



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: DECEMBER 8, 2021**
FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: MUSEUM DIRECTOR UPDATE REGARDING STRATEGIC PLANNING, THE MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION, ADVISORY TEAMS, HISTORIC HOUSES, STAFFING, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS, AND VOLUNTEER AND SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

ISSUE:

Receive and file the Museum Director Update regarding strategic planning, the main museum renovation, advisory teams, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, marketing and communications, and volunteer and support opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board receive and file the Museum Director Update regarding strategic planning, the main museum renovation, advisory teams, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, and volunteer and support opportunities.

DISCUSSION:

Strategic Planning

Museum staff continue to work toward renewal of the Museum-specific strategic plan, although the single largest undertaking—the main Museum renovation—remains unresolved. The current plan covers 2019-2024 but recent events have significantly impacted the progress that staff anticipating making at the time the current plan was approved. The new plan will encompass the five years from 2022-2023 through 2026-2027. The Museum Director will initiate discussions with many stakeholders—including the Board, the Museum's fundraising support groups, advisory teams, and neighborhood groups—so that all may have a role in articulating the Museum's immediate direction.

Main Museum Renovation

With the passage of Measure C, which relieves a significant threat to financial stability, staff will resume work with our architects, Pfeiffer Partners, as soon as possible so that project scope and costs of the museum renovations can be outlined. The very early cost estimates provided by Pfeiffer in October 2019 require updating, and they reflected only construction costs, not full project costs.

Advisory Teams

The staff-level advisory teams meet on varying schedules. Meetings may be in hybrid format, except for the Collections Committee, which must physically examine objects proposed for accession or deaccession.

- Collections Committee – The committee met on October 13, 2021, cancelled its November and December meetings, and is expected to meet next on January 12, 2022.
- Harada House Project Team – The committee met on Friday, December 3, 2021 and will meet next on February 4, 2022. This team provided input on a design for the panel exhibition about the Harada case slated for the Riverside County Courthouse.
- Branding and Marketing Team – This committee will be convened soon. Staff changes in the City's Marketing Department have impacted progress on the overhaul of the Museum's new website, which is the Museum's highest priority marketing project at present.
- Design Team – Activity suspended. This team will be convened again when the Museum is able to resume work with its architect.
- Program Team – This team will also be convened soon to gather input on future programming and, in particular, on the Museum's early plans to celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Historic Houses

The \$7 million allocation from the state of California in support of Harada House will be administered as a grant by the California Natural Resources Agency; this agency oversees many other types of grants that support museums and historic sites. Documentation is being prepared to ensure that the Museum complies with the requirements for this kind of funding.

Two person doors on the carriage house are expected to be replaced by the end of December.

Staffing

Profiles of Museum staff will continue this month with Toni Kinsman, Senior Office Specialist. Curator of Historic Structures Lisa Masengale will present at the January meeting. Museum Director Robyn Peterson will present at the February 2022 meeting. We will schedule presentations by interns after all staff have presented.

Collections

Collections work has been focused on rehousing key collections and improving the organization of records. Collections are in the process of being moved to free up space to permit anchoring of the new cabinetry in the storage warehouses.

The conservation project budgeted for the current fiscal year is under way: the Chinese screen often on exhibit in Heritage House now under treatment to stabilize it for future exhibition. We are soliciting cost estimates to conserve recent accessions of Henry Jekel architectural drawings. Treatment is not urgent, but the estimates will help staff plan.

Exhibitions and Programs

Catharine's Closet concluded successfully at Heritage House on November 21, 2021. The next temporary exhibition for Heritage House will be installed in the spring, a quilt exhibition. A refreshed mini-exhibition is now in place at the Arlington branch of the public library. The mobile

“mini-museum” featuring a chapter of the Casa Blanca neighborhood’s history is a bit behind schedule, but making progress, as is the panel exhibition for the Riverside County Courthouse focused on the Harada case.

Planning continues for the multi-organization half-year of programs to be called “in/VISIBLE, un/HEARD: Riverside’s Civil Rights Stories,” which will center on the theme of moving from invisibility to visibility through the exploration of specific moments in local history. The Museum expects to participate with three programs: 1) a performance relating to the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote, 2) a short performance piece at Harada House as part of a coordinated historic site bus tour, and 3) an original dance performance staged along Mission Inn Avenue, initiated by the Museum and involving four local choreographers.

Please calendar the following upcoming program dates:

- December 11, 2021 – Day of Inclusion acknowledged through a video screening at the Main Library’s Community Room
- December 12, 2021 – Christmas Open House at Heritage House
- January 2, 2022 – First Sunday, 1 – 4 p.m., “Lino-What? Linocut!”
- January 6, 2022 – Artswalk, 6 – 9 p.m.

Marketing and Communications

Implementation of the Museum’s new brand will continue incrementally for some time.

Please take a moment to share notices you receive about upcoming Museum programs and share the social media posts you enjoy most. Staff are currently tracking the “most popular” social media post each month and are sometimes surprised by what proves most appealing.

Volunteer and Support Opportunities

The Museum would like to take an opportunity to remember Nancy Takano, treasurer of the Harada House Foundation and long-time supporter of the effort to rehabilitate Harada House. Nancy passed away unexpectedly on October 23, 2021. She was a tireless volunteer for many organizations and had most recently devoted many hours to advancing the Harada House fundraising campaign. She will be greatly missed.

All of the Museum’s programs present opportunities for volunteer involvement. Board members are encouraged to consider meeting our public directly through these programs. To help with Artswalk or First Sundays, contact Danielle Leland, 951-826-5124 or dleland@riversideca.gov. To help with Christmas Open House, please contact Lisa Masengale, 951-826-5128 or lmasegale@riversideca.gov.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The activities of the Museum of Riverside align with the Strategic Priority, “Arts, Culture and Recreation.” Specific programs and activities mentioned in this report support, in particular, goal 1.1 (strengthening Riverside’s portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities), goal 1.2 (enhancing equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings and facilities), and goal 1.5 (supporting programs and amenities to further develop literacy, health, and education of children, youth, and seniors throughout the community).

Museum programs further support the Strategic Priority, “Community Well-Being.” Specific goals supported by Museum programs and partnerships include goal 2.3, which includes strengthening neighborhood identities, and goal 2.5, which points to fostering relationships between community

members and partner organizations.

1. **Community Trust** – The Museum Director Report comprehensively familiarizes the Board with current operating conditions and invites Board input, providing information on volunteer opportunities and recruiting for involvement on community advisory teams. The Director's Report describes the range of collaborations and partnerships the Museum is pursuing.
2. **Equity** – The Museum Director Report describes the diverse range of programs Museum staff and partners are planning and implementing to examine, share, and celebrate the full diversity of Riverside.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Museum Director Report updates the board on the transparent and rigorous process to select contractors, such as the RFP process noted above under "Historic Houses." Staff strive to increase work product through the recruitment of volunteers. The report reflects staff efforts to secure best value for the City in the selection of both goods and services.
4. **Innovation** – The Museum Director Report reflects the development of original, locally relevant programming, as well as methods to achieve programmatic ends through proactive cultural partnerships.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The Museum Director Report reflects staff efforts to streamline operations, preserve the Museum's assets, model and teach cultural and environmental preservation, develop creative avenues of interpretation, and give voice and visibility to those who made Riverside what it is today whether recognized in their time or not. The report outlines programs that are all designed to illuminate the thread that runs from the past to the present and on to the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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