2019-2024 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal #1: Make object collection information easily accessible to the public.

Goal #2: Make archival collection information easily accessible to the public.

Goal #3: Make 25,000 photographs easily accessible to the public.

Goal #4: Have a collection that is more comprehensive and focused.

Goal #5: Have a clear idea of content interests, interpretation and programming priorities.

Goal #6: Create a 5-Year Exhibition Plan

Goal #7: Create an Educational Plan which defines key audiences, content, and best practices.

Goal #8: Increase the Museum’s visitation and program attendance to 17,000 per year by 2024.

Goal #9: Create a Visitor Studies Program to collect and use data about audiences visiting the museum and potential audiences.

Goal #10: Improve visibility to tourists and the local community.

Goal #11: Develop a Facility Management Plan that continual capital improvements and regular maintenance in conjunction with the Town of Silver City’s Maintenance and Planning Departments.

Goal #12: Develop a Facility Use Plan to define best and most practical uses for each facility.

Goal #13: Support the Silver City Museum Society’s fundraising efforts to increase their annual revenue contribution to $200,000 by 2024.

Goal #14: Improve the Volunteer Program to increase volunteers’ knowledge and satisfaction.

Goal #15: Increase staff morale, productivity, and satisfaction by implementing improved policies and procedures.
Strategic Planning Areas and Issues to Address

1. AAM Accreditation and Professional Connections: AAM Accreditation is the hallmark of an excellent museum. The process of becoming an accredited museum requires that we measure operations against national standards. Only 22% of museums in the U.S.A. are accredited and only 6% of municipal museums are accredited.

   Issue: We must strive to meet the highest standards of our profession.

2. Collections Management and Accessibility: Collections management is about knowing what we have, and what condition it is in. The ultimate use of our collections is to make them widely available through exhibits, digitally through data bases, through publications and videos, websites, etc.

   Issue: Our collections have been mislabeled and confusingly numbered over the years. We must find ways to make our collections and information about them even more accessible.

3. Collections Development and Research: A museum collection is never complete. We must represent as broad a cross section of the community and the variety of aspects as best we can. We will continually evaluate our collection, fill in the blanks and improve the usefulness of the collections.

   Issues: A plan for making our collection as representative and as broad and deep as we can must be developed first and then active collecting programs must be developed to implement the plan.

4. Interpretation and Programming: Just like interpreting a foreign language the staff works with the community to interpret or provide perspectives on the past and present. Like a teacher writing her curriculum for the class she will teach, we will develop a framework of ideas and topics to explore.

   Issue: The museum needs interpretive and education plans that to reflect the most current scholarship, and has community input to reflect the needs of area citizens.

5. House and Site Care: We have been entrusted with the care of an historic house and we use the house and its additions and other buildings to carry out our mission. The house must be authentically maintained. The use of the property to house collections, present programs and exhibits and hold the store may or may not be adequate spaces to carry out our mission.

   Issue: There is no current facilities master plan. The plan would address historic preservation concerns, restoration ideas, space use and needs for future museum activities.

6. Awareness of Audiences: “Find out what your community needs and fit the museum to those needs.” Museum leader, John Cotton Dana said this almost a century ago. His words have become a guide for the best museums. This is about getting to know more about our visitors and non-visitors alike so that we become a better service to Silver City and Grant County.

   Issue: We only have simple and anecdotal information about our visitors. We know even less about our wider community.

7. Revenue and Support: Almost a third of our operating revenue is from the efforts of our partner the Silver City Museum Society. Other forms of support include our volunteer corps, partnerships and underwriting sponsorships.

   Issue: The Museum must develop its fundraising, and volunteer and membership recruitment.

8. Staff Development: The most important asset of the museum is its staff and volunteers. The museum has a commitment to supporting the continual growth and satisfaction of our staff.

   Issues: Clear and staff-developed goals and continued education are among the items that a plan for staff growth and satisfaction would need.
STRATEGIC PLAN
2019 – 2024

DRAFT

Approved by: Alex Brown Date: _____________
Town Manager, Town of Silver City

Approved by: Ken Ladner Date: _____________
Mayor for Silver City Town Council

Adopted by: Al Gamboa Date: _____________
President, Silver City Museum Society

Adopted by: Pauline Gomez Date: _____________
Chair, Town of Silver City Museum Advisory Group
Vision
The Museum will be a local and regional leader among history and culture organizations.

Adopted by SCTC August 13, 2019

Mission: “The Silver City Museum creates opportunities for residents and visitors to explore, understand, and celebrate the rich and diverse cultural heritage of southwestern New Mexico by collecting, preserving, and researching, and interpreting the region’s unique history.”

Adopted by SCMS March 10, 2003
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This plan, the first for the museum in close to ten years is the product of a dedicated and motivated group of people looking to shape a productive, professional, forward-thinking and community responsive museum.

This plan would not have been possible without the support of Town Manager Alex Brown. He found the resources for us to complete this plan under the time constraints we had. The development of the plan itself was guided by the very helpful and skilled staff of the Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Priscilla Lucero and Emily Gojkovich. They have been a pleasure to work with and were instrumental in keeping us on task and on schedule. Countless community members have given freely of their time and ideas and members of the Silver City Museum Society Board, the Silver City Town Museum Advisory Group and the Silver City Museum Members and volunteers have also provided valuable input.

Last and certainly not least has been the staff of the Museum who have jumped into this effort with all their energy and professional experience. Thanks to Curator, Joseph Bryce, Museum Store Manager Melody Collins, Office Manager Amanda Gomez, Interim Educator Erin Griffith, Volunteer and Events Coordinator and Interim Educator Johanna Lutz and Collections Manager Ashley Smith.

Couldn’t have done it without you.
I. INTRODUCTION

The Silver City Museum opened in 1967 to collect and preserve prehistoric and frontier-era objects primarily for the benefit of local residents. At the end of the 1980 decade, tourism had become an essential part of the Town of Silver City’s economy and the museum began reaching many of the new visitors to Silver City.

The H.B. Ailman House had eight decades of use as homes to two separate families, as a boarding house, as the Town Hall, then as the Fire Station, and ultimately as the hoe of the Museum. Since the early 70’s, the Museum has preserved and maintained the Ailman House and launched a series of ambitious building improvements to create a changing exhibition gallery, collections storage, offices, and a gift store to make the facility more welcoming and useful to the public. The museum has also presented various exhibitions, events and programs.

Two professional milestones in the museum’s recent past have set new standards and recognition nationally for the organization. The museum was awarded accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (then the American Association of Museums) in 2005 and an Award of Merit in 2005 for its project “Fifty Years Ago in Silver City” given by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). These accomplishments declared that the Silver City Museum could perform along with the set of best museums in the nation.

A Strategic Plan was drafted and presented to the Town Council June 28, 2010. The plan was an ambitious and focused set of overarching goals and specific strategies, connections to the town Comprehensive Plan and a set of general desired outcomes. The plan was a good plan but no evidence of it ever being used or update has been found in the administrative files. A series of short-term directors and interim directors has seen many changes in the operations, and staffing and volunteer base of the museum. The present staff, in place for approximately one-year is a very strong and experienced group of professionals. The museum’s main support organization, The Silver City Museum Society has been rejuvenated and much progress has been made in key areas of the operations including work to clarify and reorder collections and collections records. The volunteer base is growing. A full schedule of education programs has been implemented and future programs planned for the next half-year. The Gift Store is reaching new all-time profits and a recent exhibit, “Ranching in Grant County” has attracted many first-time visitors from the local community.

With a rejuvenated staff and foundation of support the deadline for Reaccreditation by AAM was the impetus and driving force for developing a comprehensive new Strategic Plan. The plan was developed with every staff member and many volunteers involved. It relied on an overwhelming response to a call from community input. Staff develop a list people, organizations and sectors of the community that we need to hear from. Invitations to more than 80 people were sent
and over the course of the four community input session more than 60 people participated, offered advice, raised questions and suggested ideas and resources.

A series of work session facilitated by staff of the Southwestern Council of Governments (SWNMCOG) worked though mission and vision, a SWOT analysis, goals and strategies drafting and brainstorming about possible resources to carry out the plan. Several sessions with staff refined goals and strategy statements using a frameworks developed early in the process to insure every key aspect of the museum was addressed. A recently launched visitor studies program under the guidance of local marketing expert SkyWest Media will continue to gather new information about our community's interests and ideas for the museum's future.

The involvement and guidance by SWNMCOG ensured that the plan was coordinated with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and relying upon staff expertise, AAM's guidelines, the review of sample plans and joining the AASLH StEPs Program made sure that we were addressing new museum professional standards.

This new plan will serve as a thoughtful, comprehensive and community-supported guide for the museum's near future.
II. PLANNING PROCESS

The AAM Accreditation process was the impetus for the development of this plan and a shortened timeframe due to the hasty resignation of the previous director was the driving force for timely completion. Previous plans fell into disuse, and no backup data or reports, or institutional memory could be garnered. So the staff jumped into this seemingly daunting process in a very cautious manner.

First the director laid out four key principles that would guide the process. They are (1) Be aware of and incorporate museum profession best practices; (2) Build the plan upon wide at-large community input; (3) Make sure all staff and museum support groups (i.e. SCMS board, MAG members, museum members and volunteers were involved; and lastly (4) Coordinate planning with the Town of Silver City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Staff began by reviewing AAM guides about plan format, processes and SMART goal development. Staff reviewed, suggested changes and then adopted a framework for areas and issues to address (see Appendix) drafted by the interim director. Staff reviewed the four guiding principles and set a series of staff meetings to review sample plans from AAM and other sources and then developed a list of stakeholders, stakeholder groups, and important and diverse sectors of the community to invite for input (see Appendix).

The Town Manager arranged for pro-bono support from SWNMCOG to serve as facilitators. A schedule of completion was developed with SWCOG (see Appendix). We invited a set of stakeholders to join in a series of four meetings to review the 2010 Plan, the museum’s mission and vision, AAM’s Accreditation Process and requirements, the timeline for completion, and to conduct a SWOT analysis. Subsequent meeting with stakeholders and others with staff and the facilitators crafted goals and strategies and available and possible resources.

In various staff meetings we reviewed older SCM plans (2010, 2005, 2001, 1999), AAM’s guides, sample plans and joined AASLH’s StEPs program.

We gathered more community input at one of the signature museum community events the July 4th Ice Cream Social. Additional community and museum member input will be improved through ay recent kickoff of Visitor Survey Program guided by local marketing firm.

Staff working sessions continued through the end of July and various drafts were reviewed by staff. Final draft was edited by director and approved by staff.

The director presented the final draft to the Mayor and Town Manager, who then presented it to Town Council where it was approved August 13th at a regular meeting of the council.

The next step is to develop an annual operating plan with more specific duties, measurable outcomes for each strategy, timeframes, needed resources and responsibilities and task teams.

The plan and operating plans will be reviewed at least quarterly and formally revised each year by the end of May to be used in preparing the next year’s budgets.
III. ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

As a department of the Town of Silver City's municipal government the museum is expected to support the Town's Comprehensive Plan, an overarching master plan to protect and nurture the unique characteristics of this community. In support of this plan the museum helps in five key areas. They are:

1. *Provide direction to both short and long-term economic recovery as the town seeks to collaborate with the county and other municipalities to develop a diverse and sustainable regional economy.*

   The museum does this by
   • Serving as an attraction being an historic structure through the exhibits, educational programs, and outreach programs that brings money to the downtown from tourist and other visitors.
   • Gaining national credibility and prestige through AAM accreditation making visitors to Silver City aware of the museum.
   • Accreditation also helps the museum be competitive for funding which provides opportunities to bring new exhibits and programs.
   • Preserving and interpreting the history of Silver City and Grant County.
   • Contributes to the economic viability of downtown.
   • Promoting an understanding and appreciation of regional identity and contributing to the local economy through its Museum Store.

2. *Protect the community's historic downtown and neighborhood, including the town's distinctive architecture and settlement patterns.*

   The museum does this by
   • Protecting the historic building that houses the museum.
   • Maintaining a position on the town's Historic Design Review Committee.
   • Engaging people in historic buildings through public programs, walking tours, exhibits, and books.
   • Maintaining a collection of photos which document Silver City and Grant County architecture.

3. *Maintain and enhance community facilities and provide park, open space, and recreational opportunities to serve the community.*

   The museum does this by
   • Being good stewards of the historic building, annex, courtyard, and mural.
   • Enabling the community to enjoy the facilities and open space any time of the year and by holding the Victorian Christmas and the 4th of July Ice Cream Social.
4. *Protect Silver City’s “small town” feel and character and shape new growth to promote walkable, livable neighborhoods and districts.*

The museum does this by
- Maintaining a partnership with Silver City MainStreet and Visitor Center.
- Maintaining historical records and objects which help create knowledge of who and what Silver City and Grant County are.
- Offering self-guided tours of the downtown neighborhoods.
- Participating in downtown business, art and cultural associations which preserve and enhance downtown experiences for community members, visitors and tourists.
- Providing the museum courtyard as a walkable attraction for neighbors and visitors.

5. *Ensure that the town’s cultural diversity is maintained and historic traditions are protected and celebrated.*

The museum does this by
- Partnering with other cultural organizations such as the Mimbres Regional Arts Council, Silver City MainStreet, Fort Bayard, and Western New Mexico University’s Movimento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) Cultural Center.
- Providing education programs, and participating in community events such as the CLAY Festival, Red Hot Children’s Fiesta, Print Fiesta, Gila River Festival, and the Day of the Dead.
- Maintaining the historic house.
- Maintaining historic collections for the public’s benefit which document the diverse history and culture of Silver City and Grant County.
IV. GOALS, STRATEGIES, TIMELINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Collections Management and Accessibility

Collections management is knowing what historical objects the Museum has, where they are located, and what condition they are in. Collection management also involves having a plan for maintaining the integrity of the Museum collection by answering these questions:

- Can the information about each and every object the Museum owns be easily accessed?
- Are all the objects in the safest and most environmentally sound storage conditions?

The ultimate and most profound use of the Museum’s collections is to make them widely available whether physically through exhibits, digitally or through publications, and other products such as videos, websites, etc.

Goal #1: Make 3-D collection information easily accessible to the public by creating a web-based interface presence by 2024.

Staff Lead: Collections Manager

Strategy #1: Complete an inventory of object collection and evaluate for possible deaccessioning by 2023.

(a) Create a Collections Management Intern Program.
(b) Define intern job description, program goals, pay scale, terms, etc.
(c) Establish partnerships such as New Mexico State University, Arizona State University, or other regional universities with Public History and Museum Studies programs to locate candidates
(d) Define program budget and identify funding sources
(e) Identify prospective program financial supporters; work with the Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments to find grant opportunities and secure funds.
(f) Hire intern(s) to help complete the full inventory of the 3-D collection.

Strategy #2: Research cost of using current PastPerfect database as online interface by 2023
Strategy #3: Upload data and test technical and user effectiveness and satisfaction by 2024

Strategy #4: Launch and promote new service by 2024

Goal #2: Make archival collection information easily accessible to the public by creating a web-based interface presence by 2024.

Staff Lead: Collections Manager

Strategy #1: Find funding to hire a consultant to create a complete survey of the archival collection and recommendations of a more robust archival database platform by 2021.
   (a) Create goals and budget
   (b) Identify potential funding source (grants, donors, and partners)
   (c) Hire professional to complete survey and help identify new software for archival and photo collections

Strategy #2: Create a robust internship program to carry out the recommendations found in the Archive Survey by partnering with universities that offer a Master of Library Science or Public History Major by 2022.
   (a) Design and fund program based upon those used by other New Mexico archive such as New Mexico State University
   (b) Partner with Library Science and Public History Programs to gain qualified interns to carry out re-cataloging and finding aid creation.

Strategy #3: Work with other museums in the region to create a co-share archivist training to continue work on archival collections by 2022.

Strategy #4: Select new software by 2024
   (a) Identify funding for purchase and transfer of data
   (b) Select and purchase software then upload data, beta test for accuracy and search ability
   (c) Launch and promote new online accessible database

Goal #3: Make 25,000 photographs accessible to the public through a web-based interface by 2024.

Staff Lead: Collections Manager
Strategy #1: Secure funds to hire a consultant to generate an assessment for the photo collection by 2021.
   (a) Create goals and budget
   (b) Identify and apply for funding (grants, donations)
   (c) Hire professional to complete survey

Strategy #2: Create a photo digitization training plan for volunteers based upon professional standards from the American Association of State and Local history and the AAM and using survey as guide for planning by 2022.
   (a) Identify parameters and create guide to train volunteers
   (b) Identify any new software and/or hardware needed to move forward
   (c) Find and apply for funding to purchase any such needed equipment
   (d) Recruit volunteers based upon skill sets found in the training guide
   (e) Set up training for new volunteers
   (f) Create work schedule and goals for volunteers

Strategy #3: Solicit volunteers to digitize photos by partnering with groups like Vista and/or Ameri-Corp to by 2024.

Strategy #4: Select software to provide public access in conjunction with Archival software recommendation by 2024.

Collections Development and Research

There are two prime reasons for a museum’s collection never being complete and is especially true of history museums. They are: Collections reflect the available resources, knowledge, and awareness; therefore, collections are always in some way incomplete. And history never stops. The Museum is not defined by history of only a certain timeframe or particular interests such as: art, politics, military history, archaeology, clothing, or ranching. The Museum must represent a broad a cross section of the community and a variety of aspects.

Research efforts go hand-in-hand with developing a broader and more representative collection. The Museum will uncover parts of the community's past that have no objects with which to represent or to study it further. The Museum will be continually evaluating present collections, filling in the blanks, and improving the usefulness of the collections.

Goal #4: Have a collection that is more comprehensive and focused by 2024.

Staff Lead: Curator
Strategy #1: Develop a comprehensive Collecting Plan to identify areas which need to be strengthened, collections gaps to be filled and objects to be culled. Using collections inventories, interpretive plan and a set of community and professional advisors create a wish list of objects, object types or subject areas for future acquisitions by 2020.

Strategy #2: Identify immediate priorities, funding needs, collecting logistics, space needs, and any conservation concerns by 2021.

Strategy #3: Secure funds, address any space constraints, and address other concerns to make priority acquisitions by 2023.

Interpretation and Programming

This is another way in which a museum proves its worth to the community it serves. The museum staff will work with the community to interpret or provide perspectives on the past and present. The Museum staff needs a framework of ideas and topics that guide the selection of exhibits, public programs, services, and publications.

Goal #5: Have a clear idea of content interests, interpretation and programming priorities by developing an Interpretive Plan by 2020.

Staff Lead: Curator and Educator

Strategy #1: Develop components of the plan by 2020:
(a) Create a list of important themes using community and professional input
(b) Define Priority Audiences and their interests, motivations and learning styles.
(c) Draft a list of engaging messages using curatorial research about local history for each audience group.
(d) Define meaningful experiences with objects, SCM’s collection, artifacts, landscapes, sites, exhibits and people for each audience group.
(e) Define how plan will be evaluated and maintained.

Strategy #2: Draft Complete Interpretive Plan by 2020.

Goal #6: Create a 5-Year Exhibition Plan defining exhibition content, schedule, and best practices by 2021.
Staff Lead: Curator
Strategy #1: Create a list of community events by 2019.

Strategy #2: Use a community survey to help develop exhibition schedule that is representative of the community makeup, interests and needs by 2020.

**Goal #7: Create an Educational Plan which defines key audiences, content, and best practices by 2021.**

**Staff Lead: Educator**

Strategy #1: Develop programming ideas to support Exhibition, Collecting and Interpretive plans by 2019.

Strategy #2: Survey museum visitors, the Silver City/Grant County community and tourists about their interests, ideas, experiences and motivations by 2020.

Strategy #3: Create a Community Advisory Group to ensure representative and continual input from museum members and other stakeholders and audiences by 2020.

Strategy #4: Create a ‘best practices’ manual defining state-of-the-art history museum education and museum education generally and a staff and volunteer training program to implement best practices by 2020.

Strategy #4: Define a 3-5 year plan of educational programs, events and services by 2021.

**Goal #8: Increase the Museum’s visitation and program attendance to 17,000 per year by 2024.**

**Staff Lead: Director, Volunteer Coordinator (Title to be revised)**

Strategy #1: Create baseline measurements of museum “use” and set annual audience, attendance and use goals by 2019.

Strategy #2: Increase social media presence by revisiting the Marketing Plan, and determining local resources 2020.

Strategy #3: Increase awareness by school districts through programs such as National History Day, a junior curator/interpreter program, educational trunks (if feasible) and teacher in-service programs by 2021.
Strategy #4: Attract a wider range of audiences by creating new events and programs such as a “Social Night” by partnering with other cultural organizations, businesses, artists, ranchers, the mining community and Western New Mexico University Museum to expand museum hours 2021.

Audiences

“Find out what your community needs and fit the museum to those needs,” said John Cotton Dana, when he was redesigning the now famous Newark Museum. These words have become a guide for many museum professionals when connecting to audiences. A Visitor Studies Program should be a component of the Museum’s operations. This type of program provides data used to better reach and serve audiences. The program helps us understand who is coming, who is using the programs, what they think of the programs, collections and exhibitions, who is not coming and why, along with a myriad of other questions.

Goal #9: Create a Visitor Studies Program to collect and use data about audiences visiting the museum and potential audiences, their demographics, experiences and motivations by 2020.

Staff Lead: Educator

Strategy #1: Start data gathering data at museum by 2019.

Strategy #2: Start gathering data from a wider survey of the potential audiences by 2019.

Strategy #3: Create Staff and volunteer training by 2019.

Goal #10: Improve visibility to tourists and the local community by 2021.

Strategy #1: Work with experts in the field to develop a data-driven marketing plan aligned with municipal efforts which includes digital marketing, website redesign, paid ads and earned media placements and museum –produced collateral by 2020.

Staff Lead: Volunteer Coordinator (title to be revised)

Strategy #2: Engage partners in planning, executing, and promoting programs by 2020.
Facilities

The Museum has four main facilities that are used to meet its mission in addition to creating a space for the community to enjoy. They include:

The historic Ailman House, along with later additions, where the collections and the Gift Store are housed, exhibits are presented, and programming happens.

The Museum Annex which houses storage and additional workspace. It is also a space where programs are presented and community meetings are hosted. At this time the Annex is in need of being brought up to code and of meeting ADA compliance. It is not being used to its full potential.

The Courtyard is a wonderful open space located at the Ailman House that the community enjoys throughout the year especially during the Museum's 4th of July Ice Cream Social.

Offsite Storage Building is a 900 sq. foot block building with no AC, insulation or heat, a concrete floor and a double entry door. It is owned by the City and has been given to the museum to use as an overflow space. We are currently cleaning the space out, identifying objects, reorganizing it and evaluating its use possibilities.

**Goal #11: Develop a Facility Management Plan that includes continual capital improvements and regular maintenance in conjunction with the Town of Silver City’s Maintenance and Planning Departments by 2024.**

**Staff Lead: Collections Manager**

Strategy # 1: Research the buildings’ changes and maintenance histories and create a database of regular maintenance schedule for all interiors and exteriors by 2022.
   (a) Create an internship program with goals, budget, etc. to research and write a comprehensive history of the building, property, previous changes and uses since 1881
   (b) Identify candidates through partnerships with NMST, U. of Arizona, Arizona State University or other regional universities with a Public History program to
   (c) Identify funding sources.

Strategy #2: Create a Facility Management Plan by 2023:
   (a) Partnering with UNM School of Architecture and Planning to create an internship project.
(b) Set goals and parameters for one time internship
(c) Identify and gain funding to hire intern

Strategy #3: Work with Silver City’s Planning Department annually to ensure capital improvements are included in the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan by 2024.

**Goal #12: Develop a Facility Use Plan to define best and most practical uses for each facility by 2022.**

*Staff Lead: Collections Manager*

Strategy #1: Identify volunteer or intern to conduct a survey of existing uses and future needs. Explore possibility of gaining assistance from the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning by 2021.

**Revenue and Support**

The Museum’s revenue for the normal operating budget comes from the Town of Silver City and the Silver City Museum Society. The Town of Silver City’s funding is used for salaries, administrative operations, and building maintenance. The Silver City Museum Society’s funding is used for salaries, gift store operations and programming.

Other forms of support include the volunteer corps, partnerships, and underwriting sponsorships. One measure of the Museum’s success is the amount and types of partnerships that have been developed and retained.

**Goal #13: Support the Silver City Museum Society’s fundraising efforts to increase their annual revenue contribution to $200,000 by 2024.**

*Staff Lead: Director, Museum Store Manager*

Strategy #1: Support the SCMS’s efforts to contract with a grant writer to research foundation, state, and federal grants to help with operations, maintenance, and programming of the Museum by 2021.

Strategy #2: Draft and begin implementing a plan to encourage the growth of Silver City Museum Society’s membership and donor drives, growing the year-end and other appeals and expanding the donor base by 2020.
Strategy #3: Draft and begin implementing a plan to increase store sales by more widely promoting the Gift Store to tourists and community members as a place to shop locally by 2020.

Strategy #4: Develop a strategy to improve the existing space rental revenue by 15%, including promotions to local and regional communities through partnerships with local newspapers, publications, radio stations, and social media and new offerings by 2020.

**Goal #14: Create a more stable, effective, and satisfied Volunteer Corps by 2024. Improve the Volunteer Program to increase volunteers’ skills and knowledge, and increase volunteer retention by 2024.**

**Staff Lead: Volunteer Coordinator (title to be revised)**

Strategy #1: Create relevant recruitment pipelines that serve volunteer interests and department needs by 2020.

Strategy #2: Create orientation and training program that addresses both initial and ongoing volunteer education 2020.

Strategy #3: Quantify and begin tracking metrics of volunteer retention, effectiveness, and satisfaction and use these metrics to inform Strategies #1 and #2 and measure Goal #14 by 2020.

**Work Environment and Staff Development**

The most important asset of the Museum is the staff. Without these knowledgeable, motivated, and accomplished people, nothing would get done. The Museum needs to have policies and procedures in place with commitment to continual improvement and support to ensure staff is productive and satisfied.

**Staff Lead: Director**

**Goal #15: Increase staff morale, productivity, and satisfaction by implementing improved policies and procedures by 2021.**

Strategy #1: Create Staff Satisfaction Survey process and create a baseline measurement by 2020.
Strategy #2: Work with Silver City’s Human Resource Department to revise job descriptions that clearly define each staff position by 2021.

Strategy #3: Create an Employee Support Program by identifying annual goals, performance evaluation, professional networking opportunities, and annual professional development by 2021.

Strategy #4: Explore the long range goals of moving key contract positions to the Town’s regular payroll by 2021.
IMPLEMENTATION

The first step in implementing this plan will be to develop a more detailed Year 1 Set of Action Items. Staff will meet to compare this plan against any new organizational work plans and work priorities.

A critical parallel series of improvement to the museum’s operations and impact will be guided by our participation in AASLH’s StEPs program. The Silver City Museum has been a member of the StEPs program for several months and a schedule for completing the series of actions to reach as many of the Gold performance indicators as possible is being developed by the museum’s curator who will serve as the lead on this project.

The overall plan will be reviewed and refreshed at least annually in the spring as the fiscal year is winding down and plans are being made for the next fiscal year (July 1- June 30).

Each annual plan will be a foundation for developing staff goals for the upcoming year.

The overall Five Year plan will be rolled forward and updated each year so that the plan always remains looking out for up to five years and reacts to any changes in the museum’s’ environment and community changes and needs. And each year a new Annual Plan will be developed by staff.

On an annual basis a set of community stakeholders, the Museum Society Board, and The Town Museum Advisory Group will have input into the plans for the museum’s future.

Each subsequent annual plan and the refreshed Five Year outlook will have input from and be reviewed and approved by the Town Manager.
APPENDIX

i. Schedule of Completion

ii. Areas and Issues to Address

iii. Stakeholders List

iv. SWOT Analysis Notes

v. Partners, Possible Partners and Resources

vi. Press Clipping

vii. Photos
### i. Schedule of Completion

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ii. Strategic Planning Areas and Issues to Address

DRAFT - Revised
5.23.19

The following areas of the museum’s operation and issues to address within each area provides one framework for developing a 3-5 year operational plan that is comprehensive, strategic and realistic.

1. **Mission, Vision and Branding:** The foundation of any future plan must be the organization's mission. A focused, succinct and meaningful mission will guide all other goals. The vision charts a big and audacious direction for the museum’s future. Branding is how the museum would like to be perceived by its various audiences and stakeholders. The museum’s brand will be supported by everything we do e.g. what we collect, what and how we present materials through exhibitions, what and how and for whom we present programs, what we sell in the shop, etc.

   Issue: The museum’s’ present mission should be focused more upon the desired effect we hope to have upon our community. The museum’s vision is not stated yet and our brand is good (*we think*) among our community but it is not clearly and fully understood by us i.e. staff, volunteers, members, and trustees.

2. **AAM Accreditation and Professional Connections:** AAM Accreditation is the hallmark of an excellent museum. The process of becoming an accredited museum is an exercise that requires the museum to measure its operations against national standards of excellence. Once accredited the museum gains the honor of being listed among the few high performing museums. Only 22% of history museums in the US are accredited and that number drops to 8% if you look only at historic houses or sites. Only 28% of museums our size are accredited and only 6% of municipally operated museums reach the goal.

   A mark of well–run museums is the extent of their connections to a wider network of practitioner’s. Serving on state or national organizations such as the New Mexico Humanities Council, AAM, Mountain Plains Museum Association, Museum Educators Roundtable, the Visitor Studies Association, American Association for State and Local History and many others demonstrate that the museum is aware of professional standards and is an active contributor to the field at large.
Issue: We are due to be reaccredited and will hopefully be reaccredited. We can find ways to connect more fully with a set of key professional organizations to build our capacity.

3. **Collections Management and Accessibility:** Collections management is about knowing what we have, where it is located and what condition it is in. It also involves having a thoughtful plan for maintaining the integrity of what we care for. Can we easily access information about each and every object we own? Are all our objects in the safest and most environmentally sound storage conditions?

The ultimate and most profound use of our collections is to make them widely available whether physically through exhibits, digitally through research data bases or through publications and other products such as videos, websites, etc.

Issue: Our collections have been mislabeled and confusingly numbered over the course of several generations of staff. We must improve our data bases. A solid inventory does not exist. Conservation assessments of the house (our biggest collection object) and our object archival and photo collections need to be done so that we can ensure their longevity. We must find more ways to make our collections and information about them even more accessible.

4. **Collections Development and Research:** A museum collection is never complete, especially that of a history museum. There are two prime reasons for this. One, collections reflect their collectors and if a previous curator decided they were only interested in clothing then the collection becomes skewed to reflect that curator’s interests and not the needs of the community the collection must represent. So there will be gaps. The second reason is that history never stops. Our mission is not defined by history of only a certain timeframe or particular interests such as art, politics, military history, archaeology, clothing, or ranching. We must represent as broad a cross section of the community and the variety of aspects as we can. Research efforts go hand in hand with developing a more full and representative collection. We will uncover parts of our community’s past that we have no objects with which to represent or study it further. We will be continually evaluating present collections, filling in the blanks and improving the usefulness of the collections.

Issues: A plan for making our collection as representative and as broad and deep as we can must be developed first and then active collecting programs must be developed to implement the plan.
5. **Interpretation and Programming**: This is another way in which the museum proves its worth to the community it serves. Just like interpreting a foreign language the museum staff will work with the community to interpret or provide perspectives on the past and present. Like a teacher writing her curriculum for the class she will teach, the museum staff will develop a framework of ideas and topics to explore through exhibits, public programs, and publications.

Issue: The museum has no overarching intellectual framework for its education programs or exhibits. It needs an interpretive plan and an education plan that are well-researched, reflect the most current scholarship, the profession’s best practices and has community input to reflect the needs of area citizens.

6. **House and Site Care and Use**: There are two parts to this focus on our facilities. First we have been entrusted with the care and preservation of an historic house and site and second we use the house and its additions and property and our other buildings to carry out our mission. The house must be authentically maintained. In addition to the historic architecture, the restoration or use of historic sections of the house provide us important and powerful tools to reach our visitors with explorations of the past and reflections on the present. Secondly, the use of the property to house collections, present programs and exhibits and hold the store may or may not be the right or adequate spaces to carry out our mission.

Issue: There is no current facilities master plan. The plan would address historic preservation concerns, restoration ideas, space use and needs for other museum activities such as collections storage, public programs, retail sales, and exhibition space as well as the use of auxiliary buildings (annex and offsite storage) and open spaces (courtyard, parking area, and new mural wall).

6. **Awareness of and Connections with Audiences**: “*Find out what your community needs and fit the museum to those needs.*” John Cotton Dana said this when he was redesigning the now famous Newark Museum. His words have become a guide for many museum professionals. This area of our operations is about getting to know who is coming, who are using our programs, what they think of our programs and exhibitions, who are not coming and why, and a myriad of other questions. This is an ongoing effort to become more aware of and make deeper connections with our many audiences.
Issue: We only have simple data and a lot of anecdotal information about our visitors and we do not make much use of the data we do have. We know even less about our wider community. The museum needs a well-designed visitor studies program and must improve its practices for gathering and using data about its various audiences to plan new programs and measure their effectiveness.

**Revenue and Support:** Half of our normal operating revenue is from the efforts of our nonprofit partner the Silver City Museum Society. Other forms of support include our volunteer corps, partnerships and underwriting sponsorships. One measure of our success is the amount and types of partnerships we develop. We depend on these extra efforts to accomplish our mission.

Issue: The Society Board is in need of rebuilding. The Museum must develop its grant getting and other fundraising efforts. We must boost our volunteer and membership recruitment. We must build upon existing partnerships and make the museum even more attractive and valued.

7. **Work Environment and Staff Development:** The most important asset of the museum is its staff and volunteers. Without knowledgeable, motivated and fulfilled staff and volunteers nothing gets done. This includes having clear job descriptions, comfortable and appropriate work spaces, definite annual goals, high morale, and the commitment to continual growth.

Issues: How effectively are we working? Do we have what we need to work effectively? We need a review of staff concerns about the work and the work place and their abilities to do their jobs. Do we know where we are going? Do we have the resources to do our jobs? Is the work environment supportive? An annual plan needs to be put in place. Work goals and continued education are among the items that a plan for staff growth and satisfaction would need. A work spaces use plan could be included in a master facilities plan.

8. Others?
### iii. Stakeholders List

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25
### SWOT Analysis Notes

#### STRENGTHS
- 52 years old
- Museum Society support
- Being a Town Department
- Town Advisory Group
- Family/Friends Opportunity
- Long-term Volunteers
- Expertise of Volunteers
- Grant County History
- Historic Facility
- Location
- Museum Annex
- Brand Recognition
- Museum Store
- Tourist Draw
- Staffs’ skills & experience
- 20,000 Photographs
- 20,000 Objects
- Highly Trained Staff
- Educational Programs
- Events & Programming
- Hands-on Workshops

#### WEAKNESSES
- Historic Home to care for
- Collection Database Unorganized
- Employee Retention
- Lost Relationships
- Limited Programmable Space
- Outdated Policies and Procedures
- Only 2 Researchers
- Lack of Outreach programming
- Planning Capacity
- Limited Budget
- No consistent Fundraising
- No recent push for membership
- Partners
- Declining Visitation
- Insufficient Visitor Data
- Museum Infrastructure

#### OPPORTUNITIES
- Downtown Revitalization
- Partnerships
- Continental Divide Hikers
- Mining District
- Social Media
- New Technology
- Collecting Stories
- Non-profit Funding
- Hosting Trainings/Workshops
- Food programs
- Climate and Environment
- Within the Metro Redevelop.
- Agency and Tax Increment
- Funding districts
- WNM University
- Old Post Office
- Digital Culture
- Wills/ Trusts
- Opportunity Zone Designation

#### THREATS
- Fluctuating Economy
- Loss of Funding
- Tourist Traveling Patterns
- Elimination of School Funding
- Flooding
- Local Economy
- Political/Cultural Division
- Aging population
- Cultural Change
- Loss of Oral Histories
v. **Silver City Museum Partners, Possible Partners and Resources**

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<td>Ranchers</td>
<td>Copper Cowbells</td>
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<td>Silver City Library</td>
<td>Rotary</td>
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<td>Fort Bayard</td>
<td>MRAC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver City MainStreet/Art and Cultural District</td>
<td>WNMU</td>
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<td>Silver City/Grant County Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Business Community</td>
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<td>Grant County Commission</td>
<td>Silver City Co-op</td>
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<td>Town and Country Garden Club</td>
<td>Murray Hotel</td>
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<td>Native Plant Society</td>
<td>WILL</td>
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<td>CDT Coalition</td>
<td>Churches</td>
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<td>Fort Seal Apaches</td>
<td>Tour Groups</td>
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<td>Land Conservancy Group</td>
<td>SWNMCOG</td>
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<td>Grant County Community Foundation</td>
<td>GRIP</td>
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<td>Silver City Artists Association</td>
<td>Lions Club</td>
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<td>Silver City Daily Press/KRU/ Grant County Beat</td>
<td>Virus Theater</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver City Community Theater</td>
<td>Forest Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver City Clay Festival</td>
<td>City of Bayard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southwest Festival of the Written Work</td>
<td>Village of Santa Clara</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lions Campbell Ranch</td>
<td>Town of Hurley</td>
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vi. PRESS CLIPPINGS

Diversity key to museum’s reaccreditation

By GEOFFREY PLANT

The Silver City Museum is formulating a strategy to bring more diverse exhibits and some community engagement to Grant County residents, along with the tourists who visit the museum.

The list of three planning discussions is still for today, and Ivan Roselli, the museum’s interim executive director, said that a cross section of stakeholders from diverse Grant County backgrounds have been invited to participate.

Two more discussions will happen by the end of August, all facilitated by Priscilla Lucero, a Silver City native from Brewer Hill who directs the Southwest New Mexico Council of the Governor.

“We want to ask people, ‘What should the museum be doing?’ and ask how we can better represent the whole range of Grant County life,” Roselli said. “Most of us view the museum as a repository of the wider community,” he said.

Board positions are unpaid — just part of the volunteer base the museum depends on. Roselli said that while the museum can always use more volunteers, the volunteer program is fairly healthy under volunteer coordinator Johna Lutz. We have about 80 right now. We do need to organize our database and fundraising,” he said.

It’s been 10 years since the last strategic plan. Roselli added that the board’s sentiment that getting the museum reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums was the most pressing issue facing the museum.

“We’re working to make it stronger and more diverse, and a more welcoming environment for all,” Roselli said.

“We need to tell the story of Silver City and Grant County. Silver City didn’t come to exist by itself,” he said. “Because it is a regional museum, we want input from the whole region and we’re looking forward to a more public input into the operation.”

“The museum, like the Silver City Public Library, is a town department. However, Brown will not participate in the strategic planning discussions. “I should be public-driven,” he said. “I will be doing the final approval on the strategy.”

Brown will also decide when to open the hiring process for a permanent museum director and director of education — the position Roselli was originally turned down.

For about a year before, the previous museum director, Carmen Vezzoli, resigned; in that time, Roselli has been interim executive director since Feb. 18.

Part of Roselli’s vision is a more visible Silver City Museum Society, which Roselli described as “an advocacy group.”

Museum is a social organization, Roselli said, and Roselli said its health is crucial to the museum’s future.

Half the operating budget for the museum is from the town — from tax dollars — and half the budget is through the museum society, he said. “The society is in need of new board members next month.”

Roselli said that, like the area residents who will help formulate a new strategy, a diverse board is key. He hopes the new board will be filled with people who represent the breadth of Grant County and Silver City culture.

“The board should be representative of the wider community,” he said.

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vii. **PLANNING SESSIONS PHOTOS**

*Figure 1* Staff facilitated strategy development

*Figure 2* Staff facilitated small group sessions

*Figure 3* COG Staff facilitate goal development

*Figure 4* More than 40 stakeholders participated