

# CITY OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW COMMISSION 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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### COMMISSION MEMBERS AS PICTURED ON COVER:

#### Front Row (Left to Right)

Norma Berrellez, Artemese Evans, David “Abel” Huerta, Gregory Smith

#### Back Row (Left to Right)

Isaac Hiraes, Phil DeBrier, Joseph Ortiz, Michael Levine

#### Not Pictured

Eileen Teichert



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## MISSION

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The mission of the Community Police Review Commission is to promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the sworn staff of the Riverside Police Department (RPD). The CPRC accomplishes this mission by conducting an independent review of officer-involved death (OID) cases and citizen complaints. The CPRC or the CPRC Manager may request independent investigation services to obtain further information about OIDs or complaints. The CPRC may recommend changes in RPD policy and maintains community relationships through continuous public outreach efforts.

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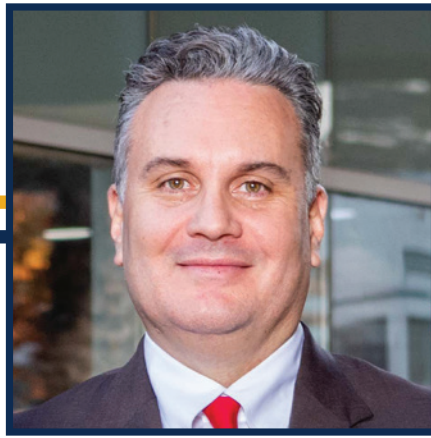
## PURPOSE

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The Mayor and City Council nominate and appoint all nine Commissioners of the CPRC. In order to fairly represent the City, that membership is distributed among all wards of the City. Commissioners serve four-year terms and may only serve two terms for a total of eight years. By ensuring an independent and thorough review of all OID and complaint cases brought before the Commission, the CPRC is able to advise the Mayor and City Council on all police and community relations issues. Case review findings and suggestions are also shared with the City Manager and Police Chief.

Although ensuring the Mayor and those mentioned above stay informed, the CPRC strives to make the greatest impact while serving the citizens of Riverside. The CPRC is tasked with ensuring good relations between the Riverside Police Officers and the community they serve. The Commission's efforts serve to increase public trust in the Riverside Police Department. It seeks to provide the public with the assurance that any allegations of misconduct lodged against a sworn officer will be fairly and thoroughly reviewed.

Through public outreach efforts, the CPRC provides a forum whereby community members can express their opinions and seek answers about the Police Department. Complaints, concerns or suggestions can immediately be shared with the Police Chief and appropriate staff thereby improving the quality of service provided by the Police Department. In addition, the CPRC educates the public on the purpose of the Commission.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, JOSEPH ORTIZ

**"EVERYBODY CAN BE GREAT, BECAUSE EVERYBODY CAN SERVE."  
- REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

I have been privileged to serve on the City of Riverside's Community Police Review Commission (CPRC) for the last eight years. This year will be my last year, and I am especially proud to have had the privilege to serve as Chair.

This year we had a significant changing of the guard, and the CPRC is excited to see such qualified new Commissioners fill our ranks: At the beginning of the year, the CPRC swore in Norma Berrellez (Ward 6), Phil DeBrier (Ward 4), Michael Levine (Citywide), and Eileen Teichert (Citywide). Just before the end of the year, Isaac Hiraes joined us representing Ward 1. Each brings a fresh perspective and a passion for public service. I would like to thank the City Council for their thoughtful selection of truly well-qualified individuals. These new Commissioner benefited from the Commissioner Handbook and the training that was developed by the CPRC the preceding year, and they are already providing valuable insight and analysis.

I have often told friends and community members that the City of Riverside is blessed to have civilian oversight, and we are double blessed to have such dedicated Commissioners serving our great City. The CPRC continues to excel in outreach under the leadership of Outreach Committee Chair Greg Smith. Kudos to Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Artemese Evans for their tireless work. The CPRC continues to reach our most at-risk communities to inform and educate. Brochures, in both English and Spanish, are regularly available at community centers and libraries throughout

the City. Each Commissioner has committed to provide presentations and direct outreach at neighborhood and community meetings, and our social media presence continues to grow. Information on the CPRC is also regularly provided by infographic distributed by council newsletter, as well as on electric signs within the City.

Of course, the CPRC has also been hard at work providing civilian oversight. As the Council is aware, the CPRC reviews all matters that relate to an officer-involved death. We recently completed our review of the actions of the officers who handled the tragedy at Castlevue Elementary School in October of 2017, and we were pleased to report that our review concluded that the officers' actions were within policy. This year we also reviewed 49 allegations of performance deficiencies; 18 allegations of discourtesy; 14 allegations of exceeding lawful peace powers; 12 allegations of general misconduct; 8 allegations of failure to take reasonable action; and 6 allegations of discrimination. As you can see, the CPRC puts in work.

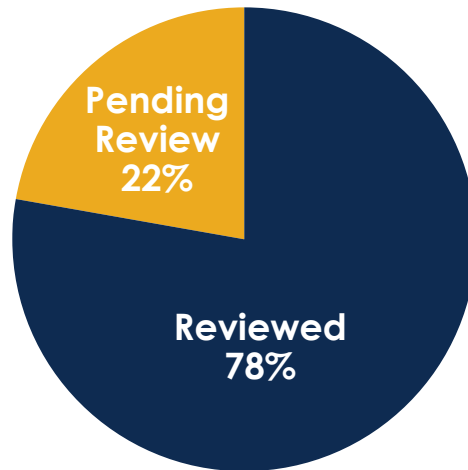
I am a proud member of the CPRC, and I am very thankful to my dedicated and thoughtful colleagues and support staff. The CPRC may have been born out of controversy, but I truly believe we continue to meet our mission: "To promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the sworn staff of the Riverside Police Department."

## COMPLAINT CASE REVIEW

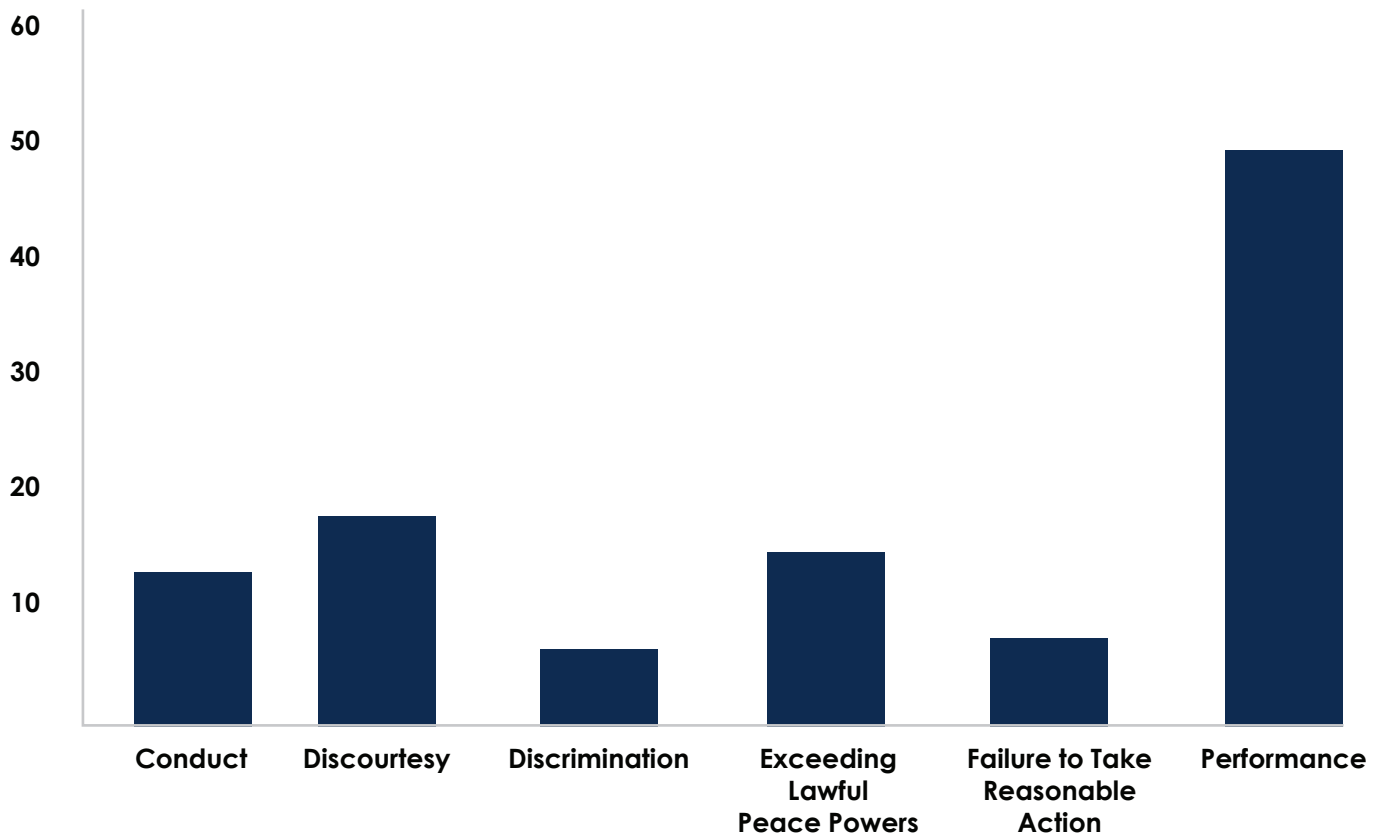
In 2019, the Commission reviewed and closed a total of 29 complaint cases containing 107 allegations. At years end, there were a total of 8 cases remaining for the Commission's review.

"Reviewed" refers to the cases for which the Commission received the investigation case files and made findings in Closed Session review.

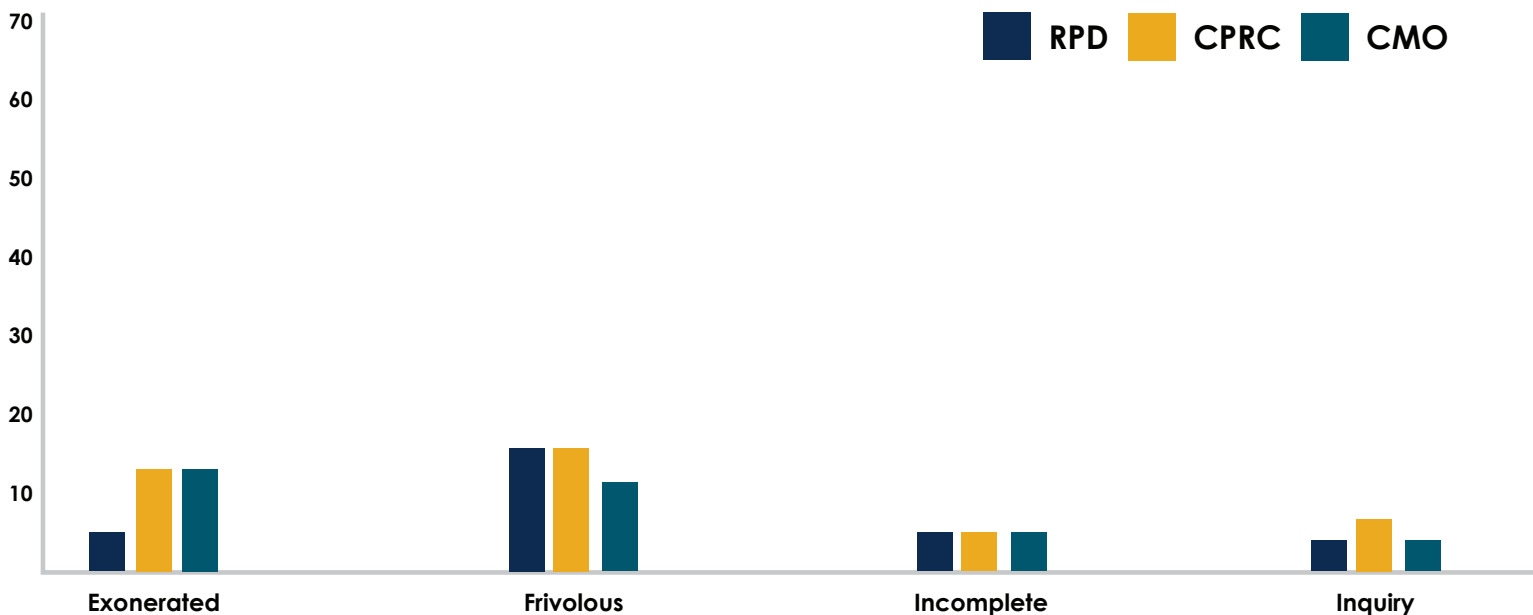
Below, **Figure 1** identifies the cases reviewed in 2019 vs. the cases remaining for the Commission's review by the end of 2019.



**Figure 2** illustrates the 107 allegations logged from the 29 cases reviewed by the Commission.



## 2019 COMPLAINT COMPARISON FINDINGS RPD VS. CPRC VS. CMO



**Figure 3** provides data comparing the complaint case findings of the 107 allegations reviewed by the Riverside Police Department (RPD), Community Police Review Commission (CPRC) and the City Manager's Office (CMO). Each of the three entities independently reach findings on allegations.

### FINDINGS AND DISPOSITIONS OF PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS:

**Sustained:** When the investigation discloses sufficient evidence to establish that the act occurred and that it constituted misconduct.

**Not Sustained:** When the investigation discloses that there is insufficient evidence to sustain the complaint or fully exonerate the employee.

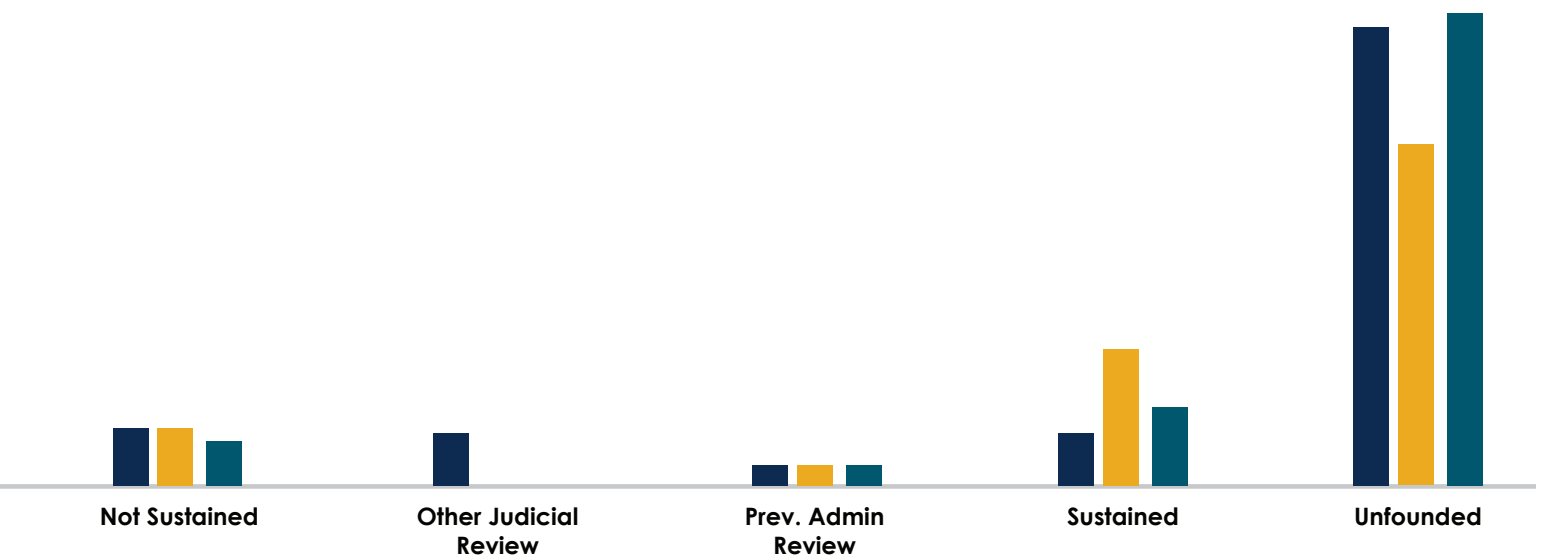
**Unfounded:** When the investigation discloses that the alleged act(s) did not occur or did not involve department personnel.

**Exonerated:** When the investigation discloses that the alleged act occurred, but that the act was justified, lawful and/or proper.

**Incomplete:** A matter in which the complaining party either refuses to cooperate or becomes unavailable after diligent follow-up investigation. At the discretion of the assigned supervisor and the Internal Affairs Bureau, such matters need not be documented as personnel complaints, but may be further investigated, depending on the seriousness of the complaint and the availability of sufficient information.

# FINDINGS COMPARISON

## FIGURE 3



**Previous Administrative Review:** A matter in which the actions of the employee(s) have been determined to be within policy in a previous Supervisor Administrative Review or other administrative investigation. If no further information is provided or discovered, beyond the facts already known at the time of the Previous Administrative Review, the Department supervisor, with approval of his or her commanding officer and the Internal Affairs Lieutenant, may classify the allegation with a finding of Previous Administrative Review.

**Inquiry:** If an uninvolved supervisor determines that a citizen is merely requesting clarification of a policy or procedure, or the alleged misconduct or improper job performance, even if true, would not constitute a violation of law or Department policy or procedure, the supervisor, with approval of his or her commanding officer and the Internal Affairs Lieutenant, may classify the matter as an inquiry and need not take a complaint.

**Other Judicial Review:** This classification is intended to address two types of complaints:

- Civil Matters
- Court Proceedings

**Frivolous:** Complaints that are totally and completely without merit, or which are made for the sole purpose of harassing a police employee may be classified with a finding of Frivolous as approved by the Internal Affairs Lieutenant or a chief officer.



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## OFFICER-INVOLVED DEATH(S) (OID)

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The Riverside City Charter defines the ability of the Community Police Review Commission to review and investigate officer-involved deaths. Charter Section 810, empowers the Commission "to review and investigate the death of any individual arising out of or in connection with actions of a sworn police officer, regardless of whether a complaint regarding such death has been filed."

Immediately upon the death of a person arising out of or in connection with the actions of a sworn police officer, a criminal investigation commences. The Riverside Police Department (RPD) conducts the criminal investigation, which includes gathering physical evidence, obtaining statements from involved parties and witnesses, and gathering reports from all involved officers.

Information regarding OID cases can be found on the Commission's website below:  
[RiversideCA.gov/CPRC](https://www.RiversideCA.gov/CPRC)

In 2019, the Commission evaluated three (3) officer-involved death cases. At year's end, there were three (3) cases pending review.

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## COMMISSION OUTREACH

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The Commission continues to maintain its Mission and Purpose and strives of ongoing outreach with the Community. The Commission's objective is to promote harmony, trust, and confidence between the residents of Riverside and the Riverside Police Department. Commissioners and Staff continue to attend a wide range of meetings and events in efforts to enhance community cohesiveness and communication between the citizens of Riverside and the sworn police personnel serving the public.

The Commission's 2019 outreach activities included, but not limited to:

### Annual Events

- State of the City
- Eastside Reconciliation Coalition
- RPC Annual Awards Dinner
- The Group Meetings
- Latino Network Meeting
- Dollars for Scholars
- Riverside Sunrise Rotary
- Riverside Police Departments Promotion & Awards Ceremony
- RPD Ride-Along
- City of Riverside Parks Recreation White Park, La Sierra, and Janet Goeske Senior Centers Outreach
- RRR Riverside Recovery Resources
- Dollar for Scholars Awards Event
- RCC Class presentations
- National Night Out - RPD
- Chiefs Breakfast
- Riverside Police Department New Hire Orientations
- Path of Life
- Saint Thomas Church
- Blue Light Ceremony
- Los Padres Enidos at Norte Vista High School (Need confirm spelling with Commissioner Birrellas)
- Riverside Neighborhood Partnership
- Riverside Chambers of Commerce
- True Evolution LGBTQ
- Grove Community Church Outreach
- Hero's Beer Release Benefit

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## TRAINING, SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

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Training presentations are generally conducted during the open session of the Commission's Regular Meetings and the public is encouraged to attend. Commissioners also attend training classes and seminars outside Regular Meeting training presentations. The following list includes, but is not limited to, training presentations, seminars and/or conferences that the Commission and/or Commissioner(s) took part during 2019:

- Terrorism Liaison Officer Information Network
- FBI Citizens Academy
- San Diego Police Department Subpoena Symposium



## CPRC 2019 OUTREACH AD HOC COMMITTEE



Artemese Evans - **Vice-Chair**  
Gregory Smith - **Chair**  
Norma Berrellez

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## COMMISSION MEMBERS

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### Joseph “Joe” Ortiz, CPRC Chair, Ward 3

Joseph Ortiz is a Ward 3 resident, a local employment attorney, and a community activist. Mr. Ortiz received his undergraduate degree at University of California, Los Angeles, and his legal education at University of Minnesota School of Law. Professionally, he is a partner with the law firm of Best Best & Krieger LLP. He is a councilmember for California's Fair Employment and Housing Council. He served as Chair of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce for the 2018-2019 year and is active with that organization. Mr. Ortiz is committed to local community causes, including Riverside Legal Aid, Greater Riverside Dollars for Scholars, and Riverside Sunrise Rotary, to name a few. He is married to Julia and has three young children. Term Expires in March 2020.

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### Artemese Evans, CPRC Vice Chair, Ward 5

Artemese Evans is a native to Riverside who pursued both her undergraduate and MBA at the University of Redlands. Artemese is currently a Labor Representative in her 11-year career with the Riverside Sheriffs' Association. In 2020, Artemese received her Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification to enhance her knowledge in employee leaves, grievances, and other employment issues. Her other contributions to organizations in Riverside include her position as Board Apprentice for the Mission Inn Foundation (2014-2015), Co-Chair for the 38th Annual Mission Inn Run in 2015 and membership with Riverside's Pick Group for Young Professionals since 2008. As part of the Pick Group, she has served on Professional Development Committee, the Membership Committee and as Secretary of the Board from November 2013 to March 2016. In 2014, she completed the Pick Group's Board Development Training Program. Term Expires in March 2020.

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### Isaac Hiraes, Ward 1

Isaac Hiraes is a newly appointed Commissioner to represent Ward 1 and has resided in Riverside for the last 25 years. Mr. Hiraes has many years of experience working in education in both correctional facilities and local school districts and is currently a Principal for Bassett Unified School District. He received his undergraduate degree in Liberal Studies from California Baptist University and holds a master's degree in Education Administration from California State University, San Bernardino. He has a vested interest in civic involvement and has worked with community stakeholders in a professional setting for many years. His current term expires March 2023.

## Gregory “Greg” Smith, Ward 2

Gregory Smith is a near life-long Riverside resident, with a bachelor's degree from UC Riverside in 1987, double major in Computer Science and Business Economics. He is also a 2014 graduate of the Regional Leadership Academy of the Inland Empire Economic Partnership. Greg works in the technology industry as the U.S. Director of Sales for Instek America, an international manufacturer of electronic test and measurement equipment. Previously, Greg held roles which include VP of Sales & Marketing for JetHead Development, and Regional Sales Manager for Rohde & Schwarz. Greg prides himself on being approachable, on keeping an open mind, and being proactive with respect to all issues. He is fully committed to the success, the evolution, and the growth of Riverside and the Inland Empire as a whole. 2nd Term Expires in March 2021.

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## Phil DeBrier, Ward 4

Phil has been a resident of Riverside for 40 years and is currently residing in Ward 4. A graduate of Norte Vista High School, he and his wife of 34 years Lisa, raised their family here and are active members in the community. Phil currently works as an independent insurance agent and financial advisor, in addition to remaining involved in his community by volunteering at his church and for the Bob Hope USO. Phil was appointed in early 2019 to complete the current Ward 4 term, which expires in March 2021. His goal is to continue to support the mission of the Commission, representing the citizens of the community, and to continue to be an impartial, objective voice in the review of issues that are brought before the panel.

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## Norma Berrellez, Ward 6

Norma Berrellez is a Ward 6 Riverside resident for 36 years. Born and raised in Tucson, Arizona where she began her law enforcement career with the Tucson Police Department and U.S. Marshals Service. Ms. Berrellez then relocated to California where she worked as a Personnel Manager for Disneyland and decided to pursue her teaching career. During this tenure she was employed by the Corona-Norco Unified School District as a secondary teacher, coordinator, and Site Administrator, retired in July 2016. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Arizona, a Masters of Arts in Education from the University of Phoenix, Teaching and Administrative Credentials from Chapman University. On her leisure time Norma serves as a Eucharistic Minister at her church and spends quality time with her one daughter who is a School Administrator.

## David “Abel” Huerta, Ward 7

David “Abel” Huerta, a Ward 7 resident, is a lifelong resident of Riverside. He has over 13 years' experience in law enforcement serving as a Reserve Police Officer then transitioning to a full time Police Officer within Riverside County. Utilizing his Paramedic Certification, Teaching Credential and his Law Enforcement experience, he continued as an adjunct instructor at the Ben Clark Public Safety Training Center. He became the first instructor in the Inland Empire to provide training on terrorism courses involving nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction. Sponsored by the Department of Justice, the program was the foundation for the National Homeland Security organization. He later became the Corporate Safety Director for Dynamic Plumbing where he authored Health and Safety Training Programs in Construction and General Industry Safety under Federal and State OSHA Standards. Term expires in March 2020.

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## Michael Levine, Citywide

Mike Levine is a Ward 4 residence. He has over 20 years Law Enforcement experience and served the last 13 years as a Law Enforcement Chief. In 2014, he was awarded the Tribal Police Chief of the year award for the nation. He retired from full time Law Enforcement January 2018. He served as a Police Commissioner for the City of Desert Hot Springs for approximately 5 years. He provided training for schools from K-12 for active shooter awareness. He is currently and has been working with the Riverside and San Bernardino County's Domestic Violence Sub-Committee.

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## Eileen Teichert, Citywide

Eileen Teichert has resided in Ward 4 for over 13 years. For more than eight years, she worked in the City of Riverside's City Attorney's office as legal advisor to the Riverside Public Utilities Department and Board of Public Utilities. She then relocated to the Sacramento area to serve as the Sacramento City Attorney, before returning to Riverside in 2012 and beginning her employment as General Counsel at San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA). Eileen received her Juris Doctor from University of LaVerne College of Law and her Bachelor of Science in Journalism from the University of Oregon. She is also a current member of both the American Bar Association and the California State Bar Association. Her term will expire March 2023.



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P O L I C E

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*CITY OF RIVERSIDE*

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COMMUNITY

REVIEW

MISSION

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