City of Richmond, Virginia
Department of Planning and Development Review
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To: Urban Design Committee
From: Planning and Preservation Division
Date: March 5, 2020
RE: **Final location, character, and extent review of a new roundabout and associated safety improvements, I-95 ramps at E. 4th St. and Maury St.; UDC 2020-05**

I. APPLICANT
Adel Edward, Department of Public Works

II. LOCATION
The intersection of Maury St. and E. 4th St.

Property Owner:
CITY OF RICHMOND

III. PURPOSE
The application is for final location, character and extent review of a roundabout at the intersection of E. 4th Street and Maury St.

IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION
Staff finds the implementation of a roundabout at Maury Street and E. 4th Street will generally improve the intersection. It will decrease the amount of vehicles that queue along the off-ramp, simultaneously allowing larger vehicles to more easily move through the intersection. The plan addresses bike and pedestrian programming through adding sidewalks, removing unnecessary aprons, and further provides enhanced accessibility at grade changes along with future connections.

Therefore, Staff recommends that the Urban Design Committee recommend the Planning Commission approve the final design as submitted.

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V. FINDINGS OF FACT
a. Site Description and Surrounding Context
The subject intersection is in a predominantly industrial area, surrounded by warehouses, utility tanks, vacant lots, and other industrial uses. The proposed project areas straddles the line between an area zoned M-2 and an area zoned B-7.

The off-ramp carries many large semi-trucks and other vehicles onto either direction on Maury Street and allows access into the Manchester community and major industrial corridors such as Jefferson Davis Highway and Commerce Road to the south or to Brander Street to the north.

The on-ramp allows vehicles to enter predominately from E. 4th Street, from either direction, to access either north- or southbound I-95.

Maury Street currently exists as a two-way street with one lane in each direction and carries a majority of the vehicular traffic onto and off of the ramp.

E. 4th Street is a one-way, two lane street that directs traffic south toward Maury Street. On the south side of Maury Street, E. 4th Street becomes a two-way street, with one lane in each direction, with the exception of a turn lane to the on-ramp.

b. **Scope of Review**
The proposed roundabout and safety improvements are subject to location, character, and extent review under Section 17.07 of the Richmond City Charter as a "widening, extension, narrowing, enlargement, vacation or change of use of streets".

c. **UDC Review History**
This project came for conceptual review at the regular Planning Commission meeting in September 2017. The UDC recommended, and the Planning Commission approved, on the consent agenda, the Staff recommendations from the August 2017 UDC meeting with the addition of the following:
  - That the applicant include lighting and consider how the Manchester lighting plan may be incorporated

This project came for conceptual review at the regular UDC meeting in August 2017. Staff recommended the UDC recommend that the Planning Commission approve the conceptual design with the following recommendations for final review:
  - That the final plans include a landscaping plan and schedule showing plant species, quantity, location and size at the time of installation
  - That the landscaping plan seeks to utilize native, non-invasive species where possible
  - That the landscaping plan seeks to beautify the roundabout as well as enhance the pedestrian amenities around it
  - That the final plans include a pedestrian plan that includes, but is not limited to, both existing and proposed new sidewalks, ADA ramps, crosswalks, and bike lanes that are within the scope of this project, including dimensions
  - That the applicant further consider ways that this project may positively impact, and tie into, future pedestrian infrastructure in the surrounding community

d. **Project Description**
This project will provide a gateway with improved traffic operation and safety to the historic Manchester Industrial District for all users by constructing a single lane roundabout on Maury Street at the bottoms of the I-95 Ramps. Two existing traffic signals on Maury Street at East 4th Street and at I-95 Off-Ramp will be eliminated. The roundabout is expected to significantly reduce the vehicle queuing during peak hours on both the I-95 Off-Ramp and Maury Street

approaches. In addition to the roundabout, the project scope includes pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, lighting, and landscaping. This project involves both right-of-way acquisitions and utility relocations.

e. Master Plan
The subject intersection is located in the Old South Planning District, as defined by the citywide Master Plan, which designates the surrounding area for Industrial uses. The Plan specifically recommends the intersection needs improvement by suggesting "the reconfiguration of the I-95/Maury Street off-ramp to 4th Street with emphasis on protecting the surrounding residential neighborhoods" (page 284).

f. Urban Design Guidelines
The Guidelines note that "intersections should be designed to serve pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists in a safe manner" and that "roundabouts should be considered in certain situations as an alternative to the traditional intersection" (page 7). The Guidelines are supportive of traffic management techniques that slow traffic (page 7) and that add "an aesthetic contribution to the urban character of the neighborhoods in which they are placed" (page 8). In regard to landscaping, the Guidelines note that "landscaping should provide a sense of scale and seasonal interest" and that "shade trees for pedestrian comfort should be the predominant plant material in an urban setting" (page 10).

VI. ATTACHMENTS
   a. **Vicinity Map**
   b. **Application**
   c. **Plans**