Fort Bend County Museum Association Facilities Needs Assessment and Program Facilities Master Plan

MUSEUMINSIGHTS

In association with

Gensler

Overview

- Background
- Resources & Constraints
- Observations, Issues, and Concerns
- Mission, Vision, Constituents, and Programs
- Facility Needs
- Site & Building Alternatives
- Preliminary Capital Budget
- Next Steps





The Planning Process

Discovery

Including research, site visits and interviews with stakeholders. Resources, Constraints, Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities were identified and discussed.

Program Planning Matrix

Documenting constituents and their needs, desires, and facility requirements.

• Interpretive Concept Development Including creating a unifying program concept.



Facility Planning

Including Facility Needs Assessment and Highest and Best Use Matrix development including documentation of existing areas and an ideal use for each building owned by the Association.

Final Long Range Master Plan Development

Including possible alternatives for moving forward.

Fort Bend County

Fastest Growing County in Texas

· Ranching, farming, the railroad,

oil and gas, & suburbs

Exceptionally diverse

 Richmond, the county seat, has retained its historic feel



The Museum Association

- Serves all of Fort Bend County
- Many different programs and activities:
 - Museum exhibits
 - Programs for children, families and adults
 - Tours of the Moore Home
 - Texian Time Machine
 - Preserving historic artifacts and documents
 - Supporting the Fort Bend Archeological Association
 - Maintaining a collection of historic buildings
 - Managing the many programs and activities at the George Ranch Historical Park.
- Multiple sources of funding: earned income, foundations, county, donations.

The Association's Mission

The mission of the Fort Bend County
Museum Association is to preserve the
history of Fort Bend County and the
surrounding area. The Association strives
to inspire and educate the public for the
purpose of strengthening awareness
and appreciation of cultural heritage
for future generations.

The Association's Bylaws

- To enhance the **cultural life** in Fort Bend County and the surrounding areas
- To support an educational undertaking and to maintain a place where historical, patriotic, civic, educational, and other scientific collections may be housed
- To increase and diffuse a knowledge and appreciation of **history**, **art**, **and scientific interests**
- To offer popular instruction and opportunities for **education and aesthetic enjoyment**

Many Possibilities

- A central repository and exhibit facility for historical artifacts
- An **indoor and outdoor educational facility** with a wide variety of hands-on learning activities for school-aged children.
- A **regional art museum** with rotating exhibits featuring local artists.
- A **regional craft center** (perhaps with a focus on historical crafts) with changing exhibits and "maker spaces" for community use.
- A place that encourages and celebrates civic engagement and the role of the people in local, regional, and national government.

The Museum and the Ranch

- Two distinct organizations serving different constituent groups
 - The Fort Bend Museum is primarily a community resource
 - The Ranch is also an international living history destination
- This plan focuses primarily on the museum's facilities
- The focus of a George Ranch strategic master plan would be primarily on programs and operations

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Resources

- The Museum's Historic Buildings
- The Museum's Collections
- The Museum's Staff and Volunteers
- County and Foundation
 Support
- Richmond's Historic Identity
- The Growth of Houston's Suburbs





Issues and Concerns

- Insufficient Space to Support Programming
- Aging Museum Building
- Lack of Resources to Maintain Buildings
- Unused Buildings in Decker Park
- Connectivity
 Between the Sites
- Scattered Offices and Work Areas
- Dated Exhibits

- Limited Space for Temporary Exhibits
- Reaching More County Residents
- Collections at Risk
- A Confusing Identity
- Relationship with George Ranch
- Competing with Other Fort Bend Museums
- Limited Family Programming

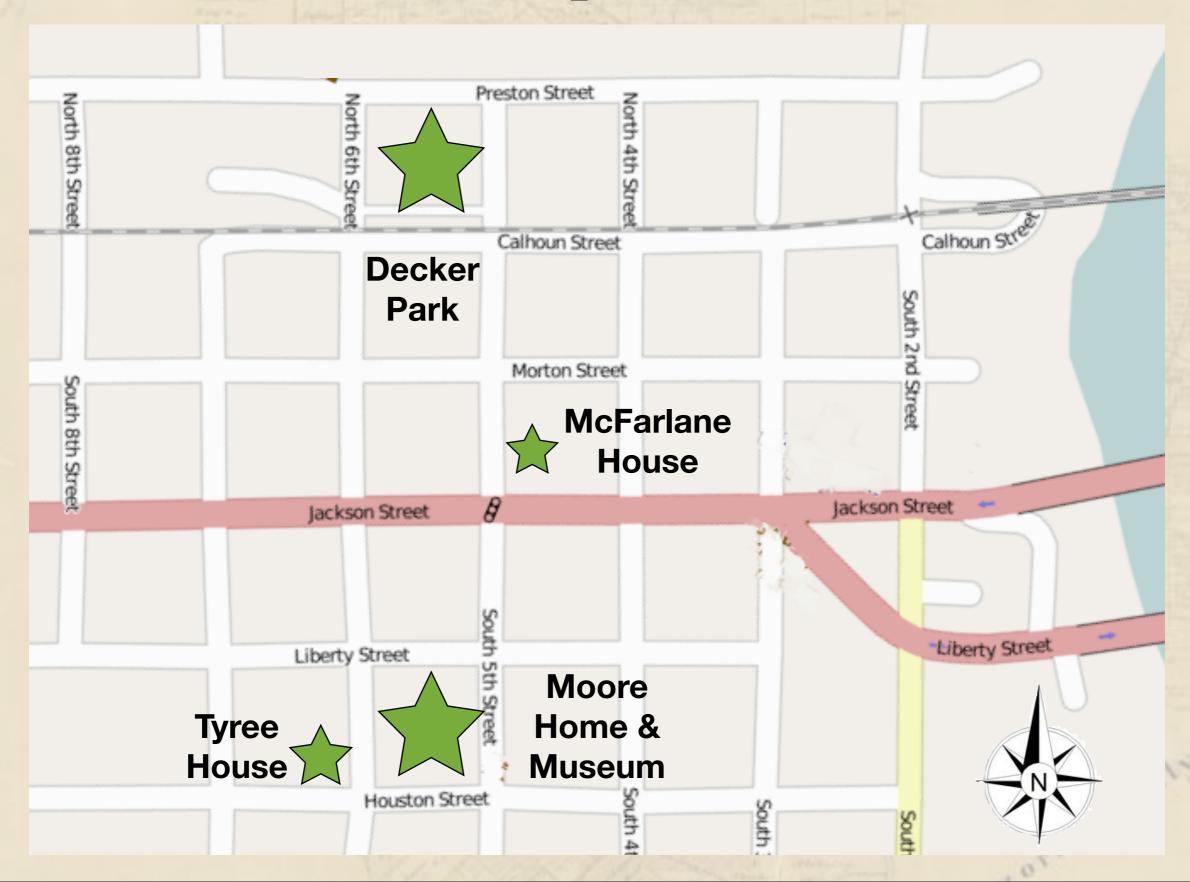
Lack of Maintenance Resources

- The **museum building** is due for a significant renovation
- The Tyree House is also aging
- The restored Moore Home is in excellent condition, but requires ongoing maintenance



- The McNabb House has been partially restored, but has issues with its roof
- The Quonset Hut used for collections storage is more than 50 years old
- The Kochan Reed House is in need of total restoration
- The **Depot** has been restored, but is not connected to utilities and is seldom open to the public

Connectivity

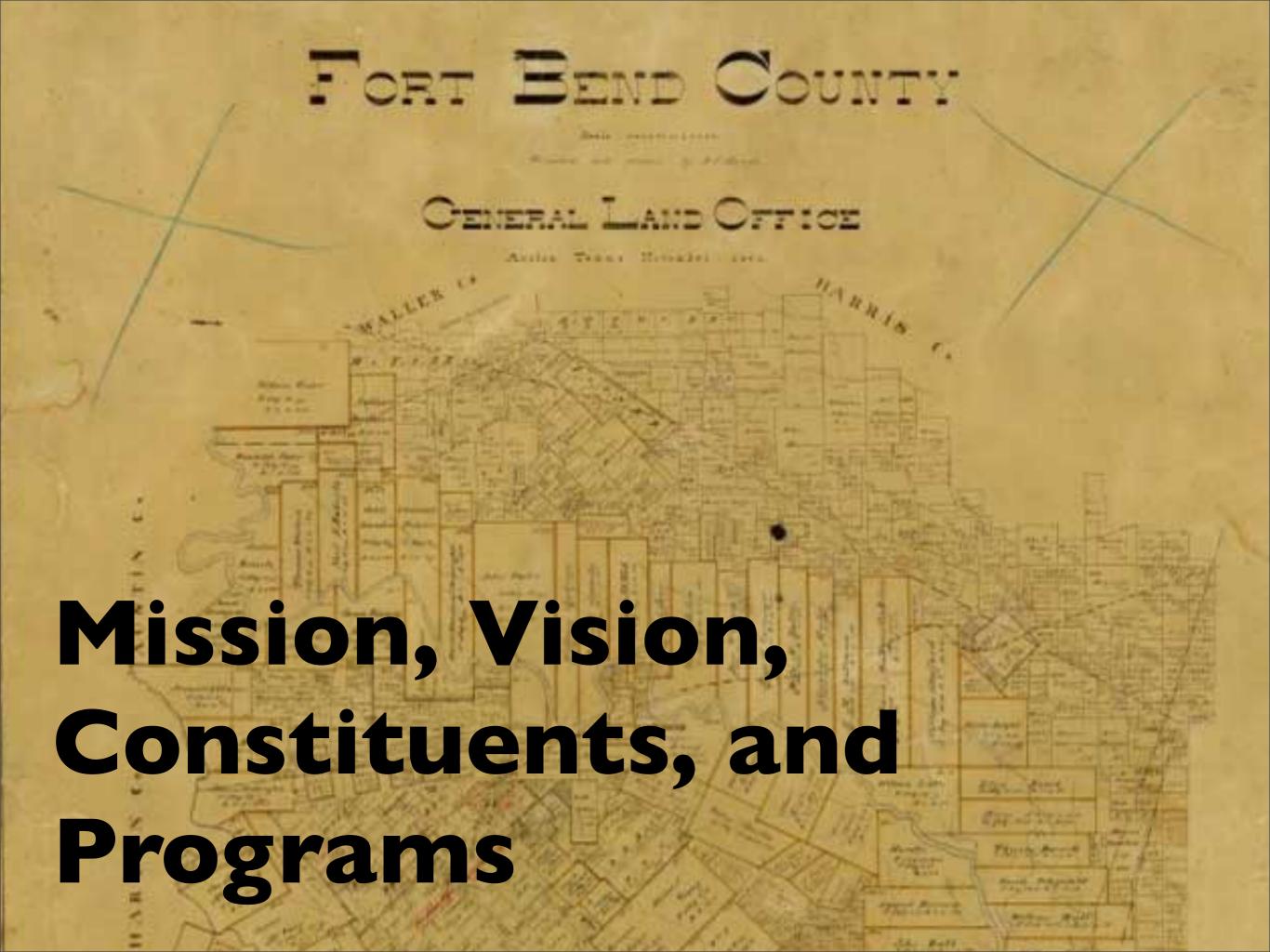


Confusing Identity

- The Fort Bend County Museum Association
- The Fort Bend (County?) Museum
- George Ranch Historical Park
- DeWalt Heritage Center
- Texian Time Machine



What can the museum do best?



Fort Bend Museum's Mission

- To help clarify the identity of the Association's different units, each should have its own uniquely focused mission statement.
- The museum mission proposed here is a working draft which we have used to inform the planning.
- Branding for each unit should also be updated to coordinate and distinguish each from the others, much like has been done with the George Ranch Historical Park web site.

The Fort Bend Museum enriches the lives of Fort Bend County's residents and visitors through exhibits, programs, and activities that preserve and celebrate the county's rich and varied history and culture.

Museum Business Models

Destination

Community

Curatorial

Museum Business Models

Destination

Visitors
Core Exhibits
Memorable
Prominent

Community

Locals or Fans
Varied Programs
Participatory
Easy to Find

Curatorial

Researchers
Collections
Academic
Secure

Museum Business Models

Destination
Earned Income
Well Known
Broad Impact

Community

Donated Income
Well Loved
Long-term Impact

Curatorial

Endowed Income
Well Respected
Deep Impact

The Museum's Constituents

The Fort Bend Museum is primarily a **community museum** with some destination and curatorial constituents.

• Fort Bend County Community members (blue), especially school children, who will be interested in a wide range of programming and activities.

Fort Bend County Visitors

• Visitors to Fort Bend (green) including visiting friends and relatives, heritage tourists, and regional residents seeking to learn more about local history.



Researchers & Scholars

• Researchers and Scholars (yellow) including history enthusiasts and others with a deep interest in Fort Bend's history.

The Museum's Constituents (continued)

The table on the following pages outlines the group members for each of the three broad groups that the Museum serves; their interests, needs, and desires; the types of programs that they find most compelling; their program and facility needs; and the potential benefits and outcomes of their engagement with the museum. The Constituent Matrix is an essential first step in planning the museum's program and space needs.

Fort Bend County Community Members

	Group Members	Interests, Needs, and Desires	Activities and Experiences	Program and Facility Requirements	Benefits and Outcomes (mission is assumed)
	School-Age Children	 A fun field trip After-school and summer programs Scout programs Title 1 school programs 	 Hands-on programs that invite engagement and participation After-school, summer, scouting, Title 1 school programs and other programs 	 Child-friendly exhibit space Flexible, easy to clean program and lunch space Covered outdoor program space 	 Children engaged with local history Enrichment for Title 1 schools Community and funder support
•	Families with Children	Fun family activities that engage with history and diverse cultures Easy to visit	Programs and activities that are engaging, participatory, and family-oriented	 Family-friendly, hands-on exhibit space Flexible, easy to clean program space Affordable and accessible Experiential programs Convenient parking 	Repeat visitationMembershipsCommunity support
'	Docent Society and Archeology Society Members and Museum Volunteers	Active engagement with the museum and with local history and archeology projects Learning about Fort Bend County Volunteer opportunities Social opportunities Opportunities to learn about diverse cultural histories	 Education and training Opportunities to lead home tours, exhibit tours, and educational programs for school-age children Archeological research and collection processing Special programs on historical and archeology topics Social events 	 Educational and training programs Newsletter and social media contacts Comfortable meeting and event space Collection processing areas Safe and secure collection storage 	 Volunteers to lead tours and programs Membership fees, donations, and other ongoing support Active archeological research
	Fort Bend County Museum Association Members	Connection with local history A way to support the museum	Interesting and engaging programs Changing exhibits Social events	Comfortable meeting and event space Flexible exhibit space Newsletter and social media contacts	Membership fees, donations, and other ongoing support Earned revenue

Community

The Museum's Constituents (continued)

Group Members	Interests, Needs, and Desires	Activities and Experiences	Program and Facility Requirements	Benefits and Outcomes (mission is assumed)
Historically and Culturally Engaged Adults	 Connection with arts, history, and other cultural disciplines Opportunities to meet like minded people Opportunities to engage in diverse cultural experiences 	Interesting and engaging programsChanging exhibitsSocial events	Comfortable meeting and event room Flexible exhibit space	Donations and other ongoing support Future members
Fort Bend County Residents	Preserve and learn about county history	 Engaging, participatory exhibits and experiences A place to come together as a county-wide community A unique venue for adult and family gatherings and events Traveling exhibits at various venues Changing exhibits at the museum 	Flexible indoor and outdoor event spaces with facilities for caterers Temporary gallery space Temporary exhibits space at locations around the county Predictable hours of operation Convenient parking	Understanding of Fort Bend County history and its importance County pride Memberships Ongoing member and community support Positive word of mouth
Richmond Residents	 Preserve and learn about Richmond history A cultural anchor for the city City identity and pride A unique venue for special events 	 Engaging, participatory exhibits and experiences Easily accessible facility Community festivals A unique venue for adult and family gatherings and events 	Changing exhibits at the museum Programs and social events Outdoor area for community events and festivals Facilities for caterers and event guests Predictable hours of operation Convenient parking	 Understanding of Richmond history and its place in the county's history City pride Memberships Ongoing community support Positive word of mouth
K-12 Teachers and Homeschoolers	Curriculum-connected learning	 Hands-on programs that invite engagement and participation Connections to real history Continuing Education and Professional Development In-school programs, summer programs and after-school programs 	Clear connections to the TEKS standards and homeschool curricula Flexible, easy to clean program space	Makes history relevant Community support Funder support Fulfills TEKS and other curricula standards

The Museum's Constituents (continued)

Group Members	Interests, Needs, and Desires	Exhibits, Programs, and Other Activities	Program and Facility Requirements	Benefits/Outcomes (mission is assumed)	
Regional Residents	day trip exhibits and experiences facility • A unique venue for special • Regional festivals • Long-term exhibit area		 Long-term exhibit area Flexible, affordable indoor and outdoor rental event space Predictable hours of operation 	Enhanced appreciation of Fort Bend County Richer understanding of Fort Bend County history and its regional impact Positive word of mouth about Fort Bend County Admission revenue/donations Museum shop revenue	
	 A remarkable and memorable experience that is unique to Fort Bend County Other nearby heritage experiences Nearby dining and shopping 	 Engaging, participatory exhibits and experiences Souvenirs Easily located and identified facility Predictable hours of operation Admission remains the properties of the properties o	Richer understanding of Fort Bend County's history Positive word of mouth about Fort		
Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFRs)	 A remarkable/memorable experience that is unique to Fort Bend County A fun, engaging, and social outing 		Predictable hours of operation	Bend County • Admission revenue/donations • Museum shop revenue	

Researchers and Scholars

History Enthusiasts	 Learn more about local history Engagement with other history enthusiasts Connection to historic artifacts 	In-depth exhibits Artifact collections	Exhibit areaRegular programs and eventsCollection access	Ongoing support
Researchers of History	Access to historic materials, archives, and collections	Archives and collections Meetings with peers	Research and meeting spaceCollection and archive storage	Research and publications related to local history

Interpretive Concept

- No single storyline embraces all of the different ways that life in the county has been shaped.
- The county's history is a rich and varied tapestry.
- The core focus of the museum's programs and exhibits should be People and Place:
 Life and Work in Fort Bend County

People and Place Stories

- Stephen F. Austin's Texian Colony
- Jane Long and the Founding of Richmond
- Land Grants and the Old 300
- The George Ranch and the George Family
- The Railroad reshapes the county
- The Moore Family and the Moore Home through Time
- Ranches, ranching, and ranchers in Fort Bend County
- Prisoners and Sugar Cane Farming
- Rice Farming Immigrants
- The Coming of the Suburbs
- The Changing Faces of Fort Bend County

The goal is to celebrate all of the different people and places that have shaped and continue to shape Fort Bend County.

Programs and Activities

Programs for the Fort Bend Community

- Hands-on educational and experiential programs for children in groups
- After-school, summer camps, and scouting programs
- Professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers
- Changing exhibits at the museum
- Traveling exhibits circulated to county libraries and other venues
- Special evening and weekend programs on historical, cultural, and archeological topics
- Family and business gatherings
- Community festivals

Collections, Archive, and Curatorial Activities

- Historical collections and archives that document county history
- Archeological research and collection processing

Programs for Destination Visitors

- Engaging, participatory historical overview exhibits about Fort Bend County for school-age children, heritage tourists, regional residents, and visiting friends and relatives.
- Unique shopping opportunities and souvenirs for heritage tourists and visiting friends and relatives.

Vision

The Fort Bend Museum will be:

- A special place for children to experience Fort Bend County's history and culture.
- An inspiring and welcoming place for residents and visitors that celebrates Fort Bend County.
- A community landmark and gathering place that brings people together for a wide variety of public and private events.
- A secure repository for the county's cultural heritage artifacts and archives.

Facility Needs

- Flexible areas for educational and public programs that can adapt to a wide variety of uses.
- To make visitors feel welcome and easily able to find their way into and around the exhibits and site.
- Additional exhibition area for both long-term and temporary exhibitions of many types.
- Secure collection storage areas that are environmentally appropriate for long-term preservation of the artifacts.
- Centralized administrative offices and work areas.
- Building service facilities including special event, receiving, mechanical and electrical, and janitorial areas.
- Grow from 28,000 square feet to 44,000 square feet

FORT BEND COUNTY

CENERAL LAND OFFICE

How can we best meet the current and future needs of the Fort Bend community and the Museum Association while taking best advantage of the Association's current inventory of buildings and other resources?

Site and Building Alternatives































Three Alternatives

- I. Renovate, expand, or replace the museum building on the current site next to the Moore Home.
- 2. Build a new museum on the site east of Decker Park that includes all of the museum's spaces. Repurpose the Moore Home facilities primarily for special event rentals.
- 3. Reuse an existing building on Morton Street for exhibits and administration, while continuing to use the current facility for education and special events.



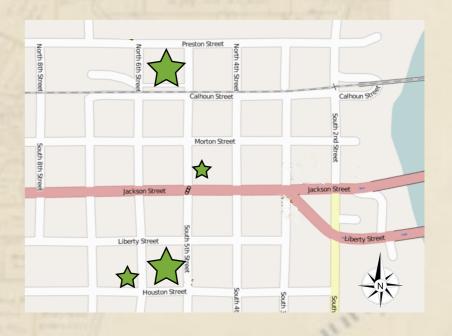




Why Not Decker Park?

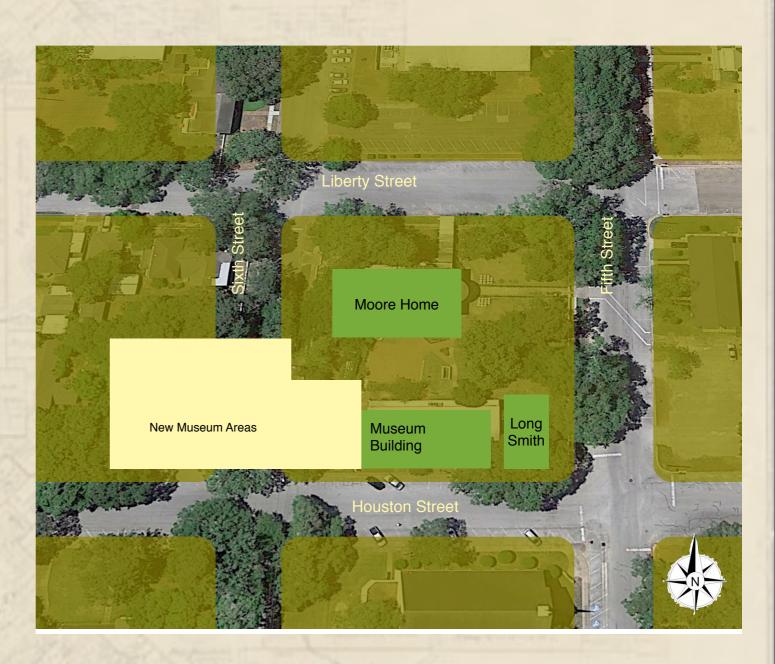
- The size and arrangement of spaces in the buildings are not well suited to museum programming
- The location four blocks from the Moore Home across Jackson Street and the railroad tracks is difficult to manage for staff and awkward for visitors
- Maintenance and operating costs will be substantially higher for a campus spread across multiple sites.





I. Expand at the Current Site

- Concentrates the museum's resources at the location of its most significant assets
- Simplifies oversight and operations.
- Does not require visitors and school children to cross Jackson Street or the railroad tracks.
- Allows the Tyree House site to be incorporated into the museum complex.
- Provides plenty of parking for museum visitors.
- Allows the museum to fundraise for expansion in phases.



2. Build a New Museum

- The new building would not integrate with the Moore Home.
- School children and visitors
 would have to cross both
 Jackson Street and the railroad
 tracks to visit both sites.
- If built in several phases, the new building would further fragment the museum's operations.
- While the rendering is lovely, it will be a long time before that part of the city is fully developed. The museum might be an orphan for some time.



3. Reuse an Existing Building

- Give the museum a greater presence for visitors to Richmond.
- Possible cost savings by repurposing an existing building, rather than building anew.
- Splitting the program areas would add operational costs and make supervision more complex.
- Parking for visitors may be difficult at a downtown location.
- School children participating in programs at the Moore Home would have to cross Jackson Street to see the museum's exhibits.
- No direct connection between the museum and the Moore Home



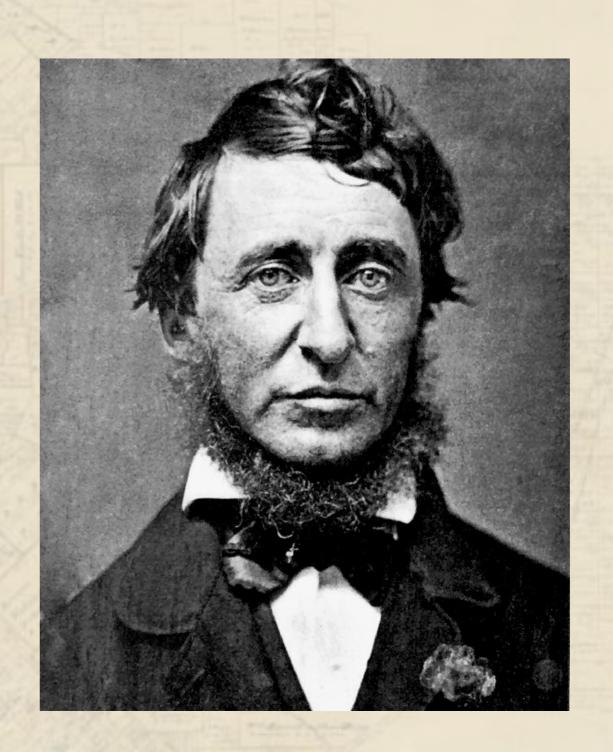


Recommendations

Simplify, simplify!

I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumbnail.

Henry David Thoreau



Recommendations

Simplify, simplify!

I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumbnail.

Henry David Thoreau

- 1. **Centralize** the museum's exhibits, programs, collections, and administration.
- 2. **Focus** on the facilities needed for the museum's programs for school children and county residents.
- 3. **Minimize** the number of buildings the Association owns and must maintain.

Phasing for Expanding on the Moore Home Site

The areas needed for the museum on the Moore Home site can be implanted in many different ways. Ideally, the new and renovated spaces would be completed as one project. However, finding funding for the larger project may take time and a phased approach may be preferable in order to address some of the museum's immediate needs.

The approach outlined here includes three phases, which can be combined in different ways depending on the available funding.

- **Phase 1** is proposed as a new building on the site of the Long-Smith Cottage, with the education, visitor services, and exhibit areas as outlined in the table to the right.
- **Phase 2** adds more education, visitor services, and exhibit areas. This phase includes renovation or replacement of the existing museum building.
- **Phase 3** adds the needed collection storage, administration, and other areas. This phase assumes that the Museum Association will move out of the Quonset Hut and the McFarlane House and into the new building.

Another alternative would be to consider locating some of the areas in phase 2 and 3 at the George Ranch Historical Park, perhaps including administration, collections, and some long-term exhibition area.

Please Note: The alternatives outlined here are designed primarily to give a sense of priority and of the overall costs. An architect should be engaged as the first step of the next phase of planning to study alternatives and determine the best solution for the programs, site, and buildings.

Please see the phasing diagram on the following page.

		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
1. Visi	tor Service Areas	1,375	1,450	
1.1	Vestibule/Lobby/Reception	500		
1.2	Ticketing/Information	100		
1.3	Museum Store	400		
1.4	Store & Visitor Services Storage	75		
1.5	Restrooms (staff and visitor)	250	250	
1.6	Storage Area for Wheelchairs and Strollers	50		
1.7	Special Events Storage (tables, chairs)		300	
1.8	Christmas Decoration Storage		100	
1.9	Catering Support (Garage, Kitchen House, etc.)		800	
. Col	lections, Conservation, and Access Areas			13,700
2.1	Museum Collection Storage (Climate controlled)			11,000
2.2	Museum Collection Storage (Not climate controlled)			
2.3	Unreturned archeological artifacts			300
2.4	Curatorial Work Area			1,000
2.5	Archival Storage and Access			1,000
2.6	Archeology Storage			400
. Exh	nibition Areas	500	6,300	
3.1	Long-term Exhibition Area		3,000	
3.2	Temporary Exhibition Area	500	2,500	
3.3	Period Rooms in Moore Home			
3.4	Period Rooms in Long Smith Cottage			
3.5	Restored Historic Interiors			
3.6	Unrestored Historic Interiors			
3.7	Exhibit Storage		400	
3.8	Exhibit Workshop		400	
. His	toric Building Areas Used for Programs			
const	These existing areas will not be part of any renovation or new ruction and are not included in the proposed space program. For s about these areas see the Existing Space Program in the ndix.			
5. Edu	ıcation and Public Program Areas	1,200	2,050	
5.1	Single-Purpose Activity Rooms	1,000	500	
	Education Programs Storage	200	100	
	Education Coordinator Work Area		125	
	Outreach Coordinator/Education Asst.		125	
	Library		400	
5.6	Education Staff Work Area		300	
5.7	Docent Room		200	
	Time Machine Storage		300	

All areas are shown in square feet.

Phasing for Expanding on the Moore Home Site (continued)

Note: Net Usable Area is the usable space inside each individual room. Gross area is the overall size of the building measured on the outside. Gross area includes the thickness of walls, stairways, hallways, utility closets, and other areas not included in the space program. The grossing factor estimate of 1.3 times the net area accounts for these areas when developing a construction budget.

In this case, for example, in order to have the 3,875 net square feet of usable space described as Phase 1, we calculate that the museum will actually need to budget for about 5,000 square feet of new construction.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
6. Staff and Volunteer Offices and Work Areas		1,150	2,250
6.1 Executive Director			250
6.2 Executive Director's Assistant			100
6.3 Director of Development			175
6.4 Administrative Services Manager			150
6.5 Director of Marketing			150
6.6 Publicity Coordinator			125
6.7 Site Manager		125	
6.8 Intern Work Stations (50 SF each)		200	
6.9 Docent/Volunteer Work Area		200	
6.10 Reception Area/Front Desk		100	
6.11 Shared Work Area (Printers, Copiers, Storage, etc.)		200	
6.12 Staff Break Room and Kitchenette		125	
6.13 Small Meeting Room		200	
6.14 Large Meeting Room			450
6.15 Staff Restrooms			150
6.16 Additional Staff Offices and Work Areas			200
6.17 Admin Storage			500
6.18 Reception Area			
7. Building Service Facilities	800	1,750	1,500
7.1 Maintenance and Security Office	150		
7.2 Central Security Room	150		
7.3 General Loading Dock and Receiving Area		250	
7.4 Maintenance and Custodial Storage		200	
7.5 Building Supply Storage @ Kochan Reed House			
7.6 Garbage & Recycling Storage	100		
7.7 Maintenance Workshop		200	
7.8 Mechanical/Electrical @ 10% of Net New Areas	400	1,100	1,500
Total Net Usable Area	3,875	12,700	17,450
Total Gross Area	E 000	16 500	00 700
TOTAL GLOSS ALEA	5,000	16,500	22,700

All areas are shown in square feet.

Phasing of an Expansion



Phase I



Phase 2



Phase 3



Alternative I



Next Steps

- Develop preliminary architectural concepts and an interpretive master plan
- Begin capital campaign
- Select a museum project management consultant
- Select architectural and exhibit design teams
- Begin construction of building and exhibits
- Grand re-opening celebration

