



HOUSTON MUSEUM DISTRICT

Houston Museum District Association
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BUSINESS PLAN

The District

The Houston Museum District is one of the most visited and diverse cultural centers anywhere, attracting visitors of all ages, backgrounds and ethnicities from the Houston area, other parts of the country and abroad. On-site attendance and outreach programs for 20 member museums serve approximately 8 million visits per year. Eleven museums are always free, and all provide free times. The District is an important tourism destination, a vital educational resource and a major asset as Houston competes in the global economy.

The Museum District is growing. Starting with 11 member museums in 1997, the District now has 20 member museums within a 1.5 mile radius that provide rich experiences in art, history, culture, nature and science:

Asia Society	Buffalo Soldiers National Museum
Children's Museum of Houston	Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
Czech Center Museum Houston	Holocaust Museum Houston
Houston Center for Contemporary Craft	Houston Center for Photography
Houston Museum of Natural Science	Houston Zoo
The John C. Freeman Weather Museum	The Health Museum
The Jung Center of Houston	Lawndale Art Center
The Menil Collection	Museum of African American Culture
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	Rice University Art Gallery
	Rothko Chapel

Houston Museum District Association

The purpose of the Houston Museum District Association (HMDA) is to foster collaboration among museums located in and near Hermann Park and the Montrose area in order to promote the District as a cultural destination, publicize activities at member museums and in the District, conduct programs and events that raise awareness about the District and member museums, and support projects that enhance accessibility and the sense of place. Current programs and projects include:

Museum District Web Site, Mobile Web Site and Visitor Brochure – The District web site www.houstonmuseumdistrict.org provides links to all member museums, a District map and a calendar of exhibits and activities and is the #1 Google search result for "Museum District." This year, the District is unveiling a mobile web site in time for the annual Museum District Day open house. The District also publishes a visitor brochure that includes a map, the location and contact information, hours, and brief information about their offerings. The brochure is available at museums, provided to conventions in Houston and distributed throughout the Gulf Coast region.

Way finding signage – The District is sponsoring comprehensive signs to guide drivers and pedestrians to the District and the 20 museums in the District.

Area improvements – The District is working with the City of Houston to implement a streetscape projects to enhance medians, crosswalks and sidewalks, provide pedestrian lighting.

The Museum Experience – In an effort to create year-round awareness of the District's resources; provide a more intimate, educational experience for visitors and promote the walkability of the area, Museum District Day was replaced with The Museum Experience. The Museum Experience features four walkable "zones" to help visitors navigate through the area and learn more about all 19 museums in a more personal way. On the last Saturday of January, April, July and September, each zone will showcase a handful of museums at a time, complete with special programming, pedicabs in select zones and food trucks.

Museum Educators Open House – Each year the District hosts a free open house for educators (public, private and home-school teachers and education students) to learn about education programs offered at more than 40 organizations in the District or in the Houston area.

Collaborations – The District works closely with the Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau and hospitality industry to promote Houston as a tourism destination. In 2010 and 2011 three prestigious cultural conferences are being held in Houston – the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the Association of Children's Museums and the American Association of Museums. The District also has ongoing coordination with Texans for the Arts, the Texas Medical Center, the Greater Houston Partnership, Houston Greeters, the Theater District, Miller Outdoor Theatre, South Main Alliance and the Houston Arts Alliance.

Allocations to Museums – The District also allocates the largest share of Hotel Occupancy Tax funds receipts to 11 member museums for marketing and publicizing their offerings for tourism:

Children's Museum of Houston
Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
The Health Museum
Holocaust Museum Houston
Houston Museum of Natural Science
Houston Zoo
The Jung Center
Lawndale Art Center
The Menil Collection
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Rice University Art Gallery

Organization

HMDA is a 501 (c) (3) corporation formed on January 27, 1997. The board of directors is comprised of the CEOs of its 20 member museums. Board members take a direct role in committees and task forces including the Executive Committee, PR and Marketing, Signage, and Finance. Additionally, staffs from all museums take an active role in collaborative activities.

Funding

Total operating budgets for the 20 member museums exceed \$130 million and are funded almost completely through private generosity and earned revenues. Private funding supports extensive outreach programs including free hours, and 11 museums that are free all the time.

The Museum District receives approximately \$2.4 million in annual Hotel Occupancy Tax funds from the City of Houston for tourism related promotion. A portion of these funds are used by the District to conduct collaborative activities such as Museum District Day, the visitor brochure and the web site. The largest share is allocated to museums for marketing and publicizing their offerings for tourism.

The District is also funded with contributions from all member museums; foundation grants from The John P. McGovern Foundation; The Wortham Foundation, Inc.; The Brown Foundation, Inc. and the Houston Endowment Inc.; and corporate sponsorship with Chevron.