

THS 2013 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

This 2013 Strategic Plan for Troy Historical Society (THS, Society) is the result of a planning process that began in January 2013. A dedicated committee and Board of Trustees examined various issues from an external and internal perspective; reviewed and revised our mission, vision, and values; identified the most important critical issues facing the organization; established specific goals and strategies to define our future direction; developed specific implementation guidelines for the strategies; and prepared a three-year projection of revenues and expenses.

Established in 1966, the Troy Historical Society has demonstrated its commitment to preserving Troy's pioneer era and heritage by transforming itself from a club interested in history to a governance body overseeing the operations of the Troy Historic Village (THV, Village). This major shift occurred in 2010 when the City of Troy laid off the majority of staff and intended to close the Village due to the local economic recession. Society members have contributed over \$1.3 million to acquire, relocate, and construct almost all of the 11 historical facilities in the Village. The Society maintains a close working relationship with the City of Troy through a renewable five-year management agreement.

Practically all museums and cultural organizations face financial challenges due to a fluctuating economy and multiple demands on limited personal budgets. Successful organizations have found that it is critical that museums become more engaging and interactive with their visitors. They must use the facilities and artifacts as social objects to create a more memorable experience for visitors, and create dynamic and changing programs to attract returning patrons.

The Village includes 12 buildings used for programs and services and over 9,500 artifacts and historically accessioned items. Operating hours and days have continued to increase since the Society assumed operational responsibilities. Currently the Society employs 3.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. Over 12,000 students and chaperones from the tri-county area visited the Village during the 2012/13 school year. A Master Site Plan for the Village was prepared in 2009 to include a barn, visitors' center, and site improvements that will require an investment of over \$5 million. This site plan will enable the Village to capture the agricultural history of Troy, accommodate a larger volume of visitors, improve traffic flow, and further diversify its revenues through expanded programs and rental arrangements. For fiscal year ending (FYE) June 30, 2013, the Society had approximately \$260,000 in revenues and experienced a positive change in net assets of approximately \$6,000.

Based on an external and internal assessment that was undertaken, five critical issues were identified that need to be addressed by the Troy Historical Society:

- Financial Viability
- Visitor Experience
- Public Awareness
- Adequate Resources
- Organizational Culture

Goals and strategies were created to address each of these issues:

Financial Viability – Serve as responsible financial stewards and achieve an appropriate level of philanthropic contributions, revenue growth, grant funding, and visitor/customer volumes to sustain and grow the Village operations on a long-term basis.

- Prepare three-year operational and capital budgets.
- Diversify revenue mix.
- Establish fund development program.
- Improve accounting and data systems.
- Reinforce importance of City of Troy financial support.

Visitor Experience – Establish the Troy Historic Village as a unique cultural destination that is convenient, accessible, meaningful, relevant, affordable, and dynamic. The Village is a popular gathering and happening place for residents in Troy and Southeast Michigan.

- Identify needs of specific stakeholder and demographic groups.
- Establish formal Program/Services Committee.
- Create comprehensive programs and events calendar.
- Expand access to Village.
- Improve way finding and signage.
- Incorporate new educational information technologies.
- Use Village collections and artifacts as social objects.

Public Awareness – Establish region-wide awareness of the Troy Historic Village programs and services.

- Create and implement a strategic marketing plan.
- Establish a clear communications plan.
- Develop a dynamic and extensive public relations effort.
- Establish extensive partnerships with high education institutions.
- Establish more extensive partnerships with other cultural, social, and community organizations.
- Increase advocacy and promotional efforts by the Society Board of Trustees members.

Adequate Resources – Maintain sufficient financial, technical, and human resources to support the operations and capital projects of the Village.

- Undertake ongoing training and development of Village staff to optimize their potential and visitor experience.
- Hire experienced professionals in fund development, business operations, collections management, volunteer coordination, and marketing.
- Undertake phased completion of the Village Master Site Plan which includes renovation of Niles-Barnard House, acquisition of an historic barn, creation of a new visitors' center, and site improvements.
- Investigate and acquire innovative technologies to enhance education and visitor experiences.

Organizational Culture – Continue the transformation of the Troy Historical Society and Board of Trustees to a governance organization dedicated to the preservation and growth of the Troy Historic Village. Improve the level of expertise and performance of the staff and Board of Trustees through training, customer service, and community involvement.

- Reinforce importance of commitment, enthusiasm, and involvement of staff and trustees.
- Establish and implement improved policies and procedures addressing hiring, orientation, performance metrics, and documentation.
- Annually review all Board committees to ensure effectiveness in structure, responsibilities, performance, productivity, and composition.
- Emphasize the importance of partnerships with other community and regional organizations to enhance the strategic priorities and initiatives of the Village.
- Expand Board of Trustee membership to include residents from other Southeast Michigan communities.
- Facilitate ongoing interaction among Village staff, Board of Trustees, and general membership.

A detailed schedule for the implementation of each goal and strategy was developed that includes specific accountabilities for the Society and Village staff. Quarterly targets were identified for the current fiscal year strategies to ensure a timely review of progress by the Board of Trustees. Grant funding from the DeVos Institute will be sought in FYE 2014 to assist in the implementation of the strategic goals, improve fundraising efforts, and increase board member engagement and productivity.

A three-year financial operational budget was prepared that projects an increase in revenues from approximately \$260,000 in FYE 2013 to over \$400,000 in FYE 2016, with net income at breakeven levels. The increased revenues will be generated by higher program and visitor attendance and donor and corporate sponsorships. Ongoing financial support from the City of Troy is critically important.

The increased revenues will support the hiring of new staff, increased marketing activities, and the expenses associated with new and expanded programs.