

# **Merrick County Historical Museum**

## **New Museum Building**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Our Mission**

To tell the continuing story of the people of the Merrick County area.

#### **Why is a new building needed to fulfill the Museum's mission?**

The new Museum building project will expand the Merrick County Historical Museum's ability to serve the people of the Merrick County area, welcome guests to our community, and to preserve and present our story. For generations past, the building has been a vision of those who love Merrick County. Now that the new Museum has gone from vision to reality, it will provide an appropriate environment to preserve, care for, and share the irreplaceable documents, photographs, and artifacts that "tell the continuing stories of the people of the Merrick County area." The new building will allow the Museum to expand its role as a public gathering place, offering even greater amenities to serve the Merrick County area, and provide opportunities for more dynamic programs and community events.

#### **Where is the new Museum located?**

It is located on 20 acres on the western edge of Central City, Merrick County's county seat. The site is on the southeast corner of the intersection of 15<sup>th</sup> Road (Fairgrounds Road) and 28<sup>th</sup> Street, and is within sight of Highway 30 and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. The address is 2716 28<sup>th</sup> Street. The soon-to-be Merrick Medical Center will be across 15<sup>th</sup> Road to the west of the Museum.

#### **Who is the architect for this project?**

DLR Group based in Omaha, known worldwide, is the architectural firm that developed the project design. Jim Roubal, now retired, a Merrick County native and graduate of Central City High School is one of the three founders of this firm, previously known as Dana, Larson, Roubal.

**Who is the contractor? Is local labor being used?**

Rathman-Manning Construction Company, based in Chapman, Nebraska is the contractor. Tom Rathman, serving as construction partner, is contracting with as many local companies as he finds possible.

**What is the construction timeline?**

A groundbreaking ceremony was held in April 2018. The first phase of ground preparation was completed shortly after. Construction began in the summer of 2019, as weather permitted. The building will be closed in by December 2020. The remainder of the building will be finished in phases as funds become available, until the building is complete.

**How big is the new Museum?**

The new Museum building has 28,000 square-feet, with more than half being exhibition space.

**How much will the project cost?**

The project's estimated cost is \$5,000,000. As of September 2020 approximately \$2,000,000 has been raised and spent on construction. This project is funded with private donations; there is no public tax money being used for the construction of the new Museum. Each phase will be paid for as completed.

**Will the new building have space to store all of the Museum's collections?**

Yes, the new Museum will accommodate the collections, providing storage, and display for the artifacts. Besides the large exhibit hall and gallery, there will be library and archival storage.

The building is designed so additional "wings" could be added if needed in the future. The completed project includes public gallery spaces, flexible event spaces, as well as workspaces for maintaining collections, and administrative offices. The building will include ADA accessibility, critical safety systems, climate control, security and operations systems.

**What will be on display in the main gallery?**

All of our galleries will showcase collection highlights that support the Museum's mission of telling the continuing story of the people of the Merrick County area. Exhibits will be rotated, changed and added to, frequently.

**What services will the Museum provide besides historical and cultural exhibits in the main gallery?**

\*The special research library and community archive will be available to researchers and genealogists. A wealth of resource material will be available, including: books, maps, newspapers, photographs, oral histories, church and social records, personal and family papers, business documents and numerous county records.

\*The small gallery will display art shows, and special traveling exhibits.

\*The conference area will be available to the public, and seats 100 for educational presentations, meetings, meals, and events. It is complimented by an exhibit area and catering kitchen.

**How will the new Museum improve the experience of educational opportunities of school children?**

The new Museum will provide the space for greater educational opportunities for schools, home schools, daycares, clubs and community groups. We will be able to offer age appropriate, hands-on tour programs that will allow students to learn about local history in an informal, new and fun way.

**Who will use the Building?**

Everyone is welcome. The building is for the people of the Merrick County area. Whether a group includes adults, schoolchildren, or others, they are welcome to explore history here. Historians, businesses, educators, families, tourists, artists, musicians, quilters, craftsman, researchers will be welcome to use the new Museum.

**What will happen to the Traver House Museum property?**

If funds permit, the Traver House will become a “house museum,” furnished and decorated as it may have appeared in 1890s when the Traver family lived in it. It would be available for use by the public for events such as teas, card parties, small meetings, showers, small weddings, and other special events.

**Weren't you given a farm worth a lot of money by Gerald Jindra? Why isn't that enough to finish the new building?**

The Merrick County Historical Museum was the recipient of a generous gift of nearly one-half section of Merrick County farm ground from the Gerald Jindra Trust. To insure sustainability of the Museum when the new building is finished, the Board of Directors plans to keep the farm ground to provide

future funds. The Museum pays property taxes on the farm ground. For further information please see the Sustainability Plan on the Museum website.  
<https://merrickcountyhisto.wixsite.com/website>

**When the new Museum is open, how will you meet expenses?**

The Sustainability Plan may be found on the Museum website.  
<https://merrickcountyhisto.wixsite.com/website/fundraising>

**How will donors be recognized? What is the plan to recognize donors?**

- \*Gifts of over \$100,000 will allow a naming opportunity. The naming opportunities are listed on the Museum website.
- \*Exhibit sponsors with donations of \$10,000 - \$50,000 will be recognized with names at the exhibit location. Several donors may sponsor the same exhibit subject. Sponsor amounts will be differentiated by size of font on individual exhibit signage. The list is a compilation of potential exhibit subjects to tell the continuing stories of the people of Merrick County area.
- \* A donation of \$1000 or more would have the name of choice placed on the recognition wall. The recognition area will be placed where all will pass by it entering the main exhibit gallery.
- \*All other donors will be recognized in a way yet to be determined.

**Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected giving?**

Donations have been down this year. As with many things, fundraising and events have been put on hold. The Museum is trying to have a more virtual presence, and has recently launched a virtual fundraiser, check the facebook page, website and Republican-Nonpareil newspaper for the latest happenings.

**What is the next step?**

Your donation is needed!  
Donations, large and small, are being requested to help pay for the next phase of building. To donate with a credit or debit card, visit the website for information <https://merrickcountyhisto.wixsite.com/website/fundraising> or call 308-624-3367, or send your donation to Merrick County Historical Museum, 211 E Street, Central City, NE 68826.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the staff and volunteers of the Merrick County Historical Museum are cataloging items and packing boxes to prepare for the move to the new building.

