



## Paleontology Research Center

- **Square Footage:** 33,000
- **Estimated Cost:** \$7,100,000
- **Why is this project important?** Paleontology at the School of Mines has been an integral part of the university for more than 100 years. Currently the Museum of Geology houses approximately 300,000 fossil specimens, one of the largest collections in the United States and some of the best scientifically documented in the world. The collections support education and research for the university's faculty and students and researchers from around the world. The university offers the only master's degree in paleontology and enrollment continues to grow. The collections are currently housed in a building that leaves them vulnerable to decomposition, susceptible to loss from fire, and largely inaccessible for study.
- **What needs will this project fulfill?** The Paleontology Research Center will provide a safe, environmentally-controlled environment for the Museum of Geology's fossil, geological, and archival collections, ensuring the protection of this rich heritage. In addition, the Center will house laboratories for the preparation, preservation, and geochemical research involving the collections. The Center will provide a state-of-the-art educational environment for faculty and students who will use the collections as a resource library to study the past to help answer current questions such as effects of climate change, overpopulation, invasive species, and more.
- **Why is this project unique?** The Center will provide academic researchers with access to study a world-class collection, serve as an educational resource for training undergraduate and graduate students, and be a tool for outreach to the local and regional communities served by the university. A key feature of the Center will be open viewing into the laboratories so the public can learn the steps needed to take a fossil from the ground to a museum exhibit. In this capacity the Center will serve as an educational resource for graduate, undergraduate, and K-12 students and their teachers.

