



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** ORD. 2019-172, **Version:** 1

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To amend the official zoning map for the purpose of designating certain street blocks as “priority streets” and certain street blocks as “street-oriented commercial streets” in the area bounded generally by Belvidere Street on the west, Broad Street on the north, the Downtown Expressway on the south, and 9<sup>th</sup> Street on the east.

### THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That, as shown on the map entitled “Monroe Ward Rezoning, Street-Oriented Commercial and Priority Streets,” prepared by the Department of Planning and Development Review, and dated April 4, 2019, a copy of which is attached to, incorporated into, and made a part of this ordinance, the official zoning map as set forth by section 30-200 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, is hereby amended to designate as “priority streets” for purposes of the regulations governing “priority street frontage” as defined in section 30-1220.86:1 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, those street blocks depicted as “priority streets” on such map.

§ 2. That, as shown on the map entitled “Monroe Ward Rezoning, Street-Oriented Commercial and Priority Streets,” prepared by the Department of Planning and Development Review, and dated April 4, 2019, a copy of which is attached to, incorporated into, and made a part of this ordinance, the official zoning map as set forth by section 30-200 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, is hereby amended to designate as “street-oriented commercial streets” for purposes of the regulations governing “street-oriented commercial frontage” as defined in section 30-1220.118:1 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, those street blocks depicted as “street-oriented commercial streets” on such map.

§ 3. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

### O & R Request

**DATE:** May 28, 2019

**EDITION:** 1

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

**THROUGH:** The Honorable Levar M. Stoney, Mayor (Patron: Mayor, by Request)  
(This is no way reflects a recommendation on behalf of the Mayor.)

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

**THROUGH:** Sharon L. Ebert, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Economic Development and Planning

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

**RE:** Request to amend the Official Zoning Map and text for the purposes of rezoning Monroe Ward in order to meet the recommendations of the adopted Pulse Corridor Plan. The rezoning is comprised of a package of five ordinances, which together will meet the objectives of the Plan.

**ORD. OR RES. No.**

**PURPOSE:**

To amend the official zoning map and text for the purpose of rezoning certain properties in Monroe Ward in order to meet the recommendations of the Pulse Corridor Plan and create a high-quality urban neighborhood. The rezoning is comprised of five ordinances, which together will revise the City's official zoning map and official zoning ordinance text for the purpose of rezoning certain properties in Monroe Ward, bounded by Belvidere Street to the west, Broad Street to the north, the Downtown Expressway to the south and Ninth Street to the east, in order to increase density and accommodate growth and development while complimenting the historic character of the neighborhood.

Each Ordinance represents one of five elements to this process, a combination of which will reach the desired outcome:

1. Changing zoning classification of certain parcels from light industrial or auto-oriented designations to those more in keeping with the historic building patterns and intent of the Pulse Plan;
2. Adding Street-Oriented Commercial and Priority Streets in the area to the official zoning map;
3. Creating a Plan of Development Overlay District for the area to ensure development meets the six design elements of the Pulse Plan;
4. Amending the B-4 district to remove incompatible uses, add a three-story height minimum, and remove the option to break the inclined plane of 4:1 by 50% of the length of the building along the street; and
5. Amending the RO-3 district to remove incompatible uses and add form-based elements.

**REASON:** This item is being requested because a rezoning will fulfill the recommendations for the Arts

District Station Area as a high priority station area recommended in the adopted Pulse Corridor Plan, an adopted amendment to the City of Richmond Master Plan, adopted by Richmond City Council on July 24, 2017.

**RECOMMENDATION:** In accordance with the requirements of the City Charter and the Zoning Ordinance, the City Planning Commission will review this request and make a recommendation to City Council. These items will be scheduled for consideration by the Commission at its July 1, 2019, meeting; to be forwarded to City Council at its July 22, 2019 meeting. A letter outlining the Commission's recommendation will be forwarded to City Council following that meeting.

**BACKGROUND:** These amendments arise out of the recommendations of the adopted Pulse Corridor Plan, an analysis of the existing zoning ordinance and its application across the City, and an extensive public engagement process, both for the plan and for this area rezoning. There is significant building activity in the downtown which continues to move west into Monroe Ward and expansion of VCU's Monroe Park campus has stretched east of Belvidere into Monroe Ward. While Monroe Ward is home to an array of historic structures, there are also a significant number of surface parking lots, several of which take up entire blocks. This proactive rezoning process is in order to ensure that new development is in keeping with the principles of the Pulse Plan, creating a decidedly urban neighborhood in an area of great potential.

### **Master Plan**

The area for this rezoning is part of the Arts District Station Area in the Pulse Corridor Plan, an adopted amendment to the City's Master Plan. The Pulse Plan Future Land Use map labels the area as "Downtown Mixed Use".

(Note: the Arts District Station Area also includes Jackson Ward, but the character of the neighborhoods and the current zoning already fit the Future Land Use recommendations.)

Rezoning Monroe Ward to districts that align with the future land use map is the first recommendation for this study area (p.84). The plan envisions a strong transit-oriented node at each station area along the corridor, and describes Monroe Ward's future land use as high-intensity pedestrian- and transit-oriented development", with tall signature buildings, active commercial ground floors, few driveways cutting through sidewalks, and little to no setbacks for commercial building, adding that new buildings will add to the already "incredibly dynamic and diverse building stock, creating a truly eclectic urban neighborhood" (p.84). The plan recommends that new zoning does not allow surface parking lots as a principal permitted use.

### **Existing and Proposed Zoning**

Staff has completed an extremely thorough analysis and vetting of exactly the tools needed to accomplish the plan vision and spur development while complementing the historic urban character of the neighborhood. Staff has also responded to citizen comments and concerns.

As a result, there are five elements to this rezoning process:

1. Rezoning the area from either light industrial (M-1) or auto-oriented commercial (B-3), to transit-oriented development (TOD-1) or downtown mixed-use (B-4);
2. Adding Priority and Street-Oriented Commercial designations in the area to the official

zoning map;

3. Creating a Plan of Development Overlay District for the area to ensure that new development meets the six design elements of the Pulse Corridor Plan;
4. Amending the B-4 district; and
5. Amending the RO-3 district to remove incompatible uses and add form-based elements.

### **Attached Summary Document**

In order to convey the ideas and reasoning behind this rezoning process clearly and thoroughly, staff created a summary document complete with explanatory text, maps of existing and proposed zoning, exact zoning changes, and explanation of each recommendation. Please see attached summary for further details.

### **Public Engagement**

As the Pulse Corridor Plan was developed over the course of 2015-2017, City Staff held numerous public forums, set up online surveys, attended standing civic association meetings, and tracked public feedback.

In July 2017, staff held two public open houses at the Main Library to discuss the Monroe Ward rezoning, and provided informational maps and comparisons of zoning districts. In addition, a letter was sent to each property owner of over 400 addresses which will be affected by the rezoning. Of the 400 property owners affected, PDR received only two letters expressing concern or opposition, and has subsequently engaged with both parties.

In November 2018, staff once again sent notices in postcard form to 444 individual property owners, and received one inquiry of concern regarding parking, and twelve letters or emails from Historic Richmond Foundation and members regarding height and protection of historic buildings. Staff also received one letter and one email of support regarding the rezoning, from an affordable housing advocate and a large developer/property-owner in the area.

**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 the Plan.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:** The Department Planning and Development Review does not anticipate any fiscal implications from this proposal.

**BUDGET AMENDMENT NECESSARY:** No

**REVENUE TO CITY:** Positive revenue is expected from tax revenue due to increased development.

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon adoption

**REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE:** June 24, 2019

**CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE:** July 22, 2019

**REQUESTED AGENDA:** Consent

**RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE:** None

**CONSIDERATION BY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES:** City Planning Commission, July 1, 2019

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

**RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.:** ORD. 2017-127 (Pulse Corridor Plan)

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

**ATTACHMENTS:** Draft Ordinance, Rezoning Summary document

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