

Infrastructure Needs Study of Alaska Museums and Capital Improvement Planning Guide

January 2014



PREPARED BY



PREPARED FOR

The Foraker Group

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Juneau • Anchorage

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Foraker Group contracted with McDowell Group to characterize the scope of major capital improvement needs among Alaska museums, and provide in-depth profiles of museum capital improvement projects underway or recently completed. Study results are intended to help The Foraker Group determine funding and technical assistance requirements for future museum projects. In addition, profiles of recent projects are designed to provide guidance for museums contemplating similar efforts.

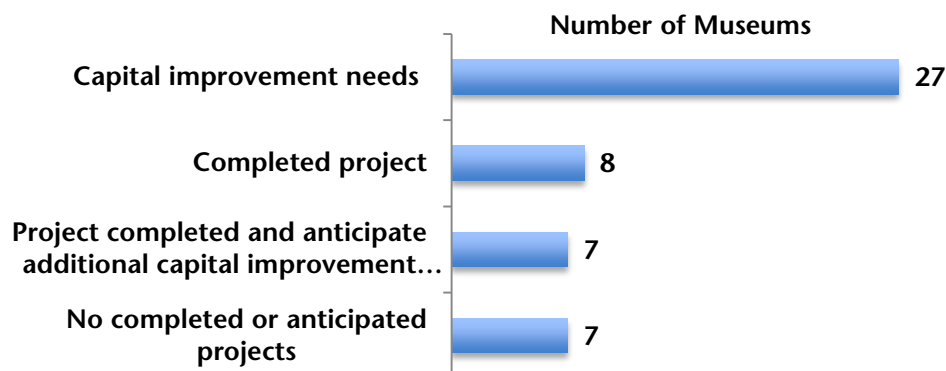
The profiles present information on museum planning and fundraising processes, project design and construction procedures, and the impacts of the projects on museum operations and services. A list of key determinants for success in Alaska museum capital improvement projects was drawn from study results. These determinants are presented in a special section at the beginning of the report.

Alaska Museum Capital Improvement Needs Summary

McDowell Group contacted all Alaska museums, with the exception of federal or State-run institutions, to determine if the museums 1) completed significant capital improvements (more than \$500,000) in the past five years and 2) anticipate the need for major (more than \$500,000) capital improvements in the next five years. In total, 36 (68 percent) of the 53 museums contacted responded to this request for information and therefore are included in the study.

Among museums that responded, almost one-quarter (eight museums) reported recently completing a major project. Three-quarters (27 museums) anticipate a need for major capital improvements in the next five years. Seven of the eight museums that recently completed a project also anticipate additional future need (and are thus counted as part of the 27 museums that anticipate future need). An additional seven museums indicate they neither completed a major project in the past five years nor anticipate one in the coming five.

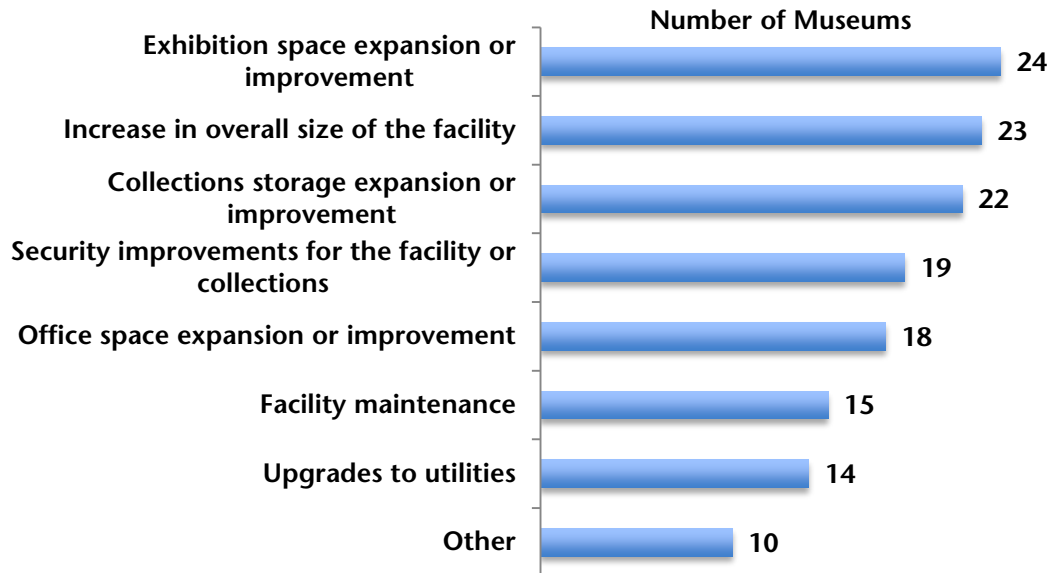
Capital Improvements Greater than \$500,000 Completed in the Past Five Years or Anticipated Within the Next Five Years



Among the 27 museums that identified a need for significant capital improvements within the next five years, 16 report they are currently planning, fundraising, or in the design/construction process of a project to address some or all of their anticipated need. Twenty-four (24) museums that anticipate need for a major project need to either improve or expand exhibition space, and 23 need to increase the overall size of the museum facility. Twenty-two (22) need to expand or improve collection storage. Twenty-two (22) need to expand or improve collection storage.

Type of Capital Improvement Need Anticipated

*Base: museums with capital improvement needs greater than \$500,000 in the next five years.
Multiple answers allowed.*



More than half of the museums that anticipate significant capital improvement needs also identify need for one or more of the following projects: security improvements for their facility or collections (19), office space expansion or improvement (18), facility maintenance (15), and upgrades to utilities (14). Among the museums that identified need for “other” capital improvements (10), the most frequently cited improvements were additional or expanded collection maintenance and restoration areas, space for exhibit construction, or space in which to host public programs.

Keys to a Successful Museum Capital Improvement Project

Museum capital improvement needs vary with each museum, partially due to differences in types of museum collection, physical location of the institutions, governance structures, and funding sources. The museums profiled in this report operate under a variety of ownership and governance structures, including city-owned, nonprofit, and combinations of the two. The museums vary in size, as measured by the extent of the collection, total budget, physical space, and number of staff. The types of capital improvements also vary, from installation of environmental controls to better protect collections, to facility renovations, and new building construction.

Despite the differences between museums and the size and scope of projects, museum representatives interviewed for this report related many similar experiences. Together, the lessons learned reveal several common factors that contribute to project success:

- Develop achievable goals.
- Prepare thoroughly and do your homework.
- Build flexibility into project planning.
- Obtain and use professional expertise.
- Design and conduct a strong engagement process.
- Foster and maintain strong leadership.

This report contains detailed descriptions of the circumstances and experiences that underlie these success factors and an appendix that summarizes (for easy reference) the lessons learned. Museums considering future capital improvements may use these guidelines to inform their own planning, fundraising, and design/construction activities. This document may also assist museums wishing to contact similar institutions that have completed or made significant progress on projects similar to their own.

Purpose of the Study

The Foraker Group contracted with McDowell Group to develop an assessment of Alaska museum infrastructure needs. The study identifies where there are large capital improvement needs among Alaska museums and profiles significant capital projects that are underway or recently completed. Study results are intended to help The Foraker Group determine funding and technical assistance requirements for future museum projects. In addition, profiles of recent projects are designed to provide guidance for museums contemplating similar efforts.

Definition of Museum

The U.S. Museum Services Act defines a museum as:

A public or private nonprofit agency or institution organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes, that utilizes a professional staff, owns or utilizes tangible objects, cares for the tangible objects, and exhibits the tangible objects to the public on a regular basis. Such term includes aquariums, arboretums, botanical gardens, art museums, children's museums, general museums, historic houses and sites, history museums, nature centers, natural history and anthropology museums, planetariums, science and technology centers, specialized museums, and zoological parks.¹

For purposes of this study, we have narrowed the definition to include museums that care for non-living permanent collections. Additionally, this study includes both museums with professional staff and those run by volunteers.

The Foraker Group

The Foraker Group is an Alaska nonprofit whose mission is to strengthen other nonprofits. One way Foraker does this is by providing technical assistance to organizations planning capital projects through its Pre-Development Program.

Methodology

McDowell Group contacted 53 Alaska museums to determine whether the museums 1) had completed significant capital improvements (more than \$500,000) in the past five years, and 2) anticipate the need for major (more than \$500,000) capital improvements in the next five years. In total, 36 museums (68 percent) responded to this request for information and were included in the study.²

McDowell Group followed up with responding museums as needed to characterize anticipated projects and to assess museum progress in planning and completing such projects.

¹ (20 U.S.C. §9172)

² A list of museums included in this study may be found in Appendix A.

After results from the initial inquiry were compiled, McDowell Group, in consultation with The Foraker Group, selected a number of museums to profile in greater depth. Profiles were completed, through use of executive interviews, on museums in three stages of planning for a capital improvement:

- Recently completed projects.
- Advanced planning through construction (includes museums currently in final fundraising or in design/construction planning or implementation phases).
- Active planning (includes museums taking early planning steps through early project fundraising).

The interviews gathered information about completed or anticipated museum planning and fundraising processes, project design and construction procedures, and the impacts of the project on museum operations and services. An important component of the interview process was identification of lessons learned during all aspects of the capital improvement process. This report includes in-depth profiles of nine museums.

A larger number of museums in the initial inquiry identified future capital improvement needs, but have not started actively planning. Several of those museums were also interviewed, but comprehensive information about the potential projects is not yet available and, therefore, the museums are not profiled.

Organization of this Report

The first section of this report provides an overview of Alaska museums. Information from 36 museums that provided information on capital improvement projects and needs is included in this section. The second section highlights some key determinants of success for museum capital improvement projects. These determinants were drawn from the results of the survey of museums and the museum profiles completed for this study. The third section consists of in-depth profiles of nine Alaska museums that have either completed a project in the last five years or are currently involved in some stage of capital improvement project planning. A complete list of museums that participated in this assessment is found in Appendix A. The profiles include lessons learned by museum staff during the project process. Aside from being summarized in the first section of this report, detailed information on lessons learned is also presented in Appendix B.

Alaska Museum Infrastructure Summary

More than 65 museums are located in Alaska. The museums serve many roles, including caretakers of Alaskan heritage, teaching centers, resources for researchers, community gathering spaces, and much more. Alaska museums vary by type, size, location, governance-structure, and programming. They provide a wide-range of services, including conservation, permanent and traveling exhibitions, and school outreach, to name a few.

Alaska State Museums prepared the most recent characterization of Alaska museums through a survey in 2010. Fifty-nine (59) Alaska museums responded to the survey, representing 88 percent of the 67 contacted for the survey. Survey results show over half (53 percent) of Alaska museums considered themselves an Alaska or local history museum (see table below for details), and 73 percent were 501(c)(3) institutions. Two-thirds of the museums (67 percent) were open year-round, though hours may vary seasonally.

Types of Museums in Alaska

| Museum Type | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Alaska or Local History | 53% |
| Ethnographic (Anthropological/Native Alaskan Collections) | 12 |
| Natural History/Wildlife | 7 |
| Cultural Center | 7 |
| Historic House or Building | 7 |
| Historic Park | 5 |
| Local Display Facility | 2 |
| Other | 10 |

Source: 2010 Alaska State Museums Study.

Alaska museums range in size and capacity from those with collections of a few items to collections with close to 1 million objects. Approximately seven out of ten (72 percent) of the institutions maintain an archive and they typically manage the archive as part of the institution collection.

The majority of museums in Alaska operate within relatively small annual budgets. In 2010, more than 60 percent of Alaska museums operated with an annual budget less than \$150,000. One in four Alaska museums operated with a budget equal to or less than \$50,000. A large portion of the money available to Alaska museums is spent in their local communities, with one-third of museums reporting between 80 and 100 percent of annual expenditures occurring in their local community.

Percentage of Museum Annual Expenditures in Local Community

| Range | Percent of Museums |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 0 to 40 percent | 13% |
| 40 to 60 percent | 10 |
| 60 to 80 percent | 28 |
| 80 to 100 percent | 36 |

Source: 2010 Alaska State Museums Study.

These figures do not address the full economic impact generated by museum activity in the community.

While the 2010 survey did not address capital improvement needs specifically, it does provide a few indicators of facility and collection maintenance capacity at Alaska museums. An understanding of such capacity provides some indication of what capital improvements museums may require. Some key survey findings include:

- Approximately half of Alaska museums maintain a sprinkler in the exhibit area, collection storage, and office areas.
- Nearly all the institutions maintain a fire or smoke detection system, while one-third of the institutions report having an emergency system that automatically contacts police or fire.
- About half the institutions had developed a disaster preparedness plan and a pest management plan.
- The majority (82 percent) of the responding institutions do not maintain a halon or other gas suppression system.
- Less than half (45 percent) of the institutions are able to monitor the relative humidity (RH) levels in their facilities monthly, while 35 percent have never measured humidity levels.
- Four out of ten (40 percent) institutions check light levels in exhibits consistently, with the rest checking as needed or not at all.
- Approximately half of the institutions consistently engage in pest management and detection activities, with the other half checking as needed or not at all.

The survey was not designed to collect information that would indicate the adequacy of facilities, programs, or operations for maintaining museum collections or serving visitors, nor does it break down future funding priorities or infrastructure needs.

2013 Alaska Museum Infrastructure Requirements

In September and October 2013, McDowell Group contacted all Alaska museums, with the exception of State of Alaska and federal institutions. Without the State and federal institutions, 53 museums were contacted to identify museums that:

1. Have completed a major (more than \$500,000) capital improvement project in the past five years.
2. Are actively planning such a project in the coming five years.

In total, 36 of the museums responded to the inquiry. The survey results do not offer a statistically representative sample of museums in Alaska. However, as a large number of museums did provide information, the data are a useful indicator of the general state of activity regarding museum capital improvements.

Of those that responded, one-quarter (eight museums) recently completed a major project. Three-quarters (27 museums) anticipate a need for major capital improvements in the next five years. Several of these

museums indicated they fall into both categories (seven of the eight recently completed a project also anticipate another project in the next five years). Seven responding museums have neither completed a major project in the past five years nor plan to in the coming five years.

Among museums that identify the need for significant capital improvements within the next five years, 23 report the need to increase the overall size of the museum facility, and 24 need to either improve or expand exhibition space. Twenty-two need to expand or improve collection storage.

Type of Capital Improvement Need Anticipated

Base: Museums with capital improvement needs of more than \$500,000 in the next five years.

Multiple answers allowed.

| | Number of Museums |
|---|-------------------|
| Exhibition space expansion or improvement | 24 |
| Increase in overall size of the facility | 23 |
| Collections storage expansion or improvement | 22 |
| Security improvements for the facility or collections | 19 |
| Office space expansion or improvement | 18 |
| Facility maintenance | 15 |
| Upgrades to utilities | 14 |
| Other | 10 |

Source: McDowell Group.

More than half of the museums also anticipate the need for one or more of the following improvements: security improvements for the facility or collections, office space expansion or improvement, facility maintenance, and upgrades to utilities. Among the museums that identified need for “other” capital improvements, the most frequently cited improvements were additional or expanded collection maintenance and restoration areas, space for exhibit construction, or space in which to host public programs.

A list of museums that anticipate significant capital improvement needs, and are actively involved in some stage of an improvement project, is provided in the following table. Information in the table also identifies how far each museum has progressed in the improvement process, and briefly summarizes the type of project anticipated. Eight other museums anticipate significant capital improvement needs in the next five years but are not actively planning for a project at this time, including:

- Ahtna Heritage Foundation/Ahtna Cultural Center
- Clausen Memorial Museum
- Dorothy Page Museum and Historic Townsite
- Hammer Museum
- Ilanka Cultural Center
- Kodiak Maritime Museum
- Sam Fox Museum
- Skagway Museum and Archives

Alaska Museums with Significant Capital Improvement Needs in the Next Five Years, Actively Planning a Project*

| Museum | Planning Stage | Project Type |
|--|---|---|
| Alaska Museum of Science and Nature | Design and construction | A list of items, including a parking lot upgrade (\$175,000) and electrical upgrades (\$120,000). |
| Alaska Veterans Memorial Museum | Thinking about project and beginning to build a consortium | Moving and upgrading from current, limited space. |
| Alaskaland Pioneer Air Museum | Basic concept in place, preliminary fundraising | Building expansion. |
| American Bald Eagle Foundation | <i>Not available</i> | Addition of dorm rooms, enclosed flight center on donated property. Security system installation. |
| Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center | Planning, funds partially raised (\$10 million out of \$15 million), design | Renovation of the Alaska History Gallery. Planning process to begin in January 2014, de-installation of the exhibits in 2015, and completion 18 months after. |
| Baranov Museum | Planning, funds raised for planning and need to be raised for design/construction | Permanent exhibit redesign and installation. |
| Beringia Center of Culture and Science | In design | New cultural center. |
| Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum | Funding secured, in design/construction | New facility. Building completion projected for 2016. |
| Cordova Historical Museum | Partial plan for funding and actual move in place | New facility. |
| Duncan Cottage Museum | Assessment complete, by Alaska State Museums | <i>Not available</i> |
| Inupiat Heritage Center, Ilisagvik College | Secured funding for project design, in design process, next step: bond funding decision and voter approval. | Facility expansion. Estimated project completion in Fall 2015. |
| Juneau-Douglas City Museum | Construction to begin in January 2014 | Heating and ventilation (HVAC) improvement project. |
| Pratt Museum | Planning and fundraising | New facility. |
| Sitka Historical Museum | Initial planning complete, fundraising plan pending | Expansion for collections and exhibit space. |
| Tongass Historical Museum | Plan complete, funding on hold | Expansion larger space, building upgrade. |
| University of Alaska Museum of the North | Discussions just beginning | Storage improvements. Also new planetarium and science center. |
| Valdez Museum and Historical Archive | Pre-planning discussions | Renovation or new facility |
| Yupiit Piciryarait Museum | Proposal complete | Proposal for a new Repository/Museum |

Source: McDowell Group.

*Significant capital improvements were defined for this study as any improvements over \$500,000. State and federally operated museums are not included in this analysis.

The lists of museums with capital improvement needs, both those actively planning and not currently planning a project, provide an indication of many of the large capital improvement projects that Alaska museums will engage in in the coming five years. They should not, however, be viewed as a comprehensive list of museums in need of such improvements, as the lists do not reflect the needs of museums that did not respond to this study (17 additional museums) or State and federally-run museums in Alaska.

While museum responses indicate a large need for major capital improvements among Alaska museums, it is hard to pinpoint with any accuracy a dollar figure that describes the overall need. Most projects are in the early planning stages and have not, therefore, developed cost estimates for the work. As each museum that responded identified at least \$500,000 in need, it is likely that current capital improvement requirements among Alaska museums top more than \$13.5 million at minimum. However, the reality is this number is likely much, much larger. This fact is evidenced by the actual cost figures for the nine capital improvement projects profiled in this report. Combined, actual and projected project costs for those nine projects alone totaled more than \$135 million. One project, the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, was especially large, at \$98 million. Taking out that large project, the total cost for the remaining eight projects totals \$37 million, or an average of \$4.6 million per project. If this per project number is projected to all 27 museums that identified significant future capital improvement need in this study, the total need would look more like \$124 million.

Further, building expansions and new construction are especially expensive undertakings. The fact that 85 percent of the museums anticipate the need to increase the overall size of the museum facility suggests capital improvements could be substantially greater than suggested by the estimates above. While these numbers do not represent any real cost figures, they do demonstrate that capital improvement funding requirements among Alaska museums are likely quite high, while funding available for museum capital improvements is limited.

The museum profiles in this report provide an understanding of the diversity of costs involved with museum capital improvements, and provide an illustrative cross-section of the types and scale of capital improvement projects Alaska museums are facing.

Keys Determinants of Project Success

Results from this study demonstrate that there is a pervasive need for significant capital improvements among Alaska museums. Of the museums that participated in this study, 75 percent identified a need in the coming five years for capital improvements at their museum that total more than \$500,000 for each museum. Over half of the museums that do anticipate major capital improvement needs are currently actively planning for such a project.

Museum capital improvement needs vary with each specific museum. Despite the differences between projects, museum representatives interviewed for this report related many similar experiences with a capital improvement project. Interviewees graciously translated the lessons they learned from these experiences into advice for other institutions that are considering conducting a future capital improvement. Together, lessons learned by interviewees may be boiled down into the following key determinants of capital improvement project success:

- Develop achievable goals.
- Prepare thoroughly and do your homework.
- Build flexibility into funding and project planning.
- Obtain and use professional expertise.
- Design and conduct a strong engagement process.
- Foster and maintain strong leadership.

Develop achievable goals

While museum personnel can often readily relate a list of capital improvement needs for their museum, such lists, by virtue of their length or the seeming impossibility of finding resources to tackle them, may be overwhelming and seem unrealizable. Several interviewees in this study underline the importance of obtaining a professional facility assessment, a process in which professional engineers or other experts determine what facility improvements are necessary, and which ones are possible. The assessment also provides cost estimates that will help the museum understand what resources the museum will need to complete each improvement. Once completed, the facility assessment allows museum personnel to identify priority projects, and to break big projects into smaller steps that may be taken as resources are available. Such an evaluation is a valuable early step in capital improvement project planning.

Prepare thoroughly and do your homework

As the museum profiles in this report demonstrate, capital improvement projects are a huge undertaking that can heavily burden institutions with limited operational funding or staff capacity to plan, raise funds, or implement projects. Thus, it is critically important that museums make an investment in careful, thorough project planning before jumping into major capital improvements. In addition to planning steps laid out in such programs as the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program (in which many of the museums included in this study participated), interviewees highlighted a few common points for consideration:

COMMUNICATE WITH PEERS

Another early step in planning a capital improvement project is to search for peer institutions that have recently completed a similar project. If possible, the museums may exchange information about the process, specific technical aspects of the projects, and lessons learned along the way. Ideally, this exchange of information will include the museum director and all other individuals who will play a key role in project planning, fundraising, or design/construction. In some cases, the results of this exchange of information may also help convince funders that the museum's project is feasible because a similar institution already successfully completed a similar project. Once a project is complete, it is also helpful for the museum to share the project experience for the benefit of other museums embarking on similar projects.

LISTEN TO END USERS

Museum staff and others who use museum spaces have an important perspective to offer when designing museum infrastructure. In particular, museum staff may be more knowledgeable about the practicalities and efficiencies of using museum spaces than outside design firms. Further, they will be the ones tasked with making the new facility work. Thus, effective planning and design processes should include input from any museum staff and others that may be future users of the facility.

PREPARE FOR IMPACTS ON MUSEUM STAFF AND PLANNING TEAM MEMBERS

Major capital improvement project planning and implementation takes an immense amount of time and energy from the museum director and, in many cases, is a full-time job in itself. The process also impacts other museum staff, board members, and stakeholders. Such an undertaking can be stressful. When planning for a capital improvement project, museums can be aware of and work to mitigate this added burden by anticipating and planning for impacts on museum operations and on staff. Some museums in this report addressed this issue by hiring additional staff, especially staff focused on development, for the life of the project (or permanently). This additional hiring was usually made possible by securing a grant to pay for some or all of additional staff expenses. Others interviewed for this report highlight the importance of fostering a team culture at the museum, which includes acknowledging the stress, finding ways to support staff and planning team members who are shouldering extra work and pressure, and celebrating successes along the way.

However a museum decides to approach capital improvement project planning, a thoroughly planned project that involves all key members of the project team typically pays large dividends as the project moves into the fundraising and design/construction phases. Funders are more likely to grant or donate money to projects with a well-developed and articulated project plan. Also, the planning process itself can engender a shared understanding among the entire project team about the full depth and breadth of project requirements, issues, and implications. Such an understanding will allow the team to make more informed choices throughout the life of the project and to respond and adapt more easily as project alterations are necessary.

Build flexibility into funding and project planning

No matter how thoroughly a museum plans and prepares for a capital improvement project, unexpected developments are likely to occur. Some such developments may cause delays or require course changes on the project. Others may require a fundamental rethinking of all or part of the project.

A universal message from all museum representatives interviewed for this study is “be prepared for the project to take a long time.” This is true for all phases of the project. It is especially true for the fundraising phase. No matter what sources of funding a museum chooses to pursue, relationships must be built, and applications must be researched and completed. Also, capital campaigns may need to be planned and executed. Setbacks often occur during this phase of the process, as funding goals are not met or grant applications are denied. Museums in this study that met their funding goals relay that they were able to learn from such setbacks, adjust course when necessary, and continue until fundraising goals were met.

In all phases of the project, as new information comes to light, it is to the project team’s advantage to remain flexible, gather information necessary to make informed decisions, and adjust to new realities. A museum may mitigate some of the unexpected developments that occur as the project enters the construction phase by building in contingency funding into the project budget.

SEEK DIVERSE FUNDING SOURCES

While the majority of museums in Alaska operate with a limited annual budget, capital improvement project costs revealed in this study show that such projects are often at least 10 times larger than a museum’s annual budget. Such a disparity necessitates major fundraising efforts in order to address significant capital improvement needs at the museums.

Museums profiled in this report raised money for capital improvement projects through a variety of different channels. Several projects relied solely on requests to the State of Alaska or their local government for capital improvement project funding. Others sought grant funding from foundations and/or solicited corporate and individual private donations.

Only one project in this study successfully relied on State of Alaska capital improvement funding to fund the entire project. That particular museum worked for almost a decade from project conception to secure the funding. While several other projects were supported in part by State of Alaska or local government funding, fundraising success was often greatest among museums that sought funding from a variety of different sources. Private donations or grant funding can act as a match to public funds and can demonstrate a commitment on the part of the museum to helping raise money for the project. Both of these factors can add necessary fundraising momentum to a project. Also, museums can find significant support within their local community with a well-crafted and executed capital campaign.

Obtain and use professional expertise

Many museums interviewed for this study identified a good project manager as one of the most important keys to successful completion of the project. A good project manager, whether an individual or a firm, has the experience and resources necessary to navigate the construction business, keeping people accountable for their part in the project, and ensuring the project remains on time and on budget. Project managers can

also play an important role in project planning and in helping write construction-related contracts in the best interest of the museum.

In addition to project managers, many museums that participated in this study hired professional exhibit designers to help with that part of the process.

Design and conduct a strong engagement process

Well-conceived and executed community engagement is important in many stages of a capital improvement process, including during planning and design, fundraising, and at project completion. As museums are often important features in their community, both as keepers of community history and as gathering spaces, the diversity and depth of community members who view themselves as museum stakeholders may be larger and more widespread than the planning team may imagine. Thus, well-advertised outreach efforts that carefully articulate the museum capital improvement needs, the project process, and specifically when and how community members may engage in that process will help solicit community input when desired, and help the community support the improvement effort. Also, community involvement in planning and design of the capital improvement can often help the museum better grow and change to fit community needs.

During the fundraising phase of a capital improvement, outreach to community members may take several forms. Many museums carefully nurture community partnerships with corporations and businesses in their community who may be willing to contribute financially to the project. Community partners are also important when applying for grant funding or funding from the State. Several museums included letters of support from community partners in applications for project funding. Such letters can demonstrate the importance of the museum within the community and communicate anticipated benefits the project will bring to the community. Finally, local capital campaigns benefit from outreach efforts that raise awareness of the need for the project and the benefits the community will receive from its completion.

LEVERAGE THE PROJECT INTO MORE THAN JUST A SUCCESSFUL BUILDING

After project completion, museums profiled in this report also engaged in various forms of community engagement. This engagement included letting the community know about the improvements and how the improvements benefit the community. Such communication is especially important if community members contributed toward the improvement effort. Also, when possible, museums can interpret the renovation for visitors, using the renovation, when possible as a tool to discuss museum and community history or highlight portions of the collection.

Foster and maintain strong leadership

As the profiles in this report illustrate, capital improvement projects typically involve very long timelines and a large investment of financial and human resources. Because of this, almost all of the museums profiled in this report emphasized the importance of maintaining strong, consistent leadership throughout the life of the project. Such leadership includes the museum director, but also, a board of directors and/or a project team.

Interviewees underscored the importance of designating someone to make final decisions about the project, these decisions include large and small aesthetic decisions and design choices. While a clear avenue for stakeholder input is important, it is also important to make clear when other voices may contribute to project

decision-making and how their input will be used (for example, is their input advisory or does it count as a vote?).

A strong leader, whether the director, a board member, or the chair of a committee assigned to oversee the project, may be the string that ties the project together as changes occur. In many cases described in this study, a transition from one museum director to a new director occurred during the project process. Such transitions typically set the project timeline back as the new director caught up on all aspects of the project, including, importantly, fundraising. In these cases, a dedicated planning team and/or board of directors may effectively bridge the gap between directors and keep the project on track. In the one instance when a director transition did not impact the project timeline, a very strong leader on the committee overseeing the project, combined with a competent project management firm with adequate capacity to manage the project, were able to keep the project moving forward. This example demonstrates the need, expressed by several museums, to involve the museum board of directors, or others who oversee museum operations, heavily in the project from the planning stage until completion. This involvement provides a base of knowledge about project issues that can carry a project forward in the event of a leadership change at the museum. This involvement also provides a means to maintain a common understanding of project goals and continuity throughout the long process.

Museum Profiles

This section of the report describes nine Alaska museums that have either completed, are designing, or are actively planning significant capital improvement projects. The museums selected for these profiles operate under a variety of ownership and governance structures, including city-owned, nonprofit, and combinations of the two. The museums are also of varying sizes, as measured by the extent of the collection, total budget, physical space, and number of staff.

Together, the profiles demonstrate common factors that contribute to capital improvement project success. Museums considering future capital improvements may use this information to assist their own project planning. This document may also serve as a basis for further communication with peer museums that have completed or made significant progress on similar projects.

Recently Completed Projects

Anchorage Museum of History and Art

Profile of Anchorage Museum of History and Art

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 2012 Anchorage Population | 298,610 residents |
| Building Specifications | |
| Building Size | 140,000 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 28,000 square feet |
| Collection Space | 10,000 square feet |
| Museum Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | Municipality of Anchorage owns building and collection. Operations are performed by a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. |
| Annual Budget | \$11 million |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 60 |
| Size of Collection | >25,000 objects, plus a 2,000-object educational collection, >500,000 photographs, 12,000 publications, and 800 maps. |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 2,500 |
| Recent Capital Improvement | |
| Total project cost | \$98 million |
| Type | Expansion and renovation |

Source: Anchorage Museum of History and Art and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

- *Collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret the art, history, anthropology and science of Alaska and its relationship to the Circumpolar North.*
- *Maintain an active and diverse changing exhibition program that acquaints the community with the global spectrum of human artistic, cultural and scientific expression.*
- *Provide a major cultural center for Anchorage where the community and its visitors meet, create, learn and participate in the museum's programs and activities.*
- *Stimulate the contributions of a creative population of artists, historians, anthropologists, scientists and other allied professionals.*
- *Demonstrate leadership and scholarship in its endeavors to serve the widest possible audience and to work with groups, individuals and organizations that share a common interest in cultural, educational and scientific activities.*³



The exterior of the Anchorage Museum addition newly opened in May 2010.
Image credit: Ken Graham Photography and the Anchorage Museum of History and Art.

The Anchorage Museum of History and Art, which opened in 1968, began as a public-private partnership between the Cook Inlet Historical Society and the Municipality of Anchorage. The partnership formed to celebrate the centennial of the United States' purchase of Alaska from Russia. The museum is located in downtown Anchorage at 625 C Street.

MUSEUM PROFILE

Today, the museum provides a multitude of public services, including exhibits on Alaska history and art. The museum experience also includes a research library and archives, guided tours, a restaurant, and a museum store. Recently, the museum added science as a component of its mission: the Thomas Planetarium offers demonstrations and educational programs on astronomy, and the Imaginarium Discovery Center is a hands-on science center that allows visitors to explore history, art, and science through play.

³ Anchorage Museum of History and Art website: http://www.anchoragemuseum.org/about/aboutus_mission.aspx. Accessed October 28, 2013.

The regional office of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History Arctic Studies Center is located at the museum. This Smithsonian center, established in 1988, is a "federal research and education program focusing on peoples, history, archaeology and cultures across the circumpolar North." The center partnered with the Anchorage Museum to open a regional office in Anchorage in 1994 and offers research, education, collections, and exhibitions related to a collection of Alaska Native artifacts on loan from the Smithsonian. A main, multi-media, exhibit features a collection of more than 600 Alaska Native objects.

The museum is housed in a 140,000 square foot building, of which 28,000 square feet is used for exhibition space and 10,000 square feet for on-site collections and storage, and the rest of the space is used for the museum services discussed above. The museum also utilizes some off-site storage that is not climate controlled and, thus, does not house the museum collection.

Ownership/Governance

The Municipality of Anchorage owns both the museum building and collection. The museum is operated, under contract with the municipality, by the Anchorage Museum Association, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization overseen by its own board of directors.

Funding

The Municipality of Anchorage is the largest source of funding for the museum, supplying approximately 40 percent of annual revenue. Foundations and paid admissions are the second and third most significant revenue sources, each making up approximately 20 percent of the annual budget. Sponsorships are the fourth largest revenue category. Significant expenses for the museum include administration, exhibits, and current facility improvements. Facility expenses are expected to decline when the museum's current capital improvement program is completed in approximately two-and-a-half years.

Admission Fees

Year-round, daily admission to the museum is \$15 for adults (\$12 for adult Alaska residents), and \$7 for children aged 3 to 12 years. The museum also offers a number of annual memberships, including individual (\$60), senior (\$50), and family (\$90). Larger sponsorships are available and are accompanied by increased benefits for the sponsor. More than 5,000 members currently support the museum. Tickets to the 48-seat planetarium are not included in the price of admission. Planetarium shows typically cost between \$4 and \$10 per person, with a \$2 discount for museum members.

Museum Gift Store

The museum operates a gift shop inside the facility. Museum merchandise is also available online.

Foundation

The Anchorage Museum Foundation was founded in 1989. The foundation raises funds and manages an endowment to support the museum. The foundation contributes to museum activities an annual percentage of interest earned from the endowment. Currently, the endowment totals approximately \$27 million.

Staffing

Museum operations are supported by staff totaling approximately 60 full-time equivalent jobs (FTEs). All staff are museum employees, with the exception of security personnel. Administrative staff include:

- Director
- Executive Assistant to the Director
- Special Exhibits Curator
- Deputy Director
- Special Assistant to the Deputy Director
- Information Technology Director
- Chief Financial Officer
- Accounting Specialists
- Human Resources Director

Staff work in a number of museum divisions, including the Arctic Studies Center, archives, collections, exhibits, education, marketing and public relations, café and catering, and the museum shop.

Volunteers

The museum offers a variety of volunteer opportunities. Volunteers may act as docents or assist with visitor services, membership, the gift shop, or museum administration. The library and archives also provide volunteer opportunities, as does collections, with tasks such as helping to catalogue artifacts. In turn, volunteers enjoy benefits such as free admission and museum discounts. In total, the museum benefits from approximately 2,500 annual volunteer hours.

Museum Collection

The Anchorage Museum of History and Art collection numbers more than 25,000 objects. It also includes a 2,000-artifact educational collection, more than 500,000 historical photographs, 12,000 publications, and 800 maps. The photographs, publications, and maps are housed on-site at the Atwood Resource Center. The center operates as a library, providing researchers access to the museum archives.

Visitor Profile

The museum welcomes approximately 280,000 visitors per year. Of those visitors, at least 10 percent attend free events or programs at the museum. Also, more than 6,000 school children visit the museum each year. Alaska residents make up approximately 50 percent of annual visitation.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Over the past three years, the museum has undertaken multiple capital improvement projects. The most significant was an expansion that doubled the size of the facility. When complete, the expansion provided the museum the capacity to bring major exhibitions to Anchorage. Gallery space doubled. New spaces were added, including the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center, Imaginarium Discovery Center, Thomas Planetarium, ConocoPhillips and Brian E. Davies Chugach Galleries, and Atwood Resource Center. A new museum shop

and the Muse Restaurant, as well as a two-acre outdoor area called the Common, were also part of the improvements.

Other renovations completed in the last five years, but not part of the expansion, include upgrades to bring the original building to code, steps to address deferred maintenance, heating/cooling system improvements, and other renovations.

While museum infrastructure was receiving significant upgrades, museum operations also changed substantially. The museum operating entity transitioned from an agency within the Municipality of Anchorage to a nonprofit corporation. A new museum director was hired, and a new board of directors elected. The number of museum staff doubled and the museum entered into a partnership with the Imaginarium.

In the coming two to three years, more significant improvements are planned. These include renovation of the auditorium and the atrium area (the museum's largest space), an energy audit, upgrades to the parking garage payment system, elevator upgrades, replacement of bathroom plumbing, and many other projects.

In addition to the planned improvements listed above, the museum has secured \$10 million toward a \$15 million re-do of its Alaska History Gallery, the oldest and largest permanent exhibition. The planning process for this renovation will begin in January 2014 and will include exhibit designers. The museum plans to de-install the exhibits in 2015. The project is anticipated to take 18 months to complete.

Planning Process

Planning for the museum expansion began more than ten years ago and has been a complex process. A building committee was the central planning entity for the expansion. The committee was made up of one staff representative and 17 public volunteers. Museum staff worked with consultants, community advisory groups, and an outside project manager during the planning process.

Public participation was a key component of the planning process, with public involvement occurring at every level and stage of the process. Community advisory groups were brought in from a variety of disciplines, including science, art, and history. An architect developed a design concept that incorporated public input. During the process, whenever significant amounts of money needed to be spent, the expenditure was subject to a public hearing.

Lessons Learned about Project Planning

- **Pay attention to the public process.** A well-managed public process was key to the success of the expansion. Opportunities for public involvement in planning and overseeing the expansion were advertised widely and articulated carefully. A designer and representative from the museum building committee attended the public meetings to provide accurate information about the project directly to the public. The list of people who view themselves as museum stakeholders was much wider and more diverse than museum staff had imagined, a sign of the importance of the museum to the community. While the process of gathering community input and gaining public support was a long one, museum staff consider it important to the success of the project.

Funding Process

Anchorage Museum of History and Art Expansion Funding Sources

| Total Project Cost | \$98 million |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Fundraising Responsibility | Development Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | Yes |
| Source | Amount |
| Matching Gift | \$50 million |
| Grant Funding | Not Available |
| Private Donations | Not Available |

Source: Anchorage Museum of History and Art.

The funding process for the \$98 million museum expansion started with a \$50 million gift to the museum from the Rasmuson Foundation. The gift required a match. A Development Director, who reports to the museum director, was hired to help secure this additional funding. Several grants were obtained, including money from the Kresge Foundation Green Building Initiative that was used to bring the project to LEED certification. Other major grant funders included the Atwood Foundation, M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the State of Alaska, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The majority of the funding to meet the match, however, was raised through a capital campaign that focused on local donors. Thousands of individuals and corporations contributed during the campaign.⁴

In 2006, Anchorage voters approved a bond initiative to support expanded museum operations once the capital project was completed.

Design and Construction

The design and construction work for the museum expansion was performed by contractors. An architecture firm with a specialty in museums developed the project design. Approximately \$1 million per year was spent on project management, an expense the museum staff and board believes was entirely worthwhile. A professional project management firm oversaw the project and held the various entities accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities. The project remained on budget and on schedule throughout, an accomplishment the museum director attributes largely to the fact that the management company had adequate support staff and systems in place.

One portion of the project that was completed by museum personnel was movement of the new collection into the building. The moving process was personnel-intensive, and included a newly hired conservator, as well as help from Smithsonian Institution personnel for moving the Smithsonian collection.

The large expansion project required a good deal of operational shuffling during the construction phase. While the museum was able to keep all staff employed during the capital improvements, staff were re-located off-site. Portions of the building were shut down at different intervals. When enough project components

⁴ A list of donors the Anchorage Museum of History and Art expansion capital campaign can be accessed on the museum website at http://www.anchagemuseum.org/expansion/campaign_donors.aspx.

were complete, the museum scheduled a staged opening in which the second floor opened a year before the third and fourth floors. The closures reduced museum revenue. However, the museum was able to remain operational throughout the project. The last part of the building was re-opened in 2010.

Lessons Learned about Project Execution

- **Carefully weigh the benefits and costs of installing automated versus manual building systems.** While automated systems may seem attractive during the design process, it is important to consider what might happen if the system stops working and needs to be operated manually. The museum is currently incurring extra operating costs to override automated systems that have not worked as envisioned:
 - Automatic shades in the galleries have broken down and are difficult to repair: the shades are on timers and difficult to access and override, as they are located between two panes of windows.
 - Exhibit cases with large glass doors that open pneumatically have presented problems because of automated system functioning. The museum plans to retrofit the cases to open manually.
 - Large video monitors are run on outdated computers and are expensive to repair/replace/update.
- **Maintain strong leadership.** Operating a facility during a period of significant change and associated uncertainty requires strong leadership. The museum director credits the chair of the building committee, along with the other committee members, with supplying the necessary time and commitment to complete components of the project successfully.
- **Listen to the end users.** Museum staff and others who use museum spaces have an important perspective to offer when designing museum infrastructure. Museum staff may be more knowledgeable about the practicalities and efficiencies of using museum spaces than outside design firms. Further, they will be the ones tasked with making the new facility work and should have a substantial voice in the design process.
- **Learn from others.** The Anchorage Museum of History and Art building committee visited other museums that had undergone major expansions. They learned about the process, about specific technical aspects of the projects, and about lessons learned along the way. Now the Anchorage museum is poised to provide such advice for future expansions at other museums.

Benefits of the Project

According to the museum's director, benefits from the expansion are vast. She feels the museum now has the space to fulfill its mission and to pursue a more aspirational long-term vision. She also feels the project has fostered an even greater sense of ownership of the museum among the Anchorage community, even though that sense was already strong when the museum was smaller. With world-class facilities, the museum can now bring major exhibitions to Anchorage as well as promote Alaska and Northern scholarship. Another community benefit is the museum's increased capacity to offer improved public gathering spaces. Tangible benefits for museum operations include a doubling of museum membership in the first two years after project completion. With science now folded into the museum mission, family membership in particular has increased. The increase in family visitation has, in turn, diversified the institution's overall audience.

Alaska Museum of Science and Nature

Profile of Alaska Museum of Science and Nature

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2012 Anchorage Population | 298,610 residents |
| Building Specifications | |
| Building Size | 12,000 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 6,000 square feet |
| Collection Space | 3,000 square feet |
| Museum Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | Nonprofit owns and manages the museum |
| Annual Budget | \$250,000 |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 4.5 |
| Size of Collection | >11,000 objects |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 2,000 |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Total project cost | \$1 million |
| Type | Renovations |

Source: Alaska Museum of Science and Nature and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature energetically pursues its mission to study and exhibit natural history materials relating to Alaska's natural history and to promote and develop educational programs, which benefit Alaska visitors and residents alike.⁵

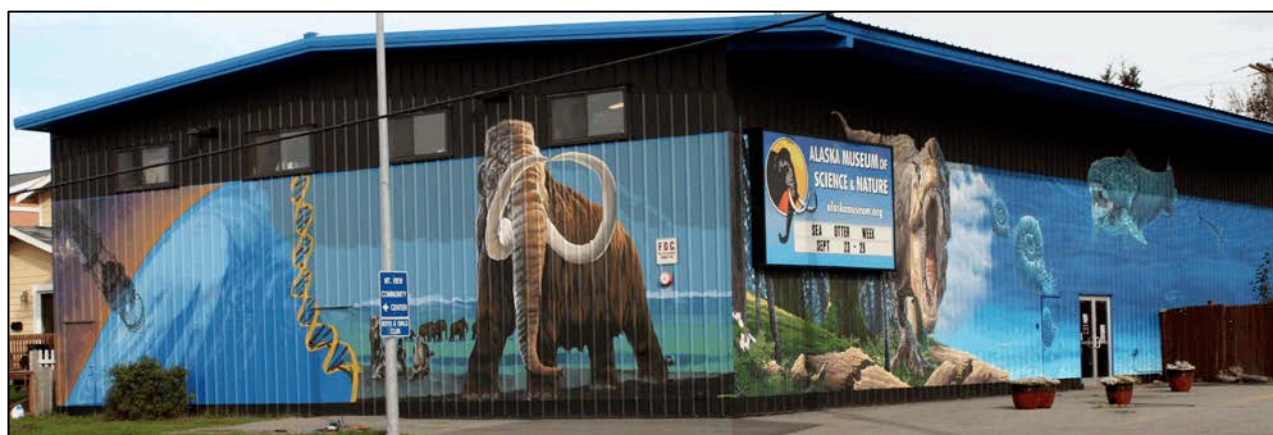


Photo courtesy of the Alaska Museum of Science and Nature.

The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature collections, exhibits, and education programs focus on Alaska cultural, ecological, and geological history. Located in Anchorage's Mountain View neighborhood, the museum serves area teachers, families, and individuals interested in science and nature.

⁵ Alaska Museum of Science and Nature Website. Accessed October 15, 2013.

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature originally opened in Eagle River in 1994. In 2004, the museum was moved to its current Anchorage location. Support for the move and purchase of the current museum building came from Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., the Anchorage Assembly, and Mayor Mark Begich. Also, a half-million dollar Community Development Block Grant allowed for purchase of the museum building. The current building is a 12,000 square foot facility at 201 N. Bragaw. A former box store, the building does not include an elevator. Thus, the museum exhibition space is located in the 6,000 square feet available on the ground floor. The upstairs of the building is split fairly evenly between collections and education space, with a small amount of space for offices.

Ownership/Governance

A board of directors oversees planning for the nonprofit Alaska Museum of Science and Nature. Board members participate in two planning retreats for the museum each year in order to develop strategic plans and identify tangible steps to achieve goals for the museum. The museum operates under a 20-year plan, which has been broken out into manageable steps for the Executive Director to implement.

Funding

The museum relies heavily on revenue from admissions to support its \$250,000 annual budget. While museum staff successfully attracted a significant amount of grant funding to support museum improvements, staff aims to fund day-to-day operations through admissions, memberships, and corporate donations. Currently, about 400 members help support the museum. A Development Coordinator was recently hired at the museum.

Admission Fees

Year-round, daily admission fees to the museum are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. The museum also offers a number of annual memberships, including for individuals, seniors, and families. Currently, 400 members support the museum.

Museum Gift Store

A gift shop is located inside the museum. Revenue from the store is relatively insignificant, totaling 2 percent or less of total annual museum revenue.

Staffing

While payroll is the museum's main expense, which is typical for most museums, the museum director correlates this expense with the success of the museum. Four full-time and one part-time employee staff the museum: an Executive Director, an Education Director, a Museum Manager, and a Development Coordinator. A part-time Collections Manager is also on staff. Interns play a significant role in museum operations. Typically, at least two graduate or post-graduate interns work at the museum during the summer months, while high school and middle school students participate in mentorships at the museum throughout the year.

Volunteers

Museum staff do not rely on volunteers for most museum operations. However, volunteers do serve as an important resource for more than a dozen museum special events organized by the museum each year. Nearly 2,000 volunteer hours are spent assisting with these events.

Museum Collection

The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature houses a collection of more than 10,000 objects. The majority (more than 90 percent) of the collection is catalogued. The museum's education collection will also be catalogued in the near future. Part of the collection is displayed in the 6,000 square foot bottom floor of the museum. The rest of the collection is housed upstairs in an approximately 3,000 square foot space. As the museum building cannot support an elevator, exhibition space will not be added upstairs. Eventually, the museum plans to utilize the current building purely for collections and move into a new building where exhibitions will be located. The museum collection does not contain objects that require careful environmental controls. However, collection specimens are stored in plastic and in cases. A humidifier and forced air are also employed for collection maintenance.

Visitor Profile

Visitor numbers have increased considerably over the past three years. In 2012, annual visitation totaled approximately 15,000. Museum staff project 2013 visitation will total between 18,000 and 20,000. Visitation occurs year-round, with teachers and school groups as the main clientele, followed by families and individuals interested in science.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Since moving to the Mountain View neighborhood in Anchorage, the museum has attracted significant financial support for capital improvements. Over the past five years, facility upgrades have included a complete remodel of bathrooms to meet Anchorage Municipality Title 21 Building Code; a floor re-tile; fire code upgrades, including exit signage and lighting in the collections room; metal replacement on the building façade; and mural installation. Museum staff are currently working on additional improvements: the museum is in the permitting process for a parking lot re-construction and an electrical upgrade is also beginning at the facility. The electrical upgrade includes an engineering report, meter panel, grounds, receptacle replacement, and repairs to lighting. Once current projects are complete, the museum will have spent about \$1 million on capital improvements over a seven-year period.

Planning Process

At the outset, museum staff worked through the Rasmuson Foundation and the Foraker Group Pre-Development program to understand museum operations and infrastructure needs and build capacity for completing capital improvements, a process the museum's director highly recommends. After working through that program, the museum then participated in a code and compliance program, through Rasmuson Foundation. As part of the program, an engineer evaluated the museum to identify needed improvements. In essence, the process provided the museum with a to-do list for facility improvements, along with cost

estimates for the improvements. Once this evaluation was complete, the museum board of directors met and developed a plan to implement the to-do list.

Within the museum to-do list for capital improvements, the first priority was safety. One of the museum’s first projects was installation of a sprinkler system. The attention to safety paid off for future improvements, as obtaining permits for other projects was easier with a sprinkler system in place.

Because planning and implementation of most capital improvements is well beyond staff experience, a project manager was hired, after a careful interview process, to oversee all improvement projects. The project manager has helped museum staff navigate the design and construction world, write contracts, and even provided expertise for grant applications.

Lessons Learned about Project Planning

- **Obtain a professional evaluation of facility improvement possibilities.** A Rasmuson Foundation grant awarded to the museum paid for an engineer to assess opportunities, as well as limitations of the museum facility. With this professional insight, the museum was able to focus efforts on projects that were achievable.
- **Develop a to-do list.** The list of possible capital improvements provided by the engineer’s evaluation, gave the museum a starting point from which the board of directors could prioritize needs. The board then developed a capital improvement plan museum staff could implement.
- **Hire a project manager.** The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature director states she would never undertake a capital improvement project without a good, carefully hired, project manager. Ultimately, a project manager can save the museum time and money because the manager knows the construction business, can plan correctly for projects, and helps write contracts in the best interest of the museum. Ultimately, the museum hires the project manager’s experience in the design and construction industry.

Funding Process

Alaska Museum of Science and Nature Capital Improvement Funding Sources

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------------|
| Total Project Cost | | \$1 million |
| Fundraising Responsibility | Executive Director and Development Coordinator | |
| Funding Goal Met? | Yes | |
| Source | Amount | |
| Grant Funding | \$1 million | |
| Private Donations | N/A | |

Source: Alaska Museum of Science and Nature.

While a well-planned “to-do” list provided museum staff with clear direction, money had to be raised to complete each item on the list. Museum staff applied for grants from a variety of sources. In total, the museum was awarded more than \$1 million in grants to implement capital improvement plans. State of

Alaska funding through the capital budget and grants from the Rasmuson and Atwood foundations were important sources of funding. The museum received some large grants, but also combined multiple grants to complete some projects. According to the museum director, one project required a combination of eight grants. In total, the museum has successfully applied for more than \$380,000 in grants from the Rasmuson Foundation alone for the planning process, as well as implementation of capital improvements.

Communication

A number of factors contributed to the museum's success in attracting grant funding. According to the museum director, one key component in attracting grant funding from the state was consistent, positive communication with elected officials. Officials, especially from State legislative offices, can act as coaches and advocates for the museum in the funding process. For example, museum staff benefited from a class on how to write grants provided by a Mountain View State senator's office.

Partnerships

One of the key elements of success in the grant-writing process for the museum were the partnerships the museum staff were able to draw on to support museum grant applications. In grant applications, museum staff included letters of support from community partners in order to demonstrate wide support for museum improvements.⁶

Lessons Learned about Project Fundraising

- **Establish and maintain community partnerships.** Community partners, especially with elected representatives from the museum's legislative district, are an important source of support for the museum. By maintaining an ongoing relationship with community partners and representatives, the museum is able to communicate its needs effectively, demonstrate the importance of its place in the community, and demonstrate community support for museum projects when applying for project funding.
- **How you write your grant is how you have to spend your grant.** One important lesson museum staff learned through the application processes for multiple grants, is that it is advantageous, when possible, to write an application that allows for maximum flexibility on how grant money is spent. A grant agreement specific to one project does not allow for money to be spent on any other capital improvements on the to-do list if money is still available within the grant. A more broadly written agreement can allow for a variety of capital improvements to the building. This may be accomplished by including a list of possible improvements in the grant application. This approach must be balanced, however, with demonstrating focus on getting a defined set of tasks completed and demonstrating capacity to complete them.
- **Build in contingency funding into every grant and contract.** Museum staff routinely build in a 20 percent contingency in every grant written and every contract signed. This contingency allows for unexpected developments as the project progresses.

⁶ For an example of support letters from community partnerships, in addition to project cost estimates and funding details, see the recent State funding request by the museum at http://omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/14_budget/CapBackup/proj59466.pdf.

Design and Construction

As with project planning, museum staff worked closely with the project manager during the design and construction process. The museum established a procurement policy within which bids for design and construction are evaluated. The policy is purposefully flexible enough to allow staff to work with a contractor who they work well with, even if that contractor is not the lowest bidder.

Museum staff report having the construction schedule sketched out such that all project impacts on museum operations were anticipated and responded to in advance to the maximum extent practical. Once projects were underway, the museum did not have to close or relocate exhibits and the museum director feels customer experiences were not substantially hampered by construction. All operational responses to construction impacts were organized. For example, the museum hired movers to shift the collection around the floor while new tile was installed.

Thus far, all completed projects have decreased operating costs for the museum, except for the new bathrooms that increased operating costs through use of more water. Staff crunched all operating numbers in advance of each project, working with a team to brainstorm all possible costs. The largest cost savings have thus far come from installation of LED lighting in and outside of the building. Bulb installation was expensive, though funded by a grant, but the savings over time have resulted in about one-tenth of the cost of what lighting originally cost the museum. Also, installation of a new tile floor in the museum increased the temperature in the museum by about 20 degrees, saving on heating costs.

Lesson Learned about Project Execution

- **Maximize the gorgeous.** The museum has worked hard to stick to the nuts and bolts of their to-do list. That said, museum staff have felt it important to pick a few projects to “go gorgeous,” in other words spend the extra money to make a portion of the museum especially attractive. In this case, the museum chose to focus the extra money and effort on having really nice bathrooms.

Baranov Museum/Kodiak Historical Society

Profile of Baranov Museum

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| 2012 Kodiak Population | | 14,239 residents |
| Building Specifications | | |
| Building Size | 3,000 square feet | |
| Exhibition Space | 1,800 square feet | |
| Collections and Storage Space | Approximately 450 square feet | |
| Museum Operations | | |
| Ownership/Management | Owned and operated by Kodiak Historical Society | |
| Annual Budget | \$200,000 - \$350,000 | |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 4.5 | |
| Size of Collection | 2,000 objects | |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 2,000 | |
| Recent Capital Improvements | | |
| Total project cost | \$500,000 | |
| Type | Renovations | |

Source: The Kodiak Historical Society and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

The purpose of the Kodiak Historical Society is to collect, preserve, research, and exhibit historically significant artifacts, documents, photographs, and other data relative to the Kodiak and Aleutian Islands area; to evaluate and interpret materials in the collection for educational and research purposes and presentation to the public through the operation of the Baranov Museum.



Photo courtesy of the Kodiak Historical Society.

The Baranov Museum, operated by the Kodiak Historical Society, is located in downtown Kodiak. Housed within the oldest building in Alaska, the Russian American Magazin, the museum opened its doors after Centennial funds were secured from the State of Alaska in 1967. The museum focuses on the history of Kodiak and the Aleutian Islands region. Some interpretive emphasis is placed on Southwest Alaska's Russian

era (1741-1867) and early American era (1867-1912). The museum provides exhibits, archives, education programs, group tours, art and craft workshops, family days, professional lectures, walking tours, and many other community services. It also serves as a community-gathering place for events and public programs.

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Russian American Magazin, also known as the Erskine House, is a three-story building (two full stories and an attic) totaling approximately 3,000 square feet. The bottom floor exhibition space totals approximately 1,800 square feet, while the second floor functions as office space, archives, and collection storage. The 200 year-old building is a designated National Historic Landmark, which means the structure holds national significance. Less than 2,500 places nationwide hold this federal designation. The National Park Service (NPS) is charged with helping care for designated landmarks.

Ownership/Governance

The Kodiak Historical Society operates the Baranov Museum, with significant financial support from the City of Kodiak. The historical society is a 501(c)(3) organization that began in 1954. A board of directors governs the historical society. All museum staff are historical society employees.

Funding

The Baranov Museum operating budget is derived from a variety of sources. In total, the museum's annual budget falls between \$200,000-\$350,000, depending on success securing grant funding. The City of Kodiak generally provides approximately one-quarter of the museum's annual operating funds. Other significant revenue sources include donations and membership, as well as fundraising efforts on the part of staff and the board of directors. Staff identify and apply for grants. The board of directors assists with fundraisers.

The City of Kodiak owns the museum building and covers rent and utilities, and, thus, the museum is free from those usually significant expenses. The largest expense for the museum is personnel, followed by financial services, such as bookkeeping.

Admission Fees

Adult admission to the museum costs \$5. Children 12 years and under are free. Annual membership to the museum starts at \$15 for seniors and \$20 for individuals. The museum offers various levels of annual membership, with higher levels between \$500 and \$1,000. Currently, 180 members support the museum.

Museum Gift Store

The museum operates an in-house gift store. A store manager oversees the store. Sales provide the revenue needed to fund the salary of the store manager, as well as gallery hosts.

Staffing

Seven staff help run the Baranov Museum. Two of the staff members, including the Executive Director, are full-time employees, while the rest work at the museum part-time. Aside from the director, other positions at

the museum include the Archivist, Curator of Collections, Curator of Education, Museum Store Manager, and two Gallery Hosts.

Museum Collection

More than 2,000 objects make up the Baranov Museum collection. The collection includes approximately 500 pieces of Alaska art. The museum also houses archives and approximately 25,000 photographs. The museum does not have any environmental controls to protect the collection. However, a Grant-In-Aid from the Alaska State Museum allowed the museum to install humidity and temperature monitoring in 2011. The museum collection is growing, and, thus, storage space for the collection is running out in the building. The museum recently received state capital projects funding to increase storage space within the building by about one-third by renovating the building eaves to add storage.

Visitor Profile

The museum welcomes about 10,000 visitors annually. The museum does not track types of visitors. However, the director has observed that winter visitation is primarily made up of local residents and out-of-town visitors attending with local residents, including Coast Guard visitors and their families. In contrast, tourists account for a large proportion of summer visitation, including visitors who come to Kodiak for sportfishing or hunting trips.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

From 2008 to 2011, the Baranov Museum completed a multi-phase renovation project to the Russian American Magazin. Renovations included replacement of electrical and fire suppression systems, repair and restoration of most windows in the structure to correct drafts and water leakage, repair and repainting of siding, roof repair, retaining wall and stairway replacement, and porch repairs.

The museum plans to continue with capital improvement planning and project implementation over the next few years. The museum was awarded an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant for a permanent exhibit redesign. Currently, the project is in the planning stages. Working with an exhibit designer, museum staff are engaged in the research necessary to formulate a new exhibit, as well as script writing for the exhibit. The IMLS grant only covers exhibit design, so another funding source will need to be identified to construct and install the exhibit. The museum director is responsible for the planning and fundraising for the project. She will likely look into Museums for America implementation grants, State of Alaska capital improvement funding, as well as Rasmuson Foundation grant funding possibilities.

Planning and Funding Process

Baranov Museum Capital Renovation Funding Sources

| Total Project Cost | \$730,000 |
|--|--------------------|
| Fundraising Responsibility | Executive Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | Yes |
| Source | Amount |
| Save America's Treasures Grant | \$273,750 |
| City of Kodiak | \$174,300 |
| Rasmuson Foundation Grant | \$123,000 |
| Designated Legislative Grant | \$72,000 |
| Private Donations | \$45,000 |
| National Scenic Byways Grant | \$37,500 |
| National Trust for Historic Preservation | \$4,500 |

Source: Baranov Museum.

The Russian American Magazin's status as a National Historic Landmark provides substantial support from the NPS for care of the building. In 2003, the NPS conducted a condition assessment on the building. The assessment provided the museum with a "to-do" list for necessary renovations. The director of the museum was heavily involved in the planning process to develop projects to address the items identified during the condition assessment. The director also worked to acquire funding to complete the renovations.

The 2008 through 2011 renovations cost approximately \$500,000 in total. The museum secured a \$250,000 preservation work grant, in part to pay for the condition assessment. Other federal grants included a National Scenic Byway grant and a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2008, as well as a Rasmuson Foundation grant and a Save America's Treasures grant.

While working in a 200 year-old building has involved quite a few challenges for the museum, National Historic Landmark status has also made a lot of museum renovations possible, as the status is a distinct benefit in attracting funding for building care.

Lessons Learned about Project Fundraising

- **Publicize accomplishments in the community.** In total, the museum has raised a significant amount of money to improve the Russian American Magazin. As the Kodiak Historical Society does not own the building, it would likely benefit the museum to let the community know about the amount of funding and effort the non-profit has put into the building, as well as the vast improvements and stewardship of Kodiak's heritage that have been accomplished through this effort.

Design and Construction

During most of the 2008 to 2011 renovations, the museum remained open and functioned fairly normally. The museum did close briefly in 2009: the museum routinely closes in February, but the closure was extended from January through March in order to complete the electrical and fire suppression work. This

work required museum closure because it occurred throughout the entire building. Otherwise, the museum utilized drop cloths to protect the collection when necessary, but few other protection measures were necessary.

The museum was able to utilize the renovations to communicate with visitors about the building and its history. This was especially true for the work of an historic preservation carpenter who replaced the building windows. For his work at the Baranov Museum, the carpenter won an award of excellence from the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation. During the project, which took one year, he was often available to talk with guests about his work.

Lessons Learned about Project Execution

- **When possible, interpret the renovation.** A renovation project presents a great opportunity to educate visitors when it can be linked with an element of the museum or the museum building that is worth highlighting. In the case of the Baranov Museum, the renovation was a tool to discuss the history of the Russian American Magazin and, by extension, other aspects of Kodiak's history.

Museum Profiles: Planning through Construction

Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum

Profile of Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2012 Nome Population | 3,757 residents |
| Building Specifications | |
| Building/Museum Size | 1,000 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 1,000 square feet |
| On-site Collection Space | Small amount |
| Museum Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | Owned and operated by City of Nome |
| Annual Budget | \$275,000 |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 2 |
| Size of Collection | 22,000 objects, >20,000 photographs |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 2,000 |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Total project cost | \$16 million |
| Type | New building |

Source: Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

The Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum is dedicated to collecting, preserving and showcasing the Nome Gold Rush, Bering Strait Eskimo, aviation, as well as contemporary history and culture associated with Nome, Alaska and the Bering Strait region of Western Alaska. The Museum exists to promote & provide education and research to everyone from elementary school children to international visitors & researchers.⁷

The Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum is located in Nome, Alaska. The museum provides exhibits on Nome history, as well as contemporary Nome culture. Researchers, educators, tourists, locals, documentary filmmakers, authors, and many other types of visitors utilize and enjoy the museum's collection.

MUSEUM PROFILE

The museum is named in honor of founder Carrie M. McLain, who began recording Nome history and collecting artifacts in the mid-1940s. The museum first moved into 223 Front Street after State of Alaska Centennial funds were acquired in 1967. Currently, the museum occupies approximately 1,000 square feet of the building. The museum is open year-round. Museum entry is free, with donations accepted.

⁷ Carrie M. McClain Memorial Museum website: <http://www.nomealaska.org/department/?fDD=12-0>. Accessed October 29, 2013.



Photo courtesy of the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum.

Ownership/Governance

The City of Nome owns and operates the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum.

Funding

As the museum is owned and operated by the City of Nome, the City provides most of the museum annual average operating budget of approximately \$275,000. The museum does not charge admission, though donations do provide a source of revenue.

Staffing and Volunteers

Two full-time staff operate the museum, a Museum Director and a Collections Assistant. A dedicated group of six to seven volunteers also contributes a combined total of approximately 2,000 hours per year, enough to equal another full-time staff member.

Museum Collection

The Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum collection includes more than 22,000 objects, 20,000 photographs, and an archive. Portions of the collection not stored on-site are stored in nine separate spaces around town. In total, the spaces provide approximately 6,000 square feet of storage. The bulk of the storage is not climate controlled, though one space does provide more protected storage for parts of the collection.

Visitor Profile

Annual visitation to the museum ranges between 9,500 and 11,000 visitors. Approximately half of all visitors are Nome residents, while the other half are either from Alaska, the rest of the United States, and international locations. School-age children frequent the museum, with classes visiting from all over the region. Some cruise ship passengers visit the museum, though the number is a small proportion of overall visitation. International visitors arrive from an average of more than 25 countries per year.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The building in which the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum is currently housed is subject to flooding during storms. When a flood occurs, which has happened three times in the past three years, items in the museum need to be moved to protect them from water damage. The Alaska State Legislature allocated funding to build a new facility out of the flood plain. The new building, named the Richard Foster Building, will total 14,500 square feet. It will house the museum (8,600 square feet), the city library (3,000 square feet), and a second local museum, the Beringia Center of Culture and Science (3,000 square feet). The amount of space allocated for the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum will be substantially larger than the location in which the museum is currently housed. The space will not be large enough, however, to bring the museum collection in-house. Building completion is currently projected for 2016.

Planning Process

Planning for the new building began in 1993 as part of planning for Nome's Centennial Celebration (which occurred between 1998 and 2001). During the Centennial Celebration, the museum announced a goal to raise money to build a new building. During this time period, the project was identified as a local priority. Once the idea for the new building took hold, museum staff led the design process. A design grant from the State of Alaska, of approximately \$50,000, in addition to local contributions, allowed for concept design completion. An architect was hired to complete the concept design and community meetings were held to gather community input during the design process. Also, an exhibit building firm was hired to assess the collection and help develop a narrative program for the museum in the new building.

The bulk of project planning, including cost analyses and project management, was completed by the City of Nome. At this point, the museum director indicates that museum personnel will move the contents of the museum. Exhibit designs will also likely be completed in-house.

Lessons Learned about Project Planning

- **Be ready to spend project funding.** It is important to have a plan in place, and be ready to proceed on a project when funding is secured. In that way, funding can better be spent on its intended purpose while the players who "had the dream" are still working on the project. This allows for continuity and for continued support of the project during construction and future funding campaigns if they are necessary.

Funding Process

Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum Renovation Funding Sources

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Total Project Cost | \$16 million |
| Fundraising Responsibility | Museum Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | Yes |
| Source | Amount |
| State of Alaska Design Grant | \$50,000 |
| State of Alaska Capital Project Funding | \$16 million |

Source: Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum.

To secure funding for building design and construction, museum staff worked through the State legislative process. The Alaska State Legislature allocated \$2 million for the project in FY11 for building design and purchase of the building site. An additional \$14 million in capital project funds was allocated in FY12 for materials and construction. The building idea and request for funding took years of effort to move through the funding process.

Lessons Learned about Project Fundraising

- **Sell your story/Make it personal.** Nome has an engaging history that involves people and families from across Alaska. Because of the Nome gold rush, many people throughout the state have roots in Nome and, thus, hold a stake in the city's history. It took a number of years to secure money for the new building and, according to the museum director, it was Nome's history and these ties that ultimately helped secure funding from the legislature.

Design and Construction

Construction of the new building is scheduled to be complete by 2016. Once complete, Nome will have a safe place to display its museum collection without concern for flooding.

Juneau-Douglas City Museum

Profile of Juneau-Douglas City Museum

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2012 Juneau Population | 32,556 residents |
| Building Specifications | |
| Building Size | 6,500 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 2,500 square feet |
| On-site Storage | 2,500 square feet |
| Museum Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | City and Borough of Juneau |
| Annual Budget | Approximately \$475,000 |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 4 |
| Size of Collection | 12,000 objects |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 1,900-2,200 |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Total project cost | Approximately \$700,000 |
| Type | Renovations |

Source: Juneau-Douglas City Museum and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

The Juneau-Douglas City Museum fosters among its diverse audiences an awareness of Juneau's cultural heritage, values and community memory so we may draw strength and perspective from the past, inspire learning, and find purpose for the future.

As a public trust, we collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit those materials that document the cultures and history of the Juneau and Douglas area.

The Juneau-Douglas City Museum, located in downtown Juneau across from the Alaska State Capitol, houses an extensive collection of more than 12,000 objects that reflect Juneau's history and artistic heritage. The museum, managed through the Juneau Department of Parks and Recreation, provides exhibition space, educational programs on-site and in local schools, public events, and special programs. Special programs include a guided historic walking tour of downtown Juneau. Museum collections not on exhibition are available by appointment or through virtual exhibits on the museum's website. The museum is open year-round.



Photo courtesy of Juneau-Douglas City Museum.

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Juneau-Douglas City Museum is located in a 6,500 square foot building. The top floor of the two-story structure provides 2,500 square feet of exhibition space. The bottom floor provides 2,500 square feet of storage for museum collections. The rest of the building is used for offices, a small gift shop, and restrooms.

Ownership/Governance

The museum is owned and operated by the City and Borough of Juneau.

Funding

The museum receives the majority of its funding from the City and Borough of Juneau, with annual revenue to the museum totaling approximately \$450,000. Funding for the museum is supplemented by grants and support from the Friends of the Juneau-Douglas City Museum. Revenue from grants has recently accounted for an additional 2 to 7 percent of the museum budget. Personnel costs are the museum's largest expense.

Friends Group

Friends of the Juneau-Douglas City Museum is a 501(c)(3) organization formed in 2011 to support the goals and activities of the museum. The relatively new group, which currently operates with less than 100 members, has thus far provided important support to the museum through two significant art acquisitions and, through provision of refreshments for museum volunteers and supplies for museum events, such as receptions. The friends group also contributes to the museum in other ways throughout the year for needed items or services not included in the city budget or covered by funding from grants.

Admission Fees

The museum charges admission during the summer months for visitors age 13 and over (\$6, \$5 for seniors). An extra charge is assessed for an historic walking tour program of downtown Juneau provided by the museum. For the past 10 years, admission to the museum has been free in the winter (October through April) for all museum visitors. Sponsors provide free admission, typically through month-long sponsorships. The museum also sells season passes for \$20.

Museum Gift Store

The museum operates a gift shop on-site that provides a small amount of revenue for the museum.

Staffing

Four full-time City and Borough of Juneau employees staff the museum: a Director, Curator of Collections and Exhibits, Curator of Public Programs, and an Administrative Assistant. The City supplies an additional .24 FTE in janitorial services to the museum, a service funded from outside the museum budget.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an important resource for the museum. Combined, Juneau-Douglas City Museum volunteers contribute services equivalent to 1 FTE annually, or between 1,900 and 2,200 annual volunteer hours. One of

the primary jobs filled by volunteers is operation of the front desk, located at the entrance to the museum exhibits. The Administrative Assistant manages museum volunteers.

Museum Collection

The Juneau-Douglas City Museum collection is exhibited on the top floor of the museum. While most of the collection is not available to view in the exhibition space at any one time, items in collection not on display may be viewed by appointment. Also, part of the collection may be viewed online in the museum's Virtual Exhibits. Museum staff are working toward displaying the entire collection online. A separate Education Collection of 467 objects is utilized for hands-on educational programs at the museum and in classroom visits. The museum recently received an Alaska State Museum Grant-In-Aid award to purchase storage and archival materials for the Education Collection, as well as inventory and catalog this collection.

The 2,500 square feet of storage available in the museum building does not provide the space needed to house the museum's entire collection. Thus, several off-site storage sites are used to house such items as exhibition furniture. Also, though environmental conditions are regularly monitored at the museum, the museum has a pressing need for humidity controls, ventilation, and other environmental controls in order to protect the collection.

Visitor Profile

2012 annual visitation to the museum totaled 11,184. This total includes all visitors to the museum, as well as participants in museum education programs outside of the museum building. The majority of visitors (more than 80 percent) were adults. Typically, 80 percent of visitation occurs in the summer months (May through September) for the museum. The majority of summer visitors are non-Alaska residents (approximately 90 percent), while Juneau residents dominate winter visitation.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In response to the need to improve environmental controls in the building housing the Juneau-Douglas City Museum collection, a major heating and ventilation (HVAC) improvement project is currently underway at the museum. The planning and funding processes are completed and construction is scheduled to begin in January 2014. Additional, smaller parts of the project include replacement of some doors and, if enough funding is available after other aspects of the project are completed, replacement of some or all of the single-pane windows in the building.

Planning Process

The City and Borough of Juneau awarded Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding (approximately \$75,000) to the museum in 2006 to conduct a facility assessment. The museum, in turn, contracted with an architectural firm to conduct the assessment, in tandem with sub-contracted museum specialists. The resulting document from the facility assessment process provides a phased list of recommended projects needed to improve the museum facility. Projects addressed such issues including HVAC, lighting, collections housing, and gallery flow. Since completion of the assessment, many of the recommended improvements have been completed through grants or from funding within the museum budget.

The recommended HVAC improvements are the largest capital improvement project undertaken by the museum to date. Museum planning for this project began with the facility assessment document. Once funding for the project became available, the museum issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for services to design and install the HVAC system. In addition to planning for design and construction, museum staff had to plan for operational changes while the project is underway, as well as for changes in operating costs once the project is complete. The Funding Process and Design and Construction Process sections below, detail some of the planning undertaken by museum staff in preparation for this project.

Lesson Learned about Project Planning

- **Divide large capital improvement needs into smaller, more achievable, and affordable projects.** The 2006 facility assessment conducted for the Juneau-Douglas City Museum provided steps to improve the museum facility that could be taken as resources became available. This tactic is especially advisable for smaller facility for which large and expensive capital improvements may be daunting.

Funding Process

Juneau-Douglas City Museum Renovation Funding Sources

| | | |
|--|---------------|-------------------------|
| Total Project Cost | | Approximately \$700,000 |
| Fundraising Responsibility | | Museum Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | | Yes |
| Source | Amount | |
| Facility Assessment funded by the City of Juneau | \$75,000 | |
| City of Juneau Capital Improvement Funding | \$450,000 | |
| National Endowment of the Humanities Grant | \$275,000 | |

Source: Juneau-Douglas City Museum.

After the 2006 facility assessment, it was up to the museum director to secure funding for the relatively large HVAC project. To secure funding, museum staff continued work, via the Parks and Recreation Department, within the City and Borough of Juneau annual CIP requests process to express the need for funding for the HVAC system. At the same time, the director submitted a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant application in order to “bring something to the table,” in the form of matching funds, in discussions with the City over funding for the project.

Grant Application

An NEH grant application is a complicated and relatively lengthy process. The museum director collaborated with several entities when assembling the grant application. She worked with staff from the City and Borough of Juneau Engineering Department to obtain mechanical information about the HVAC system, and also to understand what funding requirements are for installation of such a system. She also received support and assistance from Alaska State Museum staff when writing the application. As the museum building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Juneau Historic Resources Advisory Committee helped

demonstrate that the project would not fundamentally alter the building in accordance with requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act.⁸

The first museum application to NEH was not successful. However, the application was returned with reviewer comments. While the museum director had met with the grantor and discussed grant requirements prior to the first application, for the second application she subsequently worked to address the comments from those who reviewed the unsuccessful application and “did more homework” before re-applying. Part of that “homework” included consultation with staff at the Pratt Museum in Homer, which houses a similar HVAC system. The Pratt Museum provided information and wrote a letter to include in Juneau’s second NEH grant application to demonstrate that the proposed system could be effective for a building like Juneau’s.

The second application was successful, and the museum received a \$275,000 grant. All project planning after the MRV facility assessment was funded out of the NEH grant monies. This included a cost analysis of the system chosen for the museum. While additional operating costs will be incurred by the museum because of addition of a new system where no system existed in the building before, the additional operating costs that the system will require are deemed necessary and have been incorporated into future operating budgets.

With the NEH grant money to bring to the table as matching funds within the City’s budget, the museum was awarded the additional money needed for the project, approximately \$450,000, from the City’s 1 percent tax fund (a capital improvement fund).

Lessons Learned about Project Fundraising

- **Bring something to the table.** A significant contributor to the momentum moving the HVAC project forward was the museum’s ability to bring matching funds to the table. Once the museum secured a source of funding for a significant portion of the project through the NEH grant, the City and Borough of Juneau was able to more easily award the additional money needed for the project.
- **Do not give up/learn from setbacks.** After a first unsuccessful NEH grant application, the museum director paid close attention to reviewer comments on the original application. She then took steps and “did her homework” in order to respond to those comments and provide additional information to reinforce the museum’s case for NEH funding for this project. Just because an application is not successful during one application period, with proper changes and good communication with the funding agency, a future application may indeed be successful.
- **Demonstrate success of similar projects.** The NEH application comments included questions on the feasibility of installing such a HVAC system in the museum’s building. In order to illustrate how such a system would work, the Juneau-Douglas City Museum director did not only rely on hypothetical assumptions and projects. She contacted staff from another museum in Alaska, the Pratt Museum, with a similar HVAC system. She was then able to more effectively demonstrate the feasibility of utilizing such a system in a similar situation in the second, and ultimately successful, NEH grant application.

⁸ Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties.

Design and Construction

An HVAC system is very much needed for the Juneau-Douglas City Museum collection. The design for the Juneau-Douglas City Museum HVAC project includes a focus on energy efficiency, such as removal of the oil-burning boiler and installation of all electric heat. Replacement of the single-pane windows, as budget allows, will also increase energy efficiency.

Final schematics are being prepared for construction to begin on the project in early 2014. The project timeline was intentionally designed for construction to take place in the winter in order to minimize operational impacts on the museum when visitation is at its lowest point in the year and revenue from visitation is minimal.

As the museum has not undergone a remodel of this magnitude, museum staff are preparing for contingencies. In anticipation of impacts on museum operations, the museum staff is planning to move and protect the collection. Preparations have included the purchase of cabinets to house supplies and dust covers for the collection. Other outstanding impacts the museum is prepared to deal with include possible absence of heat at points during construction.



Dust covers purchased in anticipation of the HVAC installation process.
Photo courtesy of Juneau-Douglas City Museum.

Also, although the impact on the upstairs exhibition space is projected to be minimal, museum staff are not yet sure if they will need to close the museum at any point in the project. Thus, they have scheduled solo artists and exhibitions for longer time periods than normal, usually two months instead of one, in order to try and accommodate the construction schedule. Museum staff communicated with solo artists who will be exhibiting to ensure the artists are aware of the uncertainties involved with the project and potential museum closures.

All possible moving and storage costs, as well as other costs of protecting the collection were written into the project budget, as well as into the RFP issued when hiring a firm to undertake the project.

Pioneer Air Museum

Profile of Pioneer Air Museum

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 2012 Fairbanks Population | 32,312 residents |
| Building Specifications | |
| Building Size | 15,300 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 1,800 square feet |
| On-site Storage | >6,000 square feet |
| Museum Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | Land and facility owned by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Operated by nonprofit, 501(c)3, Interior and Arctic Alaska Aviation Foundation |
| Annual Budget | \$30,000* |
| Size of Collection | 14 airplanes, 30 engines, unknown number of photographs and documents |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | Approximately 1.5 |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | Not tracked |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Total Project Costs | \$2.4 million (projected) |
| Type | Renovations |

Source: Pioneer Air Museum and U.S. Census Bureau.

*The Fairbanks North Star Borough operates and maintains the facility so the museum budget primarily covers personnel and administrative expenses.

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Pioneer Air Museum is located in a geodesic dome at Pioneer Park in Fairbanks. The museum, which opened in 1992, showcases the history of aviation in Interior Alaska. The museum is open in the summer, from May through September.



Photo courtesy of Pioneer Air Museum.

Ownership/Governance

The museum facility is owned and maintained by the Fairbanks North Star Borough. The nonprofit Interior and Arctic Alaska Aviation Foundation IAAAF manages and operates the museum. A five-member board of directors oversees the IAAAF.

Funding

As the Fairbanks North Star Borough owns and maintains the Pioneer Air Museum building, the museum operating budget is relatively small, totaling approximately \$30,000 per year. The operating budget is primarily funded through revenue from admission fees. The museum also receives a portion of its funding

from a pull-tab charitable gaming account. That account generates expense money for maintaining and improving the museum facility.

Admission Fees

The museum is open in the summer from noon to 8pm. Admission is \$3 for an adult and \$7 for a family of 4. Children aged 12 and under may enter free of charge.

Staffing

The museum curator is the sole year-round museum employee, receiving a small monthly stipend. In the summer months when the museum is open, seasonal museum staff are hired to monitor the entryway, collect admission, and assist museum visitors.

Museum Collection

Fourteen airplanes of different sizes and stages of restoration make up the museum's main collection. Some of those planes are currently disassembled. In addition, the museum holds approximately 30 aircraft engines of varying sizes and shapes. A photographic collection and aviation documents round out the collection.

At this point, much of collection needs major restoration and refurbishing. Aside from the main facility, the museum maintains an exhibit at Fairbanks International Airport, and parts of the collection are stored at various locations around town, in addition to in the fringes of the geodesic dome on-site. The museum does not have any facility that provides environmental controls to maintain the collection.

Visitor Profile

The museum hosted 9,101 visitors between May 15 and Sept 10, 2013.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The museum is currently developing a plan to expand and improve the current facility. The renovation would increase space in the facility by creating an attached area outside of the main building for the gift shop and entryway. Such a move would then open up a bit more area for exhibits inside the building, but would mostly provide space in the dome to care for and restore the collection in-house (the museum curator envisions a glass wall in the facility looking into the new restoration area that would allow visitors to view the restoration work). Restrooms would also be added to the facility, as the museum currently does not have a restroom.

Also, the current museum entryway is, in the view of the curator, almost hidden from view from Pioneer Park visitors. In addition to providing more space inside the facility, an entryway on the outside of the current building would, in his view, make the museum more noticeable to the park's 250,000 annual visitors and, hopefully, increase visitation at the museum.

Planning and Funding Process

Pioneer Air Museum Capital Improvement Projected Funding Sources

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Total Project Cost | |
| Total Project Cost | \$2.4 million |
| Fundraising Responsibility | |
| Fundraising Responsibility | Museum Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | |
| Funding Goal Met? | Not Yet |
| Potential Sources | |
| Amount | |
| State of Alaska Capital Project Funding | \$2.4 million requested for 2014 |

Source: Pioneer Air Museum.

A basic capital improvement plan for the museum has been established, though no details, such as design or engineering work, have been settled on for the project. Pioneer Air Museum staff and IAAAF board members have communicated capital improvement plans for the museum to Borough Assembly members and State legislative representatives over the past three years. For example, in October, the museum hosted a reception for elected representatives to explain the renovation plan.

Museum staff and board members aim to raise money from the State Legislature to fully fund the improvements. They estimate the project cost will total \$2.4 million. In an October 24, 2013 resolution, the Borough Assembly passed a resolution outlining borough legislative priorities for 2014. Pioneer Air Museum improvements are included as a “community priority” in the resolution. This is the third year that the museum, through the borough, has asked for funding from the legislature. The funding requests were unsuccessful in the previous two years.

Design and Construction

No design or construction has occurred to-date due to lack of funding.

Pratt Museum

Profile of Pratt Museum

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2012 Homer Population | 5,239 residents |
| Building Specs | |
| Building Size | 10,500 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | Not Available |
| On-site Storage | Not Available |
| Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | Nonprofit/Board of Directors |
| Annual Budget | \$500,000-600,000 |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 8 |
| Size of Collection | More than 24,000 objects, 6,500 photographs, more than 1,500 books and other documents |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 3,000 |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Total Project Costs | \$9.5 million (projected) |
| Type | New facility |

Source: Pratt Museum and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

The Pratt Museum preserves the stories of the Kachemak Bay region and provides a gathering place for people to learn and be inspired by this region and its place in the world.⁹

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Pratt Museum, located in Homer, focuses on the art, culture, and science of Kachemak Bay and Southcentral Alaska. The museum, which opened in 1968, was constructed with State of Alaska Centennial funding. The facility is named after Homer residents Sam and Vega Pratt.

The facility measures 10,500 square feet and features both indoor and outdoor exhibits. The indoor exhibits display artifacts and information on area natural history and native cultures, as well as art, homesteading, fishing, marine ecology

and the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. Outdoor exhibits include an historic homestead cabin, a botanical garden, and a nature trail. The museum is open 11 months of the year and closed in January. The museum opens daily throughout the summer, with more limited hours during the winter months.



Photo courtesy of the Pratt Museum.

⁹ Pratt Museum website. Accessed November 19, 2013.

Ownership/Governance

The museum is built on a 10-acre parcel of land donated to the museum by Sam and Vega Pratt. A board of directors oversees the nonprofit museum.

Funding

Roughly two-thirds of funding for the Pratt Museum comes from individual and corporate donations, and grants from federal, state, and local entities. The remaining third comes primarily from admissions, program fees, and museum store sales. In total, the museum's annual budget typically ranges between \$500,000 and \$600,000, though it may reach \$700,000 depending on the number and type of grants and projects during a particular year.

Admission Fees

Currently, approximately 400 members support the museum. Once membership is paid, members are admitted to the museum free of charge. Museum admission for non-members is \$8 for adults, with no charge for children aged 6 and under.

Staffing

Ten staff, including five full-time staff, operate the museum year-round. Additional seasonal staff are hired during the summer, the museum's busiest time of year. In total, museum staffing is about 8 FTE annually. A Museum Director manages the museum. Additional positions at the museum include an Education Director, Curator of Exhibits, Development Director, Collections Manager, Visitor Services position, Bookkeeper, Office Manager, Building Manager, as well as other positions.

Volunteers

In addition to staff, approximately 80 volunteers contribute time and expertise to the museum. Volunteers serve in a variety of positions, including as gallery or homestead cabin hosts. They also help run the museum gift store.

Museum Collection

The museum collection includes more than 24,000 objects. These objects are organized into several groups, including the Anthropology Collection of more than 4,000 artifacts excavated locally, the 4,500-object History Collection, a 250-object Art Collection, a 500-object Earth Sciences Collection, a Biology Collection that contains more than 2,500 specimens of marine life and terrestrial animals and plants, and a Quilt Collection that features 20 quilts. A photo archive at the museum houses more than 6,500 images. A non-lending library at the museum includes historical documents, natural history information, 1,500 books, and other periodicals and papers.

Visitor Profile

Approximately 30,000 people visit the Pratt Museum each year. The bulk of museum visitation occurs during the summer months, and summer visitors are mostly tourists to the area or locals with visiting family or friends.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Pratt Museum is in the process of raising funds and planning for construction of a new museum facility. The new facility, with a projected opening date of 2016, will be built on the 10-acre property on which the current museum is located. To date, the museum has completed a schematic design for the new space (completed in Fall 2012) and is currently working with an exhibit designer on plans for the space.

Planning Process

The museum benefited from participation in the Rasmuson/Foraker Pre-Development Program. In the program, the museum developed project plans, including cost estimates and a fundraising plan. The museum changed directors approximately four years ago, when the project plan was almost complete. This change resulted in project delays as the new director got up to speed on the plans.

The museum director acts as the project manager for the planning and fundraising phases of the project. A building committee is made up of staff, board members, and advisory members who are construction or engineering experts. The committee provides advice and recommendations, especially for project elements that need board approval. During the concept design process, the museum also involved community members through public meetings to seek input on the design. Community input involved an unofficial public vote when feasible. For example, when the project architects started on the facility design process, they presented a board of design styles for members of the public to vote on. The design style that received the majority of votes is the style preference that the architect went forward with.

As each step in the project will impact museum operations, the museum secured additional grant funding to increase the number of museum staff. A grant from the Paul Allen Foundation allowed the museum to ramp up development by hiring a full-time Development Director. Also, other grants helped secure additional staff to take part of the workload off of the current Education Director so she could participate in project planning. The museum plans to acquire professional project management assistance during the construction phase of the project. In total, the museum director estimates that the planning process for the museum cost several thousand dollars in capital project and operating funds. It also took years of staff time and benefited from in-kind contributions as well.

The museum plans to keep operating in the existing building until the new building is complete. A separate access road to the new site will be used for construction in order to minimize impact on museum operations at the current site. Once the building is complete, the museum plans to close for several months while exhibits and collections are moved. The museum has developed a plan for the move. Staff, additional hired help, and volunteers will be utilized to assist with the move. Funding has been set aside for this part of the capital project.

Lessons Learned about Project Planning

- **The project will impact all staff and all museum operations somehow so prepare for this impact.** While major capital improvement project planning and implementation takes an immense amount of time from the museum director and, in many cases, is a full-time job in itself, the process also impacts all other museum staff in one way or another. In the case of the Pratt Museum project, the Museum Director, Development Director, Education Director, Curator, and Building Manager are

all heavily involved with the project. It is important that museum managers try and anticipate and plan for these impacts on staff in order to also manage museum operations not related to the project.

In addition, staff burnout is an important consideration in a capital improvement process. The same is true for board members, core museum supporters, and donors. It is important to celebrate successes along the way and acknowledge the stress by finding ways to support the extra work and pressure that comes from a project of this magnitude.

- **Avoid changes in leadership during the project process.** As the previous point attests, the director of the museum plays a pivotal role throughout the life of a capital improvement project. In the case of the Pratt Museum, the project was delayed due to a change in directors at the museum. When a new director was hired, the project momentum slowed down while she got up to speed on museum operations and the project itself.

If a change in director must occur during a capital improvement process, it is important for those hiring a new director to be aware that staff burnout centers on the director. Thus, adequate support for the director throughout the project is important. A likely fit for a new director will be a strong, diplomatic leader with a thick skin and the ability to engage with a variety of different audiences. A leadership style that matches with the organizational culture of the museum is also important.

- **Designate an ultimate decision-maker but also provide opportunities for community-led decisions.** In order to ensure that the project moves forward in a timely manner and on budget, and to ensure that the project meets museum goals and objectives, it is important that someone is designated to make final decisions about the project. Usually the museum director, these decisions include large and small aesthetic decisions and design choices.

It is also important to make clear when other voices may contribute to project decision-making. When engaging in the project planning process, some stakeholder may come to table with the expectation that they have a vote in decisions, when in fact their role may be advisory. However, for each project, museum staff can identify some decisions that may be community-led. Such decisions will likely be different for each project, situation, and place. Whatever the items are or how the community is engaged, it is important to build ownership in the community for the new project and secure buy-in and support. In Homer, local spending is an important priority. Thus, the museum deliberately chose an architecture firm that understood that and had connection to the town (they were also the most qualified firm). The museum's priority was to hire someone who would listen to the community (such as during selection of overall design styles for the new facility).

Funding Process

Pratt Museum Capital Improvement Projected Funding Sources

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Total Project Cost | \$9.5 million |
| Fundraising Responsibility | Museum Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | 50% donated or pledged |
| Potential Sources | Amount |
| Funding for Project Planning | Not Available |
| Public Funding | \$3.25 million |
| Private and Corporate Donations plus Foundation Grants | \$6.25 million |

Source: Pratt Museum.

The museum is now in fundraising mode, with approximately half of the necessary \$9.5 million in project costs already raised. Of the half raised to date, 50 percent comes from cash pledges and 50 percent has been pledged by organizations. According to a revenue plan developed to guide fundraising for the new museum, approximately one-third of project funding is projected to come from public sources, while the remaining two-thirds will likely come from individual and corporate giving, as well as grants from foundations.

Lessons Learned about Project Fundraising

- **Be prepared for the project to take a long time, especially fundraising.** One common observation made by museum staff involved with most of the capital improvement projects in this report is that the project takes a long time. In the case of the Pratt Museum, some of that time was caused by a change in museum directors. A significant amount of the time was taken by the need to build new and foster existing relationships during the fundraising phase. While such an effort is necessary to secure new funding sources, it is also often necessary when asking for a higher level of support from existing donors. The museum director does not need to build all these relationships herself, but must build a network of people who do have the relationships. Also, many of the grant applications take months to complete.

Design and Construction

Building completion is projected for 2016.

Benefits of the Project

The new museum facility will improve the museum's ability to act as a keeper of cultural heritage of the Kenai Peninsula area. An important value articulated by the Homer community during the project planning process was the idea of the Pratt Museum as a gathering place: a space to come together, learn from each other, and share ideas. This value will be reflected in the new facility.

Sitka Historical Museum

Profile of Sitka Historical Museum

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2012 Sitka Population | 9,046 residents |
| Building Specs | |
| Size of Collection | More than 8,000 objects, 25,000 photographs, 35,000 archival items. |
| Total Space Size | 2,160 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 1,175 square feet |
| On-site Collections and Storage | 300 square feet |
| Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | The Centennial building is owned by the City of Sitka. The nonprofit Sitka Historical Society (SHS) operates the museum. |
| Annual Budget | \$180,000 |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 2.5 |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 450 |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Project Costs | \$1 million (SHS share of responsibility) |
| Type | Expansion |

Source: Sitka Historical Museum and U.S. Census Bureau.

MUSEUM MISSION

To preserve and promote the events, stories, and artifacts of the human history of the Sitka area for the inspiration, education and benefit of the public and future generations.¹⁰

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Sitka Historical Museum is located in the Centennial Hall at 330 Harbor Drive in downtown Sitka. The museum collection focuses on Sitka and Southeast Alaska history, and includes photographs, artifacts, and archives that document Sitka’s Tlingit, Russian, and American history.

The Sitka Historical Society (SHS) operates the museum and owns the collections. The City of Sitka owns and maintains the 15,000 building that houses the 2,161 square foot museum space. Within the space, approximately 1,175 feet are used for exhibits. A small museum store, collections, and work space are also located on-site.



Photo courtesy of the Sitka Historical Museum.

¹⁰ The Sitka Historical Museum website, www.sitkahistory.org, accessed November 23, 2013.

Some museum operations are located off-site (0.3 miles from Centennial Hall) in the White House, an historic house built in 1901 and previously used for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. The White House is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Sitka Historical Society uses the house for storage of some of the collection, including the archives and photographs. The house is also used for museum office space and intern housing. The SHS board recently made the decision to make more use of the White House, including as offices for SHS, the Executive Director, and other museum staff. The museum curator will still be located at the Centennial Hall location.

The museum is open year-round, with longer hours in the summer months. The museum also offers special hours by appointment and to accommodate school classes, Elderhostel groups, and ferry stopovers.

Funding

The City of Sitka provides financial support to the Sitka Historical Museum totaling \$120,000 per year. Additional funding is secured through grants, SHS fundraising, museum membership and admissions, store sales, and donations. After City funding, fundraising is the next largest source of revenue, at approximately \$35,000. The largest expense for the museum is salaries and benefits.

Admission Fees

Museum members support the museum through annual Sitka Historical Society membership fees. Currently, approximately 275 members support the museum. Admission to the museum for non-members is by donation.

Staffing

The museum is generally staffed with two full-time positions, an Executive Director and a Curator of Collections and Exhibits, and one part-time clerk for a total of 2.5 FTE in staff support. The SHS recently hired a new museum director.

Volunteers

Other than board members, the museum currently utilizes few volunteers. One or two interns are hired each year for various lengths of time. The museum will likely increase volunteer recruitment in the future.

Museum Collection

The museum collection is made up of approximately 8,000 objects. In addition, the collection includes approximately 25,000 historical photographs and 35,000 archival items. At this point, none of the museum collection storage spaces, or the exhibit areas, are environmentally controlled to adequately protect the collection. The museum recently tinted the windows in the Centennial Hall space and they do operate localized humidifiers. Temperature and humidity are monitored both in the Centennial Hall space and in the White House.

Storage for the museum collection is limited. Thus, the collection is spread out over several locations around town, including 300 square feet at Centennial Hall, 200 square feet at the White House, and a few more hundred square feet in other locations.

Visitor Profile

Annually, the museum welcomes about 19,000 visitors. Approximately 20 percent of museum visitors are Alaskans. The bulk (80 percent) of museum visitation occurs in the summer, including a large percentage of cruise ship passengers in the summer.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The City of Sitka is planning an upgrade and expansion of the Centennial Hall facility. Part of the renovation will include an expansion that will more than double the amount of space available to the museum. This space, in addition to continued use of the White House for support space, will provide the museum with collections storage and exhibit space critically needed to house and display the museum collection. Also, the current museum location is not very visible to tourists. The expansion will place the museum directly on the path that most cruise ship visitors take when they get off the boats. Thus, the expansion is projected to increase museum visitation, as well as museum store revenue. At this point, construction of the museum wing of the building is scheduled to begin in Fall 2014. The entire building renovation is projected to be complete by Summer 2016.

While the museum space at Centennial Hall is planned to eventually reach 5,800 square feet, due to funding restrictions, the City of Sitka has divided the project into two phases. Phase 1 will improve the existing building and allow about 3,000 square feet for the museum. Phase 2 will provide the rest of the space for the museum through an addition.

Planning Process

The Sitka Historical Museum participated in the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program to plan for the museum expansion. The program provided the museum with an analysis of storage, staffing, budget, operations, collections management, and other needs that will be required to meet the museum mission and serve museum stakeholders. A report at the conclusion of this analysis projected space, budget, and staff requirements necessary for the museum to address its critical storage and exhibit space needs. Space requirements were estimated at 5,800 square feet, staffing at 4.5 FTE, and budget at \$318,000 annually. The results of the report were taken into account in planning for the expansion, with the space requirement fulfilled. Through this process, the museum developed a concept idea for the project. The museum also developed an exhibit layout plan to fit the expansion.

The City of Sitka used the information gathered and concept developed during the pre-development phase of this project when seeking State funding for the entire Centennial Hall improvement project. The information was also used during the City search for a project design firm. Ultimately, the firm that participated in the concept design process during pre-development was not the firm chosen for project design. The new architecture firm made the decision to start over on the design process for the project.

The City set up a committee with representatives from the museum, the Centennial Hall operating staff, and the primary users of the building to help guide project upgrades for the entire building. A SHS design committee has been appointed and is working with the architects on designs for the museum area specifically. The information exchanged with the SHS design committee is then taken to the central building

committee so all project information may be coordinated. Currently, the project architect is working on the design for the expanded facility.

The museum has been in transition over the past year, especially the last few months, with an interim director in place and a search for a new director. During this phase, museum board members carried a large portion of the load associated with running the museum. Due to this extra workload for the board, the regular annual fundraising campaign for the SHS has not moved forward in the way that it usually does. Thus, not a lot of progress has been made to date on capital campaign planning and implementation for the museum expansion. However, the City of Sitka is proceeding with the overall Centennial Hall improvement project. Therefore, it is critical that the SHS also proceed, even though the organizational structure is stretched thin. The newly hired director will be able to assist with this issue.

Since pre-development, the SHS board has downsized plans for the expansion. This downsize has occurred partly in recognition of the economic climate that has made fundraising difficult and made it unlikely that the City of Sitka will be able to increase its annual financial contribution to the museum. Thus, the board has revised plans to increase museum operations; for example, while the board previously planned to add 2 to 3 positions, they are now looking at adding just one.

Lessons Learned about Project Planning

- **The value of pre-development planning extends beyond development of a project concept.** A significant outcome from the pre-development work for the museum was a concept design for the museum space and identification of the operational needs to support such a design. The museum has relied on information developed through pre-development for a variety of other critical components in the project process. Pre-development results were used to secure funding for the project. The pre-development process itself was also useful in raising the level of awareness among museum staff and board members about the issues involved with the project. Such an awareness has allowed the staff and board members to make more informed decisions as the project scope and details changed over time.
- **Plans will likely change during the project design process.** As new information comes to light, it is important for those involved in the museum capital improvement project process to remain flexible and gather the information necessary to adjust to new realities. In the case of the SHS, those realities included, but were not limited to, a transition in museum directors and difficulty with fundraising that necessitated some downsizing in the original scope of the project. A board of directors can make a big difference in a museum's ability to adapt to changes during the life of a capital improvement project. An involved, informed board can step in to assist the museum director, or can help carry on the project in the event of a transition in directors.

Funding Process

Sitka Historical Museum Capital Improvement Project Funding Sources

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Total Cost to SHS | | \$1 million |
| Fundraising Responsibility | Museum Director and Board of Directors | |
| Funding Goal Met? | Not Yet | |
| Potential Sources | | |
| Private Contributions | Local Capital Campaign | |
| Foundation Grants | Possibly Rasmuson Foundation and M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust | |
| State Funding | To be determined | |

Source: Sitka Historical Museum.

The City of Sitka is currently applying to the State for additional funding in an attempt to complete both phases of the project together. An additional \$4 million is needed at this point for all project expenses, though the museum expansion makes up most of that amount. In addition, the SHS is responsible for raising the funds necessary for exhibit design and construction, as well as furnishings. In total, the SHS portion of the project will require SHS to raise approximately \$1 million.

While the SHS board is aware of the fundraising need, and participated in a bit of training on capital campaigns a few years ago, the museum is in the very early stages of fundraising. With the new director in place, the museum will likely apply for a Rasmuson grant for help planning a capital campaign to raise the \$1 million. The SHS board of directors and the museum director will be responsible for fundraising. Possible sources of revenue include grant funding from the Rasmuson Foundation and the M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust, a possible request to the State of Alaska as the state reaches its sesquicentennial celebration in 2017, and local fundraising from individuals and companies in Sitka.

Design and Construction

No construction has occurred to-date, as the process is still in the design and fundraising process.

Benefits of the Project

The museum expansion will significantly increase museum storage and exhibit space, allowing for expanded operations. In addition, the expansion will increase the visibility of the museum and, thus, likely increase visitation. These improvement will provide a springboard for telling the community story better and becoming more visible to the community. While increased cruise ship passenger traffic is likely to occur, the expansion will also likely make the museum more valuable to the Sitka community, as the museum will be able to offer more exhibits and programs of interest to the community.

Tongass Historical Museum

Profile of Tongass Historical Museum

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2012 Ketchikan Population | 13,779 residents |
| Building Specifications | |
| Building Size | 15,300 square feet |
| Exhibition Space | 1,800 square feet |
| On-site Storage | >6,000 square feet |
| Museum Operations | |
| Ownership/Management | City of Ketchikan |
| Annual Budget | \$1 million* |
| Number of Employees (FTE) | 8 |
| Size of Collection | 12,000 objects |
| Annual Volunteer Hours | 250 |
| Recent Capital Improvements | |
| Total Project Costs | \$6.8 to \$9.6 million (projected) |
| Type | Renovations |

Source: Tongass Historical Museum and U.S. Census Bureau.

*Budget split between Tongass Historical Museum and Totem Heritage Center.

MUSEUM MISSION

The Tongass Historical Museum collects, preserves, and interprets material and information pertaining to the history, art, and culture of Ketchikan and Southeast Alaska. The Museum features permanent and temporary exhibits based on its own collections and community participation, as well as hosting traveling exhibitions from other institutions. Public programs, special events, workshops, and educational programs that relate to Ketchikan area history are also offered. The Museum's extensive historical archive and photograph collections are available for research.¹¹



Photo courtesy of the Tongass Historical Museum.

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Tongass Historical Museum, located in the Centennial Building in downtown Ketchikan, focuses on the history, art, and culture of Ketchikan. The museum collection also includes items from other areas of Southeast Alaska. In addition to exhibits, the museum offers public programs, special events, workshops, and educational program, an historical archive, and photo collections.

The museum is open year-round, with extended hours during the summer months (May through September). The Centennial Building also housed the Ketchikan Library until the library outgrew its space and moved into a new facility in 2012. The main, top, floor of the building is currently used for approximately

¹¹ City of Ketchikan website. Accessed October 21, 2013.

1,800 square feet of exhibition space. Most of the remaining space on the top floor, the area where the main library used to be, is now used for storage for the museum collection. The bottom floor of the building (approximately 7,500 square feet) housed the children's library. This space is now being transitioned for use as research space and for archiving materials.

Ownership/Governance

The City of Ketchikan owns and operates the Tongass Historical Museum.

Funding

The City of Ketchikan provides the majority of the museum's budget. Annual funding for the City of Ketchikan Museum Department, which oversees both the Tongass Historical Museum and the Totem Heritage Center, totals approximately \$1 million. This budget is split between both museums, as is staff time. Funding for the museum is supplemented by small grants. A friends group does not currently support the museum, and volunteer hours are minimal, averaging approximately 5 hours per week, primarily in collections support. Also, the museum does not currently operate a gift store.

Admission Fees

The museum is open year-round, though hours are limited in in October through April. Admission is only charged in the summer months (May through September) at \$3 for adults, and children aged 12 and under are free of charge.

Staffing

Together, eight staff members staff both the Tongass Historical Museum and the Totem Heritage Center. A Director, Senior Curator – Programs, Senior Curator – Collections, Registrar, and Program Coordinator fill the full-time positions. The other three positions: Administrative Secretary, Program Assistant, and Museum Attendant, are three-quarter time.

Museum Collection

The Tongass Historical Society owns a significant portion of the Historical Museum collection, while the collection is housed in City of Ketchikan facilities. The collection includes more than 6,500 objects, 50,000 photographic prints and negatives, and more than 3,000 archival materials. The museum also provides a research library. The collection is exhibited on the main, top floor, of the museum. Prior to the library's move, many objects in the collection were housed off-site. Now that the library's move has opened up more space in the Centennial Building, the museum collection has been moved on-site to the Centennial Building. Almost all of the museum's collection is recorded in a database.

Visitor Profile

Visitation to the museum totaled 26,000 in 2013. Though the museum does not track specific numbers, summer visitation is higher than visitation in other seasons. The majority of summer (May through September) visitors are from out of town, and are cruise ship passengers.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Ketchikan community has discussed possible upgrades to Ketchikan's museum infrastructure for more than 15 years in response to the increasing need for more museum exhibition and program space and for more and better quality storage space for the museum collections. In 1997, a concept design for a new museum facility was completed. Another design was completed in 2004. In 2012, a plan to move the Ketchikan Library out of the Centennial Building presented an opportunity to expand the museum within the Centennial Building.

Planning Process

The Tongass Historical Museum was accepted into the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program in 2012. One component of the pre-development program culminated in an environmental condition and space planning assessment. The 2012 assessment found the museum would need approximately 14,000 square feet of space over the next 20 years, a good fit for the 15,000 square foot Centennial Building.

The 2012 assessment also found that the Centennial Building heat, lighting, humidity controls, and fire suppression systems, are inadequate to protect the museum collection. The assessment provided a list of recommendations to bring the museum in line with museum best practices, maximize utilization of the Centennial Building space, and meet community needs.

Another component of the pre-development program was a cash flow analysis. The cash flow analysis researched the cost and revenue implications of the museum expanding into the entire Centennial Building site. Analysis of project costs included projections of future operating costs once the project was complete.

While the museum progressed through the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program, the City of Ketchikan funded a Centennial Building Condition Analysis report. This assessment identified building code violations and necessary building upgrades. The assessment was closely coordinated with all pre-development planning.

A third component of the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program was development of a museum Renovation Concept Design. The museum teamed with the Foraker Group and a firm of architects, planners, interior designers, and landscape architects (the same company that developed the Centennial Building Condition Analysis), to develop the concept design. Development of the concept design included a series of public meetings to help guide the design process.

Lesson Learned about Project Planning

- **Solicit community input.** Ketchikan community input into the museum renovation design process allowed for a museum design that fits with community needs.

Funding Process

Tongass Historical Museum Capital Improvement Projected Funding Sources

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Total Project Cost | |
| Total Project Cost | \$6.8 to \$9.6 million* |
| Fundraising Responsibility | Museum Director |
| Funding Goal Met? | Not Yet |
| Potential Sources | |
| City of Ketchikan | N/A |
| State of Alaska Capital Project Funding | N/A |

Source: Tongass Historical Museum.

*Depends on project option chosen.

After project planning concluded, three options for museum improvement were presented for funding to the Ketchikan City Council: 1) construction of a new facility, 2) renovation of the Centennial Building to accommodate museum functions, or 3) Centennial Building upgrades and repairs only. In a January 2013 special meeting, the City Council decided not to immediately move forward with any of the options. However, Council deliberations did focus on the need to complete renovations in phases and to attempt to find matching funds.

Museum staff are hoping to secure matching funds from the State of Alaska. Staff have not yet pursued foundation grants or private donations as other possible sources of funding.

Design and Construction

No construction has occurred to-date due to lack of funding.

List of Museums that Participated in this Study

| | |
|--|---|
| Ahtna Heritage Foundation/ Ahtna Cultural Center | Hammer Museum |
| Alaska Aviation Museum | Ilanka Cultural Center |
| Alaska Museum of Science and Nature | Inupiat Heritage Center, Ilisagvik College |
| Alaska State Trooper Museum | Juneau Douglas City Museum |
| Alaska Veterans Memorial Museum | Kodiak Maritime Museum |
| Alaskaland Pioneer Air Museum | Maxine & Jess Whitney Museum |
| Alpine Historical Park | Pioneer Memorial Museum |
| American Bald Eagle Foundation | Port Alexander Museum |
| Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center | Pratt Museum |
| Baranov Museum | Sam Fox Museum |
| Beringia Center of Culture and Science | Sitka Historical Museum |
| Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum | Skagway Museum and Archives |
| Clausen Memorial Museum | Soldotna Historical Museum |
| Colony House | Talkeetna Museum (Talkeetna Historical Society) |
| Cordova Historical Museum | Tongass Historical Museum |
| Dorothy Page Museum and Historic Townsite | University of Alaska Museum of the North |
| Duncan Cottage Museum | Valdez Museum & Historical Archive |
| Eagle Historical Society and Museum | Yupit Piciryarit Museum |

Summary of Key Capital Improvement Project Lessons Learned

Some of these lessons learned are taken directly from the museum profiles section of this report, others are paraphrased or summarized.

BUILD FLEXIBILITY INTO FUNDING AND PROJECT PLANNING.

- **Do not depend on a single source of funding.** Having multiple funders broadens support for the project, helps meet requirements for matching funds, and provides options if one source of funding is delayed or cancelled.
- **Bring funding to the table.** A significant contributor to project momentum can be a museum’s ability to bring matching funds to the table. Once the museum secures a source of funding for a significant portion of the project, other funders may be able to more easily award the additional money needed for the project.
- **Sell your story/Make it personal.** Many museums tell a story of a community or location. For example, Nome has an engaging history that involves people and families from across Alaska. Because of the Nome gold rush, many people throughout the state have roots in Nome and, thus, hold a stake in the city’s history. It was Nome’s history and these ties that ultimately helped secure funding in the legislature.
- **Divide large capital improvement needs into smaller, more achievable, and affordable projects.** As an example, a 2006 facility assessment conducted for the Juneau-Douglas City Museum provided steps to improve the museum facility that could be taken as resources became available. This tactic is especially advisable for smaller facility for which large and expensive capital improvements may be daunting.
- **Plans will likely change during the project design process.** As new information comes to light, it is important for those involved in the museum capital improvement project process to remain flexible and gather the information necessary to adjust to new realities.
- **Because something may well go wrong, it is important to build contingency funding into every grant and contract.** A typical contingency for new construction is 10 percent, and 15 percent for renovations.

FOSTER AND MAINTAIN STRONG LEADERSHIP.

- **Have strong leadership in place from the beginning.** Operating a facility during a period of significant change and uncertainty requires strong leadership. This applies to management, the board, the building committee, and any other key players.
- **Avoid changes in leadership during the project process.** At a minimum a result will be loss of project momentum.
- **Leaders must prepare their organizations to persevere through setbacks.** The organizational leadership must prepare themselves and other stakeholders to confront the substantial time and energy commitment needed to complete a major project successfully. Further, the potential for something to go awry during a capital project is large and includes every aspect from funding to design to construction. Leadership must be prepared to stay the course.
- **Designate an ultimate decision maker but also provide opportunities for community-led decisions.** To ensure the project moves forward in a timely manner and on budget, and it meets museum goals, it is important someone is designated to make final decisions on a host of aesthetic and practical questions that will inevitably arise. At the same time, there will be particular decisions for which appropriate stakeholder involvement is vital, whether that means staff and board, facility users, funders, or the community at large. The engagement may be limited to giving input, or it may involve voting or otherwise having a say in the decision. Community expectations will help define the right roles. For example, one museum hired an architect in part to demonstrate a close connection with the community preference for local purchasing and hiring. Using appropriate decision processes is important so key groups feel ownership of the completed facility.
- **A board of directors can make a big difference in a museum's ability to adapt to changes during the life of a capital improvement project.** An involved, informed board can step in to assist the museum director, or can carry on the project in the event of a transition in directors.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK. BE PREPARED. DEVELOP ACHIEVABLE GOALS.

- **Learn from others.** As an example, the Anchorage Museum of History and Art building committee visited other museums that had undergone major expansions. They learned about the process, about specific technical aspects of the projects, and about lessons learned along the way. Now the Anchorage museum is poised to provide such advice for future expansions at other museums.
- **Demonstrate success of similar projects. For the Juneau-Douglas City Museum,** comments on an unsuccessful grant application included questions on the feasibility of installing a HVAC system in the museum’s building. In order to illustrate how such a system would work, the museum director did not only rely on hypothetical assumptions and projects. She contacted staff from another museum in Alaska, the Pratt Museum, with a similar HVAC system. She was then able to more effectively demonstrate the feasibility of utilizing such a system in a similar situation in the second, and ultimately successful, grant application.
- **Be prepared for the project to take a long time.** This is especially true of the important preliminary steps of fundraising, developing key partnerships and relationships, and fostering community input and involvement.
- **How you write your grant is how you have to spend your grant.** One important lesson museum staff learned through the application processes for multiple grants, is that it is advantageous, when possible, to write an application that allows for maximum flexibility on how grant money is spent. A grant agreement specific to one project does not allow for money to be spent on any other capital improvements on the to-do list if money is still available within the grant. A more broadly written agreement can allow for a variety of capital improvements to the building. This may be accomplished by including a list of possible improvements in the grant application. This approach must be balanced, however, with demonstrating focus on getting a defined set of tasks completed and demonstrating capacity to complete them.
- **Be prepared to move ahead quickly when funding is approved.** In that way, funding can better be spent on its intended purpose while the players who “had the dream” are still working on the project. This allows for continuity and for continued support of the project during construction, and future funding campaigns if they are necessary.
- **Listen to the end users.** Museum staff and others who use museum spaces have an important perspective to offer when designing museum infrastructure. Museum staff may be more knowledgeable about the practicalities and efficiencies of using museum spaces than outside design firms. Further, they will be the ones tasked with making the new facility work. They deserve a substantial voice in the design process.

- **The project will impact all staff and all museum operations somehow so prepare for this impact.** While major capital improvement project planning and implementation takes an immense amount of time from the museum director and, in many cases, is a full-time job in itself, the process also impacts all other museum staff in one way or another. In the case of the Pratt Museum project, the Museum Director, Development Director, Education Director, Curator, and Building Manager are all heavily involved with the project. It is important a museum try and anticipate and plan for these impacts on staff in order to manage museum operations outside of the project process.

In addition, staff burnout is an important consideration in a capital improvement process. The same is true for board members, core museum supporters, and donors. It is important to celebrate successes along the way and acknowledge the stress by finding ways support the extra work and pressure that comes from a project of this magnitude.

- **Develop a to-do list.** The list of possible capital improvements provided by an engineer's facility assessment gives the museum a starting point from which the board of directors can prioritize needs. The board can then develop a capital improvement plan that museum staff can implement.

- **Carefully weigh the benefits and costs of installing automated versus manual building systems.** While automated systems may seem attractive during the design process, it is important to consider what might happen if the system stops working and needs to be operated manually. Extra operating costs may be incurred to override automated systems that have not worked as envisioned.

PLAN AND STICK TO A STRONG COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS AND PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY.

- **Establish and maintain community partnerships.** Community partners, including elected representatives from the museum’s legislative district, are an important source of support for the museum. By maintaining an ongoing relationship with community partners and representatives, the museum is able to communicate its needs effectively, demonstrate the importance of its place in the community, and demonstrate community support for museum projects when applying for project funding.
- **Solicit community input.** Local community input into the museum renovation design process allowed for a museum design that fits with community needs.
- **Pay attention to the public process.** A well-managed public process was key to the success of the expansion. Opportunities for public involvement in planning and overseeing the expansion were advertised widely and articulated carefully. A designer and representative from the museum building committee attended the public meetings to provide accurate information about the project directly to the public. The list of people who view themselves as museum stakeholders was much wider and more diverse than museum staff had imagined, a sign of the importance of the museum to the community. While the process of gathering community input and gaining public support was a long one, museum staff consider it important to the success of the project.

LEVERAGE THE PROJECT INTO MORE THAN JUST A SUCCESSFUL BUILDING.

- **Publicize accomplishments in the community.** As an example, the Baranov Museum raised a significant amount of money to improve the Russian American Magazin. As the museum does not own the building, it would likely benefit the museum to let the community know about the amount of funding and effort it has put into the building, as well as the vast improvements and stewardship of Kodiak’s heritage that have been accomplished through this effort.
- **Maximize the gorgeous.** The museum has worked hard to stick to the nuts and bolts of their to-do list. That said, museum staff have felt it important to pick a few projects to “go gorgeous,” in other words spend the extra money to make a portion of the museum especially attractive. In this case, the museum chose to focus the extra money and effort on having really nice bathrooms.
- **When possible, interpret the renovation.** A renovation project presents a great opportunity to educate visitors when it can be linked with an element of the museum or the museum building that is worth highlighting. In the case of the Baranov Museum, the renovation was a tool to discuss the history of the Russian American Magazin and, by extension, other aspects of Kodiak’s history.
- **The value of pre-development planning extends beyond development of a project concept.** While a significant outcome from the pre-development work for the museum was a concept design for the museum space and identification of the operational needs to support such a design, the museum has relied on information developed through pre-development for a variety of other critical components in the project process. Pre-development results were used to secure funding for the project. The pre-development process itself was also useful in raising the level of awareness among museum staff and board members about the issues involved with the project. Such an awareness has allowed the staff and board members to make more informed decisions as the project changes over time.

OBTAIN AND USE PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE.

- **Obtain a professional evaluation of facility improvement possibilities.** Grant awards may pay for an engineer to take a look at opportunities, as well as limitations of the museum facility. With this professional insight, the museum can focus efforts on projects that were achievable.
- **Hire a project manager.** The Alaska Museum of Science and Nature director states she would never undertake a capital improvement project without a good, carefully hired, project manager. Ultimately, a project manager can save the museum time and money because the manager knows the construction business, can plan correctly for projects, and helps write contracts in the best interest of the museum. Ultimately, the museum hires the project manager's experience in the design and construction industry.
- **Hire an exhibit designer.**