



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: JULY 1, 2025
FROM: POLICE DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: OVERVIEW OF ILLEGAL FIREWORKS ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS – IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

ISSUE:

Receive and provide input on this overview for implementation and outreach of the Illegal Fireworks Program Enhancements for 4th of July 2025.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council receive and provide input on this overview for implementation and outreach of the Illegal Fireworks Program Enhancements for 4th of July 2025.

BACKGROUND:

On December 17, 2024, the City Council, following discussion, approved with six votes of aye and one vote nay, the Safety, Wellness and Youth Committee recommendations to: (1) receive and ordered filed the update on fireworks enforcement activities for 2024 presented by the Riverside Fire Department (RFD); (2) utilize small unmanned aircraft system (SUAS) technology for fireworks enforcement; (3) provide funding for advanced night operation training; (4) provide funding for the purchase of four new OJI M30 Drones; (5) amend Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) 1.18 to include Social Host Liability; and (6) request that the Finance Department forward all outstanding citations to the City Attorney’s Office (CAO) for collection via the Franchise Tax board (FTB) Intercept Program, and that RFD, Riverside Police Department (RPD), and Code Enforcement Department collaborate in assigning resources so the CAO can effectively process the citations.

On February 24, 2025, the City Council introduced and subsequently adopted an ordinance amending RMC 1.18.10 to include a Social Host Ordinance and to allow the use of SUAS (drone) technology for fireworks enforcement. The ordinance makes it unlawful for any social host to allow, by invitation or consent, the use of fireworks on their property. It also holds parents or guardians liable for juveniles found in violation of RMC 1.18.

On March 25, 2025, the City Council authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record a supplemental appropriation from Measure Z available fund balance in the amount of \$86,106.93

to the Measure Z, Police Field Operations, Special Department Supplies account for the purchase of drones and an advanced training course for small, unmanned aircraft systems pilots to enhance illegal fireworks enforcement.

DISCUSSION:

The Police Department will provide an overview for implementation and outreach of the Illegal Fireworks Program Enhancements discussed at the City Council meeting on December 17, 2024 and at subsequent staff meetings up to and including the week of June 16, 2025.

The overview will include a brief background on the program enhancements, new illegal fireworks enforcement efforts for 4th of July 2025, requirements for RPD implementation, RMC updates, and community outreach efforts. The overview also includes a summary of the Franchise Tax Board Intercept Program as one way to collect judgements and fines owed to the City under the appropriate circumstances.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to Strategic Priority No. 2 Community Well-Being and Goal number No. 2.4 – Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust.

This item aligns with EACH of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – Providing enforcement for fireworks keeps the community safe and ensures community trust between the City of Riverside and its residents.
2. **Equity** – The fee for violations of RMC 1.18 provides a deterrent to all residents, which will keep all communities within the City of Riverside safe.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The City of Riverside is attempting to reduce the use of illegal fireworks to prevent injuries and fire loss to all residents within the community.
4. **Innovation** – The City of Riverside must constantly change and adapt to meet the community's changing needs and prepare for the future. The proposed enhancements to the Fireworks Enforcement Program recommend the utilization of sUAS or drone technology and administrative citations to keep the community safe.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Regularly assessing City of Riverside programs, making changes as needed, and adjusting fees to appropriate levels allows the City to meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future and ensures the City's capacity to preserves, adapt and grow.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendations of this report. If the use of sUAS technology to enforce illegal fireworks is successfully, there may be an increased number of citations issued potentially increasing revenue to the City. However, equipment purchases and

staff time for enforcement efforts may outpace any increase in revenue. It is unknown at this time.

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Certified as to
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Financial Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by: Mike Futrell, City Manager
Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reibold, Interim City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation