

# NC Freedom Park Project

## Funding Request



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## Background

- North Carolina Freedom Park will be a commemorative park in downtown Raleigh to celebrate the contributions of African Americans in North Carolina to define and defend the values of “freedom” for all citizens
- In 2017, Wake County Commissioners committed \$25,000 towards the construction of the project
- Project leaders have worked since that time to raise project construction funds, secure long-term management and operation from the State, and finalize project design

# Background

- At the time of the County's commitment, the project was in early development so conditions were included with the County commitment
  - Construction should begin within 18 months and be completed within 36 months
  - Full project construction funding should be secured
  - Ongoing project operation and maintenance plans should be secured
- Although the timeline was not met, communication was provided to the County that demonstrated progress, therefore the County funding remained available but would need to be affirmed by the Board when the project was ready
- Since the Board's 2017 commitment, construction costs have escalated and Park leaders are requesting additional support from Wake County, City of Raleigh and their private donors

## NC Freedom Park

- In 2002, a group formed to explore the absence of public spaces in North Carolina commemorating the African American's struggle for freedom and dignity
- In 2004, a non-profit was organized to create a grassroots endeavor to determine purpose, place and financing for this effort
- In 2016, renowned architect Phill Freelon and his design team were chosen to design the park
  - Freelon's design feature African American "voices of freedom" embedded in walkways and at its focus point, a gleaming, illumined and towering beacon of Freedom.
  - The 1-acre park on State-owned land between the Legislative Building and Governor's Mansion, includes grassy areas to reflect and gather spots for education and cultural events, especially for school-aged groups learning about state history







Aerial View 5





# Project Status

- Secured long-term land lease with State of NC
- Secured commitment from NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to accept the park as a gift and provide ongoing maintenance and programming
- Secured \$3.6M for construction of the project, including \$1.5M from the State of North Carolina; additional requests pending to several foundations and businesses
- Conducted a ceremonial ground-breaking October 2020
- Engaged Holt Brothers for project construction
  - Construction costs currently quoted at \$4.8M



# Request to Commissioners

- Given the lasting impact of project of this nature to the Wake County community, affirm commitment of \$25,000 from 2017 and authorize additional commitment of \$100,000