

North Carolina Museum of Art Announces New Plan for Museum Park
Vision Plan Outlines Upcoming Projects, New Art Commission from Artist Jim Hodges

Raleigh, N.C.—Today the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) unveiled a new vision plan for its 164-acre campus. The phased, long-term plan calls for a new campus entrance and streetscape, increased parking capacity, woodland and meadow restoration, additional Park 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 and commissioned internationally renowned artist Jim Hodges to create a signature work of art from the existing smokestack on campus. 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 proposed 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, and ensuring sustainability.

PHASE I

The NCMA received \$13 million from an anonymous donor to complete the first phase of the plan, scheduled to begin in spring 2015. This phase will not only improve the NCMA's street front but will reimagine the existing smokestack on the campus, transforming it into a dynamic work of art. New bike and walking paths along Blue Ridge Road will connect to the Capital Area Greenway.



The NCMA is working with the City of Raleigh to create a bus stop at the Museum, and a new bus shelter is planned near the NCMA entrance on Blue Ridge Road.

THE SMOKESTACK

Internationally renowned artist Jim Hodges has been selected to transform the historic smokestack on the NCMA campus into a significant work of public art. The commissioned work, made possible by an estate gift to the Museum, will be highly visible during both the day and night.

The brick smokestack (approximately 120 feet high) is one of the last remaining structures from the youth prison that once occupied the Museum campus. Because of its prominent site, the smokestack can be easily seen from many different vantage points, including Blue Ridge Road.

The smokestack project will build on *Art Has No Boundaries*, the Museum Park program that facilitates interdisciplinary collaborations to create site-specific works that encourage visitors of all ages and abilities to actively explore the Museum Park. The smokestack project extends *Art Has No Boundaries* by creating a unified sense of place and community.

Based in New York City, Hodges was born in 1957 in Spokane, Washington. He received his B.F.A. from Fort Wright College in Spokane in 1980 and his M.F.A. from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, in 1986.

A major retrospective of Hodges's work, spanning his 25-year career, opened at the Dallas Museum of Art in 2013; travelled to the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; and is currently on view at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. His recent major public sculpture commissions include projects for the Walker Art Center, the Aspen Art Museum, Battery Park in lower Manhattan, and the Cleveland Museum of Art. His work is in numerous public collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago, Dallas Museum of Art, Guggenheim Museum, Hirshhorn Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the San Francisco Museum of Art, among others. Hodges is represented by Anthony Meier Fine Arts in San Francisco, Gladstone Gallery in New York, and Stephen Friedman Gallery in London.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

"The Vision Plan is intended to be just that, a vision for our future," said Larry Wheeler. "We're looking ahead and articulating our aspirations."

The vision plan also imagines a new Museum Center, a flexible space that would allow for a variety of programming, both indoors and out. The existing meadows and woodland in the Park would be improved ecologically and programmatically with the creation of new coves in the meadow, additional trees, and new trails. The plan also calls for the restoration of House Creek.

A formal public sculpture park would be created, and the space could be utilized for outdoor festivals, games, or other events. Part of this area would also provide an additional 250 overflow parking spaces.

To better connect the NCMA's buildings with the Park, a tree-lined discovery walk would lead from West Building, past East Building, and into the Park. Additional pathways would offer a direct connection to the paths leading from the proposed Museum Center and the meadow. These new paths would encourage children and adults to freely interact with works of art.



###

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 a wide range of strategies for reimagining urban life and places. For more information visit Civitas online at www.civitasinc.com.

CIVITAS MEDIA CONTACTS: Ilana Fowler, Civitas, Inc., marketing@civitasinc.com, (303) 571-0053; Anne McGregor Parsons, WordenGroup Public Relations, anne@wordenpr.com, (303) 777-7667

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