

**ORDINANCE ADDING RMC CHAPTER 9.53 –
PROHIBITION OF CARRYING OR POSSESSING
SPECIFIED ITEMS WHILE ATTENDING OR
PARTICIPATING IN ANY PUBLIC ASSEMBLY**

**City Attorney's Office
Riverside Police Department**

City Council
October 8th, 2024

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BACKGROUND

- Public demonstrations and rallies conducted in California cities and college campuses nationwide have erupted in violence
- Individuals and groups have used improvised weapons to inflict injury on members of the public attending these events and law enforcement personnel present
- Various improvised items have been used, including but not limited to wood and metal pipes, poles, bats, chains, projectiles, glass bottles and containers filled with flammable or noxious substances, and aerosol sprays
- Some subversive groups use social media platforms to instruct bad actors on tactics to inflict terror. Instructions have included the wearing of masks and face coverings during these events.



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MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED TO PROTEST PARTICIPANTS

FIGHT WITH TOOLS



Obscure their senses. Maintain creativity. Play dirty.

Never bring a tool you aren't prepared to use. Some tools come with duties. If you aren't prepared to fill that role, pass it to someone who will. Don't be afraid to turn down any risk you aren't prepared to accept!



Use umbrellas/banners or shields to obscure vision into the crowd. You are working! Keep your cover high, and communicate loudly when you need to shift with someone or a break.



Your senses are site, taste, touch, hearing and smell. Police use alarms, lights and tear gas to obstruct these senses and cause panic. Don't panic. They are limited by the same senses you are. Utilize this weakness and join in on the fun! Flash lights, road flares and fire works go a long way.

Pepperspray, bear mace and fire extinguishers are great tools for keeping enemy combatants at a safe and healthy distance.

GEAR UP

USE ALL BLACK GEAR. WE CAN'T TELL THEM APART, NEITHER SHOULD THEY.

LAYER UP: MAKE SURE YOU WEAR AT LEAST TWO LAYERS OF CLOTHES. MAKE THE TOP LAYER EASY TO GET OUT OF. WEAR FLAMMABLE AND DARK COLORED CLOTHES, PREFERABLY BLACK.

GLOVES FOR TEAR GAS: YOU WILL NEED WELDING GLOVES. THESE WILL PREVENT BURNS. DO NOT USE PLAIN GLOVES.

SHIELDS FOR DEFENSE: RESEARCH HOME-MADE OPTIONS

BOXING GUARDS: FOR ALL PARTS OF YOUR BODY, MOST IMPORTANTLY ARMS GUARDS FOR BATONS

BOOTS

GAS MASK, OR A RESPIRATOR AND SAFETY GOGGLES (SHATTERPROOF): THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE WITH UTHERISES, SINCE TEAR GAS CAUSES A LOT OF DAMAGE.

UMBRELLA FOR PEPPER SPRAY

HELMET FOR EVERYTHING THEY THROW/SHOOT

The best defense against surveillance & identification is a ski mask or other disguise that covers your entire head & face (i.e., not just a bandana over your nose & mouth). Wearing 2 layers of contrasting clothing can assist in escape & countering surveillance. The wearing of uniform clothing (i.e., all black) by large numbers of people can also counter identification & surveillance of individuals.



Preparation for Riot/Confrontation with Riot Police

In preparing for a potential riot situation, the primary concern is countering the actions of riot police. Other important factors may be the likelihood of receiving economic damage to an area, or getting resources. Whatever the case, organization involves assembling & training team members, preparing equipment, planning routes, sound, RV, Police, if dispersed, First Aid, & actions to avoid arrest.

Individual Riot Equipment (head to toe)

Individual riot equipment is the same as for crowd control, with the addition of a few tools & projectiles.

1. Helmet
2. Ballknee/ski mask (to conceal identity)
3. Gas Mask
4. Eye Goggles/Bandana in Apple-Clear Vanger
5. Uniform (with civilian under-layer of clothing to act in escape & evasion)
6. Gloves (for protection of hands & fingerprints)
7. Body Armour (minimum: forearms & shin guards)
8. Water Boots
9. 12" crescent. Used for slipping up pavement, bricks, opening windows, doors, etc.
10. Small Back-Pack (used to carry tools & gear)
11. Garbage Bag. Used to carry clothing contaminated with chemical agents.

Individual Riot Weapons

1. **Baton/Staff.** In some riot situations, it is not possible to enter an area carrying large batons. Conceal methods of carrying baton sticks can be as part of banners, the poles, to be held, carried by participants. When needed, they can be pulled out & used.

2. **Pepper/Bear Spray.** Pepper or Bear Spray can be used against police not wearing gas masks, or vigilante citizens.

3. **Slingshot.** Useful against riot police, vehicles, windshields & windows.

4. **Paint Bombs.** An effective defense against riot police are paint bombs. When thrown at vision, gas masks and/or shields, paint can blind riot cops. There are two methods of preparing paint bombs:

A. Canbom. The simplest method is to fill condoms with paint and tie off the top. Use a funnel. Carry condom paint bomb in bottom portion of plastic pop/water bottles, or cardboard frozen juice containers (to prevent leakage of paint bombs). When throwing, use an overhand lobbing technique with enough force to break condom on impact.

B. Ziploc Egg. Take an egg and carefully puncture small hole on top (no more than half-an-inch in diameter). Carefully but forcefully empty egg using vigorous up-down shaking motion. Egg yolk will "glue" out of hole. Let egg dry, then add paint using funnel. Seal top of egg using small piece of cardboard, plastic, taped over top, or candle wax. Carry egg paint bomb in cut out sections of egg carton or some other container. Can be thrown with greater accuracy but does not have paint load of condom bomb.



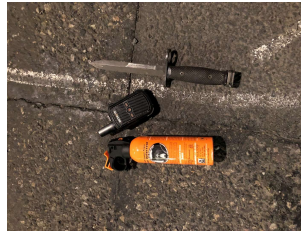
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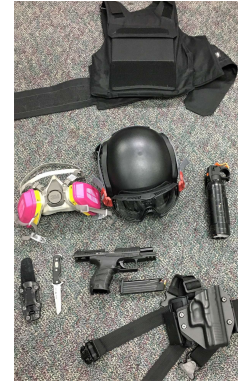
VIOLENCE/WEAPONS DURING PROTESTS



Riverside 2020 – Fireworks thrown at officers



Portland, OR 2022 – Weapons found on protestors



Riverside 2020 – "No Face, No case" shirt, possible projectile staged at feet



Minneapolis – participants all masked



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NEED FOR MUNICIPAL CODE

- It is imperative that individuals be able to engage in peaceful expressive public activity without fear of violence and injury.
- It is also important that members of the public and law enforcement encountering these events are able to do so without fear of suffering injury.
- The proposed regulations are necessary in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare.
- The content-neutral time, place, and manager restrictions allow for peaceful public expressive activity and address the City's interest in public safety



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SIMILAR RESTRICTIONS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

- Cal State and UC systems Instituted policy that face coverings; masks and other attempts to conceal one's identity are not allowed "with the intent of intimidating and harassing any person or group, or for the purpose of evading or escaping discovery, recognition, or identification in the commission of violations"
- Cities of Berkeley, Laguna Beach, Los Angeles, Modesto, Oakland, Santa Monica, and others have put in place ordinances prohibiting, or authorizing the issuance of regulations prohibiting, the carrying at protests, public assemblies, and community events of items that can readily be used as weapons
- Nassau County, New York - The Mask Transparency Act, signed into law makes it a misdemeanor for anyone to wear a facial covering to hide their identity in public.
- Charlottesville, Virginia adopted similar ordinances as a result of an after-action report recommendation.



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RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE

- Section 9.53 – Prohibition Carrying or possessing specified items while attending or participating in any public demonstration, gathering, rally, protest, picket line or public assembly
 - Will limit items such as but not limited to wooden sticks, metal and plastic pipes, baseball bats, aerosol sprays, weapons, glass bottles, metal containers, shields, gas masks, helmets, body armor, bricks and rocks that can and have been weaponized at protests, public assemblies, and community events, while still allowing for peaceful expressive activity.
 - Face coverings and other disguises would also be prohibited, except for coverings worn due to religious beliefs, practices or observances or due to medical necessity.

See Exhibit A (Full Code)



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STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT



Strategic Priority 2
Community Well-Being
 Goal 2.4



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RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council introduce and subsequently adopt an ordinance to amend the Riverside Municipal Code to add Chapter 9.53 Prohibition on carrying or possessing specified items while attending or participating in any public demonstration, gathering, rally, protest, picket line, or public assembly.

Delete Section 9.12.065.

