



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-220: To declare a public necessity for and to authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to acquire by gift, purchase, condemnation, or otherwise certain fee simple interests, temporary construction easements, permanent drainage easements, and permanent utility easements, for the transportation improvements as part of James River Branch Trail Project from 49th street to its intersection with Hopkins Road.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: September 17, 2024

PETITIONER

M.S. Khara, P.E.; City Engineer

LOCATION

Seven properties from 49th street to its intersection with Hopkins Road.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The City of Richmond developed the concept for the James River Branch Rail-Trail more than a decade ago. The initial plan called for construction of a shared-use path and greenway along the abandoned James River Branch Railroad corridor, located in Council Districts 5 and 8, in Southside Richmond. The JRBT will be a paved, shared-use path for bicyclists and pedestrians, extending from 49th Street to Hopkins Road. Future extensions are conceived contingent upon availability of additional segments of the abandoned railroad corridor and funding.

The JRBT will connect to and provide access to multiple neighborhoods along the corridor. The path and greenway will serve pedestrians, including those with mobility impairments, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users as both an active-transportation and recreational facility, linking several underserved communities and providing needed greenspace. Further, this facility would link to the expanding network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities being developed by the City, including the Fall Line Trail which is receiving significant funding from the Commonwealth.

Design is anticipated to be completed by Late Summer 2024. The design and construction of this Project are performed using American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) federal funds. The project is anticipated to be advertised for construction in early Fall 2024. Total Project Design, Right of way and Constructing Budget is \$ 9 Million.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

Seven properties from 49th street to its intersection with Hopkins Road, as shown in drawings prepared by Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP designated as DPW Drawing No. O-29054.

Richmond 300 Master Plan

This project conforms to Goal 8-Equitable Transportation in the Richmond 300 master plan by expanding and improving walking and biking infrastructure.

Public Engagement

This project held a Public Information Meeting (PIM) at Southside Community Center on 3/25/24, then was recommended for initial and final approval by Urban Design Committee (UDC) on 4/4/24. Finally, it was approved by City Planning Commission (CPC) on 04/16/24.

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