



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: APRIL 3, 2018

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT WARD: 1

SUBJECT: PLANNING CASE P18-0058 – REQUEST BY CITY OF RIVERSIDE – TO DESIGNATE THE RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY MAIN BRANCH, LOCATED AT 3581 MISSION INN AVENUE, AS A CITY LANDMARK

ISSUE:

Adopt a Resolution to designate the Riverside Public Library Main Branch, located at 3581 Mission Inn Avenue, as a City Landmark.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Determine that Planning Case P18-0058 City Landmark Designation is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines, as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment, said action is intended to preserve the historic character of the building and site, and to provide notice of the historic status;
2. Approve Planning Case P18-0058 based on and subject to the Cultural Heritage Board facts for findings outlined in the attached staff report; and
3. Adopt the attached Resolution designating the Riverside Public Library Main Branch located at 3581 Mission Inn Avenue as a City Landmark.

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

On February 21, 2018, the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) unanimously voted, 5 Ayes, 0 noes, to recommend that the City Council approve Planning Case P18-0058 and designate the Riverside Public Library Main Branch (3581 Mission Inn Avenue) as a City Landmark.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

Riverside Municipal Code, Title 20, Section 20.50.010 (U) is as follows:

“Landmark” means any Improvement or Natural Feature that is an exceptional example of a historical, archaeological, cultural, architectural, community, aesthetic or artistic heritage of the City, retains a high degree of integrity, and meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history;
2. Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history;
3. Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;
4. Represents the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect, or important creative individual;
5. Embodies elements that possess high artistic values or represents a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;
6. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning, or cultural landscape;
7. Is one of the last remaining examples in the City, region, State, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen; or
8. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

DISCUSSION:

In 2009, the City completed a Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant funded Modernism Context Statement and Survey. Due to the scale of the project, the survey was a focused Intensive-Level survey, in which twenty buildings were evaluated for designation under the newly developed context. The Library Main Branch was found eligible for listing on the California Register and as a City Landmark. On January 20, 2010, the context statement and survey were presented to the Cultural Heritage Board and was unanimously recommended for approval by the City Council. City Council approved the context statement and survey on the May 4, 2010 Consent Calendar, thereby accepting the findings of the survey and adopting it.

The Riverside Public Library Main Branch is an excellent and rare example of New Formalism architecture in Riverside. Many of the character-defining features of the style can be found in the design of the library and are expressed through the hierarchical monumentality of the symmetrical plan on an integrated site, wide overhanging flat roof, pilasters, sculptural perforated screens, and a central, elevated podium entry topped by a half barrel-shaped canopy with broken arched ends. Constructed between 1963 and 1965, the Library Main Branch was designed by the architect firm Moise, Harbach, and Hewlett, a significant local architectural firm. Bolton Moise is responsible for the design of many prominent buildings in Riverside between 1947 and 1970, including numerous public (Former Fire Station #1), and educational buildings (Polytechnic High

School). The Library Main Branch retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. The library appears to be eligible for local listing as a City Landmark under two designation criteria in Section 20.50.010(U) of the Municipal Code as described above. The Library Main Branch meets Criterion 3 because it is an excellent example of New Formalism architecture in Riverside and Criterion 4 because it is representative of the work of Moise, Harbach, and Hewlett.

The proposed landmark designation of the Library Main Branch is being initiated as part of the conversion of the library to the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art, Culture, and Industry. The designation of the library will allow the City Building Official to make use of the State Historical Building Code (SHBC) when reviewing the proposed modifications to the building. The SHBC recognizes the unique construction problems inherent in historical buildings and offers alternative building regulations for their rehabilitation. Additionally, per Chapter 16.2.4 (Parking Requirements) of the Downtown Specific Plans, designated historic resource are exempt from providing any additional parking when the use of the structure is being changed. This will allow the library to be converted to a museum and be deemed exempt from providing any additional parking.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact resulting from the Landmark designation.

Prepared by:	Rafael Guzman, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to	
availability of funds:	Adam Raymond, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by:	Al Zelinka, FAICP, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Cultural Heritage Board Staff Report – February 21, 2018
2. Cultural Heritage Board Minutes – February 21, 2018
3. Resolution
4. Presentation