

**NATURAL  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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**UNPRECEDENTED \$13 MILLION GIFT FROM  
THE OTIS BOOTH FOUNDATION ENABLES  
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
TO BUILD A SPECTACULAR GLASS ENTRANCE PAVILION  
FOR ITS NEW NORTH CAMPUS**



**Magnificent 63-Foot Fin Whale Specimen Will Soar in the Light of the  
Otis Booth Pavilion—the Beacon for a Transformed NHM—  
In Time for the Museum’s 100th Anniversary in 2013**

**LOS ANGELES, CA Wednesday, January 5, 2011** – Kevin Sharer, Chairman, and Paul G. Haaga, President of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Board of Trustees of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, today announced that the institution has received the largest private gift dedicated to the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park in its nearly century-long history, enabling it to create a gleaming glass entrance pavilion for the Museum and its new North Campus. The \$13 million gift from The Otis Booth Foundation—the largest made to date by the Los Angeles-based private foundation—will allow NHM to provide a focal point for the major new public approach to the Museum, through the landscaped North Campus.

Named the Otis Booth Pavilion in honor of Otis Booth’s service to the Museum and the unprecedented donation, the light-filled, three-story entrance will be connected to Exposition Boulevard by a soaring pedestrian bridge and will dramatically showcase one of the Museum’s signature specimens: its magnificent 63-foot-long fin whale. First exhibited at NHM in 1944, the 7,000-pound specimen was recently the subject of an intense two-year restoration and has been re-articulated to give an accurate and life-like impression of the grace and power of a whale in the midst of a dive. This unforgettable image will now be visible to all from the Exposition Boulevard side of the Museum as a sign of the wonders within—and the gentle glow of its surrounding glass structure will be visible at night from as far away as Downtown.

The Otis Booth Pavilion is scheduled for completion by November 2013, in time for the celebration of the Natural History Museum’s 100th anniversary.

“We are extremely grateful to The Otis Booth Foundation for this gift, which will create a beacon across our new North Campus for the transformed Natural History Museum by connecting the inside and outside as part of a seamless visitor experience,” Haaga stated.

“This extraordinary act of generosity moves us years ahead in our building program, in a single leap,” Sharer added. “Nothing could be more in keeping with the spirit of Otis Booth himself—one of the true champions of the Museum—who was determined for us to fulfill our potential as a world class museum and an essential public resource of science and culture.”

Designed for the Museum by CO Architects in association with Cordell Corporation, the Otis Booth Pavilion will express the mission of the new North Campus—and of NHM as a whole—by bringing a great natural treasure out of the shadows and into the light of day. The 3.5 acres of urban wilderness experiences and exhibits of the North Campus, to be completed throughout 2011 and 2012, are a new nature destination in the heart of Los Angeles, and a new front yard and approach to the Museum, directly served by two Metro Expo Line stops. In this way, the

North Campus connects NHM with the ongoing life of the city, and merges the visitor's experience of natural habitats outside the Museum with the experience of the superb collection within. The Otis Booth Pavilion symbolizes this connection by making a major specimen visible to the outdoors, and also helps to realize the connection programmatically by serving as the ground-floor passage between the North Campus gardens and the Museum's upcoming Nature Lab.

"The Otis Booth Pavilion's fin whale will be a magnificent addition to the Natural History Museum and will surely become one of Los Angeles County's cultural treasures," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. "Think of the impact on a middle school student or an international visitor to see that tremendous fin whale diving through space. This historic gift will inspire thousands of people — of all ages — to learn more about their connection to the natural world."

The Otis Booth Foundation is a legacy of Franklin Otis Booth, Jr. (1923-2008), the great-grandson of General Harrison Gray Otis, founder of the Los Angeles Times. A successful newspaper executive, investor and rancher, Otis Booth was also a noted philanthropist, whose service to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County spanned three decades. His participation began in 1972, when he was voted onto the Museum's Board of Governors by County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn. Booth went on to serve as a Trustee and a Trustee Emeritus.

According to Palmer Murray, Vice President and Treasurer of The Otis Booth Foundation, "On behalf of my co-trustees, Lynn and Loren Booth, we are thrilled to be able to make this important gift to the Natural History Museum that recognizes both the importance of the ongoing transformation that the museum is undergoing as well as the legacy of Otis Booth's 30-plus year involvement with the Museum. In his vision for NHM as a long-time Trustee and in his dedication to realizing its full potential, he always went beyond the expected. When offered the opportunity to participate in this important chapter of the Natural History Museum, we similarly wanted to surpass existing goals and do something extraordinary for the Museum and the people of Los Angeles."

The Natural History Museum is currently in the midst of a six-year, institution-wide transformation. Projects undertaken to date include the renovation of the iconic 1913 Building; the opening of the new *Age of Mammals* experience and exhibitions inside the Haaga Family Rotunda; the highly-anticipated new Dinosaur Hall in July 2011; and the North Campus and Nature Lab (the indoor counterpart to the North Campus) in 2011 and 2012; as well as a new exhibition exploring the natural and cultural history of Los Angeles and Southern California, in late 2012.

The Museum's \$135 million NHM Next Campaign is funding this transformation through generous public and private contributions totaling \$84 million to date, which have been targeted to program costs (the development of major exhibitions) and to essential capital projects (the seismic retrofit and renovation of the 1913 Building). The Otis Booth Foundation donation was made outside of the current campaign, in order to fund a crucial capital project that was not a part of the NHM Next budget: an entrance pavilion on the north side of the Museum, to bring the North Campus into dramatic focus.

Design and construction of the entrance pavilion, which would have been realized through a later phase of NHM's transformation, will now be accomplished years ahead of schedule, giving the North Campus the ability to reach its full potential for visitors and passers-by upon its opening, and providing the Museum with its new beacon to the city in time for the 100th anniversary celebration.

### **The NHM Next Campaign**

The NHM Next Campaign is a public/private partnership that engages donors, philanthropic foundations, the County of Los Angeles, and the State of California. Over 60% of the campaign's \$135 million goal has been raised to date. Physically, the transformation includes five new exhibitions, new visitor amenities, and a brand new outdoor component opening each year over the next three years. Philosophically, there is a new approach to exhibits and programs — one which reveals the thrill of discovery, the processes of science, and the ongoing, evolving endeavor that is scientific investigation. It is a thoughtful reconsideration of what science and the story of life on Earth mean to our visitors.

The NHM Next Campaign's components include:

- **Winter 2010:** The **Ralph M. Parsons Discovery Center**, the Museum's beloved interactive learning space, moves to a newly light filled space in the renovated 1920's Building overlooking the outdoor pavilions and Exposition Park's South Lawn.
- **Summer 2011:** The highly-anticipated new Dinosaur Hall opens. A front entrance, plaza, and pedestrian bridge leading to new entrance are also unveiled.
- **2011/2012:** The **North Campus** opens, with 3.5 acres of green space filled with nature experiences, community science projects, and programming space.
- **2012:** The **Nature Lab**, the indoor component to the North Campus, debuts.
- **2012:** A new permanent exhibition exploring the natural and cultural history of Los Angeles and Southern California, opens.

- **2013:** More gallery spaces are unveiled leading to the celebration of **NHM's centennial**. By the time of this 100-year anniversary, the transformation is complete: The Museum is an inside/outside experience with improved visitor amenities (new stores, café, restrooms and elevators), and in all, 12 new galleries and five new exhibits have been opened.

### **About the Museum**

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is located at 900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles, near downtown. It is open daily from 9:30 am to 5 pm. The Museum was the first dedicated museum building in Los Angeles, opening its doors in 1913. It has amassed one of the world's most extensive and valuable collections of natural and cultural history — with more than 35 million objects, some as old as 4.5 billion years. The Natural History Family of Museums includes the NHM, the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits (Hancock Park/Mid-Wilshire), and the William S. Hart Park and Museum (Newhall, California).

### **Image Information**

Rendering courtesy of NHM and CO Architects.

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