



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARDS: ALL
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: PLANNING CASE PR-2025-001821: CODE TEXTS AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 20
(CULTURAL RESOURCES) OF THE RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE TO
REMOVE THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND.

ISSUES:

Conduct a Public Hearing on Planning Case PR-2025-001821 (Title 20 Text Amendment) for proposed code text amendments to Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code, removing Section 20.30.030 (Historic Preservation Fund) in its entirety and other references to the Historic Preservation Fund, as needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Determine that Planning Case PR-2025-001821 is exempt from further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Sections 15308 (Actions to Protect Environment), 15060(c)(2) (No Physical Change), 15060(c)(3) (Not A Project), and 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), as the proposed amendment will cause no direct or indirect change to the environment, does not meet the definition of a Project under CEQA, and it can be seen with certainty that the proposed amendment will not have an effect on the environment;
2. Approve Planning Case PR-2025-001821 (Title 20 Text Amendment) as outlined in the staff report and summarized in the Findings Section of this report;
3. With at least five affirmative votes, authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record a supplemental appropriation in the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, Historical District Sign Program expenditure account, up to any remaining amount in the in Interest Bearing Special Deposits Fund, Historical Preservation Trust, offset by funds to be transferred from the Interest Bearing Special Deposits Fund, Historical Preservation Trust, for the purposes of the Historic District and Spanish Town Road sign programs, Landmark Plaques program, and to complete a historic district survey; and
4. Introduce, and subsequently adopt, an Ordinance amending Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code.

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

On July 16, 2025, the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) unanimously voted (6 ayes) to recommend that the City Council approve Planning Case PR-2025-001821 and amend Title 20, removing the Historic Preservation Fund.

BACKGROUND:

In April 2013, the City Council established the Historic Preservation Trust Fund Program (HPTF) and the Historic Preservation Fund Committee (HPFC) by amending Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code. The HPTF was initially funded with \$500,000 from the General Fund and later \$100,000 from the sale of the former Marcy Library property and \$70,000 from the sale of the Farm House Motel was added.

In total 45 projects have been approved in four bi-annual grant cycles. With limited funding remaining, discussions were held on how to handle the remaining balance of the HPTF. Cultural Heritage Board members, City Council members, and Staff considered potential uses for the funds, including funding a revised Historic District Sign program.

On May 6, 2025, City Council allocated the remaining approximately \$134,449.26 in the HPTF to projects including Historic District Signs, Landmark Plaques, and a Historic District Survey. As the HPTF was exhausted by the allocations, City Council directed staff to prepare an amendment to Title 20 and remove the Historic Preservation Fund Program.

DISCUSSION:

The Historic Preservation Fund Program is established by Section 20.30.030 (Historic Preservation Fund) of the Riverside Municipal Code with code text pertaining to the HPFC, grant administration, and eligible projects. Other references to the Historic Preservation Fund, related to notice and approval authority, are present in Chapter 20.15 (Approvals and Hearings).

The proposed amendment includes:

- Removal of Section 20.30.030 (Historic Preservation Fund) in its entirety.
- Modification of Table 20.15.010 (Approving and Appeal Authority) to remove the Historic Preservation Fund Committee and Historic Preservation Fund Grants
- Removal of Section 20.15.085 (Meeting and notice for Historic Preservation Committee)

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed amendments are exempt from additional California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Sections 15308 (Actions to Protect Environment), 15060(c)(2) (No Physical Change), 15060(c)(3) (Not A Project), and 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), as the proposed amendment will cause no direct or indirect change to the environment, does not meet the definition of a Project under CEQA, and it can be seen with certainty that the proposed amendment will not have an effect on the environment.

FINDINGS

Cultural Resources Code Amendment Findings pursuant to Chapter 20.45.020:

1. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the general plan; and
2. The proposed amendment complies with the purposes of this Title.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This total fiscal impact of this action is approximately \$1,421, which is the interest amount remaining in the Historic Preservation Trust Fund. Upon Council approval a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$1,421 will be recorded in the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, Historical District Sign Program, expenditure account number 9930200-440309, with funds from the Interest Bearing Special Deposits Fund, Historical Preservation Trust account number 0000721-225467.

Prepared by:	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer
Reviewed by:	Jennifer Lilley, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by:	Mike Futrell, City Manager
Approved as to form:	Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Title 20 Amendment Ordinance
2. Cultural Heritage Board Staff Report – July 16, 2025
3. Cultural Heritage Board Minutes – July 16, 2025
4. Presentation