



Join Project Hoot

BUILD THEIR FOREVER HOME



INTERNATIONAL OWL CENTER

*MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE FOR OWLS
THROUGH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH.*



Photo courtesy of Rochester Post Bulletin

Owls have inspired both reverence and fear in cultures around the world throughout human history. At the same time, humans are increasingly placing negative pressure on owls. Humans represent the greatest threat and the greatest hope for owls worldwide.

The International Owl Center (IOC) is located in Houston, Minnesota, and is dedicated to our mission of making the world a better place for owls through education and research. We strive to empower people to live more owl-friendly lives and engage them in community science when possible.

The IOC's story began in 1997, when a three-week-old Great Horned Owl chick was blown from her nest in Antigo, Wisconsin, dislocating her left elbow and damaging the growth plate in her humerus. A nearby raptor rehabilitator rescued her and determined she would not be able to survive in the wild, but could serve as an ambassador for her kind. She was named "Alice" and placed at the Houston Nature Center to begin her career as an educator.

In 2003, the Houston Nature Center started a Festival of Owls in honor of Alice's hatch-day. The public's overwhelming interest in owls was noted as Alice's popularity and the festival grew

far beyond the scope of a small nature center. A series of stakeholders met in 2012 and 2013 to discuss the concept of starting an owl center and garner community support. Participants included business owners, political leaders, teachers, neighbors, residents, nature center supporters, and representatives of partner organizations. All indicated agreement that an owl center is a strong concept and would benefit the community of Houston and surrounding area. Many individuals offered to help with donations and advice on the best ways to move forward. The IOC opened to the public in March 2015 at its current location thanks to donations, members, and volunteers.

OUR IMPACT FOR OWLS

In the IOC's short history, we have accomplished many things:

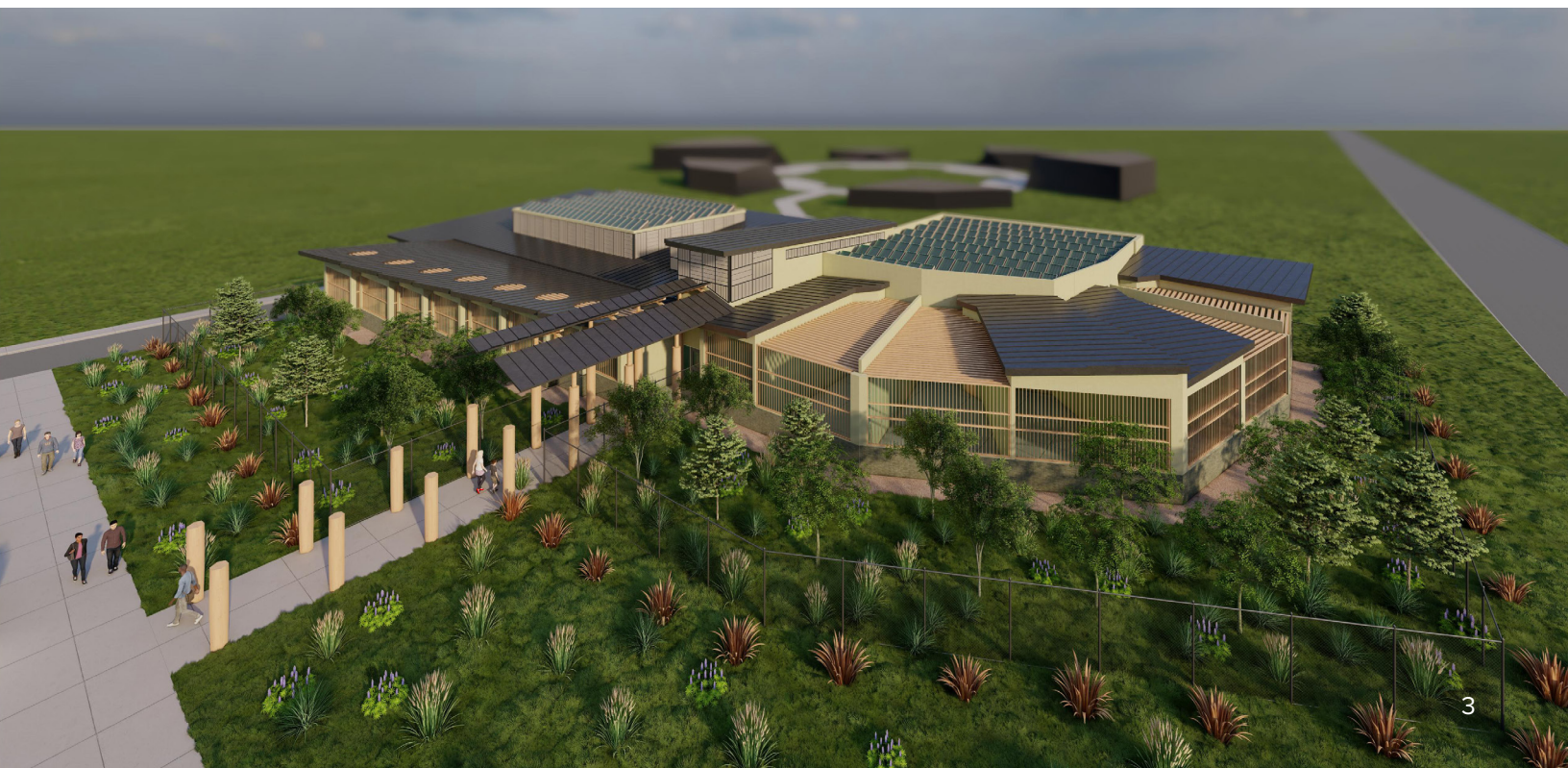
- Educated approximately 80,000 visitors to the Owl Center from around the globe about how they can live more owl-friendly lives
- Presented special programs (on-site, off-site and online) to more than 36,000 people from 50 countries, including our Virtual Owl Expert Speaker Series

- Made scientific and public presentations about owls at conferences and events in Argentina, South Africa, the USA and throughout Europe
- Documented the complete vocal repertoire of the Great Horned Owl and the return of Barn Owls to Minnesota
- Developed an Owl Conservation and Research e-newsletter to share recent research and other relevant information with owl researchers and educators around the world
- Hosted a World Owl Conference in 2023
- Served as a reference for authors (Jennifer Ackerman and Stan Tekiela, among others) and media, including appearances on Animal Planet, Canadian Broadcast Company, Minnesota and Wisconsin Public Radio, Twin Cities Public Television, WCCO and more
- Encouraged owls in art through our annual children's international owl art contest (which normally receives 2,000 – 3,000 entries per year from 3 – 4 dozen countries) and a Parade of Owls art tour featuring 12 pieces of public art around Houston
- Helped others, such as raising money for the Nepal Owl Festival and raising about \$250,000 for the children of Ukraine by auctioning off owl artwork created by Ukrainian children

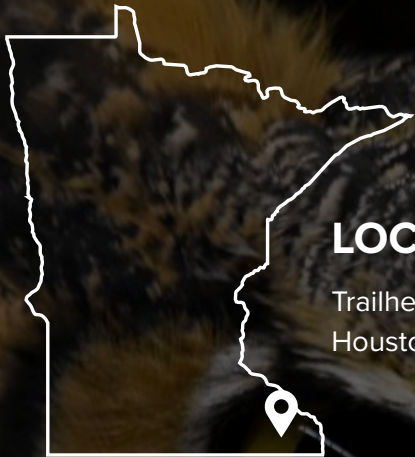
VISION FOR THE FUTURE

CHALLENGE: Our current building does not meet the needs of, or provide space for, the IOC's full potential. With adequate space and facilities, the IOC would be able to more effectively live its mission of making the world a better place for owls. Our current facilities create the following challenges:

- Inability to accommodate large audiences or multiple groups at the same time, so we have to be closed to the public several days per week to accommodate schools, libraries and other special group programs
- No on-site grounds where the owls can be housed in outdoor aviaries to meet their physical and mental needs, so they are currently housed off-site and commute to work each day
- No space to display more than five live owls
- A single toilet with no place to add another, which is inadequate for the number of visitors
- One acoustic space, so the ringing telephone and people entering the building disrupt programs
- No place on site to conduct online programs
- No place for gift shop merchandise backstock aside from under the front counter



SOLUTION: BUILD A NEW FACILITY TO HOST AND FACILITATE THE DEMAND FOR PROGRAMMING, RESEARCH AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, MORE OWLS.



LOCATION

Trailhead Park in
Houston, Minnesota

SIZE

9X our current space



22,000 SQUARE FEET

ECONOMIC IMPACT

** Statistics gathered from a University of Minnesota study*

40-50K+

Additional annual visitors to the area

\$500,000+

Additional annual spending for the local community

OWLS

Space for up to 28 owls, housed in spacious aviaries. This will include walk-through aviaries, where there is nothing between the visitor and the owls.



FEATURES

1.

More exhibit space

2.

A large program area that can be divided for two concurrent presentations or a single large program

3.

Space for behind-the-scenes work

BENEFITS FOR THE OWLS

4X

Increase in annual programming to educate more people about owls

&

100+

People engaged in new owl community science projects

COST OF CONSTRUCTION

\$17.3 MILLION

BENEFITS FOR THE HOUSTON AREA COMMUNITY

Why is Houston the best place for an International Owl Center?

Houston has developed a reputation for owls, thanks to the International Festival of Owls and World Owl Hall of Fame. Publicity has included a variety of media across North America as well as in Australia, Africa, Europe and South America. Trailhead Park in Houston also meets many key physical needs of the Owl Center. It offers ample space for walk-through aviaries and boasts a unique natural playground that has already become a destination itself. The park has become known as Minnesota's best bike trailhead. The Root River Trail, which begins there, is known as one of the Midwest's premier trails.

HOW WILL THIS PROJECT ENHANCE OUR COMMUNITIES?

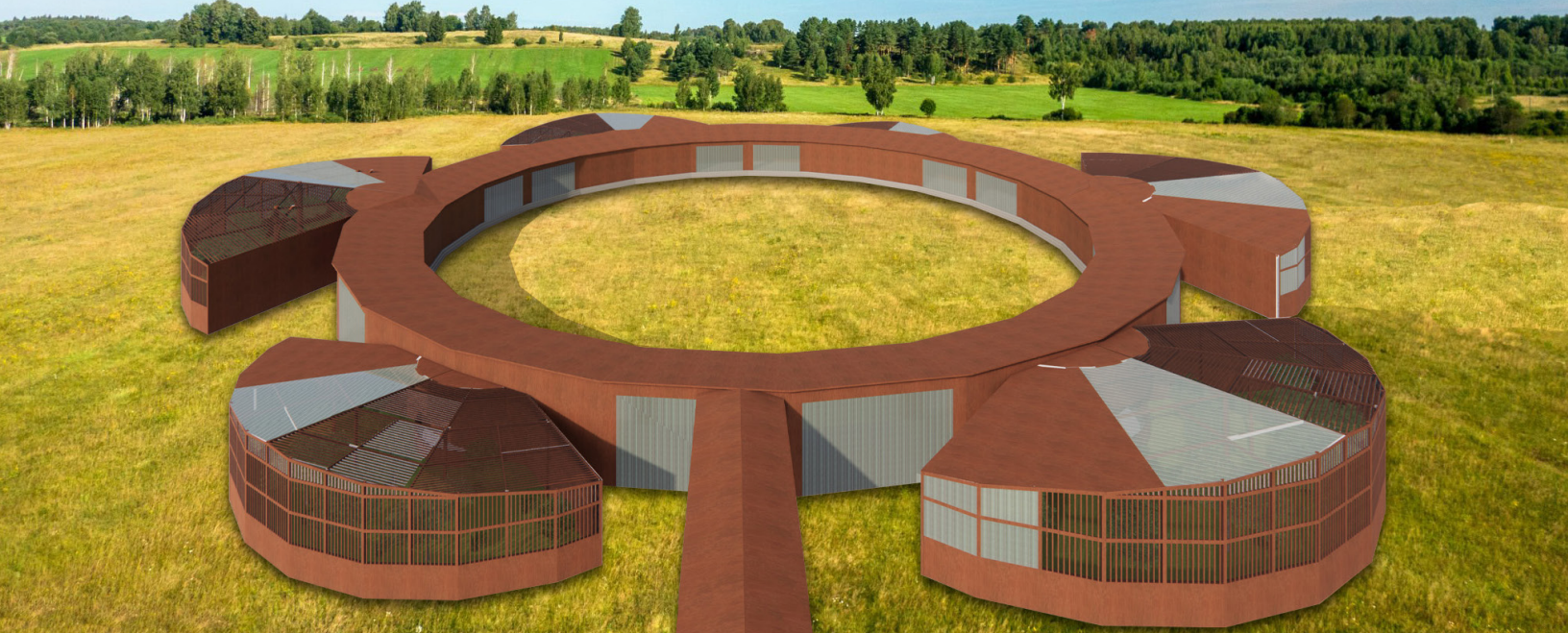
A new IOC facility will strengthen other tourism-oriented businesses and enable us to partner with organizations such as Niagara Cave, the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, and the National Eagle Center. It does this by inviting opportunities for group travel marketing among these destinations. We anticipate visitors to spend an average of two to four hours

at the Owl Center, making it very likely they will also be looking for other things to do in the area. During past owl events, many attendees have stayed in Houston and the surrounding communities of Caledonia, La Crescent, La Crosse, Lanesboro, Rushford, Spring Grove, and Winona. When the new facility is built and we continue to grow as an organization, there will be an increase in job opportunities at the IOC and more capacity to grow our events. We anticipate this growth to result in increased revenue for area businesses.

GIVING TO THE PROJECT HOOT CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The International Owl Center is asking for a multi-year pledge beginning upon return of your commitment form. A multi-year-pledge payment period has been established to enable donors to make a larger commitment than what may be possible with a one-time contribution. It also assists the IOC in determining what can be expected for this effort. We are asking each donor to thoughtfully consider the commitment you will make to the Capital Campaign. Know that your gift will make a large impact on owls worldwide, as well as southeastern Minnesota, southwest Wisconsin and northeast Iowa.



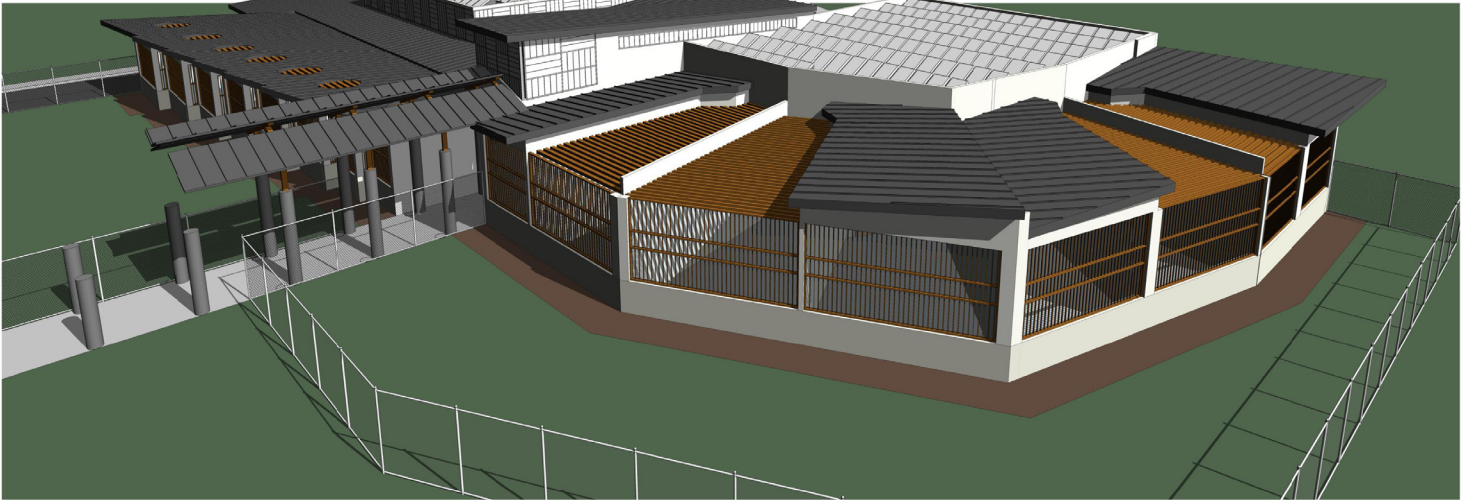


GIFTS NEEDED TO REACH OUR \$17.3 MILLION GOAL

TOTAL COMMITMENT	# GIFTS REQUIRED	SUBTOTAL	CUMULATIVE TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
\$3,500,000	1	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	20%
\$1,000,000	1	\$1,000,000	\$4,500,000	26%
\$750,000	2	\$1,500,000	\$6,000,000	35%
\$500,000	4	\$2,000,000	\$8,000,000	46%
\$250,000	8	\$2,000,000	\$10,000,000	58%
\$100,000	10	\$1,000,000	\$11,000,000	64%
\$75,000	14	\$1,050,000	\$12,050,000	70%
\$50,000	20	\$1,000,000	\$13,050,000	75%
\$25,000	40	\$1,000,000	\$14,050,000	81%
\$15,000	60	\$900,000	\$14,950,000	86%
\$10,000	100	\$1,000,000	\$15,950,000	92%
\$5,000	150	\$750,000	\$16,700,000	97%
Below \$5,000	Many	\$600,000	\$17,300,000	100%

INFORMATION ON GIVING TO THE CAMPAIGN

The information below is not meant to provide advice, as each individual's financial situation is unique. For questions regarding how to make these gifts, or your specific tax benefits, please consult an accountant and/or financial advisor.



IN WHAT WAYS CAN I MAKE A GIFT TO THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN?

Check or Electronic Giving

Donors can make gifts and pay their pledges by check or electronic giving. Such charitable contributions may be tax deductible.

Visit www.InternationalOwlCenter.org/future

Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA

If you are age 70½ or older, you may give up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA annually without paying federal income tax on the distribution. The distribution can offset a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD).

Appreciated Stocks, Bonds, and Mutual Funds

Funding charitable giving with appreciated stock, bonds, and mutual funds may be advantageous for both you and the IOC. In most cases, you will avoid paying capital gains taxes on the donated securities while receiving a fair market value charitable deduction. To claim these benefits, stocks/bonds/mutual funds must be transferred to the IOC directly.

Life Insurance

Some people have accumulated cash in insurance policies they can donate.

Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

You can give by contacting your DAF provider and making a grant. We will acknowledge your gift as a DAF distribution.

Corporate Matching Gift

Many companies offer matching gift programs. A corporate match may allow you to double the impact of your gift! Check with your employer to determine if a capital campaign gift to the IOC is eligible for a matching gift.

Philanthropic Friends

If you know of individuals, businesses or foundations who may be interested in contributing to this campaign, please share that information with Karla Bloem at (507) 896-OWLS (6957) or Karla@InternationalOwlCenter.org



CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

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