

MUSEUMS AND PLAZA OF THE AMERICAS

350 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE * PASADENA, CA 91101

Museums of Native and Mesoamerican Indigenous and Hispano/Latino Anthropology, History, Art and Culture
(Collections of the Smithsonian and Nations of the Hemisphere)



MUSEUMS AND PLAZA OF THE AMERICAS

350 NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE * PASADENA, CA 91101

351 NORTH LAKE AVENUE * PASADENA, CA 91101

WWW.AMERICASCULTURALCENTER.ORG

BRIDGEVILLAGES DEVELOPMENTS, LLC

1217 NORTH CHESTER AVENUE * PASADENA, CA 91104

626.398.1960

MARTIN K. ZITTER, PROJECT DIRECTOR

MARTIN.ZITTER@AMERICASCULTURALCENTER.ORG

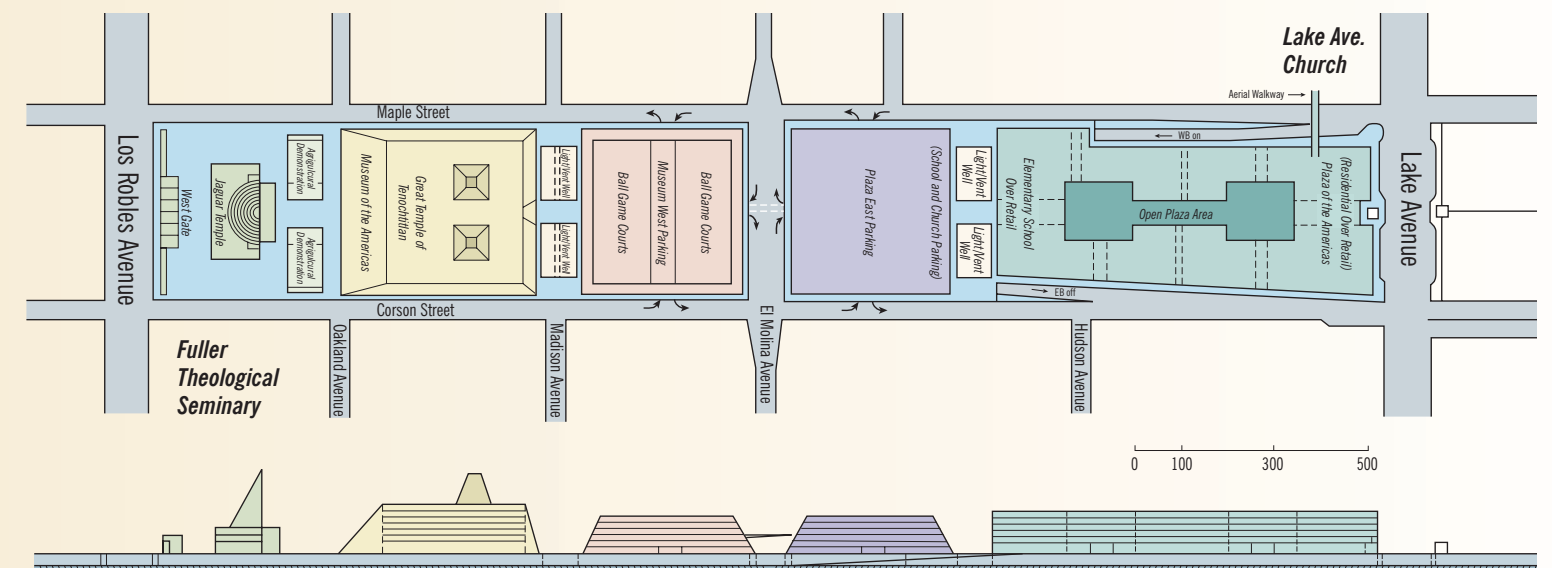
PARSONS

ANTONIO (TONY) VELASQUEZ, PROJECT MANAGER

100 WEST WALNUT STREET * PASADENA, CA 91124



From the Original Continental Migrations, to the tribes of the U.S. Southwest, Aztlan, and Alta California; to the Olmec, Maya, Mexico, and Inca, including the Caribbean.



PROJECT BACKGROUND

In a 1989 planning report anticipating the Columbus Quincentenary, the National Park Service noted that "The U.S. has many fine collections of Pre-Columbian artifacts, but it has no great national museum ... where the public may obtain a comprehensive view of the record of humankind in the New World." That same year, then-Governor George Deukmejian signed Public Law 8740 authorizing the California Museum of Latino History, Art, and Culture and appropriated \$500,000. Five years later, a task force report entitled "Willful Neglect: The Smithsonian Institution and U.S. Latinos" recommended that "The Smithsonian should immediately begin the groundwork needed to assure the establishment of one or more museums portraying the historical, cultural, and artistic achievements of U.S. Hispanics." In 1998, the Organization of American States began planning the Museum of the Americas for their existing facility on the Capitol Mall. After investing four years and \$15 million, this effort was also abandoned with the introduction by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus of H.R. 3292, in the 108th Congress, a bill "To establish the Commission to Establish a National Museum of the American Latino," to be housed in a new building on the Capitol Mall. On October 14, 2003, the Los Angeles Times reported that while not opposing the museum, preservationists say "construction on the Mall is ruining the open space and interfering with the public's right to enjoy it."

Undeterred by these setbacks in realizing a monumental anthropological Museum of the Americas, dedicated to exploring the indigenous roots, Hispanic influence, and Latino culture in the Western Hemisphere, an advocacy group began searching for an ideal place in which to build it. To this group, the City of Pasadena is the ideal place to build such a museum for a number of reasons: Pasadena is noted for being a proponent of the arts and culture and is a growing destination for research and learning. It has a sophisticated museum infrastructure and a proud, diverse, and engaged community with high civic participation. Most importantly, it is located within the historical Aztlan, an area that influenced and was once inhabited by Mesoamerican peoples. The City of Pasadena clearly provides an excellent opportunity for a museum of this nature to succeed.

The Museums and Plaza of the Americas would:

- * Create a living monument to the original migratory peoples of the Western Hemisphere and the New World.

- * Connect the indigenous Mesoamerican peoples' world, lives, and experiences with the growing Latino population and culture.
- * Be dedicated to art, education, culture and history. Also sport, commerce and entertainment, along with a mixed-use component.
- * Provide a scholarly facility for researching issues of cultural assimilation and related topics and disciplines.



PROPOSED PROJECT SITE

The proposed site for the museum is the air space over the I-210 Freeway between Los Robles Avenue and Lake Avenue. This site would require the construction of a new deck over the existing freeway to support the proposed museum and plaza. While constructing a deck over an existing freeway presents some challenges, it is not unprecedented. The Washington Trade Center and the Convention Center in downtown Seattle, Washington, are examples of facilities constructed over existing freeways.

The proposed Americas Cultural Center and Plaza would consist of public parks, museums, and venues for sporting events conducted by the Mesoamerican people prior Columbus.

Some of the benefits that the freeway site would bring to the City include:

- * Attracting new regional business and pedestrian traffic to the Civic Center
- * Creating well paying jobs locally
- * Reclaiming valuable state-owned real estate
- * Reuniting the two halves of Pasadena with spectacular pedestrian attractions
- * Mitigating a 30-year-old blight in the heart of the City
- * Mitigating certain freeway noise
- * Promoting a Park Once & Walk strategy

The Plaza of the Americas would also be an important icon to the City of Pasadena by enhancing its cultural and social status. In addition the Plaza would add to the pedestrian friendly facilities recently constructed immediately south of the proposed Plaza of the Americas site.



IMPLEMENTATION

Advocates for the museum recognize the project's challenges and are proceeding deliberately through the project development process. Preliminary discussions with Caltrans Right-of-way Department about leasing the air space over the I-210 Freeway have been encouraging. A predevelopment plan review was conducted by the City of Pasadena on June 14, 2004 providing the advocacy group direction on the steps required to develop the project and the willingness to consider an amendment to the City's General Plan pending Caltrans and environmental approval. Next steps involve completion of the project development process, including conducting a Feasibility Study, preparing a Project Study Report (PSR), conducting an Environmental Review, and developing the contract documents (plans, specifications, and estimate).

Feasibility Study

The feasibility study involves conducting a comprehensive analysis study to determine the feasibility of constructing a museum over the I-210 Freeway between Los Robles Avenue and Lake Avenue. The study involves developing conceptual plans, conducting preliminary discussions with Caltrans and FHWA, meeting with contractors to discuss constructability issues, and coordinating with the City of Pasadena in matters of traffic circulation and general plan amendments. The feasibility study will include preliminary cost estimates commensurate with the level of detail normally associated with feasibility studies as well as a feasibility concept report summarizing the study findings. The feasibility study will identify any fatal flaws that would prohibit the project from moving forward.

Project Study Report

The project study report officially initiates the project development process and is the document used to obtain formal conceptual approval from the City, Caltrans and FHWA on the proposed modifications to the I-210 Freeway. The process involves forming a Project Development Team (PDT) that includes the project stakeholders, preparing detail conceptual plans that include topographic mapping and field surveys, and developing project cost estimates within 20 percent of the actual construction costs. The PSR also assesses the impacts of the project on rights-of-way, the environment, and traffic. PSR approval will indicate that the City, Caltrans, and FHWA agree with the proposed modifications in principal and advance the project toward to a formal environmental review.

Environmental Review

The environmental review will evaluate the alternatives developed in the PSR for impacts on the surrounding environment. Review will include (1) public outreach to engage the public in the purpose and proposed modifications of the project, (2) completion of a number of technical studies (noise, air, visual) as identified in the PSR, (3) a draft environmental document disclosing the project impacts for public circulation and hearing, (4) a mitigation plan, if required (5) a final environmental document, and (6) a final determination. Upon environmental approval, the project will be cleared for design.

Design

Design includes developing the contract documents to physically construct the project. The contract documents include the plans, specifications, and an engineer's estimate (PS&E). Because the project is multi-jurisdictional, the PS&E will be developed with Caltrans and FHWA oversight and in close coordination with the City of Pasadena as well as any affected utility companies.

An estimated cost to complete the project development process is provided in the table below. The estimate is very preliminary, as it is intended for preliminary discussions only.

Project Development Costs (for infrastructure only)

Feasibility	\$200K
Project Study Report (PSR)	\$300K
Environmental Review (ER)	\$1M
Design	\$12M
Total	\$13.5M

