



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: JULY 14, 2026
FROM: FIRE DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: ADOPT AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5.66 OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING AMBULANCES

ISSUE:

Adopt revisions to Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 5.66 regarding Ambulances. The amendments modernize definitions, update franchise and permit requirements, and enhance operational standards for ambulance services within the City of Riverside.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 5.66 of the Riverside Municipal Code regarding Ambulances.

BACKGROUND:

On June 16, 2026, the City Council introduced and approved the first reading of an ordinance amending Chapter 5.66 of the Riverside Municipal Code regarding Ambulances.

The proposed amendments modernize definitions, update franchise and permit requirements, and enhance operational standards for ambulance services operating within the City of Riverside. The amendments also incorporate current state and local Emergency Medical Services standards and provide additional administrative flexibility to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality ambulance services.

No changes have been made to the ordinance since the first reading.

DISCUSSION:

The ordinance was presented to the City Council for first reading on June 16, 2026. Adoption of the ordinance will implement the proposed revisions to Chapter 5.66 of the Riverside Municipal Code as previously presented and discussed. No changes have been made to the ordinance since the first reading.

The key updates in the proposed amendments include:

- 1. 5.66.020 Franchise / permits:**

- The proposed amendment in 5.66.020 section 5 introduces a provision allowing unpermitted ambulances to operate upon approval of the Administrator in situations where significant time delays may adversely impact patient care. This ensures that when permitted ambulance services are verified to be delayed or unable to provide the required level of service, alternative arrangements can be authorized to address urgent medical needs effectively.

This change aims to mitigate the risk of care delays in critical situations by granting the Administrator the flexibility to approve supplemental or alternative ambulance services. The provision prioritizes patient care and addresses scenarios such as unexpected service interruptions, increased demand, or logistical challenges faced by permitted ambulance providers.

2. 5.66.040 Application for a franchise or extension of a franchise:

- The current ordinance requires applicants for ambulance service permits to verify their current accreditation with the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS). This ensures that ambulance providers meet nationally recognized standards for quality and safety in emergency medical services.

The amendment allows the Ambulance Administrator to grant a variance for applicants who demonstrate a commitment to achieving accreditation within six months to 18-months of receiving their permit. Failure to achieve CAAS accreditation within the specified timeframe will result in the removal of the permit.

3. 5.66.050 Processing of application:

- As part of the application evaluation, the Administrator will prepare a detailed report. The proposed change increases the timeframe for the Administrator to prepare a detailed report for Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee from (14) to (45) days. The increased timeframe will allow sufficient time to complete the report and to allow for changes in the committee schedule, which has been found to be problematic.

4. 5.66.090 Extension of franchises/permits

- The revised version aligns the ordinance with the rest of the document, allowing the Ambulance Franchise Administrator the authority to extend the franchise/permit holder agreement for up to three years, not to exceed the maximum term limitation of the City Charter.

5. 5.66.180 Ambulance rates

- The proposal to adjust the percent increase limit from 5% to 10% aligns with Riverside County's policy framework for managing rate changes. This change acknowledges the reality of escalating costs and offers greater flexibility for meeting operational needs while maintaining a structured review process.

6. 5.66.195 Permit for ambulances:

- The revised version would state: "Each permit holder shall annually submit for inspection to the Administrator 50 percent of its fleet of ambulances operating in the City, such that all ambulances of a franchisee operating in the City are inspected on a biennial basis." This change provides clarity, as "biennial"

explicitly conveys the intended two-year rotation and avoids misinterpretation that could lead to non-compliance. It also ensures accountability, as the clear schedule aligns all stakeholders on expectations that the entire fleet is subject to inspection.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with adoption of this ordinance.

Prepared by:	Chuck Tasker, Division Chief – Special Operations
Approved by:	Steve McKinster, Fire Chief
Certified as to availability of funds:	Julie Nemes, Interim Finance Director
Approved by:	Edward Enriquez, Acting City Manager/Chief Financial Officer
Approved as to form:	Rebecca McKee-Reibold, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Final Ordinance Amending Chapter 5.66
2. City Council Report – RMC 5.66 PowerPoint (Second Read)