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## MAYMONT SELECTS COMMONWEALTH ARCHITECTS TO LEAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FOR MANSION, WILDLIFE TRAIL

**Richmond, Virginia** – Maymont has selected Commonwealth Architects to lead the architectural and engineering design for the proposed infrastructure improvements to enhance the accessibility, guest engagement, safety and long-term resiliency of the historic Maymont Mansion and wildlife habitats. The overall project entails replacing the roof of the Gilded Age mansion and updating its ventilation and fire safety systems, as well as redesigning the animal habitats and connecting pathways along the Virginia Wildlife Trail, which features rescued native species ranging from bears to bald eagles.

Commonwealth Architects has assembled a team of professionals with experience in designing historic renovations, animal habitats and landscapes, as well as engineering and project management, from the firms of CPL, VHB, MCC-1200 and MBP to collaborate on developing comprehensive designs. Commonwealth Architects will also oversee the construction phase for the project, which is expected to get underway this summer.

A grant was awarded July 19, 2022, by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) as part of its American Rescue Plan Act investments to promote and expand regional tourism and outdoor recreation. Maymont will raise over \$2 million in additional funds for the estimated \$10 million project, to be completed in 2024.

“We look forward to working with Commonwealth Architects and the talented professionals they have selected to bring our vision to life for expanding and enhancing the guest experience at Maymont,” said Parke Richeson, Executive Director of Maymont Foundation. “This team has amassed an impressive track record restoring important historic buildings and complex animal habitats. They bring the skills needed to ensure Maymont approaches its hundredth anniversary as a public space in 2025 in a strong position to welcome even more guests over the next hundred years.”

“We are thrilled to work with Maymont on a project that combines our passion for historic preservation, our expertise in improving sustainability and the vision to help expand the Virginia Wildlife Trail,” said Kenneth Pope, AIA, Principal of Commonwealth Architects. “We strive to offer sensitive, inspiring design, to build and rehabilitate enduring structures and to revitalize communities for generations to come.”

### **Maymont 2025**

As Maymont approaches its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a public space, this project is a core part of [Maymont 2025](#), a campaign to improve the guest experience and ensure long-term resiliency of both the historic collections and

environmental experiences so that even more people can experience the unique charms of this Richmond landmark. Maymont ranks as one of Central Virginia's top attractions, earning Tripadvisor's 2022 Travelers' Choice Award, placing it among the top 10% of attractions worldwide for consistently positive visitor reviews. Located in the heart of Richmond, near vibrant restaurant and shopping areas, Maymont is a must-see site for visitors interested in enriched outdoor experiences and connecting with our shared history.

Details about the public/private-funded project can be found at [Maymont.org](https://www.maymont.org).

Through previous fundraising campaigns, Maymont has completed a number of infrastructure projects in recent years, including renovations to Maymont Farm in 2017, the renovation and expansion of The Robins Nature Center in 2020, and the renovation of the 1908 Stone Barn into a new welcome center and active learning classroom that opened in September 2022. The latter project was supported by a special Commonwealth of Virginia grant to enhance the public's appreciation of Virginia's diverse history and included the development of a series of interpretive audio tours and a refresh of the "In Domestic Service" exhibit highlighting the contributions of the African American domestic staff who worked at the estate during the oppressive Jim Crow era.

## **About Commonwealth Architects**

Commonwealth Architects has provided a full range of architectural and interior architectural services since the firm was founded in 1999. Headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, the firm offers a diversity of services, including architecture, interior design and tenant services, historic preservation, master planning, and urban planning.

## **About Maymont**

Maymont is a well-preserved, 100-acre historic estate overlooking the James River that was given to the public by James and Sallie Dooley, who lived there from 1893 to 1925. Today, Maymont is a welcoming community gathering place, with many unique experiences for all to enjoy, including the historic Maymont Mansion, The Robins Nature Center, an arboretum, formal gardens, and habitats for native Virginia wildlife and farm animals. Consistently ranked one of Central Virginia's top attractions by travelers and locals alike, Maymont serves over 700,000 guests annually, with free admission to the grounds, plus guided and self-guided tours, seasonal events, programs and rental spaces. Since 1975, Maymont has been maintained and operated by the nonprofit Maymont Foundation, committed to creating programs and experiences that delight, educate and inspire its guests.

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**Note to editors:** Photos are available upon request to [mabernathy@maymont.org](mailto:mabernathy@maymont.org).