NOVEMBER 2026

BID BULLETIN

Riverside Downtown Business Improvement District



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RDP LUNCHEON

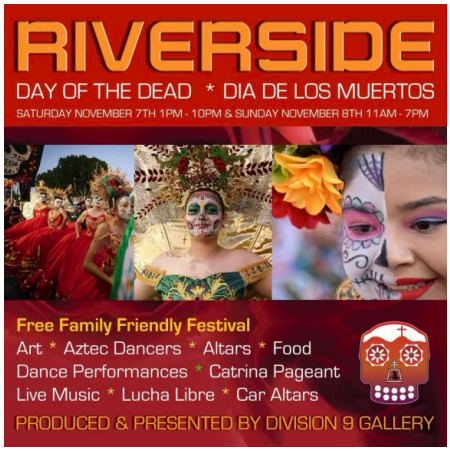
Join us for the RDP luncheon at Noon on Tuesday, November 24, 2026 at ProAbition in Downtown Riverside featuring a presentation by the Riverside Fire Department Call the RDP office at 951-781-7335 for reservations

RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

DOWNTOWN IS CALLING

www.RiversideDowntown.org

Fall Events



Día de los Muertos | Day of the Dead

Contributed by Cosme Córdova, Owner, Artist and Director of Division 9 Gallery and Director of Riverside Day of the Dead

Celebrate the 23rd Annual Riverside Day of the Dead Festival, taking place Saturday, November 7, and Sunday, November 8, 2026. Produced and presented by Cosme Córdova and Division 9 Gallery, this free, family-friendly celebration honors the rich cultural traditions of Día de los Muertos.

The two-day festival will feature art, traditional altars, Aztec dancers, live music, dance performances, a Catrina pageant, lucha libre, car altars, food, and more.

Festival Hours:

- Saturday, November 7 | 1:00 PM – 10:00 PM
- Sunday, November 8 | 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Vendor Opportunities

Applications are currently being accepted for art, food, and face-painting vendors. Interested participants can schedule an in-person appointment through the link in Riverside Day of the Dead's social media bio.

Appointments for traditional altars and car altars will be announced soon.

For additional information, please contact Ariana through the event organizers.

Photo Credit: Carlos Puma

Graphic Design: Cosme Córdova



Candy Land Comes to White Park

Contributed by Rachael A Dzikonski, Executive Director of the Riverside Arts Council

The holiday season is just around the corner, and downtown Riverside is getting ready to shine! This November, the Riverside Arts Council is excited to introduce Candy Land at White Park, a new holiday experience developed in partnership with the City of Riverside as part of the annual Festival of Lights. For years, the Festival of Lights has brought families, friends, and visitors together in downtown Riverside to celebrate the holiday season. This year, we're expanding the festivities into White Park with a holiday village filled with colorful lights, interactive activities, local art, and opportunities to make new holiday memories.



The main attraction at Candy Land will be a large illuminated holiday maze, where visitors can wander through a festive display of lights

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CANDY LAND, *continued from page 1*

surrounding a Christmas tree. Throughout the park, guests will also discover illuminated photo opportunities and the Holiday Art Trail, featuring lighted installations created by local artists. These installations bring a creative element to the holiday celebration while providing opportunities for Riverside artists to share their work with the community. Families can also enjoy a variety of activities included with admission. The Holiday Games Village will feature oversized games and interactive activities, while the Snowball Arena brings a little winter fun to Riverside with soft snowball toss games and playful challenges. The Snowfall Lounge will offer a festive place to relax and enjoy the atmosphere, with additional holiday activities and surprises throughout the park. The Artisan Marketplace will feature local artists and makers offering handmade gifts and unique creations, giving visitors another opportunity to support Riverside's creative community while doing some holiday shopping. Seasonal food and beverages will also be available throughout the experience.



Beyond White Park, the Festival of Lights will continue to bring holiday cheer to Main Street with free community performances, food vendors, and the Artisans Collective, featuring local artists and makers. Visitors can enjoy the familiar festivities downtown while discovering something new at Candy Land. The Festival of Lights Switch-On Ceremony takes place Saturday, November 21, with Candy Land opening Friday, November 27. The White Park experience will be open Thursday through Sunday from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m., with additional nightly programming December 18–27, excluding Christmas Day.

As Riverside Arts Council continues to expand its role in the Festival of Lights, we're excited to create new opportunities for local artists while bringing families together through creativity and community celebration. We hope you'll join us downtown this holiday season and experience Candy Land at White Park.

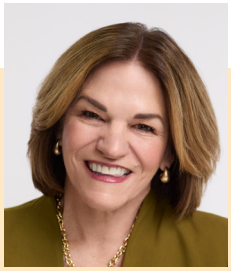
Downtown Business Improvement District: Reminder

The Board of Directors of the Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) approved the Annual Report for the renewal of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement District (Downtown BID) levy for the 2026 calendar year at their September 9, 2026 meeting. The report was submitted to the City following the meeting for setting of the Public Hearing. The Public Hearing will be set for November 10, 2026. The City sends out notices to all businesses in the Downtown BID to advise them of the date and time of the public hearing.

Both the Annual Report for the renewal as well as the PowerPoint presentation has been posted on the RDP website on October 15th so businesses can review prior to the public hearing. Go to www.riversidedowntown.org, click on "About RDP" from the dropdown menu, and then "Annual Renewal Report".

The activities of the Downtown BID are funded by the BID levy which is equal to 100% of the annual business tax levied by the City of Riverside and assessed on all businesses within the BID boundaries. No changes in the assessment or boundaries are proposed for 2027.

For more details, please refer to the Annual Report and the PowerPoint presentation. If you have any questions regarding either, or the BID renewal process, please contact Janice Penner at the RDP office at 951-781-7339.



Mayor's Message

Contributed by Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson

I Chose Riverside. I Want the Next Generation to Choose It, Too.

It's that time of year; college is back in session! Every year, thousands of students choose Riverside as the place to take an important step toward their future.

Some 60,000 students are in our city on any given day attending UC Riverside, California Baptist University, La Sierra University or Riverside City College. Some have come from across the country and around the world and others are Riverside kids who grew up here.

I know what that feels like because I was one of them.

I grew up in Riverside. I was born here, chose to attend UC Riverside and raised my family here. My siblings, however, took a different path. They left Riverside to pursue their careers and never returned.

For example, my brother had to leave Riverside to attend medical school and become a doctor. Now that UC Riverside has a medical school, I often wonder whether he would have made the same choice to leave for college if he were a student today.

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My other siblings have similar stories. They were talented, ambitious people with dreams for their futures, but they did not necessarily see a place for those dreams in the Riverside of our childhood.

That has stayed with me.

I did not want my own children to feel like they had to leave Riverside to find their future. And I don't want that for the next generation of Riverside kids, either.

I want a young person who grows up in Riverside or chooses to attend college here to be able to look around and see opportunity at every turn — a great education, a good-paying career, a place to start a business, a home they can afford, and a community where they can build a life.

And I want the students who come to Riverside from somewhere else to discover those same opportunities and decide that Riverside is home, too.

Our colleges and universities give us an extraordinary foundation to make that possible. With UC Riverside, California Baptist University, La Sierra University and Riverside City College, we have an incredible range of educational opportunities developing the talent for a diverse and future proof economy.

At UC Riverside, their innovation park, SoCal OASIS, is set to open in February 2027. SoCal OASIS is a regional economic development strategy toconnect research, entrepreneurship, industry and workforce development, helping turn ideas developed in our universities into technologies, companies and jobs.

At California Baptist University, the National Security Agency (NSA) recently designated the university as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) and students from the College of Architecture, Visual Arts and Design are working with my office on the upcoming 2027 State of the City.

La Sierra University has a strong tradition of advancing social mobility, reflected in its recent launch of a $2 million endowment to provide debt-free college education to young people aging out of the foster care system. That commitment has also earned national recognition, with the university ranked No. 1 among regional universities in the West for social mobility in the U.S. News & World Report 2027 Best Colleges guide.

And at Riverside City College, students are preparing for some of the most essential careers in our community — nurses, electricians, automotive and EV technicians, IT professionals, first responders, skilled tradespeople and many others.

Our work as a city cannot stop with educating the workforce, we also must build an economy that gives that workforce a reason to stay.

That is why we are working to attract the industries and companies that will create the jobs of tomorrow — from clean technology and advanced manufacturing to research, healthcare, cybersecurity and other emerging fields. Riverside has already attracted several companies such as Ohmio, Voltu and CHAEVI, to establish their manufacturing headquarters here, bringing new investment and quality jobs to our community from the electrical engineer to the automotive mechanic.

We are not just preparing people for the economy; we are building the economy for our people.

That means making sure a Riverside student can see a pathway from the classroom to a career without having to leave the community to find it.

But if we want people to build their lives here, Riverside has to be a place where they want to spend their lives.

That is why quality of life is economic development. We need great parks and recreation, vibrant arts and culture, restaurants and entertainment, gathering places and experiences that make people proud to call Riverside home.

This year, we are creating one of those experiences with the launch of the Crosstown Showdown, a new citywide tradition celebrating the friendly rivalry between UCR and CBU.

Riverside is now one of only a handful of cities in the country with two Division I universities competing in the same conference. The Crosstown Showdown gives us an opportunity to turn that distinction into something uniquely Riverside — bringing together students, alumni, residents, businesses and fans throughout the academic year.

Throughout the academic year, head-to-head matchups across multiple sports will earn points toward the Crosstown Showdown Championship Trophy, with one university ultimately crowned champion.

So as our educational institutions invest in their students, Riverside must continue investing in the community and economy those students will inherit.

That is the Riverside I want to build — a city where a young person can earn an education and build an entire life here, too.

I know what it means to leave a place because you do not see your future there. I also know what it means to stay.

I chose Riverside.

I want to build a city where more people make that same choice.

I want today's students to graduate and find opportunity waiting for them. I want them to build careers and companies here. I want them to buy homes here, raise families here and enjoy their weekends here. And I want them to look back years from now and realize that Riverside was not simply where they went to college.

It was where they found their future.

Council Corner

Ward One Council Update



Contributed by Councilmember Philip Falcone

Let there be Lights!

Everyone knows that when November rolls around in downtown Riverside, the holiday season is just around the corner. This year, the winds of change are bringing more than a chill. The Festival of Lights is set to shine brighter with new activities, festive decorations, and a fresh sparkle throughout downtown.

We are excited to join the new owners of the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, in bringing a fresh feel to this celebration while preserving the traditions we know and love.

You may have seen lights going up around the historic hotel as we prepare for the annual Switch-On Ceremony. This tradition will continue as usual: the weekend before Thanksgiving, on Saturday, November 21 at 5 p.m., at Orange Street and Mission Inn Avenue, officially kicking off the holiday season.

This year, we're putting the "lights" back into the Festival of Lights with decorations that highlight downtown's natural environment and capture a more traditional holiday feel. We're also expanding the festivities into Albert S. White Park, introducing an exciting Candy Land experience that adds another dimension to the celebrations. Read more about this in the Riverside Arts Council's Arts Corner article.

Starting Friday, November 27, Main Street will come alive with festive decorations, seasonal food vendors, artisan shopping, and free entertainment for the whole family. The Artisans Collective returns, featuring about 50 local artists and makers selling handmade gifts and unique items. You can also catch live performances at the Benjamin Franklin Stage, featuring local musicians, dance groups, and community organizations showcasing the incredible talent right here in Riverside.

The Riverside Arts Council will also host two special Merry Artswalk events on December 3 and December 17. These events will offer an expanded opportunity to see local art and find unique gifts.

Main Street festivities will remain free and open to everyone, ensuring all families can experience the magic of the season as downtown begins to glow again. I invite you to rediscover the Festival of Lights, explore what's new, and celebrate the cherished traditions that continue to make our downtown shine.

BUSINESS BUZZ

Adapted from "Seasonal Marketing Strategies: Utilizing What Every Season Has to Offer"

by Jennifer Dublino

The holiday season offers businesses an opportunity to attract new customers, increase sales, and strengthen customer relationships. Discover how seasonal marketing strategies can help your business stand out and make the most of this busy time of year.

Benefits of seasonal marketing

Seasonal marketing allows businesses to connect with customers when they're already thinking about holiday shopping, dining, gift-giving, and celebrations. By tailoring promotions, products, and messaging to the season, businesses can create timely opportunities to engage customers and encourage repeat visits.

From festive storefront displays and limited-time offers to holiday-themed social media campaigns, seasonal marketing can help businesses of all sizes increase visibility and build customer loyalty.

How seasonal marketing can help your business

Successful seasonal marketing begins with planning. Creating a marketing calendar, identifying important shopping dates, and preparing promotions in advance can help businesses stay organized and make the most of seasonal opportunities.

Retailers might consider holiday gift guides, bundled merchandise, or exclusive promotions. Restaurants and hospitality businesses can highlight seasonal menus, special events, and gift cards. Professional service providers can offer year-end promotions or customer appreciation incentives.

Social media and email marketing are also valuable tools for sharing seasonal offerings, promoting events, and keeping customers informed. Consistent messaging across digital platforms and in-store displays helps reinforce a business's seasonal presence.

For Downtown Riverside businesses, the holiday season is also an opportunity to encourage residents and visitors to shop, dine, and explore locally.

Did You Know?

Seasonal marketing isn't limited to major holidays. Businesses can create promotions around changing seasons, community events, local celebrations, and customer traditions throughout the year. Planning ahead helps businesses maintain customer engagement well beyond the holiday shopping season.

Source: Business.com — Seasonal Marketing Strategies: Utilizing What Every Season Has to Offer ***Read the full article:*** *https://www.business.com/articles/seasonal-marketing-strategies-utilizing-what-every-season-has-to-offer/*

RDP Welcomes New Businesses to Downtown

Glowing Dew Beauticians
King Massage
On Time Transportation

SECURITY CORNER

Run a Small Business? Pay Your Bills, Not Scammers

Excerpt from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) | May 2026



If you run a small business, you know how important it is to pay your bills. Scammers know this too and send fake invoices to businesses for products or services they never ordered in the hopes they'll pay up.

These scams often start when you or someone on your staff gets an unexpected or unfamiliar invoice in the mail. It bills your company for things you didn't order — maybe tech support, domain registration, or search engine optimization services.

How Fake Invoice Scams Work

Fraudulent invoices can look remarkably convincing. They may feature recognizable company names, professional logos, invoice numbers, payment deadlines, and warnings about overdue accounts. Some arrive by traditional mail, while others appear in emails containing suspicious attachments or payment links.

The goal is to convince an employee to pay for goods or services the business never purchased. In some cases, clicking a fraudulent payment link can also expose business accounts, passwords, or sensitive information.

Warning Signs to Watch For

- **Unfamiliar vendors:** An invoice arrives from a company your business does not recognize or has never contracted with.
- **Unexpected charges**: Bills appear for technology support, website services, advertising, subscriptions, or other services that were never authorized.
- **Urgent payment demands:** The invoice threatens penalties, service interruptions, or collection action unless payment is made immediately.
- **Suspicious payment instructions:** The sender requests payment to an unfamiliar bank account or through an unusual payment method.
- **Questionable email addresses:** The sender's address does not match the legitimate company's website or established contact information.

Tips to Protect Your Business

Establish a consistent process for reviewing and approving invoices. Employees responsible for payments should verify that purchases were authorized, confirm the vendor's identity, and compare invoices against purchase orders or existing agreements.

When an invoice appears suspicious, contact the vendor using a phone number or website independently verified by your business. Do not rely solely on the contact information printed on the questionable invoice.

Train employees to recognize suspicious emails, unexpected attachments, and fraudulent payment requests. Encourage staff to question unfamiliar invoices rather than assuming every bill received is legitimate.

Report Suspicious Activity

If your business receives a fraudulent invoice or phishing email, report the incident to the Federal Trade Commission at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

Suspicious phishing emails can also be forwarded to reportphishing@apwg.org.

For additional guidance and resources to protect your business, visit ftc.gov/SmallBusiness.

Source: Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Advice, May 2026. Opening excerpt reproduced from the FTC article; remaining sections are supplemental security guidance prepared for the Riverside Downtown Partnership BID Bulletin.

Original article: https://consumer.ftc.gov/consumer-alerts/2026/05/run-small-business-pay-your-bills-not-scammers

RDP's Holiday Window Decorating Contest Returns

Downtown businesses can help light up downtown by participating in RDP's annual window decorating contest. **Decorate your windows and be eligible to win the $250 First Place prize, $200 Second Place prize, $150 Third Place prize, or one of five $100 Honorable Mention prizes**. Winners will be notified by email or phone and then announced on December 11th on Facebook. Winners will also receive a Certificate.



To enter, email Janice Penner at janice@riversidedowntown.org to receive an entry form. Entry forms will also be available at the RDP office or from the RDP Ambassadors. Windows must be decorated by November 17th and entry forms submitted by December 4th.

Beyond Black Friday: The Complete Holiday Retail Playbook
Make the Most of the 2026 Holiday Shopping Season

The holiday shopping season is about much more than Black Friday. For small businesses, success comes from understanding when customers shop, planning promotions strategically, and preparing for the changing demands of the season.



According to SCORE, holiday shopping begins earlier than many businesses realize. By November, consumers are already comparing prices, researching products, and making purchasing decisions. Businesses that begin promoting early have a better opportunity to capture their attention before the holiday rush.

Five Important Dates for 2026

- November 26 – Thanksgiving: An opportunity to connect with customers through messages of appreciation and community.
- November 27 – Black Friday: Kick off the holiday shopping weekend with special promotions and seasonal offerings.
- November 28 – Small Business Saturday: Highlight the advantages of shopping locally, including personalized service, unique merchandise, and community connections.
- November 30 – Cyber Monday: Reach online shoppers through digital promotions, email marketing, and convenient purchasing options.
- December 1 – Giving Tuesday: Strengthen community relationships through charitable partnerships, donations, or other initiatives that support local causes.

Prepare for Holiday Shopping Surges

SCORE emphasizes that customer activity changes throughout November and December. Early November often brings increased browsing and inquiries, while Thanksgiving weekend generates significant shopping activity.

December brings additional opportunities as shoppers complete their gift lists, seek last-minute purchases, and look for convenient alternatives to shipping.

Business owners should consider adjusting staffing, monitoring inventory, and preparing employees to handle increased customer traffic during these periods.

Make Shopping Local Part of Your Strategy

Small businesses have something national retailers cannot easily duplicate: personal relationships with their customers and a direct connection to their communities.

Consider offering curated gift selections, seasonal promotions, gift cards, or special in-store experiences. Keep business hours and online information updated, and use social media to remind customers what makes your business unique.

For Downtown Riverside businesses, the holiday season also presents opportunities to welcome visitors attending the Festival of Lights and other seasonal activities.

The takeaway: A successful holiday season isn't built around a single shopping day. Thoughtful planning, consistent marketing, and exceptional customer service can help small businesses make the most of the entire season.

Summarized from "Beyond Black Friday: The Complete Holiday Retail Playbook," published by SCORE, September 2, 2026. Original article: https://www.score.org/articles/beyond-black-friday-complete-holiday-retail-playbook/h.

Online Reviews: Building Trust with Customers

Why Authentic Customer Feedback Matters to Your Business

Online reviews have become an important part of how consumers decide where to shop, dine, and do business. Whether someone is searching for a restaurant, retail store, or professional service, customer feedback can influence their purchasing decisions before they ever walk through the door.

For small businesses, maintaining a positive online reputation isn't just about collecting five-star ratings. It's about building credibility, encouraging honest feedback, and demonstrating a commitment to customer satisfaction.

Encourage Honest Customer Reviews

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) encourages businesses to seek authentic reviews from customers who have actually experienced their products or services.

Business owners can invite customers to share their experiences through follow-up emails, receipts, or friendly reminders at checkout. However, requests should be neutral and should never pressure customers to leave only positive feedback.

Businesses should also familiarize themselves with the review policies of platforms such as Google, Yelp, and Facebook, as each may have different rules regarding review solicitation and incentives.

Respond Professionally to Feedback

Customer reviews provide an opportunity to engage with the public and demonstrate professionalism.

When receiving positive feedback, a simple thank-you can reinforce customer relationships and show appreciation for their support.

Negative reviews, while sometimes frustrating, can also provide valuable insight. Responding calmly, acknowledging concerns, and offering an appropriate solution can demonstrate accountability and a willingness to improve.

Avoid sharing private customer information or engaging in public

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ONLINE REVIEWS, *continued from page 6*

arguments. Remember that prospective customers may be reading your responses as carefully as the reviews themselves.

Avoid Misleading Review Practices

The FTC cautions businesses against deceptive practices, including purchasing fake reviews, encouraging employees or family members to post reviews without disclosing their relationships, and selectively requesting reviews only from customers expected to provide favorable ratings.

Businesses should also be cautious when hiring reputation management companies. Some services promise improved ratings through questionable methods that could ultimately damage a business's credibility.

Build a Reputation That Lasts

A strong online reputation begins with excellent customer experiences. Consistent service, clear communication, and a willingness to address concerns can encourage customers to share genuine feedback.

For Downtown Riverside businesses, positive customer experiences can help attract new visitors, strengthen relationships with local patrons, and encourage repeat business throughout the year.

The bottom line: Authentic reviews build trust. Rather than focusing solely on the number of stars, businesses should prioritize honest feedback, responsive customer service, and lasting relationships.

Summarized from "Soliciting and Paying for Online Reviews: A Guide for Marketers," Federal Trade Commission, January 2022.
Source: https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/soliciting-paying-online-reviews-guide-marketers

Annie's at Imperial: Breakfast and Lunch on Main



There's a delicious new addition to Downtown Riverside! **Annie's at Imperial,** located at 3750 Main Street, is serving up fresh, delicious food in a beautiful, modern yet cozy atmosphere.

A friend and I stopped in for lunch this week, and what a treat! I ordered the patty melt on sourdough, cooked perfectly to medium, with crispy tater tots. My friend enjoyed a delicious omelet, also accompanied by tater tots. While we waited, Marcos surprised us with a slice of their warm, scrumptious coffee cake. The food was wonderful, and the service was equally impressive!

The restaurant itself is a visual delight, with vibrant turquoise seating, warm wood accents, copper lighting, and colorful terrazzo countertops.

I also had the pleasure of speaking with **Brock Dowis**, who owns Annie's Cafe with his wife, Amanda. The couple operates three additional locations throughout the Inland Empire. Brock emphasized their commitment to freshness, including bread delivered several times a week and meats that are never frozen.

For busy downtown professionals, Annie's offers convenient **Grab & Go breakfast and lunch specials**, with selections that may evolve based on customer feedback.

Just in time for Riverside's beloved **Festival of Lights**, Annie's plans to extend its hours until 8 p.m., offering visitors another wonderful dining option. The extended hours will also help determine whether evening service becomes a regular offering.

Personally, I'm thrilled to have another downtown breakfast spot that opens before 8 a.m.! I'm already looking forward to stopping in for coffee and a Grab & Go breakfast before work.

Welcome to Downtown Riverside, Annie's at Imperial!
3750 Main Street, Stew 103, Riverside
Call/Text: 951-286-0016
Hours: Mon.–Thurs., 6 a.m.–2 p.m. | Fri.–Sun., 6 a.m.–3 p.m.

Source: Original reporting and interview with Brock Dowis, co-owner of Annie's at Imperial, October 22, 2026. Photography by Mindy Griffith.

Fleming's Steakhouse – Riverside Location opening in early November

We are so excited to welcome you to our new Fleming's in Riverside this coming Fall of 2026. Our restaurant will boast several curated dining spaces including our main dining room that accommodates 107 Guests, luxurious bar dining, three private dining spaces for social events and private business dinners, and a large outdoor patio space that feels like a true oasis.

With a curated selection of Prime, Wagyu, and Signature steak cuts and an extensive wine collection sourced from esteemed producers around the world, we are the premier destination for elevated dining—where every experience feels intentional, every conversation flows a little easier, and every relationship is worth celebrating.

We're located in downtown near the intersection of Market Street and Mission Inn Avenue in Riverside County. We are also close to Fox Performing Arts Theater, UCR Arts Museum, Fairmount Park, and the Santa Ana River.

Our Riverside restaurant will be located at 3777 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside, California, 92501.

Hours
Main Dining Room
Opens November 9
Mon–Fri: 11AM–10PM
Sat: 4PM–10PM
Sun: 4PM–9PM
HOLIDAY HOURS
Thanksgiving, Nov 26: 11AM–8PM
Christmas Eve, Dec 24: 11AM–10PM
Christmas Day, Dec 25: CLOSED
New Year's Eve, Dec 31: 11AM–11PM

Source: https://www.flemingssteakhouse.com/promotions/riverside-coming-soon.

RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

DOWNTOWN IS CALLING

www.RiversideDowntown.org

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Janice Penner

Office Manager/ Bookkeeper
Shirley Schmeltz

Board and Program Liaison
Mindy Griffith

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