

**Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania**  
**P. O. Box 15**  
**Strasburg, Pennsylvania 17579**



**Strategic Plan**  
**2006-2011**

**Approved 5.1.07**

# Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	3
Methodology.....	5
Mission Statement.....	8
Vision.....	9
Values.....	10
Strategic Focus Areas.....	11
Goals.....	13
Planning Templates.....	17
Approval Process.....	30
Appendices.....	31
<b>Results of long-range plan 2000-2015</b>	
<b>Critical Issues</b>	
<b>Time Line for Planning</b>	
<b>Primary and Secondary Customers</b>	
<b>PA Dutch Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau</b>	
<b>Visitor Demographics</b>	
<b>Focus Group Reports</b>	
<b>Planning Committee Membership</b>	

# Introduction

*Brief Institutional History* The Museum was established by the Pennsylvania State legislature in 1963 to serve as the Commonwealth's official museum of railroading. A site in Strasburg was selected over a number of alternative locations because the Strasburg Rail Road, a viable steam-powered tourist railroad, was already in operation offering Museum visitors a steam train ride in conjunction with their Museum visit.

The core of the Museum's collection was a group of 23 historic locomotives and railcars of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Between 1939 and the late 1950s, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company preserved examples of most of its major locomotives and railcars. This unique and important collection, listed on the National Register, was moved to the Museum site in 1968. To this core, the Museum added locomotives and railcars representative of other railroads in the state and concurrently acquired a comprehensive collection of non-vehicular artifacts and archival materials.

To house and exhibit these massive collections, the first building in North America designed as a railroad museum was constructed by the Commonwealth. Opening to the public in 1975, the Museum immediately became the State's most popular field museum administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Bureau of Historic Sites.

For the remainder of the 1970s, the Museum maintained an emphasis on acquisition, collecting historically significant and representative artifacts and archival materials which were rapidly disappearing as historic railroads failed.

By the early 1980s, the Museum took steps to more effectively fulfill its mission of preserving and interpreting its collections. A support organization, known as the Friends of the Railroad Museum (FRM), was formed in 1983 from community leaders and rail historians to provide preservation and programmatic support to the Museum and to raise funds in the community for Museum development.

With Friends of the Railroad Museum support, the Museum implemented a comprehensive stabilization and restoration program on its locomotives and cars stored outdoors and upgraded environmental conditions for artifacts kept indoors.

The Museum concurrently embarked upon a broad program of education and interpretation to provide the public with increased knowledge of the railroad industry in Pennsylvania. New exhibits were developed to familiarize the visitor with railroading and explain the collections on exhibit in a social and cultural context.

In 1985, the Museum announced the need to double its indoor exhibit space and shelter the outdoor collections. After a thorough Master Planning process, a successful capital fund drive was launched to secure \$2.6 million for a 45,000 square foot addition to the Museum, designed in the form of the grand railroad sheds of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Ground was broken for the new wing in August 1993 and the building was opened in May 1995. The new hall shelters a larger percentage of the collection and will house a

new interpretive exhibit now in the design phase. Most importantly, the new wing allows the Museum to exhibit its vehicular collections in correct period trains rather than individual units with no demonstrated functional connection.

Since 1996, more than four million dollars in special funding has been awarded to the Museum from a variety of outside sources including federal sources, foundations and other state agencies. The PHMC has provided more than \$2 million to match those funds through its Keystone Preservation Fund. Examples of funding include:

- ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement Act) funding of \$1.32 million for conservation of locomotives and railcars, for railyard track refurbishment and partially funding the construction of the Museum's new 4,400 square foot restoration shop building in 1998.
- In 2000, the Museum, with more than half a million dollars in special funding from the North American Railway Foundation, opened a new railway education center featuring interactive exhibits and programs.
- A new exhibit gallery for changing exhibits was opened on the Museum's second floor in 2001, utilizing combined contributions from the Grif Teller family, the PHMC and FRM.
- The conservation treatment of a 1928 Pennsylvania Railroad air brake instruction car was supported by a 2002 "Save America's Treasures" grant of \$200,000 from the NEA, with \$185,000 in matching funds provided by the PHMC.
- The Museum is awaiting the release of \$5 million in capital funds authorized to install HVAC improvements in its 100,000 square foot locomotive and rolling stock exhibition hall.
- New interpretive and exhibit plans are being implemented to keep pace with expanded facilities, awaiting the expected release of \$4.5 million capital funds during fiscal year 2006-2007.
- New TEA-21 enhancement funding of \$1.1 million is providing a new front entrance, with construction planned for completion in January, 2007.

Today, an expanded Museum fulfills its mission by preserving a world class collection of significant objects directly related to the history of railroading in Pennsylvania. It maintains an ambitious program for the care and restoration of its vehicular and non-vehicular collections, and it operates a broad and active program with a host of regional and national partners to educate the public about the history of railroading in Pennsylvania. Up-to-date information is available on the Museum's website at [www.rrmuseumpa.org](http://www.rrmuseumpa.org).

# Methodology

## Strategic Planning

Every organization needs to engage in strategic planning periodically to ensure the viability of the organization's mission and identify future directions. We now know from experience that strategic planning helps an organization recommit to its mission, validate its purpose, identify key values and clarify its vision for the future. We have also found that the process of planning is as important as the final product of a five-year strategic plan for the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. The process we utilized involved the Friends of the Railroad Museum, Advisory Council, staff, volunteers, key stakeholders in the community and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Bureau for Historic Sites and Museums.

We decided that an experienced, professional consultant who would guide and support all those involved in this strategic planning process was needed. We wanted a consultant to customize traditional strategic planning approaches to ensure that they fit with the needs of Railroad Museum. The following outlines the goals we identified for strategic planning.

- To develop a five-year strategic plan for Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania.
- To involve staff, Friends of Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Museum Advisory Council and volunteers in the planning process.
- To assess the organization's role in the community and its relationship other historic sites and cultural activities in the region.
- To develop a shared vision and renewed partnerships with significant stakeholders.

Our ultimate goal in this process is a "living," working document that will result in implementation with clear deadlines and responsibilities. We envision that the implementation process will actively engage stakeholders and provide them with a sense of ownership and pride in the results.

## The Planning Process

*"Planning is not an event. It is the continuous process of strengthening what works and abandoning what does not, of making risk-taking decisions with the greatest knowledge of their potential effect, and of setting objectives, appraising performance and results through systematic feedback, and making ongoing adjustments as conditions change."*

Peter F. Drucker – 1998

Our planning process began in July 2006 with our initial discussions between consultant Carol Wolff, of C. Wolff Associates, David Dunn, Director of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and Robert Sieber, Eastern Division Chief of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. At these meetings, we decided the direction the process would take and the make-up of the planning team.

Five strategic planning meetings were organized around the following tasks during the months of July, August and September 2006.

Initial Meeting of the Core Committee – Overview of planning process, expectations, mission review, identification of critical issues and review of outcomes from previous long-range plan.

Second Meeting – Crafting of ten-year vision for the Museum, identification of primary and secondary customers, visitor demographics, PA Dutch Convention and Visitors Bureau data as of April 2006, discussion of trends that will impact site.

Third Meeting - Review of critical issues, focus group results and comparison of site strengths and weaknesses and opportunities for improvement and growth.

Fourth Meeting – Drafting ten-year vision statement, identification of strategic focus areas, goals and strategies, time-line, persons responsible and resources needed.

Fifth Meeting – Final review of strategies, goals, time-line and resources needed. Reflection on planning process and approval process. Discussion of plans to share plan with the community and key stakeholders after it is approved.

The planning process also included several focus group meetings. The purpose of the focus groups was to elicit feedback on the site's operations, trends for consideration and ideas for programming. One focus group included representatives of local tourism and other historic sites in the region. Another focus group was comprised of educators including representation from public schools and colleges. A third focus group included consumers and the fourth focus group was comprised of key stakeholders including local and state elected officials. Railroad Museum staff and volunteers were trained to conduct these focus groups so that this capacity would reside with the site in the future. Additional focus groups included the Advisory Council and the entire staff of the Museum.

The final draft of the plan was reviewed and discussed at a special meeting on November 18, to which all Museum members were invited.

Any additional changes that come out of the Member's meeting will be made prior to the transmittal of the final draft to the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums for review and approval at the end of November.

**The members of the Strategic Planning Core Committee are:**

**David W. Dunn** - Director, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, PHMC

**Edward B. Betz**, President, Board of Directors, Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, FRM

**Thomas Schoelkopf**, Vice President, Board of Directors, FRM

**Ronald Bailey**, President, Museum Advisory Council

**Deborah Reddig**, Director of Museum Advancement, RRMP

**Patrick Morrison**, Educator, RRMP

**Allan Martin**, Curator, RRMP

**Ryan Kunkle**, Visitor Services Supervisor, RRMP

**Donna Williams** – Director, Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums,  
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, (PHMC)

**Robert Sieber** - Chief, Eastern Division, Bureau of Historic Sites & Museums, PHMC

# Mission Statement

**The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania collects, preserves and interprets Pennsylvania's railroad history for citizens and visitors by preserving and documenting the contributions that Pennsylvania railroading has made to the development of our Commonwealth and the nation.**

## Goals

To present exhibits, tours, educational programs and publications that broaden understanding and appreciation of Pennsylvania's rich railroad heritage and its relevance to modern life. Major themes to be presented include:

- The history of Pennsylvania's railroad corporations, their physical infrastructure and their documentary and graphic legacy.
- The history of railroad operations in the state, 1809-present.
- The technology of railroading in Pennsylvania including locomotives, railcars and other equipment.
- Railroad work and working conditions in Pennsylvania.
- The impact of railroads on Pennsylvania's social, political, cultural, economic and environmental history.
- The contributions Pennsylvania's railroads made to national history.

To work with the Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and other groups whose valued guidance and support enhance the mission and goals of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Approved by PHMC 2/16/00

# Vision

Already widely recognized as one of the world's leading railroad museums, the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania seeks to build on that reputation in order to become the unsurpassed leader in the field, respected globally for its efforts in connecting the present with the past, and the future, of railroading.

The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, of the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, cooperates with the Friends of the Railroad Museum and a strong and growing community of advocates, supporters and stakeholders, to establish and maintain itself as the model museum of its kind, in all of its preservation, educational, interpretive and operational endeavors. To borrow from the Pennsylvania Railroad itself, the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania will become, "the standard railroad museum of the world." The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania will emerge as the premier destination for historians, scholars, enthusiasts and the public at large, interested in the historic, scientific, economic, political, environmental, cultural and social impact of railroading, within the borders of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as well as nationally and internationally. In keeping with the dynamic history and technologies it interprets, the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania will continue to reshape itself to meet the needs of a changing and diverse audience.

The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania will fulfill this vision through the continuing development of its collection, physical plant, staffing, programming, financial and additional resources. The Museum will foster an open and cooperative relationship with other individuals, institutions, corporations and the railroad museum community at large, promoting the belief that a stronger union is better for all its members. The Museum will establish itself as a center of learning, not only for Pennsylvania's railroads, but also for museum practice and historic preservation, and will create a collegial setting for students, scholars, professionals and lifelong learners alike.

The Railroad Museum will endure as a permanent repository for Pennsylvania's tangible connections to its heritage. Through accurate, thoughtful and innovative use of the Railroad Museum's collections and resources, railroading's stories will be intertwined with broader ideas and ideals, to provide both a more personal and a more comprehensive connection to its history for many generations to come.

# Values

As the “standard railroad museum of the world,” the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, its staff and its volunteers are committed to:

- ✓ Promoting high standards of excellence and professionalism;
- ✓ Providing a customer-friendly environment;
- ✓ Presenting quality family experiences that offer meaningful ----- for everyone;
- ✓ Creating programs and exhibits that are both accessible to all and mindful of diverse audiences;
- ✓ Preserving and interpreting its collections with the highest standards of museum practice;
- ✓ Standing at the forefront of innovation in the museum field;
- ✓ Striving to be proactive in the community and the world.

# STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

1. Cooperation with Community; Strengthen Collaboration/Partnerships with:
  - Strasburg Rail Road
  - Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)
  - Municipal groups (County, townships, boroughs)
  - General community surrounding Museum
  - Other RR museums
  - Resource Development
    - a. Business
    - b. Tourism
    - c. Civic
    - d. Private
    - e. Public
2. Improve Environment for Visitors and Collections:
  - Install new, and improve existing, HVAC systems
  - Improve accessibility for the handicapped
  - Investigate food services for visitors and volunteers
  - Design and install additional and improved bathroom facilities
  - Improve route 741 pedestrian crossing for easy and safe access to and from Strasburg RR
3. Investigate best use of existing site and alternatives:
  - Develop 25-year Master Plan for the site
  - Look into potential satellite site(s)
4. Increase Visitation by 20 percent:
  - Work on creating unique Museum identity within community
  - Assess visitor needs regularly with visitor satisfaction surveys
  - Complete Front Entrance project
  - Develop new interpretive programs
5. Collections:
  - Provide improved access to collections
  - Find additional resources for preservation/conservation
  - Plan for improved and enlarged collections storage
  - Continue to acquire important additions to collections
6. Develop Staff Infrastructure to Support Increased Visitation:
  - Assess present staff/volunteer capacity
  - Project staffing and volunteers needed to accommodate increased visitation
  - Identify strategies to support staffing plan
7. Be the first railroad museum in the country to achieve AAM Accreditation:
  - Develop steps and time-line to achieve museum accreditation

- Provide resources to complete remaining tasks
8. Increase leadership and advocacy role of Friends of Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania
- Create Board development plan
  - Develop annual board retreat to assess progress and set annual goals
  - Examine role of board and friends in supporting museum
  - Increase advocacy efforts on behalf of museum by board and membership of Friends

# GOALS

## **Strategic Focus Area #1:** Cooperation with Community

**Goal:** Increase the Museum's visibility within the community

**Strategy:** Develop plan seeking support from local businesses and general community to strengthen the Museum's programs

### **Action Steps:**

1. Work with Strasburg Rail Road more closely to develop both Combination and Joint ticket opportunities for visitors  
1(b) Work with Strasburg Rail Road to resolve parking problems that occur during Thomas days
2. Plan series of town meetings to introduce Railroad Museum programs to the community
3. Create new brochure for display throughout state including PA Turnpike, Penn DOT welcome centers, other venues
4. Develop curriculum-based workshops on and off site for Museum school audiences

## **Strategic Focus Area #2:** Improve Museum Environment for visitors and Collections

**Goal:** Improve creature comforts for Museum visitors and upgrade collections environments to protect collections

**Strategy:** Work out a plan in cooperation with local and political delegations to implement improvements in the Museum's physical plant infrastructure.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Get capital monies released for HVAC in Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall
2. Get capital monies released for new exhibits in Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall
3. Design and install improvements to the Route 741 pedestrian crossing between the Strasburg Rail Road and the Museum
4. Install additional restrooms at strategic locations on Museum property
5. Provide food service for visitors and staff
6. Provide better and more accessibility to pieces in L&RSH that meet ADA requirements: More viewing platforms and new platform Bridges
7. Investigate improvements to on-site parking: closer handicapped access and more spaces
8. Investigate improvements in off-site directional signage

## **Strategic Focus Area #3:** Property Improvement and Acquisition

**Goal:** Develop the existing site fully and investigate increasing the Museum's property holdings to further the mission of the Museum

**Strategy:** Develop a 25 year "Master Plan" that provides several options to improve existing property and that investigates acquiring additional property for Museum purposes

**Action Steps:**

1. Develop 25-year master plan for existing site that maximizes use of current site
2. Build Roundhouse to get more collections under roof
3. Pursue acquisition of property west of Bishop Road
  - a. Close Bishop Road coinciding w/construction of 896 bypass
4. Construct Integrated collections storage facility to properly store small objects and library/archives collections
5. Explore Satellite Sites as part of 25-year plan

**Strategic Focus Area #4:** Increase Museum Visitation 20% over five years

**Goal:** Take specific actions that will result in increased visitation from a variety of audiences

**Strategy:** Find out who our visitors are and who are not; find out what they want and develop a plan to attract more visitors to the Museum and its programs.

**Action Steps:**

1. Visitor Assessment
  - a) Periodic visitor surveys
  - b) Visitor satisfaction instrument
  - c) Website comment box
  - d) Lobby Comment box/visitor book
  - e) Periodic feedback from staff and volunteers
2. Marketing – develop, write and implement a marketing plan
3. Develop strategies to differentiate from, and leverage connection to, the Strasburg Rail Road.
4. Establish Annual Program Plan
  - a) Assess effectiveness of current programs
  - b) Design new programs
  - c) Pilot and evaluate
5. Develop Audio tour of exhibits in Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall (explore IPOD, cell phone audio tours)
6. Develop written tours in French, German, Japanese, Chinese & Spanish

**Strategic Focus Area #5:** Collections

**Goal:** Improve Collections Care, improve access to collections and continue planned acquisitions

**Strategy:** Implement specific items in Museum's long-range conservation plan

**Action Steps:**

1. Preservation – Locomotive and Railcar Collection: restore as many as possible and get as many under roof (roundhouse?) as possible
2. Design and construct new museum-quality storage facility for small 3D items and Library and Archives Material
3. Design and install new exhibits using \$5 capital monies, once released
3. Actively pursue important acquisitions according to RRMP

#### Collection Plan

4. Provide access to collections on the website and through finding aids at the Museum
5. Provide increased physical access to collections through new ADA approved viewing platforms, alternate interpretations (i.e. video, photo, virtual) and install ADA approved paths through outdoor displays

### **Strategic Focus Area #6:** Staff Resources

**Goal:** Provide adequate staffing, both paid and unpaid, for museum programs

**Strategy:** Develop staffing plan that builds on the successes of the staffing plan developed for the 2000 long-range plan.

**Action Steps:**

1. Gather information from Museum staff on strengths and weaknesses of existing staff resources, paid and unpaid
2. Determine priority of needs and develop staffing plan to address needs (Documentation to include required skill sets, detailed position descriptions and salary ranges for paid positions)
3. Engage staff in priority order as funding/personnel become available

### **Strategic Focus Area #7:** AAM Accreditation

**Goal:** To become the first railroad museum in the United States to achieve AAM accreditation

**Strategy:** Develop a program schedule that leads to Railroad Museum accreditation by the end of 2008

**Action Steps:**

1. Develop a schedule for the museum to follow that completes the application process
2. Submit eligibility application to AAM
3. Complete self-study questionnaire
4. Address any shortcoming that can be corrected prior to site survey
5. Conduct "dry run" using PHMC in-house resources
6. Appoint visiting survey team and conduct site survey

### **Strategic Focus Area #8:** Friends of Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania

**Goal:** Increase leadership and advocacy roles of Friends of the Railroad Museum's Board of Directors

**Strategy:** Board Development

**Action Steps:**

1. Hold an FRM Board retreat to assess progress and set goals
2. Examine role of Board and Friends members in supporting Museum
3. Create a Board Development plan that will increase advocacy efforts on behalf of the Museum by FRM Board of Directors and membership

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING TEMPLATES:**

**The following templates represent detailed action planning including the lead person, committee, implementation partner for each step as well as costs, sources of funds and resources needed with implementation timeline and benchmarks.**

**Priority**

- ( ) Tier 1 (Essential)
- ( ) Tier 2 (Desirable)
- ( ) Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

## STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

What?/Who?    How?/When?

θ

θ

**FOCUS AREA :**                      **#1: Cooperation with Community**

**GOAL:**                              Increase Visibility and program participation

**STRATEGY :**                      *Develop an action plan to get the word out about the Museum and its programs to local businesses, and the community in general, so they can become Museum proponents and help to increase Museum visitation.*

Actions to Implement:	Lead Person	Committee/Chair	Implementation Partner	Cost/Sources & Resources	Implementation Timeline	Milestones & Dates	Current Status
<p><b>1. a. Work with Strasburg Rail Road more closely to develop both Combination and Joint ticket opportunities for visitors</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1</b></p>	David Dunn	Ed Betz, Tom Schoelkopf, Ryan Kunkle, Deb Reddig	Strasburg Rail Road  Linn Moedinger & HIT Entertainment  PHMC IT  PHMC Bureau of Historic Sites & Museums	Estimated: Add \$ for Joint Adv; \$5,000 Cost of printing tickets; \$2,000 Cost of POS system; \$25,000	Get regular combination ticket for Museum and RR for 07 season  Make another request for a Thomas combination ticket for the 07 season  Get Joint ticket and POS system for 08 season	Meet with SRC October, 2006  Agreement on Combination ticket by November, 2006  Agreement on Thomas Combination Ticket by January, 2007  Meet with PHMC IT and SRC to get POS system designed and implemented December, 2007  Have joint ticket and POS system in place for 2008 season	

<b>1. b Work with SRC to solve parking problems that occur during Thomas days</b>	David Dunn	Allan Martin Ryan Kunkle	Strasburg Rail Road	Minimal	Meet with Linn prior to the end of 2006		
<b>2. Plan a series of Town Meetings to introduce the Museum's programs to the Community.</b>  <b>Tier 2</b>	Allan Martin & Ralph Lockard	Loretta Harrison Deborah Reddig	Strasburg Community: Borough Council, Marketing Association and individual businesses along 896, 741 and 30	Printing and Mailing costs; probably some refreshments \$2500	Begin in late winter/early spring after front entrance is done and we are moved in	Get together to discuss in October 2006  Have plan in place by December, 2006 Hold events in March/April 2007	
<b>3. Create new Rack Cards or brochures for use in brochure racks throughout the state, including the PA Turnpike, PennDOT welcome centers and local venues</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Bob Sieber & David Dunn	Deborah Reddig	PHMC Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums & PHMC Marketing Dept.	Estimated: Funding for brochure slots \$5,000 and for printing brochures \$25,000 PHMC Marketing\$ FRM Gen. Budget	Develop new printed piece for use in the various racks, statewide for the 07 season	Meet with Bureau to discuss budget and present proposal for new printed piece in November, 2006	
<b>4. Develop a series of workshops, both on and off site, to develop curriculum-based programs for the Museum's school audiences</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Patrick Morrison	Pat & Troy	IU-13	Travel and workshop materials costs \$2,000			
<b>5. FRM Board &amp; Advisory Council Development Retreat</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	David Dunn	FRM Executive Committee Advisory Council President	Outside consultant?	\$10,000 FRM Budget	Have retreat by end of Spring, 2008	Have assessment done by the time nominations are due in Milepost	

**Priority**  
 Tier 1 (Essential)  
 Tier 2 (Desirable)  
 Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

## STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

What?/Who?    How?/When?  
 θ                    θ

**FOCUS AREA :**                    **#2: Improve Museum Environment for Visitors and Collections**

**GOAL:**                            Improve creature comforts for Museum visitors and upgrade collections environments to protect artifacts

**STRATEGY :**                    *Work out a plan in cooperation with local and political groups to implement improvements in the Museum's Physical Plant infrastructure*

Actions to Implement:	Lead Person	Committee/Chair	Implementation Partner	Cost/Sources & Resources	Implementation Timeline	Milestones & Dates	Current Status
<b>1. Get capital monies released for HVAC in Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn	Advisory Council FRM Exec Comm. Deborah Reddig	Area Legislator(s) PHMC Exec. Dir. Office of the Budget (DGS) FRM Board of Directors FRM Membership? PHMC DAP	State FRM \$2,000 for representations \$5million for HVAC	2 years: 1 year design; 2 <sup>nd</sup> year installation	Money Authorized in October 2002 capital bill; identified as agency priority in 2001	Awaiting release
<b>2. Get capital monies released for new exhibits in Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn	Advisory Council FRM Exec Comm. Deborah Reddig	Same as above	FRM \$2,000 for representations State of PA \$4.5million for exhibits	2 years: 1 year design; 2 <sup>nd</sup> year installation	Money Authorized in October 2002 capital bill; identified as agency priority in 2001	Awaiting release
<b>3. Design, and install improvements to the Route 741 pedestrian crossing between the SRC and the Museum.</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn & Al Martin	Bob Sieber - Committee Staff -	Strasburg R R Strasburg Township PHMC PennDOT	\$60,000  Funding: SAFE-TEA PHMC Keystone SRC	1 year	Design by July 08 Installed by May 2009 or 2010	Old design on file

<b>4. Install additional restrooms at strategic locations on Museum property.</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	David Dunn & Al Martin		DAP, DGS & SRR Township	\$75,000 Keystone funds	1 year – 2 years	Determine location 2008 Design new facilities 2008 Install new facilities 2009 Open 2010	Sewer line being installed
<b>5. Provide some kind of food service for visitors/staff</b>  <b>Tier 2</b>	Ryan Kunkle & David Dunn	Allan Martin DAP Deborah Reddig	FRM BOD, DAP, RR Museum Staff Outside contractor	Design: \$10,000 Construction: 60,000+ FRM Funds Keystone Funds?	3-5 years	Feasibility study by 2008 Construct 2009 Open 2010	
<b>6. Investigate improvements to on-site parking: closer handicapped access &amp; more spaces</b>  <b>Tier 2</b>	Allan Martin David Dunn	DAP	DAP, RRMP VS staff;	\$250,000	Include in site master plan		
<b>7. Investigate improvements in off-site directional signage</b>  <b>Tier 2</b>	David Dunn	DAP	Penn DOT Strasburg Boro Strasburg Twp. Lancaster County DAP	\$100,000	Annual updates		participating in “lighthouse” signage program (not yet installed) through Lancaster Co. MPO and Penn DOT

<b>Priority</b>
( ) Tier 1 (Essential)
( ) Tier 2 (Desirable)
( ) Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

## STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

What?/Who?	How?/When?
θ	θ

**FOCUS AREA :** #3: Property Improvement and Acquisition

**GOAL:** Increase the size of the Museum's property holdings to better further the mission of the Museum

**STRATEGY :** *Develop a plan that provides several options to improve existing property and acquire additional property(ies) for exhibits and collections storage*

Actions to Implement:	Lead Person	Committee/Chair	Implementation Partner	Cost/Sources & Resources	Implementation Timeline	Milestones & Dates	Current Status
<b>1. Develop 25-year Master Plan for existing site that maximizes use of site and that investigates the potential acquisition of additional property</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	David Dunn	DAP & Allan Martin & Bradley Smith	Strasburg Township DAP DGS Advisory Council FRM Board	\$50,000 PHMC	2007-2008	Hire consultant architect/engineer	
<b>2. Construct Roundhouse</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Joe Savoca FRM Donna Kreiser Meg Concannon	Advisory Council FRM Board and Membership Deborah Reddig Advancement Committee	FRM Board RRMP Advisory Council DGS DAP Museum Staff	\$6.2 M authorized in 2002 capital bill;	2008/2015	Bureau Approval: 2008 Agency Approval 2009 Capital Release 2011 Design 2012	Not Scheduled for Release
<b>3. Acquire property west of Bishop Road</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Joe Savoca FRM Donna Kreiser Meg Concannon	FRM Executive Committee	FRM Board of Dir. CWOPA DGS Legislature Approval PHMC Commissioners	\$400,000 (guestimate)	2007-2008	Construction 2015	Have property title search completed; waiting for appraisal \$\$
<b>4. Close Bishop Road with construction of 896 bypass</b>  <b>Tier 2</b>	David Dunn	Bob Sieber	Strasburg Twp PennDOT	\$75,000 Legal fees	2007/2008	Get Bishop Road Property first...	896 Bypass ongoing

<p><b>5. Satellite sites: As part of the 25-year plan, investigate potential satellite sites that may provide additional resources for storage and exhibition of the Museum's collection.</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1</b></p>	<p>Ron Bailey</p>	<p>Bob Sieber</p>	<p>Bureau of Historic Sites &amp; Museums CWOPA DGS Legislature SRC?</p>	<p>\$10-15 million</p>	<p>2009-2011</p>	<p>Include satellite concept in master planning process</p>	
--	-------------------	-------------------	--	------------------------	------------------	---	--

**Priority**  
 Tier 1 (Essential)  
 Tier 2 (Desirable)  
 Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

What?/Who?    How?/When?  
 θ                    θ

**STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE**

**FOCUS AREA :**            **#4: Increase Museum Visitation**

**GOAL:**                    **Take specific actions that will result in increased visitation back to the 160,000 annual visitor level in 5 years**

**STRATEGY :**            *Find out who our visitors are/not, what they want and develop a strategy to attract them to the Museum's programs*

<b>Actions to Implement:</b>	<b>Lead Person</b>	<b>Committee/Chair</b>	<b>Implementation Partner</b>	<b>Cost/Sources &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Implementation Timeline</b>	<b>Milestones &amp; Dates</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<b>1. Visitor Assessment –</b> 1) <b>Periodic visitor surveys</b> 2) <b>Website comment box</b> 3) <b>Lobby comment box</b> 4) <b>Periodic feedback from staff and volunteers</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Deb R., Patrice & Liz	TBD – FRM & PHMC	Ryan & Dave PDCVB Bureau of Historic Sites & Museums Visitor Services F&M?	\$10,000	1) Member's Day 2) January 1 3) April 1 4) Spring volunteer training	2) Nov 1 1,3 & 4) Jan 1	Zip Codes only being collected on a regular basis
<b>2. Marketing – Develop, write and implement marketing plan</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Deb Reddig	Advancement Committee  Craig Haberle	Advisory Council PHMC Marketing  Ron	Time Cost – \$50,000 Implementation \$500,000	July 1, 2007	Jan 15–Meet with partners March 15–first draft May 15 – Feedback July 1 -Final	Implementing informally Write it
<b>3. Develop new programs to attract more visitors</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Bradley Smith, Ryan Kunkle and Patrick Morrison	Liz Zell Museum Staff and select volunteers Deb Reddig	IMLS MFA Grant FRM PHMC	\$100,000 + Lots of staff time	Complete visitor survey analysis; Immediate and ongoing		

<p><b>4. a. Program Suggestions:</b>  <b>b. trees of Christmas</b>  <b>c. railroadiana roadshow</b>  <b>d. complete and install the new permanent exhibits</b>  <b>e. open more locos and cars for visitors</b></p>							
<p><b>5. Audio Tour of exhibits in Locomotive and Rolling Stock Hall</b>   <b>Tier 2</b></p>	<p>Ryan Kunkle</p>	<p>Patrick Morrison &amp; Bradley Smith &amp; Deb Reddig</p>	<p>Robert Bullock Contracted Vendor</p>	<p>\$30,000 License to FRM</p>	<p>2-4 Years</p>	<p>Review various systems 2007 Develop tour 2007 Select, purchase, and install system 2008</p>	<p>Have been approached by several companies already</p>
<p><b>6. Develop written tours in French, German &amp; Spanish &amp; other languages</b>  <b>Tier 1</b></p>	<p>Ryan Kunkle</p>	<p>Deb Reddig</p>	<p>Millersville U F&amp;M HAAC</p>	<p>\$6,000 design and printing</p>	<p>Have in place by 2007 season</p>		

<b>Priority</b>
( ) Tier 1 (Essential)
( ) Tier 2 (Desirable)
( ) Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

## STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

What?/Who?	How?/When?
θ	θ

<b>FOCUS AREA :</b>		<b>#5. Collections</b>					
<b>GOAL:</b>		Improved Collections Care, improved collections access and continued planned acquisitions					
<b>STRATEGY :</b>		<i>Implement Specific Items in Museum's Long Range Conservation Plan</i>					
Actions to Implement:	Lead Person	Committee/Chair	Implementation Partner	Cost/Sources & Resources	Implementation Timeline	Milestones & Dates	Current Status
<b>1. Preservation – Locomotive and Railcar Collection: Get as much as possible restored and under roof as soon as possible: Build Roundhouse or other structures</b>  <b>Tier1</b>	Brad Smith Curator III	Allan Martin RRMPA Collections Committee	FRM & PHMC FRM & PHMC (Capital Project) (Includes Partnership fostered thru FRM)	\$150,000 annually Foundations Grants Private Donations TEA Enhancement Funds	2010 -2015 (before subsequent accreditation)	TBD	Long-range collection's plan indicated in
<b>2. Design and construct new Museum-quality Storage facility for small 3D items, Library and Archives Material</b>  <b>Tier 2</b> <b>See also #3.1</b>	Brad Smith Curator III	Kurt Bell RRMPA Collections Committee	FRM & PHMC FRM & PHMC (Capital Project) (Includes Partnership fostered thru FRM)	\$6 million Capital Bill Foundations Grants Private Donations FRM Fundraiser PHMC Keystone TEA Enhancement Funds	2015 -2018 (before subsequent accreditation)	Basic design requirements ready prior to Accreditation Visit	Long-range collection's plan indicated in
<b>3. Actively pursue important acquisitions according to RRMP Collecting Plan</b>  <b>Tier 3</b>	Brad Smith Curator III	RRMPA Collections Committee	Class 1 RR's; Private Owners; Deaccessioning Museums;	\$5,000 annually FRM acquisition/transport ation fund	Ongoing (as equipment becomes available)	TBD	Long-range collection's plan indicated in
<b>4. Access to collections on the website and through finding aids at the Museum</b>  <b>Tier 2</b>	Brad Smith Curator III	RRMPA Collections Committee & FRM IT Committee	PA Dept of Education; FRM IT; PHMC IT; PHMC Collections Section;	\$250,000 NARF FRM PHMC PA Dept. of Ed IMLS MFA Grant	2006-2008	Complete cataloging 2006-2008 Sustainability Plan 2007	IMLS Grant awarded Partial NARF funding awarded
<b>5. Increase the number of pieces open to the public develop alternate interpretations (i.e. video, virtual, kiosks, etc.) for pieces that are not accessible. Install new viewing platforms and ADA approved paths in outdoor display areas</b>  <b>Tier 1</b>	Brad Smith Curator III	Allan Martin Curator II Restoration crew	Visitor Services Dept Education Dept Restoration Crew DAP	\$100,000 ADA Fund SMS	2007-2008	Prioritize pieces to be addressed	

**Priority**  
 Tier 1 (Essential)  
 Tier 2 (Desirable)  
 Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

What?/Who?    How?/When?  
 0                    0

**STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE**

**FOCUS AREA :**                    **#6. Staff Resources**

**GOAL:**                            Provide Adequate Staffing, both paid and unpaid, for Museum Programs

**STRATEGY :**                    *Develop a Staffing plan that builds on the successes of the Staffing plan in the 2000 Strategic Plan*

Actions to Implement:	Lead Person	Committee/Chair	Implementation Partner	Cost/Sources & Resources	Implementation Timeline	Milestones & Dates	Current Status
<p><b>1. Gather information from Museum Staff on strengths and weaknesses of existing staff resources, paid and unpaid.</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1</b></p>	David Dunn	RRMP Department Heads FRM Personnel Committee	PHMC Bureau of Historic Sites & Museums  FRM Board of Directors  PHEAA Regional Colleges/Universities	Minimal	ASAP	Winter 2006-2007	
<p><b>2. Determine priority of needs and develop staffing plan to fill those needs. Documentation to include required skill sets, detailed position descriptions and salary ranges for paid positions</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1</b></p>	David Dunn	RRMP Department Heads FRM Personnel Committee Chief, Eastern Division	Same as above	Minimal	Spring 2007	Implement summer 2007	
<p><b>3. Engage staff in priority order as funding/personnel become available</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1</b></p>	David Dunn	RRMP Department Heads FRM Personnel Committee Chief, Eastern Division	PHMC HR Civil Service Comm. FRM B of D FRM Program/Volunteer Coordinator PHEAA Regional Colleges & Universities	\$25-50,000 annually GGA Endowment Special Grants PHEAA Internship stipends FRM Budget PHMC 100 fund	Spring 2007	Ongoing	

**Priority**  
 Tier 1 (Essential)  
 Tier 2 (Desirable)  
 Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

## STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

What?/Who?	How?/When?
θ	θ

<b>FOCUS AREA :</b> #7: AAM Accreditation							
<b>GOAL:</b> To become the first railroad Museum in the United States to achieve accreditation.							
<b>STRATEGY :</b> <i>Develop a program schedule that leads to the Museum being accredited by the end of 2008</i>							
Actions to Implement:	Lead Person	Committee/Chair	Implementation Partner	Cost/Sources & Resources	Implementation Timeline	Milestones & Dates	Current Status
1. <b>Develop a schedule for the Museum to follow that completes the application process</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn	Museum Department Heads	PHMC AAM FRM BOD	Minimal	Schedule confirmed by fall, 2006		Proposed schedule in place
2. <b>Submit eligibility application to AAM</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn	Bob Sieber	PHMC AAM	minimal	Submit application by the end of January, 2007		
3. <b>Complete self study questionnaire</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn	Museum Department Heads	PHMC BHS&M FRM BOD AAM	Lots of staff time	Begin questionnaire March, 2007 and complete by end of December, 2007		
4. <b>Address any shortcoming that can be fixed prior to site survey</b>  Tier 1	David Dunn	Museum Department Heads FRM BOD	PHMC BHS&M FRM BOD Other Accredited PHMC sites	\$100-200,000 SMS, Keystone, and other funding sources	General review of museum status Dry run using internal survey team	Have Dry run at least 3 months prior to actual survey date	

<p><b>5. Appoint team and conduct site survey</b></p> <p><b>Tier 1</b></p>	<p>David Dunn</p>	<p>Bob Sieber Museum Department Heads</p>	<p>PHMC BHS&amp;M FRM BOD AAM</p>	<p>\$10,000 PHMC will bear costs of team and application fee</p>	<p>Conduct survey late spring or summer of 2008</p>		
--	-------------------	---	---	--	---	--	--

**Priority**  
 Tier 1 (Essential)  
 Tier 2 (Desirable)  
 Tier 3 (Worth Considering)

**STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE**

What?/Who?    How?/When?  
 θ                    θ

**FOCUS AREA :**    **#8: Friends of the Railroad Museum Board of Directors**

**GOAL:**                    **Increase leadership potential and advocacy roles of Board**

**STRATEGY :**            ***Work with consultants to create a Board development plan***

<b>Actions to Implement:</b>	<b>Lead Person(s)</b>	<b>Committee/Chair</b>	<b>Implementation Partner</b>	<b>Cost/Sources &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Implementation Timeline</b>	<b>Milestones &amp; Dates</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<b>1. Hold an FRM Board retreat to assess progress and assess goals, and examine the role of the Board and FRM Members in supporting Museum.</b>	Board President David Dunn	FRM Executive Committee and Past Board Presidents	Outside Consultant and PHMC	FRM Budget PHMC	Spring of 2007		
<b>2. Create a Board Development Plan that will increase the advocacy efforts on behalf of the Museum by FRM Board of Directors and FRM Membership</b>	David Dunn Deborah Reddig	FRM Executive Committee and Past Board Presidents	Outside Consultant And PHMC	FRM Budget PHMC	Complete by Board Nomination time	Board Development plan completed by July, 2007	

## Approval Process

# RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA STRATEGIC PLAN 2006-2011

Review and approved by:



Robert Lawrence, Board of Directors  
Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania

3-15-07

Date



Ron Bailey, Chair  
Advisory Council, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania

3/15/07

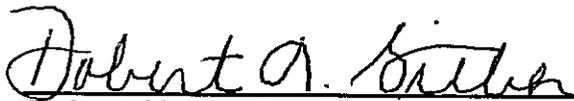
Date



David W. Dunn, Director  
Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania

3/15/07

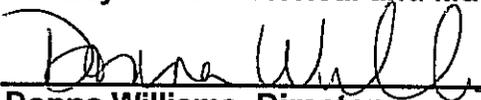
Date



Robert Sieber, Chief  
Eastern Division, Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

4/30/07

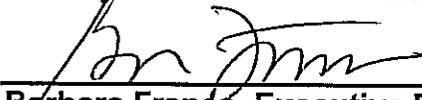
Date



Donna Williams, Director  
Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

4/30/07

Date



Barbara Franco, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

5/1/07

Date

# Appendices

**Results of long-range plan 2000-2015**  
**Critical Issues**  
**Time Line for Planning**  
**Primary and Secondary Customers**  
**PA Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
**Visitor Demographics**  
**Focus Group Reports**  
**Planning Committee Members**

## Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania **Critical Issues**

- Keeping pace and addressing needs of visiting public, keeping up with customer expectations
- Strengthening numbers of visitors
- Recruitment and retention of volunteers – declining number of volunteers for all areas of Museum operation
- Prepare for accreditation
- Funding for HVAC system
- On-going human and financial resource development
- Sustainability: ensuring that staff and volunteers do not burn out
- Restoration of collections
- Access to collections for visitors, scholars, utilization of website
- Roundhouse

7-10-07

## **Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania Strategic Planning Timetable**

All meetings will be 10am to Noon

Monday July 10, 2006 –	Strategic Planning Overview Review of Last Plan Identification of Critical Issues
Thursday July 20, 2006 -	Review Mission, Develop Vision, Identify Values Discuss Visitor Information; Trend Information Prepare for Focus Groups Train Focus Group Facilitators
Friday August 18, 2006 -	Assessment/Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities & Threats and Focus Group results Conduct Focus Groups
Friday September 15, 2006 –	Identify Strategies, Prioritize, Goals, Budget Action Plans
Friday September 29, 2006 -	First Draft Next steps
October – November	FRM Board, FRM Advisory Council, FRM Membership review
Friday November 24, 2006	Final Draft
December	PHMC Administrative Review

7-10-06

## **PRIMARY CUSTOMER:**

- ❖ **Visitors**
- ❖ **(Families, adults, seniors, middle-class, suburban, Caucasian, 50 percent local, 50 percent from NJ, Delaware, Maryland, Michigan, D.C. and NY)**
- ❖ **60-70 percent of visitors are from Strasburg Rail Road across the road**

## **SECONDARY CUSTOMERS:**

- **Tour groups (bus tours)**
- **RR model builders**
- **Elected officials**
- **Vendors**
- **Volunteers**
- **Retail shoppers**
- **College interns**
- **Staff**
- **Media: Newspapers, TV, Radio, etc.**
- **Community Leaders**
- **Facility Renters**
- **Associate group members (FRM)**
- **Boy Scouts**
- **Rail Fans**
- **Schools – public and private**
- **Colleges**
- **Lifetime learners, i.e. researchers, scholars**
- **Related railroad shops and sites**
- **Strasburg Township, Strasburg Borough, other nearby Municipalities**
- **Businesses**
- **Chamber of Commerce**
- **Strasburg Marketing Association**

**Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania  
Strategic Planning Focus Group No. 1: Tourism Partners  
August 17, 2006 8:00A.M**

Representatives Present:

Landis Valley Museum; Steve Miller  
Ephrata Cloister Museum; Toni Collins  
Rockvale Outlet Center; David Ober  
AAA Central Penn; Dorie Welk  
PA Dutch Country Visitors Bureau; Janet Wall

Moderator: Ryan Kunkle, RRMPA  
Scribe: Carol Wolff, C. Wolff and Assoc.  
Observation: David Dunn, RRMPA

Session Notes:

Following pre-session introductions and candid discussion over snacks, the focus group formally convened at 8:25. Members were asked to provide their perspective on four questions, the first being: How long have you known about the Railroad Museum and in what capacity? Answers to this question provided a formal introduction for each of the members and presented the first talking point for the session: the relative invisibility of the RRMPA and its close association with the Strasburg Rail Road in the minds of its neighbors. Familiarity ranged from having never visited the site to decades of partnership on professional projects and personal visits. Some who had visited the site in the recent past still did not realize this was not the Strasburg Rail Road.

This discussion led into the second question: What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the site? How well does the Railroad Museum operate? The following table outlines the responses:

Strengths:

1. RRMPA is well situated in a destination market, with many complementary and diverse attractions nearby.
2. RRMPA and Lancaster are perceived as family friendly and “safe” in a time of concerns over travel and security.
3. Partnership and positive relationships with the Strasburg Rail Road Corporation and availability of a train ride nearby a huge draw.
4. State funding provides security and permanence.
5. Kids love trains – large market to tap into.
6. Productive Staff – doing a lot with a little.
7. Excellent Programs – theme specific programs such as Trains and Troops specifically highlighted.

#### Weaknesses:

1. Not perceived as an independent entity (part of SRC), confusion over identity.
2. Minimal marketing resources don't provide nearly enough funds to establish identity or promote programs.
3. Very minute share of regional tourism, not tapping in to a large traffic flow.
4. State ownership limits growth and spending, particularly in marketing.
5. Decrease in school and motorcoach visitation.

Overall, the lack of advertising resources, both at the Museum and agency levels, for site promotion emerged as the greatest weakness and challenge for RRMPA. Participants all rated the Museum and its operations positively. The challenge now is to get the rest of the world to see what our current audience already knows.

Our third question: *What trends do you perceive as either opportunities or threats?* built on the previous responses.

#### Opportunities:

1. The Railroad Museum of PA should be well positioned as a popular destination due both to its geographic location and demographical market. We are a family friendly and safe destination that is only a short drive away from major metropolitan markets. A "backyard" vacation.
2. Increased cost of living (gas prices, etc.) will focus vacation spending on "bargain" programs such as those at the Museum.
3. Opportunities abound for increased packages with other tour partners.
4. Trend toward consistent year-round visitation over seasonal surges.

#### Threats:

1. Decreased use of school field-trips and history education programs.
2. Visitors looking for interactive activities and constantly changing upgrades. High-tech, high-interaction, hands-on, and behind-the-scenes demand. As much interest in *how* we preserve history as *what* we preserve.

Based on these responses, a number of suggestions were made in answer to the final question: *What additional or increased programs and services do you think we should be offering if resources were available?*

1. A traveling interactive exhibit, in a trailer or reproduction railcar, to promote the museum at regional and national trade shows, events, and professional conferences.
2. A railcar at the Visitors Center or other high-profile location.

3. Targeted motorcoach group marketing, possibly through hiring a joint promotions position for the three Lancaster PHMC sites.
4. Interactive tours and programs to connect visitors to restoration efforts – in particular, hands-on projects that go beyond the present tours.
5. Work with hotel front desk staff to increase familiarity, revisit regularly to update new employees.
6. Increase the size of the present facility to allow room for collections and program expansion.
7. HVAC, more important than ever given trend to year round visitation.
8. Increased publicity for special events.
9. Focused marketing effort on families. Of particular importance is marketing the museum to women, the primary household decision makers. Need to make the museum and its programs relevant to a new audience unfamiliar with trains or museums. Ideas include promotions with Amtrak, model trains (as a family hobby), Phoebe Snow / Harvey Girls (railroads' own family-promotion efforts).
10. Increase student market through teacher training (Act 48) and multi-disciplinary programming.

## **Notes and Trends**

### **Focus Group Session #2**

#### **“Educators”**

**Facilitator: Patrick Morrison, Museum Education**

**Railroad Museum of PA**

**August 18, 2006 -10:00am**

Representatives Present:

Lancaster-Lebanon IU13; Brian Barnhart

Teacher; Eileen Coxson

Teacher; Brent Peiffer

Millersville University; Robert Sayre

#### Strengths in operation of the Site

- Great team
- Projects i.e., mail sort and Lego cars
- Involvement of children
- Very responsive staff
- Great programs
- Great collections
- Great staff

#### Weaknesses in operation of the site:

- People don't know what they will get for kids, for families
- Congestion in the area; difficult to leave; bypass may help
- Lack of air conditioning in great hall – day campers and visitors complain
- Identity confusion – between Museum and Strasburg Rail Road
- Building is not attractive, not a magnet; needs to be inviting, brick building is not inviting

#### Opportunities to take advantage of:

- Connecting great programs, collections and staff
- Need identity niche
- Perceptions of site's purpose not that clear
- Where are brochures distributed
- Get the word out
- Revamp building to be invited with message – fun things to do here.
- Joint ticketing with Strasburg Rail Road, i.e. Trains and Troops is collaborative effort
- Broaden visitor base by connecting to other states
- Describe why teachers/students should visit, what will they learn?

- Emphasize save money, travel local

Potential threats for the site to consider:

- Parking limitations
- De-emphasis on field trips for public schools in the state.

Ideas for the Future:

- Have trains move, this attracts people
- Connect to local community with discounts for local residents
- Offer special evening for local residents
- Connect Museum to Strasburg Rail Road with wine & cheese event
- Joint ticketing for Strasburg Rail Road & Railroad Museum of PA
- Air condition and heat for the great hall
- Exhibit at school board convention
- Reception for teachers in Lancaster County
- Exhibit and offer tours to Council of Social Study Teachers annual meeting
- Offer after-school six-week program with transportation
- Workshop for teachers to meet Act 48 requirements
- Outreach to school principals
- Do readings in libraries
- Offer teachers free passes to visit and “check us out”
- Develop teacher packages – tools, worksheets, and preparation info.
- Tie museum to Pennsylvania academic standards
- Outreach to day care centers, schools, private schools, home schoolers
- Demonstrations at Chester County College
- Create program “history of railroads that you can’t learn in schools”
- Have volunteer call schools; get names of social study chairs
- Fact sheet on research possibilities for student teachers
- Offer Workshop at Millersville University for teachers including a visit to the site

**Focus Group Session #3  
 “Consumers” David Dunn, Facilitator  
 Railroad Museum of PA  
 August 18, 2006 12:00 Noon**

The Group gathered at noon on August 18, 2006 brought together as representing the Museum’s “Consumers,” or people who use the Museum in various ways. Researchers, people who have rented the Museum for events, Museum corporate and individual members, paid and unpaid staff and members of other railroad related historical societies who look to the Museum for expertise and as a repository for historic collections.

Those Present included:

Carol Adams, Reading Company Technical & Historical Society; Ed Betz, FRM Board President; David Wood, prospective FRM Board Member; Chris Baer, Librarian, Hagley Museum and Library; Al Buchan, President, Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society; Howard Rineer and Steve McCracken, Worley and Obetz, Corporate Member; Joel Long Member and Facility renter; Glen Kendig, President, Lancaster Chapter, National Railroad Historical Society; Bob Lawrence, Past President FRM Board and Current Chair of FRM Museum Store Committee; Kurt Bell, Museum paid staff, Archivist/Librarian; Bob Karig, railroad history researcher/author; Ralph Lockard, unpaid staff.

The group was welcomed by David Dunn, Museum Director and facilitator of this focus group. Participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire as they were munching on a light lunch. After completing the four questions, Dunn asked those around the table to identify themselves, describe their affiliation, if any, with the Museum and whether or not they had been to the Museum lately as described in question Number 1. Most had been to the Museum within the last year and were fairly familiar with its resources.

The group was next addressed question number 2 which asked participant’s perception of the Museum’s Strengths and Weaknesses. Answers in the table below:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Location: SRC, Tourism already here, Short drive from large markets	Collection deteriorating outside in yard; should find way of covering important pieces
World-Class Collection of Equipment, most of which is visible	State bureaucracy and its lack of funding for large projects
Additions to collection well thought out with high standards	Area traffic is getting really bad
Library and Archives collections great	Paid staff is small for size of institution
Key staff talented and excellent	Site is full...need more space
State provides guaranteed funding	Need more unpaid staff
Access to a variety of funding sources	Directional signage to site nearly nonexistent
Great quality and variety of changing programs	No HVAC in RSH

Front Entrance will be more inviting than old entrance; increase attendance?	Exhibits very traditional, informative but not exciting/engaging for new audience
Topical displays on 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor add relevance; general exhibits are good	No ownership of Museum or its programs by Borough, Township or County
Museum very visible: always in newspaper	Little visitor data available to guide programs
Good overall management	Identity problem with SRC
Museum attracts diverse audience	Research Area Crowded
Physical Plant shows good maintenance and constant improvement: good first impression	Could use more national publicity
Excellent Reputation in Field	Long Walk from Parking Lot
Volunteers helpful and enthusiastic	No public transportation to site
Free Parking	Not a site with any railroad history/architecture
Pennsylvania Railroad Historic Collection	Uneven funding stream
	No local school children use educational programs

The group was next asked to comment on question number three, “What trends do you perceive as either opportunities or threats?”

Opportunities	Threats
Work with area businesses; Facility uses, program sponsorship, etc.	Bloom may be off the traditional Lancaster County Tourism rose: everyone has outlets; traffic is getting crazy; Amish are passé; gas prices; tourism, especially for history museums, is down all over
Work with railroad groups: PRR T&HS, NRHS, MA & PA, OLW, Rdg. CO. T&HS	Identity confusion with SRC is a threat
Work to promote site at area businesses: hotels, attractions, etc.	Museum’s potential audience is changing demographically: fewer railroaders, fewer people ride trains; history not taught as intensely as math, science and English; less leisure time for both adults and kids
Plan more convention sized events 300+ participants	Thomas actually hurts Museum attendance; regular patrons and volunteers stay away
Need to develop joint/combo ticket with the Strasburg Rail Road both during regular operation and during Thomas Days.	Local political scene currently clouded with large turnover; hard to get funding endorsed by legislators with only freshman power
Develop programs for younger people and get local schools involved in curriculum-based programs	Downturn in economy/admission hurts FRM’s ability to provide programs; inflation also a threat

Improve the pedestrian crossing across 741 between the SRC and RRMP. Bridge? Tunnel? Better markings and warning lights?	Difficulty in replacing older FRM volunteers who had railroad experience
Do things no one else does	Lack of climate control limits facility use and year-round visitation
Develop more programs that have collections access as a goal: ie the library catalog and photo collections online	
Target Boomers: large audience interested in railroads	
Sell PRR T&HS publications in Museum Store	

The final question asked “What additional or increased programs or services do you think we should be offering if unlimited resources were available?” What would your vision of the Museum be in a perfect world?

- New interpretive exhibits and special tours that are hands on, interactive and entertaining
- Some kind of train/equipment ride
- An operating steam locomotive in the collection that could serve as a traveling ambassador for the Museum
- Traveling exhibits
- A series of publications documenting the collection and exhibits
- Regular speakers and visiting lecturers on a variety of topics
- Environmental controls in all collections areas
- Get all large pieces under cover, preferably in climate control too, with a roundhouse or other structure
- Large library/archives research center and storage building
- Cooperative partnerships with other railroad museums
- Outreach programs for schools
- Acquire additional property/land
- Additional staff: library and restoration
- IMAX Theater?
- Improve orientation for visitors
- Work on outreach to schools:
  - Integrate in curricula besides history
  - Target elementary and high schools
  - Offer teaching training for credit

Trends from the Consumers Session

1. Develop new programs/exhibits for younger audiences that are both educational and entertaining. Suggestions included traveling exhibits, curriculum-based outreach programs for schools, and hands-on, interactive displays at the Museum. Also try to get more of the L-S School district to use Museum as destination for field trips.
2. Preserve Museum's Collections. Suggestions included HVAC in Rolling Stock Hall, building a roundhouse and additional restoration shop staff to help with locomotive and railcar collection; and building a new state-of-the-art integrated collection storage facility for library/archives and non-locomotive/railcar 3D collections.
3. Work to address RRMP identity problem, as Museum is often thought to be part of the Strasburg Rail Road. Suggestions included working with local motels/restaurants/attractions to get word out about Museum, keep slot just for RRMP brochure, invite local businesses for familiarization tours and facility uses, and keep up the barrage of publicity through press releases and what paid advertising we can afford.
4. Cultivate existing relationships and form new alliances with partners to champion the work of the Museum. Suggestions included developing a joint/combination ticket with the SRC, work more closely with other like-minded groups (i.e. National Railroad Historical Society, Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society, Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad Historical Society, etc.), contact local schools and IU 13 with program ideas, and keep advancing the Museum's programs with the PHMC, Pennsylvania Dutch Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Museum Council of Lancaster County and Strasburg Marketing Association.

**Focus Group Session #4**  
**“Key Stakeholders” Facilitator: Ronald Bailey**  
**Railroad Museum of PA**  
**August 18, 2006 2:00pm**

The Group gathered at 2pm on August 18, 2006 brought together as representing the Museum’s “Stakeholders,” or people who are major partners, wittingly or unwittingly, in the Museum’s programs, governance or community.

Those Present included: John Luppino, Director of Operations, National Toy Train Museum; Bob Thompson, Legal Counsel to State Senator Gibson Armstrong; James Rose, Member of the Museum’s Advisory Council; Representative Scott Boyd, PA House of Representatives; Bob Lawrence, Charter Member and past president of the FRM Board of Directors; Mitch Hanna, representing State Senator Noah Wenger; Tom Willig, Strasburg Township Supervisor; Ed Betz, Current President, FRM Board of Directors.

The group was welcomed by Ronald Bailey, facilitator of this focus group and Advisory Council President and David Dunn, Museum director. Participants were given time to fill out the questionnaire. After completing the four questions, Bailey asked those around the table to identify themselves, describe their affiliation, if any, with the Museum and whether or not they had been to the Museum lately as described in question Number 1.

The group was next addressed question number 2 which asked participant’s perception of the Museum’s Strengths and Weaknesses. Answers in the table below:

Strengths

Weaknesses

Museum management: these folks know how to run a museum xxx	Parking during special events and occasionally on busy summer weekends
Good Friends of the Railroad Museum associate group support	Lack of cover for items in restoration yard: if it doesn’t survive it can’t be interpreted
Focused collection: All tied to PA xx	Size of site will limit size of collections xx
Located in major tourism destination xx	Commonwealth of PA has not stepped up to the plate with appropriate funding for such an important institution and collection xxx
Physical plant has the capacity to handle more visitors: wonderful space	Site is too small for the tasks it is assigned; site is maxed out
Active Volunteer system	Tours tend to focus more on hardware than for what it was designed and how it changed history
Water and Sewage issues are nearly resolved	Interest in history is declining with the public
As a state rep I have never received	Lack of community support and confusion

complaint about RR museum but I have about others	with the other RR attractions in the area
Two other state museums in County give a kind of critical mass	Seasonal use only due to lack of HVAC in Exhibit area
Thomas the Tank Engine creating whole new generation of train enthusiasts	Potential safety issues for visitors crossing road between SRC and RR Museum
Really a unique facility in the area and in its field: close up view of trains indoors	
Number One in attendance for all PHMC sites, and for Lancaster County Museums	
Partnership with Strasburg Rail Road	
Majority of visitors from PA, NJ, MD, and DE translate to close driving distance to markets	

The group was next asked to comment on question number three, “What trends do you perceive as either opportunities or threats?”

Opportunities

Threats

Look for satellite facility to store and/or exhibit the growing collection: Erie? Pittsburgh? Regional approach to attracting audience and volunteers	Unsafe crosswalk between Museum and Strasburg Rail Road x
Work with Strasburg RR with getting more of their ridership and income from increased admission revenue via combination ticket	Capital funds not released for HVAC or Exhibits will severely limit the Museum’s operational capability xxxx
Work with SRC, Strasburg Township and PennDOT to develop a safer crosswalk in conjunction with Strasburg Bypass project	Tourism trade in Lancaster County is decreasing and tourism is focusing more on urban growth; will have an impact on Museum Admission
Complete the front entrance project	History is out as a popular subject and many history museums are dying
Market Strasburg as a destination that includes all the regional attractions and resources. Start getting message out about the area is somewhere you can park your car and still see a lot in a small area.	Amish and country driving are not as attractive as they once were.
Keep pushing for Amtrak Station in Paradise and push marketing plan that gets cars off the road	Museum geographically and philosophically isolated from community
Start looking at diesel-electric as a new focus on collecting...the steam era has gone	Traffic will get heavier as time goes on and more development occurs

Start to work more closely with the model railroaders: national convention?	Site is too small: need more land xxx
Reinvigorate school programs to make them fresh and new and attractive to the Thomas the Tank generation xx	Fuel prices and related inflation provide less disposable income for nearly everyone
Work with other convention centers to get the word out about the Museum	
Develop traveling loco or railcar for fairs and trade shows	
Digitize images and put on web	
Market as industrial museum more than a railroad Museum	

The final question asked “What additional or increased programs or services do you think we should be offering if unlimited resources were available?” What would your vision of the Museum be in a perfect world?

- Farmland Preservation: 10% of admissions to farmland preservation
- Connect people to public transportation- Strasburg can be model for this
- Develop thematic traveling exhibits or a virtual tour of PA railroads
- Keep developing modern railroads and the future of railroading as a major theme...work with Norfolk Southern Railroad and Amtrak to promote freight and train travel as a way to get cars off the road
- Absolutely get climate control in Rolling Stock Hall to make visitors comfortable and preserve the collection
- Restore pieces at a faster pace and put more money into marketing the Museum so it is no longer one of PA’s best kept secrets
- Develop virtual tours using technology to attract and involve kids
- More interactive exhibits, demonstrations
- Connect to Strasburg Township vision
- Use internet for outreach and marketing

**Session #5: Advisory Council Focus Group**  
**Advisory Council Strategic Plan Focus Group Comments**  
**Thursday, October 26, 2006, 7:00 p.m.**

Advisory Council members in attendance: Ronald Bailey, David Dunn, Kent Haberle, William Hecker, Robert Lawrence, Deborah Reddig, James Rose, Bill Schafer, Jere Schuler, Paul Quinn

Guests in attendance: Carol Moore, Linda Schafer  
Facilitators: Ronald Bailey, Advisory Council President & David Dunn, Museum Director

### **RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA STRENGTHS**

- Quality and comprehensiveness of collection
- Professional staff
- Friends of the Railroad Museum, strong support group
- Lancaster as tourist area, ideal location
- Size of Rolling Stock Hall
- Strasburg Rail Road just across the street
- Fine restoration shop
- Variation in displays
- Volunteers feel appreciated
- Good community relations
- Hands-on activities for varied age groups

### **RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA WEAKNESSES**

- Lack of controlled atmosphere (HVAC) in exhibit hall
- Strasburg Rail Road overwhelms identity
- Lack of advertising dollars
- Staff too small, museum wide
- No public transportation, poor roads
- No cohesion between Strasburg attractions
- No joint ticket with other attractions
- No package menu with other attractions
- Lack of space for collection, unable to restore collection in a reasonable time, particularly as more pieces are added
- Site too small with limited ability to expand in current area
- Age appropriate challenges, concepts should be expanded
- Isolated (from visitors) restoration shop
- Inconsistency of interpretation standards

### **RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA OPPORTUNITIES**

- Offer programs with modern railroaders
- Obtain alternate/adjunct/satellite/annex location/facility
- Expand hands-on restoration to visitors
- Offer joint tickets
- Use Strasburg Rail Road advertising
- Take advantage of opening of Paradise Amtrak station
- Use internet, digital collections, run a train on the web site
- Offer outreach to schools, integrate into curricula
- Offer audio tours, with layered interpretation
- Educate public as to role and benefits of public transportation/railroads
- Develop children's focus groups
- Offer targeted outreach to/alliances with railroad groups

### **RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA THREATS**

- Decline in interest in/knowledge of trains

- Big railroads not accessible
- Falling attendance
- Higher gas prices
- Unspecified catastrophes, like recession, terrorism
- Lack of interpretation, due to staffing
- Highest standards not always met
- Shift in public interest away from history/historic attractions

## **IDEAS**

- Fire up and operate replica steam locomotive
- Offer live steam (rides) on a smaller scale
- Develop any exhibits/activities that move
- Mount more mechanical displays for hands-on activities and demonstrations
- Run turntable more frequently
- Develop a traveling show
- Tie in with the National Watch & Clock Museum for time-oriented exhibits/programs (Hamilton)
- Build new storage facility and obtain records now in Harrisburg
- Build Roundhouse as interpretive exhibit and to house more collections

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**Donna Williams** – Director, Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums,  
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, (PHMC)

**Robert Sieber** - Chief, Eastern Division, Bureau of Historic Sites & Museums, PHMC

**David W. Dunn** - Director, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, PHMC

**Edward B. Betz**, President, Board of Directors, Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, FRM

**Thomas Schoelkopf**, Vice President, Board of Directors, FRM

**Ronald Bailey**, President, Museum Advisory Council

**Deborah Reddig**, Director of Museum Advancement, RRMP

**Patrick Morrison**, Educator, RRMP

**Allan Martin**, Curator, RRMP

**Ryan Kunkle**, Visitor Services Supervisor, RRMP