



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-219 To authorize the special use of the property known as 2 South Robinson Street for the purpose of an independent cooking facility, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: October 7, 2025

PETITIONER

Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

2 South Robinson Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a special use permit to authorize a meat smoker in a B-6 Mixed-Use Business District. This use is not permitted within the district. As a result, a Special Use Permit is necessary to proceed with this request.

Additionally, the meat smoker will be located on a parcel that is currently being leased for parking for 2600 West Main Street. The lease is a result of a condition in Ord. 2005-285-273. As a result, a Special Use Permit Amendment for 2600 West Main Street is being applied for in order to reduce the parking requirement. The amendment (Ord. 2025-218) is a companion paper to this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed smoker is accessory to the restaurant located at 2600 West Main Street. The subject property is located in the in the Community Mixed-Use future land use category where restaurants are identified as a primary use.

Staff finds that the proposed screening of the container containing the smoker offers additional landscaping along Robinson Street and does not disrupt the streetscape.

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in the Fan neighborhood on South Robinson Street, between Davis Avenue and Mulberry Street. The property is currently a 5,200 square foot (0.11 acre) parcel of land, improved with a parking lot.

Proposed Use of the Property

Independent cooking facility (meat smoker).

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the future land use for this property as Community Mixed-Use, which is defined as a cluster of medium-density, walkable commercial and residential uses that provide neighborhood services to nearby residential communities and sometimes feature regional attractions.

Development Style: The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Ground Floor: Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged. The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. The common theme among all Community Mixed-Use areas is that a mix of uses are allowed, and buildings must address the street.

Intensity: Buildings generally ranging from two to six stories, based on street widths, and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas, as necessary. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/ personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is B-6 Mixed-Use Business District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Section 30-444.2 – Permitted principal uses

An independent cooking facility is not a permitted principal use in the B-6 district.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as an independent cooking facility, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is a mix of commercial and residential uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Fan District Association, Robinson Street Association, and Uptown Association, area residents and property owners. Staff has received one letter to date regarding the proposal.

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