

# **Sharlot Hall Museum**

## **Strategic Plan (2017-2022)**

### **A Brief History**

The Sharlot Hall Museum was founded in 1928 and is located on the grounds of the log building that served as the residence and office of the first governor of the Arizona Territory. The nearly four acre, landscaped campus features ten exhibit buildings, including four restored historic structures representing Arizona’s territorial era—the Governor's Mansion (1864), Fort Misery (1864), the Fremont House (1875), and the Bashford House (1877). The Lawler Exhibit Center (1977) hosts both permanent and changing exhibits, a theater, and storage of extensive historic and prehistoric objects. A large Archive Library (1993), houses several hundred thousand images, maps and documents. A new support facility constructed with non-State of Arizona funds was completed in March 2013, and a new admissions building, also financed entirely with privately-donated funds was added in April, 2014. The Museum also operates a branch museum at the Bob Stump VA Medical Center which interprets the history of Fort Whipple. Public programs include the annual Folk Arts Fair, Prescott Indian Art Market, Folk Music Festival, Frontier Christmas, Western History Symposium, periodical musical and theatrical historical productions, living history interpretations in both indoor and outdoor settings, heritage gardens, lecture series, education tours, and outreach opportunities for children and adults.

The Museum is operated by the Prescott Historical Society (PHS), an Arizona state agency established in 1965 for that purpose. The PHS receives an annual appropriation from the state legislature, which amount is augmented by the financial support provided by its non-profit partner, the Sharlot Hall Historical Society (SHHS).

# **Mission, Vision, and Values**

## **Mission**

Sharlot Hall Museum is an educational and cultural center, which fosters public and community understanding and appreciation of historical, social, cultural and natural aspects of Arizona, with emphasis on the Central Highlands, and which promotes involvement in and support for research, collections, conservation, exhibits, and related programs.

## **Vision**

To serve as a respected historical center offering experiential approaches to exploring Arizona's past, illuminating its present and imagining its future in order to educate, enlighten and enhance the experience of Museum visitors.

## **Values, Behaviors and Objectives**

The Museum operates with the highest ethical standards. It embraces truth and the pursuit of knowledge and recognizes the importance of aesthetic considerations. The Museum acknowledges the contributions of diverse cultural and ethnic groups to the area's historical development.

In operating within the framework established by such values, the Museum:

- collects items of historical significance
- preserves and interprets its collections
- upholds scholarly and professional integrity
- makes best use of its resources
- promotes continuous learning
- strives to be innovative and creative
- anticipates and responds to its diverse audience needs

# Objectives and Strategies

**I. Objective 1—Financial Stability.** Sharlot Hall Museum is committed to sound and responsible stewardship of the public resources to ensure that it can continue to provide members and visitors with an educational and cultural experience consistent with its mission.

## **a. Strategies**

- i. Develop and strengthen public support for the Museum through communication and outreach programs.
- ii. Provide for a sustainable stream of operating revenues:
  1. Increase earned income from all sources, including memberships, admissions, rentals, museum store and Library and Archives (L&A) sales, festivals and other fund raising activities.
  2. Increase the donor base of members, volunteers and friends of the Museum.
  3. Continue to explore the potential for additional lease/rental opportunities for the Museum's grounds and facilities, including, but not limited to, the planned Education Center.
  4. Invest Reserve Funds with the objective of preserving the long-term real purchasing power of the Funds' assets while realizing appropriate investment income.
  5. Expand corporate membership program through the active engagement of staff and members of the Board of Trustees.
- iii. Expand resource development activities.
  1. Conduct a capital campaign to fund the design and construction of an Education Center on the southeast corner of the Museum campus.
  2. Identify potential sources of major capital gifts for projects, operational support and capacity building/infrastructure, including, but not limited to, the planned Education Center.

3. Continue to identify and enlist a team of staff and Board members who are willing and capable of establishing and solidifying relationships with potential donors and others who have access to potential donors that over time will provide a reliable stream of financial support for the Museum.
4. Maintain and strengthen relationships with governmental funding sources with the objective of ensuring levels of funding that match or exceed FY17 values.
5. Evaluate other initiatives for proactively engaging city, county and state representatives, such as tours, briefings, receptions and related activities.

**II. Objective 2—Capital Planning.** Sharlot Hall Museum’s Exhibit, Facilities and Space Utilization Plans describe the facility changes, renovations, and required upkeep to accommodate the present physical plant and future growth. The Museum’s growth and development are limited by its financial and physical resources. Capital planning entails an evaluation of its facilities with the object of optimizing their productivity, utilization and strategic application to ensure that facilities will meet the needs of the Museum campus and community.

**a. Strategies**

- i. Fund, design and construct an Education Center on the southeast corner of the Museum campus.
- ii. At least biennially, review and modify, as needed, the Museum’s Space Utilization Plan dated March 31, 2017.
- iii. Continue to pursue State building renewal funds for the Noggle Building with respect to its conversion to a multi-purpose facility and/or exhibit space.
- iv. At least biennially, review and modify, as needed, the Museum’s Lawler and Sharlot Hall Building’s Exhibit Plan dated March 9, 2017 with consideration of the application of new technology. [See Objective V]

- v. Annually, review and modify, as needed, the Capital Improvement and Maintenance Plan for the Museum’s Facilities and Grounds dated March 21, 2017.

**III. Objective 3—Collections Stewardship.** The Museum holds more than 40,000 objects and several hundred thousand documents, images, maps and recorded histories in trust for the people of Arizona and the general public. The management of this collection, including documentation and preservation, is vital to the mission of the Museum.

**a. Strategies**

- i. At least biennially, review and modify, as needed, the Museum’s Collection Policy dated October 22, 2014, ensuring that all aspects of the collection are well-defined and consistent with professional standards.
- ii. Complete an inventory of all three-dimensional objects in the collections and, in the process thereof, refine and focus collections to (a) reduce duplication and (b) evaluate opportunities to deaccession non-mission related items.
- iii. At least biennially, review and update, as needed, the Museum’s Disaster Plan dated March, 2017.
- iv. Evaluate and implement, as appropriate, technology for providing public with ease of on-line access to archival documents, and images of selected three-dimensional objects.
- v. Complete the development of an informative and user-friendly website for the L&A, which can be regularly updated, edited and maintained by L&A staff.
- vi. Process to completion all documents, photographs, maps and other items in the L&A collections, update finding aids in compliance with *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACs), the content standards adopted by the American Society of Archivists, and determine legal rights with respect thereto.

**IV. Objective 4—Programming, Exhibits and Education.** The Museum is dedicated to excellence in education as its exhibitions, programming and other educational

activities are vitally important to its mission. The goal of these activities is to provide a fun and enjoyable Museum experience by offering educational opportunities that excite, enrich and engage a diverse public and a broad range of ages.

**a. Strategies**

- i. Continually evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the Museum’s festivals, events, lectures, living history programs, fund-raisers, and related activities, and modify, eliminate or add to, as appropriate.
- ii. Continue to implement and improve the Museum’s Education Plan, with increased emphasis on school tours and youth oriented activities.
- iii. Fund, and continue to review, revise and implement the Museum’s long-range Exhibit Plan.
- iv. Evaluate and implement, as appropriate, opportunities to utilize technology in new and existing exhibits.
- v. Develop a plan designed to expand public awareness of the research opportunities offered by the Museum’s Library & Archives.
- vi. Explore opportunities to expand the Museum’s collections, including its archival materials.
- vii. Continue to fund a summer intern program for the Education Department.
- viii. Develop and implement a plan for the long-term sustainability of the Prescott Indian Art Market.

**V. Objective 5—Informational Technology.** The challenge for museums of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to enhance the visitor experience beyond merely observing relics of the past. The integrated use of new and emerging technologies enables museum-goers to engage more functionality and experientially, thereby providing an enriched educational and cultural experience.

**a. Strategies**

- i. Fund a dedicated local-area Wi-Fi network, enabling access to expanded audio/visual, multimedia and textual information on selected exhibits throughout the campus through the utilization of their own electronic devices; e.g., smart phones, tablets and laptops.

- ii. Utilize new and emerging technology to develop and implement customized interactive audio/visual presentations for new and existing exhibits, including animations, and 3-D holographic, digitally enhanced projections of persons and events related to the exhibit.
- iii. Utilize engaging multimedia and audio/visual I.T. tools to provide information and entertainment content – an “infotainment” presentation style to all Museum markets and audiences.

**VI. Objective 6—Partnerships.** The development of political, economic and organizational partnerships are vitally important to the Museum’s dual efforts to provide quality of life experiences for the community and to serve as a regional economic generator through civic tourism.

**a. Strategies**

- i. Maintain a high profile with state, county, and local government to assure tax-based funding.
- ii. Develop partnerships with community businesses, leaders, and others to encourage support of the Museum.
- iii. Develop partnerships with complementary institutions/entities which offer learning and coalition building opportunities, including:
  - 1. Indigenous tribal entities
  - 2. Arizona Historical Society
  - 3. Local historical museums and organizations
  - 4. Service clubs
  - 5. Educational institutions

**VII. Objective 7—Marketing, Public and Media Relations.** The Sharlot Hall Museum can only fulfill its mission if its audiences are aware of its existence and the many opportunities and rewards available. Wide ranging efforts to publicize and promote the unique nature of the extensive quality offerings of the Museum remain at the foundation of sustainability.

**a. Strategies**

- i. Develop and implement a solid public relations, marketing and promotion plan, utilizing cost-effective communications tools, techniques and strategies.
- ii. Continue to foster strong relations with local and regional media; develop and exploit relationships with media in large city media markets, e.g. Phoenix and its surrounding areas.
- iii. Evaluate and implement, as appropriate, the use of surveys and other means to obtain input from members and visitors.
- iv. Gather, compile and analyze demographic data provided through admissions and implement and evaluate such other surveys of members and visitors to identify target areas for expanded marketing activities.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Prescott Historical Society on May 23, 2017