

# Tri-Cities Historical Museum

creating connections  
to Tri-Cities history



## OVERVIEW

In 2022, TCHM was selected from a pool of hundreds of West Michigan arts organizations and began intensive work in the two-year *Capacity Building: Michigan Lakeshore* program through the DeVos Arts Management Institute. This capacity building has engaged **all staff and Board members** in the development of a **5-Year Artistic Plan** covering mission focus, artistic and programmatic planning, marketing, and financial planning. This year, TCHM is committing to **nine key objectives** along the path toward becoming a **magnetic destination** for history exploration and a **regional leader** in education and community programming.

REVENUE



DOMINANT  
PROGRAMMING

AGGRESSIVE  
MARKETING

A GROWING  
TCHM  
FAMILY

TRI-CITIES HISTORICAL  
**MUSEUM**  
EST. 1959

## Strategic Plan

2024-2028

# strategic vision



## 5-Year Artistic Plan

The Tri-Cities Historical Museum will become a magnetic destination for locals and visitors to ignite their curiosity by exploring the rich history of North Ottawa County | Through the development of a series of high-profile themed exhibitions and programs, TCHM will capture the public imagination | To bring history to life, TCHM will become a regional leader in the design of outstanding educational programming | Its learning and engagement programs will frequently animate the Museum with experiences that define it as a welcoming and enriching hub for young and lifelong learners | CARC will become a full-fledged interactive research center for locals to uncover their genealogy and historians to study the region | These programmatic enhancements will create an adaptive and interactive Museum whose relevance and impact is continually demonstrated | This vitality will be conveyed through a compelling institutional marketing narrative | The Museum will assert thought leadership by collaborating with its regional and national peers, to contribute to the development of new models for education and museum management | By strengthening this identity, the Museum will shift from an asset that is appreciated to one that is seen as essential | This perceptual shift and expanded service will expand and diversify the Museum's family of supporters and lessen its dependency on millage funding | By enhancing its programming and asserting its relevance the Museum can attract a wider family of supporters and strengthen its position as a leading local history museum in Michigan

# | impact

*Erica Layton  
Executive Director*



It's clear to me that motivating people around a common goal is the key to success. Each day, our team is building a culture of excellence, curiosity, and excitement about local history. This **5-Year Artistic Plan** will **upshift** our momentum and bring our community together in a **renaissance** of local small-town history that will pack a punch with audiences for a lasting impact. The Museum staff, its Board, and its supporters are unified in this: serving our community by **connecting the Tri-Cities people, objects, and their stories.**

Since 1959, the Tri-Cities Historical Museum has served as a trusted repository of local history. We continue that mission today, **weaving together the threads of the past to create a rich, full tapestry of the history the Tri-Cities.**



# timeline

## 2024

Enhance education programs to become an invaluable partner to local area schools.

Engage in a meaningful Truth and Reconciliation process to fully update Museum content and practices.

Adopt a board "Charter of Expectations" that establishes clear standards for service and helps structure an annual review of member performance.

Launch an institutional marketing effort that articulates and promotes TCHM's leadership role in the preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of North Ottawa County history.

2025

2026

2027

2028



ES.,

EXHIBITS

EDUCATION

FACILITIES



## OBJECTIVES

### Exhibits and Education

TCHM has solidified its position as a cultural leader within the region, through programming that celebrates the diverse histories and perspectives of the communities that have resided and continue to reside there.

### Facilities

TCHM has developed a robust plan that enables it to adequately steward its facilities.

### Board and Staff

TCHM has built and sustained a Board of a size, composition, and generosity on par with its organizational ambitions.

TCHM has built a highly-skilled, engaged staffing unit that sustainably supports the organization's curatorial and administrative operations.

### Development

TCHM has established an organization-wide culture of philanthropy in which all staff and family members understand and embrace their role in resource generation.

TCHM has diversified its contributed revenues through the development of a robust suite of targeted campaigns, annual campaigns, and special events.

### Marketing

TCHM has developed a programmatic marketing effort that deepens relationships with current attendees and builds new patronage through assertive affinity marketing.

BOARD

DEVELOPMENT

MARKETING

STAFF

## KEY STRATEGIES

### Exhibits and Education

- Invest in vibrant and resonant Museum exhibitions.
- Judiciously plan a rotating schedule of use to fully activate all Museum spaces and maximize exhibition and programming capacity.
- Build and retain new audiences through a mix of innovative, aspirational programming; ongoing, “bread and butter” programming, and responsive, agile programming designed to remain relevant and timely in a quickly-changing environment.
- Engage in a meaningful Truth and Reconciliation process to fully update Museum content and practices.

### Facilities

- Maintain a rolling 5-year inventory of upcoming facilities needs, to incorporate into the annual budget.
- Review and update existing facilities plans with the guidance of a facilities specialist.
- Complete the draft Master Facilities Plan.
- Using Master Facilities Plan as groundwork, conduct a capital campaign feasibility study.
- Hire a part-time facilities manager, which will increase to full-time if budget permits.

### Board and Staff

- Enhance the financial performance of the Board.
- Strategically enhance Board composition.
- Maximize Board engagement and performance.
- Hire a marketing manager, focused on digital marketing and affinity marketing.
- Create a multiyear path to increase overall staff compensation.
- Engage a contract HR professional to review and strengthen policies and resources.





## Development

- Aim to incentivize repeat attendance; build toward membership; find out what defines a “core” patron and attempt to convert more lapsed and inclined to core.
- Build and maintain an organization-wide Culture of Philanthropy.
- Leverage special events to introduce new prospects to the organization, drive short-term revenues, and buoy the annual fundraising program.
- Deepen understanding of the current TCHM audience, with a data-driven effort to profile and respond to patron preferences with segmented communications.
- Initiate an institutional fundraising effort focused TCHM’s commitment to education and civic impact.
- Design annual campaign efforts for Entry, Mid-Level, and Major Donors and Prospects.



## Marketing

- Engage the TCHM audience with a vibrant content strategy and exemplary end-to-end user experience.
- Establish a codified annual marketing plan to unify messaging and coordinate content across channels.
- Develop a Change Narrative to support continuity of the marketing message throughout the year.
- Launch an institutional marketing effort that articulates and promotes TCHM’s leadership role in the preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of North Ottawa County region history.



Join us on  
our  
continuing  
journey...

...visit  
...research  
...join  
...give  
...volunteer  
...connect

TRI-CITIES HISTORICAL  
**MUSEUM**  
EST. 1959



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Thank you to our visitors, millage communities, our donors and partners, and our dedicated volunteers.

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**Tri-Cities Historical Museum**

200 Washington Avenue | Grand Haven | MI | 49417  
[connectingtohistory@tchmuseum.org](mailto:connectingtohistory@tchmuseum.org) | (616) 842-0700

**Community Archive and Research Center**

14110 172nd Avenue | Grand Haven | MI | 49417  
[collections@tchmuseum.org](mailto:collections@tchmuseum.org) | (616) 842-0700

