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Museum plans for expansion

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A planned expansion of the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History and a related fundraising effort were announced Saturday at the second annual Heritage Gala in Augusta.

"Our mission is to make the Lucy Craft Laney Museum a state-of-the-art museum, one where people can continue to come and experience the legacy of Ms. Lucy Craft Laney and other outstanding African-Americans who have made Augusta and the CSRA what it is today," said Christine Miller-Betts, the museum's executive director, in front of a crowd of 175 people at the Augusta Marriott Hotel and Suites.

"Our long term goal ... is to acquire a state of the art expansion. It is our vision to make the Lucy Craft Laney museum a museum that one can come to and really enjoy."

The museum has been approved for \$200,000 from Richmond County's special purpose local option sales tax fund to purchase more property and design a plan, Ms. Miller-Betts said. She said museum officials are seeking the support of the community to help raise additional funds. Museum officials have selected The Freelon Group, an architectural firm, to assist with the expansion.

"We have done more African-American museums and cultural centers than any other firm in the country," said Lewis Meyers, the firm's director of business development. "When Christine told me that they wanted to do this, we agreed. We thought this is a new project that we need to do. We're excited about this project."

Mr. Meyers said he hopes to have a model for the expansion by October.

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