

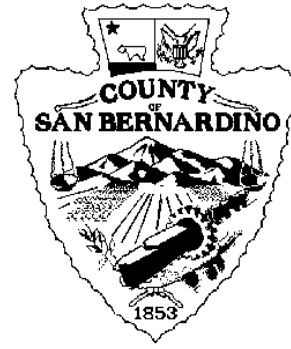
# ***NEWS***

*From the Office of*

## **Brad Mitzelfelt**

Supervisor, First District  
San Bernardino County

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### **Mitzelfelt Developing Plan for County to Acquire Victor Valley Museum**

APPLE VALLEY – San Bernardino County Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt is developing a plan to assume ownership and operations of the Victor Valley Museum in Apple Valley.

“One of my priorities as Supervisor has been to bring a County museum to the high desert, so this idea brought to me by the Victor Valley Museum seemed like a natural partnership,” said Supervisor Mitzelfelt. “Assuming public ownership of the museum will ensure its historical, cultural, educational and scientific resources remain available and will be preserved and protected for residents for years to come.”

In July of this year, the Victor Valley Museum approached Supervisor Mitzelfelt with concerns over its ability to operate the facility under current economic conditions. The museum has experienced substantial hardships due to losses in fundraising revenue, which serves as the museum’s primary source of funding. The museum offered full transfer of title to the facility should the County accept title to its ownership.

As a result, Supervisor Mitzelfelt worked with the San Bernardino County Museum and County Administrative Office to develop a plan to assume ownership and operate the facility. A key component of the takeover would be to ensure as seamless a transition as possible so as not to substantially interrupt the community’s use and enjoyment of the museum.

The County’s acquisition plan would include two phases. In the first phase, the County would allocate one-time funding to refurbish and upgrade existing public exhibits, enhance or develop new programmatic outreach, and enhance the exterior and interior of the building. This would result in a temporary partial closure wherein the county would continue to allow residents to use portions of the facility on a limited basis.

Phase two would be intended to attract existing patrons – those who have visited the facility previously – and to cultivate a new and growing audience through new exhibitions, programs, lectures, travel programs and other outreach events. As patron and school use increase through added programs and outreach, a re-examination of staffing levels, hours of operation and programs relative to local cost would be performed.

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## 2-2-2-2 Victor Valley Museum

Costs for the acquisition plans are estimated to be approximately \$250,000 and would be paid out of Supervisor Mitzelfelt's district funds. Ongoing operational costs would be borne by the County Museums Department and be offset by fundraising activities. Bringing the museum in line with requirements of the County Museum's accreditation will result in the museum being eligible for more grants than in the past.

Discussions are also underway with local cities, especially the Town of Apple Valley, in an effort to help fund ongoing operations through support from a variety of sources.

"I have long admired our Victor Valley Museum and the dedicated patrons and volunteers who have kept it a viable amenity for our community," said Mitzelfelt. "I am also glad to be able to step in at a time of need and secure the future of the museum. It is a future that will include expansion and result in an even better community asset.

"This would not have been possible without the selfless efforts of those people who got it started and kept it going for so many years. They will be appropriately honored as a new era for the Victor Valley Museum begins."