



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

2023

For the past 90 years, the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum has represented an abiding obsession with the richness of the everyday surroundings found in Texas and the Panhandle region; the landscape, buildings, people, wildlife, values, and stories that give meaning to this part of the nation. The museum is concerned with promoting the commonplace as a not-so-common place: the region's rich, diverse, and distinctive landscape, culture, and history. Canyons and Cadillacs, arrowheads and artists, cowboys and Comancheros, pastores and pastures, Wildcatters and wallows—this part of the country offers fascinating stories across all frontiers.

The filigree of rich understandings between people and a land's history is not merely about scenery, however. It takes us below the surface, to where the land might reflect back to us a story of purpose and belonging. The history of Texas contains thousands of stories that have never been written down: tales of daily lives and struggles to build shelter, find water, grow food, help neighbors, fight enemies, endure the elements, survive disease, turn a profit. Stories are the currency of ordinary history, and history is a set of stories we tell to better understand who we are and the world we're now in.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



**NO PEOPLE
EVER AMOUNT
TO ANYTHING
WHO FORGET
THEIR PAST.
THERE IS
MUCH IN THE
PANHANDLE
AROUND
WHICH OUR
IDEAS AND
ASPIRATIONS
MAY GATHER**

Frank Rayburn, 1921

***Continued...***

Everyone is a historian. The good historian of the State of Texas believes that the past and present (and future for that matter) are all bound up together in the communities of this region: the people that dared to call the Panhandle home and had the grit to survive the odds. This means, then, that the historian of Texas will be looking and listening in his or her study for what feeds and nourishes life now; they will not simply write off the past as a record of sad or cruel or stupid error (however much there may be of all of those). There will be an element of expectation: people shall emerge from an encounter with the stories of this region with some greater fullness of maturity, wisdom, and humility.

At the nearing of its 100th year, PPHM seeks to promote such an understanding and appreciation of the unexpected and unknown stories of this region for the benefit of a diverse public.

In the following pages you will encounter four strategic initiatives and goals that will center the work of PPHM as it seeks to build community, enhance learning, and nurture creativity over the next 10 years and beyond. The collection, audience, place, and funding are vitally important factors if the museum is to build upon past successes, leverage present opportunities, and achieve a future in which our visitors discover that:

There is much in the Panhandle around which our ideas and aspirations may gather.

Andrew Hay, Ph.D.
Director



MISSION & VISION

2023
2023
2023

MISSION

PPHM promotes the stories of this region in order to build community, enhance learning, and nurture creativity.

VISION

As a leading institution and a university museum, PPHM offers dynamic experiences that illuminate the power and relevance of the history of this region, state, and beyond. PPHM shares with a diverse public and WTAMU its distinct collection from all periods and parts of the world, generating new ideas, while serving as an educational catalyst for the community.



WHO WE ARE & OUR VALUES

WHO WE ARE

WE ARE

enthusiastic about introducing people to the stories and history of this region.

WE ARE

excited about the universal impact stories of this region can have in their ability to unite diverse cultures and people.

WE SEEK

to make the story of this region accessible to every life stage, culture, personality, experience, economic level, and age.

WE ENCOURAGE

a coming-to-know for the first time, or in a new way, the history of this region.

OUR VALUES

BE A GOOD ANCESTOR

Steward resources, time, thoughts, employment, relationships—all for the sake of future generations.

BELIEVE THE BEST

Challenges are opportunities waiting to be exploited; look for the good to be done in every circumstance.

CURATE THE MISSION

Be obsessed with placing the history and stories of this region and state in the hearts and minds of more and more people.

ACCELERATE INNOVATION

Future-proof the organization.

NEVER STOP LEARNING, LISTENING, AND SERVING

Avoid recycling problems; actively listen to those around you; seek opportunities to learn; serve the community.





STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & GOALS

2023
2033

The forthcoming plan notes goals and initiatives that the museum will pursue as it reaches its 100th year of serving the state. The centenary of the museum building in 2033 is a momentous occasion, and it demands momentous goals. The following pages of the plan center around four strategic initiatives that will focus the work of the museum in the coming years: collection, place, people, and funding. If we are successful in pursuing our mission – if we can focus our efforts on the initiatives so as to accomplish goals – there will result several positive outcomes.

From digitizing the entire collection to accomplishing significant phases of redesign and renovation of the galleries, to increasing the number of people served and the increase of monetary contributions – in short, this plan aims to “promote the stories of this region in order to build community, enhance learning, and nurture creativity.”

COLLECTION

Focus the collection will be in line with exhibit redesign initiatives and the “heart” of collection; catalogue and digitize the entire collection; completed necessary deaccession; created traveling exhibits.

PLACE

Within ten years, renovate, acquire, and maintain three active sites: a redesigned museum, a restaurant, and an offsite “Curatorial Center.” All three phases of redesign and renovation will be completed; Challenger Learning Center will be in its eighth or ninth year of operation.

PEOPLE

Annual attendance increased to 80,000-100,000; expanded use of exhibits and archives by WTAMU students; educational reach increased by an additional 25,000 - 30,000 students; increased PPHM membership by 300 households; a robust, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic staff that promotes the prestige of PPHM and WTAMU by embodying our core values.

FUNDING

Secured and implemented funds towards permanent exhibit and structural redesign of three phases; hired 3-5 key FTE staff; increased corporate sponsorships and endowment giving; increased unrestricted contributions.

COLLECTION



**NO OTHER
COLLECTION IN
THE COUNTRY
CAN COMPARE
WITH OURS
IN ITS CLOSE
CONTACT WITH
THE SOCIAL,
INTELLECTUAL,
AND ECONOMIC
LIFE OF THE
PEOPLE THAT IT
REPRESENTS.**

—J. Evetts Haley, 1928

Guided by the museum's long-standing commitment to historical preservation and education, we will amplify the impact of our permanent collection and create new models for the acquisition, exhibition, and interpretation of outstanding artifacts from across the region and around the world—for the sake of “the people it represents” and those who come to learn at PPHM.

GOALS

// Create a new model for building and scaling the collection, engaging collectors and donors both inside and outside the Panhandle region, which involves the important facets of our collection.

// Maximize public access to the collection, both within PPHM and beyond its walls, through digital technology.

// Enhance our ability to care for the collection and secure PPHM's leadership position in the preservation and treatment and interpretation of artifacts.

// Optimize management of the collection to enhance efficiency and make the collection more accessible and promotable to state-wide and national visitors.

// Reimagine the capacity of the PPHM archives and research center to support the study, understanding, and appreciation of the textual and oral history of this region and the wider State of Texas.





IS THERE A BETTER
PLACE IN TEXAS
THAN THIS IN
WHICH TO BUILD
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AND ENSURE THE
PERPETUATION OF
THOSE AMERICAN
IDEALS, FOR
WHICH THE GREAT
SOUTHWEST IS
FAMED?

Mrs. T.V. Reeves, Society Secretary, 1926



PHASE I



PHASE II



PHASE III

The work of PPHM has always been to educate and inspire a diverse public with the cultural and scientific heritage of the region—a region that is geographically isolated but uniquely tied to some of the most inspiring events in the history of the nation and state. As the collection continues to grow to show the diversity of this region, we will use a networked flow of ideas, resources, and people to build awareness of the relationship between the local and the global, and to engage with and find meaning in our collections. By leveraging a redesigned building and its physical components, while expanding our presence through new initiatives on the WTAMU campus and surrounding community, PPHM will extend its reach, impact, and reputation.

GOALS

Phase I Redesign

Paleontology, Geology, and a “Discovery Zone” (2023-2025)

The pre-history of this region offers a surprisingly rich story of adaptation, longevity, and depth. Much like the people of this region, it takes a lot to live here...and keep living here. This is no different when it comes to the earliest creatures of this land. And then minerals and resources that eventually formed industries we benefit from today, started life in the geological strata of the incredible formations that eventually gave us the Palo Duro Canyon. Dinosaurs, the rise of the mammals, the rock strata of the Palo Duro Canyon—this region holds deep secrets that we want audiences of PPHM to discover time and time again in new and more profound ways.

Phase II Redesign

Western Heritage (2026-2029)

The heart and soul of the PPHM collection has always been the cultural items that express the diverse people that have called this region home. From the earliest native peoples to the clash of cultures during the Red River Wars, to the men and women who risked it all in homesteading, farming, ranching, and Oil & Gas—the Panhandle has been home to centuries of unparalleled personal stories. And the stories persist...

Phase III Redesign

Fine Art (2030-2033)

Art (and fine art in particular) has always been a medium in which people might express those qualities of life that are most personal and spectacular. With regards to PPHM’s fine art collection, one will find the expression of much that makes this region inspiring and memorable. The collection at PPHM is unparalleled, especially in the area of the Taos and Santa Fe Schools, as well as early Texas art, notably represented by Frank Reaugh.



We recognize that PPHM must serve a diverse public, embracing an audience-centered approach to everything we do, in order to grow and diversify our audience locally, regionally, and nationally. The collection and audience are inseparable: without the collection, there will be no people; without people, there will be no collection. There are three key audiences that are central to PPHM fulfilling its mission: families, tourists, and West Texas A&M University. While other audiences will be engaged and served, these three groups will be the target of much of the work at PPHM.

We also commit to creating a high-performing and positive working environment at PPHM for our staff members – a place which retains and attracts needed skill sets, while empowering the staff in the field of museum management.

GOALS

// Renovate and redesign PPHM so that it is welcoming and accessible to all by implementing innovative new approaches to the visitor experience, deepening engagement and highlighting the relevance and importance of PPHM's collection.

// Strengthen brand identity, creating greater visibility and awareness.

// Continue to be a teaching museum for audiences of all ages, especially K-12, establishing PPHM as a leading institution for object-based learning in the region and in the State of Texas.

// Run a high performing and positive organization, centered on our core values.



“

MEMBERS OF THE
SOCIETY, IN RAISING
THIS MEMORIAL TO THE
SPIRIT OF THE PIONEER,
YOU HAVE CHOSEN
TO BE TEACHERS
OF CHILDREN AND
THEIR PARENTS. FOR
GENERATIONS TO COME
YOU WILL BE INVITING,
THROUGH YOUR
ORGANIZATION AND ITS
VISIBLE SYMBOLS, THE
YOUTH, AND THIS WILL
... YIELD DIVIDENDS IN
HUMAN CHARACTER
FOR YEARS TO COME.

Mrs. T.V. Reeves, Society Secretary, 1926

“

AS YOUR FIELD
SECRETARY I AM
READY TO TAKE THIS
PROPOSITION TO
THE PEOPLE OF THE
PANHANDLE AND,
IF NECESSARY, BEG
THEM TO CONTRIBUTE
TO THIS MUSEUM
BUILDING FUND IF
THE MEMBERSHIP OF
THIS ORGANIZATION IS
WILLING TO GET BEHIND
THIS MOVEMENT.

– L.F. Sheffy, WT Professor of History, 1930





FUNDING

2023
2023
2023

We will deliver on our mission and vision by increasing our capacity, expanding philanthropic investment in PPHM, and broadening our base of community support. We will endeavor to obtain predictable and sustainable funding in order to pursue innovation.

GOALS

// Prepare a long-term budget and staffing plan that identifies recurring costs, existing gaps, and strategies to fill those gaps.

// Diversify funding by growing the endowment funds, creating a development plan, identifying additional donors and museum members, obtaining corporate sponsorships.

// Identify additional sources of funding from entities such as the Texas Legislature, federal agencies, other granting agencies, and foundations, while partnering with WTAMU to grow funding sources.



OUTCOMES BY 2033:

COLLECTION

- // The focus of the collection will be in line with exhibit redesign initiatives
- // Catalogue and digitize the entire collection
- // Completed necessary deaccession
- // Created nationally-sought traveling exhibit

PLACE

- // Renovate, acquire, and maintain three active sites: a redesigned museum, a restaurant, and an offsite "Curatorial Center"
- // All three phases of redesign and renovation will be completed
- // Challenger Learning Center will be in its eighth or ninth year of operation

AUDIENCE

- // Annual attendance increased to 80,000-100,000
- // Expanded use of exhibits and archives by WTAMU students
- // Educational reach increased by an additional 25,000-30,000 students
- // Increased PPHM membership by 300 households

FUNDING

- // Secured and implemented funds towards permanent exhibit and structural redesign of three phases
- // Hire 3-5 key FTE staff
- // Increased corporate sponsorships and endowment giving
- // Increased unrestricted contributions



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2033
2033
2033

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This plan may evolve and change as circumstances dictate, especially as the organization faces unknown events in the future. However, this document, which helps to guide the organization to the 100th year of the museum building, is optimistic in outlook due to the positive opportunities that are before us. The Board of Trustees, the staff, community and corporate members, WTAMU leadership, the visitors to the museum – every stakeholder is enthusiastic about the success of the museum as it nears a momentous anniversary date. We are extremely grateful to the various groups of people who, over the past year, offered insights, thoughts, and strategies regarding the future of the museum, the result of which is this plan. The Think Tank, the PPHS Board, WTAMU leadership, and various community partners and entities all shared in the generation of this plan and execute its goals. Of course the purpose of such strategy is solely to promote the stories of this region in order to build community, enhance learning, and nurture creativity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS *Continued...*

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THINK TANK

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Randy Ray
Wes Reeves
Dr. Kyle Sparkman
Richard Walton
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**ABOVE ALL
THINGS, THE
PLAINSMEN
HAD TO HAVE
AN INSTINCT
FOR DIRECTION.
I NEVER HAD A
COMPASS IN MY
LIFE, BUT I WAS
NEVER LOST.**

Charles Goodnight, 1920