



# City Council Memorandum

*City of Arts & Innovation*

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**      **DATE: APRIL 8, 2025**  
**FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT**      **WARDS: ALL**  
**SUBJECT: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW AND RECOGNITION**

**ISSUE:**

Receive a presentation providing an overview of the activities of the Museum Department and recognizing the Museum Department's Employee of the Year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council receive a presentation providing an overview of the activities of the Museum Department and recognizing the Museum Department's Employee of the Year.

**BACKGROUND:**

The main facility of the Museum Department, which operates as the Museum of Riverside, has been closed since September 2017. Since that time, behind-the-scenes operational improvements have occurred, some of which were paused or slowed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Diverse programming has been provided to the community, and architecture planning has advanced the Museum toward eventual reopening of the main facility and first-time opening of the National Historic Landmark Harada House.

The last Museum Department Overview was presented to City Council on March 19, 2024.

**DISCUSSION:**

The attached presentation includes an overview of the Museum's activities over the past years and recognition of the Museum's Employee of the Year for 2024.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

The activities of the Museum of Riverside align with the Strategic Priority, "Arts, Culture and Recreation." Specific activities mentioned in this report support, in particular, goal 1.1 (strengthening Riverside's arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities), goal 1.2 (enhancing equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings and facilities), and goal 1.5 (supporting programs and amenities to further develop

literacy, health, and education of children, youth, and seniors throughout the community).

Museum programs further support the Strategic Priority, “Community Well-Being.” Specific goals supported by Museum programs and partnerships include goal 2.3, which includes strengthening neighborhood identities, and goal 2.5, which points to fostering relationships between community members and partner organizations.

1. **Community Trust** – The Museum Department overview familiarizes the Council with current operating conditions and invites input. Progress on the main museum and Harada House projects restore trust in the City’s commitment to open these important cultural resources for the public.
2. **Equity** – The Museum Department overview describes the programs Museum staff and partners are implementing to celebrate and serve the full diversity of Riverside. Programs strive to emphasize equity and access. Marketing reaches into all neighborhoods. Community engagement efforts strive to reach a variety of demographic groups.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Museum Department overview updates the Council on ongoing alignment of the Department’s budgets with strategic priorities. The Museum seeks non-City funding regularly and as practical. Museum budgets consistently run in the black, demonstrating responsible use of taxpayer dollars.
4. **Innovation** – The Museum Department overview reports on the development of original, locally relevant programming, as well as methods to achieve programmatic ends through proactive cultural partnerships and efficient promotions. Projects designed to extend the Museum’s reach beyond its walls during the main museum closure employ innovative techniques and designs.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The Museum Department overview reflects staff emphasis on cultural sustainability. The Report includes efforts to streamline operations, preserve Museum assets, deliver value to the taxpayer, model and teach cultural and environmental preservation, and develop solidly researched and affirming interpretation.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director  
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Jack Liu, Acting City Attorney

Attachment: Museum Overview Presentation