

# STRATEGIC PLAN

BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST

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Fiscal YEARS

2024-2028

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As we ride into the second century of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, innovation and advances exist in ways that generations before could scarcely imagine. As the Executive Director of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West and the Chair of the Board of Trustees, we invite you to look ahead and share our vision through a five-year Strategic Plan.

The American West is not a fixed region or a static concept, but a dynamic and evolving story and landscape that encompasses many peoples, places, and perspectives. We are committed to helping our visitors, local communities, and people around the world build connections through experiential engagement supported by world-class collections and credible and relevant knowledge.

To further our journey, we will continue to be stewards of the resources that sustain and inspire us. To reach our five year goals and visions beyond, we will strengthen our foundations and audiences by caring for the collections, infrastructure, lands and environments inseparable from our history and daily life. By doing so, we can support the communities we serve and grow the knowledge we hold so all may experience a changing American West through a multi-disciplinary lens.

We value collaboration to create innovative and engaging experiences though onsite and virtual exhibitions and programming. We are stewards of information and resources – including the world class collections – and are a place of inclusion for many different audiences and communities.

Whether you visit us in person or virtually, we welcome you to join us on this journey.



**REBECCA WEST**  
*Executive Director and CEO*

**LINDA SPENCER MURCHISON**  
*Board Chair*



## MISSION STATEMENT

Connecting People to the American West

## VISION STATEMENT

A world made better through deep connections to the American West, inspiring a growing cycle of understanding and impact.

## CORE VALUES

**At the Buffalo Bill Center of the West,  
we value...**

Collaboration

Innovation

Inclusion

Experiential Engagement

Stewardship

Credibility

# GOALS

## Four Strategic Priorities

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**SUSTAINABILITY (primary goal):** Combine the power of people and assets to build and maintain financial and operational soundness for sustainable growth.

**AUDIENCE (primary goal):** Attract new audiences to the Center.

**COMMUNITY (supporting goal):** Build trust and welcome diverse perspectives from the communities we serve.

**KNOWLEDGE (supporting goal):** Expand recognition as a trusted source of groundbreaking knowledge and a convener of diverse peoples and ideas.





## SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal:** Combine the power of people and assets to build and maintain financial and operational soundness for **sustainable** growth.

### Strategies:

- Increase unrestricted endowment funds and earned revenue.
- Optimize Center staff to strengthen Center operations.
- Strengthen board engagement, education, and support.
- Improve preservation and utilization of collections, buildings, land, and infrastructure.



## COMMUNITY

**Goal:** Build trust and welcome diverse perspectives from the **communities** we serve.

### Strategies:

- Identify community needs and develop responses to meet them.
- Synergize Center and Community resources.
- Commit to building trust and diversity in community relationships.



## AUDIENCE

**Goal:** Attract new **audiences** to the Center.

### Strategies:

- Increase Center presence and identity.
  - Expand experiential offerings.
- Expand marketing reach at all levels, local to international.



## KNOWLEDGE

**Goal:** Expand recognition as a trusted source of groundbreaking **knowledge** and a convener of diverse peoples and ideas.

### Strategies:

- Strengthen internal and external collaboration and research.
- Increase engagement of many audiences.
  - Maximize impact and return on Center based knowledge and programming.



# PLAN OF ACTION

“The past is best used when it serves the present, and the future.”  
- Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow, Apsáalooke

As an organization that has been in existence since 1917, we continue to make a significant impact as a cultural force in the American West. To create this plan, we first revisited the Center’s Mission, Vision, and Core Values through a thoughtful process with staff, Board and Advisors. We held community focus groups and utilized visitor feedback to further refine our direction.

Next, we developed financial projection models along with a means to track qualitative and quantitative data, including stakeholder satisfaction and engagement. We will actively measure and apply this information with well-defined Key Progress Indicators. Finally, a visioning process will evolve ideas into long range realities.

Our immediate focus is on two priorities: Sustainability, and Audience. Success with these fundamental goals and their strategies will support the ongoing work to grow two essential areas, Knowledge, and Community to their fullest potential.



## Plan Highlights

- ✦ Current annual paid visitor numbers of 140,000 will increase and reflect new audience demographics through each year of the plan.
- ✦ During this strategic plan our unrestricted operations endowment will support one-third of our annual budget with a long-term goal of supporting one half of the annual budget.
- ✦ We will develop integrated plans for Collections, Buildings, Outdoor Spaces, and Infrastructure including a 2027 goal to re-house the Center’s collections in sustainable, accessible storage.
- ✦ In 2026 we will debut a groundbreaking series of experiential programs, exhibitions, and symposia for America’s 250th celebration as a new Center standard going forward.
- ✦ The number and impact of community partnerships will thrive, so the Center is not simply a place in the community but a place for the community.
- ✦ Onsite collections, programs and experiences will have increasing virtual access. Their content and marketing will reflect the Center’s Mission, Vision, and Core Values.



**BUFFALO BILL  
CENTER  
OF THE WEST**

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*this is your west*



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