



PRINCIPAL PLANNERS  
SUZANNE ELLEDGE • LAUREL F. PEREZ

7 October 2013

Santa Barbara City Council  
735 Anapa Street Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**RE: 1130 State Street – Santa Barbara Museum of Art Request for Community Priority Designation Request (MST2013-00237)**

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art (Museum), we are pleased to submit this letter to request Community Priority designation by City Council.

**Santa Barbara Museum of Art –Background and Mission**

The County of Santa Barbara owns the subject property located at 1130 State Street (APN 039-230-020) and since 1940 has had an agreement with the Museum which provides for the operation of a public art museum. The terms of the lease stipulate that any structural additions, changes or exterior alterations require prior written approval of the Board of Supervisors. On June 4, 2013 the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors granted approval of the requested additions and alterations (see Attachment 1, Letter of Authorization).

Additionally, the lease specifies that any proposed renovations and expansions will be reviewed and considered for approval by the appropriate Boards and Commissions of the City of Santa Barbara. As has been done in the past, the City of Santa Barbara will issue the necessary land use and building permits with oversight and review by County staff.

On June 5, 1941, the Museum first opened to the public in the building that once served as the Santa Barbara Post Office (1914-1932). Since its opening, the Museum has gone through various expansions and renovations. Currently, the Museum's gross floor area of 60,000 square feet includes exhibition galleries, a museum store, cafe, a 154-seat auditorium, art storage, administrative offices, a library containing 50,000 books, and a children's gallery dedicated to participatory interactive programming. The mission of the Museum is to integrate art into the lives of people. It serves an important role in the community as evidenced by the number of visitors each year,

approximately 150,000 individuals, in addition to long established educational programs.

As an educational institution, the Museum has the following goals:

- To provide life-enhancing experiences with works of art;
- To provide art experiences that encourage an individual's cognitive and empathetic growth;
- To promote the idea that life-enhancing experiences with works of art have both private, individual benefits, as well as community benefits;
- To provide studio art instruction in the context of the Museum's collections and exhibitions;
- To increase community participation in the Museum, especially among under-served audiences;
- To facilitate informed discussion of artistic and cultural issues.

### **Santa Barbara Museum of Art – Proposed Project**

At this point in time, the Museum's various mechanical systems have nearly reached their life expectancy with many of the systems operating for at least 30 years. As part of addressing general building maintenance issues, the Museum hired a facility assessment consultant to conduct a comprehensive technical analysis of the building mechanical systems and structural components. As a result, the Museum has identified renovations and improvements that must be implemented to continue operations and to ensure that the art collections continue to be protected in a safe manner. Given the extent of the building upgrades and renovations, it is logical and prudent financially for the Museum to include additional internal improvements in the project that are not directly related to general building maintenance.

A summary of the primary project components is provided below:

- Seismic retrofit of the existing masonry walls
- New roof structure and waterproofing
- Replacement of antiquated mechanical systems including electrical services, lighting, fire protection
- Interior circulation improvements to connect gallery spaces and eliminate dead-ends
- Reconfiguration of interior space to create and increase gallery space, improve art storage and administrative offices
- New art receiving area

The majority of the renovation involves reconfiguration of the building interior, but the plan also includes floor area additions and some exterior alterations. For example, in order to seismically retrofit the unreinforced masonry walls, the project proposes to construct a new floor on the upper level gallery that will provide structural reinforcement as well as increase gallery space by approximately 3,000 net square feet. Additional project components that will result in improved museum circulation and connectivity include additions on the upper level of approximately 2,200 net square feet to create new space in order to relocate existing administrative offices and an addition of approximately 1,700 net square feet for a proposed multi-purpose gallery. The new administrative addition and new multi-purpose gallery will unify the architecture of the older structures by adding a mission tile roof and altering the horizontal nature of the existing buildings into a more cohesive massing of the buildings. The project also proposes to extend an elevator and stair to the roof level to access a new public roof garden and terrace area of approximately 1,420 net square feet. On the ground level of the Anapamu Street side of the building, an addition of approximately 670 net square feet is proposed to create a much needed art receiving area with a freight elevator servicing three levels. The existing sidewalk lift within the outdoor courtyard on Anapamu Street does not conform to standards for the receiving and handling of art established by the American Association of Museums (AAM) as well as major sureties and lending institutions, thereby jeopardizing the Museum's ability to secure international loans. Currently, the Museum also relies on the use of a passenger elevator for art movement, which cannot accommodate often monumentally scaled works of art.

In summary, the proposed building renovation will involve an addition of approximately 8,990 net square feet within the existing building footprint and a comprehensive retrofit of the existing floor area. The project proposes phased construction over a period of 6 to 10 years which will facilitate the Museum's commitment to remain open to the public.

### **Community Priority Designation Request and Needs Assessment**

As stated above, the mission of the Museum is to integrate art into the lives of people. The mission and goals of the Museum are aligned with the intent and purposes of a Community Priority development as set forth in the City's Municipal Code. A Community Priority project must be found to meet a "present or projected need directly related to public health, safety or general welfare." The municipal code also defines general welfare as a community priority project which, "has a broad public benefit, for example, a museum, and which is not principally operated for private profit," (the Museum is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization). The proposed project will improve the Museum's ability to continue to serve the community and positively affect people's life experiences. It is apparent that the general welfare of

the community benefits from the art and life-enhancing experiences and opportunities that the Museum provides through exhibits, artistic and cultural discussions and its long established education programs.

While many of the Museum's visitors are from Santa Barbara and the South Coast, many visitors come from outside the immediate area, state, and country. Visitors from all regions seek out this Museum as a destination.

Recent visitor zip code information reveals the following breakdown:

- o Santa Barbara County: 33%
- o Ventura County: 10%
- o Los Angeles (and surrounding areas): 17%
- o Northern CA: 15%
- o San Diego: 5%
- o Out of state: 20%

The diversity of the Museum's collection is quite broad and comprises more than 28,000 objects – an art museum of magnitude and quality more commonly found in cities eight times the size of Santa Barbara. The collection spans more than 5,000 years of human creativity and includes classical antiquities rivaled in the West only by the J. Paul Getty Museum, and masterpieces of French Impressionism with no West Coast museum owning more Monet paintings.

Only a fraction of the Museum's permanent collection can be shown at any particular time. Of course, increasing gallery space will not only allow the Museum to show a greater percentage of these works, it will allow them to organize more comprehensive exhibitions and to accept more significant travelling exhibitions that may require more space.

In many cases, SBMA represents the first venue or exclusive West Coast venue for many of the exhibitions they accept or organize – making this city's art museum vital now, and in the future. Just a few past/current examples include:

- o *Delacroix and the Matter of Finish* (opening October 2013) represents the first exhibition on Eugene Delacroix in the U.S. in over a decade and the first major monographic show devoted to the artist on the West Coast
- o *The Artful Recluse* (2012) presented a major exhibition of nearly 60 Chinese works with many of the paintings exhibition for the first time in the United States.
- o *Pasadena to Santa Barbara* (2012) was Santa Barbara's representation in the Getty Foundation's major southern California initiative *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A., 1945-1980*

- o *Picasso and Braque: The Cubist Experiment, 1910-1912* (2011) was the first exhibition to unite many of the paintings and nearly all of the prints created by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque during two exhilarating years of their artistic dialogue
- o *Ori Gersht: Lost in Time* (2011) represented this artist's first solo museum exhibition in the Western U.S.
- o *Charles Garabedian: A Retrospective* (2011) represented the first important museum presentation in 28 years devoted to the works of this artist
- o *Chaotic Harmony: Contemporary Korean Photography* (2010) represented the first major exhibition in the United States of photographs made by contemporary Korean artists presently living in Korea
- o *Noble Tombs at Mawangdui: Art and Life in the Changsha Kingdom (3<sup>rd</sup> Century BCE – 1<sup>st</sup> Century CE)* (2009) represented the first time the objects of the contents of three lavish 2,000-year-old Chinese tombs were displayed in the U.S.

A summary of the site development history including dates and area additions is provided in the attached table. As noted previously, the floor area additions provide for an increase in gallery floor area, community education/event space, art collection stewardship space as well as administrative offices which will allow the Museum to relocate existing administrative offices in order to create a new gallery at the State Street building frontage. The Community Priority floor area allocation will result in a 30% increase of existing gallery area, a 16% increase of community education/event space, and a 1% increase of art collection stewardship space. Therefore, the project includes a request of the City Council for a Community Priority designation for the addition of 8,900 net square feet.

On behalf of the applicant and project team, we thank you for your consideration of Museum's proposed project.

Sincerely,  
**SUZANNE ELLEDGE**  
**PLANNING & PERMITTING SERVICES, INC.**



Trish Allen, AICP  
Senior Planner

Attachment 1: Summary of Development History, page 28 HSSR prepared by Post/Hazeltine Associates, dated August 5, 2013