



CHILDREN'S MUSEUM &
IMMERSION CENTER
EXPLORATION PLAN OF
ACTION-UPDATE

DS-26-049

June 16, 2026

Background

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- On January 6, 2026, City Council directed staff to develop a coordinated Plan of Action to explore the development of a Children's Museum and Immersion Center incorporated within a Children's Public Library.
- The direction included evaluating:
 - ▣ Potential partnerships and roles;
 - ▣ Governance structure;
 - ▣ Funding strategies;
 - ▣ Potential locations;
 - ▣ Programming aligned with early childhood literacy; and
 - ▣ Immersive learning opportunities.

Collaboration Efforts

- Community Development received advisement from the following internal departments:
 - ▣ City Manager's Office
 - ▣ Community Development
 - Library Services Division
 - Killeen Convention & Visitors Bureau
 - ▣ Finance
 - ▣ Development Services
- Community stakeholders (on-going)
 - ▣ Killeen Independent School District (KISD)
 - ▣ Innovation Black Chamber of Commerce (IBCC)

Immersion Center/Children's Museum

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- A Children's Immersion Center/Museum concept supports:
 - ▣ Early childhood literacy development
 - ▣ Hands-on learning environments
 - ▣ Educational enrichment opportunities
 - ▣ Access to family-centered programming
 - ▣ Community quality-of-life enhancements
- Overall, this concept focuses on expanding learning opportunities for children and families across Killeen and may attract visitors from surrounding communities.

Potential Partnership/Roles

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- ❑ KISD representatives stated that an operating partnership was not likely but, their board could be interested in a membership of an immersion center/museum for use by its schools.
- ❑ National Mounted Warrior Museum expressed interest in cross-promotion of the proposed facility.
- ❑ IBCC would be interested in an advisory role.
- ❑ 409 N. Gray Street owner may be interested in additional discussion regarding an immersion center/children's museum concept.

Funding Strategies

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- City of Killeen funded:
 - ▣ General Fund
 - ▣ Hotel Tax Fund
 - ▣ Capital Improvement Programs
 - ▣ Bonds
 - General Obligation Bond
 - Certificate of Obligation Bond
- Grants
- Donations
 - ▣ Establish a not-for-profit foundation

Governance Structure

- Most immersion centers/museums operate as a not-for-profit organization with an executive board.
 - ▣ This could be achieved by establishing a library foundation.
- None of the organizations contacted were governed or financed mainly by its city.
- Staffing levels vary based on size and operations.
 - ▣ Staff ranged from approximately 15 to 80 employees.
 - ▣ Volunteers are present but, not used to supplement overall staffing needs.

Potential Locations

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- Sites that can be evaluated adaptive reuse:
 - ▣ 409 N. Gray St.
 - ▣ Killeen Public Library Main Branch
 - ▣ Peebles Elementary School (North Killeen)
 - ▣ Clifton Park Elementary School (Former Site, near I-14)
- Southwest Killeen

Potential Locations

- Anthem Park represents a potential location for future community-serving facilities, housing, and retail/entertainment.
- Key considerations include:
 - ▣ Approximately 203 acres of planned development area;
 - ▣ Potential for regional entertainment activity;
 - ▣ Access to future residential neighborhoods;
 - ▣ Opportunity to serve surrounding communities; and
 - ▣ Potential to support long-term family activity destinations.

Early Childhood Literacy Programming

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- Killeen Public Library (KPL) offers "Story Time" for specific age groups.
 - ▣ Ages 0-5 years
 - ▣ Ages 6-10 years
 - ▣ Story Time with Stay & Play: Ages 0-6
 - This program allows children to stay after the story time, socialize with others and strengthen cognitive development.
- These programs provide an opportunity for children to socialize, prepare craft, play games and develop a lifelong love of reading.

Current Immersive Learning at KPL

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- Little Play Date - Children ages 0-3 years can socialize with others and strengthen cognitive development by playing with age-appropriate toys.
- LEGO Day - This event celebrates the "birthday" of LEGO Bricks and offers free interactive building stations.
- LEGO Block Party! - For ages 3+ years; helps develop fine motor skills, supports creativity, and promotes social skills.
- DUPLO Baby Block Party! – 0 - 3 years; helps develop fine motor skills, supports creativity, and promotes social skills.

Current Immersive Learning at KPL

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- ❑ Magic Show - Programs such as a magic show stimulates critical thinking, boosts imagination, promotes socialization.
- ❑ Portable Planetarium – Offered for the 1st time July 25, 2026; this program is intended to help children develop an interest in STEM, and to help foster critical thinking.
- ❑ Mario Day - Offers the opportunity to enhance cognitive development, encourage creativity, and socialization.
- ❑ Library Mini-Golf - Library Mini-Golf helps build motor skills, helps develop the skill of patience, and promotes critical thinking.

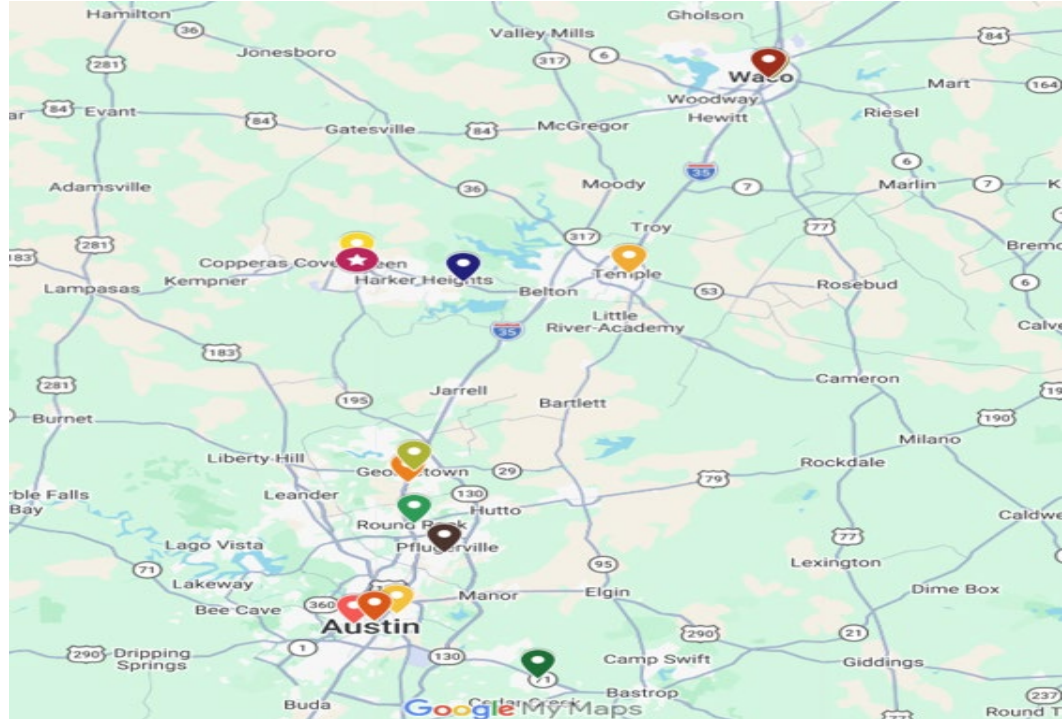
Central Texas Immersion Centers/Museums

- There are approximately 15 immersion centers, museums, and learning destinations are located within about one hour of Killeen.
- Killeen exploration focuses on identifying opportunities that:
 - ▣ Expand access locally;
 - ▣ Complement existing regional facilities; and
 - ▣ Support family learning opportunities and quality of life within Killeen.

Central Texas Immersion Centers/Museums

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-  Austin Nature & Science Cen... (1)
-  Bullock Texas State History ... (1)
-  Georgetown Art Center (1)
-  Inner Space Cavern (1)
-  Killeen (1)
-  Mayborn Museum Complex (1)
-  National Mounted Warrior M... (1)
-  Pflugerville Library (1)
-  Round Rock Public Library - ... (1)
-  SMART Museum (1)
-  Temple Children's Museum (1)
-  Texas Ranger Hall of Fame &... (1)
-  The Dinosaur Park (1)
-  Thinkery (1)



Staff Next Steps

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- KPL will pursue organizational membership at the Thinkery Interactive Museum at an annual cost of \$500 for two (2) membership cards for use by KPL members.
 - ▣ Allows for up to 6 visitors each day with membership.
 - ▣ Unlimited visits annually.
- KPL will implement additional immersive programming which responds to the KPL 5-Year Strategic Plan 2026-2030.

Motion of Direction Options

- Council may provide direction regarding:
 - ▣ Continued exploration of an immersion center/museum concept.
 - ▣ Exploration of library expansion to include immersive features and enhanced immersive programming.
- Either direction may include funding options and publishing an RFP for professional services for site selection, design, and engineering.