



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-264: To declare a public necessity for and to authorize (i) the acquisition of the real property known as 4700 Trenton Avenue and a portion of 2001 Walmsley Boulevard and (ii) the grant and acceptance of certain easements relating to the acquisition of such real property, for the purpose of creating a City park, constructing a right-of-way for the extension of Walmsley Boulevard from Commerce Road to Richmond Highway, and developing an economic development site for commercial and civic growth with a workforce development component.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: November 4, 2024

PETITIONER

Chris Nizamis, Real Estate Manager - Real Estate Strategies/DED-DGS
Matt Welch, Acting Director, Economic Development and EDA

LOCATION

2001 Walmsley Boulevard & 4700 Trenton Avenue

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The City wishes to declare a public necessity for and to authorize (i) the acquisition of the real property known as 4700 Trenton Avenue and a portion of 2001 Walmsley Boulevard and (ii) the grant and acceptance of certain easements relating to the acquisition of such real property, for the purpose of creating a City park, constructing a right-of-way for the extension of Walmsley Boulevard from Commerce Road to Richmond Highway, and developing an economic development site for commercial and civic growth with a workforce development component.

This request supports Richmond 300 Objective 17.1 Increase the percentage of Richmonders within a 10-minute walk to quality open space to 100 percent; and the Strategic Plan for Equitable Economic Development - Initiative 1.5 Real Estate Development Position Richmond for quality redevelopment citywide and aggressively pursue new commercial, industrial and mixed-use development in Priority Growth Nodes and in corridors that have not attracted transformational redevelopment. A significant benefit to this acquisition is also acquiring the land needed to extend Walmsley Boulevard from Commerce Road westward toward Richmond Highway, thus improving traffic connectivity.

Ownership of this site would be an investment for the City. The building is currently vacant and the City intends to demolish the vacant operations building and create a viable economic development site to attract new private investment to this part of the city that will bring activity and good paying jobs.

Staff recommends approval of this request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The Philip Morris site is located at 2001 Walmsley Boulevard and 4700 Trenton Avenue on the I-95 corridor five miles south of the City of Richmond's central business district with easy access to major interstate highway systems including I-64 and I-85 and is located in one of the City of Richmond's Enterprise Zones. The two properties are industrially zoned (M-2 Heavy Industrial) and the Walmsley Boulevard property is improved by a vacant office/laboratory building containing 463,786± square feet. The building has four levels, two above grade and two below grade. The property is within Council District #8.

The acquisition land parcel located at 2001 Walmsley Boulevard encompasses approximately 37.758 acres. The total parcel area is 48.798 acres, but this offering excludes the Semi-Works property, which accounts for about 11.04 acres and remains in use by Altria. Additionally, the parcel at 4700 Trenton Avenue measures approximately 58.172 acres. In total, the combined area of the two parcels is roughly 95.93 acres; however, due to the presence of wetlands, around 45 acres are deemed unsuitable for development.

Richmond 300 Master Plan

The subject parcels are designated Industrial in the Richmond 300 Master Plan, which is described as "manufacturing and production areas that primarily feature processing, research and development, warehousing, and distribution."

Development Style: The arrangement of structures, parking and circulation areas, and open spaces should recognize the unique needs of industrial users. Industrial areas have a design aesthetic that buffers industrial uses from other adjacent uses.

Ground Floor: Not applicable.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access is accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Parking lots and parking areas are located to the rear of street-facing buildings. Vehicle entrances are located off alleys or secondary streets.

Intensity: One to three stories with exceptions for unique building features relating to that industrial use.

Primary Uses: Industrial and open space.

Secondary Uses: Retail/office/personal service.

Staff Contact:

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