



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: AUGUST 6, 2024**
FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **WARD: 1**
**SUBJECT: APPROVE THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED
PARKING GARAGE 8 AT 3460 ORANGE STREET**

ISSUE:

Approve the planning and development of the proposed Parking Garage 8 at 3460 Orange Street.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council direct staff to proceed with the planning and development of the proposed Parking Garage 8 at 3460 Orange Street, the northeast corner of Orange Street at Fifth Street in Downtown Riverside, having determined the project is exempt from further CEQA review.

BACKGROUND:

On October 5, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 23773 amending the Downtown Specific Plan in connection with the 6th Cycle 2021-2029 Housing Element. This update expanded the Raincross District one block north of Fifth Street, between Orange and Mulberry Streets, and one block south of Tenth Street between Almond Street and Main Street.

On July 1, 2023, the new Parking Your Way Program went into effect, which included new parking rates, new monthly permit offerings and expanded hours of operation. The parking garages typically operated from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm Monday to Friday. Under the Parking Your Way Program, most garages now operate 24/7. The Parking Access and Revenue Control System (PARCS) equipment provides the ability for the garages to operate 24/7 with minimal staffing support, especially helpful during evening and nighttime hours to accommodate patrons and Downtown visitors.

On September 19, 2023, the City Council awarded Bid 8029 to construct a temporary parking lot at 3460 Orange Street following a structural loss due to a fire. Prior to the fire, the site served as the Public Utilities Administrative facility and subsequently as the Encore School for the Arts. The temporary lot, named Parking Lot 52, was completed prior to the 2023 Festival of Lights

On March 19, 2024, the City Council reviewed an item regarding the proposed purchase and sale of Parking Garages 1 and 2, and the item was continued in response to community feedback, citing a need to review additional parking opportunities in the Downtown.

DISCUSSION:

Location

Downtown Riverside is a regional hub of activity and interest, featuring the Riverside Convention Center, high density housing, the County Administrative and Judicial seats, The Cheech Museum, the in-development Civil Rights Walk, the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa, branches of Riverside’s higher educational institutions, the Fox Theater, the Riverside Municipal Auditorium and many more.

As expected, most visitors seek a public parking space immediately upon arrival to Downtown; a parking structure is often a visitor’s first and last impression of a visit to Downtown. Thus, the City of Riverside Parking Services Division aims to provide a safe, accessible and convenient parking experience for those who visit Downtown Riverside. Parking Services has recently increased security presence, completed deferred maintenance projects, deployed exciting new technologies, and rolled out a comprehensive rates and hours schedule update which includes free on and off-street parking opportunities.

The Downtown Business Community has routinely requested the City to pursue the construction of additional public parking. Downtown continues to grow and to provide a diversity of parking opportunities and continually replenish and modernize its network of parking garages, the Parking Services Division proposes to construct a new Parking Garage ‘8’ at the site of surface Parking Lot 52, located at 3460 Orange Street. It is anticipated that Parking Garage 8 will help accommodate future downtown parking needs. The City is currently considering expansion of its Convention Center and the purchase & sale of Garages 1 and 2; the proposed Parking Garage 8 would amply park surrounding Downtown facilities. Via a separate effort, the Public Works Department is seeking to preserve parking at either Garage 1 or 2 through a public-private partnership. The final configuration of Parking Garage 8 will be assessed when developing the financial structure for construction and debt service.



Figure 1: 3460 Orange Street – Proposed Site of Parking Garage 8

The proposed location falls within the ‘Raincross District’ of the Downtown Specific Plan, which is

described as “a compact, walkable environment that encompasses Downtown’s cultural, governmental, architectural, shopping, entertainment and educational resources.”

The Magnolia/Market Corridor Study referenced within the Downtown Specific Plan recommended that, “Instead of consolidating parking structures along Market Street, they should be dispersed throughout downtown.” The proposed location for Parking Garage 8 would sit immediately to the east of the Convention Center and one block north of The Cheech and the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa.

Proposed Garage Configuration

The proposed Parking Garage 8 will utilize the entirety of the existing Parking Lot 52 site. It is anticipated to have up to 1,100 parking stalls with an estimated height of six above-ground parking levels. Entrances to the Garage will be from Orange and/or Fifth Streets. The Raincross District allows for building heights of 100 feet with room for exceptions and variances subject to Chapter 19.64 of the zoning code. It should be noted that section 19.040.110 of the code states that the provisions of the zoning code, “shall not apply to any buildings, improvements, lots or premises, owned, leased operated or controlled by the City or any City Project for public purposes by the City of Riverside.”

The previously referenced Magnolia/Market Corridor Study additionally suggests that “retail uses should also be located at first floors of all parking structures to maintain pedestrian continuity and use.” As such, Parking Services Division will consider including up to 20,000 square feet of shops and dining on the first floor of the proposed Parking Garage 8.



Figure 2: Concept rendering, not to scale

Parking Garage 8 would feature state of the art parking technology, including requisite amounts of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Parking Garage 8 is anticipated to be open to outside air, and Parking Services Division will seek opportunities to integrate artwork throughout the facility, install rooftop solar panels, and to include areas to feature greenery on each floor. The City may design Parking Garage 8 to encompass the adjacent section of Orange Street, allowing traffic to pass through beneath the structure and for a more direct pedestrian connection to the nearby Convention Center, to increase the total stalls available per floor, and to provide design flexibility. Additionally, the City may opt to construct the garage in a manner that facilitates future

modular vertical expansion, not to exceed the studied 1,100 stalls.

Next Steps

City staff has determined that this project is exempt from CEQA under State CEQA Guidelines section 15332 as an infill project. Staff has specifically made the following findings:

- (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations. City projects are exempt from Title 19, the City's zoning code.
- (b) Staff has verified that the proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.
- (c) The project site has no value, as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species. The project was developed as a building for many years and is now a paved lot with no habitat whatsoever.
- (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. City staff performed and reviewed traffic, noise, and air quality studies, and there will be no such significant effects. Staff reviewed the water quality issue and determined there will be no impacts.
- (e) Staff has verified that the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services. Water, sewer, and electrical service are all immediately adjacent, as they served the building that was recently on site.

There is no evidence of a cumulative impact as the project will accommodate existing and future parking demands, not create demand. By providing parking convenient to downtown, idling and driving emissions from searching for street parking will be reduced, as will traffic impacts. There is no evidence of any significant effect due to unusual circumstances, this is a flat lot in an area urbanized for over 100 years. No scenic highway or hazardous waste site is in the vicinity. The project will have no effect on a historical resource. It is not in a historic district, and the closest historic district will not be affected by an ordinary parking structure, which will be compatible in scale and height to other nearby structures.

The Public Works Department recommends building the Parking Garage 8 through a public-private partnership in a design-build like framework to accelerate project delivery. The construction timeline would be defined once a public-private partnership agreement is executed, the financing is secured, and the size and scope of work of Parking Garage 8 is finalized.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The proposed Parking Garage 8 aligns with **Strategic Priority 6 – Infrastructure, Mobility, and Connectivity** and **Goal 6.3** –Identify and pursue new and unique funding opportunities to develop, operate, maintain, and renew infrastructure and programs that meet the community's needs.

This project aligns with the Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The proposed project is generally aligned with the adopted Downtown Specific Plan.

2. **Equity** – This project will benefit visitors to a range of attractions and residences in Downtown Riverside.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The five-year Parking Fund program is expected to generate sufficient revenues to consider expansion projects such as Parking Garage 8.
4. **Innovation** – The Public Works department will seek to deliver this project through an innovative public / private process.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Parking Services will review opportunities to include solar panels and green spaces in Parking Garage 8 and will ensure compliance with codes requiring electric vehicle parking in garages.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Public Works Department is preparing initial documentation for the project primarily in-house using industry standard software and practices, saving the City thousands in study preparation costs and expediting its completion. Remaining potential up-front costs have been included in the proposed Parking Services Division 5-year budget.

Parking Services Division has budgeted \$100,000 for the next stages of the project development. Financing and delivery options for the project are currently in the exploratory stages and staff will return to City Council when additional information and options are available to include partnership, design-build, and/or other models.

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