

Santa Barbara Museum of Art Strategic Plan Executive Summary



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Mission and Vision

01

SBMA's Mission and Vision

Our Mission – Our Purpose

To integrate art into the lives of people

Our Vision – Our Aspiration

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is a welcoming space for all. We inspire curiosity and creative expression through our global collections, robust educational programming, and exhibitions that make art accessible and relevant. We are a catalyst for collaboration with our community.



Image: Santa Maria Fridays in Focus





Strategic Priorities

02

Our Strategic Priorities

How We Accomplish Our Goals

Priority 1: Deliver distinctive exhibitions, collection displays, and education programs that connect to our local communities and the global art world

Priority 2: Strengthen inclusion and community connections so that the Museum is a place for all

Priority 3: Enhance the sense of welcome provided by our building and surrounding spaces

Priority 4: Tell our story in exciting and creative ways

Priority 5: Increase philanthropic support



Priority 1: Deliver distinctive exhibitions, collection displays, and education programs that connect to our local communities and the global art world

Key Goals

- Increase the number of overall visits to the Museum.
- Raise the visibility of the Museum's exhibitions, programs, and collections.

Near-Term (within 6 months)

1. Continue to make the Museum's historical collections relevant to contemporary audiences by reinterpreting them through a more current lens (similar to Modern Life)
2. Analyze where combining events may lead to greater impact
3. Feature and elevate the collection in temporary exhibitions
4. Continue our work with SBUSD and other area schools to formulate and implement cohesive, across grade-level model partnerships
5. Showcase more contemporary art

Medium-Term (6-24 months)

6. Reimagine the Ludington Court experience as a more engaging first experience within the Museum
7. Create more social opportunities to enliven the Museum
8. Evaluate exhibitions and other projects for alignment to organizational goals

Longer-Term (2-5 years)

9. Increase the percentage of shows featuring notable historical art and artists, similar to the forthcoming French Impressionists show
10. Provide financial and curatorial support to create exhibitions at SBMA that travel to other museums
11. Create more exhibitions and programs in collaboration with artists

Priority 2: Strengthen inclusion and community connections so that the Museum is a place for all

Key Goals

- Increase visits from residents of Santa Barbara and the surrounding communities, so that our visitor profile more closely aligns with the Tri-County area's demographics.
- Increase membership, especially from the regional population, to foster deeper relationships with the Museum and our communities.

Near-Term (within 6 months)

1. Reflect our communities in our exhibitions and programs, and increase our relevance to the Tri-County area's Latin/a/o/e/x population
2. Provide greater access to guests through different means of connection

Medium-Term (6-24 months)

3. Implement audience surveys and other data collection tools to enhance our understanding of our audiences
4. Expand partnerships to grow more cooperation and collaboration across communities
5. Improve the membership program, so that it is more of a two-way commitment instead of transactional (see also initiatives in Priority 5)

Longer-Term (2-5 years)

6. Host more cultural celebrations that engage local communities

Priority 3: Enhance the sense of welcome provided by our building and surrounding spaces

Key Goals

- Increase repeat visitation to the Museum.
- Track and improve our visitor satisfaction responses.
- Reduce our deferred maintenance needs.

Near-Term (within 6 months)

1. Make experience decisions informed by data
2. Create a more engaging experience through the building
3. Continue capital maintenance updates, and finalize long-term, sustainable plan for building maintenance and preservation.

Medium-Term (6-24 months)

4. Create interesting experiences for visitors to engage with
5. Provide for additional visitor experience staff, especially at the entrance
6. Analyze wayfinding and other options for how best to focus visitors on one main entry along State Street (versus two entries)
7. Improve the State Street Plaza outside the Museum to provide a more welcome face to the public
8. Provide a more welcoming experience upon entry
9. Make the Art Learning Lab more visible with new and inviting signage and displays
10. Invest in wayfinding to provide a more cohesive experience
11. Ensure in-house education spaces are aligned to meet future program needs
12. Address accessibility issues
13. Enhance sustainability practices

Longer-Term (2-5 years)

14. Conduct an analysis of administrative space needs (e.g. meeting rooms, etc.) and assess opportunities to meet them
15. Work with the City & other organizations / businesses near the SBMA campus to improve the overall State Street experience beyond the Museum property

Priority 4: Tell our story in exciting and creative ways

Key Goals

- Increase awareness of the Museum's impact among key funders and stakeholders.
- Build a strong brand for the Museum.

Near-Term (within 6 months)

1. Invest in staff resources to build out marketing & communications team
2. Improve via 'quick wins' in our external communications

Medium-Term (6-24 months)

3. Better communicate the impact of existing exhibitions and programs
4. Raise our visibility for audiences beyond the city of Santa Barbara
5. Deploy our brand to boost opportunities for earned revenue generation

Longer-Term (2-5 years)

6. Create a new SBMA website
7. Leverage opportunities for cross-promotion

Priority 5: Increase philanthropic support

Key Goals

- Increase annual fund giving, especially from major donors.
- Complete a campaign to increase our capitalization and grow our endowment, to ensure funds exist for ongoing investment in care for our collections and building, as well as to invest in future programming initiatives.
- Develop strong relationships with SBMA's next generation of donors.

Near-Term (within 6 months)

1. Invest in staff resources to build out fundraising team
2. Develop tools for enhanced collection and use of data across the Museum, especially about our audiences and donors
3. Sync fundraising with enhanced marketing & communications to ensure the SBMA story is told effectively (see also initiatives in Priority 4)
4. Cultivate stronger relationships with donors, beyond initial and subsequent asks
5. Analyze the membership program using collected data to determine opportunities to enhance effectiveness (see also initiatives in Priority 2)
6. Focus the work of the Board's Development and Governance & Nominating Committees
7. Expand and engage the Board to support fundraising efforts
8. Structure and launch a fundraising campaign to support capital improvements and increase our endowment

Medium-Term (6-24 months)

9. Analyze the current travel program to increase revenue
10. As capacity grows, develop a collaborative approach to fundraising, leveraging SBMA internal experts (e.g. Director, curators, educators, etc.) to be powerful, informed advocates that can engage potential donors who are collectors or have deeper art historical interests
11. Increase focus on prospect research to identify future key donors
12. Create impact reports to clearly communicate the reach and impact of SBMA programs
13. Explore opportunities for increased support from foundations, corporations, and government sources

Longer-Term (2-5 years)

14. Build deeper relationships with the area's second-home owners
15. Create a strategy to engage younger and future donors more creatively



Evaluative Metrics

03

Evaluative Metrics

Targets would be set at the start of each period / fiscal year and then monitored regularly.

The metrics we propose to monitor to track our strategic success are:

- # of total visits
- # of visits from our regional / Tri-County community
- # of members
- % of visitors who return within one year
- Visitor satisfaction (Net Promotor Score)
- # of positive national / international press mentions
- Reduction in \$ of deferred maintenance outstanding
- Annual fund giving \$
- # of qualified new entries into donor database





Appendix: Process Overview

Process Overview

September 2024 – January 2025

Phase 1: Assessment and Prioritization

Who are we?

- Organizational Review
- Site Visit
- Consultation & Engagement
- Context / Benchmarking / Trends Research

Key Issues Paper

- Strategy Development

Strategic Plan Outline

January 2025 – March 2025

Phase 2: Detailing Strategic Paths

Who do we want to be?

- Working Group Sessions
- Initial Organizational & Financial Implications

Draft → Strategic Plan

March 2025 – July 2025

Phase 3: Implications & Implementation Plan

How will we get there?

- Implications for Organizational Structure / Scale / Culture
- Detailed Organizational & Financial Implications
- Implementation Plan
- Evaluative Metrics

Final Strategic Plan with Implementation Paths

- Final Presentation / Approval



Thank You

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