



## Benton County Historical Society Strategic Plan 2019-2022

### Introduction:

The Benton County Historical Society was formed in 1951 as the Benton County Pioneer Historical Society to preserve local history and cultural resources. After the 1867 Philomath College building in Philomath, Oregon was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and renovated in the late 1970s, the Society opened a museum in the building in 1980. The Society collected an extensive research archive and built a collection of art and historical artifacts, which were displayed to the public.

When the Horner Museum closed on the Oregon State University campus in 1995, the crucible of change was ignited for the Benton County Historical Society. Society Trustees approached OSU administrators with a plan to save the Horner Collection. OSU agreed to transfer the collection of 60,000 objects to the Society when the safe and secure storage could be provided for these important objects.

In 2000, the Society purchased property in downtown Corvallis. At first the Society considered renovating the building on the property, but upon analysis it was deemed unsuitable. With funds raised, the Society built the Peter and Rosalie Johnson Collections Center on their Philomath property and finally acquired the Horner Collection in 2008. The Society now owns the third largest collection of its kind in the state.

The project was far from complete because the Society's museum building in Philomath, a National Register of Historic Places property, cannot be altered to exhibit more objects. Society Trustees reinvigorated the idea of building a Corvallis Museum on part of their downtown property and hired Allied Works Architecture to design a modern museum. The Society has raised the necessary funds for the Corvallis Museum. It will open in 2019.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**Mission:** The Benton County Historical Society is a nonprofit corporation that operates museum facilities for the preservation of history and culture. Its mission is to:

1. Preserve the material and intellectual culture of Benton County, Oregon, by acquiring and caring for significant collections that illustrate and interpret the history of the area and its relationship to the world;
2. Enrich people's lives through exhibitions and educational programs.

### Our Values:

*Innovation:* The Society is an innovative, catalytic force in the community.

*Inclusiveness:* Our museum is for the whole community, not just for historians.

*Stewardship:* We are committed to preserving important cultural resources.

*Excellence:* We strive to meet the highest standards of the museum profession.

**Our Vision:** Benton County Historical Society creates engaging and inspiring museum experiences in history, art, technology and culture for everyone!

**Our Impact in the World:**

- ✓ Create a museum environment where people explore culture and history in innovative ways, and envision a future where we learn from the past.
- ✓ Remove barriers to meaningful interaction and learning by presenting diverse voices.
- ✓ Encourage everyone to find and pursue their personal interests.
- ✓ Remain relevant to both the community and visitors to our museum

## GOALS and STRATEGIES 2019-2021

### **GOAL: Community Ownership (Inclusiveness)**

Build community ownership of the Benton County Historical Society to engage people of all ages and backgrounds.

*Strategies:*

- Find ways to partner with the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center
- Develop multi-lingual materials, programs and staff
- Expand board and membership diversity
- Develop an outreach program
- Maintain collaboration and partnership with diverse organizations county-wide
- Continue to present engaging and informative programs

### **GOAL: Stable Funding for Operations (Stewardship)**

Build a financially stable organization to preserve collections, provide optimal professional staffing, operate and maintain facilities that support quality programs and exhibitions.

*Strategies:*

- Confirm County Funding
- Build endowments held by the Oregon Community Foundation
- Build endowments held by Benton Community Foundation
- Increase member-households
- Increase corporate sponsorships
- Increase contributions
- Build a maintenance fund to support the facilities and grounds
- Confirm staffing plan for BCHS

- Develop a signature fundraiser to be held at the Corvallis Museum

**GOAL: The Corvallis Museum in Benton County (Innovation)**

*Strategies:*

- **Complete the building by August 1, 2019**
- Develop a marketing plan
- Develop museum attendance stats with benchmarks for yearly increase
- Maintain exhibition rotation on a staggered schedule
- Attract new speakers/programs and outside exhibitions that appeal to a broad audience/state-wide/national appeal

**GOAL: Great Board Governance (Excellence)**

*Strategies:*

- **Succession planning for staff**
- **Succession planning for board and board diversity**
- Develop regular committee meetings
- Board needs a personal commitment to funding
- Strengthen board attendance and committee involvement
- Invite commissioners to information meeting/tour with board and members