



PRESS RELEASE

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**Museum of the Confederacy Considers Statewide Museum System
Museum to Reach Out to Visitors**

The Museum of Confederacy is exploring the idea of expanding to a statewide system of visitor sites. The museum system would advance the Museum's educational mission by broadening the reach of its extensive artifact collection. The visitor sites will reach across the state, concentrating on and complementing existing flows of both historical and recreational travelers. The Museum will remain in Richmond with its headquarters, marketing and development functions, research library, collections storage and conservation and preservation efforts. The White House of the Confederacy will serve as a major visitor site in Richmond. Additional locations under consideration include Appomattox, Chancellorsville and others.

"It is an exciting prospect to expand our outreach to a greater number of historical tourists in Virginia," stated Museum Board Chairman Carlton P. Moffatt. "The plan is contingent on financing. After three years of hard work involving a state study commission, a peer review study and a large number of volunteer experts, the Board feels that a system of museum sites is the best way to accomplish our central mission of using artifacts to educate the public about the Civil War and the Confederacy."

"We are focused on taking our collection to the visitor, rather than trying to get the visitor to come to us," said S. Waite Rawls, III, Museum President and CEO. "Richmond and the other sites under consideration hold great war-time significance. They have strong visitation numbers and name recognition. We are looking to have space for many more artifacts that can be seen by three to four times as many people."

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The relocation of the Museum exhibits would have positive tourism and economic impact for each location. “Relocation of the Museum of the Confederacy to Appomattox would create a synergy between the Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, the upcoming Battle of Appomattox Station Battlefield and the Museum itself,” stated Watkins M. Abbitt, Jr. delegate from the Virginia General Assembly’s 59th district, which includes Appomattox County. “The relocation would substantially increase visitation, extend the visitors stay in our area, and result in a tremendous, positive economic impact for Appomattox.”

Museum officials had considered relocating all functions outside of Richmond. A recent *Richmond Times-Dispatch*’s editorial stated, “Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy; it ought to establish itself as a capital of Civil War research.” The continuation of the Museum’s research facility in Richmond, along with the Library of Virginia and the Virginia Historical Society, will foster that goal. Additionally, the headquarters and conservation center will continue Richmond’s critical role in the Museum’s future.

Plans call for the current museum building to remain operational and open to the public for the next five years. The new facilities will be built in time for the Civil War Sesquicentennial (2011-2015).

Dr. Charles F. Bryan, Jr., President and CEO of the Virginia Historical Society stated, “The museum system is an interesting idea that many major museums have adopted. All have been concerned that the Museum might leave Virginia, which would be a great loss to the Commonwealth. The system will keep the collection in Virginia, which allows the sharing of the Museum of the Confederacy’s resources with many historical organizations while also playing an important role in the Richmond community.”

“The idea of combining artifacts with battlefields will bring new life to both,” stated Civil War Preservation Trust’s President O. James Lighthizer. “It will provide visitors a glimpse into the stories of the war which is the most defining conflict in American history. It’s the perfect marriage.”

The Museum of the Confederacy is a private, nonprofit educational institution. The Museum and White House of the Confederacy are located in downtown Richmond.
For additional information, please call (804) 649-1861 or visit us on the web at www.moc.org



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