



SANTA CRUZ MUSEUM of natural history

BRIGHT FUTURE CAMPAIGN

To Our Community,

We are excited to share the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History's Bright Future Campaign, a fundraising initiative to renovate and expand our landmark building. Throughout our nearly 125-year history, the Museum has inspired people to observe and celebrate the natural and scientific phenomena that surround us. Our multidisciplinary exhibits and programs spark an innate curiosity in each of us, revealing our inner naturalist.

Today, the Museum reaches more than 50,000 people each year within its galleries and out in nature. Over the past decade our membership reached a record high, our outdoor education programs have expanded into South County, and our paleontological preservation has been recognized nationally. **Building upon this strong foundation, we are poised to meet the moment by expanding and enhancing our beautiful Museum.**

We have identified three strategic objectives that our designs will address: We will **ADAPT** our building infrastructure to meet the challenges of fire and flood protection, and continued collections preservation. We will **EVOLVE** by modernizing our spaces to be accessible and dynamic for visitors, school groups and staff; and we will **ADVANCE** our mission through new exhibits that inspire understanding and stewardship of the natural world.

In this booklet, you will learn how we plan to achieve our objectives to **ADAPT, EVOLVE, & ADVANCE**. Every time we share this vision with Museum constituents, we have the privilege of learning which pieces of the project resonate most for them. What will it be for you?

Friends, we hope you—as our members, volunteers, donors, educators, partners, and neighbors—will be ambassadors who will generate a groundswell of enthusiasm and support for this project. Whether you help us reach our 20 million dollar goal through your own personally meaningful contribution, by sharing the news with friends and family, or both, the importance of your efforts cannot be overstated.

Thank you for bringing us to this moment and for investing in our Bright Future!

With gratitude,



FELICIA VAN STOLK
Executive Director



J.M. BROWN
Campaign Chair



JULIANA REBAGLIATI
Project Chair



BRIGHT FUTURE CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP

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Honorary Chair

FELICIA VAN STOLK
Executive Director

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(LEFT TO RIGHT) FELICIA VAN STOLK,
J.M. BROWN, & JULIANA REBAGLIATI

“This is a much-needed project as the population and demographics continue to evolve in Santa Cruz.

The museum should reflect the prominence of nature-based education, which is a fundamental value of the community.”

Tremain Hedden-Jones

Recreation Superintendent
City of Santa Cruz

WHY NOW?

The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History was established in 1905 and has been a treasured community institution, operating in Tyrrell Park since 1930.

Though our historic Carnegie Library building was expanded in the 1960s, no significant updates have since been made, and the aging infrastructure and limited footprint present ongoing challenges to excellence in exhibits, programs, and collections preservation.

THE MUSEUM'S HISTORY



1904-05

Santa Cruz naturalist and former Lighthouse Keeper, Laura Hecox bequeaths her collections of fossils, minerals, nests and artifacts to the City, establishing Santa Cruz's first museum.

1954

The Hecox Collection and the Pilkington Collection of Indigenous artifacts move into the former Seabright Branch Library.

The Museum becomes an independent nonprofit.

2009



2024

Having achieved record-breaking reach over the last decade, the Museum launches the Bright Future Campaign.

ADAPT

We'll **ADAPT** the Museum's physical infrastructure and grounds, protecting and preserving our historic building and collections, and investing in public health and safety.



Lower-level water intrusion and temporary prevention response.

Our building's foundation will be repaired, and electrical, HVAC, plumbing, air filtration, and fire suppression will be updated. Improvements to the park will enhance pathways and refresh the Garden Learning Center.

UPGRADES & REPAIRS

These improvements will ...



Ensure disaster preparedness



Protect our biological and ethnographic collections



Enable best practices in public health



Protect heritage trees and Pilkington Creek habitat



Address failing foundation, preventing water intrusion

"Whether from a first-time visitor or a longtime member sharing the museum with their family, I often hear the same sentiment:

'What a gem!'

We're incredibly fortunate we have this opportunity to preserve our legacy, ensuring the Museum continues to inspire future generations."

Juliana Rebagliati

Project Chair, Board Secretary, and
retired Santa Cruz Planning Director



IMPACT

Repairs and infrastructure updates will help us meet the changing demands of emergency preparedness.

IMPACT

Improvements will enable continued fulfillment of the American Alliance of Museums' Standards of Excellence, enhancing stewardship of our ~17,000 collections items.

IMPACT

Restoration of our historic Carnegie Library building will comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards.



Specimens like our ribbonfish will be protected from the threat of water intrusion and will move from collections storage without outdoor exposure.

PURPOSE - BUILT & ACCESSIBLE



A dedicated classroom and community room, equipped with integrated AV systems, dynamic furnishings, and a catering corner will house educational programs and events.

A new elevator will support both accessibility and safe transport of invaluable collections.

Expanded office space and storage will enhance onsite collaboration, provide staff adequate work space, and streamline workflows.

OUR GARDEN LEARNING CENTER

will include ADA-accessible pathways and patios, an updated amphitheater, wildlife and night-sky friendly lighting, and improvements to the iconic whale sculpture.

EVOLVE



We'll **EVOLVE** by ensuring inclusion in our physical spaces and programs, and by modernizing the visitor experience for everyone learning with us.



Students engage in a lesson (above) and enjoy the iconic whale.



Our dynamic classroom will host student programs, speakers, and more.

“Strengthening our collective environmental literacy is vital to a happier, healthier and more connected life on this planet.

As an educator who prioritizes learning outside of the four walls of our classroom, I believe in the Museum’s vision and look forward to collaborating with them on future learning experiences with my students.”

Brian Boyce
4th/5th Grade Teacher



Above: Inaccessible exhibit during school program.

Below: Accessible paths and amphitheater concept.



IMPACT

A new accessible classroom designed for our community’s needs will enhance engagement with our audiences and organizational partners.

IMPACT

Field trips and other educational programs will occur concurrently with walk-in visitation without crowding.

IMPACT

Access to the whole building and its surrounding grounds will be ADA compliant.

ADVANCE

We'll **ADVANCE** by expanding and reimagining the Museum's exhibit spaces, sparking curiosity and connection with the natural world.



The beloved tidepool will be one of multiple hands-on learning experiences featured in our updated exhibits.

IMPACT

Permanent exhibits will blend traditional natural history displays with contemporary, interactive elements, and stories of cultural connections to nature interwoven throughout.

IMPACT

A new space dedicated to rotating exhibits will elevate and broaden our collaborations with other cultural institutions and create opportunities to showcase more of our collections, encouraging repeat visitation.

IMPACT

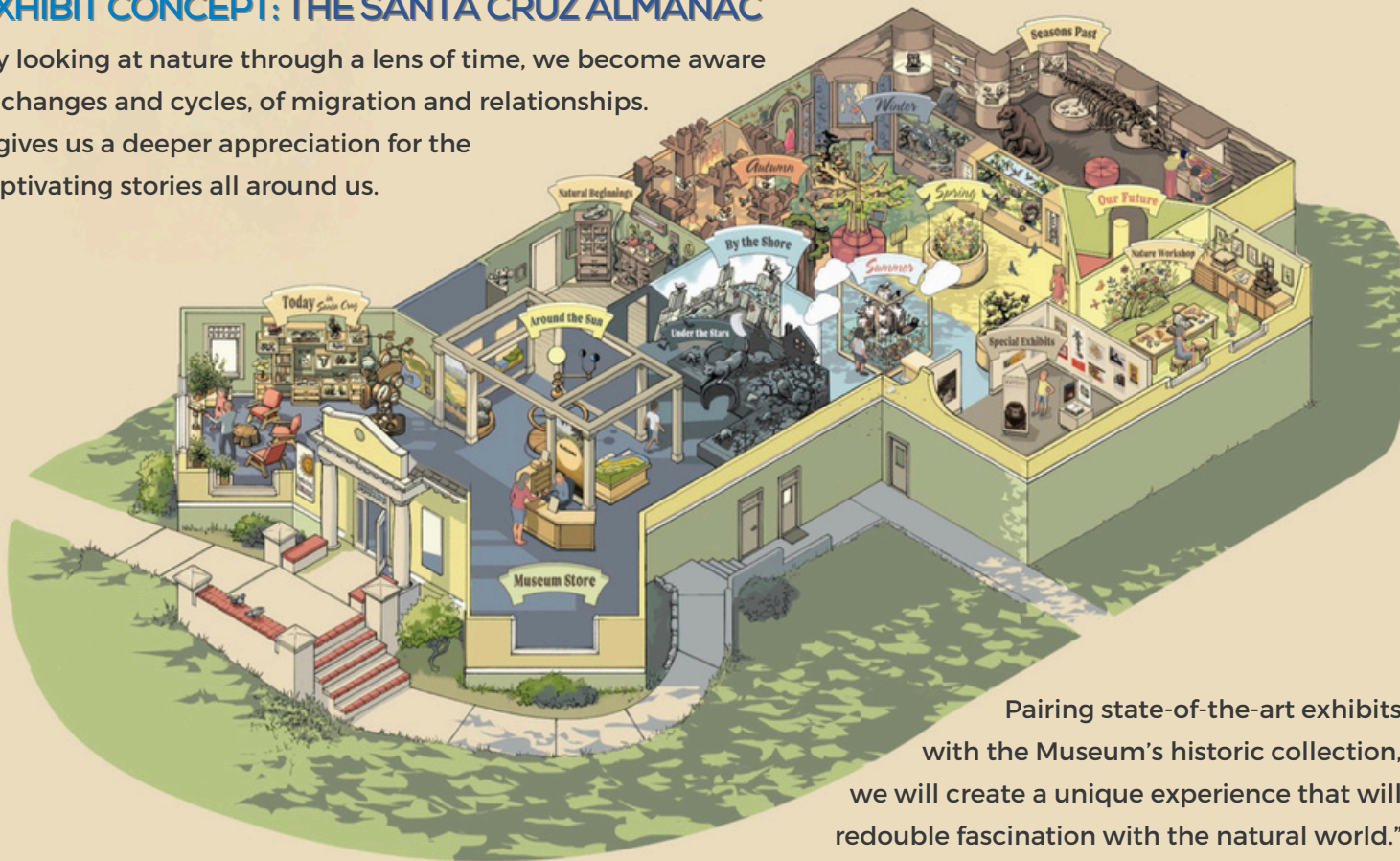
Permanent exhibit spaces will expand outdoors, bringing interpretative signage and interactive displays to our Garden Learning Center.



EXHIBIT CONCEPT: THE SANTA CRUZ ALMANAC

“By looking at nature through a lens of time, we become aware of changes and cycles, of migration and relationships.

It gives us a deeper appreciation for the captivating stories all around us.



Pairing state-of-the-art exhibits with the Museum's historic collection, we will create a unique experience that will redouble fascination with the natural world.”

Exhibit concept draft; subject to change.

Koen Liem
Exhibit Designer



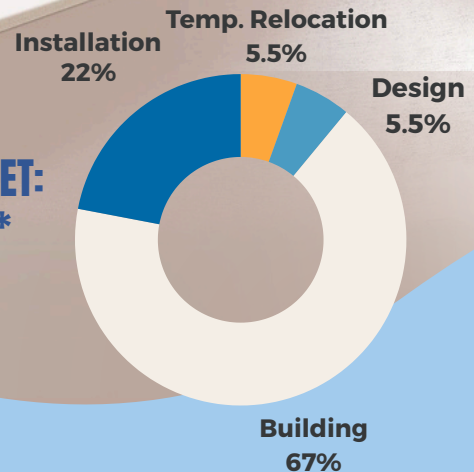
FINANCIAL IMPACT

A one-time 20 million dollar investment will uplift and sustain our mission work for generations to come.

Project funds are separate from our essential annual operating fund, so we are counting on you to join the growing coalition of lead campaign donors.

The Bright Future Campaign is a unique opportunity to make your best personal contribution, supporting both our annual fund and this once-in-a-lifetime transformation!

**PROJECT BUDGET:
20,000,000***



*Working budget; subject to change.

WAYS TO GIVE

We humbly invite every fan of the Museum to join us in building our Bright Future. You can give **online**, by **mail**, via **stock**, **Donor Advised Fund**, **Qualified Charitable Distribution**, **employer matching**, and more.

Considering a special, one-time gift? Take advantage of new behind-the-scenes benefits by becoming a **Curator Level Member with a gift of \$1,000+**.

Share your philanthropic vision for **pledges of \$5,000+** by contacting us at campaign@santacruzmuseum.org.



“Living just up the street and being a long-time volunteer, I am thrilled by the prospect of space to host classroom visits and meetings of nature-related organizations. I look forward to the lower level having a dry place after rain storms for offices and the collection. Let’s help make this happen!”

Nancy Lenz

Donor, Volunteer, and Neighbor

Learn more and join us!
santacruzmuseum.org/brightfuture

Tax ID: 94-2427733



Neighborhood Night, 2024

SANTA CRUZ MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
BRIGHT FUTURE CAMPAIGN

TOGETHER WE WILL
ADAPT EVOLVE ADVANCE



Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History

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All renderings are subject to change.