



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ADAM J. BELLO
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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SENECA PARK ZOO DESIGN PROJECT
OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVED

World-renowned CambridgeSeven will begin design phase of the state-of-the-art Tropics Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza capital project

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello announced that the \$6.7 million contract with CambridgeSeven, the new design consultant for the Seneca Park Zoo Tropics Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza capital project, was approved at tonight's Monroe County Legislature meeting by an overwhelming 25-4 vote. The \$100 million capital project will complete Phase Two of the Seneca Park Zoo Master Plan and will provide a first-class experience to Monroe County residents and visitors, making it a top destination for our region.

"Thank you to the members of the Monroe County Legislature for their overwhelming support of the design contract with CambridgeSeven, a world-renowned design firm that is uniquely qualified to fulfill our vision for the Seneca Park Zoo. We are excited to be moving forward with a new design that will create a 21st Century Zoo experience for Monroe County residents and visitors alike – one that is filled with innovative and interactive exhibits and amenities," **said County Executive Adam Bello.**

CambridgeSeven is a nationally recognized design firm with 60 years of master planning and design experience of animal habitats and aquaria, and was awarded the project after an extensive selection process. Their work creating exciting visitor experiences through immersive and innovative exhibits can be seen at the National Aquarium Blacktip Reef in Baltimore, MD; Audubon Nature Institute Insectarium in New Orleans, LA; Wonders of Water exhibit at the Rochester Museum and Science Center; Concept Design for the Hudson River Estuarium in New York City, NY; Greensboro SciQuarium and Rainforest in Greensboro, SC; and the original New England Aquarium and the award-winning Giant Ocean Tank, among others. CambridgeSeven's commitment to Monroe County is reflected in the inclusion of several local design firms working with their team.

"We have just heard the news about our contract's acceptance and we are energized! Our team is eager to start working with Monroe County and the Seneca Park Zoo to develop our design for this significant Rochester resource," **said Adam Mitchell, Principal at CambridgeSeven.**

Monroe County undertook a two-step process to select the design team of CambridgeSeven – first a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), followed by a Request for Proposals (RFP) from a list of finalists chosen through the RFQ. The RFP process took a unique approach that included a design submission from each firm to get an understanding of their capabilities, design approach, and affordability of construction. This is the first capital project undertaken by Monroe County to use this innovative and interactive approach to selecting a design consultant.

The 48,000 square foot Tropics building will include the Borneo Forest, Tropical Islands, and Pacific Reef Habitats, and a 150,000-gallon Pacific Reef Tank. Anticipated species include Orangutan, Fossa, Lemur, Sifaka, Komodo Dragon, Clouded Leopard, Small Clawed Otter, Siamang, Blacktip Shark, Cownose Ray, Jellyfish, Mudskipper, Seahorse, and Python. The 22,000 square foot Main Entry Plaza will include membership and ticketing offices, classroom and education space, event space, administrative offices, and the Zoo Shop.

Monroe County is investing a total of \$34.5 million in the Seneca Park Zoo Tropics Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza project, while Empire State Development has committed \$42.5 million, and the Seneca Park Zoo Society has committed to raise an additional \$23 million to support the completion of this capital improvement project. Funding for this project was previously approved by the Monroe County Legislature in 2022.

About Seneca Park Zoo

In addition to providing opportunities for more than 400,000 Monroe County families and visitors to connect with wildlife and wild places, the Seneca Park Zoo supports local and global conservation efforts. No other organization in our region offers the same breadth of conservation-focused learning. Zoo staff work with national and international organizations to save animals from extinction and protect wildlife. Programs like pollinator habitat restoration, community clean ups, and onsite learning give our community the ability to engage in conservation work here in Monroe County.

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