



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

For Immediate Release
Friday, January 17, 2025

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES CAMBRIDGESEVEN AS DESIGN CONSULTANT FOR SENECA PARK ZOO CAPITAL PROJECT

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced the selection of CambridgeSeven as the design consultant for the Seneca Park Zoo Tropics Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza capital project. The \$100 million capital project will complete Phase Two of the Seneca Park Zoo Master Plan and will provide a world-class experience to Monroe County residents and visitors, making it a top destination for our region.

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.

“The Seneca Park Zoo is truly one of the most prized attractions in all of Monroe County, and we’re making it even better in the years to come. CambridgeSeven is a world-renowned design firm that is uniquely qualified to fulfill our vision for an innovative and interactive Tropics Exhibit and a state-of-the-art Front Entry Plaza at the Seneca Park Zoo,” said County Executive Adam Bello. “Once completed, residents and visitors will be able to immerse themselves in exhibits that feel like they are visiting the rainforests of Indonesia or taking a trip to the island of Madagascar, truly creating a 21st Century Zoo experience.”

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.

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.

“CambridgeSeven is delighted and deeply honored that our design was selected in the competition. We are proud of the proposed Entry and Tropics Building design and believe that it offers a bold new addition to the Seneca Park Zoo while continuing the best traditions of this beloved and forward-looking Rochester institution,” **said Adam Mitchell, Principle at CambridgeSeven.** We are looking forward to working with Monroe County, Seneca Park Zoo, and the wider community on this essential project.”

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.

Senator Jeremy Cooney said, “Seneca Park Zoo is a point of pride for our community, entertaining and educating residents and visitors alike. I commend County Executive Bello for his continued commitment to bolstering tourism in the City of Rochester and I’ll keep working with my colleagues in the delegation to bring state funds directly to projects like these in our community.”

Senator Samra G. Brouk said, “Community investments in historical institutions like the Seneca Park Zoo help us make Monroe County an even better place to live and visit. I look forward to witnessing the rollout of immersive visitor experiences and innovative additions to the Zoo, which will create uplifting memories for the families, friends, and residents of our county for years to come.”

“The Seneca Park zoo continues to be a beloved treasure here in our community. I am beyond thrilled to support the zoo’s expansion plans to continue their important work around animal education and conserving wildlife. As a lifelong Rochester resident and mom of three teenagers, the zoo has been an integral part of our lives for decades. I stand here today incredibly proud to advocate in the NYS Assembly for investment and funding for this project. Thank you to the whole team at the zoo, County Executive Bello and all our local partners who have contributed to take our Zoo on this incredible journey,” **said Assemblywoman Sarah Clark.**

Assemblymember Demond Meeks said, “This \$100 million investment in the Seneca Park Zoo is an investment in Monroe County's future. It will not only enhance the lives of our residents but also attract visitors from beyond our borders with its expanded recreational and cultural offerings. I am proud to support this initiative, which will stimulate our local economy and provide invaluable learning experiences by connecting people with wildlife.”

“The Seneca Park Zoo is one of the premier tourist destinations in Western New York. We are blessed with this incredible Frederick Law Olmsted designed park that houses creatures from every corner of the globe. And with the addition of this Tropics Center, a one-of-a-kind installation, we will be able to attract even more visitors to share in the all of the fun and educational opportunities our zoo provides to locals and tourists alike. As a zoo member myself, my family has hosted birthdays, attended camps, field trips and special events at the zoo for years. I couldn't be more excited by this newest development that will stand for generations as a testament to the beauty and diversity of our world,” **added Assemblymember Jen Lunsford.**

“As the Representative for District 26, home to Seneca Park Zoo, I am happy the county has selected CambridgeSeven for the Main Entry Plaza design,” **said Legislature President Yversha Román.** “This new design will create an unmatched educational experience for all visitors, and the state-of-the-art Tropics building with main entry Plaza being constructed will undoubtedly attract new year-round visitors to learn more about the essential wildlife conservation efforts taking place in our backyard. Thank you to my partners in government and to the Seneca Park Zoo Society for gathering the funds to move this project forward.”

“I am delighted to hear that a consultant has been selected so that Phase Two of the Master Plan can begin on our beloved Seneca Park Zoo. We are so lucky to have a such an amazing attraction in our community and I look forward to seeing the new exhibits,” **added Majority Leader Michael Yudelson.**

"The Seneca Park Zoo is one of Monroe County's greatest treasures, and this visionary design for the Tropics Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza demonstrates our commitment to providing an unmatched experience for families and visitors," **said Republican Leader Steve Brew.** "This expansion will solidify the zoo's status as a world-class destination while advancing its role in education, conservation, and tourism. I'm proud to support a project that will leave a lasting impact on our community for generations."

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.

Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of the Seneca Park Zoo Society said “We are excited to relaunch our A Wilder Vision Capital Campaign for the Zoo. Through an emphasis on green building initiatives and inclusive design elements, these beautiful new habitats and buildings will allow us to better serve our entire community and model sustainable practices, all while providing more people with the opportunity to fall in love with the living world.”

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