



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Charles Butt donates \$20 million toward new San Antonio Children's Museum

Children's Museum acquires property on Broadway, planning to open new location in District 2, SAISD

SAN ANTONIO — Charles Butt, chairman and CEO of H-E-B and a longtime champion of education, committed a personal donation of \$20 million toward a new San Antonio Children's Museum. Butt's donation, the largest personal gift he has given, helped the 16-year-old Children's Museum acquire property at the intersection of Broadway and Mulberry Avenues, where it plans to build a \$45 million master planned Children's Museum. The museum's rapid and consistent growth — admissions are up 36 percent and membership has tripled since 2008 — demonstrates the demand for its services and the support for a more significant institution.

"San Antonio children are tops and they deserve a first-class children's museum," said Butt. "When properly done, children's museums contribute significantly to the creative development and education of our young people. Houston, Dallas and Indianapolis have particularly outstanding children's museums, which serve as learning centers for the early childhood set. San Antonio is too large a city not to have one, and if we are committed to improving education, the time is now to create a newer, larger children's museum of national caliber accessible to all children in San Antonio."



The new 70,000-square-foot Children's Museum will serve at least twice the number of children it currently serves at its downtown location, which is limited by both space and the cost and scarcity of parking. A relocation committee identified a former car dealership in San Antonio's District 2 and the San Antonio Independent School District as the preferred location of the new Children's Museum. The City of San Antonio actively participated in the site selection process. The new location places the Children's Museum in the same corridor as several other cultural institutions, including the San Antonio Museum of Art, Witte Museum, San Antonio Zoo and San Antonio Botanical Garden.



“To achieve our vision of becoming a premier educational resource, the Children’s Museum requires a newer, larger, exhibit-rich space that is widely accessible to children from all parts of the city and surrounding area,” said Vanessa Lacoss Hurd, executive director of the San Antonio Children’s Museum. “We are tremendously grateful for Mr. Butt’s generous donation, and we look forward to serving a critical role in the educational turnaround envisioned in SA 2020.”

“The Children’s Museum directly supports the educational goals of SA 2020 — San Antonio’s community-wide vision of the future — by offering a wide variety of early literacy, science, health and art programs to develop innovative thinkers capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century,” said Joan Collins Wyatt, chair of the board of the San Antonio Children’s Museum. “The Children’s Museum also supports two other top priorities identified through SA 2020: family well-being and arts and culture.”

"I commend Charles Butt for his generous and steadfast support of education in San Antonio and the state of Texas," Mayor Julián Castro said. "By expanding the size and offerings of the Children's Museum, we can better leverage our creative assets in San Antonio to become one of the nation's most vibrant brainpower communities."

Design, construction and installation of the new Children’s Museum will take approximately three-and-a-half years. The conceptual design of the Children’s Museum calls for outdoor exhibits, green space, ample parking and a cafe with outdoor seating.

“Starting this fall, we will seek community-wide input into the exhibits and amenities at the new Children’s Museum,” Hurd said. “This is a wonderful opportunity for parents, children, educational providers and the community at large to help develop a shared vision for a resource that will benefit generations of children.”

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About the San Antonio Children’s Museum

*The San Antonio Children's Museum (SACM) was founded by a group of dedicated volunteers who were committed to building a community space devoted to early childhood development. Since its founding in 1995, SACM has worked to carry out its mission of **growing minds, connecting families and transforming communities through joyful learning and discovery**. As a premier educational resource, we develop innovative thinkers capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century.*