

# RE-PURPOSE RIVERSIDE: ADAPTIVE REUSE ORDINANCE

PC-2026-00427 (Zoning Text Amendment)

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Planning Commission

Agenda Item: 4

May 21, 2026

RiversideCA.gov

1

## BACKGROUND

- **6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element adopted in 2021**
- **Implementation underway:**
  - (✓) Pre-approved ADU plans
  - (✓) Streamlined development processes (Zoning Code Updates)
  - (✓) Infill development standards
  - (✓) Small lot subdivision ordinance
  - (~) Pre-approved Missing Middle Housing Plans (In Progress)
  - (~) **Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (before you today)**

**City of Riverside Designated “Prohousing” by State, Eligible for Funds**  
*Designation puts Riverside in top five percent of governments in California for housing policies*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside has been designated “Prohousing” by the State of California, making the city one of only a handful that will receive preference in seeking state funding for programs designed to speed the production of housing.




2

RiversideCA.gov

2

## GRANT BACKGROUND



### Regional Early Action Planning Grants of 2021 (REAP 2.0)

- Awarded SCAG \$231.5 million to support local agencies with 6<sup>th</sup> cycle Housing Element implementation
- Grant expenditure deadline of June 30, 2026

### Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) – Technical Assistance Request

- SCAG awarded WRCOG \$1.5 million to support member agencies
- City staff coordinated request with SCAG and WRCOG
- Project kick-off July 2025

3


RiversideCA.gov

3

## BACKGROUND


### December 8, 2025 – City Council Land Use Committee

- Overview of Adaptive Reuse project provided to Committee
- Next steps provided



The timeline consists of a horizontal line with five numbered markers (1-5) indicating key milestones. The milestones are as follows:

- 1 Summer 2025:** Project Kick-off, Data Collection, Case Studies and Regional Best Practice, Roundtable 1.
- 2 Fall 2025:** Roundtable 2.
- 3 Winter 2025-26:** Land Use Committee, Roundtable 2.
- 4 Spring 2026:** Ordinance Preparation, Code Amendments, CEQA.
- 5 Summer 2026:** Draft Ordinance, Educational Materials, Community Open House, Roundtable 3, Final Ordinance and Code Amendments, Planning Commission, City Council.



4

RiversideCA.gov

4

## ADAPTIVE REUSE



Repurposing existing non-residential structures (offices, retail, or commercial buildings) into new land uses

- Incentivize housing production;
- Revitalize neighborhood and commercial corridors; and
- Preserve historic structures or architectural heritage

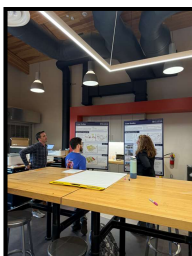
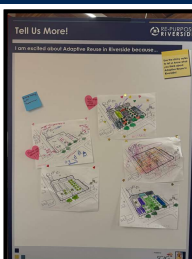


5

RiversideCA.gov

5

## STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH



### Roundtable Meetings

- Local property owners, developers, and nonprofit organizations
- Provide feedback on draft materials & inform on progress
- Share local expertise to inform the ordinance

### Expert Interviews

- Architecture and design firms; adaptive reuse developers
- Identify key obstacles and potential solutions for adaptive reuse in the City

### Community at Large

- Updates to Chambers of Commerce
- Public open house to share draft ordinance

### City Department Working Sessions

- Internal meetings with Building & Safety and Fire Department
- Inform departments about adaptive reuse and collaborate on ordinance flexibility

6

RiversideCA.gov

6

# ADAPTIVE REUSE ORDINANCE

**PROJECT GOAL:**  
INCENTIVIZE THE  
CONVERSION OF NON-  
RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES  
INTO STANDALONE  
RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-  
USE DEVELOPMENT

**New Chapter  
Chapter 19.540 –  
Adaptive Reuse**



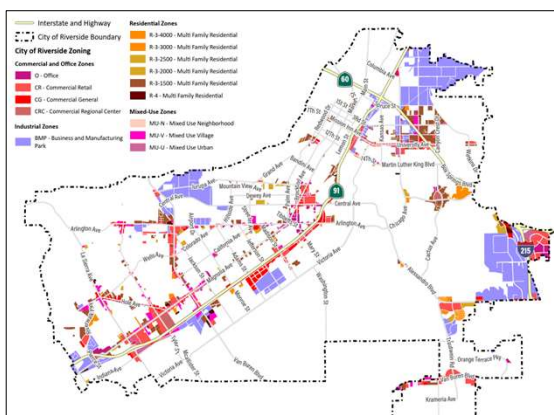
7

RiversideCA.gov

7

# INCENTIVE ELIGIBILITY

Adaptive reuse of eligible buildings permitted by right in the following zones



**Eligible buildings:** Non-residential buildings or structures constructed or received Certificate of Occupancy at least 15 years prior, on rolling basis



STALDER BUILDING, RIVERSIDE






4TH STREET MARKET LONG BEACH (EXTENSIVE)




RiversideCA.gov

8

## DEFINITIONS


Term	Definition	Illustration
<b>Bonus Floor Area</b>	Additional floor area constructed within or as an extension of height of the existing building envelope.	 <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Bonus Floor Area</p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Existing Building Envelope</p>
<b>Existing Building Envelope</b>	The total amount of 3D building space that exists at the time of the project application. No additions or alterations.	 <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Existing Building Envelope</p>
<b>New Construction</b>	New ground up construction that takes place separate from the existing building envelope.	 <p style="margin-left: 100px;">Existing Building Envelope</p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;">New Construction</p>


9
RiversideCA.gov

9

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Type	Development Standard
<b>Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not required for reuse of existing building envelope or bonus floor area.</li> <li>New construction = Abide by parking requirements of underlying zone or of zone which most closely matches density of project.</li> <li>Excess parking spaces may be converted to other uses.</li> </ul>
<b>Open Space</b>	<p>100 sq. ft. of any combination of private and common usable open space per dwelling unit or that of the underlying zone whichever is less.</p> <p>At least 25% of the usable open space is required to be shared or common space.</p>


10
RiversideCA.gov

10

# DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

## New Construction

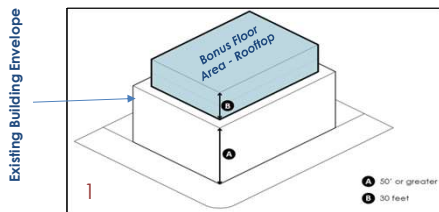
- Permitted to support project feasibility + add'l. units
- Must include:
  - Adaptive reuse of existing building
  - New construction on same project site

**Zoned for Residential Use**  
 Abide by standards of underlying Zoning, Specific Plan or Overlay

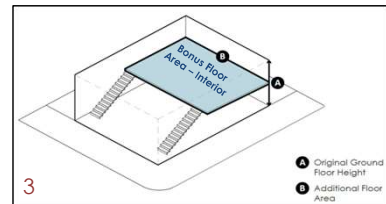
**Zoned for Non-Residential Use**  
 Abide by closest matching residential/mixed-use zone (by density)  
 Example: CG zone + 14.5 du/ac → apply R-3-3000 standards



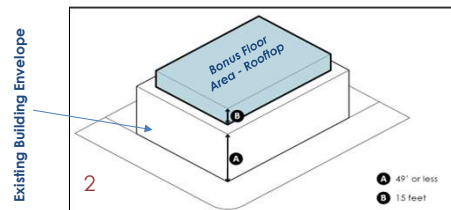
# EXISTING BUILDING ENVELOPE INCENTIVES



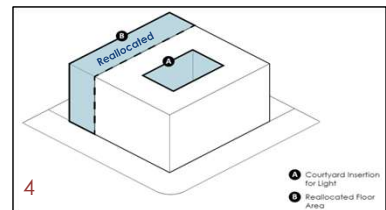
**Height**  
 Existing building height considered legal nonconforming  
 Rooftop construction permitted subject to height req.



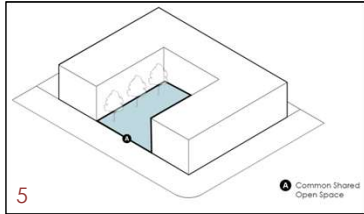
**Floor Area**  
 New floor area within or on top of existing building envelope permitted



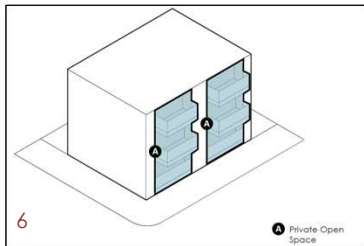
**Floor area may be reallocated**  
**Setbacks**  
 May remain as legal nonconforming  
 New floor area ≠ degree or nonconformity



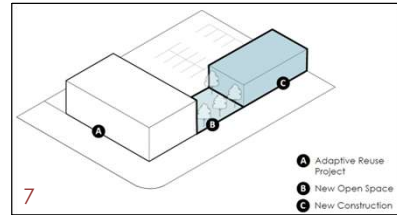
# EXISTING BUILDING ENVELOPE INCENTIVES



**Open Space**  
 ≤ 5 units = no open space req.  
 ½ w/in public park = reduce open space by 25%



**Parking**  
 No additional parking req.  
 Bicycle parking may satisfy up to 5% of req. spaces



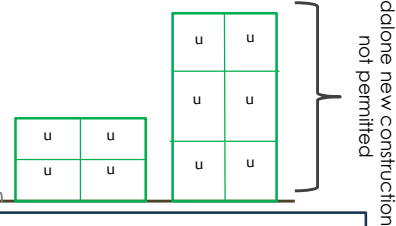
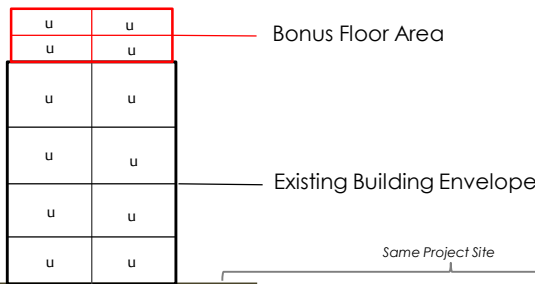
**Density**  
 May exceed allowable density if complying with height req.



# OVERVIEW

**Adaptive Reuse of Existing Building Only (Incentives Eligible)**

**New Construction (Development Standards of Underlying Zone or Nearest Zone per Density)**



**Key**

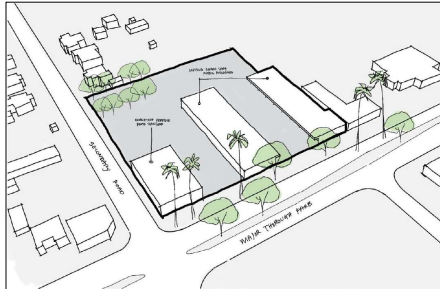
- Existing Envelope
- Bonus Floor Area: Up to 30 of add'l. depending on existing building height. Design review req.
- New Construction: Reuse of existing building req. Must be on same project site. Design review req.
- Dwelling unit/Usable Space



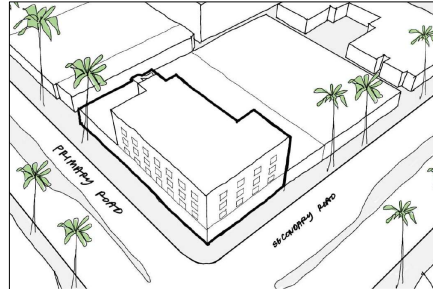
# CASE STUDIES

## OBJECTIVES

- Work through potential barriers to adaptive reuse in the City
- Inform the ordinance based on the findings
- Apply the draft ordinance to real scenarios in the City



**Case Study One**  
Commercial Building within  
Suburban Context



**Case Study Two**  
Mixed-use Office Building within  
Urban Context

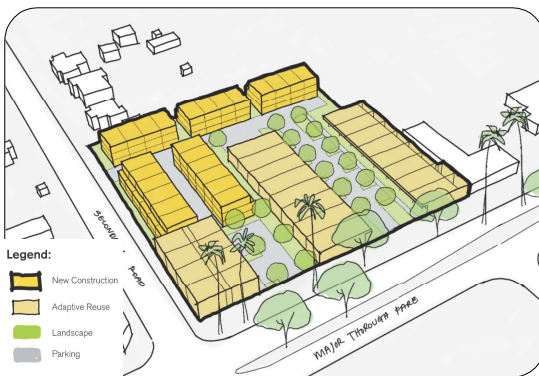


15

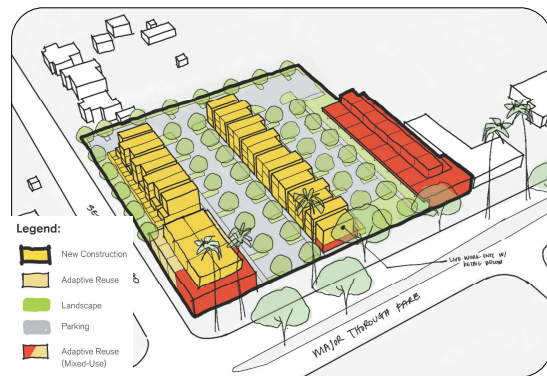
RiversideCA.gov

15

# CASE STUDY ONE – SUBURBAN CONTEXT



- Adaptive Reuse SF: 29,095 sf
- New Construction SF: 48,660 sf
- Units in Adaptive Reuse: 25
- New Units: 22
- Open Space: 5,905 sf
- Parking Count: 81 stalls



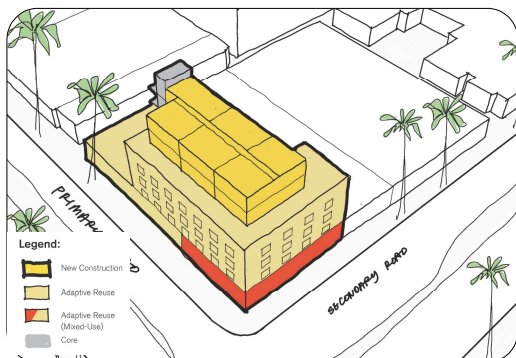
- Adaptive Reuse SF: 14,935 sf
- New Construction SF: 44,820 sf
- Units in Adaptive Reuse: 5
- New Units: 57
- Open Space: 4,865 sf
- Parking Count: 109 stalls

16

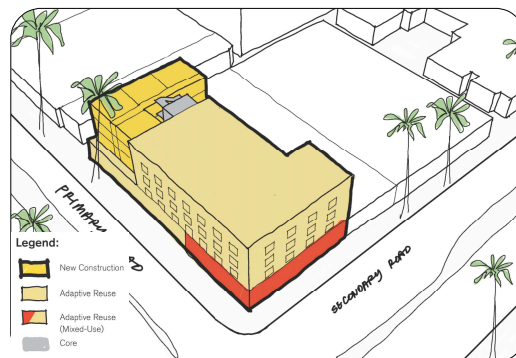
RiversideCA.gov

16

## CASE STUDY TWO – URBAN CONTEXT



- Adaptive Reuse SF: 29,870 sf
- New Construction SF: 6,715 sf
- Units in Adaptive Reuse: 24
- New Units: 12
- Open Space: N/A sf
- Parking Count: 0 stalls



- Adaptive Reuse SF: 29,870 sf
- New Construction SF: 7,005 sf
- Units in Adaptive Reuse: 22
- New Units: 12
- Open Space: 1,700 sf
- Parking Count: 0 stalls

17

RiversideCA.gov

17

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### That the Planning Commission:

- 1. DETERMINE** that Planning Case PC-2026-00427 is exempt from further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense), as it can be seen with certainty that approval of the project will not have an effect on the environment; and
- 2. RECCOMEND APPROVAL** of Planning Case PC-2026-00427 (Zoning Text Amendment) as outlined in the findings of the staff report.



18

RiversideCA.gov

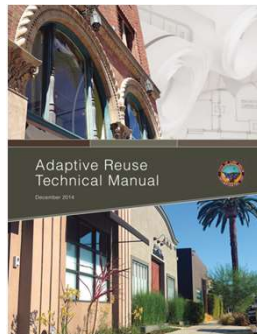
18

# Reference Slides



## TITLE 16 AMENDMENTS – REFERENCE ONLY

- Grants the Building Official & Fire Marshall the authority to adopt alternative building standards
- Adaptive Reuse Technical Manual



Example: City of Long Beach Adaptive Reuse Technical Manual



## EXISTING BUILDING ENVELOPE INCENTIVES

Incentives apply only to the conversion of the existing building envelope.

### Floor Area

- Existing floor area that exceeds allowed FAR limits may remain
- New floor area *within or on top of existing envelope* does not count toward max FAR
- May be reallocated to create lightwells or courtyards

### Setbacks

- Existing building setbacks may remain as legal nonconforming
- Reallocated or bonus floor area may not increase degree of nonconformity



21

RiversideCA.gov

21

## EXISTING BUILDING ENVELOPE INCENTIVES

### Height

- Buildings which exceed allowable height may remain as legal nonconforming
- New or added rooftop construction permitted:
  - 49 feet or less, additions 15 feet or less
  - 50 feet or greater, additions 30 feet or less

### Density

- May exceed the allowed maximum residential if project complies with height provisions

### Minimum Unit Size

- Not required



22

RiversideCA.gov

22

## EXISTING BUILDING ENVELOPE INCENTIVES

### Stepbacks

- Do not apply unless the building is a Cultural Resource

### Parking

- New parking spaces not required
- Up to 5% of parking spaces satisfied by an equal number of bicycle parking

### Open space

- Projects 5 units or less, are exempt from the open space requirements
- Projects within ½ mile of a park, may reduce open space up to 25%.

### Landscaping & Loading Zones

- No additional landscaping or loading zones required



23

RiversideCA.gov