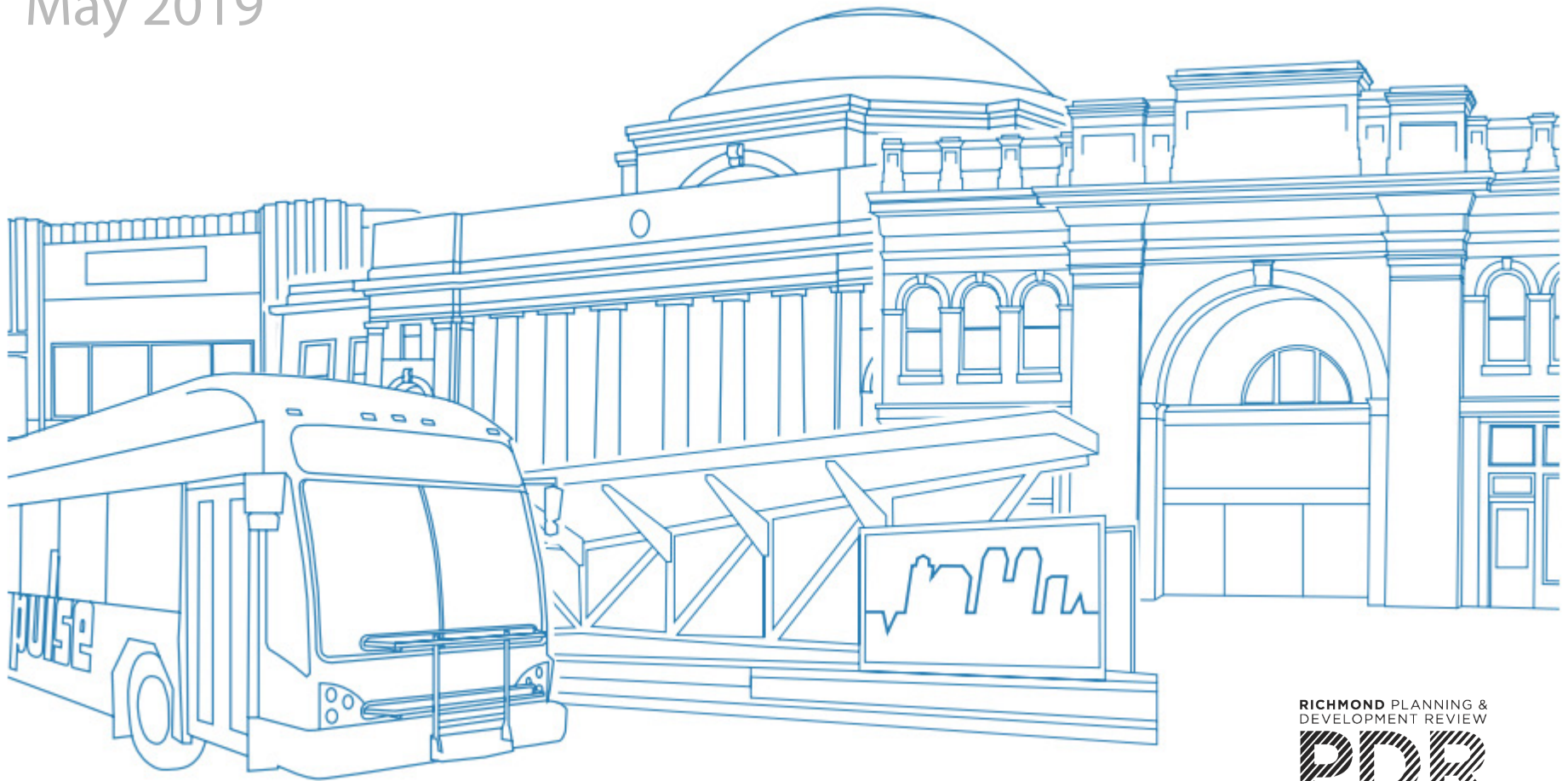


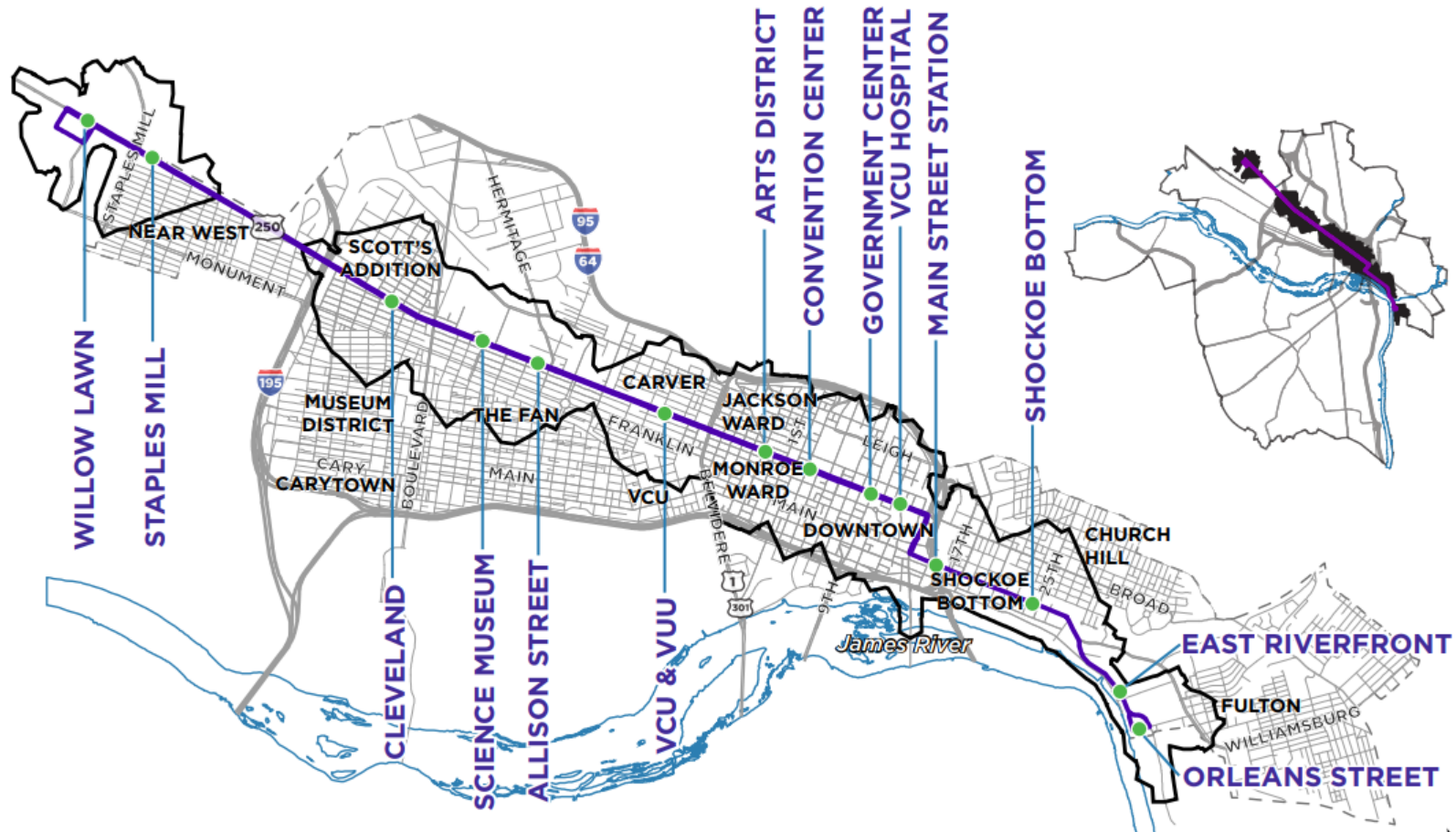
# MONROE WARD REZONING SUMMARY

May 2019



# WHY IS THE CITY REZONING MONROE WARD?

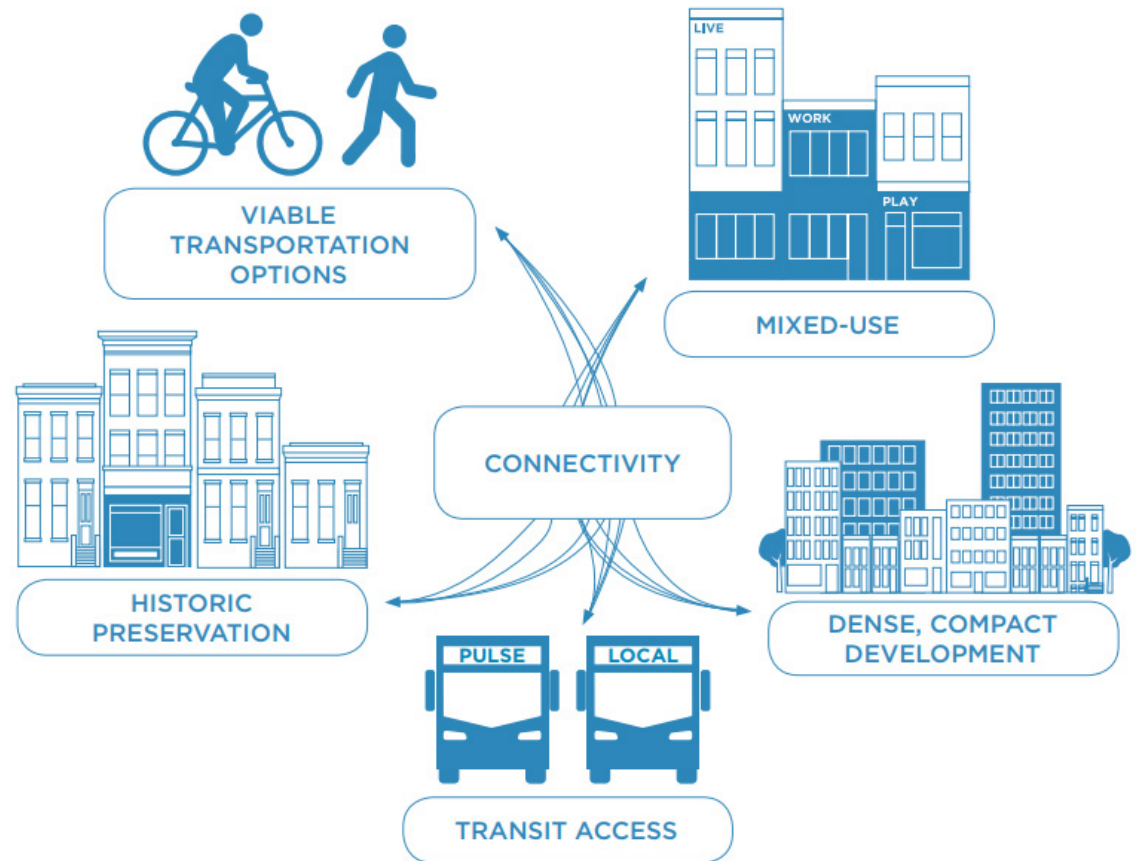
In July of 2017 Richmond City Council adopted [The Pulse Corridor Plan](#), a corridor-long planning document that outlines steps which the City needs to take to change land use around the new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route running from Rocketts Landing to Willow Lawn. Of the 14 stations on the Pulse corridor, six stations were determined to be priority station areas based on market conditions, development readiness and pedestrian orientation, and were determined to have the most potential for Transit-Oriented Development. In order to encourage this more dense development, the next step is for the City to rezone each station area. The first, Cleveland Station at Scott's Addition, was rezoned to TOD-1 and B-7 in 2017. The next priority is to rezone the Arts District Station which is made up of Monroe Ward and Jackson Ward. Because these two historic neighborhoods have their own distinct characters, it is preferable that the rezonings proceed in two phases.



# PRINCIPLES OF THE PULSE PLAN:

Development along the corridor will seek to follow six guiding principles:

- 1. Mixed-Use:** Housing, employment, entertainment and daily needs are near each station area. Mixed use can be vertical or horizontal within a neighborhood context.
- 2. Viable Transportation Options:** Walking and biking to accomplish everyday tasks is an option for people living and working near station areas.
- 3. Dense, Compact Development:** New buildings can be taller and larger in the Pulse corridor to add housing and jobs to create a more walkable and vibrant area.
- 4. Historic Preservation:** Retaining existing historic buildings is a priority. Smaller historic buildings add to the diversity of style and use along the Corridor and provide opportunities for business creation. They also provide a strong link to Richmond's history.
- 5. Transit Access:** Individuals have easy access to the Pulse and to the local transit network, enabling fewer or no car trips.
- 6. Connectivity:** A well-connected street grid and transit network is the glue that leads to successful transit-oriented development.



# DESIGN ELEMENTS OF THE PULSE PLAN:

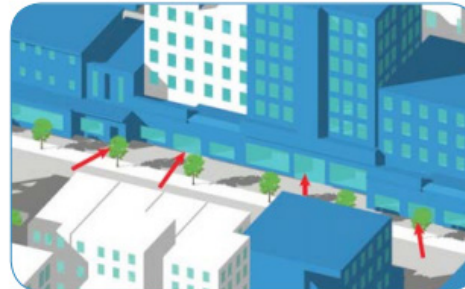
- 1. Hold the Corner:** Buildings and spaces at intersections have active ground floors that wrap around the corner.
- 2. Entrances Face the Street:** Main entrances to businesses and residences front the street, fostering pedestrian activity.
- 3. Appropriate Setbacks/Stepbacks:** Commercial uses are closer to the street while residential uses are set back to foster privacy and create a semi-public space. Stepbacks at upper stories create a means to honor existing form without overwhelming it.
- 4. Transparency:** Facade fenestration allows visibility to and from the street. This is especially important on the ground floor, where fenestration should occupy a higher percentage of the building face.
- 5. Facade Articulation:** Long, monolithic facades should be broken up and made more human-scale by varying the streetwall plane, height, colors and materials.
- 6. Screened Parking/Services:** Attractive landscaping pushed to the sidewalk helps maintain a streetwall and mitigate the disruption caused by surface parking lots and utilitarian services.



Hold the Corner



Appropriate Setbacks/Stepbacks



Entrances Face the Street



Transparency



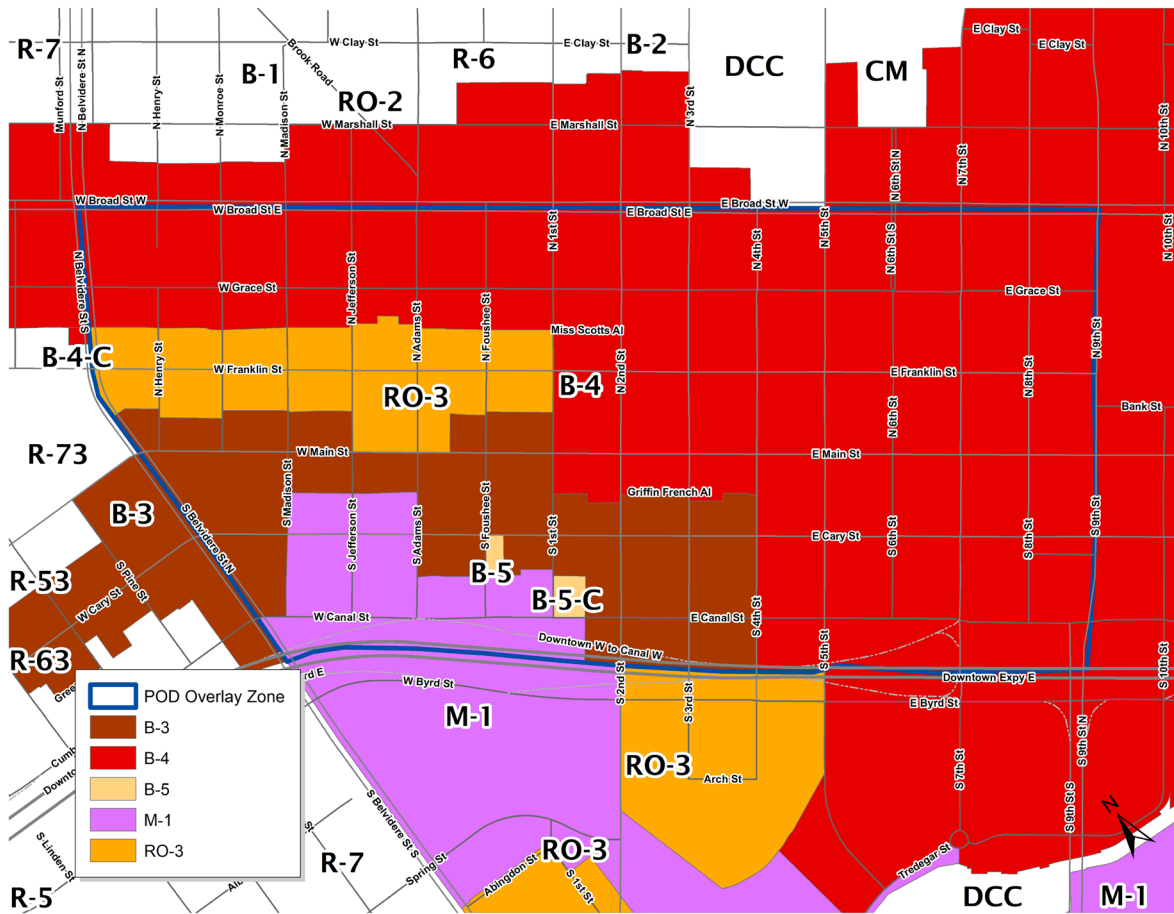
Façade Articulation



Screened Parking/Services

# EXISTING ZONING

Currently, there are five zoning district designations in the neighborhood, varying greatly in permitted land use, form and intent. Many have existed for decades and, if new development followed allowed use and form, it would be far out of keeping with the historic character of Monroe Ward.



**B-3 (General Business):** A permissive, auto-centric district that has created the characters of Midlothian Turnpike, Hull Street, Jefferson Davis Highway, and Broad Street west of I-195. Many uses, as well as setbacks, are incompatible with compact, mixed-use urban form.

**M-1 (Light Industrial):** Same uses as B-3, as well as manufacturing uses not likely to create offensive noise, dust, heat, smoke, odor, etc. Nightclubs and liquor stores with a Conditional Use Permit.

**RO-3 (Residential-Office):** Single-Family attached, Two-Family, and Multi-Family dwellings, offices (medical, dental, business, etc), private schools, lodges and similar meeting places, banks, funeral homes, hospitals, radio broadcasting studios, hotels and motels, adult day care facilities et al.

**B-5 (Central Business):** Similar uses to B-4 with a 5 story height limit and no FAR requirement.

**B-4 (Central Business):** See following page.

See page 12 for height and setback requirements. For further detail please refer to [Richmond City Zoning Ordinance](#).

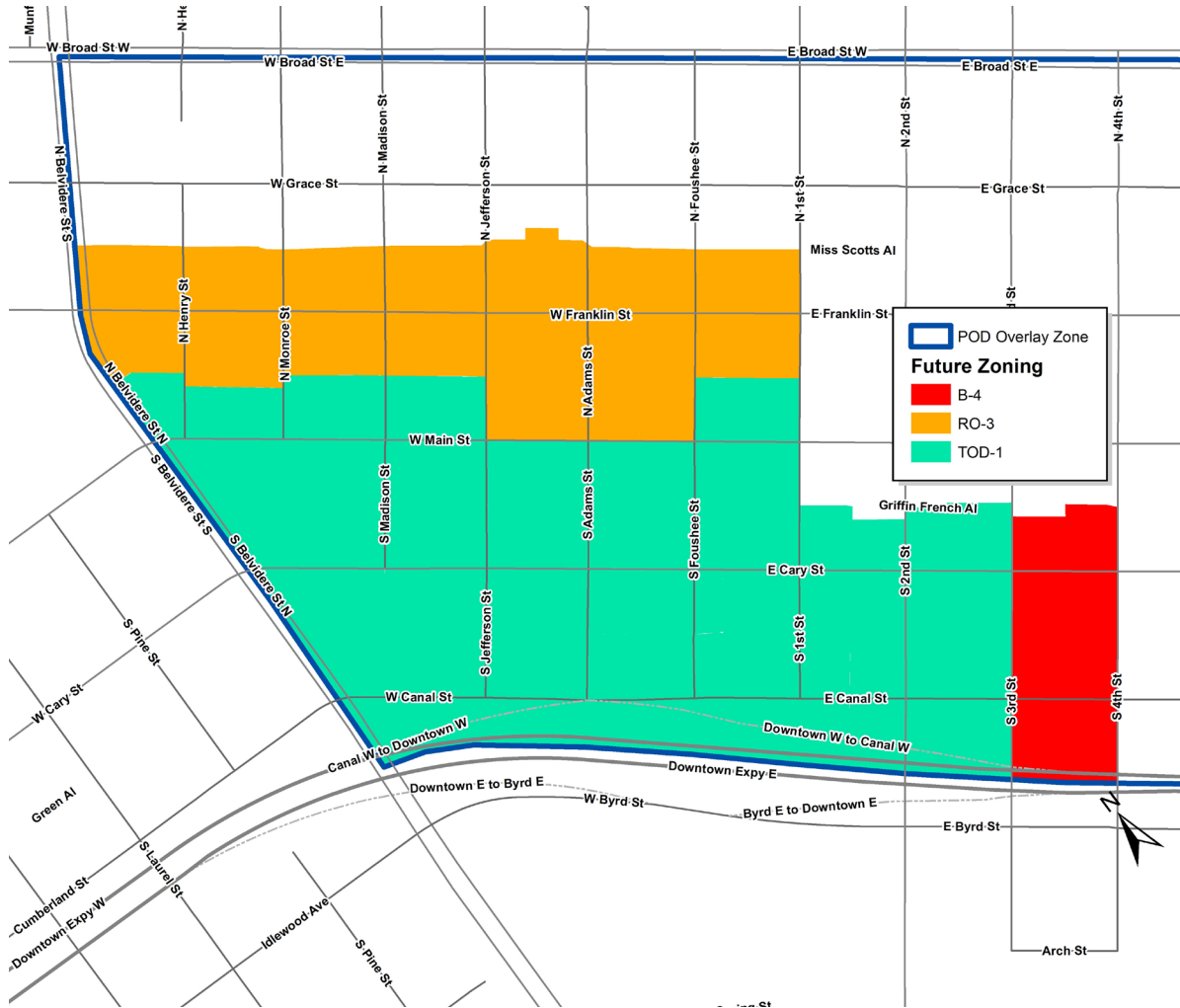
# FUTURE ZONING

After rezoning, there will be three zoning districts in Monroe Ward, all covered by a Plan of Development (POD) Overlay District. The combination of these districts and the POD overlay will accommodate development pressure moving west from the Central Business District and

east from Virginia Commonwealth University as well as protect the historic character of the neighborhood.

**B-4 (Central Business):** This district currently covers the Central Business District. Uses include offices, banks, catering, churches, contractors shops, day nurseries, dry cleaning, dwelling units (above other accepted uses), funeral homes, grocery stores, hospitals, hotels, laboratories, offices, parking decks and garages (NOT surface lots as a principal use), personal service, restaurants, and so on.

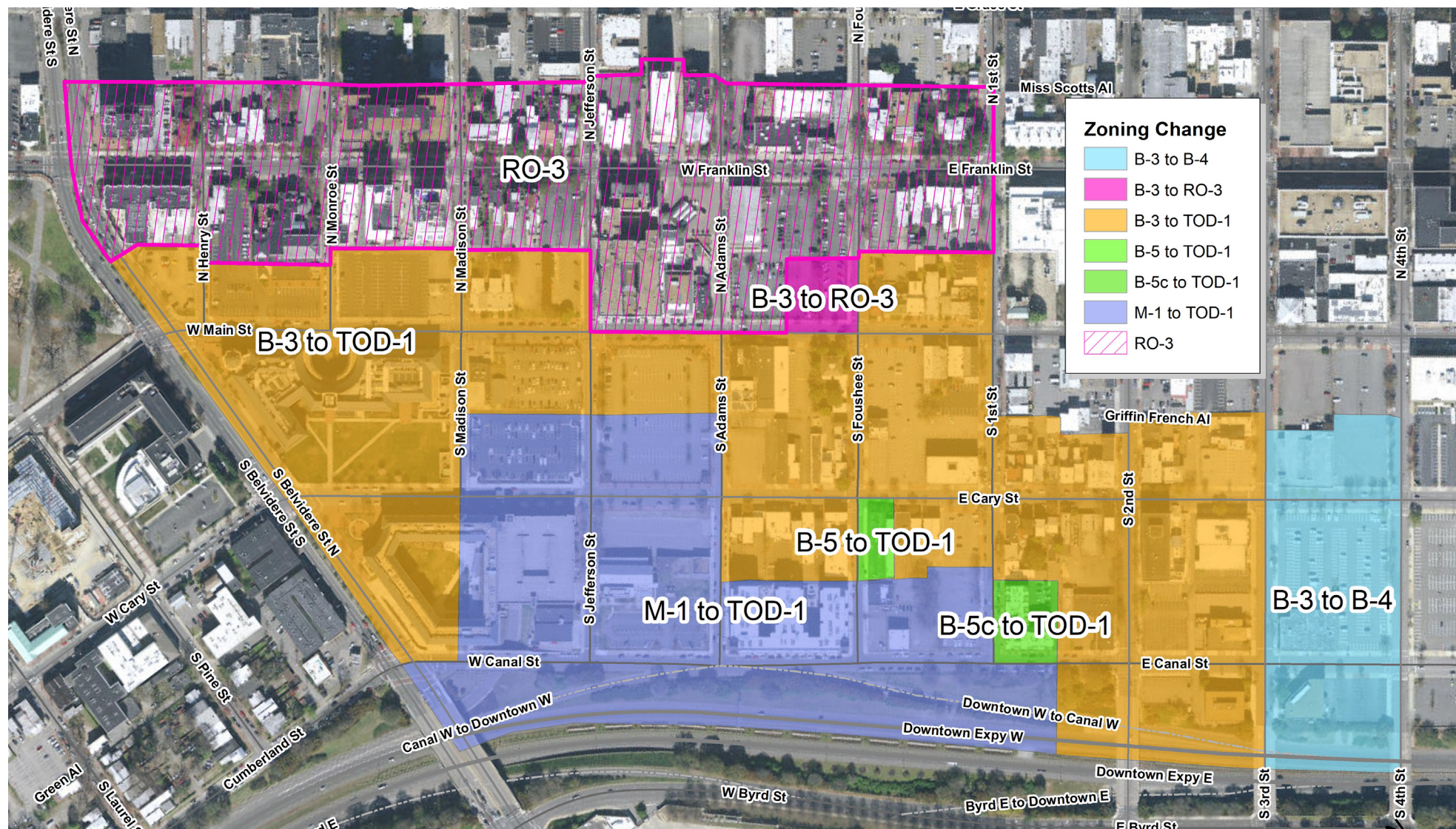
**TOD-1 (Transit-Oriented Development):** Richmond's newest zoning designation is intended to encourage redevelopment and place-making, including adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings, to create a high-quality urban realm. Uses range from grocery stores to apartments above first floor uses, as well as offices, laundromats, breweries, restaurants, etc.



See page 12 for height and setback requirements. For further detail please refer to [Richmond City's Zoning Ordinance](#).

# SPECIFIC AREAS OF ZONING CHANGE

The map below shows exactly which areas will be rezoned, from current to future. Note that the area being rezoned is much smaller than the area of the POD overlay. This is because much of Monroe Ward is already zoned B-4, which is compatible with plan goals. It is also important to note that the most significant change is replacing B-3 (auto-oriented commercial) and M-1 (light industrial) with TOD-1 (transit-oriented development), which is not only in keeping with the plan goals but is more consistent with existing development.



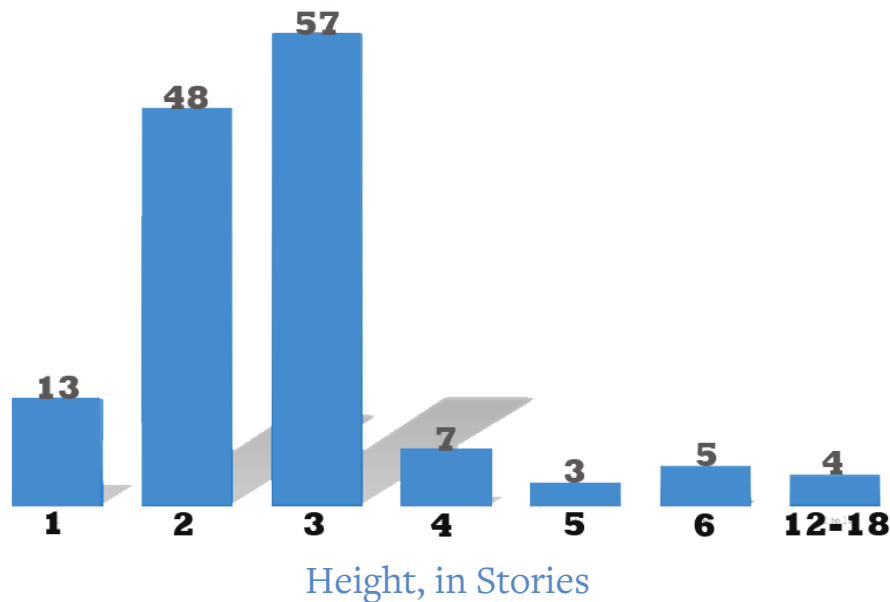
# BUILDING HEIGHTS IN MONROE WARD

At present, there is great variation in building heights in Monroe Ward, no matter the current zoning designation.

The charts below show building heights in two different sections of Monroe Ward. In the area currently zoned B-4, heights range from one to 23 stories, with an average of three stories. The Central National Bank building on Broad Street (23 stories at its tallest) is a significant statistical outlier and does not skew the average. In the rest of Monroe Ward, currently zoned RO-3, M-1 and B-3, heights range from one to 18 stories. The average building is also three stories, but there are nine buildings above five stories in these districts.

BUILDING HEIGHTS IN MONROE WARD - RO-3, B-3, M-1

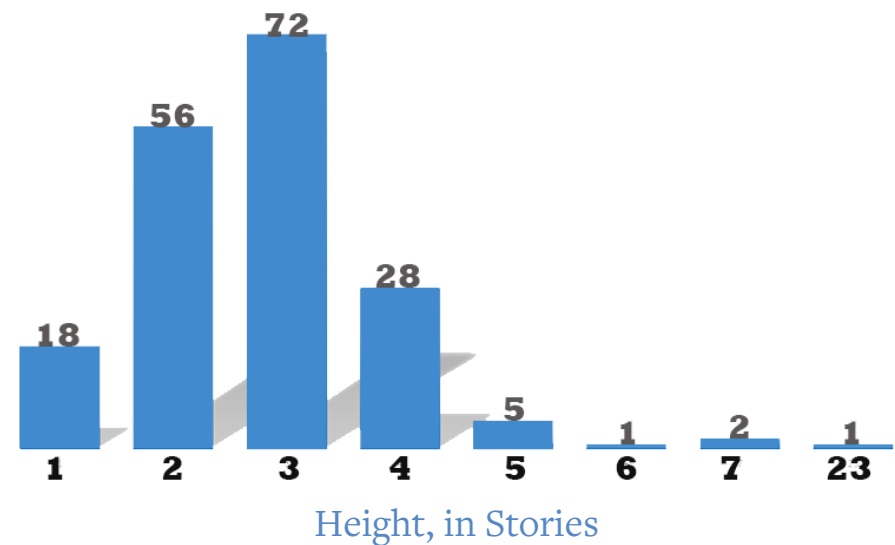
Number of Buildings



The map on the following page shows all buildings over six stories with current zoning districts. The majority are located in the RO-3 district, the tallest of which are on Franklin between Belvidere and Foushee.

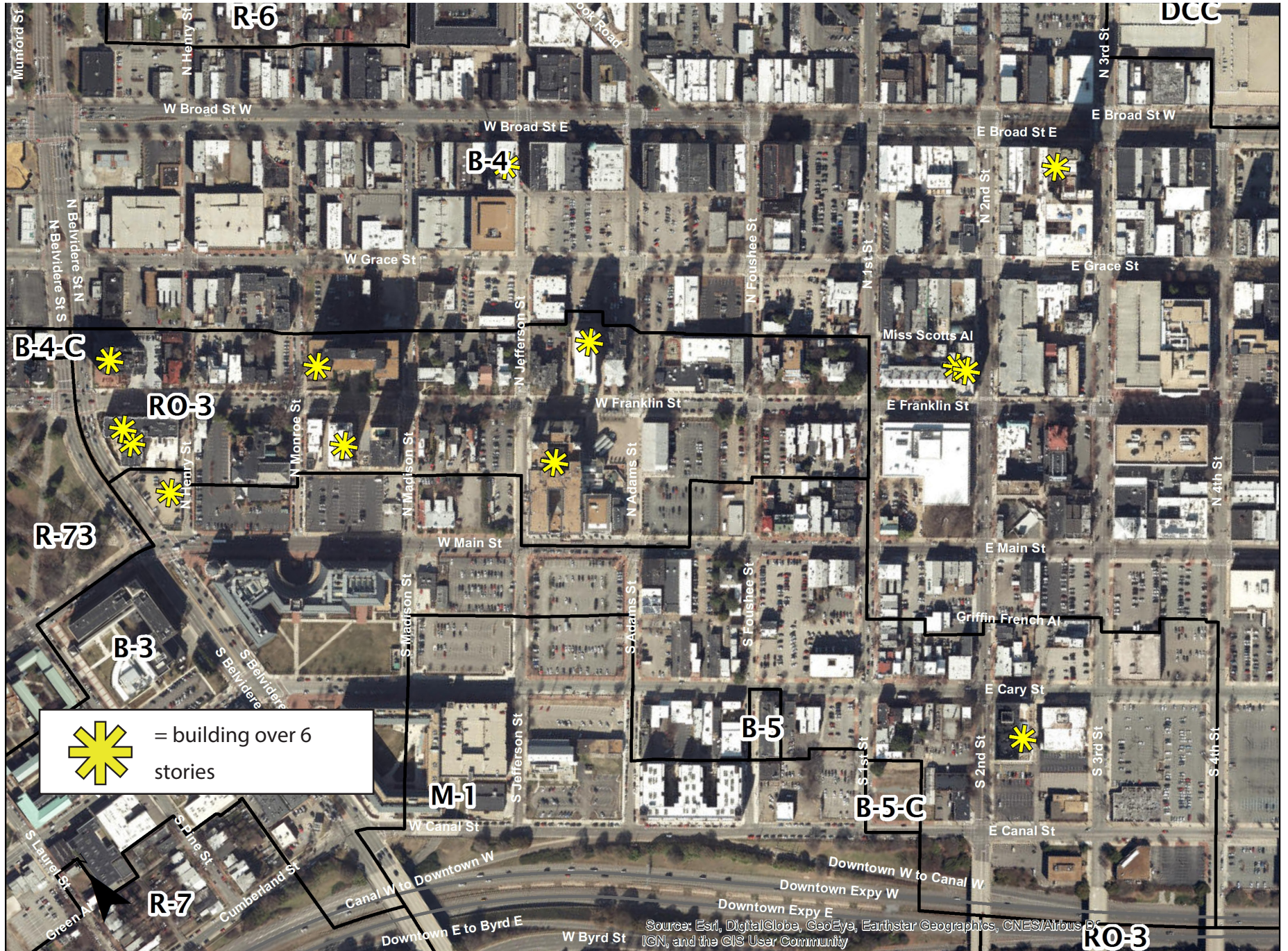
BUILDING HEIGHTS IN MONROE WARD - CURRENT B-4

Number of Buildings





# BUILDING HEIGHT AND EXISTING ZONING



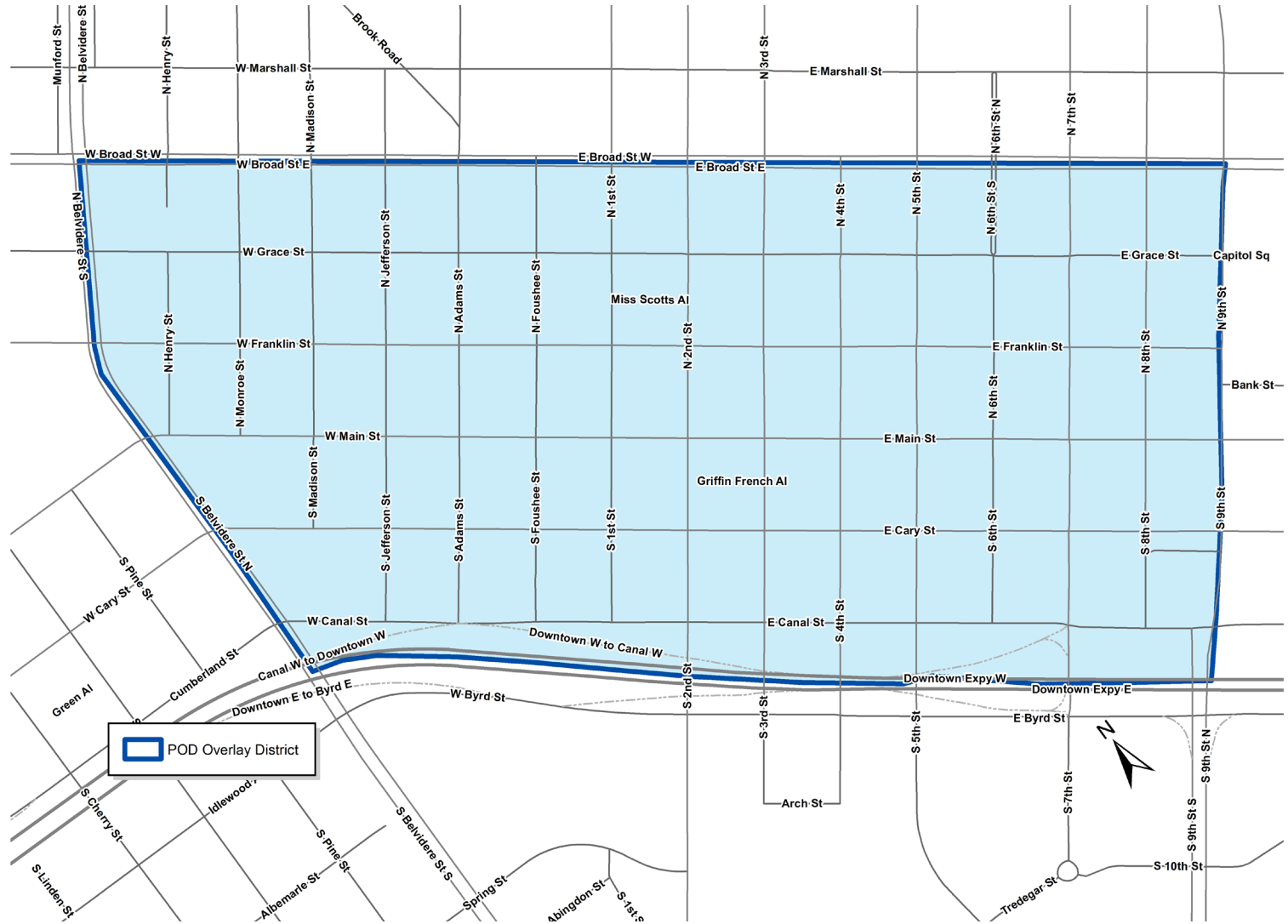
# PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY

What does a Plan of Development Overlay Zone mean and why do we need it?

While zoning district regulations are created to control land use and form to some extent, sometimes extra guidance is needed to ensure that new development is in keeping with the character of an area and/or the intent of a plan. A Plan of Development (POD) Overlay is an amendment to the official zoning map, and functions like another district, figuratively laying over the underlying districts.

Creating a POD Overlay means that in addition to adhering to use, setback, and parking requirements in either the B-4 or TOD-1 district, each new development proposed within the POD boundaries will be evaluated by Planning and Development Review staff to ensure that it meets the six Pulse Corridor design elements (p4) and is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

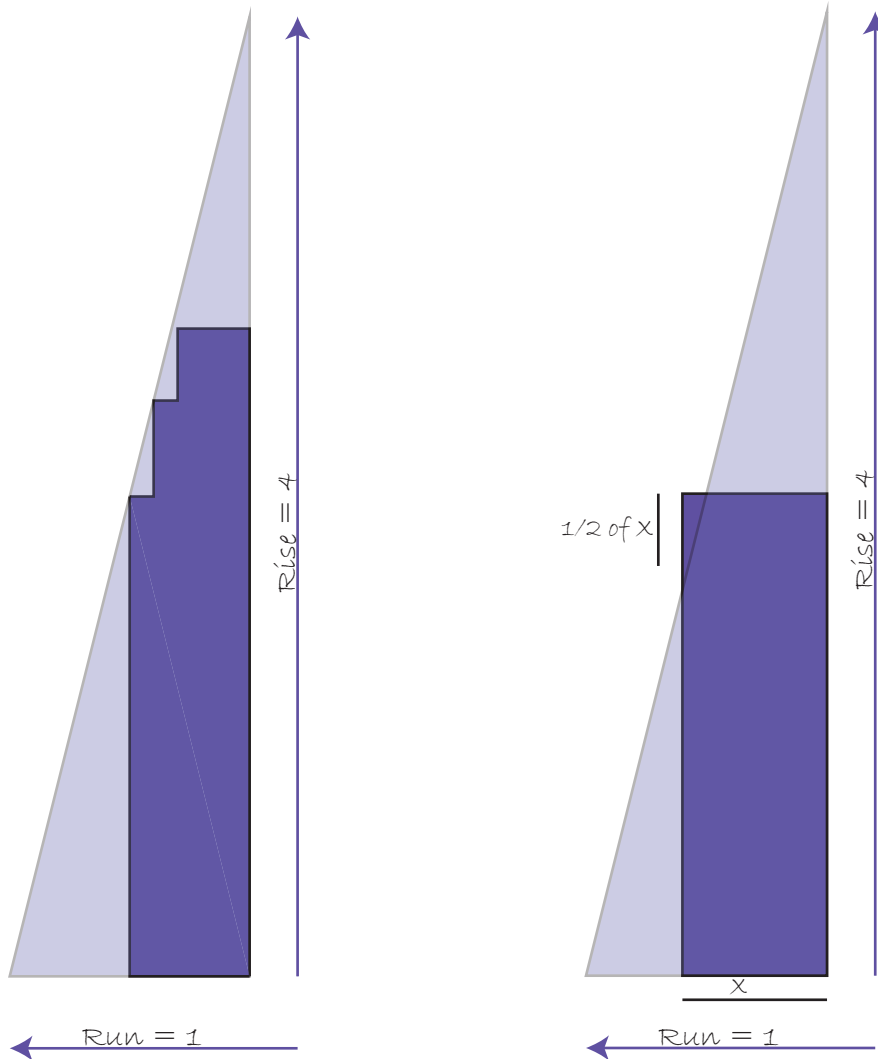
The POD overlay will be bounded by the Downtown Expressway, Belvidere Street, Broad Street and Ninth Street.



# AMENDMENTS TO THE B-4 DISTRICT

As part of this rezoning process the City is amending the B-4 district. Those changes will then be applicable elsewhere in districts zoned B-4.

The B-4 (Central Business) district currently has no height restriction, but is regulated in form by an inclined plane of four to one (4:1). In other words, imagine a plane rising from the street centerline in front of a parcel and extending at a rise over run ratio of one foot across to every four feet up.



every four feet up. The building may not break this plane except for a horizontal distance not exceeding 50% of the length of the property line along the street. The graphics at left show two options - building design which conforms to the inclined plane while adding as much height as possible (left), and breaking the inclined plane by half of the width of the parcel line (right).

This rezoning proposal will remove that second provision from the district.

In addition to removing the inclined plane, the B-4 district will be amended by the addition of Priority Streets (see page 13) and removing uses like contractors shops and funeral homes, which are incompatible with a downtown mixed-use district.

# ZONING DISTRICT COMPARISON

The chart below compares five zoning districts: M-1, B-3 and RO-3 currently exist in Monroe Ward. M-1 and B-3 will be replaced with TOD-1. RO-3 will be altered to create a more urban character. B-4 is already in the area and will be expanded.

ZONING DISTRICT	USES	HEIGHT	YARDS AND SETBACKS	PARKING
M-1	Variety of auto-oriented commercial and industrial uses including manufacturing, drive-thrus, auto sales and auto service centers as well as adult entertainment, retail, offices, and restaurants.	45' Max with some exceptions for additional height based on setbacks and inclined plane	None	Allows surface parking lots as Principal Use. No dwelling units permitted. Hotels/Motels: 1 space per guest room.
B-3	Variety of auto-oriented commercial uses including drive-thrus, auto sales and auto service centers as well as adult entertainment, retail, offices, and restaurants. Parking areas and parking lots allowed as principal use.	35', 60' under certain conditions for yard	None except when abutting an R district	Allows surface parking lots as Principal Use. Dwelling units above other uses: None for 1 to 3 units; otherwise, 1 space per 4 units. Hotels/Motels: 1 space per guest room. (Most other uses same in all districts)
RO-3	Single- and two-family attached and detached, multi-family, nursing homes, day nurseries, parking areas, parking decks, offices, lodges, funeral homes, hospitals, radio broadcasting studios, hotels and motels, adult day care facilities	1:3 inclined plane on front yard and 1:4 on other frontages	Min 15' front yards, side and rear yards between 10' and 15'. Smaller for single and two-family uses	Allows surface parking lots as Principal Use. Dwelling units: 1 to 1.5, depending on number of buildings on parcel. Hotel/Motel: 1 space per room up to 100 rooms, then 2 per room over 100 rooms. (Most other uses the same in all districts.)
TOD-1	Multifamily, variety of pedestrian-oriented commercial uses including retail, offices, hotels, and restaurants, as well as small-scale food and beverage manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, pet shops vets and kennels, Parking decks allowed with screening requirements.	12 Stories Max	Dwelling uses: Front: Min 10', Max 15' unless front yard is to be used as a pedestrian plaza and approved by POD. All other uses: none required, 10' Max unless front yard is to be used as a pedestrian plaza	Does not allow surface parking as Principle Use Dwelling units: none for 1 to 16 units; 1 per 2 units over 16 units. Hotels: 1 space per 4 rooms. (Most other uses the same in all districts.)
B-4	Multifamily, variety of pedestrian-oriented commercial uses including retail, offices, hotels, and restaurants. Parking decks allowed with screening requirements.	4:1 Inclined Plane, as existing. No height restriction as amended.	Max 10' where no other building is adjacent on same street frontage. Where existing buildings are adjacent, front yard will be the same as existing building closest to street but no greater than 10'	Does not allow surface parking as Principle Use Dwelling units: none for 1 to 16 units: 1 space per 4 units over 16 units; none if dwelling units in the same building as other use. Hotels: 1 per 4 rooms. (Most other uses same in all districts.)

# PRIORITY STREETS AND STREET-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL

Richmond City's official Zoning Map designates certain streets as "Street-Oriented Commercial", "Priority", or both. These designations are to ensure an active streetscape and an enhanced pedestrian environment in zoning districts which promote those values. Presently, Priority streets and Street-Oriented Commercial are both referenced in the TOD-1 District, and Street-Oriented Commercial streets are referenced in the B-4 District. This amendment process will update the Street-Oriented Commercial and Priority Streets designations in the official zoning map, as well as add language to accommodate Priority Streets in the B-4 district.



## THE RECAP: THERE ARE FIVE ELEMENTS TO THIS REZONING PROCESS

1. Amend the zoning map to depict new boundaries of zoning districts, from M-1 and B-3 to B-4 and TOD-1
2. Create a POD overlay for entire area based on the six form elements of the Pulse Corridor Plan
3. Amend the B-4 district to remove the provision allowing breaking the inclined plane, include Priority Streets language, and bring more in line with a walkable urban neighborhood
4. Update Street-Oriented Commercial and Priority Streets in the official zoning map
5. Update the language of the RO-3 district to bring more in line with a walkable urban neighborhood

If you have further questions, please contact  
Anne W. Darby, AICP  
Planner III, Zoning Specialist  
Department of Planning and Development Review  
Anne.Darby@richmondgov.com  
804-646-5648