



Artist's Rendering

# THE UTAH MUSEUM OF HISTORY, HERITAGE & ART

## *Visioning Document*

Utah needs a state museum of history, heritage and art in the capital city. A place where all of Utah's story can be told, and where all of Utah's citizens can find and see themselves in that story. A place where students can discover all the periods and peoples that span Utah's human history. A place where visitors can be inspired by the priceless artifacts and works of art in the State's collections, and experience Utah's historic and cultural patrimony.

Utah is one of only two states in the nation that lacks a comprehensive state history or heritage museum. Utah is home to world-class museums for natural history, church history, pioneer history, science, children, fine arts, and many other specialties. However, there is no central place to tell Utah's history that is inclusive of all its regions, religions, ethnicities, and communities.

## Economic Development Opportunity

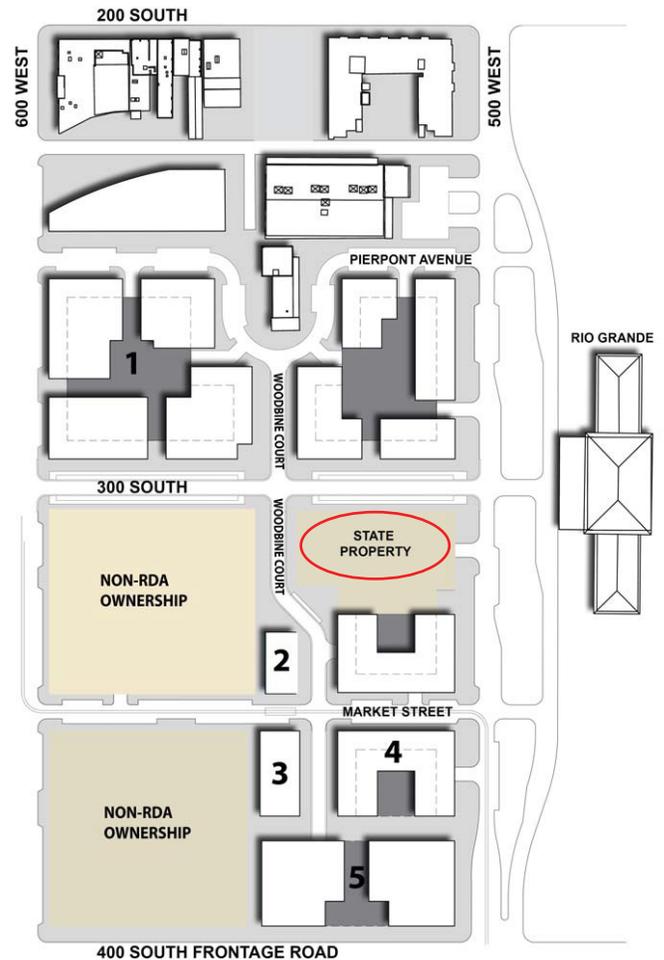
There have been past efforts in the 1930s, 1960s, 1980s, and 2000s to create a state history, heritage and arts museum. The State presently has a unique opportunity not only to construct a museum that has long been envisioned and is sorely needed, but also one that can contribute the continued economic development of Utah's capital city.

The Salt Lake City Redevelopment Authority (RDA) is in the initial stages of development for its "Depot District" project area encompassing the blocks between the historic Rio Grande Depot and UTA's Salt Lake Center Intermodal Hub. The RDA's plans envision a transit-oriented development of approximately 1.2 million square feet of new or redeveloped mixed-used office, residential, and retail space, as well as the creation of a cultural district with a "festival street" on 300 South between the Rio Grande Depot and Intermodal Hub. Plans also call for a purpose-built facility for a public market that would give a year-round home to the Downtown Alliance's popular Farmers Market (currently held in Pioneer Park) and Winter Market (held in the Rio Grande Depot).

The RDA has already accepted proposals for two of the parcels in phase one of their development plan, including a proposal for a large, mixed-use residential, office, and hotel complex by Boyer Company and Cowboy Partners. The RDA plans to start construction on infrastructure and street improvements in late 2015.

The success of the Depot District will likely hinge on the availability of assets and programming that will have regional appeal. A public market and major street festivals will provide such appeal; as could a new state museum of history, heritage and arts.

The State owns a prime parcel of land in the redevelopment area on the corner of 300 South and 500 West. This parcel will provide street



frontage on three sides, as well as extremely convenient access to downtown, Interstate 15, Trax, and FrontRunner. Centrally located in the capital and with optimal transportation access, the Depot District and the Utah Museum of History, Heritage & Arts could serve as the State's cultural gateway. A new museum facility will remain linked with the historic Rio Grande Depot, one of the State's premier historical landmarks and a symbol for history and art in Utah since the State acquired the building in the late 1970s.

The Utah Museum of History, Heritage & Arts could serve as an anchor to the redevelopment of the Depot District, and the State's current land ownership, opportunities for reduced development and infrastructure costs, and potential for mixed uses of a museum facility, could greatly reduce overall building costs.



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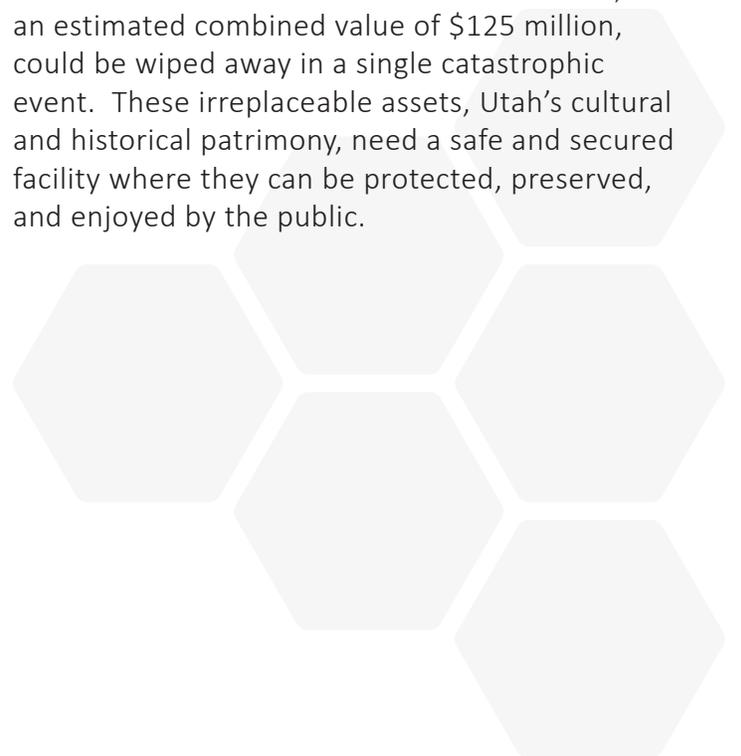
## State Collections at Risk

The Department of Heritage & Arts holds and manages Utah's principle fine arts and historical collections. The Division of Arts & Museums – America's first state-sponsored arts organization established in 1899 – has built an extensive collection of world-class fine arts pieces from Utah artists. While many pieces hang safely at the State Capitol, Governor's Mansion, and other public facilities, thousands more are stored in a corrugated steel building (formerly a vegetable warehouse) in less-than-ideal conditions and out of public view.

The Division of State History's holdings include Utah's rarest and most storied artifacts, rare books, photographs, and manuscripts. Gathered through the efforts of the Utah State Historical Society (established in 1897), the collection now encompasses over 30,000 historical artifacts, 29,163 rare books, 1.5 million historical photographs, and 250,000 manuscripts, and are housed in the basement of the Rio Grande Depot. These priceless items are stored in an unreinforced masonry

building, under a patchwork of aging water, sewer, and steam pipes, and in a known seismic liquefaction zone.

The State's fine arts and historical collections, with an estimated combined value of \$125 million, could be wiped away in a single catastrophic event. These irreplaceable assets, Utah's cultural and historical patrimony, need a safe and secured facility where they can be protected, preserved, and enjoyed by the public.





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