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North Carolina Museum of Art Breaks Ground on Park Expansion Project
Museum will create new bike and walking paths, a community lawn, and more

Raleigh, N.C.—The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) today celebrated the groundbreaking on its Museum Park expansion project. The groundbreaking marks the start to a construction project that includes the creation of tree-lined parking lots, bike and walking paths, and a central elliptic lawn where Museum and community programming will take place. The phased project is expected to be complete by summer 2016.



The long-term plan for the Museum Park, which already draws more than 150,000 annual visitors, includes a new campus entrance and streetscape, increased paved parking capacity, woodland and meadow restoration, additional trails and infrastructure, improved sustainability measures, and additional outdoor works of art.

The Museum enlisted landscape architecture and urban design firm Civitas, Inc., of Denver, Colorado, to develop the plan. The Museum's director of planning and design, Dan Gottlieb, is leading the project.

"The goal of this plan is to connect people, art, and nature in a sustainable way," said Gottlieb. NCMA Director Larry

Wheeler added that the Museum "has always been a community gathering place, but we now have the opportunity to be a catalyst for change."

The improvements to the NCMA campus would positively impact the Blue Ridge Road corridor by offering attractive pedestrian-, bicycle-, and transit-friendly development. "The Blue Ridge Corridor Alliance applauds the NCMA's plans to improve its beautiful Museum Park along Blue Ridge Road," said Stuart Levin, MD, president of the Blue Ridge Corridor Alliance. "The Alliance's stakeholders are committed to the Corridor becoming a distinct destination, and the Museum's exciting vision will initiate meaningful transformation in the area."

The plan sets forth a vision for fully developing the Museum Park, creating a stronger connection between interior and exterior spaces while fostering environmental sustainability.

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About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum's collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum opened West Building, home to the permanent collection, in 2010. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Lawrence J. Wheeler, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Pat McCrory, governor, and an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, Susan Kluttz, secretary.

About Civitas, Inc.

With a core purpose of "creating healthier cities," Civitas is an idea-based practice of urban designers, architects, and landscape architects engaged in strategic planning for urban change and project design for built works. Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2014, the consultancy and design studio advises on strategies for reimagining urban life and places. For more information visit Civitas online at civitasinc.com.

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Image courtesy of North Carolina Museum of Art and Civitas, Inc.