



TO: All Concerned Parties
FROM: Department of Planning, City of Portsmouth
DATE: September 2020
SUBJECT: D2 Innovation Overlay District

Proposal

The City of Portsmouth is proposing to identify the D2 district as the D2 Innovation Overlay District. The new D2 Innovation Overlay District is proposed to be superimposed on the new zoning districts for the D2 Uptown area.

What is an Innovation District?

An innovation district is a place-based urban development strategy that aims to regenerate an under-performing area into a desirable location for innovative and creative companies and workers. An innovation district is a platform for all kinds of activity that stimulate innovation while offering value to entities that drive the economy. Innovation districts have proven to be practical solutions for cities to modernize their economies and pivot from traditional industrial-based production to technology-driven services. For more information on innovation districts see: <https://medium.com/@mvarun91/innovation-districts-what-are-they-and-why-do-they-matter-1c618019a292>

Why is the D2 Uptown area a good candidate for an innovation district?

The D2 area contains a number of assets for identifying this area as an innovation district including:

- Considerable available land for development and redevelopment
- Significant publicly-owned land primed for private investment
- Connection to City's future fiber optic ring providing opportunities to deploy Smart City concepts
- Linkage to future wind energy investment projects by PMT
- Considerable public/civic activity with Behavioral Health Services, Social Services, Health Department buildings and the future Hampton Roads Community Health Center headquarters
- Locational advantages including:
 - Central to Portsmouth
 - Adjacent to Downtown Portsmouth and Norfolk
 - Direct access to MILK to I-264 East/West and Rt. 164 Western Freeway
 - Close proximity to PMT and VIG ports
 - Nearby institutions including Naval Hospital, Maryview Hospital, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, and Coast Guard

- Neighboring academic institutions including IC Norcom High School, Norfolk State University, Tidewater Community College, Old Dominion University, and ODU Tri-Cities Center

What are the potential benefits of the D2 Innovation Overlay District?

- The D2 Innovation Overlay District will provide the regulatory framework for the desired redevelopment and land use options.
- The D2I Overlay District will give the D2 area a sense of place, an identity, and a vision for inclusive growth.
- The D2I Overlay District will facilitate the ability of the city to generate accessible jobs.
- The D2I Overlay District will contribute to economic growth by helping generate revenue.
- The D2I Overlay District will help to provide educational and skill-training opportunities for Portsmouth residents.

Future Steps

The development of a D2 Innovation District area plan and placemaking strategy is proposed to follow the establishment of this new concept district.