



# City Council Memorandum

*City of Arts & Innovation*

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL      DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2024**

**FROM: GENERAL SERVICES      WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: ADOPT A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DISPLAY OF SPECIFIC  
COMMEMORATIVE FLAGS AT CITY FACILITIES**

## **ISSUE:**

Adopt a resolution authorizing display of commemorative flags at City Hall and potentially other City facilities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing display of specific commemorative flags at City Hall and potentially other City facilities.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On January 17, 2023, the City Council adopted a resolution establishing the City of Riverside Flag Policy, which provides a set of guidelines to ensure the uniform handling and display of flags at City facilities. In addition, the adopted Flag Policy (attachment 1) sets forth guidelines for the display of commemorative flags. A commemorative flag under this policy means a flag that identifies a specific date, historical event, cause, or group of people, whereby the City honors or commemorates the date, event, cause or people by flying the flag. At this same meeting, the City Council requested that staff solicit input from the Human Relations Commission regarding developing a schedule for display of commemorative flags at City facilities.

On February 23, 2023, staff solicited input from the Human Relations Commission (HRC) on a commemorative flag display schedule for City facilities.

On May 2, 2023, by a majority vote the City Council approved the display of established or commonly recognized commemorative flags incorporating input from the HRC but did not give direction for suggested groups of people or causes for which there is currently no established or commonly recognized commemorative flag.

On June 6, 2023, by a majority vote the City Council adopted Resolution 23996 authorizing the display of commemorative flags at City Hall and where possible at other City facilities, as follows:

1. Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27 only)

2. Black History Month (February, entire month)
3. Women's Suffrage Victory Flag (March, entire month)
4. LGBTQ Pride Month (June, entire month except for June 19)
5. Juneteenth (June 19 only)

On January 16, 2024, the City Council approved the commemorative flags schedule for the upcoming year and directed staff to return to a subsequent City Council meeting with a resolution supporting the City's display of the flags chosen.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Historically, the City of Riverside has displayed flags in conformance with Federal and State statutes which outline standards for the display of the flag of the United States, the State of California flag, and the City of Riverside flag.

Numerous public entities across the state and nation have passed resolutions within the last several years authorizing the display of commemorative flags, such as the Rainbow Pride flag, which is a symbol of lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender and queer pride and social movements, the Progress Pride flag, which builds on the Rainbow Pride flag by adding a chevron of white, pink, light blue, brown and black to symbolize transgender rights, people of color, and those living with or lost to Human Immunodeficiency Virus Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV AIDS), and the Juneteenth Flag, a symbolic representation of the end of slavery in the United States.

## **Commemorative Flags**

Per the adopted Flag Policy, commemorative flags may be displayed at City Hall and where possible at other City facilities upon City Council action, consistent with the City's vision, mission, and strategic plan. Following are the guidelines for the approval and display of commemorative flags.

1. Commemorative flags shall be displayed only at City Hall and select City facilities that have multiple flagpoles and/or a flagpole tall enough to accommodate multiple flags.
2. No more than one commemorative flag shall be displayed on a flagpole concurrently.
3. Commemorative flags may be displayed only as authorized by resolution of the City Council and as an expression of the City's official sentiments.
4. The City will not display a commemorative flag based on a request of a third party or to sponsor the expression from a third party.
5. Commemorative flags shall be displayed for a period of time that is reasonable or customary for the subject that is to be commemorated, but no longer than 30 continuous days with the exception of City of Riverside Parks facilities and the Military Wall of Honor Memorial which continuously display the Prisoner of War flag.
6. In January of each year, the City Council will consider the display of commemorative flags for the upcoming year. Staff will return to a subsequent City Council meeting with a resolution supporting the City's display of the flag(s) chosen. A majority of the City Council must vote affirmatively for said resolution.

7. In addition to the annual consideration, a Council Member may, at any time during the year, suggest the display of additional flags meeting the criteria of the Flag Policy. Consideration would be by a two-step process where on an agenda the Council considers the request, and if supported by a motion approved by a majority of the Councilmembers, staff would return with a formal resolution authorizing display of a commemorative flag. A majority of the City Council must vote affirmatively for said resolution.

### Commemorative Flag Resolution

As set forth in the Flag Policy, consideration of commemorative flags is a two-step process. The first step will occur at this Council meeting, with City Council consideration of the commemorative flag(s) schedule for the upcoming year. If specific flag(s) are approved for display by a majority of the City Council, the second step requires that at a subsequent meeting, a majority of the City Council adopt a resolution supporting the display of those commemorative flags. Under the current Resolution 23996, the City Council authorized the display of commemorative flags at City Hall and where possible at other City facilities, as follows:

- Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27 only)
- Black History Month (the month of February)
- Women's Suffrage Victory Flag (the month of March)
- LGBTQ Pride Month (the month of June, with the exception of June 19)
- Juneteenth (June 19 only)

As this is a newly adopted program with no changes currently proposed to the previously approved flag schedule, and since initial flag raising ceremonies were held in June, 2023 for LGTBQ Pride Month and Juneteenth, with upcoming initial flag raising ceremonies scheduled in 2024 for Holocaust Remembrance Day, Black History Month and the Women's Suffrage Victory Flag, the City Council is asked to approve the attached resolution (attachment 2) authorizing the commemorative flags schedule outlined above.

When properly displayed, flags are powerful symbols of our shared history, pride, principles and commitment to our nation, state, and community.

### Recognizing Groups and Causes for which no Established Commemorative Flag Exists

On January 31, 2024, staff from the General Services Division and the Community and Economic Department, Arts and Cultural Affairs Division, will solicit the Human Relations Commission's input on how to recognize groups and causes for which established commemorative flags do not exist. The Human Relations Commission's suggestions will then be brought to City Council for consideration at a later date.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

Commemorative flags support Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government, and Goal 5.5, Foster a culture of safety, well-being, resilience, sustainability, diversity and inclusion across the City organization.

Commemorative flags align with *EACH of the five Cross-Cutting Threads* in the Envision Riverside 2025, as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – In accordance with the City of Riverside Flag Policy, which was reviewed publicly at three meetings of the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement & Governmental Processes Committee prior to being adopted by the City Council, the consideration on commemorative flags for the upcoming year is agendaized for Council review on January 9, 2024, ensuring public transparency.
2. **Equity** – Commemorative flags promote equity and representation for diverse groups of people and historical events, consistent with the City's adopted vision, mission and strategic priorities.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Any commemorative flags purchased as a result of Council action will be procured in accordance with City purchasing policy.
4. **Innovation** – Commemorative flags provide an innovative way to promote diversity and inclusion by recognizing specific groups or causes consistent with the City's adopted vision, mission and strategic priorities.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Commemorative flags promote social sustainability, as an integral component of sustainability is the ability to embrace diverse communities.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impact for the purchase of a commemorative flag is estimated at under \$100 per flag. There is no fiscal impact related to this report as the General Services Department has already purchased the flags related to this report and calendar. Should any department or City facility wish to fly commemorative flags, the costs will be absorbed by those departments that choose to fly those flags within their adopted budgets.

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#### **Attachments:**

1. Flag Policy
2. Resolution