TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. Letter from Executive Director & CEO Megan Wood ........................................ 3
02. The Intentional Journey .................................................................................... 4
03. Strategic Priorities ............................................................................................. 5
04. Impact Statement, Outcomes & Indicators ....................................................... 6
05. Major Organizational Projects .......................................................................... 7
06. Implementation, Accountability & Reporting .................................................... 13
I am pleased to share the revised Ohio History Connection strategic plan. When we first developed this plan, we created it to be cascading, and by design, to be revised and updated as we move through time. The last few years have taught us to be flexible and adaptable, and this version of the plan reflects our ability to respond to and embrace the present. The process of revision involved bringing together a cross-organizational group of staff to critically examine our projects and forecast where we are going and where we want to go to transform the future.

In my role as the new Executive Director and CEO (as of August 1, 2022) I am excited to continue to adapt and grow our vision for the future. We are on the doorstep of many exciting opportunities, and we believe the best is yet to come. While we are moving these initiatives forward, we will be thinking strategically about what happens next.

My thanks to the entire Ohio History Connection team for embracing our strategic priorities in all aspects of our work. I am honored to be your colleague.

Sincerely,

MEGAN WOOD
THE
INTENTIONAL JOURNEY

OUR MISSION
WHY WE EXIST

We spark discovery of Ohio’s stories. Embrace the present, share the past and transform the future.

OUR CORE VALUES
WHO WE ARE

+ RELEVANCE: Connecting our lives to Ohio’s history
+ INCLUSIVITY: Representing all Ohioans and all descendants of Ohio’s historic communities
+ AUTHENTICITY: Valuing artifacts, oral histories and documented stories of history
+ STEWARDSHIP: Protecting the evidence of Ohio’s history and upholding 21st century best practices for public history and historic preservation
+ WORKING TOGETHER: Pursuing partnerships and sharing authority and responsibility

OUR MANDATE
WHAT WE DO

• Manage more than 50 historic sites and museums across Ohio
• Care for our state’s collections and archives and share the stories of the lands we now call Ohio
• Administer the state historic preservation office that helps preserve historic places in Ohio
• Provide education and outreach services that support students, teachers, local history groups and communities in Ohio
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SUSTAINABILITY
All the ways that we support the ongoing impact of the organization, our sites and the communities in which we work

EQUITY
All the ways that we address structural inequities and ensure representation, access and inclusion

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING
All the ways that we strengthen our connections and partnerships with stakeholders across Ohio and beyond

The strategic planning process yielded three broad organizational strategic priorities that support the Ohio History Connection’s mission. Strategic priorities are the way we do our work at all levels of the organization, including major organizational and divisional projects.

Sustainability, equity, and relationship-building will be guiding concepts for the Ohio History Connection in the years ahead and will inform the services we provide to Ohioans, whether internally or externally focused. These priorities are the means by which we align our work with our mission and impact statement.
IMPACT STATEMENT, OUTCOMES & INDICATORS

By framing our mission through the lens of our three strategic priorities, we can articulate the impact we want the Ohio History Connection to have over the next ten years. The outcomes listed below operationalize our impact statement. These outcomes will be measured by key performance indicators identified during FY23.

**IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Ohio History Connection will use history as a catalyst for transformation and a more connected Ohio.

**OUTCOMES**

In order to achieve this long-term impact, we will work towards two outcomes:

1. **OUTCOME 1:** Ohioans will better understand their relationship to history, the environment and each other.

2. **OUTCOME 2:** The Ohio History Connection will be better prepared to respond to the needs of our communities today and in the future.

**INDICATORS**

Over the next year, we will identify appropriate evaluation metrics that indicate meaningful progress toward each of these outcomes, treating FY23 as a fact-finding and baseline year to grow from for the duration of the Strategic Plan. Key performance indicators will come from this continued work.
MAJOR
ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS

As a statewide organization with headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, we operate in several spheres of impact: building our own organizational capacity, within local communities, across the state of Ohio and both nationally and internationally. Projects may cross spheres but are categorized by the highest level of impact.

These projects represent the high-level projects that the organization will tackle over the next ten years. This strategic plan is designed to be a three-year cascading plan that we will add to annually, extending it and providing more detail each year. All projects align with our strategic priorities and work toward our impact statement and outcomes.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

All projects that have a high level of impact on the organizational capacity of the Ohio History Connection itself.

01. Financial Sustainability

- Earned Revenue = 15% of operating revenues (up from 7.1%)
- Donor Support = 10-15% of operating revenues (up from 6%)
- $3.3 million returned to Foundation from Operations

Our stretch goal is to increase the percentage of support and revenue that are derived from earned sources and contributions three-fold over the next ten years.
02. Compensation Equity
Ohio History Connection is committed to the ongoing process of evaluating total compensation for all employees. Our main objectives include addressing wage stagnation, market competitiveness, and inequities across divisions and positions in the organization. This work requires collaboration amongst the leadership team and requires the development of shared values around fair compensation for all employees, regardless of position. We will consult with experts and engage in regular analysis of organizational and external compensation conditions.

03. American Indian Policy Implementation
Implementing the American Indian Policy will be led by the director of the American Indian Relations division in partnership with all other divisions across the Ohio History Connections. Areas in the organization include, but aren’t limited to, cultural resources, outreach, and historic sites and museums. This will involve identifying areas that need to align with the Policy, creating a plan for implementation, and then implementing the plan. Additionally, staffing will be necessary to implement the Policy.
All projects that have a high level of impact or reach in specific local communities, for example Columbus.

Columbus Campus Transformation

The vision for the Columbus campus is to create a premiere destination where visitors can experience the Ohio History Center and Ohio Village—all with one ticket. Additionally, patrons of the library, archives and State Historic Preservation Office will have their needs met on campus.

We see this robust and compelling set of experiences as a perfect platform for featuring the other sites in our network and the many services we provide across the system by integrating them into the visitor experience. Opportunities for up-charged experiences, event rentals, retail that offers goods from across the site work and concessions will contribute to our revenues.

The Columbus Campus will include the Ohio History Center, Ohio Village, the Library and State Archives, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Collections Care Center. Consideration of public green space will be an additional important component of the overall Columbus Campus Transformation, as details emerge.

Major projects within this portfolio include:

**Ohio Village Revitalization Project**

- **Ohio Village Experience Expansion**
  The anticipated changes to Ohio Village are threefold:
  - Redevelop and expand the characters and businesses to reflect the diversity of Ohio’s small towns in the 19th century; and, to appeal to fans of traditional food, agriculture and craft practices.
  - Introduce experiences that people indicate they miss, including more hands-on exploration, more interaction with village residents and artisans and musicians.
  - Extend the season from early spring through December.

- **Streetscape Project**
  The Streetscape Project will improve the utilities, boardwalk and roadways within Ohio Village. Anticipated recommendation for work and timing of this large project by November 2022.
  - Improvement or replacement of all utilities to enable all structures to have or be ready for electricity, water, gas and network connectivity.
  - Improve overall accessibility by improving outdoor lighting, entry and egress for all buildings, replacement of boardwalks and improvement of roadway surfaces.
  - Investment in landscape to improve beautification and overall experience.

- **Ohio Village Master Plan**
  The Ohio Village master plan will include completion of a market assessment of audience penetration and recommendations for the best overall experience and investment for Ohio Village.
  - Additional information related to the operational costs will be included in the recommendations. Anticipated completion of master plan by January 2023.

- **Ohio Village Structure Development**
  - Deferred maintenance for existing Ohio Village structures will be determined as a part of the master Plan completion.
  - Based on results of the Ohio Village master plan, the redevelopment of Ohio Village may include one or more new buildings or structures.
COLLECTIONS CARE CENTER PROJECT

**Collections Care Center: Construction will be completed**

A new collections facility will be designed and constructed within three years with a budget of $15 million (reflecting the currently available capital resources). With this budget, it will not have the visitor experience aspects nor room for future collections growth that were previously envisioned. However, we will create a facility that houses current collections at the highest standards for preservation and culturally appropriate storage. It will be designed so that it can be expanded in the future as funds permit. The location is to be determined.

**Collections Care Center: Facility will be furnished and collections move will be completed**

We anticipate a two-year process for relocating collections from their current locations to the new facility. The facility will need all interior furnishings, including high-density shelving throughout, as these are not included in construction costs. The facility will be accessed by staff and volunteers, researchers and American Indian partners for consultation. It may be open to visitors in a very limited capacity via guided tours.

MUSEUM OF OHIO PROJECT

The Ohio History Center will transition to the Museum of Ohio over a span of years, yet to be defined. As of Fall 2022, the vision for the Museum of Ohio is being finalized and a basic framework of the transition will be defined. Anticipated full plan by end of calendar year 2022.

**Moving toward Museum of Ohio**

- Ohio–Champion of Sports’ loans end at end of 2023 calendar year. The exhibition will likely be scaled down to a smaller footprint and some portions of the exhibit will go off display completely.
- Black Dolls exhibit, produced by Ohio History Connection in partnership with NAAMCC opens February 2024 in Gallery 4.
- Additional activities not yet defined as of August 2022.

02. 
Poindexter Village Museum Project

The Poindexter Village Museum project’s goal during this construction phase is to bring to life authentic community perspectives and experiences related not only to Columbus African American history and culture, but also American history in general. In partnership with James Preston Poindexter Foundation, Poindexter Village features special events and programs designed to bring value to how the community sees and identifies with the history of the site. The museum project is currently finalizing plans to begin phase II of the project, which will feature the completion of the remaining exterior and grounds work and begin the interior work of the museum.

03. 
Octagon Earthworks Restoration Project

*(pending Licking County Common Pleas Court trial)*

We are seeking to restore full public access to the Octagon Earthworks in Newark by acquiring the leasehold from Moundbuilders Country Club. On December 7, 2022, the Ohio Supreme Court upheld lower court decisions that give OHC legal authority to acquire the lease. The case now goes to Licking County Common Pleas Court for a jury trial to set the amount of the lease buy-out. Within the timeframe of this strategic plan, we would expect to conclude the legal process of acquiring the leasehold and develop a facility master plan detailing how we plan to restore the landscape and provide world-class facilities and full staffing to welcome visitors to the site.
STATEWIDE
All projects that have a high level of impact or reach across the State of Ohio.

01. Historic Site System Restructure
Ten years out from establishing the site partner management system, we will be speaking with all our site partners and other stakeholders, to assess what is working and where changes to structure or procedures might increase impact, revenues and or create efficiencies.

02. AAM Reaccreditation
American Alliance of Museums reaccreditation will be completed for seven sites and initial accreditation explored for three to five additional sites. The sites that currently have accreditation will be reaccredited in 2024. We view this process as one tactic for raising and aligning the standard for practice across sites.
NATIONALLY & INTERNATIONALLY
All projects that have a high level of impact or reach across the United States or internationally.

01. World Heritage Inscription
World Heritage Inscription will be realized for Ft. Ancient, the Newark Earthworks (Great Circle and Octagon Earthworks), and the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park. We expect that the World Heritage Inscription will be realized within five years, given the status of the eminent domain proceedings with Moundbuilders Country Club.

02. Endeavor to complete consultation with American Indian tribes around repatriation and reburial
Ohio History Connection will endeavor to complete an important aspect of its work under NAGPRA by working with American Indian communities to consult on, culturally affiliate and repatriate the remains of the 7,000+ culturally unaffiliated ancestral remains that are stored in our facility. Should they wish, tribal partners will be offered the cemetery at Johnston Farm as one option for reburying these ancestors.

03. Johnston Farm and Indian Agency Reburial Cemetery
We will establish a cemetery that will be made available to American Indian communities who wish to rebury the repatriated remains of their Ancestors in Ohio. Plans for additional landscaping for the site are being developed, and we will continue to consult with our Tribal Nation partners to design the cemetery and determine the process for accessing it for reburials.
IMPLEMENTATION, ACCOUNTABILITY & REPORTING

In order to align the work of all staff with the stated goals and outcomes of this plan, the strategic plan will be implemented in the following ways:

• Individual Annual Goal Setting and Performance Reviews - The strategic plan will be a reference document during the performance goal setting process, as well as the performance review process, to ensure that each staff member is framing their work through the organizational priorities of equity, sustainability and building connections.

• Department and Division Annual Goal Setting – The strategic plan’s impact statement and outcomes act as a framework for department and division leadership, providing structure for aligning department and division goals with the strategic plan.

Progress on the strategic plan will be monitored in the following ways:

• Project Tracking and Evaluation—Staff members will be monitoring and tracking major projects and reporting on measures of success in order to demonstrate progress, growth and comparative impact.

• Monthly Updates—Project sponsors will submit monthly updates to track progress, resource needs, and overall project status. Once a month, at an OHIO Forum meeting, the Chief Operating Officer will share high-level project updates, identified points of collaboration on upcoming activities, and requests for resources.

• Quarterly Updates—Major project updates will be compiled for the board meeting each quarter. Leadership staff will present trustees with high-level status updates and will drill deeply down into several major projects to provide greater understanding, as needed.

The strategic plan is a living document, which is intended to be updated regularly. Projects with closer deadlines will have the most detail. As the plan continues to cascade, details will be added to projects with further deadlines in the future. Odd fiscal years will be years for reflection and change to the strategic plan. These years will be: FY23, FY25, FY27 and FY29.

This concludes the Ohio History Connection Strategic Plan. A copy of this plan is available by contacting the Executive Director’s Office at 614.297.2390.