

INTRODUCED: September 12, 2022

A RESOLUTION No. 2022-R058

To declare the City’s commitment to ensuring equitable access to extracurricular programming, recreational opportunities, and public spaces for the children, young adults, and residents of the city of Richmond; honoring the legacy of Arthur Ashe, Jr. as an element of the overall design of the proposed Diamond District redevelopment; pursuing opportunities for providing the recreational and organizational opportunities previously served by the Arthur Ashe, Jr. Athletic Center on sites in the general proximity of the proposed Diamond District redevelopment prior to the transfer and demolition of the Center; and intending to prioritize the appropriation of funds to support and expand recreational and extracurricular opportunities for the youth, young adults, and residents of the city of Richmond through the development and maintenance of community centers, athletic fields, public parks, and other facilities that provide safe and healthy enrichment opportunities.

Patrons – Mayor Stoney, President Newbille, Vice-President Robertson, Ms. Lambert,
Mr. Addison, Ms. Jordan, Ms. Lynch and Mr. Jones

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: SEP 26 2022 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, the Arthur Ashe, Jr. Athletic Center (the “Center”), located at 3017 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, with Tax Parcel No. N000-1510/009 in the 2022 records of the City Assessor, is a 6,000-seat athletic facility containing a basketball court, indoor track, and other amenities that served the children and families of Richmond for nearly forty years; and

AYES: 7 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: SEP 26 2022 REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

WHEREAS, the Center has historically served as an important community-gathering center hosting youth athletic competitions, concerts, summer camps, vaccination events, graduations, and other programming; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the Center has experienced substantial deferred maintenance leading to a significant reduction in programming; and

WHEREAS, today, the lack of modern amenities and the significant costs associated with needed repairs severely limit how the building can be used; and

WHEREAS, the Center is owned by the City and is located on a 4.015 acre parcel within the a larger group of parcels intended for redevelopment as part of a project known as the Diamond District; and

WHEREAS, changes to the Center are not included in the first phase of the proposed Diamond District redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the important role the Center has played in the City's history and, therefore, included the relocation of the functions of the Center as one of the stated goals in its December, 2021, Diamond District Request for Interest, its March, 2022, Request for Additional Information, and its June, 2022, Request for Offers; and

WHEREAS, the redevelopment of the Diamond District will provide new recreational amenities, public space, employment opportunities, and mixed-income housing for the families of the city of Richmond; and

WHEREAS, the redevelopment of the Diamond District will prioritize multi-modal transportation, making it easier for families on foot, bicycle, or public transportation to move within the Diamond District and to nearby family-friendly activities, including the Science

Museum of Virginia, Children's Museum of Richmond, Battery Park, the future Fall Line Trail, and surrounding neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the creation of new greenspace and connected public spaces, will provide Richmond's families with new access to retail, entertainment, restaurants, and gathering space; and

WHEREAS, a new, publicly-owned baseball stadium proposed for the Diamond District not only will enable the City to continue to host a minor league baseball team but also will create a modern facility available for other public uses like graduations, concerts, and other public gatherings; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the public amenities planned for the Diamond District, Virginia Commonwealth University plans the development of a 40-acre athletic village immediately east of the Diamond District that includes new modern athletic facilities, which Virginia Commonwealth University officials have indicated could be made available for recreational use by the City's youth and young adults through a separate use agreement; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council hereby declares the City's commitment to ensuring equitable access to extracurricular programming, recreational opportunities, and public spaces for the children, young adults, and residents of the city of Richmond.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, as future phases of the multi-year Diamond District redevelopment are pursued, the City will remain committed to honoring the legacy of Arthur Ashe, Jr. as an element of the overall design of the Diamond District.

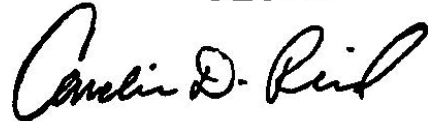
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the City vigorously will pursue opportunities for providing the recreational and organizational opportunities previously served by the Center on sites in the general proximity of the Diamond District prior to the transfer of the parcel on which the Center is situated and the demolition of the Center.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, in line with the goals of City's Equity Agenda, adopted by Resolution No. 2021-R032, adopted June 14, 2021, and the vision established by the City's Master Plan, approved by Ordinance No. 2020-236, adopted December 14, 2020, the Council intends to prioritize the appropriation of funds to support and expand recreational and extracurricular opportunities for the youth, young adults, and residents of the city of Richmond through the development and maintenance of community centers, athletic fields, public parks, and other facilities that provide safe and healthy enrichment opportunities.

**A TRUE COPY:
TESTE:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carlin D. Reil". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

City Clerk



CITY OF RICHMOND

INTRACITY CORRESPONDENCE

O&R

REQUEST

DATE: September 7, 2022

EDITION: 1

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

FROM: The Honorable Levar M. Stoney, Mayor

Handwritten signature of Levar M. Stoney.

THROUGH: J.E. Lincoln Saunders, Chief Administrative Officer

Handwritten signature of J.E. Lincoln Saunders.

THROUGH: Sharon Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Planning and Economic Development

Handwritten signature of Sharon Ebert.

RE: Arthur Ashe Jr. Athletic Center Resolution

ORD. OR RES. No. _____

PURPOSE: To express commitment for relocating the functions of the Arthur Ashe Jr. Athletic Center and continuing the legacy of Arthur Ashe Junior through the development and use of new and existing facilities better equipped to provide recreational opportunities to Richmond's families and residents.

REASON: To ensure that Richmond's children, youth, and residents have equitable access to extracurricular programming, recreational opportunities, and public spaces, in high-quality facilities. Further, to re-emphasize the need to include recognition of the legacy of Arthur Ashe Jr. in the Diamond District Redevelopment.

RECOMMENDATION: The City Administration recommends adoption.

BACKGROUND: The Arthur Ashe Jr. Athletic Center ("Center") is a city-owned property located within the Diamond District redevelopment site. The nearly forty-year-old recreational facility was designed to seat 6,000 people. It has hosted youth athletic competitions, concerts, camps, vaccination drives, and other events open to the public. Today, the public's use of the building is severely limited by a lack of modern amenities and significant maintenance challenges. The facility also serves as a tribute to Richmond's native son, tennis champion, and civil rights advocate, Arthur Ashe Jr.

The City is currently pursuing the redevelopment of 67.57 acres of publicly-owned land known as the "Diamond District." The vision for the redevelopment is the growth of a new neighborhood, which will create employment opportunities, mixed-income housing, public green spaces, and a modern, publicly-owned baseball stadium. The goals established for the Diamond District redevelopment by the December 2021 Request for Interest (RFI) include "Assist[ing] the City in

relocating the functions at AAJAC, demolishing the current building, and redeveloping the current AAJAC site” and “Continu[ing] to honor Arthur Ashe Jr.’s legacy.”¹ The RFI also requests proposals that incorporate family-friendly features; prioritize cycling and pedestrian infrastructure; and better connect the area to surrounding neighborhoods that hold a wealth of public facilities designed for children and young people.

The redevelopment is planned to occur over many phases, the latter of which include the transfer and demolition of the Center. As the City moves forward with the Diamond District redevelopment it remains committed to vigorously pursuing opportunities to replace the uses of the Center in modern facilities, before transferring the parcel or demolishing the building. Further, the City remains steadfast in ensuring that Mr. Ashe’s legacy will continue to be honored in the growing neighborhood known as the Diamond District.

FISCAL IMPACT / COST: N/A

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: N/A

BUDGET AMENDMENT NECESSARY: No

REVENUE TO CITY: N/A

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon adoption

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: September 12, 2022

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: September 26, 2022

REQUESTED AGENDA: Consent

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: N/A (Committee Referral Waiver Requested)

CONSIDERATION BY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES: None.

AFFECTED AGENCIES:

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.: N/A

REQUIRED CHANGES TO WORK PROGRAM(S): N/A

ATTACHMENTS: N/A

STAFF: Maritza Pechin, Deputy Director for Equitable Development

¹ See “Request for Interest: Diamond District, Richmond, VA,” City of Richmond (Dec. 28, 2021), at 13-15, <https://rvadiamond.com/>.