



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-227 To authorize the special use of the property known as 3100 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard for the purpose of electric vehicle charging stations, upon certain terms and conditions. (2nd District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: November 3, 2025

PETITIONER

Tesla, Inc.

LOCATION

3100 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a special use permit to authorize electric vehicle chargers in a TOD-1 district. This use is considered a fueling station and is not permitted within the district. A Special Use Permit is therefore necessary to proceed with this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use is compatible with the existing Wawa fueling station, which was established prior to the TOD-1 zoning regulations that currently apply to the property.

Staff finds that this request supports Objective 10.4 of the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan, which aims to "increase the number of low-emission vehicles." One of the strategies for this objective is to, "support the expansion of the electric charging network for vehicles and bicycles on privately owned land" (Richmond 300, p. 158).

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in The Diamond neighborhood at the corner of North Arthur Ashe Boulevard and Ellen Road. The property is a 1.44-acre parcel of land improved with a fueling station (Wawa).

Proposed Use of the Property

Fueling station with electric vehicle charging stations.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Industrial Mixed Use, which is defined as formerly traditional industrial areas that are transitioning to mixed-use because of their proximity to growing neighborhoods and changes in market conditions. These areas may still retain some light industrial uses.

Development Style: A mix of building types with low-scale, post-industrial buildings that are adapted for a new use are adjacent to new taller residential and/or office buildings. These areas allow "maker uses" to continue while encouraging more individuals to live, work, and play in the area. Buildings should have street-oriented façades with windows and door openings along street frontages. New light industrial uses are compatible with residential and office uses and are attractively buffered. New developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Ground Floor: Ground floor uses engage with and enliven the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. New driveway entrances are prohibited on priority and principal street frontages and minimal driveway entrances are allowed on secondary streets. Vehicular access to parcels should use alleys where possible. Loading for trucks must be provided off-street. Parking lots and parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.

Intensity: Medium- to high-density, three to eight stories.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/ personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Institutional and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

30-457.2 – Permitted principal uses
Electric vehicle chargers are not a permitted use.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as electric vehicle charging stations, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is predominantly commercial and located near the I-96/I-64 interchange.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Greater Scott's Addition Civic Association, area residents and property owners. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

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