

Memorandum

To: **Adrienne Torres, Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC)**

From: HR&A Advisors, Inc.

Date: **December 4, 2023**

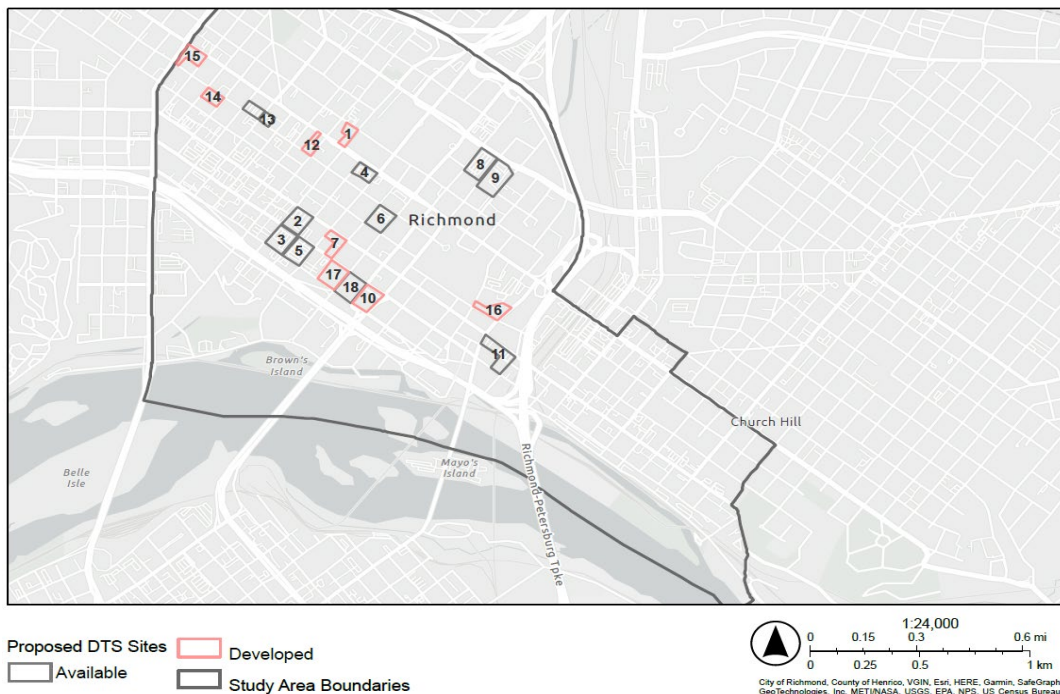
Re: Land Use and Zoning Memo

HR&A reviewed existing land uses and zoning conditions of 18 potential sites for the prospective Downtown Permanent Transfer Hub. Our review evaluated the compatibility of transit-oriented development (TOD) in Downtown Richmond and joint development (JD) opportunities at the future Permanent Transfer Hub by analyzing the current zoning, public sector plans, and precedent developments in the immediate vicinity. Additional criteria will be considered during Phase II of this study, including parcel ownership, size and shape, market conditions, and – critically – the ability to support GRTC’s transit needs.

The Research Park (RP) and B-4 Central Business District (B-4) zoning districts are supportive of high density, mixed-use TOD. Two of the sites are in the RP district and 14 are in the B-4 district.

The current Research Park (RP) zoning district is the most compatible with TOD of the four distinct districts reviewed from a zoning perspective. RP is ideal as its zoning allows for a transfer hub, a diverse mix of uses, high density, no height restrictions, and high potential developable area. However, the RP district has largely fostered office and institutional development, with minimal residential and retail development compared to the rest of Downtown. With the City Center project including residential development, this trend may begin to shift, but the lack of existing residential development in the RP district is a potential barrier to joint development in the short term.

Figure 1: Map of Proposed Permanent Transfer Hub Sites



Zoning Summary

The 18 potential sites are located within the B-4 Central Business District, B-5 Central Business District, M-1 Light Industrial District, and Research Park (RP) zoning districts (Figure 2).

B-4 Central Business District (Sites 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18): The intent of this district is to create an urban core in which dense, transit-oriented development is incentivized. The regulation of this district supports the creation of pedestrian friendly, high-quality urban spaces with uniform setbacks, first floor commercial uses, and other elements of traditional mixed-use character. This district also offers density bonuses for a variety of uses.

RP Research Park District (Sites 8 and 9): The intent of this district is to implement the development of a mixed-use technology research park as envisioned in the downtown plan. Expanding on B-4 regulations, the flexibility of development and maximum utilization of lands, coupled with a diversity of amenities will cultivate an attractive and comfortable pedestrian-friendly district.

B-5 Central Business District (Site 11): This district is adjacent to corresponding B-4 Central Business District, but **only allows for a transfer hub under certain conditions**. The intent of this district is not explicitly stated in the City of Richmond's (COR) code. However, given the height restrictions and permitted principal and accessory uses, it can be inferred that the COR is encouraging medium density, transit-oriented development patterns. The regulation of this district supports the creation of pedestrian friendly, high-quality urban spaces with uniform setbacks, first floor commercial uses, and other elements of traditional mixed-use character.

M-1 Light Industrial District (Site 11): The intent of this district is to provide land for a wide variety of both commercial and manufacturing uses, fabricating, and warehousing activities that only produce minimal odors, noises, and similar adverse impacts on nearby lands. Except for emergency housing, residential development is prohibited unless approved by the board of zoning appeals.

Figure 2: Map of Current Zoning in Study Area

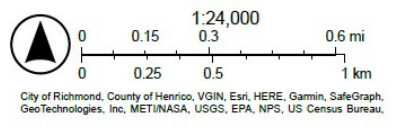
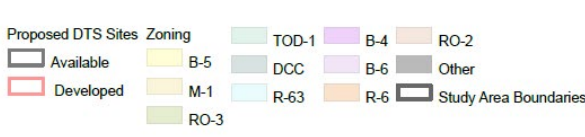
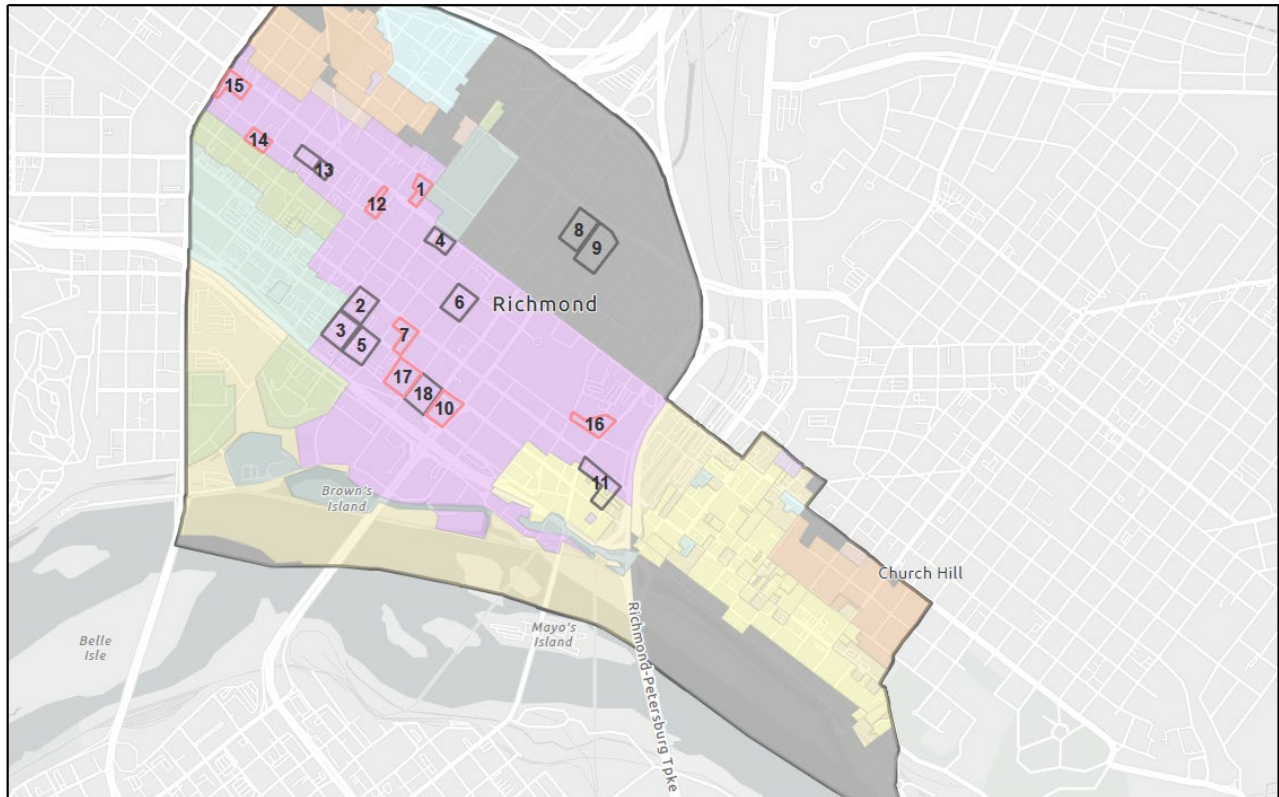


Table 1: Description of Zoning Regulations

District	Sites	Maximum Height	FAR	Open Space Ratio	Transfer Hub Permitted	Development Plan Requirements	Available Density Bonuses
B-4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18	Based on 1:4-foot ratio of distance from street centerline*	6.0	0.08	Yes	>50,000 SF floor area	Yes, refer to Appendix A
B-5	11	5 Stories	-	-	Yes, conditionally	>50,000 SF floor area	No
M-1	11	45 ft, 1:2 setback 45 ft+	-	-	Yes	Only for specified uses	No
RP	8, 9	No max height	-	0.10	Yes	>1,000 SF lot coverage	No

*Example: A distance of 25 feet from the street centerline to the parcel boundary translates to a 100-foot height limit.

Permitted Uses

In B-4, M-1, and RP, the development of a transfer hub is supported. In the case of B-5, a transfer hub could operate under uses owned or operated by a governmental agency. Permitted uses in M-1 are not conducive to traditional TOD or joint development. To support TOD, the following uses can be built in tandem with the passenger terminal to support TOD development in B-4, B-5, and RP:

- Residential
- Grocery stores
- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Retail stores
- Shopping centers
- Uses owned or operated by a governmental agency.

Potential Developable Area

Under the B-4 zoning designation, sites 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 13, and 16 can support between 230,000 and 510,000 square feet of developable space, as shown in Table 2. These parcels can take advantage of additional FAR by utilizing the density bonuses outlined in Appendix A.

Under the RP zoning designation, sites 8 and 9 can support an unlimited amount of developable space. While the parcels in RP do not have a height limit, recent development trends in Downtown Richmond demonstrate that the largest structures have typically provided no more than 900,000 square feet of space. Similarly, high-rise residential structures have typically maxed out at 20 stories and office space has rarely exceeded 25 stories in height. However, sites 8 and 9 are larger parcels than recent precedents, so could likely facilitate additional square footage based on market conditions.

Under the B-4, B-5, and M-1 zoning designations, site 11 can support approximately 424,800 SF of developable space. This includes approximately 63,900 SF in the M-1 portion, 52,500 SF in the B-5 portion, and 308,400 SF in the B-4 portion.

Although Sites 1 and 16 have been developed, they are being considered with the potential of JD with the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Police Department, and the State of Virginia Government. Sites 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, and 17 have been removed from consideration in this section given the recent completion of other developments or groundbreaking of new development. To review more in-depth context of parcel development, ownership, and the existing structure type, refer to Appendix B.

Table 2: Potential Developable Area Scenarios

Site	Developed	Zoning	Lot Area (SF)	Building Height (ft)	Total FAR	Total Potential Developable Area (GSF)
Site 1	Yes	B-4	39,580	132	6.0	237,500 SF
Site 2	No	B-4	85,310	120	6.0	511,900 SF
Site 3	No	B-4	84,660	120	6.0	508,000 SF
Site 4	No	B-4	45,870	120	6.0	275,200 SF
Site 5	No	B-4	85,490	124	6.0	512,900 SF
Site 6	No	B-4	83,540	120	6.0	501,200 SF
Site 8	No	RP	90,500	-	-	Unlimited*
Site 9	No	RP	131,120	-	-	Unlimited*
Site 11	No	B-4, B-5, M-1	83,200	B-5: 5 stories B-4: 88 ft. M-1: 45 ft.	6.0 (B-4)	424,800 SF
Site 13	No	B-4	81,540	80	6.0	489,200 SF
Site 16	Yes	B-4	60,200***	120	6.0	361,200 SF
Site 18	No	B-4	86,249	120	6.0	517,494 SF

*While height is unlimited, buildings have typically maxed out at 900,000 square feet. In terms of stories, residential buildings have typically maxed out at 20 stories, while office buildings have gone taller, but rarely exceeding 25 stories.
 **Site 11 can accommodate approximately 63,900 SF in the M-1 portion, 52,500 SF in the B-5 portion, and 308,400 SF in the B-4 portion.
 ***Site 16 is located on a portion of land owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Division of Engineering. The lot size is approximated using GIS but would need to be verified by the Richmond Planning Department.

Planning Summary

From a review of relevant planning documents and prior studies, GRTC, the City of Richmond, and Richmond Connects have all expressed support for transit-oriented development and the Permanent Transfer Hub. All parties have pointed to the enhanced quality of life for both current and future residents of the Greater Richmond area by developing equitable transportation in tandem with affordable housing, economic opportunity, and other necessary resources.

- Richmond’s comprehensive plan, Richmond 300, highlights the importance of building high-quality, well-connected neighborhoods in which targeted community necessities and amenities are equitably accessible by means of diverse transportation options. TOD is a crucial component of actualizing this vision.

- The City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan, which covers a portion of the RP district, highlights the importance of efficiently connecting both residents and visitors to the area to a mix of uses.
- Richmond Connects' Pathway to Equity Policy Guide indicated a need for more equitable connectivity as the city continues to grow to support all residents.

Richmond 300

Richmond has expressed an explicit need for TOD, particularly in the Downtown Mixed-Use future land use designation, which covers most of Downtown Richmond.

Adopted by the City Council in 2020, Richmond 300 was designed to support the equitable and sustainable growth of Richmond through the implementation of 17 goals across 70 objectives. Richmond300 identifies TOD as a strategy to increase residents and jobs along enhanced transit corridors. To accomplish this, the plan prioritizes multi-modal transit infrastructure proximate to complimentary uses.

Additionally, Richmond has established Nodes which are dense, rapidly growing communities that are home to a mix of uses and urban form. The potential Permanent Transfer Hub sites are located within the Monroe Ward and the Downtown Core nodes. The nodes have also been designated as priority growth nodes which are either positioned to, or already have the capacity to accommodate an influx of residents, jobs, and commercial opportunity over the next 20 years.

The Future Land Use and Future Connections section of Richmond 300 expanded upon future growth of the Nodes. Both Downtown Core and Monroe Ward are positioned to be walkable, mixed-use, transit-oriented communities. Richmond300 encourages the development of infrastructure that supports professional activity as well as leisure. Publicly planned transportation projects, such as the Pulse BRT, are of top priority and should include complementary uses.

Table 3: Permanent Transfer Hub Potential Sites Located in Neighborhood Nodes

Node	Sites	Future Connections	Future Land Use	Characteristics
Downtown Core	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, and 18	Major Mixed-Use Streets Enhanced Transit Corridors	Destination Mixed-Use Downtown Mixed-Use Institutional Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-density office • Large government presence • Significant financial, biotech, and healthcare industry presence.
Monroe Ward	2, 3, 12, 13, 14, and 15	Major Mixed-Use Streets Enhanced Transit Corridors	Destination Mixed-Use Downtown Mixed-Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and office mixed-use • Many designated historic buildings • Scattered dense infill development

City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan

TOD on Sites 8 and 9 is further supported by the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan. As Discussed in Richmond 300, small area planning initiatives are developed to implement Richmond's broader planning goals at a neighborhood-scale. This City Center plan was intended to support the redevelopment of the Coliseum, adjacent to Sites 8 and 9. The City rezoned the area that contains both sites from B-4 to RP to support the growing life sciences industries (Figures 3 and 4). This neighborhood is designed to be dense, walkable, and connected through robust multi-modal transportation.

Figure 3: Previous City Center Zoning

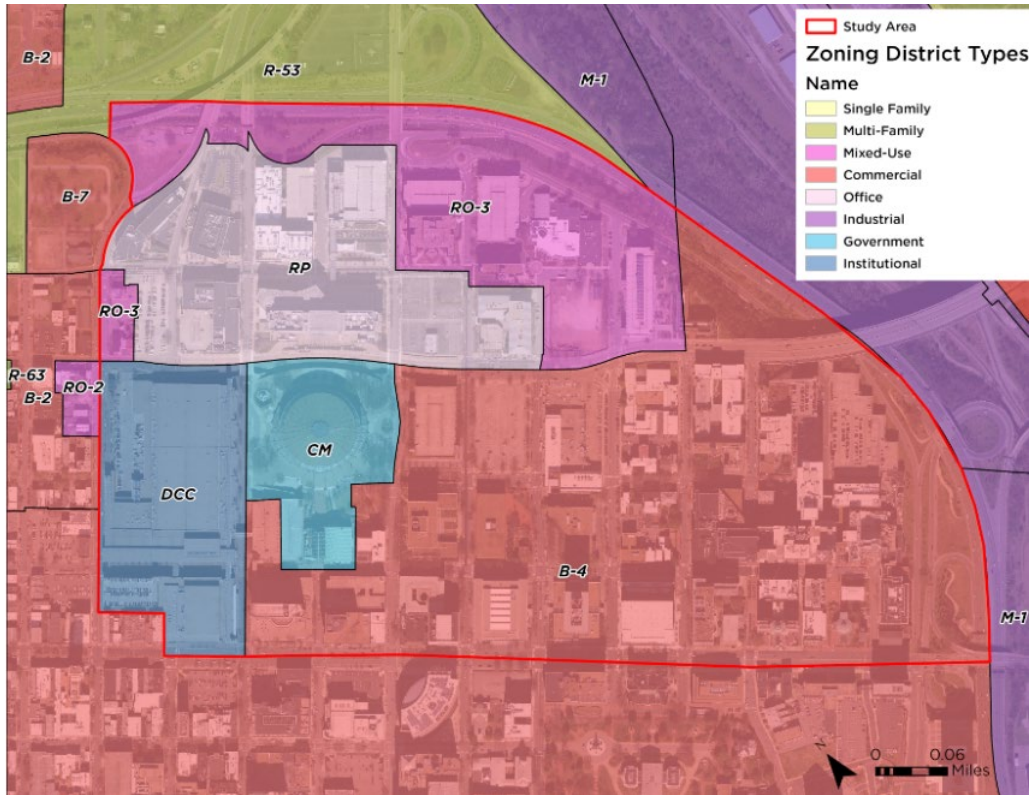
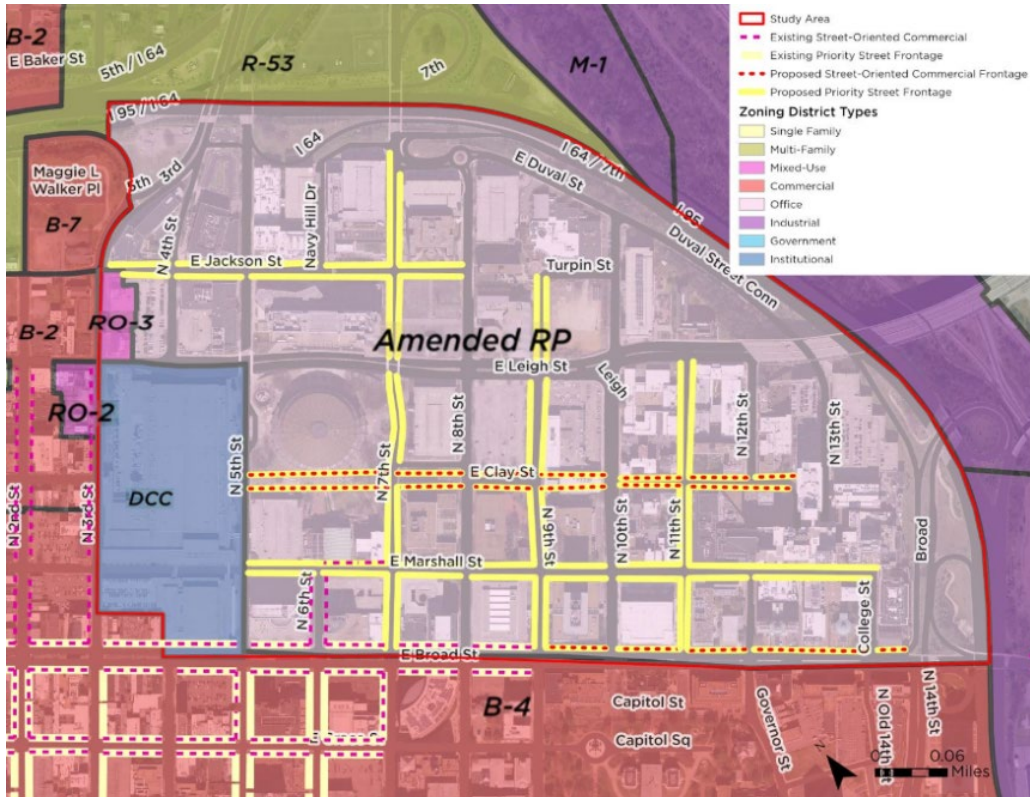


Figure 4: City Center Rezoned



Richmond Connects

Richmond Connects is an equity-centered process to advance multimodal transportation efforts throughout Richmond. Because Downtown Richmond has a high concentration of bus routes and multimodal interactions, a Permanent Transfer Hub would support connectivity and equitable access. Supported by the Office of Equitable Transportation and Mobility (OETM), Richmond Connects operates as an equity-centered process to identify and prioritize multimodal transportation projects.

The Path to Equity Policy Guide highlights the importance of decentralizing an automobile dependent grid and instead, connecting residents with resources and opportunities through public transportation. Building upon Richmond 300, Path to Equity and Richmond Connects seeks to achieve the following TOD related goals:

Table 4: TOD Goals Established in Richmond 300 to be supported by Richmond Connects

Goal	Description
Goal 1 Complete Neighborhoods	Establish a city of complete neighborhoods that have access to Nodes connected by major corridors in a gridded street network.
Goal 4 Urban Design	Establish a distinctive city comprising architecturally significant buildings connected by a network of walkable urban streets and open spaces to support an engaging built environment.
Goal 6 Land Use & Transportation	Align future land use and transportation planning to support a sustainable and resilient city.
Goal 8 Non-Car Network	Enhance walking, biking, and transit infrastructure to provide universal access to all users, prioritizing low-income areas and areas within the high-injury street network
Goal 10 Emerging Transportation	Incorporate emerging technology into the transportation network in ways that seek to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
Goal 14 Housing	Preserve, expand, and create mixed income communities, by preserving existing housing units and developing new ones—both renter and owner-occupied—throughout the city.

Richmond Connects will also result in a Strategic Multimodal Transportation Plan, a Near-Term Action Plan including the 2024 Action Plan, a Near-Term Action Plan, and a Long-Term Scenario Plan. These documents are all based on rigorous equity-centered data analysis and equity-focused community engagement and will encourage equity-informed future planning decisions.

Recent Development Precedents

There are currently two sites under construction, including the CoStar office development and student housing for VCU. Additionally, there are several planned projects, including City Center, expansion of the Virginia Biotech District, the Diamond District, and the Center for the Arts.

- CoStar has continued to expand its Richmond presence, resulting in 750,000 SF of new office space which will accommodate new jobs.
- VCU has partnered with a private developer to provide student housing in the Monroe Ward neighborhood. The CoStar Center for the Arts and the Diamond District are both planned developments that reflect TOD characteristics. Neither project has begun construction at this point.
- The Navy Hill project was a development that preceded the City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan but was cancelled in 2020. Elements of Navy Hill have been incorporated into the City Center Plan, as both plans focus on the redevelopment of the Coliseum through mixed-use TOD.
- The Virginia Biotech Research Park continues its expansion, with 107,000 SF of research space proposed to begin development in 2024.

Table 5: Relevant Planned Projects in Downtown Richmond

Project	Status	Use	Location	Program	Key Takeaways
Under Construction					
CoStar HQ Expansion	Under Construction (2022)	Office	B-4 District	750,000 of build-to-suit office space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-use tenant supported by existing Richmond-based employer.
Parc View at Commonwealth	Under Construction (2022)	Student Housing	TOD-1 District	168 units, 340 beds of student housing for VCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VCU student housing located in Monroe Ward.
Planned Projects					
CoStar Center for the Arts	Planned (2023)	Academic/ Institutional	B-4 Zoning District, on Site 15	213,000 SF multidisciplinary complex with classrooms, performance venues, and makerspaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint partnership between CoStar Group, and Virginia Commonwealth University. Intended to be a space for both VCU students, and the community at large. Located on Site 15.
Diamond District	Planned (2023)	Mixed-Use Entertainment District	Destination Mixed-Use Downtown Mixed-Use	67.57 redevelopment of underutilized publicly owned property both mixed-use, and mixed income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will include a Baseball Stadium, and 11-acre park. COR had already demolished much of the existing structures. Expected to generate \$16.4M in new tax revenue by 2035, and \$1.01B through 2068.
City Center	Planned (2023)	Mixed-use Redevelopment of Richmond Coliseum	RP District	To be announced – development team has yet to be selected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to co-locate Permanent Transfer Hub with catalytic investment in mixed-use development. Built upon preceding Navy Hill (2020) project
VA Biotech Research Park	Proposed (TBD)	Research Facilities	RP District	Up to 107,000 SF of research facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued expansion and success of the VA Biotech Center
Cancelled Projects					
Navy Hill	Cancelled (2020)	Mixed-Use Large-Scale Redevelopment	RP Zoning District, in City Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail: 260,000 SF 541-room luxury hotel Office: 1.0M SF Multifamily: 2,500 units GRTC Transfer Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struck down by seven of nine City Council Members, citing a number of weaknesses. Many desirable components, although lack of affordable housing contributed to community opposition.

Achieving Transit-Oriented Development

Current zoning is largely supportive of high-density, mixed-use TOD. Specifically, the Research Park (RP) and B-4 Central Business District (B-4) zoning districts are supportive of high density, mixed-use TOD for sites 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, and 18.

The RP zoning district is the most conducive to supporting high density TOD as the allowable mix of uses, minimal development restrictions, and high potential buildable area are optimal conditions for a Permanent Transfer Hub. While B-4 is also supportive of TOD, the height restrictions can reduce the amount of potential buildable area based on parcel context. As such, sites 8 and 9 have the most potential to support TOD from a zoning perspective. However, there has been limited residential development in the RP district, despite market trends indicating strong demand for residential in Downtown Richmond. The various tradeoffs of pursuing joint development in the RP district will be assessed further during Phase II of the Permanent Transfer Hub study, which will account for the findings of the Market Study and Transit Technical Memo to be completed in Phase I.

Site 11 is the least conducive for TOD, based on the combined B-4, B-5, and M-1 zoning designations. The B-5 and M-1 zones limit the amount of vertical development that can take place on site. Additionally, the Transfer Hub is not inherently permissible in the B-5 zone, so transit activity would have to be strategically staged in one of the other zones.

Appendix A: B-4 Density Permitted Bonuses

Feature for Which Bonus is Permitted	Maximum Floor Bonus Permitted Per Feature
Pedestrian Plaza	10 square feet for each square foot of plaza area
Building Setback	5 square feet for each square foot of plaza area
Arcade or open walkway	5 square feet for each square foot of arcade or open walkway
Improved roof area	2 square feet for each square foot of improved roof area
Reduction in lot	10% of basic permitted floor area for first 20% reduction in each building dimension; 2% of basic permitted floor area for each 5% reduction thereafter
Enclosed Parking	100 square feet for each parking space
Dwelling Use	1 square foot for each square foot of floor area devoted to dwelling use

Appendix B: Current Parcel Ownership and Development

Site	Address/Building Name	Developed (GBA/RBA)	Status	Year	Recorded Owner	True Owner	Existing Structure
1	224 E Broad St / VCU Police Department	37,540 SF	Completed	1964	Jemals United Way LLC	Douglas Development Corporation	Office building
	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	Surface parking lot
2	302 E Cary St	35,428 SF	Completed	1963	Downtown Richmond Building	Bow-Tie Partners	Parking garage
	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	Downtown Richmond Building	Bow-Tie Partners	Surface parking lot
3	117 S 3rd St	30,874 SF	Completed	1970	Riverstone Properties LLC	Riverstone Properties LLC	Office building
	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	Riverstone Properties LLC	Riverstone Properties LLC	Surface parking lot
4	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	Broad Street Community Development	Broad Street Community Development	Surface parking lot
5	401 E Cary St	85,486 SF	Completed	2006	Riverstone Properties LLC	Riverstone Properties LLC	Surface parking lot

Site	Address/Building Name	Developed (GBA/RBA)	Status	Year	Recorded Owner	True Owner	Existing Structure
6	603 E Franklin St	108,484 SF	Completed	1950	City of Richmond Dept. of Economic Development	City of Richmond Dept. of Economic Development	Parking garage
	616 E Franklin St / Franklin Federal Building	4,800 SF	Completed	1940	Gig Properties LLC	Gig properties LLC	Office building
	100-102 N 7th St	4,500 SF	Completed	1909	Seventh & Franklin	Shaia Fred T	Storefront retail/office
	106 N 7th St	4,118 SF	Completed	1909	Seventh & Franklin	5th & Grace Associates LLC	Storefront retail/office
	108 N 7th St	2,186 SF	Completed	1917	The Estate Planning & Elder Law Firm, PC	Estate Planning & Elder Law Firm	Storefront retail/office
	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	City of Richmond Dept. of Economic Development	City of Richmond Dept. of Economic Development	Surface parking lot
7	507 E Main St / Centennial Terrace	47,833 SF	Completed	2021	Goodstein Development	Goodstein Development	Multi-family residential
	10 S 6th St	48,558 SF	Completed	1911	Jemal's Leaf Tobacco LLC	Douglas Development Corporation	Office building
	523 E Main St / Centennial Apartments	22,000 SF	Completed	2016	507 Main St Prop LLC	CMB Development, LLC	Multi-family residential
	501-503 Main St	8,338 SF	Reno Completed	2017	Ocular 501 LLC	J.D. Lewis Construction Mgmt.	Multi-family residential
	505 E Main St	2,320 SF	Completed	1903	Watson M Marshall	Watson M Marshall	Office building
	S 6th St - 6th St & Main St	N/A	Completed	N/A	Jemal's Leaf Tobacco LLC	Douglas Development Corporation	Surface parking lot
8	N/A	74,500* SF	Completed	N/A	City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works	City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works	Current Transfer Hub
	N/A	16,000* SF	Completed	N/A	City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works	City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works	Current Transfer Hub

Site	Address/Building Name	Developed (GBA/RBA)	Status	Year	Recorded Owner	True Owner	Existing Structure
9	501-505 N 9th St	175,292	Completed	1954	City of Richmond	City of Richmond	Office building
	500 N 10th St / Navy Hill	545,000	Abandoned	N/A	City of Richmond	City of Richmond	Office building
10	800 E Canal St / Gateway Plaza	328,581	Completed	2015	Gateway Plaza Realty Fee, LLC	Qatar First Bank	Office building
	838 E Cary St	300,000	Completed	1940	Rushmark FNB, LLC	Rushmark FNB, LLC	Parking garage
11	1415 E Main St	6,756	Completed	1969	Dusa LC	Devon USA LLC	Office building
	1425 Main St	25,265* SF	Vacant	N/A	Commonwealth Commercial Partners	Commonwealth Commercial Partners	Surface parking lot
	1421 Lombardy Alley / The Buggy Factory	11,799 SF	Renovated	2008	Pearsall Haley P	Mountaineer Properties	Multi-family residential
	14 S 15th St	4,344 SF	Completed	1890	Nicholas A Macauley	Nicholas A Macauley	Storefront retail/residential
	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	Multiple Owners	Multiple Owners	Surface parking lot
12	115 E Broad St / Atrium on Broad	41,000 SF	Completed	2013	Dodson Commercial Properties, LLC	Dodson Commercial Properties, LLC	Multi-family residential
	122 E Grace St / Jefferson National Bank Property	2,500 SF	Completed	1998	Jefferson National Bank	Wells Fargo & Company	Storefront retail
13	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	Salvation Army	Salvation Army	Surface parking lot
	5 W Grace St	N/A	Demolished	N/A	Young Men's Christian Association	Young Men's Christian Association	Surface parking lot
	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works	City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works	Surface parking lot
14	321 W Grace St / Parc View at Commonwealth	253,000 SF	Under Construction	2024	Pinecrest LLC	Pinecrest LLC	Student housing
	305 W Grace Street	N/A	Demolished	N/A	Old Dixie LLC	Old Dixie LLC	Vacant
	307 W Grace St	4,076 SF	Completed	1900	Clay Garland	Clay Garland	Residential

Site	Address/Building Name	Developed (GBA/RBA)	Status	Year	Recorded Owner	True Owner	Existing Structure
15	535 W Broad St / CoStar Center for Arts and Innovation	213,000 SF	Planned	2027	Virginia Commonwealth University	Virginia Commonwealth University	Surface parking lot
	501 W Broad St	2,469 SF	Completed	1969	501 W Broad LLC	Virginia Commonwealth University	Fast food
	201 N Belvidere St	3,198 SF	Completed	1983	VCU Real Estate & Insurance Services	VCU Real Estate & Insurance Services	Office building
16	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Surface parking lot and parking garage
17	600 E Canal Pl / Dominion Energy	960,000 SF	Completed	2019	Dominion Resources Svcs Inc.	Dominion Energy	Office building
18	700 Canal St	86,249 SF *	Demolished	2020	DE 700 Canal Place LLC	Dominion Energy	Vacant commercial land

*In the event GBA/RBA was unavailable, data replaced with parcel land size where applicable

**In the event data was unavailable on CoStar, marked N/A