



# Economic Development Committee

*City of Arts & Innovation*

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**TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**DATE: APRIL 17, 2025**

**FROM: MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS  
DEPARTMENT**

**WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CITY BRANDING EFFORTS, EXISTING INITIATIVES AND  
UPCOMING INITIATIVES**

**ISSUE:**

Receive an update on City Branding efforts, including existing initiatives and upcoming initiatives.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Economic Development Committee:

1. Receive an update on City Branding efforts, including existing initiatives and upcoming initiatives.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Riverside continues to implement strategic branding and marketing aimed at enhancing visibility, driving economic growth, and fostering a strong sense of place. Through targeted placemaking efforts and storytelling campaigns, Riverside is strengthening its position as a cultural and economic hub. Key developments in districts such as Midtown, Arlington Village, and The Arts & Culture District (The ACD), along with the launch of The Year of Arts & Culture, have been instrumental in showcasing the city's creative economy and community identity. The ACD has seen a transformation through fresh branding, electric box wraps, banners, and promotional campaigns that celebrate the city's vibrant arts scene. Additionally, the Visit Riverside campaign and Phase 1 Brand Audit are assessing and refining Riverside's tourism and economic development messaging, ensuring consistency and cohesiveness in outreach efforts.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City is actively working with Visit California to expand its reach and leverage statewide promotional opportunities. Through this partnership, Riverside is securing features in statewide marketing materials, travel itineraries, and online content, positioning itself as a must-visit destination. The City is also enhancing its presence through multiple marketing initiatives, including a six-month contract with Ontario Airport to welcome travelers, a one-year advertising partnership with the San Diego Business Journal to attract business investment, and iHeart Radio advertising during podcasts and live streaming to further amplify Riverside's brand. Additional

strategies include targeted hotel and convention center promotions to attract business and leisure tourists, features in Inland Empire Magazine to showcase Riverside as a leading regional destination, the Riversider Magazine designed to engage the local community with monthly updates and event promotions, Las Vegas bus advertising to reach key out-of-state markets, out-of-state marketing efforts aimed at attracting business investment and tourism, and the Ohmio Initiative, highlighting Riverside's leadership in autonomous transit solutions.

Looking ahead, Riverside is strategically positioning itself for major global events such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup 2026 and the LA 2028 Olympics, capitalizing on increased travel and tourism opportunities. The City is actively collaborating with regional and national tourism organizations to maximize exposure and attract visitors to Riverside. Additionally, ongoing promotional efforts will continue to evolve, with a focus on digital storytelling, video content, and enhanced social media engagement. A key milestone on the horizon is the completion of the Visit Riverside Brand Audit in Spring 2025, which will further refine the City's marketing and branding strategies, ensuring Riverside remains a competitive and compelling destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. Through these initiatives, Riverside continues to define and share its story, fostering economic development, cultural engagement, and long-term sustainability.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This item contributes to Strategic Priority No. 3 – Economic Opportunity and supports Goal No. 3.3 – Cultivate a business climate that welcomes innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment and Strategic Priority No. 5 High Performing Government and supports Goal No. 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust and encourage shared decision-making.

1. **Community Trust** – Through visible, impactful branding that aligns with the city's development efforts, residents can see tangible progress, leading to greater engagement, pride, and trust in the city's leadership and direction.
2. **Equity** – City branding initiatives that highlight the city's commitment to sustainability, economic development, and inclusivity can help address systemic inequalities, support marginalized communities, and create an environment where everyone has opportunity to thrive.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – City branding efforts contribute to fiscal responsibility by effectively allocating resources toward initiatives that generate long-term economic benefits.
4. **Innovation** – Branding efforts and initiatives attract tech companies, startups, and entrepreneurs, creating an environment where new ideas and technologies can thrive, while also promoting sustainability, technology, and economic development to drive innovation in sectors such as green energy, smart infrastructure, and digital services.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Branding efforts and city initiatives position the city as forward-thinking, responsible, and committed to long-term environmental, social, and economic health.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this update.

Prepared by: Kaitlin Reiersen, Director of Marketing and Communications  
Certified as to  
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Jack Liu, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:  
1. Presentation