



STRATEGIC PLAN: 2022 - 2026

January 1st, 2022 – December 31st, 2026

Rockingham County Historical
Society Museum and Archives

Mission Statement

“The Rockingham County Historical Society Museum and Archives is dedicated to preserving, disseminating, and exhibiting the history, culture, human and natural resources of Rockingham County, North Carolina, for the benefit of present and future generations”

ADOPTED: December 16th 2021

Prepared by:
Executive Director &
Board of the MARC

INTRODUCTION

The Rockingham County Historical Society Museum and Archives, operating as the Museum and Archives of Rockingham County (MARC), formed in 2011 and opened to the public in August 2012 with professional exhibits and a traveling Smithsonian Exhibition. It was the culmination of the merger of two organizations, the Rockingham County Historical Society, formed in 1954 and incorporated in 1967, and Rockingham County Museum and Archives.

To guide the nascent organization through its first three years of operation, the Board of Directors undertook a Strategic Planning Retreat under the guidance of William Hinman Consulting, of Winston-Salem.

The resulting Strategic Plan established a Mission, Statement of Purpose, and Vision Statement. Goals and Objectives were divided into seven sections: (1) Governance and Organizational Effectiveness; (2) Fund Raising and Financial Stewardship; (3) Educational Programs and Exhibitions; (4) Research and Collections; (5) Property, Facilities, and Equipment; Marketing and Public Relations; and (5) Administration and Personnel.

The MARC, through the efforts of its Board of Directors and professional staff, achieved many of the goals outlined for each objective. The following is a summary of that progress from 2011 – 2021.

- (1) Governance and Organization- The MARC's bylaws, updated in March 2016, established the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors maintains a commitment to diversity of race and ethnicity, backgrounds, age, geography, and skill sets.

Committees with clearly defined responsibilities function through the leadership of Directors and volunteers, including the Executive, Finance, Programs, Publicity and Special Project Committees; however, several committees, including Collections, Resource Development, and Exhibits are no longer active due to several factors such as personnel changes and streamlining of internal operations.

- (2) Fund Raising and Financial Stewardship- The MARC has established procedures to handle gifts, an annual auction fundraiser, membership drives and an annual giving program.
- (3) Educational Programs and Exhibitions- The MARC successfully opened to the public prior to the Covid-19 pandemic (fully closed March 14th, 2020 – August 11th, 2021 and partially open at Wright Tavern 11th August 2021 – present at time of this document adoption) and has regular public programming, physically and virtually. It has established a strong relationship with Rockingham County Schools. It offers fieldtrips and group tours.
- (4) Research and Collections- Although work in the Collections is never complete, the MARC has made strides in inventorying, organizing and preserving artifacts and archival material with our current Past Perfect Collections Management Software. It is still working, however, on making those materials widely available to researchers.
- (5) Property, Facilities, and Equipment- The MARC has maintained its relationship with Rockingham County as their tenants, renewing our 5-year lease in August 2020 and

continuing to receive a stipend each month towards utility expenses, which has remained the same amount (\$50,000 per annum) since the MARC's opening. However, we are still working with the County to find funds to overhaul the courthouse building HVAC system, plumbing and roof repairs before we can fully open again.

- (6) Marketing and Public Relationships- The MARC uses traditional media and social media to promote exhibits and events. It also produces a monthly email and flyers. It maintains a professional grade website that is regularly updated with new information.

- (7) Administration and Personnel - The MARC has a professional staff, including a full time Executive Director and two part-time positions: an Operations and Facilities Manager and Administrative/ Volunteer Coordinator. MARC belongs to the American Association of State and Local History, Time Travelers Club, North Carolina Museums Council, Federation of North Carolina Historical Societies and Reidsville, Eden and Western Rockingham Chambers of Commerce. MARC budgets for staff to attend professional development conferences. MARC has over forty active volunteers.

On 11/11/2021 through a MARC Board of Directors meeting quorum, the Directors approved a motion to evaluate the 2018-2021 strategic plan and to organize the creation of creating a new strategic plan for 2022-2026.

The 2018-2021 plan was emailed to the full board with the Executive Director gathering all board feedback.

Following the compiled board feedback by the Executive Director a draft of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan was written.

The draft plan was presented to the full Board of Directors on 12/15/2021

ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENTS

MISSION STATEMENT

The Rockingham County Historical Society Museum and Archives is dedicated to preserving, disseminating, and exhibiting the history, culture, human and natural resources of Rockingham County, North Carolina, for the benefit of present and future generations.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The MARC provides vital archival and collections storage, preservation and management as the only county-wide historical repository. MARC also provides the public historical, artifact and genealogical research services and consultations, diverse exhibitions, cultural and educational programs, meeting spaces for multiple organizations (regular partners: Daughters of the American Revolution, WeCare Senior Group, Friends Quakers Group, Troop 701 Boy Scouts, Hotbotz youth robotics club) and special event services to citizens of and visitors to Rockingham County, North Carolina.

The MARC owns and is responsible for the preservation and use of several historical structures and sites, namely the 1816 Wright Tavern and outbuildings, 1905 Post Office/Law Office, High Rock Ford (20-acre Revolutionary War site park with trail and river access), and Troublesome Creek Iron Works (50 acre Revolutionary War site). The MARC leases the 1907 Courthouse, home to the exhibits, collections, and staff offices, and the 1910 Jail from Rockingham County. Additionally, the MARC owns a growing collection of historical artifacts and documents spanning from the 1700s to 20th century local ephemera, covering industry, agriculture, prominent figures, the enslaved, military history, literary works, newspapers, tens of thousands of negatives, historic local footage and more.

The MARC presents a variety of educational programs to the public, from guided tours to exhibitions, and from lectures on area historical subjects to special events. Visitation includes local citizens, school and other group tours, and visitors to the region.

The MARC Board of Directors is comprised of a representative and diverse group of citizens. The Board and its working committees provide oversight of the MARC's activities, events, structure, employees, and properties. A full-time Executive Director, part-time Administrative Assistant, and part-time Operations Manager operate the MARC. In addition, over 40 active volunteers assist with MARC programs and activities.

As a 501C3, the MARC meets financial needs through contributions, grants, fundraisers, and government allocations. The MARC Board of Directors and staff are responsible to ensure adequate revenue.

VISION STATEMENT

The Rockingham County Historical Society Museum and Archives will be a sustainable organization. It will uphold professional standards and best practices in the curation of exhibits, the preservation of artifacts and archival material, and its public programs, tours and fieldtrips.

The MARC will strive to serve Rockingham County's diverse residents by providing year-round educational opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about the county's history.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A. GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

GOAL 1 Strengthen the number and diversity of the Board of Directors

Strategy 1 Through outreach activities and utilizing MARC's Chamber of Commerce memberships, include all Rockingham County geographic regions and increase members across demographics and under the age of 40.

GOAL 2 Increase the participation of Board of Directors Members

Strategy 1 Board members should maintain official membership of the MARC.

Strategy 2 Partake in an annual visit to one or multiple external museums individually or as a group as part of a self-assessment.

Strategy 3 Members play an active role in assisting corporate giving to expand MARC's sustainer base.

Strategy 4 Strengthen committees and recruit engaged committee chairs.

B. FUND RAISING AND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

GOAL 1 Ensure the MARC remains self-sufficient to maintain current operations and programs

Strategy 1 Executive Director to use a strategic grant calendar to increase operational grants to a base target of \$20,000 per annum as well as restricted grants for special projects:

Strategy 2 Support the annual auction fundraiser event with items or monetary donations.

Strategy 3 Staff and/or Board members provide at least four fundraisers.

Strategy 4 Staff and Board to increase sustainers through individual and corporate giving.

Strategy 5 Staff and Board to provide a clear strategy to effectively communicate all building improvement work, interior and exterior, with Rockingham County Commissioners.

GOAL 2 Increase funding to a level that will allow the MARC to add staff

Strategy 1 Approach local grant foundations (e.g., such as the Reidsville Area Foundation and the McMichael Family Foundation) for support for a part time/full time archivist and education coordinator for 2+ years.

C. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EXHIBITIONS

GOAL 1 Develop a functional, regular partnership with all schools in Rockingham County.

Strategy 1 Meet with history department chairs from the public high schools to discuss curriculum needs and share MARC resources.

Strategy 2 Use teacher created lesson plans from the Griggs v. Duke Project as a springboard to create a Teachers Advisory Panel within the next 5 years.

GOAL 2 Expand the audience participating in programs.

Strategy 1 Offer a wider variety of regular programs both physical and virtual, including at least one per year dedicated to historically marginalized groups or narratives, hidden/ hard histories or racial equity and social justice.

Strategy 2 Follow the Exhibits & Programming Strategic Plan 2022-2026 as a template to regularly offer something new and actively look for traveling and state-wide exhibits such as the Smithsonian.

D. RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS

GOAL 1 Develop an overall plan for permanent and new exhibits

Strategy 1 Executive Director to create a 5-year Exhibits & Programming Strategic Plan for 2022 – 2026, including materials gathered, cost estimates and estimated timetables.

Strategy 2 Have at least one new exhibit per year.

Strategy 3 Revive the Exhibits Committee within the next 5 years, recruiting new members and a Committee Chair, using the 5-year Exhibits & Programming Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 as a template.

GOAL 2 Accession and re-house at least 50% of the MARC collection using Past Perfect CMS by the Strategic Plan end-date.

Strategy 1 Follow the living Legacy Archival Project document and continue to build and develop MARC's archive volunteer team, led by the Executive Director.

Strategy 2 Budget archival supplies in expenses each year (see Financial Sustainability Report 2022-2026).

GOAL 3 Revive the Collections Care and Acquisitions Committee within the next 5 years.

Strategy 1 Use the Legacy Archival Project document and other associated documents (Collections Management Strategy and Disaster Plan) as a guide to define MARC's collection needs and culture to new members.

GOAL 4 Work towards making public more of MARC's collection to make it easier for researchers to utilize us as an invaluable county resource.

Strategy 1 Upgrade Past Perfect 5.0 CMS to the online version, enabling a greater number of users, additional features, more secure data backup and a public interface when ready to launch.

E. PROPERTY, FACILITIES, AND EQUIPMENT

GOAL 1 Facilitate positive visitor experiences.

Strategy 1 Number rooms and provide an updated number visitor guide.

Strategy 2 Create a wider variety of options for schools and groups such as judicial/craft/ DNA workshops etc. using the tour guide materials and existing templates to create a standardized tour 'menu'.

GOAL 2 Create and adopt a plan of the use of MARC event spaces.

Strategy 1 Create a "terms of use policy" for non-MARC entities, setting out expectations, fees and responsibilities when using MARC spaces.

Strategy 2 Create a business plan for Courtroom Space including costs and plans for any modifications that are suggested.

F. MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOAL 1 Increase public awareness of the MARC

Strategy 1 Executive Director and Board to visit local clubs, county and municipal bodies, civic organizations, and other organized groups throughout the year as MARC representatives and report these visits to the Publicity Committee Chair who will compile a year-end list of contacts.

Strategy 2 Develop outreach list of all churches, schools, civic organizations, government entities, and clubs and keep regular contact each year in a January email/mail blast.

Strategy 3 Invest in additional and improved signage around Wentworth and the courthouse, approaching Wentworth Town Council for assistance and funds.

Strategy 4 Fund through grants or operating surplus a re-design and reprint of MARC's main tri-fold leaflet, utilizing MARC's volunteers, Board, staff and contacts to distribute throughout high footfall areas in Rockingham County.

Strategy 5 Staff to provide expanded use of MARC website and Facebook and other online tools to enhance community education and engagement.

G. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

GOAL 1 Add staff as soon as funding is available.

Strategy 1 Executive Director and Board to determine staffing priorities, qualifications, and new job responsibilities. An Archivist and Education Coordinator currently at the top of the list.

GOAL 2 Increase volunteers, especially youth.

Strategy 1 Maintain an up-to-date log of volunteer hours, contacts, schedules and volunteering preferences (i.e., tours, archives, writing etc.).

Strategy 2 Provide recognition for all volunteers with an annual volunteer appreciation event and include special recognition for outstanding volunteers.

Strategy 3 Volunteer Coordinator to actively seek new recruiting methods and contacting other county recruiters, using current volunteer induction templates to lead training, increase volunteer numbers (i.e., 10+ weekly archive volunteers, 10+ regular tour guides/ school workshop volunteers, 4+ article writer volunteers, 1-2 social media/ website volunteers, 1-2 graphic design volunteers and greeter and event volunteers) and ultimately promote a positive MARC culture.