Sterling Neighborhood Study: Executive Summary

Sterling is one of Greenville's most historically significant neighborhoods. Today, rising property values have increased the risks of demographic displacement. However, in the face of this challenge, Sterling still possesses a number of significant property assets. These strategically located resources can help anchor the community as the tide of gentrification rises around it.

The Study

Commissioned by the Urban League of the Upstate, this Furman University study analyzes demographic, economic, and property transaction data to assess displacement pressures in Sterling. The goal of this project is to equip neighborhood residents with the data they need to make informed decisions about how to preserve Sterling's rich history and community character.

Key Findings

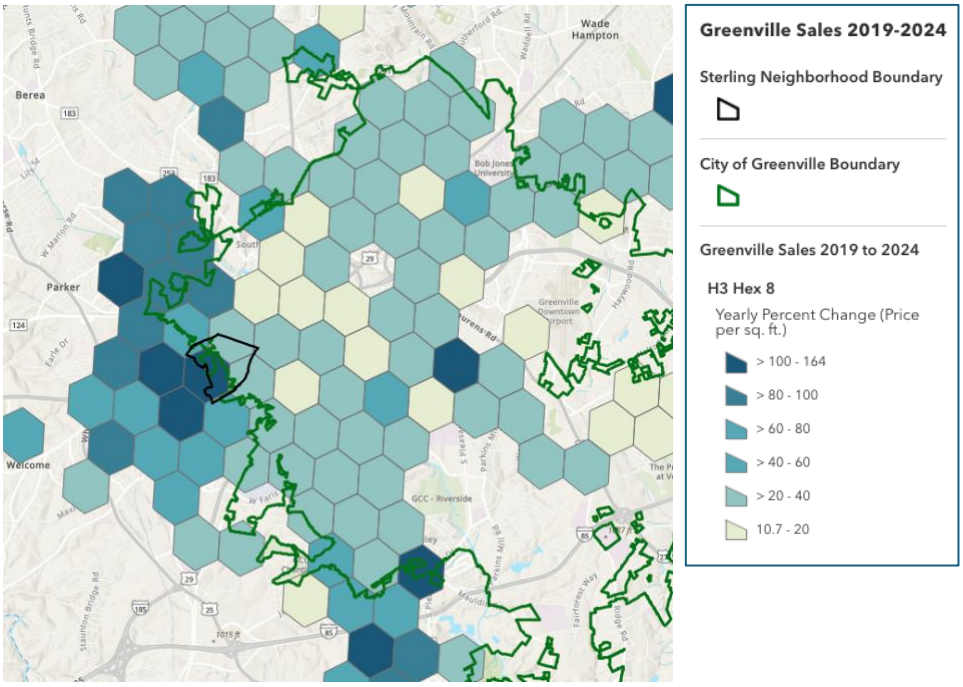
- **Community Assets:** While profound pressures exist, Sterling has significant property assets which can provide a bulwark against potential demographic displacement.
- **Gandy Allmon Manor:** Gandy Allmon senior living has helped Sterling maintain demographic consistency compared to adjacent neighborhoods (e.g. West End).
- **Rising Market Pressures**: Property values in Sterling have risen faster than nearly any other part of Greenville County over the last 5-10 years.
- **Corporate Ownership**: Nearly half of all renter-occupied parcels and 39% of residential vacant parcels are now owned by LLCs or corporate entities.
- **High Percentage of Black Renters:** 79% of Black households in Sterling rent their property. This makes them the most vulnerable demographic to displacement.
- **Senior Renters**: 137 renter householders are 65 years or older.
- **Untapped Support**: Data suggest not all eligible households (age, disability) are currently claiming homestead exemptions, which could offer tax relief and housing stability.

Leveraging existing resources

Sterling has already taken key steps to protect itself: properties like Gandy Allmon Manor and assets held by the Sterling Land Trust act as anchors against real estate volatility. Going forward, targeted strategies include:

- Accessing existing homestead exemption and emergency repair resources
- Increasing economic mobility through job training
- Focusing financial literacy to combat predatory home buying
- Securing community benefits agreements in new developments
- Supporting long-term affordability through the Land Trust

Gentrification heat map

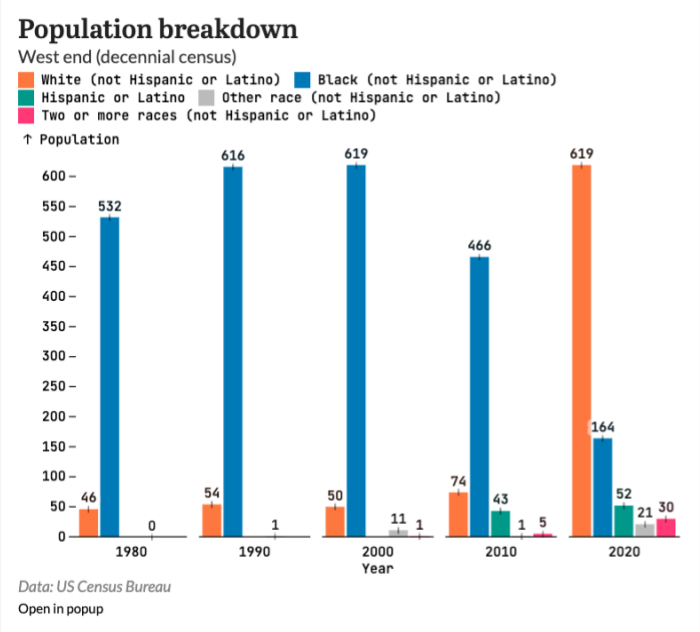


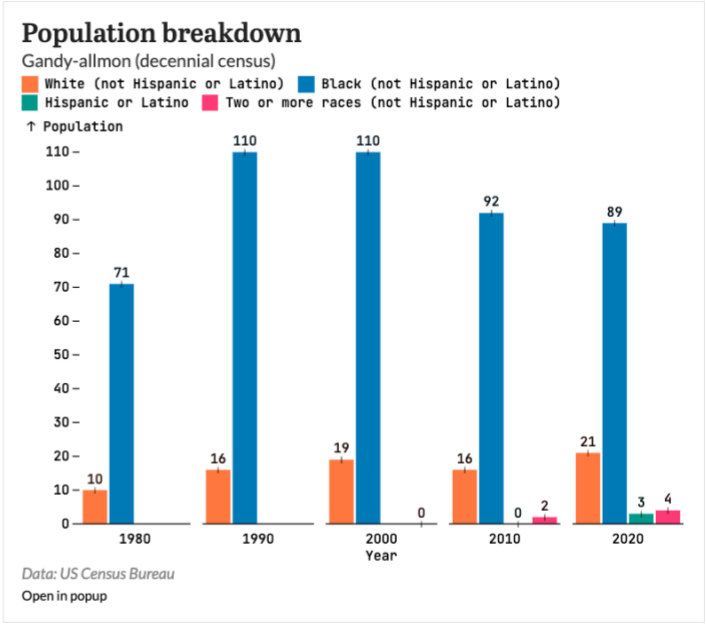
Yearly percent change in price per square foot from 2019-2024.

The darker the hexagon, the greater the increase.

Sterling has seen the highest increases (164% and 134%) in Greenville County.

Community asset case study: Gandy Allmon Manor





Strategically placed property assets can provide a safe harbor in turbulent real estate market conditions.

Gandy Allmon Manor serves as an example.

Without such anchors, Sterling today would have seen demographic shift similar to West End.