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AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC UNVEILS THE DESIGN OF ITS NEW ARCHITECTURAL CENTERPIECE, *PACIFIC VISIONS*

*A Major Expansion for the First Time in its History,
Aquarium Adds a Striking Biomorphing Structure*

*Housing an Immersive Theater, Special Exhibition and
Art Gallery Spaces, and Live Animal Exhibits*



Aquarium of the Pacific. Courtesy of EHDD.

LONG BEACH, CA— The Aquarium of the Pacific, one of the nation's largest and most-visited aquariums, has unveiled the design of its new **Pacific Visions** wing, a 29,000-square-foot, two-story sustainable structure designed by the San Francisco-based architecture and design firm EHDD. The first major expansion project ever undertaken by the Aquarium, Pacific Visions will be a new focal point of the institution, providing facilities that integrate the arts and sciences while offering visitors innovative ways to understand our connections to Earth, the World Ocean, and contemporary scientific research.

Slated to open in spring 2019, Pacific Visions is designed as a biomorphic structure that suggests the form of a whale and evokes the size, depth, variability, luminosity, and biological diversity of the Pacific Ocean. The building will house a state-of-the-art immersive theater, expanded special exhibition and art galleries, and additional space for live animal exhibits. It will provide a revitalized front plaza and exhibition hall with space for installations, performances, and cultural events. The Aquarium of the Pacific is developing the \$53 million project as the second and final phase of a Campus Master Plan adopted in 2005. The plan's aim is to enhance the institution's role as a community gathering place where scientists, policymakers, and the public can celebrate the inhabitants and ecosystems of the Pacific Ocean and explore today's most important environmental issues. When completed, Pacific Visions will increase the institution's audience capacity to approximately 2 million visitors a year.

“Pacific Visions represents an unprecedented opportunity to help our growing audience examine the vital and changing relationship between humans and the World Ocean and choose paths to make that relationship sustainable,” said Dr. Jerry R. Schubel, Aquarium of the Pacific president & CEO. “We want our visitors to leave Pacific Visions feeling more deeply engaged with the living ocean, knowledgeable about the challenges that face it and us, and empowered to make better decisions and share their new understanding with others.”

A Vision for the Arts and Sciences

The Aquarium of the Pacific presents more than 50 exhibits on the Pacific Ocean with integrated hands-on experiences, cutting-edge technology, and interactive interpretation, inviting visitors to examine and appreciate live animals and the role humans play in the wellbeing of marine life and the future of the planet. Over the past decade, the Aquarium has become a pioneer in integrating arts and sciences to deepen our understanding of the natural world. By partnering with leading art and cultural organizations, the Aquarium has developed and presented exhibitions and performances that address key issues of ocean and climate science. Pacific Visions will build on these initiatives by incorporating a 300-seat immersive theater and dedicated art gallery, which will serve as a hub for the Aquarium’s cultural events and exhibitions integrating science, technology, and the arts.

Pacific Visions will incorporate a range of technologies and media design developed by EMMY award-winning Cortina Productions. Media technology will create rich, dynamic, relevant multi-sensory, multi-dimensional experiences. Interactive technology will create a space where science, art, and nature can blend in a fluid, intuitive way for innovative learning. Digital exhibits using real-time data will enable the Aquarium to address breaking scientific discoveries and current and emerging environmental topics. When visitors leave the Aquarium, they will be able to remain connected and share the experience through the Pacific Visions app with friends and family.

“Institutions like the Aquarium of the Pacific serve a vital role in helping us understand—and better care for—the world around us,” stated U.S. Congressman Alan Lowenthal, who serves California’s 47th district. “In just a short time, the Aquarium of the Pacific has redefined the modern aquarium. It has become a leading force in educating the next generation about the importance of the ocean and scientific research, fostering a community of students, families, friends, and scientific experts who learn together. I look forward to seeing how the new Pacific Visions wing will broaden that community and reinforce our collective responsibility to build a more sustainable future.”

Architectural Design

Complementing the Aquarium’s existing building, also designed by EHDD, Pacific Visions has a façade that strikingly responds throughout the day to changing light and climatic conditions with varying colors to mirror the effect of sunlight rippling on the ocean’s surface. The façade, which doubles as a ventilated rain screen, is made up of more than 800 colored, light diffusing glass panels covering an area of 18,000 square feet. Each panel is uniquely sized to accommodate the curves and angles of the building’s form.

The principal components of the design include:

- ***Honda Pacific Visions Theater***

The two-story, 300-seat Honda Pacific Visions Theater will include a 130-foot-wide by 32-foot-tall screen, curved in a 180-degree arc and a tilting 30-foot-diameter floor

projection disc to immerse visitors in a virtual ocean environment. The theater will bring to life epic ocean stories, allowing audiences to discover new species, witness the processes and phenomena of Earth's ecosystems, and grapple with the many challenges facing the natural world. The Honda Pacific Visions Theater provides visitors opportunities to explore a range of possible trajectories for our planet, underscoring how human action can lead to a more sustainable future. All stories will be developed by the Aquarium in partnership with leading scientists, filmmakers, storytellers, and digital artists. The infrastructure created for this theater will allow for media-rich performances, panel discussions, community meetings, and educational seminars that can incorporate live broadcast feeds and streaming media.

- **Main Entrance and Front Plaza**

The Aquarium's redesigned Dr. Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg Entrance will include an expanded ticketing area and special members' entrance, as well as a Member Services Center. The front plaza will serve as a community gathering space, which will feature outdoor programs and installations.

- **Changing Exhibit Gallery**

The expanded Changing Exhibit Gallery will double the former changing exhibit gallery space. The new space will feature live animals and immersive interactive multi-media displays and expansive dynamic projected wall murals to complement and foster deeper engagement with the narrative and themes of each temporary exhibit. These exhibits will be rotated periodically to reflect current scientific issues and discoveries and will be developed in conjunction with the theater experiences.

- **Art Gallery and Orientation Gallery**

Visitors will enter the new wing through the Pacific Visions Art Gallery featuring a range of changing installations to establish an emotional connection to the ocean and marine life. Visitors will then proceed into the Orientation Gallery, which will showcase a 26-foot-wide by 8-foot-tall media wall to introduce visitors to the challenges and promises of the future to be explored in the theater.

The main Aquarium building will remain operational throughout the construction phase. A small preview exhibition with a large-scale model of the biomorphic design and informational videos about Pacific Visions' programmatic content is now on view to the public in the Aquarium's Tropical Pacific Preview. This includes an award-winning video. The Aquarium created the video in collaboration with Cortina Productions and won a 2017 MUSE Award from the American Alliance of Museums for the program titled *Pacific Visions*.

"Pacific Visions will create a forum for the important issues affecting our ocean. We are honored to be working with the Aquarium of the Pacific and aim to contribute to the inspirational aspect of the new wing by evoking the depth and mystery of the ocean through architecture, particularly the dynamic glass facade," said Duncan Ballash, EHDD president.

Campaign & Project Background

Pacific Visions is supported by the City of Long Beach with a \$15 million matching grant, a \$5 million matching grant from John, Michelle, Mario, and Therese Molina, and \$5 million from American Honda Motor Co., Inc. "The Aquarium of the Pacific is not just one of our city's most important and vital tourist attractions, but it is also one of the leading academic institutions in the region," said Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia. "I support the aquarium's expansion, and the City will remain committed to this Aquarium in any way we can." Private donations and

commitments of \$1 million or more have been generously given by James and Marilyn Simons, Dr. Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg, Don Temple Family Foundation, PREMIER/SMG, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and two anonymous donors. Donations and commitments of \$100,000 or more have been generously given by the following corporations, foundations, and individual donors: Chip Conley; Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation; The Ahmanson Foundation; The Rose Hills Foundation; John and Nancy Edwards Family Foundation, Don Knabe, Los Angeles County Supervisor, Fourth District; Confidence Foundation; The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation; The Rudolph J. & Daphne A. Munzer Foundation; Esther S. M. Chui Chao; LGA Family Foundation; Pacific Life Foundation; California Resources Corporation; Edison International; The Boeing Company; W. M. Keck Foundation; Lakeside Foundation; Schulzman-Neri Foundation; Betty White Ludden; California Natural Resources Agency; The Hearst Foundations; Johnny Carson Foundation; Farmers & Merchants Bank; Bob and Jennifer Hagle; King's Seafood Company; Tom Turney and Jill Boivin; Russ and Avalon Hill; the Quiksilver Foundation; Henry and Paulette Matson; Mark Paullin; Peter and Cathy Ridder; and two anonymous donors.

“More than any other generation in history, we are faced with making decisions that will shape the future for people and the planet,” said Dr. J Mario Molina, Aquarium of the Pacific former board chairman and chair, Pacific Visions Campaign. “That’s why the Pacific Visions project is designed to educate, inform, enlighten, and entertain all at once—because only when we have knowledge combined with a sense of purpose will we be able to appreciate and preserve the wonders of our ocean.”

The Board of Directors of the Aquarium of the Pacific adopted the Campus Master Plan in 2005. In 2008 the Aquarium opened its watershed exhibit, Premier classroom, and native garden, *Our Watersheds: Pathway to the Pacific*. In 2011 the Aquarium opened the Ocean Science Center, featuring the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Science on a Sphere® (SOS)—a 6-foot-diameter sphere representing Earth that displays animated images of the atmosphere, ocean, and continents using satellite and real-time system NOAA and NASA datasets for storytelling.

Members of the public can support this important project by making an online donation at aquariumofpacific.org/news/pacificvisions and on site while visiting the Aquarium.

ABOUT THE AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC

The nonprofit Aquarium of the Pacific is a community gathering place where diverse cultures, the arts and sciences are celebrated and where important challenges facing our planet are explored by scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders in search of sustainable solutions. The Aquarium is dedicated to conserving and building nature and nature's services by building the interactions between and among peoples. Home to more than 11,000 animals, Aquarium exhibits include the June Keyes Penguin Habitat, the Ocean Science Center, the Molina Animal Care Center, and the interactive Shark Lagoon and Lorikeet Forest exhibits. Beyond its animal exhibits, the Aquarium offers educational programs for people of all ages, from hands-on activities to lectures and courses by leading scientists. The Aquarium won a 2015 Travelers' Choice Award for Aquariums, as awarded by TripAdvisor® travelers, and the 2016 TripAdvisor® Certificate of Excellence. To learn more about Pacific Visions, visit aquariumofpacific.org

