

CITY OF DAVIS
2006-2007 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION

Organization Name: Explorit Science Center

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Total Proposal Request: **\$ 73,478**

(Check one) On-going Support New Project*

* Original request of \$220,700 was submitted in 05-06 CDBG cycle. \$147,222 was funded in 05-06 cycle; \$73,478 is the balance being requested in 06-07 CDBG cycle.

CDBG Eligible Category: Public Facilities/Improvements, Removal of Architectural Barriers

National Objective Compliance/Low and Mod Benefit: L/M Area Benefit

City Council Identified Critical Needs:

- 1) Physically Disabled – Removal of Architectural Barriers
- 2) Public Facilities

PUBLIC SERVICE

NON-PUBLIC SERVICE **X**

Beneficiary Information:

5146 Total number of beneficiaries in program**
5146 Number of beneficiaries in program to be served with **CDBG** funds
100% Percentage of the **CDBG** beneficiaries with low/moderate income
\$48.00*** Cost per **CDBG** beneficiary (CDBG Request/CDBG Beneficiaries)

** 2000 Census: number of persons age five and older with disabilities

***Cost per CDBG beneficiary in first year following completion; cost per beneficiary will decrease over 25+ year life of building as more individuals benefit.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

a. Need

Explorit Science Center is a unique resource within the Davis community, providing public and school access to hands-on science education programs and exhibits. Thousands of children and adults from the Davis community take part in Explorit's programs each year; thousands more also visit Explorit from surrounding communities. This proposal is in response to the urgent need to expand these services. Expansion of facilities will enable Explorit to provide increased access to science education programs and make these education resources more accessible to visitors with physical disabilities.

Each of us has a personal stake in science literacy – the ability to comprehend the natural world, to make informed decisions about issues that affect society, to ensure the economic health of our communities. There is a nationwide crisis in science education, with few public education resources devoted to science programs in schools and declining understanding about science-related issues in the general public.

Explorit works to address this need by creating an inviting, community-based environment for hands-on exploration and education. Beyond its primary education mission, Explorit also serves an important role as a hub for family-friendly activities within the Davis community, providing a center where volunteers and community members of all ages can come together to share interests for recreation and social interaction.

Since all Explorit programs are developed “in-house” and emphasize hands-on, open-ended exploration, staff and volunteers are able to create a range of experiences that appeal to visitors of various ages, learning styles, physical abilities and cultural perspectives. In 2005, Explorit had over 20,000 on-site visits by children and adults. This includes an estimated 2,700 individual Davis residents who participate in Explorit programs annually, many attending multiple times during the year.

Demand for Explorit Science Center's on-site programs has grown dramatically, increasing nearly 25% from 2004 to 2005. Families and teachers are clamoring for more than can be provided in Explorit's space. The Center's current physical facility is now the biggest limitation to serving more groups and families in the community.

In addition, the current facility is inadequate for comfortable access by individuals or groups with disabilities. For example, a number of disabled care facilities regularly bring groups of physically and developmentally disabled youth and adults to Explorit for visits. While the clients love the experience and hands-on activities, the 900 square foot gallery is too cramped to comfortably accommodate multiple wheelchairs at the same time.

To address this growing need for science education resources and the physical inadequacy of the current facility, Explorit Science Center has launched a project to construct a new building. The 7,248 square foot building, located on 2nd Street in East Davis, will be the main public access point and cornerstone of an indoor/outdoor science discovery campus. The campus will also include Explorit's existing facility in Mace Ranch Park and surrounding outdoor park areas.

Our goals in adding a new facility are: to provide exhibit galleries and public spaces that are larger and much more accessible to all visitors; and to significantly improve access for visitors with physical disabilities. Plans for the facility have been crafted to address needs of visitors with varied abilities, including persons who use wheelchairs, visitors with vision or hearing impairments and others with special physical needs. While all new buildings are required to meet minimum ADA access standards, our vision is to create a public facility that exceeds these standards and includes many extra features to afford physically disabled visitors comfortable and easy access to Explorit's learning resources.

b. Benefit

Access to educational and cultural resources, like Explorit, is highly valued in the City of Davis. Explorit helps to create the unique fabric of our community.

Already Explorit works very hard to make its programs financially accessible to all members of the community through free programs, scholarships and fee assistance to groups and families. Now, we are striving to make our programs as physically accessible as possible with our expansion.

The particular focus of this request is assuring that features are included in the new Explorit building to make it highly accessible to persons with physical disabilities. Selection of physical accessibility features to include or upgrade in the building has been guided by consultation with a wide range of community members. Explorit has engaged the advice of local residents with physical disabilities through a focus group held in March 2005 and one-on-one consultations during the past year. Their specific suggestions are noted in Attachment A outlining the building access features.

Projections show that on-site attendance will likely more than triple in the new building with its larger galleries and expanded range of programs. Based on disability payment data indicating that approximately 6% of the Davis population has some disability, it is estimated that the new Explorit facility will serve hundreds of Davis residents with disabilities each year, in addition to the thousands of visitors from surrounding communities who will also visit.

c. Other Resources and Collaboration

In planning for this new facility over the past few years, Explorit has worked closely with staff and elected representatives of the City of Davis. In September 2004, the City Council approved a 25-year lease with Explorit for the City owned property where Explorit will construct its expansion building.

The board, staff and volunteers have worked steadily over the past 2 years to complete the planning and secure funds for the expansion project. The funds needed for this project are being raised through a capital campaign. To date over 53% of the target goal of \$2,000,000 has been pledged or donated through a combination of state funds, corporate and foundation grants, in-kind donations and private gifts. Fundraising activities for the new project are on-going with pledges payable over a three year period.

Major project partners and donors to date for the new building project include:

Jonsson Family Foundation	\$254,000
2005-06 CDBG award	\$147,222
Gumerlock Family Foundation	\$132,000
State California Arts Council	\$105,000
Other Foundation Donors	\$160,000
Private/Individual Donors	\$125,300
Corporate Donors	\$110,000

The impetus for this expansion project came out of a long-range planning process conducted in 2000. This process involved gathering extensive information from our current clients and other members of our community through focus groups, surveys, and interviews. This work confirmed community interest and need for Explorit’s expansion. Since that time, Explorit Board, staff and volunteers have worked diligently to identify and secure the site, conduct a feasibility study, and complete the architectural plans. The campaign was launched in 2004 with projected construction beginning in mid 2006 and building completion by mid 2007.

Throughout Explorit’s history, we have made special efforts to cultivate productive partnerships with other community-based organizations, corporations and individuals. From our partnership with Kaiser Permanente in the establishment of the *Health in Your World* project to the collaboration with the Davis Community Network in hosting our web site, Explorit’s partners are diverse.

Because of our location in a University town, Explorit also has access to experts and resources affiliated with the University of California Davis. Members of the faculty and staff have served on Explorit’s Board and Advisory Groups, consulted on the development of science content for programs, provided instruments and specimens for display in exhibits, presented their work to the public through Explorit’s lecture series, and volunteered for weekend programs.

d. Organizational Capacity

Explorit has been a part of the Davis community for over 20 years. Founded in 1982 by community members concerned about the state of science education, Explorit provides science programs both at its family-friendly center in Davis and through mobile programs that travel to 12 counties. Today, a professional staff working with active volunteers creates and offers our signature programs that include changing exhibitions, childrens classes, and outreach programs for schools and families.

Explorit has established a reputation for excellence in informal science education and continues to receive recognition for its innovation and service in the community, including winning the “Outstanding Nonprofit of the Year” award by the Sacramento Nonprofit Resource Center in March 2004. In awarding this honor to Explorit, the selection committee noted that Explorit has “great long-term plans, is innovative, has strong management and a strong Board”.

As a private non-profit organization with no parent organization, Explorit has been very successful in managing a modest budget for maximum program impact. Gyroscope, a nationally recognized museum planning firm that conducted our 2002 expansion feasibility study noted that “Explorit is

a lean organization that produces highly effective programs with minimal financial resources”.

The board, staff and volunteers of Explorit are highly committed to Explorit’s expansion project. A list of the Explorit Board of Directors is included as Attachment B.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

a. Project Description

The 2-story new building will house 4,000 sq. ft. of exhibit galleries; a multi-purpose room; science store; volunteer office, exhibit workshop, and two outdoor courtyards for programs and events.

Physical accessibility will be much improved at this new site. Planned features include: on-grade access from disabled parking to the main entry; extra-wide paved paths surrounding the building; exhibit halls large enough to allow wide corridors for visitor movement and better wheelchair access around the exhibit activities; a larger reception area with counters at accessible heights; accessible restrooms on both floors; elevator with auditory signals; and more.

The City of Davis ADA Subcommittee reviewed the Explorit plans at its January 5, 2005 meeting and received an update at its February 8, 2006 meeting. The funds being requested through the CDBG program will be used toward the cost of accessibility features.

Beyond the physical structure of the building itself, Explorit will seize the opportunity to incorporate museum accessibility “best practices” (as documented and recommended by the Association of Science and Technology Centers and the Smithsonian Institute Guidelines for Accessible Exhibitions) in the design of the actual exhibit experiences. Accessibility to the long-term hands-on science exhibits in the main gallery of the new building will be enhanced through careful planning of text, signage, activity station heights, and varied methods of interaction. Continued consultation with physically disabled members of the community will be an integral part of the design process as exhibits are being developed and prototyped during the coming year.

b. Target Group

The target group for this project is physically disabled residents — both children and adult — within the City of Davis. Through its expansion building, Explorit will make its programs more accessible and inviting to physically disabled visitors by reducing and eliminating architectural barriers in the new facility.

c. Outreach

A wide variety of methods are used to inform residents about Explorit’s available programs and services. These include: weekly articles in the Davis Enterprise; brochures distributed several times per year through the school district; flyers of events and programs posted at public locations; e-newsletters to community members; listings in calendars sections of community papers; staffing of booths as community wide events; presentations to community groups; and media releases.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Work Plan

<u>List Activity</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
Presentations to City of Davis ADA Subcommittee	Jan 05, Feb 06
Focus group with community members with disabilities	Completed – Mar 2005
Consultations with community members with disabilities	On-going
Ceremonial Groundbreaking	Completed – Oct 2005
Construction Documents/Permits Complete	Spring 2006
Construction Begins	Summer 2006
Grand Opening	Mid 2007

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

ACTIVITY (What the program does to fulfill its mission)	INDICATOR (The direct products of program activities) Service #s	OUTCOME (Benefits that result from the program)
Construction of new building	100% completion by June 2007	Improved access for physically disabled visitors to educational resources, for life of building beginning June 2007.

**CITY OF DAVIS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY

Budget Category	Proposed Project “CDBG Portion”	Funds from Other Sources	Total
Project Development	\$ 0	\$ 180,000	\$ 180,000
Land Acquisition	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Design	\$ 0	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000
Architecture and Engineering Fees			
Final Development			\$ 280,000
Fees/Permits	\$ 95,700*		
Other Costs		\$ 184,300	
Construction	\$ 125,000**	\$1,275,000	\$1,400,000
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	\$ 220,700***	\$1,779,300	\$2,000,000

* Estimate provided by Kelly Stachowicz in City Manager’s office

** For accessibility features in building (see Attachment A)

*** Total request = \$220,700. \$147,222 was already funded in 05-06 CDBG cycle; balance of \$73,478 is requested in 06-07 CDBG cycle.

Attachment A

Specific features planned within the new Explorit Science Center expansion building to make the facility highly accessible for visitors with physical disabilities:

Accessibility Feature	Notes	Estimated Extra Cost of Accessibility Feature (beyond minimum required to meet ADA compliance baseline)
Exterior Access Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-grade access from bus drop-off and handicap parking to main entry • Wide, paved circulation paths to accommodate groups and visitors in wheelchairs* 	\$30,000 (wider paths)
Walls, Doors and Counters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counters and drinking fountains at varied heights* • Railings on both sides of stairwell* • Open floorplan • Double easy open doors at key access points* • Low VOC emitting (volatile organic compound) paints and coverings selected to minimize chemical sensitivities 	\$4,000 (extra railings, wider doors, etc)
Flooring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete surface in main areas to provide easier movement for manual wheelchairs* • Textural indicators built into floor surface to signal transitions between galleries* • Traction flooring on steps • Color contrast indicators on edge of steps* 	\$6,000 (accessible texture, traction, color options)
Elevator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sized to accommodate standard and large wheelchairs • Braille signage and auditory landmark signal* 	\$7,000 (upgraded signals, etc)
Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sized to accommodate standard and large wheelchairs • Centrally located on both floors • Private family-type restrooms on bottom floor accessible for disabled visitor plus assistant 	\$20,000 (upgraded wheelchair accessibility)
Acoustics and lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible lighting grid system to customize light for low vision visitors* • Acoustic tiles and pink noise to control ambient noise and reduce echoing that can mask auditory cues for visually impaired* 	\$18,000 (special lighting and acoustic accommodations)
Building Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High color contrast* • 3-D lettering on signs* • Braille signage at key locations* 	\$10,000 (upgraded signage, including some Braille)

Long-term fixtures and exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 95% of exhibits designed with touchable components; interaction not dependent on signage • Tables and exhibit stations designed to allow wheelchairs to pull up directly to stations rather than accessing from sides* • Exhibits accessible at various heights* • Locking mechanism on all carts and tables* • Audio explanations available with some exhibits* • Printed visitor guide available offering suggestions on accessing the museum exhibits and resources (also on website)* 	\$25,000 (additional features such as audio added to improve access)
Total		\$125,000

** Specific recommendations for these features provided by Davis community members with physical disabilities who participated in March 2005 focus group on improving accessibility design in Explorit’s new building plans.*

Explorit is providing this detailed breakdown of estimated costs as additional reference for consideration with its CDBG application. While we realize that many features of the building are already required to be accessible, we are striving to make this building go beyond simply meeting these minimum required standards. The table above outlines estimated costs of adding special accessibility features. The construction costs requested through the CDBG grant will make these special accessibility features possible and will establish the new Explorit building as a leader in accessibly designed facilities for members of the Davis community.

Attachment B

Board of Trustees

2005-2006

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

President:	William Owens, J.D.	<i>Attorney, Law Office of William L. Owens, Sacramento</i>
Vice-President:	Rick Baker, M.D.	<i>Physician, Kaiser Permanente, Davis</i>
Secretary:	Beth Gabor	<i>Public Information Officer, Yolo County</i>
Treasurer:	Stephen Bick, C.P.A.	<i>Partner, Landucci, Bick, Matter & Johnston, Woodland</i>

TRUSTEES

Lars Anderson, Ph.D.	<i>Research Leader, USDA/Weed Science Program, UC Davis</i>
Alan Bennett, Ph.D.	<i>Associate Vice Chancellor, UC Davis Office of Research</i>
Evelyn Buddenhagen*	<i>Program Director Emerita, Davis</i>
Betsy Elzufon	<i>Associate, Larry Walker Associates, Davis</i>
Ken Gruys	<i>Site Director, Monsanto, Calgene Campus, Davis</i>
Anne Hance*	<i>Co-Founder and Past Executive Director, Davis</i>
Sandy Harcourt, Ph.D.	<i>Professor, Department of Anthropology, UC Davis</i>
Oliver Hauck	<i>Director, Siemens Transportation Systems, Sacramento</i>
Mark Jonsson	<i>Architect, Davis</i>
Patricia Lufburrow	<i>Associate Director, Quality Control, Genentech, Vacaville</i>
Dennis McConnell	<i>Director of Information Technology, Nolte Associates, Sacramento</i>
Beth Post, Ph.D.	<i>Lecturer, Department of Psychology, UC Davis</i>
David Robinson	<i>President, Aspen Pest Management, Davis</i>
Carl Schwedler, J.D.	<i>Patent Attorney, McDonough Holland & Allen, Sacramento</i>
Sharon Shoemaker, Ph.D.	<i>Exec. Director, Cal. Inst. of Food & Agricultural Research, UC Davis</i>

*Ex Officio Trustee

Attachment C

Explorit Science Center Operating Budget

July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

Income

Admissions	8,000
Memberships	35,000
Program Enrollment Fees	275,000
Retail Sales (net)	4,500
Interest and Dividends Earned	5,000
Miscellaneous/Rental	2,000
Government Grants	36,000
Individual Contributions	28,000
Foundation/Corporate Donors	170,000
Special Fundraising Event	70,000

Total Income **\$633,500**

Expenses

Program/Office Supplies	22,000
Postage	9,000
Printing/Publications	14,000
Telephone/Communications	5,000
Fundraising	30,000
Travel	8,000
Rent	3,000
Equipment/Furniture	8,500
Facilities/Utilities	18,000
Insurance (Auto, Workers Comp, D&O, Liability)	28,000
Operations	5,000
Human Resources	5,500
Advertising/Marketing	4,000
Contractual/Professional Services	20,000
Payroll Expenses	418,435
Payroll Taxes	34,801

Total Expenses **\$633,236**

Attachment D