



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: MAY 24, 2023**
FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING THE MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION, HISTORIC HOUSES, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, 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, 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, staffing, advisory teams, volunteer and support opportunities, and marketing and communications.

DISCUSSION:

Main Museum Renovation

The schematic design phase of the architectural design process has concluded. The next phase, design development, will result in drawings referred to as "DDs" and will be the phase when details of the design are determined. Public opportunities to review progress will continue to be scheduled. Those wishing to be more closely involved are encouraged to contact Robyn Peterson, rpeterson@riversideca.gov, to join the community-based Design Advisory Team.

Historic Houses

The design development stage is nearing completion for both Harada House, Phase I, and the Harada House Interpretive Center. The two-site project was presented to the Cultural Heritage Board on April 19, 2023, during a workshop session, as well as at the April Museum Board meeting. Engineering challenges remain to be resolved for Harada House, Phase I.

At Heritage House, the Summer 2023 Path Resurfacing Project has gone out to bid. Other projects under way include additions to the perimeter fencing to secure the site more effectively, and replacement and protection of the air handling units vandalized over the winter.

Collections

A portion of the cabinet anchoring project is completed. At the time of preparation of this report, completion is expected by or before the May Board meeting date.

Ongoing collections work continues, including planning for the 100th anniversary exhibition (to open in July 2024), responding to archives requests from the public, and monitoring object conservation projects (including work on architectural drawings and mold removal from several artifacts). Object selection continues for future “Inside the Vault” videos.

Exhibitions and Programs

In Tents Moments: Risk to Life and Limb in Victorian Camping will close at Heritage House on June 26, 2023, when the house closes for the Summer season. An exhibition developed in partnership with Cal State San Bernardino museum studies students will be installed in Heritage House during the Fall of 2023.

Three screenings of the grant-funded documentary *These Are Not Stories: American Indian Boarding Schools in Southern California*, reached a total to date of over 350. Additional efforts are under way to share this documentary further.

Further details on the Museum’s participation in the In/VISIBLE, Un/HEARD civil rights site tour, Insect Fair 2023, the installation of the Casa Blanca mini-museum, our own Open Lobby event on May 18, and other spring programming will be included in the June Director’s report.

A fun event returns! Sign up for the Alice in Wonderland tea at Heritage House on June 3, an event not just for children.

With the Summer closure of the Museum’s only publicly available site—Heritage House—fewer programs are offered. Staff continue to work on the plan to offer 100 programs of varying types during 2024, the Museum’s 100th anniversary year. Thanks in advance to those of you who have offered to assist by offering a program or connecting us with a potential presenter.

Show your support for Museum programs by attending upcoming programs. Please note that First Sundays have concluded for the season and will resume in October.

Date	Program	Volunteer opportunity?
June 1, 2023	Artswalk, 6 – 9 p.m.	Yes
June 2, 2023	Nights with the Museum, 6:30 – 8 p.m., featuring Bree Putman, “Does Fear Filter Lizards from Urban Areas?”	No
June 3, 2023	LiTEArature – Alice in Wonderland tea at Heritage House, 2 – 4 p.m.	Yes
June 17, 2023	Amateur Naturalist Day at Heritage House	Yes
June 26, 2023	Last day for <i>In Tents Moments</i> exhibition	No

Staffing

New Associate Educator Kimberly Cobb began her duties on April 14, 2023. She may be known to some of you from her time with the Museum pre-closure. An offer has been accepted for the position of Exhibition Designer, and staff will make an announcement as soon as possible. Recruitment continues for the Curator of History.

Staff regret to announce the resignation of Curator of Natural History Douglas J. Long, who will be joining his wife who accepted a new job in the Santa Barbara area. Dr. Long accomplished much for the Museum in four years and will be missed. The position has been listed. His lecture series "Nights with the Museum" will be continued by other staff until his successor is on board.

The Museum is hosting one intern from UC-Riverside's history department during the 2023 late spring term.

Advisory Teams

The staff-level advisory teams are open to new members, who need not be Board members.

- Collections Committee – Due to a thin agenda, the regular meeting planned for April 12, 2023, was canceled. This Committee's next regularly scheduled meeting is June 14, 2023.
- Harada House Project Team – This Team meets virtually to focus on programming and public communications regarding Harada House and its Interpretive Center. At its meeting on April 7, 2023, the Team heard a progress report from IS Architecture, which was received with appreciation. The Team's next regularly scheduled meeting is June 2, 2023.
- Branding and Marketing Team – There is no update on the website progress from the City's Marketing Department. A joint meeting of the Branding and Marketing Team and the Design Team took place on April 6, 2023, which led to useful input from community members on the progress of the design to date. The Team was asked for ideas regarding potential marketing and communications during the construction period. The date for the next meeting is to be determined.
- Design Team – This Team's role is bringing community members' perspectives to the redesign of the main museum. See above regarding the outcome of the joint meeting on April 6, 2023, of the Design Team and the Branding and Marketing Team.
- Program Team – This Team provides input on future exhibitions, education programs, collaboration with the school districts, and mission-based events. The outcome of the meeting scheduled for May 3, 2023, will be reported at the Board meeting.

Volunteer and Support Opportunities

Should Board members become aware of individuals with the skills and interest to volunteer, please encourage them to contact Teresa Woodard Belding, twoodard@riversideca.gov.

Marketing and Communications

Look for the Museum's ads periodically in *The Riversider*. The Museum will continue to take advantage of City opportunities to share program information via Library system flyer distribution, RPU bill inserts, and the Parks Department's activity guide.

Staff continue to post programs on social media and community calendars and appreciate it when Board members share and like these posts.

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 projects and progress on the main museum renovation and expansion 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 study, celebrate, and serve the full diversity of Riverside. Programs in preparation continue to reflect an emphasis on equity and access. Efforts to reach into neighborhoods and connect with a wide variety of demographics promote access.
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. The Museum seeks non-City funding regularly, and two grant-funded programs are described above in this report. 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 during the extended closure, 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