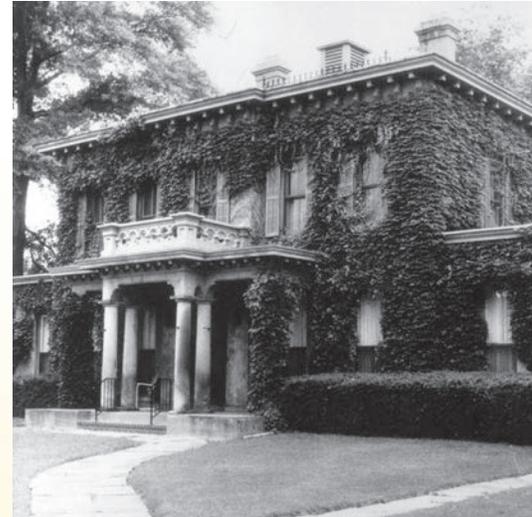
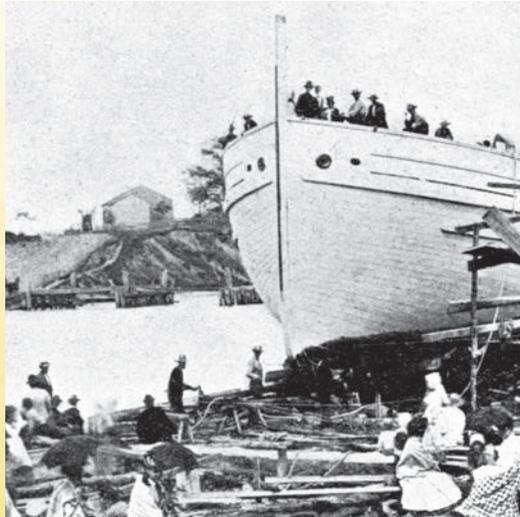




LORAIN COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



Strategic Plan

2021 - 2023

Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.

- HARRY S. TRUMAN



LORAIN COUNTY
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Strategic Plan

2021 - 2023

Dear advocates of Lorain County's past, present, and future:

For non-profit organizations, strategic plans are like road maps. The planning process results in a written document that is used as an internal guide for decision making, accountability, and evaluation. The plan is also referenced externally to prioritize programming, direct resources toward new collaborations, and seek out potential funders. When Lorain County Historical Society initiated the work of crafting a new strategic plan in November 2019, we didn't expect to be finishing the process in the midst of a pandemic.

If ever there was a time to ask the tough questions, listen without prejudice, and be open to change, it is now. We are very fortunate to have been creating LCHS's road map for the next several years, right when we need one the most.

This document outlines a plan of action for Lorain County Historical Society to become the hub of history leadership, and education, where all people are encouraged to develop a passion for the past, participate in relevant study and engaging experiences, and make history a meaningful part of their lives.

The genesis of the strategic planning process was our commitment to the Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs) of the American Association for State and Local History. This is a self-evaluation program designed to help small- to mid-sized history organizations like LCHS in reviewing policies and practices and to benchmark themselves against national museum standards. LCHS began implementing a StEPs review in 2018. During this process, the LCHS Board recognized the need for a strategic plan, and turned to Jan McKay & Associates (JMA), for assistance.

Throughout this process, JMA has been guiding us in asking how LCHS can be more relevant in our community – to families, students of all ages, lovers of history, community partners, educators, and colleague organizations. We

gathered feedback and then analyzed it in a process that included our Board of Directors, staff, members, local historical organizations, community stakeholders, and the greater community. We have held one-on-one conversations, visioning sessions, site visits, and Zoom meetings. We hired Drive Research, a market research company, to conduct focused community and member surveys. We challenged ourselves to ask the tough questions, to be honest, and to use our imaginations.

This strategic plan updates our mission, expresses our vision for the future, and shares the values by which we will carry out our work. It ensures organizational resilience and sustainability by addressing governance, finances, programming, collaboration, and facilities. It builds upon the good, solid work of many, many people in the history of LCHS and keeps moving forward.

As we wrap up the planning process and move toward implementation, we are aware of the uncertainty that has come to be a constant of the human experience. So many are experiencing unrest due to social, racial, and economic factors. The value of history in our community and in our world is clear. LCHS's work is relevant.

We are proud to share this road map to a better future for Lorain County's past with you.



Bonnie Ivancic
President



Kerri Broome
Executive Director

MISSION

The Lorain County Historical Society collects, preserves, and shares the history of Lorain County to educate and inspire present and future generations.

VISION

Our vision is to be a respected hub of learning about history, where all people are encouraged to discover and develop a passion for the past, engage in relevant study and educational experiences, and make history a meaningful part of their lives.

VALUES

LCHS believes that historical understanding is critical to creating a better world. We are dedicated to best practices, guided by professional organizations in our field. Our work will be informed by our beliefs and commitments to excellence in:

- **Stewardship and Service**
- **Integrity and Sustainability**
- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Collaboration and Innovation**

Stewardship and Service: LCHS responsibly cares for the resources entrusted to us and believes that our collections are held for the community's benefit. We challenge ourselves to meet the needs of our community, visitors, and audiences and to provide excellent customer service. We hold ourselves to the highest of standards for best practices as goals in education, interpretation, collections care, and the preservation of our historic properties. We foster evidence-based practices in our research, scholarship, exhibits, education programs, and publications.

Integrity and Sustainability: LCHS is committed to honest and clear communication, trustworthiness, and accountability. We believe that a healthy organization needs financial stability, and we are committed to using resources responsibly and acting with transparency. We develop and manage our resources to ensure the sustainability of our services. We balance short-term opportunities with long-term goals. We are good stewards of the earth.

Diversity and Inclusion: We believe that diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion make us a stronger organization. We want our collections, programs, staffing, governance, and members to reflect the diversity of Lorain County. We welcome all to learn about Lorain County regardless of race, creed, financial worth, sexual orientation, or disability. We respect the validity of different perspectives and accept diverse opinions and ideas.

Collaboration and Innovation: LCHS staff and volunteers are dedicated to using the power of history to transform lives. We strive to create a workplace where everyone can succeed. We respect one another and appreciate our knowledge, experience. We value strong leadership and governance. We conduct our work with cooperation and mutual respect, creating partnerships that take advantage of the range of skills and activities throughout the county and beyond. We value the work of other historical societies, public history programs, universities, community colleges, and museums. Creativity and effectiveness are critical to our success and are recognized, supported, and honored as we fulfill our mission. We are open to new ideas and continuously seek to improve.

Objective 1

Ensure that LCHS thrives and meets its mission by developing human and financial resources.

GOAL 1

Strengthen Fund Development efforts through stronger infrastructure, friend raising, and planning.

GOAL 2

Strengthen current fund development efforts, working with a strong Board Committee and Development Committee.

GOAL 3

Build up current staffing and volunteer program.

GOAL 4

Provide more professional development opportunities for staff and increase team building.



To communicate the truths of history is an act of hope for the future.

-DAISAKU IKEDA





Objective 2

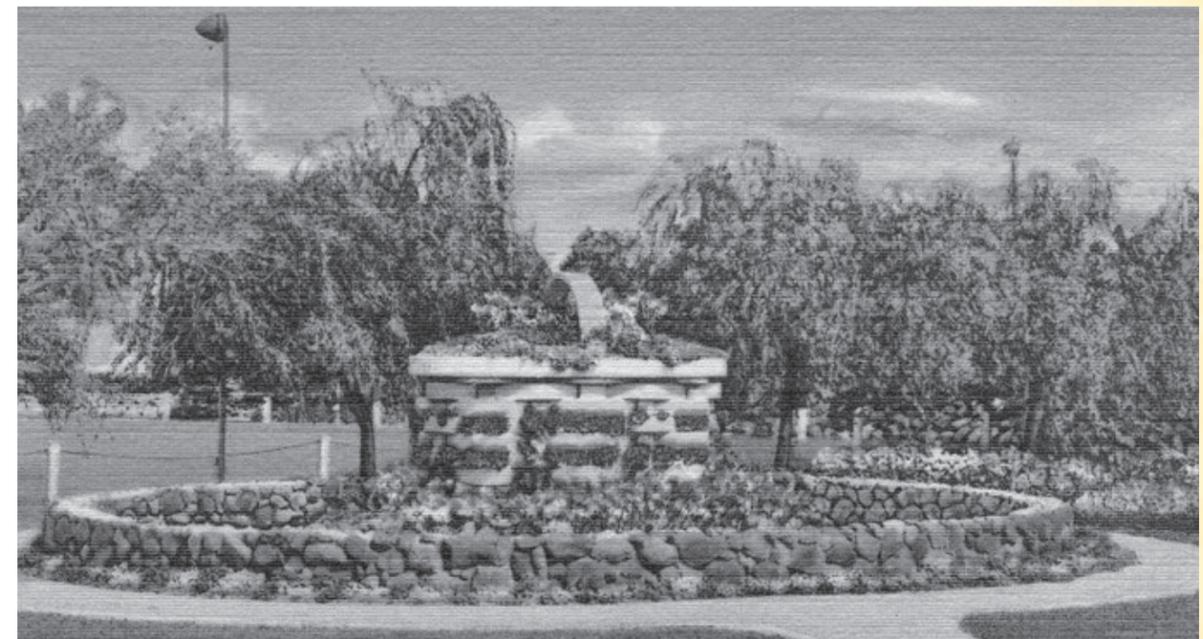
Strengthen leadership, governance, accessibility, and stakeholder care, thereby expanding the number and type of stewards for the entire organization and its mission fulfillment.

GOAL 1

Improve the process for Board leadership selection; focus on diversity.

GOAL 2

Take advantage of community leadership to advance LCHS's profile and successful in-kind and donor support.





You can't be a full participant in our democracy if you don't know our history.

-DAVID McCULLOUGH

Objective 3

Ensure Lorain County Historical Society is the leader and hub of all things related to best practices, collaborative projects, innovative use of technology, and collections care. Learn together. Work together.

GOAL 1

Be a catalyst for historical societies to learn together.

GOAL 2

Build stronger relationships with other historical societies and those who deliver history and be the catalyst for them to work together.





American history is longer, larger, more various, more beautiful, and more terrible than anything anyone has ever said about it.

-JAMES BALDWIN



Objective 4

Follow best practices in curatorial matters and effectively utilize the collections and archives.

GOAL 1

Improve and increase proper care of current collections, library, and archives.

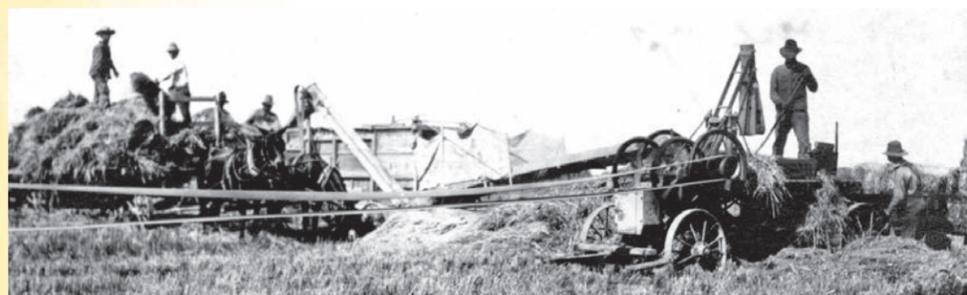
GOAL 2

Collect and share artifacts, archives, and stories; encourage the community and be the example of best practices.

GOAL 3

Ensure the Hickories and History Center are the vehicles that provide the impetus for historic preservation of buildings/architecture, and material culture in Lorain County. Ensure they serve as catalyst for researching and learning the historical narratives of Lorain County and the state of Ohio.





I would encourage us all, African Americans, Asians, Latinos, Whites, Native Americans to study history. I long for the time when all the human history is taught as one history. I am stronger because you are stronger. I am weaker if you are weak. So we are more alike than we are unlike.

- MAYA ANGELO

Objective 5

Strengthen and expand the educational components of LCHS to be the best resource possible for learning about the county's history.

GOAL 1

Build strong relationships with schools and formalize educational collaborations.

GOAL 2

Plan and reinforce the role of exhibits at the History Center and in the community.

GOAL 3

Develop fresh and exciting exhibits at The Hickories and improve interpretation.

GOAL 4

Increase engagement of children, teens, and families and, develop new audiences.

GOAL 5

Become the county-wide experts on preservation of historic structures and their reuse.

GOAL 6

Renew commitment to accuracy and topics of wide interest to garner increased community involvement.



When somebody walks up to me, don't look around, don't look beyond them. Look them in the eye, take in the story.

-MICHELLE OBAMA

Objective 6

Use marketing and public relations to build awareness, involvement and increased public/private support. Capitalize on this broader engagement to teach more history.

GOAL 1

Communicate with the latest marketing tools; Improve and expand social media marketing, online sharing, and education.

GOAL 2

Solidify commitment to the membership program and increase membership and members' satisfaction.

GOAL 3

Using marketing and public relations to raise awareness and involvement. Insure that its higher profile will grow into greater public and private support. Improve attendance and engagement and enhance ability to teach history.

GOAL 4

Revamp the Volunteer Program to increase stakeholders and create larger pool of workers while building public relations impact.



Objective 7

Ensure all facilities are maintained, safe, and accessible, making them contribute to educational impact, and visitor and donor satisfaction.

GOAL 1

Fully commit to property upkeep and management.

GOAL 2

Improve overall security and safety

GOAL 3

Finish a usage plan of the History Center

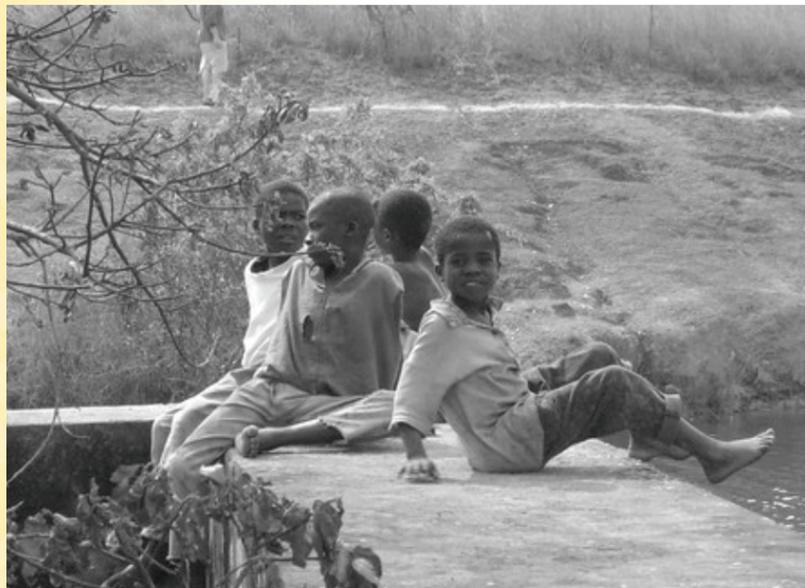
GOAL 4

Plan capital improvements of The Hickories to maximize education, earned revenue, and reinterpretation.

GOAL 5

Maximize use of the Carriage House and surrounding area, making a "campus" feel.





The history of the past is but one long struggle upward to equality.

-ELIZABETH CADY STANTON



Objective 8

Make Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion ongoing, critical components of doing business and serving the community well. Engage in extensive efforts in developing a written plan that will be embraced.

GOAL 1

Commit to Board leadership and involvement and the best thinking and practices through organization-wide efforts.

GOAL 2

Diversity: Examine, question, and evaluate diversity in representation, hiring, governance, and perspectives in the activities of programming and organizational problem solving

GOAL 3

Equity: Evaluate all practices and commit to equity in board selection, staffing and engagement

GOAL 4

Accessibility: Access to everyone's different physical and mental abilities. Evaluate accessibility in all areas of LCHS.

GOAL 5

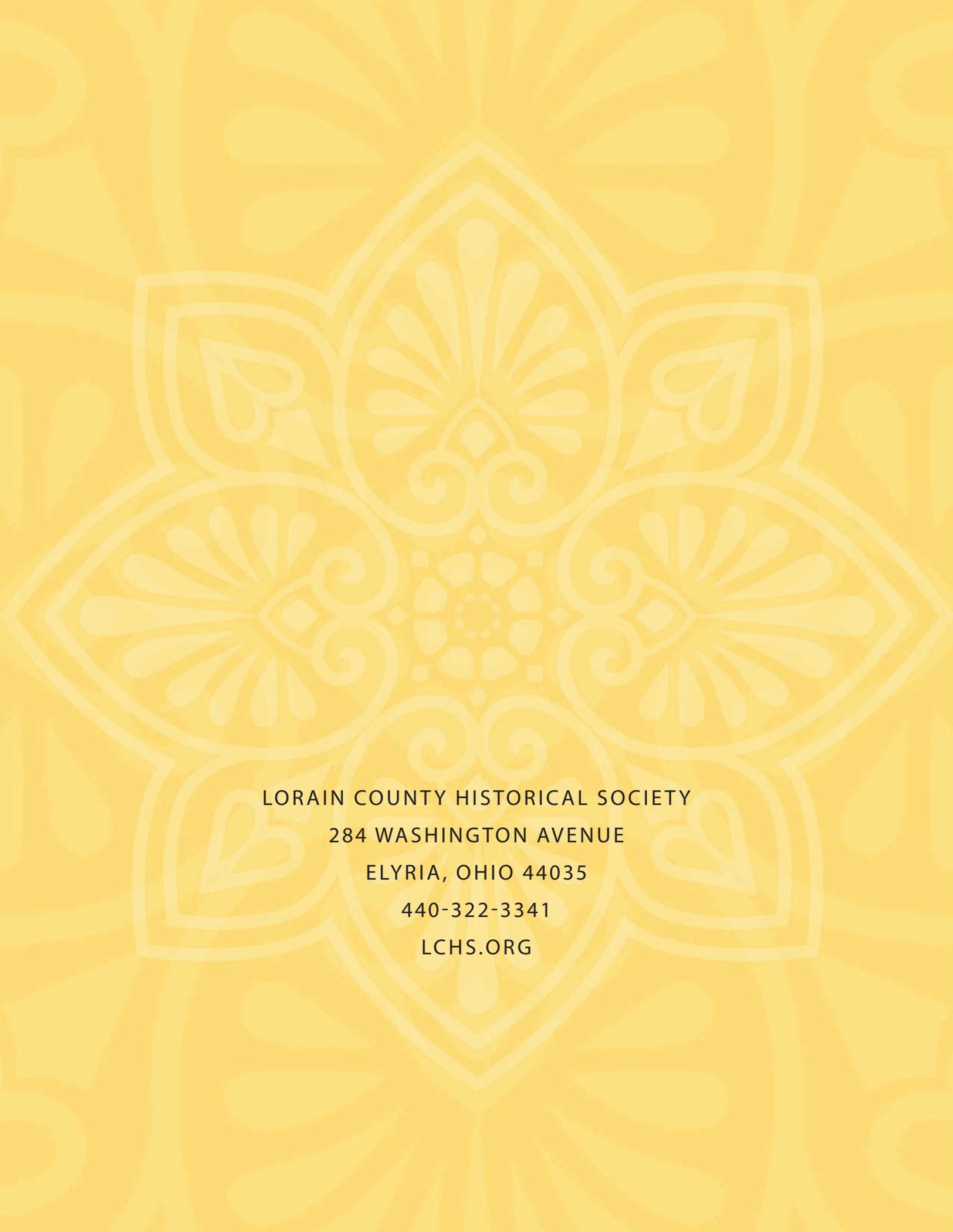
Inclusion: Truly integrate and value the representation of the diversity within LCHS. Create an environment where people feel supported and can do their best work and fully participate with LCHS.

The Action Steps under each Goal of this Plan are clear and comprehensive. Listed below are selected highlights.

-  Build relationships with prospective donors, elected officials, and business leaders in the county. Renew efforts in gratitude and stewardship.
-  Volunteerism is at the heart of LCHS. Expand the type and number of volunteers. Develop new volunteer program.
-  Increase professional development opportunities and networking for LCHS staff members on site and off site. Build staff positions.
-  Increase earned revenue through events, specialty tours, living history theatrical parties, and rental spaces.
-  Workshops and training opportunities to be crafted for colleagues at history organizations around the county. Collaborations on exhibits, school education, and history celebrations. An annual weekend for all to share their stories and artifacts.
-  Annual Training Retreat for Board of Trustees. Revamp nomination efforts. Build Board Committees.
-  A History Advisory Committee to be developed as Lorain County Historical Society Ambassadors.
-  Review compliance with the Americans with Disability Act. Board/staff collaboration for a society-wide plan to insure diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

-  Continue collecting the history of Lorain County in a way that reflects Lorain County's diversity and unique past. Improve collections care and bring together the library and archive into one physical area. Loan artifacts. Create an "education collection."
-  Reinterpret the Hickories. New narratives. New docent recruitment and training. Changing exhibit areas.
-  Improved communications with school administrators and department heads. Expand online content. Collaborate with Lorain County Community College students and faculty. Use marketing student interns for fresh ideas and video in all marketing. New newsletter. New website.
-  Connect to members in new ways. Spotlight volunteers and donors.
-  Follow recommendations of extensive marketing research project completed for LCHS in 2020.
-  Create a Master Facilities Plan for the Hickories and the Starr House "campus." Condition assessments, preservation, and maintenance plans.
-  Construct office space for staff. Refurbish the Carriage House as an education space. Use new exhibit technology in refurbishing and creating new exhibits.
-  Teen History Program. More family time together programs. More children's activities at all events.

For a complete list of Action Steps you may contact the LCHS Executive Director.



LORAIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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