

INTRODUCED: October 13, 2008

AN ORDINANCE No. 2008-265

As Amended

To direct the City Planning Commission to prepare and consider additional amendments for incorporation into the Downtown Master Plan as provided in Charter § 17.06 and Va. Code § 15.2-2229.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patron – President Graziano

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC HEARING: OCT 27 2008 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, section 17.06 of the Charter of the City of Richmond (2006), as amended, and section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, authorizes the City Planning Commission to prepare and recommend to the City Council a comprehensive plan (the “Master Plan”) for the territory within the city’s jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Council desires that the Master Plan accurately indicate the City’s long-range recommendations for the general development of the city, even though the Council recognizes that the Master Plan guides but does not legally regulate the use of property in the city and that only zoning ordinances regulate the use of property in the city; and

AYES: \_\_\_\_\_ NOES: \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_ REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_ STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, harmonious development, a sound economy, attractive residential areas, and the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Richmond can best be achieved with the guidance of a long-range Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission recommended the Downtown Plan as a part of the Master Plan on September 20, 2004, and the City Council adopted the Downtown Plan via Ordinance No. 2004-296-299, adopted on November 8, 2004; and

WHEREAS, as a result of a recent comprehensive review of the Downtown Plan undertaken by the City Planning Commission, the City Planning Commission recommended various changes to the current Downtown Plan via a resolution adopted on July 21, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has taken final action on the Downtown Master Plan on October 13, 2008; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the City Council that additional amendments should be prepared and considered by the City Planning Commission for incorporation into the Master Plan as provided in section 17.06 of the Charter of the City of Richmond (2006), as amended and section 15.2-2229 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended;

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That the City Planning Commission is hereby directed to prepare additional amendments to the Master Plan on the subject of stormwater management, brick sidewalk improvements, restoration of Main Street Station as an inter-modal center and the restoration of cobblestone streets as more specifically set forth in the document entitled [~~“Recommended revisions to the July 21, 2008 version of the~~] “Proposed Amendments to Downtown Master

Plan,” a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof. All amendments shall receive a public hearing and be acted upon in accordance with applicable law.

§ 2. The City Planning Commission shall submit its recommendations on such amendments to the City Council within ninety (90) days of the adoption of this ordinance.

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

## Proposed Amendments to Downtown Master Plan

### **Page 3.19, image**

Ensure boundaries of each Character Area (denoted with different colors) are clear in the map image.

### **Page 3.34, right column, line 27 (strike denoted text)**

According to Claritas, only thirty percent of Downtown Richmond's residents are in households of more than 1 or 2 people, and more than thirty-eight percent of the population is not currently in the labor force, ~~whether due to retirement or unemployment.~~

### **Page 3.36, right column, line 29 (insert underlined text)**

One of the first steps towards social and economic advancement is the continued improvement of the Richmond public school system, which will allow students of all backgrounds to have equal access to quality education.

### **Page 4.17, left column, line 35 [and other sections of the document, as applicable]**

Revise language regarding street and alley closures to be more flexible. Focus on preventing negative impacts on the streetscape and ensuring that utilitarian functions associated with buildings are located within the development site and not along the right-of-way.

### **Page 4.21, right column, line 24 (strike denoted text and insert underlined text)**

The City should offer ~~in-house design assistance~~ design review assistance to provide consistency in the overall improvements of facades Downtown.

### **Page 4.23**

Insert language and graphics related to J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, as depicted on Attachment A.

### **Page 4.27, right column, line 1 (strike denoted text and insert underlined text)**

~~Concurrently, the Commonwealth of Virginia should be encouraged to designate an Architect of the Commonwealth. With these two positions, the City and State can continue to work together and expand communications to shape the successful future of "Virginia's Downtown."~~

The Commonwealth of Virginia should be encouraged to hire an Architect of the Capitol, able to provide architectural, historic preservation and planning advice

pertaining to the Capitol Square Complex and state-owned properties within one-block of Capitol Square.

**Page 4.43, right column, line 2** (insert underlined text)

While it is impractical to consider buying back all of these properties for public use in the present generation, the City should plan strategic purchases of some of these properties, and should secure waterfront access and trail right-of-way rights from the others in conjunction with responsible development by the private and/or public sectors.

**Page 4.45, right column, line 11** [and other sections of the document, as applicable]

Revise language regarding viewsheds and view corridors to define both more broadly, allowing for more flexibility.

**Page 4.48, images** [and other sections of the document, as applicable]

Include the former Tarmac property as a Future Development Area and outline standards for the property's development.

**Page 4.58, right column** (strike denoted text and insert underlined text)

**Improve stormwater management**

~~The catastrophic flooding in Shockoe Bottom during Tropical Storm Gaston in 2004 has left many people wary of investing in "The Bottom." It is essential that an effective stormwater management system be introduced to the area, to ensure that such devastation does not occur again. The City should continue to be vigilant in its plans to improve stormwater management in Shockoe by moving forward with additional utility upgrades and green technologies, but by also investigating opportunities to create natural environments for water infiltration. Such an opportunity could be the development of a park in the Shockoe Valley north of East Broad Street. The park could include areas to detain stormwater from the adjacent hillsides, while also providing an open space connection to nearby neighborhoods. The City's recent investment in correcting the drainage issues should reinsure investors who were previously wary of rehabilitating buildings. New construction in the area will have to be carefully coordinated with the newly created FEMA maps.~~

The catastrophic flooding during Tropical Storm Gaston in 2004 has left many people wary of investing in Shockoe Bottom. The proposed FEMA maps, developed in the aftermath of that storm, include Main Street Station and extend over two blocks to the east. Inclusion of property within the 100 year flood plain limits the development of certain types of new uses without emergency vehicle access.

The City should be vigilant in its efforts to continue to improve the storm water management in Shockoe by moving forward with additional storm water utility upgrades in the area and by encouraging other innovative solutions to drainage issues. These should include the development of green spaces, such as ground cover in sidewalks and a park in the Shockoe Valley north of East Broad Street, that could promote water infiltration and provide areas to detain storm water during a storm event. It is essential that an effective storm water management system be introduced to the area, to ensure continued development.

**Page 4.59, left column, line 15** (insert underlined text)

The brick sidewalks that exist today should be restored, maintained, and where possible, widened. Existing concrete sidewalks should be replaced with brick, where possible and in conjunction with new private development. Street trees should be planted regularly along the edge of the sidewalk at no more than 30' apart.

**Page 4.61, left column**

Include language in the section on Main Street Station stating that development is not permitted on the Lumpkin's Jail site and designate the site for preservation on the Character Area map. Include language that reinforces the preservation of other historic elements on the Main Street Station site as well.

**Page 4.61, left column** (strike denoted text and insert underlined text; move entire section from Chapter 4 into Chapter 5, page 5.24)

#### **Restore Main Street Station as an inter-modal center**

Main Street Station was built in 1901 as a grand terminal to welcome travelers into Downtown. The chateau-style station and generous train shed was once a bustling center of transportation and commerce. By 1975, however, the interstate system and automobile usage had eclipsed the railroad system, and the train station closed due to flood damage and lack of passengers.

In 2003, Main Street Station's fortunes turned. The station was fully restored and re-opened to limited Amtrak service, serving two trains per day. Parts of the train shed are dedicated to cultural exhibitions; however, Main Street Station remains underutilized. The City should take advantage of this great asset by restoring its role as the center of the community.

The City is considering options ~~City proposed plans~~ for Main Street Station involve two different strategies for revitalizing the grand terminal and the surrounding properties. Both strategies involve introducing ~~There are~~ opportunities for both transportation-related functions and other types of uses for the existing buildings and grounds, but any development plan for the property should include a new street through the two-block long train shed, ~~thus~~ in order to

~~increasing~~ increase connectivity in the area and ~~enhancing~~ enhance pedestrian access.

~~The first plan involves the least amount of infrastructure investment and serves the short-term needs of the community. This plan involves developing the existing train shed as a community recreation space. This space could be used for flexible, temporary events such as markets, indoor sports, and exhibitions or parts of the shed could be converted in more permanent use as a bowling alley, theatre, or museum.~~

~~A more long-term plan involves developing~~ An important component of the future of Main Street Station is to consider it for as a multi-modal transportation hub for Downtown. A multi-modal transportation hub could include increased passenger rail service, commuter rail service, light rail or streetcar, buses, bus rapid transit (BRT), shuttles, taxis, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. This would provide a tremendous benefit to Downtown, as it does not currently have an integrated transportation center, thus preventing most residents and workers from using transit. Main Street Station is an excellent choice for such a transportation center, as the station is a grand entrance to the city, and its location provides direct access to the City Center and Downtown neighborhoods. The impact of any such use on the existing residential/commercial nature of the surrounding neighborhood should be carefully evaluated in consultation with representatives of the neighborhood prior to actively considering any such potential use.

~~A short-term strategy for such a transportation hub would be to center Downtown~~ provide bus service, airport shuttles, taxi and limousine service ~~on~~ at the train station. As urban transit matures, a streetcar could be integrated into the system, and ultimately, increased rail service could serve the station, making Main Street Station a local and regional transportation destination. If these proposals do not take hold, another interim option would be to lease the train shed space as a unique location for a ~~large-format~~ diverse range of local and national retailers.

The development of Main Street Station as a multi-modal hub does offer the opportunity to consider transit-oriented development (TOD) within the surrounding area. TOD allows for increased levels of density for commercial and residential uses within an area due to the anticipated use of transit and the reduced reliance on automobiles. Increased levels of density beyond what is generally recommended in this plan for the area surrounding the train station should only be considered if Main Street Station is developed into a multi-modal transportation hub.

**Page 4.63, right column**

Include language in the section on the Richmond Slave Trail stating that development is not permitted on the Lumpkin's Jail site and designate the site for

preservation on the Character Area map. Include language that reinforces the preservation of other historic elements on the Main Street Station site as well.

**Page 4.64, right column, line 32** (insert underlined text)

Traffic speeds can be lowered by better defining the streets with closely-spaced street trees, and by restoring the cobblestone streets, particularly those on Oliver Hill Way, Cary Street (across 14<sup>th</sup> Street east to 18<sup>th</sup> Street initially), 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Grace Street, Marshall Street, and 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Page 5.23, left column, line 31**

Remove reference to Governor Street as it pertains to a route option for a future streetcar line. Retain language regarding an alternate route through the Capitol Square Complex and include consideration of an adjacent street as an option.

**Page 7.5, right column, line 19** (strike denoted text)

~~The Architect of the City would oversee all new construction and demolition within the City, in areas outside of Old & Historic Districts, in particular. The Architect of the City should possess expertise in historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and context sensitive design.~~

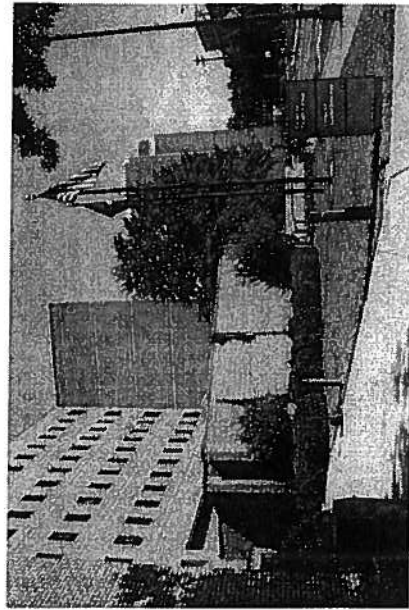
## Attachment A

Continue to integrate J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College's programs and campus into Downtown

J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (JSRCC) provides education to more than 5,000 students each year at its Downtown Campus, with more than 18,500 credit students annually attending the college at one of its three academic campuses. In addition to offering courses in business and liberal arts, the Downtown Campus houses the School of Nursing and Allied Health, School of Culinary Arts, Tourism and Hospitality, School of Mathematics and Science, Center for Health Sciences, Center for Teacher Education, Urban Teachers Institute, and the Middle College.

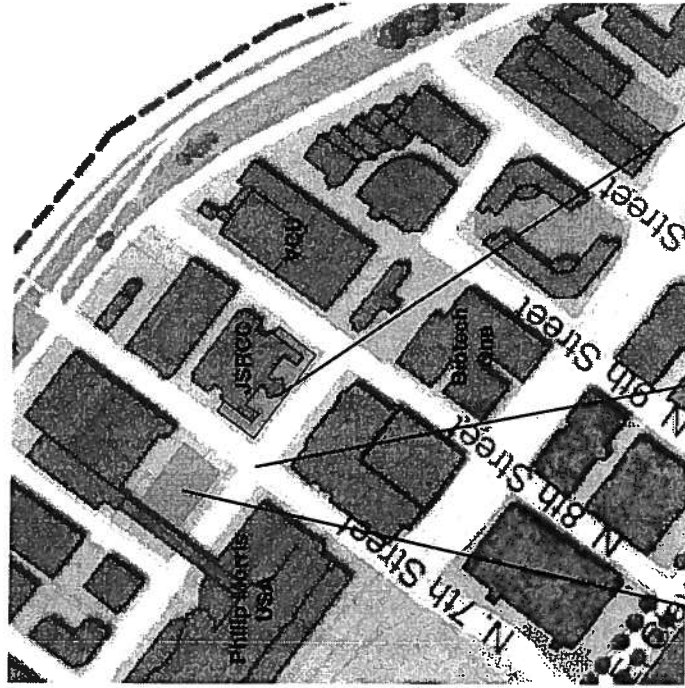
The Downtown Campus is housed in a high-rise structure at 7<sup>th</sup> and Jackson Streets, having moved in the fall of 1981 from leased facilities in the 100 block of East Grace Street. In 1995, a major addition to this facility was completed, adding 84,000 square feet to the existing 200,000 square foot structure. A 400-space parking deck opened on the campus in 2005.

JSRCC continues to forge relationships in the community through outreach into the business community, other higher education institutions, and the public schools. For example, more than 700 employers throughout the region look to JSRCC (and the Community College Workforce Alliance) for skill training for their employees that provides a trained workforce and helps their companies succeed. JSRCC also has a strong relationship with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), with more JSRCC students transferring to VCU than from any other institution in the Commonwealth.



Physical and programmatic improvements should continue to be pursued to better integrate JSRCC's Downtown Campus with the surrounding area and beyond.

JSRCC has as one of its strategic priorities to "raise the educational aspirations of the residents of the City of Richmond," so plans continue to expand access to the residents of the City. Unfortunately, the campus is landlocked and the college must identify ways to meet expansion needs while enhancing the collegiate image of the current facilities. JSRCC, the Commonwealth and the City should explore options to beautify the existing building and grounds. In addition, the college seeks to diversify its offerings, by adding active uses that engage students and invite the surrounding community onto campus. Expansion of the campus, either within the area or in other parts of Downtown should also be considered. Collaboration during the initial planning and design phase will augment pending development and assure the integrity of the area's urban fabric.



JSRCC should pursue opportunities to partner with nearby property owners on open-space initiatives

Develop complementary non-academic uses at ground floor, such as shops or other active uses that engage students and add vibrancy to the area

Collaborate with the City of Richmond on streetscape improvements along 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets to connect the campus with Broad Street

Land Use, Housing & Transportation Standing Committee  
January 13, 2009

