



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** JULY 28, 2015

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **WARD:** 1

DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: PLANNING CASE P14-0839 - CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ESTABLISH A
CHARTER SCHOOL, REACH LEADERSHIP STEAM ACADEMY – 1085
LINDEN STREET

ISSUE:

The issue for City Council consideration is a proposal by Reach Leadership STEAM Academy to consider a Conditional Use Permit to establish a charter school for kindergarten through 6th grade students, on a 2.5-acre vacant portion of the Grace Methodist Church site, located at 1085 Linden Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Determine the proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Section 15332 (In-Fill Development), Class 32 (the “Class 32 Exemption”);
2. Approve Planning Case P14-0839 based on the findings outlined in the Planning Commission staff report (attachment 2) and summarized in the Planning Commission’s recommended conditions (attachment 1); and
3. Adopt exhibits 6-8 of the Planning Commission’s staff report as approved project plans, subject to recommended conditions of approval (attachment 1).

STAFF/PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommended approval subject to the recommended conditions of approval in the staff report. On June 18, 2015, the City Planning Commission recommended approval of Planning Case P14-0839 by a vote of 8 ayes, 0 noes and 0 abstentions, with modifications to staff recommended conditions.

BACKGROUND:

The applicant is requesting consideration of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to establish K-6 Reach Leadership STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Academy (RLA), an independent charter school under the jurisdiction of the Riverside Unified School District. The RLA is a thriving and growing K-6 STEAM school. The current school is located at the Riverside Community Church at 4850 Jurupa Avenue in Riverside.

The project consists of construction and operation of a temporary K-6 charter school campus. The proposal includes the use of 20 portable structures for classrooms (14), administration (1), library (1), a multipurpose room (1), and restrooms (3). Portable buildings range in size from 960 square feet to 1,920 square feet. An outdoor basketball court, play fields, hard courts, lunch shelter, and play areas are also proposed. A courtyard with a flag pole and landscaping serves as assembly and open space. Additionally, the school proposes to use the existing Dexter Hall, an approximately 3,800 square foot building for three (3) kindergarten classes, transit kinder care, and media center.

The proposed school will house approximately 350-450 students and 28-30 staff at full build-out. School hours of operations will be Monday-Friday, 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The office operating hours will be the same (Monday-Friday, 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM).

The school campus will be built in two phases. Phase 1 includes placement of eleven (11) classrooms; administration office, multipurpose, and library buildings; which is a total of sixteen (16) portable structures, plus the repurposing of the existing Dexter Hall building. Phase 2 includes placement of the remaining three (3) classroom and restroom portables. Access to the site will be provided via existing driveways along Rustin Avenue for all phases.

The proposed school will be located on a partly developed site, on existing church grounds in a predominantly residential neighborhood. Based on the operational characteristics of the school, the site can be operated in a manner that will not be detrimental to surrounding land uses, including UCR's Riverside Sports Center. The surrounding neighborhood is developed with residential uses (mainly multi-family housing); educational facilities (UCR's Riverside Sports Center), and is in proximity to Interstate Highway 215/California State Route 60. The closest residential area is located over 80 feet east of the subject site, across the Gage Canal. Adequate access to the subject site exists from Rustin Avenue, which will adequately accommodate vehicular traffic to and from the site. No detrimental impacts are anticipated in conjunction with this use, and the Conditional Use Permit can be supported.

Please refer to the June 18, 2015 City Planning Commission staff report, Planning Commission's recommended conditions, and the Commission minutes for additional analysis and details.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no impact to the General Fund as all project costs are borne by the applicant.

Prepared by: Emilio Ramirez, Interim Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds: Brent A. Mason, Finance Director/Treasurer
Approved by: Al Zelinka, FAICP, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. City Planning Commission Recommended Conditions – June 18, 2015
2. City Planning Commission Report – June 18, 2015
3. City Planning Commission Minutes