

# Museum Of The Confederacy

***Museum officials seek new site in Richmond, but the White House won't move***

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The Museum of the Confederacy, struggling to survive beside Virginia Commonwealth University's sprawling medical campus, has decided to move its collection.

"If we stay, we die," said Waite Rawls, the museum's executive director.

The White House of the Confederacy, however, will remain open at 12th and East Clay streets, where it has stood since 1818. Officials had considered relocating the National Historic Landmark, which was home to Confederate President Jefferson Davis during the Civil War. "The White House is a public trust," Rawls said. "And the public doesn't want it moved. Everyone agrees it shouldn't be moved."

He hopes the museum will be in its new home by 2011, the beginning of the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War. If officials can't find a new site in Richmond, they will consider moving outside the area, Rawls said.

"The top priority is keeping the collection together," he said. "A lot of work remains in front of us."

Rawls and his staff are considering a number of sites, including the area around the Boulevard and West Broad Street.

Rawls' announcement, to be made public today, comes eight months after a peer review committee began analyzing the institution's future. The group, made up of historians and preservationists, is expected to release its final report this week, but a draft is to be made available online this morning at [www.moc.org](http://www.moc.org).

In addition to relocating the museum collection, the panel is recommending to Rawls and his staff that they form stronger partnerships with other cultural institutions and concentrate on educational opportunities.

"They have to make some strategic calls," said H. Nicholas Muller III, former director of the Wisconsin State Historical Society and leader of the peer review. "The bottom line is, unless there is a substantial infusion of new funding, business can not go on as usual."

## MORE SLIDESHOWS

Take a [video tour](#) of the **Museum and White House of the Confederacy**.



## MUSEUM AND WHITE HOUSE OF THE CONFEDERACY

**WHERE:** 1201 E. Clay St.

**HOURS:** Winter hours: Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (closed Wednesdays); Sunday, noon-5 p.m. The White House will be closed Jan. 2 through Feb. 28. Summer hours: Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, noon-5 p.m. **ADMISSION:** \$3-\$10

**DETAILS:** Call (804) 649-1861 or visit [www.moc.org](http://www.moc.org)

The Museum and White House of the Confederacy, which maintains the world's most comprehensive collections of Confederate artifacts, manuscripts and photographs, has been losing visitors and income for years as the continued development of VCU has nearly swallowed its small campus. Since the early 1990s, annual visitation has dropped from 92,000 to about 51,500. The museum's deficit is expected to reach \$700,000 this year.

In response to its financial woes, the institution cut its operating hours last month. The museum is now closed on Wednesdays from Labor Day to Memorial Day, and the White House will be closed for public tours in January and February.

"They have grappled heroically with the whole issue," said Conover Hunt, executive director of Historic Richmond Foundation. "It's not a win-win situation. It's wrenching to separate an institution from its main artifact [the White House]. But they have weighed all the factors in the proper manner"

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