

**CITY OF DAVIS**  
**2005-2006 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION**

**Organization Name:** Explorit Science Center

Street Address: 3141 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Davis 95616  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1288, Davis 95617  
E-mail Address: suzanne@explorit.org  
Phone Number: (530) 756-0191  
Fax Number: (530) 756-1227

Contact: Suzanne Ullensvang      Address: See above      Phone: See above  
*(Be sure to list the best contact to get information to the organization as quickly as possible.)*

**Total Proposal Request:**      \$ 220,700

\_\_\_\_\_ On-going Support      X New Project

**CDBG Eligible Category:** Public Facilities, 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:**

400      Total number of beneficiaries in program  
400      Number of beneficiaries in program to be served with **CDBG** funds  
100%      Percentage of the **CDBG** beneficiaries with low/moderate income  
\$551.75\*Cost per **CDBG** beneficiary (CDBG Request/CDBG Beneficiaries)  
\*If cost is amortized over expected minimum 25+ year life of building use, per person cost is substantially less.

## PROJECT NARRATIVE

### **a. Need**

Explorit Science Center is a unique educational resource within the Davis community, providing public and school access to hands-on science programs and exhibits.

The Center is planning a new 7,200 square foot expansion building to be located on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in East Davis. The new building will greatly expand Explorit's programs and service in the community. This CDBG request will support reduction of architectural barriers within the new facility to make Explorit's expanded facilities and educational programs highly accessible to physically disabled community members.

Thousands of children and adults from the Davis community take part in Explorit's programs each year. In 2004, Explorit had over 16,000 on-site person visits. This includes approximately 2,200 individual Davis residents who participated in Explorit programs, many attending multiple times during the year. Demand for Explorit Science Center programs has grown dramatically. Unfortunately, the existing facility is too small and poorly configured for comfortable access by individuals or groups with disabilities.

While the disabled visitors who currently use Explorit's programs clients love the experience and become highly engaged in the hands-on activities, the 900 square foot exhibit gallery is too cramped to accommodate multiple wheelchairs comfortably at one time and lacks other features that would improve access for disabled visitors.

Providing greater access to science education resources within an inviting, community-based environment is an important goal for our project. 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 and to stimulate the young minds who just may discover the cure for cancer, unleash a new energy source, or invent a new technology.

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 and abilities can come together to share interests for recreation and social interaction.

### **b. Benefit**

While provision of basic human services is critical in any City, providing equal access to educational and cultural resources is also highly valued within the City of Davis. As a widely used community facility, Explorit provides a dynamic center for education and recreation that should be as accessible as possible to all members of the 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 more physically accessible through our expansion. The particular focus of this request is assuring that features are included in the new Explorit building to make it very accessible to person with physical disabilities.

Projections show that on-site attendance will more than triple in the new building with its larger galleries and expanded range of programs. Based on these projected attendance statistics and disability payment data indicating that approximately 6% of the population has a disability, it's estimated that the new Explorit facility may serve as many as 400 Davis residents with disabilities each year, in addition to the many visitors from surrounding communities who will also visit.

**c. Other Resources and Collaboration**

In planning this new facility, 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. After the end of this lease term, the building may transfer to City ownership.

The board, staff and volunteers have worked steadily over the past year to raise funds for the expansion project with a targeted capital campaign. To date nearly 40% 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.

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 one year ago with projected groundbreaking in mid 2005 and completion in 2006.

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. Also, because of our location in a University town, Explorit has access to experts and resources affiliated with the UC Davis.

**d. Organizational Capacity**

Founded in 1982 by members of the Davis community, Explorit has established a reputation for excellence in informal science education and continues to receive recognition for its innovation and service in the community.

In March 2004, Explorit was named the "Outstanding Small Nonprofit of the Year" by the Sacramento Nonprofit Resource Center. 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 and has a proven track record in administering grants from both private and public sources including the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services and the State California Arts Council.

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 an attachment.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

**a. Project Description** (Activity Summary: Describe the activities of the proposed budget)  
The 2-story new building will house two large exhibit galleries; a multi-purpose room; science store; volunteer office, exhibit workshop, and two outdoor courtyards for public programs and events.

Physical accessibility will be much improved at the new site. This expansion building will have on-grade access from disabled parking to the main entry, wide circulation paths in and around the building, an elevator, and accessible restrooms on both floors. Other accessibility features include a greatly expanded exhibit hall allowing wider corridors for visitor movement, better wheelchair access around the exhibit activities and a larger reception area with counters at accessible heights.

The ADA Subcommittee of the Social Services Commission reviewed the Explorit building plans at its January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. A follow-up focus group with physically disabled members of the community is being planned for March to refine our accessibility plan for the new building.

Funds being requested through the CDBG program will be used toward the permits/fees and construction costs related to these accessibility features.

Beyond the physical structure of the building itself, Explorit will seize the opportunity to incorporate museum accessibility "best practices" (as recommended by the Association of Science and Technology Centers) in the design of the actual exhibit activities, signage and assistive visitor guides.

**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.

**c. Outreach**

A wide variety of methods are used to inform residents about Explorit's 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.

Additional outreach to special education teachers, disabled service providers and community members will be initiated upon completion of the new building.

## PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

### Work Plan

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with ADA Subcommittee</li> <li>• Focus group with disabled community members</li> <li>• Construction documents complete</li> <li>• Groundbreaking</li> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Grand Opening</li> </ul>	<p>January 2005</p> <p>March 2005</p> <p>Apr/May 2005</p> <p>July 2005</p> <p>Jul 2005– Jun 2006</p> <p>July 2006</p>

## PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

<b>ACTIVITY</b> <small>(What the program does to fulfill its mission)</small>	<b>INDICATOR</b> <small>(The direct products of program activities)</small>  Service #s	<b>OUTCOME</b> <small>(Benefits that result from the program)</small>
Construction of new building	95% completion of construction by June 2006	Improved access for physically disabled visitors made possible for life of building, with expected service to 400 or more disabled visitors per year beginning August 2006.

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

***CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY\****

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

\* Revised estimate provided by Kelly Stachowicz in City Manager's office on 1/3/05

\*\* For construction costs related to accessibility features.