



City of Las Vegas

1700 N. Grand Avenue | Las Vegas, NM 87701 | T 505.454.1401 | lasvegasnm.gov

Mayor David Romero

**CITY OF LAS VEGAS
MUSEUM ADVISORY BOARD
September 12, 2024, THURSDAY, 5:15 PM
City of Las Vegas Museum**

The public is invited to submit written comments for public input prior to the meeting. Written comments should be submitted no later than 12:00 pm on September 12, 2024, addressed via email to Michael Rebman at mrebman@lasvegasnm.gov or dropped off to the Museum mailbox at City Hall 1700 N. Grand Ave.

AGENDA

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- V. **PUBLIC INPUT** (comments limited to topics on current agenda). Public Input submitted to Michael Rebman, Museum Manager, via email will be read into the record.
- VI. **BUSINESS ITEMS:**
 1. Museum Advisory Board Membership Vacancies
 2. Restroom Renovation Plans
 3. Exhibit Renovation Plans
 4. Fundraising and Grant Writing for Plans
- VII. **ADJOURN**

ATTENTION PERSONS ATTENDING FOR PUBLIC INPUT: City of Las Vegas Museum 727 Grand Ave, you consent to photography, audio recording, video recording and its/their use for inclusion on the City of the Las Vegas website and to be broadcast on YouTube. Restrooms will not be available before, during, or after the meeting.

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Councilor Ward 1

Michael Montoya
Councilor Ward 2

Barbara Casey
Councilor Ward 3

Marvin Martinez
Councilor Ward 4



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ATTENTION PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: The meeting room and facilities are accessible to persons with mobility disabilities. If you plan to attend the meeting and will need an auxiliary aid or service, please contact the City Clerk's Office prior to the meeting so that arrangements may be made. Restrooms will not be available before, during, or after the meeting.

Note: A final agenda will be posted 72 hours prior to the meeting. Copies of the Agenda may be obtained from City Hall, Michael Rebman, Museum Manager, City Hall, Las Vegas, NM 87701 or the City's website at www.lasvegasnm.gov.

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City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial Collection Monthly Report August 2024

Visitation

August 2024 yielded 123 visitors at the Museum. The Museum operated on winter hours in August. 11 visitors, or 8.94% of visitation, came from Las Vegas; 2 visitors, or 1.63% of visitation, came from the northeast corner of New Mexico; 27 visitors, or 21.95% of visitation, came from other parts of the state; 77 visitors, or 62.60% of visitation, came from other states and territories; and 6 visitors, or 4.88% of visitation, came from other countries. 110 visitors could be considered tourists, as the rest would fall under locals, commuters, or regional day-trippers. Year to date will be reported by fiscal year instead of calendar year going forward, and year to date for fiscal year 2024-2025 is 317 visitors. August 2024 represents a 25.9% decrease over August 2023 (166 total visitors when correcting for outreach). If Saturdays are removed, July 2024 represents a 9.6% decrease over August 2023. Visitation is slowing down as the summer ends, but is still lower than in the pre-COVID era, most likely due to a decrease in tourism caused by the water crisis. The lack of Saturday hours has an impact as well.

Temporary Exhibits

The middle gallery remains empty. It is serving as temporary storage for large artifacts waiting to be returned to storage. Once emptied, it will be converted into a permanent history gallery following the 2025 Exhibit Renovation Plan.

The Cuentos exhibit in the third gallery will remain on display until early 2025. The Cuentos exhibit opened in Fall 2021, and that gallery has traditionally been used for three-year exhibits.

Museum Building Maintenance

There are pending work orders for Public Works that have not been completed.

Tuck pointing for the downstairs has not been initiated, as Museum staff have been preoccupied with the other issues in the building. Contractors did site visits in July to look at the downstairs wall, and the Museum should have quotes in August. Concerns were raised by contractors regarding the condition of the ceilings due to decades of water leaks, which could negatively impact their ability to repair the walls. The Museum is in the process of installing ADA

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compliant door handles on all doors in the building, and painting is ongoing throughout the building. Painting in the Manager's Office, Specialist's Office, and Specialist's Restroom has been completed.

There was a significant roof leak on June 21. Despite patching, water continues to leak in the Court areas of the building due to the walls peeling away from the flat roof. Water flow into Museum areas of the building have ceased. The building, already in poor shape, has suffered more damage from that. Court staff complained of wet carpets and musty odors in their work space, and the moldy odors are noticeable to Museum staff. The building needs closer examination for mold and structural damage to wood floors and ceilings.

Personnel and Staffing

The Museum Specialist position remains vacant, and the vacancy creates an impediment in exhibit planning and preparation for the middle gallery, and difficulties with routine operations. Due to the staffing shortage, the Museum will not be able to bring back Summer Saturday hours until the position is filled. At three employees, the Museum is at the bare minimum for opening the doors to the public. The Museum Specialist position, a highly specialized and technical position that requires advanced degrees and prior museum experience, will remain vacant as long as the hourly wage for the position remains at \$15 per hour.

The legal situation with the invalid and illegal Buffalo Hall Bar and Cowboy Café loan has no updates as of January 2. The artifacts are still at the restaurant.

The Museum requested that the Museum Educator position be restored, allowing the Museum to have a fifth employee while offering more services to the city. That request, along with the \$80,000 to bring the restrooms to ADA compliance and higher salaries for specialized positions, was denied, and the Museum received a 5% budget cut for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. That is not a positive step towards building workplace morale.

There will be a part time paid student intern at the Museum starting in September, organized through HelpNM and the New Mexico Public Education Department. The internship will last until November. The intern will learn about museum operations, functions, and purposes in modern society.

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Fiscal Update

The Museum's budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 is \$237,607.00, which consists overwhelmingly of payroll and benefits. \$18,723.31 was spent, reserved, or encumbered in the month of July, consisting of payroll, benefits, archival supplies, telephone bills, employee uniforms, building maintenance materials, equipment over \$1,000, and the Xerox annual lease. Year to date expenditures have been \$41,296.60. The Museum received \$111.36 in donations and archival scan fees, deposited in the archival supplies budget line. \$196,421.76, or 82.67%, of the budget remains.

Plans for September

The month of September will continue to focus on inventory matters. Plans for each project (from February 2024) are outlined below:

Safety Project: The Museum has additional emergency lighting and regular lighting for poorly lit areas, and installation is pending work orders submitted in late April to Public Works. The Museum will continue working towards resolving every issue brought up in the 2023 safety inspection. Decluttering will continue as well, as the removal of auction items created space necessary to shift items around. The Museum will continue to explore ADA compliance as well. The Museum plans to acquire new office furniture in August, to replace worn-out furniture that will be placed in the next auction.

Restroom Project: There are no specific Restroom Project plans for August beyond potentially repainting the restrooms. A vendor will provide a quote for bringing the Ladies Restroom to ADA compliance, and that quote will be used to request additional funding from the City Council. The impediment will be the asbestos present in the walls that will need to be removed before any renovations can be started.

Collections Storage Project: The Museum received high-density shelving for Collections Storage in March. Once the walls are properly tuck pointed and plastered, the Museum will begin the process of reorganizing Collections Storage to eliminate constricted spaces.

Exhibit Project: Museum staff will continue research for the 2025 exhibit changes. The Museum will continue the process of developing and installing the Territorial Era Gallery.

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Issues and Needs

There are always issues and needs at museums. The Museum has administrative needs based on staffing levels, mostly in filling the vacancies in order to provide services beyond opening the doors.

There are structural needs, based on difficulties posed by the building itself. These have not changed since last month, and should be reiterated. The building historically was unsuitable for museum purposes, and remains unsuitable. The materials used in its walls, floors, and ceilings present safety hazards. The electrical supply and internet connectivity are underpowered for modern office usage. Collections Storage is beyond capacity and has been repeatedly criticized by employees from the Safety Office and the Fire Department due to cramped spaces; the Museum is unable to accept new donations due to Collections Storage and the Archives being completely full. The building has many ADA compliance issues, some of which cannot be addressed due to structural problems. The easiest solution would be a fresh start with a new building, possibly opening in 2035 to mark the Land Grant Bicentennial.

There are issues and needs that can be handled within the Museum's staffing and budgetary limitations, and Museum staff is presently planning for those projects. They include completing deferred maintenance, converting restrooms into ADA compliant restrooms, and addressing some of the safety concerns raised by the Safety Office.

Museum Advisory Board

The new fiscal year changed the Museum Advisory Board's meeting schedule, which is now the second Thursday of each month at 5:15 PM, now in the Museum Curator/Manager's office. There was a Museum Advisory Board meeting on August 8, but it failed to achieve quorum. The next Museum Advisory Board meeting will be on September 12, 2024. The Museum Advisory Board has three active members and is currently searching for more members to fill the vacancies.

Friends of the City of Las Vegas Museum

There was no Friends of the Museum meeting in August at the Museum. The next Friends of the Museum meeting will be in September.

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Donations in the donation box were not counted by the Friends in August.

Michael Rebman
Museum Curator/Manager
August 30, 2024

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