

TESTIMONY OF TOMMY THOMPSON

Smithsonian Affiliation/Oklahoma Historical Society Partnership

The Native American Cultural Center and Museum has applied in a joint application with the Oklahoma Historical Society to become a Smithsonian Affiliate. With this affiliation, this opportunity will offer the Cultural Center a chance to be in a position to have access to over one million Native American exhibits from the Smithsonian. This will give the Native American Cultural Center and Museum the chance to become the "Smithsonian of the Midwest." In addition, this partnership will allow the NACEA to have access to the Oklahoma Historical Society's Indian Art and Artifact Collections, known to be one of the finest in the world. Building these institutional ties and cooperation will help determine what will be possible in presenting the story as well as in what programs and activities will be available.

The Center will preserve and promote the living cultures of Native Americans, in the history, dance, arts, and education of historical ways. The Center will have a unique role in the development of partnerships with Tribes and other cultural institutions in preserving cultural aspects such as language.

Market Analysis/Financial Analysis Context

Phase I - Site Selection

In accordance with State of Oklahoma regulations governing procurement, the Native American Cultural and Educational Authority issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking applications for possible site locations for the Cultural Center and Museum. Responses from Ponca City, OK, Edmond, OK and Oklahoma City, OK. The City of Tulsa was also considered, but chose not to participate in the selection process. The Authority appointed a selection committee to review the proposals. After careful consideration, the City of Oklahoma City was selected. Its generous offer of approximately 300 acres in fee simple and a \$5 million Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) was the deciding factor in the selection process.

Phase II - Program Brief, Master Plan, Final Building Concept, Environmental Healing Process of Site

The conceptual design of the site, which consists of the Program Brief with building concepts and the Master Plan, was recently completed. We are working in partnership with local environmental firms and the City of Oklahoma City to restore the land to a safe and beautiful site for the museum.

There is a tremendous environmental cleanup process that has been taking place over the past 1 ½ years to "heal" the site from previous oil and gas production. These state and federal individual groups involved with the healing process include the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, and the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board.

Phase III - Story Line, Exhibitory and Design of Cultural Center and Museum

This Phase will commence in the near future and will include the actual design work of the Cultural Center and Museum, including the exhibitry expressing the compelling story behind the 39 tribes' histories and survival in Indian Territory now known as Oklahoma.

Story Line, Exhibitory Phase

Visitors will learn about the diversity of Native American Nations and their stories of adversity, courage and endurance. A wealth of unique and personalized encounters by Oklahoma Native Americans will be characteristic of a visit to the Center, beginning with the multi-sensory presentation in the "Who We Are" theater and carrying through to the strongly narrative long-term exhibits, the exciting and engaging "Family Discovery Gallery," the vital and vibrant changing and community exhibits, and the contemplative and reflective outdoor exhibits.

As a destination attraction, the Native American Cultural Center and Museum will welcome all visitors to explore the history, culture, traditions and experiences of Native Americans. Our public education and performance programs, permanent and changing exhibitions, and events focus first on the Tribal Nations of Oklahoma, but are inclusive of all native peoples throughout the Americas. By creating opportunities for established and emerging artists, the Cultural Center preserves traditional fine arts and crafts, song, dance and encourages the exploration of contemporary cultural expression. We are a resource for the study of and a forum for the discussion of the Native American social, cultural, and justice issues past, present and future by providing access to information sources and dissemination of ideas through symposia, research projects and publications.

We will work collectively with the tribes and institutions to preserve Native American heritage. We collaborate with tribes and governments, as well as educational, cultural and community organizations at the local, state, national and international level to promote a deeper understanding among all people of the diverse Native American cultures.

Construction Phase

The second part to Phase III will be the actual design of the Cultural Center and Museum with projected landscaping, infrastructure and site work. The projected costs include the total construction cost - initial phase, total consulting costs which include the design and project management, and the total project costs which include the "soft costs" composed of the surveys, legal, title fees, permits, etc. Total costs of the project are estimated to be near the \$100 million mark. \$60 million is estimated for the costs of the buildings, \$30 million is estimated for the landscaping and site work, and \$10 million is estimated for the "soft costs."

Fundraising Feasibility Study

Phillips & Associates, of Los Angeles, CA conducted a fundraising feasibility study for the proposed Cultural Center and Museum, and fundraising goals are being planned by the Authority to solicit public and private funds from Corporate and private foundations and individuals who are known nationally to contribute to projects like the Cultural Center and Museum.

Partnership with the City of Oklahoma City

The City of Oklahoma City and the Native American Cultural and Educational Authority are currently engaged in a partnership to apply for T-21 Funds through the Oklahoma Department of Transportation for landscaping improvement of the site; the Transportation Enhancement Program application for surface transportation system for the project; and an EPA FY2002 Grant for research and studies pertaining to the protection of wetlands. In addition, the City of Oklahoma City maintains its continued and valuable

commitment to the restoration and development of the river and the site overall.

Economic Development Impact

Research by the project consulting team has indicated that the project will attract 650,000 new visitors to Oklahoma. They estimate that this number will grow approximately 2% per year.

The development of this project should make a very positive economic development impact for Oklahoma City and the State of Oklahoma by providing new quality jobs and services. The project will be a "world class project" with dignity.

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