



City of Arts & Innovation

Inclusiveness, Community Engagement & Governmental Processes Committee

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: AUGUST 4, 2021**
FROM: GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING A POLICY FOR THE PROPER DISPLAY AND HANDLING OF FLAGS AT CITY FACILITIES – DIRECT SUBMITTAL

ISSUE:

Provide input and guidance regarding establishing a policy for the proper display and handling of flags at City facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement & Governmental Processes Committee:

1. Provide input and guidance regarding establishing a policy for the proper display and handling of flags at City facilities; and
2. Direct staff to return to City Council for consideration of adoption of a resolution establishing a policy for the proper display and handling of flags at City facilities.

BACKGROUND:

Historically, the City of Riverside has displayed flags in conformance with Federal and State statutes which outline standards for the display of the Flag of the United States, the State of California Flag, and the City of Riverside Flag. When properly displayed, flags are powerful symbols of our shared history, pride, principles and commitment to our nation, state and community.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed flag policy establishes formal guidelines and procedures to handle and display the Flag of the United States as well as the State of California Flag and the City of Riverside Flag, in accordance with Federal and State statutes and regulations, including but not limited to: United States Code Title 4, Chapter and California Government Code Section 430 et seq., and compliance with Public Law 94-344 “Federal Flag Code.”

The policy also provides guidelines and procedures pertaining to Commemorative Flags. A Commemorative Flag is a flag that identifies with a specific date, historical event, cause, or group of people.

The proposed flag policy establishes the order of the flag display and includes the requirement that, when a Commemorative Flag is added, it will be displayed in a position of honor following the aforementioned flags unless otherwise directed by the City Council and to the extent such protocol does not conflict with Federal or State law. Key points of the draft flag policy are outlined in the following sections.

Proper Flag Handling

1. Flags are to be raised and lowered by hand.
2. Flags are to be lowered slowly and with dignity.
3. The Flag of the United shall be hoisted first and lowered last.
4. Flags must not touch the ground or anything beneath it.
5. When no longer in good condition, flags are to be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Proper Flag Display

1. Flags are to be flown from sunrise to sunset, unless properly illuminated.
2. Flags should not be displayed during inclement weather unless an all-weather flag is used.

Proper Placement of Flags

1. No flag or pennant may be placed above or to the right of the Flag of the United States.
2. When displayed on a single pole, the order from top to bottom shall be the Flag of the United States, the State of California Flag, and if displayed, the City of Riverside Flag, followed by a commemorative flag.
3. In displays with multiple flagpoles, the US flag should receive the place of honor, usually on the tallest flagpole in the center or to the far left.

Flags Flown at Half-Mast

1. Flags may be flown at half-mast only by order of the President of the United States or the Governor of the State of California. Notifications to lower flags to half-mast will be sent via e-mail by the General Services Department.
2. The Flag of the United States should be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-mast position.
3. Before lowering the Flag of the United States for the day, it should again be raised to the peak.
4. On Memorial Day, the Flag of the United States will be flown at half-mast until noon only, then hoisted to top of staff.

Commemorative Flags

The City Council may authorize the flying of commemorative flags as follows:

1. The specific date, historical event, cause, or group of people being honored must be consistent with the City's vision, mission and ongoing and strategic priorities, incorporating themes of diversity, equity, social justice and inclusion.

2. Commemorative flags must not be larger than the Flag of the United States, the State of California Flag, or the City of Riverside Flag, and must be on the flagpole beneath the aforementioned flags when flown on the same staff.
3. No more than one commemorative flag may be displayed on a flagpole concurrently.
4. Commemorative flags shall only be displayed at City Hall.
5. Commemorative flags representing political organizations, for-profit organizations, or religious organizations shall be prohibited from being displayed at City facilities.
6. The City will not display a commemorative flag based on a request of a third party or to sponsor the expression from a third party.
7. Commemorative flags shall be displayed for a period of time that is reasonable or customary for the subject that is to be commemorated, but no longer than 30 continuous days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with recommendation.

Prepared by: Carl Carey, General Services Director
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Interim Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Resolution
3. Exhibit A – Flag Policy