

Introduction to Strategic Plan: Stepping Up to Serve Chicago



The Chicago History Museum is an anchor institution that exists to meet the needs of the city. Sharing Chicago's stories is our mission, and our article of faith is that connecting with history changes lives – the lives of individuals and the life of a city.

“How can the Chicago History Museum step up its service to our city?” We have considered that question for a year, and now we have the answers.

We will find new ways to bring people together by enhancing the Museum as a destination. We will push out our outdoor footprint – create a history trail, landscape our neglected corner of Lincoln Park, and redo our plaza. Our old auditorium will be reborn as a state-of-the-art multi-purpose theater, one offering a breath-taking film experience. The adjacent gallery will become a place of wonder with lively new installations. All generations and all communities will feel that Museum is their very own place, thanks to our welcoming brand of service.

We will expand civic-based education – programs that develop skills by connecting with Chicago stories. We will create a new center that connects us with the schools, while we also enhance the field trip experience and add to our classroom and tech-based educational resources.

We will build the foundation for a higher level of service. After thirty years, our key collection storage area needs a major renovation. We also want our content to jump the walls, even more than it does today, by expanding our digital hub and investing in digital collection access. These steps, as well as continuing our record of bold experimentation, will give our stories new life. Bolstering our endowment and reserves will make it possible for us to share Chicago's stories for generations to come.

Our gratitude goes to all who have contributed their ideas during our Long-Range Planning Year. We thank our Trustees, our staff, and our communities of support in advance for caring about Chicago and helping us to bring our bold plans to life.

T. Bondurant French, Chairman

Gary T. Johnson, President

Note: The attached Plan was updated in 2018 to include new and refocused “Actions” in place of “Actions” now completed, all under the original rubric of “Strategic Priorities and Goals.”

Gary T. Johnson, President

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Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Actions, 2015-2020

