



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: JANUARY 15, 2019

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARDS: ALL
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: PLANNING CASE P18-0608 – AN AMENDMENT TO THE CITYWIDE DESIGN AND SIGN GUIDELINES TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES

ISSUE:

Adopt a Resolution amending the Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines to add Appendix C: Water Efficient Landscaping and Irrigation Design Guidelines; amend the Citywide Guidelines' existing landscape provisions to incorporate water efficiency; and include other minor revisions in the Citywide Guidelines that provide clarity or implement best practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Determine the proposed project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15061(b)(3), as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the proposed Amendment will have a significant effect on the environment (General Rule). An exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act is also supported by Sections 15307 (Protection of Natural Resources), and 15308 (Protection of the Environment);
2. Approve Planning Case P18-0608 (Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines Amendment) subject to the Planning Commission findings in the attached Planning Commission Report and the input received from the Riverside Public Utilities Board; and
3. Adopt the attached Resolution amending the Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines to include Appendix C: Water Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Design Guidelines; amend landscape related provisions of the Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines to incorporate water efficiency provisions; and include other minor revisions to provide clarity to implement best practices.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On September 20, 2018, the City Planning Commission recommended approval of Planning Case P18-0608, by a vote of 6 ayes, and 0 noes, subject to Staff's recommended findings (Attachment 2 and Attachment 3). On November 26, 2018, the Guidelines were presented to the Riverside

Public Utilities Board (Board) as an informational item. The Board provided comments and voted to receive and file the staff report. From input provided by the Board, minor non-substantive changes were made to language pertaining to soils analysis and recommendations. These changes from the Planning Commission approved version are shown in redline/strike-out text and serve to clarify and provide further guidance on soil analysis and incorporate guidance for compost use as a soil amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2007, the City Council adopted Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines (Citywide Guidelines). The Citywide Guidelines are used to review the design of proposed development in the City. The Citywide Guidelines reinforce the City's physical image, and promote development that enhances neighborhoods, creates identity and improves quality of life.

On April 1, 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-29-15 (EO B-29-15), which mandated water conservation efforts. This included a requirement for local jurisdictions to comply with the State's updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo), or adopt their own Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELo) that is at least as effective in conserving water as the MWELo.

On December 1, 2015, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 7310, which updated Zoning Code Chapter 19.570 – Water Efficient Landscaping and Irrigation (WELo), to comply with the State's stricter water efficiency standards.

In early 2016, the Community & Economic Development Department, in partnership with Riverside Public Utilities (RPU), retained the services of Architerra Design Group to develop WELo Design Guidelines that set clear design expectations, integrate best practices in landscape design, and make the City's adopted WELo customer friendly.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed revisions to the Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines (Citywide Guidelines) incorporate water efficient landscape and irrigation provisions that supplement the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELo). The updated Citywide Guidelines include the proposed WELo Design Guidelines to illustrate how the WELo is interpreted and applied. The WELo Design Guidelines provide narrative, illustrative and photographic examples of best practices in water efficient landscape design. The WELo Design Guidelines are a guide for developers and professionals to achieve well designed landscapes that successfully reduces water usage, increases water efficiency, and promotes conservation.

Working with the three water agencies serving the City of Riverside (Riverside Public Utilities, Western Municipal Water District and Eastern Municipal Water District), Architerra Design Group completed the following as it relates to the WELo Design Guidelines:

- 1) Updated the Citywide Guidelines to reflect the adopted WELo's new water efficiency requirements;
- 2) Revised the Citywide Guidelines to include references to water efficiency, and other minor revisions to provide clarity or implement best practices;
- 3) Updated the checklist used for landscape plan review; and
- 4) Provided example plans to illustrate contents for landscape plans.

The WELO Design Guidelines are included as Appendix C of the Citywide Guidelines. In addition to addressing the requirements of the WELO, the revisions will now include a climate appropriate landscape pallet of trees, shrubs, and groundcover.

The following is included in Appendix C of the Citywide Guidelines:

- Application of Guidelines;
- Planting Design;
- Irrigation Design;
- Landscape Irrigation Maintenance;
- Certificate of Compliance;
- Storm Water Management;
- Definitions of Landscape Terms;
- Examples and Worksheets for Calculation of Hydrozones; and
- Climate Appropriate Plants for Riverside (includes a plant list/palette for trees, shrubs ground cover, vines, and moderate water use turf varieties).

The proposed revisions to Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines will add Water Efficient Landscape and Irrigation Design Guidelines, which support and compliment the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. They do not add any requirements beyond those contained within the Zoning Code, and serve as an implementing guide to the Planning Code requirements. The WELO Design Guidelines will facilitate compliance with State landscape and irrigation requirements for new development in the City and promote citywide water savings.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this staff report.

Prepared by: David Welch, Interim Community & Economic Development Deputy
Director

Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer

Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager

Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. City Planning Commission Report – September 20, 2018
3. City Planning Commission Minutes
4. Updated Landscape Plan Review Checklist
5. Single-Family Residential Landscape Guide
6. Single-Family Residential Landscape Checklist
7. Single-Family Residential Landscape Plans – Working Drawing Example
8. Commercial Landscape Guide
9. Commercial Landscape Checklist
10. Commercial Landscape Plans – Working Drawing Example
11. Presentation