



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Independence National
Historical Park

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Independence National Historical Park

May 5, 2010

For Immediate Release

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Public Input Wanted on Proposed Designs for Franklin Court

Philadelphia -- The National Park Service, in partnership with the Independence Visitor Center Corporation, Pew Charitable Trusts, and others is planning for an ambitious and exciting rehabilitation of the underground museum at Franklin Court in Independence National Historical Park, and a detailed explanation of the proposed project is now available online for public review and comment. The public is encouraged to visit <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/inde> and click on "Benjamin Franklin Life and Legacy Museum" to access the plan proposals and submit comments. Comments will be accepted until May 15. Exhibit panels showing the proposed plans are also on display at the Independence Visitor Center, at 6th and Market Streets.

This project represents the first rehabilitation of the underground museum since its opening in 1976. Once completed, the museum will be equipped to serve park visitors in the 21st century, offering improved facilities and a new appreciation of the life and accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin. During this two-year project, which is expected to start later this fall, the underground museum will be closed to the public. The historic Market Street buildings, which include an 18th century printing office, an exhibit showing archeological and architectural fragments of Franklin Court, and a working U.S. Post Office, will remain open to the public throughout the project.

While the focus of the project is the rehabilitation of the underground museum, this project will modify the front façade of the museum, (landscape and architecture) within the Venturi and Rauch designed courtyard. Exhibits available online provide a general description of the project, a presentation by Quinn Evans Architects of the proposed plans, and comments on the projects from external sources. These materials will be available for public comment at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/inde> until May 15. Comments will also be accepted by mail, at Independence National Historical Park, ATTN: Franklin Court Comments, 143 S. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19106.

A unit of the National Park Service, Independence National Historical Park was created by an Act of Congress on June 28, 1948. Accredited by the American Association of Museums, Independence NHP covers almost 54 acres in Philadelphia's Old City, and includes Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Congress Hall, Franklin Court, and other historic buildings associated with the founding of the United States. A visit to Independence NHP should start at the Independence Visitor Center, located at 6th and Market Streets. Here, visitors can pick up a park brochure, park map, and the free, timed tickets required for Independence Hall. For more information visit the park's website, <http://www.nps.gov/inde> or follow us at twitter.com/independencenhp.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.