



FINAL LONG-RANGE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE NEW COMIC-CON MUSEUM WILL BE A PLACE

WHERE AUDIENCES CAN CONNECT WITH THE MAGIC OF COMIC-CON YEAR-ROUND. IT WILL BE A PLACE WHERE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER TO ENJOY, SHARE, AND LEARN ABOUT COMICS AND RELATED POPULAR ART FORMS. IT WILL FEATURE A DYNAMIC COLLECTION OF EXPERIENCES THAT CULTIVATE THE IMAGINATION. CONNECT AUDIENCES WITH THE JOY OF CREATIVITY AND CELEBRATE THE PASSION AND ENTHUSIASM OF FANS AND CREATORS ALIKE.

THE NEW COMIC-CON MUSEUM WILL HAVE...

RICH **EXPERIENCES**

Through programs and exhibits, the Museum will allow anyone to connect with Comic-Con and its culture at any time.

Comic-Con International (CCI), which is also known as Comic-Con, has become part of the cultural fabric of San Diego and succeeds in turning large parts of the city into a hub of creative participation during the annual convention. The richness and depth of programming offered during the event, provides immense value to the local San Diego community, as well as the larger creative and fan communities as a whole. The Comic-Con Museum has emerged in response to the limitations of time and capacity experienced by the event. Once open the Museum will expand CCI's impact, strengthening its presence in the community and increasing its accessibility by offering programs and experiences that are within reach of participants throughout the year.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Through onsite offerings and outreach programs the Museum will help educators to design and implement educational programs that inspire creativity.

SOCIAL **ACTIVITIES**

A community center, where diverse groups can celebrate their shared passions, creating a home for fandom.





ABOUT COMIC-CON/SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION



Comic-Con International (CCI), also known as Comic-Con, is the world's premier pop culture event. It is a division of the San Diego Comic Convention, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. From modest beginnings in 1970, Comic-Con has become the most influential pop culture event in the world. Its scope covers all major aspects of modern fan culture including comics, TV, film, animation, manga, literature, toys, collectibles, cosplay, board games, video games, esports, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality. Annually, the **San Diego Comic Convention** is focused on:

EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

A core of Comic-Con's work is using the educational power of popular culture to engage learners of all ages. We accomplish this through educational and academic panels, seminars and programs as well as graphic novel clubs, conferences for teachers and librarians, seminars, how-to classes and other events.

WORLD CLASS EVENTS

Each year, we put on two large-scale convention events that blend education and entertainment in San Diego (Comic-Con) and Anaheim (WonderCon). In 2019, Comic-Con celebrated its 50th convention with nearly 2,000 programs and panels, including hands-on workshops, academic presentations, costuming competitions, art shows, portfolio reviews and more.

ARTS PROMOTION

Comic-Con celebrates the popular arts by raising their visibility and public awareness in an effort to fuel creativity, imagination, and innovation. Examples include, the annual Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards, the Comic-Con Independent Film Festival, Artists' Alley (showcasing original works by artists at the convention) and Artist Portfolio Reviews (where up-and-coming artists are paired with experts to gain career guidance).

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Giving back is of the utmost importance to Comic-Con. We work with key stakeholders to strengthen our community through blood drives, charitable donations, and training more than 8,000 event volunteers annually.

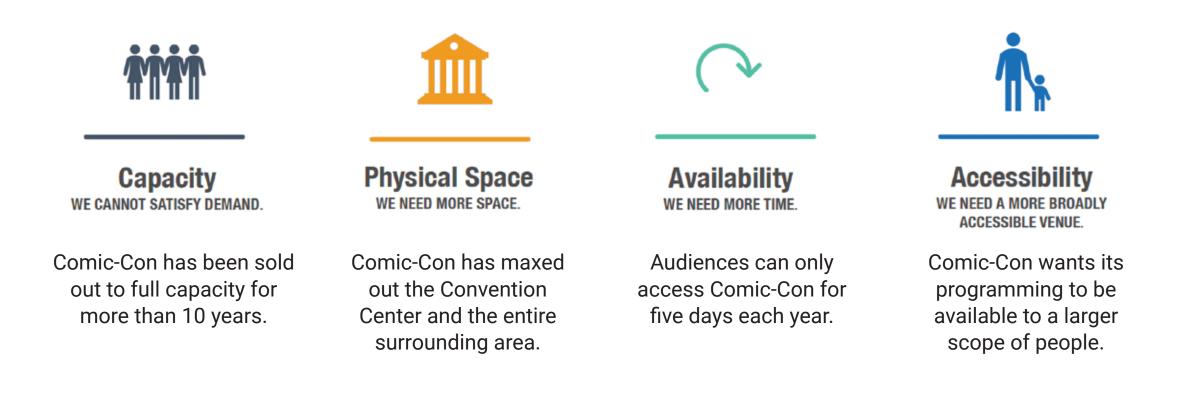




COMIC-CON MUSEUM

COMIC-CON MUSEUM · WHY THIS, WHY NOW?

In 2017, the City of San Diego offered the opportunity for a year-round facility in Balboa Park, the cultural heart of San Diego. Already home to 17 museums, galleries, and theaters, the Park welcomes more than 20 million visitors per year. A long-term lease was initiated on the 68,000 square foot Federal Building.



The opportunity for a Comic-Con Museum arises out of a combination of fan desires, institutional needs, latent capacity, and the value the project brings to the Comic-Con community, Balboa Park and San Diego.



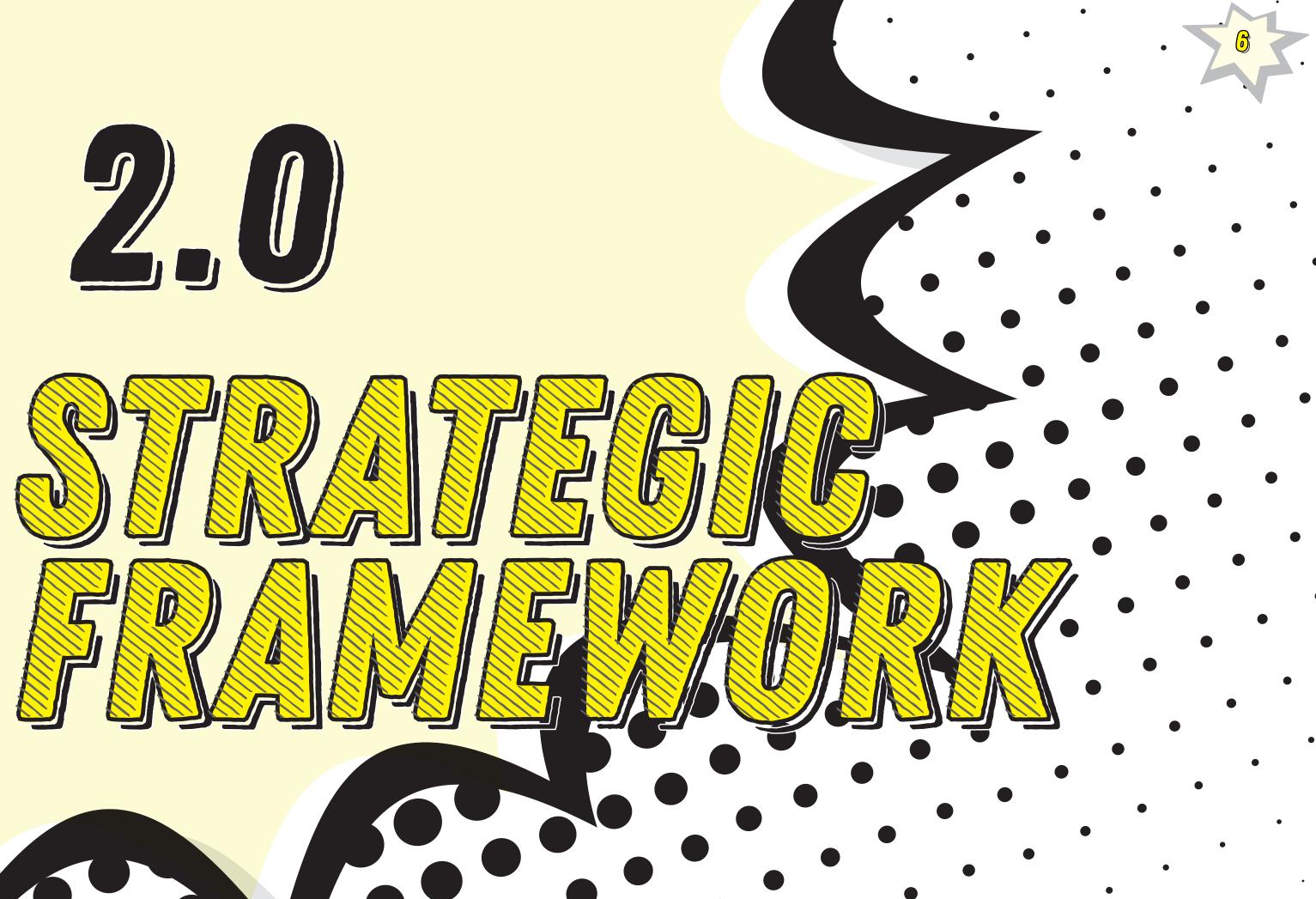


Education WE NEED TO EXPAND BEYOND THE CONVENTION.

New, innovative approaches to education are in high demand. Comic-Con aims to expand offerings beyond the annual convention.

COMIC-CON & MUSEUM





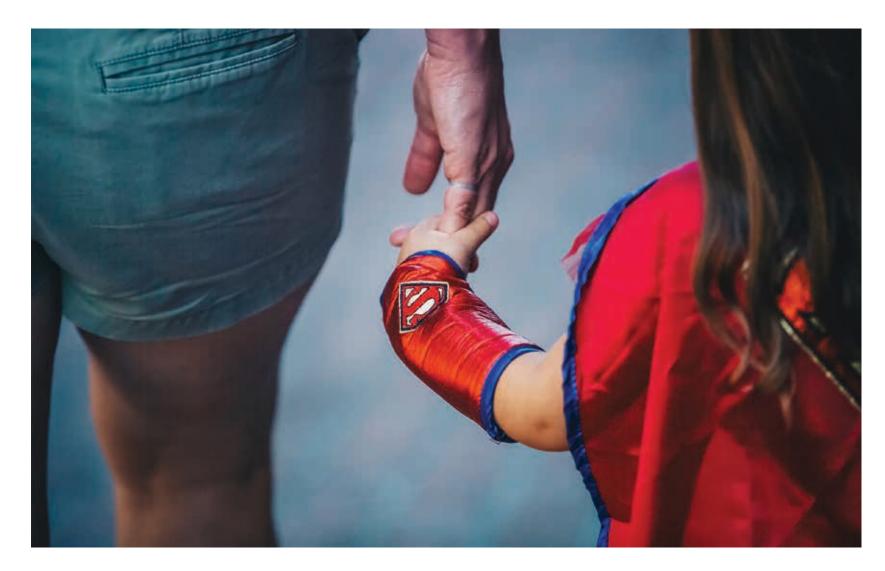
MISSION

The SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION is a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation organized for charitable purposes and dedicated to creating the general public's awareness of and appreciation for comics and related popular art forms, including participation in and support of public presentations, conventions, exhibits, museums and other public outreach activities which celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture.

"Creating general public awareness of and appreciation for comics and related popular art forms, including participation in and support of public presentations, conventions, exhibits, museums and other public outreach activities which celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture."

The Comic-Con Museum celebrates the passion, creativity and imagination that drives popular culture, and endeavors to:

- · Build awareness and appreciation for the art forms that communicate popular culture,
- Provide a platform for fans to express their passions,
- Communicate and celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of the creators and their creations to popular arts and culture.
- Provide a social setting for experiencing and expressing our shared mythologies, and
- Leverage popular culture to support the education of a new generation of creators.





VISION

The vision for the Comic-Con Museum describes the impact of the facility on the larger world in which it exists and operates. Elements of the vision are aspirational and reflect goals for the future, as well as ongoing project development.

THE COMIC-CON MUSEUM'S VISION IS TO:

- Serve as a pop culture focal point, enhancing the ways San Diego celebrates its unique place in the popular culture landscape.
- Thrive as a world-class attraction and gateway to art, culture, and life-long learning for San Diego residents and visiting tourists.
- Enhance the economic strength of the community.
- Become a sustainable model for equitable and ٠ environmentally-sound community service through its practices and offerings.





COMIC:CON SMUSEUM

VALUES

THE VALUES expressed in this document reflect the core beliefs of San Diego Comic Convention and the Museum. They are critical in developing the kind of space outlined by our Mission and Values. They will also guide the way that people engage with the Museum and treat one another once it opens. These values will be shared by the institution, its stakeholders, staff and volunteers alike. They will also be evident to visitors in each and every offering put forth by the Museum.







ACCESS

CCM is a place where everything is made to be accessible. Intentionally placed within reach-physically, intellectually, and financially.

EQUITY

CCM will treat its diverse audiences fairly. Equity is being equivalent without sameness. Everyone has an equal opportunity to get what they need based on where they are and where they want to go, taking into account their physical, intellectual, and financial abilities.

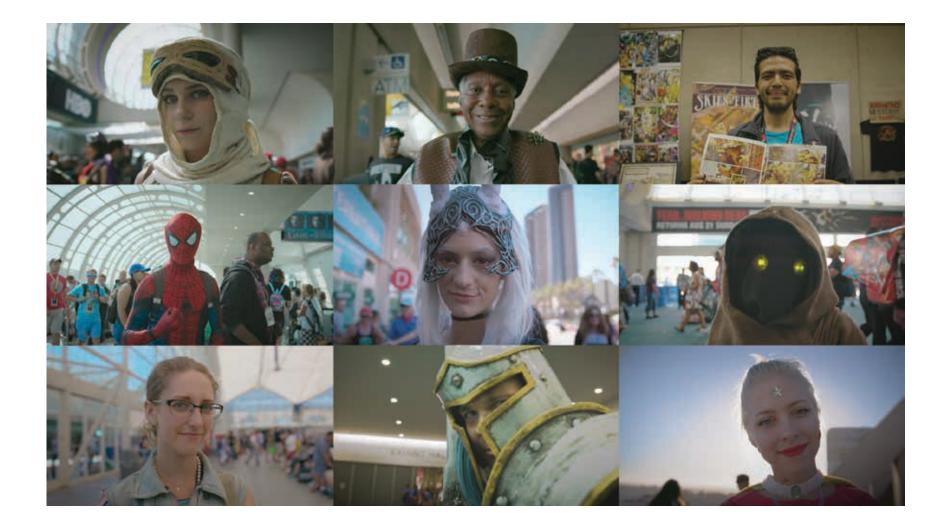
INCLUSION

CCM embraces diversity of all types, and is a place where the audience has a voice and a sense of authorship. The Museum will actively seek to provide opportunities for engagement to all people.

SCOPE

Traditionally a museum's scope is an opportunity to outline the boundaries of its interest in a given subject matter. Because it is the ambition of the Comic-Con Museum to be a **<u>PARTICIPATORY MUSEUM</u>** of popular culture, the role of defining the scope of collections and exhibits actually rests within the larger community. This allows the definition of pop culture to evolve in response to emerging trends, as part of a dialogue between audience and institution.

That is not to suggest that this growth and development is unguided. A key consideration for content inclusion at the Museum will be something likely to be found at Comic-Con. Another key consideration will be how a given subject matter area, or genre, empowers visitors to connect with one another, to gather, share, celebrate, learn and create. Content will also be evaluated based on the degree to which it may serve as a point of connection to pop culture, or how interesting and meaningful it will be to the Museum's audience. Content will also be shaped to offer unique perspectives as well as opportunities to engage and explore, while discovering something new.





COMIC-CON MUSEUM

PLANNING RESPONSE: A PROGRAM-DRIVEN PLACE

Programming allows museums to breathe life and vibrancy into a space. It provides an opportunity to include different audiences who align around different interests. Programming is one of the great strengths of a Comic-Con convention. A robust schedule runs throughout the event and showcases everything from theatrical announcements to historical retrospectives, and even hands-on fashion industry programs for young people. The Comic-Con Museum will bring to life additional programs that reflect this quality standard and introduce new types of offerings not limited by boundaries of the Convention Center space.

Programming will become the Museum's principle mechanism for engagement with the San Diego area education ecosystem and will be the engine that fulfills the Museum's commitment to lifelong learning. It also will create an experience that is dynamic enough to respond to changing interests and emerging industry trends.

<u>ADDRESSING OUR LIMITATIONS</u>

Part of the magic of Comic-Con is the enormous spectrum of what can be found at the convention. If it exists in the world of pop culture, you can find it at the convention somewhere. Since this barely fits into 1.5 million square feet of Convention Center, it will be difficult to translate into a 68,000 square foot Museum environment. However the Comic-Con convention is limited by time since it is open for only four and one half days every year. The Museum, in contrast, will have 52-weeks of open hours available including its non-traditional opening hours.

Programming is the tool that the Museum will use to address the breadth and depth of pop culture, since events and occurrences will be spread throughout the year. It will allow each element of the subject matter its own space to become a point of emphasis, to be celebrated and to be elevated.

COMMUNITY NOT COLLECTION

This kind of program-intensive approach will drive routine repeat visitation, since it is regularly seen at other institutions within the Park, such as the Fleet Science Center. This kind of repeat visitation will allow the Museum to develop a community of supporters and participants who are engaged with the Museum and its mission.

CCM will focus on sustainably growing this community and applying the resources to allow it to thrive, with the Museum existing at its epicenter.



COMIC:CON & MUSEUM

PLANNING RESPONSE: AN ONLINE MUSEUM

<u>A SPACE FOR INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT</u>

An analysis of the survey responses and audience segments, when positioned alongside the social media follower base for Comic-Con, reveals another unique opportunity for the Comic-Con Museum. It reveals an opportunity to translate one-of-a-kind experiences into the digital space, creating an accessible platform where people can receive a CCM experience from anywhere in the world—an Online Museum. This places world-class programming at the fingertips of aspiring artists, creators and fans across the globe.

The Online Museum will bring to life elements of our mission for millions who might not be able to travel to San Diego, and provide an additive pre- or post-visit experience for those who can. It will extend beyond conventional online exhibits and feature photographs of items found in the Museum. The Online Museum space will enable users to: view live streams of programs ongoing in the Museum, participate by asking questions during Q&A segments and access past recorded programs.

SUPPORTING EDUCATORS

The Online Museum will also become a space where resources for teachers will be archived and made available. It will allow for the use of pop culture in classrooms or for field trips to the space without ever leaving school.

Geography will not limit participation in the Comic-Con Museum.





94,850

ONLINE FOLLOWERS TUNED IN TO BOB ROSS PROGRAM DURING 2019 POP-UP MUSEUM



PLANNING RESPONSE: A NEW KIND OF PARTICIPATORY SPACE

<u>VOICE OF THE FANS</u>

When analyzing the Comic-Con event, it is clear that the voice of the fans, and the role they play in shaping the convention and its experiences, is one of the organization's greatest resources. It has been an important key to Comic-Con's success and continued growth over the years.

With such a passionate and engaged fan base, it has been apparent since the earliest days of the project that fans would play a role in shaping the visitor experience at the Comic-Con Museum. The Museum team has conducted surveys as well as brainstorming activities to help understand how broad the world of pop culture is, as well as how much knowledge and passion fans bring to the table relative to their interests.

INVITING NEW VOICES INTO THE PROJECT

Fan input has been used to shape this document. Going forward, the Comic-Con Museum will continue to seek these diverse voices and perspectives to shape experiences, exhibits and programs. This idea of "Fan Sourcing" will create a truly inclusive space that is uniquely participatory.

<u>FAN SOURCING IN PRACTICE</u>

Empowering fans is a compelling idea, but translating it into practice poses a unique set of challenges. As part of its operating model, the Comic-Con Museum will invite fans to present collections, interpret materials and to help design displays. Subsequently, resources traditionally assigned to collections development and management, will instead be assigned to a facilitation and fabrication team mandated to bring these visions to life. The depth of knowledge and breadth of passion that our fan base feels for the diverse universe of pop culture is more than we could ever ask for from a limited team of professional curators, so why not invite them into the process?

To effectively and successfully implement this approach, the Museum will need to develop a new set of methodologies to turn exhibit and experience design into a transparent process and invite members of the community into it. In-house processes will need to be prototyped and tested for planning and organizing people, infrastructure, communication and the material components of displays, individual exhibits and entire exhibitions. This will enable the Museum to retain oversight of the design process to enable effective facilitation, and to ensure a safe, stable platform for fans to share their ideas.

To bring the vision of Fan Sourcing to life, the Museum team has been actively observing forces within the private sector that have created similar avenues for engagement. Systems like Lego Ideas, and Threadless have been carefully evaluated. They have proven that an online portal can empower an audience to share their ideas, collaborate and ultimately design something with input from a brand-conscious organization. This is a very logical extension of the proposed Online Museum, as each submitted piece of content would continue to exist on the platform as an exhibit in its own right.

Fan Sourcing will be one of the things that defines the Comic-Con Museum, separating it from other museums that exist in the pop culture space. It will produce a more accessible museum, and a more dynamic space that is responsive to current emerging interests and enthusiasms.

13,000 pieces of feedback were gathered during Comic-Con 2018, reflecting submissions from fans relating to experiences, exhibits and programs they would want to see in the Museum.

COMIC-CON MUSEUM

A MUSEUM LIKE NO OTHER

With consideration given to the audience of visitors and even non-local users of the Museum, it will operate at these three levels of delivery to best meet the needs and interests of its diverse audiences. By keeping the Museum open at night, it can increase its impact and offer a greater variety of experiences within its walls. By extending its reach online, the Museum can also spread its impact to a wider area and larger number of people.



MUSEUM BY DAY A DYNAMIC, EDUCATIONAL DESTINATION

- A unique immersive environment for tourists, families and students
- Regulary rotating exhibits
- Hands-on activities and workshops



MUSEUM BY NIGHT A UNIQUE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

- Pop culture community hub
- Dynamic space for special events
- A place to eat, drink, create and play
- Interactive movie nights, music, classes, gaming and more



MUSEUM AT LARGE VIRTUALLY ACCESSIBLE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

- programming

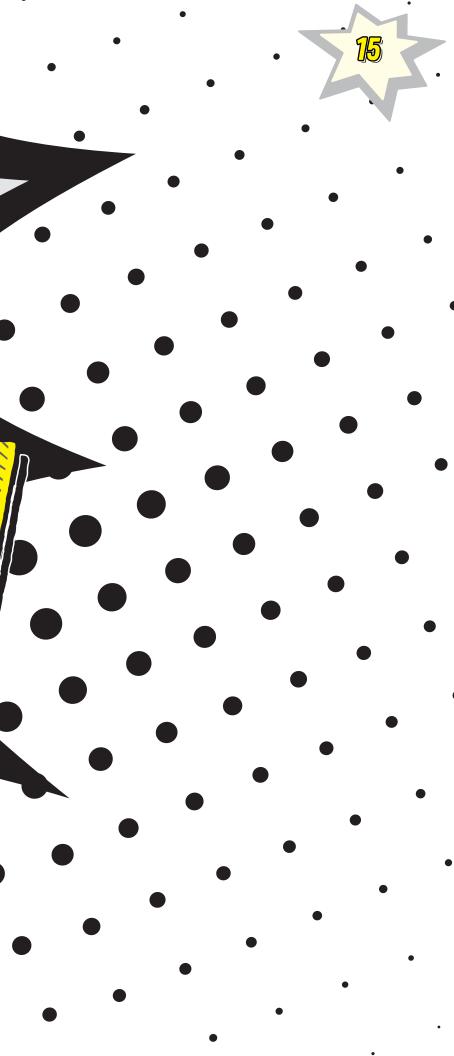


• Live streams of Museum programs Digital extensions of Museum education

• Engagement with global fan community to shape Museum content and programming







EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

INSPIRE A LOVE OF LEARNING

In addition to consulting fans and evaluating their needs and expectations for the Comic-Con Museum, various educators around the region have also been a part of a consultative process. Working with the San Diego County Office of Education as well as CultureThrive, the Museum has evaluated the ways in which pop culture can be used as a learning device, aimed at impacting students and educators alike.

Though initial conversations with educators suggested that the areas for impact were vast with many specific opportunities to impact individual classrooms, the common thread of using pop culture to connect audiences to the joy of learning emerged routinely across disciplines as well as ages. At a philosophical level Education Programs offered by the Museum will seek to instill a love of learning. Each specific program offering will use pop culture to create access points for all learners allowing them to be engaged and excited about the subject matter, which connects back to state or national standards for educators.

The lasting behavior change this philosophy seeks to drive, is the creation of life-long learners, and as such, education programs at the Comic-Con Museum will not be exclusively youth focused; there will be something on offer for learners of all ages or abilities.



AREAS OF EMPHASIS

In addition to inspiring a love of learning in audiences, the Comic-Con Museum's education programs will also reinforce key aspects of the Museum's mission. Programs will be designed to fuel passion, explore imagination and empower creativity and self expression among participants. All of our offerings will also reflect our core values of Access, Equity and Inclusion.

- **1. Literacy** Improving literacy rates using comics and graphic novels to create a lifelong love of reading.
- 2. Visual and Performing Arts Encouraging creative development and selfexpression through project-based learning opportunities.
- **3. STEAM** Inspiring the next generation of innovators through subjects like science, technology, engineering, art and math including robotics, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality.
- **4. Career Readiness** Equipping students with the skills to succeed in the creative industries, which represent approximately 10% of all California jobs.

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EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

BREADTH OF IMPACT

Because pop culture commands the breadth of interest that it does, it has the potential to be impactful in different segments of the education landscape. To maximize the Museum's footprint and its opportunity to contribute to the larger world, it will emphasize continuing education programs for teachers, along with content delivered directly to students. To broaden the Museum's impact in a geographic sense, distance learning capabilities are included in the plan to ensure that the quality educational offerings developed by the Museum are accessible to educators across the country.

Our goal is to make the Museum and its programs accessible to all visitors and participants. We will offer resources for those with sensory sensitivities or those who are affected by autism spectrum disorders. Before coming to the Museum, visitors will be able to download and review our Sensory Guides and other resources designed to make the experience more enjoyable.

The Museum will also work to ensure that children and adults with disabilities are able to fully participate in education programs. The education staff will be trained to work with visitors to make necessary accommodations on a case-by-case basis.





STAYING CURRENT

One challenge consistently faced by museums is how to keep educational offerings current and responsive to evolving needs in classrooms and across the education system. The Museum will retain educators who have supported the development of initial program offerings as the core of an Educator Advisory Committee.

- Participating educators will periodically re-evaluate the Museum's place within the education ecosystem of San Diego County, and pre-evaluate exhibits, experiences and programs to support the development of education materials such as curriculum and supporting classroom activities.
- Regular meetings will be held at the Museum.
- Principal annual responsibility is to determine the areas of programmatic emphasis for the coming year.

LONG-RANGE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





PROGRAM OFFERINGS



FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be a core way for students to experience the Museum.

- Booked through an online reservations system.
- Special Exhibit and program tie-ins.
- Self-guided, with specific chaperone ratios.
- Themed packages to ease the teacher workload surrounding field trip planning.
- Special programs funded by grants/philanthropy to help Title 1 schools visit the Museum.

Supporting the field trip will be curriculum offered online. This will connect the Museum's content to K-12 State Standards and will include knowledge hunts to connect classroom learning and the Museum experience, vocabulary words, extension activities, hands-on experiences, cooperative learning, critical thinking, research and cross-curricular lessons so that learning extends beyond the day of the visit.

STUDENT LABS

Programs run by the education staff at the Museum, designed to connect with our four areas of programmatic emphasis.

- Occupy studio classroom spaces within the Museum depending on the nature of the class.
- Created with state education standards in mind.
- Offered as extensions to field trips, or as independent programs.
- They are also the programs that can be most easily adapted for distance learning, and in-school outreach.
- Offers ability for homeschool educators to reserve.







3.0 EDUCATION

PROGRAM OFFERINGS



OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Outreach Programs multiply the impact of the Museum beyond its walls and reduce barriers of participation caused by time or transportation costs. They include both distance learning systems, and physical outreach, where museum educators visit the classroom and bring a little bit of the magic of the Museum with them. Programs will feature content pulled from Student Labs as well as bespoke outreach programs.

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

Designed to support teachers and educators nationwide, our Educator resources will include online access to pop culture based curriculum as well as lesson plans. In addition, the Museum will offer a comprehensive system of Educator workshops, available both in-person and remotely through distance learning systems. These workshops are designed to allow teachers themselves to get hands-on experience with activities that they can take directly back to the classroom.

Educator Exhibit Previews and Late Nights will also be on offer during which educators will be able to enjoy an after hours Museum experience designed just for them. These fun-filled events may include classroom activity demonstrations, food and beverage as well as behind-the-scenes tours. Educator Late Nights, you will enjoy the Museum after hours as you participate in an experience designed specifically for Educators. In each fun-filled evening you will work on activities to use in your classroom, have a catered dinner, and tour exhibits. Additional educator resources may include:

- Professional Development Credit.
- Enhanced classroom strategies with ready-to-implement activities and techniques as well as with dynamic presenters and engaging sessions.
- **Example Program (Studio A)** Educator Maker Labs are intended to engage learners in problem-based, open-ended activities that naturally encourage highlevel learning, cooperation and problem-solving. Participants will learn a number of new skills and then use those skills in a group setting to solve challenges related to standards based objectives. At the end of each workshop, participants will receive a kit of materials to take back to the classroom to use in their own Maker Lab.

3.0 EDUCATION

PROGRAM OFFERINGS



FAMILY EDUCATION EVENTS

Throughout the year the Museum will offer a number of family focused education programs as pop-ups connected with special events, or park-wide celebrations. Museum Educators will have special themed offerings for family groups connecting with events like:

- Earth Day
- Free Comic Book Day
- 24-Hour Comics Day
- December Nights
- Banned Book Week
- Black History Month
- Women's History Month

LATE NIGHT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Late Night Programs will provide participants with an opportunity to experience the Comic-Con Museum after closing! Enjoy a fun-filled evening exploring the Museum by flashlight, and participating in hands-on volunteer facilitated activities. Lab and Outreach Programs, in addition to films (selected from a catalog) will be available as Add-Ons to any Late Night Programs.

Late Night Program Examples

- Dinner
- Hands-on activities with Museum educators
- Photo scavenger hunt in one of our exhibit halls
- Evening snack
- Late night show in the Theater

PANEL PROGRAMS & DISTINGUISHED LECTURES

The Comic-Con Museum will create programs where industry professionals, fans and creators are invited to discuss their work, art and experiences in pop culture. Throughout the year programs may enhance an audience's understanding of a current or upcoming exhibition, provide new perspectives on captivating topics, or address current trends in the industry.







PROGRAM OFFERINGS

NON-SCHOOL GROUP FOCUSED OFFERINGS

The core philosophy of Merit Badges is centrally aligned with our strategic outlook on education, that learning new skills should be fun. Merit Badge classes will be available on-demand to area scout groups as well as during the day on Spring and Summer Breaks and weekends during the school year. Available as daytime classes during the Spring and Summer Breaks, and as weekend offerings during the school year, Merit Badge classes will also be available on-demand to area Scout groups. Some of the Badges we will offer through this program may include:

- Comics Badge
- Animation Badge
- Cinematography Badge
- Art Merit Badge

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Perfect for budding artists and scientists, Birthday Party offerings at the Comic-Con Museum will be arranged around themes which can be selected by the parents. This theme will then impact the decor provided by the Museum, as well as the hands-on activity offered during the party, and which gallery is toured as part of the celebration.

GRAPHIC NOVEL BOOK CLUBS

With specific variants developed to support both youth and adult participation, the Museum will support the existing Comic-Con Graphic Novel Book Clubs expanding opportunities to host them in Balboa Park. Museum support of these clubs will include:

- · Developing the necessary infrastructure to allow clubs to expand outside the San Diego area.
- Creating a system of rules and written policy guides to support facilitators.
- Integration of distance learning technology to allow more direct interaction between creators and clubs.







PROGRAM OFFERINGS

SUMMER CAMP (NON-RESIDENTIAL)

These non-residential offerings are week-long, hands-on summer camps featuring science and art activities for youth and adults. Programming focuses will evolve in response to trends in pop culture. Examples of Camp Adventures for kids between the ages of 6 and 12 could include:

- Movie Monster Maker Study. Featuring vintage horror and sci-fi films, and the great pop culture monsters, campers will design and develop their own monsters and direct their own stop-motion monster flick. Experiment with movie make-up and take home a kit to use on friends.
- Science of Superheroes. Discover the real science behind our favorite superheroes. How does science make things appear invisible? Where does super strength come from? What powers would you give a superhero? Campers will develop their own superhero to star in a comic book of their own creation.
- Superheroes in Training. Campers will become a superhero of their own making. They'll develop powers, a persona and learn how to combine powers with the other campers to do good. Create a costume, and venture into Balboa Park to help save the world.

- Raiders of the Lost Artifacts. Follow in the footsteps of Lara Croft, Indiana Jones and Nathan Drake as campers explore ancient civilizations, and get their hands-on artifacts and idols from antiquity. Campers will hone their archeology skills, explore neighboring museums in Balboa Park, and equip themselves with a bag of archaeology tools.
- Steampunk Tinker Time. Don't Try This at Home... Try it at the Museum Instead! Build working contraptions like a lamp, and a device for pendulum art. Learn how to make copper tape circuits using a variety of materials and hand-tools. Join us to tinker and invent, persist and problem-solve.

SPRING/WINTER BREAK MINI-CAMPS

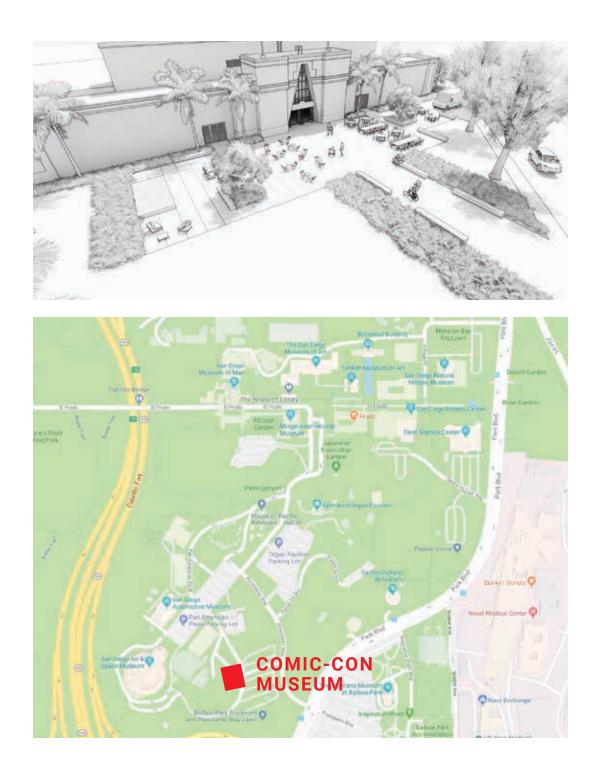
Adapting the Camp Model to fit within the timeline of Winter Break and Spring Break helps the Museum cater to those who are in year round schools. The selection of programs offered will be consistent with the quantity and quality of the Non-Residential Summer offerings.







A HOME FOR THE COMIC-CON MUSEUM



In 2017, the City of San Diego offered Comic-Con the opportunity for a year-round facility in Balboa Park, the cultural heart of San Diego. Already home to more than 17 Museums, galleries, and theaters, the Park welcomes over 20 million visitors each year. It is the ideal environment to situate a new museum development as the existing foot traffic and audience base are conditioned to seek out cultural, educational and experiential offerings.

Although preliminary consideration had been given to a Comic-Con Museum, the organization's leadership saw the building as a major opportunity to expand on its mission, while deepening its impact and connection to the community through such a space. Comic-Con subsequently entered a long-term, rent-free lease on the 68,000 square foot building. In place of rent, the Comic-Con Museum will offer free admission to the citizens of San Diego as part of a park-wide rotation known as "Free Tuesdays."

CONNECTING WITH THE BALBOA PARK COMMUNITY

The City of San Diego's early commitment of the building to this project has been a key breakthrough for the Comic-Con Museum. In addition to saving tens of millions of dollars in construction costs to create a similar facility, the availability of the space has allowed the building to shape the vision for the project, helping the team explore the art of the possible.

Early notions of what the Comic-Con Museum could be have expanded. The scale of the building and its location in Balboa Park have increased attendance projections. Even today, the space allows for prototype programs and installations to be tested in support of this plan.

It has also allowed the Comic-Con Museum to integrate with a supportive community of institutions and cultural partners located within the Park, developing a deeper understanding of what it takes to operate as part of the park landscape in a sustainable way.

COMIC-CON & MUSEUM

THE FEDERAL BUILDING





"The Federal Building in the Palisades section of Balboa Park was constructed in nine weeks after the U.S. Congress had approved a bill March 7, 1935 authorizing construction of an exhibit building for \$125,000 with another \$225,000 for presentation of exhibits at the California Pacific International Exposition to be held in Balboa Park beginning May 29, 1935." **Richard Amero**

Dating from 1935, the building that will house the Comic-Con Museum is known as the Federal Building. It is situated in the Palisades area of Balboa Park, a 1,200-acre urban park located adjacent to downtown San Diego. Originally constructed as an exhibit hall to house U.S. Government Exhibits during the California Pacific International Exposition, the second of Balboa Park's two major Expos, the building is defined by its Maya Revival front facade.

Unlike the majority of the buildings in the park, and particularly its neighbors in the Palisades. the Federal Building was not intended as a temporary structure, as it was originally constructed with concrete walls and steel roof trusses. It was thought that after housing the The National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, the U.S. Army and Navy, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Treasury, the U.S. Postal Service, the U.S. Labor Department, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Institution that the building might become a civic theater, or a convention center for the City of San Diego.

Serving a variety of roles over the decades-from Naval Barracks for 1,400 men during World War II to Badminton Headquarters-the building was modernized in the mid-1990's to house the Hall of Champions, a multi-sport museum, that operated inside the building until June 2017. It was during this modernization that the upper floor, basement, elevator, HVAC and earthquake mitigation systems were added.

Although the building itself is not listed as a historic structure, it, and more specifically its front facade, are considered a part of the National Historic Landmark and National Historic Landmark District status granted to Balboa Park in 1977. Balboa Park is also on the National Register of Historic Places.



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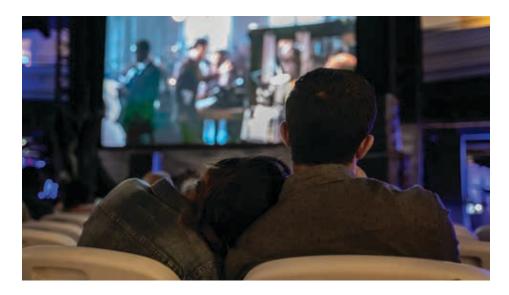
MAIN PROGRAMMATIC AREAS OF THE BUILDING

The main programmatic areas of the project have been organized under the three visitor experience modalities listed below. The resulting space planning studies on the following pages prioritize and optimize the siting of these program functions, while also taking into account the necessary back-of-house spaces that are required to run a facility of this scale. Considerations for space planning included visitor flow and access, functional adjacencies, spatial characteristics and existing infrastructure.



EXHIBITION & EXPLORATION SPACES

With more than 25,000 square feet of space in the plan earmarked for exhibitions, the public will have an opportunity to engage in meaningful experiences and explorations within a dynamic, and continually refreshed space, that will host top quality exhibits, art shows, activations, and multimedia installations.



PROGRAM & EVENT SPACES

With multiple spaces that can be converted into program venues-ranging in capacity from 50 to 500 participants-programming will be at the heart of how many people will experience the Comic-Con Museum. With flexible spaces, the Museum will be home to a yearround schedule of exciting programs and experiences, including panel programs, creator meet-and-greets, experiential cinema, watch parties, esports, cosplay shows, concerts and more.



EDUCATION & STUDIO SPACES

Situated within the Museum's Education Center. more than 6,000 square feet of space will be used to create spaces that will serve as a base for creative, activity-driven programs. The programs will use pop culture to promote a love of learning, rooted in standards based education and 21st Century skills. These classrooms will exist to serve area educators, community groups and Museum visitors seeking additional hands-on enrichment.

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5.0 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

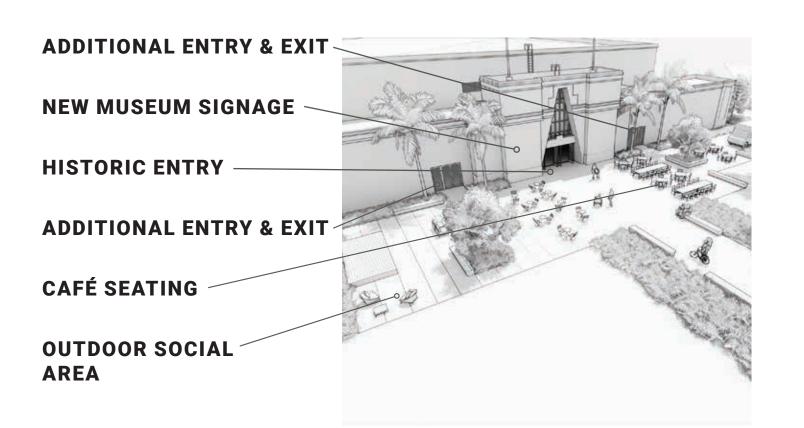
ENTRY EXPERIENCE







ENTRY EXPERIENCE





DESCRIPTION

A key part of the visitor experience is Comic-Con Museum's "front yard," its "face" to the world. The building facade and outdoor landscaped areas are a canvas for communicating the spirit and content of Comic-Con to arriving visitors and passersby. Video projection mapping and programmed lighting effects can bring the facade to life in the evening. During the day, the use of colorful banners and large format images will have a similar effect. Improvements to the outdoor landscaping provide additional activation areas for arriving visitors and special events, while preserving key historic elements of the entry forecourt and building exterior.

MAIN ELEMENTS

- Branded, monumental signage
- Enhanced historic forecourt and an outdoor area
- Additional queuing and arrival infrastructure, including school bus loading and unloading areas
- Thematic video projection and programmed lighting effects for night-time experience and digital display above entry doors
- Outdoor café seating and themed retail pop-up displays
- Improved activation space that allows the area to be used during events and activities outside

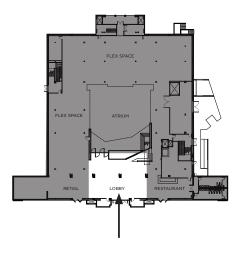
CONTENT

• Free Tuesday Activations, Seasonal Events, Performances, Book Fairs, Art Shows, Film Openings

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LOBBY EXPERIENCE







DESCRIPTION

As the primary welcome area for all visitors, the lobby experience reinforces visitors' sense of arrival and orients everyone to the physical and thematic organization of the Museum. It incorporates the functions typically found in such a space, as well as creating an exciting, branded entry experience. The presence of cosplay fulfills the expectations of fans and exhilarates newcomers. Partially interrupted sight-lines to large scale activities taking place in the Atrium accentuate the sense of excitement and anticipation.

MAIN EXPERIENCES

- Welcome desk with information and membership services
- Ticketing and entry control stations
- Access to retail, café and restrooms
- Large-scale digital messaging, conveying daily and upcoming program offerings

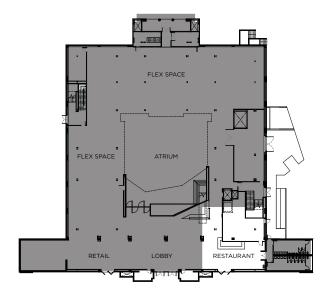
CONTENT

- Information on Exhibitions, Programs and Events
- Information on the Museum's Mission, Vision and Values
- Accessibility equipment that supports touring the overall space.
- Donor Recognition Wall

COMIC:CON MUSEUM

CAFÉ EXPERIENCE





DESCRIPTION

Food occupies a special place within the Museum operation, and is defined by its extended opening hours and immersive or experiential programming. The Comic-Con Museum Café will first and foremost offer quality food at reasonable prices during operational hours. While the kitchen space attached to the Museum Café is somewhat limited, the presence of an alcohol license means that cocktails and similar offerings might help anchor the Museum's dining experience. The Café will also supply items to cater special programs and events.

MAIN EXPERIENCES

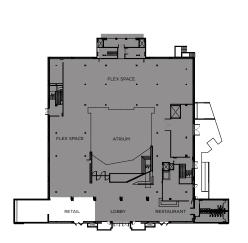
- Quality food and beverage offerings
- Affordable pricing
- Self service and specific high traffic offerings
- Themed food and beverage offerings
- Alcohol service



5.0 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

RETAIL EXPERIENCE







DESCRIPTION

The Comic-Con audience expects retail to be a key part of their visit, since it is a quintessential component of the Comic-Con experience. In addition to being a conventional and expected gift shop, there are other interests that the Comic-Con Museum retail space will need to address. These include collecting limited run merchandise, procuring unique items attached to favorite pop culture properties, and being among the first to secure a desired item.

MAIN EXPERIENCES

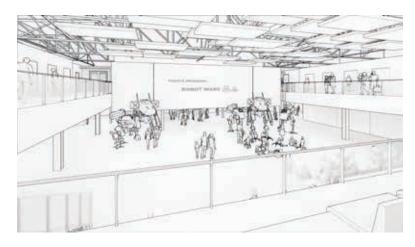
- Quality items
- Affordability ranges
- Exclusive merchandise ٠
- All within an intentionally designed retail experience

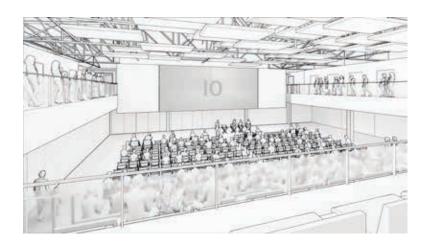
CONTENT

- Comics and graphic novels
- Collectibles
- Branded souvenirs
- Art
- Apparel



ATRIUM





Programming Mode Layout

Theater Mode Layout

Stage & Event Mode Layout

DESCRIPTION

The two-story central atrium is a space for multiple programming purposes. It features a large-scale video display, a performance sound and lighting system and it accommodates up to 500 seats.

FOUR MAIN EXPERIENCE MODALITIES

- **PROGRAMMING MODE** provides space for special activities and activations
- Multi-use <u>THEATER MODE</u> for video/experiential/immersive experiences
- **<u>STAGE MODE</u>** area for staging panels and seminars
- **EVENT MODE** provides space for performances and galas

THE SCREEN

A main feature of the Atrium is a large screen situated at the rear of the space. Here, dynamic cascades of images and information are used to create an engaging visual that draws people into the Museum from the lobby. When in use, the screen will:

- Provide programmatic flexibility and a tool-set for the creation of experiences unique to the Museum;
- Pull you in, creating an immersive space that is also a shared experience; and
- Preserve flexibility in the space activities.



• Preserve flexibility in the space for the Museum's special events and

COMIC-CON MUSEUM

ATRIUM • PROGRAMMING MODE

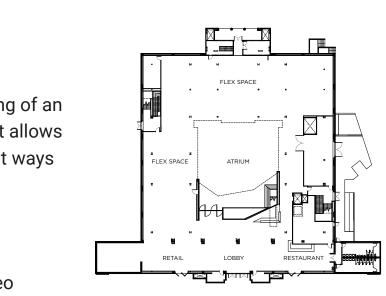


- + Daily Programming
- + Tabletop Gaming
- + Large-Scale Video Games
- + Mass Maker Space
- + Volunteer Guided Activities
- + Quick Draw Activity
- + Esports

POSSIBILITIES

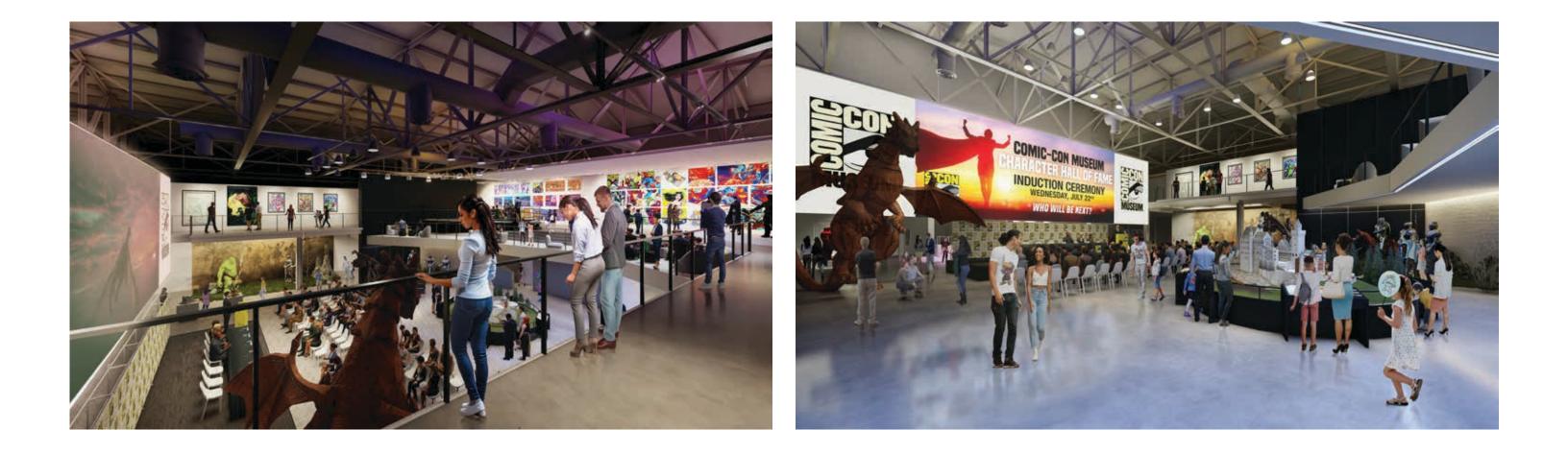
Programming Mode is the general daily configuration of the space consisting of an open floor plan where different activities can take place at different times. It allows volunteer- or employee-driven programs to bring the space to life in different ways around a structured schedule.

- As screens themselves are fixtures within the pop culture experience, the Atrium screen can be used to watch content, but also to experience video games etc. The area could be used for staging of retro or 8-bit video games, allowing people to play Pong, Tetris, or Mario with giant controllers.
- Quick Draw types of activities, similar to that at Comic-Con, would be a • great way for the screen to support an artist-in-residence program. The artist might be storyboarding, writing, or illustrating comics or cartoons with the engagement and participation of the crowd, all while his or her drawing pad is displayed on the screen behind the workstation.
- Recent studies have shown esports programs driving an increase in • student engagement and attendance, as well as higher test scores and overall scholastic performance. By outfitting the Comic-Con Museum with gaming devices, the Comic-Con Museum will be able to act as a hub for dozens of schools in the Southern California area to come together to learn, play and compete.





ATRIUM • PROGRAMMING VIEW



COMIC:CON & MUSEUM

5.0 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

ATRIUM • THEATER MODE

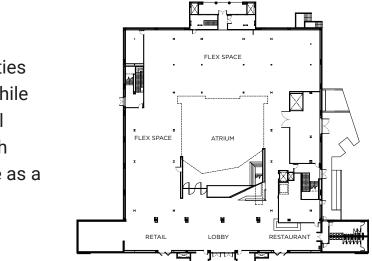


- + TV Watch Parties
- + Film Screenings & Premieres
- + Film Festivals
- + Experiential Theater
- + Immersive Theater
- + Mixers

<u>POSSIBILITIES</u>

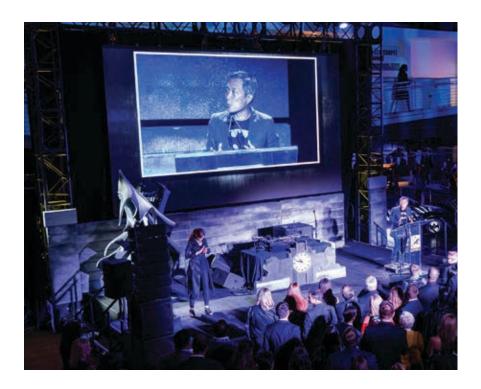
The Atrium, converted into a large theater for special screenings, watch parties and experiential events, allows up to 500 people to participate in an event while sitting in conventional chairs. It also has the flexibility to use unconventional seating for watch parties or experiential cinema events. Watching *Jaws*, with everyone sitting on beach chairs and inner tubes, is as possible in the space as a standing-room-only music event.

- The space provides for an open format performance venue, ideal for DJs or live bands during evening events or parties.
- The capacity and flexibility of this space combine to create unique cinematic experiences where visitors can view *Jurassic Park* while the screen is framed by the iconic park vehicles, or throw toast around during a *Rocky Horror Picture Show* screening.
- The space also allows for staging of unique performance art activities derived from the experiential cinema experience—building off of the screen and movie itself to create environments and atmosphere for the viewers using performers.



COMIC:CON MUSEUM

ATRIUM • STAGE & EVENT MODE



- + Music Events
- + Masquerade
- + Panel Programs
- + Presentations & Seminars
- + Commemorations
- + Award
- + Themed Food Festivals
- + Galas & Banquets
- + Building Rentals
- + Community Events
- + Launch Parties
- + Weddings

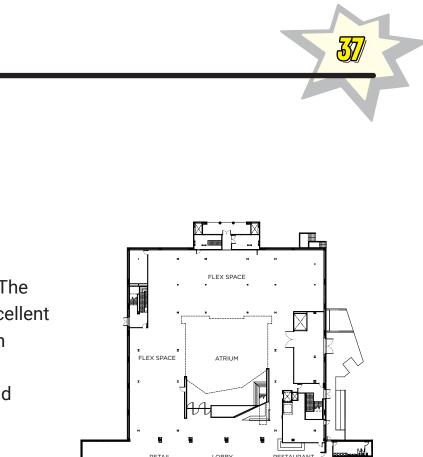
STAGE POSSIBILITIES

Comic-Con is famous the world over for its high-quality program offerings. The Atrium is designed to receive these kinds of activities, and to provide an excellent platform for communication directly with fans and audience members. With technology supporting the space, it will be possible for panel discussions to be viewed live through the Online Museum by thousands of people around the globe.

- The space could be easily converted for panel discussions and similar large-scale programming in the building, either during the convention or year-round. It would be ideal for hosting Q&As, as well as supporting creators who could introduce their works, films and more.
- The space would allow for live streams of popular panels during Comic-Con. People could also re-live their favorite panels from the past.
- It would also support regular Cosplay events, fashion shows and masquerades with a small stage build-out beneath the screen. This might be scheduled activity within the Cosplay community, or a graduation of sorts where people can showcase the creations they made in the Museum.

EVENT POSSIBILITIES

The Comic-Con Museum will be a sought-after venue for hosting community events and corporate rentals, in addition to hosting its own galas, banquets and themed food events. It could also serve as a venue for pop culture product launches, demonstrations, and screenings for video games, films and TV, comics, toys, collectibles and more.





ROTATING GALLERIES

Wrapping around three sides of the Atrium is a flexible space that can be used singularly or partitioned into several separate exhibit/activation spaces. The programming for these spaces can be driven by the fan-sourcing process, but will also feature rented blockbuster traveling exhibitions and industry activations.

TEMPORARY & ROTATING FUNCTIONALITY

- Movable partitions within the exhibition space provide flexibility to subdivide the gallery into separate smaller spaces as needed by the requirements of specific exhibit installations.
- Opportunity to extend the life cycle of popular activations following the annual convention.

FAN-SOURCED EXHIBITIONS

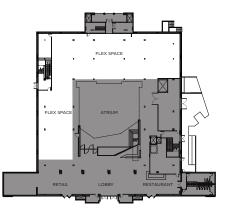
- Opportunity to work with fans, and other organizations to develop world-class exhibit content designed and fabricated in-house.
- Allows CCM to place fans at the center of the creative process, sharing their knowledge and collections.
- Suggestions for concepts already include: A Jack Kirby Retrospective, Comics during World War II, Robots in Science Fiction and The Rise of the Zombie.

BLOCKBUSTER TRAVELING EXHIBITIONS

- Opportunity to bring in national and international blockbuster exhibitions that celebrate passion, imagination and creativity.
- Exhibits produced by other companies and institutions that are self-contained experiences, possibly including: Marvel: Universe of Super Heroes, Star Wars Identities, Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds, Imagination Unlimited: The Jim Henson Exhibit, The Game of Thrones Touring Exhibition and Harry Potter, the Exhibition.

ACTIVATIONS

- Existing fan favorites could be installed, such as Blade Runner 2049, Mr. Robot, Adult Swim or Game of Thrones.
- Studios get to extend their impact, and reach to the Comic-Con audience, as well as influencers across San Diego.
- Space could be rented to creative third-party operations that run Virtual Reality programs.





5.0 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

ROTATING GALLERY EXAMPLE







THEATER LOBBY





DESCRIPTION

The Theater Lobby will serve as pre-function space for the Theater. During regular Museum operations it will provide queuing space for the Theater. When the Theater is operating for a special event or screening, this space becomes a reception area where lighting and a high-quality sound system will create a vibrant environment.

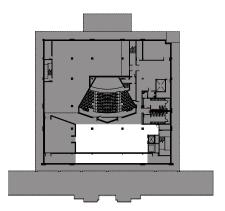
MAIN EXPERIENCES

- Flexible space for temporary shows relating to theater content or three-dimensional installations.
- Theater pre-show and mural

THE MURAL

- Addressing the history of Comic-Con in San Diego over the last 50 years, the Mural (a corollary to the piece developed by Sergio Aragones for the 40th anniversary book, this time showing the inside of the Convention Center) will serve as a center piece in the space.
- Sergio Aragones has expressed a willingness to create a special piece for the Museum for this purpose.
- Key people who have helped drive Comic-Con over the years can be represented within the mural.







THEATER

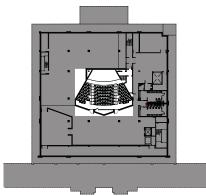


DESCRIPTION

The existing theater will be slightly expanded and enhanced both aesthetically and technically to function as a state of the art, 4K video theater and presentation space.

THEATER EXPERIENCES

- Feature video presentation
- Films and screenings
- Intimate panels and speaker series
- Small events and performances





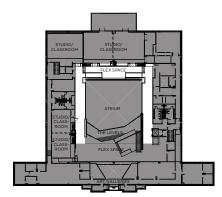


5.0 VISITOR EXPERIENCE

MEZZANINE GALLERY







The sides flanking the Mezzanine serve as gallery space. Here visitors can be struck by the bold, colorful graphic world of comics and pop culture. Macro-scale illustrations draw visitors in, enticing them to discover the multidimensional nature of the pop culture medium. The illustrations can be paired with interactive and free-standing displays that build visitor awareness of the visual language of pop culture, as well as increase understanding of the effort that underscores the creation of these influential and impactful works.

MAIN EXPERIENCES

- Dramatic, boldly colored macro-graphics
- Layered cutout graphics
- Freestanding graphic ribbon displays
- Interactive touchscreens
- Giant flipbooks



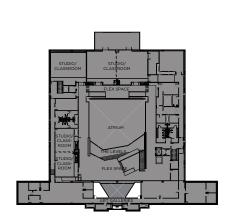


COMIC-CON SMUSEUM

ART GALLERIES







The Museum acknowledges the inspirational role of original artwork in the creative process, and seeks to elevate these works by isolating them from the ambient noise created in other parts of the building. In the Art Gallery spaces, creators or works can be viewed as art and celebrated as such.

The galleries will be frequently rotated, featuring selections from prolific comic artists whose 20th Century works informed and shaped the pop culture of the 21st Century, as well as storyboard artists, concept artists, and even local artists creating derivative works inspired by the broader industry.

The two spaces will be configured to allow for the display of two- and threedimensional art with matching cases to provide extra display surfaces when needed.

FIXTURES, FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT

- Wall hanging system
- Movable display cases with vitrines
- Folding tables and chairs

<u>PROGRAMMING</u>

- Art shows
- Small traveling exhibits
- Fan-sourced exhibits
- Student exhibits



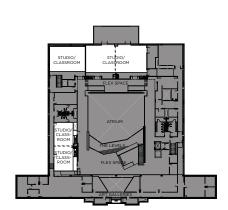




EDUCATION CENTER • SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ART & MATH







The Comic-Con Museum will feature three studio classrooms than can be sub-divided into five spaces dedicated to educational programming.

Each studio functions as a multi-use art studio and classroom. Visitors and school groups sign-up for labs, classes and seminars that develop creative visualization and making skills common in the pop culture industry. The multipurpose studios, are configured with a mixture of built-in and movable furniture and equipment. This permits a range of configurations for use as an arts and crafts studio, an innovation lab, a makerspace and a presentation/ distance learning center. A movable partition permits Studios A & C to be subdivided into two separate, equally functioning classrooms. The spaces will allow life-long learners to explore the fundamentals of art and discover new, creative outlets through hands-on programming.

FIXTURES, FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT

- Makerspace work tables
- Easels and painting /drawing stations
- Workbenches / tools
- Drawing tables
- Activity carts
- LCD presentation Promethean Boards •
- 3D printers ٠
- Sink and counter
- Workstations for film and motion graphics editing
- Virtual Reality alcove







PROGRAMMING PHILOSOPHY



<u>INSPIRE A LOVE OF LEARNING</u>

Although the Museum seeks to provide learning opportunities within all of its programmatic endeavors, not all programs will have roots in standards based education. Some of the Museum's offerings will be firmly rooted in celebrating pop culture and providing visitors the opportunity to connect with other fans, and explore their shared passions. The Museum's programs will reflect the diversity and range of interests of our visitors, inviting them to actively engage, and interact with a creative community like no other.

Much like it is for attendees at the Convention, choosing which programs to participate in will be a big part of how fans curate their own experience at the Comic-Con Museum. Diversity within the offerings is also intended to entice participants to discover new areas of pop culture that they may not have been exposed to previously, so that they can expand their horizons and interests.

Programming at the Museum will also emphasize representation in its selection of participants, allowing members of the community to hear from a wide variety of voices when they visit the Museum, highlighting the diversity found within the pop culture industry.

COMIC-CON MUSEUM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

<u>AREAS OF EMPHASIS</u>

Through surveys and test programs, the Museum has identified visitor areas of interest within programming as identified below.

- Film and Television
- Graphic Novels, Comics, Manga
- Books and Novels
- Toys and Collectibles
- Animation & Anime
- Art
- Video Games, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Tabletop Games
- Cosplay
- Music

Specific programmatic models are being actively prototyped in response to each of these areas and mapped onto different spaces within the building, serving to validate the space planning which has underpinned the development of this plan.



PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

To create the kind of program driven space that will allow us to encompass the breadth of content that visitors expect us to cover, the Museum's operations will have to be extremely efficient. With different programs happening all throughout a given month, each will have to be based on a regularly executable core.

While a wide range of content will be represented, the operational model that supports each will be a carefully rehearsed routine for the Museum's program staff.

Additive experiences can be layered on top of the core execution model, such as speakers, or serving themed food and beverages.

Another necessary efficiency that will allow a high program rotation is the development of programs alongside the implementation of exhibits.





COMIC-CON COMUSEUM



PUBLIC SPACES

FRONT DESK & LOBBY

As the day-to-day operational hub of the Museum, the Lobby is being designed to allow for clear way-finding and streamlined use. Although facets of the Lobby have been previously described in the Visitor Experience portion of this plan document, operationally the space will have several additional key functions.

- Although supported by online and automated ticketing options, the Museum's front desk will be the primary point of ticket purchase for those who prefer to interact with a person before deciding to visit the Museum.
- The front desk will also serve as the Museum's primary membership purchase point.
- The front desk will also serve as a coat, bag and stroller check for those guests needing services.
- The front desk with also will house the available on-site wheelchairs for anyone needing to borrow one.
- The front desk will be furnished with the tools necessary to provide accessibility support to people who need to access way-finding or interpretive information.
- It will be anchored by bilingual staff who are able to support in both Spanish and English, with written materials available in a wide variety of other languages.
- Also offered at the front desk will be communications support such as paging. The front desk will also act as a hub for museum communications in emergency events that impact visitors.

<u>ELEVATORS</u>

The current elevator within the building is not able to keep-up with peak loading in the Museum, and would struggle with prolonged use. Planned improvements include the replacement of the current single shaft with a double shaft, and the procurement of two new elevator cars. In addition to improving wait times for people transiting the building, the modern cars will allow us to improve ADA access to the car, and consider the elevator as part of the experience that people have when they visit the Museum. See below for inspirational images from the other institutions who have incorporated art into their elevators. (pictured)





PUBLIC SPACES

<u>ACCESSIBILITY</u>

Accessibility has been and will continue to be a core value of the Museum, thoughtfully incorporated into building design and programs. It is an area where we have sought supplemental stakeholder engagement and have been met with a wide range of input into how experiences can be more inclusive. As evident in the rest of this document, the Comic-Con Museum experience will be enhanced by its more social aspects; some of the more routine provisions made for accessibility in traditional cultural institutions can have the effect of isolating their users. Considerations made within the Comic-Con Museum include:

- The building plan simplifies the layout and configuration of ramps on the upper level, and the operational planning will ensure they are clearly signed, and that no person struggles to find a path through the building between their chosen experiences.
- In addition to the ADA requirements relating to the placement of braille and other accessibility considerations relating to architecture, we will be making devices available that allow specific exhibit constructs to be navigated. The flexibility provided by the devices allows them to be updated when new content is brought into an ever changing slate of exhibits and experiences.
- Our goal is to ensure visitors have access to interpreters when requested.
- The Museum will also feature an increased number of seating and benches in common spaces allowing people to experience the Museum at their own pace.
- As part of its program offerings, the Museum will also provide sensory reduced experiences that allow people to experience the Museum with a reduced amount of visual and auditory stimuli.

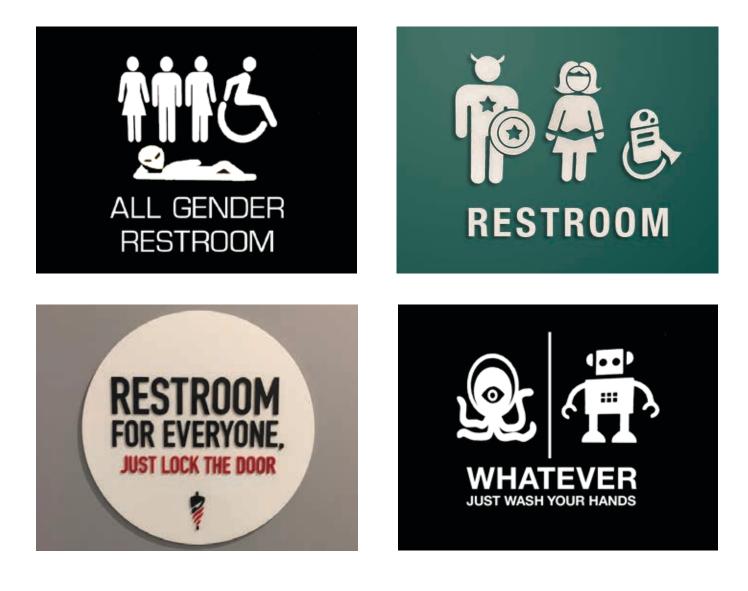


COMIC-CON & MUSEUM

PUBLIC SPACES

RESTROOMS

Prototype operations have continued to showcase just how important non-binary restrooms are to the Comic-Con Museum audience and larger San Diego community. Although our current restrooms do meet and exceed code requirements, a modernization plan has been devised as part of this plan's development. Allowing the restrooms to remain within their existing footprint, while adding two ADA/family stalls.



FAMILY SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Museum prototype operations to-date have revealed that although the building is well served by restrooms, there are a number of other modern expectations that are not met by the building in its current state. The bathroom renovation will consider the inclusion of additional changing tables, as well as family restroom options. Other specific changes include the creation of a designated lactation room within the museum, as well as the expansion of existing drinking fountain equipment to include bottle filling stations.

Proposed (and Current Site) of the Lactation Room indicated on plan.





THE END





