



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: MARCH 24, 2026

FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$195,000 FOR THE JUNE 2, 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION BALLOT MEASURE COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS - SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION

ISSUE:

Supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$195,000 for the June 2, 2026 municipal election ballot measure community outreach and educational materials.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council, with at least five affirmative votes, authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record a supplemental appropriation to the General Fund, Non-Departmental City Manager, Fiscal Management Account in the amount of \$195,000 from General Fund available fund balance for the preparation and distribution of informational materials and community outreach related to the ballot measure.

BACKGROUND:

On March 3, 2026, the City Council unanimously approved Option A, to place a general tax measure on the June 2, 2026, Municipal Election ballot to extend the City's existing voter-approved Measure Z transaction and use (sales) tax and update the rate from 1.00% to 1.25%. The Council adopted the resolution calling the election and introducing the corresponding ordinance to amend the Riverside Municipal Code to implement the measure should it be approved by the voters.

The measure will be consolidated with the statewide election schedule for June 2, 2026, and administered by the County of Riverside Registrar of Voters. The March 3, 2026, City Council Report identified that placing a ballot measure on the June 2, 2026, election ballot carries an estimated one-time election cost associated with County election services.

DISCUSSION:

The placement of the ballot measure on the June 2, 2026, election requires funding for Community education and information Outreach. City staff will develop and distribute educational and informational materials to ensure residents and businesses are aware of the upcoming election and have access to accurate information regarding the measure. State law allows cities to provide factual, unbiased informational materials regarding ballot measures. These activities may include:

- Informational fact sheets explaining the updated USPS postmark clarification

- Publishing informational content on the City's website
- Community presentations
- Informational materials explaining the measure and its purpose
- Public information distributed through existing City communication channels
- Informational presentations requested by community organizations
- Information on how to vote, where to vote, and vote-by-mail ballot return options
- Guidance encouraging residents to return ballots early or use official ballot drop-off locations or vote centers

These efforts are intended to ensure transparency and provide residents with clear and objective information so they can make an informed decision at the ballot box.

City departments participating in these efforts include the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Finance Department, Fire Department, and the Marketing and Communications Department. Outreach activities may include community meetings, presentations to civic organizations, and informational materials distributed through digital and print channels.

Additionally, in December 2025, the United States Postal Service (USPS) implemented an update to its Domestic Mail Manual clarifying how postmarks are applied to mailed items. The rule, which took effect on December 24, 2025, defines a postmark as the date when a piece of mail is processed at a USPS facility rather than the date the mail was deposited in a mailbox or accepted by the Postal Service. Historically, many mail users understood the postmark to reflect the date an item was mailed. Due to operational changes and the consolidation of mail processing operations, postmarks are now commonly applied at regional processing facilities and may occur one or more days after the mail is collected. As a result, mail deposited in a mailbox on a specific date may receive a postmark reflecting a later processing date depending on when the item reaches a processing center.

The clarification of USPS postmark practices is particularly important for elections conducted using vote-by-mail ballots. Under California law, vote-by-mail ballots must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by the county elections office within seven days of the election in order to be counted. Postmarks now reflect the date a ballot is processed rather than the date it was deposited in the mail, voters who mail their ballots close to Election Day may risk receiving a postmark date after Election Day. If a ballot receives a postmark after Election Day, it will NOT meet the statutory requirements to be counted.

It is anticipated that our Riverside City Clerk in concert with the City Attorney's Office will conduct an educational campaign to ensure Riverside voters are aware of this change by the U.S. Postal Service. Any ballot measure educational campaign can likewise act as a communication channel to inform voters of this important change impacting mail-in ballots. The outreach effort will also encourage civic participation by providing residents with information on how and where to vote, including available vote centers, ballot drop-off locations, and vote-by-mail options.

To ensure residents are informed prior to the June 2, 2026, election, staff proposes implementing a community education effort that provides clear, factual guidance regarding the ballot measure, where and how to vote, and ballot return options. Funding from the supplemental appropriation will support the development and distribution of informational/educational materials such as fact sheets, community presentation materials, and other communication tools.

All informational/educational materials related to the ballot measure will be fair, impartial, and

strictly informational in nature. Materials will be developed in compliance with applicable state laws governing public agency communications regarding ballot measures. The City Attorney’s Office will be involved with the preparation of all materials to ensure compliance with state law.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total fiscal impact of this action is \$195,000. Upon Council Approval, a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$195,000 will be recorded in the General Fund, Non-Departmental City Manager, Fiscal Management Account from General Fund available fund balance. Funds will support the development and distribution of informational materials and community outreach efforts related to the June 2, 2026, Municipal Election ballot measure and voter education regarding ballot return deadlines and USPS postmark practices.

Fund	Program/Account Name	Account	Amount
Community Information and Outreach			
General Fund	N/D-City Manager, Fiscal Management	7211200-450247	\$195,000

Prepared by: Mike Futrell, City Manager
 Certified as to availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
 Approved by: Mike Futrell, City Manager
 Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reibold, Interim City Attorney