CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review
Staff Report

Ord. No. 2023-123 – To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to accept funds in the amount of $7,500,000.00 from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, through the Virginia Resources Authority, and 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 (i) establishing a new project for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities in the Culture and Recreation category called the "Stormwater Mayo Island Purchase" project and (ii) increasing estimated revenues from the funds received from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the amount appropriated to the new Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities' Stormwater Mayo Island Purchase project in the Culture and Recreation category by $7,500,000.00, all for the purpose of funding the acquisition of Mayo Island in the city of Richmond. (6th District); and

Ord. No. 2023-124 - To declare a public necessity for and to authorize the acquisition of the parcels of real property owned by Mayo's Island, L.C. located at 501 South 14th Street, 501 1R South 14th Street, 503 South 14th Street, 505 South 14th Street, and 508 South 14th Street, and a parcel of real property owned by Alan T. Shaia and Wayne T. Shaia located at 501 2R South 14th Street, for the purpose of maintaining the properties as a City green space and recreational area. (6th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities
Date: April 24, 2023

PETITIONER
Christopher Frelke, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities

LOCATION
Mayo's Island

PURPOSE
An ordinance is necessary to authorize the acceptance and appropriation of the VDCR grant, create a new capital project titled "Stormwater Mayo Island Purchase" and to authorize the acquisition, through conveyance of deed Mayo Island from the Mayo's Island L.C.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION
The goal of this project is to acquire Mayo Island from private landowners and turn it into public open-space and implement Natural and Nature Based Features (NNBF) such as converting riparian buffer turf and impervious areas to forest and protecting natural wetlands with surrounding upland buffer.

A benefit to nature-based projects is that there can be low ongoing maintenance costs. Once Mayo Island is acquired restoration work can commence to remove concrete and asphalt surfaces and restore vegetation. Land use changes that are anticipated after acquisition include impervious urban surface reduction, forest buffers, urban forest planting, urban tree canopy expansion,

conservation landscaping practices, erosion and sediment control, shoreline management (urban), urban nutrient management, wet ponds and wetlands. Removing approximately 8 acres of surface parking and restoring it to a more natural area will have many co-benefits.

Mayo Island can be programmed by the Department of Parks and Recreation and a conservation easement will be established. Acquiring Mayo Island for public use has long been part of planning for clean water, green spaces and public access to the James River.

Staff recommends approval of this request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

SITE DESCRIPTION
The subject property, in total, consists of a combined 16 acres and is located at the convergence of the fall zone and tidewater sections of the James River. The island is bisected by Mayo Bridge, which connects 14th Street and Hull Street.

PROPOSED USE FOR THE PROPERTY
Outdoor recreation and open space.

MASTER PLAN
The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates Mayo's Island as Public Open Space, which is defined as public and quasi-public parks, recreation areas, open spaces, and cemeteries. That include passive and active recreation, natural habitats, cemeteries, and large plazas.

The Richmond Riverfront Plan, adopted November 26, 2012, includes plans for converting Mayo's Island into a "Central Riverfront Park." The plan calls for removing the existing pavement and buildings to create a public green space featuring walking paths, art installations, and gardens.

ZONING
The subject parcels and surrounding properties are located within the M-1 Light Industrial District.

SURROUNDING AREA
The subject properties are surrounded by the James River on all sides, and are bisected by the Mayo Bridge.

Staff Contact:
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Howard Glenn, Department of Public Utilities
Jason May, Department of Budget