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Springfield Art Museum Receives \$5 Million Lead Gift to Capital Campaign Project



Gift marks one of the largest private capital contributions to an arts institution in Springfield and is the largest in the Museum's history.

Springfield, MO. (March 3, 2022) – The Springfield Art Museum announced today that it has received a \$5 million lead gift to its 2028 Campaign from The Sunderland Foundation of Overland Park, Kansas. In 2018, during the Museum's 90th Anniversary year, a master plan was devised that would expand the Museum's education, exhibition, lobby, administrative, and community spaces, activate the amphitheater and auditorium, mitigate flood risk, and create sculpture, biking, and hiking trails that connect the City's oldest cultural institution with other areas of the city, including the new Grant Avenue Parkway project.

"The Springfield Art Museum's vision is expansive and invigorating for Southwest Missouri," said Kent Sunderland, chairman of The Sunderland Foundation. "We can trace both our family and business roots back to Springfield and the surrounding area. Sunderland family members performed on the Museum's amphitheater stage many years ago. We make this gift not only to honor our heritage but to inspire others to invest in the Museum as the leader for cultural tourism, quality of place, and arts education in this region. We are proud to be a part of launching the Museum's next 100 years of service to citizens today and for generations to come."

In 2020, the City of Springfield secured and committed nearly \$2.5 million to naturalize and daylight much of Fasnicht Creek which runs alongside the Museum and remove the Museum and the adjacent homes from a FEMA floodplain.

Additionally, The Sunderland Foundation committed an initial \$500,000 in early 2020 to fund a new parking lot that will ultimately connect the Museum to its WPA-era amphitheater via continuous greenspace, while reducing groundwater contamination through green paving technology.

“We cannot thank The Sunderland Foundation and its board and family members enough for their confidence in the Museum’s ambitious goals for its future. The Springfield Art Museum’s master plan is truly transformational – for the institution and for our community,” added Museum Director Nick Nelson. “We have envisioned a place that speaks to all our visitors’ senses with a modern, creative building and beautiful landscapes. Whether indoors or outdoors, visitors will be immersed in an artistic experience. The Sunderland Foundation’s lead gift helps propel this project from concept to reality.”

The Springfield Art Museum’s capital campaign is structured so that fundraising and construction will be complete by the Museum’s 100th Anniversary in 2028. With the Sunderland Foundation gift, the Museum has raised nearly \$9 million to-date toward the \$25 million campaign.

For more information about contributing to the 2028 Campaign, please contact Kate Francis, Museum Affairs Officer for Fundraising and Development at kate.francis@springfieldmo.gov or 417-874-2865. The Museum’s nonprofit 501(c)(3) foundation, Friends of the Springfield Art Museum, Inc., is receiving and managing the Museum’s 2028 Campaign private contributions. The Springfield Art Museum is located at 1111 East Brookside Drive. Admission is always free. Donations are gratefully accepted.

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About the Springfield Art Museum

The Springfield Art Museum is Springfield, Missouri’s oldest cultural institution, founded in 1928. A department of the City of Springfield, the Museum invites you to connect with the world, your community, and yourself through active engagement with art objects. For more information about the Museum’s 2028 Campaign, please visit www.sgmuseum.org/258/Museum-Master-Plan.

About the Sunderland Foundation

The Sunderland Foundation was established in 1945 by Lester T. Sunderland, who served as President of the Ash Grove Cement Company for 33 years and as a highly respected leader in the cement industry. Since its inception, the Foundation, which continues to be led by Lester T. Sunderland's descendants, has focused on supporting construction projects, awarding grants to nonprofits in the Kansas City region and other markets traditionally served by the Ash Grove Cement Company. For more information, please visit www.sunderland.org.



Museum Master Plan Renderings Courtesy of BNIM

[Master Plan Ground-breaking Video](#)