

Historical Museum at Fort Missoula (HMFM)
Strategic Plan (2019-2022)

Mission

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

Guiding Principles

At the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula:

- **We constantly strive for truth and the inclusion of all people in telling the stories of Missoula County's past. We tell diverse stories that connect and are relevant to local, national and international history.**
Goal #1 – ADC Programming - Host a minimum of two events per year to raise awareness of the ADC story.
Goal #2 – Maintain membership and support the activities of the Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium.
In FY 2020-2022, HMFM will host one or two programs/events each year focusing on the diverse history of the Missoula Community
- **We provide professional curation, exhibition, and interpretation to educate and intrigue.**
Goal #4 – HMFM will work to prepare the collection for AAM Accreditation. During FY 2020, we will work with AAM to conduct a full collections assessment.
Goal #5 – HMFM will work to recruit a minimum of two collections interns per FY in 2020, 2021, and 2022.
- **We provide research opportunities because we believe research helps keep history relevant, true, and alive.**
- **Goal #6** – During FY 2020, HMFM will recruit and train an intern to conduct research on the ADC.
- **We assure that our exhibits and sites can be experienced by visitors of all abilities.**
Goal #7 – In FY 2020, HMFM will create a transcript of our current Visitor Orientation Video.
Goal #8 – During FY 2022, HMFM will produce a new Orientation Video complete with closed captioning.
Goal #9 – HMFM will install a ramp to the ACM Library Car in FY 2020.
- **We believe that the financial health of the Museum is critical to achieving our mission.**
- **We hire qualified professionals and work to maintain appropriate staffing levels within our financial capacity. We value the skills and expertise of our staff and encourage professional development.**

Goal #10 – All HMFM staff members will attend at least one conference, meeting, or educational opportunity per fiscal year.

- **We value our status as an accredited museum and provide the support necessary to maintain that status.**

Goal #11– HMFM Staff will review all policies related to accreditation beginning in 2022.

- **We believe that a knowledgeable, collaborative working relationship between Museum Trustees and the Friends Board expands the Museum’s marketing, financial, and program success.**
- **We recognize the many organizations that are part of the Fort Missoula Historic District and the Museum’s campus and their relationship to visitor numbers and site branding**

Goal #12 – Staff will work to build relationships with other Fort Partners and seek opportunities for partnership in promotion, events, and educational programs.

- **We celebrate the contributions of staff, our Board, Trustees, Volunteers, and supporters.**

Goal #13 – HMFM staff and boards will work to plan and execute at least two appreciation events for Staff, Boards, partners, and volunteers each year in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022.

- **We believe that collaboration – internally, locally, state-wide, nationally, and internationally – can further our mission.**

Goal #14 – Staff will work to build relationships with our partners locally, state-wide, nationally, and internationally to collaborate in a way that is within the financial and staff capacity of the museum.

Strategic Priorities

Preservation and Collections

Vision

In accordance with the standards laid out by the American Alliance of Museums, HMFM houses quality collections that are preserved and maintained appropriately.

Strategic Directives

1. Maintain and continue to improve facilities for appropriate and specialized preservation and storage.

Goal #1 – During FY 2021 and FY 2022 begin to develop the basement level of Building T-1 to meet the museum’s growing collections storage needs.

Goal #2 - During FY 2021 and FY 2022 conduct an inventory of the warehouse and update collections records.

Goal #3 – During FY 2022 explore options and formulate a plan to improve storage facilities in the warehouse.

2. Utilize volunteers with professional expertise to assist in preservation of the collections and buildings. Within capacity, seek to expand collections staff.

Goal #4 – FY 2020-2022, recruit and train a minimum of two collections interns per FY.

Goal #5 – FY 2020-2022, recruit and train collections volunteers.

Goal #6 – Utilize Board of Trustees and Friends of the Museum to assist with building restoration and preservation projects on the Museum's grounds.

Goal #7 – Staff and Friends Board will prioritize and seek to fund at least one preservation/restoration project each fiscal year in 2020, 2021, and 2022. Project will be chosen at the March Board Meeting.

Goal #8 – HMFM staff will consult AAM Accreditation standards to assure the HMFM buildings and grounds meet professional standards.

Goal #9 – During FY 2020, HMFM will research possibilities of a grant funded position in Collections in order to prepare for our AAM Accreditation review.

Goal #10 – FY 2021 and 2022, secure funding, recruit, and hire a collections professional/registrar.

Goal #11 – FY 2020-2022, work to seek funding and begin restoration of the Locomotive.

3. Work to identify and secure additional Collections space.

Goal #12 – During FY 2020, Staff will assess current collections space and look for a solution to crowding and improper storage.

Goal #13 – During FY 2021 and 2022 secure and prepare additional Collections storage space/s.

Visitor Experience

Vision

Assure that every visitor to HMFM and all those attending one of HMFM's offsite programs are satisfied and interested in future interactions with the Museum.

Strategic Directives

1. Maximize exposure while at the Museum (its artifacts, its buildings, and grounds) through improved signage, maps, and technology.

Goal #1 – Install at least two new interpretive signs on the Museum Grounds in FY 2020,2021, and 2022.

Goal #2 – Evaluate and possibly re-design the Museum's Grounds Brochure in FY 2021.

Goal #3 – FY 2020-2022, Staff will create short videos and interviews to provide additional resources and interpretation for the public. Videos will be made available through the Museum’s website and social media.

2. “Take it to them” – Show/advertise/educate people about what the Museum has to offer. Use a variety of tools including technology, off-site exhibits, presentations, signs, etc.... to entice people to visit the Museum.

Goal #4 – FY 2020-2022, HMFM will provide the public with high quality, informative public programming in the form of field trips, off-site outreach activities, and visits.

3. Maximize visitor enjoyment and convenience by expanding “creature comforts”.

Goal #5 – Repair and re-pave HMFM Parking Lot in FY 2020.

Goal #6 – Begin carrying snacks in the Museum Gift Shop in FY 2020.

Goal #7 – FY 2020-2022, HMFM will work to add additional tables and benches to improve the comfort of our visitors.

Goal #8 – Install new ADA Library Car Ramp in FY 2020.

4. HMFM is committed to providing a memorable educational experience to our guests.

Goal #9 – During FY 2020-2022, HMFM will achieve at least an 80% positive response on all post visit surveys.

Goal #10 – HMFM will replace and/or update an exhibit in one of outbuildings each year in FY 2020-2022.

Marketing, Branding, and Identity

Vision

HMFM keeps Missoula County’s history alive through strong, varied media channels utilizing concise image-based identity, informative signage, and collaborative partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally.

Strategic Directives

1. Messaging and Branding – While maintaining our current name and brand, expand our brand using visual imagery that represents our iconic location and historical stories.

Goal #1 – During FY 2020, HMFM will look to partner with a local photographer or photographers to produce a pool of professional images of the Museum’s buildings, grounds, events and exhibits.

Goal #2 – In FY’s 2020-2022, Staff will review marketing plan annually with the External Affairs Committee of the Friends of the Historical Museum in order to gauge outcomes and effectiveness.

2. Signage – Expand signage throughout our state, both directional and informational.

Goal #3 – During FY 2020-2022, staff will research ways to work with our local and state government entities to increase directional/informational signage for the Fort Missoula Historic District and museums.

Goal #4 – During FY 2020, HMFMM will research the cost and the process of utilizing a billboard to raise awareness. If within the museum’s financial capacity, HMFMM will contract for a billboard promoting the Museum in FY’s 2021 and 2022.

3. Signage – Expand on-site signage and interpretation to provide better access for all including those with disabilities.

Goal #5 – Work to install a minimum of two outdoor interpretive signs per fiscal year in 2020,2021, and 2022.

4. Media Channels – Grow our web presence with social media and our website (i.e. social media, partnerships, and imagery branding).

Goal #6 – During FY 2020, HMFMM will research and seek bids for a new website design and management firm.

Goal #7 – FY 2020-2022 – HMFMM monitor social media trends and research new social media opportunities and strategies for increasing audience and engagements.

5. Collaborations and Partnerships – Continue to build relationships with our current partners and explore new partnerships with organizations that have similar missions to HMFMM.

Goal #8 – Staff will work to establish new partnerships with similar organizations that are mutually beneficial and are within the financial and staff capacity of HMFMM.

Financial Health

Vision

HMFMM is committed to maintaining the financial health of the combined budgets of the County and the Friends of the Museum.

Strategic Directives

1. Continue fiscal responsibility with a modest, agreed upon annual surplus.
2. Strive to fund preservation and project priorities as set by management and staff in their efforts to achieve the Strategic Plan.

Goal #1 – Staff will work with Missoula County to seek grant funding for preservation projects. HMFMM will look to apply for at least one grant related to preservation in FY’s 2020,2021, and 2022.

Goal #2 – Staff will work with HMFMM Friends Board to identify and fund at least one restoration/preservation project (\$5,000-\$10,000) each fiscal year beginning in FY 2020.

3. Friends of HMFMM will evaluate financial needs of the future and strive to plan for needs in collaboration with the County Board of Trustees.

Goal #3 – Friends of HMFM and the County Board of Trustees will meet at least once annually to evaluate financial health and plan for the future of HMFM.

Goal #4 – The Friends of HMFM will have an attending Trustee at each of their regularly scheduled Board Meetings.

Goal #5 – The County Board of Trustees will have an attending Friends Board Member at each of their Regularly scheduled Board Meetings.

4. Commit to clear communication and transparency in financial dealings and good faith use of monies raised by the Friends of HMFM.

Organizational Infrastructure

Vision

HMFM recognizes organizational capacity and operates within those constraints while maintaining the quality of its events and programs. Trustees, Friends of HMFM, staff, and volunteers understand their appropriate roles and work within those roles to advance the mission of HMFM.

Strategic Directives

1. Maximize HMFM capacity through Board, Trustee, and volunteer engagement and community partnerships.

Goal #1 – Friends of the Museum and Trustees will support the Museum by raising awareness and by volunteering to help with at least one event or program per FY.

Goal #2 – All Friends Board Members and Trustees will assist the museum by engaging at least one potential volunteer, partner, or sponsor, each FY in 2020-2022.

2. Regularly assess fundraising events and educational events for opportunities to improve quality and increase revenue.

Goal #3 – Staff will conduct event debriefings following each of the Museum’s major events. Conclusions will be presented at the Friends of HMFM and County Trustee Board Meetings immediately following the event. Boards will discuss findings and evaluate events with an eye towards realistic assessment and ideas for improvement.

3. Regularly convene Trustees, Friends of HMFM, and staff to review progress and status of the current Strategic Plan.

Goal #4 – Friends of HMFM and County Board of Trustees will discuss the current Strategic Plan and evaluate goals and directives as part of their January Board meeting each fiscal year.

4. HMFM will strive to increase diversity in the Museum’s staff, Boards, and volunteers as opportunities are made available. All HMFM units will work to assure that the Museum’s leadership reflects Missoula’s changing community.

5. Staff, Board, and Trustees will collaborate to evaluate HMFM buildings, grounds, and collections for the purpose of improvement, restoration, and preservation.

Goal #5 – HMFM will convene a work group made up of members of the Trustees, Friends of HMFM, and staff for the purpose of evaluating and prioritizing necessary projects. This group will have a representative on each board that report findings to the larger body.

6. Friends of HMFM will assure the ongoing success of fundraisers and events through formulation of a succession plan.

Goal #6 – Friends of HMFM External Affairs Committee will work to create a succession plan for each of HMFM's major events and will work to actively recruit leaders for these events.

Approved by the Friends of the Historical Museum on July 11, 2019.

Formally adopted by the Trustees of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula on July 15th, 2019.