

GRACETOWN

HISTORY

- Houses at Start: 65
- Occupied Houses Deemed Uninhabitable: 4
- Population at Start: 208
- Percentage of Land Undeveloped: 59%
- Work Completed:
Housing, Water, Sewer, Streets, Drainage
- Improvement Costs: \$2.8 Million
- Revitalization Completion: September 1991

GRACETOWN

Background

LOCATION: Located in the Bayside study area, Gracetown is bordered on the north by Hermitage Town Houses and Robin's Corner Shopping Center, west by Independence Boulevard, south by Throughgood Elementary School and east by Throughgood Community.

POPULATION: 227 persons

COMPOSITION: 96% minority

ZONING: Gracetown is zoned R-6, medium density.

REZONING: There have not been any rezoning applications made within the past five years.

LAND USE: 42% of Gracetown is developed land (by parcel), used for single family residential. The remaining 58% is undeveloped.

ADJACENT USE & ZONING: Gracetown is surrounded by residential use on the northeast (R-4) and on the southwest (R-5 & R-6) and north (A-1) commercial developments exist along Independence Boulevard and Throughgood Elementary serves as a compatible buffer between the Throughgood Community and Gracetown.

UTILITIES: Water and sewer lines were installed in Gracetown around 1980. Street improvements have been scheduled for 1985-86.

HOUSING: 45% of existing housing in Gracetown is considered feasible for rehabilitation according to the City of Virginia Beach property rehabilitation standards. 30% is infeasible, 13% is new, 5% vacant infeasible.

EDUCATION: Gracetown is located in the school zones of Throughgood Elementary, Independence Junior High and Cox High School.

TRANSPORTATION: T.R.T. serves Independence Boulevard.

SPECULATION:	Land Use:	Vacant	86%	Absentee
		Residential	25%	Absentee

Zoning:	100% of parcels zoned R-6	61% Absentee
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Note: Absentee ownership excludes city, state and federal.

GRACETOWN

Community Development Land Use Issues

1. With the surrounding communities of Throughgood and the Hermitage Town House Development, land value in Gracetown should go up, making housing unaffordable for low to moderate income families.
2. Due to the Department of Housing and Community Development's budgetary restrictions, Gracetown's community development improvements have been rescheduled.
3. Until recently, there was no rehabilitation assistance for residents, only a program to assist residents in connecting to water and sewer lines. The lack of such programs in the past has hampered residents' efforts to rehabilitate their own property.
4. Gracetown is subject to traffic increases as well as an increase in the noise levels from Independence Boulevard. This will have an adverse impact on land fronting on Independence Boulevard.
5. Gracetown has an 86% absentee owner rate on undeveloped land as well as 61% on residential parcels, indicating that speculation is very high. A large number of absentee owners will therefore have public improvements installed fueling speculation and a rise in property values.

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Community Development Land Use Recommendations

OVERALL

A. Graceton is an important link separating the high volume Independence Boulevard from surrounding neighborhoods. It should remain a moderate density residential neighborhood which allows nothing of a greater density than duplex or patio type housing units (R-8) along Independence Boulevard and Hermitage Town Houses (A-1). The medium density R-6 designation should remain along the eastern boundary adjacent to the R-4 residential community of Throughgood.

SPECIFIC

1. No new development should be allowed to front on Independence Boulevard and all site access should be by a street other than Independence Boulevard, if at all possible.
2. A vigorous code enforcement program should be used to remove substandard housing.
3. All existing platted streets should be improved to a 50-foot right of way.
4. Andrew Jackson Lane should connect with an improved Frost Lane which would then run to the Throughgood Elementary School and provide a north-south through street to Pleasure House Road.
5. Weldon Street should be the principal entrance and exit of Graceton to Independence Boulevard.