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Please see the following link as proof of recognition and link to map:

[http://www.houstontx.gov/superneighborhoods/profiles/SN\\_55.htm](http://www.houstontx.gov/superneighborhoods/profiles/SN_55.htm)

See boundaries for Greater Fifth Ward area.

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**Facebook: GreaterFifth Ward Super Neighborhood**

*Warm Regards,*

***Kathy Blueford-Daniels***

**"Our lives begin to end when we become silent about those things that matter"**

*...Dr. Martin Luther King,*

*Jr.*

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## Super Neighborhood 55 - Greater Fifth Ward

Recognized 03.06.2000

### Your Super Neighborhood At-A-Glance:

#### Location

The Fifth Ward is located east of downtown Houston and is bounded by Buffalo Bayou on the south, Lockwood Drive on the east, Liberty Road on the north, and Jensen Drive on the west.

#### Brief History

One of Houston's original six wards, the site was sparsely inhabited before the Civil War. It was subsequently settled by freedmen and became known as the Fifth Ward in 1866, when an alderman was elected to represent the community in the Houston city government.

At the time, half the population was African-American and half Anglo. By 1870, the population of the ward comprised 561 white and 578 black residents. Two schools, one black and one white, corresponded to the roughly equal segments of the ward's population in 1876. Mount Vernon United Methodist Church, founded in 1865 by former slave Rev. Toby Gregg, is the oldest institution in the ward. Five other churches are over 100 years old: Pleasant Grove Baptist, Mount Pleasant Baptist, Sloan Memorial United Methodist, Payne Chapel Methodist, and First Shiloh Baptist. The Fifth Ward was also the site of a saloon named for Carry Nation, which, after considerable damage resulting from a dispute with the owner over the name, was subsequently known as the "Carnation."

In the 1880s, the ward enjoyed a boom following the construction of repair shops for the newly built Southern Pacific Railroad. Growth was interrupted by a fire in 1891 at the Phoenix Lumber Mill and another in 1912 that burned 119 houses, 116 boxcars, nine oil tanks, thirteen plants, and St. Patrick's Catholic Church and school.

Eventually, the Fifth Ward population became predominantly black. Frenchtown, a four, square block neighborhood in the ward: 500 blacks of French and Spanish descent from Louisiana organized a community in 1922. Black-owned businesses, including a pharmacy, a dentist's office, an undertaking parlor, a theater, and several barbershops, operated after 1900 on Lyons Avenue and numbered forty by 1925. Working-class blacks were primarily employed within walking distance of the ward; many worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad or at the Houston Ship Channel. Others commuted across town to work as domestics and servants for wealthy Houstonians. By 1927 Phillis Wheatley High School in the ward, with 2,600 students and sixty teachers, was one of the largest black high schools in America. Other new businesses developed in the 1930s, including printing plants, photography studios, and the Club Matinee, which came to be known as the Cotton Club of the South. Local businessman Grand Duke Crawford organized the Fifth Ward Civic Club.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the area saw significant housing and commercial growth as the Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation, organized in 1989, worked to revitalize the neighborhood through new home construction as well as an increased focus on job training, access to technology, and access to the arts. A cultural arts festival celebrated the artistic, culinary, and musical heritage of the area. By 2000, the neighborhood had an estimated population of 22,000.

#### Community Landmarks

- Houston's second housing project for African Americans, the Kelly Court Housing Project, opened after World War II.
- Peacock Records, a black-owned recording company, started in the ward.
- C. F. Smith Electric Company, one of the state's early licensed electrical-contracting companies began there.
- Finnigan Park, the second public park for blacks in Houston, opened in the community in the postwar years.
- The Julia C. Hester House, a black community center, is a prominent part of Fifth Ward.

#### Famous Well Known Residents

- Barbara Jordan
- Mickey Leland
- Arnett Cobb
- Milton Larkin
- Illinois Jacquet, musician
- Geto Boys, rap group
- Joe Sample and the Crusaders, musicians
- Lonnie Smith, civic activist
- Lilly Portley, civic activist
- Nat O. Henderson, long-time principal of Bruce Elementary School, was the mayor of the Fifth Ward and became known for his leadership.

#### Super Neighborhood Statistical Info

- Houston City Council Districts B, H
- Houston Independent School District (11 public schools; 1 private school)
- 3,192 acres (5.0 sq. miles)
- [Your Super Neighborhood's demographics](#)

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