

**PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RICHMOND CITY HALL**

Council Chambers
440 Civic Center Plaza
Richmond, CA 94804
January 15, 2026
6:30 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS

Bruce Brubaker
Rachel Lockett
Jonathan Harrison, Chair
Alexander Golovets
Gay Timmons

The regular meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Harrison at 6:31 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jonathan Harrison, Vice Chair Bruce Brubaker, and Secretary Gay Timmons

Absent: Commissioners Alexander Golovets and Rachel Lockett

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Planning Staff: Planning Manager Avery Stark; Senior Planner Michele Morris; Assistant Planner Pete Srivarom; and Eldren "Nino" Prieto, Planning Technician I

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August 21, 2025

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Brubaker/Timmons) to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2025 meeting, as submitted, which carried by the following vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Brubaker, Timmons, Harrison; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Golovets, Lockett).

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

There was no Consent Calendar.

PUBLIC FORUM

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

HOLD OVER ITEM

- 1. PLN25-087: Chevron Food Mart Beer and Wine Sales**

PUBLIC HEARING to consider a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow beer and wine retail sales at a Chevron gas station food mart at 2900 Hilltop Mall Road (APN 405-302-010).

CM-5, Commercial Mixed Use, Activity Center District.

Jaswinder Singh, owner; Ron Cole, applicant

Planner: Pete Srivarom

Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

Pete Srivarom presented the staff report dated January 15, 2026, and noted the project had previously been presented to the Planning Commission in August 2025. He described the 1.5-acre site and the surrounding uses including a gas station with a convenience market, residences, a church, other small-scale retail and a fire station. The proposal was to add a Type 20 alcohol license to the convenience market at the gas station for beer and wine sales only, with no on-site consumption, from 10:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M., seven days a week. The refrigerator space to be converted to display alcohol would make up less than 5 percent of the floor area as required by the City's code. The only exterior improvement proposed was to add two bicycle parking stalls and staff recommended that omega-shaped bicycle racks be utilized.

Mr. Srivarom reported the operational logistics for alcohol sales would include lead training provided by California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). There would be electronic identification verification at the register with every alcohol sale, signage explaining the permitted hours for alcohol sales, and interior and exterior security cameras with a two-week retrieval function. The Richmond Municipal Code (RMC) required a distance requirement of at least 600 feet from other liquor stores and convenience markets and there were none nearby, and at least 600 feet away from schools, recreational centers and public parks. There were two schools 900 feet away but none within the 600-foot limitation and the site met the distance requirement. The existing hours of store operation were from 5:00 A.M. to midnight, although with the proposed hours of alcohol sales from 10:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M., to better align with those hours the store would close at 10:00 P.M. instead of at midnight.

Mr. Srivarom reported that prior to the August 2025 meeting, one comment letter from the Hilltop Neighborhood Council had been received raising concerns with the project, and the meeting in August had heard other concerns during that public hearing. As a result, the Planning Commission had deferred the item and directed the applicant to conduct additional community outreach. A community meeting had been hosted by the applicant on September 10, 2025, attended by the applicant, the owner and a representative from the Hilltop Village Homeowner's Association (HOA) when primary concerns of potential loitering and clarification of the hours of operation had been expressed. The applicant was directed to submit a security and operations plan, which had been included in the Commission packet.

The proposed security plan would include maintaining an employee outside the store to monitor loitering and the parking lot during nighttime. To prevent the sale of alcohol outside of the proposed hours, the applicant proposed to place movable plastic barriers in front of the alcohol display so that alcohol could not be accessed outside of the allowed hours. In addition, a backpack program had been proposed where students would be instructed to place backpacks in a designated area while inside the store.

Mr. Srivarom explained that after the applicant's hosted meeting, staff had requested interested parties provide comments by September 26, 2025, and none had been received. Staff received three comments in October 2025, all three in opposition to the project. The Richmond Police Department (RPD) had also been contacted regarding the application and had advised that the site was not associated with any significant calls for service or significant public safety concerns, was not a high crime area, and the RPD supported the proposed hours of alcohol sales.

Mr. Srivarom reported that the project was consistent with the land use classification under the General Plan, would reduce long-distance trips, and there would be no on-site consumption of alcohol which reduced community impacts associated with late night alcohol sales by ending alcohol sales by 10:00 P.M. There were no concerns in the neighborhood created by the approval of the CUP, the census tract was not overly concentrated with alcohol licenses, it was not a high crime district, the site met the current parking requirements and two bicycle parking spaces would be consistent with the General Plan policy encouraging a variety of travel modes. There were no existing problems in the neighborhood that would be exacerbated by the sale of alcoholic beverages, the site met the distance requirements in the RMC, and to minimize community impacts the conditional approval also prohibited the sale of small-scale products that were associated with on-site consumption. There were no improvements that would interfere with any vehicular, pedestrian circulation or public right of way, the proposal would not affect the visual quality of the surrounding area and conditions of approval would prohibit visible advertisements of alcoholic beverages. The census tract did not have an over concentration of alcoholic licenses and was not a high crime district.

Mr. Srivarom recommended that the project be approved. The action was subject to appeal to the City Council.

Chair Harrison OPENED the public hearing.

Jaswinder Singh, the property owner, explained why the sale of beer and wine was so important to be able to remain in business since he was losing customers because they could not secure those items at his establishment. He clarified there was not a problem with loitering or with homeless outside of the business.

There was no one speaking in opposition to the project.

Chair Harrison CLOSED the public hearing.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Brubaker/Timmons) to adopt Resolution 25-03 in Exhibit A to the staff report dated October 16, 2025 approving a Conditional Use Permit (PLN25-087) for a Type-20 ABC Off-Sale Beer and Wine license for the Chevron Mart, subject to conditions, carried by the following Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Brubaker, Timmons, Harrison; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Golovets, Lockett).

Chair Harrison advised that the appeal period would be ten days from this date to the City Council.

NEW ITEMS

2. PLN24-358: Proposed Rezoning to add -L, Landmark Overlay District to the John Haley Studio/House

PUBLIC HEARING to consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding a proposed rezoning to add a -L, Landmark Overlay District to the John Haley studio/house located at 771 Ocean Avenue (APN 558-223-012) for the purpose of listing on the Richmond Historic Register. RL1, Single Family Very Low-Density Residential District.

David K. Ruddell and Joy A. Tahan, owners, Joy A. Tahan, applicant
Planner: Michele Morris

Tentative Recommendation: Recommend Approval to City Council

Senior Planner Michele Morris presented the staff report dated January 15, 2026, and explained she was the staff liaison to the City's Historic Preservation Commission. She provided an overview of the proposed rezoning to add -L, Landmark Overlay District to the John Haley studio/house at 771 Ocean Avenue in the Point Richmond Historic District. She recommended the Planning Commission adopt a resolution and make recommendation to the City Council for the proposed rezoning to add the -L, Landmark Overlay District for the purpose of listing the property on the Richmond Historic Register.

Ms. Morris explained that John Haley was a significant and influential figure in Richmond, the Bay Area and the California art world, and he and his wife were the original owners of the house built in 1932, in a typical form and design of a Second Bay Tradition style of architecture. An addition to the home had been built in 1949 by Roger Lee. Mr. Haley lived in the home until 1991.

Ms. Morris stated the City's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) had recommended the Landmark designation and nomination for the studio/house's architectural merit and association with Mr. Haley, who taught at UC Berkeley and who utilized the studio for his art practice. She added that Mr. Haley's art and teaching while at UC Berkeley, along with his peers and colleagues at the Art Department, generated a style that became known as the Berkeley School characterized by a unique treatment of space and use of colors. The HPC recommended on August 4, 2025 that the Planning Commission and City Council approve the proposed rezoning and designate the property as a Landmark Overlay District to be able to place it on the Richmond Historic Register.

Ms. Morris stated the California Department of Parks and Recreation primary record form and project statement detailed how the Haley studio/house met five of the six findings for a landmark designation. She identified those five findings and explained how the site met each criterion, with the exception of Criteria 3. She clarified that the site needed to meet only one of the criteria to qualify for the designation.

Ms. Morris recommended that the Planning Commission adopt the resolution to recommend to the City Council the approval of the proposed rezoning to add a Landmark Overlay District to the RL1 base zoning district to the John Haley studio/house for the purpose of listing the property on the Richmond Historic Register.

CAITLIN HIBMA, Cultural Historic Resources Consultant, and the current Vice Chair of the City's Historic Preservation Commission, serving as the applicant's representative, noted that she had recused herself from the item since she had prepared the documentation. She stated the property owners were present to respond to questions. The intent of nominating the house to the Richmond Register was to honor the history of the site and the legacy of John Haley, and to ensure some protections under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The HPC had seen the item in August 2025 and had recommended approval of the request.

Ms. Hibma explained that the house was the epicenter for Haley's work and that of his colleagues. There were actually two houses that sat side by side; the other house was owned by Worth Ryder who was another professor at UC Berkeley. The two invited all their colleagues, including Ansel Adams and Chiura Obata, and made Point Richmond an epicenter for a very Bohemian, intellectual, artistic community. Since the houses were built in 1932, they were some of the earliest modernist houses on the Bay side of the hill in Point Richmond and started the little enclave of modernist architecture and an artistic community. She presented photographs of the studio/house inside and out from the Bay side of the property.

Ms. Hibma noted that John Haley's wife, Monica, was an Arts Administrator in the Richmond Unified School District, significant in her own right, and collected children's art during WWII, much of which now housed in the Richmond Museum. It was her understanding that the Haley studio/house had been built and designed by the Haleys on their own based on their experience with studio spaces in Europe.

In response to Commissioner Brubaker, Ms. Hibma clarified that the current property owners had purchased the home aware of some of its history and had a feeling of responsibility to preserve it, and were also aware that the proposed designation of their home would require abiding by the CEQA regulations and the stricter environmental review that would follow. As to why both homes had not been included in the designation, she explained that the property owner of the other home had no desire to pursue the historic designation.

Ms. Morris added that the Landmark designation was allowed on single properties.

Planning Manager Avery Stark also clarified that the City had historical districts and within them historical landmarks, and there could also be contributing structures. The Point Richmond Historical District had a number of contributing structures, which for the purposes of the zoning code served as landmark designations for the preservation of each unit, and moving further through recognition by the state and federal governments it changed somewhat in terms of those protections. Generally speaking, there were a number of districts throughout the City, although that did not mean all contributing structures or places were in the exact geographical boundary. He used the Rosie the Riveter Museum and its relationship to the Kaiser Shipyard Hospital as an example of part of the same national monument but in separate locations. He added that through the HPC, a new fully updated GIS map of all historical sites and landmarks in Richmond, as part of an item brought forward by Councilmembers Robinson and Bana, would be prepared and brought forth to the HPC next month, and engage with the public to continue the storytelling of Richmond's history. While the item would not come to the Planning Commission, he could make the final product available to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Brubaker expressed his support for the time when there would be a historic designation on much of the property on the ocean side of the ridge, to be considered as its own historic district separate and distinct from the historic district on the village side.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Harrison CLOSED the public hearing.

Chair Harrison also supported the designation and the ability to move Richmond and its history forward.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Harrison/Brubaker) to adopt Resolution 25-03 recommending that the City Council approve the proposed rezoning to add a -L, Landmark Overlay District to the RL1 base zoning district to the John Haley Studio/House located at 771 Ocean Avenue, Richmond, 94801 for the purpose of listing the property on the Richmond Historic Register, carried by the following Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Brubaker, Timmons, Harrison; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Golovets, Lockett).

3. PLN25-0329: Chevron Modernization Project Annual Compliance Report

PRESENTATION on the Chevron Refinery Modernization Project Annual Compliance Report pursuant to Condition of Approval H5 of Conditional Use Permit PLN11-089 at 841 Chevron Way/100 Chevron Way (APNs 561-030-001; 561-030-002; 561-030-003;

561-030-005; 561-040-013; 561-040-014; 561-040-015; 561-040-016; 561-040-017; 561-080-001; 561-080-002; 561-080-003; 561-080-005; 561-080-006; 561-090-07; 561-090-003; 561-090-004; 561-100-003; 561-100-009; 561-100-010; 561-100-017; 561-100-020; 561-100-025; 561-100-037; 561-100-038; 561-100-042; 561-100-043; 561-100-044; 561-100-047; 561-100-048; 561-100-049; 561-110-022; 561-110-029; 561-110-034; 561-110-035; 561-110-036; 561-110-041; 561-110-044; 561-390-001; 561-390-003; 561-390-004; 561-390-016; 561-400-008; 561-410-002; and 561-410-003). IG, Industrial General District.

Chevron USA Inc., owner; Chevron Products Company, A Division of Chevron USA Inc., applicant

Planner: Avery Stark

Tentative Recommendation: Receive and Provide Comments

Senior Planner Avery Stark presented the staff report dated January 15, 2026, and introduced Sarah Manzano to present the annual report and the continued monitoring of the project since its inception. This was not a public hearing and no action would be taken.

SARAH MANZANO, Ramboll, presented the annual report associated with the Chevron Modernization Project based on reporting year 2024. The recommended action was to receive the staff and consultant presentation of the report and provide comments on the Chevron Annual Compliance Report.

Ms. Manzano highlighted the Chevron Modernization Project that consisted of construction of the new hydrogen plant and a collection of new equipment improvements that removed naturally occurring sulfur contained in feedstocks processed at the facility, including modification to the refinery's existing sulfur recovery units (SRUs). The project also included infrastructure improvements to facility piping, utility lines, and electrical systems, and Project Design Features (PDFs) and Mitigation Measures to achieve no net increase in Criteria Air Pollutant (CAP) and Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC) emissions, and no physical increase in greenhouse gas (GHS) emissions. She identified the monitoring site and stated the Annual Compliance Report was a requirement of the CUP, and this was the eighth compliance report. She added this report and all previous reports had been shared online.

Ms. Manzano identified the numerous agencies and individuals involved in ensuring the project's compliance with the CUP, identified the four phases of compliance, highlighted the construction involved with the project and noted no construction activities had occurred in 2024. She summarized the operations for the new hydrogen plant and sulfur recovery improvements and noted this was the sixth annual report addressing operations requirements. She also reported there were no net increase in criteria pollutants and no net increase in TACs, as well as no physical increase in GHGs. Facility utilization was at 84 percent, below the 93 percent utilization scenario in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and as a result no additional mitigation was triggered.

Ms. Manzano stated compliance for ongoing limited construction activities was tracked and submitted quarterly to the City; operations compliance was reported via the Annual Compliance Report as were all operational mitigation measures and conditions of approval on an annual basis; and the City had contracted with Ramboll to verify compliance, which included detailed reviews of the annual report, meetings with Chevron, review of emissions estimates, and cross-checking emissions data with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Flare Monitoring data. The refinery was required to notify the City of hydrogen plant flaring events greater than 500,000 standard cubic feet, and the City had concluded the hydrogen plant flaring events were being monitored and regulated by the BAAQMD.

In addition, Chevron had prepared a Flare Prevention/Minimization Assessment Report as part of a 2024 settlement agreement with BAAQMD. Details of the requirements associated with the settlement agreement were noted along with the fact that Chevron had invested over \$20 million to reduce flaring events refinery-wide and to address reliability issues.

Ms. Manzano advised that the Planning Commission was to review the Annual Compliance Report in a publicly noticed meeting. She reported the project was essentially complete and the compliance report was more streamlined. She recommended that the Planning Commission hold a public hearing every three years instead of every year unless staff determined a meeting was warranted in an unscheduled year, and explained that Chevron would still submit its Annual Compliance Report to the City by September 1 each year. Certain obligations that had been fulfilled and were no longer applicable would be removed from future reports for clarity. The report would still be posted online at www.ci.richmond.ca.us/modernizationproject.

JEFF BRAUN, Business Improvement Manager of one of the operating divisions for Chevron Richmond, introduced the other members of the team present to respond to questions: Brandon Sutter, Modernization Compliance Specialist; Kris Battleson, Health, Safety and Environmental Manager; and Brian Hubinger, Public Affairs Manager.

Mr. Braun described the impetus for the Chevron Modernization Project, and stated with five full years in the operations phase of the project Chevron had remained well below the emissions commitment of no net increase in criteria pollutants, no net increase in TACs, and no physical increase in GHGs over the baseline emissions established for the project. He added that the approval of the Modernization Project and associated Environmental and Community Investment Agreement had enabled a reduction in emissions from the Richmond facility while positioning Chevron to safely and reliably produce the energy needed for California families, which included 60 percent of the Bay Area airports and 20 percent of the gasoline used in Northern California. He explained that significant steps had been taken to engage with the Richmond community over the last year and there had been three public meetings open to the community to discuss operations, flaring performance and other topics. The next meeting should be early this year. He looked forward to working with the City, labor and other stakeholders.

There were no other speakers.

Commissioner Brubaker noted that a two-year extension had been triggered, which meant that construction on the project could occur up to mid-2027. He referenced the proposal to create a three-year reporting system instead of an annual reporting system in the future, and also verified that there had been eight reports submitted to the Planning Commission. He asked about the flaring issues.

In response, Ms. Manzano stated from their review of the flaring data, it was trending down in that there had been 11 flaring events in 2024 compared to 25 in 2023.

Commissioner Timmons asked if the pending closing of the Valero Refinery in Benicia would change the capacity expectation for Chevron Richmond.

In response, BRIAN HUBINGER, Chevron Public Affairs Manager, stated there were very strict limits even associated with the Modernization Project and Chevron could not exceed those limits. He added there was still a very strong demand for gasoline, diesel and jet fuel in California, which was expected to be the case for some time, and Chevron would continue to produce those fuels in the future cleaner and better than today. Unless there was a permit change, no more could be done.

Commissioner Brubaker was not averse to a presentation every three years but asked if there was a way to create a condition that if construction did proceed a report would be made to the Planning Commission, and if construction did not proceed the recommended three-year presentation could be pursued.

Planning Manager Stark clarified that the item was a presentation and not a voting item. He confirmed that the Commission's question had been covered in the presentation.

4. PLN24-357: TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP

PUBLIC HEARING to consider a two-lot subdivision – lot line adjustment permit, or, in the alternative, condominium conversion located at 815 24th Street (APN 528-240-008).
T4N-35 T4 Neighborhood, MR, Medium Density Residential District.

Malboubi Rassoul Tre, owner/applicant

Planner: Avery Stark

Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

Planning Manager Stark advised that a revised resolution had been submitted to the Planning Commission from the resolution that had previously been posted to correct textual errors in the resolution. He stated the proposed parcel map was for a home located at 815 24th Street, a subdivision of one parcel into two equal parcels. The property was currently developed with a duplex and there would be no new construction or increased density associated with the tentative parcel map.

Mr. Stark stated that since the proposal was under the Minor Land Divisions category of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), it was exempt from CEQA and no environmental impacts had been identified.

Mr. Stark explained that the existing duplex currently shared some utility infrastructure, common to multiple units of a single parcel, but once the land was subdivided into two separate parcels, shared utilities created cross-parcel dependencies that were inconsistent with the intent of land subdivision. As such, independent utility service was required to ensure that each parcel could function autonomously for ownership purposes to avoid the creation of any implied easements or future disputes between two separate owners, a requirement of the Subdivision Map Act. He stated that while the applicant had referenced the potential intent for a condominium conversion, no application was formally submitted for a condominium conversion and the project did not qualify for a condominium conversion. As a result, the resolution included a denial of any condominium conversion.

Mr. Stark stated that staff had evaluated the tentative parcel map against the findings required under the Subdivision Map Act and the RMC, the project was consistent with the General Plan and zoning, the site was suitable for the development and density, no public health or environmental impacts were associated with the site, and there was no conflict with any public easement.

Mr. Stark recommended that the Planning Commission open the public hearing and after closing the public hearing adopt the Resolution to approve PLN 24-357 granting approval of Tentative Parcel Map MS 755-20, except for the utilities easement, subject to the conditions of approval contained in the resolution, and deny the applicant's informal request for approval of a condominium conversion.

Commissioner Brubaker clarified after visiting the site that all utilities appeared to be shared, and Mr. Stark stated that all utilities coming into the site were shared and as a condition of approval separate independent utilities for the newly created parcel would be required in order to proceed with the recordation of a Final Map so that each unit would have its own running power, water, sewer, gas, electricity, cable, Internet and other services to be able to function individually from each other.

Chair Harrison OPENED the public hearing.

An unidentified nearby resident to the subject parcel, speaking on-line, commented that the neighborhood had been built post war where families were not expected to have more than one car. It was a congested area and he opposed consideration of a condominium conversion.

Chair Harrison CLOSED the public hearing.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Timmons/Brubaker) to adopt Resolution No. 26-01 – Approving Planning Application No. PLN24-357, granting approval of Tentative Parcel Map MS 755-20, except for the utilities easement, subject to the conditions of approval contained in the resolution, and denying the applicant’s informal request for approval of a condominium conversion, carried by the following Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Brubaker, Timmons, Harrison; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Golovets, Lockett).

COMMISSION BUSINESS

5. Reports of Officers, Commissioners and Staff

Mr. Stark noted that a number of items would be presented to the Planning Commission in the coming months and staff was actively working with the Mayor’s office and the City Manager to find additional Commissioners to ensure a quorum at all times. He invited those interested in joining the Planning Commission to make application to do so. He reported that the next meeting would be on February 5, 2026 when three residential projects would be included on that agenda. He advised that the idea of combining Commissions was still being considered and expected that item to be submitted to the Planning Commission in March as a study item. Given the number of items to be considered by the Commission, he expected the Commission would be meeting at least monthly.

4. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 P.M.