



City of Arts & Innovation

Riverside Metropolitan Museum

TO: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM BOARD

DATE: MARCH 13, 2019

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING STRATEGIC PLANNING, MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION AND EXPANSION, STAFFING, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

ISSUE:

Receive and file Director's Update regarding administration and budget, strategic planning, main museum renovation and expansion, Harada House, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, community engagement, and marketing and communications.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Metropolitan Museum Board receive and file Director's Update regarding strategic planning, main museum renovation and expansion, Harada House, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, community engagement, and marketing and communications.

DISCUSSION:

Strategic Planning

A draft Museum Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 continues to coalesce. The categories for future action include Renovating, Exhibiting and Engaging, Embracing Community, Strengthening Fundamentals, and Maximizing Resources and Stewarding Assets. Key goals include pursuing an effective renovation and reopening of the downtown site and preparing for an engaging celebration of the Museum's centenary in 2024.

Productive discussions of the draft plan with the Riverside Museum Associates (RMA) and the Harada House Foundation (HHF) have occurred. The Museum aims to formalize the new five-year plan in time for its intended start date of July 1, 2019.

Main Museum Renovation and Expansion

The Museum is pleased to announce the Los Angeles office of Pfeiffer Partners as the architect for the renovation and proposed expansion of the Mission Inn Avenue site pending City Council approval. Following approval of the contract for Phase I design services by City Council, principal architect Stephanie Kingsnorth and her team will begin the schematic design process with the

Museum and the community. This phase is anticipated to last four to six (6) months. Final design may take another six (6) to nine (9) months.

Harada House

The Museum submitted an application for Proposition 68 California state parks bond funding in the amount of \$3 million to assist substantially with the rehabilitation of Harada House. As with most grant applications, prospects are uncertain. Other sources of funding are under investigation. The Museum is grateful to the Historic Preservation Fund for a small grant (up to \$10,800) to support the costs of a professional grant writing firm experienced in parks bond applications, which reviewed and advised staff on the application. The Museum will know by the summer whether it will advance to the next stage, which would be a site visit and request from the Museum for a full proposal.

This season's generous rainfall has revealed minor weaknesses in the Harada House roof, but Building Services is promptly seeing to all repairs.

Under the direction of Lisa Masengale, Curator of Historic Structures, the historic siding from Harada House has been cleaned and is now being encapsulated and moved to storage.

Staffing

The Museum welcomed Dr. Douglas J. Long, the Museum's new Curator of Natural History, on February 25th. His office will be in the main museum until all staff at that location are temporarily resituated for construction.

The title change for the next key position to fill—Collections Registrar—was approved by City Council on February 5 and the position is under review by the City Manager's office prior to posting as part of a new layer of diligence in managing the City's hiring processes.

Additional funded positions await reclassification, revision of position descriptions, and/or City Manager's office review.

Collections and Collections Committee Activity

The collections move continues. The Clark Herbarium is undergoing freezing in stages, and collections designated for the new steel cabinetry at the Rumsey storage facilities (for example, entomology and historic firearms) are being staged to move into those cabinets.

Staff prepared appropriate custom storage housing for the Tlatilco artifacts now that *Uncovering Ancient Mexico: The Mystery of Tlatilco* has closed.

Staff inventoried the sub-collection of quilts in preparation for a small selection to go on exhibit in March in Heritage House.

The Collections and Exhibition Management Policies continue to be under revision, as do the Collections Development Plan and internal collections-related forms and procedural documents.

Please note the correct email for filing archives requests is: ArchivesRequest@riversideca.gov.

Exhibitions and Programs

The new citrus-themed "pocket" exhibition at the Arlington branch of the Riverside Public Library—which opened successfully on February 2, 2019 with an event attended by about 200—provided a solid model for the preparation of similar small-scale neighborhood exhibitions. The exhibition highlights Riverside citrus families, and the event overall celebrated citrus heritage. Staff will plan

to inaugurate each of these neighborhood exhibitions throughout the city with a half-day of multi-media programming with our partner institutions. Working with the neighborhoods, staff are at work on a schedule of locations and topics. These “pocket” exhibitions represent a surprising investment of staff time in spite of their small size, so it is anticipated that staff will work on only one at a time.

February saw a reprise of the popular Riverside Museum Associates’ “vinegar Valentines” installed at Heritage House, a look at lesser-known Victorian Valentine’s Day traditions. In honor of National Quilting Day (March 3), a month-long exhibition of quilts from the permanent collections will be on view at Heritage House. It coincides with region-wide citrus-related programming under the title of *Zest! A SoCal Collaborative*, led by the Mission Inn Museum. A citrus-themed quilt in the collection ties it all together.

Community Engagement

With the architect selected and announced, all three (3) of the community advisory teams will meet in early spring to advise on effective public communications during the design process (Rebranding and Marketing Advisory Team); refining scope for the reopening exhibitions with an eye to determining the degree to which an exhibition design firm will be required (Program Advisory Team); and ensuring strong community involvement in building design charrettes held by the architect (Design Advisory Team).

Recruiting local talent in the scripting, sourcing, and coordination of the reopening exhibitions will be crucial. The Museum’s goal is to minimize the need to outsource all stages of exhibition development. Board members are encouraged to direct individuals interested in this process to the Museum Director.

Marketing and Communications

The City’s Marketing Department presented preliminary Museum rebranding concepts to the staff on February 22. Central to this effort will be the renaming of the Museum to the “Museum of Riverside,” a proposal before this Board at today’s meeting.

The Museum was pleased by the media coverage of its Citrus Heritage Day event, given the minimal investment the Museum was able to allocate to promotion. Social media continues to be a key avenue for our communications.

The segments relating to the Museum that were prepared by C-SPAN and that aired in December 2018 may be accessed via these links:

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?454811-1/state-california-v-jukichi-harada>

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?454814-1/native-american-artifacts>.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
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Approved by:	Lea Deesing, Assistant City Manager