

Overview

Planning for the Irvingtonian Fossil Museum Project is underway to create a world-class facility that educates and celebrates the natural history of the Irvingtonian period, dating back 1.9 million years when sabercats roamed the land. The museum will house fossil collections held by UC Berkeley and the Fremont-based Math Science Nucleus and is envisioned to be an educational resource for natural sciences, similar to the Page Museum and La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles.

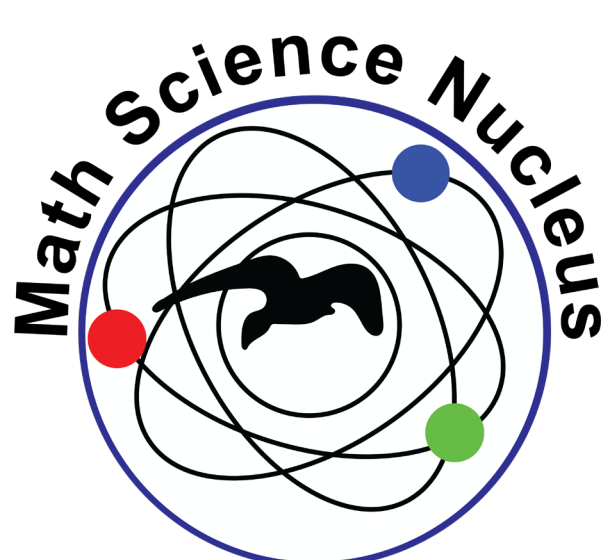
Features

- A 40,000 square-foot museum building is planned on a State-owned property overlooking the I-680 freeway and the original paleontological dig site where fossils were first discovered.
- The museum is located along an extension of the Sabercat trail with connections to Sabercat Historical Park, along with Ohlone College, the future Irvington BART Station, and East Bay Greenway Trail to the east.
- Vehicle access to the museum is provided from a driveway along Osgood Road and includes parking for school buses, persons with disabilities, and the general public.

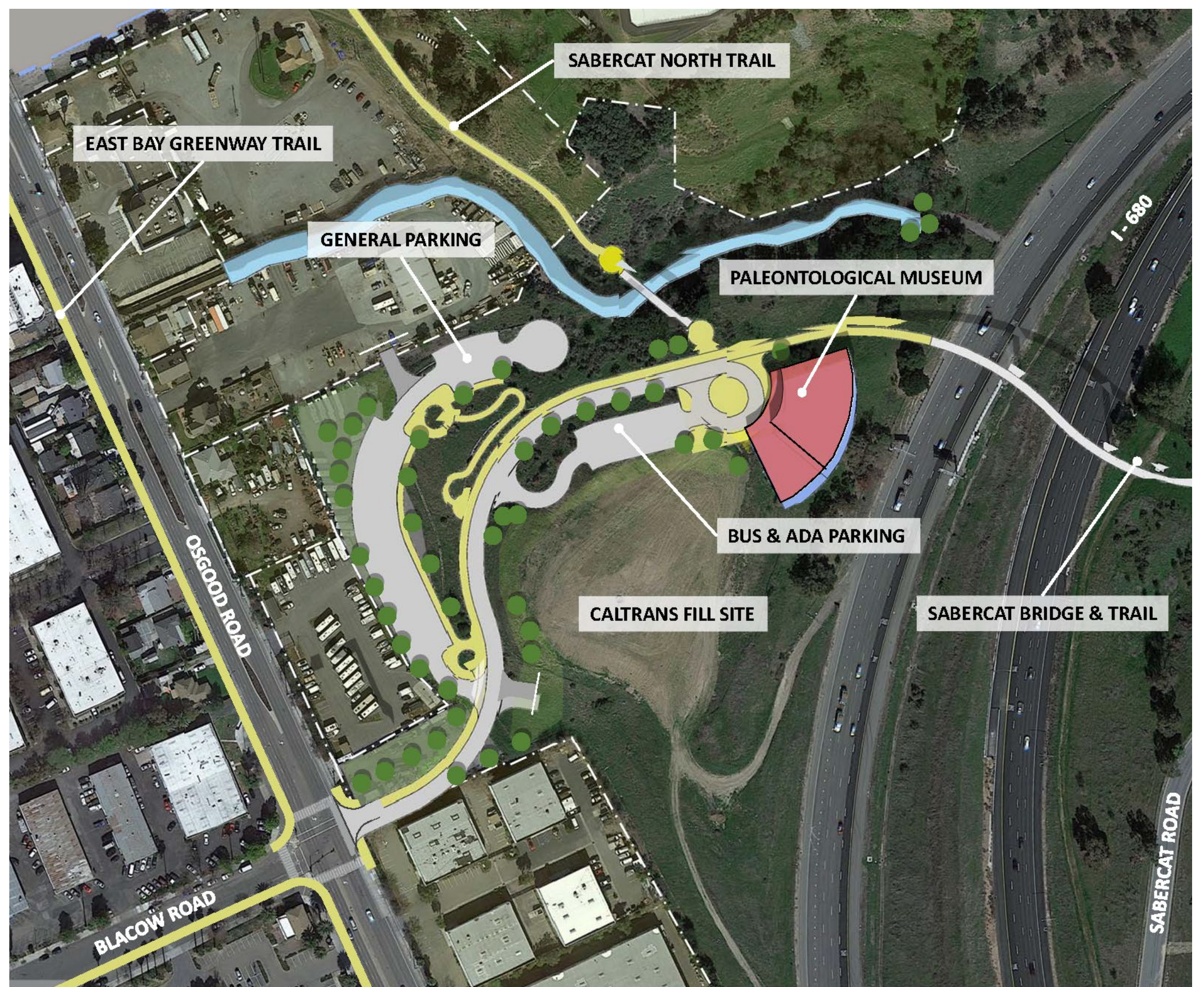
Project Status

Using grant funds from the California Natural Resources Agency, a project scoping plan was completed in Spring 2022. Next steps include facilitating a transfer of property ownership from Caltrans to the California Natural Resources Agency, preparing a project environmental clearance, and developing an implementation and management plan among project stakeholders.

Partnership Agencies



Concept for new Irvingtonian Fossil Museum overlooking Interstate 680 and Sabercat Creek.



Rendering of the museum and the surrounding area.

Schedule

Scoping Plan	Completed Spring 2022
Implementation Plan	Fall 2024
Environmental Clearance	Spring 2025
Property Transfer	2025
Design and Construction	TBD*

*Schedule subject to funding availability

Cost and Funding

Funding for project planning work has been provided through a California Natural Resources Agency grant. The estimated cost for the design and construction of the Irvingtonian Fossil Museum facility is estimated to be approximately \$50 million. Funding sources are proposed from federal, state, and private contributions.

Contact

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Project Webpage

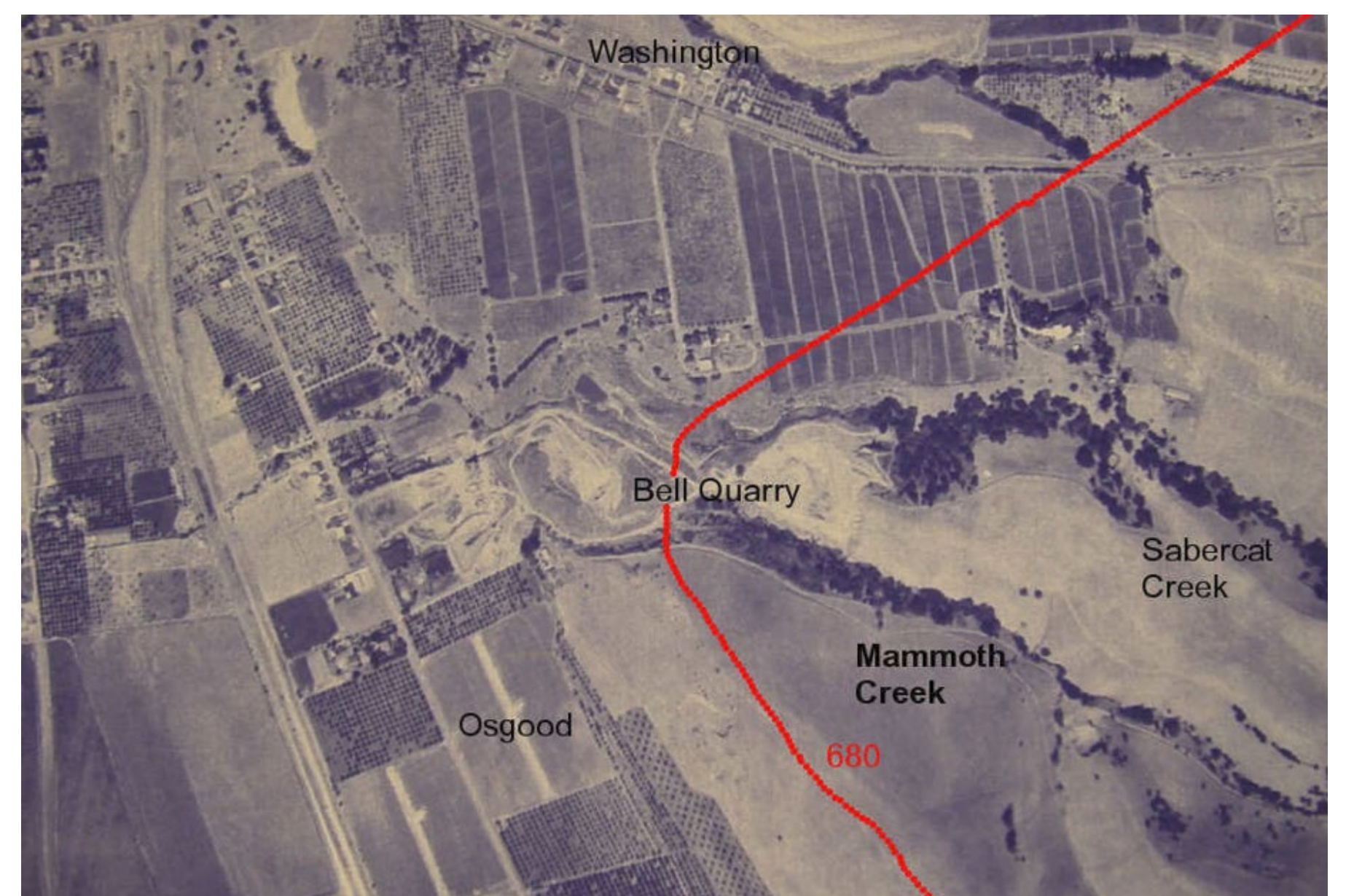
www.fremont.gov/government/departments/public-works/public-works-projects/sabercat-trail-extension-project



“Irvingtonian Age” one million years ago. Photo credit: Math Science Nucleus

Extraordinary History!

Over 29,000 fossil specimens have been recovered in and around the proposed Museum location area including mammoths, musk oxen, camels, giant sloths, deer, dire wolves, elk, and sabertooth cats. Fossils have been found in the Irvington hills since the late 1800s. At the Bell Quarry, tens of thousands of specimens were recovered from the 1940s through 1960s by a teacher named Wesley Gordon and students he called the “Boy Paleontologists.” Additional fossils were found during the construction of I-680 in the early 1970s and along the east side of I-680 in subsequent improvements. Fossils are occasionally found in the creek beds or upstream of the Project area to this day.



Bell Quarry before I-680 was constructed. Photo credit: Math Science Nucleus



Fossils excavated by Wesley Gordon and the “Boy Paleontologists”. Photo credit: Math Science Nucleus

Irvington Fossils

The Children’s Natural History Museum in Fremont houses a collection of fossils in the Wesley Gordon Fossil Hall that was excavated in the 1940s through 1960s in the Irvington area of Fremont by a group of young boys.

Several of the fossils found at Irvington were new to scientists. For example, the Irvington bear was truly a monster, standing about 14 feet tall as the largest bear known to man. However, the most amazing find was an antelope with four horns (modern antelope have only two horns). Since this was a new species, it was named *Tetrameryx irvingtonensis* after Irvington. These finds were so important that Irvington was even given its own place in geological time.

Boy Paleontologists

The young boy paleontologists who uncovered the largest collection of ice age fossils in the San Francisco Bay Area spent over a year working with Wesley Gordon in rough terrain. Their discovery of Pleistocene (Ice Age) fossils changed the way paleontologists looked at this time period. The Children’s Natural History Museum has a room that displays tools and equipment used for their work.

For More Information

The Children’s Natural History Museum is operated by Math Science Nucleus and can be visited at 4074 Eggers Drive, Fremont, CA

cnhm.ms-nucleus.org

Related Project

[Sabercat Trail Extension Project](#)

