



ST PETE SCIENCE CENTER

PREPARED BY:

THE
ST. PETERSBURG
GROUP



HISTORY

Established in 1959, the Science Center of Pinellas County in St. Petersburg was, for generations, a unique and beloved place for countless children to explore science. It was born of a mid-twentieth-century flourishing of interest in science and technology and the national mandate to focus on the scientific and technological disciplines that could contribute to U.S. competitiveness in the space race. The Science Center's mission was to educate and engage the public, and school-age children in particular, with scientific principles. Its goal was to boost an appreciation for science, science literacy, and careers in science as a civic priority.

Over the years, the Science Center adapted and incorporated an array of learning opportunities, such as laboratories, gardens, an observatory, a planetarium, and a 600-gallon marine life touch tank. At its peak, more than 22,000 children visited yearly. Fueled by emerging research into the efficacy of hands-on experiences as a tool for science education, the Science Center became a mainstay of public school field trips, summer camps, and family-friendly "edutainment" outings.

The Science Center of Pinellas County is fondly remembered by generations who grew up visiting it and learning from it. Many residents who have gone on to prominence in the STEM and STEAM fields (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) point to youthful experiences at the Science Center as the impetus for their subsequent studies and careers. Indeed, research tells us that early experiences with science that are engaging, entertaining, and interactive are a key factor in choosing a STEM/STEAM profession. And STEM/STEAM learning is a proven method for fostering creativity and problem-solving skills in all children and young adults, regardless of their career paths or vocations.

REVITALIZATION

The time is ripe for a reactivated, reimagined Science Center for the 21st century. As a community and a nation, we face new but equally pressing competitive pressures to train and educate more scientists and technologists. For example, technology and tech-enabled industries in Tampa Bay cite a need for more trained technologists as a drag on regional competitiveness. The recent COVID pandemic demonstrated the importance of public understanding of some of the basics of medicine, human biology, and the scientific method, revealing the vulnerability of a population that fails to grasp them. A science-literate public is a healthier, more capable, and more empowered citizenry.

Our K-12 schools cannot do this alone. Hands-on STEM experiences are a powerful adjunct to classroom instruction and an essential investment at a time when educators are stressed, stretched, and in need of public support for their important work and their students.

As envisioned and planned by the participants to this proposal, the Science Center will be a space where hands-on, discovery-based learning and STEM enrichment fuel inquisitive minds and enthusiasm for all things science. It will be an invaluable asset to the Pinellas County area and provide an interactive, classroom-supportive, family-friendly environment for generations to come.



EQUITY

With the full support of Pinellas County Schools and partner organizations, the Science Center will provide students from all walks of life, income levels, and backgrounds with high-quality experiences that will foster the necessary tools to excel and gain a sense of mastery in STEM fields. We know that not every school, and not every home, is positioned to offer the same level of exposure to enriching resources and activities. That's why public and private investments in shared civic resources, open to all children and youth, are so important to our society. We cannot afford to leave anyone behind if we are to be a healthy, prosperous, and equitable region and nation. And the learning benefits to parents and other adults, who may find inspiration to retool their careers and upgrade their own professional and personal prospects, cannot be overlooked.

The reimagined, revitalized Science Center will catalyze this growth and transformation. Through the collaborative network of program providers this initiative is pulling together, the Science Center will provide a unique opportunity for learners to experience the thrill of discovery and grasp the possibilities of a better future through knowledge.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) offers a variety of benefits to underprivileged youth in the community. It encourages creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, which can benefit educational and career pursuits. It also helps foster a sense of community and collaboration, allowing young people to build relationships with their peers and adults. Additionally, STEAM activities can introduce youth to possible career paths and open up doors for internships and job opportunities. By providing affordable access to STEAM activities, the Science Center can provide underprivileged youth with the chance to develop technical and life skills that will aid in leading them to a path of future success.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The economic impact of STEAM/STEM programs on a community can be significant. The programs allow people to develop new skills and gain knowledge that can help them find employment in growing industries. Research has found that areas with strong STEAM/STEM programs tend to have higher wages, increased job opportunities, and more economic growth.

Currently, Pinellas County's proportion of low-wage workers is above the national average. Increasing the earning power of county residents is one of the most efficient ways to address a range of social issues, from unaffordable housing to food insecurity, health disparities, and a longstanding deficit of intergenerational wealth in communities of color. Introducing STEM and STEAM programming at the Science Center is an excellent opportunity to provide local students with the essential skills needed to secure higher-paying jobs in the Pinellas County market- many of which go unfilled.

The 79% growth in the STEM and STEAM fields since the mid-1990s is a clear indication of the importance and demand for such skills. Programming at the Science Center will help ensure that local youth have the best chance of gaining the knowledge and experience they need to build a better future for Pinellas County.

Students who move into STEM careers out of high school and college make more money than their non-STEM counterparts. Workers with STEM training and skills are in very high demand now and that demand is only expected to increase in the future.

Additionally, the Science Center and its programming can also benefit tourists looking to provide their children with educational and fun activities while visiting the area.



SCIENCE
CENTER

LOCATION

The Science Center is located at 7701 22nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida, 33710, zoned as a special use/educational facility on 3.89+ acres. The property is currently vacant and will require a significant investment to bring the building up to code and outfit it for use as a science and technology learning center. Harvard Jolly assessed the current condition of the building in May of 2022. The business plan we propose below is based on the reports and estimates included in that assessment.

The exterior land includes space for outdoor adventure courses, agricultural education, and alternative farming. The walkable gardens and mosaic paths have been preserved, but green space will need a significant amount of landscaping and tree work to be safe and usable.

BUSINESS PLAN

The operations and revenue plan for the Science Center consists of two parts. On the first level of the two-story facility will be an installation of roughly eight STEM modules on potential topics ranging from the environment, marine biology, and medicine to cutting-edge technology topics such as blockchain and virtual reality. Similar to the successful Enterprise Village model for economic education, the themed Science Center modules will be sponsored by eight area businesses. Teaching and learning objectives will be developed, and staffing will be done in partnership with Pinellas County Schools and Pinellas Education Foundation. Most programming will be experienced by students from Pinellas County Schools, who will lead and staff the initiative. We plan to also use the modules for drop-in summer day camp experiences to serve families during the summer season and on weekends during the school year, as well as to tourists looking for an engaging, educational experience for their children while they visit Tampa Bay.

The second level of the Science Center will be rentable space for STEM-related organizations. Conversations with anchor tenant(s) are underway. An alternative model would be to rent to a group of complementary nonprofit organizations loosely joined in a collective impact model collaboration around shared education and equity objectives.

Additionally, there is potential for event rentals in the future, and the outdoor space would also be available for programming use, rentals, or other events.



BUSINESS PLAN

The table below shows a simple breakdown of our forecasts for revenue and expenses for operating the Science Center. There will most certainly be additional revenue opportunities as well as costs. The model builds a buffer for repairs, upgrades and expansion to keep the facility in top shape, as well as to capitalize on new opportunities as they occur.

Revenue			
	Rent Second Floor	\$ 160,000	\$ 16.00 sq/ft
	Grants & Other Operational Assistance	\$ 100,000	
	STEM Village contribution	\$ 186,000	
	Total - Gross Revenue	\$ 446,000	
Operating Expenses			
	Annual OpEx	\$ (286,000)	\$ 10.00 sq/ft
Net Operating Income		\$ 160,000	

FINANCES

The St. Petersburg Group has aggregated a group of community minded individuals to purchase the property as St Pete for STEM, LLC. That entity will lease the facility to The St Petersburg Foundation to operate for \$1 per year, triple net.

The St. Petersburg Foundation will operate the facility in public/private partnership with Pinellas County Schools and other community based organizations. SPF and partners have \$5 million in secured appropriations as well as another \$2.5 million submitted for this year. We have commitments for ongoing support from State Representative Linda Chaney, State Senator Daryl Rouson and U.S. Congresswoman Anna Paulina Luna. Additionally, we've received commitments from local individuals and organizations for support and have a robust network for future grants and appropriations.

- Buyer: St Pete for STEM, LLC
- Purchase Price: Appraised value minus \$100,000
- Property: The existing Science Center and its approximately 3.89 acres of land, all of which is located at 7701 22nd Avenue North in Saint Petersburg Florida. Tax Parcel ID: 07-31-16-61605-001-0030
- Deposit: 2% of the Purchase Price. This amount will be held in escrow and shall remain fully refundable during the Due-Diligence Term. Once the Due-Diligence Term expires, the Deposit becomes non-refundable and shall be released to the Seller. At settlement, the Deposit will be applied to the Purchase Price.
- Target Execution Date for Purchase & Sale Agreement: The Parties endeavor to execute a Purchase & Sale Agreement no later than Feb 10th, 2023.

FINANCES

- **Pre-Closing Term:** The Buyer shall have 18 (18) months to complete due-diligence, to finalize its design and permitting efforts, and to obtain construction financing. If at any time prior to the conclusion of the Due-Diligence Term, the Buyer indicates in writing to the Seller its readiness to proceed towards settlement, the Due-Diligence Term shall be shortened and the Closing Period shall begin. If at any time prior to the conclusion of the Due-Diligence Term, the Buyer indicates in writing to the Seller that it will not proceed towards settlement, the Deposit shall be returned to the Buyer, and the Buyer shall provide the Seller with all documents, studies, and analyses it conducted during the Due-Diligence term. The Parties shall then have no further obligation to one another.
- **Closing Period:** Once the Pre-Closing Term is complete, the Buyer shall have thirty (30) days to settle on the Property.
- **Other:** Rights of entry, utility splits, transfer & recordation fee splits, reps & warranties, and other contractual conditions will be negotiated via the formation of a Purchase & Sale Agreement should the Parties elect to proceed towards execution thereof.

FINANCES

The below table provides our construction funding sources. Not yet included is an anticipated additional federal appropriation we expect will be similar to the previous \$3,000,000 appropriation.

	Budget Amount
SOURCES OF FUNDS	
-Government (state/local)	
Federal	\$3,000,000
State 2	\$1,500,000
State 1	\$500,000
-State 3 (new)	\$2,500,000
-Foundations (priv./pub.)	\$448,240
-Donors (ind./corp.)	\$694,721
-New Markets Tax Credits	\$1,983,031
Debt	
-Loan (Perm)	\$0
Total Sources	\$10,625,992
USES OF FUNDS	
-Land Dev	\$416,800
-Science Center	\$8,813,471
Soft	\$1,384,541
Finance	\$0
Total Uses	\$10,614,812

PARTNERSHIPS

THE ST. PETERSBURG GROUP

St. Petersburg Group has committed countless hours to the project and is committed to the long term viability and impact of the Science Center.



Pathfinder Outdoor Education received some of the appropriations and will participate as one of the 8 stations in the STEM Village.



The St. Petersburg Foundation builds capacity for organizations and the region. SPF has a strong team of skilled operators, and an extended network of specialists to leverage as needed. SPF currently operates the Lealman Exchange and has overdelivered on revenue and impact.

Cap Ex Advisory Group | Build with Confidence.

Cap Ex Advisory Group brings deep experience in financing, managing and optimizing large projects like the Science Center. We've partnered with them previously on the successful development of the Skill Center in Tampa.

Partnerships



Pinellas County Schools will join with St. Petersburg Group in a Public-Private partnership to conduct an educational program based on the operating model of Enterprise Village.



D-Mar General Contracting & Mechanical has been connected with the project since before the Facility Assessment, they are interested in staying with the project and seeing it through to completion.



Water Warrior Alliance will provide children with environmental education as one of the 8 stations operating in the STEM Center on the first floor.

ST PETERSBURG GROUP



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KEARA MCGRAW

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GRANTS MANAGER
ST. PETERSBURG FOUNDATION



MAC COTTER

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
ST. PETERSBURG FOUNDATION

St. Petersburg Group and St. Petersburg Foundation will lead all facets of the construction, programming and operations for the facility. Following the collective impact model, we'll establish a board of stakeholders and leverage additional leadership and administration from Pinellas Schools, Pinellas Education Foundation, other nonprofit partners, Cap Ex Advisory Group and other community partners.



LETTERS OF SUPPORT



Vision:
100% Student Success

Mission:
"Educate and prepare each
student for college, career,
and life."

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Superintendent
Kevin K. Hendrick

January 20, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept this letter in support of exploring the use of the Science Center in St. Petersburg for a public-private partnership in support of innovation and emerging science technology education. Just over a year ago, Pinellas County Schools and the Innovation Foundation (IF) came together to explore a partnership to how our organizations could best work together to impact student learning and innovate the student experience. As the philanthropic arm powered by ARK Invest, a global investment firm that focuses only on "disruptive innovation" – for example, DNA Sequencing, Robotics, Energy Storage, Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain Technology, IF is uniquely situated to work alongside school districts to reimagine how emerging technologies and science instruction is experienced in schools.

Our teams have been working together to develop, implement and support curriculum modules for 6th grade science curriculum that have been piloted at six schools throughout our district. The hands-on, problem-based modules empower students to lead their own learning and discover ways to apply their knowledge to solve new problems. In each module, the students reflect on the problem or issue at hand, and their personal experiences. They pose questions, gather and analyze data, model and interpret the data, document and scientifically argue their findings and then self-assess their work and outcomes, with guidance from their teachers. This curriculum has also truly re-energized the teachers engaged in this work. In our first year of implementation, the impact of this partnership has shifted how Pinellas County Schools looks at innovation. The work with IF is serving as a model for how we not only look at science, but the entire middle school experience.

As the district moves forward with this work for innovative science curriculum, there is significant interest in exploring the development of an Emerging Science experience similar to Enterprise Village and Finance Park. This experience would be available to all middle school students and extend the learning for emerging technologies through experiential learning. The Science Center is a potential location to make this vision become a reality. Pinellas County Schools looks forward to the opportunity to explore such a public-private partnership to accelerate the learning and excitement of our students while also benefiting the entire community.

Sincerely,

Kevin K. Hendrick
Superintendent

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0913

January 30, 2023

Mayor Ken Welch
175 5th Street North
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Dear Mayor Welch,

I am writing to convey my support for the St. Petersburg Foundation and their efforts to revitalize the St. Petersburg Science Center.

The Science Center is a non-profit organization founded in St. Petersburg in 1959 by William Guild and Nell Rodgers Croley. It was the first science center of its kind in the world, and it operates on donations and grants. The Science Center has played a crucial role in the promotion of scientific research, learning, and discovery not just in our county but also worldwide. Alumni of the Science Center have gone on to jobs in robotics, cancer research, and computer technology. Restoration of the Science Center will create greater opportunities for high-impact, S.T.E.A.M, education in St. Petersburg.

The Science Center for Pinellas County will provide youth development and educational opportunities for children and families as well as prepare our future workforce, and I am proud to support the revitalization efforts.

I strongly urge your favorable consideration of revitalizing the St. Petersburg Science Center. Thank you for your time. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (202-225-5961).

Sincerely,



Anna Paulina Luna
Member of Congress



January 30, 2023

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NC CGC81048
AZ ROC 3222345
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NV ROC 327047
CA CGC1070371

FL DOT DBE Certified
AZ DOT DBE Certified

To Whom It May Concern:

D-Mar General Contractors is a Pinellas county-based general contracting firm with a strong record of community engagement and dedication to excellence in preconstruction, design-build, general contracting and construction management phases of the building process.

It has been our privilege to be engaged in the planning process for the Science Center of Pinellas County revitalization from the outset. This includes numerous site visits and a thorough review of the assessment of the site and facility by Harvard Jolly Architects.

We are pleased to partner with the St. Petersburg Foundation and the St. Petersburg Group to move the Science Center project forward. We are ready to commit to providing preferential pricing and our full commitment to what will be an important part of the built environment in Pinellas County. We look forward to helping to bring to fruition this valuable resource for children, families, and adult learners and job seekers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Collin D Parenton".

Collin D Parenton
Director of Construction

