Richmond 300: Code Refresh

High-Quality Places Working Group Meeting #1

May 5, 2025

Welcome and Orientation

Room Orientation

- Staff and Zoning Advisory Council

- Restrooms and Exits

- Refreshments

- Parking Board

Working Group Purpose

- Advise the Zoning Advisory Council and PDR staff

- Review the materials related to the Code Refresh process, through the lens through the lens of one of five topic areas from Richmond 300

- Determine what may be missing or inconsistent with the policies related to each topic area in the Code Refresh

- Provide subject matter expertise

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What is the process?

FEBRUARY 2024 - MAY 2024

PHASE 1
PROJECT INITIATION

Confirmation of timeline, development of engagement plan, review of existing materials and kick off visit with staff.

MAY 2024 - FEBRUARY 2025

PHASE 2
PATTERN BOOK

Analysis of existing and traditional urban and architectural form.

PHASE 3
ZONING ORDINANCE FRAMEWORK

Analysis of existing ordinance.

PHASE 4
ZONING DISTRICTS FRAMEWORK

Conceptual framework and districts for new ordinance, not yet addressing detailed metrics.

MARCH 2025 - SPRING 2026

PHASE 5
DRAFT & FINAL ZONING ORDINANCE

Development and testing of code metrics, graphics and administrative language.

We are here!

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What is the process?
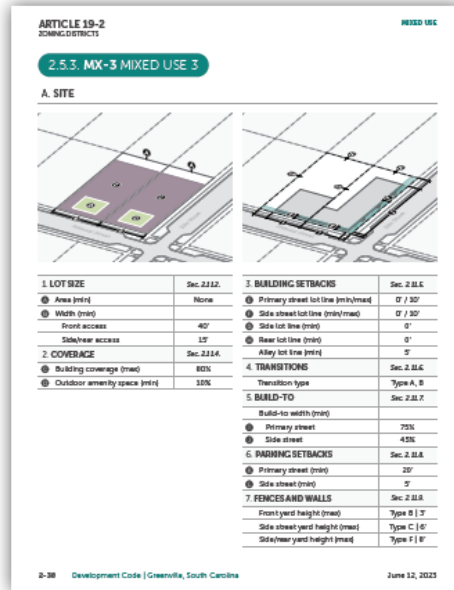
+ Draft code will be delivered in three separate parts or "modules" in 2025.

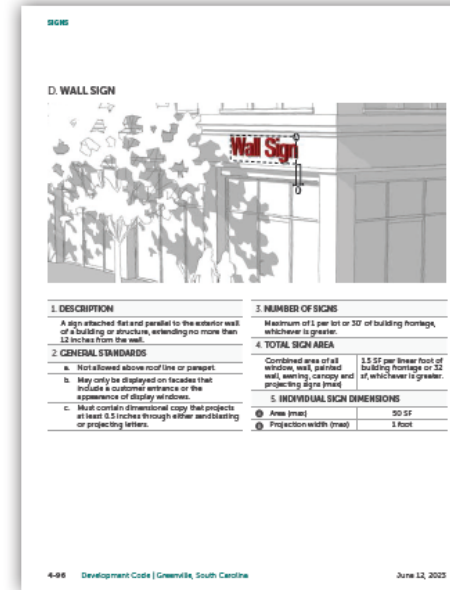+ Each module delivery will provide opportunity for detailed review and discussion by ZAC.

+ Three modules will then be revised and assembled as a complete draft.
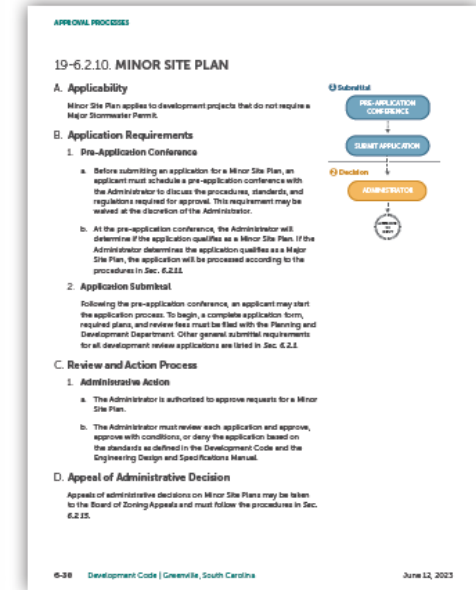
MODULE 1:
DISTRICTS, USES & MAPS

Full zoning districts, use matrix and zoning maps

MODULE 2:
DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Landscaping, transitions, signs, vehicle access, and other city-wide standards

MODULE 3:
ADMINISTRATION & OTHER PROVISIONS

Processes for review of applications, and how to allow amendments or relief

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Working Group Ground Rules

- Engage in open dialogue

- Participate as individuals and share when representing your organization.

- Refrain from speaking on behalf of the Council

- Attend meetings and read materials

- Everyone participate in the conversation and share your advice

- Try to be succinct to allow others time to speak

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Agenda Review

5:00 PM   Welcome & Orientation

5:10 PM   Ice Breaker Activity

5:20 PM   Background Presentation

5:40 PM   Small Group Discussion

6:40 PM   Small Group Report Back

7:00 PM   Adjournment

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Meeting Objectives

- Understand the connection between the strategies of Richmond 300 and the Code Refresh project

- Learn about Code Refresh Module 1 Content

- Provide input on questions that have been posed to the ZAC and that we have received from the community

- Begin to dive deep into the Module 1 Content

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Icebreaker

Where is a high-quality place in the City of Richmond and what makes it a high-quality place?

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Richmond 300

High-Quality Places

High-Quality Places Topic Vision

Richmond is a well-designed city of communities interconnected by a network of Nodes, public facilities, and open spaces providing services to residents, businesses, and visitors.

As the Capital of the Commonwealth, Richmond leads the region in high-quality business and residential growth. Richmond's unique neighborhoods and districts, both historical and new, support a diversity of uses, the equitable accommodation of all phases of life, and the efficient use of land to promote sustainable and healthy lifestyles.
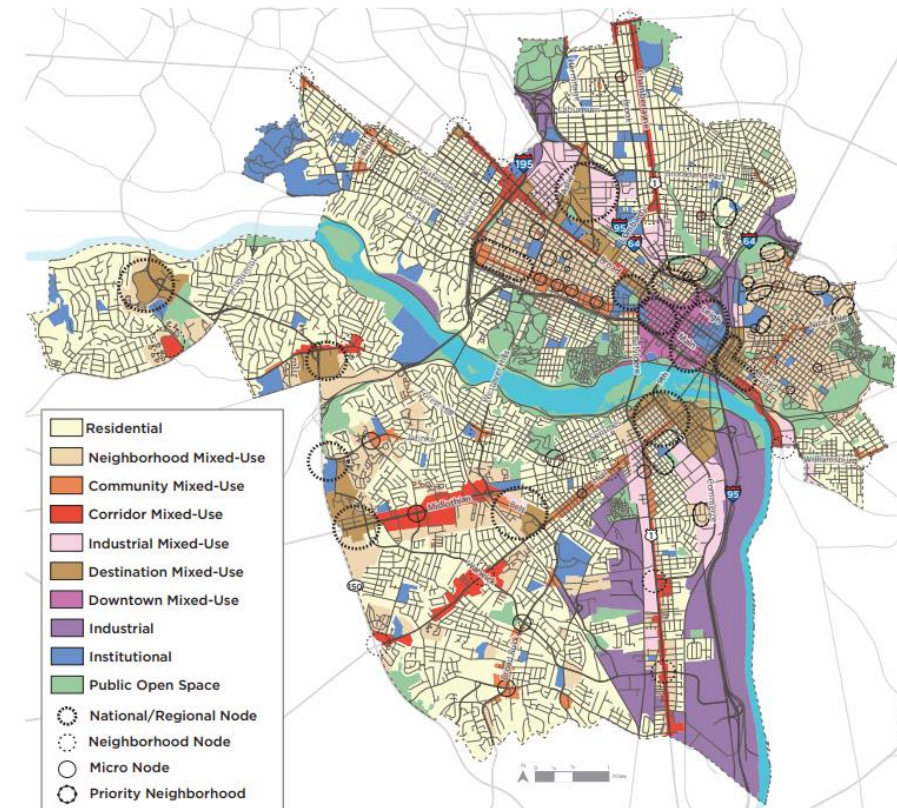
Rezone

Objective 1.1 Rezone the city in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan, as shown in Figure 21 and described in Chapter 1.

- Evaluate zoning districts in historical areas that were developed prior to the advent of zoning regulations to ensure new construction similar in form to the historical context is allowed
- Rezone parcels in Nodes and Priority Neighborhoods with design requirements that encourage walking, such as providing sidewalks, street trees, shade structures, pedestrian-level lighting, street furniture, and street-level windows and doors; prohibiting parking facing the street; and limiting driveway entrances.
- Rezone to allow more housing types throughout the city

Residential Areas

Objective 1.3 Maintain and improve primarily residential areas by increasing their linkages to Nodes, corridors, parks, and open space, and maintaining high-quality design standards.

- Implement urban design and architecture strategies that maintain and enhance the unique character of Richmond's residential districts

Residential
Neighborhood Mixed-Use
Community Mixed-Use
Corridor Mixed-Use
Industrial Mixed-Use
Destination Mixed-Use
Downtown Mixed-Use
Industrial
Institutional
Public Open Space
National/Regional Node
Neighborhood Node
Micro Node
Priority Neighborhood

Goal 3: Historic Preservation

Support growth that preserves the historical urban fabric and enhances understanding of Richmond's multi-faceted past.

Preservation

Objective 3.1 Preserve culturally, historically, and architecturally significant buildings, sites, structures, neighborhoods, cemeteries, and landscapes that contribute to Richmond's authenticity.

- Develop and regularly update a city-wide preservation plan to establish near- and long-term preservation priorities and to identify proactive and innovative strategies to protect the character, quality, and history of the city.

Demolition

Objective 3.2 Reduce the demolition of historical buildings.

- Create flexibility in the Zoning Ordinance to encourage the adaptive reuse of historical buildings and deter demolition, such as allowing for compatible densities and uses in historical areas

City of Richmond **Cultural Heritage Stewardship Plan**
Identifying, Recognizing, and Caring for Richmond's Cultural and Historic Assets

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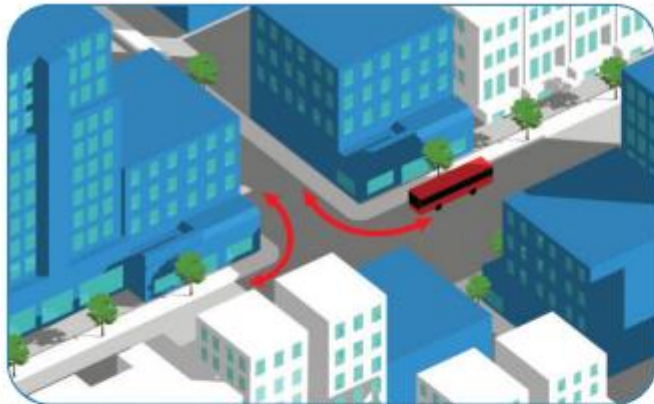**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW**

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.

Building Form
Objective 4.1: Create and preserve high-quality, distinctive, and well-designed neighborhoods and Nodes throughout the city.

Hold the Corner

Appropriate Setbacks/Stepbacks

Façade Articulation

Entrances Face the Street

Transparency

Screened Parking/Services

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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.

Open Space

Objective 4.3: Increase neighborhood access to, and through, a well-designed network of open spaces.

- Revise the Zoning Ordinance to change the definition of open space to require private landowners to include usable open space, small parks, playgrounds, green roofs, courtyards, etc. in their developments and link the open spaces to the city-wide open space network
- Require any new development along the river and canals to provide for public access and activated ground levels

Walkability

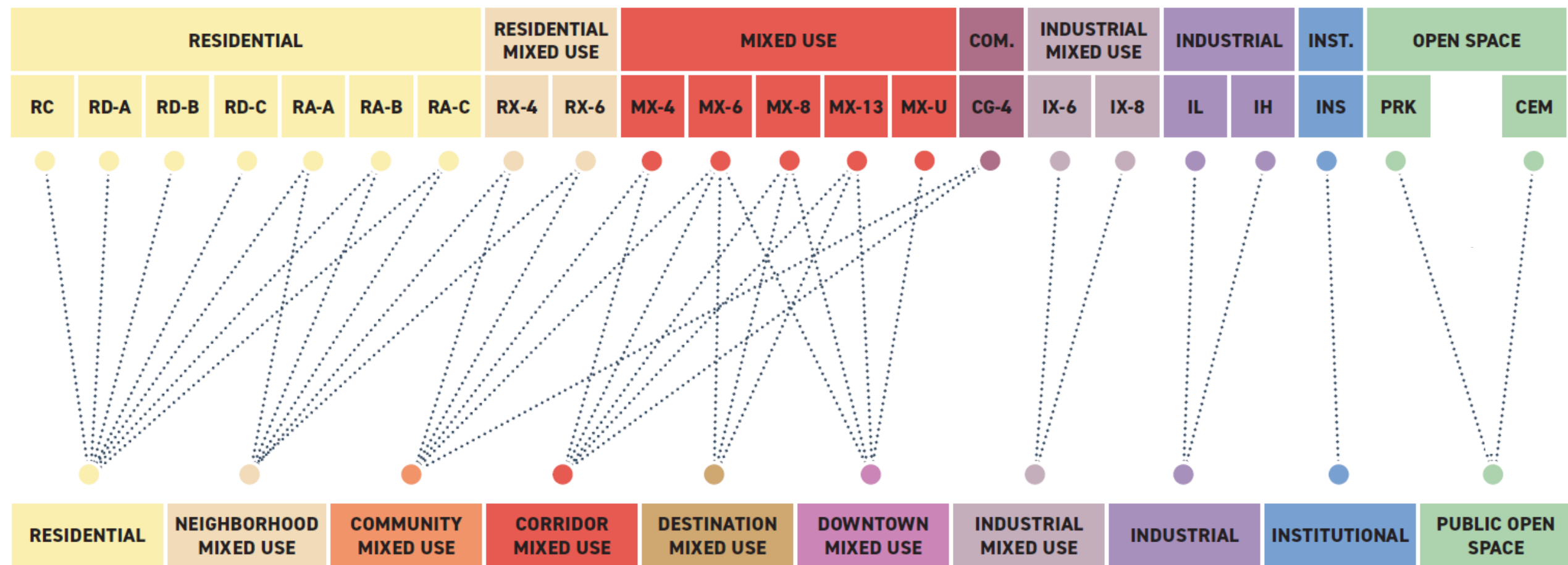**Objective 4.4:** Increase Richmond's walkability along all streets.

Draft Zoning Districts

Draft Framework

PLAN

CURRENT ZONING

Future Land Use

- Residential
- Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- Community Mixed-Use
- Corridor Mixed-Use
- Industrial Mixed-Use
- Destination Mixed-Use
- Downtown Mixed-Use
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Open Space
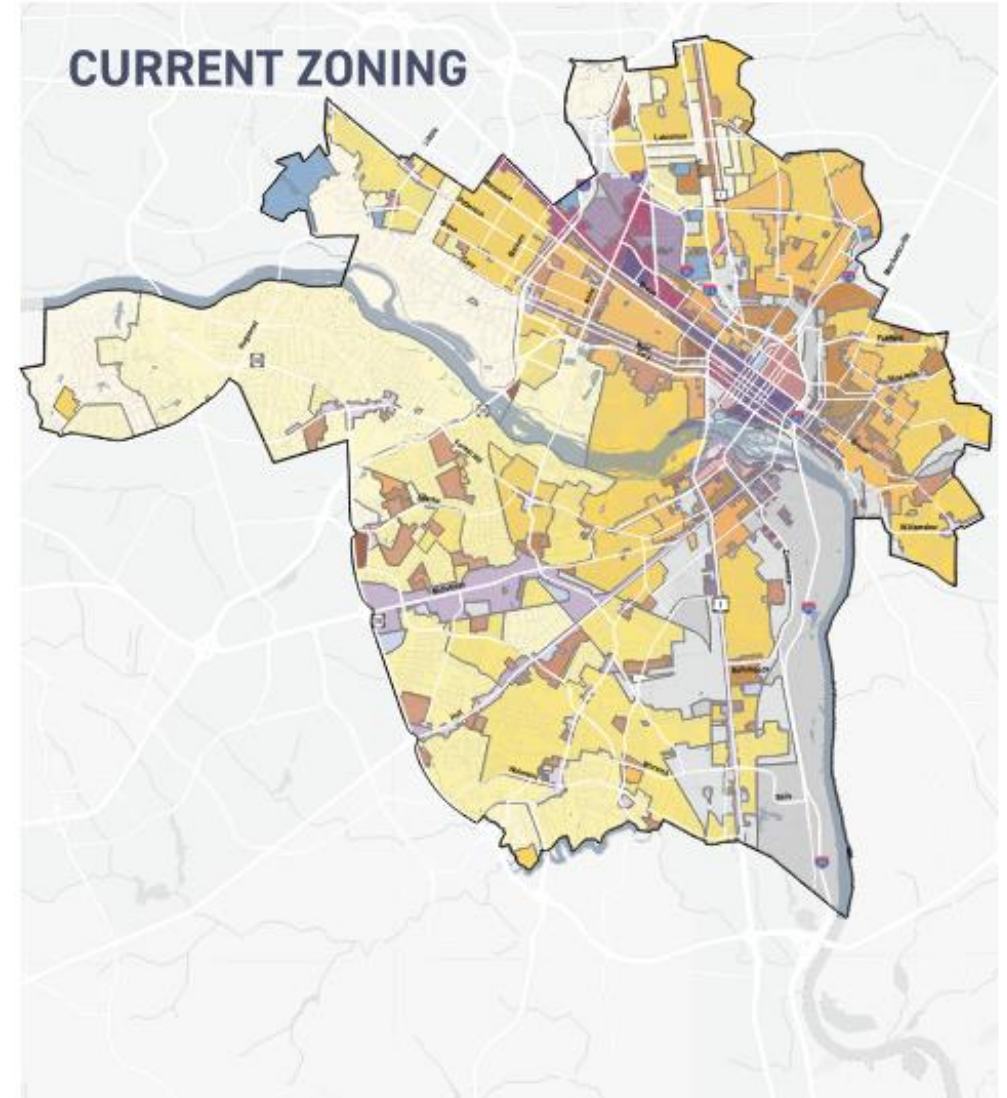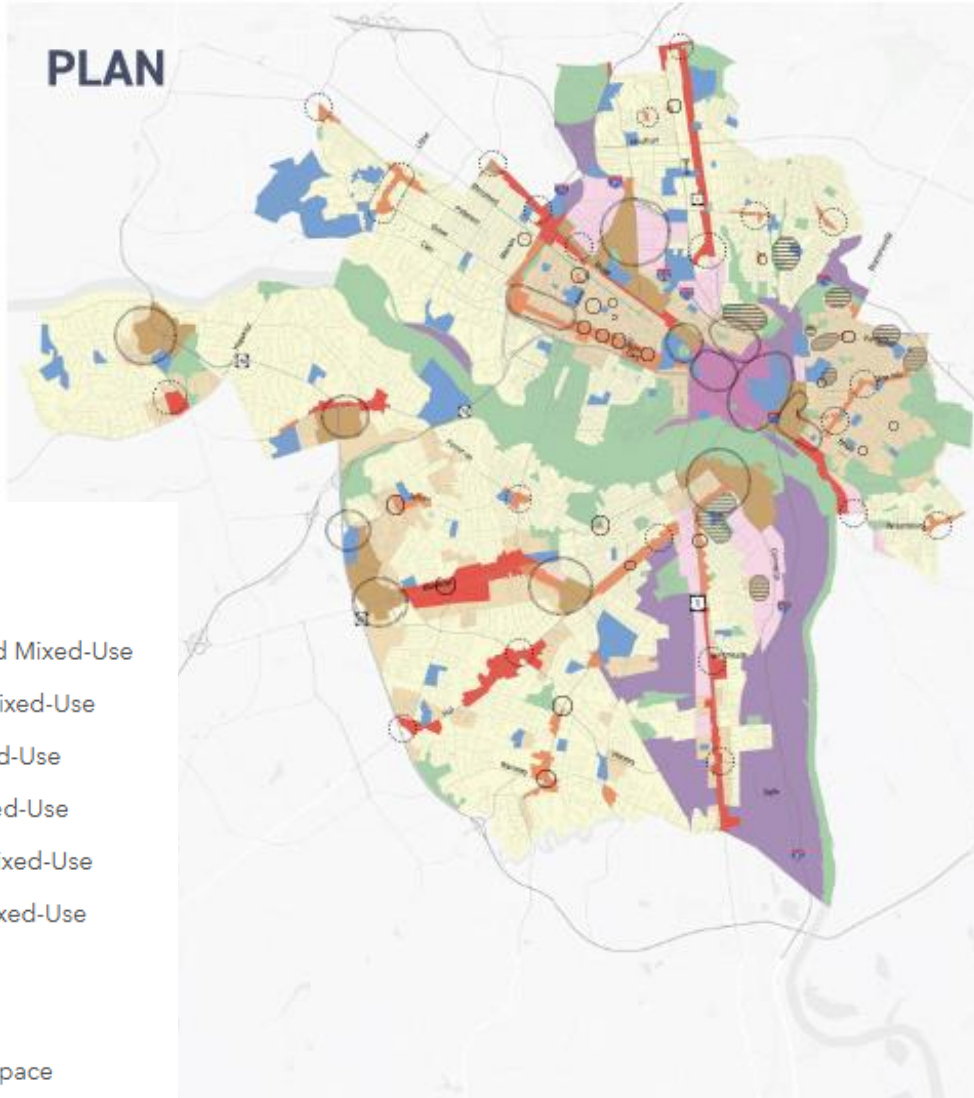
Preliminary Zoning Districts

RICHMOND 300 LAND USES

Residential Detached Districts

RC
Residential Cottage

RD-A
Residential Detached - Low

RD-B
Residential Detached - Medium

RD-C
Residential Detached - High

Clusters of small detached houses that could include manufactured and tiny home parks, & cottage courts

Allows up to 2 units and an ADU on a lot no less than **90 feet in width**, includes single family detached houses, duplexes, & ADUs

Allows up to 2 units and an ADU on a lot no less than **50 feet in width,** includes single family detached houses, duplexes, & ADUs

Allows up to 2 units and an ADU on a lot no less than **25 feet in width,** includes single family detached houses, duplexes, & ADUs

Residential Detached Districts

RA-A
Residential Attached - Low

RA-B
Residential Attached - Medium

RA-C
Residential Attached - High

Allows up to **2 units and an ADU in a building**, includes single-family detached houses, duplexes, & rowhouses. Also allows limited commercial.

Allows up to **6 units and an ADU in a building**, includes single-family detached houses, duplexes, rowhouses, multiplexes. Also allows limited commercial.

Allows up to **12 units in a building**, includes single-family detached houses, duplexes, rowhouses, stacked townhouses, multiplexes, & small apartments. Also allows limited commercial.

Mixed-Use Districts

RX-4
Residential Mixed Use - 4

Allows up to a **4-story residential building** – also allows ground floor commercial

RX-6
Residential Mixed Use - 6

Allows up to a **6-story residential building** – also allows ground floor commercial

MX-4
Mixed Use - 4

Allows up to a **4-story residential, commercial or mixed-use building**

MX-6
Mixed Use - 6

Allows up to a **6-story residential, commercial or mixed-use building**

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Mixed-Use Districts

MX-8
Mixed Use - 8

MX-13
Mixed Use - 13

MX-U
Mixed Use - Unlimited

Allows up to an **8-story residential building** – also allows ground floor commercial

Allows up to a **13-story residential building** – also allows ground floor commercial

Allows up to an **unlimited in height residential, commercial or mixed-use building**

Mixed-Use Districts

IX-6
Industrial Mixed Use - 6

Allows up to **a 6-story residential, commercial, light industrial or mixed-use building**

IX-8
Industrial Mixed Use - 8

Allows up to **a 8-story residential, commercial, light industrial or mixed-use building**

Commercial and Industrial Districts

IL
Industrial Light

IH
Industrial Heavy

CG-4
Commercial General - 4

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Commercial and Industrial Districts

INS
Institutional

OS
Open Space

CEM
Cemetery

Allows for a range of **larger public, civic & institutional uses** that do not readily assimilate into other zoning districts such as schools, places of worship, hospitals, museums, & libraries

Publicly-owned open space that serves passive and active recreational needs of the community, includes parks, playgrounds, sport fields, dog parks, & conservation areas

Open space used to bury remains and memorialize the deceased that could include chapels and mausoleums.

Small Group Discussion

1. Unit Arrangement in Residential Districts

In the Residential Districts (RD & RA), if two units plus an ADU is allowed, what is the appropriate arrangement of the units?

- Number of Structures?

- Location of Structures?

- Existing Structures?

- How it relates to the context?

RD-A: HORIZONTAL DUPLEX

RD-A: VERTICAL DUPLEX

Unit 1
Unit 2
Unit 3 (ADU)

RD-A: SIDE-BY-SIDE

RD-A: FRONT AND BACK

STREET

STREET

Unit 1
Unit 2
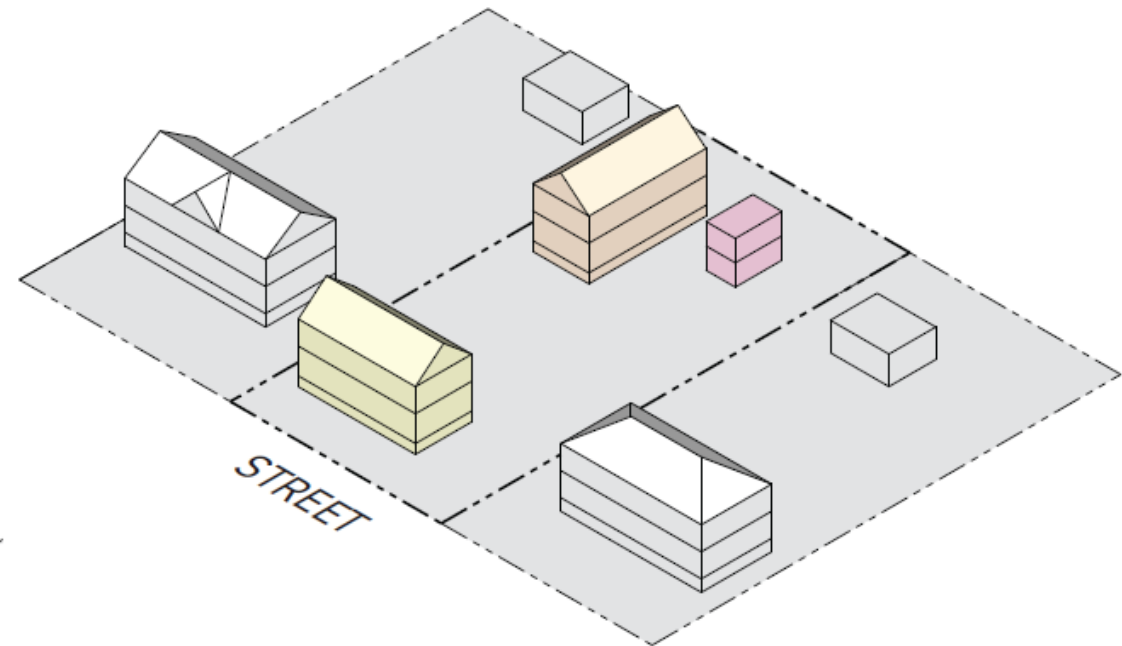Unit 3 (ADU)

RD-C: BACK TO BACK DUPLEX
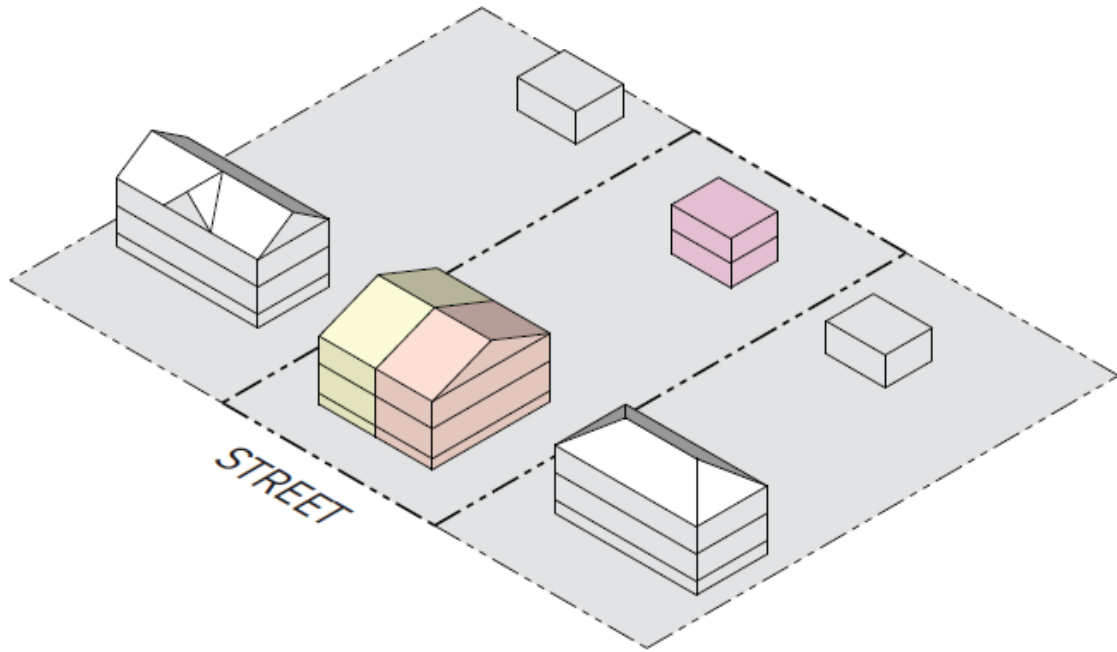
RD-C: VERTICAL DUPLEX
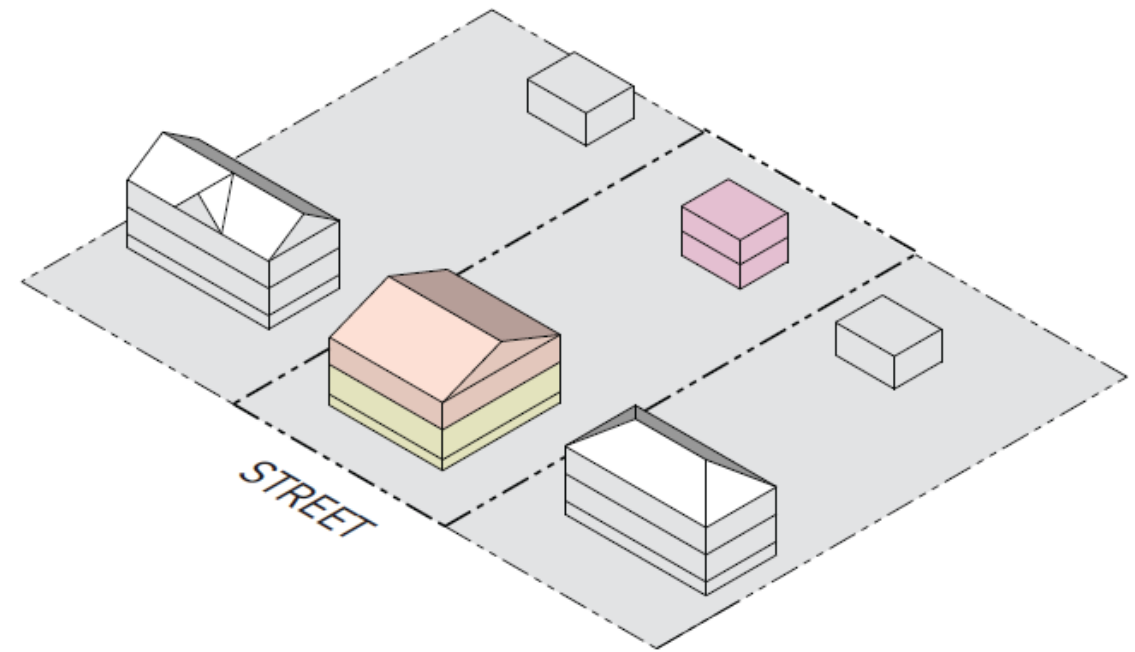
Unit 1
Unit 2
Unit 3 (ADU)

1. Unit Arrangement in Residential Districts

RD-C: BACK TO BACK DUPLEX

RD-C: VERTICAL DUPLEX

Unit 1
Unit 2
Unit 3 (ADU)

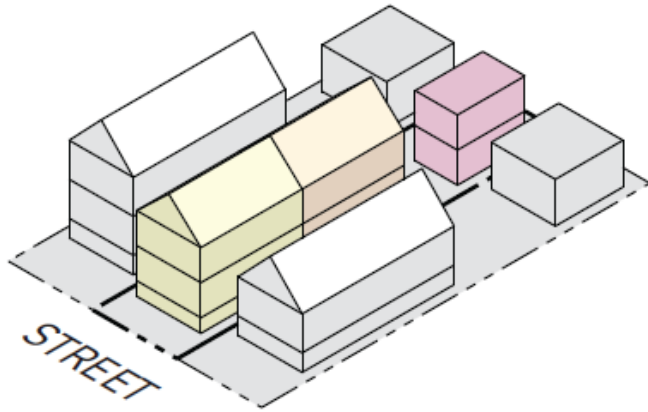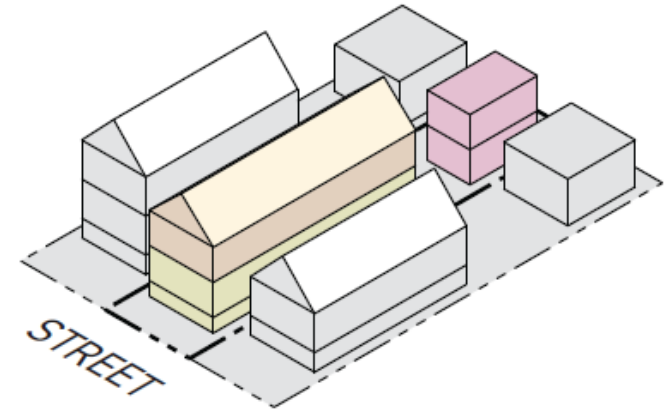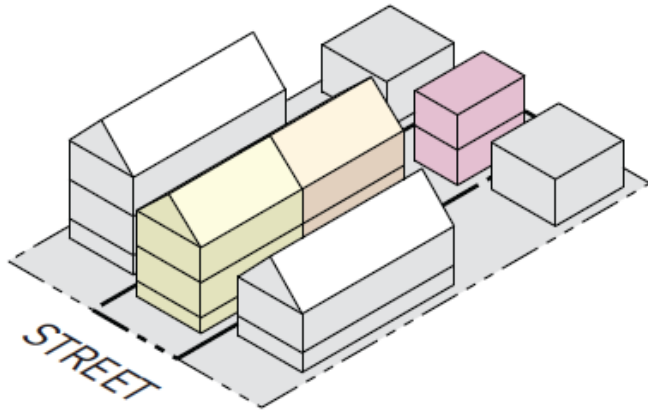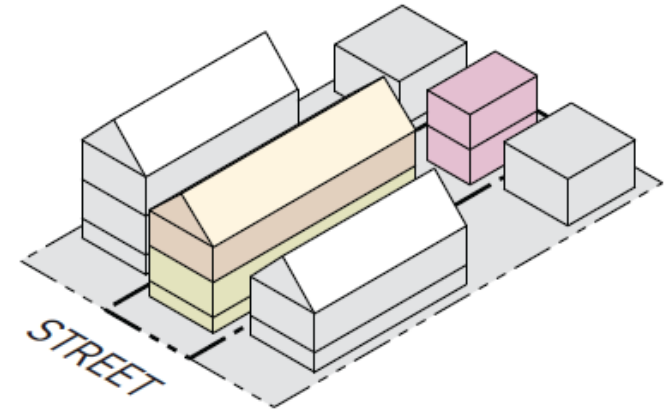Should small commercial uses be allowed within RA? RD?

If permitted, should there be limitations regarding:

- Size?

- Location in the building or accessory structure?

- Outdoor dining?

- Other elements of design or operation?

Use Category / Specific Use	RESIDENTIAL						
	RC	RD-A	RD-B	RD-C	RA-A	RA-B	RA-C
Food and Beverage							
General food beverage (up to 1,500 SF)	-	C	C	C	P	P	P
General food beverage (above 1,500 SF)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Microbrewery, small distillery/winery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lodging							
General lodging	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medical							
General medical (up to 1,500 SF)	-	C	C	C	P	P	P
General medical (above 1,500 SF)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medical laboratory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office							
General office (up to 1,500 SF)	-	C	C	C	P	P	P
General office (above 1,500 SF)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parking							
Commercial parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Remote parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personal Service							
General personal service (up to 1,500 SF)	-	C	C	C	P	P	P
General personal service (above 1,500 SF)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Animal care - outdoor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retail							
General retail (up to 1,500 SF)	-	C	C	C	P	P	P
General retail (above 1,500 SF)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alternative financial services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Are there any concerns with the heights of mixed-use zoning districts in the Neighborhood and Micro Nodes that abut residential zoning districts?

Is there a maximum height that you would not want to see surpassed beside a 3-story residential district?

Should building stepbacks be considered to limit height or height bonuses for certain types of development?
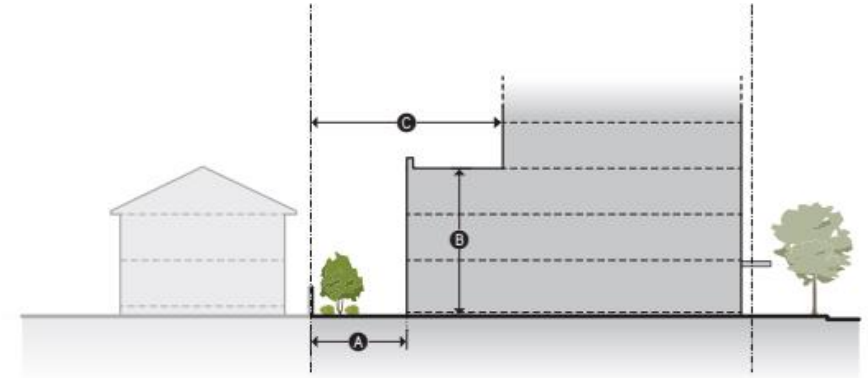
TRANSITION AREA		UPPER STORY STEP-BACK	
Ⓐ Building setback (min)	20'	Ⓑ Height before step-back (max stories/feet)	3 / 44'
Transition screen type	Moderate	Ⓒ Upper story step-back (min)	40'

Sample transition standard used in Charlottesville for taller buildings backing onto neighborhoods.

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4. Window Requirements

The draft ordinance requires a percentage of the building façade to be transparent beginning in the RD-C District.

Are these percentages appropriate?

Transparency and limits on blank walls —

Distance between entrances —

	Primary St.	Side St.
4. Windows		
Ⓒ Ground story (min)	20%	15%
Ⓓ Upper story (min)	15%	15%
Ⓔ Blank wall width (max)	15'	20'
5. Doors		
Ⓕ Street-facing entry spacing (max)	50'	n/a

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Next Steps

- Next High-Quality Places Working Group Meeting on **6/12 from 5-7pm**, in the basement auditorium of **the Main Library**. The Working Group will continue to discuss topics from Module 1 including building setbacks, building width and articulation, and the potential of the residential cottage district.

- Email richmond300@rva.gov with additional topics from Module 1 that you think need to be discussed

- Tune into the next ZAC meeting on 5/14 from 4-6:30pm at City Hall or online at https://bit.ly/CodeRefreshAC

- Let us know if there is a meeting for staff to attend

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