



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# Museum Board Memorandum

**TO: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM BOARD** **DATE: MARCH 22, 2017**

**FROM: ALEXANDER T. NGUYEN, ACTING MUSEUM DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS REACCREDITATION PROGRESS REPORT**

## **ISSUE:**

Review the Riverside Metropolitan Museum's Progress Report for American Alliance of Museums reaccreditation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Receive and file the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Reaccreditation Progress Report.

## **BACKGROUND:**

RMM's last reaccreditation evaluation was in 2002.

In 2016, the Riverside Metropolitan Museum (RMM) was reviewed by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) for re-accreditation as an AAM-accredited museum. According to AAM, "accreditation offers high-profile, peer-based validation of your museum's operations and impact. Accreditation increases your museum's credibility and value to funders, policy makers, insurers, community and peers. Accreditation is a powerful tool to leverage change and facilitates loans between institutions".

Accreditation is based on core standards for museums: the Characteristics of Excellence. The extensive reaccreditation process included a self-study by RMM, review of supporting documents, site visit and interviews. After conducting this process, AAM elected to table its decision for RMM reaccreditation, and notified RMM on November 1, 2016 (Attachment 1).

When a museum's accreditation application gets tabled, it has the opportunity to submit a Progress Report to the Accreditation Commission for review approximately six months into the tabling period and a Final Report approximately twelve months after the original tabling date. The AAM will make its final decision for the RMM's accreditation in February 2018.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The reaccreditation progress report addresses the three primary concerns that resulted in the tabling of RMM's accreditation application.

1. Deterioration of Harada House.
2. Substandard Collections Storage Condition in Museum basement.
3. Inadequate acknowledgment of importance of the Basketry Collection.

The Museum's progress report addressing these concerns is Attachment 2. In summary, the museum will:

1. Immediately pursue a proper, orderly plan that begins with a complete structural engineer's assessment of the entire house that involves "destructive testing and evaluation" to determine the extent of deterioration.
2. Begin organizing for the capital campaign to save Harada House, to take advantage of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *California vs. Jukichi Harada* in 2018.
3. Move the archives and bulk of collection items from the Museum basement to the collection facility.
4. Inform the AAM of the significance of the Museum's basket collection and how it is acknowledged in exhibits, programming, and research.

Additionally, the AAM accreditation report contained misunderstandings about the role of the City Council, the Museum Board and its functions versus that of the Riverside Museum Associates. A letter of explanation (Attachment 3) will be submitted with the progress report to AAM.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report. However, the execution of the plans to remediate the Museum's problems in this progress report will have budget implications, and those budget details will be presented to the Board after the initial response is received from AAM regarding those plans.

Prepared by: Alexander T. Nguyen, Acting Museum Director/Assistant City Manager

### **Attachments:**

1. American Alliance of Museums Accreditation Commission letter to Riverside Metropolitan Museum (November 1, 2016)
2. American Alliance of Museums Reaccreditation Progress Report from Riverside Metropolitan Museum
3. Letter of Explanation to AAM re: role of City Council, Museum Board, and Riverside Museum Associates
4. Collections Storage Timeline (AAM Progress Report #7)