
LOWELL AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

2018 Review



HISTORICAL MUSEUM

GOAL 1

ENGAGE THE PUBLIC IN MEANINGFUL WAYS

- ◆ Develop exhibits that explore a wide variety of topics in Lowell area history
 - 2016: The Fur Trade in Lowell Exhibit opened Oct. 2016; 5 Interpretive Boards
 - 2018:
 - ◆ Exhibit Committee formed to develop plan for exhibit spaces, Determined to combine and rework Industry and Retailing and Showboat exhibits, change current Showboat gallery into a changing gallery featuring the Graham family as next exhibit, retain Fur Trade in Lowell exhibit as a permanent exhibit.
 - ◆ Research begun on interpretation for Fur Trade Interpretive Center and Interpretive Boards for the new Lowell Township Park
- ◆ Provide public programs that engage
 - 2016: The Fur Trade in Archaeology; Dale Ford-Lowell's Monument Man, Ladies of the Lighthouses, Pontoon Tours, Exhibit Opening
 - 2017: *Captured in Time dating photographs; Maple Syrup; Life of a Voyageur; Historic Pontoon Tours; River of Time*
 - 2018: *Antique Instruments, The Railroad that Never Came, Maple Syrup, Pontoon Tours, Oakwood Cemetery Tour, Michigan in the Civil War.*

- ◆ Connect to new audiences in new ways

2016: Launch of The Past Online—online access to the collection, Facebook, Direct email, Interpretive Boards

2018: Instagram Account set up

- ◆ Increase public awareness of and involvement in museum mission and programs

2016: Public and educational programs, articles in Michigan Historical Society magazines on programs

2017: *Public and Education programs, talks to Women's Club, Lowell City Council, Lowell and Vergennes Townships, Rotary, Vergennes Club ,TV interviews on the Showboat*

2018: *Public and Education programs, talks to Women's Club, Lowell City Council, Lowell and Vergennes Townships, Rotary*

Technology

- ◆ Utilize technology to present and share history *Yes*
- ◆ Continue to use Website, Facebook, emails, and new social media *Yes*
 - ◆ Develop The Past Online to share with the public and other small museums to foster research and sharing of local history

2016: The Past Online development and launched Sept 2016

2017: *Fallasburg and Saranac and Cascade are using.*

2017: *Weekly Throwback Thursday posts on Facebook introduced*

2018: *Instagram account established*

GOAL 2

MAINTAIN A STRONG EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ◆ Continue and support current programs through staff and volunteer educators
 - 2016: All programs continued
 - 2017: All programs continued
 - 2018: All programs continued
- ◆ Explore new programs, resources to reach a wider variety of grade levels
 - 2016: Museum Immersion Program launched, 2nd year scheduled;
Tots preschool program
 - 2017: Museum Immersion program expansion planned for 3 classes in 2018.
Teacher recruitment and training completed for 2018. Grant funding secured to develop training program and support 3 classes.
Internship program –2nd year supporting one college intern
Currently serving preschool, grades 1, 2, 3, 4
 - 2018: Museum Immersion program expanded for 2018-2019 school year to encompass all Lowell Area Schools 3rd grade classes.
- ◆ Foster programs that encourage youth involvement with the Museum
 - 2016: Pioneer Life summer camp
 - 2017: River of Time summer workshop
 - 2018: English Pioneer youth summer camp

GOAL 3

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

- ◆ Continue best practices for managing collection *Yes*
- ◆ Utilize the new tools available through The Past Online *Yes*
- ◆ Maximize storage space *yes*
- ◆ Explore the need for off site storage
- ◆ Continue to foster oral history program *Yes*
- ◆ Continue to foster genealogy *Yes,*

GOAL 4

DIVERSIFY AND STRENGTHEN FUNDING

- ◆ Seek out and apply for a diverse range of grants

2016: Lowell Area Community Fund, Lowell Community Fund/United Way, Look Fund, Rotary Club, Women's Club, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs.

2017: Lowell Area Community Fund, Lowell Community Fund/United Way, Rotary Club, Women's Club, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs— Operational Support

2018: Lowell Area Community Fund, Lowell Community Fund/United Way, Rotary Club, Women's Club, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs— Operational Support, Literacy Legacy Fund of Michigan

- ◆ Develop the Summer Fest fundraiser to its potential making it a signature Museum event

2016: 2nd year successful, more sponsors and donors, higher attendance, net income increased

2017: 3rd year successful, more food and drink donors, higher attendance, new breweries and cider co. involved. New garden design an improvement, net income increased

2018: 4th year successful, we had one new sponsor, many return food and drink vendors. Income even with 2017.

- ◆ Develop corporate sponsors for Summer Fest, Exhibits and Education programs

2016: Summerfest sponsors increased, still room for development

2017: Food and drink vendor sponsors increased, still room for development

2018: One new sponsor for Summerfest, room for development

- ◆ Explore, develop and nurture a Planned Giving Program
- ◆ Explore new sources of funding

2017: Grant written for 2018 through MCACA Artist In Residence program to fund Museum Immersion program

2018: Grant from the Literacy Legacy Fund of Michigan.

GOAL 5

FOSTER COLLABORATION WITH THE MUSEUM'S COMMUNITIES

- ◆ Collaborate and engage with local organizations and businesses to promote awareness of Lowell area history.

2016: Rotary Club exhibit, Lowell Township Park project, Fallasburg Historical Society collections intern and project

2017: Museum Hack training with GVSU, Calvin, GRAM, Gerald R. Ford Museum and DIA; , Chamber-Showboat Rebuild committee, Riverwalk Festival booth, parade, River history tours, kids archaeology station, Lowell Township Park project, Fallasburg Historical Society collections intern and project

2018: Chamber-Showboat Rebuild committee, Riverwalk Festival booth, parade, River history tours; Lowell Township Park project; Fallasburg Historical Society collections intern and project; Lowell Merchants walking tour reprint and building plaques study; Wittenbach Center educational programming; Heidi's Farmstand educational programming; TriRivers; Michigan Museums Association

- ◆ Continue to emerge as a regional model and mentor for other small museums including Fallasburg Historical Society, members of the Tri-Rivers Museum Network and the larger museum community

2016: Fallasburg and Saranac TPOL projects, Tri-Rivers Presentation, Idea sharing meetings with Greenville, Ada, Byron Center, Zeeland, Sturgis, Saranac

2017: Fallasburg, Saranac, Cascade TPOL, Tri-Rivers participation including managing postings to the Tri-Rivers Facebook page for other organizations. Consultation meetings and talks with Saugatuck-Douglas Museum, Zeeland, Greenville, Ada, and Museum students from CMU, Calvin and Illinois . On board of Michigan Museum Association and serving as Treasurer.

2018: Tri-Rivers participation including managing postings to the Tri-Rivers Facebook page for other organizations. Consultation meetings and talks with Saugatuck-Douglas Museum, Ada, and Museum students from CMU and Calvin. On board of Michigan Museum Association and serving as Treasurer and 2019 joint state and Association of Mid-West Museums Conference Board Representative.

- Work with the townships to promote historical awareness in the larger community

2017: Vergennes: Collaboration with Fallasburg Historical Society to support an intern and collections management procedures.

Lowell: Collaboration on a fur trade cabin concept for the new Lowell Township Park

2018: Vergennes: Collaboration with Fallasburg Historical Society to support an intern and collections management procedures.

Lowell: Collaboration on a fur trade cabin concept and interpretive boards for the new Lowell Township Park

GOAL 6

MUSEUM PERSONNEL

- ◆ Continue to evaluate staffing and develop a plan for future needs

2017: Developing funding for expanding Immersion program staffing

- ◆ Grow and strengthen volunteer program

- recruit new volunteers

2016: Diane Smith, Doris Rhines, Denice Barker, Bruce Barker

2017: Elaine O'Connor, Denise Dommer, Bruce Barker (docent)

2018: Janet Twesten, Johanna Swanson, Sarah Humes

- develop volunteer appreciation/enrichment opportunities

2016: volunteer appreciation event, newsletter articles

2017: volunteer appreciation event, newsletter articles

2018: volunteer appreciation, Newsletter articles, New volunteer "Robert Graham Award" started-first recipient Bev Anderson.

- develop volunteer jobs offering flexibility and leadership

2016: Graham research project-Diane Smith, Committee leaders-Summer Concerts-Bev Anderson, Fallasburg-Ardis Barber, Tina Cadwallader, Carolyn Jane Blough,

2017: Committee leaders-Raffle-Tony Dommer; Program Committee-Carolyn Jane Blough and committee; Summer Concerts -Bev Anderson; Riverwalk Festival-Ardis Barber; Summerfest-Tony Dommer, Ardis Barber; Fallasburg-Ardis Barber, Tina Cadwallader, Carolyn Jane Blough; Christmas Decorating Committee– Diane Smith, Elaine O’Connor; Gift Shop-Elaine O’Connor

2018: Committee leaders-Raffle-Tony Dommer; Program Committee-Carolyn Jane Blough and committee; Summer Concerts -Bev Anderson; Riverwalk Festival-Ardis Barber; Summerfest-Tony Dommer, Ardis Barber; Fallasburg-Ardis Barber, Tina Cadwallader, Carolyn Jane Blough; Christmas Decorating Committee– Diane Smith, Elaine O’Connor; Oral History-Ardis Barber, Dale Kropf; Genealogy-Dorann Truax

GOAL 7

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

- ◆ Physically maximize current space for storage

2017: Gift shop space cleaned up and updated; Storage space in Marsac Room evaluated for additional shelving to be put in 2018

- ◆ Maintain exterior of building in historically accurate manner

2016: Met with DPW director to discuss exterior needs, planning for 2017 work, garden reconfiguration project underway

2017: Garden space reworked to facilitate events; exploration of front steps rebuild begun; basement door replaced

2018: Back ramp repaired and repainted. Bids for side porch and front porch delayed to 2019.

- ◆ Explore the need and possibilities for future growth of off-site space for storage and public programs and what that would mean for the current storage/office areas

2018: Inquiry made into open space at the Superior Furniture building. Owner intends space for rental.