

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2024



## MISSION

The DC History Center deepens understanding of our city's past to connect, empower, and inspire.

## VISION

The DC History Center will reach into all eight wards to preserve and elevate the stories of Washington's diverse people, neighborhoods, and institutions.

We will do this work as a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters curiosity and nurtures civic engagement to strengthen our city for all.

## CENTER COMMUNITY

We will center stakeholder communities in our work and prioritize the perspectives and lived experiences of people of color, while examining our organization's past.

## CONNECT NEIGHBORS

Using history to connect Washingtonians, we will bring neighbors together to create dialogue, seek shared values of equity and justice, and encourage civic participation.

## COLLECT INTENTIONALLY

Working with communities whom we have historically excluded from our collections, we will support the long-term preservation of their stories and encourage research.

## BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

We will establish a stable and sustainable future for the organization, consistent with our core values and principles of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The DC History Center's three-year strategic plan fulfills its vision to reach into DC's eight wards to preserve and elevate the stories of Washington's diverse communities.

With an overarching goal of serving a broad audience, we will focus in these areas:

- Start by listening and building relationships in neighborhoods across the city
- With the Carnegie Library as our home base, strengthen existing programs and develop new services that reach into all eight wards
- Use the tools of history to connect neighbors with each other, encourage dialogue, and inspire civic engagement
- Invest in our historic collections through better stewardship, digitization, and improved public access to these treasures

To do this work, we must sustain the organization for the long term. The strategic plan includes diversifying our income streams, building the best possible team, and invest in audience building.

We will do this work as a welcoming and inclusive community of trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors, dedicated to creating broad access to DC history.

# IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR FOUR PILLARS

Below are some of the steps we are taking to accomplish the goals laid out in the 2022–2024 Strategic Plan. We will do this work as a welcoming and inclusive community of trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors, dedicated to creating broad access to DC history.

## CENTER COMMUNITY

In active dialogue with communities across the city, expand DC History Center's reach and impact in all eight wards.

Relaunch K–12 programs to help educators in all eight wards teach DC history.

Serve as a welcoming community hub in Downtown, Mount Vernon Triangle, and Shaw from the Carnegie Library.

## CONNECT NEIGHBORS

Reorient current programs toward timely issues relevant to Washingtonians today, with a focus on equity and justice.

Develop new programs that encourage Washingtonians to gather around neighborhood heritage and honor lived experiences.

## COLLECT INTENTIONALLY

Implement collections management policies that support improved stewardship of existing holdings and new acquisitions.

Develop our capacity to digitize analog collections and boost born-digital holdings.

Work closely with immigrant communities, including Latinx, to advance the long-term preservation of their local histories.

## BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Increase and diversify our income streams.

Attract and retain the best possible team, reflecting the community we serve.

Invest in communications to build new and more diverse audiences.

# CENTER COMMUNITY

We will center stakeholder communities in our work and prioritize the perspectives and lived experiences of people of color, while examining our organization's past.

## OUR GOALS

- Create structures that put the DC History Center in active dialogue with diverse communities in all eight wards
- Re-examine the DC History Center's history and use the resulting insights as a catalyst for organizational change
- Ensure that all DC K-12 educators are aware of and use DC History Center resources in their classrooms
- Establish the DC History Center as a community hub in Downtown, Mount Vernon Triangle, and Shaw
- Replace THE BIG PICTURE with a two-year exhibition (FY24-26) reflecting community focus and engaging for a broad audience



# CONNECT NEIGHBORS

Using history to connect Washingtonians, we will bring neighbors together to create dialogue, seek shared values of equity and justice, and encourage civic participation.

## OUR GOALS

- Deliver programming that focuses on timely and relevant issues of interest to new and long-established Washingtonians
- Lead the DC History Conference as a welcoming forum for addressing topical issues
- Fully integrate *Washington History* magazine into organization programs and services, placing editors in dialogue with a broader community
- Deliver a sustained engagement around issues related to housing, including affordability, gentrification, Black land loss, and the unhoused
- Educate audiences about the history of Home Rule and Statehood, positioning this as a shared issue for all disenfranchised Washingtonians
- Create opportunities for neighborhood residents to gather around hyperlocal heritage and culture
- Identify, uplift, and support the work of community memory keepers
- Create programming and engagement designed for new residents

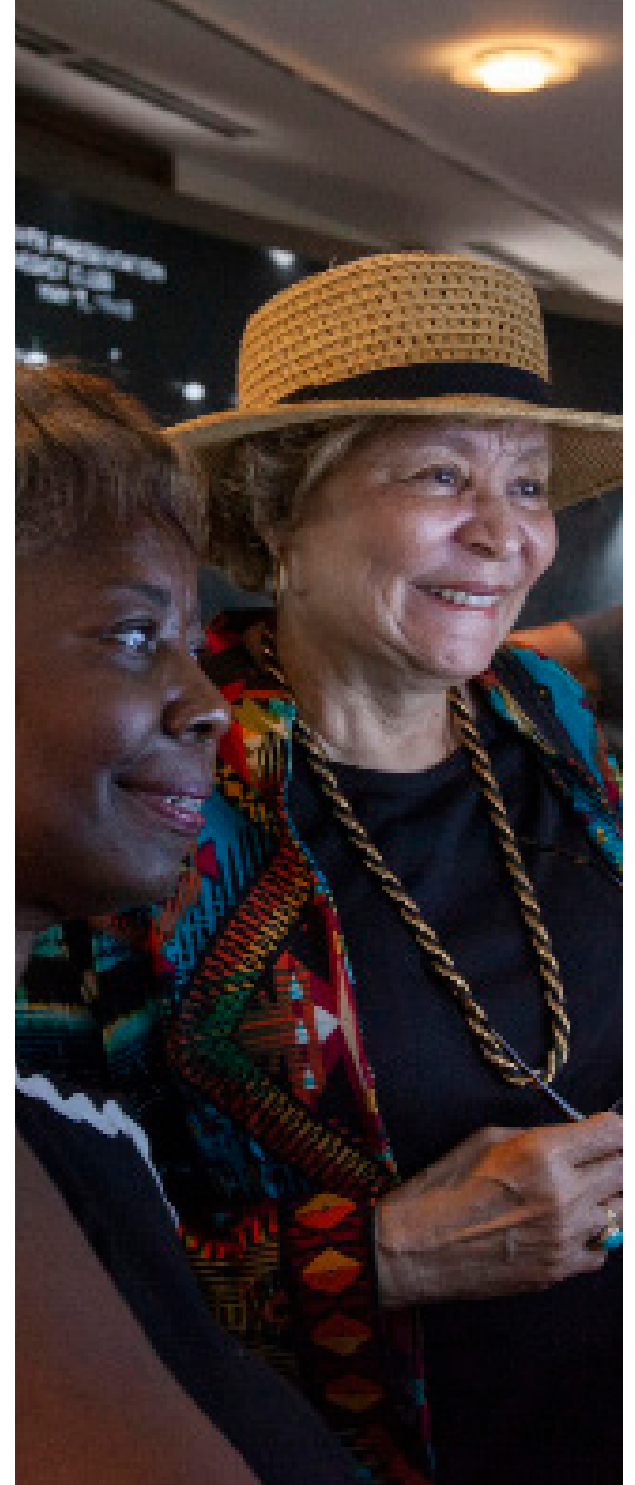


# COLLECT INTENTIONALLY

Working with communities whom we have historically excluded from our collections, we will support the long term preservation of their stories and encourage research.

## OUR GOALS

- Establish a values-based collections management policy in alignment with our in the works digital collections policy
- Establish policies and procedures that allow us to take in new collections in a sustainable and responsible fashion
- Manage offsite and unprocessed holdings more efficiently
- Develop our capacity to collect born-digital materials and manage existing digital resources
- Make existing holdings more accessible through digitization and library research services
- Focus new collaborations on immigrant communities, including Latinx, whose records are at risk of being lost in the DC history narrative

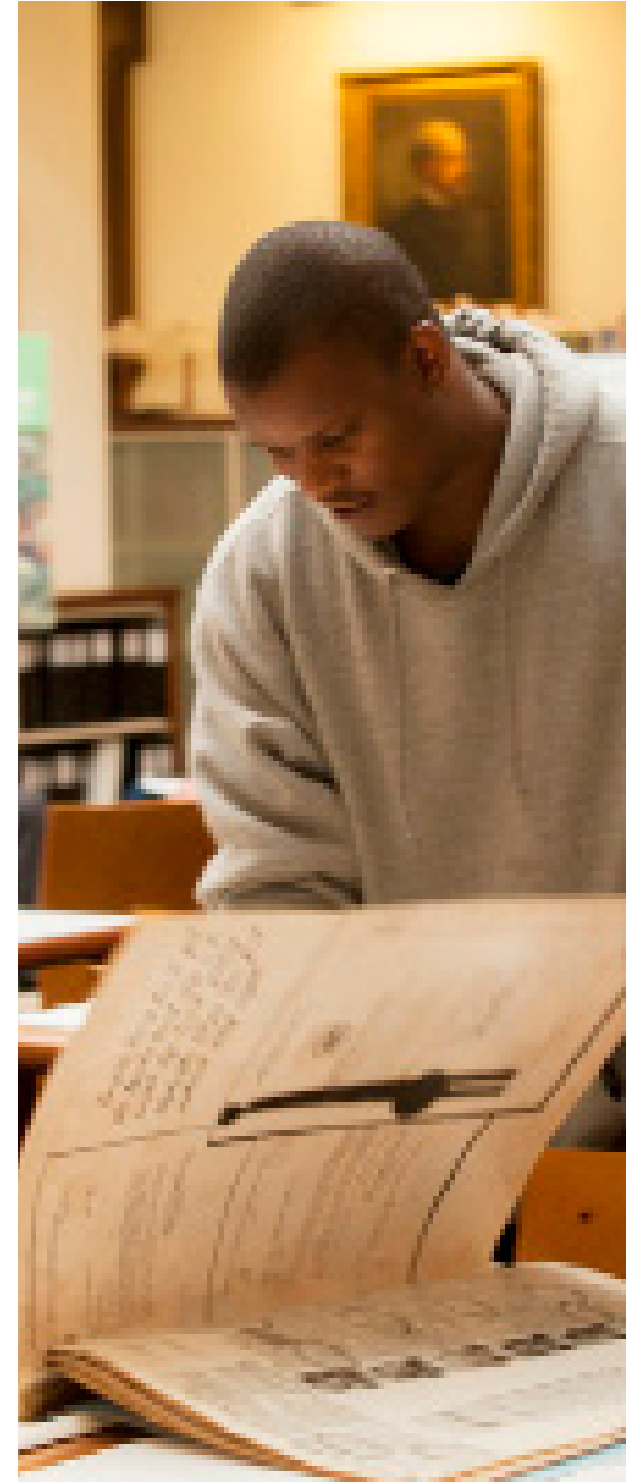


# BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

We will establish a stable and sustainable future for the organization, consistent with our core values and principles of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

## OUR GOALS

- Strengthen the Board of Trustees with new members who will support the goals laid out in the strategic plan
- Improve our fundraising capacity
- Strengthen our relationship with DC government to increase general operating support funding
- Stabilize our business model by adding earned income revenue sources
- Recruit and retain the best possible team
- Systematically grow diverse audiences, representative of the District and region





# JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

## OUR ROLE

The DC History Center contributes towards just outcomes for Washingtonians of color and other historically marginalized groups by exposing the historical roots of current inequities and honoring agency, resistance, and resilience. We aspire to be an inclusive and welcoming convener, using the tools of history to put our audience members in conversation with each other, while encouraging learning and empathy. We urge our stakeholders—as engaged citizens, taxpayers, educators, and leaders—to use these insights to support equitable outcomes including but not limited to housing, education, and policing.

The DC History Center's full JEDI statement can be found [on our website](#).

## OUR COMMITMENT

The DC History Center commits to:

- Actively listen to the perspectives and stories of our diverse communities and illuminate these stories through our programs, services, and collections
- Foster a culture of inclusivity and respect for all stakeholders and audiences
- Make its collections, spaces, programs, and services accessible to all audiences
- Reflect our communities in our board, staff, volunteers, and contractors
- Reduce our reliance on unpaid work
- Ensure transparency and equity in our pay administration
- Hold monthly meetings with a JEDI focus to learn about evolving best practices and increase our knowledge
- Share yearly updates with our community about lessons learned