

# Transfer of Burial Grounds from VCU to City of Richmond

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Mayor Dwight C. Jones

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City of Richmond

# Background

- Slave Trail Commission was created in 1998 by Richmond City Council.
- The Slave Trail will commemorate the sad history of the slave trade in Richmond. Traders profited from an estimated 100,000 Africans delivered to Virginia between the 1600s and the American Revolution. The slave trade continued in Virginia until Emancipation Day, April 3, 1865.
- The Commission has developed a master plan with 17 approved site markers – following a course from:
  - the Manchester Docks on the south side of the river
  - Across Mayo’s bridge to the Auction Houses and Lumpkin’s Jail (near Main Street Train Station in Shockoe Slip)
  - To the Negro Burial Ground and the First African Baptist Church (near the VCU Medical Campus)
- One of the site markers is for the Reconciliation Statue which marks the “profound regret” of Virginia’s General Assembly, the Republic of Benin and the Liverpool City Council for their roles in the involuntary servitude of Africans. Identical statues are in Liverpool and Benin.

# Spending to Date

**Total investment by the City thus far for the Slave Trail Development - \$1.3 million with donations totaling \$150,000 (without the official kickoff of fund-raising). *(This does not include the Federal and State grant funds to acquire Lumpkin's Jail.)***

2005 - Reconciliation Statue purchase and shipped from England

2006 - Established Slave Trail Commission Branding and Brochure for tourists

2006 - Lumpkin's Jail Phase I Archaeological Survey (results and findings were positive)

2007 - Reconciliation Statue plaza construction completion and unveiling

2008 - Lumpkin's Jail Phase II Archeological Excavation begins

*[2009 - Lumpkin's Jail showcased in Smithsonian Magazine]*

2009 - Slave Trail Markers designed and Slave Trail Master Plan established

2010 - Slave Trail Markers presented for agency approvals and bid

2011 - Slave Trail Marker unveiling April 3, 2011 (Emancipation Day)

2011 - Website launch and Slave Trail virtual tours available internationally

# Proposed Plans for Site of Burial Grounds

- The current Master Plan for the Slave Trail will be altered by the Slave Trail Commission to incorporate the property from VCU.
- We believe that this property will enhance the proposed Slave Trail, by incorporating the oldest municipal cemetery for enslaved and free Blacks known to have existed in the Richmond area.
- The City would prefer to accept the property with the asphalt removed.
- At a minimum, the City of Richmond is prepared to move forward on the following (once asphalt is removed and the property is transferred):
  - Top soil, grass seed, fertilizer and landscaping - \$54,000-\$123 ,000
  - Lighting – \$175,000 - \$345,000
  - Annual maintenance - \$5,000
  - Marker for Negro Burial Ground - \$11,000 (already budgeted)

# Capital Budget Summary for Slave Trail

- African-American Genealogy Center \$6.3 million
- Lumpkin's Jail Archaeological Site \$4.5 million
- Gathering Place & Amphitheater \$6.2 million
- Negro Burial Ground/The Passage (Tunnel) \$1.4 million\*

\*This number will increase to reflect the larger area (including the VCU property).