



STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

April 09, 2024

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: David Loya, Director of Community Development

PREPARER: David Loya, Director of Community Development

DATE: April 03, 2024

TITLE: **Discuss Options for Security Gates and Fences in Commercial Districts**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission receive a staff report, invite public comment, and discuss options for security fencing in commercial areas.

INTRODUCTION:

The Commission recently approved a scissor gate installation on the Plaza. Several Commissioner's expressed reservations about the approval. The Commission expressed an understanding of the balance between preventing the negative impacts associated with vagrancy, litter, and overnight camping on the Plaza among our unhoused community members with the aesthetics and design character on the Plaza. Many businesses have turned to scissor gates, either in their shop windows or in the entryways to their stores. This item is to discuss options for objective standards for security in commercial districts.

BACKGROUND:

The City does not explicitly prohibit scissor gates in policy or in code. Land Use Code (Code) Section 9.30.030 Fences, Walls, and Screening discusses the standards allowed for gates. In most cases, scissor gates would not meet the development standards for height in setbacks. However, some zoning districts, such as the Commercial Central, have no setback. The standards can be viewed at:

<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Arcata/#!/LUC/ArcataLUC0930/ArcataLUC0930.html#9.30.030>

None of the fence standards currently prevent the establishment of scissor gates.

Historically, scissor gates were discouraged and not approved when part of a Design Review application.

DISCUSSION:

The Commission will be presented several examples of commercial uses and their facades to facilitate a discussion about potential standards that may be applied for security fencing. This will be

an introductory discussion to familiarize the Commission with the variables, including existing design, various setbacks, and other physical limitations.

Staff anticipates the Commission providing direction to enhance the discussion at a future meeting.