News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Oct. 16, 2019

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City of Riverside Tops In Nation For Providing Good Experience for Public

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside finished first in the nation in the recent Government Experience Awards, which recognize state, county and local governments for their efforts to use technology to improve how residents interact with their government.

The awards were announced by the Center for Digital Government (CDG). They recognize the achievements and best practices of states, cities and counties that are radically improving the experience of government and pushing the boundaries of how citizen services are delivered.

Riverside finished ahead of San Diego; Mesa, Arizona; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Gilbert, Arizona; and Roseville. Other finalists included Detroit, Indianapolis/Marion County, Miami Springs, St. Petersburg, and Sugar Land, Texas.

"Riverside always seeks to be the most responsive local government in California, and these results back that up," Mayor Rusty Bailey said. "Whether it's at the planning counter or online, our city makes service a priority, so this award is a real validation of those efforts."

Riverside was recognized for redesigning its website, improving internal communication and digital resources and providing a high level of customer service online though the use of mobile applications and an expanded open data portal. It also drew kudos for streamlining its communications so that the public gets the same great experience on a mobile device – which now account for 54 percent of visits – as someone logging in from a computer.

The City reaches the public through graphic design work, web content and graphics, email campaigns, video content, social media content, electronic signs, bill inserts, video screens in City facilities, and more. The graphic design and content development is consistent across multiple channels, including web, social media, Riverside TV, and printed flyers

Riverside's website – riversideca.gov – provides a huge amount of data, a large number of online services, collaborative tools, real-time open datasets, and mobile apps, while also showcasing Riverside to potential businesses. The city is pursuing a "virtual city hall" vision, providing a large number of online services and apps for legislative agendas, documents, video, and minutes; bulky item

pick-up; online service requests (e.g. graffiti cleanup, pothole repair, etc.); online library services; permit inspection scheduling; vendor bidding; citation payments; and utilities bill payments.

Riverside uses the Happy or Not system to encourage visitors to City Hall to rate the quality of customer service received. City staff evaluates this feedback and makes proper changes, helping the City formulate plans that are aligned with community needs.

It has received wide acclaim for its "One Stop Shop" that brings together on one floor all City departments that are part of the development process. The new innovative approach is a huge change from traditional practices and allows citizens to obtain permits and approvals faster than ever.

"We know that more and more of our residents are meeting us online, instead of at City Hall, so it's crucial that their experience be a positive one," Mayor Pro Tem Andy Melendrez said. "This award shows we are meeting the expectations that residents and business owners have for us."

The Center for Digital Government is a national research and advisory institute focused on technology policy and best practices in state and local government. The Center is a division of e.Republic, the nation's only media and research company focused exclusively on state and local government.

"This year's results are evidence that state and local government agencies are continuing to grow the sophistication of their digital experiences," said Dustin Haisler, chief innovation officer for the Center for Digital Government.

More information can be found at: https://www.govtech.com/dc/articles/Government-Experience-Awards-2019-Expanding-Citizen-Services.html

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