



City of Arts & Innovation

Economic Development Committee

TO: HONORABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS **DATE: SEPTEMBER 19, 2024**

FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF TABLE SPONSORSHIP POLICY AND RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES TABLE SPONSORSHIP EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2022/23 AND 2023/24

ISSUE:

Review of the Table Sponsorship Policy, Administrative Manual 01.027.00 and Riverside Public Utilities table sponsorship expenditures for Fiscal Years 2022/23 and 2023/24.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Economic Development Committee:

1. Receive an update on the Table Sponsorship Policy, Administrative Manual 01.027.00 and Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) table sponsorship expenditures for FY 2022/23 and 2023/24; and
2. Provide direction for department participation in table sponsorships moving forward.

BACKGROUND:

On May 23, 2024, during the biannual City Sponsorship update at the Economic Development Committee meeting, staff presented an update on table sponsorships for the period of July 1 – December 31, 2023. The events reported included one table sponsorship from Riverside Public Utilities in the amount of \$500. Following public comment and discussion, it was requested by Councilmember Robillard that the Table Sponsorship Policy be brought back to the Committee for further review, specifically pertaining to RPU sponsoring tables.

City Sponsorship Program

In October 2002, the City Council created a City Sponsorship Program and adopted a policy to encompass all city departments and support their efforts to formalize and track the amount of giving to the community. The City Sponsorship Program is administered by the Arts and Cultural Affairs Division in the Park, Recreation, and Community Services Department and provides local

non-profit organizations with the opportunity to apply for City Funds and in-kind services twice each fiscal year. Eligible organizations are notified of upcoming opportunities to apply for the City Sponsorship Program through direct communication, via email, and at community events. The biannual review and approval process of sponsorship applications requires approximately five (5) months from the application deadline to receive approval by the City Council. Sponsorship awards are provided in the form of cash, City facilities, staff time, water, and special event permits. The total fiscal impact of the program is typically less than \$250,000 annually, including monetary and in-kind sponsorship awards.

Table sponsorships by the City of Riverside do not occur through the City Sponsorship Program.

Table Sponsorship Policy

Organizations request the City of Riverside sponsor tables at community events and programs to raise funds for their activities, programs or a special event. Several City departments are engaged in table sponsorships for numerous reasons, including: 1) to receive public recognition and show support for an organization or event that is aligned with the departments' mission and values; 2) provide community outreach and market the departments' services and programs to a certain audience; and 3) purchase seats to attend an event where City staff and/or programs are being recognized.

On November 16, 2015, a request was made by the Governmental Affairs Committee to develop procedures for issuing table sponsorships. This request was initiated based on concerns that multiple departments were sponsoring tables for the same community events and there were no guidelines for determining when a department should sponsor a table and who from the City should attend the event.

On May 4, 2016, the Governmental Affairs Committee recommended revisions to the City's Sponsorship Program, which included supplemental guidelines for issuing table sponsorships. The guidelines allowed departments to support events relevant to their work, including the purchase of tables at various community events, without having to go through the City's Sponsorship Program process. The guidelines required departments to include these events and the number of seats available at the sponsored tables on an event calendar, which would be updated on a quarterly basis and accessible to Council Members so they could have an opportunity to attend these events based on their availability. The Sponsorship Program revisions and supplemental guidelines for table sponsorships were approved by the City Council on July 26, 2016.

On January 8, 2019, the City Council received an update on table sponsorships for Fiscal Years (FY) 2017/18 and 2018/19 and directed the City Manager's Office to create a new Table Sponsorship Policy that allows the City Manager, or his or her designee, to review and approve department requests for table sponsorships. During this meeting, additional direction was provided by the Council to include the following provisions in the policy:

1. A not-to-exceed limit on table sponsorship amounts for departments;
2. The Public Works Department shall not use Enterprise Funds for table sponsorships;
3. More than one Department may share sponsorship of the same event, if appropriate;
4. Table sponsorships shall be reviewed by the City Council on the Consent Calendar in advance of the event;
5. The City Manager shall report back to the City Council every six months on sponsorship activities, including the name of the event and who attended; and
6. The City Manager has authority to approve urgent table sponsorship requests in advance of City Council consideration, if needed.

On March 12, 2019, the City Council approved a policy that set forth procedures for departments to request approval for table sponsorships. The policy authorized the City Manager, or his designee, to review and approve department requests for table sponsorships, and authorized the City Manager to approve urgent requests for table sponsorships that are received less than six months prior to the event without City Council consideration, if needed. In addition, the policy set limits for the total amount of table sponsorships for each department to not exceed \$1,000 per event or \$5,000 cumulative per fiscal year and excluded the following Enterprise Funds from being utilized for table sponsorship purposes: Sewer Fund, Parking Fund, and Refuse Fund. The procedures outlined in the policy were as follows:

1. Departments receive request for table sponsorships;
2. Departments submit request for table sponsorships for review and approval to the Office of the City Manager at least six months prior to the event, or immediately upon becoming aware of the event, using the SharePoint portal created;
3. City Manager's Office reviews and provides approval through the SharePoint portal;
4. Departments post notification of events in shared table sponsorship calendar (in Outlook or a similar software program) so that the City Council members have the option to attend the event if their schedule permits;
5. The City Manager's Office shall report table sponsorships to City Council every six months for review and consideration.

Table Sponsorships via Professional Services Agreement

In November 2019, the City entered into an agreement with the Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) that consolidated all Chamber services, sponsorships, memberships, and other benefits across all City Departments into a single agreement. The term of the agreement ended on June 30, 2020, with the option to extend it for two additional two-year terms. Since then, two amendments have been executed, which extended the term to June 30, 2024.

The table sponsorships outlined in the 2019 Chamber agreement were as follows:

Department	Description	Amount
Public Utilities	KRCB Luncheon	\$50
	Legislative Summit	\$600
	Mayor's State of the City	\$600
	Inaugural Ball	\$1,000
	Athena Luncheon	\$1,000
	Leadership Riverside Luncheon	\$500
	Subtotal	\$3,750
Community and Economic Development	Mayor's State of the City	\$500
	Subtotal	\$500
Public Works	Mayor's State of the City	\$750
	Legislative Summit	\$600
	KRCB Luncheon	\$400
	Subtotal	\$1,750
Police	Mayor's State of the City	\$750
	Leadership Riverside Luncheon	\$500
	Subtotal	\$1,250

In July 2024, a new agreement was entered into with the Chamber for a term through June 30, 2026, with the option to extend for one additional two-year term. As with the past agreement, the intent remains to provide public transparency for the Citywide partnership with the Chamber. The events sponsored by the City in the current agreement are listed below:

Department	Description	Amount
Public Utilities	KRCB Waterwise Landscape Sponsorship	\$3,000
	Business Expo/Mixer/Riv Forward	\$1,000
	Mega Mixer/Tradeshow/Job Fair	\$500
	GMR Sponsorship	\$1,850
	Legislative Summit	\$750
	Mayor’s State of the City	\$750
	Inaugural Ball	\$1,500
	Athena Luncheon	\$1,000
	Leadership Riverside Luncheon	\$800
		Subtotal
Community and Economic Development	Mayor’s State of the City	\$750
		Subtotal
Public Works	Mayor’s State of the City	\$750
	Legislative Summit	\$750
		Subtotal
Police	Mayor’s State of the City	\$1,000
	Leadership Riverside Luncheon	\$800
		Subtotal

DISCUSSION:

Participating in table sponsorships at community events can offer a multitude of benefits that enhance the event and strengthen relationships between the City, local businesses, and non-profit organizations by creating a supportive partnership. Benefits that City departments receive include:

1. **Enhanced Relationships:** Collaborating with event organizers and other sponsors can strengthen partnerships and create opportunities for future collaborations or joint initiatives;
2. **Networking:** Events typically attract a range of attendees, including other city officials, community leaders, and stakeholders. Participating in table sponsorships provides valuable networking opportunities with other community leaders, potentially leading to future business ventures and collaboration;
3. **Visibility and Public Relations:** It offers an opportunity to showcase the department’s involvement and support within the community, enhancing public perception;
4. **Brand Exposure:** The department’s logo and name usually appear prominently at the sponsored table and in event materials, increasing brand visibility among attendees;
5. **Marketing and Promotion:** Sponsoring a table allows the department to promote specific programs, services, or initiatives directly to a targeted audience;

6. **Supporting Community Initiatives:** By sponsoring an event, the department demonstrates its commitment to local causes and initiatives, which can foster stronger community ties and support;
7. **Access to Information and Insights:** Attending events often provides access to valuable information, industry trends, and best practices that can benefit the department's operations;
8. **Morale and Team Building:** Involving department staff in an event can boost morale, promote teamwork, and foster a sense of pride;
9. **Supporting the Local Economy:** Events often benefit local businesses and vendors, indirectly supporting the City's economic growth and sustainability.

In FY 2022/23, City departments sponsored tables at four community events, for a total sponsorship amount of \$4,405. In FY 2023/24, departments sponsored tables at four events totaling \$4,100. These totals do not include any table sponsorships done by RPU, as RPU did not participate in any table sponsorships outside of those included in the agreement with the Chamber.

There are two avenues by which City departments can sponsor tables at events. The first option is to enter into an agreement with an organization, whereby the City agrees to sponsor a table at one or more events hosted by an organization. The second avenue is through the steps outlined in the Table Sponsorship Policy. When sponsoring an event via an approved agreement, the limitations set forth in the Table Sponsorship Policy no longer apply.

RPU Professional Services Agreement with Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce

RPU's partnership with the Chamber allows the RPU Board members, Executive team, and staff access to key business leaders at business-focused events similar to outreach programs designed to reach residential customers. Through attendance at Chamber events, RPU saves substantial expenses by avoiding the cost of hosting and facilitating similar events and benefits from the Chamber's resources and business community connections. In addition, the Chamber excels at convening business leaders from small and micro-businesses to large businesses across a wide array of sectors, and all Chamber events are well attended.

RPU actively engages with the business community at Chamber events, seeking their feedback and collaboration on current and future needs, RPU programs, and the economic benefits they receive as RPU's commercial ratepayers. These conversations range from retention discussions with businesses considering leaving Riverside, to those interested in expanding their business in Riverside, to potential new commercial customers seeking cost reduction by relocating to RPU's service territory or participating in efforts to attract new businesses to the City.

These conversations are essential to the City and the Utility's continued success and future growth. Although measuring the exact economic return for these interactions is difficult to calculate, the cumulative relationship building and conversation with RPU and the business community via the Chamber helps retain or contribute to additional RPU sales.

As a result of the table sponsorships provided by RPU to the Chamber, ratepayers have the potential to experience the following indirect benefits:

1. **Enhanced Service Quality:** Community involvement through events may encourage RPU to maintain or improve service quality to uphold its reputation among local stakeholders, including ratepayers.
2. **Community Development:** Sponsorship supports local economic development initiatives through the Chamber, potentially creating more stable economic conditions.

3. **Efficiency and Innovation:** Chamber events provide opportunities for networking and sharing best practices among businesses. This exposure can stimulate efficiency improvements within RPU.
4. **Transparent Communication:** Events can provide a platform for RPU to share information about services, rates, and upcoming projects directly with ratepayers and other stakeholders.
5. **Community Engagement:** Active involvement in community events allows ratepayers to voice concerns, provide feedback, and engage in discussions that could influence how RPU operates and serves the community.
6. **Local Partnerships:** Sponsorship of Chamber events encourage collaboration that can lead to joint initiatives that benefit the community and potentially reduce the costs or improve service delivery for ratepayers.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The City's sponsorship of tables at events aligns with **Strategic Priority No. 3 *Economic Opportunity*, goal 3.1** – Facilitate partnerships and programs to develop, attract and retain innovative business sectors.

The Table Sponsorship Policy aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The Table Sponsorship Policy was created at the direction of the City Council and discussed openly during public meetings where members of the community had the opportunity to provide input by way of public comments. The City Council is also provided with a biannual review of the table sponsorships paid for by each department to ensure transparency. The same applies to the Professional Services Agreement with the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce with annual reporting of outcomes.
2. **Equity** – The events sponsored by departments are available to all members in a public forum that accommodates community engagement from the public.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Table Sponsorship Policy and Professional Services Agreement with the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce sets limits allowed for table sponsorships ensuring a responsible use of City funds.
4. **Innovation** – Participation in table sponsorship events helps identify and meet the community's changing needs.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Utilizing community involvement through the events sponsored by departments demonstrates the City's commitment to long-term fiscal health.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the receipt of this report.

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Certified as to availability of funds:	Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer

Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Table Sponsorship Policy
2. Agreement with Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce
3. Presentation