



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2022-329** - To amend Ord. No. 2022-057, adopted May 9, 2022, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, and determined a means of financing the same, by transferring \$52,000.00 from the Percent for Arts project; and to amend Ord. No. 2022-055, adopted May 9, 2022, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 General Fund Budget and made appropriations thereto, by (i) creating a new line item in the Non-Departmental agency entitled "RRHA for Hillside Court Playground," (ii) increasing estimated revenues by \$52,000.00, and (iii) appropriating \$52,000.00 to the new RRHA for Hillside Court Playground in the Non-Departmental agency, all for the purpose of providing funds for improvements to the Hillside Court community playground located at 1500 Harwood Street in the city of Richmond.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** December 5, 2022

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#### **PETITIONER**

Kevin J. Vonck, Director, Department of Planning and Development Review

#### **LOCATION**

Hillside Court Playground

#### **PURPOSE**

To amend Ord. No. 2022-057, adopted May 9, 2022, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, and determined a means of financing the same, by transferring \$52,000.00 from the Percent for Arts project; and to amend Ord. No. 2022-055, adopted May 9, 2022, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 General Fund Budget and made appropriations thereto, by (i) creating a new line item in the Non-Departmental agency entitled "RRHA for Hillside Court Playground," (ii) increasing estimated revenues by \$52,000.00, and (iii) appropriating \$52,000.00 to the new RRHA for Hillside Court Playground in the Non-Departmental agency, all for the purpose of providing funds for improvements to the Hillside Court community playground located at 1500 Harwood Street in the city of Richmond.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The Public Art Commission (PAC) selected, and City Planning Commission approved, an artist for an installation as part of the *playground+* project at the Hillside Court Apartment complex. Since the work will be installed on property owned by the RRHA, not the City, the PAC is requesting to grant the funds for the project to RRHA in the amount of fifty-two thousand dollars (\$52,000.00). RRHA will then contract with the artist and architect for the installation of the work and will own the work thereafter. This option was preferred over (i) City contracting for and owning the work and (ii) accompanying establishment of a City easement for the work on RRHA property.

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Councilmember Ellen Robertson approached the PAC requesting a public art installation be created for the Hillside Court Apartments as part of a larger playground renovation that was in underway. Although the PAC cannot typically apply its funding to non-Capital Improvement projects, its FY22 budget included a \$306,396 cash contribution that the Department of Budget & Strategic Planning (DBSP) explained as follows: “Several years ago, City Council added funding to Percent for the Arts and the funding was not appropriated; this caused the funding to move to a fund balance account for Percent for the Arts. To clean up our CAFR, DBSP moved the funding from the fund balance and into the project for this year.” DBSP confirmed that this unique source of funding can be used by the PAC to pursue a few non-CIP commissions. On Monday, 7 March 2022, the Planning Commission approved a § 17.05 City Charter location, character, and extent (LCE) review for the project.

Staff recommends approval of this request.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

Playground within the Hillside Court apartment complex located at 1845 Southlawn Ave.

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

Playground Art Installation

### **MASTER PLAN**

The Richmond 300 Master Plan recommends a Neighborhood Mixed-Use Land Use category for this apartment complex. Neighborhood Mixed-Use is defined as “Existing or new highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses.

Development Style: These areas feature a variety of building types that are close to one another and create a unified street wall. The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas vary depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Setbacks, plazas, and parks create a sense of place and community gathering areas. New developments on larger parcels continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity within the neighborhood and to adjacent neighborhoods. In historic neighborhoods, small-scale commercial uses exist today or should be allowed to reestablish. In new neighborhoods, small scale commercial buildings should be introduced.

Ground Floor: Regardless of use, buildings should engage the street with features such as street-oriented façades with windows and door openings along street frontages. Appropriate setbacks, open space, front porches, elevated ground floors, and other features that provide a sense of privacy should be provided for residential uses.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. New driveways are prohibited on Priority and Principal Street frontages. Vehicular

access to parcels should use alleys wherever possible. Parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.

Intensity: Building heights are generally two to four stories. Buildings taller than four stories may be found along major streets. Parcels are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 sq. ft.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), and open space.

Secondary Uses: Large multi-family buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

## **ZONING**

Zoning for this area is primarily R-48 Multifamily Residential District. Large areas to the east and west are zoned M-1 Light Industrial and R-5 Single-Family Residential, respectively.

## **SURROUNDING AREA**

Much of the area includes low to medium density residential with some auto-oriented commercial uses along the major arterials.

## **Staff Contact:**

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