



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL      DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2016**

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

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ITEM 42A - SELECTING 4019 MISSION INN AVENUE AS THE LOCATION FOR THE NEW MAIN LIBRARY AND ITEM 42B - APPROVING AN EXCLUSIVE NEGOTIATING AGREEMENT WITH THE DISCOVERY SCIENCE FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH A DISCOVERYCUBE RIVERSIDE IN THE EXISTING MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING**

## **ISSUES:**

The issue for City Council consideration is to receive information and provide direction on Item 42A selecting 4019 Mission Inn Avenue (at Chestnut Street) as the location for the new Main Library and Item 42B for approving an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with the Discovery Science Foundation to conduct a feasibility analysis to of a DiscoveryCube Riverside in the existing Main Library building in Downtown.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council receive information and provide direction on:

1. Item 42A selecting 4019 Mission Inn Avenue (at Chestnut Street) as the location for the new Main Library; and
2. Item 42B approving an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with the Discovery Science Foundation to conduct a feasibility analysis to of a DiscoveryCube Riverside in the existing Main Library building in Downtown.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Throughout its history, Riverside has made public infrastructure and community facility investments that have benefitted generations of residents and advanced the community's prosperity. This leadership continues today and is evidenced through the priorities set forth by the Mayor and City Council in the Riverside 2.0 Strategic Plan; among these priorities are rehabilitating the Main Library and attracting a "Science, Technology, Engineering and Nature Center" to Downtown. This report provides context for Items 42A and 42B, which pertain, respectively, to selecting 4019 Mission Inn Avenue (at Chestnut Street) as the location for the new Main Library and approving an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with the Discovery Science Foundation to establish a DiscoveryCube Riverside in the existing Main Library building in Downtown.

**Item 42A. NEW MAIN LIBRARY LOCATION.** The Riverside 2.0 priority of rehabilitating the Main Library is being presented by the City Manager's Office in Item 42A as a recommendation to: a) to select 4019 Mission Inn Avenue (at Chestnut Street) as the location for the new Main Library; and b) authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to advance the efforts needed to determine the design and funding for the new Main Library. At its December 14, 2015, meeting, the Library Board of Trustees voted unanimously to seek out an alternative location for a new Main Library. At its January 25, 2016 meeting, the Board divided about evenly on which site should be selected to locate the new Main Library. It voted 5-3 for 3911 University Avenue, known as the "RTA site."

The City Manager's Office recommends the 4019 Mission Inn Avenue site for the following reasons :

- a. ***Anchored in Policy.*** The recommendation offers the City Council and public the ability to advance a longstanding objective as set forth in the Educational Element of the 2007 General Plan: "Ensure that the library system remains a premier information and independent learning resource for the Riverside residents and a complement to formal education." Building a new Main Library at a new location allows best practices of modern libraries to be integrated throughout every aspect of the public facility.
- b. ***Mindful of Public Resources.*** This recommendation acknowledges that achieving a new state-of-the-art Main Library is more readily accomplished by investing public financial resources in new construction. The existing mid-century modern Main Library building, while a Riverside cultural resource, requires significant adaptive reuse and, were such work to be undertaken, still would not incorporate the attributes of modern libraries.
- c. ***Multiplier Effect of Public Benefits.*** The recommendation recognizes that the 4019 Mission Inn Avenue location for the new Main Library provides a neighborhood-compatible catalyst for reinvestment by owners of commercial and residential properties in the area – many of which are cultural resources. Further, a new Main Library location allows for the existing Main Library building to be considered for other uses that reinforce the cultural, educational and historic purposes of Downtown's Raincross District.
- d. ***Timing.*** The 4019 Mission Inn Avenue site is City-controlled. It is vacant. It is clean. It is ready to build on. We can get started right away. The RTA site has a Federal Transit use restriction, expected to be removed by the end of this year. It has a building on it. It's an ideal site to become a private development and as such its development schedule will require several years of private party planning before construction begins.

Please refer to Item 42A for the applicable report and recommendation.

**Item 42B. DISCOVERYCUBE RIVERSIDE.** Should the City Council agree with the recommendation to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century Main Library at 4019 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside would then have a notable opportunity to advance the Riverside 2.0 priority of attracting a Science, Technology, Engineering and Nature Museum/Center to Downtown Riverside within the current Main Library building. This second recommendation seeks City Council approval of an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the Discovery Science Foundation to conduct investigatory analysis for establishing a DiscoveryCube Riverside in

the existing Main Library building in Downtown.

The City Manager's Office recommends this as a well-positioned opportunity for the following reasons:

- a. **Demonstrated Success.** Working with a proven organization such as the Discovery Science Foundation optimally positions Riverside for a science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) and nature-oriented museum/center in Downtown. Through DiscoveryCube Orange County (OC) and DiscoveryCube Los Angeles (LA), the Discovery Science Foundation has demonstrated its stewardship of spaces and places and its ability to cultivate and maintain vital partnerships with the communities in which its centers are located. The Foundation greatly appreciates the attributes of the existing Main Library building, the Downtown setting, and believes Riverside is a natural next location to offer its nationally recognized family-friendly STEM-related programming and exhibits (i.e. in May 2013, the Discovery Science Foundation received the National Medal of Service Award).
- b. **Aligned with Riverside.** The Discovery Science Foundation is exploring this opportunity because it appreciates the City of Riverside and Riverside community, recognizes the promise and potential of the Inland Empire, and desires to build upon its longstanding activity in the region as a "museum without walls" resource to area schools, municipalities, utilities, businesses and others. The partnership potential between the Mayor, City Council, Riverside community, and the Discovery Science Foundation is evidenced through its mission and core initiatives: "For over 25 years, Discovery Science Foundation has been a non-profit organization impacting the lives of children through hands-on science education. At our foundation lies our four core initiatives used to prepare the next generation of teachers, students and life-long learners. From early childhood education to STEM proficiency, healthy living to environmental stewardship, these initiatives go to the heart of the Foundation's mission as an entity of inspiration, education, and transformation."
- c. **Expanded Downtown and Community Prosperity.** As the Raincross District within Downtown Riverside is the "...cultural, historic, and social center of both Riverside and the region beyond..." and the Mayor and City Council consistently endeavor to promote and advance Riverside as the City of Arts & Innovation, the potential benefits of a DiscoveryCube Riverside to Downtown and the community is significant. For example, annual attendance at the DiscoveryCube OC is about 500,000; additionally, the Discovery Science Foundation provides in-school lessons for about 250,000 Orange County children a year, and another 70,000 visit the DiscoveryCube OC on field trips. The presence of such a museum/center in Downtown Riverside creates significant economic and educational development opportunities to the City and region.

***The children of Riverside and the children of this entire region need access to the very information that such a science center will provide them. This is an opportunity that Riverside, as the regional capital, should seize.***

Please refer to 42B for the applicable report and recommendation.

These recommendations represent the potential to advance priorities of the Mayor, City Council and community. They represent alignment of community dialogue, new and tenured partnerships, implementation of established policy, and embracing of diverse visions for thoughtful change. Through the Riverside Renaissance, the City Council accomplished an unprecedented investment in municipal infrastructure that has and will continue to benefit generations of Riversiders. Today, the Mayor and City Council advance the idea that the potential of this City is inextricably linked to partnerships, quality infrastructure, educational opportunity, environmental stewardship, and facilitating entrepreneurship. A new Main Library and a DiscoveryCube Riverside in Downtown Riverside enduring public benefits for Riverside and the Inland Empire well into the late 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this introductory report for Items 42A and 42B.

Prepared by: John A. Russo, City Manager  
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availability of funds: Brent A. Mason, Finance Director/Treasurer  
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment: Letter from Raincross Hospitality Corporation