Breakout | Thursday, October 29, 10:45am–12:00pm

# Institutional Leadership and Change

Rebekah Beaulieu, Ph.D., Louise Taft Semple President & CEO, Taft Museum of Art

Joie Grandbois, Director of Sustainability, Historic New England

Debra A. Reid, Curator of Agriculture and the Environment, The Henry Ford; Secretary, ICOM-SUSTAIN

Stephanie Shapiro, Managing Director, Environment and Culture Partners

# Learning objectives

*By the end of this session, you will be able to:*

1. Compare top-down and bottom-up approaches to making climate action an institutional priority.

2. Describe how leaders at different levels (executive, sustainability staff, curators) influence decisions.

3. Identify one strategy for advancing climate action within their own governance and decision-making structure.

PHIPPS Duke Farms

# Agenda

*What we'll cover in this session:*

1. Welcome and Introductions (30 min)
2. Moderated Panel (30 min)
3. Discussion and Q&A (15 minutes)

PHIPPS Duke Farms

# Why This Matters



## Collections at risk

Exposed to flooding, heat, and storms.[1]



## Funders expect action

Not just acknowledgment.[2]



## No single approach

Organizations of every size and governance structure are finding their own path.

*1. Thirty-five percent of U.S. art museum directors report their institutions have experienced damage from climate change; half have prepared response plans. Ithaka S+R, 2023.*

*2. 68% of major philanthropic foundations now include environmental criteria in grant evaluations. European Foundation Centre survey, 2025.*

# Leadership at every level

*Top-down*



*Bottom-up*

**Executive leaders**

Set priorities and allocate resources.

**Sustainability & facilities staff**

Translate priorities into day-to-day practice.

**Curators & program staff**

Embed climate themes in public-facing work.

# The Institutional Middle

***Change succeeds when the institutional middle, not just the top or the bottom is engaged.***

*1. Ackerman, "Achieving Campus Sustainability," International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education, 2011.*

# Taft Museum of Art: History





# Taft Museum of Art: Building

- Preservation/Renovations
  - 2003: expansion to include underground parking, additional exhibition and administrative spaces
  - 2021: stabilization and restoration building envelope, exterior façade, and systems
- Set footprint: downtown Cincinnati location
- National Historic Landmark building and interior (2 separate designations)

# Taft Museum of Art: Sustainability Efforts

- Operations
  - Green Team
  - Composting and recycling programs
  - Transition to LED lighting
- Facilities
  - Carbon footprint reduction
  - Energy monitoring
- Capital Planning
  - Establishment of capital reserve
  - Generational capital plan: 30-year capital and sustainability needs

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **30-Year Capital Expense Forecast** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Functional Area** | **FY2027** | **FY2028** | **FY2029** | **FY2030** | **FY2031** | **FY2032** | **FY2033** | **FY2034** | **FY2035** | **FY2036** | **FY2037** | **FY2038** | **FY2039** | **FY2040** |
| Electrical & Power Systems | - | - | - | 138,192 | - | 215,046 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| HVAC & Environmental Control | - | - | - | - | - | 278,979 | 101,315 | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Plumbing & Water Systems | - | - | - | 19,900 | - | - | - | - | 119,059 | - | - | - | - | |
| Life Safety & Security Systems | 49,219 | 78,858 | 64,689 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 77,105 | 63,251 | - | - | |
| Exterior Envelope & Structure | - | - | - | - | - | - | 387,379 | - | - | 192,763 | - | - | - | |
| Interior Structure & Finishes | - | - | 97,034 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 94,584 | - | |
| Site & Hardscape | - | - | - | - | 221,055 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Vertical Transportation | - | - | - | - | - | - | 196,670 | 336,108 | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Building Automation & Controls | - | - | 48,517 | - | - | 127,865 | - | - | - | - | 59,298 | - | - | |
| Lighting Systems | - | - | - | 132,664 | - | 75,557 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Collections & Exhibition Infrastructure | - | - | - | - | - | 209,234 | - | 164,999 | - | - | - | - | - | |
| IT & Digital Infrastructure | - | 84,116 | 118,597 | - | - | - | - | - | 238,119 | - | - | - | - | |
| Cafe Equipment & Infrastructure | 36,914 | - | 30,188 | 71,860 | - | - | - | - | 45,117 | - | - | - | 38,795 | |
| Gift Shop Fixtures & Equipment | - | - | 72,236 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 28,272 | - | - | - | |
| Facility Rental & Event Equipment | - | 52,572 | 43,126 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 52,709 | 67,560 | - | |
| Grounds & Landscaping | - | - | 64,689 | - | - | 87,181 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 83,131 | |
| Long Term Financing Principal Expense | - | - | - | 18,717 | 19,466 | 20,245 | 21,054 | 21,897 | 38,529 | 40,070 | 41,673 | 43,340 | 45,073 | 19,1 |
| Long Term Financing Interest Expense | - | - | - | 8,989 | 8,240 | 7,462 | 6,652 | 5,810 | 12,501 | 10,960 | 9,357 | 7,690 | 5,956 | 4,1 |
| Annual Total Projections | $86,134 | $215,546 | $539,076 | $390,322 | $248,761 | $1,021,568 | $713,070 | $528,813 | $453,325 | $349,170 | $226,288 | $213,174 | $172,955 | $23,3 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Funding Source** | **FY2027** | **FY2028** | **FY2029** | **FY2030** | **FY2031** | **FY2032** | **FY2033** | **FY2034** | **FY2035** | **FY2036** | **FY2037** | **FY2038** | **FY2039** | **FY2040** |
| Operational surplus, current year | 44,268 | 80,000 | 20,335 | 75,945 | 30,011 | 85,613 | 6,652 | 5,810 | 12,501 | 10,960 | 9,357 | 7,690 | 5,956 | 4,1 |
| Fundraising/Capital Cammpaign | - | - | 150,000 | - | - | 600,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Capital reserve | - | - | - | 18,717 | 19,466 | 65,245 | 71,054 | 73,167 | 91,101 | 93,978 | 96,950 | 100,021 | 103,194 | 78,7 |
| Restricted endowment earnings | 41,866 | 48,046 | 44,020 | 45,138 | 46,284 | 47,460 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Anticipated Grant Funds | - | - | 100,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Specific Grant Funds (from Capital Items list) | - | 87,500 | - | 84,000 | - | 89,250 | - | - | - | 52,500 | - | - | - | |
| Anticipated Donor Funds | - | - | - | 91,522 | 120,000 | 32,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |

# 2027–2029 INSTITUTIONAL PLAN

taft
MUSEUM OF ART

*Last updated*
*September 17, 2026*

## GOAL 1

**Secure the Museum's future by developing and launching a comprehensive vision and financial strategy to guide the museum's next century**

### STRATEGIES:

- Foster a future-ready organization
- Execute a balanced budget
- Cultivate and deepen community relationships
- Develop a 10-year institutional plan
- Orient and equip trustees
- Create leadership pipelines
- Utilize committee structures and working groups

## GOAL 2

**Become a leading arts hub by strengthening local, regional, and national leadership and enhancing museum engagement and experiences**

### STRATEGIES:

- Deliver high-profile, high-quality, and accessible exhibitions
- Reimagine museum spaces
- Strengthen regional and national leadership
- Cultivate new partnerships
- Build a network of ambassador representatives

## GOAL 3

**Deepen inclusion and access to arts experiences to create meaningful and lasting impact**

### STRATEGIES:

- Position the museum as a community-centered forum
- Design, test, and scale innovative experiences
- Connect historic collections with contemporary perspectives
- Advance inclusion through data-driven decision making and organizational practices
- Enhance access for every individual
- Strengthen partnerships and collaborations

## GOAL 4

**Cultivate a visitor-centered approach in everything we do by delivering a world-class museum experience**

### STRATEGIES:

- Upgrade physical spaces
- Design the future visitor experience model
- Train, equip, and support every team member

# Taft Museum of Art: Constraints

- Historic structure
- Limited flexibility in terms of footprint
- Small/midsized institution -> limited resources



# Climate Action at Historic New England

Joie Grandbois, Director of Sustainability

HISTORIC
NEW ENGLAND












































- 41 properties in five New England states
- 38 historic house museums
- 1,320 acres of farmlands, fields, forests, and gardens
- 168 structures

# Historic New England

- 125,000 objects and 1.5 million items of archival material
- 120 easements held on privately owned historic properties
- 167,657 visitors  in 2022
- 31,550 students from 168 communities
- More than 280 public programs attended by 56,706 participants









# Our journey to climate action planning…

- Did not start from square one
- Energy efficiency projects
- Resilience projects
- No overarching plan



# Intentional Climate Action Planning

HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND

- Regulatory - BERDO
- Collaborative - Boston Green Ribbon Commission
- Planning - Statement and goals

Historic New England is committed to addressing the global climate crisis through actions that reduce or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, promote resiliency, engage our communities, and advance climate justice and energy equity by:

## Mitigation

Achieving carbon neutrality for all Historic New England sites by 2050, continuously evaluating progress and adjusting actions to achieve success.

## Resilience

Managing our properties to meet our high preservations standards but also adapting those standards to ensure resilience in the face of weather extremes and sea level rise.

## Justice

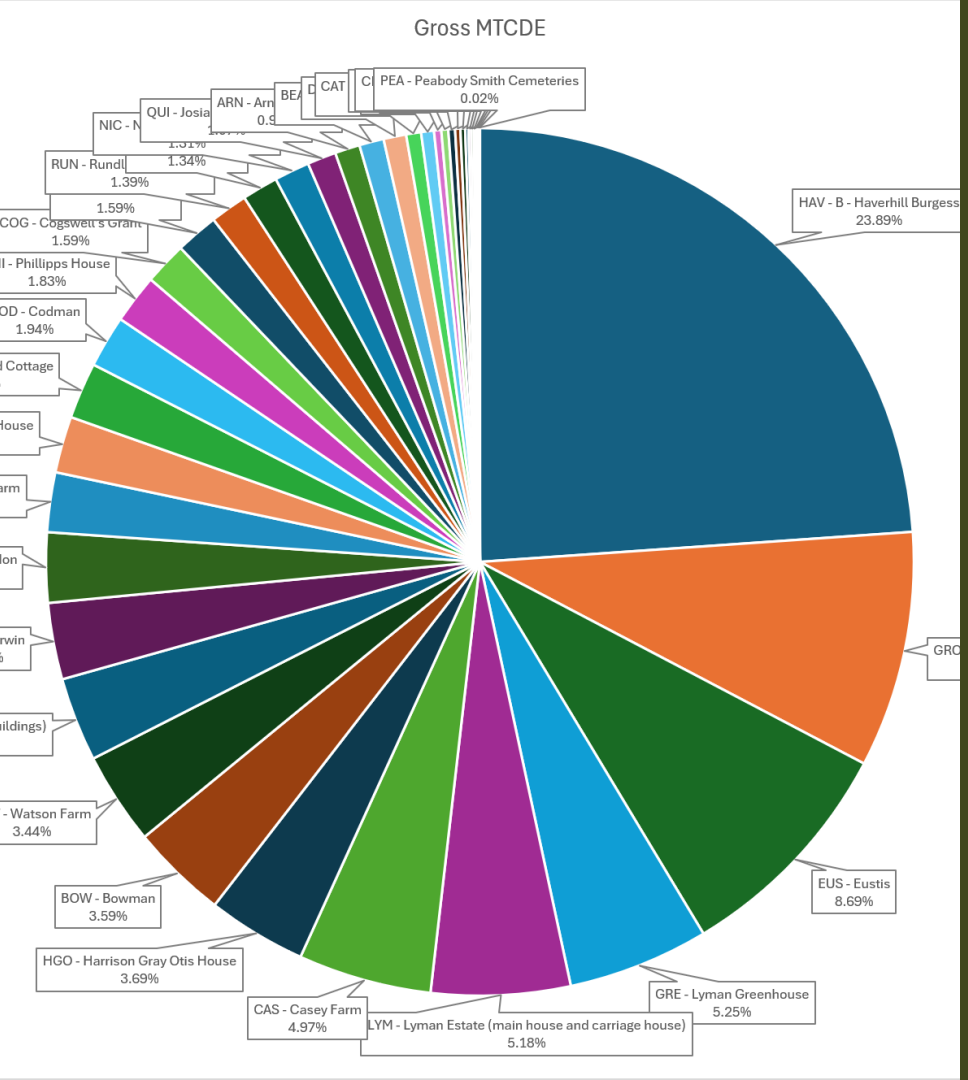
Engaging a broad and inclusive public through robust partnerships, programs, and activities that advance climate justice for all.

## Integration

Enacting operational shifts that integrate climate action into the day-to-day operations of Historic New England.

# Great, we have a plan and some goals.

# What's next?



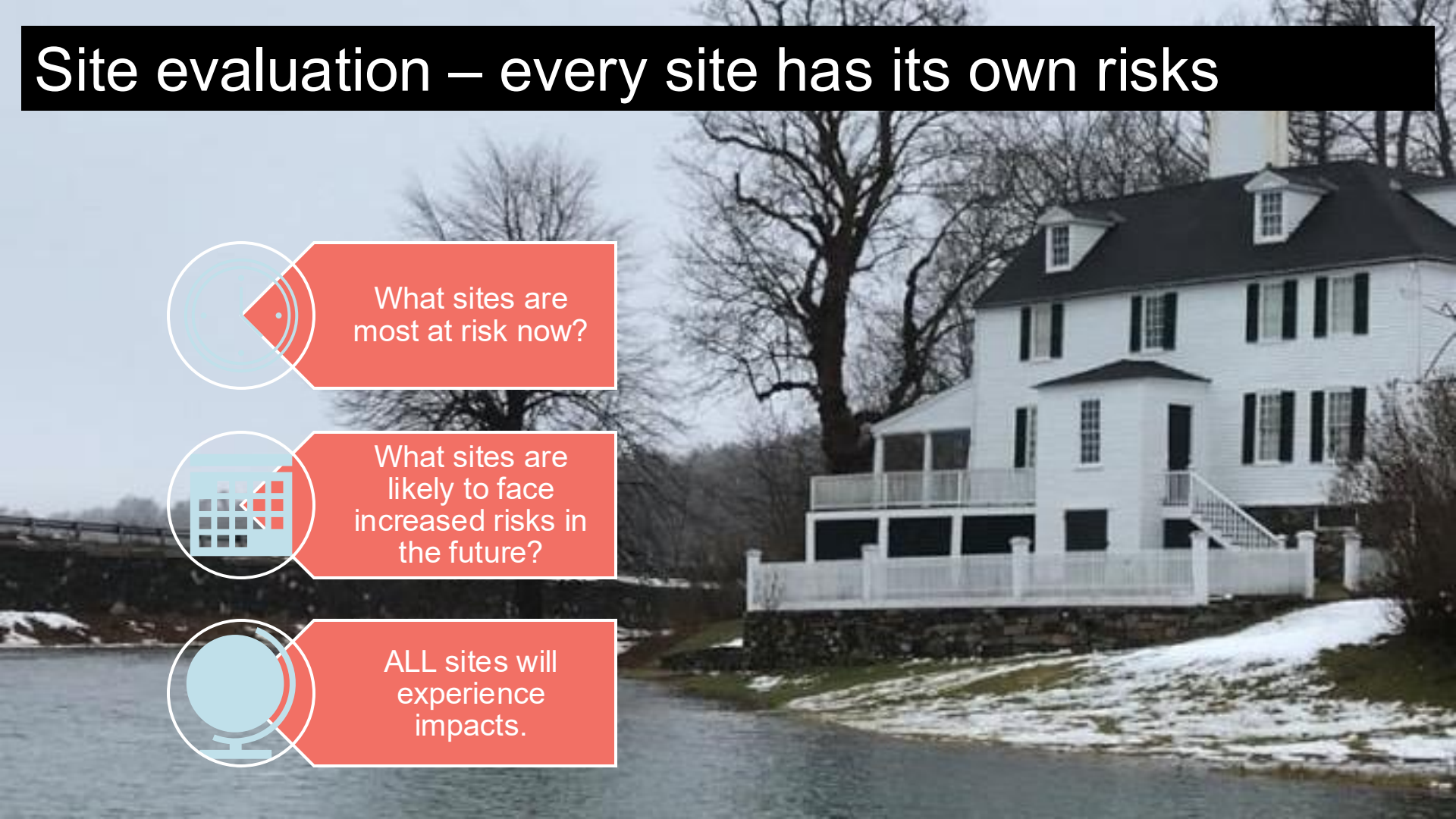

# Emissions

Every site has a unique energy footprint.

HistoricNewEngland.org

HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND

# Site evaluation – every site has its own risks

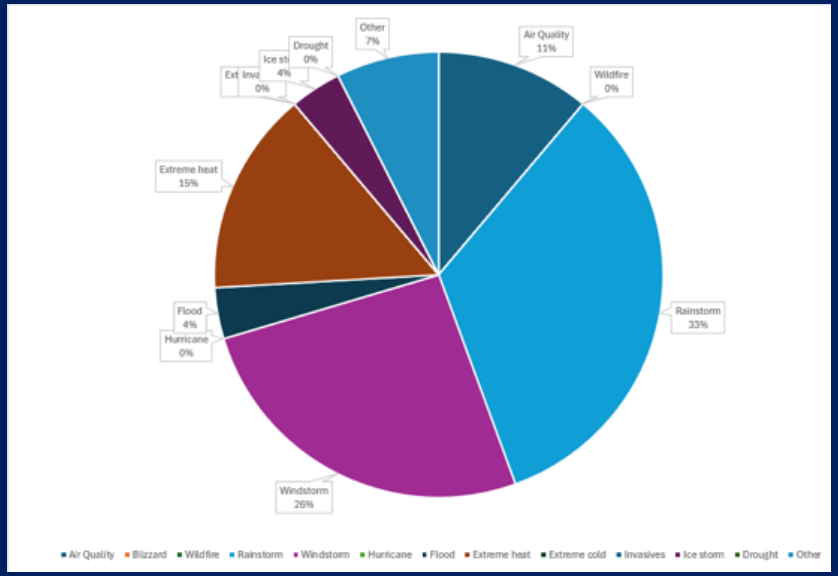


What sites are most at risk now?

What sites are likely to face increased risks in the future?

ALL sites will experience impacts.

| B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ard | Wildfire | Rainsto | Windstorm | Hurricane | Flood | Extreme heat | Extreme ( | Invas |
| 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Property | | | | Event Information | | | | |
| Code | Town | State | Region | Event Date | Event Type | Precipitation Type | Precipitation Amount | Wi |
| | Gloucester | MA | North Shore | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.37 | |
| | Essex | MA | North Shore | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.37 | |
| | Waltham | MA | Metro Boste | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.37 | |
| | Waltham | MA | Metro Boste | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.37 | |
| | Saugus | MA | North Shore | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.37 | |
| | South Berwick | ME | Northern N | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.47 | |
| | South Berwick | ME | Northern N | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.47 | |
| | South Berwick | ME | Northern N | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.47 | |
| | York | ME | Northern N | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.47 | |
| | York | ME | Northern N | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.47 | |
| | South Berwick | ME | Northern N | 1/10/2024 | Rainstorm | Rain | 2.47 | |

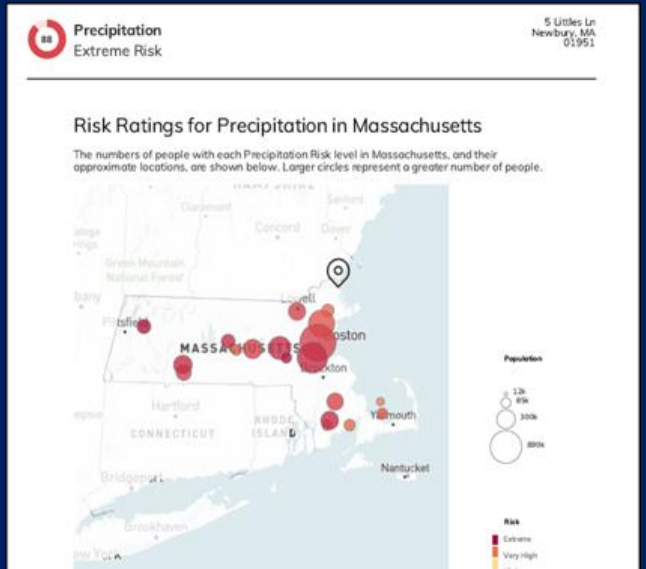



# What is happening on the ground right now?

# Resilience & Risk Assessment

What is likely to happen in the future?

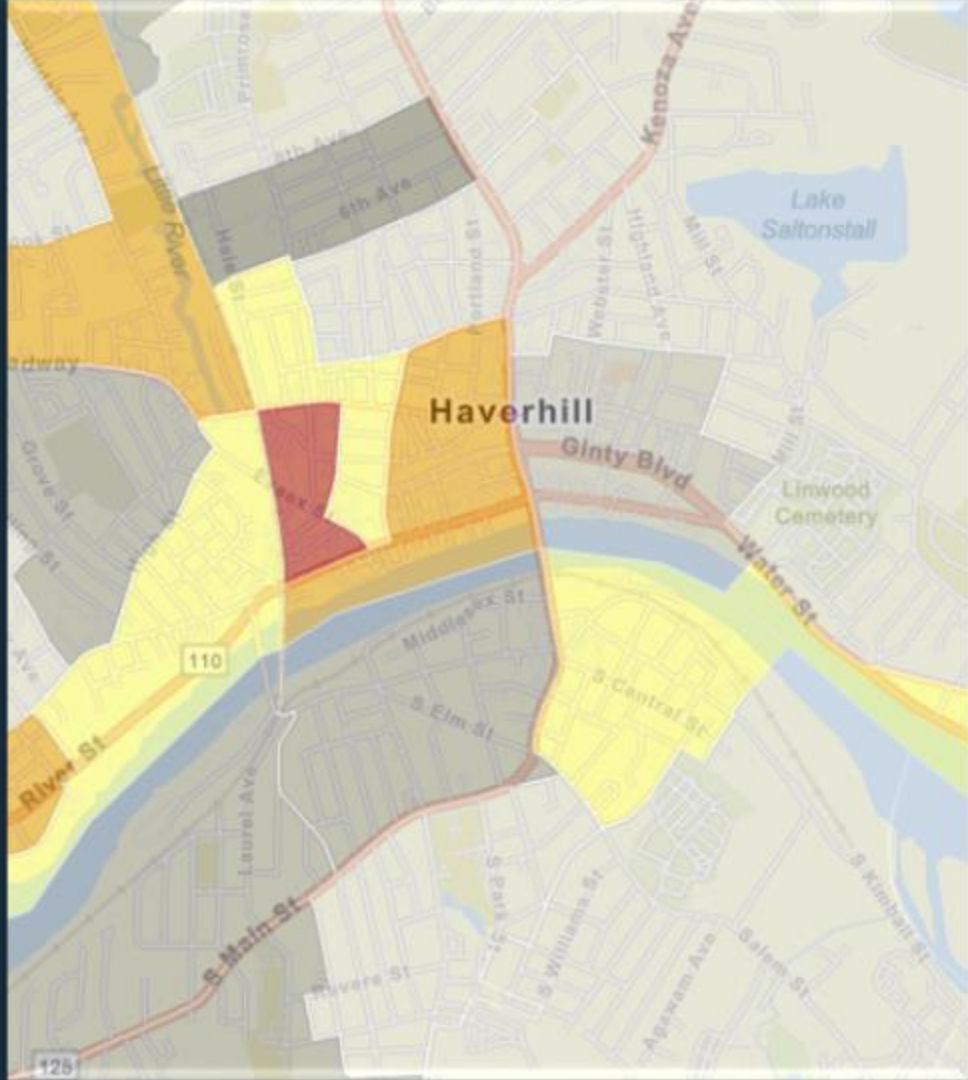
| Impact | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Precipitation | Flood | Heat | Drought |
| Extreme | Relatively low | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Extreme | High | Significant |
| Extreme | High | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Relatively low | High | Significant |
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| Extreme | Relatively low | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Extreme | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Very high | Very high | Significant |
| Extreme | Extreme | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Relatively low | High | Significant |
| Extreme | High | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Relatively low | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Extreme | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Relatively low | Significant | Significant |
| Very high | Very high | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Extreme | High | Significant |
| Extreme | Relatively low | High | |
| Extreme | Extreme | | |
| Extreme | Relatively low | | |
| Extreme | Extreme | | |
| Extreme | Relatively low | | |
| Extreme | Relatively low | | |
| Extreme | Relatively low | | |



- 41 communities
- 41 histories
- Site managers build relationships
- Create connection that works in that community
- Build connection for future engagement

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Climate Justice



# Integration

Enacting operational shifts that integrate climate action into the day-to-day operations of Historic New England.



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| | |
|---|---|
| ***Every job is a climate job!*** | Empower staff to make sustainable decisions |
| **Climate Action Staff Advisory Group:** | *Foster cross team climate action planning, share team resources* |
| **Site specific Climate Action Plans** | |

# Integration at work

# Site Specific Climate Action Planning: Lessons learned

- Pierce House – Dorchester, MA
  - High heat policy
- Sayward-Wheeler – York, ME
  - Nature based solutions
- Jackson House – Portsmouth, NH
  - Shoreline monitoring
- Casey Farm – Saunderstown, RI
  - Sustainable purchasing









# Summary

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- Data gathering is essential – every site is unique
- Lessons learned go both ways
- Community engagement is an ongoing process
- Empower staff in decision making

# Learn more…

Joie Granbois, Director of Sustainability

jgrandbois@historicnewengland.org

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HistoricNewEngland.org



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# MISSION

The Henry Ford provides unique educational experiences based on authentic objects, stories, and lives from America's traditions of ingenuity, resourcefulness and innovation. Our purpose is to inspire people to learn from these traditions to help shape a better future.

NOTE: THF's *The Journey to 100* 2023 goal: "Solidify our commitment through refinement of a multiyear plan, and a 2029 goal that "Environmental sustainability will be embedded in our culture, operations, and programming as a model for our industry.




2025: Cultivate environmental responsibility
2026: Cultivate environmental stewardship

# WHERE IS THE HENRY FORD?



*Windsor, Canada / Detroit River (strait) / Detroit, MichiganPhotograph by Debra A. Reid a fluid border*

# BUILDING THE EDISON INSTITUTE 1929

DBA
The Henry Ford



# PRECEDENT/ MOTIVATION

# FORD: NO WASTE



*Henry Ford and Edsel Ford at FordRouge Plant, 1933*







# Green Team

Began as part of the Institutional Responsibility Committee (May 2019). Goals: to reduce carbon footprint, reuse things when possible, and recycle both waste and energy. Tied to DEAI initiative pursuing social responsibility.

**GREEN MUSEUMS…"THE BEST EXAMPLE OF MUSEUMS AS COMMUNITY PARTNERS" --** Brophy & Wylie, *The Green Museum*, pg. 1

Chartered as Environmental Focus Group (May 2021)

- Goal to reduce The Henry Ford's carbon footprint (environmental impact)
- Subcommittees focused on three priorities: Benchmarking, Recycling, Composting





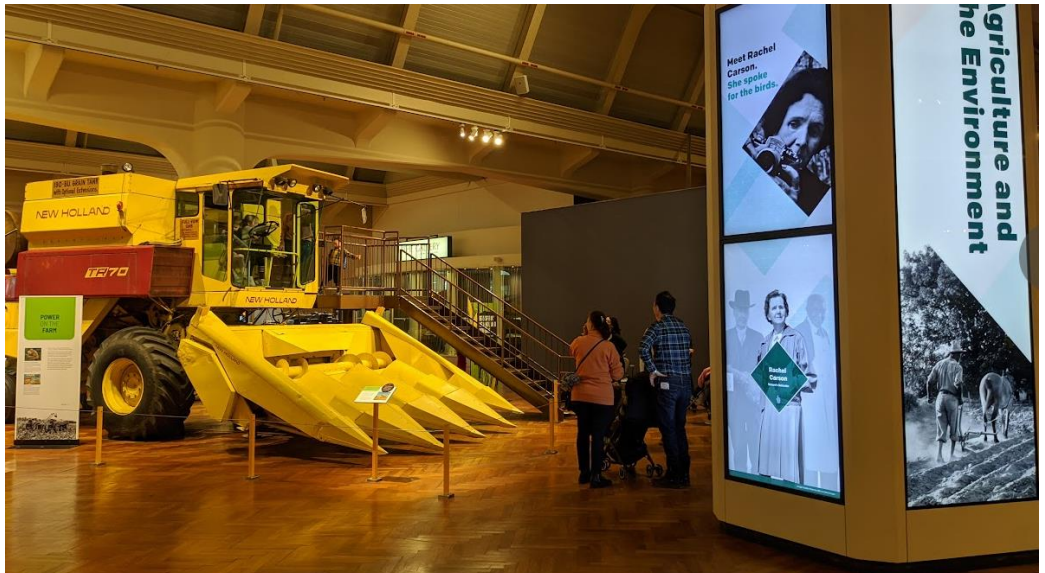
# BUILD STAFF SUPPORT & INCLUSION

Communicate:

- Regular meetings
- Staff newsletter
- Learning lunches
- Presentation at all-staff
- Engagement w/ organizations (AASLH's Climate & Sustainability; ICOM-SUSTAIN










# BUILD A CLASSROOM FOR CLIMATE ACTION







LEED certified new construction
Green Restaurant 4-Star certification
(highest possible rating)

# CURATOR = CREATE CONTENT

Collect / Preserve
Analyze / Interpret
Create new understanding

Sutton: proxy data over millennia
Reid: Environmental history (science, culture, arts) but all museums face global warming and have a platform for Climate Action







- Brophy, Sarah S. and Elizabeth Wylie. *The Green Museum: A Primer in Environmental Practice* (2008; 2nd ed., 2013)
- Sutton, Sarah. *The Arts and Humanities on Environmental and Climate Change: Broadening Approaches to Research and Public Engagement* (2023).
- McNeill, J and P. Engelke. *The Great Acceleration: An Environmental History of the Anthropocene since 1945* (2014).
- *ICOM Award for Sustainable Practice in Museums* (2025)
- Garthe, Christopher J. *The Sustainable Museum: How Museums Contribute to the Great Transformation* (2023).
- Reid, Debra and David Vail, *Interpreting the Environment at Museums and Historic Sites* (2017).
- Reid, Debra, Karen-Beth Scholthof, David Vail, eds. *Interpreting Science at Museums and Historic Sites* (2023).
- Zalasiewicz, Jan, Julia Adeney Thomas and Mark Williams. *The Anthropocene: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (2020).

# Questions?

# Takeaways

*By the end of this session, you should be able to say:*

1. Climate action becomes an institutional priority through both top-down mandates and bottom-up advocacy — know which lever to pull.

2. Executives, sustainability staff, and curators each shape climate decisions differently — identify who holds the influence you need.

3. Leave with one strategy to advance climate action within your own governance and decision-making structure.

PHIPPS Duke Farms

# Thank You


- Rebekah Beaulieu, Ph.D. | Becky@taftmuseum.org
- Joie Grandbois | JGrandbois@historicnewengland.org
- Stephanie Shapiro | Stephanie@ecprs.org
- Debra A. Reid | Debra@thehenryford.org