

LIPPITT
HOUSE
MUSEUM



STRATEGIC PLAN





TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction p. 1
- Vision & Mission p. 2
- Programming p. 3
- Stewardship p. 4
- Financial Sustainability p. 6
- Operations/Administration p. 7
- Who We Are p. 8

INTRODUCTION

A property of Preserve Rhode Island, Lippitt House Museum is Providence's premiere Victorian house museum capturing the brilliance of 19th century design while representing a time in Providence's industrial history. Heir to one of Rhode Island's leading textile manufacturing families, Henry Lippitt (1818-1891) designed and supervised the construction, from 1863 to 1865, of the house for his wife Mary Ann Balch (1823-1889) and their six children. The house was occupied by four generations of the Lippitt family before it opened as a museum in 1993. Today, Lippitt House Museum offers guided tours, concerts, and a variety of programs and resources. A National Historic Landmark, Lippitt House has one of the best-preserved Victorian interiors in America allowing visitors to step into Providence's Golden Age. Following the Lippitt family's example of public service, the Museum's cultural programming promotes civic engagement, the arts, and sharing Providence's remarkable history.

This plan was approved by the Preserve Rhode Island Trustees on November 8, 2023.

Insert photo: Museum volunteers welcome visitors.

VISION & MISSION

VISION

Vision (the world we want to see):
We envision a community that supports a thriving civic landscape and is connected to its diverse cultural heritage.

MISSION

Mission (what we do):
Lippitt House Museum contributes to a vibrant civil society by activating a place where art, history, and community converge.



PROGRAMMING

Continue:

- Use the Museum's Interpretive Plan and its themes of civic engagement, art & design, and history to guide programming.
 - Deliver core public programs:
 - Museum tours, including House at Work tour
 - Lecture and discussion programs, including Community Conversation series
 - Music programs
- Offer a mix of fee-based and free programming, including participating in the Institute of Museum and Library Services' "Museums for All" free admission program.

Strive:

- Scale existing community partnerships and look for opportunities to develop new partnerships, including expanding English Language Learning (ELL) programming. These partnerships may result in programming for the general public or for targeted audiences.
- Commemorate the 160th anniversary of the completion of Lippitt House (1865-2025).
- Participate in national Semiquincentennial commemoration – 250th anniversary (1776-2026).
- Seek collaborations with contemporary artists to create installations inspired by the design, histories, and stories associated with Lippitt House and its mission.

Key Strategies:

- Develop and deliver programs that have relevance for the 2020s and align with Lippitt House Museum's brand.
- Actively work to diversify community partners and audience.
- Activate the garden space and optimize online programming in addition to House-based programs.
- Seek funding to staff an expanded ELL program, for concert series sponsorships, and to support special projects such as museum exhibitions and artist installations.
- Update the Museum's Interpretive Plan.

Benchmarks:

- Public programming is offered regularly.
- Programming is well attended.
- Audience is more diverse.
- Partnerships with community groups sustain over time.



STEWARDSHIP COLLECTIONS

Continue:

- Provide stable conditions for collections and historic interiors.
- Maintain and update collections information routinely.
- Continue efforts to return the appearance of furnished interior spaces to their period of historical significance.

Strive:

- Update a Collections Policy for Lippitt to complete American Alliance of Museum standard core documents.
- Research, acquire, and display prints once owned by the Lippitt family and continue window treatment reproduction projects.
- Devise and implement a plan to organize digital image collections.
- Stabilize built-in furniture pieces.

Key Strategies:

- Conduct a conservation assessment program survey to help identify object treatment priorities.

Benchmarks:

- The Museum will know where all objects in the collection are, have the appropriate documentation, and ensure they are physically secure.

STEWARDSHIP PROPERTY

Continue:

- Follow an annual maintenance schedule for museum and residential units, e.g., landscaping, fire detection system, HVAC, appliance replacement schedule.
- Maintain access to property for people with physical disabilities.
- Preserve and restore interior finishes, prioritizing areas where original paint is failing.

Strive:

- Invest in capital projects to protect the property from wear and tear as well as changes in weather and climate.
- Invest in projects to preserve the building envelope prioritizing life/safety concerns. E.g., mortar repointing and brownstone repair project.

Key Strategies:

- Create a master "campus plan" that includes a real estate asset management approach considering financial and programming needs and opportunities.
- Create prioritized and sequential capital projects list and related funding plan.

Benchmarks:

- Lippitt House is structurally stable and watertight.
- Building and grounds' appearance reflects how it looked when the Lippitt family lived at 199 Hope Street.
- The facility is safe for staff, visitors, and residents.



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Continue:

- Raise general operating support through the annual fund including holding an annual fundraising event.
- Earn income through apartments and event rentals as well as fees to cover direct expenses for programs.
- Raise dedicated funds for capital projects.

Strive:

- Maximize return on investment for earned income sources.
- Cultivate and encourage legacy donors.
- Fund upcoming major capital projects, expanded ELL program, exhibit/installations, and collections projects.



Rosé Garden Party

Key Strategies:

- Implement a planned giving program.
- Pursue private, federal, and state grants.
- Cultivate individual and corporate donors.
- Increase engagement with existing and new contacts.
- Explore debt financing options.

Benchmarks:

- The Museum has funds to do the activities outlined in the plan and stays within budgets.

OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION

Continue:

- Maintain appropriate staffing level for programming, stewardship, sustainability, and operations/administration functions.
- Sustain visibility for the Museum and its programmatic offerings.

Strive:

- Work with Preserve RI staff to employ best-practices for DEI in the workplace.
- Streamline administrative functions to create greater efficiencies.
- Increase PRI Trustees and Lippitt Advisory Committee engagement.

Key Strategies:

- Optimize electronic communications including social media to promote Lippitt brand and programs, and to increase audience engagement.
- Re-think the use of volunteers and interns for the Museum, including exploring partnerships to funnel new volunteers.

Benchmarks:

- Museum operations will be satisfactorily staffed.



Museum visitors

WHO WE ARE

PRESERVE RI BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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WHO WE ARE

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Lee Chafee
Duncan Cocroft
Petra Jenkins
Brett Pelletier
Alex Reynolds
Maureen Taylor
John Woolsey

LIPPITT HOUSE MUSEUM STAFF

Carrie Taylor, Director
Cathy Saunders, Curator of Education
Jane Bird, Museum Associate
Mat Hickey, Property Manager