



Ordinance Prohibiting Chain Link Fencing in Historic Districts, Neighborhood Conservation Areas, Landmarks and Structures of Merit

Vice Chair Philip Falcone

Land Use Committee
February 9, 2026

RiversideCA.gov

SUBJECT



- The City of Riverside prides itself on its historic built environment.
- Aligning with best practices for historic preservation as outlined by the United States Secretary of the Interior standards.
- Chain link fences are inconsistent with
 - Architectural character
 - Material palette
 - Visual cohesion of these areas



2

RiversideCA.gov



Currently, the City's zoning and design codes do not explicitly prohibit chain link fencing in historic or conservation areas.



3

RiversideCA.gov

NOTABLE HISTORIC CALIFORNIA CITIES

CITY	POLICY
Santa Ana	Restrictive of chain link fencing in residential, especially visible areas. Chain link fencing is not allowed in front yards and only allowed in rear or side yards that are not visible from a public street. (Santa Ana Municipal Code 41-610)
Orange	Ordinance 17.19.140 bans chain link fencing citywide between structures and public streets
Pasadena	Chain link and similar materials are deemed inappropriate and unpermitted in historic districts under the <i>Design Guidelines for Historic Districts</i> (2002).
Monterey	Chain link fences are not specifically prohibited citywide but are regulated primarily by height and location (City Code Sec. 38-23). It is permitted on side and rear yards but restricted or discouraged in Historic Overlay or Coastal Zone areas where additional design/review standards apply.
Redlands	2023 Historic Architectural Design Guidelines exclude chain link fencing from approved materials and require a Certificate of Appropriateness for new fence installation of any kind by the Office of Historic Preservation.
Sacramento	Ordinance 17.620.110 prohibits chain link fencing in front and side setbacks; design standards prohibit fencing materials inconsistent with historic district character.



4

RiversideCA.gov

TOPIC



Consideration of an ordinance amendment to prohibit the installation or replacement of chain link fences within designated Historic Districts, Neighborhood Conservation Areas, Landmarks and Structures of Merit throughout the City of Riverside.



5

RiversideCA.gov

DISCUSSION



- The proposed ordinance would align Riverside's preservation practices with peer cities across California.
- It would ensure visual consistency within the City's historic and conservation areas and support the goals of the City's Historic Preservation Element.
- Adoption of this ordinance would reinforce the value of preserving community character, improve visual quality, and support ongoing historic preservation initiatives citywide.



6

RiversideCA.gov

DISCUSSION



- There are select architectural styles in which chain link is an appropriate material.
- Those architectural styles date back to the mid-century era.



7

RiversideCA.gov

DISCUSSION



- Propose a 5-year amortization period to allow property owners to align with current ordinances
- Explore funding a program for property owners to receive plants or rebates for covering chain link fence with plant material



8

RiversideCA.gov

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council approve the introduction of an ordinance amending Title 19 (the zoning Code) of the Riverside Municipal Code to prohibit the installation and replacement of chain link fences in all Historic Districts, Neighborhood Conservation Areas, Landmarks and Structures of Merit.

