



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: FEBRUARY 4, 2026**

FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO THE MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD TO RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL APPROVE DEACCESSION FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION OF ONE (1) TAXIDERMIED CARIBOU TROPHY MOUNT (A1128-4)

ISSUE:

To recommend that City Council approve deaccession from the permanent collection of one (1) taxidermied caribou trophy mount (A1128-4).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommends that City Council approves deaccession from the permanent collection of one (1) taxidermied caribou trophy mount (A1128-4).

BACKGROUND:

At its meeting on January 14, 2026, the Museum of Riverside's (Museum) Collections Committee voted unanimously in support of recommending that the Museum of Riverside Board forward a recommendation to City Council for deaccession of one (1) taxidermied caribou trophy mount (A1128-4).

This caribou trophy mount is the last remaining item from a donation of multiple trophy mounts donated to the then Riverside Municipal Museum in 1980 by Mrs. Jacob A. Richman (A1128).

DISCUSSION:

The term "deaccession" refers to the procedure of formally removing an object from a museum's permanent collection, after which the object may be considered for sale, exchange, gift, transfer to another entity, transfer to a collection other than the permanent collection, or – in the case of irretrievably deteriorated objects—disposal.

To “accession” an object is the process of including it formally in a museum’s permanent collection, which is the category of collection for which the greatest effort will be made to preserve the object in perpetuity and document it fully.

In 2001, three trophy mounts from the Richman donation were loaned to the City of Riverside Parks and Recreation Department to be exhibited in the Izaak Walton Clubhouse facility at Fairmount Park. Later that year, a fire at that facility destroyed three loaned mounts from this donor and two mounts from other donors. In 2007, this caribou head (A1128-4) was loaned to the Parks and Recreation Department and remained hanging in the Izaak Walton Clubhouse until Museum of Riverside staff removed it at the request of the Parks and Recreation Department on 22 December 2025.

Museum staff have determined that this object is unlikely to be used for exhibition in the near future due to its deviation from the Museum’s mission, which centers on Riverside and the local region. Caribou are not native to this area. Only a select few natural history objects outside of this local scope are occasionally useful to provide context and comparison; however, the Museum already has sufficient holdings that fit this intent.

Justification for this recommendation is drawn from the Museum of Riverside’s Collections and Exhibitions Management Policies where it is codified that the process of deaccession may be initiated when:

1. The object/specimen is outside of the scope of the Museum’s mission and guidelines set by Riverside Municipal Code (Chapter 2.12), acquisition policy, or is irrelevant to the purposes of the Museum.
2. The object/specimen has doubtful potential utilization in the near future in the Museum’s exhibition and public programs.

Upon approval of deaccession, this mount will be offered to a national forensics laboratory for use in investigator training or, failing that, another regional natural history institution. If the Museum is unable to transfer the mount, it will be sold via appropriate public auction. The funds realized from this transaction will be restricted to uses designated in the Museum’s Collections Management Policy, that is, retained until used for an appropriate acquisition to the natural history collection. The change of ownership will be accompanied by a disclaimer due to the possibility that toxic materials employed in taxidermy at the time this mount was prepared may remain.

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

