



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: AUGUST 5, 2025

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARD: 1
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: PLANNING CASE DP-2024-01558 – REQUEST BY JO PHELAN AND BRUCE LINK TO DESIGNATE BOYD RESIDENCE - LOCATED AT 4649 NINTH STREET - AS A CITY LANDMARK AND ADOPT ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING CODE MAP TO APPLY THE CR – CULTURAL RESOURCE OVERLAY ZONE TO THE SUBJECT PROPERTY

ISSUE:

Adopt an Ordinance amending the Zoning Code Map to apply the CR - Cultural Resources Overlay Zone to the subject property.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council adopt an Ordinance to rezone 4649 Ninth Street from the R-1-7000-Single Family Residential Zone to the R-1-7000-CR – Single Family Residential and Cultural Resources Overlay Zones.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE:

The City Council approved Planning Case DP-2024-01558 (Historic Designation) designating the Boyd Residence as a City Landmark and introduced the Ordinance to rezone 4649 Ninth Street from the R-1-7000-Single Family Residential Zone to the R-1-7000-CR - Single Family Residential and Cultural Resources Overlay Zones. The motion carried unanimously with Councilmembers Conder and Hemenway absent.

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

On May 21, 2025, the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) with voted (5 ayes and 1 abstention) to recommend that the City Council approve Planning Case DP-2024-01558 and designate the Boyd Residence as a City Landmark (Attachments 4 and 5).

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

A “Landmark” is defined in Section 20.50.010 of Title 20 of the Riverside Municipal Code as:

- A. 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

B. 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:

The property owners, Jo Phelan and Bruce Link, are requesting approval of a Historic Designation to recognize the Boyd Residence as a City Landmark.

Located at 4649 Ninth Street, the Boyd Residence is a Hollywood Regency Style home with a detached two-car garage. Designed in 1957 by architect Charles O. Matcham and built in 1959 by prominent Riverside builder Harry Marsh, the residence was commissioned by Philip and Dorothy Boyd, who lived there until 1977.

Philip L. Boyd and Dorothy M. Boyd were key figures in shaping the civic, educational, and philanthropic landscape of Riverside and beyond. Philip Boyd served as the first mayor of Palm Springs, a California State Assembly member (1945–1949), and a University of California Regent (1957–1975). He played a critical role in the founding and growth of UC Riverside, advocating for its transformation from a small liberal arts college into a full-fledged research university. Dorothy Boyd was equally engaged in civic life, contributing to organizations such as the Riverside Art Museum, the Junior League, and numerous scholarship programs benefiting local students.

The Boyds commissioned Charles O. Matcham to design the residence in the late Hollywood Regency style—an architectural style partly inspired by early 19th-century British trends. Like the original Regency style, it blends Neoclassical and French Empire elements, but its streamlined forms and restrained ornamentation reflect the influence of the Modern Movement. The Boyd Residence is the only known example of this style in Riverside.

Charles O. Matcham was a well-regarded architect known for his refined modernist designs, which combined classical influences with contemporary elegance. His portfolio includes custom homes and commercial projects throughout Los Angeles, Palm Springs, and Riverside. Builder Harry Marsh was known for his high-quality craftsmanship and was responsible for many significant projects in mid-century Riverside, particularly custom residences for prominent clients.

The Boyd Residence is historically significant as an exceptional example of Hollywood Regency residential architecture in Riverside. It also represents the work of a notable regional architect and builder and is closely associated with the lives of Philip and Dorothy Boyd. Philip Boyd often conducted political, business, and philanthropic activities from the home, further deepening its historic significance.

With no major alteration, the Boyd Residence retains a high degree of integrity required for Landmark designation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Prior to the CHB and City Council meetings, public notices were mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the site.

As of the writing of this report, no responses have been received by staff regarding this historic designation request.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact resulting from the City Landmark designation.

Prepared by: Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer
Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachment: Ordinance