
Business Plan

**West Parry Sound
District Museum**

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary and Priorities.....	3
Museum Mandate.....	3
Mission Statement.....	3
Vision.....	3
Governance.....	3
Collection and Research Vision.....	4
Strategic Directions.....	4
Enhance Access.....	4
Capture our Ongoing History.....	5
Resources to Ensure Security.....	5
Project Infrastructure.....	6
Overview of Current and Future Programs.....	6
Program Strategy.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives.....	7
Government Funding.....	8
Self-Generated Income.....	8
People.....	8
Environmental Scan.....	9
Internal Environmental Scan.....	9
External Environmental Scan.....	10
Marketing and Communications Plan.....	11
Human Resources.....	11
Performance Measures.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Financial Plan.....	12
Initiative Involving Third Parties.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Implementation Plan.....	14

Executive Summary and Priorities

The West Parry Sound District Museum's is a key tourist destination of the district as well as a heritage resource. The Museum strives to run efficiently and effectively, diversifying income to ensure the organization's longevity.

The organization's long-term goal is to complete a major renovation to the building. The building has good "bones" but by 2035 it will be over 40 years old and many of its systems will be ready for upgrades. The renovation will ensure that the building can continue to protect the collection while the updates will allow the Museum to operate more efficiently and provide a more inviting look to welcome more visitors in.

In the short term the Museum has undertaken a re-branding project to clearly define its brand to better communicate its goals and functions within the community. This includes community consultations regarding the name of the organization and a new logo before focussing on marketing strategies.

The core mandate of the Museum stays the same, to collect and preserve the tangible historical evidence of the West Parry Sound District.

Museum Mandate

Mission Statement

Our mission is to collect, preserve, and share the history of the West Parry Sound District.

Vision

The be known as the heritage hub of the district, through community collaborations, community relevant programming, and a collection that captures the values of the West Parry Sound District Museum.

Governance

The Board of Directors is the governing authority for the Museum, with powers vested in it by the membership. The Board is responsible for the institution, its policies, its operational continuity and well-being, and the various assets that it holds in trust for the people of the West Parry Sound District, to whom it is ultimately responsible.

Museum staff have duties, responsibilities, and opportunities, and from time to time will encounter ethical dilemmas and conflicts that must be resolved, considering both the needs of the institution and the broader public interest.

In this regard, the WPSDM shall be guided by the Conflict of Interest Act and the Canadian Museum Association's Ethical Guidelines.

Collection and Research Vision

The WPSDM's strategically collects in order best represent the peoples and territory of the district we serve. The research conducted into our collection is aimed to enhance the lives of residents, seasonal and permanent.

The WPSDM employs one Collections Supervisor to manage two collections. The WPSDM has a primary collection that consists of:

- Objects related to the West Parry Sound District
- Photographs and slides depicting the places and people of the West Parry Sound District.
- Archival materials (newspapers, journals, maps, etc.)

A secondary collection labelled the education collection exists of objects related to the West Parry Sound District. This collection while just as important, is composed of objects that the museum has a lower duty of care to and that may be used by the public in a manner that may shorten their lifespan.

Strategic Directions

The WPSDM has four strategic objectives, which together are transforming the Museum into a public focused instituting that is used regularly by the people of Ontario to help them understand nature and culture, and to build connections to each other. The four strategic objectives are:

Enhance Access

Enhancing access embraces "public access" as a core purpose of the West Parry Sound District Museum. It also signals a commitment to explore beyond the traditional use of exhibits to showcase selected aspects of the District's history by providing access for others to discover through appropriate physical, and just as importantly, online means.

Objectives

Enhance and expand displays in the E Roy Smith Gallery to reflect and inclusive and representative history of the District.

Establish temporary exhibits and programs that entice residents and visitors to return to the Museum and explore more deeply the Museum's offerings.

Adapt outdoor space to enhance the visitors experience and permit social distancing.

Expand digitization of records and explore online resources to enhance online access. Improve telecommunication resources to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Capture our Ongoing History

History is made every day, and risks being lost if not actively and systematically collected. The Museum intends to actively identify and capture digital and physical artifacts relevant to the District's Human experience. Important to this effort is capture the oral and visual elements that can be shared through non-traditional means.

Objective

Design, resource and implement programs to actively identify, solicit and capture critical elements representative of the District's History from the distant past to the evolving present.

Initiatives

Designing and implementing a program to identify and recruit members of the public to extend the reach of Museum Staff within the community

Establishing strategic partnerships with private and public institutions to include relevant materials into the Museum's collections

Researching, designing and implementing programs to best record and retain local oral history.

Resources to Ensure Security

Funding continues to be a source of stress and distraction for Board and Staff. Success depends on securing human and financial resources beyond that required to simply display existing collection artifacts.

Objective:

Establish a funding formula with the participating municipalities to cover operational expenses consistent with the Strategic Plan and Annual Objectives.

Identify public and private sources of funding to support defined projects and programs.

Implement appropriate actions to secure this funding, including support for special exhibits, collections related initiatives, online resources and specialized training for staff and volunteers.

Secure the necessary funding from supporting municipalities and upper level government to support building related capital projects.

Project Infrastructure

The West Parry Sound District Museum is approaching the 30th anniversary of the construction of the building. Forecast capital expenses for the 2022-2026 period require funding beyond what is allocated for operations and special projects.

Objectives

Update the existing Capital Asset Budget to cover maintenance and capital needs for the 2022-2026 period in partnership with the municipalities.

Identify, explore, and apply for the necessary funding.

Initiatives

Preparing, prioritizing, and agreeing on the core capital related expenses for the period 2022-2026.

Identifying, applying for, upper tier funding to support capital expenses and investments.

Proactively identifying necessary investments and preparing the required supporting documents.

Identifying and nurturing private donation sources.

Overview of Current and Future Programs

Genealogy Club

- Lecture series on topics related to genealogy. Meets online 9 times a year.

Northern Nature Exchange

- In partnership with Science North the West Parry Sound District Museum's permanent gallery hosts a Northern Nature Exchange. Allowing individuals to bring in their knowledge of the natural environment and exchange that for points and trade those points for rocks, minerals, bugs or shells.

Train Volunteers

- A dedicated group of volunteers keep the Model Train running. They share their knowledge about model trains with each other as well as the public. In addition to just running the train around the tracks, they keep the model clean and functioning.

YouTube Channel

- YouTube channel featuring heritage content inspired by the West Parry Sound District.

Research Library (future)

- An ongoing initiative to organize a dedicated space for individuals to conduct their own research utilizing the WPSDM's digital resources, physical resources available to the general public.

Jr. Train Club (in trial)

- A new initiative, WPSDM staff is collaborating with Train Volunteers to create a Jr. Train Club. The Club will have senior volunteers work with youth, creating a new train layout and teaching the basics of creating a train layout.

Children's Museum (future)

- Collection of roll away highly interactive exhibits that will transform the E Roy Smith Gallery into learning environment for children between the ages of 5 and 10 to play and explore.

Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives

The WPSDM has developed two budgets:

- Operational Budget, this budget is a reasonable expectation of income and expenses based upon current operational level.
- Project Budgets. These budgets are self contained and may be plugged into the Operational Budget for the year the project is to be undertaken.

Overall as the WPSDM receives at least 50% of their funding from the municipalities their goal is to keep service fees low and extremely affordable to community members.

Assumptions made when drafting budgets are:

- The building is undervalued at \$1,900,000
- That 5% should be set aside annually for capital repairs and expenses \$38,000

Government Funding

The WPSDM receives funding from federal, provincial and municipal governments.

Municipal

The WPSDM relies heavily on Municipal funding, as the West Parry Sound District is home to the communities that the Museum serves.

The WPSDM has proposed that the Municipalities within the West Parry Sound District catchment fund the organization at 0.4% of property taxes. This percentage will fluctuate allowing for inflation and ensure that basic operational costs are covered allowing the WPSDM to continue to operate even through difficult times.

Provincial

There are no operational grants available at a provincial level. The WPSDM leverages self generated revenue, municipal contributions and federal funding in order to apply for project based grants.

Most of these grants are not 100% coverage and require the applying organization to contribute financially to the project.

Federal

The WPSDM prides itself on meeting Canadian Museum Standards and is therefore eligible for \$13,000 annually for operational expenses.

Self-Generated Income

The WPSDM brings in approximately \$25,000 in self generated income each year through, admission fees, gift shop and membership sales, donations, and facility rentals.

These activities come with their own expenses, be it labour costs (staff time to facilitate rentals) or hard costs (inventory costs).

People

The WPSDM relies on human resources in order to deliver upon its mission. The Board of Directors consists of municipal representatives and community members.

There are approximately ten volunteers that keep the train operational and act as docents within the permanent gallery. These volunteers provide much added value for visitors to the gallery.

Since 2018 two full time permanent employees:

The Curator/Manager is responsible for the administrative, facility management, human resources and curatorial activities.

The Collection Supervisor manages the collection, facilitates research requests and assists the Curator/Manager in curatorial activities.

In 2022 a permanent part time position was added to assist other staff with janitorial and front of house activities.

Through various grants additional temporary staff are brought on to assist with activities such as:

- Collections Management
- Programming Development
- Marketing Activities

Environmental Scan

Internal Environmental Scan

Strengths and Opportunities

- Location is a natural tourism destination
- Building was well built
- Dedicated, passionate, knowledgeable and experienced staff and volunteers.
- Connection with the community.
- Resources in demand by the general public.

Weaknesses and Threats

- Not enough resources to complete projects quickly or efficiently
- During periods of high visitor traffic staff have little time to complete commitments.
- Aging base building infrastructure as well as aging equipment, collections and other Museum support infrastructure requiring significant capital investment.
- Aging I.T. and technological infrastructure requiring significant capital investment.
- Not seen as offering innovative dynamic and entertaining experiences.
- Website
- Branding

External Environmental Scan

The WPSDM sees an average of over 7,000 visitors annually¹.

- 60% June to August
- 20% September to October
- 5% November to February
- 15% March to May

The majority of these visitors visit on a Friday or Saturday. Thursdays and Sundays were well attended as well, however, due to staffing the WPSDM opted to close on Sundays when the staff compliment is under 4.

Data on the Virtual Landscape Sourced from the ROM's 2022 Business Plan

The pandemic has changed how we behave and perform day-to-day tasks. While lockdowns and social isolation has lifted in many areas of the world, people have become accustomed to more digital interaction, and are increasingly seeking rich online experiences. Comfort levels of returning to “normal” vary widely not just globally, but also between individuals in each community.

2021 Online Landscape

- More than two thirds of the global population use a mobile phone in Oct 2021, an increase of 100 million mobile users compared to 2020.
- The use of social media continues to see significant growth globally – there are 4.55 billion active users across social platforms globally, an increase of 400 million (+10%) since 2020.
- Canadians rank as one of the world's most “online” population – 96.5% of Canadians report regular internet use.
- On average, Canadians spend six hours a day online: 2.5 hours on mobile, and 3.5 hours on a desktop.
- A sharp rise in e-commerce has driven a surge in social media ad prices. Global CPM (cost per thousand impressions) for social media advertising has increased 33% since 2020.

2021 Online Trends

- Canadians are spending more time with digital media (social, web, podcast, music/video streaming) than traditional media (print, TV, radio). 52.6% of time spent consuming media is in digital form.
- People increasingly expect a personalized digital experience. They seek control of the experience, but also the brand “knowing” or “remembering” them.
- There is an increasing desire to control your own digital footprint, and to interact in more private ways. 89% of Canadians expressed concern about people using information available about them online to steal their identity. 70% have refused to provide an organization or business with personal information due to privacy concerns, and 4 in 10 Canadians report deleting an account or stopping doing business with an organization that reported a privacy breach.

¹ Average based on data collected by WPSDM staff since 2012

Sources: Digital 2021 October Global Statshot Report — DataReportal –Global Digital Insights Canada Time Spent with Media 2021 - Insider Intelligence Trends, Forecasts & Statistics (emarketer.com) News release: Canadians concerned about access to their online personal information: poll - Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

Marketing and Communications Plan

- Our primary goal is to connect with our visitors in a way that is intriguing, relevant, and inspirational, transforming the Museum and the experiences we offer into a meaningful part of their lives.
- We continue to create content and build experiences with the objective of engaging a wide swath of demographic and psychographic audience segments and cultural communities, encouraging interaction with new visitors while deepening relationships with our existing audiences.

Marketing and Communications Objectives

Develop a clearly identified brand, clearly articulating the Museum's messages and benefits leveraging mobile, digital, and experiential channels as well as traditional media.

Build the WPSDM brand profile as an essential destination to both tourists and visitors alike.

Further initiate and nurture strong strategic partnerships with institutions and corporate partners that offer the opportunity to reach new audiences and attract support for the Museum.

Develop multi-platform, integrated marketing and communications initiatives in support of the WPSDM brand.

Human Resources

Human Resources continue to limit the Museum's ability to grow. The Museum has a core group of extremely dedicated volunteers that assist with visitor interaction. Making greater use of volunteer time for collection and fundraising activities have been a struggle.

Both Collection management and fundraising activities require significant organization and coordination and over the years have required significant staff involvement to achieve the required organization and coordination.

Staff resources are limited to two permanent staff members and a part time staff member. Staff is frequently augmented with NOHFC interns that are employed for a period of 52 weeks.

Financial Plan

The West Parry Sound District Museum has separated the operational budget from project budgets. The operational budget is a conservative estimate of what is required to run the organization.

Projects, such as capital improvements, exhibitions, and special events will be added into the budget on a yearly basis.

The projected five year budget assumes a 6% inflation rate of expenses. Income also assumes an 6% increase except on the grant line item as this income has not been raised in over 15 years.

Payroll assumes the employment of two full time employees and one part time employee.

Projects strive to bridge the gap between the operational revenue and expenses. Projects have the potential to cover administrative costs through grants, or increase revenue by offering new programming for the communities.

2025 Operational Budget

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
REVENUE					
Admission	8,000	8,500	9,000	9,500	10,000
Gift Shop Sales	8,000	8,500	9,000	9,500	10,000
Research	200	200	200	200	300
Memberships	\$1,200	1,300	1,400	1,500	1,600
Direct Public Support	166,500	176,500	187,000	198,200	210,000
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Grants	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000	13,000
Program Income	500	500	500	600	600
Rentals	1,500	1,600	1,700	1,800	1,900
TOTAL REVENUE	\$187,200	210,100	221,800	234,300	247,400
EXPENSES					
Inventory Purchases	5,000	5,300	5,700	6,000	6,400
Exhibition Expense	-	-	-	-	-
Programming Expense	-	-	-	-	-
Contract Services	24,500	26,000	27,500	29,100	30,900
Facilities and Equipment	46,200	49,000	51,900	55,000	58,300
Payroll	127,200	134,900	143,000	151,600	160,700
Operations	14,000	14,900	15,800	16,700	17,700
Insurance	30,000	31,800	33,700	35,700	37,800
Interest Expense	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Advertising and Promotion	5,000	5,300	5,700	6,000	6,400
TOTAL EXPENSES	252,900	268,200	284,300	301,100	319,200

Upcoming Projects:

- 2025 Exhibitions:
 - Fire Fighting Exhibit
 - Lighthouse Exhibit
 - Escape Room
- Renovation of the Kitchen into a Board Room, that will be available as a rental space.
- Creation of a Research Library for use by the general public. This includes access to digital copies of the North Star and other primary documents held in the Collection.

Implementation Plan

To excel at this mission a new decision framework was established.

- Does the project fall within the organization's mission statement?
- If not, does the project have the potential to generate revenue that will exceed the expense of the project by at least 25%

If the answer to both questions is no, then the project will not be undertaken. This simple framework will help staff and volunteers deliver an excellent heritage experience to our community and visitors alike.