



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

CPCR. 2022-023: To declare an intent to amend the official zoning map for the purpose of rezoning certain properties in the area generally north of East Broad Street, south and west of Interstate 64/95, and east of North Third Street in accordance with the *Richmond 300* Master Plan.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Department of Planning and Development Review
Date: March 7, 2022

PETITIONER

City of Richmond
900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

The area generally north of East Broad Street, south and west of Interstate 64/95, and east of North Third Street.

PURPOSE

To amend the Zoning Ordinance for the purpose of implementing the vision for City Center as outlined in the *Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth* Master Plan.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth was adopted by the City Planning Commission Resolution 2020-050 and City Council Ordinance 2020-236. City Planning Commission subsequently adopted the “City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan” as an incorporated element of the *Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth* Master Plan through City Council Ordinance 2022-010. The City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan outlines the following vision for City Center:

The vision for City Center is to become the engine for expanding Greater Richmond’s life sciences industries. City Center will be the place to live, learn, collaborate, create, and develop new life science businesses in a high density, walkable, urban full-service environment that includes multi-modal transportation options to city and regional neighborhoods and job centers. (p. 32)

The current zoning of City Center is primarily CM, RP, RO-3, and B-4 and does not align with the vision described in the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan via the vision statement (see above), illustrations, site plans, and future land use designations for City Center – see page 33 for the conceptual map of the City Center Innovation District and pages 30-31 for descriptions of the Downtown Mixed-Use future land use category.

A primary next step to further the vision created by Richmonders is to rezone City Center to align with the innovation vision by allowing mixed-uses including residential, ground floor activation, and unlimited height and density. Rezoning can allow uses not permitted today, such as residential uses, which are key elements in fostering a vibrant innovation district. The rezoning can also include open space provisions that ensure there is adequate open space included within the development footprint. The City Center primary next step refers to Goal 3 of the plan which contains many strategies to help implement the vision of City Center, including, but not limited to the following:

Goal 3: Zoning & Urban Design - Create a distinctive neighborhood with high-quality design and activated streets. (p.42)

Objective: Develop City Center into a high-quality, distinctive, well-designed, walkable neighborhood. (p.42)

Strategy a. Develop a new zoning district for City Center that supports the development of uses that support the life sciences innovation district and create a walkable urban realm. Explore creating one zoning district for all the properties from I-95/I-64 to E. Broad Street and N. 5th Street.

In order to commence the rezoning process, Staff recommends that the City Planning Commission approve this resolution. After approval, Staff will commence a community engagement process to determine the appropriate zoning districts to reclassify parcels within the study area to achieve the City's vision, as outlined in the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan, for City Center.

Staff recommends approval of the Resolution.

Staff Contact:

Brian P. Mercer
Planner, Office of Equitable Development
Brian.Mercer@rva.gov
646-6704