



STAFF REPORT
9/25/2024

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Adopt Ordinance No. 1213 (Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 22-09) 1st Reading to amend Coachella Municipal Code Title 17 regarding zoning district permitted uses and development standards for the R-E, Residential Estate District, Chapter 17.12 of the Coachella Municipal Code. City-Initiated.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council introduce Ordinance No. 1213 for first reading, by title only, to adopt Ordinance No. 1213 to amend Coachella Municipal Code (C.M.C.) Chapter 17.12 to modify zoning district permitted uses and development standards for the Residential Estate District.

BACKGROUND:

On December 14, 2022 Planning Division staff identified to the Coachella City Council a work program to update the Coachella Municipal Code Title 17, Zoning, to streamline the development review process, create more flexibility in development standards, and modify Zoning Ordinance to address new changes required by State Law. Staff has identified Code Amendments as follows:

- Sidewalk Vending: Adopt amendments to address SB 946 allowing cities, by ordinance or resolution, to adopt requirements for the public safety regulating any type of vending and the time, place, and manner of vending from a vehicle upon a street if requirements are directly related to objective health, safety, or welfare concern.
- Housing Law Updates: Revise residential zoning standards to address new State housing law related to flexibility for construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and SB 9 (Atkins) that requires cities to apply a ministerial review process for eligible development of up to two principal dwelling units on a parcel in a single-family residential zone.
- Residential Front Yard Structures: Revise requirements for residential front yards that would permit certain structures to encroach into the front yard setback such as covered vehicle canopies over residential driveways.
- Parking Standards: Revise commercial parking requirement to be commensurate with parking standards in surrounding Coachella Valley cities and allow for applicant initiated parking studies as a method to identify projected parking demand for proposed uses and reduce parking below minimum parking requirements if warranted. Staff will further

evaluate the merits of eliminating minimum parking requirements.

- Sign Ordinance: Revise sign ordinance to only permit freestanding signs in association with multi-tenant commercial centers. The existing sign ordinance permits a 25-foot high freestanding sign for any business.
- Special Events: Establish a new permitting mechanism for a range of allowable special events in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Residential Block Walls: Revise residential development standards to allow for front yard obscuring block walls in the front yard that would accommodate courtyards and front yard pools subject to aesthetic performance standards.
- Commercial Landscape Maintenance: Revise requirements for commercial landscape maintenance responsibilities to ensure landscape areas subject to approved landscape plans are maintained in a first class condition.
- Architectural Review Permit Findings: Currently no findings are identified in the Zoning Ordinance for the approval of Architectural Review permits.
- Minor Variances: Modify minor variance provisions that allow for administrative variances to allow for more flexibility from a numeric development standard by as much as 20% without strict variance findings.
- ADU Ordinance: Relocate ADU regulations as its own separate chapter in the municipal code and update the ordinance to comply with State ADU requirements. Revise ADU regulations to clarify approval, parking, and architectural requirements.

Staff proposed amendments to Coachella Municipal Code chapters 17.11, 17.12, 17.13, 17.14, 17.15, 17.16, 17.24, 17.26, 17.28, 17.30, 17.38, 17.60, 17.70, 17.72, 17.76 and Adding Chapter 17.21 to modernize the Coachella Municipal Code, allow greater flexibility in development standards, improve aesthetics of residential neighborhoods and commercial centers, streamline the development review process, and establish performance standards for energy efficiency and heat island reduction. The Planning Commission recommended approval to the City Council of amendments to Chapter 17.12 only as Ordinance No. 1213 and requested that the amendments to the other Chapters be studied further in a Planning Commission study session.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Planning staff prepared the following code amendments to the Coachella Municipal Code Chapter 17.12 to update the Residential Estate District to ensure agricultural uses are not considered a nonconforming use and allow for lodging uses that are consistent with the agricultural character of many properties that would be zoned Residential Estate. Lodging uses would require that agricultural production is maintained on-site consistent with the standards of the new Riverside County Rancho Ordinance including the preservation of date palms that are iconic representations of the City of Coachella and celebrate the City's unique agricultural heritage. The modifications to the R-E zone are outlined below.

R-E Residential Estate Chapter 17.12

- Agricultural Uses. Add existing commercial agricultural activity as a permitted use.
- Lodging. Permit bed and breakfast, hotel and resort in an agricultural setting subject to a CUP

approval where forty percent (40%) of the property utilized for agricultural crops with twenty percent (20%) planted with date palms. Associated tourist-related uses such as conference facilities, gift shops, wellness spas, and recreational facilities may be approved with the CUP. (R-E zone only)

- Perimeter Landscape Setback. Established a 10-foot minimum perimeter landscape setback for residential developments and an average 20-foot perimeter landscape setback. This is a common setback for Coachella Valley cities. A shade standard of 30 percent of landscape area is required. (R-R Chapter 17.11, R-E Chapter 17.12, S-N, G-N zones only)

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) Introduce Ordinance No. 1213 for first reading, by title only, to amend Coachella Municipal Code chapter 17.12 to amend zoning district permitted uses and development standards.
- 2) Introduce Ordinance No. 1213 for first reading, by title only, to amend Coachella Municipal Code chapter 17.12 to amend zoning district permitted uses and development standards with amendments.
- 3) Deny the ordinance.
- 4) Continue this item and provide staff with direction.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Staff recommends Alternative #1.

Attachments:

1. Ordinance No. 1213 ZOA No. 22-09 Phase 1 Streamline Code Amendments
Exhibit A – Amendments to Code Chapter 17.12