

Historical Museum at Fort Missoula

Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2011-2013

July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2013

INTRODUCTION

In May 2007, the Staff, Trustees, and Friends of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula participated in a strategic growth-planning process facilitated by WestRidge Creative. The result was the 2008-2010 Strategic Plan. In August of 2009, the Trustees and Friends Board directed the staff and committee of two Trustees and two Friends Board members to prepare the next three-year strategic plan, believing that with the rapidly changing nature of the Museum's operations in regards to the development of Building T-1, which will be a driving force for the next several years, an internally produced strategic plan would be best. Staff generally prepared this Strategic Plan with input and feedback from the committee. The Strategic Plan, which includes each top-ranked priority, is contained within this report.

This Strategic Plan will inform and guide the work, development, and growth of the Historical Museum over the next three years.

OVERALL THEMES FROM SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

Abstracted from the previous Strategic Plan

1. The Museum is in a growth phase, which is an invigorating, yet challenging stage for any organization. The Museum must balance opportunities with resources and plan for growth.
2. There is only one way to achieve and sustain the desired growth and that is through the building of a culture of fund-raising throughout the organization.
3. Fostering diversity in programming, exhibits, collections, board, and staff may be the key to gaining more respect, attracting new funding, and engaging more community support in the programs and work of the Museum. As Missoula County's Historical Museum, the importance of involving the community in as many ways as possible and of developing partnerships within the community is an integral part of embracing diversity and generating more interest.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula is to keep Missoula County's history alive for the education and enjoyment of the public.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula is to inspire a sense of place and history for Missoula County by collecting, studying, interpreting, and preserving the region's natural and cultural heritage. This includes the Museum's core areas of collecting: the history of the city and county of Missoula, the history of Fort Missoula and the military presence in the area, and the history of forest management and the wood products industry in Western Montana. The Museum's focus further includes, but is not limited to: family history, women's history, Native American history, environmental history, and minority-based history.

Our vision for the Museum is a place and institution that:

1. Is a welcoming place where people are drawn together to share their passion and interest in our history and sense of place;
2. Supports and gives voice to the region's diverse cultural perspectives;
3. Has sustainable, modern facilities while retaining its traditional character;
4. Creates and maintains educational programs and exhibits that are professionally-presented, inspiring, and intellectually challenging;
5. Has collections that are exhibited, stored, and preserved (via professionally-accepted preventative conservation methods) as per American Association of Museums (AAM) accreditation standards, and which will provide a continuing source of inspiration and learning;
6. Has a paid staff and volunteer corps that are creative, enthusiastic, and supportive of each other, the Museum's mission, and the community;
7. Participates in discussions at the national level on matters pertaining to the Museum's mission, and for the good of the profession;
8. Believes in and participates in open strategic partnerships.

CORE VALUES

The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula is committed to

- Openness – Of purpose, governance, and communication;
- Integrity – In fair and ethical practices, and the respectful treatment of all;
- Excellence – In leadership, cooperation, and in utilization of the highest museum standards, as established by the American Association of Museums (AAM);
- Relevance – In identifying and responding to new challenges;
- Stability – Of its Mission, Vision, and resources (particularly its collections);
- Respect – For different viewpoints, diverse cultural values, and the traditions of the Museum;
- Balance – In dealing with all aspects of Museum operations fairly and honestly.

STRATEGIES FOR GROWTH PLANNING

Abstracted from the previous Strategic Plan

1. Strengthen what the Museum already has, while taking advantage of new opportunities
2. Learn what the community wants from the Museum
3. Build community ownership
4. Meet today's technology demands

5. Build on the organization's uniqueness
6. Build a culture of fund-raising
7. Become an organization that achieves planned, realistic scale

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

For the purpose implementing this Strategic Plan two "Strategic Directions" have been identified:

- Growth in Core Programs and Facilities
 - To build on our track record of innovative, engaging, community educational programs;
 - To expand the culture of education throughout the organizational;
 - To maintain and restore the existing facilities on the main campus;
 - To restore and renovate building T-1;
 - To continue to install an aggressive schedule of exhibits;
 - To continue to acquire and access important collections; and
 - To renovate, modify, and improve collection storage facilities.
- Achieve Organization Scale by:
 - Building a culture of fund raising that supports sustainable growth;
 - Actively recruiting individuals with fund-raising experience to all boards;
 - Finding ways to pay off the mortgage on T-1;
 - Adding staff as possible and continue to offer staff professional development opportunities;
 - Enhancing diversity in all areas of Museum operations; and
 - Building an evaluation process that focuses on goals, ensuring that the Museum meets community needs and builds community ownership in the Museum.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction I: Growth in Core Programs and Facilities

1. Core Programs

- Build on our track record of innovative, engaging, community educational programming
- Expand the culture of education throughout the organization

PROGRAMMING: Education and Exhibits		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Year 1 July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan to add interpretive signs on the grounds • Complete physical aspects of the Homestead Cabin and develop interpretive program • Research exhibit for the NCO building • Begin research on 2012 exhibit • Capitalizing on the FY10 ADC program with the art museum and library, develop specific educational programming for the Alien Detention period • Work with the University of Montana to produce a conference on the ADC period of American history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/EdCom • Staff/EdCom • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/EdCom • Staff/UM/Historical Society
Year 2 July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement interpretive program for the Homestead Cabin • Implement plan for new interpretive signs • Implement ADC education program • Develop and install 2012 exhibit with educational components • Install one exhibit in the NCO building • Research a second exhibit for the NCO building • Research and develop new exhibits for the ADC barracks • Produce the ADC conference with UM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Staff/Contractors • Staff • Staff/Volunteers/Contractors • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/UM/Historical Society
Year 3 July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a program of outreach to adult community centers • Begin research on 2014 Missoula’s 150th celebration exhibit • Double the number of students attending programs through increased outreach • Complete Library Car exhibit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/EdCom • Staff/Volunteer • Staff/EdCom • Staff/Volunteers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install a second exhibit in the NCO building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/Volunteers
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and implement an educational component for every project, exhibit, and program • Continue to expand docent program and recruit additional volunteers • Pursue and develop partnerships to expand opportunities for and to increase involvement of the community in all programming • Revamp permanent exhibit • Maintain temporary exhibit schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/EdCom • Staff/EdCom • All • Staff • Staff

2. Facilities

- Maintain and restore the existing facilities on the main campus
- Restore and renovate Building T-1

FACILITIES – Current Buildings		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Year 1 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roof and paint Schoolhouse • Stabilize NCO Building • Lay rail sections for the Library Car and Trolley Barn • Restore Library Car & Trolley trucks • Complete exterior of Trolley Barn & return Trolley Car • Restore, install Plexiglas door, and place Homestead Outhouse on new concrete pad • Renovate Timber Building and develop new exhibit to accommodate Mike Roney Collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers
Year 2 July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint and re-roof Drummond Depot • Restore interior of NCO Building • Complete interior of Trolley Barn • Complete Library Car restoration • Replace 2 front porch posts & sills of Miller Creek Guard Cabin • Repair/restore Sentry Box #1 & #2, sand, and re-paint exterior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers
Year 3 July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint ADC barracks • Re-roof and seal Sliderock Lookout • Install a second exhibit in the NCO building • Install exhibit in Trolley Barn • Extend pathway system to Trolley Barn and Library Car • Move Homestead Stable to west side of Corral and restore • Properly seal Root Cellar and install new signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • Contractors/Staff • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • Contractors/Staff
On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General maintenance needs • Monitor Missoula Parks and Recreation plans for Fort Missoula Regional Park • Add shelving to collections storage areas in Building 322 • Install new fencing around Old Officer’s Row • Update computers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • Staff • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • B&G Com/Staff/Volunteers • Staff

FACILITIES – T-1		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Year 1 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise \$50,000 for mortgage • Raise match for grants • Start moving Curatorial Department and appropriate collections materials • Complete move of Friends supplies • Complete move of administration files • Find a tenant • Finalize space for programming • Complete National Park Service grant restoration • Complete TIIP boiler grant • Obtain National Landmark Status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends Board/FinCom • Friends Board/FinCom • B&G Com/CollCom/Staff • B&G Com/Staff • AdminCom/Staff • All • EdCom/B&G Com/Staff • Contractors • Contractors • Contractors
Year 2 July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise \$50,000 for mortgage • Raise match for grants • Complete Curatorial Department and collections move • Restore courtroom, re-carpet, & re-paint 1st. & 2nd. floors • Find a tenant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends Board/FinCom • Friends Board/FinCom • B&G Com/CollCom/Staff • Contractors • All
Year 3 July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise \$50,000 for mortgage • Raise match for grants • Obtain lift between basement and first floor • Begin developing exhibition to be housed in restored Courtroom • Initiate development of collections/museology partnership program with University of Montana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends Board/FinCom • Friends Board/FinCom • FinCom/Staff/Contractors • Staff • Staff
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise \$430,000 to pay off mortgage • Develop partnerships to maximize use of facilities • Update T-1 Master Plan • Complete handicapped ramp at rear of structure • Complete renovations for new Department of Collections areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All • All • B&G Com/Staff • Contractors/County • Contractors/Staff

3. Collections

- Plan, develop, install, and maintain temporary, bi-annual, and permanent exhibits in the Main Museum
- Plan, develop, install, maintain, and/or renovate outbuilding exhibits
- Continue the acquisition and accessioning of collections materials appropriate to Mission Statement, Scope of Collections, and Collecting Plan
- Evaluate the necessity of deaccessioning and disposal of collections materials inappropriate to Mission Statement, Scope of Collections, and Collecting Plan
- Renovate, modify, and improve collections storage conditions throughout Museum

COLLECTIONS PROJECTS		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Year 1 July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate process of transferring collections from Photo-Document Room and Library/Research materials to Building T1 • Initiate process of Museum-wide collections inventory and PastPerfect update • Acquire and accession Blackfoot Stagecoach • Complete fabrication of crates, and develop traveling exhibition schedule for WWII Poster and Ogden Collections • Complete cataloging of Library materials, and install new Library database system • Bring new Museum website online, and upload collections/research material • Initiate process of renovating all open shelving in collections storage areas with Velcro and Tyvek 	Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Coll. Com/Staff • Contractors/Staff • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Staff • Contractors/Staff
Year 2 July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete process of transferring collections from Photo-Document Room and Library/Research materials to Building T1 • Initiate renovation of Building 322 Photo-Document Room to accommodate textile materials • Complete process of Museum-wide collections inventory and PastPerfect update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Contractors/Staff • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers
Year 3 July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete renovation of Building 322 Photo-Document Room to accommodate textile materials • Research and plan conservation of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractors/Staff • Contractors/Staff

	<p>MCHS Trophy Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete process of photographing pre-2009 collections accessions • Complete process of renovating all open shelving in collections storage areas with Velcro and Tyvek • Inventory, clean, and re-house collections currently stored in Warehouse Storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Staff/Volunteers • Contractors/Staff • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete annual partial collections inventory • Evaluate and transfer all appropriate collections stored in Building 322 storage areas to Building T1 • Contact descendants of historic Missoula families to inquire as to potential collections acquisitions • Continue processing and eventual accessioning of University of Montana archaeological collections • Complete development of Research File database • Evaluate and transfer all remaining collections materials in Storage Warehouse yard indoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers • Staff • Staff/Volunteers • Coll. Com/Staff/Volunteers

Strategic Direction II: Achieve Organizational Scale

1. Fund-raising

- Build a culture of fund-raising that supports the sustainable growth
- Raise money to pay off the T-1 mortgage

FUND-RAISING		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise money for T-1 mortgage • Recruit three new people—Friends, Board members, or Volunteers—with fund-raising experience to the organization • Offer Trustees and Friends fund-raising training opportunities • Identify additional sources of revenue, including new members and building an Endowment program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends Board/FinCom • AdminCom • FinCom/Staff • All

2. Staffing

- Add staff as possible and continue professional development

STAFFING		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and identify staffing needs; get Board approval for new positions • Identify funding sources, including grants, ongoing revenue, and special projects to finance needed positions • Leverage staff needs with partnerships • Hire staff as identified and funded • Continue supporting staff professional development with conferences and workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/AdminCom/Trustees • Staff/AdminCom • Staff/AdminCom • Trustees • Staff/AdminCom

3. Diversity

- Enhance diversity in programming, collections, exhibits, board, and staff to accurately reflect Missoula County history, engage broader community support, and attract new funding

DIVERSITY		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor if Museum operations accurately reflect the diversity of Missoula County • Explore opportunities to diversify Museum offerings through partnerships • Implement at least 2 programs/projects that fill diversity gaps each year • Recruit at least 2 Board members that fill skill/diversity gaps on Board each year • Enhance diversity of all levels of organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AdminCom/Staff • Staff/Boards • Staff/Boards • Boards • All

4. Evaluation

- Build an evaluation process that focuses on goals ensuring that the organization meets community needs and builds community ownership of HM@FM

EVALUATION		
Time	Action Items	Responsibility
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and implement an annual operating plan that is regularly reviewed by Staff and Board • Formally review progress on the Strategic Plan and suggest improvements • Evaluate all programs and exhibits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/AdminCom/Boards • Staff/Boards • Staff

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

It will require commitment and resources to implement the strategic growth plan. All the prioritized goals have action plans that are implemented throughout each year. Monitoring, revising, and rewarding progress in all areas is an important role for leadership.

Periodic Evaluation

Evaluation is a best practice tool that helps the organization and those who fund it know what has been achieved with their efforts and investments. In the current funding world evaluation is necessary in order to compete as a professional nonprofit organization.

Invest in Staff and Board Leadership Development

Organizational growth and change may require new skills or new ways of working together. Investing in training for individuals and teams to prepare them for area expansion or new responsibilities, e.g., fund-raising, increases the success and sustainability of changes.

Ensure Technology Plan Is in Place

Inventorying technology needs prior to expansion and increased demand is another best practice tool of growing organizations. Ensuring that resources are available for expansion areas, e.g., cell phone tours or fund-raising donor software, avoids bottlenecks and expedites growth.

CONCLUSIONS

- 1) Staff, Board, and Friends all understand that competing choices for limited time and resources require careful planning in order to successfully navigate the next three years while building historical assets and community support.
- 2) The mission and vision statements are important tools for guiding decisions during this growth phase.
- 3) Change can be hard for individuals as well as organizations. The change process requires setting, monitoring, and evaluating goals, and, if needed, changing course. Change is both challenging and rewarding; everyone needs to participate in order to ensure a smooth transition.
- 4) Organizational leadership has to take the lead on implementing the plan.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: March 15, 2010

Ratified by the Friends Board of Directors: