



The Conservation Society of San Antonio Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2025-2027

VISION

The Conservation Society of San Antonio is a vital partner in the conservation and preservation of the unique cultural, natural and architectural heritage of San Antonio and surrounding areas.

PURPOSE

The purpose for which The Conservation Society of San Antonio is formed is to preserve and to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, places, and customs relating to the history of Texas, its natural beauty and all that is admirably distinctive to our State: and by such physical and cultural preservation to keep the history of Texas legible and intact to educate the public, especially the youth of today and tomorrow with knowledge of our inherited regional values.

CORE VALUES OF THE ORGANIZATION

Leadership including the Board of Directors - Have the courage to shape a better future

Collaboration and Outreach - Achieve good outcomes with public and private entities at every level including:

- Bexar County projects and events
- Local media to help spread the word supporting preservation efforts
- City of San Antonio on variety of projects like the neighborhood associations

Integrity - Assure that we act directly in accordance with our mission and national and international preservation standards, and not for other motivations.

Passion - Provide the enthusiasm and energy to achieve our goals.

Education - Foster an understanding of regional heritage through:

- Education Grants – helped fund other organizations in their programs and research projects
- General membership meeting guest speakers
- Heritage Education Tours
- Historic Preservation Month
- Juniors’ programs
- Expansion of opportunities for youth and young adults including apprentice and volunteer programs
- Neighborhood workshops
- Inclusion of all cultures that contribute to the life of San Antonio
- Training and symposiums

- Conservation Society’s website and Foundation Library archives

Diversity - Achieve cultural sensitivity and inclusivity through partnerships and educational programs.

Advocacy - Discern all preservation opportunities of value.

- Be a source for research, education, and preparation for challenges and presentations.
- Discuss and determine which challenges to fight regarding buildings, sites, and traditions to preserve, and projects to support.
- Monitor local, state, and federal preservation issues.
- Assist neighborhoods to achieve historic designation and landmarking.
- Impact change by protecting buildings from demolition.
- Maintain relationships with allied organizations.
- Make available Society staff and research library expert as sources for media, students, authors, architects, other professionals, and the general community.

SWOT ANALYSIS (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats)

Strengths:

1. Organized and active in preservation since 1924
2. Membership of 1,200+ with some members belonging more than 50 years
3. Popular revenue source NIOSA®
4. Stable rental properties
5. Four buildings operating as restaurants
6. Properties Committee must evaluate properties and rentals on a regular basis
7. Partners with other community and governmental groups to achieve goals
8. Dedicated to community service
9. Independent and strong voice for preservation
10. Staff has expertise in preservation, architecture, and research

Weaknesses:

1. The Society’s dependence on revenue from NIOSA and NIOSITAs
2. Decreased political clout and public awareness
3. Insufficient financial development plan
4. Do not have 100% financial commitment of Board of Directors with clarification of membership and gifts (donations)
5. No sophisticated donor database, donation tracking, board service hours tracking, and planned giving
6. Youth programs need development and strengthening
7. Increased administrative and maintenance costs of historic structures
8. Recruiting volunteers to assist staff and to operate programs
9. Inadequate space for the office, library, warehouse, and meeting area
10. Recruitment of committed board members to serve in leadership positions
11. Continuity as Board changes
12. Limited ability to respond to time-sensitive and multiple issues

Opportunities:

1. Increase the profile of The Conservation Society of San Antonio’s past and present with business and civic leaders as well as the general public

2. Strengthen search engine criteria so that the Conservation Society is easily recognizable on the internet. Provide an increased presence on social media to strengthen advocacy efforts
3. Evaluate office, library, operational, meeting and warehouse space to meet the needs of the organization
4. Increase membership with the focus of better representing the San Antonio population
5. Target rapid growth of the San Antonio area
6. Expand philanthropic support by individuals, foundations, and corporations
7. Align with state and national programs that match our mission and goals

Threats:

1. Dependence on NIOSA® for majority of operational funds
2. Impending changes to Alamo Street and La Villita affecting NIOSA® operations
3. Decrease in members
4. Financially draining properties
5. Increase in forces that pursue insensitive real estate development
6. Lack of funds to maintain administrative and property expenses
7. Insensitive rapid growth of San Antonio area and encroachment into the historic neighborhoods

GOALS

Long-Term Goals:

The Long-Term goals are the overarching goals of the Society that the specific goals will support.

1. Ensure financial stability.
2. Increase community participation in historical preservation and recognition of our leading role in this important facet of civic life.
3. Engage and empower youth in the community to embrace historical preservation.

Specific Goals:

The Specific goals support the long-term goals and are most critical to the Society in the near term.

Resource Development

1. The Properties Committee will develop a plan for disposition or utilization of properties based on the space requirements provided by the Strategic Planning Committee by the end of FY 2025. The plan should propose requirements for the next 5-10 years. An annual review of all properties should be performed and reported. The plan should include options to utilize spaces not owned by the Society. The plan will ensure that properties are not a drain on funds and that all space requirements are met.
2. A fund-raising coordinator will be appointed to head a committee created to oversee and direct fund raising activities not related to NIOSA to include, a 50% increase in grant applications, opportunities for new fund-raising activities or events, and an increase in philanthropic support by individuals and organizations. A proposal for additional fund-raising event(s) should be completed by the end of FY 2025.

3. The NIOSA committee should stay informed of changes to the NIOSA footprint and develop a strategy to adapt to the environment and keep the President informed of these options.
4. Conservation Society management will develop an employee succession plan to ensure that there is a plan in place that identifies critical functions and who will perform these functions if key personnel are no longer employed.

Operations and Board Structure

1. Develop Board Continuity Plan. Explore options to enhance the continuity of Board operations that should include committee structure requirements, document retention, and communication and adherence to the Strategic Plan.

Membership and Preservation Leadership

1. The Membership Committee will increase membership annually by 5% for each of the next 3 years. The committee will report tactics and results to leadership. This goal will result in increased revenue and increased participation and interest in the activities of the Conservation Society.
2. The Membership Committee will identify volunteer needs not related to NIOSA and develop methods to communicate the opportunities to the membership by March 1, 2025. By accomplishing this goal, a loyal group of knowledgeable volunteers can be developed to eventually serve as board members and officers.
3. The Juniors Committee will work with the Membership Committee to increase membership by 5% for each of the next 3 years. The Juniors Committee will report tactics and results to leadership. This goal will help to increase future general membership and expose Junior members to the mission and purpose of the Conservation Society.
4. The Membership Committee will develop a plan to increase Business/Organization membership by the end of FY 2025. Business membership promotes increased awareness and support of the Society.
5. The Executive Committee will review the current dues structure and make recommendations if changes are required.