



SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE

December 30, 2014

Dear Capital Development Committee Members,

History Colorado is advancing to the Construction Drawing phase of the Ute Indian Museum expansion and respectfully requests additional funding to complete the project and meet project goals. This project was originally designed in 2008 at a construction budget of \$1.9m, but was put on hold when funds were rescinded in 2009. In the past seven years, construction costs have escalated, resulting in a current estimate of approximately \$2.4 million, an increase of \$500,000.

The Ute Indian Museum represents an important cultural asset to the Montrose community, a destination for both local residents and international tourists, and importantly, an invaluable resource for K-12 schools in the region. From its inception in 2008, the Ute Indian Museum expansion was designed to raise the institution's profile in the community and to enhance the services it provides to its various constituents. The building design increases square-footage devoted to exhibits and classrooms in order to accommodate school field trips, as well as casual visitors. The design includes work space for the few paid staff and many volunteers who support the facility and currently share a single office. The Ute Indian Museum has the potential to earn significant revenues as a rental space for which there is substantial local demand, but currently lacks the interior space to meet those needs. The Ute Indian Museum retail operation is the most successful among History Colorado's regional museums, but is constrained by an awkward physical lay-out and lack of storage space. The building design addresses both of these issues and provides for new energy-efficient and effective building and security systems.

History Colorado has undertaken a thorough value-engineering process and modified the design accordingly. The project budget anticipates the reuse of materials onsite and from other properties, including insulation, cabinetry, gift shop wall finishes and flooring. Interior furnishings will, in part, be built in-house to further reduce costs. However, these cost-cutting measures will not close the construction budget deficit. Within the current budget, the project will not accommodate expanded exhibit space or exterior architectural features desired by Ute tribal consultants and will limit the expansion of gathering spaces and related support spaces. More importantly, the project budget will likely not support modern environmental systems that will reduce long-term operating costs.

Facts About the Ute Indian Museum:

- The museum is different in that it is one of the few non-tribally managed museums in the nation to interpret the culture of one American Indian group;
- History Colorado has developed strong collaborative relationships with the three Ute Tribes in ongoing consultations around this projects and others;
- History Colorado holds an important collection of Ute ethnographic objects, and a third of this collection is on display at the Ute Indian Museum with the potential to display more;
- The museum is located on 8.65 acres of the original 500-acre ranch deeded to Chief Ouray and his wife, Chipeta, in the heart of traditional Ute territory;

- The museum complex includes Chief Ouray memorial park and monument, the gravesite of Chipeta and her brother, Chief John McCook, and the Dominguez and Escalante Monument – a memorial to the Spanish conquistadors who traveled through the area in 1776;
- Museum grounds are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are recognized as a State Historic Monument.

Ute history is Colorado's history, and the Ute Indian Museum is uniquely able to preserve and interpret that history for generations to come. This project will enable History Colorado to enhance programs and services provided to school children and educators, local families and tourists audiences. Thank you for considering supplemental funding to expand the Ute Indian Museum.

Sincerely,



Clement J. Frost, Chairman Southern Ute Indian Tribe

CC:

Governor John Hickenlooper
Ernest House - Director- Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs
Bo Pogue, CDC Staff
Henry Sobanet, Director, Office of State Planning and Budgeting
Laura Blomquist – OSPB
Sen. Ellen Roberts
Andy Stine - Facilities Director, History Colorado

Lt. Governor Joe Garcia
Kori Donaldson, CDC Staff
Matt Becker, CDC Staff
Erick Scheminske - Deputy Director, Office of State Planning and Budgeting
Rep. Don Coram
Kathryn Hill - COO, History Colorado
Cl Brafford - Director, Ute Indian Museum