



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia
Planning Commission



UDC 2023-13	FINAL Location, Character, and Extent Review	Meeting Date: 10/16/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	Winston Phillips – Capital Improvements Projects, CIP, DPW	
Project Description	UDC 2023-18 FINAL Location, Character, Extent Review for a City of Richmond Gateway Sign located on Hull Street Road at the Chippenham Parkway Interchange.	
Project Location		
Address: Hull Street Road at the Chippenham Parkway Interchange		
Property Owner: City of Richmond Right-of-Way		
High-Level Details: The project includes a new "Gateway" sign to the City of Richmond along Hull Street Road from Chesterfield County. The sign will be designed to be a breakaway sign located in the wide median with proposed native/drought-tolerant landscaping to compliment the sign and reduce unnecessary concrete. The gateway sign will include lighting.		
UDC Recommendation		
Staff Contact	Ray Roakes, Planner, raymond.roakes@rva.gov	
Public Outreach/ Previous Reviews	NA	
Recommended Conditions for FINAL	<p>The UDC recommends the following condition:</p> <p>It is recommended that the Applicant utilize organic treatment for pests, utilize native and noninvasive species for plantings, and provide long term maintenance to the site.</p>	

Findings of Fact

Site Description	The site is located in the Right-of-Way for Hull Street Road at the Chippenham Parkway Interchange in the existing concrete median.
Scope of Review	The project is subject to location, character, and extent review under section 17.05 and 17.07 of the Richmond City Charter.
Project Description	The purpose of the project is to provide a new gateway sign as drivers enter the City from Chesterfield County.

	<p>The sign will be located in the median of Hull Street Road which currently consists of a concrete space roughly 12 feet wide.</p> <p>The proposal is to construct a 15.5 foot tall and 6.5 foot wide gateway sign welcoming drivers into the City. The script on the sign will be internally illuminated as well as the large logo located at the top. The script will read “Welcome to the Hull Street Corridor.” A photo of the Manchester Civic Building will be located on the bottom portion. Landscaping will be provided for 60ft before and after the sign along the median. This landscaping will convert existing concrete space into landscape space.</p> <p>Staff worked closely with the Applicant to have the design fit into the already existing wayfinding signage primarily found in Downtown, the Fan, and Carytown that was previously approved by the UDC and Planning Commission. Staff is currently working (but has not finalized) with other City departments to expand that signage package throughout the City to create a set of unified signage themes across wayfinding, gateway, neighborhood identification, and other types of specialized signage. The proposed Hull Street Gateway Sign is a long standing project that should not wait for any further larger approvals, but will none-the-less generally follow future planned design scheme.</p> <p>Staff recommends approval. The proposal enhances a long underserved stretch of Hull Street and an important entrance location to the City. The proposal also creates landscaping space in a space that is currently all concrete. Staff fully supports the proposed design as meeting already established graphic themes in other parts of the City.</p> <p>The UDC recommends Approval with an added condition. It is recommended that the Applicant utilize organic treatment for pests, utilize native and noninvasive species for plantings, and provide long term maintenance to the site.</p>
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Urban Design Guidelines and Master Plan

	Text	Staff Analysis
Master Plan	NA	
Urban Design Guidelines		
PAVING AND SURFACE MATERIALS – Page 3	<i>The design guidelines suggest compatibility, performance, durability, maintenance requirements, cost, and sustainability be considered when designing pavement areas. Impervious areas should be limited and pervious pavement materials should be introduced, especially in minimally used parking areas.</i>	PAVING AND SURFACE MATERIALS Proposal reduces concrete land cover.
LANDSCAPING – Page 10	<i>Plantings should be compatible with and relate to surrounding landscapes. Site landscaping should complement and soften new construction and building architecture. Plant materials should create spaces by providing walls and canopies in outdoor areas. In addition, landscaping should provide a sense of scale and seasonal interest. Species diversity, plant selection, and long term maintenance should be considered.</i>	LANDSCAPING Landscaping will be included and will be native and non-invasive.

<p>Signage – Page 20</p>	<p><u>Messaging</u> <i>A sign's message should be easy to read and direct. It should not contain too much information. The message should clearly relate to the use of the building. The use of "sponsor" advertising should be discouraged. This type of advertising has an assembly line appearance, sends a confusing message, and does not promote individual store identity.</i></p> <p><u>Color</u> <i>Sign colors should relate to and complement the materials and color scheme of the building, including accent highlights and trim colors. The stronger the color contrast between the lettering and the background, the easier it is to read the sign. For example, light colored lettering will read better against a dark colored background.</i></p> <p><u>Illumination</u> <i>Internally illuminated signs are not appropriate in or adjacent to residential areas. Internally illuminated signs should have light lettering and dark, opaque backgrounds for improved readability and minimal glare.</i></p> <p><u>Landscaping</u> <i>Freestanding signs should be landscaped with appropriate deciduous and evergreen shrubs, ground cover planting, annuals and/or perennials.</i></p>	<p>Signage</p> <p><i>The proposed messaging is concise and clear.</i></p> <p>The proposed lettering contrasts well with background colors.</p> <p>The internal illumination only applies to the lettering and logo with opaque color panels not being illuminated.</p> <p>The proposed free standing sign includes significant landscaping.</p>
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