



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Naperville Heritage Society receives a \$749,700 Illinois Public Museum Capital Grant and thanks Governor Pritzker, Representative Janet Yang Rohr and Senator Laura Ellman for their support and efforts

NAPERVILLE, ILL. – Naper Settlement is one of 36 Illinois museums to receive an Illinois Public Museum Capital Grant funded by Governor Pritzker’s Rebuild Illinois capital program and administered through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). \$749,700 was awarded to the outdoor history museum to support the construction of a Digital Experience Welcome Zone inside the museum’s Innovation Gateway, a new visitor welcome and education center. The museum is grateful for the efforts of INDR Director Colleen Callahan, Representative Janet Yang Rohr, and Senator Laura Ellman, who understand the powerful contributions made by cultural institutions in education, tourism, and economics.

The 1,270-square-foot zone will welcome and orient visitors to the 13-acre outdoor history museum and feature a digital exhibit experience, audience gathering and seating area, and three mobile ticketing kiosks.

“Visitors will step into a warm, energetic, and inviting space that celebrates our community and is accessible for people of all abilities. The centerpiece of the Digital Experience Welcome Zone will be a 23’x 10’ indoor-outdoor digital exhibit experience that will invite visitors to self-curate their own history journey,” said Rena Tamayo-Calabrese, president and CEO at Naper Settlement. “Thank you to Governor Pritzker, INDR Director Colleen Callahan, Senator Laura Ellman, and Representative Janet Yang Rohr for their continued support of Naper Settlement and this important project that will share a whole and complete history that will expand our museum content to represent Naperville in the 20th and 21st century.”

The new space will allow the museum to better serve the 290,000 annual visitors (5-year average), including 35,000 school children from 112 districts, with a fully ADA accessible layout.

“As a leader in informal education, Naper Settlement offers vital learning opportunities that strengthen students’ understanding of history and their role in shaping the future of our communities,” said Representative Janet Yang Rohr. “These types of educational opportunities build thriving communities of life-long learners and are a valuable investment in our state’s future.”

The Digital Experience Welcome Zone is part of a larger \$3.7 million capital campaign project to fund the Innovation Gateway. This 5,150-square-foot visitor welcome and education center is designed to orient and engage guests while expanding the museum’s content to represent

Naperville's history through today. The new welcome center will allow the museum to expand its current programming, including teacher professional development programs, workshops, rental events, and corporate training offerings while providing an improved site entrance that is accessible and welcoming to all.

“By investing in our state’s museums, we are providing a vehicle for economic growth and development in our communities,” said Senator Laura Ellman. “The Innovation Gateway’s Digital Experience Welcome Zone will allow Naper Settlement, and the surrounding communities, to attract visitors, provide jobs, and boost local tourism.”

For more information about Naper Settlement and the Innovation Gateway capital campaign project, please visit NaperSettlement.org/InnovationGateway.

About Naper Settlement

Naper Settlement is a nationally accredited, award-winning outdoor living history museum set on 13 magnificent acres in the heart of Naperville. Located 30 miles from Chicago, the museum is home to thirty-one historic structures dating back as early as the 1830s. Featuring exhibits, special events, educational programming and more, Naper Settlement is where history comes alive, and the community comes to connect. For more information, please visit www.napersettlement.org or call (630) 420-6010.

About Naperville Heritage Society

Founded in 1969, the Naperville Heritage Society is a not-for-profit organization and administrator of Naper Settlement, the City of Naperville’s museum. With a commitment to the community and a focus to the future, the mission of the Naperville Heritage Society is to collect, document, preserve, and support the history of Naperville, Illinois past and present.