



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson Bringing Resources to Riverside From Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative

Riverside Mayor selected as one of 40 mayors from around the world to participate in prestigious leadership program

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson is one of 40 mayors from around the world, and one of only three from California, participating this week in the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative, which provides high-level training on business, economic development, urban planning, and social issues. Acceptance into this program provides Riverside with access to Harvard University students who will work directly with Mayor Lock Dawson and city management to address pressing local challenges.

Lock Dawson is part of the fifth class of mayors to go through the program, which includes representatives from the U.S., Latin America, Europe, and Africa. The group has identified its priorities as improving the way City Hall engages with the community, leading change, and enhancing communications in order to inspire engagement and action among residents.

“As part of my continual efforts to bring resources home to Riverside, I am excited about the opportunity to hear from and partner with some of the leading voices in the world on issues facing mayors everywhere,” Lock Dawson said. “The extensive training and intensive curriculum will be of great value to Riverside over the next year as we work with Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Harvard Business School, and others to drive positive change in Riverside.”

Launched in 2017, the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative is a collaboration between Bloomberg Philanthropies, Harvard Kennedy School, and Harvard Business School, to equip mayors and senior city leaders with tools and expertise to effectively lead cities.

Harvard faculty, staff, and students, alongside experts from Bloomberg Philanthropies’ global network, work with mayors and senior officials over the course of the program to foster professional growth and advance their capabilities to drive innovation and deliver results for residents.

Courses, which are held in-person and virtually, will be taught by faculty from Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Business School, and feature renowned urban policy, and innovation experts from across the international Bloomberg Philanthropies network. The travel, lodging, courses, and all other aspects of the program are paid in full by Bloomberg Philanthropies and no City funds are utilized for this initiative.

“We created the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative because cities have always been on the frontlines of the biggest challenges we face – and it’s critical that mayors have the skills, support, and resources they need to confront them,” said Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg LP and Bloomberg Philanthropies, and 108th mayor of New York City.

The year-long program also will provide similar training from a staff perspective to two senior leaders at each city. In Riverside, that will be City Manager Al Zelinka and Assistant City Manager Rafael Guzman.

Participating cities will be provided with the time and skillset of students from the Harvard Business School to do intensive research on a local issue and provide recommendations. The issue that will be examined on behalf of Riverside will be determined later this year.

“I am eager to identify an issue we face in Riverside that can uniquely benefit from the research and work of the Harvard Business School,” Lock Dawson said.

For the latest information and resources regarding COVID-19 -- www.RiversideCA.gov/COVID-19