



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL      DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2015**  
**FROM: RIVERSIDE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM      WARDS: ALL**  
**SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF MUSEUM NATURAL HISTORY DONATIONS**

## **ISSUE:**

The issue for City Council Consideration is the approval of donations of artifacts made to the Riverside Metropolitan Museum's Natural History Collection between 2006 and 2014.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council approve the donations of artifacts to the Riverside Metropolitan Museum's Natural History Collection accepted by the Riverside Metropolitan Museum between 2006-2014.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Riverside Metropolitan Museum (RMM) collects, preserves and interprets specimens that document the natural setting of the City of Riverside (City) and surrounding region. In the 2001 report, "Biodiversity Connection with the Tapestry of Life" by the Smithsonian Institution Monitoring & Assessment of Biodiversity Program and President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology, the coastal scrub habitat, which is the native habitat of most of the City of Riverside, is estimated to be 70-90% damaged or disturbed. The RMM's Natural History Collection is an important resource for research and interpretation of local environmental history.

While the RMM's initial collection was the donation of Native American artifacts by Mrs. Cornelius E. Rumsey, the RMM's founders included natural scientists such as former Riverside Mayor, S.C. Evans. Much of the RMM's Natural History collection originated through the life-long pursuits of scientists and naturalists that called Riverside their home.

Today, RMM seeks to engage our community in observing and documenting the City's natural environment through the Riverside Citizen Science program. As part of Citizen Science, members of the public can submit questions about the natural environment and submit photos of plants and animals for identification using the **Nature Spotter** smartphone application. The questions and answers and photographs are available to the public via the **Riverside Citizen Science** project on the iNaturalist website at <http://www.inaturalist.org/>.



[http://www.inaturalist.org/guides?place\\_id=917](http://www.inaturalist.org/guides?place_id=917)



Nature Spotter

Iphone/App Store Users: [Apple iOS AppStore](#)

Android Users: [Google Store](#)

The RMM Natural History Collection includes:

- Geology and Earth Sciences: approximately 3,500 specimens including Southern California rocks, minerals and fossils
- Life Sciences: over 450 zoology specimens depicting the wildlife of the Riverside region
- Clark Herbarium: approximately 10,000 specimens comprising an important database describing the distribution of native plant species in Southern California and the western and southwestern U.S.
- Nature Lab: open free to the public, offers hands-on experiences and a small collection of living vertebrate and invertebrate species

City of Riverside Ordinance No. 419 established the Riverside Museum in 1925 and states that all gifts and donations made to the RMM are to be filed with the City Clerk. From 2006 to 2014, the RMM received donations for its Natural History Collection that were formally accepted by the RMM Collections Committee and the RMM Board. However, the donations were not presented to the City Council. RMM lost key staff positions as a result of the recession that had previously handled this type of reporting. RMM is correcting the time lapse between donation acceptance reports and will submit donation reports annually going forward. These donations strengthen the RMM fossil and life science collections.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Sarah S. Mundy, Museum & Cultural Affairs Director
Certified as to	
availability of funds:	Brent A. Mason, Finance Director/Treasurer
Approved by:	Alexander T. Nguyen, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney
Attachment:	Accessions Report 2006-2014