

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, INC
STRATEGIC PLAN 2013

August 2013

INTRODUCTION

The following Strategic Plan was adopted by the Historical Society's Board of Trustees to provide a guide for the Society over the next several years and to assist the Society as it attempts to meet a series of goals and objectives identified by members, consultants and advisors during the past year. While it is not possible to address all issues in a single document, the Plan is intended to provide broad guidelines and specific actions needed to address the challenges and seize the opportunities available to the Society as it seeks to fulfill its Mission.

President's Signature: _____

Approved and Adopted: _____

STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2016

Vision:

The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc seeks to be the preeminent and most user-friendly source for an individual to obtain historical information about the county and genealogical information about its inhabitants.

Mission:

The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. collects, preserves, promotes, and interprets the rich and diverse history of the Harford County area in its regional context from prehistoric origins to the present for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Values:

The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. fosters an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and those seeking information are provided a rewarding and educational experience. Material in the possession of the Society will be preserved with care. The Society embraces technology to further these values.

The Board of Trustees developed and approved the aforementioned Vision, Mission and Values statements and the following Strategies to assure the long term viability of the Society and to identify the steps necessary to accomplish the identified strategies.

Goal 1: Improve Program Services

Objective:

Assure the Society is run in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Tasks:

- Set measurable goals and benchmarking measures for the goals

- Develop an evaluation framework and description for collections (qualitative and quantitative)
- Measure outcomes in relation to cost to assure programmatic efficiency and effectiveness
- Include evaluations in the annual report for member information
- Develop an up to date Policies and Procedures Manual which should be available to all Board members and volunteers
- Coordinate more fully with other organizations, i.e. state and local historical societies and programs, local museums, the Bel Air Alliance, local Cultural Arts groups, etc.
- Expand hours of operation

Responsibility:

Executive Committee

Timeframe:

This effort will begin immediately and become an ongoing activity of the Executive Committee.

Goal 2: Increase Membership

Objective:

To assure the long term viability of the Society, membership levels need to be stabilized and membership increased:

Tasks:

- Attract younger generation members by developing plans to introduce a Web Membership
- Create a membership committee to focus on expanding the number of members
- Identify and enact strategies to increase membership
- Increase membership by a minimum of 10% per year
- Use Website to raise funds through donations, membership drives genealogical resources, etc.

Responsibility:

Membership Committee and Website Management Committee

Timeframe:

As the County's population has aged, membership has declined; therefore, to attract younger generations, the Society plans to introduce a Web Membership more in tune with today's computer based society. Many documents already exist in an appropriate format for posting, but others must first be digitized. Initial efforts will focus on those documents that are historically rich with a launch date set for January 1, 2014. Thereafter, thumbnails of photographs and post card images will be posted allowing interested members to purchase copies by electronically paying a fee. Other membership initiatives must be identified and implemented.

Goal 3: Attract and maintain a strong volunteer pool and increase the number of visitors for both the Hays House Museum and the Society headquarters

Objective:

To operate the Society effectively, a strong, well trained volunteer base and a program to attract visitors to Society and Museum events must be developed.

Tasks:

- Create volunteer committee to oversee program and provide training
- Develop a volunteer policy including the chain of command, duties, termination, confidentiality and liability policies for all volunteers and assure that all volunteers receive a copy
- Increase number of volunteers and times available for volunteer participation
- Conduct an annual volunteer event to showcase volunteer opportunities and attract new volunteers
- Expand Society hours of operation, i.e. at least one week night and Saturdays
- Assign volunteers to develop a plan for optimal use of all electronic resources and assets
- Use electronic media to make Society resources more available
- Routinely review and update Society Website
- Optimize use of Facebook to generate interest in Society and its resources
- Assure that signage is routinely updated and events publicized in a timely manner

Responsibility:

Volunteer Committee, Hays House Museum Committee, Publicity/Activities chairs

Timeframe:

Establish a volunteer committee in January 2014. Create ongoing publicity and event planning program to assure coordination and adequate publicity.

Goal 4: Maintain and Improve Society Facilities

Objective:

Provide state of the art facilities (Headquarters and Hays House Museum) to display, store and protect the archives and artifacts that tell the story of Harford County and its people

Tasks:

- Continue the building restoration campaign to address Headquarters building deficiencies
- Create a facility oversight committee to routinely review and address facility issues at both Headquarters and the Hays House
- Improve public accessibility
- Improve space utilization at both facilities
- Increase rental activities at both facilities
- Improve media facilities
- Develop rental program and advertise space availability

Responsibility:

Facilities committee, Building Campaign Restoration Committee

Timeframe:

Establish Facilities Committee in January 2014 and initiate review and planning for improved facility use. This must be an ongoing activity.

Goal 5: Upgrade Technological Facilities and Services**Objective:**

Assure the Society keeps pace with the technological needs of its members and visitors

Tasks:

- Assign a Committee to develop a plan for optimal use of all electronic resources
- Use electronic media to make Society resources more available
- Use website to raise funds through donations, membership drives, genealogical resources, etc.
- Routinely review and update Society website
- Optimize use of Facebook to generate interest in Society and its resources
- Upgrade outdated equipment (hardware and software) and identify media/computer needs

Responsibility:

Technology Oversight Committee (Webmasters, Past Perfect coordinator and Website management committee)

Timeframe:

This is an ongoing effort. Committee members are currently evaluating equipment and have noted a need for a wide format scanner to digitize old and fragile documents and a complementary wide format color printer to allow visitors to examine a reproduction of the document rather than the original. As the evaluation is completed a funding mechanism will need to be identified and a schedule for equipment replacement developed.

Goal 6: Enhance Event and Exhibition Program

Objective:

Attract new members and retain current members by highlighting the Society's collections and programs.

Tasks:

- Create an event coordination committee to plan and oversee events
- Develop year round exhibits at both the Hays House and the Society
- Coordinate exhibit program with similar agencies
- Identify and create events that highlight Harford's history and are of interest to a wide ranging audience
- Develop a strong publicity program to make sure that all events and exhibits are broadcast to the widest audience possible.

Responsibility:

Event Committee, Exhibit chair and Publicity chair

Timeframe:

Beginning in January 2014 the exhibit chair will assure that exhibits are replaced periodically. The Event committee will begin identifying and programming events on an annual basis immediately. This will be an ongoing effort.

Goal 7: Define and Meet Society's Financial Needs

Objective:

Increase funds available for use by the Society both for operating and capital projects

Tasks:

- Work with the investment advisor to increase income from the investment portfolio

- Revise guidelines on disbursing income from investment funds in order to use the income more efficiently
- Continue active grant writing program seeking additional funding for ongoing capital projects, special projects and operational activities where applicable
- Seek funding necessary for the ongoing capital campaign allowing restoration of the Society Headquarters

Responsibility:

Finance Committee/Executive Committee/Building Restoration Committee

Timeframe:

Most of the Finance and Executive Committees initiatives are ongoing in nature. The Building Restoration Campaign began in 2013 and will continue through 2015