Cumberland County
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Collecting
Engaging
Sharing
Stories

Strategic Plan
2026-2028

What Connects Us
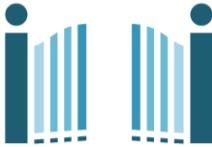
CCHS' Mission

We connect people to Cumberland County, Pennsylvania history.
We engage people with the stories of all of Cumberland County history, linking past to present, to build understanding and strengthen our communities.

CCHS' Vision & Core Values

By 2029, we will have a stronger, more resilient institution which can grow with intention, meet unexpected challenges with confidence, and engage communities across and beyond Cumberland County in the shared stories and interests of our region.

Inclusion	Integrity	Curiosity	Vitality
We foster a welcoming environment in our communities and beyond.	We act with honesty and courage, building trust and partnerships through transparency and respect.	We embrace a culture of learning, and adaptability, exploring and valuing a range of perspectives.	We cultivate experiences that resonate by infusing energy and purpose into collaboration, stewardship, and engagement.

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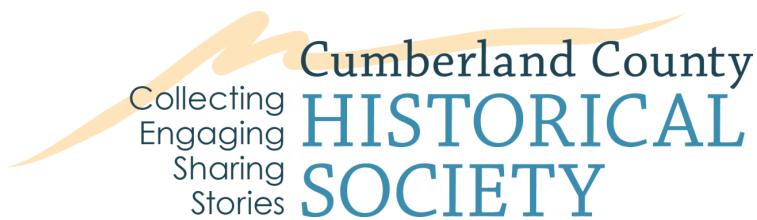
Executive Summary

The Cumberland County Historical Society (CCHS) is committed to connecting people to the history of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, by engaging communities in the stories that link past to present. The 2026–2028 Strategic Plan outlines how CCHS will strengthen its foundation, care for its collections, and expand its reach in order to serve as a trusted, inclusive, and dynamic institution.

At the center of that effort was a planning team comprising CCHS staff and board members, partner organizations, and subject matter experts. Early in the process, the planning team conducted an in-depth discovery effort that included internal reviews of operations, finance, and programming resources, as well as interview feedback from 23 funders, major donors, organizational partners, stakeholders, volunteers, and staff. This phase was followed by intensive planning sessions to develop goals, strategies, and metrics.

The planning process provided the opportunity for CCHS to reflect on its strengths, challenges, and aspirations for the future. From this work emerged five priority goals designed to strengthen the institution's foundation, expand interpretation, broaden its reach, and ensure long-term sustainability. Together, these goals chart a path for CCHS to become a more resilient and engaging institution — one that not only safeguards Cumberland County's history but also connects it meaningfully to today's communities and tomorrow's generations.

> **Goal 1 | Operational Readiness** Ensure that people, facilities, and infrastructure effectively support institutional needs by aligning staffing, optimizing space, updating infrastructure, and cultivating a professional, collaborative culture.
>
> **Goal 2 | Fiscally Sound Foundation** Build long-term resilience by diversifying revenue streams, strengthening donor and member programs, and implementing transparent budgeting and forecasting tools that align resources with mission priorities.
>
> **Goal 3 | Collections Stewardship** Ensure ethical, consistent care of collections by standardizing acquisition and cataloguing practices, reassessing and deaccessioning with clarity, and equipping staff and volunteers to uphold professional standards.
>
> **Goal 4 | Interpretation with Integrity** Develop and implement a comprehensive interpretive plan that reflects diverse communities, connects to national narratives,

shares untold stories, and guides exhibits, programs, and digital collections with professionalism and inclusivity.

Goal 5 | Communications Elevate visibility and recognition across the county and beyond through a refreshed brand identity, annual communications planning, deeper engagement with current supporters, targeted outreach to educators, and proactive welcoming of new audiences.

The established goals will be achieved through a series of strategies and supporting activities laid out in this plan. A key component in the process of crafting the goals and strategies, was the development of a set of Core Values. The values were developed and refined by the team, resulting in a clear set of principles intended to anchor the implementation of the plan to the institution's mission and vision. These values are:

Inclusion | Fostering a welcoming environment in our communities and beyond.

Integrity | Acting with honesty and courage, building trust and partnerships through transparency and respect.

Curiosity | Embracing a culture of learning, and adaptability, exploring and valuing a range of perspectives.

Vitality | Cultivating experiences that resonate by infusing energy and purpose into collaboration, stewardship, and engagement.

Prior to finalization, the plan underwent an expanded review beyond the planning team with 14 staff, board members, partners, and volunteers providing critical feedback of which over 80% was incorporated into the final document. Over the three-year horizon of the new strategic plan, CCHS staff and Board will continue to meet regularly, evaluating and reflecting on their progress while refining the plan as necessary to keep pace with and adapt to emergent needs and opportunities.

This plan positions CCHS to strengthen its foundation, responsibly steward collections, and expand its impact through interpretation and communication. At its core is a commitment to professionalism, integrity, and collaboration — ensuring that CCHS continues to thrive as both a trusted guardian of history and an engaging resource for the community.

Goals

Goal 1 | Operational Readiness
Ensure that CCHS's people, facilities, and infrastructure effectively support institutional needs by cultivating and investing in a professional staff with the right people in the right roles, optimizing current spaces, updating critical infrastructure, and thoughtfully evaluating opportunities for future growth.

Goal 2 | Fiscally Sound Foundation
Cultivate long-term institutional resilience by strengthening diversified revenue streams and securing investments that protect existing resources and adapt to emergent needs.

Goal 3 | Collections Stewardship
Ensure the long-term care and ethical management of all collections by establishing and maintaining consistent appropriate practices, regular evaluation, and responsible stewardship that reflects professional standards for housing, cataloguing, and preservation.

Goal 4 | Interpretation with Integrity
Develop and implement a comprehensive interpretive plan, including purposeful sharing of collections information online, that reflects our diverse communities, connects to nationally significant narratives, engages in intentional sharing of untold stories, and celebrates the full breadth of Cumberland County's history.

Goal 5 | Communications
Elevate CCHS's visibility and recognition across Cumberland County and beyond through clear, consistent messaging about who we are, what we offer, and the inclusive, welcoming experience we provide for all — from those already familiar with our work to communities and partners that have not previously been centered in our engagement efforts.

	Goal 1 | Operational Readiness
	Ensure that CCHS's people, facilities, and infrastructure effectively support institutional needs by cultivating and investing in a professional staff with the right people in the right roles, optimizing current spaces, updating critical infrastructure, and thoughtfully evaluating opportunities for future growth.

Strategies:
- Align staffing levels, roles, and workspace needs across the organization.
- Define and prioritize long-term space needs to accommodate staff and institutional priorities.
- Restructure public services to reflect institutional capacity and enhance visitor experience.
- Cultivate a culture of professionalism, collaboration, and shared accountability.

Significance: CCHS's ability to deliver on its mission depends on having the right people in the right roles, supported by functional workspaces and reliable infrastructure. By assessing and addressing both immediate and long-term staffing, as well as exhibit, library, and workspace needs, the organization can ensure its collections are secure and its people and programs are positioned for success. This work requires thoughtful coordination across departments, a clear understanding of current limitations, and intentional planning for future growth. At its core, this goal reflects a commitment to cultivating a strong, skilled, and effective team — equipped with the resources and environment needed to collaborate more effectively with each other, our partners, and our community.

Implementation Overview

2026
- Staff alignment and hiring plan
- Infrastructure assessment
- Short-term space planning

2027
- Public services restructuring
- Long-term space planning
- Expansion of professional development opportunities

2028
- Space planning implementation
- Staff and infrastructure improvements

Strategy 1.1: Align staffing levels, roles, and workspace needs across the organization.			
1.1.A ➤ Define ideal staffing levels and establish a phased restructuring and hiring plan.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Assess current staffing structure (in conjunction with Strategy 3.3.A), engaging department leads, and identify critical gaps that limit effectiveness.	X		
● Forecast realistic staffing needs over a 3–year horizon, including interns and mentees, needed to achieve the strategic initiatives put forth in this plan.	X		
● Create a phased restructuring and hiring plan and present to the Finance Committee. Include fundraising thresholds and financial implications specific to ideal staffing levels and competitive pay and benefits.	X		
● Align hiring priorities with space and infrastructure planning to ensure adequate work environments.		X	
1.1.B ➤ Assess infrastructure to ensure it supports effective day-to-day operations.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Survey staff to identify recurring issues with workstations, equipment, or tech tools that impact their ability to do their jobs efficiently.	X		
● Conduct an IT systems audit to evaluate hardware, software, network performance (Wi-	X		

Fi coverage, speed, reliability), to identify areas for upgrade or improvement.			
● Assess non-digital office needs, ensuring that staff have functional, comfortable, and safe workstations.	X		
● Develop a prioritized list of infrastructure improvements, with associated costs and implementation timelines, to inform budgeting and facilities planning. Review annually.	X	X	X
● Establish a regular review and replacement cycle to ensure infrastructure remains aligned with changing staffing needs and institutional priorities.		X	
1.1.C ➢ Develop and apply an interim space plan that bridges existing gaps while long-term facility planning is underway.	**Accountability Lead:** Infrastructure Committee Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify the primary function and ideal use for each space (e.g., exhibits, meetings, offices, public programs, storage).	X		
● Identify priority gaps between institutional needs and space allocations.	X		
● Develop a short-term space utilization plan to temporarily reassign or reconfigure spaces.	X		
● Evaluate the effectiveness of the interim plan, incorporating staff feedback to guide adjustments and support long-term planning.	X	X	

Strategy 1.2: Define and prioritize long-term space needs to accommodate staff and institutional priorities.			
1.2.B ➤ Develop a long-term space and facility strategy that considers staffing, collections, and public use.	**Accountability Lead:** Infrastructure Committee Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop a 360° workspace plan that incorporates staffing projections, restructuring/hiring plan, and feedback from the interim space plan. See Strategy 1.1.C.		X	
● Identify ideal space configurations for collections, staff, and public engagement based on restructuring forecasts and the interpretive plan. See Strategies 1.1.A and 4.1.C, respectively.		X	
● Review feedback from Museum and Archive Task Forces related to how deaccessioning and collection changes have affected available spaces. See Strategy 3.2.		X	
● Review the Interpretive Plan to understand how exhibit plans and public space needs impact planning for long-term space allocations. *See Strategy 4.1.C.*		X	X
● Present recommendations to the Infrastructure Committee to incorporate into the Master Site Plan.		X	X

1.2.C ➢ Make an informed decision about future facility changes.	**Accountability Lead:** Infrastructure Committee Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Set a deadline for the Infrastructure Committee to make a formal recommendation to the board.		X	
● Evaluate financial, functional, and strategic implications of retaining, repurposing, or selling buildings, and for building new facilities.		X	
● Determine financial feasibility and fundraising potential for any major building investment in accordance with Strategy 2.2.D and a capital campaign strategy.		X	
● Present to the Board a phased, prioritized plan for long-term space reorganization, including contingencies for high-priority needs.		X	
● Board votes on the recommendations presented by the Infrastructure Committee.		X	
● Initiate implementation planning once board-approved decisions are made, covering architectural planning, communications, logistics, and fundraising.			X

Strategy 1.3: Restructure public services to reflect institutional capacity and enhance visitor experience.			
1.3.A ➤ Evaluate all public-facing services to reflect institutional capacity and to enhance visitor experience.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Review current staffing and volunteer levels in the context of public offerings to assess whether they align with CCHS mission and priorities.	X		
● Consult relevant committees and department heads to coordinate a clear purpose for the Library.		X	
● Develop a tiered access model (e.g., visitor services staff/volunteers during museum hours; open library access; 'ask an expert' days; and by-appointment research requests) that scales with available staff and volunteer resources.	X	X	
1.3.B ➤ Implement and evaluate changes to public services.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop scheduling and communication systems that coordinate coverage and ensure consistency in service delivery.		X	
● Communicate updates transparently with the public, connecting changes to mission and vision.		X	X
● Track public usage, appointment frequency, and staff time spent on various services to inform long-term planning.	X	X	X

Strategy 1.4: Cultivate a culture of professionalism, collaboration, and shared accountability.			
1.4.A ➢ Strengthen internal collaboration and shift away from siloed operations.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Establish a cross-departmental planning structure that aligns with institutional priorities and implementation of the interpretative plan.	X	X	
● Incorporate the interpretive plan, collaborative goal-setting, and shared projects into work plans and staff evaluations.		X	X
● Create intentional spaces (e.g., regular planning meetings, retreats) for staff to co-create and reflect together.		X	X
● Set and review clear expectations for staff on contributions to the interpretive plan, communications calendar, and development tasks.		X	X
1.4.B ➢ Invest in professional development and alignment with national standards.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify line item expense requests that appropriately budget for recurring professional development across departments and submit them to the finance committee.	X		
● Provide ongoing opportunities for staff to participate in professional development and create structured moments to share insights and apply new learning.	X	X	X

|			
● Integrate national standards and ethics into institutional policies, staff and trustee onboarding, and volunteer trainings.	X	X	
1.4.C ➢ Develop annual staff assessment and goals, with interim check-ins, that align with the mission and strategic plan, and include paths for professional development.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'26	'26
● Create a process of assessment and goal setting.	X		
● Train department heads and staff on the assessment process.	X		

Goal 2 | Fiscally Sound Foundation

Cultivate long-term institutional resilience by strengthening diversified revenue streams and securing investments that protect existing resources and adapt to emergent needs.

Strategies:
- Implement an updated budget framework that equips staff and trustees with clear financial data to guide planning, fundraising, and resource allocation.
- Improve revenue generation by analyzing return on investment, optimizing current and potential revenue streams, and exploring cost-saving opportunities.
- Grow our donor, legacy giving, and member stewardship programs by evaluating engagement data and giving trends to improve outreach, retention, and lifetime value.
- Review the schedule of fundraising events to evaluate Return on Investment (ROI).

Significance: CCHS's ability to plan confidently and respond effectively depends on a stable and transparent financial foundation. Strengthening core financial practices will allow the organization to align revenue with mission priorities, maximize return on investments, and respond to emerging needs without compromising long-term sustainability. Through the implementation of a standardized budgeting and forecasting process, CCHS will improve financial clarity, equip staff and leadership with timely data, and guide resource allocation across departments. At the same time, a deeper understanding of program costs, fundraising capacity, and donor behavior will support better decision-making, ensuring efforts are aligned with institutional values and capacity and allowing CCHS to invest more strategically in its future.

Implementation Overview

2026
- Update budget framework
- Assess revenue streams and ROI of all activities
- Prioritize key programs/events

2027
- Develop a fundraising plan
- Retool events and programs for optimal ROI
- Build financial fluency among staff and board

2028
- Strengthen member and donor programs
- Refine event and program metrics
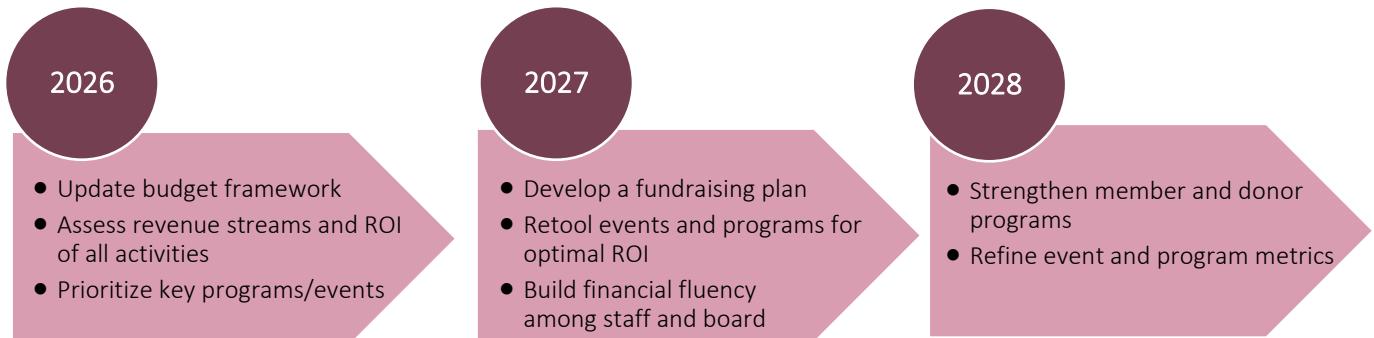
Strategy 2.1: Implement an updated budget framework that equips staff and trustees with clear financial data to guide planning, fundraising, and resource allocation.

2.1.A ➢ Revamp the budgeting and forecasting process to include performance targets by funding stream and ensure a balanced cash budget by 2028 — meaning that cash available matches the cash required to cover 2028 operating expenses.	**Accountability Lead:** Finance Committee Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify useful elements to keep and data gaps to close that improve the current budget process and template.	X		
● Engage individuals, within the committee and external advisors, to identify revenue generation opportunities that match actual costs of services rendered.	X		
● Integrate scenario planning tools to evaluate potential outcomes of new or changing revenue sources.	X		
● Develop clear financial thresholds that prompt proactive planning discussions and contingency scenario review.	X		
● Draft an updated budget and forecasting framework, with reporting guidelines, to be used with staff and trustees.		X	
● Schedule routine budget reviews with department heads to assess progress, discuss variances, and recommend adjustments related to financial goals.		X	X
2.1.B ➢ Build financial fluency among staff and trustees to support informed decision- making and shared accountability.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28

● Communicate to staff and trustees the new tools and responsibilities for financial management, the intentional diversification of revenue streams, and how each stream connects to overall financial stability.		X	
● Provide training sessions on revised budgeting, forecasting, and reporting tools; adjust as needed for roles and responsibilities.		X	
● Incorporate financial review into board and departmental meetings to normalize financial discussions and strengthen understanding of institutional health.	X	X	X

Strategy 2.2: Improve revenue generation by analyzing return on investment, optimizing current and potential revenue streams, and exploring cost-saving opportunities.

2.2.A ➢ Analyze the ROI of programs to guide future planning, including costs, revenue, and impact. *The term 'programs' includes lectures, receptions, education, Summerfaire, tabling, annual meeting, and satellite initiatives, but does not include major fundraising events. Major fundraising events are included in Strategy 2.4.*	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director & Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of all programs to determine actual cost, institutional value, and mission alignment.	X		

● Categorize and rank programs by performance and potential, prioritizing them into three tiers:
  ○ Top 50%: high-value programs to sustain or grow
  ○ Lower 30%: programs with promise but needing refinement
  ○ Bottom 20%: programs to re-evaluate or sunset
	X		

	'26	'27	'28
● Develop an annual calendar of recurring/expected programs, inclusive of planning/execution windows and staff involvement.	X	X	X

2.2.B ➢ Assess the performance and sustainability of all revenue streams and major cost centers to identify areas for growth, diversification, and long-term savings.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Determine the actual costs, per building, of safe and sustainable operation.	X		
● Prioritize deferred maintenance to capitalize on key repairs with potential for high-return, long-term impact.		X	X
● Review year-over-year performance of annual appeal campaigns, taking note of giving trends including timing, messaging, format, etc., to inform planning for future campaigns.	X		
● Review museum store operations and inventory practices, including consignment policies, cost of goods sold (COGS), and potential for online growth, to identify opportunities to improve profitability and mission alignment.	X		
● Assess the cost and impact of printed publications—including staff time, volunteer hours, expense, revenue, and reach—to explore options for creation and distribution.	X		
● Review membership and donor stewardship programs, legacy giving, and major fundraising events in accordance with Strategies 2.3 and 2.4.	X		
● Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of CCHS' partnership with the West Shore Historical Society. Analyze current activities, facility		X	

	'26	'27	'28
requirements, and opportunities for optimizing in alignment with CCHS' mission.			
2.2.C ➤ Identify and implement cost-saving measures while maintaining mission alignment and community value. **Accountability Lead:** Executive Director			
● Engage staff in identifying and evaluating opportunities for cost reduction, low-cost enhancements, or delivery changes based on results of Strategies 2.2.A and 2.2.B.	X		
● Preserve equitable access when implementing programmatic adjustments.		X	
2.2.D ➤ Develop a right-sized, flexible fundraising strategy that aligns with institutional capacity, staff skillsets, and funding priorities. **Accountability Lead:** Executive Director & Development & Communications Director			
● Identify fundraising needs by department, program area, or cost center.	X		
● Align fundraising responsibilities with staff capacity and strengths, ensuring clarity around who leads, supports, and contributes to fundraising.		X	
● Reorganize, reassign, or reduce staff responsibilities, where needed, to allocate adequate resources for development of fundraising, legacy giving, and donor stewardship programs that are consistent and mission aligned.		X	X
● Department heads coordinate with Executive Director to identify, prioritize, and apply for grants that match institutional values and capacity. Review annually.	X	X	X

	'26	'27	'28
● Build adaptability tools into fundraising plan—such as reserve funds, flexible campaign goals, or rapid response protocols—to allow for swift responses to opportunities, challenges, or funding shifts.		X	
● Incorporate routine review of fundraising progress in accordance with Strategy 2.1.A.		X	X
● Research potential for recurring monthly donations, on-site 'tap and go' donations, donor advised fund contributions, employee giving opportunities, etc. as avenues for potential growth and diversification of donors.		X	X

Strategy 2.3: Grow our donor, legacy giving, and member stewardship programs by evaluating engagement data and giving trends to improve outreach, retention, and lifetime value.

2.3.A ➤ Clarify and refine the structure and purpose of the membership and donor program.	**Accountability Lead:** Advancement Task Force Chair & Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Define and differentiate between members, donors, and other categories of supporters.	X		
● Articulate the value proposition for each, including mission, impact, and benefits. Answer the question "Why does my support matter here?"	X		
● Evaluate the current membership structure to leverage appropriate tiers to increase support and serve conduits for deeper engagement.	X		

	'26	'27	'28
• Reinvigorate, support, and expand the legacy circle giving program.		X	X
• Expand outreach efforts beyond the current base and immediate region by offering inclusive and accessible options (e.g., reciprocal memberships, pay-what-you-like, digital only, etc.).	X	X	
• Use surveys or other feedback tools to understand donor motivations and improve membership offerings.		X	X
2.3.B ➢ Develop and implement a donor stewardship plan that nurtures donor relationships and increases giving at all levels.	**Accountability Lead:** Advancement Task Force Chair & Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
• Segment donors and members by behavior, giving history, and interests to tailor communications, outreach, and recognition.	X		
• Review donor demographics to identify potential areas for growth and diversification.	X		
• Identify strategic storytelling opportunities (events, newsletters, impact updates, acknowledgements, etc.) and corresponding stories that develop relationships beyond financial asks and connect donor support to impact.	X	X	X
• Develop a communications plan, beyond programming, and inclusive of strategic stories, first-to-know opportunities, behind-the-scenes, impact updates, etc.	X	X	X
• Create level-based protocols to systemize and personalize outreach, acknowledgment, impact updates, and financial asks.		X	

	'26	'27	'28
● Establish realistic and stretch benchmarks for expansion of donor base and specific metrics for how success will be evaluated.		X	X
● Host two (2) events annually that are specific to donor acquisition and diversification.		X	X
● Create meaningful recognition opportunities beyond listing names—e.g., behind-the-scenes tours, personal notes, or donor spotlights.		X	X
● Regularly analyze retention, lapsed donors, upgrade trends, and acquisition rates to refine stewardship approaches.	X	X	X
2.3.C ➤ Foster a culture of fundraising grounded in shared responsibility.	**Accountability Lead:** Advancement Task Force Chair & Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Normalize donor stewardship and fundraising as a collective responsibility by identifying clear roles and responsibilities and integrating them into routine practices and reporting.		X	X
● Celebrate successes and create shared accountability through regular updates, reflection, and recognition.	X	X	X
● Create opportunities for reverse storytelling, sharing donor motivation stories with staff and board.	X	X	X

Strategy 2.4: Review the schedule of fundraising events to evaluate Return on Investment (ROI).

2.4.A ➢ Analyze financial performance of events to guide strategic planning and resource allocation.	Accountability Lead: Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
• Track and compare event revenue sources—including ticket sales, sponsorships, donations, merchandise, and year-over-year performance.	X	X	X
• Document and review all direct and indirect costs, including staff time, space use, materials, and contracted services.	X		
• Calculate and evaluate total cost vs. revenue and cost per attendee to understand financial efficiency.	X		
• Identify high- and low-performing events.	X		
• Make recommendations to the Outreach Committee for changes to the fundraising schedule of existing events and potential opportunities.		X	
2.4.B ➢ Evaluate audience turnout, experience, engagement, and promotional reach to improve impact and participation.	Accountability Lead: Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
• Monitor attendance vs. event capacity for each event, noting trends by type, timing, partnerships, and promotion method.	X	X	

	'26	'27	'28
● Track media coverage, social media mentions, and newsletter engagement related to each event.	X	X	X
● Develop and distribute post-event surveys to gather attendee feedback on experience, satisfaction, and promotional tools that affected their decisions.	X	X	X
● Segment attendee data in CRM (e.g., members vs. new visitors, local vs. out-of-town) to tailor future outreach.	X	X	X
● Use feedback to refine programming, pricing, and logistics for future events.		X	X
● Incorporate storytelling elements in post-event wrap-ups to extend visibility and donor connection.		X	X
2.4.C ➢ Review internal staffing and resource demands to improve event efficiency and sustainability.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director & Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Track staff and volunteer time spent on planning, setup, execution, and follow-up.	X	X	
● Conduct internal debriefs after each major event to evaluate workload distribution, document lessons learned, and identify tasks to be streamlined, delegated, or automated.	X	X	
● Build a shared toolkit with standardized planning templates, implementation documents, tracking metrics, and post-event reporting and evaluation to support consistent, efficient event execution.		X	X

2.4.D ➢ Ensure each event has clear, measurable goals aligned with mission, audience, donor cultivation, and financial strategy.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Establish success metrics (e.g., revenue, member acquisition, donor leads, attendee satisfaction) to guide future planning.	X	X	
● Use events for donor and member engagement by offering exclusive experiences (e.g., early or behind-the-scenes access, private receptions).	X	X	X
● Track donor and member participation in events and monitor how event attendance relates to future gifts, renewals, or upgrades.		X	X
● Assign board and staff to relationship-building roles such as welcoming guests, making thank-you calls, or introducing key supporters to leadership.		X	X

Goal 3 | Collections Stewardship

Ensure the long-term care and ethical management of all collections by establishing and maintaining consistent appropriate practices, regular evaluation, and responsible stewardship that reflects professional standards for housing, cataloguing, and preservation.

Strategies:

- Standardize policies and procedures for acquiring, processing, storing, and cataloging collections to ensure the ethical, accurate, and consistent stewardship of all assets.
- Reassess and catalog all collections to align with current policies, ensure discoverability, and guide department-specific plans for retention, deaccessioning, and long-term management.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped, supported, and aligned in their roles to implement CCHS policies and uphold professional standards for long-term stewardship.

Significance: CCHS's collections are central to its identity, mission, and public value. Stewarding these resources requires more than preservation alone — it calls for coordinated systems, clearly defined roles, and shared responsibility. By establishing consistent processing and cataloguing workflows, addressing long-standing backlogs, and aligning collections with the organization's mission, CCHS will ensure its holdings are accessible, well cared for, and professionally managed. This work also strengthens the institution from within: clarifying responsibilities, filling skill gaps, fostering accountability, and building a culture of collaboration.

Implementation Overview

2026
- Update policies and standardize workflows for collections management
- Create task forces for collections review and management

2027
- Implement action plans for collections management
- Revise volunteer training and onboarding to match critical tasks

2028
- Measure effectiveness of updated workflows
- Incorporate workflow adherence and metrics into routine reviews

Strategy 3.1: Standardize policies and procedures for acquiring, processing, storing, and cataloging collections to ensure the ethical, accurate, and consistent stewardship of all assets.			
3.1.A ➤ Update and refine criteria for accepting and retaining materials in the collections.	**Accountability Lead:** Collections Definition Task Force Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop a Collections Definition Task Force composed of selected members of the Museum and Library Committees, including timeline and definition of final product.	X		
● Identify clear, overarching collections criteria, as well as department-specific criteria, and apply to routine workflows.	X		
● Review and update existing Collections Management Policy, including acquisition criteria, to promote responsible and efficient workflows.	X	X	
● Provide a comment period for the updated Collections Management Policy by the Museum and Library Committees; Adjudication of comments to be completed by the Collections Definition Task Force.		X	
● Finalize the updated Collections Management Policy through Board review and approval.		X	X
● Reconvene the Collections Definition Task Force to create a Collections Development Policy to define priorities for future acquisitions.			X

3.1.B ➤ Develop and implement streamlined workflows in the Archives and Library departments that enable timely assessment, inventory, storage, and discoverability of incoming materials.	Accountability Lead: Library Committee Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
• Map and assess existing intake and cataloguing processes to identify gaps, inconsistencies, and bottlenecks.	X		
• Identify and prepare staging spaces for processing, ensuring they are functional, accessible, and properly equipped.	X		
• Design clear, repeatable workflows for processing and cataloguing new and backlogged materials. Explicitly define prioritization metrics, recommended timeframes, and departmental exceptions, as appropriate.	X		
• For the Archives and Library, define what "cleared backlog" looks like in public areas and staff offices, and set realistic benchmarks for progress (e.g., percentage reduction goals).	X		
• Pilot new workflows in one or more departments, incorporating feedback and refining processes.	X		
• Apply workflows institution-wide.	X	X	X
• Implement routine tracking of progress using metrics such as number of items processed, reduction percentages, and time from acquisition to cataloguing.	X	X	X
• Evaluate workflows and results with relevant staff to identify areas for adjustment and improvement.	X	X	X
• Implement semi-annual group projects, closing the institution to the public and engaging staff and volunteers in tackling key initiatives.	X	X	X

Strategy 3.2: Reassess and catalog all collections to align with current policies, ensure discoverability, and guide department-specific plans for retention, deaccessioning, and long-term management.			
3.2.A ➢ Conduct a high-level assessment of collections and create department-specific review plans aligned with updated policies.	**Accountability Lead:** Task Force Chairs (Museum & Archives, respectively)		
	'26	'27	'28
● Create two Task Forces: Museum Collections Review and Archives Collections Review (inclusive of Library, Archives and Photo departments)	X	X	X
● Apply the method to complete high-level assessments, producing a departmental breakdown of collections by status category (expressed in percentages).		X	
● Review institutional policies related to deaccessioning and amend accordingly to grant temporary deaccessioning authority to task forces.	X		
● Develop a standardized method to describe collection status (e.g., color coding or high-level descriptor) and adapt it for each department.	X	X	
● Develop a timeline for each task force that includes target dates for key milestones such as review for retention, update storage and location, create minimal or enhanced cataloging information.	X	X	X
● Museum Collections Review Task Force develops workflows and tracking tools, as well as recruitment, training, and resource needs.	X		

	'26	'27	'28
● Archives Collections Review Task Force develops workflows and tracking tools, as well as recruitment, training, and resource needs.	X		
● Develop a process for timely management of deaccessioned materials and assign resources to carry out recommended actions.	X	X	X
● Recruit necessary volunteers.		X	X

3.2.B ➢ Conduct a review for retention, deaccession of unwanted materials, and assess needs of all collections materials.	**Accountability Lead:** Task Force Chairs (Museum & Archives, respectively)		
	'26	'27	'28
● Create a list of retention status categories to be used for item-level assessments such as not accessioned, needs primary re-cataloging, needs more extensive re-cataloging, needs to be rehoused, needs preservation treatment, etc.	X		
● Conduct a pilot test to evaluate strategies, tools, and workflows for each task force.	X		
● Evaluate implementation for each task force, refine as necessary, and adapt timeline to adequately reflect task completion time to timeline milestones.		X	
● Organize volunteer and intern trainings, led by project/task force leaders and inclusive of collection management policy; mission, space, and ethical considerations; and decision-making and reporting processes.		X	X
● Conduct reviews in accordance with workflows established for each task force; update workflows, tracking tools, etc. as needed.	X	X	X

	'26	'27	'28
• Complete secondary assessments of all items flagged for retention and assign items a predefined retention status category.		X	X
• Conduct regular reviews, at a frequency determined by each task force, of lists of materials flagged for deaccession and make determinations in accordance with approved policies and professional judgment.		X	X
• Dispose of deaccessioned materials in accordance with institutional policy and approved processes.		X	X
• Routine reporting to the Board on the progress of each task force.	X	X	X
3.2.C ➢ Develop timelines and workflows to address action items identified in collections review process.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
• Sequence workflows so the most at-risk or high-use collections are reviewed first.	X		
• Define clear phases for workflow (e.g., proper accessioning, primary re-cataloging, extensive re-cataloging, rehousing, preservation treatment, deaccessioning, etc.).	X		
• Set target dates for key milestones and reviews for each department to ensure steady progress.	X	X	X
• Share collections management stats with staff, volunteers, and Board regularly to build trust and momentum in the process.		X	X

Strategy 3.3: Ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped, supported, and aligned in their roles to implement CCHS policies and uphold professional standards for long-term stewardship.			
3.3.A ➤ Ensure the right people are in the right roles - staff and volunteers - to support collections stewardship.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Conduct a comprehensive review of staff roles, related to collections management, to ensure core skills, abilities, and responsibilities are identified in relevant job descriptions.	X		
● Identify personnel gaps reflected in the results of the review and develop plans to address them through hiring, training, reorganization, or partnerships.	X		
● Prioritize staffing needs and incorporate them into long-term reorganization and budget planning.	X		
● Identify opportunities for structured volunteer work that function as support, not substitution, for staff positions.		X	
● Identify key personnel to develop and lead training programs, both in-house and through guest lectures.		X	
3.3.B ➤ Establish clear expectations for training, education, and skill development.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Host an all-hands staff event focused on specific changes to collections management to build understanding, engagement, and buy-in.	X		

	'26	'27	'28
● Incorporate regular review and feedback, tied to collections stewardship standards, into one-on-ones and performance reviews.	X	X	X
● Establish structured onboarding for collections management volunteers and recurring skill reinforcement and development opportunities.		X	
3.3.C ➤ Foster a culture of shared responsibility through staff and volunteer engagement opportunities.	**Accountability Lead:** Outreach Committee Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Audit current volunteer contributions and identify where outdated practices may be contributing to inconsistencies.	X		
● Develop department-specific training for new and current volunteers focused on processing and cataloguing.		X	
● Provide retraining opportunities and mentorship roles to ensure volunteers reinforce, not hinder, improved practices.		X	
● Create accessible training resources including guides, checklists, and quick-reference tools.		X	X
● Recognize staff and volunteers contributing to backlog reduction and workflow success to reinforce shared accountability and professionalism.		X	X

	Goal 4 | Interpretation with Integrity
	Develop and implement a comprehensive interpretive plan, including purposeful sharing of collections information online, that reflects our diverse communities, connects to nationally significant narratives, engages in intentional sharing of untold stories, and celebrates the full breadth of Cumberland County's history from its founding to today.

Strategies:

- Develop a comprehensive interpretive plan that serves as a unifying framework for exhibits, storytelling, and program development.
- Strengthen interpretation through collaboration, shared storytelling, targeted evaluation, and strategic engagement.
- Develop a communications strategy to support change management during the development and implementation of the interpretive plan.
- Establish a structured framework for sharing collections online that combines clear purpose, mission alignment, and audience needs.

Significance: Interpretation is how CCHS brings history to life and connects people to the stories of Cumberland County. A thoughtful, comprehensive interpretive plan helps ensure that the full richness of our history is shared — from well-known events to untold stories, from local traditions to nationally significant moments. This work is strengthened by collaboration, inclusive engagement, and a shared commitment to intentional and cohesive interpretation that is rooted in professionalism and integrity. With a clear framework to guide exhibits, programs, and storytelling, CCHS can create deeper connections with the public, inspire greater trust, and ensure its interpretation reflects both the community it serves and the mission it upholds.

Implementation Overview

2026
- Develop an interpretive plan, narrative, and rollout strategy
- Develop value statements for conflict management

2027
- Implement interpretive plan
- Strengthen key partnerships
- Strengthen staff collaboration

2028
- Evaluate key feedback loops
- Leverage interpretive plan in outreach
- Add options for professional development

Strategy 4.1: Develop a comprehensive interpretive plan that serves as a unifying framework for exhibits, storytelling, and program development.			
4.1.A ➢ Lay the groundwork for development of an interpretive plan.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Research interpretive planning models from peer organizations and identify relevant best practices.	X		
● Establish a timeline and budget for development of the plan.	X		
● Hire a Museum Director by January '26 who is competent, enthusiastic, and capable of leading this effort.	X		
● Outline the composition of a planning team that is representative of staff, trustees, partners, and external advisors with relevant expertise.	X		
● Clarify roles and responsibilities for team members. Give special consideration to realistic time allocations and potential trade-offs for team members, particularly staff, so they can devote adequate time to this effort.	X		
● Design a feedback process that enables timely and meaningful input from stakeholders not directly involved in plan development.	X		
● Recruit and convene the plan development team.	X		

4.1.B ➢ Develop a unifying narrative to articulate a shared story of Cumberland County's history within a regional and national context.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Craft a compelling, historically grounded narrative that connects and contextualizes exhibits and programs.	X		
● Create a collaborative vetting process (internal and external stakeholders) to ensure the narrative is accurate, inclusive, and usable across departments and partnerships.	X		
● Submit the draft narrative to the Board for review and feedback.	X		
● Use the story framework to highlight how individual exhibits and programs fit into the broader historical arc/timeline.		X	
4.1.C ➢ Create the Interpretive Plan	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director & Museum Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Define the goals the plan is intended to achieve and how they align with the organization's mission and vision.	X	X	
● Identify key metrics and evaluation methods to track progress and trigger review or revision.	X	X	
● Define the structural components the plan should include (e.g., interpretive themes, target audiences, implementation tools) to achieve the established goals.	X	X	
● Circulate the institutional narrative and interpretive plan to relevant committees for review and feedback.	X		

	'26	'27	'28
● Determine the space needs required for exhibits and public engagement over the course of the plan's implementation.	X		
● Develop an implementation timeline with launch dates, interim milestones, task leads, and review/sunset cycles.	X	X	
● Launch a 2-Year Interpretive Plan		X	X
4.1.D ➤ Develop a system for managing controversy and risk that supports staff, volunteers, and partners.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop a core *Statement of Values* to accompany the interpretive plan — articulating CCHS's overarching commitment to interpretation with integrity.	X		
● Develop a policy and process for managing controversy and risk related to exhibits and programs. This may include a statement of core beliefs, institutional responsibility and values, commitment to respectful engagement, and clear protocols for supporting staff, volunteers, and partners.	X		
● Create adaptable *statement templates* for exhibits and programs to proactively set public expectations, navigate criticism, and provide a foundation for respectful dialogue.		X	X

Strategy 4.2: Strengthen interpretation through collaboration, shared storytelling, targeted evaluation, and strategic engagement.			
4.2.A ➤ Deepen relationships with partner organizations and community groups.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Board members, staff and key personnel conduct individual outreach visits to each historical society in Cumberland County.	X	X	
● Identify and connect with key community organizations and partners.	X	X	
● Create regular opportunities for collaboration, such as roundtables, workshops, or annual gatherings.		X	
● Identify opportunities for collaboration and cross- promotion through joint programs, pop-up exhibits, education, or collection loans.		X	
4.2.B ➤ Evaluate visitor and partner experiences to strengthen interpretation and improve engagement over time.	**Accountability Lead:** Museum Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop a toolkit of evaluation methods to gather input on visitor engagement, understanding, and emotional response. This may include surveys, exit questions, emoji prompts, quick-response cards, QR codes)	X	X	
● Collect partner feedback on collaborative exhibits and programs, including what worked well, what felt equitable, and where there are opportunities to improve the co-creation process.	X	X	X

	'26	'27	'28
● Use evaluation findings to inform future interpretive plans, improve the visitor experience, and strengthen partner collaborations.		X	X
● Identify potential areas for a pilot program that leverages partner or community relationships and expands a key area of interpretation.			X
4.2.C ➤ Use the interpretive plan to support strategic engagement with funders/sponsors and strengthen long-term financial stability.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify alignment between plan themes and funder/sponsor priorities, matching exhibits and programs with shared interests, values, or geographic focus.	X	X	X
● Develop funder- and sponsor-facing materials (e.g., concept briefs or case statements) that clearly link exhibits and programs to mission-aligned funding opportunities.	X		
● Invite funders and sponsors into early planning conversations where appropriate, positioning them as partners in advancing shared goals.		X	X
● Track engagement and funding outcomes related to interpretive efforts to evaluate success and inform future strategy.		X	X

Strategy 4.3: Develop a communications strategy to support change management during the development and implementation of the interpretive plan.			
4.3.A ➢ Develop a communications strategy and evaluation methods for sharing the value of the interpretive plan.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director & Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify key stakeholders and define when and how they will be engaged throughout the process.	X		
● Create messaging tools (e.g., talking points, visual overviews, one-pagers) tailored to multiple audiences that clearly articulate the purpose, goals, and benefits of the plan.		X	
● Prepare a media toolkit for use with press releases, interviews, newsletters, etc.		X	X
4.3.B ➢ Build internal understanding and support for the development of the interpretive plan and the changes it will guide.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop a clear case statement that explains why the interpretive plan is needed, what it will accomplish, how it will be developed, and how it connects to CCHS's mission and long-term goals.	X		
● Clearly communicate anticipated changes — including shifts in approach and decision-making — and explain the rationale behind them.	X		

	'26	'27	'28
● Articulate how the interpretive plan may influence staff responsibilities, project focus, or performance expectations.	X		
● Create an internal FAQ for staff, trustees, and volunteers to ensure consistent messaging and prepare them to confidently respond to questions.	X		
4.3.C ➤ Engage external stakeholders in understanding, supporting, and shaping the interpretive plan.	**Accountability Lead:** Executive Director & Board Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify and prepare champions — such as staff, trustees, partners, or community leaders — to share the plan's value and purpose in their networks.	X	X	
● Host stakeholder briefings and dialogue opportunities (e.g., town halls, one-on-one conversations, impact updates) to introduce the plan, invite input, and build shared investment.		X	
● Create meaningful opportunities for donor and partner input, including informal conversations, listening sessions, or advisory roles tied to specific initiatives.		X	

Strategy 4.4: Establish a structured framework for sharing collections online that combines clear purpose, mission alignment, and audience needs.

4.4.A ➤ Evaluate existing methods of online access to collections information to inform future strategy.	**Accountability Lead:** Museum Director		
	'26	'27	'28

|	'26	'27	'28
● Evaluate and document current methods for sharing collections information online and measuring engagement, including what specific collections are accessible.	X	X	X
● Host a retreat for relevant staff and volunteers to identify and explore priority objectives for sharing collections information online.	X	X	X
● Assess what digital infrastructure changes are needed (website, IT resources, etc.) to effectively host shared static collections information online.	X		
4.4.B ➤ Integrate online collections framework with institutional planning and processes.	**Accountability Lead:** Museum Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Incorporate findings from retreat into the interpretive plan to develop an intentional framework for online content that guides decision-making related to content, capacity, and priorities.		X	
● Integrate online collections sharing framework with the annual communications plan to highlight appropriate collections information on the messaging calendar.		X	X
● Present recommendations for digital infrastructure upgrades to the Infrastructure and/or Finance Committees.		X	
● Secure board approval and add expenses to institutional budget as appropriate.		X	
● Implement technology upgrades to online collections information sharing.			X

Goal 5 | Communications

Elevate CCHS's visibility and recognition across Cumberland County and beyond through clear, consistent messaging about who we are, what we offer, and the inclusive, welcoming experience we provide for all — from those already familiar with our work to communities and partners that have not previously been centered in our engagement efforts.

Strategies:

- Redesign CCHS's brand identity, including a name change, to reflect its mission, values, and welcoming public presence.
- Develop and implement an annual communications plan to guide outreach, engagement, and messaging across all platforms.
- Reimagine communications with existing members, donors, and supporters to deepen connection and reinforce the value and impact of their support.
- Expand outreach and communication tools to better serve educators and learning communities.
- Engage new audiences by proactively welcoming people into the CCHS community.

Significance: Clear, consistent, and compelling communication is vital to CCHS's ability to advance its mission. A refreshed brand identity, inclusive messaging, and coordinated outreach will help reinforce our commitment to our stakeholders, while proactively welcoming those who haven't previously been centered in engagement efforts. By aligning communications across platforms and tailoring messaging for specific audiences, CCHS can share more broadly the warmth, enjoyment, and sense of belonging that is so often described by visitors, members, supporters, and partners.

Implementation Overview

2026
- Redesign brand identity
- Develop an annual plan for communications

2027
- Implement phased rollout of new branding
- Redesign donor, legacy, and member communications
- Expand educator outreach

2028
- Expand tourism and new resident communications
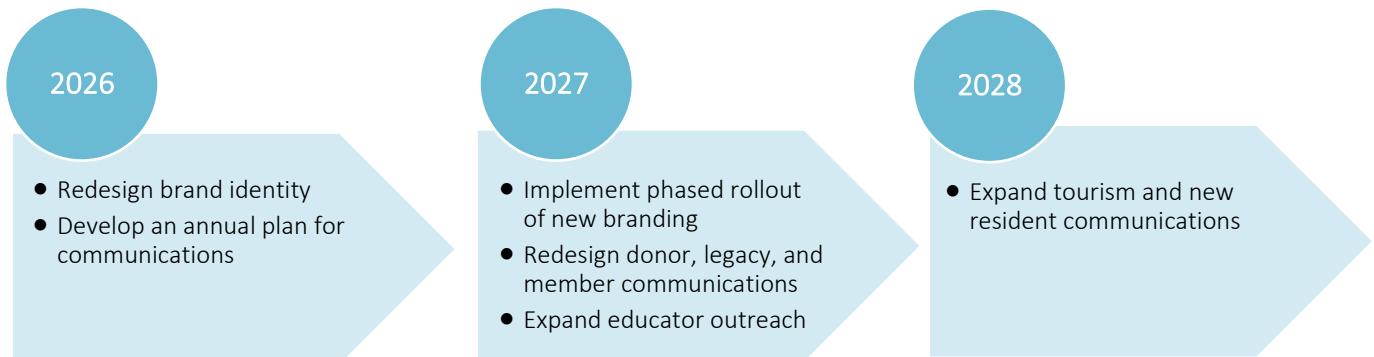
Strategy 5.1: Redesign CCHS's brand identity, including a name change, to reflect its mission, values, and welcoming public presence.			
5.1.A ➤ Undergo a comprehensive and inclusive review of brand identity assets.	**Accountability Lead:** Brand Identity Task Force Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Convene a task force inclusive of staff and trustees. *See Rebranding Brainstorming Doc in Planning folder.)*	X		
● Develop an initial proposal for board review that includes an estimated budget (consultant, contractors, website, graphics, print materials, etc.), implementation timeline, and recommendations for a name change and institutional rebrand (logo elements, color palette, tone, taglines, etc.).	X		
● Approve institutional name change.	X		
5.1.B ➤ Develop a suite of new brand elements that reflect the refreshed tone, direction, and spirit of CCHS.	**Accountability Lead:** Brand Identity Task Force Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Gather multiple quotes, review portfolios, conduct interviews, and select a logo/graphic designer to develop the new brand elements and a set of guidelines.	X		
● Provide the designer with all potential use cases for new branding elements (e.g., website, signage, letterhead, publications, social media, mascot, etc.)	X		

	'26	'27	'26
● Task force evaluates design options and selects one to present to the board for approval.	X		
● Revise and finalize selected option with the designer.		X	
● Complete a set of brand guidelines with the designer to support consistent application of brand elements, including use of logo, fonts, colors, taglines, images, etc.		X	
5.1.C ➢ Develop and launch a new website to reflect rebrand.	**Accountability Lead:** Brand Identity Task Force Chair		
	'26	'27	'26
● Gather multiple quotes, review portfolios, conduct interviews, and select a website designer to build a new website in alignment with the rebrand.		X	
● Provide the website designer with critical components to populate a site map to guide development (e.g., department landing pages, donations, forms, portals, integrations, etc.)		X	
● Task force evaluates website design options and selects one to present to the board for approval.		X	
● Review, refine, and launch new website.		X	
5.1.D ➢ Implement a phased rollout of the new brand.	**Accountability Lead:** Brand Identity Task Force Chair		
	'26	'27	'28
● Refine and finalize initial proposal to board with updated quotes and estimates related to phased rollout and implementation of new	X		

		X	
branding elements (e.g., printing, signage, painting, marketing, promotion, mascot, etc.).			
● Finalize rollout in coordination with communications plans in Strategies 2.3.B and 4.3.A.		X	
● Communicate the purpose and meaning behind the rebrand, tailoring messaging to existing members, donors, partners, stakeholders, and other audiences. *Ensure bequest-related communications specify that the name change will not affect wills or estate plans.*			
● Kick-off the new branding campaign and implement the plan.		X	X
● Celebrate the completion of the rebrand and acknowledge all participants and stakeholders.			X

Strategy 5.2: Develop and implement an annual communications plan to guide outreach, engagement, and messaging across all platforms.

5.2.A ➢ Audit, refresh, and segment messaging.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Evaluate all current methods of communication, intended audience, and desired result (information sharing, fundraising, action, etc.)	X		
● Prioritize and implement investment of time and resources, by intended audience, into channels with the greatest reach and impact.	X	X	

	'26	'27	'28
● Segment communications into category-specific messaging including general membership, fundraising appeals, event attendees, donor-specific outreach, new/long-time members, and department-specific communications.	X		
● Develop tailored messaging for each category of support. *See Strategies 5.3 and 5.4.*	X		
5.2.B ➤ Develop an annual communications plan to coordinate institutional messaging across all platforms.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Establish a yearly communications calendar that aligns with the interpretive plan (see Strategy 4.1), major programs, fundraising efforts, exhibits, and strategic messaging opportunities.	X		
● Identify lead staff, tools, and processes for content development, scheduling, and evaluation.	X		
● Develop clear objectives, audience segments, key messages, and evaluation metrics to evaluate plan effectiveness.	X		
● Identify strategic storytelling opportunities (events, newsletters, impact updates, first-to-know, acknowledgements, etc.) and corresponding stories geared toward relationship-building that connects donor support to impact.	X		
● Use cataloguing efforts as marketing, promotion, and education tools.		X	X

5.2.C ➤ Implement and evaluate communications plan to coordinate consistent and relevant messaging.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Coordinate messaging across print, digital, and in-person channels to ensure consistency and maximize reach.	X		
● Establish regular reviews to assess what's working, adjust timelines or tactics, and ensure responsiveness to emerging opportunities or needs.	X		

Strategy 5.3: Reimagine communications with existing members, donors, and supporters to deepen connection and reinforce the value and impact of their support.

5.3.A ➤ Evaluate and understand current communications to inform improvements.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Conduct a communications audit of recent newsletters, digital communications, and mailings to assess tone, consistency, relevance, and alignment with CCHS's new mission, vision, and direction.	X		
● Survey members and donors to understand what content they value most, what motivates their engagement, and how they prefer to receive updates.	X		
● Map content to key audience segments (e.g., long-time supporters, event-based donors,	X		

	'26	'27	'28
lapsed members) and develop targeted messaging frameworks for each.			
● Establish a steady cadence of communications in coordination with Strategy 5.2.B.	X	X	
5.3.B ➢ Refresh messaging and resources to reflect institutional priorities and support consistent implementation.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Add updated content and messaging to plan in Strategy 5.2.B.		X	
● Refresh the visual design and tone of communications to align with the updated brand identity.		X	X
● Develop a messaging bank with story snippets and programmatic themes to ensure consistency across platforms.			X
● Create reusable templates (e.g., for newsletters, appeals, acknowledgment letters).		X	X
5.3.C ➢ Encourage relationship-building and engagement through targeted events.	**Accountability Lead:** Development Comm.		
	'26	'27	'28
● Host a community-building event for members and donors, designed to build warmth and deepen connection.	X		
● Communicate the purpose, planning, and results to include supporters at every step.	X		

Strategy 5.4: Expand outreach and communication tools to better serve educators and learning communities.			
5.4.A ➢ Understand and strengthen relationships with current and potential educators.	**Accountability Lead:** Education Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Assess current educator engagement by identifying who is already working with us and how they interact (e.g., field trips, research, co-curricular collaborations).	X		
● Conduct short surveys or interviews with educators to understand how they're using CCHS resources and what draws them to the organization.	X		
● Develop a prioritized outreach list of educators, department heads, and professors at K–12 schools, colleges, and universities in the Central PA region.	X		
● Research local, regional, and state curricula and class offerings to identify where CCHS content and experiences can support standards and learning outcomes.	X		
5.4.B ➢ Create, promote, and highlight education and engagement offerings.	**Accountability Lead:** Education Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Develop and share a "menu of engagement" that outlines opportunities such as field trips, research access, guest lectures, curriculum-aligned programs, digital resources, and collaborative projects.	X		

	'26	'27	'28
● Create introductory materials for new educators (e.g., onboarding email series, printed guide) that highlight the value of working with CCHS.		X	
● Develop follow-up communications after initial introductions (e.g., email or meeting) to personalize next steps and build relationships.		X	
● Present educational opportunities at relevant gatherings such as department, school district, or education leadership events.		X	
● Host periodic teacher open houses to showcase exhibits, collections, and curriculum connections.			X
● Develop stories, lesson plans, and shareable resources that demonstrate how CCHS supports classroom and home school learning.		X	
● Regularly share education team updates, student experiences, and classroom partnerships through newsletters, social media, and annual reports; share with education partners through targeted outreach.	X		

Strategy 5.5: Engage new audiences by proactively welcoming people into the CCHS community.

5.5.A ➤ Build relationships and messaging that emphasize local tourism to draw new people to experience CCHS.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Hone a set of clear, welcoming messages about why CCHS is a place of interest for	X		

	'26	'27	'28
locals, new residents, and visitors. Emphasize its relevance, warmth, and the variety of experiences offered. *See Strategies 5.1 and 5.2.*			
● Develop a welcome package tailored for new residents, Airbnb hosts, hotels, and tourism partners that includes brochures, guest passes, event calendars, and CCHS highlights.		X	
● Provide talking points and printed/digital materials tourism and business partners that they can share with guests.		X	
● Encourage and monitor online reviews on travel and tourism sites (Google, TripAdvisor, Yelp) and offer prompts or gentle nudges for satisfied visitors to share their experience.		X	
● Include testimonials, quotes, and powerful visuals in marketing materials that reflect the diversity of experiences people can have at CCHS.		X	X
5.5.B ➢ Leverage local partnerships to increase CCHS' visibility and engage new residents.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28
● Identify and connect with organizations that interact with new residents (e.g., libraries, realtors, Chambers of Commerce, tourism centers) and offer materials or welcome presentations.	X	X	X
● Create short "Get to Know CCHS" experiences or drop-in tours specifically designed for new-to-the-region audiences.			X
5.5.C ➢ Convert single encounters into deeper connections.	**Accountability Lead:** Development & Communications Director		
	'26	'27	'28

● Create lightweight, engaging handouts for off-site lectures, festivals, and community events that invite attendees to explore more at CCHS.		X	X
● Include interpretive plan highlights in outreach to book clubs and libraries to draw in new individuals through shared storytelling and local connection points.		X	
● Track attendance at external-facing programs and build a segmented list to continue outreach to attendees with targeted communications.	X		
● Develop a follow-up protocol for off-site event participants that includes an email series, discount code, or exclusive invite.	X		
● Offer easy ways to stay connected (e.g., QR codes to join a mailing list, giveaways, first-visit offers) during pop-up or tabling events.	X		
● Cultivate and promote a speaker network made up of non-staff experts, storytellers, and community leaders who can present on topics of broad interest and represent CCHS in new settings.			X