Strategic Plan

2025–2027

Pennsylvania
Historical & Museum Commission

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Preserving and Sharing History of and for All Pennsylvanians

Pennsylvania is known as the Keystone State – and for good reason. The Commonwealth is the crossroads of so many important events and ideas: the nation's founding, a primary gateway and corridor for America's diverse population, the rise of industrialization, the intersection of a variety of natural ecosystems, and much more. With 2,450 individual municipalities, Pennsylvania is a complex fabric enriched by its varied threads. At the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC), we embrace this complexity and the fullness it brings, and we value all voices in remembering and using our shared past to plan for our future.

Our *Mission*

As the state's history agency, it is our mission to discover, protect, and share Pennsylvania's past, inspiring others to value and use our history in meaningful ways.

Our *Vision*

Pennsylvanians see history as relevant to their lives.

Our *Values*

We are committed to:

- Connecting Pennsylvanians to their history and each other.
- Helping Pennsylvanians discover the relevance of their history and culture.
- Sharing Pennsylvania history to educate, inspire, and provide context for decision-making.
- Being inclusive in everything we do and treating everyone with dignity, kindness, and respect.
- Doing our best always to provide Pennsylvanians with the service they deserve.

Plan Background

PHMC's 2025–2027 Strategic Plan continues the general direction of PHMC's 2021–2024 strategic plan, carrying forward the goals of that ambitious plan. New objectives and tasks have been developed to support continued progress toward these goals.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Meaningful and Inclusive History

Our work is ultimately about *people*. Although we are stewards of Pennsylvania's natural and cultural history, it is not enough to preserve historic sites, artifacts, and documents. We must ensure that what we preserve reflects the history of all Pennsylvanians and share this history in meaningful ways.

WE WILL:

- Ensure that the history preserved and shared represents the breadth of Pennsylvanians and their stories.
- Engage with communities and partners to preserve and share history that is meaningful to them.
- Enhance offerings on topics with contemporary relevance.
- Share history in engaging, innovative, and relatable ways.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ***New dynamic and relevant exhibits and programs,*** *including new standing exhibits at the State Museum, Anthracite Heritage Museum, and Brandywine Battlefield Park.*
- ***Online Community History Dialog*** *to encourage documentation and preservation of underrepresented communities' history.*
- ***Broadening the interpretation of museums and their collections*** *to better represent all Pennsylvanians.*
- ***Implementation of a new 10-year Statewide Preservation Plan*** *to assist communities in preserving historic resources that are meaningful to them.*

Accessible History

Improve Access to Collections and Programs

We serve *all* Pennsylvanians by preserving their history. For people to be able to use history for their purposes, they must be able to find, access, and retrieve it.

WE WILL:

- Increase the diversity represented in PHMC's collections, including its sites, facilities, collections, exhibits, and data.
- Ensure that collections, artifacts, and documents are findable and retrievable.
- Make PHMC sites and content accessible, both physically and virtually.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ***Digitization of archival records*** *that were previously available only on-site and making them accessible online.*
- ***Augmentation of publicly accessible online records*** *of museum collections, including botanical and archaeological collections.*
- ***Documentation of historic resources*** *across the Commonwealth to represent the breadth of Pennsylvania history, making these records available online.*
- ***Delivery of virtual history programs*** *shared through social media, online presentations, live-streamed programs, and online webinars.*

Participatory History

Be Leaders and Facilitate Partnerships

We do not accomplish our work alone. We *partner* and *collaborate* with communities and organizations across the state to preserve, share, and promote Pennsylvania history.

WE WILL:

- Assist communities in preserving history that is meaningful to them.
- Connect history practitioners, resource providers, and strategic partners.
- Support strategic initiatives and partnerships that produce mutually beneficial results.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ***Development of a statewide directory*** *of historical and cultural institutions.*
- ***Development of procedures*** *for other state agencies to clarify their responsibilities under the History Code.*
- ***Collaboration with federally recognized Tribes*** *to facilitate the sharing of their history through exhibits, programming, and documentation.*

Public History

Enhance Customer Experiences in Innovative and Inclusive Ways

We are a public service agency, and our focus will remain on the *public* and on *service*. We strive to provide value to the Commonwealth's people in return for their financial investment in us.

WE WILL:

- Keep service to Pennsylvanians at the heart of everything we do.
- Continuously improve efficiency and prioritize mission-driven and strategic work.
- Follow best practices, preserving historical collections and stories for present and future generations of Pennsylvanians.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ***Regular evaluation of initiatives and programs*** *for effectiveness and alignment with strategic priorities.*
- ***Creation of a digital archives*** *to serve the public by preserving records that protect their financial interests and legal rights*
- ***Development of collaborative efforts*** *with other state agencies to streamline environmental review processes.*

Sustainable History

Increase Sustainability as an Organization

Our collections are forever. We only collect artifacts and documents that must be preserved *permanently*, so it is essential that agency operations remain supported and viable.

WE WILL:

- Care for collections in accordance with best practices.
- Align mission-critical and strategic priorities with resources.
- Provide professional growth and support opportunities to retain and attract motivated, well-qualified, and diverse staff.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ***Renovation*** *of the PHMC Tower for collections storage.*
- ***Increased revenue*** *generation through mission-appropriate activities.*
- ***Reorganization*** *of PHMC's digital assets.*