



**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING DATE: JUNE 20, 2024  
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 4**

**SUMMARY**

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>PR-2024-001678 (AMD)</b> – Infill Development and Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance
<b>Request</b>	<p>Proposal by the City of Riverside to consider Zoning Code amendments to Title 19 (Zoning) of the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC), including but not limited to Articles V (Base Zones and Related Use and Development Provisions) and Article IX (Land Use Development Permit Requirements/Procedure) intended to implement a Residential Infill Development Ordinance and a Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance as directed by the City Council Housing and Homelessness Committee. The proposed amendments are intended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Streamline development standards for existing, undersized lots within the Single Family (R-1) Residential Zones and Multi-Family (R-3 &amp; R-4) Residential Zones;</li> <li>2. Amend the existing Planned Residential Development (PRD) Permit process to implement three new PRD permits as part of a Residential Small Lot Subdivision Program; and</li> <li>3. Make other minor, non-substantive changes and technical clarifications as required to implement the Infill Development and Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance.</li> </ol>
<b>Applicant</b>	City of Riverside, Community and Economic Development Department
<b>Project Location</b>	Citywide
<b>Ward</b>	Citywide
<b>Staff Planner</b>	Daniel Palafox, Associate Planner 951-826-5985 <a href="mailto:dpalafox@riversideca.gov">dpalafox@riversideca.gov</a>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning Commission:

1. **Recommend** that the City Council determine that Planning Case PR-2024-001678 is exempt from further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), as it can be seen with certainty that approval of the project will not have an effect on the environment; and
2. **Recommend Approval** of the Planning Case PR-2024-001678 (Zoning Text Amendment) as outlined in the staff report and summarized in the Findings section of this report.

## BACKGROUND

Throughout 2023, staff had the opportunity to work closely with the City Council Housing and Homelessness Committee (Committee) to identify six development strategies which promote infill development as a mechanism to address the region's housing need. The strategies presented were included as implementation actions for the 6th Cycle Housing Element of the General Plan 2025 adopted by the City Council in October 2021.

The Committee directed staff to proceed with the preparation of a Residential Infill Development and Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance (Ordinance) which focuses on providing streamlined and administrative paths for infill development. A compilation of Committee staff reports may be read in Exhibit (1) for additional context. Staff also had the opportunity to obtain the Planning Commission's feedback during a workshop in August where the Commission was in alignment with the Committee's policy direction (Exhibit 2).

In February 2024, staff held a virtual workshop with key stakeholders with recent or current residential development experience in order to assess challenges, opportunities and obtain general feedback on residential infill and small lot subdivision development. With this feedback, staff worked with Sagecrest Planning (Consultant) to draft several Zoning Code Amendments to Title 19 of the Riverside Municipal Code which implement the Ordinance.

On May 23, 2024, staff conducted a workshop with the Planning Commission presenting the proposed amendments for their consideration and feedback. A detailed assessment of current policy and proposed Zoning Code Amendments may be read in the associated staff report (Exhibit 3).

## PROPOSAL

The proposed amendments are included as Exhibit 4 and are separated by Zoning Code Chapter. The following is a summary of each of the proposed changes including the chapter; a brief discussion of current policy and proposed changes; and feedback obtained from the Planning Commission during the May 23<sup>rd</sup> workshop.

### RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

#### I. Chapters:

- Chapter 19.100 – Residential Zones (RA-5, RC, RR, RE, R-1-½ ACRE, R-1-13000, R-1-10500, R-1-8500, R-1-7000, R-3-4000, R-3-3000, R-3-2500, R-3-2000, R-3-1500, R-4); and
- Chapter 19.580 – Parking and Loading

Minor, non-substantive amendments throughout the Riverside Municipal Code are also proposed to ensure consistency with the draft ordinance.

#### II. Existing Policy:

The Infill Development Strategy adopted by the City Council in 2003 provides financial incentives in the form of certain fee reductions to developers who initiate residential development on eligible infill sites. Flexible development standards were never introduced along with the strategy causing difficulty in the project design process given the irregular shape of the infill lots. Applicants are required to adhere to the development standards of the underlying zoning designation. This may result in requests for variances resulting from inflexible standards or otherwise limit the viability of developing the site.

Without more flexible infill development standards, many existing substandard lots (i.e., smaller than required by current Zoning) may remain vacant.

#### III. Proposed Changes:

##### **Chapter 19. 100 – Residential Zones**

Two new sections provide development standards for existing, legally created substandard lots within Single Family (R-1) Residential Zones and Multi-Family (R-3 & R-4) Residential Zones.

- §19.100.065 – Regulations for infill development on undersized lots in the R-1 Zones
- §19.100.075 – Regulations for infill development on undersized lots in the R-3 and R-4 Zones

##### Infill Development Standards for Single Family (R-1) Residential Zones

Section 19.100.065 provides appropriate development standards for lots that do not meet the minimum lot size of the underlying zone. Several provisions were incorporated including tiered setbacks, maximum building height, lot coverage, privacy considerations and landscaping requirements. Various lot size thresholds were established throughout various R-1 zones to determine eligibility. The infill development standards will not apply to the Residential Conservation (RC) and Residential Agricultural (RA-5) zones.

## Infill Development Standards for Multi-Family (R-3 & R-4) Residential Zones

Section 19.100.075 provides development standards appropriate for substandard multi-family lots including setbacks, building heights, privacy considerations, common and privacy open space and landscaping requirements. To be eligible, the parcel must be zoned R-3 or R-4 and be less than 21,780 square feet where the current minimum lot size is 30,000 square feet. The development standards are flexible depending on the size of the lot; smaller sized parcels are generally given greater flexibility compared to larger sized infill parcels.

### **Chapter 19.580 – Parking & Loading**

Table 19.580.060 (Required Spaces) is amended to reflect two new parking requirements for single-family dwellings on residential infill lots.

- For R-1 lots between 3,500 to 5,499 square feet, two covered parking spaces are required either in a carport or garage.
- For R-1 lots less than 3,500 square feet, one covered space and one uncovered space is required. Tandem parking is also permitted to satisfy this requirement.
- All other R-1 infill lots will adhere to the existing single-family dwelling parking requirement of two parking spaces within a private garage.

There is no change to the parking requirements for multi-family infill projects.

#### **IV. Planning Commission Workshop Feedback**

During the May 23<sup>rd</sup> Planning Commission Workshop, staff presented the proposed Zoning Code amendments and stakeholder comments for the Commission's consideration and feedback. The Commission had questions related to the possibility of creating new infill parcels and the amount of eligible infill parcels in the City.

Staff clarified that the infill development standards only apply to existing legally established infill parcels; the standards do not allow for new infill lots to be created such as postage stamp lots. Staff also shared information regarding previous spatial analyses conducted to identify the development potential of eligible infill parcels in the City which may benefit from the infill development standards.

## **RESIDENTIAL SMALL LOT SUBDIVISION IMPLEMENTATION**

### **I. Chapters:**

- Chapter 19.150 – Base Zones Permitted Land Uses; and
- Chapter 19.780 – Planned Residential Development Permit

Minor changes elsewhere in the RMC are also proposed to ensure consistency with the proposed Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance.

### **II. Existing Policy:**

The Zoning Code currently permits Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) to allow for the subdivision of large tracts of land into clustered single-family residential development. The PRD Permit allows for modified development standards such as smaller internal lot dimensions, reduced interior setbacks and increased lot coverage in exchange for

providing enhanced on-site amenities and privately maintained streets and common open space. PRDs are prohibited in multi-family residential zones but are allowed in all single-family residential zones except for the Residential Agricultural (RA-5) Zone.

The current PRD approval requirements lend themselves to larger-scale subdivision development. Smaller scale subdivisions are often unfeasible due to market conditions, project design constraints, and the existing approval process which may not support the development of smaller-scale PRD projects.

### **III. Proposed Changes:**

#### **Chapter 19.780 – Planned Residential Permit**

Various provisions are amended to incorporate three new PRD permit types intended to promote small-lot subdivisions and provide streamlined approval for smaller PRD projects in single family and multi-family zones. Chapter 19.780 is amended to reflect:

In Single Family Zones (R-1, RR and RE Zones excluding the RC and RA-5 zone):

- **Minor Planned Residential Development Permit (Minor PRD):** Intended for projects in single-family residential zones consisting of 16 or fewer dwelling units.
- **Administrative Planned Residential Development Permit (Administrative PRD):** Intended for projects in single-family residential zones consisting of four or fewer parcels.

In Multi Family Zones (R-3 zones excluding the R-4 zone):

- **Small Lot Subdivision Planned Residential Development Permit (Small Lot PRD):** Intended for 16 or fewer dwelling units within Medium-High Density or High-Density (R-3) multi-family residential zones.

#### **Minor PRD & Administrative PRD Permits**

New provisions provide flexible development standards and reduce enhanced amenity requirements for Minor PRDs and Administrative PRDs without sacrificing superior design and to ensure compliance with the General Plan and the California Subdivision Map Act (Government Code §66400 et seq.). For Administrative PRDs specifically, a tentative parcel map for 4 or fewer lots can be processed without the need for discretionary review as it is considered an administrative action pursuant to Section 18.140.040 of the Subdivision Code. The Minor PRD will require a Tentative Tract Map, approved by the Planning Commission, but will still benefit from more flexible setbacks, parking, open space and superior design standard requirements.

#### **Small Lot PRD Permit**

The Small Lot PRD permit would allow for the subdivision of multi-family (R-3) parcels. A new section within Chapter 19.780 incorporates the same findings and approval requirements for Small Lot PRDs as all other PRD projects.

Section 19.780.055 also establishes a minimum and maximum density. A minimum density will help to ensure that properties already zoned for higher density are meeting a minimum density threshold and that Small Lot PRDs are consistent with the density set

forth in the respective General Plan land use designation and any applicable Specific Plan. The development standards within Section 19.780.060 are amended to incorporate specific height limits, privacy considerations, lot size and coverage, setbacks, landscaping, open space requirements, and parking requirements.

#### All PRD Permits – Minor, Administrative and Small Lot

All three permit types will adhere to existing application processing, findings and approval requirements, project noticing and development review procedures.

Section 19.780.070 is amended to reflect that all of the proposed PRD permits will need to submit maintenance agreements which demonstrate that the property owners agree to maintain the premises and any other improvements not dedicated to public use in lieu of formation of a Homeowners' Association, which can be cost-prohibitive for smaller subdivisions.

#### **Chapter 19.150 – Permitted Uses Table**

The Permitted Uses Table (19.150.020.A) is amended to reflect the permit applicability for Minor, Administrative and Small Lot PRDs based on the respective zoning designation. Minor PRD and Administrative PRDs will be prohibited in the Residential Conservation (RC) and Residential Agricultural (RA-5) single family residential zones. Small Lot PRDs are only permitted in R-3 multi-family residential zones.

#### **IV. Planning Commission Workshop Feedback**

During the May 23<sup>rd</sup> Planning Commission workshop, the Commission had questions related to the approving and review authority of the proposed PRD Permits; applicability of PRD Permits in the Greenbelt; the development standard provisions applying to small lot subdivisions; and the quantity of land available for small lot subdivision development. Staff responded as summarized below:

- Minor and Administrative PRD Permits are prohibited in the Residential Agricultural (RA-5) and Residential Conservation (RC) zones. The Small Lot PRD Permit is also ineligible as it applies only to the R-3 Zones.
- The approving and review authority for the PRD Permits is in accordance with Title 18 (Subdivision Code) of the Riverside Municipal Code and the State Subdivision Map Act (Government Code §66400 et seq.). The Administrative PRD Permit is reviewed administratively and is approved by the Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD) Director and can be appealed to the Planning Commission. Both the Minor and Small Lot PRD would require review and approval by the Planning Commission similar to the standard PRD Permit process. Appeals would go to the City Council.
- The infill development standards do not apply to small lot subdivisions; they are completely separate development tools. No new infill parcels are created through small lot subdivisions. Newly created parcels as part of a small lot subdivision may benefit from modified development standards in exchange for enhanced project design features, like any PRD.

- Previous spatial analysis revealed various oversized lots in the City ranging from one-half (0.5) and one-and-one-half (1.5) acres which could benefit from streamlined and administrative approval of a PRD permit.

## NEXT STEPS

With the Planning Commission's recommendation, staff will bring the draft Ordinance to the City Council for consideration and adoption.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMENT

In addition to the stakeholder outreach conducted in early 2024, notice was published in the Press Enterprise on May 23, 2024. At the time of writing this report, Staff has not received public comments regarding the Zoning Text Amendments.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed amendments are exempt from additional California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule) of the CEQA guidelines, as it can be seen with certainty that the proposed text amendments will not have a significant effect on the environment.

## FINDINGS

Zoning Code Amendment Findings pursuant to Chapter 19.810.040:

- 1) The proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments are generally consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan;
- 2) The proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments will not adversely affect surrounding properties as the development regulations are intended to revitalize existing vacant lots; and
- 3) The proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments will promote public health, safety, and general welfare and serves the goals and purposes of the General Plan.

## ENVISION RIVERSIDE 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This proposed amendments contribute to **Strategic Priority 2 – Community Well-Being, Goal 2.1** – Facilitate the development of a quality and diverse housing supply that is available and affordable to a wide range of income levels and **Goal 2.3** – Strengthen neighborhood identities and improve community health and the physical environment through amenities and programs that foster an increased sense of community and enhanced feelings of pride and belonging citywide.

This Project aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. **Community Trust** – The proposed Zoning Code amendments are presented at an open public meeting and contains transparent information on City processes and regulations.

2. **Equity** – The proposed Zoning Code amendments promote equitable development regulations which encourage much needed housing development in the region.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The proposed amendments do not incur costs to the City.
4. **Innovation** – The proposed Zoning Code Amendments incorporate new development tools intended to streamline housing production for first time homeowners in the City.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The proposed Zoning Code amendments adopt development standards which are environmentally sensitive to surrounding neighborhoods and are consistent with the objectives of the General Plan.

## APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the City Planning Commission, including any environmental finding, may be appealed to the City Council within ten calendar days after the decision. Appeal filing and processing information may be obtained from the Planning Department Public Information Section, 3rd Floor, City Hall.

## EXHIBITS LIST

1. Housing and Homeless Committee Staff Reports
2. August 17, 2023, City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
3. May 23, 2024 Planning Commission Workshop Staff Report
4. Proposed Amendments
  - a. Chapter 19.100 – Residential Zones (RA-5, RC, RR, RE, R-1-½ ACRE, R-1-13000, R-1-10500, R-1-8500, R-1-7000, R-3-4000, R-3-3000, R-3-2500, R-3-2000, R-3-1500, R-4)
  - b. Chapter 19.150 – Base Zones Permitted Land Uses
  - c. Chapter 19.580 – Parking and Loading
  - d. Chapter 19.640 General Permit Provisions
  - e. Chapter 19.650 Approving and Appeal Authority
  - f. Chapter 19.670 Public Hearings and Notice Requirements
  - g. Chapter 19.690 Effective Dates, Time Limits, and Extensions
  - h. Chapter 19.780 – Planned Residential Development Permit

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