



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

CPCR. 2022-078: To declare an intent to amend the official zoning ordinance for the purpose of amending the RP Research Park District in accordance with the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Department of Planning and Development Review
Date: July 18, 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 City Center Innovation District Small Area 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 sets forth recommendations and policy to guide the future growth of City Center. One main recommendation of the plan 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. The City Center plan calls for the creation of a new Innovation Zoning District; however, staff recommends it is more practical at this time to amend the existing RP zoning district and expand the boundaries of the district to cover the majority of the City Center study area.

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. For example, residential uses are not permitted principal uses in the existing RP and CM zoning districts. These proposed amendments would significantly increase the number of permitted principal uses in the RP zoning district to align with the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan. Another intention of the additional permitted uses in the RP zoning district is to prevent any nonconforming uses in the City Center study area.

In addition, the existing RP and CM zoning districts do not have feature requirements (i.e. building façade fenestration and usable open space requirements) that are emphasized in the City Center Small Area Plan and Richmond 300. The proposed amendments to the RP district would create these new feature requirements while amending existing requirements regarding yards, screening, parking and circulation of vehicles, height, and off-street parking requirements. As previously mentioned, the City Center Small Innovation District Small Area plan calls for unlimited height in this area of the City. These proposed amendments would permit unlimited height while creating a building stepback requirement to ensure the maintenance of light, air, and a comfortable pedestrian experience at ground level. Minor amendments to the existing RP district sign regulations are proposed as well.

In order to implement the vision outlined in the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan, Staff recommends that the City Planning Commission approve this resolution.

Staff recommends approval of the Resolution.

Staff Contact:

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