



Community & Economic Development Department
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Planning Division

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: JULY 16, 2025
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

DISCUSSION ITEM

Case Numbers	PR-2025-001821 (AMD)
Request	To amend Title 20 of the Riverside Municipal Code, removing Section 20.30.030 (Historic Preservation Fund) in its entirety and other reference to the Historic Preservation Fund, as needed.
Project Location	Citywide
Ward	All
Staff Planner	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer 951-826-5507 swatson@riversideca.gov

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cultural Heritage Board recommend that 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; and
3. Introduce, and subsequently adopt, an Ordinance amending Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code.

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 were 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.

At the May 6, 2025, City Council considered funding allocations for the remaining approximately \$134,449.26 in the HPTF. Council approved the funding allocations as follows:

Project	Project Activities	Estimated Cost
Historic District & Spanish Town Road Signs	Installation of new historic district signs in all thirteen districts Installation of commemorative signs along North Orange Street Funds for future maintenance and contingencies for Historic District and Spanish Town Road Signs	\$75,000
Landmark Plaques	Purchase and issuance of 18 pending plaques for Historic Landmarks and funding for 10 years (2 plaques/year)	\$35,000
Historic District Survey	Funding for the completion of a historic district designation survey.	Remaining Balance ~\$24,449
Total available HPTF for allocation		\$134,449

Sign Programs: At the request of Council Member Falcone, the Planning Division and Public Works departments worked to update the Historic District Sign Program. The proposed plan will place historic district signs atop existing street intersection signs within each district rather than just at the boundary; thereby improving identification and properties within the district. As part of this update, existing historic district signs will be removed. Some street name signs may need replacement to accommodate the new signs, and certain poles may require relocation to meet current standards. The updated signage program will enhance the identification of historic districts, allowing residents and visitors to easily recognize historically designated areas. Additionally, the new signage aims to foster neighborhood pride within the City's historic districts.

Since the approval, staff has worked to simplify and revise the Historic District Sign design. The Heritage Square Historic District will be the first district to receive signs and production of the signs is anticipated to begin in the coming weeks and installation is anticipated to be completed over the next few months.

In addition to installing historic district signs, the HPTF will cover the cost of commemorative signs along North Orange Street between Columbia Avenue and Center Street, recognizing its ceremonial designation as Spanish Town Road, approved by City Council on July 20, 2021.

Landmark Plaques: Until 2018, the City provided two landmark plaques a year, on average, to newly landmarked properties. Through previous budget cuts the City was no longer able to provide plaques to property owners, and some owners have opted to purchase the plaques directly at a cost of \$875. Currently, eighteen properties have not received a plaque. City Council approved reinstating the program with the eighteen plaques that have yet to be purchased and funding an additional 20 plaques over the next 10 years, at two per year.

Historic District Survey: In recent years there has been interest in designating a Mid-Century era historic district. As part of the designation process a historic context statement and survey would need to be completed. There are approximately nine potential historic districts were identified by the Modernism Historic Context and Survey. Additionally, a historic context statement was previous completed for the Grand Avenue Bluff (Cliffside Drive to Bandini at Tower Road). In total, approximately ten Mid-century era potential districts already having a historic context statement but still needing a survey. The cost of a historic district survey is estimated at approximately \$25,000 - 30,000. The City Council allocated the remaining balance the HPTF, approximately \$24,449, to be used for a historic district survey for the next historic district designation nomination requiring a historic district survey. Additional funding may be needed depending on the size of the district and staff will seek additional funding including grants, as needed.

PROPOSAL

As the funding allocations exhausted the fund, City Council provided direction for staff to prepare an amendment to Title 20, removing the Historic Preservation Fund.

The proposed amendment includes:

- Removal of Section 20.30.030 (Historic Preservation Fund) in its entirety.
- Modification of Table 20.15.010 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)

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMENT

A Public Hearing notice was published in the Press Enterprise at least ten days prior to the meeting. As of the writing of this report, no responses have been received by Staff regarding this proposal.

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(D):

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.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This item contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Priority 2 – Community Well Being (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 item aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. Community Trust: The Title 20 amendment aligns with the Community Trust Cross-Cutting Thread as the amendment is reviewed at a public meeting, allowing for public comment.
2. Equity: The Title 20 amendment aligns with the Equity Cross-Cutting Thread as it applies to all historic properties throughout the City.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: The Title 20 amendment aligns with Fiscal Responsibility as no General Funds, outside of staff time, are being used for the update.
4. Innovation: The Title 20 amendment aligns with the Innovation Cross-Cutting Thread as meets the changing needs of the community.
5. Sustainability and Resiliency: The Title 20 amendment aligns with the Sustainability & Resiliency Cross-Cutting Thread as is adaptive to community goals and priorities.

APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the Cultural Heritage Board, 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. Title 20 – Chapter 20.30 Redlines

Prepared by:	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer
Approved by:	Maribeth Tinio, City Planner