



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 8, 2014

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Downtown Visual Arts Center and Museum Associated with The University of Arizona**

There has been some discussion with regard to a potential downtown University of Arizona Art Museum; however, those discussions have been preliminary and are inconclusive regarding specific timing of providing such a facility for a University of Arizona art collection. In advance of any specific proposals, it is important to understand all of the options that may be available.

Years ago, the County discussed purchasing La Placita Village. If further plans develop, and with Board approval, there may be discussions regarding County acquisition of La Placita Village from the present owner in the future. While nothing other than general concepts have been discussed, it is important to understand the full range of possibilities if such were to occur.

Facilities Management Director Reid Spaulding recently participated in a design jury for fifth-year architectural students. Their project was to conceptualize and identify a number of design concepts that would form a basis of a downtown visual arts center. Attached is Mr. Spaulding's December 30, 2013 report on their process. The alternatives produced demonstrate the potential opportunities for redevelopment of the La Placita Village site.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Dr. Ann Weaver Hart, President, The University of Arizona
The Honorable Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor, City of Tucson
Humberto Lopez, President, HSL Properties



PIMA COUNTY

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 30, 2013

TO: Chuck Huckelberry, County Administrator

FROM: Reid H. Spaulding, R.A.
Facilities Management Director

SUBJECT: UA 5th Year Student Design Jury – Downtown Visual Arts Center

At the request of Jan Cervelli, Dean of the UA College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, I was asked to participate as a juror in the project review process for 5th year architecture students. This year's semester long studio project was the analysis, programming and schematic design for a new University of Arizona Visual Arts Center. Conceptually, the project would combine the vast existing collections from the Center for Creative Photography along with the School of Fine Arts museum. A considerable portion of both of these collections are currently not available to the public simply due to a lack of display space at the current on-campus museum.

Housing over 90,000 works by 2,000 photographers including Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, the Center for Creative Photography is also a repository for archival collections, manuscripts, rare books and other reference materials about the history and study of photography around the world. Likewise, the University Museum of Art has more than 6,000 objects, the core of which is rare art from Europe and the U.S. Six collections include paintings, drawings and sculpture ranging from the 14th century through the present including the 26-panel altarpiece of the Cathedral of Ciudad Rodrigo, Spain, works from the Great Depression, and modern artists such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko.

It has been suggested, that a new properly located facility to combine these culturally significant holdings and open to the public has the potential to create an urban cultural core unmatched in the Southwest. Arts and culture organizations created a total economic impact approaching \$88M in Pima County in fiscal year 2010 (see Arts and Economic Prosperity IV, 2012, American for the Arts). The importance of these visitor contributions is well noted in Pima County's recent economic development plan. Locating and enhancing these facilities downtown, in easily-identified locations close to parking and immediate streetcar access and closely aligned with similar existing cultural entities (Tucson Museum of Art (TMA), Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), should be an essential component of a comprehensive regional economic development strategy.

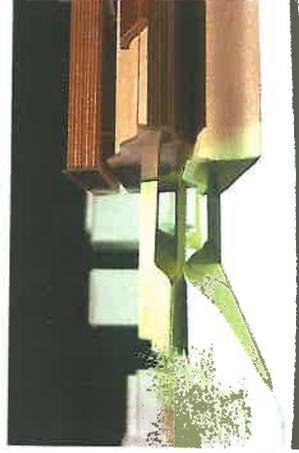
It is for these reasons, that the currently under-utilized La Placita Village site was selected as the hypothetical parcel for the student's design studio project. The site meets all of the criteria as established above and would serve as an anchor to a burgeoning Arts District extending from north of Alameda Street to south of W. Cushing Street.

Attached for your consideration are photos from the various student schemes. The students were required to form teams of 3 to 4 students each, with each team addressing a separate design component deemed critical to a successful patron museum experience. While appropriately academic in nature, the student's effort reinforced the potential of such an undertaking and revealed several challenges as well as tremendous opportunities the La Placita site affords.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly should you have any questions.

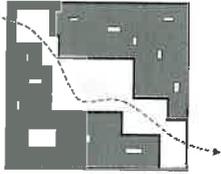
Downtown Tucson Visual Arts Center
University of Arizona | School of Architecture
ARC 451 Design Studio VII: Application Options | Fall 2013
Assistant Lecturer: Brad Lang, AIA

Topography
Laura Dinardo | Kenneth Lowe | Kelsey Shaw



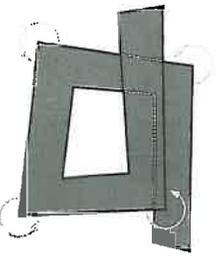
Downtown Tucson Visual Arts Center
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Courtyard
Ruth Dejene | Nilo Enami | Aaron Tsoosie



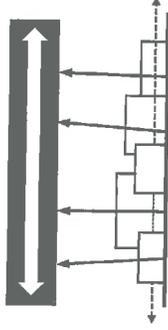
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Ribbon
Wes Kipley | Jeremy Riback



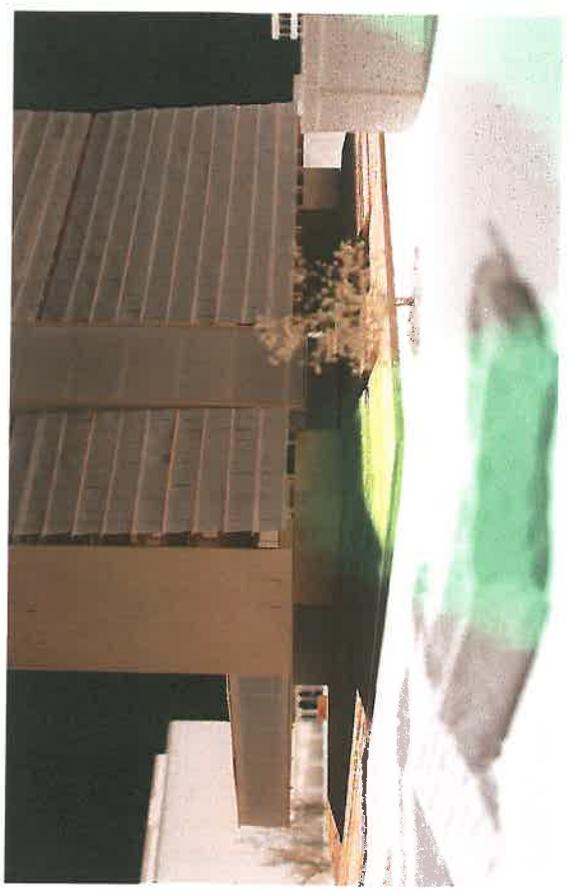
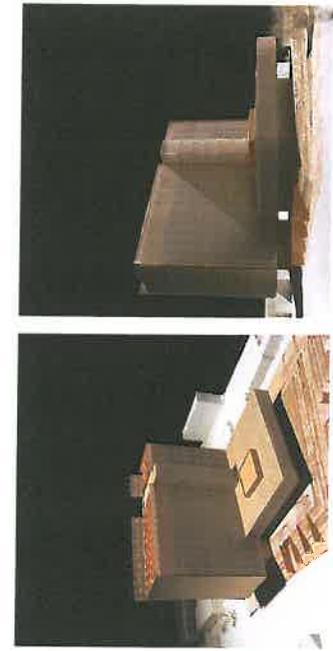
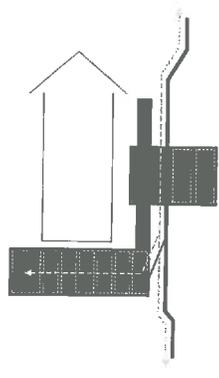
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Canopy
Jason Baiocchi | Brian Kolfage | Ben Thilliges



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ArTchive
Roy Peer | Christopher Pela | Yukun Zhou



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Standing (L to R): Kenneth Lowe | Kelsey Shaw | Wes Kipley | Roy Peer | Justin Wolfe | Laura Dinardo | Christopher Pela | Yukun Zhou | Jason Balocchi | Nilo Emami
Sitting (L to R): Ben Thiltges | Brian Koffage | Brad Lang | Ruth Dejene | Jeremy Riback | Aaron Tsoosie | Nathan Hyman

