



Strategic Plan 2013

Created for the approaching 25th Anniversary of Operations, 2014

Dennison Depot Museums Network

Dennison Railroad Depot Museum

Historic Schoenbrunn Village

Uhrichsville Clay Museum

Law-Reed-Huss Historic Farm

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011, the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum reached a major milestone in its development when it was designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Landmarks Commission in Washington, DC and the National Park Service. This momentous occasion was the culmination of 11 years of dogged, determined dedication to achieve this status. But also 29 years of restoration on the building and 24 years of operating and serving the public.

Additional achievements include recognition by the Ohio Museum Association naming the Dennison Depot as Institute of the Year in 2012. In 2013, the Depot's Director received recognition as the Tuscarawas County Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year. In March of 2013, the Depot was one of only 11 historical organizations across the state to receive a first round History Fund Tax Check-off grant.

We have successfully kept Polar Express alive for 14 years and participated in the creation of a new 25 year lease on the Panhandle Line which finally allows for 4 additional days of train rides per year. As founders of the Historic Center Street Association, which has branched out and transformed into the Historic Dreamsville Association, we have been a leader in community development which has resulted in the Twin City Tourism Corridor Plan, the Panhandle Passage Trail Plan, the Dreamsville Downtown Development Director initiative and the new Sustainable Communities Master Plan for Uhrichsville. All have had the opportunity or will soon have the potential to have a great impact on downtown development in both communities of Dennison and Uhrichsville.

These measures of success, together with 29 years of restoration on the building (including 7 fully completed phases of expansion), and 24 years of operation that have seen our foundation grow to include almost 1400 museums members, three new museum partnerships and a volunteer structure of over 700 people, have demonstrated that our organization makes significant contributions to our community. With the opening of the Dennison Rotary Business Car in November 2012, a new dimension has been added to our facility providing much needed community meeting, meal, reception and exhibit space. There is also great anticipation for the introduction of the Pullman Bed & Breakfast Car in the next five years.

Throughout this process, the Depot has progressed from the realm of small museum to mid-size museum. The American Alliance of Museums (formerly the American

Association of Museums) categorizes small museums as museums with budgets of \$250,000 or less. The Depot's budget exceeds half a million dollars. Together with our associate museums within the Dennison Depot Museums Network, Historic Schoenbrunn Village and the Uhrichsville Clay Museum, and a partnership with the Law-Reed-Huss Farm Foundation, our Museum Network budget is over one million dollars in community investment and employment.

As we head into our 25th Anniversary of operation, we realize we are on the cusp of an exciting new period of development. The Depot completed one of its highest goals with the Landmark status, and will now focus on accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), improving standards of operation in that process. Once complete, we will be assured of operating at the highest level of museum standards in the country. A large part of that process will focus upon collections storage and care of artifacts.

Our responsibilities extend to Historic Schoenbrunn Village and the Uhrichsville Clay Museum, whose leadership and guidance we accepted in 2008. Both sites are also at exciting crossroads. Schoenbrunn recently completed its first five year strategic plan and has a new plan enclosed here. The plan encompasses information gathered at an important Cabin Symposium held at Kent State Tuscarawas in October 2011 with scholars and community coming together to determine how best to accurately put life back into the Village both in buildings and programs. Schoenbrunn is also in its second year of being successfully managed by a Leadership Team with a bottom-up management approach.

Schoenbrunn Village is ready to move forward into a new five year period where restoration of the Village should be complete, and the focus will begin to look at constructing new buildings in the Village and restoring the Lower Level Park area.

The Uhrichsville Clay Museum is also at a crossroads, transitioning from a one room museum in a temporary building to a new location in a former downtown department store. Construction will begin with a new roof in 2013 and a planned partnership with Buckeye Career Students will be established to begin construction and complete the project in five years. The Clay Museum also has the opportunity to be the cornerstone of a Master Plan of Action created through an Appalachia Sustainable Communities Strategic Planning program. Other exciting elements to be added to the new Clay site include the office of a new Downtown Development Director, and our new, desperately needed collections storage space on the Museum's second floor, retail and community activity space.

Our last partner in The Dennison Depot Museums Network is the Law-Reed-Huss Historic Farm, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Our role has been to assist in the site's awareness and outreach.

This pivotal point in museum development as we approach our 25th Anniversary was the perfect occasion to take stock of our progress, access our direction, strategically plan our journey to the next destination and determine how to measure our success. To that end, the Depot Board, staff and volunteers embarked on an extensive strategic planning campaign.

We have always felt great responsibility to be of value and service to our community. We are, after all, community museums and the caretakers of local history. Although we operate the museums, we do not own them. The Village of Dennison owns the Depot, the City of Uhrichsville owns the Clay Museum, the Ohio Historical Society owns Schoenbrunn Village and the Law-Reed-Huss Farm Foundation owns the farm. We are honored to be the caretakers of the community's historical assets, maintaining them in the best interests for the citizens. In so doing, it is important for us to provide a good return on the community's investment.

On top of that, we take our role as storytellers very seriously. We are commissioned with the noble task to tell our special historical tales, all of which have local, state and national significance.

What we do is important. We have the opportunity to touch and enrich lives, and raise the human spirit by infusing it with emotion and meaning. We provide a sense of place, pride and heritage. We educate, lead and provide critical economic development.

During our strategic planning, three simple over-riding goals were ever present in our discussions and they became assumptions we made in our planning process:

One, increasing our audience through a wide range of interactions is overwhelmingly our top priority. Using all tools available, the number of people we reach whether in person at our site, beyond our site, online or in print, should continue to significantly increase.

Two, the goal to create the best regional family of networked museums which operate seamlessly to provide an outstanding valuable experience, is a second top priority.

Three, we want to exceed all expectations. We do not aim to just survive, we plan to flourish and create museums that are truly remarkable.

We also recognize our biggest challenge:

Our progress is not stopped by a lack of ideas, vision, planning or the know-how to accomplish them. Our progress tends to be impeded at the implementation or maintenance stage by not enough hands to keep plans in motion. Although we have become very good at piecing together a diverse staff from various free or funded sources, creating Advisory Committees, Leadership Teams and a Volunteer Hopper Program, we still do not have enough paid staff to put our dreams into motion. Although profitability in areas such as Polar Express has dramatically increased, the level of funding is still too low to hire the additional staff needed to put our goals fully into action. On top of that, existing staff is further drained by overseeing three sites with full calendars of events. Our Museums are developing faster than we can afford to staff them, and thus we are not reaching our potential at the best possible pace.

This is the challenge our board and staff had to address in strategic planning.

We specifically looked for improvements that would save time and make us more efficient, hence allowing a small staff to accomplish even more than before within the same timeframe.

Over the next five years, new opportunities and challenges will present themselves that we hope to be positioned to act upon. Following the strategic plan outlined here, The Dennison Depot Museums Network will have the tools, staffing and experience needed to move forward with a solid base of fiscal stability and the institutional culture that breeds success.

Sincerely,

Wendy R. Zucal, Director

Dennison Railroad Depot Museum

MISSION STATEMENT

To collect, preserve, exhibit, interpret and educate visitors on the history of southern Tuscarawas County, including Dennison's rich Railroad and WWII heritage.

VISION STATEMENT

To offer a welcoming place in the community that creates a specific railroad experience at our Depot for families and visitors of all ages through enriching, entertaining, engaging, and educational activities, programs and exhibits. In doing so, the Depot will provide a positive environment that cultivates knowledge and offers a repository of information from which to draw upon. The Depot will be a place where older generations can capture the nostalgia of days gone by, and the younger generations can be encouraged to meet the challenges of the future.

EXPERIENCE STATEMENT

The Dennison Depot Experience will immerse the guest in a simpler time in American History where you can see trains, touch trains, smell trains, ride trains, and hear trains through the use of sensory props, architecture, actual artifacts, specifically intended actions by cast members, programs, exhibits and activities. Coupled with the camaraderie and nostalgia of the middle American Home front Spirit of the WWII Canteen Era, guests will be transformed from the 21st Century to the 1940s and leave with memories that linger from that transformation.

Uhrichsville Clay Museum

MISSION STATEMENT

To collect, preserve, exhibit, interpret and educate visitors about the local history of Uhrichsville, and the clay history of Uhrichsville and the surrounding region.

Historic Schoenbrunn Village

MISSION STATEMENT

Schoenbrunn Village shall promote, interpret and celebrate the heritage of the cultural diversity and religious legacy of the 18th Century frontier Mission settlement through educational "hands-on" experiences, interactive programs, events and authentic interpretation. Through this dynamic immersion into the 18th century, Schoenbrunn Village shall cultivate the new stewards for this national treasure, leverage significant public and private resources and create a legacy for future generations.

CORE VALUES

Respect for History

Commitment to Community

Encourage people all ages to Engage in multiple ways

Responsibility as caretakers to Preserve and Tell our story

Provide Leadership and Constant Attention to Raising the Bar

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

Culture of Value and Trust

We will provide increased institutional value to our stakeholders, community, museum members, donors, families and visitors of all ages by building enduring relationships and personal connections. At all levels of operations and interactions with people, we will strive for the highest of State and National standards, providing a safe and trustworthy institution that is a good investment of the public's time, dollars and valued historical artifacts.

Building Effective Partnerships

As a non-profit organization, we realize the importance of effective partnerships and communication. We value these relationships, and strive each year to make existing partnerships stronger and build new partnerships. We take note that to be successful, our decisions cannot be based on our agenda alone but in how we can best give back to the community and assist in the goals of other organizations as well.

Broadening Base of Financial Support

Our goal is to regularly broaden our financial base by creating multiple, diverse streams of income balanced by constant evaluation and cutting costs where possible. We operate on the assumption that our budget is always tight, and that self-sufficiency and sustainability are the highest goals.

Benchmarking & Evaluation

The Dennison Depot, which oversees The Depot Museums Network, is an institution whose leadership regularly and systematically raises the bar, bringing a culture of entrepreneurialism and constant innovation to our museums. We set the tone for a "learning culture" where the solicitation of visionary ideas and "thinking big" is the order of the day. We do not seek to just satisfy our customers, we seek to leave them pleased beyond expectations. We regularly plan, evaluate, manage and strategize our operations.

Education and Strong Internship Program

As with all museums, our mission focuses on education. We wish to serve all ages with superior programming that reflect academic scholarship, using the best teaching methods and resources available. The Dennison Depot considers itself as a strong "teaching institution", with special emphasis on educating young adults through mentoring, internship programs and the Patriot Rally. This is an aspect of our operation we take very seriously and is near and dear to our hearts.

Providing Community Leadership and Service

Over the past two decades, the Dennison Depot has become a community leader in areas of economic development, grant writing, volunteerism, downtown development, preservation and other regional initiatives. This is a role we want to maintain and grow in the decade to come.

Developing Outstanding Staff

As a leader, we want to have the best qualified and trained staff we can possibly afford. We are dedicated to seeking out these individuals and putting the best people in the best roles at the museum. Constant training and staff development will always be a top priority. At the same time, there will be little patience for poorly performing staff.

Economic Development

The Dennison Depot is an economic driver and catalyst in our region, and very strongly supports economic development organizations. Our senior staff commits time for economic development boards such as the Tuscarawas County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chambers of Commerce, Community Improvement Corporation and the Port Authority. The creation and retention of jobs and support for local businesses that result in a healthy and beautiful downtown with an influx of tourism dollars are all critical elements to how we plan our operations. Our core services are those that people depend on and need to survive. These include jobs and programs that address a societal gap not provided by other organizations or businesses.

Culture of Storytelling

We recognize that it is all about "the story!" To that end, we deliberately made the transition from museum "docents" to museum "storytellers" and began creating a culture of storytelling within our Museums Network.

Responsible Stewards of Assets

We will endeavor to care for our Historic Sites and assets by closely monitoring the conditions of our physical structures and collections, while conducting exemplary volunteer and staff development programs. We will strengthen our outreach programs, such as the T-County History Patriot Rally which strives to instill a passion, love and awareness of the importance of local history in today's youth, thus creating the next generation of stakeholders. We must also make sure that we are caring for our collections and buildings at the highest level we can afford.

FIVE YEAR GOALS

Goal 1: Build fiscal operations that make the museums self-sustaining and supportive of all goals.

It is our intention to not just survive, but to succeed and flourish! We need to increase our budget to meet the needs of our growing museum network, larger staff, aging buildings, growing collections and activities. The Museums are currently funded in the following manner:

Admissions & Gift Shop

Fundraising: events, donations, grants, corporate donations, special events

Earned Income: membership, programs, management fees

Rent: restaurant, theater, business car, pavilions

There are no regular tax dollars in our budget other than the occasional state or federal grant.

A tremendous effort has been put into keeping Polar Express train rides alive, which currently represents the bulk or 52% of The Depot's budget. We need to protect and strengthen operations by broadening this base with additional and stronger sources of income.

TASKS:

- Task 1. With the new Panhandle Lease (2012), increase train trips to 4 more days a year, focusing on bringing in partners to make trips profitable.
Measures: At least one new excursion or excursion partnership in planning each year, with 2-5 new excursions attempted over the next 5 years, resulting in an increased profit minimum of \$5,000 to justify staff time and attention.
- Task 2. Increase visitors and rent income with the opening of the Business car.
Measures: Addition of five community meetings per month; increased rental income of \$200 per month.
- Task 3. Increase museum attendance by 25% with a corresponding marketing strategy, train rides, a blockbuster exhibit plan, increased membership, and new programming opportunities.

Measures: Increase in admission income and attendance of 5% over next five years. Implement Proposed Tour Menu (Bullet Tour, Scavenger Hunt, Storyteller Tour, etc.) to appeal to many different types of visitors.

Task 4: Grow our membership roster by 25% through a membership campaign that focuses largely on serving and pleasing existing members rather than focusing on the solicitation of new members.

Measures: Membership increase of 5% each year over five years. Make a regular practice of adding a “member reduced rate” to events, as an added benefit and enticement to join the museums.

Task 5: Increase Gift Shop sales proportional to increase in attendance (25% goal) and train trips, with an emphasis on better quality merchandise, better exhibit themed or site-specific merchandise.

Measures: Increased sale from merchandise sold on Amazon.com. Addition of a minimum of ten new logo or customized products to sell in gift shop. Increase of a minimum of five reproduction items from the Museum Collections to sell. Increased offering of Twin City Made local items including food and crafts and specific museum themed merchandise. Increase offerings at Schoenbrunn of items made in the Village.

Task 6: Create a new fundraiser to replace the Ball, discontinued after 20 years, focusing on the Speakeasy 1920s Prohibition/Red Light District and Ghost tours at the Depot, improving existing events at the other museums.

Measures: Add \$8,000 to 15,000 to budget over five years from new or improved fundraisers.

Task 7: Extend the opportunity to donate online through user-friendly, accessible platforms. This can increase income while decreasing staff time.

Measures: All museums will be registered and active with Amazon.com, Kickstarter, Donors Choose, Indiegogo, Catapult, Gofundme, Givemo, Chipin. All museums will have an easily accessible page on website to give.

Task 8: Extend skills and use our assets beyond museum to create new sources of income, i.e. Grant writing, consulting, Underdog Community Development, etc.

Measures: Develop a second workshop as successful as our grant writing Workshop. Engage with 1 to 3 communities to advise on Community Development to bring an additional \$5,000 to the Museum.

Task 9: Increase our Endowment Fund with the One Soldiers * One Letter * One Dollar Landmark Legacy Campaign.

Measures: Fully complete and implement the marketing/outreach strategy for this campaign, with a goal of \$10,000 and 10,000 letters per year.

Task 10: Increase other avenues of income streams as possible, with focus upon:
Increasing Restaurant Rent

Selling Naming Rights for the Archival Research Library, \$75,000

Selling Naming Rights to the New Pullman Bed & Breakfast, \$50,000

Making underutilized areas profitable, i.e. basement into a Speakeasy

One Big Fundraiser to benefit all museums, such as Wine Event in

Schoenbrunn Lower Level

Measures: Create one new diverse stream of income per year.

Goal 2: Build consistent systems of operations for all museums that enable us to operate more efficiently.

With the operation of multiple museums, small staff and tight budgets, it is imperative we improve operating systems to not only save time, money and eliminate duplication, but to have accessible, timely information in order to make better business and planning decisions. Too much time is currently spent collecting data that should be at our fingertips or repairing reports that should easily be assembled.

TASKS:

- Task 1: Implement a standard POS (Point of Sales) system for admissions and event tickets, which provides a quicker customer experience. Include a more mobile credit card system with lower fees and less phone line time. Include processes for better tracking, better reports, and better decisions.
Measures: System implemented at Depot in year one, at Schoenbrunn and Clay in Year two.
- Task 2: Improve all staff and volunteer training for a more seamless operation.
Measures: Increase all staff “Legendary Service Training” from once a year to twice a year, with quarterly specific topic workshops which key volunteers can attend. Reduce the number of instances when a volunteer or staff is unable to answer a question.
- Task 3: Implement a standard POS (Point of Sales) system for the museum gifts shops.
Measures: Implement year three for Depot, year four for Schoenbrunn and Clay.
- Task 4: Have all tickets for sale on-line.
Measures: Implement year two for all museums, beginning with smaller events and escalating to Polar Express.
- Task 5: Eliminate the use of all hand written ledgers, placing all records electronically, and training all staff to realize they are official “Record Keepers.”
Measures: All reports and data electronically generated.

Goal 3: As funding grows, increase and maintain a quality corps of Museum staff that is stable, more skilled, more experienced, and more visionary.

This goal, perhaps more than any other, requires intense planning and scrutiny as it has the greatest impact on the ability to grow and advance operations.

TASKS

- Task 1: Increase the number of Experience Coordinators that are qualified to work all museums and move to part-time or full-time as needed.
Measures: Welcome six new interns per year as a pool for Experience Coordinators. Hire or maintain 3 to 7 Coordinators to cover all front lines.
- Task 2: Create and maintain strong Leadership Teams to manage sites.
Measures: Sites are fully covered during open hours and Team is actively handling day-to-day operations. Team is also active in strategic planning and events are successful. Consistency and Stability is evident and measurable.
- Task 3: Hire a part-time Registrar to manage collections.
Measures: All incoming artifacts are accessioned, inventoried and stored properly. All backlog of artifacts complete. All Artifact registers complete. We actively seek up to ten significant new artifacts for our collections per year, rather than waiting for them to come to us. Exhibits improve with better use of artifacts. Plans progress under Registrar for new collections storage.
- Task 4: Continue to actively seek partnerships with alternative sources of free labor: Senior Employment, Goodwill, Job & Family, etc
Measures: One to two free employees per year, and no additional funding going for services staff cannot get to (i.e. cleaning). Explore using the new Bed & Breakfast to provide housing for summer college interns to help with staffing needs.
- Task 5: Improve our volunteer corps by increasing its size, putting more emphasis on the "Museum Hopper" program to fill staff gaps, and establishing a committed volunteer coordinator.

Measures: Schedule a minimum of one Museum Hopper or Museum Volunteer Fair per Winter and early fall. Increase volunteers by 10%. Increase number of volunteers from one site hopping to another by 5%. Designate a volunteer coordinator.

Goal 4: Tailor a deliberate fluid Develop Plan that supports operations and nurtures growth.

In order to flourish, we need to be forward thinking and position ourselves to be able to take advantage of future opportunities, while continually acknowledging the past in order to keep on track. Rather than letting development just happen, we propose to be methodical, thoughtful, visionary and fluid in our planning as we grow.

TASKS:

Task 1: Cultivate new private donors.

Measures: Work closely with the Membership Chairman and Registrar to develop a list of potential donors each year, and follow up with contacts.

Task 2: Have a regular, prioritized and priced "Wish List" we actively promote and have available at a moment's notice to match with donors.

Measures: Significant reduction in spending as needed items are donated rather than purchased.

Task 3: Develop a Corporate Giving Program.

Measures: Meet with two companies a year to raise an additional \$1,000 a year through new corporate donations.

Task 4: Cultivate new foundation donations.

Measures: Create a new relationship with at least three new foundations each year, and submit a minimum of five grants per year.

Task 5: Explore Estate Planning and Investments.

Measures: Determine if this is worthwhile, and if so, complete a plan of attack by 2018.

Goal 5: Make the museum technologically savvy and be a leader in Museum social media platforms.

Make funding and training for new technologies an institutional priority. Embed technology in all facets of the museum to not only improve business systems, but to improve the overall experience in exhibits, public interior and exterior spaces.

TASK:

- Task 1: Upgrade staff computers and software to allow staff to be more productive and efficient.
Measures: Phase in new computers, so all staff has upgrades by 2018. Purchase Past Perfect to newest edition. Have appropriate equipment in place for POS and mobile credit card systems.
- Task 2: Network all computers together.
Measures: Complete by 2018.
- Task 3: Create a better, more complete and easily accessible Photograph database for use.
Measures: Decide on best system, purchase and implement by 2018. Includes need to protect copyright.
- Task 4: Digitize a minimum of one-half of the Museum's collections.
Measures: Collections staff is trained and actively conducting this work to be completed by 2018.
- Task 5: Creatively find ways to begin embedding technology into exhibits that will assist in displays that appeal to the senses.
Measures: Plan created to input technology in specific exhibits. Identify specific exhibits to be technology "free." Implementation to begin with at least one technologically advanced exhibit per museum.
- Task 6: Make all museums completely Wireless areas.
Measures: Progressively increase wireless access points until the museum is fully wireless by 2018. Connection changed from dial-up to wireless.

Goal 6: Methodically enhance and market the Brand.

Branding and marketing that brand for our museums should be top of mind. Finding ways to remarkable and distinctive are top priorities. This makes us more competitive in a world of many larger museums with bigger budgets. Being distinctive gives us the much needed competitive edge.

TASKS:

- Task 1: Continually enhance and strengthen our Brand.
Measures: Yearly reevaluate our strengths to determine our assets, and focus time on what we do best; eliminate what we don't do well to keep our Brand pure. Seek feedback through surveys, Facebook, reviews, etc. to determine if the public sees our Brand in a similar fashion.
- Task 2: Create a comprehensive Marketing Plan that perpetuates our Brand, that is not only local, but focuses on state and National Markets.
Measures: Have a Marketing Consultant on contract with a portfolio of available ads, and participating in marketing, brand discussions. Consistent, ready press releases available at all times by staff and more use of free wire services for releases. Implement a tracking system for ads and campaigns to measure success and ROI. More highway signage – two billboards up within five years. Achieve more print space in National Publications, and expand media reach with new major new sources.
- Task 3: Develop a corresponding social media campaign.
Measures: Active and regularly increase in social media feedback responses such as Facebook friends, Facebook likes, Facebook comments, tweets, online review, website hits, email inquires, etc. Create a measurable report mechanism for above responses. Increased use of free Google ads.
- Task 4: Complete museum website upgrades to have fully operational, comprehensive websites.
Measures: Website feedback including event reservations, memberships, email comments, donations, etc. All website pages are full and complete – nothing under construction.
- Task 5: Make Golden Triple Tickets a standard tourism tool widely recognized and regularly used.

Measures: Sale of Triple Tickets increase 5% per year. Triple Ticket purchases begin to equal regular admission purchases. People purchase them for gifts. Market at the gift of History!

Task 6: Be more themed and unique in our events and planning

Measures: Improve the theme and uniqueness in the restaurant. Introduce events around specific theme: Bing, Landmark Status, Canteen, Railroad.

Task 7: Extend the outreach of our Brand and build partnerships by attending more important State and National events and programs.

Measures: Have museum representatives regularly attend the annual OMA (Ohio Museum Association) conference, OLHA (Ohio Local History Alliance) regional and annual meeting, AAM (American Association of Museum) and (American Association of State and Local History) national conventions and RPCA (Railway Passenger Car Alliance) conventions.

Task 8: Partner with the National Landmarks Program and make use of multiple promotional opportunities.

Measures: Confirm we are active on their web and using all opportunities there. Increase NHL web presence. Increase participating in their programs and activities to become fully recognized as a NHL.

Task 9: Seek accreditation by the AAM, AASLH, affiliation by the National WWII Museum and the Smithsonian.

Measures: Join AASLH and attend their national convention for first time. Attend AAM's national convention for first time. Continue to nurture the relationship begun with the WWII Museum and the Smithsonian. Continue to prepare all programs, policies and collections storage for the accreditation process approval.

Goal 7: Increase and Enhance Educational and Outreach Opportunities.

Education and its visible expression through exhibits, are the keystone of our operations. We are here to enlighten and teach all ages. The more creative and innovation our lessons can be, the more they will be retained by visitors. Our special area of educational emphasis is on history outreach to youth with the Patriot Rally and instilling leadership skills in young adults through our internship program.

TASKS:

- Task 1: Review and update exhibits to make them more interactive and appealing to the senses including sound, smell, touch and include technology appropriate.
Measures: Plan a schedule to review each and every exhibit. Have all exhibits reviewed, updated and repaired within five year.
- Task 2: Create a historical outdoor Children's park that compliments indoor exhibits and provides an outdoor space to mount exhibits we cannot mount inside.
Measures: Complete an outdoor exhibit specifically for youth at all three sites within five years.
- Task 3: Completely revise and update school materials including pre and post visit packets, teacher packets, docent material, scheduling forms, etc.
Measures: Include this process within the schedule and timeline of Task 1. Include activities and program that encourage collaboration between all museums. Materials should align with educational standards.
- Task 4: Continue to expand our historical outreach with the Patriot Rally, striving to bring more museums into the event.
Measures: Make the Patriot Rally more Regional, bringing in 10-20 new regional museums in the next five years.

Goal 8: Improve the overall customer experience at each museum, making it extraordinary.

TASKS:

- Task 1: Focus on immersing the visitor into a specific time and place to enhance their experience.
Measures: Increase levels of Living History. Increase use of period clothes, music, props, food, smells, etc.
- Task 2: Work with various community partners and create a plan that expands OUT from the Depot creating a larger “Campus Plan”, tying in the new Panhandle Passage Trail.
Measures: Work with Historic Dreamsville Association to implement a downtown mural plan and a Development Director.
- Task 3: In the above plan, include an element that ties the Clay Museum and Depot closer together in perception, activities and signage.
Measures: Participate in the Uhrichsville Connect Downtown Committee and Master Planning Committee so help create and implement activities and way finding.
- Task 4: Enhance the experience by providing a “Tour Menu” that appeals to different types of visitors.
Measures: Implement the proposed menu of different types of tours: Scavenger Hunts for families, Bullet Tour for people who don’t have a great deal of time, Storytelling Tour for those with plenty of time and an interest to hear more of the history, cell-phone or QR code tours for teenagers who like technology, etc.
- Task 5: Make outdoor areas more themed, appealing and productive.
Measures: Add additional outdoor attractions such as more flowers and landscaping, photo opportunities, train recreation equipment, miniature train similar Tuscora Park, etc. Encourage the communities to immerse into the time period more in signage and theme. For example, Dennison could paint Coca-Cola signs on the sides of building.

Goal 9: Upgrade collections management and storage.

As the new Clay Museum develops, we will have the opportunity to focus on and finally improve our collections management, accessioning process and storage by creating an improved environment that conforms to the professional standards of state and national collections care.

TASKS:

- Task 1: Improve current Collections Storage:
Measures: All artifacts numbered and cataloged. All artifacts are on exhibit or in safe temporary storage. A more secure area for incoming gifts will be established.
- Task 2: Raise funding and partnerships for new Storage Facility.
Measures: Raise grants to help complete, outfit and supply new Collections Storage in the Clay Museum to finally offer a permanent storage facility for the museums. (CAP GRANTS.) Create partnerships with Massillon Museum and others for guidance on project.
- Task 3: Create new Collections Storage on second floor of Clay Museum.
Measures: All artifacts safely in new storage.

Goal 10: Improve, maintain and protect facilities: doors, floors and walls.

Depot Specific. (Each site has individual facility goals.)

We are caring for a facility that is 140 years old, and therefore, must be prepared for constant upkeep. Overall, we need to be proactive in repairs and utility cost savings.

TASKS:

- Task 1: Maintain delicate sandstone foundation of Depot.
Measures: Have stonemason review and develop a plan of action to protect and regularly monitor stone.
- Task 2: Repair and repaint new Museum wing of cars as needed.
Measures: Repaint street side in 2013, track side in 2014. Develop and budget for a five year maintenance plan.
- Task 3: Build the new Brick Wall and sign on the Depot's west end.
Measures: Completed by 2014.
- Task 4: Replace doors on the building, using wood or faux wood as recommended for authenticity by the Preservation Office.
Measures: New main doors by 2018.
- Task 5: Continue to seek the support of the building owner, The Village of Dennison, to assist with repairs and maintenance as they are able.
Measures: Complete the new lease with the Village of Dennison and strive to create a consistent line item in the Village Budget for yearly upkeep and repairs.
- Task 6: Increase Railroad Platform trackside.
Measures: Double the size of the cement boarding platform by 2018.
- Task 7: Maintain and improve our operating rolling stock.
Measures: Add air condition to car 422 and maintain it in good operating conditions to increase rent income.
- Task 8: Complete Phase VIII: Interior of Pullman Bed & Breakfast and Engine #2700.
Measures: Complete ODOT Transportation Enhancement Grant Process.

Goal 11: Create and Nurture Leadership at a higher level.

Make the Dennison Depot synonymous with leadership.

TASKS:

Task 1: Develop and lead the new "MLX", Museum Leadership Exchange organization.

Measures: Have bylaws and founding members in place by 2013, invite new member to reach a membership of 25 by 2018.

Task 2: Pass leadership of Historic Dreamsville USA Association (formerly Historic Center Street Association) on to the new Dreamsville Downtown Development Director and assist in that transition. This will free up time for new ventures.

Measures: Assist in the election of new officers in HAD, 2013. Hire new downtown development director 2013.

Task 3: Partner with Kent State Tuscarawas to lead a Women's Leadership Series.

Measures: Provide three featured speakers per series in the next five years.

Task 4: Sponsor employees in Leadership Tuscarawas.

Measures: Encourage a staff member to attend in next five years, adding to the 4 that have attended in the past/

Task 5: Encourage staff to participate on Leadership Boards.

Measures: Every employee should extend our outreach to participate in at least one decision making leadership board over the next five years.

2013 Strategic Plan for Historic Schoenbrunn Village, Native American and Missionary Settlement

Note explaining Strategic Planning Process

This plan is a result of two activities.

One, the October 2012 Cabin Symposium held at Kent State University with scholars, Ohio Historical Society Staff, Schoenbrunn and Depot Leadership, Schoenbrunn Volunteers, and neighboring 18th Century Sites. A complete list of ideas and speakers abstracts are available at the Ohio Historical Society and the Dennison Depot.

Two, a Strategic Planning Session held at the Tuscarawas Convention & Visitors Bureau with Schoenbrunn and Depot Leadership in attendance, Ohio Historical Society staff and Schoenbrunn volunteers. Tracy Stevens of Dominion East Ohio served as facilitators. A complete record of ideas discussed is available at the Dennison Depot.

Goals

Buildings: Create a comprehensive Building and Maintenance Plan to encompass current buildings, rebuild structures that once stood at Schoenbrunn after initial restoration in the 1920, and introducing new historic structures from the original Village, all with a strategy to add life and be less static in the Village.

Task 1: Create a Building Plan to include both maintenance concerns listing current repair needs and upkeep of current structures, with a goal to be able to present building in the Village today to the public in the best possible condition with the most accurate historical interpretation we can aspire to.

Task 2: Create a Master New Building Plan which calls for constructing buildings once on the site but now lost (4 missing structures previously on the site) and to begin a planned schedule of constructing new building in a more realistic manner and less static plan, using information gathered at the Cabin Symposium as a guide.

Task 3: Rebuild the missing Native American Cabin we tore down.

Task 4: Once Tasks above are in good order, begin to focus on buildings in the lower level park area.

- Funding: Create funding resources that will enable us to complete our goals.**
- Task 1:** Work with the Ohio Historical Society to seek funding to implement the Building Plan and the Master New Building Plan, with special focus upon the Reeves Foundation and the Timken Foundation.
- Task 2:** Begin discussions with Diversified Engineering and ODNR to explore feasibility of grants to restore wetland area.
- Task 3:** Tap into the CVB, corporations, civic groups and smaller local foundations to fund our smaller projects, programs and equipment needs.
- Staffing: Increase the level of leadership, staff and volunteer participation to help reach our goal to make the Village more dynamic and more valuable to the community.**
- Task 1:** Continue to support and strengthen the leadership team, adding resources and training to make the team more knowledgeable and productive.
- Task 2:** Continue to train, improve and build daily staff with a goal to attain full time funded positions.
- Task 3:** Increase volunteer support with a larger, more stable volunteer corps which fills the village on a more regular basis, exploring more opportunities with youth, scouts, 4-H, Buckeye Students and adult programs.
- Sustainability: Build profitability and self-sufficiency into the budget and financial structure of the Village.**
- Task 1:** Increase sales in the Gift shop.
- Task 2:** Focus time and energy on events that are potentially more profitable; eliminate those that are not.
- Task 3:** Improve reporting and systems for better accurate data to make decisions.
- Marketing: Implement a marketing plan that utilizes a strong social media platform, packaging and networking with other sites to get best return on marketing dollar investments.**
- Task 1:** Update or replace current website.
- Task 2:** Participate in getting two billboards up, one at Schoenbrunn, one on 250 toward Tappan.
- Task 3:** Participate in a wide array of NEW marketing opportunities, including the coffee cup sleeves.
- Experience: In all strategic aspects from A to Z, focus on making the Village come to life: through programming, outreach, marketing, field trips, docents, reenactments, and special events.**

Strategic Plan for the Uhrichsville Clay Museum

Note explaining Strategic Planning Process

This plan is the result of two efforts.

One, the Strategic Planning of the Uhrichsville Advisory Committee, with Clay and Depot Leadership, and clay museum volunteers in attendance.

Two, a recent community study by the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Program that resulted in a Master Plan for downtown Uhrichsville, with the new Uhrichsville Clay Museum as the center point to the plan. The Master Plan is attached here, "Downtown Revitalization: Actions and Strategies for Uhrichsville, Ohio." It is important to also note that this 2013 plan encompasses previous study/plans - most importantly the "Twin City Tourism Corridor Report" which was a catalyst leading Dennison and Uhrichsville to this point of development. The Tourism Corridor Plan is available at the Dennison Depot.

Goals

Leadership:

Create a Leadership Team by 2013.

Task 1: Put into place a 4-5 Leadership Team for the Clay Museum, similar to the Leadership Team in place at the other Depot Museum Network Museums.

Task 2: Increase the commitment and participation of the Clay Advisory Committee.

Collections:

Establish a better process of collections management at the Clay Museum.

Task 1: Have the Depot Registrar catch up on the backlog of artifact donations at the Clay Museum.

Task 2: Have the Registrar create and train a Clay Museum Accessioning Team to help catalog and document these clay artifacts.

Task 3: Get all clay artifacts on exhibit or into proper storage.

Task 4: Using History Fund, bring consultant to site to begin planning collections storage.

Task 5: Create a safe temporary storage area in new building with secure walls and begin to move artifacts to the new site by end of 2013.

Funding: **Focus and create plans for two different funding needs, a Capital Campaign for the new museum and a Sustainability Plan for the current museum.**

Task 1: Now that funding has been raised for the new museums roof, begin the detailed development of a funding plan for the new museum.

Task 2: Have the Advisory Committee and Leadership Team create a better plan for funding the current museum, including the need to fund staff.

Task 3: Increase membership for additional income.

Staffing: **Improve existing staff.**

Task 1: Continue to work with Advisory Committee to fund staffing positions.

Task 2: Seek sources of free funding, Senior Employment, Goodwill, Students.

Task 3: Continue to build a stronger volunteer corps to be able to call upon volunteers to fill the gaps.

New Building: **Complete Phase I**

Task 1: Raise funding for new roof and install by Spring 2013.

Task 2: Raise funds needed for Engineering Plans and have them completed by end of 2013.

Task 3: Re-ignite relationship with Buckeye Career Center and begin to develop plan on how student classes can assist with project.

Task 4: Put History Fund project into motion.

Task 5: Beginning detailed planning of next phase, which is to improve the outside appearance of the Building.

Increase awareness and support for Clay Museum:

Task 1: Implement through membership drive.

Task 2: Participate in Depot Museums Network Volunteer Fair.

Task 3: Partner with Claymont Students to create an improved website.

Task 4: Participate actively in the Uhrichsville Downtown Master Plan.

Open the new Museum site within five years, by 2018.

Strategic Plan for the Law-Reed-Huss Historic Farm Partnership

Have a presence for farm at the New Clay Museum, including specific exhibit space.

Assist with funding of the Uhrichsville Clay Museum as able.

Continue to increase visibility and strengthen outreach and awareness of the farm through outreach outlets including exhibits at the Depot and possibly a table at the Patriot Rally.

Consider partnering with the Depot to tap into the Depot Collections programs to assist in care of collections where able.

Entertain a marketing strategy.

CONCLUSION

In this Strategic Plan, we hope to have created a dynamic blueprint that will enable all our museums to thrive into the next five years. This is an operating plan that provides a roadmap with the ability to stretch goals for a staff that has a strong can-do approach. As no longer a “small museum”, but instead a larger museum system, it has been our goal to think BIG. Yet our approach continues to pay attention to the details that make our operation distinctive and extraordinary. We look forward to the next five years with great enthusiasm!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: 2013

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Tiffany Poland, Trinity Twin City Hospital	2 nd Vice President
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Restaurant Committee, Historic
Dreamsville

April Berni, Berni's Italian Deli

Restaurant Committee

Staff Strategic Planning Committee:

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Laura Milarcik, Operations Manager

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