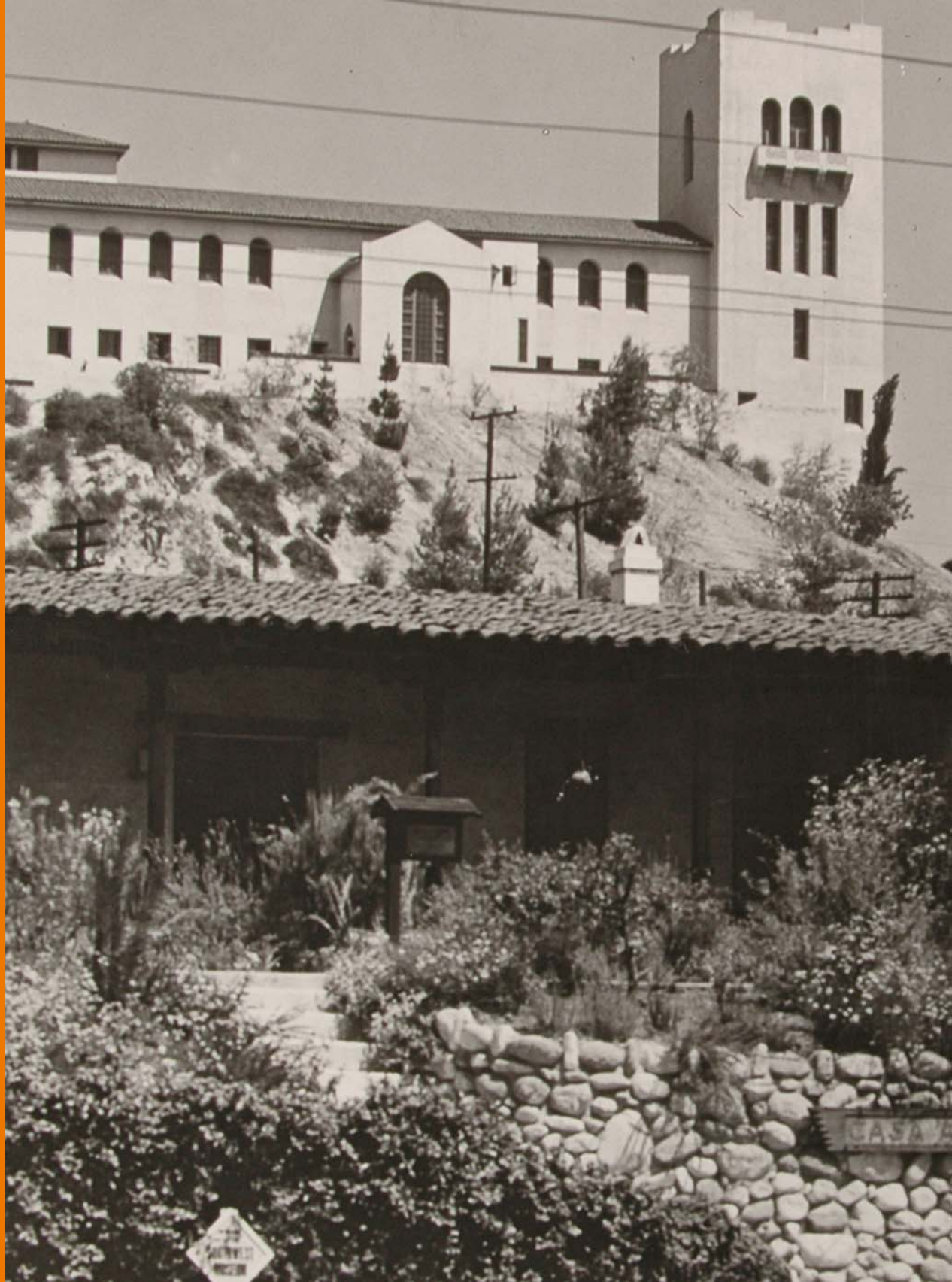


Stakeholder Interview Summary Report

November 2015



**National Trust for
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE SPECTRUM OF PERSPECTIVES ON THE SOUTHWEST MUSEUM SITE

This report summarizes qualitative findings from 75 confidential interviews with 87 individuals about the future of the Southwest Museum Site.¹ Interviews were conducted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (National Trust) in the spring and summer of 2015 as a critical first stage of their planning work on the Southwest Museum Site National Treasure. The primary goal of these interviews was to gather baseline information directly from stakeholders by carefully listening to their opinions and perspectives, and summarize their responses to help inform how the Southwest Museum Site could be revitalized in the future.

The National Trust's extensive planning process (see Appendix F) will evaluate existing reports, plans, and surveys that were completed for this site, and that historical information will be supplemented with public input and new, current data—the stakeholder interview results, an online survey (e-survey), a market analysis, a small series of test events at the site, and an architectural analysis. Together this information will guide the development of a long-range vision and potential business model. A 15-person Steering Committee representing a broad spectrum of expertise and interests across Los Angeles will play a pivotal role in the planning process by critically assessing the data from this report and many other sources, developing informed recommendations, and steering the creation of a financially-sustainable business model that will be presented to the Board of Trustees of the site's owner, the Autry Museum of the American West (Autry).²

The National Trust's planning process will identify and emphasize areas of agreement as the basis for consensus on viable and financially sustainable roles and functions for the site in the future. Towards that end, the interview responses are aggregated into areas where some consensus already exists and areas where there are clear differences of opinion that need to be further explored and resolved.

It is important to note that these interview findings do not establish specific priorities. The inclusion of an observation or comment in this report does not constitute an endorsement by the National Trust for a specific use.

We need to respect the past, but we shouldn't be stuck in the past.

-- Cathi Milligan, Owner,
The Glass Studio

We need to end the "us versus them" mentality. Can we find a way to melt our swords into plowshares?

-- Gideon Kracov, Attorney

Change is difficult. In part, people fear change less in terms of what they imagine is possible, and more in terms of what they think they may lose. Change is at the heart of our hopes, aspirations, and fears.

--Omar Brownson,
Executive Director, LA River
Revitalization Corporation

¹ A small number of interviews were conducted as group interviews with 2 or more individuals from related organizations or interests groups.

² In the fall of 2015 the formal name of the organization changed from the Autry National Center of the American West to the Autry Museum of the American West. The updated name reflects the Autry's principal activities as a museum dedicated to exploring and sharing the diverse stories of the American West. (See: <https://theautry.org/about-us/what-is-the-autry> for additional information.)

While the interviews generated a wide range of opinions, ideas, and suggestions, some broad themes emerged quite clearly:

- All interviewees agreed that **this site is a significant, beloved, and iconic landmark** that deserves special attention and national recognition.
- Even though the site has been privately owned by a non-profit for over a century, it was always open and accessible to the public. As a result there is a strong sense among many local neighborhood stakeholders that **the buildings and the grounds are a valued and shared community asset**. The passion with which some community members have fiercely advocated for this place is a strong indication of the significance it holds in the hearts and minds of many residents in surrounding neighborhoods.
- There is weariness over the protracted struggle surrounding the Southwest Museum Site and the Southwest Museum of the American Indian Collection (the collection). Many of the interviewees, however, were cautiously optimistic about the **apparent willingness on all sides to move towards a shared solution** after years of disagreement and deadlock.
- A majority of the interviewees expressed a positive attitude about the participation of the National Trust as a neutral, outside facilitator, viewing the **National Treasure designation as an opportunity to find a positive resolution for the site**.

Many of the interviewees shared a preference for arts or cultural uses that include educational functions and allow for public access and use. Functions associated with museum uses were mentioned frequently by local neighborhood stakeholders and the interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of individual views on the potential role(s) of the collection at the site, along with the identification of various complementary or appropriate uses that interviewees would like to experience at the site. Interviewees' long-range visions for the Southwest Museum Site generally aligned with one or more of the following concepts:

- an improved and greatly **expanded version of the historic Southwest Museum**, with a primary focus on the display of the Southwest Museum Collection. This could include restored historic buildings and complementary new construction to provide expanded galleries and other spaces for programming;
- a more **modest museum use within the footprint of the existing historic buildings**. This would have more limited exhibits from the collection but also incorporate other exhibits and programming;
- **mixed-use concepts** that add complementary retail and dining uses or community-serving cultural uses to make the site a destination for locals as well as visitors;
- **alternative uses** such as galleries, a different kind of museum, or arts spaces that could draw on the collection in some way; and
- **non-museum uses** such as a community center, a cultural center, office space, a charter school, day care or after-school program center, a library, or lodging (including artist-in-residence or scholar-in-residence programs).

Regardless of their vision, many interviewees acknowledged that a variety of functions, activities, and programming will be needed to make the site financially sustainable. For the purposes of this report, "financially sustainable" means having reliable and sufficient sources of earned and contributed revenue to offset operating expenses. Interviewees consistently expressed a desire for exhibits and displays, educational programming, restaurants or cafes, and retail options. In addition to these, a range of

creative programming and use alternatives were suggested during the interviews that deserve further examination:

- connecting the site to a larger **network of historic, cultural, and natural sites** and attractions, either along the Arroyo Seco, across Los Angeles, or across Route 66;
- creating a **welcoming and desirable destination** that attracts visitors and can serve as a community gathering place;
- providing **complementary services** such as a variety of events, places to eat and drink, and shopping opportunities that will draw people to return on a regular basis;
- **celebrating the legacy of Charles Lummis**, his vision, and his role in shaping the culture and history of early Los Angeles. This could be manifest as a broader focus on the cultural diversity of Los Angeles, Native American arts and culture, Latino arts and culture, and the history of the Southwest;
- incorporating a **strong arts or cultural component**, which could connect to contemporary visual and performing arts, or programming with local Los Angeles artists, modern art, opera, theater, puppet shows, etc.; and
- incorporating **educational functions**, such as programs serving local youth to supplement the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) public educational system.

One notable area of disagreement among the interviewees is whether it is sufficient to preserve and reactivate the site itself, or whether the original use also must be retained with the buildings and the collection.³ Views on the role of the collection were divided largely, but not exclusively, along geographic lines. A group of interviewees from the Northeast Los Angeles neighborhoods felt strongly that the use must continue as the previous Southwest Museum of the American Indian, with its primary focus being displays of the collection. Other interviewees expressed support for a range of additional uses, which included but were not limited to:

- **arts, cultural, and educational opportunities** for the public;
- uses that could meet other **community needs**; and
- **revenue-generating activities** that can offset operational expenses.

Another point of contention is the financial viability of the site as a museum, particularly the amount of funding that could be raised to underwrite the large capital needs for rehabilitation of the property, in addition to ongoing operational costs. Some local neighborhood residents firmly believe it is possible for a new, expanded version of the historic Southwest Museum to support itself financially, and they reference studies that have been commissioned to demonstrate this point. Other interviewees cited other studies that show a range of physical, logistical, and financial challenges that could hamper continued use as a museum devoted to the collection. Interviewees in the museum profession and representatives from philanthropic organizations expressed the most skepticism about some museum uses.

³ Although there is some disagreement about the total number of objects contained in the collection, the website of the Autry Museum of the American West describes the Southwest Museum of the American Indian Collection as “a collection of 238,000 Native American art and artifacts that is one of the most significant and representative of its kind in the United States, second only to the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian.” Source: <http://theautry.org/collections/collections-home>.

Despite disagreements over the museum function and the collection, the interviews revealed a growing willingness to work collaboratively toward a shared vision, which could include variations of museum uses as well as arts, cultural, educational, and community uses. The Southwest Museum Site is a very special place that inspires deep feelings and strong passions, and many are adamant that this site is simply too important to remain largely empty and underutilized.



Photo courtesy of the Autry Museum of the American West.

While the primary focus of this report is to share the diverse opinions of interviewees without any prioritization or judgment, the National Trust compiled some key observations from the interviews that should be considered during planning process. Specifically:

- While almost all interviewees agree that the care of the collection today is an improvement over the condition prior to 2003, views on the role of the collection remain deeply felt. **Continuing disagreement over the collection has the potential to prevent from reaching consensus and could keep the future of the Southwest Museum in limbo.**
- Given the disagreement over the viability of securing funds for different concepts, **a fundraising feasibility study will be a critical and necessary step in the future** to determine the amount of funding that could realistically be raised to support capital and on-going annual operating expenses.
- Reaching a solution that satisfies the priorities for different stakeholder groups **will require compromise from all sides.**

Building from the common desire to reinvigorate this landmark as a resource for all of Los Angeles, the National Trust requests that all stakeholders approach the planning process with an open mind and a willingness to work together towards a shared vision that can be embraced by everyone. For the purposes of this report, “stakeholders” are defined broadly to include anyone with an interest in the future of the Southwest Museum Site. Careful consideration of the many creative ideas and perspectives generated by the interviews can direct the Steering Committee toward a viable, vibrant vision and a solid business model to guide its implementation.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The primary goal of these stakeholder interviews was to gather baseline information directly from stakeholders and summarize stakeholder opinions regarding the future of the Southwest Museum Site, concentrating on issues where some consensus already exists and identifying areas where there are clear differences of opinion that need to be further explored and resolved. The interviews and the large quantity of information gathered from these conversations also facilitated a number of related project goals:

- introducing the National Trust staff to stakeholders who have been involved with the site and to engage new stakeholders;
- developing and testing draft “parameters” or guidelines, and actively listen for other areas of general agreement;
- probing more deeply into what stakeholders mean when they reference concepts such as “museum,” “cultural center,” or “community center;”
- better understanding specific preferences for desired activities and uses that could be offered in different parts of the historic buildings and grounds;
- informing the development of questions for an e-survey distributed to a broader audience to identify the preferences and interests of potential audiences across Los Angeles;
- informing a professional market analysis (to be conducted by a qualified consultant) that will identify opportunities, needs, and potential uses;
- gathering information about potential resources (financial as well as other professional assistance and possible partners) that could support certain functions and uses; and
- soliciting confidential recommendations for possible members of a 15-person Steering Committee that will advise the National Trust, oversee the planning process, and provide recommendations to the Board of the Autry.

While much of the previous discussion around the future of the Southwest Museum has centered on areas of conflict, the National Trust’s approach seeks to focus on first defining and then expanding areas of consensus. Accordingly, interviews began by reviewing a list of draft planning “parameters” representing potential areas of agreement that can serve as a foundation for continuing conversation (see [Appendix C](#) for a discussion of the parameters).

More in-depth responses are organized by topic with observations on areas of agreement and areas of differing opinions. This helps to expand our understanding of other areas of consensus while also capturing different opinions on topics related to the site’s potential future uses, which are illustrated with quotes from interviewees. The National Trust’s goal is to move towards a solution that a majority of stakeholders can support, that can be successfully implemented, is financially sustainable, and is endorsed by the Autry’s Board of Trustees, who own the property and are the ultimate decision-makers.

It is important to note that these interview findings do not establish specific priorities. The inclusion of an observation or comment in this report does not constitute an endorsement by the National Trust for a specific use.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY AND METHODOLOGY

Conducting interviews with key stakeholders represents the critical first stage of planning work on the Southwest Museum Site National Treasure. The National Trust's 18-month planning process (see diagram in [Appendix F](#)) will evaluate the many other reports, plans, and surveys that have been completed for this site in the past, and that historical information will be supplemented with new, current data—the stakeholder interview results, an online survey (e-survey), a market analysis, a small series of test events at the site, and an architectural analysis. Together this information will help guide the development of a long-range vision and potential business model.

This stakeholder interview process has been used extensively by the National Trust on other assessment studies across the country for individual historic sites, entire cities and communities, and large geographic regions. The process for this site was much more extensive than other similar studies, which was a direct result of the large number of interested stakeholders identified for interviews, many of whom held strong opinions about the past and future of the site.⁴

The National Trust completed interviews with 87 stakeholders between February and July of 2015. Each interviewee was provided with a list of six questions (see [Appendix A](#) for the list of stakeholder questions provided in advance of each interview). All interviews were conducted by Amy Webb and Chris Morris of the National Trust. The feedback captured in this summary report is based on more than 200 pages of notes and represents the opinions provided by the 87 interviewees who participated in a stakeholder interview. While the compiled responses were not subjected to quantitative analysis, the data was evaluated with an emphasis on recurring opinions that appeared in multiple interviews.

Interviewee Selection

To identify potential interviewees the National Trust collected suggestions from local community organizations, the Autry, and community members during several initial meetings and conversations. The National Trust also reached out to experts in the philanthropic, preservation, education, arts, and museum communities, along with other individuals who have been actively involved in this issue. The National Trust also solicited suggestions for interview candidates from the public on the National Trust's website for this National Treasure www.treasureswm.org.

Potential interviewees were contacted by email and phone to determine their interest in participating, resulting in an initial round of interviews in February 2015. During that first round of interviews participants were asked for suggestions of additional names to add to the outreach list (see [Appendix B](#) for a list of stakeholders who participated in an interview). A second round of interviews took place in April 2015. Due to the high number of potential stakeholder interview candidates (especially those from the local community or multiple members from similar or related community organizations), it was not feasible to interview every person suggested to us. However, every attempt was made to ensure that the interviews captured representative viewpoints. Stakeholders who were unable to participate in an in-person interview for the first or second rounds were provided with options for a phone or email interview, and phone interviews continued through July 2015. A total of 75 one-on-one and small group interviews with 87 individuals were completed. The large number of stakeholders who requested to participate in the interview process underscores the passion that many stakeholders have for this historic site.

⁴ A typical National Trust stakeholder interview study involves 15-30 stakeholder interviews. This study included more than three times the average number of interviews.

Interviews were generally 30-45 minutes with 60-minute interviews for larger groups. All interviewees were informed that their responses were confidential and anonymous to encourage candid feedback. Responses shared in this report have been credited to a specific interviewee only after express permission was secured for an attributed quote.

Steering Committee

During each interview stakeholders were asked to provide confidential recommendations for Steering Committee members to oversee the planning effort and formulate recommendations that could be embraced by the Autry's Board of Trustees and the community. The Steering Committee will play a pivotal role by reviewing information gathered through the planning process and by making recommendations to the Autry's Board at each step. This will include:

- recommendations on potential viable, financially sustainable uses based on stakeholder responses, public input, a market analysis, and other data;
- identification of potential resources and partners to support those uses; and
- development of a draft business model.

Interviewees had many questions for the National Trust about the structure and role of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will be comprised of 15 individuals, including two representatives from the Autry (chosen by the Autry), two from the Northeast Los Angeles neighborhoods surrounding the site (chosen by the community), as well as elected officials, representatives from academic institutions, and professionals with expertise in areas such as historic preservation, museums, philanthropy, arts and culture, cultural affairs, education and academics, economic development, Native American culture, Latino culture, parks/public lands, city planning, land use, business development, and community development. The Steering Committee will be finalized in the fall of 2015 and their work will take place over the next 10-12 months. In addition to bringing a high level of professional expertise, the Steering Committee will include visionary and open-minded leaders who are consensus builders and strategic thinkers.

Recognizing that the selection of the committee is crucial to the success of this planning effort, feedback from the interview process provided guidance to ensure that the right mix of candidates are chosen for the Steering Committee. Many recommended that the committee include high-level individuals who are respected in their field, and who bring decision-making authority for the organization or entity they represent. Others suggested that it would be valuable to bring in fresh perspectives in order to avoid the same arguments and "stalemates" that have hampered this site for years. Interviewees noted that the diverse communities of Los Angeles must be represented (including Native American and Latino communities), and advised recruiting individuals willing to represent the interests of a larger stakeholder group rather than self-serving interests. Specific recommendations provided by interviewees were carefully considered in the Steering Committee selection process.

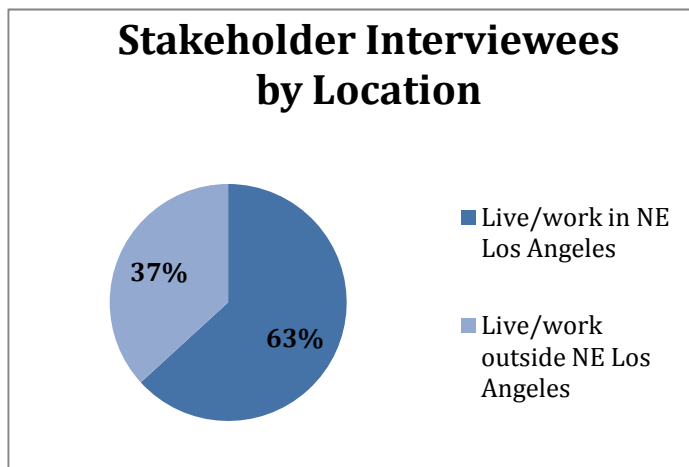
Interview Demographics

Interview responses formed the foundation for a focused e-survey to reach a much broader audience and learn more about their interests and preferences to inform the planning process (see e-survey questions in [Appendix E](#)). This is important because 55 of the 87 individuals interviewed (63 percent) live or work in the local community surrounding the site (Highland Park, Mount Washington, and Eagle Rock), but this nationally significant place is a treasure for all of Los Angeles and beyond. According to a 1992 study, the majority of the greater Los Angeles-area visitors to the Southwest Museum in the 1990s

came from the Westside, the San Fernando Valley, Central Los Angeles, Orange County, and the San Gabriel Valley.⁵ Since all of these neighborhoods and communities were not represented in the stakeholder interviews, the e-survey offered an opportunity to reach these markets and other potential markets in the greater Los Angeles area to learn more about their preferences and interests.

E-Survey

To develop the questions in the e-survey, the National Trust compiled a long list of the topics that emerged during the stakeholder interview process and the range of opinions for each topic. This lengthy summary was condensed into a short series of multiple choice questions to construct an online survey



Almost 2/3 of the stakeholders interviewed about the future of the Southwest Museum Site (55 out of 87) live or work in Northeast Los Angeles.

that could be completed by most people in 15-20 minutes. Recognizing that the e-survey might reach respondents representing new audiences who are less familiar with the site, the survey questions were structured so that anyone could take the survey regardless of their level of familiarity or knowledge. Those more familiar with the site and its history had the option of writing in more detailed responses.

Where interviews with the stakeholders produced qualitative information about the range of opinions for the future of the site, the e-survey offered an opportunity to compile broader quantitative data about

the number of survey respondents who shared similar opinions, along with demographic information about the e-survey respondents to better understand how opinions and interests may differ among varying stakeholder groups. The 1,600 responses included a good geographic distribution from Los Angeles, California, the Southwest, and the rest of the country, and the results have been compiled and mapped by a GIS/data specialist for future use and distribution.

Market and Use Analysis

Interviewees also had many questions about how the interview findings would be used as part of the overall planning process. This interview report and the summary of the e-survey results will inform a market and use analysis for the site to be completed by a qualified consultant. The consultant will use the interview and survey results, information from previous studies and reports, and existing tools that provide current regional demographic and economic data to identify and assess a range of possible uses. The consultant will evaluate the current demographics, market conditions, and opportunities and challenges to assess the viability of uses that meet the parameters developed through this interview process and respond to the e-survey results.

⁵ Harrison Price Company. "Strategic Long Range Planning Alternatives for the Southwest Museum." April 13, 1992, page 4-14.

DEFINING THE SOUTHWEST MUSEUM SITE

The National Trust uses the term “Southwest Museum Site” to encompass the group of Southwest Museum buildings, the 12 acres of grounds surrounding them in Mount Washington, and the historic Casa de Adobe at the base of the hill on Figueroa Street.

The rich historical and cultural connections surrounding the site were a recurring theme in the interviews. Interviewees had many suggestions for topics connected to the site’s history and legacy that could be explored regardless of use(s). Several interviewees mentioned the direct link to historian, ethnographer, and journalist Charles Lummis as an essential aspect of the site’s identity. Others expressed a desire to maintain a strong connection with the Lummis Home and Gardens, which was Lummis’ primary residence and is located less than a mile away on the Arroyo Seco. Occidental College in Eagle Rock is currently exploring an agreement with the City of Los Angeles (the property owner) to utilize the Lummis Home and Gardens as their new Institute for Los Angeles History and Culture. If this moves forward, the Lummis Home would become an important center for local history research with accompanying programs and outreach that could have a natural connection to uses and activities at the Southwest Museum Site.

Some interviewees believe it is important to maintain a prominent or primary Native American focus in the function of the site as a continuation of the Southwest Museum of the American Indian, while others favored uses that combined some focus on Native American heritage with different topics and themes. Still others advocated for a focus on Latino heritage, an exploration of the diverse cultures of Los Angeles, or simply a broad focus on culture or arts in general.

However, even those interviewees who suggested an entirely different use at the site felt that retaining a strong focus on its heritage and legacy should be a priority.

It is very important for us to be able to remember our history, and to reflect on the community of Native Americans that was here before us. This is a spiritual site that represents the indigenous roots of LA.

--Kathy Gallegos,
Founder and Director,
Avenue 50 Studio, Highland Park

This place represents the history of Los Angeles better than any other single edifice.

--Peyton Hall, FAIA
Managing Principal,
Historic Resources Group

Most of L.A. is new, but this place makes you feel a bit more like there is a grounded past. A lot of people who are in Highland Park are here because of the history.

--Josh Shaw,
Artistic Director,
Pacific Opera Project

PERSPECTIVES ON KEY ISSUES

Most interviewees agreed that retaining public access to the historic buildings is important. They expressed a preference for active uses that will draw people to the site regularly. Interviewees would like to see vibrant activities and programs to engage visitors (such as interactive learning experiences, workshops, hands-on activities, or frequently changing exhibits) because they view these as essential to attract the public to the site and spur frequent repeat visitation.

Many interviewees acknowledged that different types of programs could be offered, with some focused on generating income, others serving an educational function, and others that might be underwritten in some fashion if sources of support (such as public, private or government subsidy) were available to

create affordable spaces for community meetings, events, and programs.

The most important thing I would recommend is to make it into a flexible facility that can respond to changing needs over time.

--Patrick Gallagher,
President,
Gallagher & Associates

People think that we want the old museum back, but that's not the case. Significant exhibits with rotating exhibits, research components, academic relationships, and other things that will attract people to culture, archeology, and artifacts to put these narratives together.

--Carol Teutsch,
Mount Washington resident

Consider what the site lends itself to do well. Once you know that, listen hard to the people that you think are the prospective audience for those sets of uses.

--Jane Pisano, Director,
Natural History Museum
of Los Angeles County

Some suggestions for supporting activities that could generate reliable sources of revenue included a restaurant or café, rental of the historic buildings and grounds for events or filming locations, and compatible retail options such as a gift shop or book store.

Consensus on Programming

For the majority of interviewees, dynamic public programming including workshops, performances, lectures, and other program offerings would be highly desirable as a way to create a welcoming environment that attracts people to the site. Interviewees felt that the right kind of programming has the potential not just to enliven the site with the presence of program participants, but potentially could supply an additional source of revenue and incorporate an educational function that many interviewees considered to be a priority.

Interviewees cited educational programs for a variety of age levels from school age to college or university students to adult learning opportunities. Topics for educational programs mentioned most frequently fell into the category of arts and culture, starting with Charles Lummis' interest in the traditional American Southwest but expanding to embrace the diversity of cultures in today's American Southwest as well as the burgeoning arts community in Northeast Los Angeles.

Given the limited amount of gathering/meeting spaces for the public in the neighborhoods immediately surrounding the site, there also was a desire for community programming uses such as the ability to host public or community meetings at the site. Sprague Hall has served that function in the past, although some observed that the acoustics in the room at present are problematic for large groups and presentations.

Differing Opinions on Programming

Interviewees proposed a variety of suggestions for programming for children and adults. Some interviewees felt that hands-on, interactive programming for children and adults was more important than exhibits, while others disagreed and asserted that exhibits needed to be the top priority. Some felt that the multicultural nature of the site and the surrounding community demands that programming and exhibits be translated into Spanish, and potentially into Native American dialects.

Some interviewees suggested that the site could offer valuable **enhancement to the school curriculum and after-school programming** to create an educational alternative that meets the needs of working parents. Ideas for school programs included:

- **school tours;**
- **lesson plans** made available to educators (particularly for the 4th grade curriculum); and
- **outreach programs in classrooms.**

Others recognized that school programs are appealing in an ideal world, but expressed concern that school programming would require a substantial subsidy for operations, noting that the Los Angeles Unified School District has its own financial struggles and funding for arts education is highly competitive.

After-school programs also were suggested as a possible form of programming. As more families today rely on two incomes, parents often seek child care options that incorporate educational experiences for after school, school holidays, and summer vacations. Interviewees noted that with the high cost of child care, parents are often willing to pay more for quality learning experiences where they feel their children are being well cared for during the hours they are at work.

Potential after-school programs suggested by interviewees include **after-school camps, school holiday daytime programs, and summer camps**. Interviewees suggested programs that could be tied to the thematic focus of the site, such as:

- **workshops, classes, or events to learn about Native American culture;**
- **programs that explore dance, pottery, gardening or cooking; or**
- **a day camp that includes an archeological dig adventure on site.**

A small number of interviewees would like to see opportunities for young adults offered at the site to help them with career or life choices, potentially through volunteer opportunities or internships that could be conducted on site.

Additional investigation will be needed to understand if there is sufficient interest to support such after-school programs and whether they would be feasible. A few interviewees cautioned that accessibility issues at the site, the dispersed layout of rooms, and the steep slope of the site in Mount Washington could present challenges to safely accommodate large numbers of children in a camp-like setting.

A range of **program suggestions for adult or general audiences** were put forward, including:

- **art, dance, theater, or photography workshops** with an emphasis on hands-on learning experiences. Interviewees noted that workshops could be enhanced by incorporating artifacts on display at the site;

- **studio rentals for performing or visual artists**, for example, studios occupied by local artists, juried artists, or contemporary Native American artists. Open studios could provide the public with opportunities to see artists at work, to purchase works of art, or to take lessons from an artist; and
- **performance venues** for indoor or outdoor lectures, music, dance, theater, or films open to the public. For example:
 - musical performances (for example, by the [Pacific Opera Project \(POP\)](#) or others);
 - pow wows or plays about Native American peoples and cultures;
 - poetry readings;
 - puppet shows; and
 - theatrical performances (for example, by [Teatro Arroyo](#) or others).

Some suggested that educational programming could be offered in conjunction with an academic institution of higher learning, potentially as part of the college or university's curriculum, or as a place for small symposia or conferences. University-level programs on the history of the Southwest, museum studies, or Native American studies were mentioned as potential compatible areas of interest. While a number of Los Angeles colleges and universities were identified as potential partners (UCLA, USC, and Cal State LA), Occidental College was mentioned most often because of its proximity and its possible new role at the Lummis Home. Interviewees commented that the historic museum building could offer smaller classroom or learning laboratory spaces throughout, and Sprague Hall could accommodate larger gatherings and presentations for as many as 150-170 people. While most interviewees felt that a partnership with an academic institution would be an asset, some were concerned that approach might limit the site to serving only students and not the general public.



Potential uses for the site mentioned in the 200+ pages of interview notes arrayed as a "wordle" or word cloud with the larger words representing the range potential uses that were mentioned more frequently.

Consensus on Exhibits & Displays

There was general agreement that it is highly desirable to include exhibits or displays in some form at the site, regardless of how the buildings are ultimately used. Many interviewees expressed a strong belief that dynamic and changing exhibits developed by a creative, savvy curatorial staff could be an effective way to attract visitors and encourage repeat visitation. They also noted that exhibits and displays can play an important educational role to create an awareness of the site's legacy while enhancing the experience for visitors.

The collection was mentioned frequently in connection with future exhibits on site. The Autry confirmed that artifacts from the collection can be made available for display at the site as long as current professional curatorial and security standards are met to properly protect the artifacts.

Differing Opinions on Exhibits & Displays

There were widely diverging opinions about the extent, type, and content of exhibits that would be most feasible and appropriate at the site. Interviewees generally agreed that the collection should play a role, although there were differing opinions about the extent and the importance of the collection's presence. Some envisioned extensive exhibits filling all of the existing exhibit space and new galleries, while others imagined more modest displays that allowed room for other objects, collections, and activities.

Northeast Los Angeles is recognized as an artist community and interviewees from those neighborhoods frequently mentioned the lack of gallery space in the area. They expressed a desire to see the site provide opportunities to display the work of local or Los Angeles artists. Local arts organizations such as the [Arroyo Arts Collective](#), other arts groups and galleries, or other museums could be potential partners.

In addition to display of the collection, interviewees suggested **potential exhibit topics** such as:

- **Los Angeles history and culture**
- **cultural diversity of Los Angeles**
- **architecture**
- **art**
- **photography**
- **natural history** (with scientists on staff)
- **foods of the Southwest**
- **early urban museums** in the U.S.
- **the role of Los Angeles' first museum**
- **conservation efforts for the collection.**

If you want to create a destination museum you have to do much more than just provide exhibitions.

--Marla C. Berns,
Shirley & Ralph Shapiro Director,
Fowler Museum of Art

Unless there's something calling my attention, it is unlikely that I will return any time soon. When I go to museums, it's more often because of lectures or events and not so much because of their permanent collection, once I have already seen it.

--Antonio Castillo,
Highland Park Resident

When we redid the Natural History Museum, we wanted a place where people could be smart but also a place where they can play and have fun.

--Jane Pisano, Director,
Natural History Museum
of LA County

It should be a gathering place or cultural center where there can be participation by visitors and the audience needs to be bigger than just the local neighborhood.

--Selma Holo, Ph.D., Director,
USC Fisher Museum of Art and
International Museum Institute,
Professor of Art History

I want the art back. I want it the way it was. I want the dioramas back.

--Kathy Gallegos,
Founder and Director,
Avenue 50 Studio, Highland Park

Consensus on Other Services and Amenities

When asked about other appropriate services or amenities for the site, **event rentals** were among the most common responses. A number of indoor and outdoor spaces at the site could have tremendous appeal as rental venues for events, which could provide earned income to help support operations. Rentals for banquets, weddings, bar or bat mitzvahs, quinceañeras, community meetings, community events, corporate retreats, birthday parties, family reunions, or other activities could be offered. The nature of the site, with its varied buildings and topography, also could make it appealing as a filming location, providing another potential source of revenue.

Some interviewees pointed out that there would be challenges with event rentals, including accessibility issues, parking limitations, the need for upgraded electrical and HVAC systems, the lack of adequate restrooms and kitchen/catering facilities, and the lack of event supplies on site (tables, chairs, AV supplies). These issues are addressed in more detail in the infrastructure section on page 20.



Event rentals can be a significant revenue source for some historic sites. Pictured here is the exclusive annual “white dinner” held in the courtyard of the Louvre in 2013. Photo courtesy of ParisSharing Diner en Blanc, flickr.

In addition to private rentals, spaces appropriate for events could be programmed with **special events** to engage the community and help raise funds for operations. Special events might include **dinners, food tastings or other culinary events, performances, or events for children**. While some types of events would have greater revenue potential than others, interviewees would ideally like to see some kind of

reduced rate to allow a variety of public and private events to take place on site. Interviewees noted that non-profits or community groups might not be able to afford the competitive rates that could be charged for weddings or private events. Other rental venues have addressed this by offering a reduced or subsidized non-profit rate.

Many recalled the former Southwest Museum’s **gift shop as an appealing and lucrative retail operation**. This recollection is reinforced by the 1992 Strategic Long Range plan by Harrison Price Company, which indicated that the museum gift store accounted for 24.4 percent of the museum’s revenues in 1992 with above-average sales per square foot.⁶ Interviewees recalled a broad variety of merchandise at price points ranging from affordable items for school children to publications to high-end jewelry and art for discerning customers. The majority of interviewees would be open to a financially viable retail operation like the former gift shop as an added draw for repeat visits and a potential source of reliable income.

⁶ Harrison Price Company, page 5-5.

Differing Opinions on Other Services and Amenities

While most interviewees were supportive of event rentals as one part of the overall use of the site, a small number specifically qualified their endorsement by adding that they would not want the site to *only* be an events rental venue.

Consensus on Restaurants

Interviewees are open to the possibility of some kind of **dining facility, café, or eatery** at the site, which would be a complement to other offerings and would make the site more of a destination. They noted the potential to capitalize on the site's high visibility and its dramatic architecture and setting in Mount Washington, which affords spectacular views of both downtown Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Mountains. **Indoor/outdoor dining opportunities** could take advantage of the year-round temperate climate and the many appealing but underused outdoor spaces at the site. Several interviewees remarked on the need for more dining options in the immediate neighborhood and noted that commercial kitchen facilities would be helpful to support catering for rentals and events at the site.

Some kind of restaurant or café was perceived by many to be an opportunity to create a revenue-generating activity that—if structured correctly—could help support operations while providing an incentive for repeat customers or visitors from nearby neighborhoods, from downtown, and other parts of Los Angeles. A place to have a cup of coffee, enjoy a glass of wine or beer, or have a meal with friends could help establish the community gathering place that so many local neighborhood interviewees hoped to see at the site.



Restaurant or cafe functions can be popular and revenue-generating uses at challenging historic properties, such as the Church Brew Works in Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of Daniel Lobo, flickr.

Suggestions regarding the kind of cuisine that could be featured in a restaurant at the site ranged from Native American specialties to a changing menu of ethnic cuisines that reflect the cultural diversity of Los Angeles and the American Southwest. A groundbreaking or prominent chef could add significantly to the appeal of a destination restaurant, or affordable snacks and entrees could be offered as part of a more modest café experience for everyday dining. A coffee shop or tea house could serve as a welcoming community gathering place, and a liquor license would allow for the creation a place to enjoy a beer or a glass of wine with friends.

Differing Opinions on Restaurants

There were many different ideas about the type of restaurant, the most appropriate price point for menu items, where a restaurant should be located, and what kind of food or drinks the dining facility might serve. Some envisioned a high-end destination restaurant that would take advantage of the site's spectacular views as a one-of-a-kind, special-occasion dining experience, while others preferred a more

affordable eatery that could become a popular and frequently-visited neighborhood destination. Still others saw opportunities for both in different locations on the site.

Some envisioned opportunities for an indoor/outdoor destination restaurant in the historic buildings incorporating the terrace and gardens, the courtyard and adjacent indoor spaces in the historic Southwest Museum buildings, or the Casa de Adobe and its courtyard. Others did not want to see a restaurant function in the historic buildings and preferred restaurant functions in attached new construction, potentially in the space where the Braun Library is currently located or as a stand-alone new structure located uphill from the parking lot to capitalize on the views. Additional research with an experienced restaurateur or food service provider would be required to gain a better understanding of what locations and types of food service might be most feasible.

Consensus on the Southwest Museum Collection

There is almost unanimous agreement that this is an important and extensive museum collection, which is recognized as one of the top collections of its kind in the country. Interviewees agreed that the Southwest Museum's collection, which was expanded dramatically from the original collection that Lummis assembled, had outgrown the storage capacity of the historic buildings at the site. As the



The Autry website describes the collection as "238,000 Native American art and artifacts that is one of the most significant and representative of its kind in the United States, second only to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian." Photo courtesy of the Autry Museum of the American West.

collection grew, spaces in the historic buildings that were never intended to serve as storage were converted into object storage out of sheer necessity. Finding alternate off-site storage space to relocate the collection will open up many previously inaccessible spaces within the buildings.

Additionally, most interviewees agreed that while the historic museum building was state-of-the-art in the early 1900s, it had not been appropriately upgraded to maintain modern museum standards for collections care. Damage from the 1994 earthquake further compromised the building and exposed the collection to more severe threats. Most interviewees also acknowledged that the artifacts in the collection are in better condition today than they were at the time of the merger in 2003.

Differing Opinion on the Collection

Most interviewees agreed that the collection should be represented in some way at the site, but there were decidedly mixed opinions about how extensive the presence of the collection should be. Some would like to see "corner to corner" exhibits of the collection filling the site, including new construction with expanded gallery space, while other interviewees envisioned a more modest display of the collection, or a contemporary artistic or historical interpretation of the collection.

Interviewees who want to incorporate prominent exhibits of the collection at the site cited the following reasons:

- the **significance and value of the collection** would provide credibility and thus would be a critical factor in creating a successful museum at this site;
- there is an **enormous quantity of artifacts in this vast collection** that could be displayed in multiple locations;
- there might be opportunities to focus on items or **areas of the collection that are not a primary focus for the Autry**, such as the Central American or Mexican artifacts;
- it is appropriate to allow the collection to be **displayed in the original location envisioned by Charles Lummis**;
- some residents in the local neighborhoods feel they were **promised by the Autry** that the collection would continue to be exhibited in the historic museum building; and
- even if there are exhibits of the collection in the Autry's facility in Griffith Park, the **site is accessible by public transportation** and could attract a different audience.

Other interviewees raised several concerns about extensive displays of the collection at the site:

- the **higher cost of renovating spaces in the historic museum building to current collections care standards**, since the fragile nature of many items in the collection would require a more expensive museum-quality restoration to provide secure, dust-free, pest-free, climate-controlled galleries and curatorial spaces;
- the opportunity to reduce costs with a **less stringent level of climate control or security might be required for other art objects or exhibits** that are less fragile than the collection, which could reduce both capital costs and annual operating expenses;
- the **cost of adding new gallery space** would be impractical as it would greatly increase financial needs for both capital and operating funds;
- the **prohibitive cost of addressing current accessibility and other infrastructure upgrades** at the site versus other locations;
- there is a **risk of duplicating efforts** because of the Autry's decision to consolidate displays of the collection in its Griffith Park facility;
- there might be **greater flexibility for programming around less fragile objects and collections**. For example, an ability to host receptions with food or drink in galleries; and
- there would be **access challenges for visitors driving to the site**, including navigating through the neighborhood, access from major roadways, and limited dedicated parking, which could inhibit visitation.

A number of interviewees were dismayed to see the collection moved off site to the new Autry Resource Center (ARC) in Burbank. Although they acknowledged the need for expanded and improved storage facilities to provide appropriate conservation of and storage for the objects, some would have preferred to construct a new storage facility at the site as a way to effectively address the storage issue and keep the collection on site. Some interpreted the relocation of the collection to the ARC as a permanent loss of the collection and a sign that the site was at risk of being left empty, vacant, and abandoned with no collection, programming, or staff. Others believed the ARC will provide better care for the collection and access for researchers. In addition, interviewees who supported storing the collection at the ARC noted that relocating the collection potentially removes the considerable financial burden of storage, conservation, and curatorial expenses from the potential costs to operate the site,

Since this place was specifically designed for the collection, it's important to maintain that link.

--Lupe Vela,
Northeast LA resident

I like to see a diversity of displays. I would love to see the permanent collection, but I am also interested in what is new, different, and featured.

--Susanne Siegel,
Northeast LA Artist

The collection is absolutely important. That is what most people in this community and the surrounding communities are looking for.

--John Nese, Owner
Galco's Soda Pop Stop

and it frees up large amounts of space in the existing buildings for more active and productive uses than storage.

As part of the Autry's master plan for collections storage, the Braun Research Library also is in the process of being relocated to the ARC. Interviewees had similar concerns about the loss of this research resource. Some were especially concerned about this loss because they felt the site was well suited to be a research facility for scholars. As with the collection, other interviewees observed that the removal of the archives would open the 1970s-era library building for other functions (visitor services, vertical circulation, and programming or meeting space were mentioned most often), or possibly even replace that building with new construction.

A few interviewees contended that the Autry acquired a collection that enhanced their reputation and provided opportunities to profit from object loans and traveling exhibitions. When asked about this, the Autry staff explained that their standard lending agreements do not charge fees for the use of the collection. Costs associated with loans are primarily to cover shipping and other administrative expenses.⁷ Other interviewees made the case that the Autry's stewardship of this extensive and fragile collection represents an expensive conservation undertaking that could eliminate similar costs from the site's future operating budget.

⁷ A very small number of interviewees expressed concern that the Autry was selling items from the collection. Autry staff indicated this is not the case. They have a strict deaccessioning policy that does not allow the sale of items in the collection except to fund the purchase of other items more in compliance with the museum's collections policy. In response to these questions about the sale of objects and the condition of the collection, the National Trust asked the Autry to offer a behind-the-scenes tour of the Autry Resource Center for community members. The Autry agreed to this request and hosted a tour of the ARC on March 21, 2015, and has offered to host similar tours in the future.

GROUNDS AND OUTDOOR SPACES

The prominent and highly-visible location for the historic Southwest Museum was very deliberately selected by Charles Lummis. In addition to the commanding views of downtown, the Arroyo Seco, and the San Gabriel Mountains that are afforded by its hillside location, a few interviewees suggested that the site may have been chosen because it had special significance to the Tongva as “the crossing,” a sacred site they would visit when they were ready for their souls to cross over into the next world. There is no question that the Southwest Museum’s 101-year legacy in this location contributes to its significance, and renders it a visual and cultural landmark for Los Angeles residents and visitors alike.

Consensus on the Grounds and Outdoor Spaces

All interviewees agreed that the grounds surrounding the hillside location contribute to the specialness of the site. While the museum has always been privately owned, interviewees in the surrounding neighborhoods feel a sense of ownership and pride in the site and they value the grounds as an oasis in a densely developed urban area. Many interviewees mentioned a desire to **retain public access to the grounds as a park-like amenity**. In envisioning ways to enhance the grounds, many interviewees promoted visually appealing, well-manicured, and shaded places to relax, which could take full advantage of the spectacular views and make the site a destination.

I like the architecture, the garden, the view, and the amount of outdoor space that is enclosed where the community could gather. It is an inspiring environment that is like a mini Getty Villa.

--Michael Soller
Parent of Aldama Elementary
Student

Existing features such as the rustic Hopi Trail, the ethnobotanical garden, the terrace, the courtyard, the outdoor amphitheater, and the Casa de Adobe’s outdoor courtyard all were mentioned as **possible settings for a wide range of outdoor activities** that could include:

- **classes on native plants;**
- **gardens** featuring native plants;
- **hiking trails;**
- **nature walks;**
- **outdoor activities;**
- **outdoor performances** in the amphitheater;
- **outdoor films** in the evenings;
- **picnicking;**
- **pleasure garden;**
- **public park;**
- **sculpture garden;** and
- **urban farming** to learn about sustainable agriculture.

Differing Opinions on the Grounds and Outdoor Spaces

There are many different opinions about how the grounds could or should be used, as well as what degree of development or new construction would be considered appropriate or desirable. Some would like to see the grounds and outdoor spaces protected for some or all of the uses described above, but others view this open space as an opportunity to expand the footprint of the existing buildings (see section on “New Construction” on page 21 for more perspectives on new development).

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Consensus on Infrastructure

All interviewees agreed that all of the historic buildings require a significant amount of rehabilitation to address decades of deferred maintenance, and to install the systems and circulation upgrades necessary to revitalize the site. No one questioned that this will be very expensive. A number of interviewees cited challenges with the current buildings, such as deferred maintenance, parking, accessibility, climate control, and security. Some interviewees pointed out that the very features that give the site its unique appearance also present major logistical challenges for use:

- the steep hillside location of the buildings and the multiple levels within the historic museum structure contribute greatly to the visual appeal of the site, but they also present **multiple barriers for anyone with mobility issues or physical disabilities** (since ADA compliance is mandatory for any federally-funded entities, this would be a requirement if any federal funding is secured);
- the existing **one-car elevator only provides access to one floor** of the Southwest Museum building;
- the **Caracol Tower has only one means of egress**, which is steep, difficult to navigate, and is not code-compliant;
- the existing **galleries and spaces do not meet current museum conservation standards** for controlling temperature, relative humidity, light levels, and visitor circulation to protect delicate artifacts; and
- the existence of **multiple entrances on multiple levels requires a larger security staff** to monitor the site, adding to operational costs; and
- virtually **all systems in the building (electrical, HVAC, plumbing, elevator) are well beyond their useful life** and need to be upgraded.

Differing Opinions on Infrastructure

Even though all interviewees recognized the need for major rehabilitation and investment in order to make the buildings and grounds more functional, there is disagreement over the feasibility of securing the necessary funds for improvements to the physical structures and infrastructure. Some believed this is an insurmountable problem because the needed upgrades are simply too expensive to justify the cost, while others argued that the challenges can be resolved and that funds to pay for this expense can be identified. However, when asked about sources that could underwrite the rehabilitation costs, these

When you have historic structures on a hill, accessibility will need to be addressed—and it is expensive and takes creativity. As a practical matter, you need to keep that firmly in mind.

--Jim Tranquada,
Director of Communications,
Occidental College

Historic preservation is an important component of this discussion. The building itself is an artifact.

--Christy McAvoy,
award-winning preservation
consultant and
National Trust Advisor

The site is beautiful but challenging.

--Kim Walters,
former director,
Braun Research Library

The building is not very accessible. It is part of the unique character, but it is also a challenge. It's clear that there is still a lot of work to be done on the buildings.

--Patrick Gallagher, President,
Gallagher & Associates

interviewees offered many possible names but could not confirm any specific individuals, foundations, corporations, governmental agencies, or other philanthropic sources that would be willing to make a contribution toward the millions of dollars needed in capital costs.⁸

Consensus on New Construction

New construction was raised by interviewees as a possibility for the historic museum buildings and grounds, but not for the Casa de Adobe. Almost every interviewee was open to the idea of some new

If it's really needed and it makes a difference, adding space should not be dismissed as long as it is done in the right way.

--Sue Mossman,
Executive Director,
Pasadena Heritage

It is very dangerous to start adding new buildings when you are already in financial distress.

--Selma Holo, Ph.D., Director,
USC Fisher Museum of Art and
International Museum Institute,
Professor of Art History

It is important that new construction doesn't overwhelm the historic structure. It would need to respect the scale and massing of the original historic buildings.

--Adrian Scott Fine,
Director of Advocacy,
Los Angeles Conservancy

construction as a means to expand the existing facilities, with many observing that this might be necessary simply to address the many vertical circulation issues at the site (vertical circulation includes the means by which occupants move between different levels of a building, including stairs, elevators, lifts, and ramps). Most interviewees only supported new construction as long as it was carefully considered, did not detract from the historic integrity of the site, and will make the annual operations more economically viable despite the added cost of building and maintaining the new infrastructure.

In general, suggestions for new construction in plans previously completed by Brenda Levin and Associates, PLUM Architects, and other design professionals have focused on the uphill or north side of the site to protect the integrity of the viewshed (the iconic view of the historic buildings as seen from below and the surrounding hills). Since the Braun Library was built in the 1970s—outside of the period of significance defined in the National Register of Historic Places nomination—a number of interviewees felt that if any buildings had to be removed or replaced with new construction, it should be the Braun Library.

Differing Opinions on New Construction

As mentioned previously in the section on Grounds and Outdoor Spaces, there were different opinions on the topic of new construction and whether it is appropriate at the

site. While some interviewees preferred the hillside above the museum complex to remain undeveloped and prioritized for public use as open space, others envisioned developing the grounds with new construction in a variety of ways:

- **expand the historic museum complex** with new buildings for additional exhibit and programming space;
- regrade the upper portion of the hill to **expand the capacity of the current parking lot**;
- **construct a new parking deck** to maximize the available but limited space for parking;
- build a **new destination restaurant** halfway up the hillside just below Crane Avenue that would give diners access to beautiful views; and

⁸ Each interviewee was asked to recommend specific resources—financial or otherwise—that could support their vision or recommendations for the site. A list of all the funding suggestions is compiled in Appendix D.

- **scatter new eco-cabins on the site** as an income-producing lodging opportunity for travelers or visiting artists and scholars.

When asked about adding new construction to the existing buildings, some interviewees felt that new construction could be appropriate, especially if it would help make desired uses more viable and new buildings were added sensitively to the historic buildings. Others cautioned that adding new buildings would be an extremely risky move from a financial standpoint, especially if the existing buildings are already in need of significant investment. Specific concerns about new construction overlapped with those mentioned in discussions of the grounds, and they included:

- the potential to have a negative effect on **the existing historic structures**;
- the impact of new construction on **parking availability**; and
- the **potential loss of open space** that could diminish the ability of the grounds to provide a park-like setting.

A number of design challenges have been considered to some extent in architectural studies and assessments prepared at the request of the Autry or the Friends of the Southwest Museum. Interviewees who have reviewed these plans hold different opinions about the options that have been presented so far. However, there was no agreement among the interviewees that any suggested option in any existing plan should be implemented.

Consensus on Alternate New Uses

Although there was no clear consensus among the interviewees on a specific use or set of uses for the site, there was agreement about broad categories that most interviewees believed to be desirable and/or appropriate. ***Almost every interviewee advocated for some type of arts, cultural, museum, community, or educational use.***

Differing Opinions on Alternate New Uses

Some interviewees were adamant the site must maintain the museum function with the collection at its center, but others were open to new uses or a mixed-use concept that might also include some kind of museum, gallery, or display component. Interviewees suggested several specific new uses that could encompass part or all the facilities, and comply with many of the project parameters (see [Appendix C](#)):

Overnight Lodging

A small number of interviewees cited a hotel or conference center as a commercial use they definitely would not want to see at the site. Other interviewees suggested a range of overnight accommodations and work spaces could be provided that directly relate to programming alternatives such as:

- A **competitive residency program** or **artist-in-residence program** to offer inspiring live/work spaces to emerging or established artists for a short-term stay. Artist-in-residence programs range from less competitive programs where artists pay most of their own way to highly competitive programs where artists are given free lodging, food, and studio space for the duration of their stay. Residencies can last from a few weeks to a few months. During a residency an artist might offer structured classes or workshops, participate in open houses or events that allow the public to interact with the artists and experience their work “in progress,” or create artwork that is displayed/performed on site or sold to benefit the site.

- **Alternative residency programs** that would not require a potentially messy working art studio space included a **scholar-in-residence** or **researcher-in-residence**. One interviewee felt that a research center would work well because of the limited square footage. However with the pending relocation of the Braun Library to the ARC, others noted that opportunities for on-site research will be more limited.

While some interviewees thought a residency program could bring real appeal or cache to the site, others cautioned that residency programs require substantial external programmatic support because expenses for residents are often entirely or heavily underwritten. Residency programs also require staff to manage and maintain the program. Other concerns about incorporating lodging for this purpose included the increased security risks of having overnight guests in parts of a secured museum or gallery, which might necessitate 24-hour on-site staff and security as well as zoning changes (which would be required for any change in use) and compliance with housing codes.

Office Space

Some opposed the idea of office space as an undesirable use that would limit public access while other interviewees noted that the historic buildings currently contain a fair amount of office space on the lower floors, as well as reclaimed storage space that could be repurposed for more active or income-producing uses. In addition to accommodating staff for potential programs housed on site, some interviewees saw opportunities to **lease space to clusters of like-minded tenant organizations**. Suggestions included an **incubator for emerging non-profit organizations** or leasing space to:

- **arts organizations**, such as the California Basketmakers Association and/or local arts organizations;
- **community organizations**;
- **Native American organizations**;
- **non-profit organizations**, such as the western headquarters for the Archaeology Conservancy; and
- **law offices**.

With the exception of the law offices, the recommended potential tenants were non-profit or community organizations with limited budgets. Some interviewees commented that it was unlikely these organizations could afford to undertake the costly rehabilitation of the site, and they probably would have strict limits in terms of what they could pay to lease space. If portions of the site are being used as a museum, incorporating adjacent office uses could require security measures that would make it more difficult for tenants to access the building after hours, unless the museum or gallery spaces are adequately secured. Additional research would be needed to determine if there is the interest, ability, and adequate space to accommodate office or meeting space for organizations, and to determine if this use is financially viable.

Community Functions

A number of different **uses to serve community needs** were mentioned during the interviews, which could be provided as one component of another use or could become a primary use for the entire facility, such as a community or events center. Some suggested that the site could offer valuable **“social practice” functions** to serve the surrounding community by hosting blood drives or health fairs. Others thought the site could provide a public cultural space for socializing.

Educational Uses

The need for educational programming in the surrounding neighborhoods was raised by several interviewees. Suggestions for uses with a predominantly educational focus included:

- a **bilingual charter school** with a special focus on the American Southwest and museum management, exhibits for teaching, and opportunities for students to lead exhibit tours for the general public;
- a **community college**;
- a **lending library** with a focus on children, or Native American, Latino, or Chinese genealogy.

While interviewees raised a number of suggestions for alternate uses, several interviewees noted that a change in use would require a change in zoning and an environmental review.

Opinions on a Network of Sites and Services

Some interviewees commented that in order for the site to succeed as an attraction drawing Angelenos and domestic or international travelers, there must be available lodging nearby along with other things to see, do, and buy in the surrounding community. Many interviewees also observed that Highland Park has experienced a great deal of change since the merger took place over a decade ago. Interviewees noted that gentrification has caused, and continues to cause, a number of changes in the neighborhood demographics and economics, with the result that the neighborhood was recently featured in several national stories and publications as an up-and-coming place for hipsters, young professionals, and young families.⁹ This would suggest that there are a growing number of amenities and services in the immediate neighborhood. But some interviewees—especially those living outside Northeast Los Angeles—felt these supporting services were not yet in place near the site. Others remarked that while Metro light rail has arrived with the Gold Line and real estate prices continue to climb, Highland Park is still perceived by a large percentage of Angelenos as a “tough” neighborhood lacking in amenities, which makes it less appealing as a destination.

A larger percentage of interviewees raised the idea of the site as one part of a larger network of similar heritage, cultural, and natural sites in the area. Some envisioned this as a simple grouping of attractions and services within walking distance of each other, while others imagined a more formal and deliberate partnership between many attractions in the Arroyo, such as the Museums of the Arroyo, the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway, or the yet-to-be-realized concept of Greater Arroyo Park through the National Park Service. Still others speculated about a Los Angeles-wide partnership of major museums.

Differing Opinion on Use of the Name “Southwest Museum”

Some interviewees felt very strongly that the site must continue to be known as the “Southwest Museum,” citing the following reasons:

- there is a **100+ year-long history** of referring to the site by this name;
- it is **commonly known in the local community** by this name;
- “Southwest Museum” is **carved into the tunnel entrance**;
- it is the **name used at the adjacent Gold Line stop**;
- **it supports the continuation of the historic function** with exhibits featuring the collection; and
- eliminating the historic name is viewed by some as a **broken promise**.

⁹ Brisick, Jamie. “Highland Park: A New Cultural District in Los Angeles.” *New York Times*, July 9, 2009.

A few interviewees offered arguments for the adoption of a new name, including:

- the historical name **could limit or complicate reuse options**. For example, another museum or institution considering a partnership or presence at the site would need to maintain their own name and identity;
- it could be **confusing if the primary exhibits of the collection are on display at the Autry's Griffith Park location**; and
- a large percentage of the population outside Northeast Los Angeles **does not know the site or recognize the name**.

Opinions on Intangible Qualities

When discussing intangible qualities they hoped the site would embody, some Native American interviewees expressed a desire to create a sacred space that is welcoming and healing for all peoples and cultures. Neighborhood residents envisioned it as a casual gathering place for the community. The range of descriptions provided by interviewees about the qualities reveals much about the interviewees current perceptions of the site as well as their aspirations for its future:



The intangible qualities mentioned during the interviews are captured in a "word cloud." The size of the word is proportional to the number of times it occurred in the interview notes.

- a living cultural space;
- a sacred tribal space;
- a place for celebrations;
- a place that is embedded in the community;
- a place that brings out another part of your artistic soul;
- a place of special promise, community memory, and cultural exchange;
- a place for hands-on activities;
- a place that you can hear, feel, taste and smell in addition to seeing;

- a place that is recognized as a cultural anchor for the east side of Los Angeles, e.g. “The Getty of the East Side”;
- a place that is vibrant with changing events and rotating offerings to keep people coming back;
- a place where something is always going on, a place you want to be;
- a place that is a “destination location”;
- a place that is seen as a venue for serious art;
- a place that adds to our understanding of 19th-century and present-day Latino culture;
- a place that takes full advantage of the unusual and special features of the building such as the tunnel entrance (with original dioramas or a re-imagined version installed as displays); and
- a crown jewel that improves the economic vitality and quality of life for the surrounding community.

CASA DE ADOBE

The Casa was an undertaking of the Hispanic Society of California built in 1916 as a replica of an early California rancho to provide an educational setting for living history school tours about California history. School tours and public and private events, like library book sales and holiday celebrations, were hosted at the Casa de Adobe over the years. The site also served as the location for a tour guide training program.

Consensus on the Casa de Adobe

The Casa de Adobe is less well-known and controversial than the historic museum buildings up the hill. While fewer interviewees were familiar with the Casa de Adobe, those who know the property agreed that it is a historically significant part of the overall site and they acknowledged that it is important to



The historic Casa de Adobe was conceived in 1916 by the Hispanic Society of California as a romantic replica of a California rancho for educational purposes. It is currently closed to the public but presents an opportunity for public programming and revenue-generating functions. Photo Courtesy of the Autry Museum of the American West.

see this structure revitalized and reused. Generally speaking, interviewees were more open to a range of use options here.

Like the other historic buildings on the site, the Casa de Adobe is in need of substantial rehabilitation. It is currently closed to visitors due to damage to the roof and adobe walls. Restroom facilities are limited and the existing systems and kitchen facilities are inadequate for contemporary needs and safety requirements. While repair estimates for this site are substantial (estimated around \$5 million), the costs are considerably lower than the capital needs of the historic buildings up the hill.

The location on Figueroa Street across from Sycamore Grove Park and the Ramona Hall Community Center provides good public visibility, although interviewees commented that the location on a busy

urban street also presents parking challenges because there is no dedicated parking lot.¹⁰ The Southwest Museum Gold Line stop is conveniently located next to the Casa de Adobe, providing easy access via public transportation.

Differing Opinions on the Casa de Adobe

There was no consensus on a single use for the Casa de Adobe, but interviewees provided many recommendations on ways it could be used productively in the future for a variety of purposes. While some hoped the original use for school tours and other educational functions could be returned, many other interviewees suggested alternative uses such as:

- **destination restaurant;**
- **center for music** offering music lessons and performances;
- an **extension of Ramona Hall**, potentially as a home for the [Ballet Folklórico](#);
- **headquarters for organizations** such as the National Hispanic Cultural Center (one of the founding organizations who helped to create the Casa de Adobe);
- **multi-purpose space** for exhibits, private functions, and community events;
- **regional visitor center** serving Highland Park, Northeast Los Angeles, or the Arroyo Seco;
- **rental facility** for weddings, special events, or corporate parties; and
- **space to host outdoor public events** (performances, Latino celebrations such as Mercados, Fandangos, or Los Posadas at Christmas, Cinco de Mayo, and Día de los Muertos).

¹⁰ A few interviewees believed there was an agreement with Ramona Hall to rent parking across the street and suggested there might be opportunities to utilize valet parking for events. But an inquiry with city staff did not reveal any record of a parking agreement with Ramona Hall.

RESOURCES

The interviewees were unanimous in their belief that the site will require substantial capital and operating costs to return it to more active use, but beyond this point there was disagreement about the viability of securing the large sums of funding necessary to meet those needs. A national trend in operational funding for museums has been an increased reliance on earned revenue. In recent years, sources of contributed revenue such as grants and governmental support have become more competitive and difficult to secure. According to the American Alliance of Museums, the four main categories of museum funding are government grants, private donations, earned revenue, and investment income.¹¹ With this in mind, it will be important to identify uses and experiences for the site that audiences are interested in—and that they will pay for—when assessing the viability of the site as a museum.

Consensus on Funding

Everyone agreed that there is much work to be done on the site and it will be a very expensive undertaking. Interviewees acknowledged that rehabilitating the buildings for different combinations of uses will affect the amount of funding required for capital improvements, as well as the amount of annual operating funding needed for the site to be “revenue neutral” with balanced expenses and income.

Differing Opinions on Funding

Disagreements ranged from the total costs for rehabilitation to the amount of earned income that could be generated from admissions, retail sales, or other events, but the biggest point of contention was around fundraising. **Interviewees held starkly different perspectives about the amount of money that realistically could be raised from available sources for both capital costs and operating expenses.** In general, long-time local residents from the surrounding neighborhoods were much more optimistic about the sustainability of a museum focused on the collection. These interviewees believed that as long as there is consensus and a will to move forward, there is ample public and private funding available in Los Angeles to support an ambitious vision for a museum that includes full access to the collection for exhibits on site.

From my perspective, financial sustainability is most important.

--Dorothy Fleischer, Ph.D.,
Program Director,
W.M. Keck Foundation

Once there is a compelling curatorial vision for the collection, the museum and grounds, the financial support will follow.

--Louisa Van Leer, Vice President
Highland Park Heritage Trust

Unless you can monetize this it won't work.

--Eric Natwig,
New West Partners

We need to be open-minded to consider a wide range of potential investors who could make something of this.

--Wendy Garen,
President and CEO,
Ralph M. Parsons Foundation

Museums today need to have a different business model. When times get tough, you have to recognize that cities and other funders are going to cut museum funding first. The goal should be to be revenue neutral...(but) the timing is good. Philanthropy is coming back and the economy is better, so it's a better time to be working on all of this today.

--Patrick Gallagher,
President,
Gallagher and Associates

¹¹ Bell, Ford W. “How Are Museums Supported Financially in the U.S.?” U.S. Department of State, March 2012, page 2.

Other interviewees—particularly those who are museum professionals, political and government leaders, and philanthropists—were more skeptical about the long-term financial viability of both an all-museum use and undertaking new construction for expanded museum space and galleries. These interviewees cautioned that funding for museums—especially funding for ongoing operations—is increasingly scarce and competitive, and they advocated for a more modest vision and a focus on sources of earned revenue to help achieve a “revenue neutral” budget. Some of these interviewees cited a national trend of museums relying more heavily on earned rather than contributed revenue. They tended to support alternate uses for the site, or a use that combined a museum function with other activities that could generate revenue to offset operating expenses. Some of them commented that the controversy surrounding the site could make fundraising more challenging.

Regarding the availability of specific sources of funding, each interviewee was asked to suggest funders and partners who might have an interest in supporting the revitalization of the site (see [Appendix D](#)). Even though the resulting list is long, none of the interviewees had approached any of these potential funders to determine their level of interest, or identified whether the prospective funders had programs that matched the needs of the site. Some organizations on the list do have resources and could be potential supporters, but a number are struggling financially to meet their current internal obligations. A few interviewees offered to directly assist with fundraising for smaller, discreet efforts, and most interviewees said they were willing to disseminate information via mailing lists and other publicity or outreach efforts through their respective groups. Other groups, such as neighborhood or community organizations, offered access to affiliated local professionals who might provide in-kind expertise as volunteers, docents, fundraisers, consultants, or educators.

Some interviewees felt the significance of the site and the challenges it faces demanded some form of public-private partnership to supply the necessary funding. The passion of local stakeholders for this site as a beloved community asset was cited by a few interviewees as justification for a significant public investment to ensure ongoing public access. Some suggested that public investment could be the means to finance infrastructure improvements to the historic buildings or the grounds, or to pay for infrastructure improvements adjacent to the site, such as securing additional off-site parking.

Opinions on Annual Operating Costs

Most interviewees agreed that the site needs to be self-supporting and financially sustainable to ensure its long-term viability. While many potential uses were suggested during the course of these interviews, little research has been done by the interviewees or others to determine which uses might generate revenue, require a subsidy, or would be “revenue neutral.” **Research to examine uses that could at least achieve a “revenue neutral” status through a combination of earned and contributed revenue would be very helpful to guide informed decision-making.**

Opinions on Management Structures

Although everyone agreed that the site needs to be managed by an entity that has the vision and capacity to tackle the capital costs as well as on-going operations, programming, and administration, there was no consensus as to who or what could best fill that role. Some felt that one well-funded organization could manage the entire complex, and others favored a structure that included tenants or concessionaires as well as owner-occupants. Several interviewees noted that the Autry has offered the site for \$1 to the City of Los Angeles and other groups and institutions, but none were willing or able to take over the property. Many interviewees cited the importance of a leader who has a clear and strong

vision or “big vision” along with a realistic, well-conceived business plan. Some interviewees recommended positioning the site as a satellite or affiliate of a larger, well-established institution to provide greater opportunities for financial sustainability, but others cautioned that as an affiliate location for another museum or institution, the site would be at risk of being treated as a “stepchild.” Opinions regarding who should own and manage the site generally fell into one of the following categories:

- the **Autry** will step up to take on this challenge and create a separate board for the Southwest Museum Site;
- a **public-private partnership** will be necessary to fully address all the needs of the site;
- **another museum entity** with deep pockets and a passion for the site should take it on; and
- a **new, independent non-profit entity** must assume ownership and management of the site.

Conclusion

The interview process provided an opportunity for a large number of stakeholders to share their open and honest perspectives about the Southwest Museum Site and the ways in which it could, or should, be used in the future. It was promising to see so many areas of agreement among the interviewees around the “parameters” and a number of key issues, but it is apparent that critical areas of disagreement remain—the role of the collection, the extent of new construction, and the viability of funding—which must be carefully explored and collaboratively resolved before a vibrant future for the site is possible.

While this interview report is primarily meant to capture and share the range of stakeholder desires and opinions about the future of the Southwest Museum Site, the National Trust staff offers the following three key findings from this interview process that represent the National Trust’s observations based on this interview process:

- 1) *While almost all interviewees agree that the care of the collection today is an improvement over the conditions prior to 2003, continuing disagreement over the collection and its role at the site has the potential to prevent stakeholders from reaching consensus, and could keep the future of the Southwest Museum Site in limbo.*
- 2) *Given the disagreement around fundraising, a fundraising feasibility study will be a critical and necessary step in the future to determine the amount of funding that realistically could be raised to support capital and operating expenses.*
- 3) *Reaching a solution that satisfies the most important priorities for different stakeholder groups will require compromise from all sides.*

Building from the shared desires for this site, the National Trust hopes that all stakeholders will come to the planning process with an open mind and a willingness to work together towards a shared vision that can be embraced by everyone.

Acknowledgements

The National Trust would like to thank all of the individuals who generously gave their time to participate in an interview.

We also extend a very special thanks to **Mark Kenyon and his staff at Northeast Trees** and **Tim Brick and his staff at the Arroyo Seco Foundation**, all of whom graciously donated their assistance and office space at the **Los Angeles River Center and Gardens** to accommodate our interview sessions in February of 2015.

APPENDIX A: Southwest Museum Site Stakeholder Survey Questions

- 1) Tell me a little about your current or past connection to this site.
- 2) To help focus our planning effort we would like to identify “parameters” or guidelines to provide an overall framework. These planning parameters will outline areas where everyone is already in agreement. Some possible examples of parameters might include:
 - *Proposed uses should reflect and respect the historic, artistic and cultural legacy of the site*
 - *Restoration or rehabilitation work must follow professional preservation standards.*
 - *The site should be vibrant, active and appealing to a wide range of audiences.*
 - *Displays of the Southwest Museum Collection must adhere to professional museum standards.*
 - *The operation and maintenance for proposed uses should be financially sustainable through reliable sources of earned and/or contributed revenue.*

Do you agree or disagree with the statements above? What else would you add to this list?

- 3) In thinking about ways in which the buildings and grounds at the site could be used in the future:
 - a. What qualities or activities for uses at the site are absolute “must haves” for you?
 - b. What qualities or activities would be highly desirable (but would not be a deal breaker)?
 - c. Can you think of any services, businesses or programs that are needed in Highland Park/Mt. Washington/NELA that could potentially be provided at the site?
- 4) What resources (financial, expertise, political influence, etc.) could you or your organization bring towards implementing a plan to reactivate the site? Consider what you could definitely bring to the table as well as what you or your organization might be able to offer.
- 5) What other organizations or individuals do you suggest who might be able to bring support, resources or expertise to help implement the plan that comes out of this planning effort?
- 6) Is there anyone you feel should be on the steering committee to oversee the recommendations resulting from this planning effort? Who else should we reach out to so they can be included?

APPENDIX B: List of Stakeholders Interviewed

The list below includes the 87 individuals who participated in an interview about the future of the Southwest Museum Site. Interviewees were invited from a list of 156 individuals who were identified by other stakeholders. While every effort was made to contact and set up an interview with all individuals who were suggested, time limitations and the potential interviewee's availability meant that it was not possible to interview everyone.

Michael Alexander, Grand Performances
Cindi Moar Alvitre, Ti'at Society
Dana Anderson, Heritage Square Museum
Barbara Arvi, Southern California Indian Center, Inc. and Southwest Museum (former)
Jem Axelrod, Occidental College
Diana Barnwell, Southwest Museum (former)
Martha Benedict, Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council, Debs Park Advisory Board, La Casita Childcare Center
Marla Berns, Fowler Museum (UCLA)
Ken Bernstein, City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources
Ted Bosley, Gamble House (USC)
Tim Brick, Arroyo Seco Foundation
Omar Bronson, Los Angeles River Revitalization Corporation
Gabriel Buelna, El Plan
Pilar Buelna, El Plan
Tony Castillo, Highland Park Heritage Trust
Colleen Cavanaugh Anderson, Aldama Elementary
Arturo Chavez, Los Angeles City Council (CD1)
Hollace Davids, NBC/Universal
Fernando De Necochea, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Linda Dishman, Los Angeles Conservancy
Barbara Drake, Mother Earth Clan
Armando Duron, El Plan
Adrian Scott Fine, Los Angeles Conservancy
Dorothy Fleischer, W.M. Keck Foundation
Gwen Freeman, Arroyo Arts Collective
Patrick Gallagher, Gallagher Design
Kathy Gallegos, Avenue 50 Studio
Jose Gardea, Former Los Angeles City Council
Wendy Garen, Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Carmela Gomes, Highland Park Heritage Trust
Pat Griffith, El Plan
Olga Hall, Highland Park Resident

Peyton Hall, Historic Resources Group and USC School of Architecture
Anthea Hartig, California Historical Society
Mike Hernandez, Former Los Angeles City Council
Michael Heumann, Autry Museum of the American West Board, Mossaman LLP
Selma Holo, USC Fisher Gallery, USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
Amy Inouye, North Figueroa Association and Future Studio
Misty Iwatsu, North Figueroa Association and Highland Park Ebell Club
Doug Jacobs, Teatro Arroyo
Carol Jacques, Mount Washington Association
Linda Johnstone Allen, Women's Twentieth Century Club
Felicia Kelley, California Humanities
Mark Kenyon, Northeast Trees
Gideon Kracov, El Plan
Brenda Levin, Levin & Associates Architects
Roger Lowenstein, Los Angeles Leadership Academy
Pamela Marcello, Office of Congressman Adam Schiff
Christy McAvoy, Historic Resources Group
Richard McCarthy, Arroyo Seco Academy at Franklin High School
Sarah Miggins, Audubon Center at Debs Park
Cathi Milligan, NELA Arts
Sue Mossman, Pasadena Heritage
Dennis Murphy, Hopi Radio
Eric Natwig, New West Partners
John Nese, Galco's Soda Pop Stop and Highland Park Heritage Trust
Fernando Orozco, El Plan
Mari Pritchard Parker, Friends of the Southwest Museum

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Frank Parrello, Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society
Roy Payan, Montecito Heights Improvement Association
Scott Piotrowski, Author
Jane Pisano, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles
Nicole Possert, Friends of the Southwest Museum
Jessica M. Rivas, Heritage Square Museum
Dolores Romero Stewart, El Plan
Yvonne Sarceda, Friends of the Southwest Museum
Hank Shaefer, Self-Realization Fellowship
Isabella Shirinyan, Heritage Square Museum
Suzanne Siegel, Arroyo Arts Collective
Evelyn Soller, Aldama Elementary
Michael Soller, Aldama Elementary
Justin Stadel, Artist
Tracy Stanhoff, American Indian Chamber of Commerce of California

Mark Stankard, Woodbury University
Paula Starr, American Indian Center in Los Angeles
Carol Teusch, Friends of the Southwest Museum
Craig Torres, Traditional Council of Pimu and the Ti'at Society
Jim Tranquada, Occidental College
Louisa van Leer, Highland Park Heritage Trust
Lupe Vela, Garvanza Resident
Ray Verches, El Plan
Jonathan Vietch, Occidental College
Ann Walnum, Friends of the Southwest Museum
Kim Walters, Braun Research Library
Eric Warren, Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society
Dan Wright, Attorney
Laura Zucker, Los Angeles County Arts Commission

APPENDIX C: Planning Parameters for the Southwest Museum Site

Stakeholders agreed that the five draft parameters outlined in the stakeholder interview questions generally reflected a starting framework of areas where stakeholders were already in full agreement. In discussing parameters, stakeholders suggested ways to clarify or enhance the draft parameters. We also asked stakeholders to recommend additional parameters (see revised parameters at the end of this section).

a. ***Proposed uses should reflect and respect the historic, artistic and cultural legacy of the site.***

Almost all stakeholders agreed that any proposed uses for the Southwest Museum Site (which includes the historic Southwest Museum buildings and grounds as well as the Casa de Adobe) should reflect and respect the historic, artistic and cultural legacy of the site. Some suggested that the offerings should also help to create a broader awareness of this legacy. It was also suggested that it could be helpful to further clarify exactly what this legacy is, specifically referencing Charles Lummis' interest in the Arroyo culture of Los Angeles and the cultures of the American Southwest.

b. ***Restoration or rehabilitation work must follow professional preservation standards.***

While all stakeholders agreed that maintaining the integrity of the historic structures was important, some questioned whether the more rigid preservation term of "restoration" might inhibit adaptive reuse options or preclude modern upgrades or enhancements necessary for success. They favored the more flexible preservation term "rehabilitation" or "renovation." The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation defines rehabilitation as "...making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values." Restoration is defined as "...accurately depicting the form, features and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstructing missing features from the restoration period." For more information, refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>.

c. ***The site should be vibrant, active and appealing to a wide range of audiences.***

There was universal agreement that finding ways to make the site vibrant, active and appealing was very important. While most agreed that the site should serve many different audiences, some expressed concerns that it might not be attainable to be all things to all audiences. While desirable to appeal to a broad range of visitors, defining target audiences might be one area where compromise might be necessary or where more research and market analysis would be helpful in defining what kinds of activities could be supported financially.

d. ***Displays of the Southwest Museum Collection must adhere to professional museum standards.***

Objects from the Southwest Museum Collection that are brought back from the ARC for future exhibits in the Southwest Museum Site should comply with professional museum standards to adequately protect fragile items in the collection. Given the cultural sensitivities around the care of Native American artifacts, Native American stakeholders suggested that this statement could be expanded to address that aspect of collections care.

e. The operation and maintenance for proposed uses should be financially sustainable through reliable sources of earned and/or contributed revenue.

While all stakeholders agreed that financial sustainability is important, they expressed different views about how to achieve this goal. These different views are discussed in more detail in the “Resources” section on page 28.

Revised Parameters

Based on stakeholder input a revised version of the parameters was developed along with one new additional parameter that had general support when tested with subsequent interviewees. Two new parameters were added to underscore the importance of some connection between the collection and the site as well as a new parameter to acknowledge the physical capacity of the site. This includes the capacity of existing structures and grounds and the ability to accommodate new construction, as well as other physical constraints such as limitations on parking. The revised parameters based on stakeholder feedback during the interview process include:

- a. Proposed uses should reflect, respect and help to create broader awareness of the historic, artistic and cultural legacy of the site and the Arroyo culture of the American Southwest.**
- b. Rehabilitation work for the historic buildings must follow professional preservation standards.**
- c. It is important to maintain an ongoing connection between the Southwest Museum Collection and the original Southwest Museum Site.**
- d. Displays of the Southwest Museum Collection in this site must adhere to professional museum standards, including treating artifacts with respect as well as ensuring proper care and handling.**
- e. The operation and maintenance for proposed uses should be financially sustainable through reliable sources of earned and/or contributed revenue.**
- f. Whatever is done must respect the physical capacity of the site.**

Differing Opinions on Parameters

Some additional parameters suggested by stakeholders were ultimately not added to the list because discussions in subsequent interviews with other stakeholders indicated that there were differing opinions around these issues. For example, some stakeholders suggested parameters such as only considering a museum as the use for this site, or stipulating that exhibits of the Southwest Museum Collection should be a primary focus. As subsequent interviews indicated that there were differing opinions on these and other topics, they were not included as new parameters.

APPENDIX D: Funding Suggestions from Interviewees

Interviewees suggested a number of potential sources of financial assistance listed below. While the suggestions could be sources of support, ***it is important to note that interviewees suggesting these resources for the most part had not spoken with anyone to ascertain if there was any interest in financially supporting the Southwest Museum Site in some manner, nor had they investigated what kinds of potential uses would be perceived as the most appealing to potential funders.*** It is also important to recognize that some of the agencies and organizations listed below are currently struggling to meet the financial needs of their current sites and programs, and others do not have significant sources of funding to take on new external projects. The list below represents an unedited list of all suggestions offered during the interview process, regardless of whether or not the entities actually provide grant programs or have financial capacity:

Academic Institutions

- Occidental College (already working on the nearby Lummis House as an educational facility)
- USC
- UCLA
- Cal State LA

ArtPlace

California Association of Museums, regional museum associations

California Community Foundation

California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) Museum Grant Program

Chamber of Commerce

Churches and Interfaith groups

Corporate Sponsors (e.g. Disney “Imagineers” to help with brainstorming)

Cultural Arts District/Business Improvement District/Special Improvement District

Ebell Club (provides community grants of a few hundred dollars)

For-profit art galleries

Indian reservations with casinos

- Mother Earth Plan
- Puebladores 200

Kiwanis

Los Angeles Unified School District

- Arts Education
- Charter Schools
- Funding provided for each pupil helps cover operating costs.
- Ask every fourth grader (the year when local history is taught) to give 5 cents

Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI)

Los Angeles businesses

Los Angeles County

- Commission for the Arts
- Parks and Recreation (Prop A)

Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board

Local Community

- Local fundraising (for example, current efforts to raise \$20K to restore the street mural)
- Create a fund endowed by local community members

Metro (because the Gold Line includes a Southwest Museum stop)

National arts, library and humanities funders (IMLS, NEA, NEH)

National Park Service

Other museums

- Autry Museum of the American West
- The Getty Center
- The Huntington
- Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)
- Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
- The Santa Monica Museum of Art (SMMoA)

Private philanthropic organizations

- Parsons
- Keck Foundation
- Mellon
- Annenberg Foundation (redevelopment projects)
- Luce Foundation (open storage)

Public health funding (for example, if the site was linked to other sites as an active space or urban trail that encouraged walking/biking)

“Retail Roundtable” of Los Angeles museum gift shops

Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program

- Grants as well as working with the group focusing on the Native experience on Route 66

Self Realization Fellowship on Mount Washington

Society of American Archeology

Society of California Archeology

State of California

- Special license plate
- State Arts Council
- State Parks

Take out a mortgage because there is value in the land and buildings, as long as you are generating sufficient revenue to pay it off.*

Tax credits for historic rehabilitation**

The Cultural Affairs Department of the City of Los Angeles

Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants (Sun Valley, CA)

Urban Land Institute

Wealthy/well connected private individuals

- Jamie Oliver

** While taking out a mortgage was one of the suggestions made during the interviews, others strongly cautioned against meeting capital needs by increasing demands for annual operating expenses. Traditionally, raising funds for one-time capital costs is easier than raising ongoing funding to sustain operations.*

*** Owner must be tax-paying or the tax credit does not have any value, though there could be opportunities to syndicate to benefit from the credits.*

APPENDIX E: Southwest Museum Site E-Survey (2015)

This beloved icon in Northeast Los Angeles was the City's first museum, founded just over a century ago by Charles Lummis to celebrate the many Native cultures of the American Southwest. After struggling financially for many years, the Southwest Museum merged with the Autry in 2003, to form a single new institution. In 2015 the National Trust for Historic Preservation named the Southwest Museum Site a [National Treasure](#) because of the uncertain future of this significant site. Now we need 5 minutes of your time to help envision the future for this Los Angeles landmark!

** Denotes required field.*

**Contact information is required for survey verification purposes only and will not be used for any other purpose without your permission.*

1) Age

- ☐ 18 or under
- ☐ 19-25
- ☐ 26-34
- ☐ 35-49
- ☐ 50-65
- ☐ Over 65

2) Which describes your household?

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Couple
- ☐ Family with children
- ☐ **Other**

3) What is your ethnicity or race?

- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black/African American
- ☐ White/Caucasian
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ Native American/American Indian
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ **Other**

4) How frequently do you visit museums (such as art museums, history museums, science museums or botanical gardens)?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Once a year

- ☐ ☐ 4-5 times a year
- ☐ ☐ About once a month

Now we'd like your opinions on the potential future of the Southwest Museum Site, which includes the original Southwest Museum building and grounds, as well as the Casa de Adobe, which is a replica of an early California rancho. Some people would like to see this historic site function as a museum, while others have suggested a range of new community, educational, arts, and cultural uses for the buildings and grounds.

5) How familiar are you with the Southwest Museum Site?

- ☐ ☐ I haven't heard of it
- ☐ ☐ I've heard of it but never visited
- ☐ ☐ I've visited once or twice
- ☐ ☐ I have visited multiple times

6) Would you/your family visit the site if these activities were offered in the future?

Art/craft fairs

- ☐ ☐ definitely
- ☐ ☐ maybe
- ☐ ☐ not interested

Art gallery

- ☐ ☐ definitely
- ☐ ☐ maybe
- ☐ ☐ not interested

Children's programs (after school, weekend, or summer programs, etc.)

- ☐ ☐ definitely
- ☐ ☐ maybe
- ☐ ☐ not interested

Classes or workshops (performing or visual arts, etc.)

- ☐ ☐ definitely
- ☐ ☐ maybe
- ☐ ☐ not interested

Community events

- ☐ ☐ definitely
- ☐ ☐ maybe
- ☐ ☐ not interested

Film/documentary screenings

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Food events (themed dinners, cocktail events, food trucks, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Gift shop/book store

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Lectures or panel discussions

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Musical performances (opera, classical music, Native American music, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Permanent exhibits

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Public park with gardens and walking trails

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Restaurant/café

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Special or changing exhibits

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- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Theatrical performances (plays, poetry readings, opera, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ definitely
- ☐ ☒ maybe
- ☐ ☒ not interested

Other (please specify)

7) What other activities do you think would be desirable at this site? *If you are not familiar enough with the Southwest Museum Site to suggest activities please skip to question 8.*

Artist-in-residence program

- ☐ ☒ very desirable
- ☐ ☒ desirable
- ☐ ☒ not desirable

Academic or educational institution (affiliation with college or university, charter school, community college, research center)

- ☐ ☒ very desirable
- ☐ ☒ desirable
- ☐ ☒ not desirable

Lodging (bed and breakfast, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ very desirable
- ☐ ☒ desirable
- ☐ ☒ not desirable

Office space for like-minded organizations (arts organizations, Native American organizations, nonprofit organizations, community organizations, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ very desirable
- ☐ ☒ desirable
- ☐ ☒ not desirable

Private rentals (weddings, receptions, quinceanera, parties, special events, conferences, filming location, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ very desirable
- ☐ ☒ desirable
- ☐ ☒ not desirable

Tribal cultural center

- ☐ ☒ very desirable
- ☐ ☒ desirable
- ☐ ☒ not desirable

Other (please specify)

8) How interested would you be in programs or exhibits at the Southwest Museum Site in the future on the following topics?

Cultural Diversity of Los Angeles

- ☐ ☒ very interested
- ☐ ☒ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☒ not at all

Ethnic Cuisine (foods of the Southwest, etc.)

- ☐ ☒ very interested
- ☐ ☒ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☒ not at all

Gardening (native plants, native/local foods)

- ☐ ☒ very interested
- ☐ ☒ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☒ not at all

Latino Art & Culture

- ☐ ☒ very interested
- ☐ ☒ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☒ not at all

Los Angeles History

- ☐ ☒ very interested
- ☐ ☒ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☒ not at all

Native American Art & Culture

- ☐ ☒ very interested
- ☐ ☒ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☒ not at all

Performing Arts

- ☐ ☒ very interested

SOUTHWEST MUSEUM SITE NATIONAL TREASURE
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW REPORT

- ☐ ☐ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☐ not at all

Southwest history and culture (Arroyo culture, Charles Lummis and his legacy, early urban museums, etc.)

- ☐ ☐ very interested
- ☐ ☐ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☐ not at all

Visual Arts (photography, modern art, local art, etc)

- ☐ ☐ very interested
- ☐ ☐ somewhat interested
- ☐ ☐ not at all

Other (specify)

For our final question, we'd like to get your thoughts on the ideal role for the collection. The Southwest Museum Collection includes 238,000 pieces and is one of the most significant and representative of its kind in the US, second only to the Smithsonian Institution. It represents Indigenous peoples from Alaska to South America, with an emphasis on cultures from California and the Southwestern United States.

9) What role should the Southwest Museum Collection play at the site?

- ☐ ☐ I'm not familiar enough with the Southwest Museum Collection to respond.
- ☐ ☐ It doesn't matter as long as the Southwest Museum Collection is well cared for and can be seen nearby.
- ☐ ☐ Exhibits should incorporate the Southwest Museum Collection along with other collections or displays.
- ☐ ☐ Exhibits at the site should be devoted only to displays of the Southwest Museum Collection.
- ☐ ☐

Before you go, we'd like to learn a little bit about you.

Name*

First

Last

Email*

Zipcode*

Phone

(optional)

Did we miss anything important that you want us to know? Share your comments here:

0 of 500 max characters

We've got great prizes that we'll be giving away to a few lucky folks who complete our survey. Check out what you could win!

A pair of tickets for an [LA Dodgers](#) home game

Three pairs of tickets. Tickets will be for home games at Dodger Stadium in July and August (dates to be selected by the Dodgers). Courtesy of the LA Dodgers.

A table for 2 to the [Pacific Opera Project production of Viva la mamma](#)

Tickets may be used for any of the performances on November 12, 13, or 14. Courtesy of the Pacific Opera Project

Four (4) tickets to the [Autry's Sizzling Summer Nights](#) an all-ages, outdoor summer dance party

Three sets of four tickets. Tickets may be used for any Thursday night, July 2-August 13 at the Autry in Griffith Park. Courtesy of the Autry Museum of the American West.

A [Chicken Boy Gift Pack](#) ("LA's Statue of Liberty and a Highland Park Icon")

Includes 1 treasure box, 1 patch, 1 floaty pen, 1 lapel pin, and a Chicken Boy booklet
Courtesy of Future Studios and Chicken Boy.

Behind-the-scenes tour and lunch for two people at the historic Southwest Museum Site

including the Caracol tower, with lunch on the terrace to follow. Courtesy of the Autry Museum of the American West of the American West

"Treasure it Together" T-shirts

featuring the Treasure it Together Southwest Museum Site logo. Courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

- ☒ Yes! I want to be entered into a drawing for one of these prizes.
- ☒ Yes, I want to get updates about the progress on the Southwest Museum Site National Treasure!
- ☒ Yes, I want to get updates from the National Trust!

APPENDIX F: Planning Process for the Southwest Museum Site

