



CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: JUNE 17, 2026  
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 8

DISCUSSION ITEM

<b>Case Number</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Request</b>	A workshop to discuss and provide feedback potential ordinance to amend Title 19 of the Riverside Municipal Code, prohibiting the use of chain link fencing on historic properties.
<b>Project Location</b>	Citywide
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Staff Planner</b>	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer 951-826-5507 swatson@riversideca.gov

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) hold a workshop to discuss and provide feedback on a potential ordinance to amend Title 19 of the Riverside Municipal Code, prohibiting the use of chain link fencing on historic properties.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

At the February 9, 2026 Land Use Committee (LUC) meeting, Councilmember Falcone introduced a proposal to amend Title 19 (Zoning) of the Riverside Municipal Code to prohibit new and replacement chain link fencing for City Landmarks, Structures of Merit, Historic Districts, and Neighborhood Conservation Areas. The proposed ordinance is intended to improve compatibility between fencing materials and the historic character of designated cultural resources and historic neighborhoods.

Councilmmber Falcone indicated that the City's zoning and design codes do not explicitly prohibit chain link fencing in historic or conservation areas. As a note, while chain link fencing is not explicitly prohibited, the *Citywide Residential Historic District Design Guidelines* states, "Chain link should not be used in locations prominently visible from the street." The LUC was provided with a summary of other jurisdictions throughout the State which have taken action to limit or prohibit the use of chain link fencing at historic properties.

During discussion, the Land Use Committee reviewed the proposed prohibition, discussed the importance of preserving neighborhood character within historic areas, and considered the need for flexibility for larger lots and post-World War II historic districts where chain link fencing may be more historically appropriate. Additionally, the LUC discussed the potential to work with local advocacy groups, like the Old Riverside Foundation, to provide grants for the replacement of existing chain link fences. Following

discussion, the Committee directed staff to continue development of the ordinance language and seek feedback from the CHB on the potential ordinance.

Based on the feedback from the LUC, staff has prepared the following potential amendment text [redlined text] to aid CHB's discussion:

**19.550.70 – Historic properties and cultural resources**

- A. Fences, walls, and landscape materials for cultural resources shall be designed to comply with Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code, the Cultural Heritage Board's Design Guidelines, and district-specific guidelines.
- B. Installation of new or replacement chain link fencing is prohibited at Cultural Resources as defined by Title 20, including within historic districts and neighborhood conservation areas
  - a. Exceptions:
    - i. Chain link fencing may be allowed in historic districts with a period of significance post-World War II, subject to review under applicable historic preservation design review standards.
    - ii. On large lots greater than one-half acre, chain link fencing may be permitted in areas not visible from the public right-of-way, subject to review for compatibility with historic character.

Staff is requesting Cultural Heritage Board review and feedback regarding the proposed fencing standards, including the appropriateness of the proposed exceptions and potential impacts on historic preservation review and neighborhood compatibility.

*Chain Link Fencing History*

As a matter of information, chain link fencing was developed in the mid- to late 19th century through the adaptation of mechanized wire weaving technology originally derived from textile manufacturing processes in the United Kingdom and later commercialized in the United States. While available in limited forms in the early 20th century, its widespread adoption occurred in the post-World War II period, when expanded steel production, standardized manufacturing processes, and suburban and institutional development drove demand for low-cost, durable perimeter fencing. By the mid-20th century, chain link fencing had become a common utilitarian material for schools, parks, industrial facilities, and public infrastructure, distinguishing it from earlier ornamental or site-specific fencing traditions.

**EXHIBITS LIST**

1. Land Use Committee Report 2-9-2026
2. Land Use Committee Presentation 2-9-2026
3. Land Use Committee Minutes 2-9-2026
4. [Citywide Residential Historic District Design Guidelines](#)

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Approved by: Laurel Reimer, City Planner