



NEW BEDFORD ART MUSEUM/ARTWORKS!

STRATEGIC PLAN

AUGUST 13, 2017



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this strategic plan document is to provide a roadmap for the New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! to follow for the next few years. A strategic plan is first and foremost a set of future activities that guides an organization towards its mission and its vision. This plan should be used to prioritize efforts and resources in an efficient and strategic manner and ensure that they align with both short and long term goals. The plan allows for a framework for evaluating proposed actions to ensure that continued alignment with the Museum's stated purpose is put into place. Goals should be measured on a regular basis and objectives realigned as needed, and the plan should be considered a living document that is revised and updated periodically.

The plan is also a vehicle to engage stakeholders and foster alignment between the Museum and community organizations.

HISTORY

With the official declaration by the Secretary of State on February 3, 2014, the merging of ArtWorks! Partners for the Arts & Community and New Bedford Art Museum was official. New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! became the unified organization built on the foundations of two long standing community organizations. New Bedford Art Museum was founded in 1993 to preserve and promote the artistic and cultural heritage of the region and to showcase area artists through exhibitions and programming. It is a place to showcase New Bedford's art collection, held by New Bedford Free Public Library. ArtWorks!, also founded in 1993, grew into an established community gallery and art education center with a mission to make art accessible to everyone through exhibits, classes and community outreach.

NBAM/ArtWorks! offers a dynamic calendar of a dozen exhibitions a year in our several galleries. Exhibitions are accompanied by a variety of educational programs and events that enrich the visitor experience. We highlight and support local artists in our shop, Regions Gallery, and some of our exhibitions. We provide a wide range of educational programs both on site and in the community that serve people of all ages with special attention to youth and the under-served. Our signature purple ArtMobiles provide creative experiences for the youth of our community every summer.

MISSION STATEMENT

The New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! is dedicated to engaging a diverse audience in relevant exhibitions, exemplary education and creative experiences as a vital innovative center for the arts.

VISION STATEMENT

The New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! vision is to transform the community by inspiring all generations through art.

STRATEGIC GOALS

OVERALL

The Museum's primary focus is on its engagement with the myriad and diverse New Bedford communities to enhance the reach and content of its exhibition programming as well as the expansion of its education programs through community and regional partnerships. The Museum enlists a diverse Board of Directors and a cross-generational staff who engage in community activities and assist in the development of the financial and staff resources. Future areas for focus will be the museum's reliance on city support, the overlap with other organizations and funding competition and the space to host exhibitions and educational activities.

New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks!'s two main areas of focus are Exhibits and Education, with Development as a key underpinning for these two areas. While each department has developed their own strategic goals, there are some needs of the organization that are overarching for all and some that are discrete from each other. Goals that do not fall directly and solely under a specific department are included here as organizational goals intended to move New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! forward as a whole.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Museum seeks to improve its marketing capability that will identify and reach our audiences, build relationships with members and donors, and share what we have to offer. We will develop a marketing and communications plan and create an engaging brand for the Museum which will deliver a consistent and memorable association with the institution.

- Work on brand development
- Reconstruct the website
- Maintain a robust presence on Social Media
- Hire a part-time marketing staff person and develop marketing plan
- Establish target markets and develop strategies for reaching them
- Schedule and produce bi-annual newsletter for members
- Develop and implement a long-range advertising plan.

BOARD ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Engaging the Museum Board of Directors is a way of leveraging personal connections to help identify corporate sponsors and new high-end donors. As we build an organization with a clear vision for the future we need to ensure that there will be leadership in place to carry these things forward. To facilitate achieving the goals of the strategic plan and to support the continued financial and operational well-being of the institution, there needs to be the development of a strong Board structure that governs the succession planning of the Executive Director and Board officers.

- Establish criteria for contributions and participation by Board members
- Expand the DAC through Board relationships
- Develop Board practice of identifying potential new Board members, officers and committee chairs
- Develop Board governance that outlines goals and responsibilities for Board members
- Prepare potential Board officers through additional training and exposure to responsibilities
- Ensure that job description and expectations for Executive Director stay current.

FACILITY SPACE AND NEEDS

New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! enjoys the support of the City of New Bedford in the form of space in a municipally owned building. The building was originally was a bank and as such has unique architectural features that enhance the gallery spaces. However, as a building that was not designed as a museum or to house art studios or education spaces, it presents a number of challenges. There needs to be both immediate and long range plans to address the physical structure and spaces of New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! to ensure they will adequately meet the needs of our exhibition and education programs and staff.

- Identify and apply for resources to fund major systems updates and renovations
- Complete recommendations for building improvements made by Facilities Committee
- Identify further needs for space
- Identify potential solutions to space needs.

DEVELOPMENT

The goal of the Development team is to increase the financial contributions from various sources which will enable the long term sustainability of the exhibits and education programs.

CULTIVATE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Our on-going partnerships with organizations in the Greater New Bedford area will prove to be the key in the Museum's long-term sustainability and overall presence in the community.

- Develop the partnership with the Library and other community organizations
- Focus on the development of strategic partnerships which enhance the Museum's mission and support sustainability.

EXPANSION OF DONOR BASE

An on-going effort to communicate on multiple levels to past donors and make new connections with prospective donors is essential to growing the donor base. Our efforts will include reaching out to younger generations as well as re-connecting with individuals who may have become disassociated with us due to the merger or any other reason.

- Develop focused approach to identifying donor groups and membership base to grow a culture of stewardship
- Leverage Board contacts
- Review operational systems for optimization of donor database

- Work with the Director's Advisory Council (DAC) to engage potential donors and grow the number of DAC members and offer them exclusive events
- Reach out to the parents of the students who participate in our educational programs
- Focus on the Membership Campaign and Annual Appeal to order to increase Museum's financial stability.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

Corporate sponsorships help build community partnerships and expose the Museum to additional audiences to support exhibitions and educational programs and add to the financial stability of NBAM/ArtWorks!

- Work with the Exhibition Manager to identify potential corporate donors for 2018-2020 exhibits
- Target specific campaigns (such as sound equipment)
- Target donors for specific gallery naming rights
- Utilize Board connections to utilize corporate support.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS AND RECEPTIONS

Events are a key method to raise funds for general operating expenses and provide an opportunity for community outreach and visibility, as well as to celebrate individuals and organizations who have contributed to the success of NBAM/ArtWorks!

- Look for ways to increase the participation of existing events and avoid creating too many events that will disperse the donor base
- Grow and expand the capacity of the principal fundraising events to support the Museum
- Develop the capability to host an event that recognizes leaders in the community.
- Encourage participation in event committees by community members to get fresh ideas and energy and build relationships.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TO BUILD AN ENDOWMENT (3 YEAR GOAL)

An endowment will ensure a long term sustainability for the Museum. An agreement on targets for a capital campaign and prioritization for resources by Board and staff for this campaign will be needed in the future.

- Conduct a feasibility study for the development of a capital campaign
- Identify financial goal and objectives
- Identify leadership and major donors as well as other prospects.

EXPANSION OF STAFF AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

The addition of more resources will enable a continued and expanded capability for the development process.

- Expand current Development roles.

GRANTS

Government and foundation grants contribute substantially to the support of our educational programs, exhibits and general operating support. Time and energy should be devoted to nurturing relationships with current grantors and identifying new potential grants.

EXHIBITS

The overall intent of the Exhibitions component of the New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! is to maintain a calendar of events that is lively, engaging, thought-provoking and resonant to the area while at the same time creating a balance between regional (New England), national and international exhibitions. Short-term objectives consist of currently identified items and in no way limit activity consistent with long-term objectives. Long-term objectives lean toward overarching values that warrant perpetual consideration.

To enhance the quality of exhibitions it is important that the Museum increase its engagement with the local art community and expand its network of prospective artists. The Museum also encourages Board members and others to contribute to the development of the exhibits schedule. The Museum will develop a strategy for the professional marketing of exhibits to increase participation. The Museum will continue to strengthen its internal staff to improve the quality of exhibits and allow the Exhibits director to focus on future relationships beneficial for future exhibits. The Exhibits team works with the operational team to develop strategies to improve the quality of infrastructure to support the exhibitions.

We strive to create exhibitions that feature regional artists as well as national and international artist. In doing so, the Museum develops its reach and reputation as a culturally diverse institution.

- Review geographic origin of Artists and Curators and possibly that of the subject exhibited artwork for the past 3 years
- Map and analyze the resultant information
- Determine what constitutes 'balance'
- Identify adjustments to planned schedule of exhibits needed to meet the determined 'balance'

- Cultivate relationships with a broad range of artists and develop a history of exhibiting work from both the region and farther afield with a focus on cultural relevance to the New Bedford region.

STRIVE FOR SELF-SUSTAINABILITY OF EXHIBITS

Art exhibits are at the heart of the Museum's programming. In order to produce powerful and interesting art exhibits, the Museum must develop strategies for exhibition expenses, shipping and transport of art works, print and support materials as well as artist support.

- Develop strategies for sustained funding for shipping and receiving of national and international works
- Establish program to assist Artists and Curators in developing exhibit budgets
- Establish a sustainable annual budget specifically for exhibit spending
- Establish annual grant application(s) process
- Establish corporate funding.

DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH EXHIBITS

Education that is specific to exhibitions enhances the viewer experience. New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! strives to develop and maintain an innovative Museum Education program.

- Develop a Docent program
- Develop a Museum Educator in Residence program
- Develop a dedicated interactive educational space in the galleries
- Investigate digital application programs including consideration of data input and user access
- Create an Exhibitions Education staff position.

REACH FOR DIVERSITY OF ARTISTS AND CURATORS

It is important that New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! is a cultural institution that represents the population that it serves.

- Work with artists and curators who reflect the diversity of our community
- Identify nationality, race, gender and religious populations being under served
- Develop strategies for approaching and encouraging participation of under-served populations.

ENLIVEN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

A continued, active relationship to the Library will diversify viewer experience of both institutions. The Library houses the city's art collection. Exhibition of the Library's Collection was the cornerstone to the original establishment of the New Bedford Art Museum. Engagement with this collection is something that will directly benefit the Museum's exhibits and education programs.

- Meet with Library personnel on a regular basis to review plans for City Gallery exhibitions and coordination with planned exhibits in the remaining galleries
- Plan a workshop with the Museum's Exhibitions Committee and Library Staff to review the NBFPL collection
- Enhance the close relationship with the New Bedford Free Public Library.

FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ARTISTS AND CURATORS

New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks! strives to be an educator of and advocate for artists and curators and should develop a plan to foster this professional development by artists and curators.

- Develop expectations, responsibilities and privileges for Artists and Curators to assist in their professional growth and development. Provide periodic professional development workshops and seminars for area artists
- Develop a sustainable annual budget specifically for artist/curator education and stipends.
- Highlight artist members on Museum's website

DEVELOP COLLECTIONS STRATEGY

New Bedford Art Museum/Artworks! continues to explore the possibility of becoming an institution with its own collection.

EDUCATION

The Museum's education programs drive the Museum's mission. The Museum offers a variety of in-house classes and workshops for all ages as well as regular art education to the community and private groups on request. Specialized art education and educational offerings related to the current and upcoming exhibits are offered and will be expanded. The Museum plans to promote more diversity in programs, continue the growth of scholarships offered, expand and create more partnerships that will grow educational offerings, and investigate and pursue any opportunities for additional space.

INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

A variety of classes are offered to children, teens and adults throughout the year both onsite at the Museum and off-site locations. Classes are offered in painting, drawing, clay, and digital photograph, and computer design. The Museum's goal is to increase participation at least 10% each year.

- Assess and evaluate course offerings in terms of diversity, current trends and audience demands
 - Assess equipment needs regularly to determine future costs and possibilities for expanded opportunities.
 - Assess space requirements on a regular basis to determine opportunities for additional educational offerings.
 - Review and improve transportation options to facilitate arrival at the Museum for visitors.
 - Increase the participation of the teen programs
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EXPAND THE MUSEUM'S EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

The Museum has access to a vast network of artists and professionals that allow for additional offerings to the community.

- Grow the marketing capabilities to notify community organizations of the Museum's capabilities to support off-site customized art classes and workshops
- Explore the possibility of master classes with established and new artists that relate to current exhibits
- Explore partnerships with other organizations to offer accreditation to art teachers
- Explore partnerships with organizations to facilitate summer institutes or programs specifically focused for educators
- Review upcoming exhibits for educational opportunities
- Maintain alignment with community and cultural events to develop relevant educational offerings
- Recruit volunteers to support one-time educational events or specialized activities that help the Museum membership be exposed to region-wide artistic activities.

IMPROVE THE MUSEUM'S CAPACITY TO EVALUATE AND PRIORITIZE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TO REMAIN ALIGNED WITH MUSEUM MISSION, EXHIBITS AND THE GREATER COMMUNITY.

There must be a focused process for the evaluation and prioritization of the education programs in alignment with financial, community and strategic considerations. This annual assessment should take into consideration both quantitative as well as qualitative values in order to determine which programs to continue to support and strengthen.

PLAN MANAGEMENT

It is the assumption that strategic planning does not end with the Museum's Strategic Plan document. Board members should be kept abreast of changes or revisions to the Plan at regular intervals and review the plan for consistency and changes as well as assist in the establishment of a methodology for measuring the success and progress of the Plan. The Museum's Strategic Plan document should be used to facilitate engagements with stakeholders and elicit input in regards to the direction of the museum. The Museum's Strategic Plan should be used as a framework for dialogue with the community.

CONTRIBUTORS

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VERSION HISTORY

V#	Status	Date	Editor	Notes
V1	Draft	Jan 7, 2016	Margaret Nash	Submitted to Board for review Jan. 11, 2016
V2	Draft	Feb. 16, 2016	Margaret Nash	Edits by Jamie Uretsky (Exhibits), Caroline Conzatti & Meg Albert (Development)
V3	Draft	March 3, 2016	Margaret Nash	Updated document per feedback from Board members. Consolidated all marketing objectives to Overall section. Updated each section for consistency with goals, strategies, and objectives. Moved "Grants" to overall section. Re-prioritized objectives.
V4	Draft	April 27, 2016	Margaret Nash	Updated Vision., Added #8 Grants to Development section. , Updated Succession Planning section.
V5	Draft	February 2017	Margaret Nash	Updated Education section.
V6	Draft	March 2017	Margaret Nash	Included information from original analysis in each section. , Updated sections with input from Stakeholder session January 2017.
V7	Draft	April 24, 2017	Margaret Nash	Changes made per review with Noelle Foye, Barbara Purdy, Caroline Conzatti, Mark Medeiros, Gig Lang
V8	Publish to Board	May 4, 2017	Margaret Nash	Revised History section by Noelle Foye
V9	Publish to DAC	August 13, 2017	Margaret Nash, Sara Krane	Edits by Sara Krane