



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2021-351-** To declare a public necessity for and to authorize the acquisition by gift of the property known as the Lee Circle from the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purpose of its use for the benefit of the public in accordance with the City's master plan.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** December 20, 2021

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#### **PETITIONER**

Matthew A. Welch, Senior Policy Advisor – Planning & Economic Development Portfolio

#### **LOCATION**

1700 Monument Avenue

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to, on behalf of the City, accept a donation of fee simple title to that certain real estate located at 1700 Monument Avenue, identified as Tax Parcel No. W0001252001 in the records of the City Assessor, and commonly referred to as “Lee Circle” from the Commonwealth of Virginia, for use of the property for the benefit of the public in accordance with the Richmond 300 Master Plan, which real estate is more particularly described within the document attached to this O&R Request entitled “Lee Circle Legal Description”.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The Commonwealth of Virginia is working towards completing a project that it commenced in September of this year on Lee Circle to completely remove the Lee Monument and pedestal from the property. Following conclusion of the monument and pedestal removal, the Commonwealth desires to donate title to the real estate to the City and the City desires to acquire the real estate through acceptance of such donation.

The Richmond 300 Master Plan recommends a land use of “Public Open Space” for the subject property. Public Open Space is defined in the Master Plan as public and quasi-public parks, recreation areas, open spaces, and cemeteries. These areas should be designed in a manner to allow access by all modes of transportation, while emphasizing connections to bicycle and pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and shared-use paths.

Goal 4 under the “High-Quality Places” chapter of Richmond 300 is to “Establish a distinctive city comprising architecturally significant buildings connected by a network of walkable urban streets and open spaces to support an engaging built environment.”

Goal 17 under the “Thriving Environment” chapter of Richmond 300 is to “Positively adapt to the effects of a changing climate via RVAgreen 2050, and ensure that all residents have equitable access to nature and a healthy community.”

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Accepting the donation of the Lee Circle from the Commonwealth of Virginia aligns with the City's vision for the Public Open Space land use designation, while also contributing to the aforementioned goals.

Staff recommends approval of this request.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

State owned property through the Commonwealth of Virginia Division Of Engineering

### **PROPOSED USE FOR THE PROPERTY**

Public Open Space

### **MASTER PLAN**

The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property as Public Open Space which is defined as "Public and quasi-public parks, recreation areas, open spaces, and cemeteries." Includes passive and active recreation, natural habitats, cemeteries, and large plazas. Designed in a manner to allow access by all modes of transportation, while emphasizing connections to bicycle and pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and shared-use paths. Bike parking and other such amenities are provided as well.

Primary Uses: Open space.

Secondary Uses: Cultural, institutional, and governmental. (p. 70)

### **ZONING**

R-6 Single Family Attached Residential

### **SURROUNDING AREA**

The area includes a variety residential densities as well as some commercial to the north of the property along Broad Street.

### **Staff Contact:**

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