



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: APRIL 24, 2024**
FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING THE MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION, HISTORIC HOUSES, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, BUDGET, STAFFING, ADVISORY TEAMS, VOLUNTEER AND SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES, AND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

ISSUE:

Receive and file the Director's Update regarding the main museum renovation, historic houses, collections, exhibitions and programs, budget, staffing, advisory teams, volunteer and support opportunities, and marketing and communications.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board receive and file the Director's Update regarding the main museum renovation, historic houses, collections, exhibitions and programs, budget, staffing, advisory teams, volunteer and support opportunities, and marketing and communications.

DISCUSSION:

Main Museum Renovation

Pfeiffer Partners, the Museum's main museum architects, expect to present their 100% construction drawing set by the end of May. A cost estimate delivered to the Museum recently is close to the previous one received several months ago. We continue to work with the architects on final details and are integrating the exhibition designer into the process. The exhibition design firm, Riggs Ward, has oriented themselves quickly and begun developing the reopening exhibitions and new Nature Lab. A site walk occurred in response to the Request for Qualifications issued to create a pre-qualified panel of general contractors for the project. Putting the project out to bid early this summer remains the Museum's goal.

Progress has occurred toward preparing the offices at our leased warehouse for three staff to relocate there during main museum construction. Educators Teresa Woodard and Kim Cobb as well as Curator of Natural History Ian Wright (and the live collections) will soon be situated there. Most of the other staff working in the main museum will relocate during construction to a suite of offices in Mission Square.

Historic Houses

In mid-March work began to remove the inscription wall from the second floor of Harada House in order to safeguard it offsite during the impending structural work on the house. IS Architecture progresses toward the plan set needed for review by our grantors and peer reviewers. A Request for Qualifications will soon be issued to create a pre-qualified panel of general contractors for the first portion of the work on the Harada House Interpretive Center property. This work will need to occur in two stages.

At Heritage House, small projects under way include research for site fencing improvements, job walks for contractors considering the kitchen upgrade project, window and door repairs, and various small projects in the carriage house. The resignation of Curator of History Laura Fisher means that the office space in the carriage house is again usually unoccupied, allowing work to proceed with less staff disruption.

Collections

Most of the progress on collections-related tasks has been continued work in aid of the 100th anniversary exhibition and chipping away at large multi-year projects, such as rehousing and reconfiguring collections storage. Curator of Natural History Ian Wright has made good progress on moving collections that remained in the main museum to the collections storage warehouses.

Tribal consultations are taking place when requested under California's version (AB 275) of legislation passed federally in 1990. The federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, which mandates a repatriation process for human remains, grave goods, and sacred objects, was updated in December 2023 to broaden requirements for tribal communications and consent. We anticipate additional deaccession recommendations coming to the Museum Board in the future to facilitate repatriations to California tribal groups.

Exhibitions and Programs

Chinatown: A Home for All opened at Heritage House and will be on view through June 30, 2024. The exhibition was curated by Laura Fisher, Curator of History for a short time (joined the staff in August 2023 and resigned in February 2024). The exhibition was beautifully designed by staff Exhibition Designer Elise (Burgos) Heath. Staff are, as of this writing, about a quarter of the way through the 100th anniversary programs, which have occurred successfully, apart from three cancelled due to weather. Additional programs had been planned but not yet published, anticipating that weather might interfere with a few.

Show your support for Museum programs by attending them, telling others about them, and sharing our posts announcing them. May in particular is a busy month.

Date	Program	Volunteer opportunity?
April 27, 2024	Perfume workshop at Heritage House, 10:00 – noon. This is a ticketed event.	Yes
May 2, 2024	Artswalk, 6:00 – 9:00, on Main Street, featuring Astronomy Day	Yes
May 3, 2024	Nights with the Museum, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., featuring Steve Lech, "Riverside County Through the Lens of Burton Frasher," Main Library Community Room	No
May 4, 2024	Derby Day when we will be "Horsing Around at Heritage House," with live horses on site from 1:00 – 3:00	Yes

May 5, 2024	First Sunday, 1:00 – 4:00, Captain Carl and His Mobile Tidepool will be at the Casa Blanca branch of the library	Yes
May 12, 2024	A musical performance for Mother's Day, by the La Sierra Wind Consort, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. at Heritage House	No
May 17, 2024	Movies on the Lawn: Made in Riverside will feature <i>Vibes</i> from 1988. Heritage House gates open at sunset, screening starts at dusk.	Yes
May 18, 2024	The Riverside Community Players offer a special magic show at Heritage House, starting at 2:00 p.m.	Yes
May 19, 2024	Ice Cream Social at Heritage House! 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Very definitely

Budget

Museum staff are moving through the budgeting process established by the Finance Department and the City Manager. Find a separate report about the development of the FY2024-2026 biennial budget in this Museum Board meeting packet.

Staffing

By the time of the April Museum Board meeting, the recruitment for the Curator of History will be under way.

Advisory Teams

The staff-level advisory teams are open to new members, who need not be Board members. Staff are always interested in new members for these teams who can bring expertise aligned with the goals of the team. Team chairs may change as new staff are brought up to speed.

Committee / Team	Meeting interval	Role	Chair	Next meeting
Collections	Every other second Wednesday	Advising on collections activity	Robyn G. Peterson	May 8, 2024
Harada House Project Team	Every other first Friday	Programs and communications regarding Harada House	Interim lead: Robyn G. Peterson	June 7, 2024
Branding and Marketing	Irregular	Public communications, PR, website	Chantal Downing	TBD
Programs	Every other first Wednesday	Program development, implementation, and coordination with partners	Robyn G. Peterson	May 1, 2024

Volunteer and Support Opportunities

The Museum needs touring docents and event volunteers! Please encourage interested individuals you may know to contact Teresa Woodard Belding, twoodard@riversideca.gov. A volunteer handbook is in draft, which is intended to be a one-stop source of information for volunteers, whether they be docents, Board members, or general volunteers.

Please note as well that a Volunteer Appreciation Brunch will take place on Sunday, April 28, 2024, at Heritage House from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Please contact Teresa and do not wait until the date of the Board meeting to RSVP, if you would like to attend this event.

Marketing and Communications

Notable progress has been made on the new website, although staff do not yet have a date when the site will go live. Three Museum staff are initially being trained to update the site and understand how it works behind-the-scenes. When the most important content is loaded, we'll go live and work thereafter to enrich the site with information about the collections, past exhibitions, and relevant community connections the Museum maintains.

Institutional Advancement Coordinator Chantal Downing has assumed oversight of the Museum's social media program, which continues to be the most varied and up-to-date avenue of public communication for the Museum.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The activities of the Museum of Riverside align with the Strategic Priority, "Arts, Culture and Recreation." Specific programs and activities mentioned in this report support, in particular, goal 1.1 (strengthening Riverside's portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities), goal 1.2 (enhancing equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings and facilities), and goal 1.5 (supporting programs and amenities to further develop literacy, health, and education of children, youth, and seniors throughout the community).

Museum programs further support the Strategic Priority, "Community Well-Being." Specific goals supported by Museum programs and partnerships include goal 2.3, which includes strengthening neighborhood identities, and goal 2.5, which points to fostering relationships between community members and partner organizations.

1. **Community Trust** – The Director's Report comprehensively familiarizes the Board with operating conditions, invites Board input, provides information on volunteer opportunities, and describes partnerships the Museum is pursuing. Progress on the Harada House main museum projects restore trust in the City's commitment to open these important cultural resources for the public.
2. **Equity** – The Director's Report describes the programs Museum staff and partners are implementing to celebrate and serve the full diversity of Riverside. Programs strive to emphasize equity and access. Marketing reaches into all neighborhoods. Community engagement efforts strive to reach a variety of demographic groups.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Director's Report updates the board on ongoing efforts to operate within the Department's budgets and apply a transparent and rigorous process when selecting contractors and expending resources. The Museum seeks non-City funding regularly and as practical. Museum budgets consistently run in the black, demonstrating responsible use of taxpayer dollars.
4. **Innovation** – The Director's Report reports on the development of original, locally relevant programming, as well as methods to achieve programmatic ends through proactive cultural partnerships and efficient promotions. Projects designed to extend the Museum's reach beyond its walls during the main museum closure employ innovative techniques and designs.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The Director's Report reflects staff emphasis on cultural sustainability. The Report includes efforts to streamline operations, preserve Museum

assets, deliver value to the taxpayer, model and teach cultural and environmental preservation, and develop solidly researched and affirming interpretation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager