



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-027: To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the total amount of \$4,000,000.00 from CSX Transportation, Inc., to amend Ord. No.2023-073, adopted May 8, 2023, which accepted a program of proposed Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and the four fiscal years thereafter, adopted a Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, and determined a means of financing the same, by increasing estimated revenues from the funds received from CSX Transportation, Inc. and the amount appropriated to the Department of Public Works' Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge Replacement project in the Transportation – G.O. Bonds category by \$4,000,000.00, all for the purpose of funding the replacement of the Arthur Ashe Boulevard bridge.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 6, 2024

PETITIONER

Department of Public Works

PURPOSE

To amend Ord. No. 2023-073 adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted the Capital Improvement Plan for FY 2024, and to authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the total amount of \$ 4,000,000.00 from the CSX Transportation Inc. (CSXT) and appropriate the revenues by amending the FY2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget in Transportation category for the NEW 'Arthur Ashe Blvd Bridge Replacement' project (Project # 108670).

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The Arthur Ashe Blvd bridge extends over a CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) railroad and is structurally deficient with emergency temporary supports recently installed and it has sub-standard vertical clearances over CSXT. The bridge provides a critical connection between the City of Richmond's urban and commercial centers and regional transportation infrastructure, including interstate highways I-95 and I-64. The bridge is also an essential component of the City's planned redevelopment of the Diamond District, a 67-acre site into a mixed-use, mixed-income, transit-oriented neighborhood anchored by green space and a new minor league baseball stadium. The replacement of the Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge will allow the City to ensure that the NHS route remains in operation at its full load carrying capacity and provides safe passage for the traveling public over the heavily used CSXT railway corridor.

The bridge consists of a northern half over then Seaboard Airline railroad company and a southern half over then RF&P railroad company. CSXT merged both railroad companies in 1980 and 1991 respectively and inherited the bridge maintenance responsibilities.

The Department of Public Works submitted Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant application in April 2022 that will focus on the replacement of the Arthur Ashe Boulevard over CSXT Bridge.

The RAISE Grant application was approved in September 2022 and funded the project for a total of \$18,400,000. The estimated total project cost is \$23,000,000. CSX Transportation Inc. is committed to offer a one-time contribution of \$4,000,000.00 to the project so that the City may assume the right, ownership and all maintenance responsibilities for the new bridge.

The CSXT contribution (\$4,000,000) needs to be accepted as a budget amendment of the FY2024-FY2028 City Capital Budget to have the funds for the project.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

Arthur Ashe Bridge

Proposed Use of the Property

Bridge Replacement

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Destination Mixed-Use, which is defined as a "Key gateways featuring prominent destinations, such as retail, sports venues, and large employers, as well as housing and open space. Located at the convergence of several modes of transportation, including Pulse BRT or other planned transit improvements."

Community Engagement

The City of Richmond has worked closely with key project stakeholders to gain support for the Arthur Ashe Blvd Bridge RAISE project to enhance the safety and efficiency of the transportation network and promote the Diamond District redevelopment. These include elected officials, public agencies such as GRTC, Central Virginia Planning District Commission, and Diamond District Developers. On March 28, 2022 the City Council adopted resolution No 2022-R20 to support the City's participation in the RAISE Grant funding program for the Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge. Additional public hearing/engagement will be through the City Planning Commission (CPC) meeting and City Council meeting on this Ordinance request.

Staff Contact:

Lamont L. Benjamin, P.E., Capital Projects Administrator, 804-646-2467

Youngping Wang, P.E., Project Manager, 804-646-2467