



City of Arts & Innovation

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City of Riverside Creates AI Working Group to Study How to Use Emerging Tool to Increase Efficiency, Economic Opportunity

Group of three City Council members will meet monthly for 13 months

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – A three-member City Council working group will spend 13 months developing a comprehensive strategy for deploying artificial intelligence to improve City operations, advance coordination with other agencies and prepare the local economy for rapid change.

The City Council Working Group on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy and Policy includes City Council members Steven Robillard, Philip Falcone and Steve Hemenway.

“Artificial Intelligence is going to change the way we work, the way businesses operate and the way cities provide services,” said Robillard, who recommended creating the working group. “I don’t think Riverside should wait for those changes to happen to us. We should be intentional in how we prepare for them.”

AI presents “substantial opportunities to improve municipal service delivery, streamline operational workflows, and enhance data-driven decision-making,” Chief Innovation Officer George Khalil wrote in a report to the Council. But the use of AI also raises critical policy considerations regarding transparency, ethical standards, cybersecurity, and data privacy.

“AI is going to be a transformative opportunity, similar to the steam engine, to electricity and to flight,” Khalil said. “It’s going to change how we function for the next 100 years.”

The forthcoming AI Strategic Framework will answer core questions such as:

- Policies governing ethical, safe, and transparent use of AI.
- How to use AI in economic and workforce development, including how to foster innovation, business attractions and workforce readiness.

- Issues related to critical infrastructure and land use, including resource needs for data centers, high-capacity electrical grids and water-cooling demands.
- Ensuring cybersecurity and data privacy protects municipal networks and safeguards resident data.
- How to advance local education efforts and the local economy by partnering with regional institutions to promote digital literacy and economic resilience.

Robillard said the group likely will meet once a month.

“My goal is not to start from a predetermined position that AI is either good or bad,” Robillard said.

“The goal is to bring in experts, ask difficult questions, learn from what other cities and institutions are doing, and develop a Riverside-specific strategy. Ultimately, I want Riverside to be a city that does not simply react to technological change, but helps shape how that change benefits our residents, our businesses and our community.”