



IDAHO STATE  
**HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

# **Idaho State Historical Society**

## **Strategic Plan FY 2026-2030**



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*As defined in Idaho Code, section 67-4112 (3), the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) includes the Idaho State Museum, the Idaho State Archives and State Records Center, and the State Historic Preservation Office. It operates in public trust state historic sites, including the Old Idaho Penitentiary, John and Ann Doney House, the Lorenzo Hill Hatch House, Franklin Relic Hall, Franklin Cooperative Mercantile Institution, Rock Creek Station and Stricker Homesite, and Pierce Courthouse. Our mission is authorized through seventy-four state statutory mandates and the National Historic Preservation Act.*

*ISHS preserves and protects the records, artifacts, and places that tell Idaho's story—not only as stewards of the past—but as champions of a future rooted in integrity, community, and collective vitality. Through education, outreach, and responsible government, ISHS fosters a deeper understanding of our heritage, empowering Idahoans to see themselves in history, to care for their communities, and to participate fully as informed citizens.*

### **Mission:**

Idaho State Historical Society preserves and promotes Idaho history.

### **Vision:**

Our vision is to make history essential and accessible through dynamic and gratifying services that inspire, enrich, and engage all Idahoans.

### **Values:**

#### ❖ **Guided by the Facts**

We preserve, interpret, and share Idaho's history through rigorous, research-driven practices that meet the highest professional standards. Our collections care, archival work, and educational programs are grounded in verifiable sources, ensuring that our decisions, exhibitions, and public resources reflect accuracy, credibility, and scholarly integrity.

#### ❖ **Working Smart in Every Arena**

We navigate complex governmental landscapes with skill, fostering constructive relationships with local, state, tribal, and federal partners. By understanding policy contexts, anticipating challenges, and providing historical insight to decision-makers, we amplify Idaho's voice in shaping preservation priorities while protecting the agency's nonpartisan role.

#### ❖ **History You Can Rely On**

We are committed to presenting Idaho's history fully and fairly, offering balanced interpretations that reflect multiple perspectives. Through transparency, insights from audience surveys, community dialogue, and accountability in our work, we maintain the public's trust—ensuring our resources serve as a reliable foundation for civic understanding and informed decision-making.

## **ISHS Core Programs**

### **Idaho State Archives and State Records Center**

- Collections & Outreach
- Government & Historical Records Management
- Reference and Research Services

### **Idaho State Museum**

- Collections & Exhibitions
- Education Programs
- Visitor Experiences
- Capitol Curation Program

### **State Historic Preservation Office**

- National Register of Historic Places
- Site Survey & Inventory
- Certified Local Governments

- Preservation Planning
- Federal Tax Incentive Program
- Federal Project Review
- Archaeological Survey of Idaho

### **Old Idaho Penitentiary And Historic Sites**

- Exhibitions
- Education Programs
- Visitor Experiences

### **Administration**

- Finance and Budget
- Fundraising and Membership
- Marketing and Communications
- Maintenance and Operations
- Governance

## **Stakeholders**

The agency provides a distinctive portfolio of services that respond to state and federal mandates and provide educational value to a variety of unique stakeholder groups, including:

- **Professional and Partner Networks:** Historical and Cultural Entities, Architectural and Archaeological Entities, Professional Researchers, Consultants, National Organizations, Non-Profits, and Special Interest Groups, such as veterans' groups.
- **Advocates:** Members, Volunteers, Donors, Staff, Trustees, Foundation for Idaho History, Affiliate Boards.
- **Public:** Citizens, Tourists, Families.
- **Education:** Professors, University Staff, Pre-K-12th Educators, Homeschool Networks, Students.
- **Elected Officials/Government Entities:** State Agencies, Federal Agencies, Federal Delegation, Tribes, Legislators, Executive Branch, Judicial Branch, County/City/Municipal Entities, Community Leaders.
- **Media:** News outlets, influencers, journalists.

# Strategic Goal 1: Outreach

**Inspire and mobilize Idahoans through meaningful statewide outreach that builds lasting relationships, broadens participation, and amplifies the value of history in civic life.<sup>1</sup>**

***Objective 1.1: Strengthen community-centered engagement by activating the agency's collections, programs, and expertise through outreach initiatives that reflect the distinctiveness and vitality of Idaho's people and places.***

***Objective 1.2: Deepen strategic partnerships with elected officials and government entities by creating targeted opportunities for collaboration, education, and historical context that support informed policy and shared stewardship of Idaho's legacy.***

***Objective 1.3: Strengthen internal processes to leverage external communications by identifying, informing, and engaging all stakeholder groups, and amplifying our existing program impact.***

## **FY 26-30 Benchmarks:**

- By FY 28, execute America250 outreach with relevant stakeholder groups.
- Through FY 28, ISHS staff will engage with at least one partner/professional network stakeholder or one elected official/government entities stakeholder per judicial district to provide training and/or technical assistance.
- Through FY 28, each ISHS Trustee/FIH Board member will engage with at least one partner/professional network stakeholder or one elected official/government entities stakeholder per judicial district to provide understanding and information about ISHS and its essential role in government.
- Through FY 30, manage and track alteration and repair project timelines, cost, outcomes, and community satisfaction across the state.
- Through FY 30, increase the agency's statewide outreach activities by 5% yearly.
- Through FY 30, strengthen community engagement by actively inviting elected officials/government entities, and advocate stakeholder groups to participate in core recognition programs.
- Through FY 30, engage in person with a minimum of 30% of Certified Local Government Commissions, to develop/advance local historic preservation plans to ensure preservation is an anchor value in retaining community identity.

## Strategic Goal 2: Education

**Elevate the impact of ISHS's educational offerings by delivering compelling, curriculum-aligned, and inquiry-driven learning experiences that foster evaluative thinking skills, inspire self-reflection, and promote a shared understanding of Idaho's distinct histories.<sup>ii</sup>**

***Objective 2.1: Create and deliver transformative educational content by expanding the reach and depth of ISHS's educational resources that spark curiosity and connect historical knowledge to contemporary issues and civic identity.<sup>iii</sup>***

***Objective 2.2: Integrate with Idaho's educational system by partnering with educators, elected officials, and government entity stakeholders to align content with state standards, support classroom instruction, and offer professional development rooted in comprehensive and evidence-based historical interpretation.***

***Objective 2.3: Empower audiences to be co-creators of knowledge by designing participatory learning experiences that invite reflection, dialogue, and storytelling, amplifying various voices and encouraging Idahoans to see themselves as part of Idaho history.***

***Objective 2.4: Cultivate self-discovery and investigative learning by providing access to and information about ISHS's collections, which will position Idahoans to become inquisitive about their own stories and the state's history.***

### **FY 26-30 Benchmarks:**

- By FY 28, deliver a completed reimagined Old Penitentiary experience that aligns with educational objectives as outlined.<sup>iv</sup>
- By FY 28, deliver ISHS's portfolio of America250-related projects.<sup>v</sup>
- By FY 28, engage with external stakeholders from each of Idaho's judicial districts through onsite tours and virtual programs to illustrate the extent and value of ISHS collections and educate these groups about how to access these materials best.
- By FY 28, engage in educational activities that result in participation from Idahoans from at least 50% of counties and 50% of Idaho's higher education institutions.
- By FY 26, upgrade the agency's website to align with the State of Idaho template and meet ADA compliance, enhancing access to catalogs, educational, and historical resources.
- Through FY 30, partner with education stakeholders to align exhibition and field trip content with audience needs and project goals.
- Through FY 30, in partnership with advocates, educate community stakeholders about the value of historic preservation through promoting and celebrating new listings in the National Register of Historic Places.

# Strategic Goal 3: Responsible Government

**Earn and maintain the public's trust and support by consistently demonstrating transparency, integrity, excellent customer service, and efficiency in agency operations to ensure services, resources, and decisions are accountable, equitable, and responsive to the evolving needs of Idahoans.<sup>vi</sup>**

***Objective 3.1: Optimize internal systems for transparency and efficiency by evaluating internal processes to identify opportunities for streamlining operations, reducing redundancies, and improving service delivery.***

***Objective 3.2: Build transparent relationships with the public and stakeholders by hosting at least two annual public forums or listening sessions to gather feedback on agency priorities and operations.***

***Objective 3.3: Execute work of core program areas to the highest professional and disciplinary standards, positioning ISHS as a trusted steward and subject matter authority by upholding the most rigorous practices in historical preservation, collections, archival, and records management, research, interpretation, and finance and operations.***

## **FY26-30 Benchmarks**

- By FY 27, generate sufficient private funding, to maximize and leverage public funding, to execute the Old Pen Reimagining project.
- By FY28, complete collections and archives Stewardship facility, to achieve proper collections care and preservation in accordance with professional standards.
- By FY 28, complete collections and records transfer to the purpose-built Collections and Archives Stewardship facility, realizing significant efficiency in the consolidation of multiple facilities.
- By FY 28, align internal evaluation systems to better track agency program impact to make agency offerings more effective.
- By FY 27, to optimize ISHS budget self-sufficiency and maximize taxpayer investment, evaluate and optimize internal revenue generation processes, such as POS alignment and facility use strategies at the Old Idaho Penitentiary and the Idaho State Museum.
- Through FY 30, while federal regulations allow 30 days for SHPO response to Section 106 consultation, Idaho SHPO will serve constituents more effectively and maintain on average less than 7 days response time.
- Through FY 30, strengthen the agency's public-private partnership and broad citizen involvement by increasing our membership base by 50 members each year.

## Performance Measures

Goal	Measure	Performance Target	FY Deadline
<b>Goal 1: Outreach</b>	Statewide outreach activities completed. <sup>vii</sup>	--	FY 26
		--	FY 27
		--	FY 28
		--	FY 29
		--	FY 30
<b>Goal 1: Outreach</b>	Growth of public newsletter subscribers. <sup>viii</sup>	5.0 %	FY 26 – FY 30
<b>Goal 1: Outreach</b>	Growth of website traffic. <sup>ix</sup>	4.4 %	FY 26 – FY 30
<b>Goal 2: Education</b>	County representation across educational activities. <sup>x</sup>	50% of Idaho counties	FY 26 – FY 30
<b>Goal 2: Education</b>	Higher education representation across educational activities. <sup>xi</sup>	50% of higher education institutions	FY 26 – FY 30
<b>Goal 2: Education</b>	Educators participating in educational activities at the Old Penitentiary and the Idaho State Museum. <sup>xii</sup>	1,439 educators	FY 26
		1,466 educators	FY 27
		1,493 educators	FY 28
		1,523 educators	FY 29
		1,550 educators	FY 30
<b>Goal 3: Responsible Government</b>	Response time via ICRIS. <sup>xiii</sup>	Average response time of less than 7 days	FY 26 – FY 30
<b>Goal 3: Responsible Government</b>	Growth in agency memberships. <sup>xiv</sup>	900	FY 26
		950	FY 27
		1000	FY 28
		1050	FY 29
		1100	FY 30
<b>Goal 3: Responsible Government</b>	Growth in the agency membership retention rate. <sup>xv</sup>	51%	FY 26
		52%	FY 27
		53%	FY 28
		54%	FY 29
		55%	FY 30

## ISHS Key Internal Factors

- Curatorial services preserve and protect the state's irreplaceable legacy collections;
- Programs and services of the Idaho State Archives collect, preserve, and provide access to historic records to inform the work of government and support the interests and decisions of the people of Idaho;
- Programs and services of SHPO give an Idaho voice to federal decision-making;
- Dynamic educational services build 21st-century skills and directly support Idaho school curriculum;
- Preservation of historic sites reveals a sense of place critical to personal and community identity;



- Government records management and archival services are essential to state agencies and official jurisdictions.

## **ISHS Key External Factors**

### **State Facilities Ownership and Leasing Issues**

- The timeline for evacuation of the museum and Capitol storage facilities on the former Idaho Transportation Department's land in downtown Boise will not be completed until FY 27 at a minimum, and we will need to maintain access and use of these facilities until that date.

### **Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Federal Mandates**

- Federal efforts to streamline regulations will increase SHPO leadership in creating Programmatic Agreements with federal agencies, the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation;
- Federal Executive Orders may impact funding, workload, and project timelines;
- State efforts to streamline federal partnerships require heightened communication and partnerships between SHPO and those agencies, such as the Department of Lands, Office of Energy Resources, and Office of Species Conservation;
- Large-scale infrastructure projects will increase SHPO workload, necessitating the maintenance of additional personnel.

### **State Records Center State Mandates**

- The Office of the Attorney General's litigation hold remains in effect, impacting statewide records management practices and the revenue that the State Record Center would generally earn from routine destruction procedures.

### **Fund Development**

The agency derives half of its annual financial support through non-general fund sources. It is a challenge to secure private ongoing operating support as perception is that government funds meet agency needs. The agency's approach to ongoing funding and project development is strategic. Government support is critical for buildings, collections care, and personnel. Private sources best leverage public funds in the spirit of public-private partnership.

- ISHS marketing focused on building public awareness to expand its ongoing supporters;
- ISHS can best leverage project-based private funds for education, exhibitions, and collections access services;
- Changes in records management at state agencies may impact cost recovery efforts;
- Fund development for the agency's rural sites is limited;
- Fund development for on-site initiatives for the immediate future will focus on major site reinterpretation at the Old Idaho Penitentiary;
- Changes in federal grant criteria may impact federal grants for the OIP exhibitions campaign;
- Potential state general fund budget reductions will result in the need to generate additional, ongoing agency program revenues.



## **ISHS Statutory Authority Summary**

Idaho Code 67-4126 states that the agency shall:

- ❖ Identify, preserve, and protect sites, monuments, and points of interest in Idaho of historic merit. **(67-4114)**
- ❖ Protect archaeological and vertebrate paleontological sites and resources on public land. **(67-4119)**
- ❖ Govern the agency and administer the powers and duties of the board. **(67-4126)**
- ❖ Appoint a director of the society as provided herein and advise then in the performance of their duties and formulate general policies affecting the society. **(67-4126 [1])**
- ❖ Encourage and promote interest in the history of Idaho. **(67-4126 [2])**
- ❖ Collect, preserve, and exhibit artifacts and information illustrative of Idaho history, culture, and society. **(67-4126 [3])**
- ❖ Facilitate the use of Idaho records for official reference and historical research. **(67-4126 [6])**
- ❖ Be responsible for records management services for state government. **(67-4126 [7])**
- ❖ Accept archival material from governments. **(67-4126 [8])**
- ❖ Establish such rules as may be necessary to discharge the duties of the society. **(67-4126 [10])**
- ❖ Identify historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural sites, buildings, or districts and to coordinate activities of local historic preservation commissions. **(67-4126 [14])**
- ❖ Serve as the Geographic Names Board of the state **(67-4126 [15])**
- ❖ Carry out the preservation and protection of the state's historic, archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage resources. **(67-4114)**
- ❖ Provides for the creation of an Idaho Archaeological Survey and designates the State Archaeologist as director. **(33-3902)**
- ❖ Assigns responsibilities to the agency for consultation, determination of appropriate actions, and providing for re-interment of human remains that have been disturbed. **(28-501)**
- ❖ National Historic Preservation Act 54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq., assigns responsibility to the state historic preservation officer for administration of the national historic preservation program at the State level.

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<sup>i</sup> ISHS defines outreach as the agency's proactive, statewide engagement with multiple stakeholder groups to foster connection, relevance, and participation with Idaho history.

<sup>ii</sup> ISHS defines education as the active process of delivering accurate, engaging, and thought-provoking historical content that informs, inspires, and equips stakeholder groups to think critically, reflect deeply, and contribute meaningfully to civic life.

<sup>iii</sup> Educational resources include exhibitions, digital content, programs, and publications, among others.

<sup>iv</sup> In FY 25, ISHS began the process of engaging with stakeholders to conceptualize new exhibitions for the Old Idaho Penitentiary.

<sup>v</sup> This portfolio includes exhibitions, a publication, and an oral history initiative.

<sup>vi</sup> ISHS defines responsible government as the ethical commitment to serve the public with integrity, efficiency, transparency, and accountability. It means managing public resources wisely, generating revenue, making data-informed decisions, and ensuring all agency actions are aligned with required state and federal laws, values, and expectations of Idahoans. Through this commitment, ISHS strengthens civic trust and models excellence in public service.

<sup>vii</sup> ISHS will establish a baseline for this metric during FY 26, and based on this work, future years' strategic plans will include performance targets for this metric. ISHS aspires to conduct outreach in person; however, to execute this work effectively and efficiently, ISHS also conducts virtual outreach.

<sup>viii</sup> This measure reflects the success of outreach and communications strategies in building lasting public relationships. It aligns with **Objective 1.3** by maintaining regular communication with stakeholders, ensuring they stay informed and engaged with ISHS priorities. As an effectiveness measure, it validates whether ISHS's storytelling and resource-sharing efforts resonate with Idahoans. Growth in newsletter sign-ups indicates greater effectiveness in retaining existing stakeholders and attracting new stakeholders and reflects successful content creation and communication strategies.

<sup>ix</sup> This measure is a key indicator of the agency's effectiveness in expanding its digital reach and engaging a broader statewide audience. It aligns with **Objective 1.1** by monitoring the increase in website visitors; the agency can assess the impact of its outreach and communication strategies, ensuring that more Idahoans access collections, programs, and resources online. It also supports **Objective 1.3** by validating the effectiveness of internal communications upgrades (e.g., ADA compliance, content optimization) in driving engagement.

<sup>x</sup> This measure ensures ISHS meets its FY 28 benchmark of engaging 50% of Idaho counties, directly supporting **Objective 2.1** and **Objective 2.2** by guaranteeing equitable access to curriculum-aligned programs statewide. By tracking county participation, ISHS demonstrates the effectiveness of its efforts to expand reach and integrate with the educational system, validating that its initiatives are successfully engaging diverse communities across Idaho and meeting strategic benchmarks. By maintaining 50% annual representation, ISHS demonstrates its commitment to fostering statewide reach and engagement.

<sup>xi</sup> This measure aligns with **Objective 2.2** and **Objective 2.3** by strengthening collaborations with universities for curriculum implementation, internships, and learning opportunities. Sustained engagement with higher education institutions supports **Objective 2.4** and its efforts to enhance self-discovery through access to collections and investigative learning tools. This measure indicates the effectiveness of our educational offerings and helps assess how effectively educational programs attract and engage educators, reflecting their quality, relevance, and value to the academic community.

<sup>xii</sup> This measure directly advances **Objective 2.2** and **Objective 2.3** by equipping teachers with resources to integrate Idaho's history. This input measure reflects the success of workshops, field trips, and the Educator Advisory Council in building partnerships that align programs with state standards and inclusive practices. Tracking participation is an effectiveness measure that ensures ISHS meets FY 28 benchmarks and validates the impact of the Old Penitentiary Reimagining, among other benchmarks, and ensures ISHS delivers curriculum-aligned programs that meet classroom needs, strengthens school partnerships, and empowers teachers to integrate Idaho's history into student learning.

<sup>xiii</sup> This measure aligns with **Objective 3.1** and **Objective 3.3** by ensuring timely, transparent communication with the public. A response time under seven days demonstrates operational efficiency, reduces service gaps, and builds trust through accountability, key to the agency's goal of equitable, responsive service. Meeting the FY 26–30 benchmark for SHPO consultation response time further validates ISHS as a reliable steward of public inquiries and regulatory compliance.

<sup>xiv</sup> This measure supports **Objective 3.2** by expanding the agency's supporter base, which fosters community trust and engagement. Membership growth reflects successful outreach and customer service, directly tied to earning public trust through equitable resource access. This output measure validates the effectiveness of marketing, front-desk sales, and partnership strategies in making ISHS's offerings responsive to Idahoans' needs.

<sup>xv</sup> This measure aligns with **Objective 3.3** by demonstrating sustained member satisfaction and trust in ISHS's programs. Higher retention signals that the agency meets member needs through professional stewardship, transparent operations, and quality programming, which are critical to maintaining public trust. This outcome measure also ensures financial stability, enabling ISHS to deliver on benchmarks like the Old Pen Reimagining project and collections transfers.