



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

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FAQS on the gift of the Belk Building to the Albany Museum of Art

The Albany Museum of Art has been gifted the former Belk Department Store at Broad Avenue and Washington Street from the Robert N. Brooks Sr. family. Following are some frequently asked questions about the acquisition.

What is the Albany Museum of Art receiving?

The Robert N. Brooks Sr. family is donating the properties at 128 and 146 West Broad Avenue. Situated on 1.27 acres, the property includes the former Belk Outlet Department Store, the former dance studio and the parking area just east of the Belk building. The AMA gratefully acknowledges the Brooks family's generosity for gifting the building, which will have a positive impact for generations.

Why do Albany Museum of Art officials want to relocate downtown?

Museum officials believe that relocating downtown will result in increased visitation and higher visibility, both with local residents and visitors to Albany. With city plans to improve the walkability of downtown, both local residents and tourists would benefit from the AMA being in close proximity to points of interests including the Flint RiverQuarium, Albany Convention & Visitors Bureau, Pretoria Fields Brewery, Turtle Park, the Albany Civic Center, the Albany Municipal Auditorium, the Albany Civil Rights Institute, the Thronateeska Heritage Center, and the recently opened Flint Restaurant.

When will closing on the property take place?

We will close on the property by July 3, 2019.

When will the Albany Museum of Art move downtown?

We are currently developing on a timeline. No projected opening date has been set.

How much will the project cost?

Museum officials estimate the project will cost nearly \$10 million to complete.

What about the reported environmental issues with the property?

This is not an AMA-specific issue. This environmental cleanup will have to be completed for anyone to make use of the property. Most importantly, the cleanup will mean a healthier environment for Albany.

How will those environmental hazards be mitigated?

The cleanup of contaminants found on the property is to be funded through grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program. That program is designed to provide funding to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites, which are properties where expansion, redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The EPA estimates there are more than 450,000 brownfields in the U.S. The next round of Brownfield grants is in 2020.

When was the former Belk store built?

It was built in 1968. It was part of an effort by the Belk company to create a more consistent store design throughout the chain. The location, however, was used for other purposes for decades before the store was constructed. Its commercial use dates to the 1890s. Uses include horse stables, carriage repositories, retail stores, warehouse storage, auto repair facilities, a paint shop, a print shop and a gas station.

Will the AMA be gaining any space?

Yes, it will more than double. Our current facility at 311 Meadowlark Drive has 25,000 square feet. Our new downtown home will have more than 53,000 square feet.

What will you do with the additional space?

We will be able to increase the number of galleries and bring the Albany Museum of Art's permanent collection back from the safe storage in which it has been held since the 2017 storms. Our children's programming area will be increased, and we will have expanded meeting and events space. Behind the scenes, there will be more storage and preparation room space, both of which are cramped in the current facility. It will give us the opportunity to grow and add programming, and to provide more points of interest for those who visit the Museum.

What are the AMA plans for the smaller building at the corner of Washington and Broad?

The 4,125-square-foot building, which was built in 1967, will be razed. We plan to create an outdoor sculpture garden in its place. It has housed an auto parts and appliances store, an art gallery, and a dance studio over the years.

About the Albany Museum of Art

The Albany Museum of Art, located in Albany, Georgia, adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open 10 am through 5 pm Tuesdays through Fridays and noon until 5 pm on Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400. Follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum of Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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