Throughout the implementation of the most recent Strategic Plan the Museum, the staff and the board have accomplished so much of what we set out to do. Over the last four years we have grown in every measurable way—programs, exhibitions, visitors, endowment and revenue have all increased significantly. The museum introduced the “@ The MATT” brand which helped to increase public recognition and to change perceptions about the Museum as a welcoming and accessible community resource. The vision laid out in 2014 has been carefully and courageously followed and the outcomes have brought us to a higher level.

The next four years hold an amazing opportunity for the Mattatuck. The path outlined within this plan will not only positively impact the Museum, but it will also serve our City and our community in profound ways. The success of the plan depends upon the dedication of the staff, volunteers and good governance. The measure of that success will be revealed in our audiences. We look forward to the journey forward.

The role of museums is changing. The museum has always been the storehouse of all that is important: objects, artifacts, art, and history. Our mission is to care for these so that they will survive through time to inspire visitors for years to come.

What is changing is our relationship with our visitors. We want everyone—regardless of age, race, experience, or ability—to visit, explore, and question. We offer labels in different languages. We invite children to touch. We create tours to accommodate special needs. We invite visitors to ask questions, engage in a dialogue with the work and unlike in the past, we encourage them to take pictures and share them with their network of family and friends.

The Museum today is a community center, a school, an artist’s studio, a place of creativity, a place of inspiration and a place to engage with others who may, or may not, be like you. Over the last four years, together we have worked to make the Museum more inviting, more accessible—both physically accessible to visitors with special needs and a place that is not “scary”, “elitist”, or “boring”. We’ve done this by not only sharing our mission, vision and core values on the walls of the Museum, but more importantly by living them every day.

Through collaboration and partnerships, we’ve expanded our offerings and designed exhibits, programs and tours to bring people together to engage with art and history. The next steps are big ones. Through thoughtful planning we are doing all we can to ensure success as we move forward. We are excited by the unique and unforeseen possibilities that the future holds for The Matt and we look forward to working together with you to achieve our goals.
A VIBRANT DESTINATION

The Mattatuck Museum Strategic Plan 2018-2021 is a continuation on the path set out in our 2014-2017 Strategic Plan. Our central goal—to be known as a vibrant destination—has been met but not fully attained. In the coming years we will work to fully establish the museum as a destination known for our ability to welcome and engage diverse audiences from our community, the region and beyond. By fully embracing participatory culture and the active, social ways that people today engage with art, history and ideas, the Museum has the potential to be a catalyst for social change. Through the implementation of this plan, we believe that by 2021 we will have physically transformed the Museum. This transformation will enable us to attract more than 45,000 visitors per year, increase our endowed funds to sustain operations, and cover at least a quarter of the annual operating expense through revenue generated by our expanded offerings and programs.
MISSION & VISION

MISSION STATEMENT
The Mattatuck Museum is a center of art and history, a gathering place that nurtures creativity and learning through transformative experiences to encourage a deeper understanding of ourselves and our heritage.

VISION STATEMENT
The Mattatuck Museum will be known as a vibrant destination inspiring visitors from New England and beyond.

CORE VALUES
ACCESS
We are welcoming, accessible and collaborative.

STEWARDSHIP
We embody integrity, ethical practice and accountability in the care, enrichment and use of our human, financial and physical resources.

COMMUNITY
We are committed to fostering strong relationships with our community to build a common future.

EDUCATION
We promote the unique connections between art and regional history to inform, challenge and engage a diverse public.

INSPIRATION
We challenge expectations and provide a stimulating environment that inspires curiosity and awe.

BACKGROUND
The Mattatuck Museum, founded in 1877 as the Mattatuck Historical Society to serve the ten-town region surrounding present-day Waterbury, is at a critical juncture.

The Museum is known locally and regionally as a vibrant community-centered institution dedicated to providing learning opportunities about art and cultural history to a diverse audience. Its collections, exhibitions and programs adhere to the highest of museum standards, are numerous and varied, and represent the educational backgrounds and personal interests of the community which it serves. As a result, the Museum is known as a dynamic and ever-changing resource for a variety of constituents, from first-time museum-goers to art collectors and historians.

For more than 140 years the Museum has served as keeper of historical artifacts and a place for community engagement around local history and Connecticut-based art; however, with changing demographics, aging traditional audiences, and growing competition for resources, the Museum must decide what its focus will be for the coming years and make appropriate adjustments to its infrastructure, budget, staff structure, and outreach efforts.

This plan reflects the work of the Museum’s Board, staff, and constituents and outlines the critical next steps given the context in which the Museum operates.
TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT

For 140 years, the Mattatuck Museum has shared the history of Waterbury and its surrounding communities with the thousands of people who visit the Museum each year. While planning in 2014, the board and staff explored several scenarios for the Museum’s future, including the possibility of a move to another community in our 10-town area. These difficult discussions resulted in a renewed commitment to remain downtown and a pledge to use our strength as a cultural leader to help Waterbury grow through increased Museum visitation to the downtown area. The implementation of the most recent strategic plan led to significant expansion of education and curatorial programs. However, limitations of the existing building are now a significant challenge to the Museum’s continued growth.

Renovation and expansion of the Museum will result in positive economic development and increased stability of downtown Waterbury while providing the opportunity to serve more school groups, to host more programs for families and adults, and to provide improved visitor services and amenities that will serve to attract more regional visitors.

The Museum has engaged the architectural firm of Ann Beha Architects (ABA) of Boston, MA to develop a design plan to address our needs. Following several months of work with the Museum Task Force, ABA presented a design to the board of directors that addresses a variety of urgent needs for the Museum and our constituents, including:

- expanded, above-ground educational studio spaces;
- increased space for the Mattatuck’s collections and changing exhibits;
- a larger elevator to move artwork and visitors safely and more efficiently;
- a more welcoming exterior that invites visitors into the Museum;
- enhanced wayfinding and completely accessible public spaces throughout the Museum;
- and a stable financial legacy.

This thoughtful expansion will enable us to broaden our reach and serve a larger audience of visitors that will benefit the City and our community. For the Mattatuck to continue in its effort to be a destination museum, it must continue to create exhibitions, programs and events with strong allure to attract local and regional audiences. The success we have seen from focusing on our special collections and presenting “headliner” exhibitions the past four years has confirmed that by featuring our unique history and well-known art and artists, the Museum will attract a broader audience. Through partnerships with cultural organizations, galleries, and artists, we will concentrate our collective energy on developing unique opportunities that resonate with a wider audience and attract them to Waterbury.

ALEX KATZ
Selections from the Whitney Museum of American Art
December 8, 2013 - March 16, 2014

LOVE, ANDY
Highlights from the Andy Warhol Museum
November 19, 2015 - February 7, 2016

JANE PETERSON
At Home and Abroad
November 19, 2017 - January 28, 2018
GOALS & INDICATORS

GOALS
GETTING TO OUR VISION STEP BY STEP

ENGAGEMENT
Foster an environment that welcomes diverse perspectives and inspires learning.

COLLECTIONS
Collecting, researching, presenting, preserving, and expanding collections in the service of learning and critical dialogue.

SUSTAINABILITY
Increase and diversify revenue streams to ensure our future well-being.

BRAND
Develop a strong message that reaches a wider audience through expanded use of all available media.

TECHNOLOGY
Incorporate technology to enhance the visitor experience and expand access to all.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE
Convey a sense of welcome and openness to exploration, discovery and personal enjoyment.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING INSTITUTION

The fundamental factors that contribute to the Mattatuck Museum’s success are its reputation and the diversification of its audiences and finances. Key measurement areas include:

Visitor index (conveys quantity and quality of visitor engagement)
- total number of visitors;
- number of repeat visits;
- number of new visitors;
- geographical spread of visitors;
- and quality of visitor experience,

Financial profile
- increase in endowment principal, year over year;
- increase in annual revenue;
- increase in annual membership;
- and increase in earned revenue,

Space optimization index
- number of visitors per public space square footage;
- and total earned revenue/public space square footage,

Staff, board, and volunteers
- staff: turnover and tenure rates;
- board: average “give/get” increases;
- and volunteers: average hours per volunteer/number of volunteer hours increases.
ENGAGEMENT
FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WELCOMES DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES AND INSPIRES LEARNING.

OBJECTIVES
Expand arts and history opportunities for grades K-12 in Waterbury Public Schools.
Design and implement educational experiences with all Waterbury Parochial Schools.
Expand educational programming for grades K-12 with other towns, including homeschool networks.
Grow vacation day and school-break programs for children and teens by 50%.
Increase ACCESS programs (youth with disabilities) by 50%.
Provide dynamic learning opportunities for visitors in new studio spaces including boutique-style adult art studio classes.
Share exhibitions and programs through new partnerships with the cultural and educational institutions.
Strengthen our existing relationships with other organizations such as the YMCA and Waterbury BRASS.
Respond to social and economic changes in our community through engaging learning experiences such as multilingual tours and programming.
Engage senior and adult audiences utilizing the Museum’s collection and special exhibitions, including outreach through the MATT on the Go program.
Assess visitor interests through evaluations and surveys distributed to program participants.

OUTCOMES
Increase program attendance through the successful use of website, social media, program calendar and other sources of marketing.
New and diverse audiences cultivated through new programs.
Integration of multicultural exhibitions, multilingual tours and programming will increase by 80%.
Establish relationships with at least 4 new cultural and/or educational partners.
Programming initiatives in the new studio space will produce a 50% increase in adult audiences.
React to visitor interests identified through evaluations.
COLLECTIONS
COLLECTING, RESEARCHING, PRESENTING, PRESERVING, AND EXPANDING COLLECTIONS IN THE SERVICE OF LEARNING AND CRITICAL DIALOGUE.

OBJECTIVES
Grow and improve the existing collections through active collections management.

Seek key gifts from private collectors and artists.

Purchase objects guided by collections committee priorities which reflect a commitment to contemporary art, filling gaps in Connecticut collections, and diversifying artist representation with works by women and minority artists.

Increase holdings in archives, manuscripts and ephemera collections.

Document and research objects in the collection and feature them on-line.

Expand multilingual labels.

Publish annually with a focus on collection objects and special exhibitions.

Develop long-term exhibition calendar.

Expand the collections committee and develop a peer advisory network.

Create and grow strategic partnerships with other Connecticut institutions.

Continually share collections and exhibition information with staff and board.

Strengthen staff skills through professional development programs.

Extend curatorial skills by cross-training with other museum staff and seeking and training interns.

OUTCOMES
The Museum will achieve a more complete understanding of the physical and intellectual properties of the permanent collection.

Increase the collection through acquisitions and gifts by adding 100 objects per year, increasing diversity through gender, race and identity and filling gaps in the Connecticut Collection.

By expanding committees, advisors, volunteers and interns and implementing long-term planning, the Museum will increase curatorial capacity.

Curatorial staff will participate in at least one museum, art history or history conference per year and train with in-house development programs.
SUSTAINABILITY

INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY REVENUE STREAMS TO ENSURE OUR FUTURE WELL-BEING.

OBJECTIVES

Improve donor communications with a focus on showing the Museum's impact on visitors and the Waterbury community.

Increase focus on major gifts (targeted gifts from individuals over $2,500) to fund education programs and other Museum initiatives.

Focus on growing the endowment corpus to meet operating needs through gifts and bequests.

Collect more information about visitors, members, and donors and integrate fundraising into the visitor experience.

Relaunch membership program with opening of new building.

Train staff and board in planned giving opportunities.

Expand and define the planned giving program to reach a wider audience and better track and recognize planned gifts.

Apply to at least one federal grant for an appropriate project each year.

Have development staff attend additional trainings related to best practices, database management, and other relevant interests.

Expand museum shop and rentals, as well as establish a café, with the opening of the new building to increase revenue.

OUTCOMES

Update development collateral (website and letters) with a focus on the Museum's impact.

Increase contributions cumulatively by at least 5% each year.

Increase membership by 20% to at least 675 members.

Market planned giving opportunities and recognize donors who have made planned gifts.

Meet operating needs with endowment funds while staying well within the board-designated 4.25% annual draw.

Increase earned revenue by 25% by 2021.

Engage at least 40 individuals in conversations about potential planned gifts.
BRAND

DEVELOP A STRONG MESSAGE THAT REACHES A WIDER AUDIENCE THROUGH EXPANDED USE OF ALL AVAILABLE MEDIA.

OBJECTIVES

Sustain current marketing budget.
Identify proven marketing opportunities and utilize them to reach a targeted audience.
Preserve brand integrity.
Seek opportunities to increase brand awareness statewide and throughout New England.
Maintain a strong presence on social media, following trends in posting and advertising with a goal to grow our following on all applicable platforms.
Educate the public in access and use of collections information via the Collections database.
Explore diverse advertising channels.
Engage focus groups to better understand visitor interest in exhibitions and programs as well as overall impression of the institution.

OUTCOMES

Maintain the marketing budget at $75,000 while still seeing visitor growth.
Continue to query visitors using front desk engagement and program surveys to track how they learned about the Museum/programs/exhibitions.
Increase number of visitors to the building to 45,000 per year.
Increase unique website visits by 50%.
Museum website users are actively utilizing content.
Museum visitors are sharing via social media between the museum and their universe.
Average number of Social Media posts will increase by 20% per year with at least 4 posts to each platform on a weekly basis.
Average number of “likes” on Social Media posts will increase by 25% which demonstrates an increase in audience engagement.
Museum staff will incorporate data and suggestions gathered during focus groups to align the Museum’s offerings of exhibitions and adult and family programming to effectively represent the interests of our constituency.
TECHNOLOGY

INCORPORATE TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AND EXPAND ACCESS TO ALL.

OBJECTIVES

Build strong relationships with IT Management company to ensure effective monitoring of Museum equipment including routine updates and maintenance, allowing for more reliable function of day-to-day operations.

Move server to 1st floor server room where temperature and security can be more closely regulated.

Repurpose existing interpretation materials and enhance for digital media outlets including the Museum website and social media.

Incorporate technology into programming to accommodate off-site “visitation” of the MATT on the Go virtual tours, Facebook Live, etc.

Develop tools to track visitation through media and incorporate them into the larger picture of yearly visitors.

OUTCOMES

We will see an increase in staff productivity by converting routine and re-occurring IT help desk calls to one-time inquiries.

Museum website visitors and social media followers who are actively engaging in content that is provided as an extension of exhibitions and programming will increase by 25%.

The Museum will have a robust audience of “visitors” who access the Collection on a routine basis through MATT on the Go and Facebook Live events that utilize programming and exhibitions to bring the Museum to people virtually.

React to changes in technology to interact with visitors as advances change the way people communicate.
VISITOR EXPERIENCE

CONVEY A SENSE OF WELCOME AND OPENNESS TO EXPLORATION, DISCOVERY AND PERSONAL ENJOYMENT.

OBJECTIVES

Prioritize a visitor-centered approach by professionalizing the visitor experience at the front desk, creating a succinct welcome, and relay of information by the visitor services staff member.

Build on-going relationships with our visitors.

Train all staff to welcome and engage visitors.

Seek to align our hours with the availability of our audience.

Create a brief digital survey to be shared with visitors which will include the ability to capture visitor information for future contact about exhibitions, programs and events.

Lengthen the average visitor’s stay through access to archives in the History exhibit, hands-on activities in the Studio, and engagement in the Café and other public spaces.

Identify and assess current wayfinding signage both inside and outside the building.

Create and implement a museum-wide plan to make signage clear and aesthetically cohesive.

Identify key information for visitors and create a plan for strategic placement throughout the building in underutilized spaces (ie. upcoming events on a digital screen in a hallway or a printed membership “pitch” in the stairwell).

OUTCOMES

Regular departmental staff meetings and professional development opportunities will be established to hone the skills of our Visitor Services staff and create the best visitor experience possible.

Well-trained staff from various departments will be prepared to step in and greet guests when needed.

Museum hours will be adjusted to reflect our audience availability with galleries open late and regular evening programs and events.

Staff will utilize information gathered through digital surveys to reach out to visitors and inform them of exhibitions and programs related to their specified interests.

Dedicated volunteers and staff will track a visitor’s experience throughout their stay to better understand their habits, needs and interests.

The newly reopened Museum will have clear and accurate wayfinding to enhance the visitor experience as well as strategically placed information where visitors gather.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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G. Bradford Palmer (1924-2011)
W. Fielding Secor (1942-2012)

MUSEUM STAFF

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Cat Clark
Executive Assistant

Stephanie Harris
Director of Operations & Marketing

Janice Shambor
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Curator

Michael Dooling
Archivist

Chelsea Garth
Curatorial Assistant

Heather Whitehouse
Director of Education

Molly Norton
Education Manager

Valerie Rodgers
Lead Museum Educator and Tour Coordinator

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