



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART REQUESTS FUNDING FROM DOUGHERTY COUNTY

The Funding Would Help Facilitate Move of the AMA to Downtown Albany

[For Release April 25, 2022 – Albany, GA] – The Albany Museum of Art this morning asked the Dougherty County Commission to consider a \$2 million leadership gift to help fund its relocation to downtown Albany.

In his request to County Commissioners, AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said the County gift from the upcoming special-purpose local-option sales tax or other sources would be “would be demonstrative and important” for the \$34,975,000 cultural project. The museum, currently located at 311 Meadowlark Drive, will move to the former Belk department store at 128 and 146 W. Broad Ave. once renovations are completed.

“With free admission and field trips for schools and organizations, we serve all of Southwest Georgia,” Wulf said. “We offer scholarships to our art camps, and we have free admission to our largest event of the year, *AMA ChalkFest*.”

“We strive to offer a place of inclusivity and accessibility. Accessibility is key to our mission and that is why our move downtown is crucial. With a more centralized location, it will make it easier for residents in East and South Albany to access the museum, which is for everyone.”

Dougherty County Commission Chairman Chris Cohilas noted that \$700,000 in support for the museum’s move downtown was included in SPLOST V, a special-purpose local-option sales tax previously approved by Dougherty County voters. Today’s request would add \$1.3 million, making a total of \$2 million.

The move downtown will give the Albany Museum of Art the space it needs to offer more exhibitions, art classes, events, and programs. In the new building, the AMA’s space will more than double from the current 25,000 square feet to 58,000 square feet. The additional space will allow for:

- Expanded exhibition space for art in a range of sizes and media;
- Expanded event space;
- Expanded classroom space that will support educational programs for children, teens, and adults;
- State-of-the-art collection storage for the AMA's permanent collection;
- Studio space for artists-in-residence;
- Multimedia systems that will support new and emerging art;
- A café and museum store;
- An outdoor sculpture garden.

"Our museum in Albany builds connections with individuals and communities to inspire curiosity, appreciation, understanding, and passion for art and creative thinking," Wulf said. "We engage diverse experiences and perspectives in our audiences through exhibitions, events, collection preservation, research, and educational programming that have an impact on our residents."

Moving the museum downtown will make the AMA a pillar for redevelopment in the area, creating a robust arts district with downtown cultural partners, he said. It will enable the AMA to reach a broader audience, host more K-12 and university student groups, and welcome large touring exhibitions.

Noting that the AMA has "encouraged the artistic curiosity of children and adults through studio classes, art camps, and art instruction events" for more than four decades, Wulf said that work must continue.

"Through its educational outreach, the museum will increase awareness of and appreciation for a myriad of art forms and broaden partnerships with schools, youth-serving organizations, and other educational institutions for arts-focused, curriculum-based learning experiences involving anthropology, art, natural sciences, and many other subjects," he said.

In late 2021, the AMA completed and adopted a new five-year strategic plan that will result in the new downtown museum. The Albany Museum of Art is now set to begin its funding campaign and fully realize its potential as an arts center for Albany and Southwest Georgia.

"Your support will set the pace for others to join and invest in the community," Wulf concluded.

Last week, Wulf asked Albany City Commissioners for \$8 million in funding in the SPLOST referendum that is expected to go before Dougherty County voters this November. The total request for funding from the two local governments is \$10 million.

A special-purpose local-option sales tax (SPLOST) is an optional 1 percent sales county tax used to fund capital outlay projects proposed by a county government and participating qualified municipal governments. By using special districts, the revenue of a county tax can be constitutionally shared with participating municipalities. The tax is imposed when the board of commissioners calls a local referendum and the referendum is subsequently passed by the voters within that special district. The SPLOST can be in effect for up to six years.

AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Homecoming*, which features artworks from the Albany Museum of Art's permanent collection, opens May 12.
- *Escape Plan*, an installation by Elinor Saragoussi, is in the West Gallery.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free.

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

CAPTION

This rendering indicates how the exterior of the Albany Museum of Art might look once the renovation of its future home in downtown Albany is complete. (Image courtesy of the Albany Museum of Art)

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