

# **PIMA MUSEUM OF THE WEST**

## **(WORKING TITLE)**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

The Tucson Museum of Art (“TMA”) Board of Trustees has determined that a building expansion to house rapidly growing collections of Western and Native American Art is the next logical step in the Museum’s 90-year evolution. The most compelling opportunity to achieve this end lies in Pima County’s proposed renovation of its iconic 1929 County Courthouse, and their interest in assisting in the creation of a quality museum environment for exhibiting Western and Native American art, both for our community’s enjoyment today and for the benefit of generations to come.

This is an unprecedented opportunity for the Museum to expand its four-acre campus into an immediately adjacent plaza and historic property. The initiative would allow TMA to establish a much-anticipated programmatic showcase for its *Art of the American West* collection (i.e. Native American art, western ephemera, traditional and contemporary art forms including paintings, sculpture, photography, etc. – all conditioned with the unifying theme of the American West). The project would provide a new footprint and series of galleries to the Museum, adding an additional 26,000 square feet of space to house enhanced exhibitions, as well as related education programs, public activities, and special events that will build the Museum’s audiences and enhance the fulfillment of its mission of *Connecting Art to Life*.

Expansion of the Museum’s *Art of the American West* collection will have deep impact on the community and fill a pressing lack of regional, western, and Native American art exhibition space. Indeed, the Museum’s current multi-year and on-going programmatic partnerships with numerous Arizona tribes, including the Hopi (esp. their refugee program), the Tohono O’odham Nation, and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, make it keenly aware of the need for artistic representation of these groups – which the new Courthouse facility will provide.

The Pima County Courthouse is a symbol of Tucson’s diverse and rich past. Combining it with the cultural legacy of the Tucson Museum of Art will serve to deepen and enhance the experience of southern Arizona’s heritage by locals and visitors alike.

## **PROGRAMMATIC CORE**

This project has occupied the attention of the Museum's Board of Trustees, volunteers, and staff for the past eight years, and has been at the forefront of its strategic planning process for an equal amount of time. The current Pima County Courthouse renovation and repurposing proposal, supported by numerous legislators, officials, and community figures, has brought this long-sought project within the realm of reality.

It is believed that this initiative will result in a number of outcomes, all of which offer multifaceted opportunities to ensure the sustainability of the Museum well into the future:

- The project will result in dramatically increased traffic, visibility, and consumption of the Museum both locally and nationally.
- Expanding TMA's Western and Native American art holdings will create opportunities to attract new patrons and financial supporters.
- Not only are museums widely considered one of the best choices for adaptive reuse of historic buildings, TMA's unparalleled expertise and experience in restoring, converting, and caring for the five registered houses on its historic block position it as the most qualified local steward of this precious community symbol and resource.
- Gaining access to such a key historic site creates a multitude of educational programming possibilities. For an institution so deeply entrenched in the educational concerns of its community, this would translate to innumerable opportunities to experiment with high-quality interdisciplinary education programming as well as the enrichment and expansion of its current arts-centric programs.

## **EDUCATIONAL ARTICULATION AND IMPACT**

Aside from the call for *Art of the American West* gallery space, however, the expanded campus will present increased opportunities for experimental and participatory educational programming and community engagement. By increasing the historical and architectural content of the campus, the Museum will seek new avenues to employ other disciplines as well as the traditional art patrons who currently frequent TMA. The additional space, according to *Art of the American West* Curator, Christine C. Brindza, will also provide enhanced opportunities to experiment with new theories of interpretation and programming, thus providing an unequalled prospect of exploring creative methods for audience engagement and enrichment.

Educationally, connecting the Courthouse to the present Museum campus, situated in the heart of a prominent historic district with five (5) properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, will present a multitude of new programmatic opportunities to engage local teachers and students in learning about regional history in context. Inclusion of the most prominent and iconic historic building in Tucson (the Pima County Courthouse) will allow the Museum to create a vibrant cultural destination, connecting authentically with multiple disciplines and creating new intersections of collaboration with other organizations through the presentation of many facets of local heritage.

At a time when arts education is virtually nonexistent in the school systems, the Museum aggressively maintains an outstanding education department, featuring programs such as:

- **“Museum as Sanctuary”** – An internationally recognized and award winning Refugee Program in collaboration with the Hopi Nation (featured on BBC International and BBC America)
- **Summer Youth Art Camp**
- **“Picture This! Art for Families”** – Free studio art programs
- **THE IDEA SCHOOL** – Housed on campus, this is a K-3 grade inquiry based learning center that incorporates the Museum’s programming into its curriculum.
- Museum tours to thousands of K-12 students
- Docent led In-school art programs
- Artist, Curator, and Docent lectures and panel discussions
- Southern Arizona’s largest ceramics kiln and workshop
- Musical and theatrical performances
- Studio art classes that are open to the community
- Hospital outreach art activities for critically and terminally ill children and their families at Tucson Medical Center and University Medical Center, just to name a few.

### **PIMA COUNTY COURTHOUSE ADAPTIVE REUSE**

A community-based quality art museum is generally perceived as a perfect fit and use of Tucson’s downtown historic architectural icon, the Pima County Courthouse.

The reasons include:

- **Ideal Location** – Proximity to the current Museum campus, which features five historic homes, a restaurant, museum store, art school, ceramics studio, fine arts library, and 29 art galleries.
- **A Great Showcase for Great Art Collections** – This initiative would attract the donations of many other Western and Native American Art collections to the Tucson community.
- **Community Plaza** – The plaza directly west of the courthouse would be linked to the current museum campus by a redesigned multi-use outdoor sculpture park and memorial to the January 8 shooting victims. This redesigned plaza could accommodate outdoor art fairs, community programs and events, musical and theatrical performances, etc. It is envisioned as a welcoming community gathering place – a place to listen to music at noon during the workweek, or enjoy the many downtown Tucson outdoor art markets and events in a pleasant, safe, and accommodating environment.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- The Museum's participation and contribution to tourism will grow as more sophisticated and diverse exhibits are presented – exhibits such as those that can be created out of its fine arts collection.
- An average Museum tour will take a minimum of two hours, increasing adjacent downtown restaurant and other business patronage.
- The Museum will make an attractive tourist destination in the "Shoulder Season."
- Since the Museum is fully compliant with the American Disabilities Act, it can accommodate more senior-aged groups with its easy accessibility.
- With adult-learning and hands-on experiential programs added to the Museum's repertoire, more tourists and residents will be engaged and want to visit.
- As an educational resource, the Museum will offer high-quality school and children's programs with a focus on its art collection and changing exhibitions.

Indeed, with the opportunities and benefits represented by the Pima County Courthouse adaptive reuse project, these goals are well within reach. TMA is thoroughly committed, and boasts firm leadership and a compelling vision. The power to initiate significant and lasting change in the cultural life of southern Arizona cannot be overstated.

- The Pima Museum of the West is a programmatic expansion of the Tucson Museum of Art, a **private** non-profit 501(c)(3) educational institution.
- Founded in 1924 (just 12 years after Statehood), the Tucson Museum of Art generates an annual operating budget of approximately \$3.2 million dollars, employs 50+ residents, and is invaluablely assisted by 600+ regular volunteers. TMA is celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.
- Less than **one-half of one percent** of the Museum's annual funding comes from state and/or local governmental sources. The vast majority of the operating budget is earned through fundraising special events, admissions, foundation grants, and private donations.
- The Museum holds and protects in public trust, on behalf of its community, an art collection of more than 8,500 objects valued in excess of \$20 million dollars.
- The Museum manages and maintains five historic properties owned by the City of Tucson. Throughout its history the Tucson Museum of Art raised the initial monies necessary to build the new museum building in 1973 – added a major addition in 1996 – and has invested more than \$8 million in capital improvements to the City's historic buildings.
- For many years the Pima County Library System has assisted the Museum in administering its large research library of 14,000+ books on the history of art. The library's valuable holdings are cross-referenced and accessible via Pima County's catalogue system – and are available for public use.

- Café a la C'Art, a full-service restaurant housed in one of the historic properties, is open to the public for breakfast, lunch, and dinner – as well as for private and special event catering.
- The Museum hosts between 120,000 – 200,000+ visitors annually from around the world (depending of the year's programming); has an outreach of more than 9,500 and maintains a mailing list in excess of 22,500 residents.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE BOND – MUSEUM PATRONS ARE VOTERS!!!**  
With the ability to directly link to museum patrons for voter support, TMA believes this initiative can greatly help in the overall success of the bond election.
- TMA's regular special event fundraising programs include:
  - Semi-Annual **Artisans Markets** featuring hundreds of local artists and craftsman attracting thousands of patrons
  - **ART on TAP** – A local music, craft beer, and art festival designed, programmed, and implemented by the Museum's young professionals group "START"
  - **Dinners a l'Art** – A large number of special art-themed fundraising dinners held in patrons' homes throughout the community
  - **ART AFTER DARK** – A regular program of "after hours" art events
  - Corporate receptions, weddings, and private functions
  - **CRUSH**, a multi-day fine art and rare wine festival.
- **GREAT CITIES DESERVE GREAT ART MUSEUMS!**
  - TMA is fully accredited by the American Alliance of Museums – a "Good Housekeeping" stamp of approval held by only 5% of museums in the country.
  - TMA has been inducted into the American Association of Art Museum Directors group – another distinction held by only one other museum in Arizona (the Phoenix Art Museum).

The Tucson Museum of Art's mission of *Connecting Art to Life* is a statement that bolsters the belief that a great community deserves great art museums. It is in this spirit that the Tucson Museum of Art programs its exhibitions and educational experiences. The Museum continues its journey into the twenty-first century by presenting exhibitions and educational programs of significance that are supported by scholarship and publications of preeminent intellectual merit.

Through the dedicated leadership of its Board of Trustees and staff, the Museum is committed to establishing, preserving, and documenting a permanent collection of the highest order that reflects the vitality, complexity, and unfolding patterns of historic, traditional, modern, and contemporary art forms.

One of the overarching goals of the Museum is to build upon the theme of it as “a living, breathing place” – a gathering place for residents and a destination attraction for visitors. In fact, the word “museum” fails to describe this expansive vision, as it really is more of the concept of a “cultural campus” – an environment that embraces, and in turn is embraced, by every member of our culturally rich and diverse region.

As envisioned, the Pima Museum of the West will be less a place dedicated to archiving dusty objects on shelves, and more a dynamic and interactive experience of making the artistic legacy of one of Arizona’s leading art collections come alive in the fertile imagination of schoolchildren; bringing art and beauty into the lives of its citizens; and imbuing a sense of common humanity and dignity between the Museum’s widely diverse audiences.

### **COSTS**

- The Museum will occupy approximately **26,000 square feet** of first floor of the Pima County Courthouse.
- Renovation cost estimates for the Museum portion is currently at **\$19 million**.
- Total project renovation cost for the entire building and exterior plaza is at **\$35 million**, as per amended bond funding request.
- Museum will be required by the County to pay for annual maintenance and operations at \$7.00 per square foot, which equals **\$182,000**. This number can be covered with 18,200 adult admissions (at \$10.00 per person).

### **OTHER FUNDING**

The Museum will seek funding support from private foundations (e.g. Kresge Foundation; Ford Foundation; Getty Foundation; etc.), governmental organizations (e.g. National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Trust for Historic Preservation; etc.), as well as individual donors and special fundraising events.

**TUCSON DESERVES THIS MUSEUM** – An art museum that honors the past, celebrates the present, and helps create the future. The Museum’s programs and exhibits will maintain a unique quality, and break new ground by taking a vibrant and creative approach to telling the full story of the history of art in the southwest.

### **PROJECT SCHEDULE AND TIMELINE**

The dates listed below are provided as a project timeline estimate and would go into effect after all approvals and construction funding is secured.

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| ▪ Program Plan Approved and Construction Funds Secured |                      |
| ▪ Conceptual/Schematic Design:                         | <i>Six Months</i>    |
| ▪ Approvals:   | <i>One Month</i>     |
| ▪ Construction Documents:                              | <i>Six Months</i>    |
| ▪ Permits:   | <i>One Month</i>     |
| ▪ Construction:  | <i>Twelve Months</i> |