

Raleigh's Historic Resources & Museum Program Strategic Plan

FALL 2018

Prepared by:

HR&A
Analyze. Advise. Act.
Gensler Ryan-Harris, LLC

 **RALEIGH** Parks,
Recreation and
Cultural Resources

Character *Diversity*

Small Town Charm

Food

Open Space

HISTORY

Outdoor activities

Civic Pride

Heritage

When asked about their affinity for Raleigh, residents had a strong sense of pride in the city, and residents and visitors alike enjoy the area's amenities.



City Of Raleigh
NORTH CAROLINA

Welcome!

Raleigh is a capital city with a rich history, unique cultural experiences, and people of all backgrounds who call it home. Raleigh's story and those of its residents – both past and present – lay the foundation from which our city will continue to grow as an epicenter for arts and culture, education, and commerce in the region. Our shared story inspires us to envision creative possibilities and encourages us to view the world and our beautiful city through new lenses.

The Historic Resources and Museum (HRM) Program cares for and activates the physical elements that represent our city's unique history. The museums, sites, and historic objects managed by the HRM Program illuminate our collective story, allowing us to take lessons from our past to build a stronger tomorrow.

Through the organizational Plan presented on the following pages, the HRM Program will build on the goals established in the City of Raleigh Strategic Plan to strengthen our collective identity and encourage further development of arts and cultural programming in the City. Importantly, the HRM Program will continue to steward places that tell stories reflective of Raleigh's diverse populations; strengthen partnerships for increased programming capacity and impact; broaden its reach for education and activation of public spaces throughout the city; increase accessibility of its programs, sites, and collections; and create and maintain welcoming spaces for residents and visitors to learn, engage, and play.

Plans like these are not possible without vision and commitment. Many individuals and groups have contributed to this project; including residents, civic leaders, partner organizations and City staff. It is through careful coordination, and collaboration that we can present the HRM Program with an actionable framework through which the plan will be achieved.

Raleigh's historic resources and museums are integral components of the City's cultural ecosystem, contributing to positive social and economic growth. Thank you for your interest in the HRM Program, its vision for the future and for being part of Raleigh's distinctive story.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy McFarlane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy McFarlane
Mayor



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CONTEXT

Founded in 1792, North Carolina's capital city has grown from a small town to one of the premier education and innovation centers in the country, home to diverse and growing populations and a vibrant cultural scene.

Over the last thirty years, Raleigh more than doubled its population, from 201,000 in 1987 to well over 450,000 in 2016. This period of growth represents a unique period in the City's history and marks an opportunity now to not only reconnect with long-time residents, but also to reach the next generation of people moving in and calling Raleigh home.

In June 2012, Raleigh City Council created the Historic Resources and Museum Program (HRM Program) with the express purpose of protecting and programming the cultural, museum, and historic resources within the City of Raleigh.

The HRM Program is located within the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department. The HRM Program portfolio includes the Borden Building and Fred Fletcher Amphitheater at Fletcher Park, City of Raleigh Museum, John Chavis Memorial Park Historic Attractions, Latta House and University Site, Moore Square, Mordecai Historic Park, Pope House Museum, Pullen Park Historic Attractions, the Raleigh Trolleys, and Tucker House. The HRM Program's portfolio includes some of Raleigh's most historic and iconic sites, including the Pullen Park Carousel, the Mordecai House, and the Pope House. During FY2018, the HRM Program hosted almost 1,000,000 registered visitors, even more when considering all non-registered visitors to HRM parks, museums, and historic sites. The HRM Program's vitality is represented not only by increased annual attendance figures, but also through staff capacity. The HRM Program currently employs 13 full time staff, almost 300 part-time staff, and over 1500 volunteers that support programs and operations throughout the year.



Tour Group at COR Museum



Letterland Parade at Pullen Park

STRATEGIC PLAN

Through implementation of the Strategic Plan, the HRM Program can continue to honor Raleigh’s history and increase awareness of its heritage, while supporting citywide goals around inclusion, economic prosperity, and celebration of vibrant, healthy communities. The strategic plan will enable HRM to strengthen its original mission and intentions to meet the educational and programmatic needs of Raleigh residents and visitors.

The Strategic Plan holistically evaluates the operations and governance of the HRM Program, identifies ways for the program to move forward, and recommends strategies to achieve those goals. The Raleigh Historic Resources and Museum Program Strategic Plan is ultimately a roadmap for the program’s growth and influence within the PRCR Department, City of Raleigh, and Triangle Region.

Plan Elements

1. Existing Conditions

- A detailed assessment of current conditions for operations and governance in the HRM Program based on site visits, operational documentation, staff engagement, and community engagement.

2. Program Vision

- A defined set of characteristics and goals for the HRM Program moving forward that build on the organization’s purpose and influence within the City of Raleigh.
- Recommendations for the program’s interpretation, activation, marketing and branding, and site design.
- Recommendations for HRM’s relationship to the broader PRCR department, its internal staffing model, and external

funding and partnerships as the program increases its impact on a wider audience.

3. Implementation

- Synthesized implementation plan for recommended strategies, including high-level identification of current and future capital needs and other funding requirements, their prioritization, and metrics tied to tracking progress towards the Plan’s highest-level goals.

Plan development was supported by an extensive community engagement strategy and evaluation of national best practices to inform recommendations.

Connection to Past City Plans

The HRM Program is part of a larger system of assets and services in the City’s Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department.

- In 2014, Raleigh’s Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources released a system plan that would guide the department’s strategic investments and strategies moving forward. The goals expressed therein reaffirmed the City’s commitment to the preservation and activation of its historic resources.
- Raleigh’s 2015 Strategic Plan leveraged recommendations in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan to develop strategies for the identification of and long-term visioning for the HRM Program and other important historic and cultural assets.
- The 2016 Raleigh Arts Plan detailed strategies for implementing a vision of Raleigh as “a community connected through arts and culture,” for which HRM’s role as a cultural steward would play a role in realizing.

PRCR Systems Plan

Goals and objectives outlined in the PRCR System Plan that are particularly relevant to the HRM Program are indicated below. Strategies from the HRM Program Strategic Plan are designed to build from and expand on these directives and supporting action items identified.

Goal 1: The City of Raleigh will continue to support historic resource preservation, protection, and acquisition.

Objectives

- A. Implement the mission and goals of the Historic Resources and Museum Program.
- B. Manage City of Raleigh Historic Resources and Museum Program's Fine Arts Object Collection to adopted industry standards.
- C. Operate City of Raleigh Historic Resources and Museum assets to effectively balance public use and stewardship.
- D. Actively seek, acquire, and manage unique historic properties and assets that are critical to preserving the city's and area's heritage and story.
- E. Actively seek, engage and nurture public and private sources of funding and support.
- F. Expand opportunities for effective partnership and volunteers throughout all City of Raleigh Historic Resources and Museums.

Goal 2: The City of Raleigh will interpret the community's history through its historic properties, museums and programs in such a way as to attract more use and visitation while balancing stewardship and conservation of resources.

Objectives

- A. Identify compelling stories that can be conveyed using industry standard active, passive and/or tactile learning methods.
- B. Enhance utilization technology at the city's historic properties and museums.
- C. Integrate historic resources and museums into the city's parks, recreation and cultural resources as well as other city departments.
- D. Advocate and promote traditional site-based visitation as well as utilize technology to provide remote experiences for non-site based visitations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Strategic Plan outlines a community-oriented and inclusive vision and action plan for HRM's future as a steward of the City's heritage and places of learning, recreation, and cultural entertainment.

Goals

HRM Program staff and Advisory Board members articulated a vision for the HRM Program, distilled into the five goals outlined below. Goals are organized according to function, from mission to implementation.

1. The steward of activated, innovative places for community engagement that draw residents and visitors.
2. The curator of places that are sources of understanding and appreciation of Raleigh's heritage by diverse populations.
3. An approachable organization with a broad interpretive reach for today's audiences.
4. The recognized, unifying organization for a system of City-owned historic assets in Raleigh.
5. A financially and operationally sound organization.

Strategies

Through an analysis of existing conditions and their alignment with Plan goals, the team developed a set of 30 strategic recommendations for advancing the HRM Program's mission. Strategies range from short-term, low-cost actions that could show measurable impacts (e.g. strengthening partnerships with other organizations) to long-term, higher-cost actions that expand the physical reach of the Program (e.g. acquiring new sites).

HRM priorities in the near term revolve around making the organization more accessible to and reflective of the diverse backgrounds and experiences of Raleigh's residents. Lower cost actions for advancing these goals include **strengthening partnerships** internally within City government and among HRM functions, and externally with new and existing historic and cultural affinity groups and local businesses. **Cross-promoting events** and developing joint programming among HRM sites of low (e.g. Pope House Museum) and high traffic (e.g. Pullen Park Historic Attractions) will increase awareness and interest in lesser-known sites.

Raleigh is a diverse city with a complex and compelling heritage that can be learned from and celebrated through the HRM Program. Regularly surveying visitors at HRM sites will provide insight into the types of programming that may interest them and encourage greater use of the Program's assets. A **range of educational, entertainment, and recreation uses** should be available across the Program to encourage visitation by groups with diverse interests and further activate and increase visitation at sites of both high traffic and low traffic in the Program. **Expanding exhibits beyond the walls of HRM sites** will extend the reach of the Program and capture more diverse audiences.

Telling **more stories about underrepresented communities** in Raleigh further distinguishes the Program as a vehicle for educating and bringing together people of diverse backgrounds to form a stronger community. Additional investments must be made to strengthen Program assets that help to tell those stories, including **increased programming at the Pope House** and an **interpretation and master plan for the Latta House and University site**. The strategies identified in the short term will rely heavily on increased staff capacity for implementation.

In the longer term, the HRM Program's focus will lie in addressing physical access and capacity constraints for programming and strengthening its identity and recognition as a unifying organization for Raleigh's heritage assets. These strategies require higher capital and operational costs for implementation given the need for investment in the physical conditions of sites. ***The Historic Raleigh Trolley provides an opportunity to physically and interpretively connect all sites*** within the Program, but a ***shared narrative and communications approach*** across each asset must be developed to ensure continuity in public awareness of the HRM Program and its value to Raleigh's heritage and community.

The physical capacity of the older buildings that house much of the HRM Program's existing activities limits the amount of education and cultural programming that can take place and constrains the ability for the Program to responsibly store and access the significant material culture collection amassed over a short period. Priorities for capital funding needs over this period include establishing a ***permanent location for the COR Museum***, improving ***quality storage conditions*** for collections and freeing up storage space for core programming functions, providing ***welcoming public spaces*** within each site, and ***improvements to the Pope House*** that activate the site and increase visitor capacity.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan will rely heavily on successful partnerships within and outside of City government and the commitment of resources for funding capital needs and limited numbers of new staff and/or contracted positions to deliver the core programmatic and administrative functions of the Program.





Moore Square Groundbreaking

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABOUT THE CITY OF RALEIGH HISTORIC RESOURCES AND MUSEUM PROGRAM

Raleigh’s Historic Resources and Museum Program was established in 2012 to preserve and activate important cultural, museum, and historic resources within the city, including an artifact collection of more than 21,000 fine and decorative historic objects.

Contact and learn more about the HRM Program online and through social media:

Raleighnc.gov/museums

 @RaleighHistory

 Raleigh History and Museums

CONSULTING TEAM

HR&A Advisors, Inc. is an industry-leading consulting firm providing services in real estate, economic development, and program design and implementation for over 40 years. HR&A has helped create transformative strategies for a broad range of public and private-sector clients, including some of the leading downtown-focused non-profit organizations in the nation. These services are part of wide-ranging real estate advisory, economic development, and public policy practices, delivered by our 90-person staff located in five offices across the United States: Raleigh, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC.

Gensler has 50+ years of experience planning, programming, designing, and completing studies for both public and private sector facilities. The Raleigh office has a local culture that is committed to passionate client service and innovative design. They bring incredible knowledge of the local market and provide personal attention that delivers creative, business-focused design solutions. They have created new identities, designed workplaces, and converted outdated spaces into vibrant facilities—all while finding new ways to enhance the way people work and play.

Deborah Ryan is the managing principal of **Ryan-Harris, LLC**, and has a 30-year history of assisting communities and their leaders with challenges relating to historic preservation and activation, urban open space, downtown revitalization and civic engagement. She is the co-author of the best-selling *Anarchist’s Guide to Historic House Museums*, (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press/Routledge, October 2015. Listed as the #1 new book on museums and museum studies on Amazon and voted #1 museum education book by the Museum Education Monitor in 2015.

CONTRIBUTORS

City of Raleigh Historic Resources and Museum Program: Troy Burton, Ernest Dollar, Amanda Fletcher, Marvin Howell, Josh Ingersoll, Jenna Kostka, Scott Mott, Kathryn Neuhart, Douglas Porter, Ainsley Powell, Megan Raby, Celeste Purvis, Matthew Wright

Historic Resources and Museum Advisory Board: Clare Bass, Fred Belledin, Jannette Coleridge-Taylor, Barbara Freedman, Esther Hall, Holmes Harden, Alicia McGill, Joe Mobley, Sam Mordecai, Ed Morris, Stephen Rabin, Lindsay Wagner (ex officio), Tom Ward

City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department: Diane Sauer (Director), Scott Payne (Assistant Director), Stephen Bentley (Assistant Director)

HR&A Advisors: Shani Carter, Candace Damon, Kayla Graves, Kyle Vangel

Gensler Raleigh: Michael Wagner, Lindsey Barker

Ryan/Harris LLC: Deborah Ryan

