



**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING DATE: DECEMBER 19, 2024
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 2**

PROPOSED PROJECT

Case Number	PR-2024-001705 (Street Vacation & Traffic Pattern Modification)	
Request	<p>To consider the following to accommodate the future construction of a new elementary school (Eastside Elementary):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Street Vacation - to vacate the following street/alley segments: Park Avenue between Thirteenth Street and Fourteenth Street; the alleyway between Howard Avenue and Lincoln High School; and 2-feet of excess right-of-way along a portion of Fourteenth Street adjacent to parcel APN 211-233-021; 2) Traffic Pattern Modification Measures - to convert Thirteenth Street between Howard Avenue and Park Avenue into one-way westbound vehicle travel; and to construct a traffic circle at the intersection of Victoria Avenue and Thirteen Street. 	
Applicant	Timothy Deland of Riverside Unified School District (RUSD)	
Project Location	Generally bounded by Thirteenth Street on the north, Victoria Avenue on the east, Fourteenth Street on the south and Howard Avenue on the west	
APN	N/A (Public Right-of-Way)	
Project Area	0.67-acre	
Ward	1	
Neighborhood	Eastside	
General Plan Designation	N/A	
Zoning Designation	N/A	
Staff Planner	<p>Winnie Liang, Associate Planner 951-826-5933 wliang@riversideca.gov</p>	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. **RECOMMEND that the City Council DETERMINE** that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) subject to Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Rule) of the CEQA Guidelines, as it can be seen with certainty that the project will have no significant effect on the environment; and
2. **RECOMMEND that the City Council APPROVE** Planning Case PR-2024-001705 (Street Vacation and Traffic Pattern Modification Measures), based on the findings outlined in the staff report and subject to the recommended conditions (Exhibit 1).

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

The 0.67-acre project consists of right-of-way segments located on the following streets/alleyway: 1) Park Avenue; 2) a partially improved alleyway; 3) Fourteenth Street; and 4) Thirteenth Street. Surrounding land uses include an industrial business office (SolarMax Technology) to the west (across Howard Avenue), residential and commercial uses to the north and south, and a high school to the east (Lincoln High School).

The applicant is requesting approval of a Street Vacation and Traffic Pattern Modification Measures to facilitate the construction of a new elementary school (Eastside Elementary School). The review and construction of the elementary school is not a part of this proposal and will need to obtain all relevant permits from outside agencies prior to construction.

The Applicant proposes to vacate a total of approximately 29,257-square-foot of public right-of-way consisting of the following: 1) an 18,797-square-foot segment of Park Avenue that is approximately 284-foot in length and 63-foot in width; 2) a 10,200-square-foot segment of a partially improved alleyway that is approximately 573-foot in length and 16 to 20-foot in width; and 3) a 260-square-foot excess right-of-way segment of 14th Street (APN 211-233-021) that is approximately 130-foot in length and 2-feet in width.

The Applicant proposes the following Traffic Pattern Modification Measures: 1) convert Thirteenth Street between Howard Avenue and Park Avenue into a one-lane, one-way travel heading westbound; and 2) install a traffic circle at the intersection of Victoria Avenue and Thirteenth Street.

The proposed Traffic Pattern Modification will allow adequate ingress and egress via Thirteenth Street to the proposed school parking lot, and facilitate efficient student drop off and pickup. Student drop-off would begin at 8:10 am and pick-up at 2:30 pm. The conversion of Thirteenth Street into a one-lane, one-way westbound travel lane will accommodate additional angled parking stalls on the southside of Thirteenth Street and alleviate parking demand impacts to the school. The proposed traffic circle at the intersection of Victoria Avenue and Thirteenth Street will improve pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing vehicle speeds and the number of potential collision points between vehicles and pedestrian/cyclists.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Street and Alley Vacation

Pursuant to State law, specifically Public Streets, Highways, and Services Easements Vacation Law (commencing with Section 8300 of the Streets and Highway Code and Section 21101 of the Vehicle Code of the State of California), the City may regulate traffic on its public streets, alleys, and walkways to the extent expressly authorized. The law permits the City to vacate a street, alley, or walkway only upon a finding supported by substantial evidence that the right-of-way is no longer needed for vehicular or pedestrian traffic and is unnecessary for present or prospective public use.

The following facts are provided to support the proposed vacation of the subject portion of Park Avenue right-of-way, the entirety of the alleyway, and the excess 2-foot right-of-way along a segment of Fourteenth Street:

- The proposed area to be vacated will no longer be needed for street purposes or for access to adjacent parcels, as all adjacent parcels will be utilized for the construction of the future Eastside Elementary School. There are no other uses, residences or businesses that require access from this segment of Park Avenue and the alley. Vehicular traffic to the existing residences and park on the north side of Thirteenth Street will continue to be accessed from Thirteenth Street.
- Thirteenth Street will continue to serve as the primary access to the future Eastside Elementary School and will continue to provide access to the existing park and residences located on the north side of Thirteenth Street.
- The proposed vacation will not impact access to any other surrounding parcels, as there is adequate vehicular and pedestrian access via Thirteenth Street to the north, Howard Avenue to the west, Fourteenth Street to the south and Victoria Avenue to the east.

Based on the findings above, staff concluded that the subject street and alley rights-of-way are not needed for vehicular or pedestrian traffic or for present or prospective public use. The vacated rights-of-way will revert to the General Plan land use designation and zoning of the adjacent properties.

In compliance with State Law and local ordinance, if the Planning Commission approves the proposed street vacation, the City Council will consider a Resolution of Intent to set a public hearing to consider the vacation at a date not sooner than 15 days following adoption of the Resolution of Intent. At least 15 days prior to the public hearing date established with the Resolution of Intent, a notice will be posted at all intersections and at points occurring each 300 feet along the affected roadway segments.

Traffic Pattern Modification Measures

The conversion of a segment of Thirteenth Street into a one-way, one-lane westbound travel is proposed to maintain adequate traffic circulation for the school parking lot fronting Thirteenth Street and provide for additional angle parking for the school. The parking lot and additional angle parking will be utilized for the student drop-off/pick-up area. There will be a drive-through lane and two driveways to accommodate the drop-off/pick-up.

Access to the school parking lot will be via a one-way, left-in-only driveway along Thirteenth Street. Vehicles will either be going westbound on Thirteenth Street or southbound on Park Avenue. To maintain a single direction of the circulation, vehicles will not be permitted to enter the easterly driveway, thus reducing delays and traffic congestion. With the modification of Thirteenth Street segment into a one-lane, one-way westbound street, traffic would use the following routes:

- Thirteenth Street eastbound traffic turning left on Park Avenue will utilize Howard Avenue to Twelfth Street.
- Thirteenth Street eastbound traffic turning right on Park Avenue will utilize Howard Avenue to Fourteenth Street.

Additional angle parking stalls will be provided along the south side (school side) of a segment of Thirteenth Street to accommodate the excess need of drop-off/pick-up during peak hours. The parking stalls will be utilized for public parking during school hours and off-school days.

A traffic circle is proposed to be installed at the intersection at Victoria Avenue and Thirteenth Street to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing vehicle speeds and the number of potential collision points between vehicles and pedestrian/cyclists.

FINDINGS SUMMARY

The vacation of a segment of Park Avenue, the alleyway, and the 2-foot excess right-of-way along a segment of Fourteenth Street (APN 211-233-021) will not impact access or circulation to surrounding properties or to the City's overall circulation. The project, as proposed, will not be materially detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the public or otherwise injurious to the environment or to the property or improvements within the area.

The segment of Park Avenue, the alleyway, and the 2-foot excess right-of-way along a segment of Fourteenth Street (APN 211-233-021) to be vacated will be acquired by the RUSD and incorporated into the site design for the future elementary school. The areas to be vacated are not used to access other properties or connect to surrounding streets as they are surrounded by RUSD-owned properties.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Staff has determined that the proposed street vacation and traffic pattern modifications are categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Rule) of the CEQA Guidelines, which stipulates that a project is exempt from CEQA if covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have a potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. As the proposal involves the vacation of local streets and alley, not identified as a major component of the local roadway network, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Public hearing notices were mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the site. As of the writing of this report, no responses have been received by staff regarding this project.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This project contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Plan Priority 5 – High Performing Government - **Goal 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.**

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

1. *Community Trust* – The proposed street vacation requires public hearings by the Planning Commission and City Council. Additionally, public comment is encouraged throughout the process through the 12-day public noticing period and at public hearings.
2. *Equity* – The proposed project contributes to educational facilities available to residents in the City.

3. *Fiscal Responsibility* – The Applicant will be responsible for all fiscal aspects of the project.
4. *Innovation* – The proposed street vacation and Traffic Pattern Modifications will allow for the future construction of an elementary school to serve the Eastside Neighborhood, spurring education and innovation.
5. *Sustainability and Resiliency* – The proposed street vacation is designed to meet the current and future needs of the community.

APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the City Planning Commission, including any environmental findings, may be appealed to the City Council within ten calendar days after the decision. Appeal filing and processing information may be obtained from the Planning Department Public Information Section, 3rd Floor, City Hall.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. Findings
2. Conditions of Approval
3. Location Map
4. Existing Site Photos
5. Zoning Map
6. General Plan Map
7. Project Plans
8. Traffic Summary

Prepared by: Winnie Liang, Associate Planner

Reviewed by: Brian Norton, Principal Planner and Regine Kennedy, Senior Planner

Approved by: Maribeth Tinio, City Planner



EXHIBIT 1 – FINDINGS

PLANNING CASE: PR-2024-001705 (Street Vacations and Traffic Pattern Modification Measures)

Traffic Pattern Modification Measures Findings pursuant to Chapter 19.785, as outlined in the Staff Report:

1. The measure will provide for the health and safety of the citizenry and will not substantially impair the rendering of emergency and public services;
2. The measures will not unreasonably interfere with general traffic circulation via the public rights-of-way designated as major and secondary streets in the circulation element of the General Plan;
3. There is sufficient evidence to indicate that one or more of these conditions exist:
An abnormally high percentage of traffic is unrelated to the local neighborhood and is merely passing through;
 - Street design or conditions permit excessive vehicular speeds;
 - There is a separate street from the general neighborhood circulation pattern to preserve the unique character or adjacent properties, to encourage pedestrian, equestrian or non-motorized vehicular travel and/or to discourage crime, noise, air pollution, and other hazards to public safety and welfare; and
 - In the case of street closure, a separate factual finding must be made that the street is no longer needed as contemplated by the California Vehicle Code Section 21101.
4. The measures will not unreasonably restrict access to adjacent properties nor impair the constitutionally guaranteed rights of any individual or group. Releases may be acquired as determined by the City Attorney.
5. The measures will not create an unacceptable internal circulation system characterized by any excessively long dead-end or cul-de-sac street, poor aesthetics, poor drainage, difficult maintenance requirements or poor street design geometry.



EXHIBIT 2 – CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

PLANNING CASE: **PR-2024-001705** (Street Vacation and Traffic Pattern Modification Measures)

Planning

1. There shall be a one-year time limit in which to satisfy the conditions and finalize this action.

Fire Department

Prior to Start of Construction

2. *Advisory:* Installation of public fire hydrants will be required on Howard Ave, 13th Street and 14th Street where existing public fire hydrant spacing exceeds 350 feet.

Public Works Department – Land Development

Conditions to be fulfilled prior to permit issuance unless otherwise noted

3. Storm Drain construction will be contingent on engineer's drainage study.
4. Deed for widening 14th Street along project frontage to 55-feet from monument centerline to Public Works specifications.
5. Potential right of way corner cutback at intersection of 14th Street and Howard Avenue to Public Works specifications.
6. Installation of curb and gutter at 43 feet from monument centerline, sidewalk and matching paving on 14th Street to Public Works specifications.
7. Deed for widening Howard Avenue along project frontage to 33-feet from monument centerline to Public Works specifications.
8. Installation of curb and gutter at 22 feet from monument centerline, sidewalk and matching paving on Howard Avenue to Public Works specifications.
9. Vacation of alley right of way between Park Avenue and Howard Street to Public Works Standards and Specifications.
10. Vacation of right of way on Park Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets to Public Works Standards and Specifications.
11. Prior to Building Permit Issuance, the Developer shall complete a lot line adjustment to consolidate the project site parcels to the satisfaction of the Planning Division and Public Works Department.
12. Installation of sewers and sewer laterals to serve this project to Public Works specifications.
13. Off-site improvement plans to be approved by Public Works prior to issuance of construction permit.
14. A surety prepared by Public Works to be posted to guarantee the required off-site improvements prior to map recordation.
15. Size, number and location of driveways to Public Works specifications.

16. Closure of unused driveway(s) to Public Works specifications.
17. All security gates or facilities proposed now or in the future will be located on-site and adequate stacking space and vehicle turn-around area will have to be provided to Public Works and Fire Department specifications.
18. On site plan, provide linear footage labels, clearly marked, along all parcel lines. PLANT 24 inch box size Street Trees (species to be specified later) in public right-of-way along public roadways bordering project. Typical spacing 15-feet on center. Prior to any planting, contact City of Riverside Public Works Tree Inspector at gtanaka@riversideca.gov, to schedule inspection for Tree Inspector to determine precise locations at time of scheduled site inspection after fine grading and hardscape installation is complete. Planting, staking, irrigation, root barriers, trunk protectors, to Landscape & Forestry specifications.
19. Trash enclosures required per public works specifications. Project is required to use the City of Riverside franchise hauler Athens Services for waste disposal or recycling.
20. Prior to final inspection for the development project, the applicant shall pay the Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) in accordance with the fee schedule in effect at the time of payment. If the project improvements include qualifying right-of-way dedications and/or street improvements to a TUMF regional arterial roadway as identified on the Regional System of Highways and Arterials, the developer may have the option to enter into a Credit/ Reimbursement Agreement with the City and Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) to recover costs for such work based on unit costs as determined by WRCOG.

The terms of the agreement shall be in accordance with the RMC Chapter 16.68 and the TUMF Administrative Plan requirements. Credit/reimbursement agreements must be fully executed prior to receiving any credit/reimbursement. An appraisal is required for credit/reimbursement of right of way dedications and credit/reimbursement of qualifying improvements requires the public bidding and payment of prevailing wages in accordance with State Law. For further assistance, please contact the Public Works Department.

21. If the project will cause land disturbance of one acre or more, it must comply with the statewide General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity. The project applicant shall cause the approved final project-specific WQMP to be incorporated by reference or attached to the project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan as the Post-Construction Management Plan.
22. Prior to building or grading permit closeout or the issuance of a certificate of occupancy or certificate of use, the applicant shall:
 - Demonstrate that all structural BMP's described in the project-specific WQMP have been constructed and installed in conformance with approved plans and specifications;
 - Demonstrate that applicant is prepared to implement all non-structural BMP's described in the approved project-specific WQMP; and
 - Demonstrate that an adequate number of copies of the approved project-specific WQMP are available for the future owners/ occupants.

The following conditions are specific to the vacation of Park Avenue and the alley between Park Avenue and Howard Street:

23. All conditions placed upon this case must be fulfilled prior to the recording of the vacation resolution by the City Clerk. The case is not finalized until the City Clerk records the Vacation Resolution.

24. If the disposition of land is other than by operation of law the applicant shall have quitclaim deeds exchanging the property prepared to the satisfaction of Planning, City Attorney's Office and Public Works Departments. All necessary parcel descriptions and plats shall be prepared, signed and sealed by a licensed Land Surveyor or Civil Engineer authorized to practice Land Surveying in the State of California. DESCRIPTIONS and PLATS ARE REQUIRED TO BE ON 82 inch by 11 inch FORMAT.
25. Prior to finalization of the case, the applicant shall provide the appropriate documentation that the lender(s) / trustee(s) has (have) agreed to modify any Trust Deed(s) to reflect the reconfigured parcel(s).
26. Property transfers to the final proposed parcel configurations must be accomplished concurrently with the finalization of this case. Ownership of the property shall remain undivided prior to recordation of the Certificate of Compliance for Lot Line Adjustment.
27. All recording fees of the Riverside County Recorder, including transfer documents, grants of right-of-way and the Certificate of Compliance for Lot Line Adjustment are the responsibility of the applicant.
28. Applicant shall prepare Grant Deeds that have each owner grant to themselves each of the parcels in their final configuration. This requirement is necessary to insure that the final parcel configurations and ownership's are clearly identified in the Land Title History.
29. Advisory: A Public Utility Easement (PUE) will be reserved over the entire area of the vacation.

Public Works – Traffic Division

30. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall construct a bike rack and skateboard rack that can accommodate a minimum of five bikes and five skateboards. The installation of the bike racks shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. The applicant is solely responsible for the procurement and installation of this infrastructure improvement.
31. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall complete following improvements as shown on the Exhibit 9 (Pedestrian Circulation Improvements as included in the Traffic Summary Report dated November 26th, 2024 (Exhibit 3 ,6, 8 & 9):
 - a. Project proposes the to vacate existing roadway segment of Park Avenue between 13th Street and 14th Street which will require signal modifications and modify segment of 13th Street from two-way operations to one way operation in the westbound direction, add angled parking along the southern side and parallel parking along northern side. Signing & striping improvement plans and traffic signal modification plans shall be shown as separate design plans signed by a licensed civil or traffic engineer and completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Work.
 - b. Westernmost Project Driveway (Near Howard Avenue) along 13th Street: Project driveway will only allow ingress movements. Project shall install "Do Not Enter" (R5-1) and "Wrong Way" (E5-1a) signs and associated pavement striping on the interior to prohibit illegal egress from the project site. The signs shall face away from 13th Street, and towards the project site.
 - c. Intersection of Park Avenue-project driveway and 13th Street):
 - i. The south leg is an 'Exit Only" project driveway. Project shall install "DO NOT ENTER/WRONG WAY" combination signs at driveway.

- ii. Construct a stop sign (R1-1), stop bar, stop legend, at the Project Driveways. Stop sign installations must conform to City Standard 664 and the stop bar and legend must conform to the City standard 650.
 - iii. Install solar powered LED edge-lit flashing Stop Signs at all three approaches (excluding project driveway) of the intersection.
 - iv. Retrofit existing standard crosswalks and convert into continental crosswalks per Standard Plan No. 640 on each leg of the intersection.
 - v. Construct curb extensions along the east leg, north leg and west leg of the intersection to minimize the pedestrian crossing distance.
 - d. Howard Avenue between 12th Street & 14th Street: Project shall procure and install two (2) speed feedback signs along Howard Avenue (one for each direction).
32. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall construct the following improvements **as shown on the project site plan & Exhibits 3 ,6 , 8 , 9 & 10** in the Traffic Summary Report dated November 26th, 2024 :
- a. Install continental crosswalks per Standard Plan No. 640 at the following intersections:
 - i. 14th Street @ Howard Avenue
 - ii. 14th Street @ Park Avenue
 - b. Intersection of 13th Street @ Victoria Boulevard:
 - i. Install continental crosswalks per Standard Plan No. 640.
 - ii. Install a traffic circle with associated signage and striping.
 - c. Intersection of 13th Street & Howard Avenue:
 - i. Install continental crosswalks per Standard Plan No. 640.
 - ii. Install curb extensions on the east leg.
 - d. Bicycle Improvements:
 - i. Install Class III bike lane on 13th Street between Howard Avenue and Park Avenue.
 - ii. Install bicycle infrastructure consistent with the city's Bike Master Plan along 14th Street between Howard Avenue and Victoria Avenue.
33. The applicant shall hire a contractor to install the traffic signal equipment to its intended operating conditions. All signage and striping improvements must comply with the most current California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards. The applicant shall hire a contractor to install MUTCD & City of Riverside Standard compliant signage & striping and median improvements. The applicant shall obtain any necessary permits and approvals to complete the improvements. The applicant is solely responsible for the **procurement** and **installation** of the improvements to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works.
34. Prior to the issuance of any city permits, project shall complete the Signing & striping improvement plans and traffic signal modification plans signed by a licensed civil or traffic engineer and completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works.

35. That prior to the issuance of any permit, the applicant shall provide traffic control plans signed by a registered professional engineer for any public street, utility, signing/stripping, or traffic signal improvements.
36. Project shall submit a revised traffic study that incorporates the selected school option and street vacation and includes updated intersection level of service analysis, queuing analysis and mitigation measures, if any, for the proposed school project to the Public Works, Traffic Division for review and approval.
37. Project shall prepare a Safe Routes To School Exhibit to identify the pedestrian and bicycle routes to school along with associated traffic control devices on the roadway network.

Riverside Public Utilities – Electric

38. All utilities shall be satisfactorily relocated, protected and/or replaced to the specifications of the affected departments and agencies, and easements for such facilities retained as necessary.
39. The provision of utility easements, water, streetlights, and electrical underground and/or overhead facilities and fees in accordance with the rules and regulations of the appropriate purveyor.
40. Easements & any associated fees will be acquired during the design process.
41. Provisions for electrical Utility equipment to provide power to the site is the responsibility of the developer. Please make sure that all clearances are maintained, and location of the equipment is approved by the Utility.
42. Developer is responsible for all trenching, installation of conduit and substructures required to provide power to the site. In addition to installing spare conduits, streetlights, and stub & cap along property frontage. Contact RPU for information on private street lighting.
43. RPU-Electric does not coordinate the relocation or removal of any third-party facilities. Please coordinate work with telecommunications or any affected department and/or agencies.

Riverside Public Utilities – Water

Prior to recordation of vacation resolution

44. Utility easements will be retained across the width of the existing right-of-way for existing water infrastructure, minimum 30-feet.