



# City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street  
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Richmond, VA 23219  
www.rva.gov

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** ORD. 2017-127, **Version:** 1

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To adopt an amendment to the Master Plan for the City of Richmond, adopted by the City Planning Commission on Nov. 6, 2000, and by the City Council by Ord. No. 2000-371-2001-11, adopted Jan. 8, 2001, as previously amended, to incorporate the Pulse Corridor Plan, applicable to certain areas from the City's corporate boundary on East Main Street to the intersection of East Main Street and North 14<sup>th</sup> Street and along East Broad Street to the City's corporate boundary along Staples Mill Road, as part of the Master Plan.

### O & R Request

**DATE:** May 17, 2017

**EDITION:** 1

**TO:** The Honorable Members of City Council

**THROUGH:** The Honorable Levar M. Stoney, Mayor (by request)

**THROUGH:** Selena Cuffee Glenn, Chief Administrative Officer

**THROUGH:** Peter L. Downey, Jr., Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Economic Development and Planning

**FROM:** Mark A. Olinger, Director, Dept. of Planning and Development Review

**RE:** Request to amend the City's Master Plan to include the recommendations and results of the Pulse Corridor Plan to guide future transit-oriented development, public realm and infrastructure investment, and policy recommendations.

### **ORD. OR RES. No.**

**PURPOSE:** To amend the City's Master Plan to include the recommendations and results of the Pulse Corridor Plan to guide future transit-oriented development, public realm and infrastructure investment, and policy recommendations in the neighborhoods and commercial corridors stretching from the eastern border with Henrico County on E Main Street, along E Main Street, up N 14<sup>th</sup> Street, and along Broad Street until the western border with Henrico County at Staples Mill Road focused around 14 Pulse BRT stations.

**REASON:** This ordinance would amend the City's Master Plan to include the recommendations and results of the recently-completed Pulse Corridor Plan. The Plan supports a walkable urban environment around soon-to-open Pulse BRT Stations through the adoption of principles, goals, and recommendations for redevelopment, public infrastructure, and policy recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Planning Commission held multiple public hearings on the Pulse Corridor Plan from December 2016 to May 2017. At its April 17, 2017, meeting, the Planning Commission deferred this item for 30 days in response to a request from Councilwoman Gray to work with neighborhood associations, specifically the West Grace Street Association, on their concerns over building height. Staff worked with the Councilwoman and Association representatives since that date to revise language in that chapter, language that has since been endorsed by the Association as satisfactory. The Planning Commission passed a resolution to adopt the Pulse Corridor Plan at their May 15, 2017, meeting.

**BACKGROUND:** This plan began in late 2015 through a combined effort of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission and Department of Planning & Development Review.

The Plan establishes three main goals: that development be compact and mixed; connected; and thriving and equitable. Compact and mixed development around Pulse stations has a rich mix of uses and is compact, sustainable, and high-quality. Connected station areas allow pedestrians and cyclists to access homes, jobs, entertainment, everyday needs, and transit in a safe, pleasant, and engaging public realm. Thriving and equitable new development includes housing for all income levels and new jobs. Increased development in the Corridor supports Pulse ridership with a goal of over \$1 billion in additional assessed value over the next 20 years.

Six basic principles guide transit-oriented development in the corridor: mixed-use development; viable transportation options; dense, compact development; historic preservation; transit access; and connectivity. There are 35 corridor-wide recommendations to achieve these principles for a transit-oriented future and highly -walkable corridor. These recommendations apply across the entire corridor area.

The plan establishes new categories for Future Land Use as well as a Future Land Use map for the Pulse Corridor. The Downtown Mixed-use area is the central business district of the Richmond region featuring high-density development with office buildings, apartments, and a mix of complementary uses, including regional destinations. Nodal Mixed-use areas are transit-oriented districts located immediately adjacent to the Pulse BRT or other frequent transit service at key gateways and prominent places in the city in order to provide for significant, urban-form development in appropriate locations. Corridor Mixed-use areas are found along major, traditionally commercial corridors like Broad and E. Main Streets, and are envisioned to provide for medium-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented infill development to fill “missing teeth” of the corridor fabric. Neighborhood Mixed-use areas are cohesive districts that provide a mix of uses, but with a larger amount of residential uses than other mixed-use districts. Industrial Mixed-use areas are traditionally-industrial areas that are transitioning to mixed-use due to their proximity to growing neighborhoods but still retain industrial uses. Transitional areas provide a gradual transition between intense commercial areas and primarily single-family residential areas. Industrial areas feature easy highway access, large parcels, and separation of residential areas to allow light and heavy industrial uses. Institutional uses are public and quasi-public entities, such as local, state, and federal government, hospitals, and universities.

The Plan also identifies significant nodes, or key intersections and discusses street-oriented commercial and priority street designations to require buildings to have ground-floor commercial uses, be oriented towards the street, and prohibit new driveway entrances along these frontages. A number of opportunity areas, or large tracts of land that are ideal for redevelopment, are identified for future study by way of a series of small area plans.

The Plan’s primary focus is on the individual station-areas themselves. It analyzes the existing conditions and market-readiness of each of the 14 station areas. Each station area then has its own vision statement, as well as

detailed descriptions of future land use and future connections in each station area. This means that the land use and connectivity recommendations are tailored to each station area, its surrounding context, and its unique redevelopment opportunities to seamlessly integrate the Pulse Corridor with surrounding areas. These station areas collectively have an additional 71 detailed recommendations to achieve the three plan goals of compact and mixed; connected; and thriving and equitable.

### **Master Plan**

The Pulse Corridor Plan offers recommendations for a number of neighborhoods and commercial corridors, including Scott's Addition and West Broad Street, which have not been part of amendments to the City's Master Plan since its 2001 adoption. The recommendations here provide the greatest departure from the out-of-date Master Plan, particularly in terms of setting Future Land Use.

A number of areas in the Pulse Corridor Plan, including the Jackson Ward, Broad Street, Downtown, City Center, Monroe Ward, and Shockoe Bottom areas received close study as part of the 2009 Downtown Plan. The Riverfront Plan, adopted in 2012, speaks to some issues of Downriver development and connectivity. The Pulse Corridor Plan incorporates new development and updates that have occurred since these two Master Plan amendments, and provides a more forward-looking framework for the future of these areas, particularly regarding future land use. The Plan also incorporates major elements of these two planning efforts, particularly as it relates to preservation and character.

The Pulse Corridor Plan also incorporates elements of the City's Strategic Multi-modal Plan and Bicycle Master Plan into connectivity recommendations.

### **Public Participation**

The Pulse Corridor Plan was guided by a Technical Advisory Committee of design professionals, development experts, and policy stakeholders. The Plan began with a public kick-off meeting and charrette, and included over two years of meetings with neighborhood and community associations and stakeholder groups, as well as workshops. An online survey collected further feedback, and the Historic Fulton neighborhood was the focus of a week-long charrette effort held in Spring of 2016. There were two city-wide draft plan review meetings in November 2016, with multiple drafts of the document released for public comment over the following months as well as multiple presentations to the Planning Commission and neighborhood associations.

Currently, parking lots and parking areas are permitted as a principal use within the B-4 and B-5 districts, provided that any card reader or other access control device at an entrance to a parking area or parking lot shall be provided within not less than one stacking space situated off of the public right of way. The proposed amendments eliminate parking lots and parking areas as a principal use within the B-4 and B-5 districts; parking areas and parking lots would instead be permitted as an accessory use customarily incidental and clearly subordinate to uses permitted in the district. The amendments also propose adding parking lots and parking areas, subject to the existing access control provision as well as screening requirements, to the enumerated principal uses permitted by conditional use permit.

**FISCAL IMPACT / COST:** The Department of Planning and Development Review anticipates that impact to the City's budget will be positive. Implementation of the Pulse Corridor Plan and programs established to implement the Plan will ultimately achieve the \$1 billion increase in new assessed value over the next twenty years as identified in this Plan.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:** The Department of Planning and Development Review anticipates increased revenue to the City through implementation of the Plan. Costs associated with any City sponsored projects will

occur as projects and funding for them are identified in future City budgets.

**BUDGET AMENDMENT NECESSARY:** No

**REVENUE TO CITY:** None

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon Adoption

**REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE:** June 12, 2017

**CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE:** July 24, 2017

**REQUESTED AGENDA:** Consent

**RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE:** Land Use, Housing, and Transportation Committee

**CONSIDERATION BY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES:** City Planning Commission, May 15, 2017

**AFFECTED AGENCIES:** Office of Chief Administrative Officer  
Law Department (for review of draft ordinance)  
Department of Planning & Development Review

**RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.:** None

**REQUIRED CHANGES TO WORK PROGRAM(S):** None

**ATTACHMENTS:** Draft Ordinance  
Pulse Corridor Plan  
City Planning Commission Resolution

**STAFF:** Kathleen Onufer, Executive Staff Assistant  
646-5207

Key Issues:

Retain on Consent Agenda

Move to Regular Agenda

Refer Back to Committee

Remove from Council Agenda

Strike

Withdrawn

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