



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2025

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: DEACCESSION FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION 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:

Approve deaccession from the Museum of Riverside's 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 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.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

At a regular meeting on August 27, 2025, the Museum of Riverside Board, with seven (7) members present for this vote and two (2) absent, unanimously voted 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.

BACKGROUND:

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 original collection included seventy (70) objects of which sixty-one (61) are identified for deaccession:



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



A1814-44 Kachina



A1814-47 Kachina



A1814-50 Mask



A1814-53 Mask



A1814-56 Mask



A1814-59 Shield, mask



A1814-42 Kachina



A1814-45 Kachina



A1814-48 Kachina



A1814-51 Mask



A1814-54 Mask



A1814-57 Mask



A1814-60 Mask



A1814-43 Kachina



A1814-46 Kachina



A1814-49 Kachina



A1814-52 Mask on stand



A1814-55 Mask, helmet



A1814-58 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

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. 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.

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

Certified as to availability

of funds:

Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer

Approved as to form:

Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Museum of Riverside Draft Board Minutes – August 27, 2025
2. Museum Board Deaccession Recommendation Report – August 27, 2025