



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Selected to Join National “What Works Cities” Initiative

Designation brings resources to Riverside to better focus efforts on eliminating homelessness

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside has been selected to participate in Bloomberg Philanthropies’ What Works Cities initiative, one of the largest-ever national philanthropic efforts to enhance the use of data and evidence in the public sector. Riverside will receive technical assistance from world-class experts to better use data to address homelessness.

With Riverside’s selection, the growing national initiative, launched in April 2015, is now partnering with 58 mid-sized U.S. cities. All together, these cities come from 33 states, represent 18.9 million residents and have annual budgets exceeding \$65 billion. The initiative will partner with 100 cities on a rolling basis through 2018.

“Riverside is taking a multi-faceted approach to reducing homelessness that emphasizes partnerships with our fellow government agencies, community non-profits and local churches,” Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “With so many groups coming together to tackle one of the most pressing issues of the day, it will be imperative for us to share data quickly and efficiently with one another and with the public. I look forward to seeing how the recommendations from What Works Cities can help with that.”

“We are very excited to welcome the newest What Works cities – including Riverside – to our growing roster of world-class cities working across America for better outcomes,” said Simone Brody,

Executive Director of What Works Cities. “These cities have declared their commitment to using data and evidence to enhance decision-making in local government to improve residents’ lives.”

With support from a consortium of expert partners, What Works cities are identifying more effective ways to evaluate programs and improve performance; best use resources to serve their communities; and address a range of social challenges – from poverty and inequality to public safety. Another key benefit is joining What Works Cities’ growing national network of local leaders and global experts actively sharing best practices for outcomes-focused government.

Riverside is one of the latest to publicly commit to enhancing its use of data and evidence to improve services, inform local decision-making and engage residents.

Riverside will improve open data and performance measurement practices to make municipal data more accessible to residents and the community, and help to engage residents around government priorities and services. Riverside specifically seeks to improve its ability to provide services to members of the community who are homeless and could benefit from the services the City of Riverside provides.

“Helping people out of homelessness is a major undertaking,” Mayor Pro Tem Mike Gardner said. “But one of our additional challenges is helping the public understand what we are doing and how we are achieving results. Performance measurements can go a long way to helping the public understand what we are accomplishing and where more work is necessary.”

The consortium of leading organizations assembled by Bloomberg Philanthropies and delivering a program of support to cities includes the Behavioral Insights Team, the Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University, the Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School, Results for America and the Sunlight Foundation.

Riverside, together with several other cities that also planned to announce their selection today, joins these other 57 What Works cities: Albuquerque, NM; Anchorage, AK; Baltimore, MD; Birmingham, AL; Boulder, CO; Buffalo, NY; Bellevue, WA; Boston, MA; Cambridge, MA; Cape Coral, FL; Chattanooga, TN; Charlotte, NC; Denton, TX; Denver, CO; Des Moines, IA; Downey, CA; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fort Worth, TX; Greensboro, NC; Gresham, OR; Hartford, CT; Independence, MO; Jackson, MS; Kansas City, KS; Kansas City, MO; Knoxville, TN; Las Vegas, NV; Lexington, KY; Lincoln, NE; Little Rock, AR; Louisville, KY; Madison, WI; Mesa, AZ; Milwaukee, WI; Naperville, IL; Nashville, TN; New Orleans, LA; Olathe, KS; Portland, OR; Providence, RI; Raleigh, NC; Salinas, CA; Salt Lake City, UT; San Francisco, CA; San Jose, CA; Seattle, WA; Scottsdale, AZ; Saint Paul, MN; South Bend, IN; Syracuse, NY; Tacoma, WA; Topeka, KS; Tulsa, OK; Victorville, CA; Virginia Beach, VA; Waco, TX; and Wichita, KS.

About Bloomberg Philanthropies:

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in more than 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg’s charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2016, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed over half a billion dollars. For more information, please visit bloomberg.org.

To receive updates on the What Works Cities initiative, please visit www.whatworkscities.org.