

OHS-BHM VISION FOR ARTS & HERITAGE CENTER AT OLD CITY HALL/FIRE STATION

The Olympia Historical Society-Bigelow House Museum (OHS-BHM) will collaborate with its partners in the Arts & Heritage Alliance (AHA) to operate and maintain spaces at the old City Hall/Fire Station as a vibrant venue for conveying to the public the richness and diversity of Olympia history.

OHS-BHM is dedicated to collecting, maintaining, and interpreting the history of Olympia. As the historical society for Washington's capital city, OHS-BHM fulfills this mission in an accurate, balanced, and comprehensive manner. This effort includes honoring the heritage of the Squaxin Island people and their ancestral village of Steh-Chass, as well as the Nisqually and other Tribes having a presence in the southern reaches of the Salish Sea. Recognizing the diversity of all people who have shaped our region, OHS-BHM embraces its responsibility to document and share the experiences and stories of more recent arrivals to our community.

To fulfill our vision for the AHA partnership, OHS-BHM will utilize space at old city hall/fire station for local heritage programming, including but not limited to:

- Displays, exhibits (permanent, traveling, and rotating) and special events spaces;
- Secured collection storage, curator's work space, and research room;
- OHS-BHM office space with storage space, and meeting room.

OHS-BHM expects to collaborate with AHA in hosting public events (lectures, exhibits, workshops, performances, meetings, etc.) in shared spaces on the first floor that are controlled but accessible to all guests. During good weather months, we envision using protected outdoor spaces for informal performances, lectures, walking tour orientations, and other outdoor activities hosted by the AHA partners. Shared spaces include a reception area, restrooms, conference room, and food preparation areas.

As the social, historical, and symbolic center of our community, OHS-BHM gives high priority to having a presence in downtown Olympia. That stated, OHS-BHM has a perpetual commitment to preserving and interpreting the Bigelow House, a publicly accessible historic house museum. Clearly, this commitment requires a substantial ongoing devotion of the organization's financial, time, and human resources. In addition, OHS-BHM has both a short and long-term vision for maintaining the Bigelow House landmark building and grounds as well as operating the museum as a destination for learning about local and state history. Therefore, OHS-BHM sees its presence at the old city hall/fire station as a complementary facility to operations and programming at the Bigelow House Museum. Looking further ahead, OHS-BHM anticipates that as Olympia and the South Sound region grows and changes, that its mission and role in the community will change and grow as well. Therefore, in the distant future, the society may seek or join other opportunities, partners, and venues in which to share, explore, and celebrate local heritage.

A final aspect of the OHS-BHM vision for the AHA partnership is our participating as an equal with other AHA partners in managing, maintaining, and operating the arts and heritage center at the old city hall. To this end, OHS-BHM expects the specifics of the center's operation will be identified and clearly articulated in a working agreement executed amongst partners having an ongoing financial and programmatic stake in the center. The agreement will clearly identify how the partners work together through policies and procedures that include but are not limited to: allocating and programming spaces, maintenance, security, public engagement, technology, marketing, scheduling, and staffing. As an all-volunteer private non-profit organization, OHS-BHM commits to a staff presence at a level that is commensurate with the organization's personnel and financial capacity. During, and as part of its tenure at old city hall, OHS-BHM also anticipates entering into partnerships with other organizations, individuals, Tribes, businesses, etc. for programming and operations. OHS-BHM will provide ample notification to the AHA for how and when these external partnerships may affect the operations of other partners at the center.

Finally, as the old city hall/fire station is a designated historic property and a contributing property to the Downtown Olympia Historic District, OHS-BHM expects that any proposed alterations or rehabilitation work on the exterior and/or interior of the building will be designed and executed in accord with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. OHS-BHM and its AHA partners commit to regularly engage with the Olympia Historic Preservation Officer and Olympia Heritage Commission to act as stewards of this historic building.

Olympia Historical Society-Bigelow House Museum

Adopted by the Board of Directors 6/21/2021