



MIDWEST MINIATURES MUSEUM



Strategic Plan

2026-2028

As developed and approved by the Board of Directors of the
Midwest Miniatures Museum in the Fall 2025

Midwest Miniatures Museum (MMM)

Strategic Plan 2026–2028

Introduction

Since the board last came together in 2021 to imagine the future of the Midwest Miniatures Museum (MMM), the organization has grown in both size and spirit. What began as a beloved collection in a Hickory Corners farmhouse has blossomed into a dynamic museum in the historic Robbins House in downtown Grand Haven. When the doors opened to the public on November 6, 2021, a new era began—one defined by creativity, community, and possibility.

In just a few short years, MMM has expanded its partnerships with artists, collectors, and community organizations. Operations have evolved from a single part-time role to a full-time Executive Director and a strong team providing guest services and operational support.

The board, too, has evolved—combining new leadership and vision with two founding members who keep the museum’s history close at heart. This blend of continuity and new energy provides the perfect moment to take stock, celebrate progress, and to chart the museum’s next stage of growth.

The landscape for arts funding has become increasingly competitive, but MMM is ready to meet that challenge. Through creative programming, community engagement, and deepened partnerships, the museum is well positioned to sustain and strengthen its impact.

This past year brought another milestone: the addition of the remarkable Carole and Barry Kaye Collection of Miniatures, further elevating MMM’s national reputation. These works will enrich both the museum’s own galleries and future collaborations with museums and organizations across the country.

Looking ahead, this 2026–2028 Strategic Plan builds on the foundation established in 2021 and defines the next phase of the museum’s evolution. It outlines five key priorities—Financial Resilience and Sustainability; Marketing, Visibility, and Community Engagement; Collections Stewardship and Exhibitions; Education and Public Programs; and Governance and Organizational Health. Each priority is designed to move the museum closer to its vision: to inspire wonder and appreciation for the artistry and craftsmanship of fine-scale miniatures.

The plan is intentionally designed as a living document—a flexible guide that can evolve as conditions and opportunities change. It represents the shared commitment of the board, staff, and community partners to a thriving and sustainable future for the Midwest Miniatures Museum.

Finally, MMM extends special thanks to Ginger Hentz, Mountain to Lake Creatives, for her expert facilitation, guidance, and good humor in helping the museum define its priorities and chart a clear path forward.

Dennis Swartout, Board Chair
Midwest Miniatures Museum
March 2026

Midwest Miniatures Museum (MMM) Strategic Planning

Action Plan 2026-2028

Approved March 18, 2026

Goal/Desired Outcome: Financial Resilience and Sustainability

MMM achieves long-term financial resilience through diversified, reliable revenue streams that support operations, programs and responsible growth

Strategic Actions: What strategies get us to our desired outcome?	Who will do this?	Resources Needed	Success Indicator(s)	By When? Year		
				1	2	3
<p>Donor and Sponsorship Program Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop structured donor and sponsorship tiers Create tailored packages Establish clear recognition processes for both corporate and individual support 	Executive Director and Finance committee	Money in budget for development activities	Growth in diversified revenue sources (donations, sponsorships, memberships, events, retail)	X		
<p>Donor Engagement and Tracking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop database of local, regional and national donors Identify and cultivate new prospects, including miniature enthusiasts Personalize outreach through handwritten notes, thank-you calls, and tailored invitations to special events or exhibit previews Encourage board and staff to engage in peer-to-peer outreach, introducing new supporters to the museum Track and follow up with prospects through a donor management system to ensure consistent, personal communication 	Board, Executive Director, and development staff	Donor tracking software	Increased number of recurring donors and multi-year sponsors	1/26		
<p>Membership Enhancement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance membership value and communication Review and upgrade current membership, benefits, and contacts 	Executive Director & Membership Committee Chair	Membership tracking software	Improved donor retention and repeat giving	X		
<p>Fundraising Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish signature, relationship-building events that cultivate and recognize supporters and raise meaningful annual revenue Enhance gift shop offerings with local artists 	Development staff & board volunteers	Membership tracking software	Operating budget supported by predictable, recurring revenue	5/26		
		Money for food, space, entertainment	Lasting and engaged donor relationships created and grown		X	X

Goal/Desired Outcome Collections Stewardship and Exhibitions

MMM responsibly stewards its fine-scale miniatures collection and expands access through high-quality exhibitions, thoughtful interpretation and digital reach to local and global audiences

Strategic Actions: What strategies get us to our desired outcome?	Who will do this?	Resources Needed	Success Indicator(s)	By When? Year		
				1	2	3
<p>Collection Exhibit Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess space readiness and develop a second-floor exhibition plan which includes exhibitry and lighting Create interpretive materials (labels, etc.) Provide for safe transport and installation of miniatures Promote the expansion through social media and other marketing 	Staff and contracted workers	Budgeted resources for lighting, exhibitry, transport, labeling	Second-floor exhibition space developed and activated	3/26		
<p>Exhibit Rotation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop short and long-term exhibits plans and calendars which include onsite and off-site pop-up and outreach exhibits Ensure proper handling and conservation protocols for every change-out Coordinate marketing and communications so each rotation is announced through press releases, social media, and member updates Engage donors and members by offering preview receptions or other opportunities to build enthusiasm and connection 	Staff, board volunteers, Collections Committee, contractors	Budgeted resources for transport, exhibitry, lighting, labeling	Regular exhibit rotations implemented on a planned schedule Increased visitor engagement with exhibitions (attendance, feedback, tours, digital interaction)	1/26	X	X
<p>Digitized Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish digitizing collection and launch online Inventory and catalog all remaining objects that have not yet been photographed or entered into the collections database Integrate the digital catalog into the museum's website 	Contracted staff	Resources for equipment and contractor time	Collection fully inventoried, digitized, and accessible online Adherence to professional standards for handling, conservation, and documentation	TBD by \$		

Implementation Considerations and Reflections

The Midwest Miniatures Museum (MMM) 2026–2028 Strategic Plan is intended to be a flexible and adaptive roadmap. The planning process was streamlined into a focused, one-day strategic planning session in which participants examined input from board members, the executive director, stakeholders and staff, as well as current challenges, emerging trends, and future opportunities facing the Museum.

This plan provides direction for the coming years as MMM strengthens its internal operations, stabilizes its financial footing, and expands its reach among existing and new supporters. As conditions change, the Board and staff recognize that elements of this plan may be refined to respond to new internal and external realities while remaining aligned with the Museum’s mission and long-term vision.

Board Reflections

Upon review of the November 12, 2025 draft of the Strategic Plan, the Board identified several considerations that merit inclusion as the plan moves into implementation:

- The three prioritized objectives (Financial Resilience and Sustainability; Marketing and Visibility; and Collections Stewardship and Exhibitions) will require additional specificity, benchmarks, and sequencing as strategic actions are implemented. Success indicators will be refined annually to reflect capacity, resources, and progress
- To maintain a holistic view of the plan and ensure coordination across objectives, the Board may work as a Committee of the Whole, providing direction to standing and ad-hoc committees. The Board reaffirmed the importance of active and new committees, including Policy and Collections Committees, in advancing plan objectives.
- At its November meeting, the Board acknowledged the critical role of Education in community engagement, marketing alignment, and donor cultivation. As a result, Education was elevated and incorporated as a formal objective in the final plan.
- While Governance and Organizational Health did not emerge as top priorities for immediate action, the Board affirmed its ongoing commitment to:
 - Expand leadership capacity through recruitment of skilled board members
 - Improve board effectiveness, communication, and transparency
 - Clarify roles, responsibilities, and communication pathways between the Board and the Executive Director
- To accommodate people with differing abilities, the Board recognizes that increasing physical accessibility within the Museum (including the addition of an elevator and related renovations) is a long-term goal that would significantly enhance access, exhibition opportunities, and programming capacity. The high cost of off-site storage is another challenge. However, the Board agreed to pause planning for a capital campaign until MMM’s financial sustainability goals are achieved.

Staff Input

Staff input on the draft plan was solicited by the Executive Director. While staff were unable to meet collectively to review the plan, individual feedback highlighted the following themes:

- The plan is comprehensive and will require careful consideration of organizational capacity in order to successfully achieve its objectives
- Agreement with the Board that goals and action steps will benefit from additional benchmarks and measurable indicators of success
- Recognition that special events (e.g., yard sales, a gala) can expand reach, share MMM's stories, and generate interest in exhibitions, while also requiring realistic assessment of staff and volunteer capacity
- Support for maximizing visitor engagement with the historic Robbins House and strengthening MMM's core stories to build brand recognition.

The Executive Director will continue working with staff and the Board to operationalize the Strategic Plan and translate strategic actions into achievable annual work plans.