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MISSION'S GATE HOUSE PROJECT BREAKING GROUND

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. – Nov. 21, 2011 – Mission San Juan Capistrano's Preservation Foundation will celebrate the construction start of Phase I of the Gate House Preservation Project with a Groundbreaking on Wednesday, Dec. 14, beginning at 10 a.m. on the Mission's historic grounds in the project area.

Phase I of the Gate House Preservation Project includes the construction of the Mission's new group entry, plaza and wall along Camino Capistrano.

"This phase of the project is only happening because of the incredible generosity of our leadership and private supporters who believe that the entry of the Mission should be architecturally inviting and preserve its most historic elements at the same time," said Mechelle Lawrence-Adams, Executive Director of Mission San Juan Capistrano. "We hope to give the community a project that it can be proud of and celebrate for generations to come."

The Gate House Preservation Project ultimately will safely accommodate the operational use of the Gate House and eventually relocate the current gift shop out of the rich and historic 18th Century Sala Building as part of Phase II.

The project enhances and protects the most historic elements of the existing Gate House while improving access, safety, and staging of thousands of school children who queue on sidewalks that are just four feet wide today. The project also will lengthen the hours of the downtown's busy period and reinforce its identity by providing a museum store on the street-front after hours.

"I am excited to witness the start of construction on the first new building at Mission San Juan Capistrano since the 1950's," said George O'Connell, President of the Mission Preservation Foundation Board.

"Together we are making history and insuring that this great landmark will be around for many generations to come."

The plan has been carefully developed over the last year using visual simulations and on-site modeling to help create its overall scale, details and massing.

"The overall Gate House Preservation Project will, at its completion, elevate the architectural meaning and experience of the Mission's entry for our visitors and for the community of San Juan Capistrano," Lawrence-Adams said. "This first phase involves the construction of an entry plaza with public benches provided on the street as well as the rehabilitation of the 1916 original gate house building."

Working closely with Lawrence-Adams on the project, the design team of the Gate House Preservation Project includes:

Ed Lohrbach, Lohrbach Studio (Architect), San Juan Capistrano resident

Glen Gellatly, Lohrbach Studio (Architect)

Mike Imlay, Land Concern (Landscape Architect), San Juan Capistrano resident

Matt McKinlay, Barnard Ventures (Project Manager)

Sam U'Ren, Preservation Project Manager, staff, San Juan Capistrano resident

George O'Connell, Mission Preservation Foundation President

Ultimately, it is the design team's goal to build a Gate House that will become a historically significant building in its own right.

In going through the process of designing a new Gate House, those involved in the project have strived to treat the site with reverence and respect while working to ensure the Mission's continued preservation, sustainability, and reputation as a worldwide appreciated landmark.

The mission will be inviting community support for the project beginning with the Ground Breaking event.

About Mission San Juan Capistrano:

Known as the "Jewel of the Missions," Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that boasts of quality permanent exhibits featuring original artifacts as well as traveling and temporary exhibits on a wide variety of topics.

The site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18th century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres' quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County's only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term preservation and viability of Orange County's only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Open Daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday afternoon. Admission is \$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$5 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission. For more information, call (949) 234-1300 or visit www.missionsjc.com.