



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: APRIL 22, 2026**
FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: TO RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL APPROVES A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE OPERATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2026-2027 THROUGH 2030-2031

ISSUE:

To recommend that City Council approves a five-year Strategic Plan for Museum of Riverside operations for the fiscal years 2026-2027 through 2030-2031.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommends that City Council approves a five-year Strategic Plan for Museum of Riverside operations for the fiscal years 2026-2027 through 2030-2031.

BACKGROUND:

Multi-year strategic plans have governed intermittently during the Museum of Riverside's (Museum) many years of operation. The museum field considers a strategic plan to be a basic, required document. A strategic plan is often a prerequisite to seeking grant funding. A current, regularly updated strategic plan is one of the American Alliance of Museums' (AAM) core documents required of accredited museums; thus, as an accredited museum, the Museum is obligated to develop a strategic plan that realistically reflects institutional goals and capabilities.

The closure in September 2017 of the main Museum disrupted the Museum's strategic plan (Plan) at the time. On June 19, 2019, the Museum Board approved a five-year Plan for the years 2019-2020 through 2023-2024. A plan revised in response to the pandemic's impacts was approved by the Museum Board on April 27, 2022, for the years 2022-2023 through 2026-2027. It was subsequently approved by City Council on July 5, 2022. The Museum Board has received status reports on this Plan quarterly. To be prepared for the forthcoming reaccreditation process with a refreshed and current Plan, the process began in mid-2025 to renew the current plan.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed Plan is informed by meetings involving all staff and many stakeholders. Input was solicited from the Museum of Riverside Board at a workshop meeting held on February 25, 2026. In January and February 2026, input was also solicited from the Riverside Museum Associates,

the Harada House Foundation, and several informal groups.

The Museum's Plan carries forward the four key categories of activity that were the armature of the earlier Plan:

1. Renovation, Expansion, and Access;
2. Inspiring and Connecting;
3. Stewardship; and
4. Maximizing Resources.

The proposed Plan reflects the fact that the Museum is mid-stream in two large capital projects—the main Museum and the Harada House campus—and that the majority of its resources will be focused on completing these projects successfully. Opening and operating these sites will be transformational for the Museum and will assist it in aligning with national level museum field priorities to represent our communities more fully, accurately, and inclusively.

The plan continues to contain actions that address the concerns expressed in the independent operational assessments that led to the 2017 closure of the downtown site. Many of these actions center on continuing to advance or complete these years-long initiatives. Other actions include continued pursuit of meaningful collaborations, effective use of technology, meeting professional stewardship standards, pursuing scholarship with integrity, and offering community service that excels. The Museum's proposed Plan continues to emphasize a visitor- and service-oriented perspective, which has been core to the design of the new main Museum itself. The Plan also notes practical realities, opportunities, and limitations on resources as well as the need to diversify revenue.

The proposed Plan resembles its predecessor in that it has multiple logistical functions. It codifies overarching priorities but also serves as an action plan reflecting responsibilities, costs, timelines, and evaluative criteria. The proposed Plan is not intended to restate position descriptions or standard operating procedures; rather, it focuses on new, key, or one-time initiatives and projects that fundamentally advance the Museum and are deemed achievable within the five-year period.

Quarterly status reporting to the Museum of Riverside Board will continue. At the three-year mark, the Plan renewal process will begin again.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Museum Director
Reviewed by: Ann Lovell, Manager of Operations

Attachment: Strategic Plan FY2026-2027 to FY2030-2031