



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: JUNE 24, 2026**

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT: APPROVE REVISIONS AND UPDATES TO THE MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE'S
COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

ISSUE:

To recommend to City Council to approve revisions and updates to the Museum of Riverside's Collections and Exhibitions Management Policies.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommends that City Council approves revisions and updates to the Museum of Riverside's Collections and Exhibitions Management Policies.

BACKGROUND:

Collections management policies are central to the unique function that museums have in our society. Their development over recent decades reflects the changing wisdom of the field and ensures that high ethical and operational standards regarding the care of physical and intellectual resources are defined and upheld.

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) considers a collections management policy to be one of the field's five "core documents," and one of the four of these five that must be approved by any accredited museum's governing body. The Museum of Riverside (Museum) is an AAM-accredited institution; it is thus obliged to comply and, furthermore, desires to comply with the field's standards even as they become ever more demanding.

The Museum has had many iterations of collections management policies over its decades of operation. The current version was approved by City Council on August 6, 2019.

DISCUSSION:

Since the existing Collections and Exhibitions Management Policies were approved in 2019, Museum staff have been operating in compliance with them. Over that time, the Museum's

name has changed, omissions have been noted, and the need to make additional edits and clarifications has arisen. Apart from minor typo corrections, the proposed revisions and updates are summarized below:

1. Clarification of Collections Committee composition and meeting interval;
2. Refinement of staff responsibilities regarding the live collection;
3. Establishing that determinations will not be made regarding whether to retain certain natural history specimens until after treatment by a taxidermist or similar professional;
4. Prohibition on collecting live ammunition, active flares, volatile fuels, or other explosives;
5. Direction regarding property abandoned to the care of the Museum;
6. Clarification regarding the preservation standards for objects installed outdoors or in compromised environments such as porches, attics, or similar; and
7. Clarification regarding the range of resources that the Museum may steward under repository agreements and what those agreements should stipulate.

Collections management policies differ from collections development plans. Management policies define *how* practical and logistical matters that pertain to collections will be handled. Development plans define *what* a collection will comprise and how a museum will pursue reasoned collections growth and refinement. These refinements to the collections management policies bring the Museum up to current standard for the practical care of the collections with respect to the range of collections the Museum collects.

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: Collections and Exhibitions Management Policies REVISED