



**STAFF REPORT**  
**12/14/2022**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Modifications to Title 17 Zoning Ordinance - Streamline Code Amendments related to development standards and permitted uses. City-Initiated.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council provide direction with respect to Title 17 Zoning Ordinance amendments proposed to the Coachella Municipal Code by Staff in 2023.

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

Planning Division staff has identified 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.

The proposed amendments would modernize the Coachella Municipal Code, allow greater flexibility in development standards, improve aesthetics of commercial centers, streamline the development review process and reduce development costs. Staff will pursue draft Code revisions to address the aforementioned updates and return to the Planning Commission and City Council for Zoning Text Amendments within six to eight months. Staff seeks input from the City Council on the code amendments that Planning Division staff will pursue in calendar year 2023.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

- 1) That the City Council provide direction with respect to Title 17 Zoning Ordinance amendments proposed by Staff to the Coachella Municipal Code in 2023.
- 2) That the City Council recommend Staff pursue no Zoning Ordinance amendments.

**RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):**

Staff recommends Alternative #1.