



Community & Economic Development Department

Planning Division

3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522 | Phone: (951) 826-5371 | RiversideCA.gov

**PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING DATE: MAY 11, 2023
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 7**

PROPOSED PROJECT

Case Number	PR-2023-001510 (General Plan Consistency)	
Request	A request by the Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) for a Planning Commission determination of General Plan Consistency and Site Acquisition Findings to acquire twenty-three (23) parcels for a proposed elementary school to support students in grades TK through 6.	
Applicant	Riverside Unified School District	
Project Location	<p>Generally, bound by 13th Street to the north, 14th Street to the south, Victoria Avenue to the east, and Howard Avenue to the west (includes Lincoln High School at 4341 Victoria Avenue, a portion of Lincoln Park at 4261 Park Avenue, and the twenty-three (23) parcels to be acquired as Blocks B and C.</p> <p>Block B: Located on the east side of Park Avenue between 13th Street and 14th Street, west of Lincoln High School and Lincoln Continuation School.</p> <p>Block C: Bounded by 13th Street to the north, 14th Street to the south, Howard Avenue to the west, and Park Avenue to the east.</p>	
APNs	<p>211-251-001 & 211-231-001</p> <p>Block B: 211-234-001, 211-234-002, 211-234-003, 211-234-004, 211-234-005, 211-234-006, 211-234-007, 211-234-009</p> <p>Block C: 211-233-002, 211-233-003, 211-233-004, 211-233-005, 211-233-006, 211-233-007, 211-233-008, 211-233-009, 211-233-011, 211-233-013, 211-233-017, 211-233-018, 211-233-021, 211-233-022, 211-233-023</p>	
Project area	4.2 acres (Blocks B & C)	

Ward	2	
Neighborhood	Eastside	
Specific Plan	Marketplace Specific Plan	
General Plan Designation	MDR - Medium Density Residential, B/OP-Business/Office Park and C - Commercial	
Zoning Designation	CR-SP - Commercial Retail and Specific Plan (Marketplace); R-1-7000 - Single-Family Residential; CG-SP - Commercial General and Specific Plan (Marketplace); CG-X-10-SP-Commercial General, Building Setback (10 Feet) and Specific Plan (Marketplace); and R-3-1500-SP - Multi-Family Residential and Specific Plan (Marketplace)	
Staff Planner	Daniel Palafox, Assistant Planner 951-826-5985 dpalafox@riversideca.gov	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the City Planning Commission:

1. **DETERMINE** that the proposed property acquisition for a proposed future elementary school is consistent with General Plan 2025, based on the analysis in the staff report.

BACKGROUND / PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21151.2 and Government Code Section 65402, on April 10, 2023, the Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) notified the City of its intent to acquire twenty-three (23) parcels for a future Eastside elementary school supporting students in grades TK through 6.

Currently, most Eastside residents are bused to schools outside the neighborhood; this school would provide a more local option. RUSD has identified three potential configurations for site development which involve acquisition of Blocks B and C and demolition of existing uses along with the vacation of a 0.45-acre segment of Park Avenue from 13th to 14th Streets. RUSD is evaluating three potential design options for the future school facility, including:

- Option 1: Fully demolish Lincoln High School; construct elementary school.
- Option 2: Keep Lincoln High School; vacate 0.52 acres of 13th Street between Howard Avenue and Park Avenue; construct elementary school with joint use of Lincoln Park.
- Option 3: Fully demolish Lincoln High School; construct new high school on north end of the existing school; construct elementary school.

Any demolition of Lincoln High School would exclude the multipurpose room and bungalow, as these buildings have historic designations.

The area under consideration for the proposed elementary school includes existing Lincoln High School and Lincoln Park, along with the twenty-three (23) parcels to be acquired. The parcels are divided into two development blocks:

- **Block B** is comprised of eight (8) parcels and is 1.17 acres. The parcels facing 13th Street and 14th Street are vacant, while the parcels facing Park Avenue contain single-family residences and a church. The parcel at the southeast corner of Park Avenue and 13th Street is vacant. An unimproved alleyway bisects this block east to west and continues into Block C. Surrounding land uses include single-family residences to the north, a strip mall with personal services and a vehicle repair facility to the south, Lincoln Continuation School to the east, and Block C to the west.
- **Block C** is comprised of fifteen (15) parcels and is 3.03 acres. The parcels facing 13th Street exhibit a "checkerboard" pattern of vacant land and single-family residences; the parcels facing 14th Street contain vehicle repair facilities (western end) and vacant land (eastern end); the parcels facing Park Avenue contain single-family residences; and the parcels facing Howard Avenue contain a single-family residence and a wireless telecommunications facility. The parcel at the northwest corner of Park Avenue and 14th Street is vacant. A partially improved alleyway bisects this block east to west and continues into Block B. Surrounding land uses include Lincoln Park to the north, a business/office park and thrift store to the west, vacant land, a convenience store, and a vehicle repair facility to the south, and Block B to the east.

RUSD has requested that the Planning Commission investigate and make findings as to whether the property acquisitions conform with the City's General Plan (Exhibit 1). Specifically, State Law requires that the Planning Commission:

- 1) investigate and determine whether the location, purpose and extent of the development conforms to the City's General Plan; and
- 2) submit a written report of its investigation and recommendations concerning the proposed site development.

The Commission must investigate and report its findings within 30 days and determine consistency within 40 days of receipt of the request. The Commission's determination of General Plan consistency does not indicate that the Commission is approving or endorsing the project. RUSD, as lead agency, ultimately has final discretion in approving the project and is responsible for environmental review.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Staff has evaluated the proposal's consistency with the General Plan 2025 (GP 2025), as summarized below.

General Plan 2025

The General Plan land use designations applied to the site include B/OP - Business/Office Park, C - Commercial, and MDR - Medium Density Residential (Exhibit 3).

- The B/OP-Business/Office Park land use designation provides for single or mixed light industrial uses such as corporate and general business offices, supportive retail and commercial uses and light manufacturing.
- The C - Commercial land use designation provides for retail, sales, service and office uses that serve multiple neighborhoods within the City.
- The MDR - Medium Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of single-family homes, town houses and row houses.

The proposed project meets the following goals and objectives of the Education Element of the GP 2025:

- Objective ED-1: Accommodate the growth of all educational facilities.
 - Policy ED-1.1: Provide an adequate level of infrastructure and services to accommodate campus growth at all educational levels.
- Objective ED-2: Capitalize upon the opportunities offered by the educational community.
 - Policy ED-2.4: Mobilize municipal resources to promote education, cultural and employment opportunities
- Objective ED-3: Plan proactively for all education needs.
 - Policy ED-3.1: Partner with local schools, colleges, early childhood education programs and other educational institutions to accommodate the educational needs of residents.

The Education and Land Use and Urban Design Elements of the GP 2025 promote joint use of schools and community facilities to provide a higher quality of life to Riverside residents. RUSD sites play an important role as they are often joint-use facilities, providing both education, community meeting space and recreational facilities near the residential populations they serve.

Title 19 (Zoning)

The Zoning designations applied to the site are CG-SP - Commercial General and Specific Plan (Marketplace) Overlay Zones; CG-X-10-SP-Commercial General, Building Setback (10 Feet) and Specific Plan (Marketplace) Overlay Zones; CR-SP - Commercial Retail and Specific Plan (Marketplace) Overlay Zones; R-3-1500-SP - Multi-Family Residential and Specific Plan (Marketplace) Overlay Zones; and R-1-7000 - Single-Family Residential Zone (Exhibit 4).

- The CG - Commercial General Zone provides for intensive commercial; retail, office, and repair uses.
 - The X-10 Building Setback Overlay calls for a setback of 10 feet from 14th Street.
- The CR – Commercial Retail Zone provides for a broad range of indoor oriented retail sales and services, and office uses as either stand-alone businesses or as part of commercial centers or office developments.
- The R-3-1500 Multiple Family Residential Zone provides for multiple family residences, including apartments, town homes and condominiums.
- The R-1-7000 Single Family Residential Zone provides for single-family residences.

Marketplace Specific Plan

The Riverside Marketplace Specific Plan (adopted 1991) applies to all of Block B and portions of Block C and locates both within the South Neighborhood Sub-area (Exhibit 5). The Neighborhood South Sub-area is intended for development of a primarily single-family residential character consistent with the immediate surroundings in the Eastside Neighborhood. Specific Plan Objective 2.4.2, Land Use, includes the following policy:

- Stabilize and enhance the residential areas by permitting compatible adjacent land uses as well as guiding improvements throughout the Specific Plan Area.

Consistency Findings

The table below illustrates GP 2025 consistency findings for the parcels through two metrics. The first metric (“General Plan/School Use Consistency?”) identifies the parcels’ compatibility between their General Plan land use and whether or not K-12 schools are consistent with any of the Zoning designations within the General Plan land use according to Table LU-5 of the Land Use and Urban Design Element. The second metric (“Zoning/School Use Consistency?”) identifies whether K-12 schools are permitted in the parcels’ underlying base zones according to Table 19.150.020.A in the Municipal Code. As RUSD, like all public school districts in California, is exempt from the City’s

zoning requirements pursuant to State law, this determination was made using the table's "Schools: Private (Grades K-12)" land use category as a proxy.

Site ID	Address	APN	General Plan Designation	Zoning Code Designation	General Plan/School Use Consistency?	Zoning/School Use Consistency?
C1	4307 Park Avenue	211-233-023	C	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C2	2928 13th Street	211-233-003	C	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C3	2932 13th Street	211-233-004	C	R-3-1500-SP	Yes	No
C4	2944 13th Street	211-233-005	C	R-3-1500-SP	Yes	No
C5	2956 13th Street	211-233-006	C	R-3-1500-SP	Yes	No
C6	2968 13th Street	211-233-007	B/OP	R-3-1500-SP	Yes	No
C7	2980 13th Street	211-233-008	B/OP	R-3-1500-SP	Yes	No
C8	4342 Howard Avenue	211-233-009	B/OP	R-3-1500-SP	Yes	No
C9	4356 Howard Avenue	211-233-022	B/OP	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C10	4370 Howard Avenue	211-233-011	B/OP	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C11	2993 14th Street	211-233-021	B/OP	CG-SP; CG-X-10-SP; CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C12	2945 14th Street	211-233-018	C	CG-SP	Yes	Yes
C13	4343 Park Avenue	211-233-002	C	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C14	2933 14th Street	211-233-017	C	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
C15	2923-4397 14th Street	211-233-013	C	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B1	2858 13th Street	211-234-001	MDR	R-1-7000	Yes	Yes
B2	4302 Park Avenue	211-234-002	MDR	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B3	4322 Park Avenue	211-234-003	MDR	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B4	4342 Park Avenue	211-234-004	MDR	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B5	4376 Park Avenue	211-234-005	MDR	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B6	4398 Park Avenue	211-234-006	MDR	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B7	2875 14th Street	211-234-007	MDR	CR-SP	Yes	Yes
B8	2859 14th Street	211-234-009	MDR	R-1-7000	Yes	Yes

All parcels are consistent with GP 2025 when evaluating if a K-12 use is consistent with the parcels' respective General Plan land use designation. Although 6 parcels are inconsistent based on the underlying Zoning designation, the project maintains overall consistency with GP 2025 per the General Plan Consistency Criteria (Table LU-7, Land Use and Urban Design Element).

Based on the preceding analysis, the proposed property acquisition for a future elementary school is consistent with GP 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This project contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Priority 6 – Infrastructure, Mobility & Connectivity (Goal 6.2 – Maintain, protect, and improve assets and infrastructure within the City's built environment to ensure and enhance reliability, resiliency, sustainability, and facilitate connectivity.) and (Goal 6.4 – Incorporate Smart City strategies into the planning and development of local infrastructure projects.)

This item aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. Community Trust: The request for General Plan Consistency will be reviewed at a public meeting held by the City Planning Commission and the public may provide comments.
2. Equity: The proposed project will provide educational infrastructure needed by residents in the Eastside neighborhood.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: All project costs are borne by the applicant.
4. Innovation: The proposed project will bring state of the art technology and labs to facilitate student learning.
5. Sustainability and Resiliency: All new construction will be required to meet the current Building Code.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

This item does not require a public hearing because the Planning Commission's action is limited to providing comment, making findings of consistency with City's General Plan, and reporting its findings to the School District. The School District has sole authority to act on the proposed acquisition.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

RUSD is the "Lead Agency" pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the agency having "approval authority" for development of the subject property; therefore, compliance with CEQA is the responsibility of the School District.

As a matter of information, a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared by RUSD and is currently available for public review and comment until May 29, 2023. The Draft EIR can be accessed at https://bit.ly/Eastside_EIR.

APPEAL INFORMATION

The evaluation and determination of consistency by the City Planning Commission is required pursuant to the California Public Resources Code and California Government Code. The determination of consistency is the sole discretion of the Planning Commission and is not an appealable action to the City Council.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. Riverside Unified School District Letter - April 10, 2023
2. Aerial Photo/Location
3. General Plan Map
4. Zoning Map
5. Specific Plan Overlay Map
6. Presentation

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