



Metropolitan Museum Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM BOARD **DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2019**

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING STRATEGIC PLAN, MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION AND EXPANSION, HISTORIC HOUSES, STAFFING, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, AND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

ISSUE:

Receive and file Director's Update regarding the Strategic Plan, main museum renovation and expansion, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, and marketing and communications.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Metropolitan Museum Board receive and file Director's Update regarding the Strategic Plan, main museum renovation and expansion, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, and marketing and communications.

DISCUSSION:

Strategic Plan

At the conclusion of the first two months of the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, progress has occurred on the following selected actions:

1. An estimated 10% of additional material has been removed from the downtown site.
2. Close collaboration among the Museum, Library, and City Clerk's office is refining the definition and management of "city archives."
3. See below, *Marketing and Communications*, regarding progress on rebranding.
4. Efforts to broaden the Museum's internship program are progressing, with active involvement of California Baptist University (CBU).
5. Cultural site collaboration continues; it is expected that during 2020, a region-wide menu of programs relating to women's rights, women's achievements, and the 100th anniversary of U.S. women's right to vote will be promoted.
6. The Museum is promoting and actively enhancing participation in iNaturalist, a worldwide species identification app.

7. Museum-specific administrative / operational policies have begun to be drafted.
8. Updating emergency response kits is under way.
9. The annual budget has been detailed by program, for internal reference, and introduced to all staff in order to improve budgeting awareness and budgetary management.

Main Museum Renovation and Expansion

Planning continues with the Museum's architects, Pfeiffer Partners. Staff have reduced square footage requirements for various functions, and Pfeiffer is scheduled to present the next iterations of their potential spatial layouts on October 10, 2019. Curator of Historic Structures Lisa Masengale reviewed historic assessments of the building in order to identify features of significance for which special consideration will be required; this task, which is identified in the Strategic Plan, was completed without incurring the cost of a consultant. It is anticipated that after the October meeting, Museum staff may be ready to present options for stakeholder response and input. Staff aim to choose the right moment to gather public input, striking a balance between the project still being fluid enough to alter yet presenting concepts that are developed well enough to be clear to those who haven't been involved at all stages of discussion.

Historic Houses

Heritage House reopened on schedule on September 6th with new public toilets, a new filtered water fountain, two (2) trees of concern removed and replaced with two (2) trees at different sites, and more cleaning done on the house itself than has been accomplished in many years. Lisa Masengale is seeking estimates for a long list of projects ranging from deferred maintenance to nice-to-haves so that a multi-year prioritized and phased plan can be firmed up. The issue of the falling block wall between Heritage House and the neighbor to the east—another Strategic Plan action—nears resolution.

Architectural Resources Group and IS Architecture submitted their rehabilitation plans and cost estimates to the Harada House Foundation. The two (2) plans differ from each other more than anticipated, and a detailed comparison is under way. Staff will not be able to comment on a potential direction for the project until the analysis of the reports is completed.

Staffing

Katie Gove began as the Museum's new Collections Registrar on August 26, 2019. She has already dived into the collections tasks, the most pressing of which include assisting with the final stages of the collection relocation, preparing for the data migration to our eventual new software, refining all regular processes, integrating physical collection records, and considering how to structure a full collection inventory process.

Staff are working through the necessary processes in advance of proceeding with the next most pressing hire, which the Museum has identified to be an Exhibitions Designer.

Collections

Packing, encapsulating for freezing, and preparing to move collections into the new specialized collection storage cabinets all continue. An alternative freezing option to the UCR freezer has been identified; completion of the freezing process is projected in January.

Staff continue to move forward to obtain new collections management software.

Exhibitions and Programs

Pre-design planning continues for the reopening exhibitions as well as for one (1) or two (2) "pocket" exhibitions for installation in other sites in Riverside. Fall programs at Heritage House

have included Chinese Moon Festival on September 13th and Croquet with the Mayor on September 21st. Museum staff also participated in the Long Night of Arts & Innovation on October 10th along Main Street. The Museum will host a special talk by termite specialist Lisa Margonelli on October 26th at the Arlington branch of the Library.

Marketing and Communications

Development of potential rebranding concepts continues; staff expect to have a group of options ready soon for audience field-testing. Input is anticipated as well from the advanced graphic design students at CBU, under the leadership of instructor Mike Berger.

Our social media posts have diversified and increased, and it is encouraged that all who are on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) like the Museum of Riverside and stay up-to-date on Museum programs and activities. Some of the Museum's posts have garnered tens of thousands of hits showing that an interest in the nature, culture, and history of Riverside is high.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
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