

St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre

1

Strategic Plan

2015-2020



Prepared by: The City of St. Catharines Historical Services Section –
Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Strategic Plan Methodology Outline	3
3	St Catharines Museum Historical Context	4
4	Where We Are Today	7
5	Vision and Mission	15
6	Goals	16
7	Objectives	18
8	St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre: Branding Considerations	19
9	Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting	25
10	In Closing	26
	Appendix A: Strategic Plan Summary	27
	Appendix B: Implementation Plan	31



The St. Catharines Museum's award winning aMUSE pop-up museum program

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1 Introduction

In 2014, the St. Catharines Museum retained a team that included consultants from Golder Associates Ltd., TCI Management Consultants, Maltby & Associates Inc. and Letourneau Heritage Consulting Inc., to facilitate the development of a Strategic Plan.



View down St. Paul Street looking from James Street c.1877
(1976.177.2)

The goal of this plan is to develop a clear vision and to set objectives and priorities reflecting the Museum's needs, assets, constraints, and ambitions over a 5-year period.

Museums are complex cultural institutions that are continuously evolving to meet the needs and expectations of their visitors, patrons and communities. Changes in demographics, audience, technology, regulations and expectations mean that a museum must be a vibrant and active community institution. A museum should be more than a "community attic" that collects stories, stores and displays historical artifacts from a community's past. They are expected to play a role in community building, life-long learning, entertainment and economic development. Museums can help shape community identity and address social issues through the artifacts and stories they hold; they can be civic spaces and can serve as a resource for the communities they serve.

Museums that engage in a thorough and transparent strategic planning process can expect: shared vision of the museum's future, a common understanding of the museum's mission, agreement on major goals and how to realize them and consensus on how to measure the achievement of the goals.¹ The St. Catharines Museum has engaged in a thorough strategic planning process including an analysis of the current operations at the museum; a scan of current museum best practices; and community and stakeholder consultation.

¹ Dexter Lord, Gail, and Kate Market. 2007. *The Manual of Strategic Planning for Museums*. Toronto: Altamira Press. 4.



The Welland House – Corner of King and Ontario Street (1105-N)

This process has identified strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges facing the Museum and has allowed the Museum to develop the vision, mission, goals and objectives articulated in this plan.

This plan sets out a roadmap forward to take the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre into the next five years and provides measureable benchmarks to keep the plan and the Museum's operations on track.

These Strategic Directions plan for leadership and excellence in all aspects of the Museum's activities and create a positive framework for action for the next five years.

For more information on the plan and to discuss collaboration opportunities, please contact:

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2 Strategic Plan Methodology Outline

The Strategic Planning process for the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre was divided into three phases in order to gain a detailed understanding of the museum. The process involved the creation of two assessment reports and this strategic plan. The first two reports consisted of an Environmental Scan of the Museum and an Engagement Report. Visits to the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre took place on June 6, 2014; July 7 and 8, 2014; and August 12 to 14, 2014.

Environmental Scan Report

The Environmental Scan of the museum included a review of museum planning documents, policy and history. Some of the documents reviewed included *The Garden City Plan* (Official Plan of St. Catharines), *St. Catharines Tourism Strategy*, *City of St. Catharines Economic Development Strategy*, *Tending the Garden City* (Sustainability Strategy), *Inspire St. Catharines: Culture Plan 2020*, and the *Recreation Facility & Programming Master Plan* (Draft). Document review also included examination of By-Laws 2009-154 and 2010-260 the museum operations by-laws, the 2008-2012 Museum Strategic Plan and all museum policies. The scan included site visits to examine the facility, exhibits, collections and comparable museums in the surrounding area. This included visits to The St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre and Morningstar Mill to assess City of St. Catharines Museums.

Several museums in the surrounding area were visited to compare and assess the St. Catharines Museum against other museums, including Niagara Falls Museums, Niagara Historical Society Museum, Jordan Historical Museum, Battlefield House Museum, the Waterloo Regional Museum, and the Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives. This report was intended as an independent assessment of the state of the Museum.

Engagement Report

The second phase of this project involved conducting interviews and surveys with museum personnel, volunteers, stakeholders and members of the public. This phase of the project built on the Environmental Scan but was intended as an assessment of the Museum from the perspective of people who are involved with it. This phase of the project allowed for a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of the museum.

Ultimately the aim of the first two phases of this project was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the site and initial prioritization of next steps to guide the strategic plan development.

Strategic Plan

Development of the Strategic Plan involved developing a new vision, mission, goals and objectives for the museum. A retreat was held on February 22, 2015 with members of the Museum Advisory Committee, Museum Staff and the consultant team to develop initial ideas for a vision, mission, goals and objectives based on the findings of the Environmental Scan and Engagement Reports.

The results of the retreat were collected and were used to inform the creation of this strategic plan. First a vision and mission were developed, followed by the creation of goals and finally the development of objectives under each goal along with action items for achieving the objectives.

3 St Catharines Museum Historical Context

3.1 ST. CATHARINES HISTORY

The Region of Niagara, and what is now the City of St. Catharines, was first occupied 11,000 years ago by indigenous people. Before 1845, St. Catharines had no established boundaries as it had no formal status; the site of present-day St. Catharines was initially a single community among several in Grantham Township.

The lots and concessions of Grantham Township were surveyed in the late 1780s as part of a program to provide land to refugee Loyalists and discharged soldiers after the American Revolutionary War. The site of current-day St. Catharines was settled by three thousand United Empire Loyalists and by 1796–1797 the Village of St. Catharines was established. The village remained small until the 1820s when construction of the First Welland Canal caused significant population growth in the area. As the Village of St. Catharines grew, citizens began to want formal recognition as a town. In 1845, when the population of the village was approximately three thousand five hundred and a railway connected St. Catharines to Port Colborne and Hamilton, the town was formally incorporated.

Following incorporation, the town was separated into four wards and was administered by a Board of Police. This structure was replaced by a mayor and council in 1849. In 1854, St. Catharines was expanded by government proclamation. The Town's limits expanded again in 1876 when a second annexation increased the population of St. Catharines from ten thousand to almost thirteen thousand. The town incorporated as a city on May 1, 1876.



St. Paul Street c.1885 (1028-N)

After 1876, there was a long period of stability in St. Catharines. The manufacturing industry became increasingly important in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and helped to grow the industrial and urban landscape in the northern part of the city. In 1946, expansion resumed and pieces of Grantham Township were annexed until the last of the township was absorbed by the City of St. Catharines in 1961. The post-war years and the proliferation of the automobile brought dramatic changes to the urban form of St. Catharines and the city began to spread its boundaries. The Province of Ontario, in



Shickluna's Shipyard in 1864 (1066-N)

1970, implemented a regional approach to deal with planning issues and the City once again expanded, this time westwards into the rural lands of Louth Township.

Today St. Catharines is the largest municipality in the Niagara region and is known as “The Garden City” for its parks, gardens and trails. It has an advantageous location on the QEW/Highway 406 corridor where it is close to the both Canada/USA border and the Greater Toronto Area. The Niagara Region, in particular, is a known tourism area with numerous attractions. The city is, itself, home to over 30% of the population of the Niagara Region, and is experiencing changing demographic and economic conditions as the city evolves in the 21st century from a manufacturing base into more service industries.

3.2 ST. CATHARINES MUSEUM

The origins of the St. Catharines Museum are tied to several attempts by the community to collect and preserve St. Catharines' material history. The Historical Society of St. Catharines began collecting material shortly after its formal establishment in 1927. The society met at the Public Library and used a basement room at the library for storage of this growing collection. In 1959, the society put on an exhibit of "antiques, heirlooms, and art treasures" with the St. Catharines and District Chamber of Commerce at which time the society began a concerted effort at collecting. The society began taking a standardized approach to collecting and records management in the 1960s. Dr. Edwin Bonako served as the society curator at the time and first advocated for the creation of a museum. The historical society moved to the Rodman Hall Arts Centre when it opened in 1960 and on to the former Merritton Town Hall in 1965. A Museum Board of Management for the St. Catharines Museum was established in 1965 with the purpose to "display the way of life and history of the original settlers of the area". The museum officially opened on June 4, 1967, and the core of the collection consisted of material loaned from the Society. The St. Catharines Historical Society remained a separate entity and continued to both collect materials and maintain its own collection. In 1984, the Society transferred all loaned artifacts to the museum as a donation.

In 1987 the City of St. Catharines decided to build a new facility at the location of the lock 3 viewing platform which had been in its present location since 1965 and was already an important tourist attraction in the region. The museum in the new Welland Canals Centre was officially opened in 1991. A new wing was added to house the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum, in 1998. In December 2004 the operations of the St. Catharines Museum were transferred from the Museum Board to the City of St. Catharines and



Photographic postcard of the Merritton Town Hall (2006.77.890)

the Museum Board was reconstituted as an advisory committee. The Museum, in 2005, opened an interpretive centre and outdoor Discovery Park.

4 Where We Are Today

Museums play a critical role in shaping and defining the character and identity of a community. The St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre contributes to the cultural economy of St. Catharines and provides valuable services to community members, visitors and patrons.

This strategic planning process has allowed the Museum to establish a strengthened sense of purpose and goals to achieve its full potential.

This section presents an overview of the St. Catharines Museum's key functions, administration and current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

4.1 CURRENT SITUATION

Located on Welland Canals Parkway, the St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre currently serves as a multi-use site. Known by many different names, it is located on grounds leased from the St. Lawrence Seaway Corporation. The site of the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre includes the Discovery Park, the observation deck for Lock 3 of the Welland Canal; a gift shop catering to museum patrons and general visitors to the site; offices for City of St. Catharines Cultural Services staff; a small tourist information centre; rental spaces; the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum; and the St. Catharines Museum.

The St. Catharines Museum holds a large collection of artifact, archival and artistic materials related to the history of St. Catharines and the Welland Canals. The museum exhibits the history of St. Catharines through its permanent galleries and feature exhibitions,



St. Catharines Museum gallery – Welland Canals Exhibition.

and offers a myriad of public programming opportunities including educational programming and special events. The current Statement of Purpose of the museum is to collect, preserve, research, exhibit and interpret artifacts and archival records, along with their associated information relative to the history of St. Catharines and the Welland Canals for the education and enjoyment of the public.

4.2 ST. CATHARINES MUSEUM STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The role of museums in today's society is changing. Knowledge of fundraising, marketing, community engagement and education are increasingly essential to overall museum operations. Traditional museum tasks including collections management and public programming and exhibition development have become more sophisticated. Responding to the changing contexts of museums and the expectations of visitors requires a shift from an artifact-focus to a narrative-based-focus with an emphasis on visitor experience and creative engagement. Provincial legislation and policy and municipal policy have implications for the operation and management of museums in Ontario. Strategic plans help museums navigate these changes and allocate resources accordingly.

The strategic planning process for the St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre has been divided into three phases. The first two phases, consisting of an Environmental Scan Report and an Engagement Report, were designed to gain a better understanding of the governance structure, public and staff perceptions, and site conditions of the museum. The final phase is this Strategic Plan.

4.2.1 Background Reports

4.2.1.1 The Environmental Scan Report

The Environmental Scan Report involved documenting the museum's context, policy review and site visits to ascertain and document general conditions and issues at the Museum. It examined broad trends in museums; implications of provincial and municipal policies; demographic conditions in St. Catharines and examined the current state of the museum. Implications for the Museum were articulated in 19 specific issues that the museum will have to address through this strategic plan (some of these issues have now been addressed).

The 19 issues identified in the Environmental Scan included:

- 1) The role and function of the Museum Advisory Committee;
- 2) The role and function of Council;
- 3) The nature of the relationship with Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum;
- 4) The need for exhibit renewal;
- 5) The need for policy renewal
- 6) The need for better site integration.
- 7) The current proliferation of staff responsibilities;
- 8) The existing mandate which places an emphasis on increasing earned revenue;
- 9) The future of the second floor space;
- 10) The need for enhanced programming;
- 11) Brand confusion/public perception of the St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre;
- 12) The lack of public transit to the site;
- 13) The coordination of museum staff with other City departments;
- 14) Maintenance/building Issues;
- 15) The future of the membership program;
- 16) The need to develop opportunities for more partnerships;
- 17) The scope and nature of the site's educational activities;
- 18) The issue of storage and whether the site should serve as the official municipal historical archives; and,
- 19) The nature of the lease with the St Lawrence Seaway Corporation.

The Environmental Scan also identified significant strengths at the St. Catharines Museum including:

- 1) Museum personnel;
- 2) Curatorial facilities;
- 3) The museum's location at Lock 3;
- 4) The museum's collection;
- 5) Existing partnerships; and,
- 6) The museum's position within the City of St. Catharines.



Brand confusion and public perception of the St. Catharines Museum in the community



Organized yet full collections storage areas



Museum signs are not easily seen from the approaches

4.2.1.2 The Engagement Report

The Engagement Report involved a public survey and consultation with the Museum Advisory Committee, City of St. Catharines senior management, key stakeholders, museum personnel and museum volunteers.

The findings of this report supported the findings of the Environmental Scan Report and identified four more issues facing the Museum, including:

- 1) Internal communication and greater cooperation;
- 2) More strategic approach to training;
- 3) Fundraising, who is responsible and what fundraising should involve; and,
- 4) Use of technology.

4.2.1.3 Background Reports Summary

These reports revealed many strengths and weaknesses, potential opportunities, and threats that the Museum faces and offered ideas on developing the Museum for the future.

External to the museum, the reports identified opportunities around developing partnerships with other organizations and a renewed commitment from the city, to cultural heritage, sustainability and recreational and tourism activities. The museum has the potential to build relationships with many stakeholders and leverage its relationship with the city into new public engagement opportunities. However the region is seeing limited population growth with some areas in decline, as well as an aging population. There are threats related to issues with access to the site, community awareness and indifferent or negative perceptions of the museum.

The museum has significant strengths including its highly qualified, enthusiastic and friendly staff; the curatorial facilities; location at Lock 3; the collection; existing partnerships; and it's positioning within the

City of St. Catharines. The Museum plays an important community role in St. Catharines. However, the Museum also has outdated and cluttered galleries, facility deficiencies such as a lack of space for collections storage, and the need for aesthetic improvements, there are personnel issues, and the museum needs to work towards greater awareness in the community.

Stakeholders, volunteers, museum personnel and visitors want a future St. Catharines Museum that has a strong presence in the community and delivers engaging programming and exhibits.

4.2.2 Strategic Plan Process

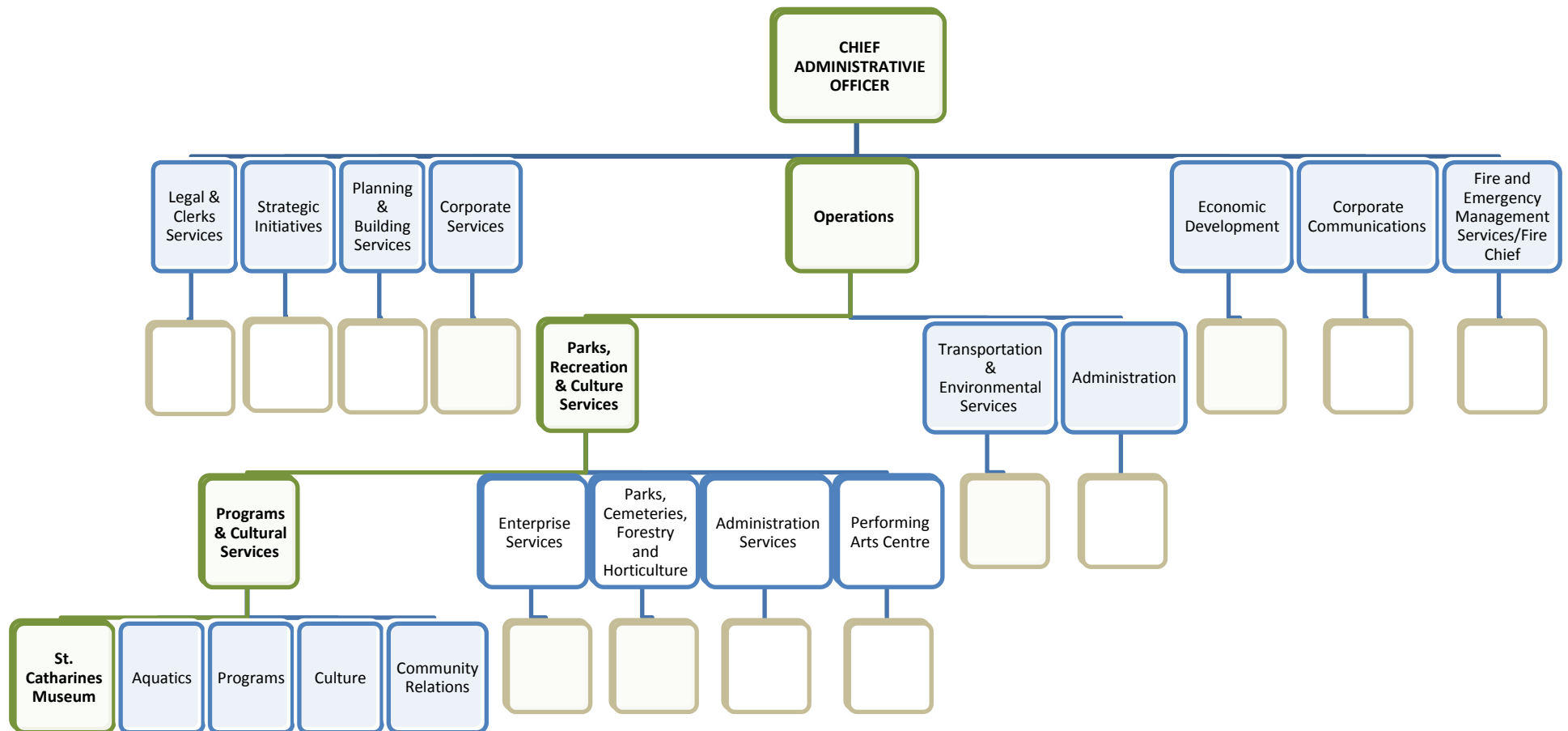
On February 22, 2015 a retreat was held with members of the Museum Advisory Committee, Museum Volunteers, Museum Management and Museum Staff to develop preliminary ideas for this strategic plan. The retreat was based on the findings of the Environmental Scan and Engagement reports.

Based on the SWOT analysis in the Engagement Report the retreat focused on developing preliminary ideas for a Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. Following the retreat, ongoing discussion between Museum personnel and the consultant team worked to refine the Vision and Mission statements with the Museum ultimately creating the statements in this plan.

Goal and Objective ideas from the retreat were classified into general categories and refined into the five goals articulated in this plan. Museum personnel then took recommendations from the background reports and objectives from the retreat and created objectives and action items under each goal.

4.3 ST. CATHARINES MUSEUM MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

4.3.1 St. Catharines Organization



4.3.2 St. Catharines Museum Organization

The St. Catharines Museum is a unit in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department. Responsibility for the museum is under the auspices of a Supervisor of Historical Services/Curator. Further responsibilities are divided among a Historical Services Coordinator; a Collections Coordinator and a Visitor Services Coordinator (who oversees programming staff, exhibit design, custodial staff, and visitor services staff.). Various members of the Museum's staff are responsible for supervision of volunteers.

The museum reports to a Museum Advisory Committee which in turn reports to the Cultural Sustainability Committee, which reports to City Council. Ultimately City Council acts as the steward for the Museum's collection in the public trust. Council is responsible for ensuring that the collections are properly managed and that adequate resources (financial and otherwise) are allocated for their care and management. The Museum Advisory Committee also serves as the Museum's Accessions Committee.

4.3.3 Museum within the Municipal Context

The St. Catharines Museum Strategic Plan is positioned within this local context and reflects the values of the city of which the museum is a part. The values and the vision of the City of St. Catharines are illustrated through plans the City develops and several of the City's plans and strategies impact and shape the operations of the St. Catharines Museum.

Garden City Plan

The *Garden City Plan* is the Official Plan for the City of St. Catharines. This plan addresses land use planning and resource management and includes general heritage conservation policies on heritage resources within the city, demonstrating a commitment to the City's heritage and must be taken into account when addressing

future development or redevelopment at the museum site. This plan also addresses archaeological potential around the Welland Canals. The *Garden City Plan* articulates a vision and guiding principles for the City of St. Catharines which states:

St. Catharines – The “Garden City” – A Welcoming and Nurturing Community that:

- *Is safe and secure*
- *Thrives through innovative leadership and integrity*
- *Stimulates and values a vibrant Downtown – the heart of the City*
- *Embraces its culture and the diversity of its citizens*
- *Celebrates its unique agricultural and historical assets*
- *Works together to foster new business and employment opportunities*
- *Promotes a healthy environment and ideal location*

St. Catharines Tourism Strategy

The *St. Catharines Tourism Strategy* gives direction to the public and private sector in St. Catharines to grow its visitor appeal and economic base. The vision outlined in this document is as follows:

As a sophisticated regional centre with unique cultural and heritage attractions, St. Catharines will be an integral part of the broader destination of Niagara with year round attractions, strong tourist interest, strong leadership, and a viable and sustainable tourism industry.

This document also identifies the Welland Canal and Lock 3 complex as an integral strength to the community.

City of St. Catharines Economic Development Strategy

The City's Economic Development Strategy identifies the need for community revitalizations within the downtown including in arts, cultural and heritage activities.



Green Roof at the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre

Tending the Garden City

The St. Catharines Sustainability Strategy *Tending the Garden City* adopted the four pillars of sustainability approach for the city of St. Catharines. This approach identifies culture as one of the four pillars and the “glue” that binds environmental responsibility, economic health and social equity together, providing a sense of shared identity and purpose that is necessary to tackle challenges as a community. This sustainability approach asserts that heritage, creativity and diversity are crucial elements of a sustainable city. The vision of this strategy to guide sustainability initiatives is “a sustainable community works together to take on the challenges ahead.”

Inspire St. Catharines: Culture Plan 2020

The St. Catharines Culture Plan *Inspire St. Catharines* contains a vision and seven priorities for culture in the city. The vision states:

The City of St. Catharines boasts a dynamic and robust cultural sector, and values the arts, heritage and culture as essential to community building and sustainability. St. Catharines supports and promotes culture to enrich the lives of its residents, attract new people and ideas, bolster economic development and social inclusion and celebrate its unique identity. The City will nurture, support and celebrate St. Catharines distinct identity, creativity and diversity through the promotion and advancement of a wide range of cultural activities, events, facilities, programs and services that serve all citizens of St. Catharines regardless of age, ethnicity or income.

The priorities for this plan are:

- *Communicate the experiences and value of culture to St. Catharines’ residents.*
- *Foster participation in arts, heritage and cultural experiences.*
- *Cultivate the growth and development of the creative sector.*
- *Further develop the planning, management and coordination of heritage assets and historical services.*
- *Recognize and embrace the city’s cultural diversity as a cornerstone for civic engagement.*
- *Leverage culture to strengthen St. Catharines’ distinct sense of place and community.*
- *Foster the cross-departmental management and delivery of arts and heritage service delivery, planning and community development.*

Recreation Facility & Programming Master Plan (Draft February 2015)

The *Recreation Facility & Programming Master Plan* for the City of St. Catharines will guide the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department in providing services to residents of St. Catharines. The vision for this plan "*The City Where Everybody Can Play*" highlights the City's commitment to providing recreational opportunities for everyone. The plan is guided by ten principles:

- *Building a Healthy Community*
- *Making Recreation Accessible for All*
- *Investing in Opportunities for Youth*
- *Enhancing Opportunities for Older Adults*
- *Embracing the Natural Environment*
- *Providing the Necessary Infrastructure*
- *Supporting Our Volunteers*
- *Encouraging Positive Partnerships and Alliances*
- *Efficient and Effective Service Delivery*
- *Sustainable Investments in Recreation Infrastructure*

These plans demonstrate a commitment on behalf of the City of St. Catharines to support, celebrate and embrace the city's cultural heritage and historical assets. Culture and heritage are identified as assets and crucial elements of the city. These plans present opportunities for the St. Catharines Museum to engage with other initiatives being carried out by the City that also highlight the community's cultural heritage. All these plans contribute towards supporting City visions and goals surrounding the promotion and preservations of cultural heritage.



Doing Our Bit: World War I from St. Catharines to the Western Front – exhibition detail

5 Vision and Mission

A vision statement aspires to what a museum will do or be. A mission statement states the purpose of the museum. The mission is how the museum acts day-to-day to achieve the vision. These two statements form the foundation that all other museum work is built on.

The St. Catharines Museum as a part of the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines, ultimately and operates under the overall Corporation's Vision and Guiding Principles. This Strategic Plan articulates a vision and mission for the Museum which is complimentary and supportive of the City's broader governing documents.

5.1 ST. CATHARINES MUSEUM VISION AND MISSION

Vision

The St. Catharines Museum will be a leading local history museum and community gathering place, engaging our visitors and building relationships with partners. We will encourage sustainability, demonstrate curatorial leadership and deliver innovative programming and exhibits.

Mission

The St. Catharines Museum is dedicated to engaging our visitors, telling the story of the city through artifacts, and preserving, sharing and celebrating the cultural identity and history of the city; we are a community resource that interprets, exhibits, researches, acquires and preserves material culture and stories of St. Catharines.

6 Goals

Governance

We will support excellence in Museum governance. We will continually seek to improve our governance through engagement with the Museum Advisory Committee, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department, the City of St. Catharines as well as other city departments and City Council.

We are committed to being efficient, effective, accountable and responsive in all aspects of our operations. We will support municipal planning efforts to the best of our abilities.

Leadership

We will develop strength and resilience in institutional management and demonstrate effective and inclusive leadership. We will strive to be museum leaders through our innovation, long term planning and continuous improvement.

We will strengthen and support the Museum's team, and position the museum to best meet our goals and objectives.

Engagement

We will enhance engagement by connecting and working with our audience, stakeholders, museum personnel, volunteers and the broader community to meet their needs and expectations.

We will actively cultivate our relationships with external groups and community members, and develop innovative methods of engaging the public.



Left to Right: Sir Frederick Benson c. 1875 (1556-N); H.B. Burgoyne c. 1903 (2198-N); Three girls making sand castles at the beach (1198-N); Two women in the gazebo at Montebello Park (detail) (1290-N)

Stewardship

We will prioritize collections and research work in support of the Museum's vision and mission. We will support engagement by the documentation, preservation and presentation of the City's material culture; the preservation of artifacts, archival materials and stories of St. Catharines; and by providing greater access to this resource for researchers and citizens.

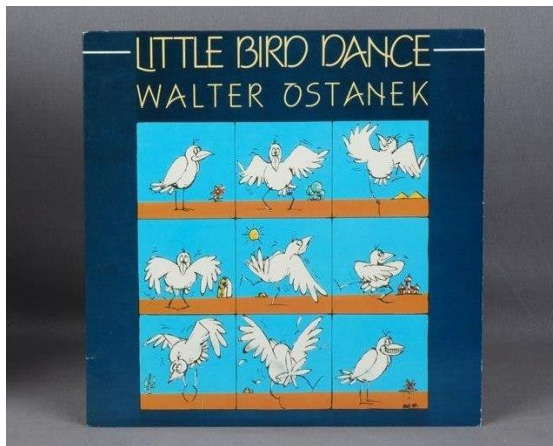
We will enrich the community understanding of St. Catharines' history through engagement and collaboration with the research and professional community.

We will work towards sustainability, developing sustainable initiatives to meet our current needs without compromising our ability to meet future needs. We will support municipal sustainability initiatives.

Experience

We will provide an experience that is seamless, integrated, relevant and captivating. Enriching and improving the museum visitor experience will be central in all museum activities.

We will continue to build on our solid foundation of curatorial work, coupled with innovative programming and interpretation with a view to providing a superior visitor experience.



Left to Right: Little Bird Dance vinyl record album and cover (1984.257.7); Girl Guide costumed dolls (2006.101); Accordion owned by Walter Ostanek (1984.257.9)

7 Objectives

The Museum has developed specific objectives based on each goal. The goals and associated objectives are listed here. An implementation plan that assigns actions, responsibilities and timelines is included as **Appendix B**, and will be updated annually by the Museum.

Goal	Objectives
1. Governance	1.1 Policy and plan review and renewal 1.2 Strengthen the Museum's relationship with City Council and the Corporation 1.3 Address the relationship with the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum
2. Leadership	2.1 Strengthen the skills of staff through management support and targeted professional development 2.2 Continue to develop and strengthen the Museum's volunteer programs
3. Engagement	3.1 Develop methods for encouraging regular community feedback 3.2 Make the collections more available in the community 3.3 Revitalize the Museum's membership program 3.4 Increase and enhance the Museum's virtual presence in all aspects of operations 3.5 Develop and Implement a new Museum and Welland Canals Centre identity and brand
4. Stewardship	4.1 Investigate options to address current and future collections storage needs 4.2 Continue to strengthen the Museum's collections management program 4.3 Strive for excellence in collections care 4.4 Update collections policies and plans 4.5 Incorporate the concept of sustainability into all Museum initiatives
5. Experience	5.1 Strive for excellence in creating an inviting facility 5.2 Improve and renew Discovery Park 5.3 Enhance the visitor's museum experience through innovative design 5.4 Enhance accessibility

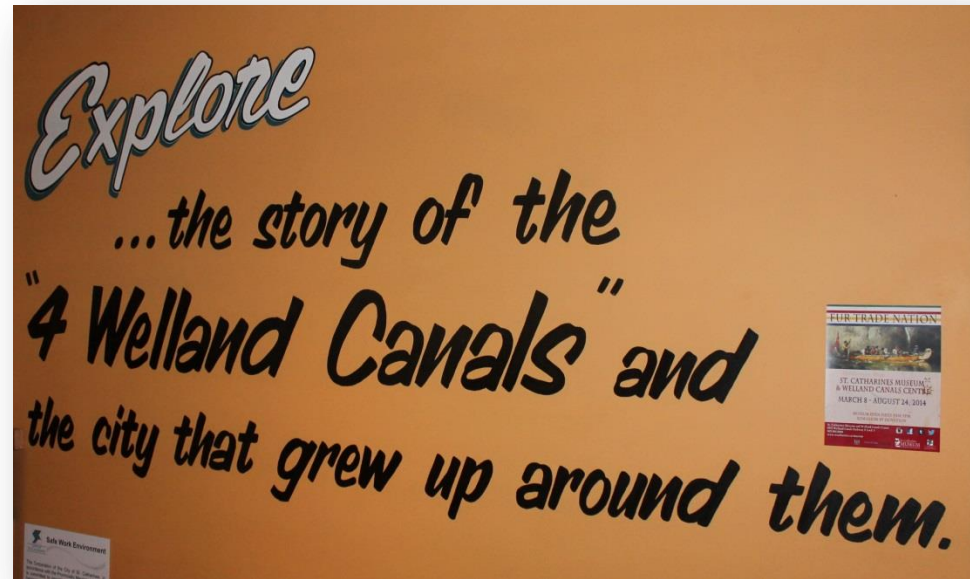
8 St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre: Branding Considerations

8.1 OVERVIEW

The St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre suffers from a branding problem: that is, the fusion of two relatively distinct entities into one enterprise. While the history of the Welland Canals and the history of the City of St. Catharines are inextricably linked to one another, they both represent two stories that unfold in different directions. The inclusive history of the City of St. Catharines has many aspects that are only peripherally related to the Welland Canals, and vice versa. One single identity does not do justice to both, and yet the current brand of “St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre” is a complex mouthful, making it difficult to understand whether the focus of the enterprise is more upon the history of St. Catharines, or the history and operation of the Welland Canals, both large and interesting topics by themselves.

The situation is further complicated by the existence of the Morningstar Mill, which is an entity of the St. Catharines Museum, but removed from the main complex at Lock 3. The focus of interpretation at the Mill is upon the mill operation, and how it related to the early history of the City of St. Catharines (as well as how an early establishment of this type actually operated).

This strategic plan is not the place where this brand conundrum can be resolved (or, of course, where a new identity and logo might be developed), but the assessment presented here can point the route to a potential solution. This analysis considers target audiences for the brand, then considers the brand promise to be made to each. Considerations of brand hierarchy (i.e. whether each museum should have its own prominent identity or whether they all should be



Statement in Museum lobby that illustrates the brand confusion at the Museum.

subsumed under a common St. Catharines Museum brand, or some other configuration) are also reviewed. Related to this, considerations of the appropriate ‘brand personality’ – i.e. the identity of the brand in human terms – are raised. Finally, the next steps towards the development of a repositioned brand identity are outlined.

Also, for the purpose of this assessment, it is assumed that the Lacrosse Hall of Fame, which is located in the Museum for purely expedient reasons and not because it is in any way integral to the history of the City of St. Catharines, is **not** included in any new or re-shaped brand identity.

8.2 TARGET AUDIENCES FOR THE BRAND

There are several target audiences for a museum brand identity: these include:

Local residents: This key audience consists of residents of the municipality and surrounding area, for whom the museum will be the place for connection, engagement and learning about the local community. Long-term residents will visit the Museum to see new exhibits and participate in new events, as well as occasionally to view 'old favorites' in artifacts and displays. They may also bring visiting friends and relatives to see various aspects of the history of the City. New residents to the City of St. Catharines may visit to develop a broader and deeper appreciation of their new home.

School groups: Teachers will use the museum to instruct local classes in various aspects of local history, as well as about broader elements of the school curriculum where this may be appropriate (e.g. scientific and historic aspects of the Welland Canal).

Tourists and visitors: Tourism and visitors will likely be primarily interested in aspects of the Museum that have a broader connection to the world rather than just the history of the City. They are more likely to be interested in the Welland Canals story, for example, or black history, or possibly the operation of the Morningstar Mill. The Welland Canals Centre is well established due to the length of time the viewing platform has existed in the community. Tourists and tourism providers are very familiar with the Welland Canals Centre as a location. A large portion of the visitation to the site is driven by the opportunity afforded to view ships in Lock 3 from the viewing platform.

Events and rentals: Community museums often have another key market to cater to, which is companies, organizations and individuals using the facilities for meetings, event such as weddings and retirement parties, etc. While this can be an important component of use (and revenue generation) it is very much a secondary benefit and not the prime focus for museum activities (or a branding thrust for a community museum).

The brand should convey to all these groups a sense that the Museum is a place where they can experience a multiplicity of offerings.

8.3 BRAND PROMISE TO BE MADE

In any community museum, the brand promise should be an extension of the core purpose of the Museum itself. As expressed in the Vision and Mission, this is very much to ***tell the stories of the City***. In addition, some consideration needs to be made for the major tourism attraction just outside the door.

The brand promise specific to the Museum, then, should directly reflect this positioning. While this is not the place to actually develop a new brand in itself, the kind of positioning that could be appropriate in conveying this brand promise would be something along the lines of:

“St. Catharines Museum: Telling the Unique Stories of Our City”



Scale Model of an 1887 Streetcar from the St. Catharines Street Railway (1986.138.1G)



Label for canned white unpitted cherries produced by the Lincoln Canning Company in St. Catharines. (2006.77.2019)

The expression of the brand in conveying this promise should be that the stories being told have the following characteristics:

- they are unique or at least particular to St. Catharines (and not the same sort of story that is told in any community, anywhere)
- they are interesting and compelling
- they are relevant to both new and long-time residents of the City
- they tell significant aspects of the history of the City and convey an understand about how and why the City grew and developed as it did
- they act to enhance a sense of identity and pride

These characteristics can be conveyed through specific messaging as well as through more subliminal aspects of the brand such as colour, typeface, accompanying images, locations where the brand is seen, etc. These are areas that would be covered in greater detail in a subsequent branding study (which is recommended as a next step).

8.4 BRAND HIERARCHY

The foregoing supports a position where the “St. Catharines Museum” should be the predominant brand identity (rather than the Welland Canals Centre). This is the case for several reasons:

- The core purpose of the Museum is to tell the history of the growth and development of the City of St. Catharines to the residents of St. Catharines (as is the case with any community museum); residents are thus the primary audience for the activities of the enterprise, and the predominant brand identity as the “St. Catharines Museum” will clearly reflect this.
- The Welland Canals Centre name is not specific to the City of St. Catharines and conveys no sense of the attraction as a community museum.
- This brand positioning will make it clear that each of the interpretive domains of the museum (the Welland Canals Centre, Morningstar Mill, potential future areas of interpretation) is one of the ‘stories of St. Catharines’ – one aspect of the history of the growth and development of the community.
- This predominant identity is ‘scalable’: as new interpretive opportunities become available to the City over time (e.g. black history, specific areas such as Port Dalhousie, etc.), they can easily be folded into this brand identity.

A possible positioning for the Museum following from this approach would be for each of the ‘secondary attractions’ to be positioned as ‘one of the stories’ of the City of St. Catharines. This could involve repositioning the Welland Canals Centre to the ‘Welland Canals Story’, and the Morningstar Mill as the ‘Morningstar Mill Story’. The focus on “story” (rather than Centre) emphasizes the narrative element of interpretation and may engender more interest on the part of the potential audience regarding understanding what the story is. (The word “centre” in contrast, can be perceived to be somewhat sterile and academic.)

Specific identities for the various areas of interpretation would then become:

- **St. Catharines Museum: The Welland Canals Story**
- **St. Catharines Museum: The Morningstar Mill Story**

Other aspects of interpretation of the St. Catharines Museum could also be re-positioned as ‘stories’ in this regard.

Under this approach, any independent promotion of the ‘Welland Canals Story’ or the ‘Morningstar Mill Story’ would by default make it clear that these were all aspects of the larger St. Catharines Museum.

8.5 BRAND 'PERSONALITY'

The notion of the 'personality' of a brand is that there are certain personal characteristics that can be associated with a brand identity, and that, the closer these characteristics are to the personal traits of specific individuals, the more they will be attracted to the brand. There is a long debate as to just how useful brand personality analysis can be, but some basic elements of the approach are worth considering.

The conventional wisdom in brand personality analysis is that there are five types of characteristics of a brand that are most attractive to individuals. These are:

- 1) sincerity
- 2) excitement
- 3) competence
- 4) sophistication
- 5) ruggedness

The brand personality that the St. Catharines museum would want to adopt in order to be most attractive to target markets would be some blend of all of these factors (or at least the first four – 'ruggedness' may not be an appropriate or consistent personality trait for the St. Catharines Museum). The personality characteristics that the Museum would want to portray on the first four of these dimensions would be:

Sincerity: That the stories told by the Museum are credible, authentic, and honest. They portray all aspects of stories of the City, positive and negative, and are not sugar-coated or sanitized.

Excitement: The stories told are compelling, and involve human drama and intrigue.

Competence: This is related to the first personality trait. Not only are the stories authentic, but they are told in a competent manner, with appropriate artifacts, displays, etc. Overall, the Museum is well-regarded, and complies with all required standards for competent museum operation (e.g. CMOG).

Sophistication: This is related to the 'competence' dimension, and relates to the fact that the stories told are detailed, complex (or as complex as they need to be), told using state of the art technology (or reasonably so), etc.

According to brand personality theory, these characteristics and dimensions should come out in the new brand developed. These are all aspects that should be considered in the development of a new brand positioning, which is dealt with next.

8.6 NEXT STEPS

A suggested next step in pursuing this branding approach would be to retain specific marketing and branding expertise to help develop a brand expression following this overall strategy.

Branding considerations are a key element of the objectives for the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre. In order to effectively engage with visitors and partners the museum needs a clear identity. A clear identity is essential for focusing museum governance, directing leadership, engaging with an audience, leading stewardship initiatives and providing a desired experience.

Three of the museums goals in particular, Governance, Engagement and Experience are closely tied to the Museum's identity or brand. Objective 3.5 "Develop and implement a new Museum and Welland Canals Centre identity and brand" is directly concerned with this. Other goals of the museum will build on a new and clear identity and brand for the Museum.

9 Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

This Strategic Plan lays out an ambitious set of goals and objectives to guide the St. Catharines Museum from 2015-2020. This section outlines how the Museum will approach implementation, monitoring and reporting. Museum activities are ultimately overseen by City Council, who act as the steward for the museum's collections in the public's trust. Museum operations are led by the Supervisor of Historical Services/Curator working closely with a Museum Management Team. The Supervisor of Historical Services/Curator reports monthly to the Museum Advisory Committee (MAC) and the Museum Advisory Committee reports quarterly to the City's Cultural Sustainability Committee who reports to City Council. The MAC is an advisory committee of City Council. The museum is part of the City of St. Catharines and the Supervisor of Historical Services/Curator reports on museum operations through the Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department of the City.

The Museum will use the following practices to guide the implementation and evaluation of this plan:

Annual work planning

- Museum staff will develop annual work plans and budgets that follow the structure of this Strategic Plan, address actions in the Strategic Plan Implementation Plan (Appendix B) and outline quarterly activities and milestones. These work plans will build off of the actions identified in Appendix B Implementation Actions.

Progress monitoring and course correction

- The Museum Management Team will formally report to the Supervisor of Historical Services/Curator on work plan progress and strategic plan monitoring quarterly, in advance of meetings with the Museum Advisory Committee.
- The Museum Management Team will meet twice a year to review overall progress against the Strategic Plan and respond to issues and challenges.
- As actions are in progress or are completed the Implementation Plan in Appendix B will be updated to reflect progress.

Reporting

- The Supervisor of Historical Services/Curator will formally report on Strategic Plan progress to the Museum Advisory Committee quarterly at a meeting in advance of the MAC's report to the City's Cultural Sustainability Committee.
- Starting in 2016, an annual report will be produced for stakeholders, council members and the general public. This report will summarize key activities, accomplishments and milestones and report on progress against the Strategic Plan and targets.

Strategic plan updates

- A Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document that directs all of the planning of the Museum. As the Museum progresses through the plan timeframe, it is inevitable that challenges will arise with its implementation. The plan also outlines a number of key planning activities early in the plan timeframe that will shape the remaining years of the strategy. The Museum will therefore review and update the plan as part of the review process for the annual report. This way if the Museum needs to make changes the changes can be made and endorsed when the annual report is presented.
- A new strategic plan for the period 2020-2025 will be started in 2019.

10 In Closing

This strategic plan is an ambitious vision for the future of the St. Catharines Museum. It outlines the Museum's commitment to engage with its audience and be a community resource. The Museum celebrates the cultural identity and history of St. Catharines. This plan highlights the role and position of the museum in the city and identifies key challenges facing the museum.

The Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives of this plan support a program that addresses the issues the Museum faces and promotes it as a gathering place, a place that is engaging and relevant for the community, and a place that uses its collections to tell the story of St. Catharines. This plan presents an invitation to community members and stakeholders to engage with the Museum to preserve, promote and celebrate the shared heritage and history of St. Catharines.

The St. Catharines Museum envisions this plan as a dynamic document, continually updated throughout its life cycle through specific action plans and regular feedback from museum stakeholders and visitors. This strategic plan is intended to be the base for a series of long term plans and strategies that will help the St. Catharines Museum meet its vision as a leading local history museum and community gathering place.



Button making activity as part of the award-winning aMUSE pop-up museum program.

Appendix A: Strategic Plan Summary

Strategic Plan Summary

Museums are complex cultural institutions and the role of the museum is continuously evolving as a result of changing technology, demographics, regulations and societal expectations. Museums are no longer simply seen as “community attics” that collect, store and display historical artifacts; they are also expected to play increasing roles in community building, life-long learning, entertainment and economic development.

The St. Catharines Museum has long been a valued institution in the City of St. Catharines, with its home in a purpose built facility at Lock 3. With the development of this new strategic plan the Museum is moving into the next phase of engagement with the St Catharines’ community as reflected in a new Vision and Mission for the Museum.

Vision

The St. Catharines Museum will be a leading local history museum and community gathering place, engaging our visitors and building relationships with partners. We will encourage sustainability, demonstrate curatorial leadership and deliver innovative programming and exhibits.

Mission

The St. Catharines Museum is dedicated to engaging our visitors, telling the story of the city through artifacts, and preserving, sharing and celebrating the cultural identity and history of the city; we are a community resource that interprets, exhibits, researches, acquires and preserves material culture and stories of St. Catharines.



Goals and Objectives

Governance

We will support excellence in Museum governance. We will continually seek to improve our governance through engagement with the Museum Advisory Committee, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department, the City of St. Catharines as well as other city departments and City Council. We are committed to being efficient, effective, accountable and responsive in all aspects of our operations. We will support municipal planning efforts to the best of our abilities.

- Policy and plan review and renewal
- Strengthen the Museum's Relationship with City Council and the Corporation
- Address the relationship with the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum

Leadership

We will develop strength and resilience in institutional management and demonstrate effective and inclusive leadership. We will strive to be museum leaders through our innovation, long term planning and continuous improvement.

We will strengthen and support the Museum's team, and position the museum to best meet our goals and objectives.

- Strengthen the skills of staff through management support and targeted professional development
- Continue to develop and strengthen the Museum's volunteer programs

Engagement

We will enhance engagement by connecting and working with our audience, stakeholders, museum personnel, volunteers and the broader community to meet their needs and expectations. We will actively cultivate our relationships with external groups and community members, and develop innovative methods of engaging the public.

- Develop methods for encouraging regular community feedback
- Make the collections more available in the community
- Revitalize the Museum's membership program
- Strive for excellence in virtual engagement. Increase and enhance the Museum's virtual presence in all aspects of operations
- Develop and Implement a new Museum and Welland Canals Centre identity and brand

Stewardship

We will prioritize collections and research work in support of the Museum's vision and mission.

We will support engagement by the documentation, preservation and presentation of the City's material culture; the preservation of artifacts, archival materials and stories of St. Catharines; and by providing greater access to this resource for researchers and citizens.

We will enrich the community understanding of St. Catharines' history through engagement and collaboration with the research and professional community.

We will work towards sustainability, developing sustainable initiatives to meet our current needs without compromising our ability to meet future needs. We will support municipal sustainability initiatives.

- Investigate options to address current and future collections storage needs
- Continue to strengthen the Museum's collections management program
- Strive for excellence in collections care
- Update collections policies and plans
- Incorporate the concept of sustainability into all Museum initiatives

Experience

We will provide an experience that is seamless, integrated, relevant and captivating. Enriching and improving the museum visitor experience will be central in all museum activities.

We will continue to build on our solid foundation of curatorial work, coupled with innovative programming and interpretation with a view to providing a superior visitor experience.

- Strive for excellence in creating an inviting facility
- Improve and renew Discovery Park
- Enhance the visitor's museum experience through innovative design
- Enhance accessibility

Appendix B: Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan

The table below presents a summary of priority implementation actions for the St. Catharines Museum for each of the goals and objectives. Each action is assigned to a lead person or position responsible for implementing the action. Activities that must be accomplished by the Museum as a whole are marked "All". These commitments must be reviewed and updated annually.

Legend: Lead Acronym	
SHS	Supervisor Historical Services / Curator
MAC	Museum Advisory Committee
CSC	Cultural Sustainability Committee
TES	Transportation and Environmental Services
HR	Human Resources
PRCS	Programming and Cultural Services Section
OLHFM	Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum

Legend: Status of Actions	
✓	Action item completed
➔	Action underway or part of on-going regular maintenance
□	Action not underway
○	Continuous Action
NR	Not rated due to unavailability

Immediate Steps for Strategic Plan Implementation

OBJECTIVE/ACTION	LEAD	TIMELINE	STATUS	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	CONNECTIONS
Referral to Museum Staff to develop a specific plan for implementation (using this Strategic Plan as a key guide)	City Council, PRCS Staff	2015		Staff time	
Presentation of Implementation Plan to Council for approval	MAC, PRCS Staff	2015		Staff time	
Council approval of this Museum Strategic Plan in principle	MAC, CSC	2015		Staff time	

Governance

We will support excellence in Museum governance. We will continually seek to improve our governance through engagement with the Museum Advisory Committee, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Department, the City of St. Catharines as well as other city departments and City Council.

We are committed to being efficient, effective, accountable and responsive in all aspects of our operations. We will support municipal planning efforts to the best of our abilities.

OBJECTIVE/ACTION	LEAD	TIMELINE	STATUS	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	CONNECTIONS
1.1 Policy and Plan Review and Renewal					
a. Assess current museum policies against the Standards for Ontario Museums	SHS, MAC, CSC	2015-2021		Staff time	1.1b., 1.1d., 2.2a., 4.2b., 4.4b., 5.4b.-c.
b. Develop a yearly action plan for the Museum Advisory Committee	SHS, MAC, CSC	2015-2021		Staff time	1.1a., 1.2b., 5.4a.,
c. Develop a Marketing / External Communications / Branding / Social Media Plan for the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre	SHS	2015-2016		Funding for implementation	1.2a., 2.1c., 2.2c., 3.3b., 3.4a., 3.5a-c.
d. Create a Collections Development Plan, including reviewing the current Collections Scope.	Collections Department	2016-2017		Staff time	1.1a., 1.1f., 1.3c., 2.2c., 4.2c., 4.4a.
e. Develop a Facility Plan	SHS, TES	2016-2017		Budget allocation of funds for development of plan	1.3c., 2.2a., 3.5c-d., 4.1a-b., 5.1b., 5.2a-b., 5.4b.
f. Develop an Interpretive Plan for the Museum Galleries and Discovery Park.	Programming and Collection Departments	2015-2016		Funding is already in place	1.1d., 2.2b., 5.2a.c., 5.3.b

g. Develop a Museum Volunteer Management Plan	SHS, HR, Programming Department	2017-2018		Staff time	1.3a., 2.3a-b.
h. h. Develop a Gift Shop Development Plan	Visitors Services Department	2017-2018		Staff time	2.2c.
1.2 Strengthen the relationship with City Council and within the Corporation					
a. Communicate more effectively within the corporation the activities of the Historical Services Section	SHS, MAC, CSC, PRCS	2015-2021		Corporate buy-in, Staff time	1.1c., 2.2b., 4.1b.
b. The Museum Advisory Committee to provide regular reports to the Cultural Sustainability Committee of City Council.	MAC, CSC, SHS	2016-2021			1.1b., 4.1b., 5.4a.,
c. Participate in the cross-departmental working group recommended in the Culture Plan to ensure all departments are informed and working in cooperation towards common goals.	SHS	2016-2021		Staff time	4.1b., 5.4a-c.
1.3 Address the relationship with the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum					
a. Discuss future plans and sustainability of the OLHFM future plans.	SHS, MAC, City Council, OLHFM Board of Directors	2017-2018		Staff time	1.1g.
b. Develop and implement a strategy for OLHFM exhibit renewal and maintenance.	SHS, OLHFM Board of Directors	2016-2017		Staff time to support OLHFM	5.3a.
c. Develop and implement a strategy for more efficient use of the OLHFM collections storage area.	SHS, OLHFM Board of Directors	2015-2016		Staff time	1.1e., 4.1b.

Leadership

We will develop strength and resilience in institutional management and demonstrate effective and inclusive leadership. We will strive to be museum leaders through our innovation, long term planning and continuous improvement.

We will strengthen and support the Museum's team, and position the museum to best meet our goals and objectives.

ACTION	LEAD	TIMELINE	STATUS	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	CONNECTIONS
2.1 Strengthen the skills of staff through management support and targeted professional development.					
a. Review staff training against Museum Goals.	Management	2016-2017		Staff time	5.1a.
b. Create a priority list of potential training opportunities based on Museum Goals.	Management	2017-2018		Staff time	5.1a.
c. Equip staff and volunteers with tools to assist them in representing the St. Catharines Museum to the public.	Management	2018-2019		Tools such as: Staff training and Development Budget allocated to Professional Development	1.1c., 5.1a.
2.2 Continue to develop and strengthen the Museum's volunteer program.					
a. Provide training to volunteers to improve their knowledge.	All, HR	2016-2017	○		1.1g.
b. Provide opportunities for the volunteers to provide feedback.	SHS, Visitors Services, Department	2019-2020			1.1g.
c. Improve tracking of data related to volunteer participation.	Administration	2016-2017		A new CMS has been implemented in 2015	

Engagement

We will enhance engagement by connecting and working with our audience, stakeholders, museum personnel, volunteers and the broader community to meet their needs and expectations.

We will actively cultivate our relationships with external groups and community members, and develop innovative methods of engaging the public.

ACTION	LEAD	TIMELINE	STATUS	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	CONNECTIONS
3.1 Develop methods for encouraging regular community feedback.					
a. Develop and implement audience surveys.	Visitors Services and Programming Departments, Administration, Corporate Communications	2017-2018	→	Staff time	3.2b., 5.1c., 5.2b., 5.3c.
3.2 Make the collections more available in the community.					
a. Explore options for sharing the Museum's collections in community venues outside the museum.	All	2019-2020		Budget allocation to outreach	2.2c., 3.2d.
b. Evaluate success of outreach of the collection. Implement findings to ensure more effective outreach.	Programming Department and Collections Department	2017-2018		Staff time	3.1a., 5.3c.
c. Develop a program of behind the scenes tours of collections.	Programming Department and Collections Department	2015	○ →		

d. Develop a template for quick standardized artifact information for usage in exhibitions and programming.	Visitors Service / Programming and Collections Departments	2017-2018			3.2a.
3.3 Revitalize the Museum's Membership program					
a. Investigate best practices in Museum Membership Programs	SHS, Administration, Visitors Services Coordinator	2017-2018	→		
b. Improve member tracking system to be able to evaluate the success of program.	Administration	2015-2016			1.1c.
3.4 Strive for excellence in virtual engagement. Increase and Enhance the Museum's virtual presence in all aspects of operations.					
a. Improve the Museum Chat Blog platform	SHS, Corporate Communications, Administration	2019-2020	→		1.1c.
b. Implement e-Museum to provide virtual access to the Museum's collections.	Collections Department, Programming Department	2018-2019	→		4.2c.
c. Investigate best practices with regards to open data and crowd sourcing in museum collections.	Management, Corporate Communications	2019-2020			4.2c.

3.5 Develop and Implement a new Museum and Welland Canals Centre Identity and Brand					
a. Consideration and validation of the overall primary theme / secondary theme strategy identified in the Branding section of this Strategic Plan.	Management, Corporate Communications	2016-2017		Budget allocation required for outside expertise. An external branding consultant is recommended	1.1b; 1.1c
b. Review current image / visual expression of the St. Catharines Museum primary identity; develop images and tag-line expressions for the secondary identities.	Management, Corporate Communications	2016-2017		An external branding consultant is recommended	1.1b; 1.1c
c. Consider appropriateness of an overall slogan identity for the Museum.	Management, Corporate Communications	2016-2017		An external branding consultant is recommended	1.1b; 1.1c
d. Develop a plan and advise on roll-out and on-going utilization of these new identities to ensure maximum impact and consistency of use.	Management, Corporate Communications	2017 and on		An external branding consultant is recommended	1.1b; 1.1c
e. Seek recommendations regarding overall marketing strategy and the utilization of this identity (possibly).		2017 and on			
f. Incorporate brand philosophy in marketing and promotional materials.	All, Corporate Communications	2017 and on			1.1c.
g. Incorporate brand in external and internal signage.	All, Corporate Communications	2017 and on			1.1c.
h. Incorporate brand philosophy in physical plant improvements.	All, TES	2017 and on			1.1c., 1.1e.
i. Incorporate streetscape presence into site/facility plan.	All, TES, Programming Department	2017-2018			1.1e.

Stewardship

We will prioritize collections and research work in support of the Museum's vision and mission.

We will support engagement by the documentation, preservation and presentation of the City's material culture; the preservation of artifacts, archival materials and stories of St. Catharines; and by providing greater access to this resource for researchers and citizens.

We will enrich the community understanding of St. Catharines' history through engagement and collaboration with the research and professional community.

We will work towards sustainability, developing sustainable initiatives to meet our current needs without compromising our ability to meet future needs. We will support municipal sustainability initiatives.

ACTION	LEAD	TIMELINE	STATUS	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	CONNECTIONS
4.1 Investigate options to address current and future collections storage needs.					
a. Review the Museum's current storage to identify future needs.	Collections Department	2015-2016	➔	Staff time	1.1e.
b. Provide a detailed report of the collections storage needs for the next 10 years.	Collections Department	2016-2017		Staff time	1.1e., 1.2a-c., 1.3c., 2.2c.
c. Seek funding opportunities for improvements to collections storage.	SHS, Collections Department	2016-2021		Staff time	
4.2 Continue to strengthen the Museum's collections management program.					
a. Continue the Museum's collections cataloguing program.	Collections Department	2015-2021	○	Staff time	
b. Continue to develop the Museum's collections management program.	Collections Department	2015-2021	○	Staff time	1.1a.
c. Update and review Collections Data for implementation of e-museum	Collections Department	2017-2018		Staff time	1.1d., 3.4b.-c., 5.3d.

4.3 Strive for excellence in collections care.					
a. Assess collections against developed conservation priorities.	Collections Department	2019-2020		Staff time	Relies on 4.4a and 4.4b
b. Conduct Inventory and Review storage of backlog material	Collections Department	2020-2021		Staff time	
4.4 Update Collections Policies and Plans.					
a. Implement the reviewed Collections Scope, Collections Development Plan	Collections Department	2017-2018		Staff time	1.1d
b. Update the Collections Management Policy	SHS, MAC, CSC, Collections Department	once policy updated		Staff time	1.1a
4.5 Incorporate the concept of sustainability into all Museum initiatives.					
a. Incorporate environmentally friendly initiatives into all aspects of Museum operations	All Staff	2018-2019		Staff time	1.1a., 1.1e.
b. Encourage social and cultural sustainability in museum program development.	All Staff	2016-2020	○	Staff time	1.1f., 1.2a.
c. Actively seek out community partners in all aspects of Museum and Welland Canals Centre operations.	All Staff	2015-2020	○	Staff time	1.1c., 1.1e., 1.1h., 2.2c., 4.1c.

Experience

We will provide an experience that is seamless, integrated, relevant and captivating.

Enriching and improving museum visitor experience will be central in all museum activities. We will continue to build on our solid foundation of curatorial work, coupled with innovative programming and interpretation with a view to providing a superior visitor experience.

ACTION	LEAD	TIMELINE	STATUS	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	CONNECTIONS
5.1 Strive for excellence in creating an inviting facility.					
a. Customer service training.	All, HR	2015-2019		Budget allocation for Professional Development	2.1b-c.
b. On-going facility maintenance.	SHS, TES, Visitor Services Department	2015-2021	○	Continued budget allocation to facility maintenance	1.1e.
c. On-going quality control related to our facility offerings.	All staff	2018-2019	○		3.1a.
5.2 Improve and renew Discovery Park					
a. Improve interpretation of outdoor artifacts.	Programming Department	2017-2018		Budget allocation to exhibition development	1.1e-f.
b. Create a seamless experience for all outdoor spaces.	Programming Department, TES, Parks Department	2018-2019			1.1e., 3.1a.
c. Investigate active interpretation of the Discovery Park.	Programming Department	2020-2021			1.1f.
d. Integrate Interpretive programming into Discovery Park and outdoor spaces as a part of the visitor experience.	Programming Department	2016-2017			

5.3 Enhance the visitor's museum experience through innovative design.					
a. Plan short term gallery enhancements.	SHS, Programming Department, Collections Department	2016-2017	○	Continued budget allocation to exhibition maintenance	1.3b.
b. Implement Interpretive Plan.	All	2017-2021			1.1f.
c. Evaluate museum programs based on participant experience and feedback.	Programming Department, Visitors Services Department	2018-2019			3.1a., 3.2b.
d. Connect physical galleries with virtual collections through e-Museum (e-Museum is the software that allows the collections database to be accessed by the public).	SHS, Programming Department, Collections Department	2018-2019			4.2c.
e. Adopt a culture of hospitality and a visitor centric approach to visitor services and interpretation.	All	2015-2020	○	Budget allocation to professional development	
5.4 Enhance accessibility					
a. Work with other municipal departments and city council to bring public transit to the Museum	SHS, MAC, CSC	2015-2021			1.1b., 1.2b-c.
b. Have the facility assessed against AODA requirements.	SHS, MAC, CSC, Accessibility Coordinator	2015-2016	○		1.1a.e., 1.2c.
c. Include accessibility considerations in all aspects of the operations.	All, Accessibility Coordinator	2017-2021	○		1.1a., 1.2c.