



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Strengthens Global Economic Ties with Finland Through Strategic Partnership with Lahti Region Development LADEC, Ltd.

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside today (4/23) marked a major milestone in its global economic development strategy with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Lahti Region Development LADEC, Ltd. (LADEC), a leading regional development organization in Finland. The agreement establishes a collaborative framework to advance innovation, sustainability, and international business expansion between the two regions.

This strategic partnership reinforces Riverside’s position as a global hub for clean technology, advanced manufacturing, and sustainable innovation, while opening new pathways for foreign direct investment, job creation, and economic growth.

“Riverside is building a globally connected economy that delivers opportunity for our residents and businesses,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “This partnership with LADEC connects Riverside to one of Europe’s leaders in sustainable transportation. Together, we are creating a bridge for innovation, investment, and job creation that will benefit both our communities.”

The non-binding MOU establishes a framework for cooperation in key sectors including sustainability and circular economy, e-mobility, smart city solutions, green building, research and development, and workforce development. It also positions Riverside as a “soft-landing” location for Finnish companies seeking to expand into the U.S. market, while supporting Riverside-based businesses in accessing opportunities in Europe.

LADEC, which represents the Lahti Region of Finland, is internationally recognized for its leadership in environmental innovation, and views the partnership as a gateway to new markets and collaborative growth.

“Collaboration with Riverside creates exciting opportunities for companies in the Lahti Region to expand into the U.S. market and engage in forward-thinking innovation ecosystems,” Lahti Region Development LADEC Ltd’s CEO, Tomi Tura. “By connecting our expertise in sustainability and

circular economy with Riverside's dynamic business environment, we can accelerate the development of solutions that address global challenges while driving economic growth."

The agreement builds on ongoing discussions between Riverside and LADEC to strengthen economic ties between Southern California and Finland. It reflects Riverside's proactive approach to international partnership-building aligned with its priorities in green technology commercialization, workforce development, and business attraction.

Under the MOU, the City of Riverside will play a key facilitative role by connecting international partners to local assets, coordinating with regional and state stakeholders, and providing concierge-style support for business development, permitting, and site selection.

While the MOU does not create any legal or financial obligations, it serves as a foundation for future collaboration, pilot projects, and investment opportunities that will be brought forward for City Council consideration as they develop.

"This agreement is about more than partnership, it's about positioning Riverside at the forefront of the global economy," Mayor Pro Tem Steven Robillard, Chair of the City's Economic Development Committee, added. "We are intentionally building relationships that bring innovation, sustainability, and high-quality jobs to our city."

The MOU will remain in effect through December 31, 2027, with opportunities for extension by mutual agreement.