



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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**Contact:**

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

[ppitchford@riversideca.gov](mailto:ppitchford@riversideca.gov)

**“Our Time Is Now” in Riverside, Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson Says**

*An emerging green technology economy and unparalleled leadership on the state level pushed city to new heights*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – An emerging green technology economy, combined with unprecedented leadership on the state level, shows that “Our Time is Now” in Riverside, Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said Thursday night at the annual State of the City address.

Riverside’s success results from a focus on committed investments, committed partnerships and committed leadership, Lock Dawson said. Those investments have produced a new green technology economy in Riverside; the private-public partnership that created the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture has pumped \$29 million into the local economy; and Riverside is leading like never before with Lock Dawson chairing the Big City Mayors coalition of the 13 largest cities in the state.

“We are not a city that settles! We are a city that seeks greatness,” Lock Dawson said. “I did not run for Mayor to sit back and let someone else decide our future. I ran for Mayor to create our future. And if you are in this building tonight, I know you are with me!”

Strategic investments have brought four green technology companies to Riverside to be a part of a high-tech ecosystem that began taking shape four years ago when the California Air Resources Board relocated to the city. Companies either bringing their headquarters to Riverside or already here include:

- Ohmio, who relocated from New Zealand and manufactures autonomous, all-electric shuttles.
- Hyundai Rotem Tech, which will build hydrogen-powered trains for the LA28 Olympics.
- Voltu Motor Inc. will build electric, medium-duty trucks.
- GreenPower Motor Company will build small, large and custom electric buses.

More than 1,600 new businesses opened their doors last year, creating 13,500 new jobs. More than \$390 million worth of new projects were approved. New housing is coming to the Mission Grove area and downtown, adjacent to the Main Library.

Riverside invested in public safety by adding 74 new police officers, seeing violent crime drop 25 percent. The city seized 3,000 pounds of fireworks last Fourth of July, and the City Council has invested in new drone technology to make more progress in the future. More than 7,500 pieces of graffiti – 20 per day – were removed last year. A new city ordinance prohibits camping near schools, shelters and parks, ensuring public spaces are enjoyed for their intended purpose. The city continues to provide services and shelter for those facing homelessness

“This is balancing compassion with the needs of our community,” she said.

A record \$30 million has been invested to pave 51 miles of roads, focusing on high-traffic areas like Market Street, Chicago and La Sierra avenues, and Alessandro Boulevard. Additional investment is coming to the Museum of Riverside, a new Eastside Library, renovations to the Cesar Chavez Community Center, and a new gym at Bordwell Park. The former El Dorado Park will be renamed Tim Strack Park to honor the late Riverside Fire Department captain.

“This park will keep Tim’s memory alive for generations of Riversiders as a testament to the power of putting service before self,” Lock Dawson said.

The event at the Riverside Convention Center also saw the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce present the Hero Award to retiring UC Riverside Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox, who has greatly expanded the university’s profile since coming to UCR in 2013.

Lock Dawson presented the Mayor’s Innovation Award to Riverside Community College District for the Mapping Articulated Pathways or “MAP” initiative, which translates prior military training and work experience into course credits for military veterans and working adults.

Lock Dawson thanked the community for decades of work that raised Riverside to the 12<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state. She recently was chosen to chair the Big City Mayor’s group, which puts the city in a strong position to advocate for increased housing production, a reduction in homelessness and other issues important to the quality of life in Riverside.

“This year, for the first time, Riverside is not just at the table with this powerful bipartisan coalition of leaders from places like Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego,” Lock Dawson said. “We’ve claimed the head of the table! This is a great honor, not for me, but for all of us who have worked so tirelessly to lift up our community to its rightful place in our great state.”

The city also benefits from having the #1 ranked STEM school in the state; UCR leads the nation in social mobility; the city is #3 in the country for family-owned businesses; and TIME magazine ranks Riverside as a top destination in the country for millennials.

Lock Dawson also praised Riverside residents who represented the U.S. in the recent Olympic games – women’s water polo athlete Emily Ausmus, a graduate of King High School, and men’s water polo conditioning coach Christopher Bates.

“It was a special moment to know two Riversiders donned our nation’s colors and competed against the best in the world,” she said.