



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2021-331:** To rezone the property known as 4501 East Main Street from the RF-2 Riverfront District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** December 6, 2021

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#### **PETITIONER**

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

#### **LOCATION**

4501 East Main Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To rezone the property known as 4501 East Main Street from the RF-2 Riverfront District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant has requested to rezone the aforementioned property to follow the requirements of the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District and recommendations of the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

Staff finds that the proposed rezoning is appropriate given the area's future land use designation within the City's recent Richmond 300 Plan. The Plan designates a future land use category for the property as Corridor Mixed-Use and locates the property within the Rockett's Landing node. The subject property is adjacent to an existing TOD-1 district, and rezoning it to TOD-1 would enable unified development along the Main Street corridor.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the rezoning request.

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#### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

##### **Site Description**

The property consists of approximately 80,817 SF, or 1.86 acres, of land. The property is located in the Rockett's Landing area, between East Main Street and the CSX Railroad Right of Way to the East.

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

The proposed rezoning would accommodate mixed-use development of the property.

### **Richmond 300 Master Plan**

The City's *Richmond 300* Plan designates a future land use category for the aforementioned property as Corridor Mixed-Use which is defined as areas "Found along major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium- to medium high-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development."

Corridor Mixed-Use is found "...along major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium- to medium high-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development." 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 introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. 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. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be of 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.

Intensity: Buildings generally ranging from two to ten stories, based on street widths and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas. 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.

This property is located within a designated "Great Street" under the category of "Major Mixed-Use Street" which is characterized by the following:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas
- Prioritize use and density-scaled sidewalks and crosswalks
- Require form elements, such as buildings to the street with parking in the rear, as well as building windows and entrances on the street
- Incorporate streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Prioritize the curbside for walking, bicycling, transit, and short-term parking access and loading for local shops and restaurants (p. 72)

The Property is also located within the Rockett's Landing Neighborhood Node. The Vision for this Node is for the area to become "...is a dense, walkable destination for workers, residents, and

visitors. The underdeveloped land north of the station is redeveloped to provide amenities to adjacent residents and visitors to the James River. Residents of Greater Fulton easily access the terminus station via Orleans Street which has become a major mixed-use area featuring active ground floor uses and a walkable environment. The Virginia Capital Trail is enhanced by the Gillies Creek Greenway that connects through Gillies Park and up into Church Hill. The character of single-family neighborhoods east of Williamsburg Avenue is preserved with programs that allow homeowners to live in high-quality homes and programs that increase homeownership opportunities. The history of Historic Fulton is shared and honored at the Historic Fulton Memorial Park at the base of Powhatan Hill.” (p. C-28)

### **Zoning**

The properties are located in the RF-2 Riverfront District. The application is for the property to be designated as TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District. The property is currently vacant with construction underway. The City’s Zoning Division is supportive of the request for TOD-1.

### **Surrounding Area**

While the property is surrounded by a large M-2 Heavy Industrial zone that occupies much of the riverfront, recent changes in zoning to adjacent properties include TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal and B-7 Mixed-Use Business zones. Once dominated by industrial uses, the area is rapidly developing toward higher density residential and mixed-uses.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified adjacent property owners and the Shockoe Partnership civic association of the proposed rezoning. To this date, staff has not received any letters or notices of support or opposition to this application.

**Staff Contact:** Jonathan Brown, Senior Planner, PDR, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734.