



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **Proposal for Community Facilities District in Arroyo Park Moved to June 16**

*Hearing that had been scheduled for June 9 delayed a week to receive input from state agency*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside has delayed to June 16 a public hearing on whether to create a community facilities district for the proposed Arroyo Park development near Jurupa Avenue and Van Buren Boulevard.

The community facilities district would allow the developer of the Arroyo Park property to finance various public improvements like streets, roads and sewers through the sale of tax-exempt bonds that would be paid back as homes are sold in the development.

The Arroyo Park property, often described by surrounding residents as the “Ag Park,” due to the agricultural uses that have occurred there in past years, has been the topic of debate in Riverside for several months. Residents blame the property for a variety of physical ailments they say have been caused by contaminated soil there, although a state agency has cleared the property for development.

The City of Riverside will not conduct a public hearing on the proposed community facilities district until state officials decide whether that existing environmental clearance of the property remains valid, City Manager John Russo said. The hearing had been set for the next regularly-scheduled City Council meeting on Tuesday, June 9, but has been delayed.

“It does not make sense for the City of Riverside to proceed with a public hearing on this property until the City achieves some clarity on that very basic issue,” Russo said. “The state has indicated it will let us know how it plans to proceed on or about June 10. Prudence demands we hold off on the public hearing until the following council meeting on June 16.”

The state Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) oversaw clean-up of an incident in 2003 in which sludge from a broken sewage digester was released onto the property. That material was later found to contain hazardous materials, but DTSC has since cleared the property for development following an extensive clean-up effort.

The City of Riverside has tried for several months to bring DTSC officials to Riverside for a public meeting to explain the clean-up effort and the resulting environmental clearance to concerned residents who have raised concerns about the property since last year.

The agency has not committed to attending, but has committed to informing the City whether the agency stands by its original environmental clearance or plans to do additional testing.