



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

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TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** APRIL 23, 2019
FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS:** ALL
SUBJECT: PROPOSED RENAMING OF RIVERSIDE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM TO
"MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE"

ISSUE:

Consider the renaming of the Metropolitan Museum to "Museum of Riverside" as part of the renovation and reinvention of the institution.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council approve the renaming of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum to "Museum of Riverside" as part of the renovation and reinvention of the institution.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

On March 13, 2019, the Metropolitan Museum Board, with six (6) members present, unanimously recommended that the City Council approve the renaming of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum to "Museum of Riverside" as part of the renovation and reinvention of the institution.

BACKGROUND:

The Museum, originally known as the Riverside Municipal Museum, was renamed the Riverside Metropolitan Museum in 2005. The reason for the name change at that time was to present the Museum as more urban and cosmopolitan and to set an aspirational goal.

DISCUSSION:

The temporary closure that began on September 5, 2017, and the impending renovation of the Museum's downtown site have been widely perceived as a rare opportunity for institutional reinvention. The decision to close followed recognition of the need to rethink the operation as a whole, from internal operational considerations to the approach to public programming. Part of this process includes rebranding and reconsideration of the Museum's communications, public appeal, and scope of operations.

The current recommendation stems from a recognition that, from a public perspective, the most important consideration that influences participation is what the Museum is about rather than who administers it. Further, the reality reflected by both precedent and anticipated future activities is that the Museum's collections and its programs are inspired by a flexibly defined region centered on the City of Riverside rather than an area rigidly fixed by geographic city limits, hence the proposed name "Museum of Riverside."

The Museum aims to amplify its visitor focus. It must compete with many attractions for the leisure time of future visitors. Thus, communications will need to be assisted by attractive, up-to-date, and strategic marketing that distinguishes it from other cultural institutions. The clarity of the name "Museum of Riverside" and the marketing potential provided by its abbreviation, "MOR," have been widely noted during formal and informal community discussions. If approved, staff will work promptly with other City of Riverside Departments to formalize the name change.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director

Certified as to

availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Approved by: Lea Deesing, Assistant City Manager

Attachment: Draft Metropolitan Museum Board Minutes – March 13, 2019