DHR | Virginia Department of Historic Resources

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 111-5381

1. General Information

District name(s): Mayfield

Main Streets and/or Routes: Summit Street, Tyler Street, Howison Ave, Railroad Ave, Dixon Street

City or Town: Fredericksburg

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Fredericksburg (Ind. City)

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 55

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban _✔_ Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural_____

Briefly describe the district's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The neighborhood is constructed on a relatively flat plain that is bound on the west by railroad tracks and on the east by Dixon Street, a heavily-used thoroughfare. On the north side, the land was originally capped by Hazel Run, a tributary of the Rappahannock River, and is now separated from Fredericksburg's downtown by the Blue Gray Parkway. The land slopes steeply down to the Blue Gray Parkway on the north side of Summit Street. On the south side, the neighborhood extends into the later Airport subdivision, which exhibits much of the same character, but was not developed until after annexation by the City in 1955. The Mayfield subdivision is generally characterized by a mix of lot sizes on streets in a gridded pattern. The originally subdivided lots tend to be narrow at the street (most are 25 feet by 105 feet); however, a number of lots have been combined to accommodate wider Ranch or Minimal Traditional style homes. Most lots have grassy yards with limited tree coverage.

3. Architectural/Physical Description

Architectural Style(s): Folk Victorian, Bungalow, Minimal Traditional, Colonial Revival, Ranch

If any individual properties within the district were designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here:

If any builders or developers are known, please list here:
Dr. W.L. Harris/ McGuire, Inc. (developer)

Date(s) of construction (can be approximate): c.1900 through 1960s

Are there any known threats to this district? Demolition, neglect, transportation expansion

Narrative Description:

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire historic district, such as building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district, as well as typical updates, additions, remodelings, or other alterations that characterize the district..

The neighborhood contains a mix of modest dwellings in a variety of architectural styles. Examples span from the early 1900s through the present day reflecting slow, but consistent growth through the 20th century. A handful of vernacular dwellings constructed prior to 1919 remain, showing elements of the Folk Victorian and Colonial Revival styles. Interspersed through the neighborhood are bungalows, Cape Cod, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch homes with the largest concentration of homes dating from the 1940s to 1960s. In the case of mid-century homes, multiple narrow lots have typically been combined to create a wider street frontage. Most dwellings have been altered in some way, often with accessibility ramps, small additions, or replacement materials.

Discuss the district's general setting and/or streetscapes, including current property uses (and historic uses if different), such as industrial, residential, commercial, religious, etc. For rural historic districts, please include a description of land uses.

While the district is primarily residential in nature, Mayfield has always contained a number of different uses, including a school, churches, a hospital, and commercial buildings. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show a post office at the corner of McKinney and Dixon Streets, and a restaurant and stores along Tyler Street. One residence was used as a hospital for a period of time when access to Mary Washington Hospital was limited for African Americans. As much of Fredericksburg was closed to its Black residents during the years of the neighborhood's development, those uses became integral to the growing community. A small family cemetery is located on the north side of Summit Street and, though the burials are associated with families that predate the neighborhood's development, the cemetery is credited with preventing the Blue Gray Parkway from carving through the neighborhood itself.

4. District's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the district, such as when it was established, how it developed over time, and significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.) Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

If the district is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The land that became the Mayfield subdivision was originally farm land belonging to the Howison family. Known as Moorefield farm, the land was purchased and subdivided by the Fredericksburg Development Company in 1906. In that same year, the trustees of the Fredericksburg Normal and Industrial Institute sought to find a permanent location for their school. The Institute was founded as the first area high school for Black students in 1905, and originally met in the Shiloh Baptist Church (New Site) basement.

By 1906, most of the Moorefield property was held by the Virginia Trust Company, represented by Fredericksburg judge A.T. Embrey. The Board of Trustees of the school purchased a large farmhouse on what is now Tyler Street and 300 lots for $1200, with school opening in the farmhouse in the fall of 1906. The school was attended by both day and boarding students. Judge Embrey renamed the area Mayfield and the school became known popularly as Mayfield High School. Few dwellings existed in the early subdivision. One Folk Victorian dwelling, at 214 Tyler Street, belonged to William and Nannie Thurston and is still extant.

After 1938, the school became an apartment house, which eventually burned. The site is now part of a community park adjacent to the Mayfield Civic Association building. While no historic structures remain on the former school lots, it is very likely that intact archaeological resources are present on the site. Development of the residential lots occurred over the course of several decades and ultimately the neighborhood became the city's largest Black residential area. The Mayfield Civic Association was formed in 1969 with the goal of providing organization and unity to ensure the community's voice was heard. One of the group's first objectives was to seek transportation for young children to attend the newly constructed elementary school more than five miles away.

The majority of homes in the neighborhood were constructed in the post-World War II era. Dr. W.L. Harris, a dentist, entrepreneur, and advocate for the Black community, built more than 35 homes in Mayfield as a way to provide affordable housing for local Black residents unable to secure bank loans. In the 1940s, he purchased the previous school property on Tyler Street and converted it to apartments. Dr. Harris was known for his leadership on the Fredericksburg Branch NAACP, the Walker-Grant School Parent-Teacher Association, and the City of Fredericksburg's Bi-Racial Commission.

The period of significance for the neighborhood should extend from the founding of the school in 1906 to approximately 1960 to capture the bulk of the neighborhood's residential expansion in the post-WWII era. The primary area of significance is ethnic heritage, recognizing the importance of this neighborhood to Fredericksburg's African American community. The neighborhood is also significant for its community planning and development due residents' efforts to provide for all the needs of the community in a segregated society. Sources include *A Different Story: A Black History of Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Spotsylvania, Virginia* by Ruth Coder Fitzgerald (1979), Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1919, 1927, and 1947), and oral histories collected for the City's Civil Rights Trail (now included in the US Civil Rights Trail).

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: ☑ Public\Local ☑ Public\State _____ Public\Federal _____

6. Applicant/Sponsor (Individual and/or organization sponsoring preparation of the PIF, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Kate Schwartz, Senior Historic Resources Planner
organization: Community Planning & Building Department, City of Fredericksburg
street & number: 601 Caroline Street, 4th Floor
city or town: Fredericksburg state: VA zip code: 22401
e-mail: ksschwartz@fredericksburgva.gov telephone: 540-372-1179

Applicant's Signature: Kate Schwartz
Date: 03/28/2024

• • Signature required for processing all applications. • •

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: _____
Daytime Telephone: _____

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than applicant/sponsor listed above)

name/title: _____
organization: _____
street & number: _____
city or town: _____ state: _____ zip code: _____
e-mail: _____ telephone: _____
Date: _____

7. Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator, City Manager, and/or Town Manager.

name/title: Timothy J. Baroody, City Manager
locality: Fredericksburg
street & number: 715 Princess Anne Street
city or town: Fredericksburg state: VA zip code: 22401
telephone: 540-372-1010

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Mayfield Boundary

DHR #111-5381



March 14, 2024

1:4,514

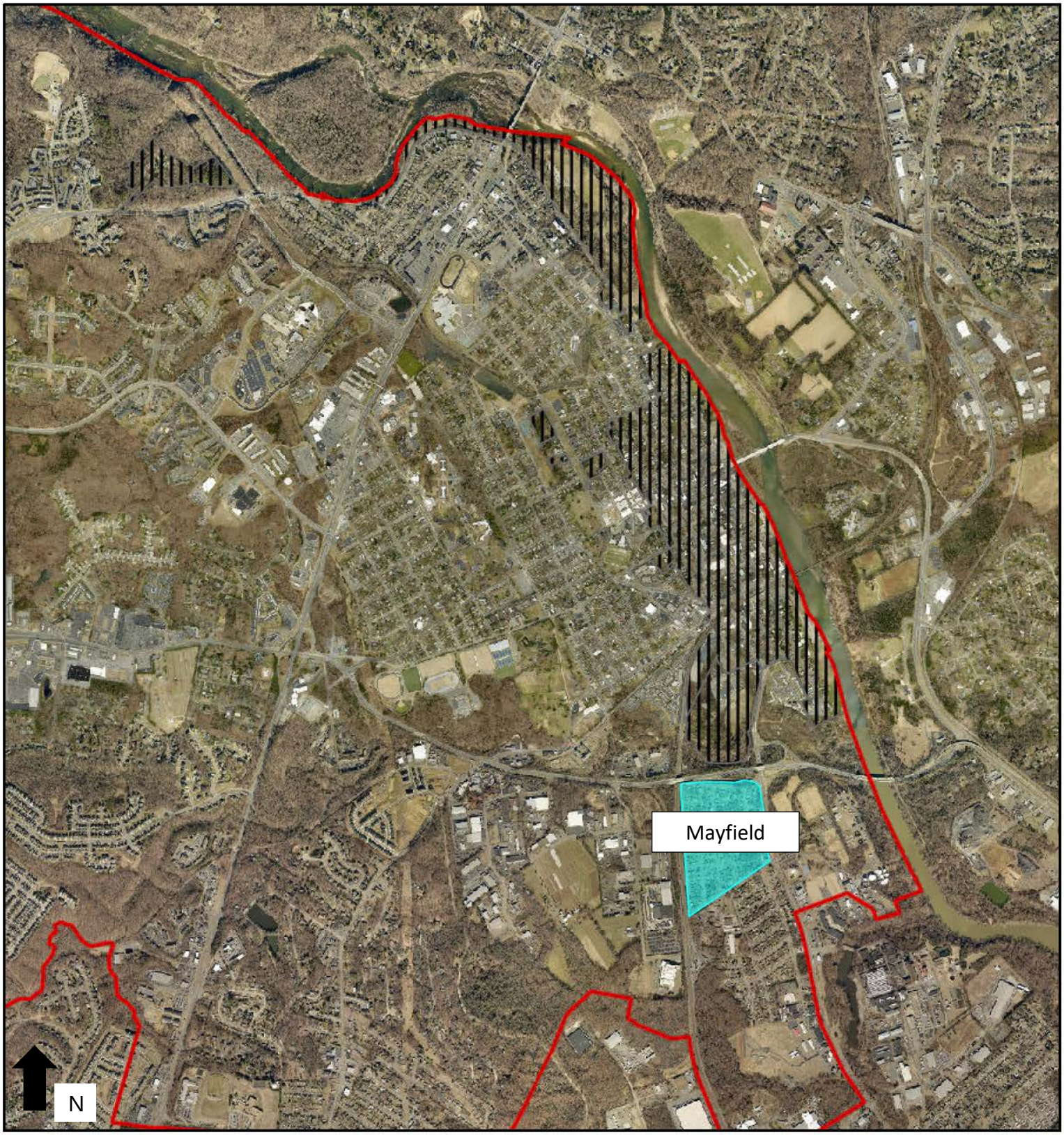
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City Boundary

Road Labels

Context



March 28, 2024

1:36,112

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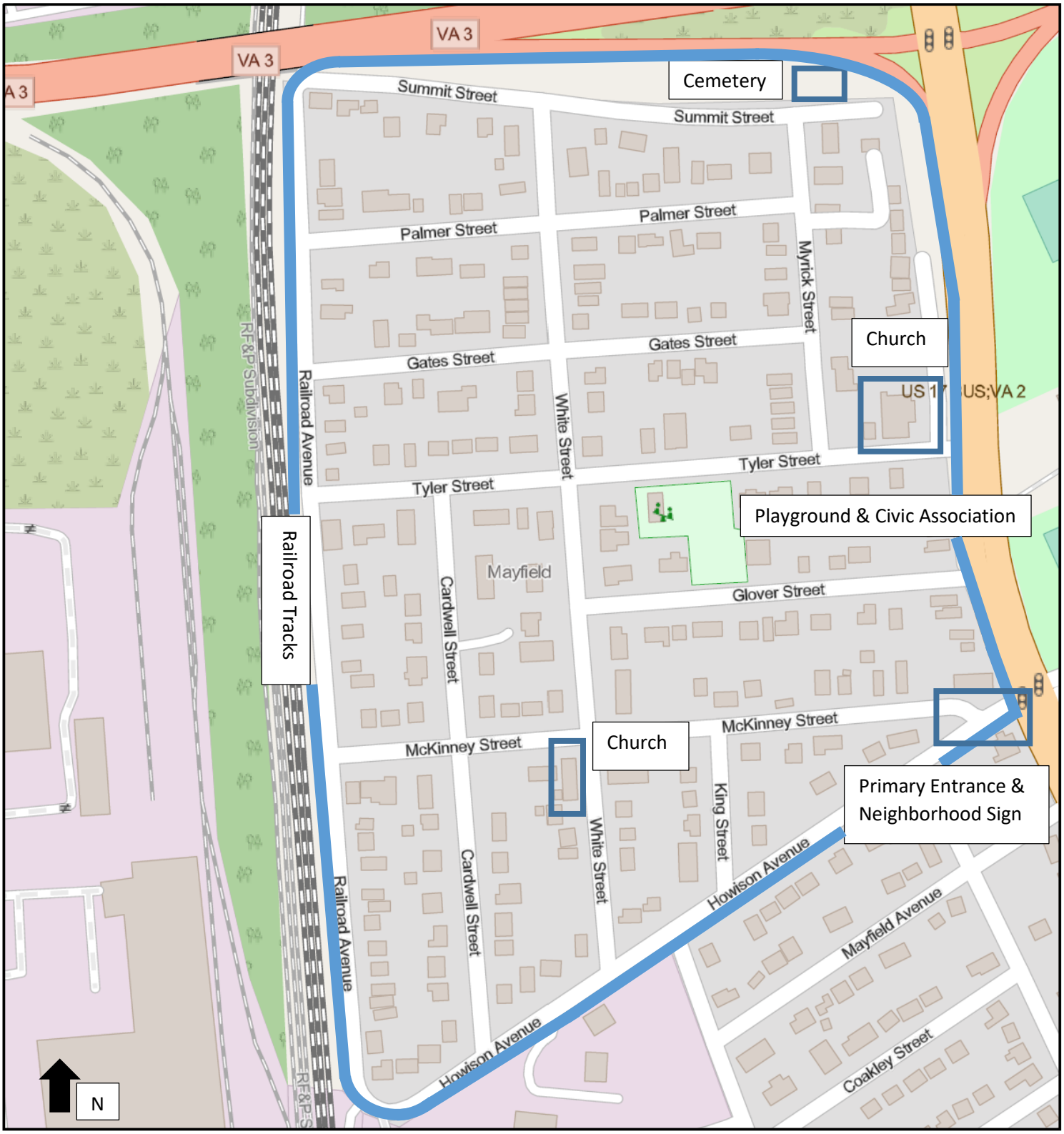
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City Boundary

Road Labels

Local Historic District Overlay

Mayfield Sketch



March 28, 2024

1:4,514

0 165 330 660 ft

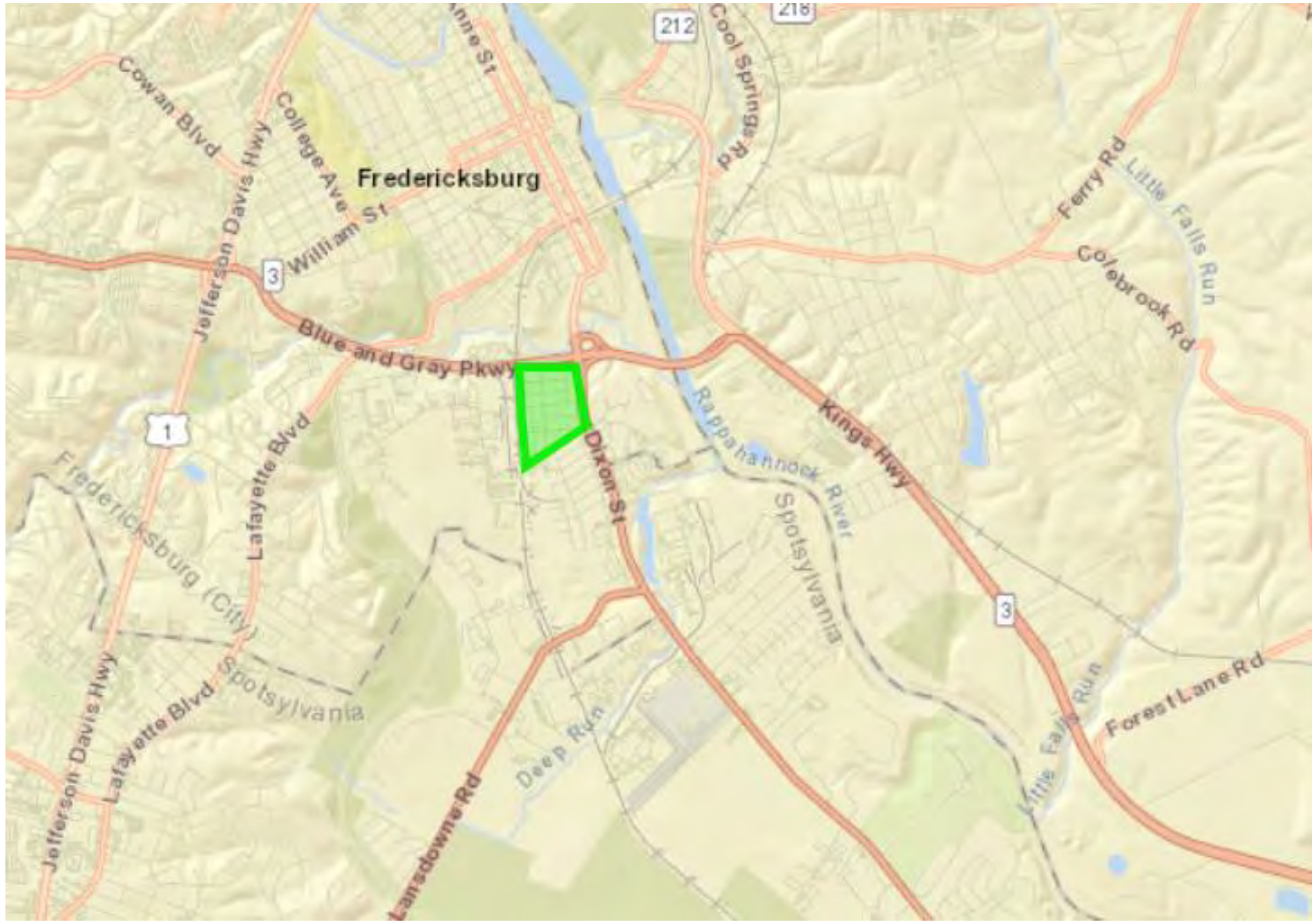
0 50 100 200 m

Proposed Boundary

Resources

Residential (approx. 250)

Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Facebook, Google, Esri Community Maps contributors, Map layer by Esri


Fredericksburg
Cowan Blvd
College Ave
William St
Jefferson Davis Hwy
Blue and Gray Pkwy
Lafayette Blvd
Fredericksburg (City)
Spotsylvania
Deep Run
Lansdowne Rd
Dixon St
Rappahannock River
Kings Hwy
Cool Springs Rd
Ferry Rd
Colebrook Rd
Little Falls Run
Forest Lane Rd
212
216
3
1




CAUTION
CHILDREN
SPEED LIMIT
25
MAYFIELD


214


913
TWF-4607

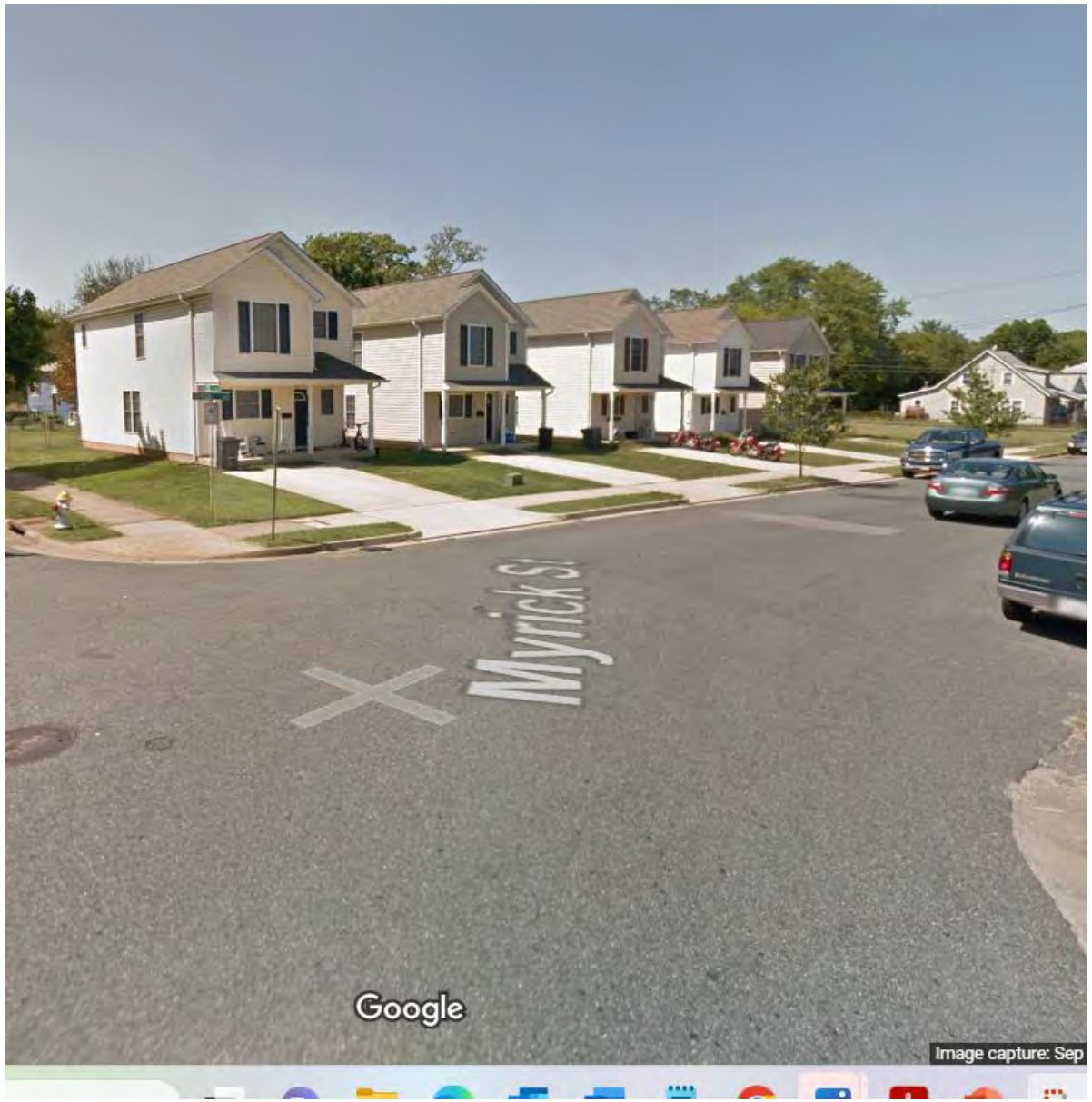




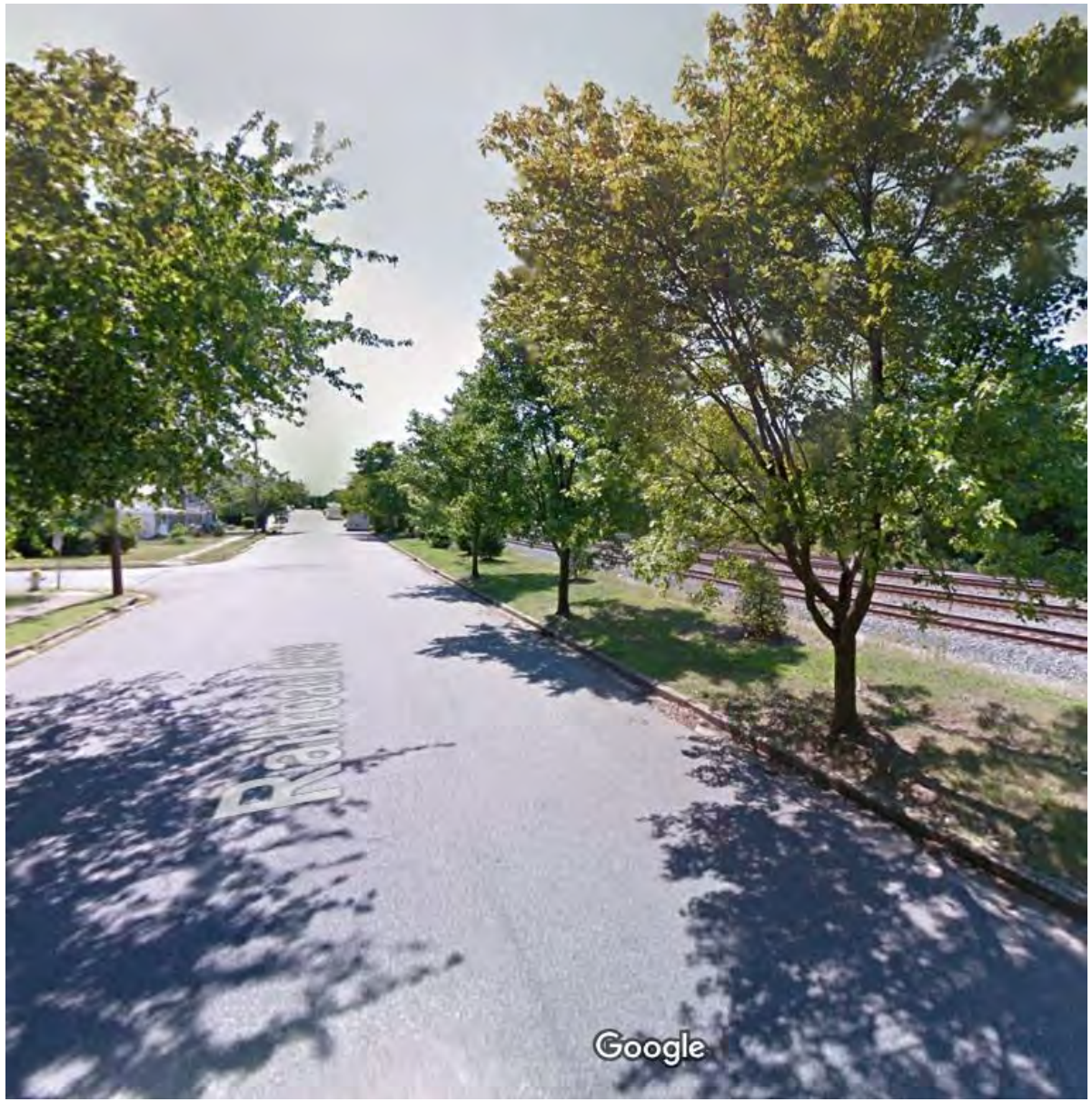

LEFT TURN
YIELD
ON FLASHING


Tyler St
Google


JOSHUA
COLE
Google


Myrick St
Google
Image capture: Sep


MYRICK
Google


Railroad Ave
Google




Google


Cardwell St