PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025, 9:00 A.M.
PUBLIC COMMENT IN-PERSON/TELEPHONE
ART PICK COUNCIL CHAMBER
3900 MAIN STREET, RIVERSIDE, CA 92522

PRESENT: Chair Launa Wilson, Secretary Raj Singh, Sergeant of Arms Brian Baird, and Commissioners Aurelio Melendrez, Lorraine Mooney, Johnny Wilder, and Judy Teunissen

ABSENT: Vice Chair Rafael Elizalde and Commissioner Benjamin Stewart

STAFF: Maribeth Tinio, Anthony Beaumon, Lorena Verdusco, Matthew Taylor, Scott Watson, Clarissa Manges, Paige Montojo, Kimi Palacios, Jessica Bruce, Mark Hernandez, Chris Pullin and others

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Teunissen led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE
There was no one wishing to address the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PLANNING CASE PR-2025-001768 - CITY OF RIVERSIDE AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 19 ZONING OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE (RMC) - CONTINUED FROM FEBRUARY 27, 2025
Hearing was called to consider Planning Case PR-2025-001768 a proposal by the City of Riverside to consider amendments to Title 19 (Zoning) of the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC), including but not limited to Articles VIII (Site Planning and General Development Provisions), IX (Land Use Development Permit Requirements/Procedures), and X (Definitions). The proposed amendments implement policy direction from the City Council Land Use Committee related to general sign provisions and are intended to: (1) Promote high-quality signs through enhanced standards for materials and construction; (2) Reduce sign clutter and over concentration of wall signage; (3) Establish development standards for blade signs; (4) Establish a Creative Sign Permit process to allow for the flexible application of development standards for creative and high-quality designs; (5) Clarify and establish standards for window signage and transparency; and (6) Make other minor and/or non-substantive changes and technical corrections as required to provide clarity, improve useability, correct errors, or remove redundancies. The Community & Economic Development Department recommends that the City Planning Commission determine that this project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense) of the CEQA Guidelines, as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the project will have a significant effect on the environment. No one spoke regarding the matter. The public hearing was officially closed.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Baird and seconded by Commissioner Singh to (1) recommend that the City Council determine that Planning Case PR-2025-001768 is exempt from further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), as it can be seen with certainty that approval of the project will not have an effect on the environment; (2) recommend Option 2 for nonconforming sign amortization policy; and (3) recommend approval of all other amendments under Planning Case PR-2025-001768 (Zoning Text Amendment) as outlined in the staff report and summarized in the Findings section of the staff report. The motion carried with Commissioners Baird, Melendrez, Mooney, Singh, Teunissen, Wilder, and Wilson voting aye and Commissioners Elizalde and Stewart absent.

PLANNING CASE PR-2025-001788 - FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROJECTS - DETERMINATION THAT PROJECTS ARE CONSISTENT WITH GENERAL PLAN 2025 PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65401
Hearing was called to consider Planning Case PR-2025-001788 a request for Planning Commission annual review of projects included in the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and determination that the projects are consistent with General Plan 2025 pursuant to California Government Code Section 65401. The Community & Economic Development Department recommends that the City Planning Commission determine that the CIP consistency review is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), because the review is not considered a "project" as defined by Section 15378(b)(4). No one spoke regarding the matter. The public hearing was officially closed.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Wilder and seconded by Commissioner Mooney to (1) determine that the City of Riverside's Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) as this action is not considered a "project" as defined by Section 15378(b)(4), and a determination of consistency has no potential to result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment; (2) find that the capital improvement projects added for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 are consistent with the City's General Plan 2025; and (3) report to the City Council that the capital improvement projects added for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 are consistent with the City's General Plan 2025. The motion carried with Commissioners Baird, Melendrez, Mooney, Singh, Teunissen, Wilder, and Wilson voting aye and Commissioners Elizalde and Stewart absent.

PLANNING CASE PR-2025-001795 - ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT - CITY OF RIVERSIDE - AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE V (BASE ZONES AND RELATED USE AND DEVELOPMENT PROVISIONS) OF TITLE 19 (ZONING) OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE (RMC)
Hearing was called to consider Planning Case PR-2025-001795 a proposal by the City of Riverside to consider an amendment to Article V (Base Zones and Related Use and Development Provisions) of Title 19 (Zoning) of the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) for consistency with recent changes to the City's Commercial Cannabis Business Program. The Community & Economic Development Department recommends that the City Planning Commission determine that this project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense) of the CEQA Guidelines, as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the project will have a significant effect on the environment. No one spoke regarding the matter. The public hearing was officially closed.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Wilder and seconded by Commissioner Singh to (1) recommend that the City Council determine that Planning Case PR-2025-001795 is exempt from further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), as it can be seen with certainty that approval of the project will not have an effect on the environment; (2) recommend approval of Planning Case PR-2025-001795 (Zoning Text Amendment) as outlined in the staff report and summarized in the Findings section of the staff report; and (3) revise the distance from parks from 600 feet to 1000 feet. The motion carried with Commissioners Baird, Melendrez, Mooney, Singh, Teunissen, Wilder, and Wilson voting aye and Commissioners Elizalde and Stewart absent.

CONSENT CALENDAR
It was moved by Commissioner Baird and seconded by Commissioner Wilder to approve the Consent Calendar as presented below affirming the actions appropriate to each item. The motion carried with Commissioners Baird, Melendrez, Mooney, Singh, Teunissen, Wilder, and Wilson voting aye and Commissioners Elizalde and Stewart absent.

MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting of April 24, 2025, were approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS

ITEMS FOR FUTURE PLANNING COMMISSION CONSIDERATION
City Planner Maribeth Tinio (1) announced that the next Planning Commission meetings would be on May 22nd and June 5th; and (2) informed the Commission of two upcoming items for City Council approval.

The Planning Commission adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

The above actions were taken by the City Planning Commission on May 8, 2025. There is now a 10-day appeal period that ends on May 19, 2025. During this time, any interested person may appeal this action to the City Council by submitting a letter of appeal and paying the appeal fee. In the absence of an appeal or referral, the Commission's decisions and conditions become final after 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2025.