



WASHAKIE MUSEUM

& CULTURAL CENTER

Strategic Plan

2022 – 2025

Approved by Museum Board of Directors April 26, 2022

Mission Statement

The Washakie Museum is a community arts and cultural center and history museum for the preservation, education, cultural enrichment, and development of the Big Horn Basin in Wyoming.

Introduction

With the hiring of a new Executive Director after the long tenure of the previous Director, the Board and Staff of the Washakie desired to create a new Strategic Plan to guide the activities of the Washakie Museum. Because the Museum was founded to be an asset to the communities of Worland and the Big Horn Basin, Board and Staff desired to poll local residents to assess their interests in the current and future programs and exhibits of the Museum. This plan reflects input from the Board of Directors, community members, museum members, and museum staff.

Background

The Washakie Museum was established in 1984, thirty-eight years ago. Founded by local residents who felt strongly that a cultural center and museum was needed in the Big Horn Basin, it was first run as a component entity of Washakie County, then converted to a private entity in 1996. With generous support from the Newell B. Sargent Foundation and the community, the Museum moved into a beautiful new building on Big Horn Avenue in 2010. Through the years, the dedication of the board and staff, the support of the community, and the support of the Newell B Sargent Foundation made the museum a stable and productive organization, and minimal strategic planning was needed or desired. Now, with the building reaching ten years of age, new executive leadership, and numerous new staff people, the board desired a clear, collaborative strategic plan to guide the operations of the museum.

Process

To gather the input of local residents, the Board of Directors, and museum staff, the following strategic plan development process was recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the Board:



Community input was gathered through surveys emailed to members and through a “dot exercise” in which community members visited tables at community events and outside the supermarket to indicate (with colored dots) which areas of museum programming were of most interest to them. Staff

also gathered 2020 US Census information from the local Washakie Development Association that showed general demographic data about the residents of the County. Next both staff and board held facilitated meetings to identify a desired future for the Museum, both near- and long-term. Informed by the data collected and the desired future identified, the board participated in a brainstorming meeting to identify five Key Strategic Priorities for the organization to address in the next three years.

Key Strategic Priorities

- 1. Have programming for a wide range of audiences – all ages and income levels**
- 2. Attract more tourists/travelers (folks from outside the area)**
- 3. Increase the museum’s focus on local history in exhibits and programs**
- 4. Increase the museum’s engagement in the community; more partnerships**
- 5. Begin planning/researching structural expansion of museum to include:**
 - Children’s area for touch-n-feel exhibits and kid-friendly activities and classes
 - More exhibit space
 - More storage space for collections
 - Outdoor (indoor) performance space

Following the identification of the five Key Strategic Priorities, the staff developed action steps to address those priorities. The following table lists those steps under each priority, along with suggested responsibility and timeframe.

Strategic Priorities, Objectives, Action Steps and Desired Outcomes

Priority 1: Provide programming for a wider range of audiences – all ages and income levels

Action Item	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Conduct STEAM with OWL Unlimited to reach individuals with developmental disabilities	Kurt	2022-ongoing
2. Offer FREE Museum Day (no admission charged) at least twice a year, and promote it and offer special tours and activities	All	Ongoing
3. Provide a private guided tour to attendees at Temporary Exhibit Openings: Members and Non-Member Adults	Kurt, Stevie	2022-
4. Conduct monthly free STEAM classes for grades K-5	Kurt	2022-
5. Facilitate Missoula Children’s Theater for K-12	Kurt	Feb.-March 2022-
6. Assist and Host Performing Arts Camp for ages 10-18	Kurt	June 6-25-
7. Facilitate and Host Kids’ Art Classes for ages 18 and under	Kurt	Two-three per year
8. Develop and offer guided, focused tours to school groups: ages 5-18	Kurt	2022-
9. Develop and present 4 th Grade History Days	Kurt, Chloe, Stevie?	2022-
10. Halloween Face Painting for kids and teens early in the afternoon of Halloween	Chloe	Oct. 2022
11. Add a small table by front desk with coloring items, puzzles, word search etc. for kids while parents peruse galleries.	Chloe, Robin, Marian	Spring-Summer 2022
12. Facilitate and host Robotics Club for grades 7-12	Kurt, Steve, Curtis Hamer	2022-
13. Trivia Night-Will hopefully attract a wide age range; initial target ages 21-40	Chloe, Kurt, Stevie	2022-ongoing
14. Facilitate and host Speaker Series for adults, older adults	Kurt	2022-
15. Develop and offer guided tours for adults, families	Kurt	2022-

16. Continue to use the High School students/Groups/Clubs as paid helpers for our events.	Chloe	Oct. 2022
17. Develop a walking tour of Worland's historic properties and main street aimed at adults and tourists	Stevie, Kurt	2023
18. Continue to develop and expand Indigenous Peoples' Day to include more Native artists, speakers, and performers to make connections with Indigenous communities and grow the event's popularity	Stevie, Kurt, Chloe, Jacquelyn	Fall 2022
19. Facilitate and host Adult Art Classes for ages 18+	Jacquelyn	Biannual/Triannual, 2022-
20. Promote the use of our scholarship program to make sure admission costs are not a barrier to participation	All	Ongoing
21. Conduct an accessibility survey of the museum and take steps to make sure it is as accessible as possible for visitors with various disabilities	Chloe, Nick	Summer 2022

Desired outcome(s): The museum will offer programs and benefits to all ages, abilities, and income levels in our community. Eliminate, wherever possible, barriers to participation.

Priority 2: Attract more visitors from outside the Basin

Action Item	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Work with TAUCK Tours-motor coach tours, from east coast traveling through Wyoming, to stop here, take tours.	Chloe, Kurt, Marian	Summers 2022-ongoing
2. Start tracking origin info for visitors to museum to find out how many are local, in-state, or from out of state.	Robin	Spring 2022
3. Work with the Wyoming Office of Tourism to get access to promotional deals that will promote our museum and area.	Chloe, Marian	2022-ongoing
4. Build up our website to attract more people to view, shop and gain interest in what we have to offer. Add more content; improve event listings	Chloe, Marian, Robyn I. everyone	2022-ongoing

5. Offer more guided tours to visitors. Advertise it online	Kurt	2022-
6. Offer BOGO admission coupons at local hotels	Chloe	Spring 2022
7. Engage speakers from outside the Basin for Speaker Series and invite their contacts.	Kurt	2022-
8. Continue to contribute and work as a member of the Washakie Country Visitor's Council. Help give and receive marketing grants to those bringing overnight stays.	Chloe	On-going
9. Purchase new and enticing Gift Shop merchandise and promote that merchandise to attract visitors to come in and shop.	Chloe	On-going
10. Improve external signage so people driving by can see if we're open or closed.	Nick, Chloe	
11. Improve external event signage – look into a permanent sign that could feature changeable temporary event signs (instead of banner poles)	Nick, Chloe, Marian	2022-2023
12. Continue to offer "Blue Star" through the National Endowment for the Arts (free admission for <u>active military</u> personnel and their families)	Chloe, Marian, Robin	On-going
13. Continue to promote the Museum and Washakie County by using "Certified Folders Display Service, Inc." Sending our museum brochures are distributed through Wyoming, Montana and South Dakota. Visitor Council also distributes brochures that promote Museum.	Chloe, Marian	On-going
14. Begin researching how to sponsor banners with the museum's name at the Washakie County Fair and the Ten Sleep Rodeo	Stevie	
15. Work through other artists' guilds in the state to recruit artists from outside the Basin for exhibits, classes, Quick Draw	Jacquelyn	Ongoing

Desired outcome(s):

Increased number of visitors to museum, especially visitors from out of town.

Priority 3: Increase the museum’s focus on local history in exhibits and programs

Action Item	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Improve cataloging of museum’s artifact collection so we know what we have: Starting with a single row, ensure all artifacts in storage are accurately recorded in the Past Perfect database	Stevie, Robin	Complete review and entry of all items on a single shelving row by Dec 2022; and move on from there
2. Improve cataloging of museum’s collection so we know what we have: Starting with a single filing cabinet, ensure all archival materials are accurately record in the Past Perfect database	Stevie, Robin	Complete review and entry of all items in one filing cabinet by end of 2022
3. Develop at least one exhibit each year which focuses on Worland-specific history to be placed in either the temporary gallery or the lobby/foyer	Stevie	Spring/summer 2022
4. For each travelling exhibit, work to include relevant basin-related artifacts from our collection or local loans.	Stevie, Robin, Kurt	
5. Hold book readings/signings by local, historical authors or poets to focus on local history.	Chloe, Stevie, Kurt	Spring 2022-ongoing
6. Have a category of Worland history or Big Horn Basin history questions during each trivia event	Stevie	Winter 2022
7. Develop a walking tour of Worland highlighting historic properties, sites, and buildings	Stevie, Kurt	2023
8. 4th Grade History Days: Encourage the presenters to tie their works to Basin History	Kurt	2022-
9. Update the Oral History Collection for primary source use	Kurt, Stevie, Robin?	Ongoing-
10. Speaker Series: Draw a number of local speakers and encourage all speakers to connect their presentations to Basin history	Kurt	2022-

Desired outcome(s):

Engender a stronger feeling of ownership and support for the museum among local residents.

Priority 4: Increase the museum's engagement in the community; more partnerships

Action Item	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Serve a 5-yr term on the Washakie County Historic Preservation Commission	Stevie	2021-2026
2. Support local history projects – old cabin crew & Westside school	Stevie	On-going
3. Trivia Night – partnership with local bars/restaurants	Chloe, Stevie, Kurt	Winter 2022
4. Hold Small Museum Summit to build partnerships with other regional museums	Everyone?	Feb. 2022
5. Partner with WOT to get promotional advertising to our area and build relationship for future.	Chloe, Marian	Feb. 2022-ongoing
6. Partner with Worland Youth Alternatives organization connect to local support organizations and help provide services to at-risk youth.	Kurt	December 2021-
7. Be an active member in Worland Rotary and Worland Kiwanis groups to support local efforts, build partnerships and promote the Museum.	Chloe, Marian and guest staff speakers	On-going
8. Partner and collaborate with the Community Complex Center to hold events that bring a wider audience. (i.e. Hometown Hootenanny)	Marian, Chloe, Stevie, everyone?	Summer 2022-continue
9. Build relationship with the Worland Library to share resources and programming	Marian, others	Ongoing
10. Continue to build relationships with teachers and administrators at Worland Public Schools	Kurt, others	Ongoing
11. Build relationships with local resources agencies (BLM, County Extension, County Conservation District) especially to get speakers/instructors	Kurt, Marian	Ongoing
12. Continue to find and build relationships with more artists and consignment artists/crafters from around the Big Horn Basin, for our education programs, events and gift shop.	Chloe, Kurt, Jacquelyn.	On-going
13. Continue to use the High School students/Groups/Clubs and other side organizations as paid helpers for our events.	Chloe	On-going

14. Promote our Rental services on our website. Give our community better info over what we have to offer with rentals and the tech options we can have available.	Chloe	Jan-March 2022 On-going
15. Recruit local volunteers to help at front desk and help put artifacts into the Past Perfect database	Stevie	Jan 2022-ongoing

Desired outcome(s):

The Museum is seen as a beneficial partner and active participant in the community, and partnerships will leverage the attributes of both the museum and its partners to benefit the community.

Priority 5: Begin planning/researching structural expansion of museum to include children's area for touch-n-feel exhibits and kid-friendly activities and classes; more exhibit space; more storage space for collections; outdoor (and improved indoor) performance space

Action Item	Responsible	Timeframe
1. Include Capacity Utilization Review in overall maintenance assessment project	Marian/Nick	
2. Get initial drawings and estimates		
3. Discuss this topic with board at each meeting; continue to define needs/wants and identify next steps	Marian	2022-
4. Assess current artifact storage and quantify how much additional space is needed	Stevie	2022-2023
5. Identify/define need for art-specific storage	Stevie	
<i>Initial Goals for Expansion</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More exhibit space: Separate Native American gallery or better flow between Ancient Basin and Last West 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More technology in temporary gallery – sound, screen, projector, etc. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area for interactive exhibits for younger visitors (ages 3-8) and education/activity programs. (Separate from event center) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Performing Arts area that could accommodate educational programs and both outdoor and indoor performance space. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign entry area so it's more welcoming upon entry; better flow to exhibits; and accommodates an improved Visitor Center 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer an outdoor play area for children w/history-themed play equipment – either prehistoric or western/Native American themed (welcoming and accessible to kids with physical & other disabilities also) 		

Desired outcome(s):

A draft architectural drawing and cost estimate of proposed expansion to present to potential funders (end of 2022, early 2023) followed by development and implementation of a capital fundraising campaign.