



STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2019

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Glossary

Mission – Defines the fundamental purpose of our organization; concentrates on the present

Values – Enduring beliefs shared by our members regarding what is good; major influence of what we aspire to and how we work to achieve it

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis – Tool to define where we are at today as well as what is likely to confront us; see chart:

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
External	Opportunities	Threats

Vision – Defines what we want to become; source of inspiration providing clear decision-making criteria

Top Level Metrics – Quantifiable measures of the vision; typically three to five years out

Strategy – Decisive allocation of resources; provides a big picture view; discourages other avenues

Initiatives – Activities or projects aligned to realize strategy

Strategy Map – A tool to show how the top level metrics, strategies, and initiatives fit together and to show who is responsible for each initiative and how it will be measured

Tagline

Ames Historical Society: Discovering our history, Preserving our past, Sharing our stories

Mission Statement

The mission of the Ames Historical Society is to engage our diverse public and provide unique opportunities to learn about Ames history. The Historical Society carries out this mission by:

- staffing the Ames History Center where archives, artifact collections, exhibits, and research assistance are available;
- providing tours, programs, publications and extensive website;
- operating an 1860s one-room schoolhouse museum.

Values

- In all interactions with the public, we value accuracy, openness, transparency, stewardship and respect for those that embody the Ames story.
- We value strategic partnerships and collaborations with our cultural peers (libraries, archives, art centers, museums, media, and more).
- We value professionalism and adherence to museum standards.

SWOT Analysis

<h3>Strengths</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive public image• Strong public programs• 416 Douglas• Good people (Staff & volunteers)• Strong media presence• Good partnerships• Hoggatt School	<h3>Weaknesses</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inadequate financial resources• Poor fundraising processes• Inadequate space (operations & storage)• Work/resource imbalance• Not a physical destination• Board responsibilities unclear• Lack of Board & audience diversity
<h3>Opportunities</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaboration w/existing orgs• Cultivating & strengthening existing supporters• Planned giving & volunteering by Boomers• Growing Ames/ISU population• Further engaging increased audience• Stronger MSCD	<h3>Threats</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Landlord(s) evict us• Staff opportunities elsewhere• Loss of major supporter(s)• Fundraising competition• Perception that AHS is “financially OK”• Board leadership continuity

Vision

The Ames Historical Society sets exemplary standards for quality interactions that make Ames history compelling and relevant.

Top Level Metrics

1. Increase Customer Interactions by __%
 - a) Visitors to History Center from __ to __
 - b) Program Attendees from __ to __
 - c) Website Visitors from __ to __
2. Increase No. of Members by __% from __ to __
3. Increase Museum Standards Score from __ to __
4. Increase Annual Financial Support by __% from __ to __

Strategies

1. Improve our fundraising competence
2. Broaden our demographic engagement
3. Consolidate our storage
4. Optimize our people (Board, Staff & Volunteers)

Initiatives - Fundraising

- Recruit Board member(s) with fundraising expertise
- Pursue grants to hire a fundraising consultant

Experts “To Do” List

- Implement a capital campaign for storage space with concurrent endowment campaign
- Encourage and promote planned giving
- Improve end-of-year appeal
- Train Board members on fundraising
- Optimize development committee

Initiatives - Engagement

- Provide an effective platform for information crowdsourcing
- Develop programs for specific target audiences and take to them (high school, business lunch and learns)
- Design & install a new external sign

Initiatives - Storage

- Complete a first pass at deaccessions
- Hire a collections intern (grant)
- Redefine the Storage Committee and charge with location consolidation
- Identify an immediate short term space for collection processing

Initiatives - People

- Investigate employee benefit alternatives & costs
- Refine Board expectations & make clear prior to appointment
- Align Board and volunteer skills with needs; identify gaps
- Identify unique Staff tasks, delegate others
 - Enlarge pool of trained program docents

Review of the Plan

The initiatives have been assigned to “champions” who will recruit teammates and develop project schedules for each initiative. Initiatives will be reviewed and reported on at the January, April, July, and October Board meetings each year. Progress will be tracked using a Strategy Map.