



NANTUCKET

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN
2024–2028



SINCE ITS FOUNDING 130
YEARS AGO, THE
NANTUCKET
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
HAS BEEN THE CHIEF
CARETAKER OF THE
ISLAND'S HERITAGE, ITS
STORIES, AND ITS ICONIC
PROPERTIES.





Mission

The NHA preserves, interprets, and shares the diverse stories of Nantucket with all audiences through its collections, properties, programs, and research.

We fulfill our mission by:

- Bringing history to life through research, collections, exhibitions, and publications.
- Making our collections accessible to all, both on and off the island.
- Nurturing community engagement and responding to public interests that reflect the island's diversity.
- Monitoring our historic properties and adopting best practices in anticipation of climate change and rising sea levels.
- Managing organizational and financial sustainability at all times.

Vision

The Nantucket Historical Association will be the foremost expert on the history of Nantucket and its people.



Core Values

- We celebrate the past and the present through **storytelling**.
- We are **welcoming** and **inclusive** in everything we do.
- We are **committed to community** learning and strive to be thought leaders.
- We model **integrity, resilience** and **collaboration** while focusing on contemporary issues.
- We **support** and help **improve** the working and living conditions of our staff.



2024-2028 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1: Reach and Effectively Engage a Broader Audience Both in Person and Online

The NHA strives to collaborate with partners to collectively reach more audiences through inclusive programming. This collaborative work and DEIA initiatives within the organization will increase accessibility across the NHA campus. The NHA will explore topical themes of Nantucket by telling diverse stories, including identifying and collecting new stories. The collection and NHA offerings will be made accessible to a global audience through technology.

Goal 2: Center Collections Stewardship

We will be diligent in continuing our progress in developing and caring for the collection and exploring ways in which we share it with the public. We will continue the sustained investment in the ongoing digitization effort and maximize active application and usage of technology in making collections available to the public.

Goal 3: Develop Holistic Plan for the Preservation, Maintenance, and Use of Properties

Including the needed annual maintenance of the NHA properties, a Master Properties Plan will be developed that outlines proposed uses for each property and identifies potential properties for strategic acquisition. This will include the creation of various housing options for NHA staff housing. Throughout, this will be done using data collected at each site, which informs best practice related to historic preservation in the age of climate change.

Goal 4: Shape Our Identity

We will bring focus to our operations, messaging, and outreach, creating a more cohesive and contemporary image for the Nantucket Historical Association's various initiatives and brands. This comprehensive approach will include revamping our logos, website, marketing materials, signage, and retail products.

Goal 5: Deepen Our Financial and Organizational Strength

The NHA, with sound administrative and governance practices, strives to build and maintain an increasingly healthy organizational culture and a financial base that provides operational resiliency and ensures sustainability.



GOAL 1 Reach and Effectively Engage a Broader Audience Both in Person and Online

1. Prioritize accessibility and inclusion

Initiatives will include creating spaces that are culturally and socioeconomically inclusive and ensuring sites and programs are accessible to visitors with physical and cognitive disabilities.

2. Collaborate with partners to build a collective effort to reach a broader audience

Initiatives will include identifying shared goals among island organizations and entities to create unified efforts with outreach and storytelling.

3. Continue the tradition of Nantucket basket weaving through relevant and historically accurate exhibitions and through creative and engaging hands-on classes

Initiatives will include continuing the youth weaving program; developing an adult year-round weaving program; maintaining the featured lightship basket exhibit; publishing a book; and developing a lightship basket collecting plan.

4. Be the trusted source for Nantucket history by delivering the highest-quality exhibitions, education initiatives, and programs

Initiatives will include implementing the multi-year exhibition plan; applying the interpretive plan as an intellectual framework to guide development and implementation of our visitor experience; training and developing staff on Nantucket history and interpretive themes; and increasing utilization of technology, research, and collections to engage and educate.

5. Provide leadership in Nantucket history research and scholarship

Initiatives will include the developing and implementing a research plan; working with the research committee to inform our strategy; increasing research output; optimizing the researcher experience; developing new research tools; and collecting targeted oral histories to further research goals.



GOAL 2 Center Collections Stewardship

1. Advance existing intellectual and physical control of the collection
Initiatives will include thoughtful, targeted deaccessioning; continuing the investment in and streamlining of digitization workflows; storage planning and implementation; a sustained metadata remediation project; and targeted conservation projects.

2. Improve discovery of and access to collections

Initiatives will include a continued focus on digital access to the collections through digitization; prioritizing a minimal-processing approach to unprocessed archival collections; inventorying targeted portions of the artifact collection; developing structures and workflows to support best practices for cataloging and describing collections; and incorporating digital access as a component of every collections project.



GOAL 3 Develop Holistic Plan for the Preservation, Maintenance, and Use of Properties

1. Expand organizational infrastructure and staff capacity for monitoring the physical campus, carrying out routine maintenance and capital projects, and flexibly responding to the unexpected

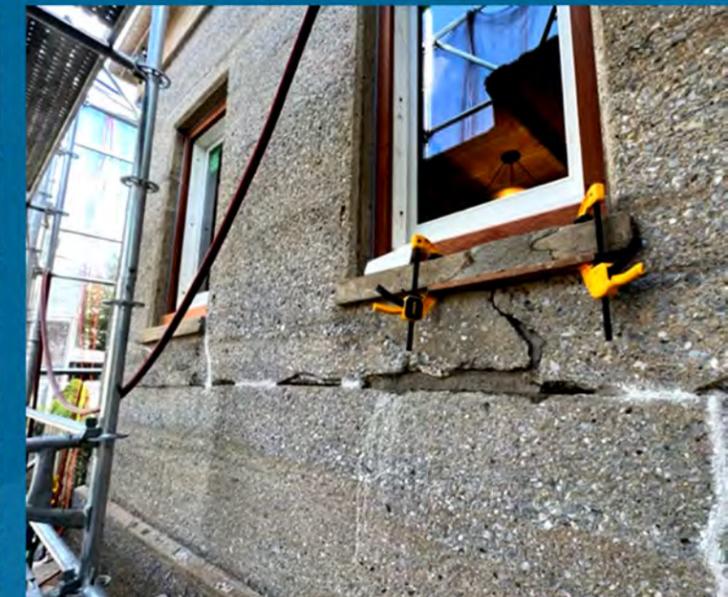
Initiatives will include completing historic structures reports; developing a properties management database; and continuing to improve processes for more transparent reporting.

2. Complete use assessment on all properties and implement master property plan to align with institutional goals

Initiatives will include developing a staff housing plan; exploring strategic potential property acquisitions; and additional museum space planning.

3. Take a leadership position working with other strategic partners on resiliency efforts

Initiatives will include updating and revising property resilience plans; creating a lab for historic building materials analysis that provides an overall lens through which to consider our properties and others on the island; and providing educational opportunities and professional development.



GOAL 4 Shape Our Identity



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1. Reimagine the Nantucket Historical Association Brand

We will collaborate with a consultant to establish a unified brand identity and create a comprehensive graphics strategy and style guide for the association.

2. Elevate Our Communications Strategy for Local, National, and International Recognition

We will develop and launch a marketing plan that utilizes the revamped graphics strategy and style guide for consistent visual communication.

3. Forge a Retail Strategy Aligned with Museum Collections and Interpretive Goals

Our strategy will involve integrating our merchandise offerings with our rich collections. We will seek partnerships with renowned national brands for licensing opportunities and prioritize strengthening our e-commerce capabilities.

GOAL 5

Deepen Our Financial and Organizational Strength

1. Ensure a healthy organizational culture

Initiatives will include retaining and attracting diverse, talented staff; offering a competitive suite of benefits; and continuing on-going efforts to create informed, open dialogue in a positive working environment.

2. Develop and implement a DEIA strategy

Initiatives will include identifying best practices at board, staff, collections, exhibitions, and programming levels; working with an advisory consultant, the DEIA committee, and members of the community to inform our strategy; creating a new department of community engagement; and developing measurable goals and practical plans for achieving them.

3. Strengthen organizational infrastructures to support departmental goals

Initiatives will include reviewing and enhancing revenue streams; developing an operational risk assessment dashboard; strengthening IT infrastructure; and documenting organizational knowledge.

4. Continue to modernize the NHA's governance practices

Initiatives will include rightsizing the board of trustees with appropriate skill sets and diverse representation; revising committee charters; conducting ongoing board evaluations; and creating an environment of transparent communication.

5. Build a culture of philanthropy through a plan that engages with a growing NHA donor base, supports annual operations, and leads to the successful launch of a Capital Campaign

Initiatives will include new membership approaches, annual giving, major/principal giving pipeline, gift planning pipeline, corporate and foundation relations (grant writing), and campaign readiness and public launch.

6. Achieve AAM re-accreditation in 2027

Initiatives will include updating emergency preparedness plans, internal policies, building mechanics, and preparing for thorough onsite inspections.



2028

By implementing this plan over the next four years, the Nantucket Historical Association will:

- Become a more diverse, community-engaged organization with expanded education programs and outreach
- Feature a clear brand and a focused digital presence reaching a larger global audience
- Have a unified properties plan that models best practices in historic preservation and develops a long-range plan for staff housing needs
- Respond and adapt to the increasing impact of climate change on our buildings and our operations
- Showcase new gallery spaces to feature more of our permanent collection and Nantucket Lightship Baskets; while having reinstalled 80% of the permanent exhibitions at the Museum in line with the new interpretive plan and improving the depth of our storytelling



2028

By implementing this plan over the next four years, the Nantucket Historical Association will:

- Publish significant books based on original research and improve the content of “Historic Nantucket” and our online offerings
- Digitize the collection and implement important collections care improvements to the storage facilities, resulting in a professionally managed collection that is more focused on the NHA mission
- Cultivate the necessary financial support through growing membership and donor support with our special events and a successful comprehensive fundraising campaign
- Enable a healthy organizational culture for staff and board, implementing best governance practices
- Gain reaccreditation from the American Alliance for Museums

