

Powerhouse Science Center gets financial support from city

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The city of Sacramento will support the development of the \$49 million first phase of construction at the Powerhouse Science Center just north of downtown, by paying \$350,000 a year for 20 years to help pay back a loan.

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Sacramento will support the development of the \$49 million first phase of construction at the **Powerhouse Science Center** just north of downtown.

The City Council voted on Tuesday to pay \$350,000 per year for 20 years, which will be used to help pay back a \$25 million loan the Powerhouse Science Center is seeking from the **California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank**, or I-Bank.

The city owns the former powerhouse, and the development of the museum is seen as a

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significant project and an amenity for the waterfront, said [Rachel Hazlewood](#), senior project manager with the **city of Sacramento**.

The vote was unanimous Tuesday. "This project is a home run," said Councilman [Steve Hansen](#).

The project to create a science center has been spearheaded by local businesses and volunteers for years. Much of the funding will come from private and corporate sources, in addition to grants and tax credits.

The science center will "activate the river" as a "marquee" project, said Councilman [Kevin McCarty](#).

Backers of the Powerhouse Science Center want to convert the former power plant into a showplace for science education and learning. The plan has local corporate backing from Synergex Corp. and **GenCorp Inc.**, among others, so far.

Backers also are seeking money and grants from the **National Science Foundation**, plus a mix of city, state and federal grant funding.

The project could go before the I-Bank next month, said [Raymond Burrell](#), director of the Powerhouse Science Center. The effort also is seeking new market tax credits and other funding, he said. "A lot of things are occurring simultaneously."

With a loan from the I-Bank, the center could begin construction this year, with about an 18-month construction cycle.

The first phase of the project includes development of a new building next to the historic Jibboom Street powerhouse in the banks of the Sacramento River, just west of the downtown railyard.

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The new building would house a planetarium, an exhibit about the importance of water, a Challenger Learning Center and a nature center.

A \$40 million second phase would renovate the historic powerhouse building into multiple gallery and exhibit spaces and add a parking structure.

Much of the second phase would be built with corporate funds, which are anticipated to be more forthcoming once the first phase is complete, Burrell said.