



American Alliance of Museums

July 5, 2017

Alliance Accreditation Commission

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Executive Director & CEO, Ohio History Connection, Columbus, OH

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James Gilson
Former Vice President and General Counsel, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Foundation, Los Angeles, CA

Jill Hartz
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Lourdes Ramos
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Kenneth Schutz
The Dr. William Huizingh Executive Director, Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix, AZ

Todd Smith
Director and Chief Executive Officer, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA

William Tramposch
Director Emeritus, Nantucket Historical Association, Nantucket, MA

Mr. Alex Nguyen
Assistant City Manager and interim Museum Director
Riverside Metropolitan Museum
3580 Mission Inn Ave
Riverside, CA 92501-3321

Dear Mr. Nguyen:

At our June 12-14, 2017 meeting we reviewed the progress report and supporting documents submitted by the Riverside Metropolitan Museum in response to our October 2016 tabling decision. Thank you for the report and the actions you have taken to address the Commission's concerns.

The Commission appreciates the ongoing communication with Accreditation Program staff during the tabling period and applauds the steps taken to better utilize the significant collection of Native American baskets. The progress report satisfies the Commission's concerns regarding this matter.

Concerning the sub-standard housing of collections in the basement of the museum's main building (a problem noted in the previous accreditation report), the Commission is pleased to learn of the City's \$15 million commitment for capital improvements and to implement the in-progress institutional planning effort, as well as the newly-enacted policy to accept no new donations until collections care conditions can be improved.

We acknowledge the bold decision to consider closing the museum to accomplish these improvements and request an update on whether you've made a decision to close. Please provide an update by **September 8** detailing the closure plan and what collections stewardship improvements will be accomplished during the closure, so the Commission can review it at its October 2017 meeting.

Concerning the Harada House, the Commission acknowledges the museum's and city's additional explanations and supporting documentation about the financial, physical, and attendance-related business model challenges to stabilizing and then re-opening the Harada House, including the additional engineering reports that were commissioned. However, the Commission also notes that Harada House remains an important artifact for which the museum has stewardship responsibility and that the city and museum's long-term inaction has made a challenging situation worse. The Commission must consider the likely future stewardship of this artifact in determining the museum's accreditation.

Therefore, by the end of the tabling period, the museum needs to present an action plan that acknowledges and addresses its stewardship responsibility for the Harada House. The action plan should describe the options considered and a justification for why the museum chose the course it is pursuing. The range of options to consider is up to the

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museum, but should reflect what the museum believes best meets its mission, its policies, and AAM standards. In addition to justifying the choice it has made, the museum's action plan should present a timeline for implementation, including obtaining any required approvals (and public input or outreach, if appropriate or required) and any necessary public and/or private funding.

Again, the Commission applauds both the city's commitment of significant new funding and its expected comprehensive look at the options for the future of the museum.

The museum's final report, with the requested supporting documentation, must be received by the Accreditation Program staff by **December 18** for review at our February 2018 meeting.

If you have questions about our feedback or the dates listed above, please contact Julie Hart, Senior Director, Museum Standards and Excellence, at (202) 218-7712 or jhart@aam-us.org. Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Burt Logan".

Burt Logan
Chair, Accreditation Commission
Executive Director and CEO
Ohio History Connection

cc: Mr. Charles Wilson, Chairperson, Metropolitan Museum Board