



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: MAY 26, 2021**

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING ADVISORY TEAMS, COVID-19 IMPACTS, HISTORIC HOUSES, STAFFING, BUDGET UPDATES, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS, AND VOLUNTEER AND SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

ISSUE:

Receive and file Director's Update regarding advisory teams, COVID-19 impacts, historic houses, staffing, budget updates, collections, exhibitions and programs, marketing and communications and volunteer and support opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board receive and file Director's Update regarding advisory teams, COVID-19 impacts, historic houses, staffing, budget updates, collections, exhibitions and programs, and volunteer and support opportunities.

DISCUSSION:

Advisory Teams

The following activity occurred in the staff-level advisory teams. These teams meet on varying schedules. The pandemic continues to affect the meeting schedules for some teams.

- Collections Committee – The committee met in April. Board members will find reports for two of their recommendations in the packet. Discussion of the complexities of defining when a historic object warrants preservation one of the Museum's collections occupied part of this meeting. This committee's next regularly scheduled meeting will be May 26, 2021, immediately prior to the Museum Board meeting.
- Harada House Project Team – The team's next regular meeting will be Friday, June 4, 2021. Members of this team with special expertise have been invited to serve on the review committee for selection of an architect for Phase I of the Harada House rehabilitation, a process expected to occur before the end of the fiscal year.
- Branding and Marketing Team – This entire committee has not met recently, although a core group tracked development of the new brand over the past few months. The Museum's new brand is under discussion with the City Manager's team. Informal

presentation to City Council members is a prerequisite to being presented to the Board. All of these stages are necessary before we can implement our new brand. While we expected review to be completed by the end of the fiscal year, it is now likely that we will not proceed to using our new brand until the summer.

- Design Team – Activity suspended.
- Program Team – Activity suspended.

COVID-19 Impacts

The City has instituted a transition plan called “Moving Toward New Normal as an Adaptive Organization.” For the Museum, the results have been a review of our operational protocols and examination of the Heritage House site in advance of the planned reopening on September 10, 2021. Comparatively few physical site changes are anticipated, but limitations on tour size and the permitted number of event participants will likely affect immediate operations. The City continues to encourage and facilitate vaccinations.

Historic Houses

Review committees are recruited and ready to be scheduled as soon as the two Requests for Proposal (RFPs) are released by the City's Purchasing Division: 1) architectural services for Phase I of the Harada House rehabilitation and 2) architectural services to oversee demolition and prepare design and construction documents for the reconstruction of Robinson House as the Harada House Interpretive Center.

Harada House campaign fundraising continues at a low level. The campaign benefited from the Riverside Museum Associates (RMA) choosing to redesignate some of its unrestricted funds to the Harada Stewardship Fund, bringing the campaign goal achieved to \$917,629 or 14.12%. The decision boosts the campaign closer to the goal at a time of year when donors are typically focused on income taxes rather than charitable giving.

A request for Community Benefit Funding was submitted through Congressman Mark Takano's offices by the Museum in partnership with the Civil Rights Institute of Inland Southern California (CRI). If successful, in securing the highly competitive funding, and if received in full, the funding opportunity will equip both the Harada House Interpretive Center and the CRI's public spaces with exhibitions and public programs. The funding will enable both organizations to pursue an active program of changing exhibitions and programs relating to the important Inland Empire civil rights stories.

Staff continue to pursue a handful of small to medium-sized site projects for Heritage House, in hopes of completing them before the scheduled reopening in September.

Staffing

One of the UCR interns, Takahito Tanaka, completed his term and was recruited to the Harada House Foundation board. Two additional interns from UCR remain focused on inventory and digitization of Harada House Family archives and educational program support.

Profiles of Museum staff continue this month with Dr. Douglas J. Long, Curator of Natural History. Amanda Langevin, Office Specialist, will present at the June meeting.

Budget Updates

The following indicates the Museum's year-to-date through the third quarter of the fiscal year:

Expenditure Category	Original Appropriation	Appropriation Adjustments	Total Appropriation	Encumbered	Expenditures through March 31, 2021
Personnel	\$1,358,480	(\$107,325)	\$1,251,155	\$0	\$864,917
Non-personnel	\$452,506	\$134,037	\$586,543	\$101,414	\$247,199
Grants and Capital Projects	\$0	\$26,670	\$26,670	\$5,809	\$0
Special Programs	\$94,670	\$69,460	\$164,130	\$25,716	\$5,915
Capital Purchases	\$0	\$142,855	\$142,855	\$38,571	\$104,284
Charges from others	\$222,556	\$0	\$222,556	\$0	\$164,273
Museum Debt	\$40,390	\$0	\$40,390	\$0	\$30,292
Total	\$2,168,602	\$265,697	\$2,434,299	\$171,510	\$1,416,880

Budgets for fiscal year 2021-2022 are drafted and have been presented to the Budget Engagement Commission, boards and commissions, and the City Council via a one-day workshop. After several additional stages of review, final budget approval by City Council is scheduled for June 22, 2021. A biennial budget cycle is expected to resume in 2022 for the years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.

Collections

Collections work continues behind-the-scenes, including inventories of sub-collections (southern California basketry and selected textile collections are done, for example), data cleanup in our new TMS Collections software, rehousing, records scanning, and similar work in the areas of documentation and preservation storage.

Dr. Douglas Long continues to pack the geology and paleontology collections for relocation to offsite storage, awaiting only the final configuration and anchoring of the new cabinetry.

Exhibitions and Programs

The mobile unit for micro-exhibitions mentioned last month has been delivered, and short-term guest curator Carlos Cruz, a UCR graduate student in history, has begun to consider the approach to a feature on the Casa Blanca neighborhood. He will be working with Robyn Peterson as his staff liaison.

Planning continues on *Catharine's Closet*, a temporary exhibition to reopen Heritage House, which will feature Victorian costumes of the period when Catharine Bettner had the house designed and built. It will be on view for just a few weeks, coming down to make way for *Behind the Black Veil* in October.

Digital program development continues. Several Museum videos were part of the virtual Insect Fair, a video on Miné Okubo released on Japanese Children's Day (May 5), and a video on the phenomenon of the downtown Black Lives Matters board-up murals is projected to release at the end of May on the anniversary of George Floyd's murder. Videos are in development to accompany the education kits that are available to classroom and homeschool teachers to borrow. Staff have also contracted to obtain additional B-roll via drone in areas where the subject matter will likely be used in multiple contexts.

Marketing and Communications

With a growing number of digital programs, the Museum encourages everyone to follow Museum social media accounts including the new YouTube channel. Site followers are provided with

access to the quality videos staff develop (one of three for Insect Fair): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwjghP1kOD4>. The Harada House Foundation also has an active social media presence.

Upon completion of the approval process for the new brand, the Museum will test the current mailing list with a snail-mail Museum update sheet. A direct mail item has not been sent by the Museum since prior to the closure of the downtown site in 2017.

Volunteer and Support Opportunities

Please share among all contacts that the Museum is able to accommodate limited volunteer involvement. Returning volunteers may need to renew Livescan clearances.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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