



Construction Renovation underway at historic building- Steele Indian School Park

For immediate release
August 7, 2017

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Phoenix, AZ: Construction is underway at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, on the former elementary school/music building. The city of Phoenix (COP) and partners Native American Connections (NAC) and the Phoenix Indian Center (PIC) are turning the 6,000 sq. ft. building into the Phoenix Indian School Visitors Center.

“Phoenix is proud to be home to one of the largest urban Native American populations in the United States, and the music building is an important piece of our shared history,” said Mayor Greg Stanton. “Preserving and activating this historic structure honors our Native American communities and educates new generations about Phoenix Indian School, while providing a valuable community space at one of our city’s signature parks.”

Construction is expected to be completed in early October 2017 with the grand opening of the Phoenix Indian School Visitors Center on October 14, 2017.

A unique feature of the building will be the gallery space which will tell the history of the Phoenix Indian School which opened in 1891 and closed in 1990. It was a U.S. government run boarding school for American Indian children. The gallery will be free and open to the public.

Three rooms will be available for rent to outside organizations; a 120 person conference room, 25 person classroom, and a commercial kitchen.

“We plan to have a day-long celebration to mark this special occasion which will reopen a building that has been closed since 1990,” said Diana Yazzie Devine, NAC’s CEO.

“It is exciting to create space in a historical site and be able to pay tribute to that space,” said Patricia Hibbeler, CEO of PIC. “We can’t wait to unveil it to the community and celebrate this accomplishment together.”

The building is on the National Register of Historic Places and is located just west of Memorial Hall, another building that remains from the Phoenix Indian School.

"The restoration of the music building at Steele Indian School Park is made possible thanks to a strong partnership between the city, Native American Connections, and the Phoenix Indian

Center; and ensures that the history of Phoenix Indian School and the story of its many students and families will never be forgotten," said Vice Mayor Laura Pastor, who is the Chair of the Parks, Arts, Education and Equality Subcommittee; and also serves Council District 4 in which the park is located. "It is an important historical landmark in one of the city's most popular parks, and will serve to educate generations to come about Native American contributions, heritage, and culture."

The COP, LISC Phoenix, the Caterpillar Foundation and Chase Bank have all provided funding for the project. Architectural Resource Team designed the floorplan and ForeSite Design and Construction, Inc. is handling the renovation.

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