

# Vermont 250<sup>th</sup> Commission Strategic Plan

Approved 12/13/2022

## **Strategy #1: Increase Commission capacity and productivity by utilizing resources from other states and past commemorations, leveraging external partners and subcommittees, and employing project management systems**

- Relevant Goals from TOWS: Increase Commission capacity; Capitalize on national commemoration resources; Increase Commission capacity to articulate the importance of the Commission's work
- Actions
  - Seek Governor and/or legislative support for contracted position to manage Commission activities
  - Learn from our history of anniversaries and from models around the country. Utilize resource from other states
  - Rely more on external partners and leverage committees/subcommittees with additional participation for accomplishing tasks
  - Establish idea and task tracking systems (e.g., Microsoft Planner)

## **Strategy #2: Increase relevance of 250th history by expanding the historical narrative to include a greater diversity of perspectives, developing programming that relates to pressing public issues, and connecting history to regional and local levels**

- Relevant Goals from TOWS: Connect history to pressing public issues; Increase diversity of perspectives from marginalized communities on Commission; Meet the cultural expectation of diversity; Decrease nostalgia for an unimagined, incomplete past that glorifies war/Expand from glorifying war; Increase diversity of perspectives; Increase diversity of voices in the commemorations; Capitalize on current public interest in history
- Actions
  - Create a platform/framework for hearing and communicating expanded stories. Define mechanisms community input and engagement
  - Invite partners and networks to recommend candidates who might best improve diversity in this work. This should include drawing on the expertise of historians who might be able to help the commission understand recent scholarship/developments in the field of American Revolutionary history.
  - Ensure committees/subcommittees include greater diversity of voices and perspectives
  - Identify and shine spotlight on underrepresented stories
    - Leverage education committee to create an expanded narrative
    - Build on existing research of expanded narratives
    - Utilize resources from other states
    - Review past commemorations and identifying perceived gaps
    - Ensure indigenous perspectives are included in programming
  - Collaborate with local historical societies to broaden perspectives included in programming. Build on strong regional identities
  - Broaden topics of historic markers to include women, Native Americans, African Americans, and how people were affected. Expand outreach and sponsorship associated with roadside markers

- Leverage existing state DEI resources provided by Office of Racial Equity
- Empower organizations to share the expanded narrative. Include expectation of diversity and inclusion in the participation framework developed for organizations
- Identify and collect similarities between past and present and build similarities into curriculum, frameworks, and roadside markers
- Partner with activist social change organizations to connect causes together
- Connect history to local levels

**Strategy #3: Enable arts and cultural heritage organization and school participation by developing a framework for participation, providing funding for 250<sup>th</sup> commemorations, and providing organizations and teachers with relevant content**

- Relevant Goals from TOWS: Increase funding available for 250th commemoration activities; Increase financial and structural readiness; Increase ability to access and utilize external funding sources; Increase teacher buy in for curriculum; Capitalize on teacher interest for content
- Actions
  - Develop framework for participation that identifies Commission values (e.g., diversity of perspectives, appreciation for local history, connected to pressing issues, contemporary relevance of understanding the American Revolution from a variety of perspectives)
  - Funding
    - Conduct an inventory of potential funding sources connected to Commissioner's networks and other potential external funding sources (e.g., federal grants, 250th Grants)
    - Research how past Vermont Commissions used funds (ie: sales of commemorative license plates)
    - Review financial models for commemorations from across the country
    - Collaborate with state tourism and marketing to get people to more historic sites and generate income that could serve as match
    - Ensure there are pieces in the tourism budget for commemorations
    - Distribute resources equitably to partners
  - Teachers
    - Leverage libraries for developing, reviewing, and distributing content
    - Establish teacher leaders/influencers within schools
    - Provide content/product to teachers
    - Leverage teacher associations
    - Target communications to specific teacher “influencers”
    - Connect with curriculum directors
    - Leverage VHS staff member
    - Communicate how 250<sup>th</sup> resources could help meet requirements of social studies
    - Encourage teacher curriculum to address an expanded history using input from diverse perspective
    - Ensure flexibility in curriculum
    - Connect history to local levels
    - Ensure resources are complete and ready to implement

**Strategy #4: Increase partner and public awareness of 250th commemorations by developing Commission communications strategy and leveraging partners for spreading awareness**

- Relevant Goals from TOWS: Develop consistent branding, communication tools, and communication pathways for commemoration; Centralize communication and advocacy; Increase sense of urgency in a world with many competing priorities; Increase awareness of the Commission; Increase awareness of the Commission to enable fundraising; Leverage strong awareness of 250th Commission in some parts of the state; Capitalize on various content delivery systems
- Actions
  - Develop communications strategy
    - Inventory existing communication resources and assets available to Commission members and partner organizations and take advantage of the existing infrastructure
    - Learn how past Commissions have communicated (be aware of commission rules for communication)
    - Develop relationships with diverse media outlets and, perhaps, include a representative from one of them on the Commission.
    - Learn how other states are communicating with partners and public
    - Research why some regions are more aware than others and apply this learning to increase awareness in other parts of the state (i.e., positive deviant analysis)
  - Develop outreach materials and utilize networks within the Commission to spread
    - Establish template for town resolutions
    - Establish list serves for communication
  - Empower partner organization to prepare outreach materials and activate their communication outlets
  - Leverage various content delivery systems
  - Leverage national tools, groups, frameworks, and resources
  - Leverage communications staff available to Commissioners (e.g., Chief Marketing Office)
  - Dedicate funding to communications
  - Consider brand contest and incentives
  - Increase budget for 250th roadside markers
  - Utilize Department of Marketing and Tourism to promote activities (at least one year advance)
  - Engage libraries early