

# Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

*City of Arts & Innovation*

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**TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD                      DATE: AUGUST 27, 2025**

**FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO THE MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD TO RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL APPROVE DEACCESSION OF THE LISA L. ANDERSEN AND WILLIAM M. A. SWAFFORD COLLECTION (A1814) COMPRISED OF SIXTEEN (16) BASKETS, EIGHT (8) WOVEN PLAQUES, FOUR (4) GOURDS, THIRTEEN (13) KACHINA FIGURES, FIFTEEN (15) MASKS, ONE (1) SHIELD, THREE (3) WOODEN PLAQUES, AND ONE (1) TOTEM POLE**

## **ISSUE:**

To recommend that City Council approve deaccession from the permanent collection of the Lisa L. Andersen and William M. A. Swafford collection (A1814) comprised of sixteen (16) baskets, eight (8) woven plaques, four (4) gourds, thirteen (13) kachina figures, fifteen (15) masks, one (1) shield, three (3) wooden plaques, and one (1) totem pole.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommends that City Council approves deaccession from the permanent collection of the Lisa L. Andersen and William M. A. Swafford collection (A1814) comprised of sixteen (16) baskets, eight (8) woven plaques, four (4) gourds, thirteen (13) kachina figures, fifteen (15) masks, one (1) shield, three (3) wooden plaques, and one (1) totem pole.

## **BACKGROUND:**

At its meeting on July 9, 2025, 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 objects from the Lisa L. Andersen and William M. A. Swafford collection (A1814) of the Museum's permanent collection.

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.

Between 2011-2015, the Museum accessioned into the permanent collections these sixty-one (61) objects. The cultural objects of the Hopi, Paiute, Akimel O'odham, Tohono O'odham, Salish, Cahuilla, and Diné were accepted because they were intended to be used as contemporary additions to the Museum's founding collections that contained historic materials associated with the same cultures.

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

The objects—confirmed to have come from or potentially come from Africa, Mexico, Central America, Oceania, and Indonesia—were accepted into the collections at the time without a plan for their exhibition, publication, or study, on the grounds that the Museum did not have anything else like them. Records indicate that the donors acquired the collection from a relative who purchased the objects on his travels. The majority of the objects are of types created for a tourist market rather than for use by the cultures that manufactured them. None of them has been exhibited at the Museum or loaned to other institutions. This is true in spite of the fact that the Museum has had several exhibitions relating to the cultures of origin of some of these objects since their acquisition.

The collection includes seventy (70) objects of which sixty-one (61) are identified for deaccession (see attachments for additional information):



A1814-1 Basket jar



A1814-2 Basket



A1814-3 Basket



A1814-4 Plaque



A1814-5 Plaque



A1814-7



A1814-8 Basket bowl



A1814-9 Basket tray



A1814-10 Basket



A1814-11 Basket with lid



A1814-13 Plaque



A1814-14 basket



A1814-15 Plaque



A1814-16 Plaque



A1814-17 Plaque



A1814-18 Plaque



A1814-19 Basket



A1814-22 Basket



A1814-24 Basket



A1814-25



A1814-26 Basket



A1814-27 Basket



A1814-28 Basket



A1814-29 Gourd



A1814-30 Gourd



A1814-31 Gourd, 2



A1814-31 Gourd



A1814-32 Gourd



A1814-33 Basket



A1814-34 Kachina



A1814-37 Kachina



A1814-39 Kachina



A1814-40 Kachina



A1814-41 Kachina



A1814-42 Kachina



A1814-43 Kachina



A1814-44 Kachina



A1814-45 Kachina



A1814-46 Kachina



A1814-47 Kachina



A1814-48 Kachina



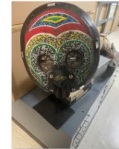
A1814-49 Kachina



A1814-50 Mask



A1814-51 Mask



A1814-52 Mask on stand



A1814-53 Mask



A1814-54 Mask



A1814-55 Mask, helmet



A1814-56 Mask



A1814-57 Mask



A1814-58 Mask



A1814-59 Shield, mask



A1814-60 Mask



A1814-61 Mask



A1814-62 Mask



A1814-63 Mask



A1814-65 Mask



A1814-66 Plaque



A1814-67 Plaque



A1814-68 Totem



A1814-69 Plaque



A1814-70

## DISCUSSION:

The sixty-one (61) objects selected for deaccession from the Lisa L. Andersen and William M.A. Swafford Collection (A1814) fit three deaccession criteria within the Museum's Collections and Exhibitions Management Policies:

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.
3. The Museum has at least two comparable objects/specimens in the collection that are in superior condition, better documented, and/or of better quality

See the attachment for additional details about each object with specific deaccession criteria. Museum staff has determined that these objects are unlikely to be used for exhibition in the near future, due to their deviation from the Museum's mission, which centers on Riverside and the local region. However, curatorial staff have selected nine (9) objects from the original gift collection to retain for future relevant projects and to provide context for interpretation of regional Indigenous resources. Particular emphasis has been placed on keeping those materials with a known maker or that were deemed a unique example in the context of the Museum's mission-relevant holdings. This is in line with the Museum's intention to retain for comparative purposes a small number of other representative Indigenous North American resources from non-California tribes—for example, Northwest Coast and Southwestern Pueblo.

Thus, the Museum proposes the deaccession of the sixty-one (61) objects from the Lisa L. Andersen and William M.A. Swafford Collection (A1814) that do not align with Museum's collecting or programmatic goals. Upon approval of the deaccession action, the objects will first be offered to appropriate cultural organizations for transfer. If the Museum is unable to transfer the materials, they will be sold at an appropriate auction house or other public sales outlet. The funds realized from this transaction will be used according to designated purposes as identified in the Museum's Collections Management Policy, i.e., retained until used for an appropriate

acquisition to the anthropology/Indigenous peoples' collection.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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

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| Attachment: | A1814 deaccession inventory with notes |
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