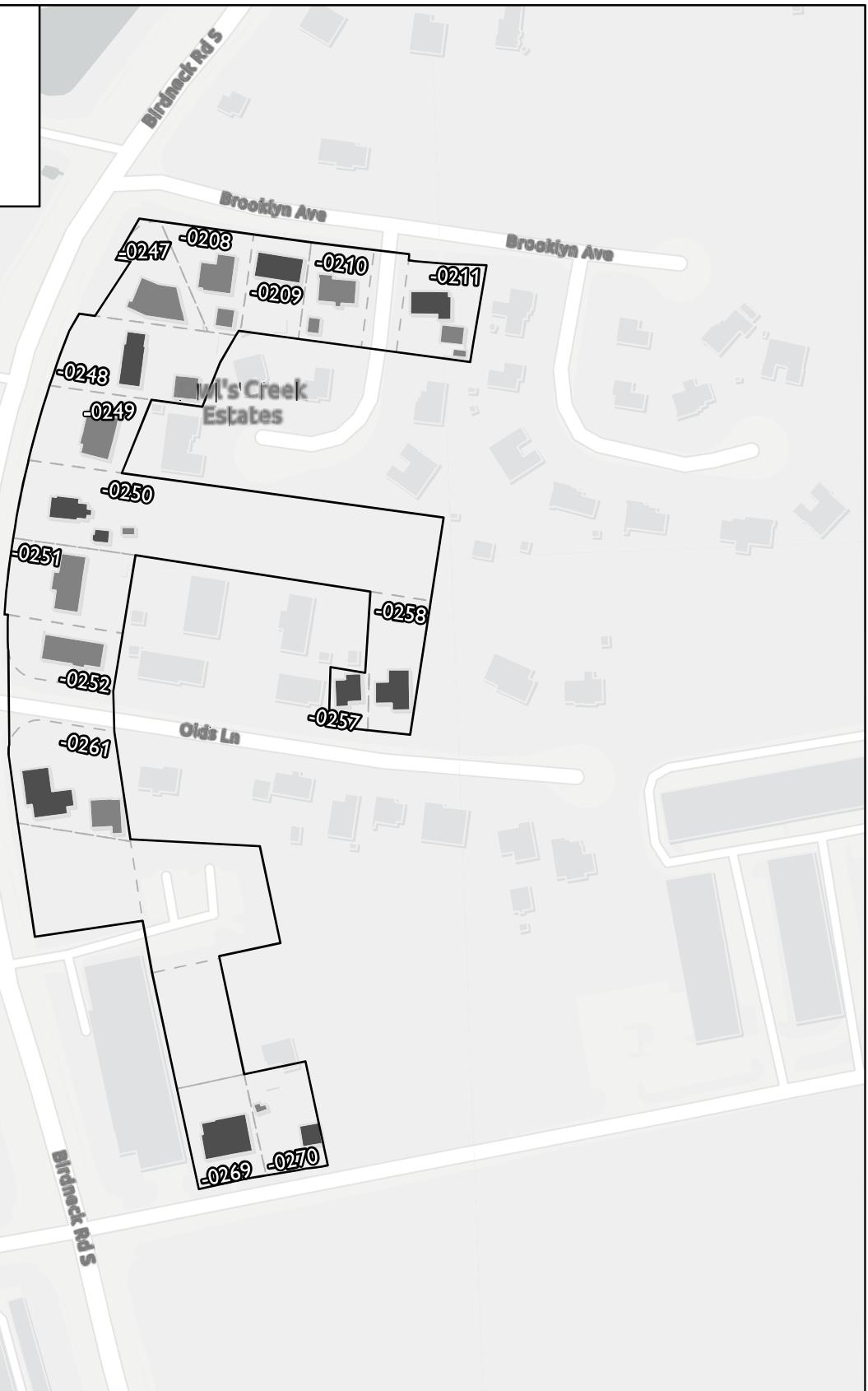






Legend

- Seatack Historic District Discontiguous Area (E)
- Parcels
- Contributing Resource
- Non-contributing Resource
- Outside the District



**Discontiguous Area E
Sketch Map**

Seatack Historic District
Virginia Beach, Virginia
134-0969
June 2023

0 200
Feet