



**2015 - 2018
Strategic Plan**

Stearns
History Museum

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Stearns
History Museum

stearns-museum.org

Participants

Strategic Planning Committee

Jim Davis - CEO

Jon McGee - Board Vice President

Cathy Mehelich - Board of Directors

Ann Meline - COO

Mark Muniz - Board of Directors

Jonna Thomas - Finance Manager

Staff

John Decker

Steve Penick

Gena Hiemenz

Adam Smith

Glenn Liesch

Process

The Stearns History Museum strategic planning process included separate staff and strategic planning committee sessions to gather ideas, to identify issues, define emerging outcomes and key strategies. During these sessions, participants also reviewed the museum's current strategic plan. Upon completion of these sessions a draft of the strategic plan was crafted by the Strategic Planning Committee made up of staff and board.

Another addition to the planning process was the inclusion of community representatives. The Stearns History Museum wanted to get non-staff and non-board perspectives of the plan and therefore invited individuals in the larger community to comment on the draft.

The full Board of Trustees reviewed the plan during its February 2015. The final plan was approved in March 2015 by the Board of Directors.

Who We Are

The Stearns History Museum (SHM) seeks to make the Central Minnesota region an exceptional place to raise families, to grow businesses, to experience arts and culture, to achieve an excellent education, and to attract new residents and visitors.

Since 1936 SHM has been successful in its mission to collect, preserve and interpret historic materials. The Stearns County Historical Society, a.k.a. Stearns History Museum, opened its state-of-the-art history facility in 1984 to house growing historical resources. We are now challenged with a rapidly growing and changing community. Our mission, to make regional history relevant to today and a pathway to our future, is made richer by meeting the needs of our increasingly diverse residents and coming generations.

Meeting the needs of today's community and those of future generations will require new perspectives, new energy and new resources. The Stearns History Museum in its present form is bursting at its seams. We have outgrown our programming and artifact storage space. The research facilities and exhibits require new technologies to keep pace with the changing world.

To meet the increasing expectations of the community, to make our historic resources accessible to a growing number of users, and to ensure our role as a signature cultural resource, the Museum Board has identified opportunities for growth. New and expanded space for current programs that are at capacity and state of the art exhibits to meet the learning styles of younger generations are part of the plan. Easy regional access, convenient and adequate parking, handicapped accessibility, and climate-controlled storage protected by fire suppression systems to safeguard our sensitive artifacts are essential elements in our expansion plan.



Mission & Vision

Mission: The Stearns History Museum connects people to the power of history and culture by collecting, preserving, and interpreting our historical and cultural resources.

Vision: The Stearns History Museum will be a place where citizens of central Minnesota can honor their diverse history and recognize that the past is what built the present and is a road map to the future.

Strategic Goals

1. Make the Stearns History Museum a signature cultural resource for County residents and visitors.

1. Develop and implement facility renovation/expansion plan to increase capacity for exhibits, programs, research, and storage.
 - a. Work with Stearns County Community, County government, and the City of St. Cloud to determine appropriate site.
 - b. Develop an innovative concept and operations design that meet the Museum's need for expanded capacity and role in the community.
 - c. Acquire funding to support/plan capital campaign.
 - d. Renovate/Build as determined.
2. Evaluate opportunities for community collaboration and partnerships.
3. Strengthen the Museum's reputation as a significant arts and culture destination, contributor to the community's self-identity and future development, and a strong voice that represents and speaks to the entire community

2. Ensure the Stearns History Museum's financial strength and stability.

1. Develop approaches to increase and diversify revenue streams and to invest in financial opportunities that offer growth for the long-term.
 - a. Complete Development Assessment.
 - b. Engage a Development Officer
 - c. Create a new broad-based and sustainable development plan.
 - i. Develop plan for existing businesses and organizations to use, support, and acknowledge Museum as an essential cultural entity.
 - ii. Revamp membership program and create a unique supporting membership program.
 - iii. Develop and implement a planned giving program to help build the museum's endowment and engage the Boomer population
 - iv. Grow donor and member base and significantly increase annual giving with new members and donors.

3. Review and update governance and management practices

1. Create Framework for effective board governance and policies.
 - a. Update or amend articles of incorporation and bylaws to comply with best practices.
 - b. Attract committed, community-minded leaders as Board members.
 - c. Provide board training.
2. Maintain American Alliance of Museum's Accreditation
 - a. Review "Best Practices" as defined by the American Alliance of Museum every two years
 - b. Adopt changes as identified in review.



3. Create foundation for effective management of Museum operations
 - a. Update organization chart, personnel policies, job descriptions, performance review standards.
 - b. Provide staff training opportunities.

4. Ensure the cultural resources of Stearns County are accessible to all residents.

1. Develop Collections that reflect cultural diversity of the region.
2. Continue to care for existing collections while creating environmentally sound space for new and existing collections.
3. Develop and implement a long-term technology plan to enhance user access to historical resources.
 - a. Digitizing Collections.
 - b. Implement a schedule for technology equipment replacement/update.

5. Create visitor experiences at the Stearns History Museum that are meaningful, memorable and entertaining. Experiences will engage the community and encourage return visits.

1. Hire a Program Curator.
2. Complete Audience assessment.
3. Develop interpretive plan for all exhibits.
4. Collaborate with schools and school districts to develop an appropriate plan to integrate local history with state and federally mandated curriculum.
5. Using audience analysis and development assessment, develop adult and family programming that meets the expectations and needs of the diverse community.
6. Create programming that attracts broad audiences and support, and enhances the financial viability of the organization.



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