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Dinosaur Hall's evolution mapped

ERIK SIEMERS

Friday, April 12, 2002 12:00 a.m.



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Carnegie Museum of Natural History's vision of progress will take them and their visitors back 150 million years.

The Oakland museum announced Thursday a \$37 million expansion of its famed Dinosaur Hall that will provide more exhibit space for their cache of fossils. The expansion also will allow visitors to experience dinosaurs in their natural habitat.

The project will nearly triple the museum's current exhibit space.

"We're using some of the most spectacular animals of the past to lead us into the future," said Mary Dawson, curator of the museum's vertebrate paleontology department.

The new exhibit will be called "Dinosaurs in Their World." The present dinosaur room will be transformed into Jurassic Hall, showcasing dinosaurs such as the museum's massive *Diplodocus carnegii* in an environment similar to the one they lived in 150 million years ago.

From there, visitors can fast-forward 85 million years into the adjacent Cretaceous Hall, which will feature that period's dinosaurs — like the *Tyrannosaurus rex* — within a new atrium that will be built by expanding into a connecting courtyard in the middle of the museum.

Offices for the vertebrate paleontology department and a research library now situated between Dinosaur Hall and the courtyard will be removed during the first phase of the project. Visitors ultimately will be able to walk from the Jurassic Period directly into the Cretaceous.

Bill DeWalt, the museum's director, said the dinosaur exhibits should still be accessible to museum visitors during the expansion. He plans to make the disassembly and transportation of the skeletons an exhibit of its own.

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Museum officials said they expect to begin the project in 2004, with hopes of completing it within five years. But to begin, they must secure funding.

State Rep. Dan Frankel, a Squirrel Hill Democrat, said \$17 million has been authorized out of the state's capital budget for the project. State lawmakers still must approve the release of the money.

The remaining \$20 million will be accrued during a fund-raising campaign already under way that's expected to conclude in two to three years, said Ellsworth Brown, board chairman of the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh.

Brown wouldn't disclose how much has been raised. To show the state that the campaign is capable of raising the \$20 million, money will be borrowed from museum endowments until the amount is reached, Brown said.

The original Dinosaur Hall was built in 1907 to hold only the *Diplodocus carnegii*. Today, though, the one room holds 15 dinosaur skeletons, including the first *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever found.

Officials said the expansion will allow them to showcase more of the museum's 21 million pieces of their collection, of which only 50,000 are on display.

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Friday, May 13, 2022 | Shirley McMarlin



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Wednesday, May 18, 2022 | Paul Peirce



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Thursday, May 19, 2022 | Jeff Himler



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Andy Warhol Museum plans \$60 million expansion on North Side (<https://triblive.com/aande/museums/andy-warhol-museum-announces-60-million-expansion-on-north-side/>)

Friday, May 20, 2022 | Paul Guggenheimer



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