Harry Ransom Center

Strategic Plan
Updated: September 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VISION

The Ransom Center strives to be the leading research library and museum for the study and greater understanding of the literature and culture shaping our time.

MISSION

The Ransom Center encourages discovery, inspires creativity, and advances understanding of the humanities for a broad and diverse audience through the preservation and sharing of its extraordinary collections.

ABOUT THE RANSOM CENTER

The Ransom Center is an internationally renowned humanities research library and museum at The University of Texas at Austin. Its extensive collections provide unique insight into the creative process of writers and artists, deepening our understanding and appreciation of literature, photography, film, art, and the performing arts. Visitors engage with the Center's collections through research and study, exhibitions, publications, and a rich variety of program offerings including readings, talks, symposia, and film screenings.

VALUES

Collection Development and Stewardship
The Ransom Center is committed to building collections of enduring cultural value and caring for them in accordance with the highest standards of preservation and access.

Public Service and Engagement
The Ransom Center aspires to engage the broadest possible audience with its diverse and internationally renowned collections.

Creativity and Innovation
The Ransom Center values creativity and innovation in the materials we preserve, in the interpretation of these materials, and in our service to the public.

Positive Work Environment
The Ransom Center values the professionalism and unique talents and perspectives of our colleagues, and fosters a community that encourages excellence, collaboration, transparency, and thoughtful action.

Diversity
The Ransom Center recognizes the fundamental importance of the diversity of individuals and ideas in the Center's collections, audience, staff, and programs.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This strategic plan outlines how the Harry Ransom Center will strengthen and extend its standing as the nation's leading research library and museum for the arts and humanities.

That ambitious aspiration will be achieved not by speculative new ventures but through a renewed commitment to the highest professional standards in all aspects of our work and through new investment in four major areas of activity:

- Collections
- Teaching and Research
- Public Engagement
- Staff Excellence

Looking beyond the lifespan of this plan, we know that the Ransom Center must prepare now for sustained growth of its collections and programs. The building, which has served the institution well over the past 43 years, must be reimagined for the work described in this document. In size, function, and appearance, that building should be commensurate with the world-renowned collections it holds and should be a visible signal of The University of Texas's ongoing commitment to teaching, research, and the life of the mind.

This plan reflects the thoughts and ambitions of a broad cross section of Ransom Center staff, members of the Center's Advisory Council, senior University leadership, colleagues from other University of Texas collecting institutions, faculty, and other campus partners. The planning was conducted between January and November 2014 and included study of the best practices at a number of leading national peer institutions. The plan has been prepared by the Ransom Center's Director and staff with the assistance of Thomas Wolf and Jane Culbert of the consulting firm Wolf Brown and the Strategic Planning Committee of the Ransom Center's Advisory Council. The plan received a thorough review and update in 2018 by the Center's Director and senior leadership team, in consultation with other staff.

COLLECTIONS

The Ransom Center routinely receives first offers of the most important collections and is sought out by our finest writers, photographers, and artists as the archive of

choice for the creative record of our time. The institution must position itself for sustained growth of its world-renowned collections by creating deeper and more reliable sources of funding not tied to the vagaries of state or university budgets. In addition, in the coming years, resources will be directed to important new areas of priority including new investment in the Center's rich photography and film holdings.

The Ransom Center cannot be known, however, for acquisitiveness alone, and this strategic plan also outlines the many ways we will fulfill our responsibilities through the highest standards of conservation, cataloging, and research services support. Through the steps described in this document we will ensure that the Ransom Center's unparalleled collections continue to grow and continue to have a vital and useful life for years to come.

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, and TEACHING

Across the humanities, technological innovation is introducing new modes of conducting research, new ways of teaching, and new ways of extending access to primary source collections like those the Ransom Center holds. For all of the rich potential of new ways of doing our work, these innovations are, and will continue to be, additive. That is, they will supplement and enhance the ways the Ransom Center provides a rich teaching and research experience onsite. This plan proposes balancing these dual commitments to a direct experience of its collections with powerful new discovery and access initiatives that will greatly extend the reach and relevance of the Center's collections for an international community of scholars.

The Ransom Center will implement the best practices of peer teaching and research institutions while providing important leadership in development of new access models for the growing body of digital collection material that is now a part of nearly every archive we acquire. In addition, we will recommit to providing access to traditionally under-described collection materials (e.g., sound and moving image), the Center's own institutional records, and to the Center's extensive collections of photographs and other visual materials.

Even as we seek to advance the scholarly use of the Center's holdings, we also understand the obligations we have as a part of the state's flagship university to prepare the next generation of students for original research. This strategic plan signals a renewed commitment to teaching with primary source materials and invites collaboration with our faculty colleagues.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The collections that offer the most direct and unmediated experience of our cultural past are also objects of great interest to a broad public seeking a deeper understanding of and engagement with the past. This strategic plan embraces this opportunity for service and outlines how we will enrich the visitor experience for those in Austin and how we will extend the reach of the collections through collaboration with peer institutions in other geographic areas of the country.

The contemporary nature of many of the Ransom Center's collections reminds us that the cultural history we document is part of an ongoing and living tradition. In addition to supporting research in the Center's historical collections, this plan also describes an array of public programs we are committed to producing for the greater understanding and delight of intellectually engaged visitors, students, and scholars, both onsite and online. The Center is uniquely qualified to share its expertise through high-quality public exhibitions, lectures, readings, symposia, and conferences.

CURATORIAL and STAFF EXCELLENCE

Further investment in the professional staff of the Ransom Center is essential for the Center to assume its rightful place as a leader in the nation's cultural life. The Ransom Center must be able to recruit and retain the most talented staff, and it must invest appropriately in their ongoing professional development in preparation for leadership at the local, state, and national levels.

Further, the Ransom Center will work to create a culture that values the individual and promotes community. We will do so through a commitment to transparency, openness, and participatory management in our policies and procedures and, more importantly, in how we conduct our day-to-day work.

CONCLUSION

This strategic plan is a living document. As we realize the goals described here new forms of service will emerge. Looking beyond the scope of this plan, we know that the building we have occupied since 1972 must be renovated to provide a safe and secure collection environment and to support future growth of collections and

programs. Even as we conclude this strategic planning exercise, we launch an equally important series of planning discussions that will assess our space needs and envision options for future building enhancements.

We will measure and assess our progress toward the goals outlined in this plan on an annual basis, and I look forward to sharing details of our progress over the life of this plan.

In planning now for the activities described in this strategic plan, and longer range building enhancements, we are renewing our commitment to Harry Ransom's vision to create in the capital of Texas a center for the world's cultural compass. For all that has been achieved in the intervening years, the ambition of that vision ensures that the Harry Ransom Center will always be in a state of becoming. It is our responsibility now to sustain and extend that important work for the next generation.

Stephen Enniss
Director

GOALS

GOAL 1
Develop, manage, interpret, and care for the Ransom Center's rare and unique collections in accordance with the highest professional standards.

GOAL 2
Advance research, scholarship, and teaching in the humanities.

GOAL 3
Create meaningful and engaging experiences with the Ransom Center's collections for broad and diverse audiences at the local, national, and international level.

GOAL 4
Cultivate an organizational culture that values communication, transparency, inclusivity, and learning to promote community and strengthen the organization.

GOAL 5
Create a facility and infrastructure to support our mission and inclusivity goals and to address evolving needs.

GOAL 6
Secure resources to sustain growth and advance the mission.

GOAL 1
Develop, manage, interpret, and care for the Ransom Center's rare and unique collections in accordance with the highest professional standards.

- Strategy 1A: Empower curators to engage in the full range of curatorial work, including collection development.
    - Following the newly implemented Collection Development Policy, engage curators and others with specialized subject expertise in collection development decision making.
    - Charge curators with ongoing responsibilities for developing and maintaining relationships with collectors, collection donors, sellers, and agents, thereby expanding the Center's overall level of curatorial activity.
    - Convene curators to review and strengthen policies and procedures related to collection development, acquisitions, management, and maintenance.
    - Establish improved documentation and implementation of acquisitions among curators.
    - Dedicate funding to enable curators to travel to view potential collections, engage in stewardship of potential donors, and participate in professional development opportunities.
    - Develop procedures for curators to work in collaboration with the Digital Collections Services staff on the acquisition of digital materials.
    - Develop strategies to enable exhibition curators to devote sufficient work time to develop exhibitions and related publications and meet established content-delivery deadlines.

- Strategy 1B: Expand the Ransom Center's subject expertise in underserved areas of collection strength.
    - Conduct competitive searches for two vacant curatorial posts.
    - Identify and prioritize curatorial and subject-area needs, and develop a plan for strengthening subject expertise in these areas.
    - Define roles and responsibilities for external exhibition curators or publication organizers.

- Strategy 1C: Consistently apply the highest standard of collection management to all Ransom Center collection materials.
    - Define collection management activities and responsibilities.
    - For consistency of operations, centralize within one unit all accessioning, processing, cataloging and description, internal tracking, and stacks maintenance for all collection materials.
    - Establish a working group to review internal databases related to collection management and investigate options for integrating and streamlining these databases and records.
    - Select and implement a museum collection management system (CMS).
    - Develop and implement a preservation plan for all digital collection materials.

- o Form a cross-departmental committee to discuss security issues, improve security policy including a regular review of the SOP, and discuss physical enhancements that will better safeguard the Center's collections.
- o In coordination with campus peers, review and improve loan policies, procedures, and documentation for campus, state, and system offices.
- o Review and improve documentation needed for insurance purposes, including collection locations and values and loan/deposit records.

- Strategy 1D: Complete retrospective conversion and significantly reduce the backlog of uncataloged and hidden collections.
  - o Determine appropriate cataloging priorities and levels for retrospective conversion (ReCon) and for uncataloged and hidden collections.
  - o Determine the staffing requirements and timeline for completing ReCon and for reducing the backlog of uncataloged books, serials, archives, and visual materials.

- Strategy 1E: Review and improve Preservation & Conservation Division processes and procedures to better address all format types and institutional priorities.
  - o Review current procedures and recommend appropriate staffing and workflows for establishing priorities for and undertaking preservation and digitization of at-risk audiovisual collection holdings.
  - o Establish a process by which priority conservation needs and backlogged projects will be completed, and ensure curatorial engagement in priority selection and approval.

- Strategy 1F: Deaccession out-of-scope collection materials for which the Center is not an appropriate steward.
  - o Establish a working group to review and implement the deaccessioning process.
  - o Consult with other campus entities that have recently escalated their deaccessioning activities, such as the Briscoe Center and the Texas Memorial Museum, for advice and recommendations.
  - o In consultation with curators and the Director, identify and prioritize potential out-of-scope collections for deaccessioning.
  - o Work with legal counsel at The University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas System to ensure that all deaccessioning activities follow University guidelines.
  - o With public affairs staff, develop and communicate a strong and consistent message about the value of deaccessioning activities.

- Strategy 1G: Adopt and implement records management best practices for Ransom Center administrative records.
  - o Review and update the Ransom Center's Records Retention Schedule and previous records management activities and documentation, and establish best practices for the scheduled destruction or transfer to the HRC Archive or UT Archive of all appropriate administrative records.
  - o Incorporate appropriate born-digital administrative records (such as email) into the Ransom Center's Records Management Program.
  - o Improve description, access, and physical arrangement and control of the HRC Archive.

> **GOAL 2**
> **Advance research, scholarship, and teaching in the humanities.**

- Strategy 2A: Adopt forward-facing and innovative approaches to support research with rare and unique primary source materials.
    - Consider alternative staff structure to drive innovation in digital projects and initiatives.
    - Strengthen collaborations between the Ransom Center and Digital Humanities communities.
    - Implement semantic web strategies to allow our collection metadata and other web-based resources to be more discoverable, interoperable, and efficient.
    - Develop initiatives that encourage more diverse fellowship applicants and projects.
    - Explore models for encouraging and supporting digital projects and tool building that utilize Ransom Center collections and/or instructors developing courses or writing curriculum that utilize Ransom Center collections.
    - Establish guidelines governing the approval and management of sponsorship of non-fellow scholars.
    - Continue regular evaluation of public service models for researchers.
    - Extend public service hours for the Reading and Viewing Rooms.
    - Secure a mechanism for sustaining the Writers, Artists, and Their Copyright Holders (WATCH) and Firms Out of Business (FOB) databases.

- Strategy 2B: Review and revise policy framework to support greater access to, and use of, digital and born-digital collections.
    - Draft and adopt an Open Access Policy for the Ransom Center that will guide future access initiatives.
    - Regularize and streamline policies and procedures for permission requests of collection materials.
    - Adopt a risk-analysis model for providing responsible online access to selected collection material still under copyright.
    - Develop acquisition agreements that permit the Ransom Center to provide some level of online access to selected collection materials still under copyright.

- Strategy 2C: Provide enhanced support for teaching with primary source materials to faculty and educators on campus, in the local community, and online.
    - Create a full-time staff position responsible for University engagement.
    - With UTeach and the College of Education, develop lesson plans and other supplementary materials to facilitate classroom use of existing digital collections.
    - Work with Humanities Texas and other community partners to offer primary source workshops and attendant web resources for secondary school educators.

- Strategy 2D: Implement access to born-digital content.
    - Establish working collaboration among stakeholders to shape and create models for access to born-digital materials in the reading room.

- - Develop policy and procedural framework for delivery of born-digital content.
  - Create a workflow for the management of and access to institutionally created media (i.e., archiving of web pages, images, audio, and moving image).

- Strategy 2E: Engage UT Austin faculty and students with initiatives that will promote their use of Ransom Center materials.
  - Strengthen working relationship with iSchool through targeted initiatives.
  - Seek opportunities to establish long-term relationships with members of the UT science community in the pursuit of technical research to advance understanding of collection materials for conservation treatment, preservation, and scholarly understanding.
  - Develop easily accessible online information for faculty developing student assignments requiring the use of the gallery or reading and viewing rooms.
  - Send an all-UT email at the beginning of each semester, highlighting current exhibition(s), programs, acquisitions, and/or new web content. Priority messages will be determined each semester in consultation with the Director.

- Strategy 2F: Prioritize digitization and access activities around collection materials with preservation concerns or strong research and/or teaching value.
  - Hire a full-time digitization manager.
  - Establish a prioritization system for collection materials, across formats, targeted for online access.
  - Create a prioritized list of collection materials requiring reformatting due to preservation concerns.
  - Establish regular assessment of digitization software and equipment for needed upgrades and replacements.

> **GOAL 3**
> **Create meaningful and engaging experiences with the Ransom Center's collections for broad and diverse audiences at the local, national, and international level.**

- Strategy 3A: Define and prioritize the Ransom Center's audiences.
    - Prioritize and allocate resources for research services, digital initiatives, scholarly programs, exhibitions, and visitor engagement.
    - Institute all-staff training and new-hire training about the Ransom Center, its mission, and its messages.
    - Incorporate evaluative assessments of exhibition audience experiences into the exhibition planning process.

- Strategy 3B: Redesign the website to support the Center's varied audiences and their needs.
    - Conduct user survey to determine the current web audience and their needs.
    - With the assistance of a web design consultant, undertake detailed analysis of functionality and ease of the Ransom Center website, including functions not presently supported, and carry out a redesign based on those findings.
    - Investigate current trends in finding aid design and functionality, and implement changes for greater clarity and ease of use, including the possible use of natural language as well as the provision of access to collection-level descriptions for as yet unprocessed archival collections.
    - Highlight varieties of research with Ransom Center materials on the website.
    - Build out and increase visibility of the web space provided as a resource for K–12 educators.
    - Create workflow to regularly retire and/or archive outdated or redundant web content.

- Strategy 3C: Provide a consistent, positive, and enriching experience for onsite visitors.
    - Commit, as an institution, to consistently welcoming the public to the Ransom Center.
    - Increase visitor services staff hours to improve visitor engagement and consolidate attendance and tour management.
    - Evaluate the number and quality of public and behind-the-scenes tours that are offered, and determine if they are suiting our visitors' needs.
    - Hire a full-time event manager to manage Ransom Center events and facility rentals.
    - Install comprehensive interior and exterior signage.
    - Work with campus peers for parking options.
    - Explore options for creating a permanent exhibition space on the first floor to feature Ransom Center collections.
    - Convene regular "lessons learned" meetings between exhibition organizers and exhibition implementers with the goal of improving the visitor experience.
    - Extend the visitor experience into the plaza.

- o Explore ways to coordinate the recruitment and management of volunteers across the building, so they are assigned projects appropriate to their skills and to coordinate training and appreciation events.
  - o Review and update permanent displays and donor recognition areas on first and second floors.

- Strategy 3D: Develop a comprehensive program of outreach to The University of Texas campus to encourage staff, faculty, and students to engage with the full range of activities the Center offers.
  - o Seek opportunities to promote more actively the Ransom Center's presence across campus.
  - o Offer incentives and/or personalized invitations to encourage new faculty and staff to visit the Center.
  - o Convene a meeting between relevant administrative staff, curators, and Head of Instructional Services each semester to plan University engagement, including program promotion.

- Strategy 3E: Develop an exhibition program that shares the Ransom's Center's collections in ways that both serve scholarly goals and reach a broad public.
  - o Define intent and scope of Ransom Center exhibition program overall with definable measures of success.
  - o Form a Director-led exhibition planning group of senior staff to plan exhibitions and related programming well in advance.
  - o Formalize and communicate a more streamlined process for moving ideas for exhibitions from proposal through to realization.
  - o Seek partnerships with local, national, and international peers that will provide opportunities for the Ransom Center to share its collections and practices beyond Austin.
  - o Utilize emerging technologies to streamline exhibition design, fabrication, and installation systems and processes.
  - o Achieve greater consistency and control over design of non-monographic Ransom Center print materials.
  - o Identify resources needed to make exhibition content more accessible to visitors with special needs.
  - o Develop capacity and a plan for creating bilingual exhibition content (print and guide by cell) and assess the effectiveness of the initiative in attracting new audiences.
  - o Review and update policies and procedures for outgoing collection loans to ensure this service prioritizes collection care, does not negatively impact the Center's own activities, and operates on a full cost-recovery basis.

- Strategy 3F: Leverage the Ransom Center's position as a premier cultural heritage institution to develop programs that balance scholarship with engaging content with broad appeal.
  - o Work with on-campus and community partners to develop programs that reach new audiences.
  - o Offer programs at different times of day (lunch-time and day-time) and new types of programs (book clubs, gallery talks) to reach on-campus and other audiences that might not attend evening lectures.

- Use regular programming (symposia, conferences) to establish the Ransom Center as a center of conversations about the state of archives, museums, and the humanities.
- Partner with national leaders in rare book and manuscript education to offer courses at the Ransom Center.
- When possible, host public events featuring writers and artists in conjunction with the announcement of either the acquisition or the opening of their archives.
- Host events (authors in conversation, artists from different fields) that are reflective of the Center's broad collections and show the value of having those collections in conversation with each other.
- Evaluate attendance and audience responses to determine if number of and types of programs are suiting our audiences' interests and needs.

- Strategy 3G: Capture and share local programming with audiences beyond Austin.
  - Define aims and scope of publications program with definable measures of success.
  - Enhance our ability to share recorded programs online.
  - Continue current practice of soliciting blog content from speakers and visiting writers. Promote through e-news event announcements when possible.
  - Continue to identify and strengthen relationships with community and cultural organizations to leverage the Ransom Center's role in the city's efforts to be a cultural destination for out-of-town visitors and new Austin residents.
  - Consider delegating rights and permissions management to an existing staff position to secure rights on behalf of the Ransom Center.

GOAL 4
Cultivate an organizational culture that values communication, transparency, inclusivity, and learning to promote community and strengthen the organization.

- Strategy 4A: Review staff roles and responsibilities, realign (where called for), and plan for growth or change in light of strategic directions and Shared Services implementation.
  - Director reviews and reconfigures organizational chart in consultation with associate directors and human resources staff. Updates to the organizational structure continue on an ongoing basis, as needed.
  - Staff review position descriptions for currency and accuracy and discuss with supervisors, who will reconcile internal titles and recommend selective reclassifications to be prioritized.

- Strategy 4B: Ensure salaries and professional development support are commensurate with job duties and that compensation is competitive with national peers.
  - Continue to work to improve salaries to address salary imbalances and ensure salaries are competitive with University of Texas, regional, and national peer institutions.
  - Improve the effectiveness of the annual performance appraisal process.

- Strategy 4C: Enhance opportunities for professional development for all staff.
  - Offer support for professional development and training.
  - Organize opportunities and procedures for staff to share information learned from workshops, professional conferences, webinars, etc.
  - Establish policies and procedures for research leave.
  - Provide opportunities for cross training and staff sharing within and across divisions and units.

- Strategy 4D: Foster a culture of transparency, open communication, and participatory management.
  - Enhance communication and participatory management by hosting staff-wide workshops on topics such as effective workplace communication, running an effective meeting, and managing projects.
  - Improve internal communication tools.
  - Provide as much budgetary transparency as possible, including up-to-date budget information for managers and annual departmental budget conversations with the Director.
  - Review roles of business office and other support staff for greatest efficiency. Ensure that purchasing or other business policies and procedures are effectively and regularly communicated to other staff. Create and mount SOPs and forms on staff portal.
  - Offer leadership and managerial training to all supervisors.

- Strategy 4E: Provide meaningful work experiences for interns, student workers, and volunteers, and take steps to ensure they are full members of the Ransom Center community.
  - Create uniform volunteer policy, reflecting best practices and security requirements, and review online recruitment and application materials.
  - Seek out annual evaluations of graduate and undergraduate interns regarding their work and educational experience; where appropriate, structure the programs more formally to involve other Ransom Center departments, area cultural institutions, and presentations by interns.
  - Perform regular review of all department-level training and orientation materials (or if necessary create them) for staff and volunteers so that clear and updated information is available.
  - Develop ways to better integrate interns across the Ransom Center and explore options for expanding internship opportunities.

- Strategy 4F: Enhance diversity in the workplace and among audiences, members, and supporters.
  - In support of the University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (UDIAP) and Ransom Center values, form a diversity, equity, and inclusion committee charged with "drafting a plan inclusive of measurable unit-specific goals and objectives and identification of areas of improvement based on past history," and establishing a culture that "embraces and encourages diversity in its many forms, striving to create an inclusive community that fosters an open and supportive learning, teaching, and working environment." A primary focus of the committee will be "ensuring that diversity and inclusion strategies are included in all recruitment and hiring practices." The committee will "help establish culture that is accessible, respectful, and supportive of diverse people and ideas."

> **GOAL 5**
> **Create a facility and infrastructure to support our mission and inclusivity goals and to address evolving needs.**

- Strategy 5A: Improve security within Ransom Center facilities.
    - o Bring Building Management into Ransom Center administration, and revise responsibilities to include accountability for security operations.
    - o Convert existing analog security cameras to digital as part of an integrated video surveillance program.

- Strategy 5B: Analyze long-term facility needs and sustainability goals, developing appropriate plans to ensure a strong future for the Center, its collections, and its programs.
    - o Undertake a building master plan to inform interim and long-range space planning.
    - o Develop a decision pathway for deciding on full building renovation, an entirely new facility, or some combination of the two.

- Strategy 5C: Secure additional offsite storage capacity, and review service model with other campus partners in light of the expansion of these remote operations.
    - o Work with UT partners to determine future plans for offsite storage, estimated time frame, and capacity.
    - o Meet with other UT departments using the LSF system to determine how work flow can be made more efficient.

- Strategy 5D: Examine physical impediments to our work, and make low-cost, interim modifications to improve adjacencies, workflow, and communication.
    - o Form a committee to plan reallocation of 4th-floor space, and redesign workspaces to support consolidation of all descriptive practices within cataloging services.
    - o Repurpose the Moseley Room as a staff break room and eliminate break areas on upper floors in order to foster improved staff interaction and protect the collection from food-associated threats.
    - o Repurpose spaces on the 3rd and 4th floors to create additional conference rooms.
    - o Having evaluated staff adjacencies and appropriate workspaces, and with the understanding that a complete revision is addressed by the building master plan, make interim improvements in 2nd-floor Library Division staff workspace.
    - o Replace outdated furnishings with more functional and ergonomically appropriate furnishings.

- Strategy 5E: Explore current and anticipated needs for technological infrastructure, and build capacity for a program of continuous improvement.
    - o Maintain and strengthen liaison with LAITS, ITS, and other centralized or campus-based technology infrastructures.
    - o Explore the possibilities of offsite and/or cloud storage for digital assets.
    - o Explore future solutions for the integrated management and delivery of digital and born-digital content.

- Strategy 5F: Maintain the best possible building environment for the full range of material types housed by the Center.
    - o Contract with a pest control company to address Ransom Center's special needs and requirements.
    - o Establish regular preventative maintenance for exposed pipes over collection material in the basement.
    - o Install timers for lighting and develop a plan for reducing light damage caused by emergency lighting in all stack spaces.
    - o Evaluate the Center's environmental monitoring program and associated technical monitoring equipment and systems to ensure reliable, effective operations.
    - o Develop an institution-wide food policy for individual staff and public events to ensure that the collection is not endangered.
    - o Update the Ransom Center Emergency Response Plan to align with that of the University, and establish a well-trained emergency team for the Center.

GOAL 6
Secure resources to sustain growth and advance the mission.

- Strategy 6A: Review and strengthen Advisory Council roles and responsibilities.
    - o Review role of Advisory Council and rewrite bylaws. Bylaws should include specifics on giving expectations, structure, nomination process, attendance, participation, terms, conflicts of interest, and termination.
    - o Deepen engagement of Advisory Council.

- Strategy 6B: Grow and reposition development operations to increase fundraising results through principal gifts, foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, gift planning, annual giving, and membership.
    - o Hire Assistant Director of Development to manage development operations, supervise support staff, and develop strategies for building annual giving programs.
    - o Continue to strengthen the coordination of Ransom Center fundraising activities with Texas Development, especially in the areas of gift planning and principal gifts.
    - o Consolidate all gift processing in one Development Associate position.

- Strategy 6C: Maintain the Center's competitive position as the archive of choice for new collections by creating more reliable and sustainable sources of acquisition funding.
    - o Increase endowments that support acquisitions by at least $10 million, including endowments in underfunded subject areas such as art, film, literature, performing arts, and photography.
    - o Engage curators in collection fundraising activities, including cultivation of collectors and development of proposals to foundations active in their fields.
    - o Engage more collectors and donors who are able to support opportunistic acquisitions.

- Strategy 6D: Expand the number of position endowments to recruit and retain the most talented staff and to relieve pressure on the state-funded personnel budget.
    - o Develop proposals with corresponding budgets for senior-level positions attractive for endowment support.
    - o Where possible, broaden purpose of existing endowments to maximize flexibility.

- Strategy 6E: Expand total annual giving, especially in the areas of major gifts, planned giving, and foundation support.
    - o Develop a donor portfolio that includes prospects for annual gifts, foundation grants, and bequests.
    - o Engage identified prospects through personal visits by Director and development staff.
    - o Hold a fundraising gala to determine cost and potential benefits as a recruitment and fundraising vehicle.
    - o Increase the revenue generated by and number of supporters participating in the Ransom Center's membership program from Austin and beyond.

- o Broaden base of support by hosting strategic events in major metropolitan areas.
- o Produce a direct mail end-of-year appeal to current members as a test case.

- Strategy 6F: Begin capital campaign analysis and planning.
  - o Meet with Texas Development to determine campaign potential, strategies, goals, and timeline.
  - o Develop case statement and other campaign collateral.
  - o Identify current and new donors with major gift potential.
  - o Create Capital Campaign Committee (including Advisory Council members) to help with prospect development.
  - o Work with Texas Development to coordinate capital campaign fundraising activities.
  - o Secure lead gifts prior to public announcement of capital campaign.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This strategic plan was prepared by the Ransom Center's Director and staff with the assistance of Thomas Wolf and Jane Culbert of the consulting firm Wolf Brown, and with the participation of the Strategic Planning Committee of the Ransom Center's Advisory Council.