

INTRODUCED:

A RESOLUTION No. 2026-R

To request that the Chief Administrative Officer execute a Joint Gilpin Transformation Working Group Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Richmond and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority to establish the intended roles of the parties as partners in the redevelopment of the Gilpin Court housing community, and to request that the Chief Administrative Officer enter similar memoranda of understanding with the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority for future redevelopment of other Richmond public housing communities.

Patron – Mayor Avula

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING:

AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, the Council is committed to supporting and elevating the quality of life of all residents, especially its economically disadvantaged residents; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that access to safe, secure, code-compliant and affordable housing is a critical element of well-being and a core building block of thriving lives and thriving communities; and

AYES: _____ NOES: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: _____ REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

WHEREAS, the Council believes that the thousands of Richmonders residing in the approximately 3,200 traditional public housing units in the city of Richmond are first and foremost residents of the City, entitled to equal concern and consideration, fair treatment, and having a meaningful voice in matters concerning their fundamental well-being; and

WHEREAS, for over a decade the City has engaged in a concerted effort to expand economic, educational, and housing opportunities for all its residents, with particular attention on residents living below or near the federal poverty line; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of the Council, the large majority of traditional public housing units in the city of Richmond are over half a century old, and many of these units are in substandard condition and have been described as “functionally obsolete” by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that funding provided by the federal government, including the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, does not provide local housing authorities adequate resources to sustain public housing units in their portfolios as safe, dignified, and desirable places of human habitation; and

WHEREAS, it has been a core, well-documented policy commitment of the City to improve the quality of subsidized housing units in the city and region without reducing its supply and the City has long-standing commitments to reduce poverty through improved employment, educational and housing opportunities for residents; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to support the redevelopment of aging public housing communities in the city of Richmond, provided that any plans for development include (1) one-for-one unit replacement; (2) resident participation and voice in the redevelopment process; (3) a

robust case management and transition support for all residents; (4) a build-first model of providing new housing opportunities prior to any demolition of existing units; and (5) a robust tenant bill of rights establishing a right to return and other resident protections; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that successfully pursuing resident-centered redevelopment, without reconcentrating poverty, will require the combined capacities and effort of the City of Richmond, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and numerous community partners; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to articulate and define each stakeholder's responsibilities in this collective work; and

WHEREAS, the City and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority have been engaged in planning efforts related to public housing redevelopment in Gilpin Court, Mosby South, Creighton Court, and other communities; and

WHEREAS, it is an operational necessity to have a structured plan of partnership between the City and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority that establishes clear commitments to public housing residents, clear standards of transparency and accountability, and clear assignment of authority; and

WHEREAS, the City's Administration and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority have engaged in extensive conversations to determine the scope of this partnership, and have reached substantive agreement as to both assigned and shared responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to that agreement, the City and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority intend to create a joint working group to oversee the transformation of Gilpin Court as part of the larger implementation of a Jackson Ward Community Plan, which the

residents of Jackson Ward began to develop in 2023 and which the Council expects to accept as part of the City's Master Plan later this year;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council hereby requests that, by no later than September 1, 2026, the Chief Administrative Officer execute a Joint Gilpin Transformation Working Group Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, substantially in the form of the document attached to this ordinance, for the purpose of establishing intended roles of the parties as partners in the redevelopment of the Gilpin Court housing community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Council also hereby requests that the Chief Administrative Officer enter similar memoranda of understanding with the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority for future redevelopment of other public housing communities within the city of Richmond by no later than December 31, 2026, or as soon as is otherwise practicable;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Council hereby requests the Chief Administrative Officer and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority provide detailed updates on the status of their shared efforts to redevelop the public housing communities within the city of Richmond to (i) the Council's Land Use, Housing and Transportation Committee on at least a quarterly basis, and (ii) the full membership of the Council on at least an annual basis.