



**Stearns History Museum  
Strategic Plan & Vision  
2020 to 2027**

## **Stearns History Museum Mission**

*The Stearns History Museum connects people through the power of history and culture.*

## **Our Vision**

*The Stearns History Museum offers a premier cultural heritage experience in Central Minnesota.*

### **The Stearns History Museum**

- **Preserves** a rich and diverse history by collecting and curating archival materials and three dimensional objects
- **Engages** all of us who live in and visit Stearns County and Central Minnesota
- **Inspires** people to think about our past, present and future through the lens of history and
- **Thrives** by maximizing opportunities for innovation

## **Our Audience – All are Welcome Here**

The people of Stearns County are who we serve. Stearns County population is as diverse and representative of the larger Minnesota population. If we serve our county constituents, we will serve all.

In the years to come, SHM will focus on growing our service to the following audiences:

- Families with children
- Young adults
- Researchers
- Retired Persons

## **Our Audience – Focus on 2020 to 2025**

### **Community Partnership**

The Museum is committed to learning from our communities how to better serve them and to change the way we do business to better support all people in Stearns County, those who live here and those who visit.

**Families with Children** include the broadest definition of family and will be decided by the families who engage. Programs and exhibits will support family engagement and will include topics both creative in design and accessible to everyone.

**Young Adults** include anyone between the ages of 18 and 35. They are parents, young professionals and college students. Inspired to explore, create, and socialize, we will develop opportunities to learn while engaging with others.

**Researchers** engage with us around the world.

**Retired Persons** are at a stage in their life where they are reflecting on their accomplishments and exploring their roots. Many enjoy non-traditional educational opportunities and look to Museums to deliver. With disposable income and time, these citizens can engage with the museum through programs, service and gifts. Developing meaningful connections is a priority for this group.

## Our Culture

Stearns History Museum is not just a place, it's us. Our actions speak louder than our words. We live by a set of values or expectations that determine the way the Museum feels.

- Staff and volunteers are **dedicated** to using the power of history and culture to connect people. We will succeed when we **create** a workplace where everyone can succeed.
- We **maintain the highest professional standards** and continue being recognized for this achievement through National Accreditation.
- We **show our respect** for each other and the community we live in through our words and actions.
- We **acknowledge and appreciate** one another's knowledge, experience and expertise, and build relationships upon trust.
- We achieve the best results when we **collaborate** and our diverse perspectives and skill sets come together.
- We are **open** to new ideas and continuously seek to improve.
- We are **accessible to everyone**.
- We are **one county**.

**Priority 1 – Museum Wide Initiatives  
Preserve our Future Past**

| <b>What</b>  | <b>Who</b>  | <b>Which Vision</b> | <b>Timeline &amp; Notes</b>   | <b>Cost If Known (2020)</b>                                   |
|--|---|---------------------|---|---|
| <b>Develop and Implement a Plan for Collections Storage that includes a New Storage Facility and New Exhibit Fabrication Space by 2027</b> | Facilities & Collections Committee/Board – Planning<br><br>Staff – Planning & Implementation<br><br>Consultants & Contractors | Preserve, Inspire   | Contract with City Expires by 2027  | \$5,000 to \$10,000 in administrative fees &                  |
| <b>Complete Plan and Execute Essential Updates on the Current Building and Grounds</b>   | Facilities Committee/Board – Planning<br><br>Staff – Planning & Implementation<br><br>Consultants & Contractors               | Preserve, Engage    | Between 2020 and 2024<br><br>Nothing permanent to exterior plaza, west or north side of building as we plan for capital changes | \$5,000-50,000 depending on volunteers and number of projects |
| <b>Develop a Capital Campaign Plan to Complete 1 &amp; 2</b>   | Development Committee – Planning<br><br>Staff and Capital Campaign Committee – Planning and Implementation                    | Thrive              | 2020 – Plan in Place by end of this year for 5 YR Fr  | Staff and volunteer time to plan in 2020                      |

**Priority 2 Museum Wide Initiatives**

**Update and Integrate most current Technology into our Daily Experience for both Staff and Guests**

| What   | Who  | Which Vision              | Timeline and Notes  | 2020 Cost   |
|--|--|---------------------------|---|---|
| Update Collections Catalog so that it is accessible through our website and that items can be purchased at the click of a button                                     | Staff – Planning & Implementation & Funding<br>Consultants & Contractors                     | Preserve, Engage, Thrive  | 2021/2022 development with implementation in 2023/204   | Staff time to plan                                  |
| Upgrade our Wireless technology to meet current standards that wifi is available to all and many when visiting the Museum.   | Staff – Planning and Implementation<br>Assistance from the County<br>Consultant to implement | Thrive, Engage            | 2020/2021<br>Update Basic Wireless Capabilities including a new router and new wireless "hot spots."  | \$5,000-\$10,000<br>(need to get specific estimate) |
| Upgrade current workstations and networking to current professional standards and maintain the current status by updating equipment and software on a regular basis. | Staff – Planning and Implementation<br>Assistance from the County<br>Consultant to implement | Thrive, Engage, Preserve, | 2020/2021 – 2 new workstations to replace outdated machines<br><br>2020 new printer scanner for Research Center<br><br>Create a Plan for future replacements including new line item in budget for tech | \$2000 (budgeted in Research Center                 |

**Priority 3 (Page 1) Museum Wide Initiatives  
Fund the Future of the Past**

| <b>What</b>   | <b>Who</b>   | <b>Which Vision</b> | <b>Timeline and Notes</b>  | <b>Cost (2020)</b>          |
|---|--|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Implement new financial goals designed to look forward instead of back and that foster growth and stability</b>            | Finance Committee & Staff -                                    | Thrive              | 2020 – Q1– metrics refined for reporting<br><br>2020 Q1 - Meeting with Development Committee to determine feasibility of 2020/2021 goals | Staff Time                  |
| <b>Plan and Execute a Development Plan to Fund Technology</b>   | Development Committee & Staff – Planning and Implementation    | Engage and Thrive   | Plan in 2020   | Staff Time, Donor Materials |
| <b>Plan and Execute a Membership Drive</b>  | Staff – Planning & Implementation<br><br>Marketing Consultants | Engage & Thrive     | End of 2020 – 400 new members  | Staff Time, Donor Materials |
| <b>Plan and Execute an Awareness Campaign with Goals to Triple Admissions Income by 2023 and Double Rental Income by 2022</b> | Staff – Planning & Implementation<br><br>Marketing Consultants | Engage & Thrive     | End of 2020 – Admissions Revenue up 25%<br><br>End of 2020 – Rental Income up 25%  | Staff Time and Materials    |



**Priority 3 (Page 2) Museum Wide Initiatives  
Fund the Future of the Past**

| What   | Who   | Which Vision    | Timeline and Notes   | Cost (2020)            |
|--|---|-----------------|--|------------------------|
| <b>Plan and Execute Planned Giving and Endowment Messaging</b> | Development Committee & Staff – Planning & Implementation | Engage & Thrive | Presence on Web, Materials for Distribution, etc. Staff, Board and Committee Training on Sharing | Staff time & Materials |
|  | Marketing Consultants                                     |                 |  |                        |
|  | Minnesota Community Foundation                            |                 |  |                        |

**Priority 4 (Museum Wide Initiatives)**

**Engage our Community through Programs and Exhibits that Reflect our Past and our Present**

| What  | Who   | Which Vision        | Timeline and Notes  | Cost                             |
|---|-------|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Tell the story of our past through exhibits, program and activities that welcome everyone and encourage all to use the past to inform their present | Staff | Inspire & Engage    | 3 new exhibits in 2020<br><br>4 new continuing program opportunities in 2020<br><br>Program integration between exhibits and special events | \$15,000 for year<br><br>\$5,000 |
| Update our scholarship, ask new questions, include new voices and take risk to engage new audiences   | Staff | Engage and Preserve | Researcher volunteers, staff time,  | Staff time                       |
| Increase our staff capacity to include more program, research and collections management hours through student workers and volunteers               | Staff | Engage              | Implement Improved Volunteer Program with a Goal to Increase Volunteers by 25 in 2020   | Staff time, Materials \$3000     |

**Priority 4 (Museum Wide Initiatives)**

**Page 2**

**Engage our Community through Programs and Exhibits that Reflect our Past and our Present**

| <b>What</b>   | <b>Who</b>                            | <b>Which Vision</b> | <b>Timeline and Notes</b>   | <b>Cost</b>                                      |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| Embrace new technology that brings history to life in ways we haven't even imagined yet | Staff                                 | Engage and inspire  | No specific timeline  | TBD  |
| Plan for new Permanent Exhibitions & Changing Exhibition Space                          | Facilities Committee/Board – Planning | Engage & Inspire    | Overview for Exhibits through 2024<br>Complete by the end of 2020 | Staff time with Input from the Program Committee |
|   | Staff – Planning & Implementation     |                     | Timeline for remodel of box done by end of 2020                   | Facilities Committee                             |
|   | Consultants & Contractors             |                     |   |  |

**Priority 5 Museum Wide Initiatives**

**Create New Space for Learning, Celebrating and Working**

| What  | Who   | Which Vision               | Timeline & Notes  | Cost 2020  |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|--|
| Develop and execute a long range plan for program/rental space                                  | Board Program & Facilities Committee & Staff Design & Implementation          | Inspire, Engage, Thrive    | Short term through 2024 use space as efficiently as possible  |  |
| Create work spaces that reflects current work habits and encourage creativity and collaboration | Staff & Facilities Committee Design and Implementation, Development committee | Inspire, Engage and Thrive | Invest in staff work productivity with new office equipment (desks, computers, chairs, spaces) within existing spaces to meet the needs of new employees and a 21 <sup>st</sup> century way of working<br><br>Updated equipment in large meeting spaces | \$1500 - \$5,000 for equipment<br><br>See estimates for cost |
| Fund these projects as part of the Capital Campaign   | Development Committee & Capital Committee Plus Staff                          | Thrive                     | Create a development Plan for 10 years including annual fund growth, capital campaign and comprehensive campaign plans done by end of 2020  | Staff time   |

## **Funding the Plan**

### **Admissions**

An awareness campaign and aggressive move to bring visitors through the doors is necessary to improve cash flow and our bottom line. We must double paid admissions every 2 years for at least 6 years to generate enough income to contribute to the operating budget of the museum.

### **Membership**

Analysis of our current population in Stearns County offers the opportunity to increase our membership to up to 15,000 members. Even if awareness increases this number to over 5,000 members, annual income will increase by \$225,000 annually, on the low side. In order to increase to these numbers, we must:

- continue to offer ambitious, creative, and state of the art programs for our core audiences
- give reasons for people to return and to offer ongoing support to the organization.

Creating a strong Heritage Circle Society program, we will improve Friend level membership numbers and donations which will offset the cost of these programs.

## **Funding the Plan (continued)**

### **Rental Income**

The Museum offers a unique setting for special events, private parties and meetings as long as they are not fundraising, specific to a political party, or against the values of the museum. Doubling rental income every 3 years for the next 9 years would create over \$35,000 in additional fund annually. This income should be designated for capital project improvements and planned capital improvements. Marketing the space is the key to success of this program.

### **Annual Gifts**

Increase annual giving especially in the grant, government and private funding.

County Support   Grant Funding   Private Funding   Other Government Funding

### **Leveraging Resources/Investing in our Future**

## **Planning for a Comprehensive Campaign that Funds Capital Improvement Projects, a New Building and the Long Term Sustainability of the Organization**

### **Generate:**

Annual Campaign Security

Capital improvement funds

Endowment & Planned Gifts

## **Milestones and Work Plans**

Timelines for Priorities will be developed by setting organization milestones and budgets by January 2020. Budgets for each of the Priorities and Milestones will also be complete by January 2020.

### **Milestones**

- Historical
- Organizational

**Individual Staff Work Plans will support the achievement of the institutional milestones and priorities at a departmental level. These work plans will be integrated into the Strategic Plan and complete by December each year.**

### **Work Plans**

- Specific to Staff
- Coordinated, Timely, Achievable



## **Planning Cycle**

SHM will complete an annual review cycle and every-3 year planning cycle to promote continual action, reflection, and accountability as we implement the strategic plan. To ensure a “living strategic plan” and alignment across our departments, we anticipate regular review sessions and an annual retreat to celebrate accomplishments, monitor progress, and make plan updates.

### **Twice Annual Review**

|             |                   |                                    |
|-------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Milestones: | April & September | Discuss Progress & Lessons Learned |
| Benchmarks: | June & November   | Discuss Progress & Lessons Learned |

### **Retreat and Celebration which includes**

- Annual Revision of Milestones followed by
- Annual Revision of Benchmarks

### **Every Two Year Review of Milestones for Changes in Community, Economy and Scale**

- Adjustments to Milestones
- Changes in Benchmarks

### **Every Three Years Update the Strategic Plan**

Board Level Plan - only

