

VOICES

THE GREENVILLE NEWS EDITORIALS

Children's museum will

More than 10 years in the making, the Children's Museum of the Upstate will open in July on Heritage Green near downtown Greenville, officials recently announced.

That's an exciting development and, coming in the midst of a challenging time for our state, it's a bold affirmation of our community's commitment to children.

The \$20 million project will be one of the nation's 25 largest children's museums — out of 350 in the nation.

The 79,000-square-foot museum will offer children a simple and inspiring motto: "I can be anything." That seems

appropriate given that the project itself is a testament to our community's can-do spirit.

The facility will feature 18 highly interactive exhibits, designed to engage children, ages 6 to 11, in playful learning and spark their imagination. There'll be special areas designated for younger children as well.

Most installations will be completely unique to Greenville.

The Reedy River Bend exhibit, for example, will offer a glimpse of the lush beauty of the Upstate's forests and mountains. It also will include a miniature Reedy River and Liberty Bridge. A series of pumps, pulleys, wheels

and pipes demonstrates how we harness water resources.

The museum also is working with Clemson University on an optics, lights and lasers exhibit that includes references to Greenville's Nobel Prize-winning Charles Townes, creator of the maser and the laser.

Other exhibits explore Formula One racing, the workings of a hospital, and air flight and space travel, including a flight simulator. The Bi-Lo Market, sponsored by the grocery chain, is a realistic, child-scaled grocery store, while the Construction Zone is a mini-construction site featuring local architecture. Still

other exhibits will introduce children to conservation and world cultures.

In addition, there'll be space for touring shows. All the exhibits are being designed specifically for the Greenville museum's space, located in the old Greenville main library.

There'll also be an outdoor garden, cafe and shop. For more information, see the museum's colorful Web site at www.tcmgreenvillesc.org.

The Children's Museum is the last of three relatively new museums on Heritage Green.

The others include the Upcountry History Museum and the Museum & Gallery at Heritage

inspire

Green.

If there's one characteristic the three share, in addition to their location at Heritage Green, it's this: They feature the latest in museum technology, designed to immerse the visitor in the museum experience. The longer-term residents of Heritage Green include Greenville Little Theater, the Greenville County Museum of Art and the Hughes Main Library.

With the addition of the Children's Museum, Heritage Green can lay even stronger claim to providing attractions for all ages. It will bolster Greenville's image as a top regional destination for the arts and for families.