

# Virtual Fed

The screenshot shows the website for the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. The header includes the bank's logo, tagline "At work for America's economy", and navigation links for "Conferences & Events" and "Careers". A blue navigation bar contains links for "RESEARCH", "BANKING", "EDUCATION", "COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT", "PRESS ROOM", "PUBLICATIONS", and "ABOUT US". The main content area is titled "Resource Centers" and features a "Data and Mapping" section. This section includes a brief description of PolicyMap's web-based mapping tool, a map of the District of Columbia, and a list of "Additional Resources" such as "Neighborhoods in DC" and "District of Columbia Geographic Information System (DC GIS)".

## The stuff of legends

Not long ago, many thought geography was a dead discipline. The Age of Exploration was over, and every corner of the earth had been charted. But with the proliferation of geographically detailed data from the government and other sources, along with the continued development of computer graphics, something of a mapping renaissance has emerged.

Federal Reserve Banks have gotten in on the action, rolling out interactive data-mapping tools, a few of which have been featured by Virtual Fed. Map Your Community is another one that's too good to overlook. To create it, the Richmond Fed's Community Development department teamed up with PolicyMap, a web-based mapping firm that produces tools to monitor economic and financial indicators of communities.

On its Map Your Community site, the Richmond Fed has packaged maps to focus on states in its district, but the last tab covers the entire United States down to county or census tract levels, and color legends tell the data tale. The site's goal is to help businesses, banks, investors and community development organizations make more informed decisions, but it's also helpful (and user-friendly) for those who want to know more about where they live.

For more, navigate your way to: [richmondfed.org/community\\_development/resource\\_centers/data\\_mapping/index.cfm](http://richmondfed.org/community_development/resource_centers/data_mapping/index.cfm).

—Joe Mahon