

2026-2031

Strategic Plan



Miriam P. Bremner

**CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM**
greensboro, nc

empowering through play

Table of Contents



A Letter to the Community	3
The Big Picture	4
Our New Mission, Values, and Vision	6
Our Story So Far	8
Evolving to Serve the Whole Family.....	9
Why Children’s Museums Matter	10
Community Listening	11
Strategic Priorities Breakdown	12
Our Framework	20
Metrics to Illustrate Success	22
Education Experience Areas	23
Mission: Play Possible	24
Leadership.....	26
Acknowledgements	27



A Letter to the Community



In my eight years at the Museum, nothing moved me more than our latest strategic planning effort. The incredible feedback and engagement we've received from the community during this process has been inspiring and humbling. Whether it was past board members, ardent Museum supporters, government officials, or the most important stakeholders, kids, it became very clear very quickly that the Museum has an incredible impact on the lives of everyone it touches.

In our listening sessions we heard so many stories! Stories of parents who first visited with their children, now coming back with grandchildren. Stories of crossroads faced, and decisions made, and fear of the unknown. Stories about an inspiration to act, or give, or lead because folks knew how important this Museum was. Stories about love and joy and family and growth! There's one story that I want to make sure you know. **One I've known for years.**

Way back in the mid-1990's, a man named Jerry, took a business trip to San Francisco. Finding himself with some free time on his hands, Jerry visited the Exploratorium, a much-loved San Francisco hands-on museum. That visit lit a spark in Jerry – he envisioned how such a museum could transform his home, Greensboro, NC. Days later Jerry hopped a plane and brought that spark home, where he shared it with his friend Cynthia. Cynthia, known as "Greensboro's Civic Engineer," worked tirelessly to turn that spark into a flame, and she did. Jerry and Cynthia's vision spread throughout the community, and it bore downtown Greensboro's own hands-on Museum that you know and love today – The Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum.

I've known the story of Jerry and Cynthia since before I started at the Museum, and it has always inspired me. What they, and all their founding partners, believed was that through play, education, connection, and lived experiences, a museum could help build a better Greensboro. They were right – it has. Every day, on the floor of the Museum I see our founders' beliefs in action, and I'm inspired to do more.

With the right plan, I know this Museum can transform not only a city block, but a city itself. With the right plan, this Museum can leverage the impact of the past 25 years, to create tremendous momentum for the next 25 years to come. With the right plan, we can grow to meet the transforming needs of our community.

With the right plan, we can combine the joy of play, the excitement of knowledge, and the limitless bounds of imagination, into a platform from which generations of children can launch themselves into an unwritten and untidy future.

I'd love to share that plan with you, if I've sparked your curiosity, read on...



Where We're Headed:

The Big Picture

The Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum (MBCM) has developed this five-year strategic plan to chart a bold and thoughtful course for the future—one that strengthens our role as a cornerstone of Downtown Greensboro and deepens our commitment to being a safe, fun, and enriching place for children and families to play, learn, and grow together.

At the core of this plan lies a bold new vision for MBCM, anchored by an updated Mission Statement and five refreshed organizational values. Together, this powerful trio forms the foundation for four strategic priorities—each paired with actionable goals aimed at amplifying the Museum's impact, visibility, and leadership. These priorities shape a dynamic and forward-looking roadmap that is both ambitious in scope and deeply rooted in our enduring commitment to community connection.

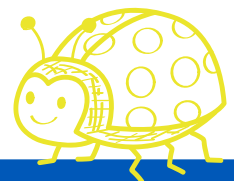
This plan also introduces a new Childhood Development Framework that will guide our decisions around programming, exhibits, and services. It defines what families can expect when they visit the Museum and ensures that our work remains aligned with best practices in child development and early learning. This framework will be a consistent touchpoint across all areas of Museum planning and operations, helping us grow with intention and clarity.

MBCM's approach to this strategy is rooted in adaptability. We will actively scan our environment—internally and externally—to identify emerging needs, opportunities, and challenges. This ongoing process of sensing and responding ensures that strategic decisions remain relevant and grounded in real-time context. MBCM will build in regular reflection and review, allowing for intentional adjustments to strategies, partnerships, and priorities. This adaptive mindset enables us to remain resilient, responsive, and aligned with our mission as conditions evolve.

Throughout this journey, we will continue to share our story more intentionally and collaboratively—with partners, stakeholders, and the public—ensuring that the Museum's unique role in the lives of Greensboro families is visible, valued, and vibrant. The strategic priorities and goals are outlined on the next page—read on to explore the details behind the vision and how we'll bring it to life.



BIG PICTURE,
LITTLE FRIENDS



Strategic Priority One Tell an Incredible Story

- Goal 1: Highlight MBCM's unique identity and legacy
- Goal 2: Boost brand awareness
- Goal 3: Promote the value of play-based learning
- Goal 4: Quantify impact and advocate for families

Strategic Priority Two Lead in Our Field & Champion Our Community

- Goal 1: Codify MBCM's childhood development framework
- Goal 2: Integrate into Guilford County's early childhood support networks
- Goal 3: Build relationships with local universities
- Goal 4: Launch mobile and pop-up Museum experiences

Strategic Priority Three Ignite Community Support

- Goal 1: Identify MBCM as a "Thrive 35" priority
- Goal 2: Launch a capital campaign
- Goal 3: Lead in Greensboro's Cultural District development
- Goal 4: Connect with local and emerging industries

Strategic Priority Four Transform the Museum Space

- Goal 1: Visualize and render the future Museum
- Goal 2: Design and implement a Master Plan guided by staff, community input, and our childhood development framework
- Goal 3: Engage children and local partners in the development process



Our New Mission

We empower young people through play.

Through playful, hands-on experiences in art, movement, STEM, and literacy, children play an active role in their own development and are inspired to explore their world.

Experiential play fosters collaboration, curiosity, and innovation. We believe these are the crucial skills that children will need to build a bright and vibrant future.



Our Vision

A thriving Greensboro for all families, ignited by play, education, connection, and lived experiences.

The Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum can significantly contribute to building a better community in Greensboro through:

PLAY Play helps kids develop their innovative and creative skills - creating imaginative problem solvers. Play also fosters curiosity and collaboration, encouraging young minds to ask questions and work together. We believe these are essential skills for kids to succeed.

EDUCATION Education ensures that individuals have the knowledge and skills needed to succeed. Education empowers people to make informed decisions, pursue their goals, and contribute positively to their community. We believe access to both formal and informal education experiences are critical parts of a child's development.

CONNECTION Strong community connections promote a sense of belonging and support. We believe when kids feel connected, they are more likely to work together, share resources, and support one another, leading to a more cohesive and resilient community.

LIVED EXPERIENCES Valuing and learning from lived experiences allow individuals to gain a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives. We believe this fosters empathy, respect, and inclusivity, creating a more harmonious and inclusive community.

Our Values



We are FUN. We believe that sharing joyful experiences builds emotional resilience and strengthens relationships within families and the community. Improved individual mental health and pro-social experiences with safe community connections lead to improved long-term community health impacts. In this place, you are free to laugh out loud, make a mess, make mistakes, be silly and weird, and focus on what makes you happy.

We are CURIOUS. We strive to nurture a sense of wonder and curiosity in all that we do to ensure that we are building on a lifelong love of learning. We create, invent, and discover all by wondering why, how, or what if.... In this place, ask questions, try new things, explore, and experiment. Wonder is the key to unlocking the world around us. We are all explorers, finding new paths and activities that bring happiness and teach us about ourselves and our world.

We are POWERFUL. Play is a powerful tool! Child-led activities encourage a sense of self-determination in early childhood. This is an important part of building independence, as well as problem solving and planning skills, self-regulation, and social skills. In this place we are makers of our own destiny! We speak our truth, stand up for ourselves, and work to protect what we love. In a place built for children, we encourage them to take the lead.

We all BELONG. All children and families deserve a space for learning and connection. Fostering a sense of belonging gives children a sense of emotional security and helps build resiliency, social skills, and self-esteem. In this place, all families are welcome. What sets us apart as individuals makes us stronger as a group. Sharing our different points of view and experiences makes us more resilient as a community.

We CARE. We listen to our community and respond with action whenever possible. Our programming helps kids and families make connections to their personal wellbeing, our community, and our planet and build their understanding of our collective impacts. We strive to make decisions with sustainability in mind. In this place we exhibit respect, compassion, support, and patience for each other and the world around us. We are caretakers of ourselves, our community, and our planet.

A timeline of our history

1994	Jerry Hyman is inspired to create a children's museum and a new 50,000 SF building is purchased with major community support. A steering committee forms and additional funds are raised.
1995	
1996	
1997	
1998	The Greensboro Children's Museum Opens!
1999	
2000	
2001	
2002	
2003	
2004	
2005	
2006	Welcomed our millionth visitor!
2007	
2008	
2009	
2010	Edible Schoolyard Launches
2011	
2012	
2013	
2014	
2015	Reaching Greater Heights Campaign funds a major expansion
2016	
2017	New Play Plaza/Lobby Opens
2018	Water Wonders Exhibit Opens
2019	
2020	Closed for 12 months during the pandemic Reopened with record attendance
2021	"Building for Tomorrow" campaign
2022	Museum receives record gift from Frank & Nancy Brenner and is renamed as the Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum
2023	
2024	Campaign funds upgrades to HVAC, facilities and exhibits



Our Story So Far

The Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum began with one man's dream of bringing a children's museum to Greensboro. Jerry Hyman was inspired by traveling to children's museums around the country, and he began to share his vision with community leaders. Cynthia Doyle, a local legend in the area of civic duty and volunteerism, who in turn contacted a group of alumni from the Leadership Greensboro Program. This group served as the Steering Committee, then launched a Capital Campaign led by Doyle. Three years later, on May 15, 1999, the Greensboro Children's Museum opened its doors at 220 N. Church Street.

In September 2009, Food Activist and Chef Alice Waters came to Greensboro to open The Edible Schoolyard at the Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum. The Edible Schoolyard is a hands-on, half-acre organic teaching garden and kitchen classroom. Since its grand opening in May 2010, The Edible Schoolyard has been a destination for children, families, and teachers to learn about growing, cooking, and sharing fresh, delicious food. With an ecosystem of plants and animals, the garden features vegetables, herbs, fruits, flowers, trees, and shrubs, as well as chickens, worms, and insects. A special thank you to The Edible Schoolyard donors for their generous contributions.

In 2015, MBCM launched the "Reaching Greater Heights" expansion project and capital campaign with the objective of opening multiple signature features to strengthen MBCM's mission. Phase 1 was completed in summer 2017 with the addition of the Outdoor Play Plaza; and phase 2, an indoor, interactive water exhibit, was completed in fall 2018. Phase 3 of construction was completed in 2020, adding the technology exhibit, The Growing Place, to the Museum's list of fun STEAM-based activities.

Evolving to Serve the Whole Family

With roots in early childhood, and more than 25 years of experience serving families in our community, we're adapting to better engage whole families to meet our community's needs and changing demographics.



0-4 Years: With more than 90% of brain development happening before the age of 5, we will continue to lead in the area of early childhood with a focus on young children and their caregivers.



5-10 Years: Time spent in play during childhood is directly related to self-regulation, pro-social behavior, and academic success. However, the amount of time that children spend in play is deficient and declining.



11+ Years: Play doesn't stop just because you're almost a teenager! Though it might look different, play continues to impact social skills, problem-solving, and importantly, stress relief. Growing up doesn't mean giving up fun!



Grown-Ups: Every grown-up in a child's life is a teacher, advocate, and caregiver. We strive to engage adults in a lifetime of playful learning - both for the well-being of the children in their lives and themselves.

↓ LOOK AT US ↓

Why Children's Museums Matter

Children's museums aren't just fun—they're fundamental. Investing in them means investing in stronger families, smarter kids, and healthier communities.

Fostering Learning & Well-Being:

Children's museums support early learning, school readiness, and mental health through hands-on, play-based experiences. They help kids build critical skills like problem-solving, communication, and resilience. Museums also foster inclusion, reduce stress, and promote social-emotional growth.

Children's Museums Are:

- Proven economic engines
- Champions of early education
- Catalysts for healthy development
- Trusted community partners

Economic Impact: Children's museums serve over 30 million visitors annually and generate \$5.5 billion in economic activity—supporting jobs across sectors and revitalizing local communities. Programs like Museums for All expand access and return millions to local economies.

The State of our Community

Greensboro can be a great place to grow up, but not everyone's experience is the same. It is important to be conscious of the social, financial, and cultural variations in our city.

For example »

There are at least **121 different languages** spoken as a first language in Guilford County Schools. - GCS

Only **33%** of Guilford County School Students enter Kindergarten at or above literacy benchmarks. - Action Greensboro

17,166 children under age six live in families earning below 200% of the federal poverty level. - Action Greensboro

Approximately **80% of parents** are working and childcare costs can range from 16%-21% of the counties median income. - Action Greensboro

In 2024, **82% (55,160) of students** qualified for Free or Reduced Price Meals. - Carolina Hunger Initiative

Between 2018-2022 **59.9% of mothers** qualified for Medicare and 42.7% qualified for WIC. -NCDHHS



Community Listening

The Path to Our New Strategic Plan

MBCM's Strategic Plan is rooted in community voice. Over almost eight months, the Miriam P. Brenner Children's Museum (MBCM) led a thoughtful, inclusive process—engaging staff, board, partners, public officials, visitors, and peer institutions. Through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and interactive exhibits, MBCM gathered diverse insights to shape a responsive, forward-looking plan grounded in lived experience. This Strategic Plan reflects that collaborative journey and the values at its heart.

Spring 2024: A Strategic Start. MBCM formed a diverse Steering Committee to guide the planning process and ensure it reflected community values.

Summer 2024: Partnering for Impact. Fountainworks Inc. was selected to facilitate the process and support meaningful, inclusive engagement.

September 2024 - March 2025: Listening to Our Community. Over seven months, MBCM gathered input from staff, partners, and the public to shape the plan.

December 2024: Staff Retreat. MBCM staff came together to reflect, share insights, and identify key priorities for the Museum's future.

February 2025: Board Retreat. Board members engaged in strategic conversations to help define the Museum's direction and long-term vision.

Engagement Highlights:

COMMUNITY SURVEY

~150 responses shared ideas on how MBCM can grow and deepen its impact.

IN-MUSEUM FEEDBACK BOARDS

Interactive boards invited real-time input from visitors.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

One-on-one conversations with leaders including City Manager Trey Davis, County Manager Mike Halford, and GCS Superintendent Dr. Whitney Oakley.

FOCUS GROUPS

Sessions with Museum members and local leaders explored MBCM's role in community and economic development. Partners included Downtown Greensboro Inc., Shift_Ed, Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, and others.

PEER MUSEUM INPUT

Discussions with institutions like Marbles Kids Museum and Kaleideum provided external perspective and inspiration.

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Check-ins throughout the process surfaced priorities and aligned internal vision.

BOARD INVOLVEMENT

Ongoing board participation, including the Steering Committee, guided strategic direction and ensured accountability.

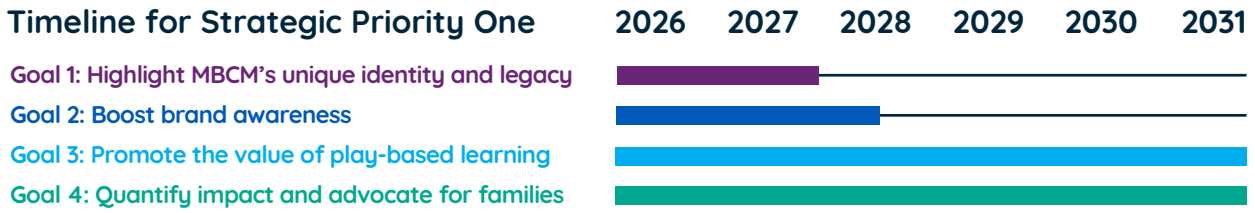


Strategic Priority One:

Tell an Incredible Story

Our story is one of legacy, innovation, and joy—and we are ready to tell it like never before. This priority is about raising visibility, strengthening our brand, and making clear what makes MBCM truly special. From legacy families who have visited for generations to new parents discovering us for the first time, we want every audience to see themselves reflected in our mission. We will revisit and refine our branding, grow our customer insights, and pursue creative outreach strategies—including advertising, mascot development, and play-based education campaigns—to expand our reach. At the same time, we will build advocacy efforts that position MBCM as a key voice in conversations about the importance of play, childhood development, and family support. Telling our story effectively is not just about recognition—it’s about influence, impact, and the ability to shape the future of childhood in Greensboro.

Timeline for Strategic Priority One



GOAL 1

Highlight MBCM's Unique Identity & Legacy

Shine a spotlight on what makes MBCM special—from its deep roots in Greensboro to iconic features like the Climbers and the Edible Schoolyard—building pride and recognition in the community.

GOAL 2

Increase Brand Awareness & Recognition

Strengthen MBCM's public presence through strategic marketing, media engagement, and community outreach.

GOAL 3

Promote the Value of Play-Based Learning

Champion the power of play as essential to early childhood development through clear messaging and educational content.

GOAL 4

Quantify Impact & Advocate for Children & Families

Measure and communicate the museum's outcomes to advocate for young children and elevate the importance of family-centered learning environments.

Strategic Priority Two:

Lead in Our Field & Champion Our Community

As a trusted institution, MBCM has a unique opportunity to lead the way in early childhood development and community-based learning. This priority focuses on defining our approach through a formal theory of change and aligning ourselves with broader systems that support children and families. By integrating more deeply into Guilford County's early childhood networks, building partnerships with universities, and establishing collaborative programs with organizations like Shift_Ed and Ready for School, Ready for Life, we can play an essential role in preparing children for success. We will also expand our reach beyond the Museum walls through mobile and pop-up experiences, bringing the magic of MBCM to communities that may not yet have access. Leadership, for us, means showing up—in our field, in our city, and in the lives of families who need us most.



GOAL 1

Codify MBCM’s childhood development framework

Clarify and communicate the museum’s approach to early childhood development as a reference for staff, partners, and visitors—ensuring a consistent, shared understanding of what guides the MBCM experience.

GOAL 2

Integrate into Guilford County’s early childhood support networks

Actively participate in Guilford County’s early childhood systems to ensure the Museum is a valued and visible community resource.

GOAL 3

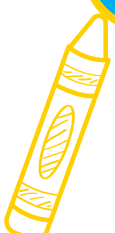
Build relationships with local universities

Collaborate with area universities to create in museum opportunities for students—supporting research, practicum experiences, and program development that align with MBCM’s mission.

GOAL 4

Launch mobile and pop-up Museum experiences

Expand MBCM’s reach through mobile exhibits and pop-up programming, bringing playful learning directly into local neighborhoods.



Timeline for Strategic Priority Two

Goal 1: Codify MBCM’s childhood development framework

Goal 2: Integrate into Guilford County’s early childhood support networks

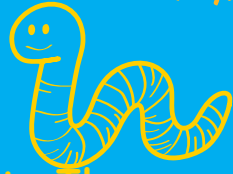
Goal 3: Build relationships with local universities

Goal 4: Launch mobile and pop-up Museum experiences

2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031



WIGGLE WITH ME NOW



Strategic Priority Three:

Ignite Community Support

Community support is foundational to the future of the Miriam P. Brenner Children’s Museum. To achieve our vision, we must boldly position the museum as a civic priority and an essential asset to Greensboro’s cultural and economic life. This begins with deepening our partnerships—particularly through the “Thrive 35” initiative—and launching a capital campaign to secure resources for long-term growth. As we build relationships with local industries and business leaders, we aim to foster a sense of shared investment in the Museum’s future. MBCM is uniquely sustained by community generosity, which makes expanding our network of support all the more important. By playing an active role in the development of Greensboro’s emerging Cultural District and inviting community leaders into our planning process, we will increase awareness, grow our impact, and strengthen the museum’s ability to serve families and children for years to come.



GOAL 1

Identify MBCM as a “Thrive 35” priority

Actively engage with Downtown Greensboro Inc.’s Thrive 35 initiative to secure MBCM’s recognition as a key priority, increasing visibility, public support, and potential funding.

GOAL 2

Launch a capital campaign (“Future Me”)

Kick off a major capital campaign to fund the Museum’s physical expansion and support long-term strategic goals aligned with stakeholder visions.

GOAL 3

Lead in Greensboro’s Cultural District development

Establish MBCM as a driving force in the creation and promotion of Greensboro’s Cultural District, shaping its identity and impact.

GOAL 4

Connect with local and emerging industries

Develop strategic partnerships with established and emerging industries to create collaborative opportunities and align with the city’s evolving economic landscape.

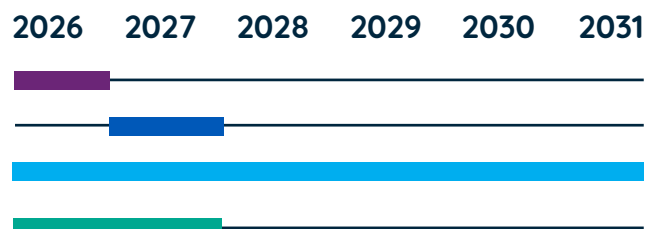
Timeline for Strategic Priority Three

Goal 1: Identify MBCM as a “Thrive 35” priority

Goal 2: Launch a capital campaign (“Future Me”)

Goal 3: Lead in Greensboro’s Cultural District development

Goal 4: Connect with local and emerging industries





DREAM BIGGGGG
WITH US!

Strategic Priority Four:

Transform the Museum Space

Our physical space is the heart of the museum experience. As we look toward the future, we recognize the need to reimagine the museum environment to better serve the children and families of tomorrow. This transformation will be guided by input from our staff, our community, and our new childhood development framework—ensuring the design reflects our values and meets the evolving needs of young learners. We will create a visionary master plan for the Museum, incorporating both existing strengths and aspirational possibilities. This includes onboarding architectural and design partners, surveying potential expansion sites, and developing inclusive community networks to help inform and advance the process. Children will play a central role in this journey, offering their ideas and imaginations to shape a Museum designed with and for them. Our space should be as dynamic and inspiring as the community we serve.

Timeline for Strategic Priority Four

2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031

Goal 1: Visualize and render the future Museum

Goal 2: Design and implement a Master Plan guided by staff, community input, and our childhood development framework

Goal 3: Engage children and local partners in the development process



GOAL 1

Visualize and render the future Museum

Partner with an architecture and design firm to create detailed concepts and renderings that bring to life a bold, future-focused vision for the Museum.

GOAL 2

Design and implement a Master Plan guided by staff, community input, and our childhood development framework

Develop a comprehensive master plan rooted in community input, staff expertise, and our childhood development framework to guide long-term growth.

GOAL 3

Engage children and local partners in the development process

Include children, families, and community partners in the design process to ensure the new space reflects shared values and meets local needs.



Our Framework

Rooted in Play, Designed for Impact

As part of this strategic plan, the Miriam P. Brenner Children’s Museum will develop a comprehensive childhood development framework. Rooted in play-based learning and informed by research in child development, this framework will articulate our approach to supporting children’s growth across six core themes: Playful Exploration, Tech & Tinkering, Environmental Agency, Competence & Leadership, Inclusion, and the full Spectrum of Play. It serves not only as an internal guidepost, but also as a commitment to the families and educators we serve—clearly defining what children will gain from time spent at the Museum. This framework will help us communicate more clearly the value and impact of our work.

Playful Exploration as Foundation

- Center play as a primary mode of engagement, valuing open-ended, imaginative, and whimsical experiences alongside more structured interactions.
- Encourage environments where silliness and weirdness are celebrated—these are signs of creative, engaged minds.
- Ground exhibit and program design in child development research to create guidelines that support joyful discovery and sustained curiosity.

Tech & Tinkering

- Use technology to get kids moving—design active, kinetic, and immersive tech experiences that promote cooperation and interactivity.
- Demystify physics and engineering by showing how things work—expose the “guts” of machines and systems to spark curiosity and hands-on learning.
- Foster a maker mindset that blends digital tools with realworld problem-solving.

Environmental Agency & Action

- Build children’s awareness of resource stewardship through activities like seed saving, growing and eating food, and exploring waste streams.
- Normalize sustainable habits: reuse, recycle, and rethink consumption.
- Empower children to see their choices (e.g., transport, food, waste) as impactful and connected to community and environmental health.



V R o o o o o M M M M M M

Competence & Leadership

- Foster independence and ownership—design experiences that let kids take the lead and feel empowered.
- Involve youth directly in exhibit design and programming decisions.
- Offer structured leadership pathways that recognize and cultivate their voices and contributions.

Inclusion

- Commit to inclusion across dimensions: financial access, physical ability, and authentic cultural representation.
- Prioritize an internal culture of inclusion within staff and systems.
- Co-design with communities to ensure relevance, belonging, and shared ownership of the museum experience.



Spectrum of Play

- Recognize and support all types of play: imaginative, physical, social, constructive, risky, independent, and cooperative.
- Use play as a framework for resilience, creativity, and future-readiness.
- Let this spectrum guide all programmatic and exhibit decisions—from quiet reflection spaces to high-energy exploration zones.

Metrics to Illustrate Success

To measure the effectiveness of the Museum's efforts and ensure progress toward its mission, a series of key metrics will be used.

These metrics will track performance in critical areas such as community engagement, educational impact, operational capacity, and strategic partnerships, providing clear indicators of success as the Museum continues to serve children, families, and the broader community.

Storytelling plays a vital role in how the Museum communicates its impact, builds relationships, and brings its mission to life. While not captured as a discrete metric, this priority is interwoven throughout all areas of the plan, shaping how the Museum engages audiences and amplifies the outcomes reflected in its measurable goals.

Childhood Development Partnerships

Strengthen partnerships that support children's healthy development and family well-being.

KEY METRICS

Quality & quantity of educational and family support partnerships

Organizational Partnerships

Foster collaborative relationships with public and private organizations to advance investment in children and family infrastructure.

KEY METRICS

Quantity of partnerships
Amount of operational and capital financial support

Community Reach

Expand and sustain community reach to effectively support all Museum activities.

KEY METRICS

Digital engagement (social media, email, website)
Event participation
Community feedback
Reviews

Organizational Capacity

Maintain the resources and infrastructure necessary to support its full range of activities.

KEY METRICS

Annual attendance
Annual revenue
Staff headcount
Exhibit/program square footage



FUNNY SEEING YOU HERE!



Education Experience Areas

All of the Museum's exhibits, programs, and services are grounded in four core education experience areas. These experience areas guide how we approach exhibit and program design — ensuring that Museum experiences are bolstered by what our community needs and what we do best.



Natural World: Natural world experiences nurture curiosity, independence, and problem-solving by encouraging children to explore, observe, and interact with their environment. They also promote emotional well-being and resilience, fostering a lifelong appreciation for nature and a sense of responsibility toward the planet.



Community + Culture: Play and education rooted in community and culture help children build a strong sense of identity and belonging while learning to value diversity. Shared experiences foster connection across generations, strengthening cultural traditions and creating resilient, supportive communities.



Art + Design: By providing opportunities for artistic expression, we give children and families the freedom to explore new ideas through art and design fostering imagination, self-expression, and emotional growth while strengthening fine motor and cognitive skills. Children also learn to observe, interpret, and create, building confidence and innovative thinking that carry into all areas of life.



STIC (Science, Tech, Innovation, Creativity): STIC equips children with the skills to think critically, solve problems, and adapt to a rapidly changing world. By engaging with these areas early, children develop curiosity, confidence, and the ability to imagine and build solutions that shape their future.

Mission: Play Possible

You're a curious kid exploring the museum.

Join the journey that all our young learners take—starting at Home Base, living our values, diving into our childhood development framework, and spinning to experience museum magic. Every roll helps you discover how play informs exhibits, programs, and our strategic vision.



START

Home Base

In Greensboro, every kid grows up with different experiences. But once you walk through our doors, we all start from the same place — ready to play, learn, and explore.

Ready to Play by Our Values?

We Are Fun Challenge:
Show us your best silly face.
Done? Move one square!

We Are Curious Challenge:
Tell Us: What's one thing you're curious about today?
Done? Move one square!

We All Belong Challenge:
Invite a friend to play or say hi to someone new.
Done? Move one square!

We Are Powerful Challenge:
Name one way you can make a difference here.
Done? Move one square!

We Care Challenge:
Offer help or give someone a high-five.
Done? Move one square!

Natural World:
Name one thing in nature you love—show or describe why it's special.

Community & Culture: Share a tradition or say hello in another language—connect with someone new.

Art & Design:
Draw a quick sketch or strike a pose inspired by your favorite artwork.

STIC: Invent a mini-gadget or explain a fun experiment in just one sentence.

Strategic Priorities Forest

Our strategic priorities are the roots and branches that shape every new idea we nurture. They surround our journey.

Experience Hub: Take a spin!

Our four education areas shape every exhibit and program. Use the prompts on the right to help inspire your exhibit.

It's time to make it official:
Name your exhibit!



CHECK POINT: Does this fit in one of our educational framework themes?

- Playful Exploration
- Tech & Tinkering
- Environmental Agency
- Competence & Leadership
- Inclusion
- Full Spectrum of Play

Mission Accomplished... now take a peak at the future!

You've explored ideas, tested priorities, and imagined new possibilities. Now, take a glimpse at what's ahead—our vision brought to life.

DONE!

MBCM Leadership



Joe Rieke
President / CEO



Stephanie Ashton
Chief Operating Officer



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