



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**Ord. No. 2021-270:** To amend Ord. No. 2021-041, adopted May 24, 2021, which adopted the Special Fund Budgets for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and appropriated the estimated receipts of the Special Revenue funds, to transfer funds in the amount of \$1,300,000.00 from the Office of the City Attorney's "Delinquent Tax Sales" special fund and to amend Ord. No. 2021-042, adopted May 24, 2021, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Capital Budget, and determined a means for financing the same by appropriating the funds transferred to the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Capital Budget by increasing revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' Enslaved African Heritage Campus project by \$1,300,000.00 for the purpose of procuring design services and associated community engagement.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** October 4, 2021

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#### **PETITIONER**

Sharon L. Ebert, DCAO- Planning & Economic Development Portfolio

#### **PURPOSE**

To increase the funding available for the Enslaved African American Heritage Campus capital improvement project, which will enable the procurement of services for campus design and associated engagement.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

City Council adopted Ord. No. 2020-194 on September 28, 2020 establishing the official Enslaved African American Heritage Campus capital improvement project with an initial appropriation of \$1,700,000. By appropriating an additional \$1,300,000, the adoption of this ordinance would increase the project's funding to date to a total of \$3,000,000, which increase will enable the City to utilize of portion of the available funding to procure services for campus design and associated community engagement.

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Background**

This project reflects significant advocacy over many decades by numerous individuals and organizations to properly honor and memorialize the trade in enslaved Africans that was centered in Shockoe. Numerous proposals have been made for how best to achieve this goal including a memorial park and a National Slavery Museum. In 2018, the Rose Fellowship began to bring these various proposals into focus. The Rose Fellowship suggested the creation of an inclusive community engagement strategy which led to the Mayor's creation of the Shockoe Alliance to guide the community conversation to develop a Shared Vision for Shockoe that would be incorporated into an area plan. In 2019, the VCU Center for Urban Regional Analysis at Virginia Commonwealth University prepared a study, *Shockoe Bottom Memorialization: Community and Economic Impacts*, for Preservation Virginia, Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. CURA stated in the report that the Shockoe Bottom Memorial Campus "has the potential to become a site of reflection, contemplation, perseverance, innovation, and heritage tourism." (For reference, see the CURA Impact Study attached.) The notion of a "Campus" in Shockoe came from the Center for Design Engagement that envisioned a project that combined a memorial park and museum with other development opportunities that create equity in the area. A conceptual plan was completed thanks to significant efforts undertaken by the Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project, Preservation Virginia, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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### **Site Description**

The area of the proposed Enslaved African American Heritage Campus is multiple blocks. North of Broad Street it includes the current African Burial Ground Memorial Site, which is east of I-95 and west of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and CSX railroad tracks. South of Broad Street it includes the Lumpkin's Jail/Devil's Half Acre Site and is generally bound by I-95 to the west, Crane and Ambler Streets to the east, and East Franklin Street to the south. The majority of this portion of the site is presently used as surface parking areas.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

The proposed use of the property is for the Enslaved African American Heritage Campus, which would be anchored by a museum and memorial park.

**Master Plan**

Richmond 300 recommends a land use category of Destination Mixed-Use for the area. Primary uses include retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space. Secondary uses are institutional and government.

**Zoning & Surrounding Area**

The area surrounding the property is located in the M-1 Light Industrial District.

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