



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: MAY 2, 2023
FROM: GENERAL SERVICES WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION ON COMMEMORATIVE FLAGS

ISSUE:

Discussion on commemorative flags for display at City Hall and potentially other City facilities, incorporating input from the Human Relations Commission.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Discuss commemorative flags for display at City Hall and potentially other City Facilities, incorporating input from the Human Relations Commission;
2. Provide direction for suggested groups of people or causes for which there is currently no established or commonly recognized commemorative flag; and
3. With at least five affirmative votes, direct staff to return to City Council with a resolution authorizing the display of specific commemorative flag(s).

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On February 23, 2023, the Human Relations Commission (HRC) received a presentation on suggested commemorative flags for display at City Hall and potentially other City facilities.

BACKGROUND:

On January 17, 2023, the City Council adopted a resolution establishing the City of Riverside Flag Policy (attached), which provides a set of guidelines to ensure the uniform handling and display of flags at City facilities. In addition, the newly adopted Flag Policy sets forth guidelines for the display of commemorative flags. A commemorative flag under this policy means a flag that identifies with a specific date, historical event, cause, or group of people, whereby the City honors or commemorates the date, event, cause or people by flying the flag.

At this same meeting, the City Council requested that staff solicit input from the Human Relations Commission regarding developing a schedule for display of commemorative flags at City facilities.

DISCUSSION:

Numerous public entities across the state and nation have passed resolutions within the last several years authorizing the display of commemorative flags, including the Rainbow Pride flag, which is a symbol of lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender and queer pride and social movements, the Progress Pride flag, which builds on the Rainbow Pride flag by adding a chevron of white, pink, light blue, brown and black to symbolize transgender rights, people of color, and those living with or lost to Human Immunodeficiency Virus Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV AIDS), and the Juneteenth Flag, a symbolic representation of the end of slavery in the United States.

Human Relations Commission Input

As directed by the City Council, on February 23, 2023, staff solicited input from the Human Relations Commission (HRC) on a commemorative flag display schedule for City facilities. The HRC expressed support for each of the causes and groups of people below:

- Dr. Martin Luther King Day* (third Monday in January)
- Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27)
- Black History Month (February)
- Women's History Month* or Women's Suffrage Victory Flag (March)
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month* (May)
- LGBTQ Pride Month – Rainbow or Progress Pride Flag (June)
- Juneteenth (June 19)
- Latino/a Heritage Month* (September 15 – October 15)
- Indigenous Peoples or Native American Heritage Month (November)

While there are established or commonly recognized commemorative flags for Holocaust Remembrance Day (Holocaust Memorial Remembrance Flag), Black History Month (the Pan Africa Flag), Women's History Month (the Women's Suffrage Victory flag), Pride Month (the Rainbow or Progress Pride flags), and Juneteenth, that is not the case for Dr. Martin Luther King Day, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Latino/a Heritage Month, and Indigenous Peoples or Native American Heritage Month. Where there is no established or commonly recognized commemorative flag available, the HRC suggested that it might be more meaningful to those communities who share that identity to participate in a community art project to design that flag.

Finally, the HRC suggested that the community be invited to participate in any approved commemorative flag raising ceremonies.

Commemorative Flags Approval Process

As memorialized in the adopted City of Riverside Flag Policy (attached), the City Council may authorize the display of commemorative flags as follows:

1. In January of each year, the City Council will consider the display of commemorative flags for the upcoming year. After an initial agendized discussion, staff will return to a

subsequent City Council meeting with a resolution supporting the City's display of the flag(s) chosen. A majority of the City Council must vote affirmatively for said resolution.

2. In addition to the annual consideration, a Council Member may, at any time during the year, suggest the display of additional flags meeting the criteria of this policy. Consideration would be a two-step process where on an agenda the Council considers the request, and if supported by a majority of the Councilmembers, staff would return with a formal resolution authorizing display of a commemorative flag. A majority of the City Council must vote affirmatively for said resolution.

At this time, the City Council is asked to consider which commemorative flag(s) to approve for display at City Hall and potentially other City facilities which have multiple flagpoles and/or a flagpole tall enough to accommodate multiple flags. If supported by a majority of the Council, staff will then return to a subsequent Council meeting with a resolution supporting the display of flag(s) approved by a majority of the City Council.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

Commemorative flags support Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government, and Goal 5.5, Foster a culture of safety, well-being, resilience, sustainability, diversity and inclusion across the City organization.

Commemorative flags align with *EACH of the five Cross-Cutting Threads* in the Envision Riverside 2025, as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – In accordance with the City of Riverside Flag Policy, which was reviewed publicly at three meetings of the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement & Governmental Processes Committee prior to be adopted by the City Council, the discussion on commemorative flags is agendaized for Council discussion, ensuring public transparency.
2. **Equity** – Commemorative flags promote equity and representation for diverse groups of people and historical events, consistent with the City's adopted vision, mission and strategic priorities.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Any commemorative flags purchased as a result of Council action will be procured in accordance with City purchasing policy.
4. **Innovation** – Commemorative flags provide an innovative way to promote diversity and inclusion by recognizing specific groups or causes consistent with the City's adopted vision, mission and strategic priorities.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Commemorative flags promote social sustainability, as an integral component of sustainability is the ability to embrace diverse communities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the discussion on commemorative flags.

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

Attachments:

1. Flag Policy
2. Presentation