



Strategic Directions

Background

To ensure the Oshawa Community Museum and Archives (OCMA) was utilizing its assets to the fullest and to enhance the community involvement in the Museum, the Board of Directors tendered a study to examine every aspect of the Museum's facilities and operations. In 1992 the Board selected the firm of Sears and Russell Consultants Limited to undertake the Feasibility Study. The Study commenced in 1994 after funding had been confirmed. The purpose of the study was to conduct a thorough review of every aspect of the Museum's facilities and operations as well as to propose a realistic plan for its future growth and development.

From the Study

The Statement of Intent defines the "vision" for the OCMA by defining the intent with respect to the museum's future development and operation. As the Statement of Intent is never permanent or fixed, the consultants suggested it be reviewed at least every three years. Revision of the Statement of Intent should be accompanied by changes to the relevant policies and operation practices.

The Statement of Intent includes three components:

1. **Mission Statement:** A summary of the museum's purpose which is easily communicated and referenced. Policies should be consistent with the museum's purpose as defined in the Mission Statement.
2. **Theme Statement:** A description of the content of the collections, exhibits and public programs.
3. **Development and Operating Guidelines:** An analysis of the OCMA objectives and intentions within 13 categories.

Currently our **Mission Statement** as set forth in the Feasibility Study (April 1996) is as follows:

The purpose of the OCMA is to preserve and interpret the history of the City of Oshawa and to foster an understanding and appreciation of the City's heritage. To achieve this purpose, the OCMA maintains and offers guided tours of three historic houses in Oshawa's Lakeview Park; preserves and exhibits a collection of historic artifacts; maintains and provides public access to an archival collection; and provides a variety of other programs and services for the education and enjoyment of both residents and visitors to the City.

The OCMA also works with other community interests in promoting the awareness, appreciation and preservation of Oshawa's heritage resources.

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Theme Statement

The broad theme of the Oshawa Community Museum & Archives (OCMA) is the story of the City of Oshawa from the first native settlements to the present day. Sub-themes provide connections between the different periods in the history of Oshawa. The emphasis placed on these sub-themes depends on resources available to the OCMA, including spatial and financial resources, but also on the sub-themes depicted by other local Museums and heritage institutions. Sub-themes are organized as follows:

- **First Settlement** – early periods of Oshawa history. This sub-theme focuses on the reasons for the development of the City of Oshawa in this location. The unique features of the landscape
- **Reaping the Resources** – Oshawa’s history during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries including the harbour development, early agricultural methods and lifestyles of Oshawa residents.
- **Impacts of Industrialization** – the City’s evolution into a large-based community including studying the impact of changes and advancements in technology, early industries, businesses and individuals of note.
- **Oshawa Today** – a look at the contemporary city, its people, accomplishments and future directions including the cultural mosaic and intellectual, cultural and athletic pursuits.

Development and Operating Guidelines

The development and operating guidelines are defined in the Feasibility Study within thirteen categories including organization, staffing, collections, conservation and research.

Update 2010

In October 2010, the Board of Directors and staff participated in a full day facilitated visioning session with the intention of updating the environmental scan, confirming the mission and vision statements, articulating values and identifying the strategic directions for the organization. The following summarizes the workshop’s results.

Values Workshop Result

Using a workshop process, the participants generated the following list of organizational values.

- Respected
- Pro-active outreach
- Inclusive
- Education
- Purposeful Presentation
- Diligence

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Environmental Scan Update

Strengths	Weaknesses/Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS & OCM positive reputation • Membership of OHS • Job opportunities – career development & volunteer opportunities • Celebrate and value our community’s history • City’s Harbour plan – OCM – right place & right time • Move into digitization • Staff wearing multiple hats • Open service policy • Increase in accessibility • Social media • Staff relationships • Need to connect with the “newer” historic families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of houses – continuing deterioration • Environmental factors – eg, exposure to high winds • Change in political atmosphere • Current economic atmosphere – potential lack of funding • Storage space for collections • Space for programming • Adapting old building to new standards – maintaining historic integrity • Vulnerability to catastrophes – eg, fire – need risk mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase promotions • Signage along bike trails and install bike racks • OCM as part of Waterfront Master Plan • Reach out to new council members • Grow partnerships • Umbrella organization to align all museums & stakeholders within Oshawa eg, “Museums Open” • Use social media to coordinate – OCM as hub? • Get displays into other public buildings & institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New municipal government • Changes in local economy • Lack of succession planning – staff, Board, OHS • Recruiting new members for OHS • Lack of accessibility • Keeping up with technology • Collection – what museum has • Not thinking big enough? • Risks of increased use of technology

Strategic Directions Workshop results

Using a workshop process, the participants came to consensus on four key strategic directions for the OCM. These are shown below with their supporting ideas:

- Proactive Programming
 - Engaging exhibits
 - Pushing the education element to new levels eg, adult classes, historian in the schools
 - Increase the community’s awareness of us
 - More on-site special events
 - Increase animations/demonstrations
 - Dynamic programming
- Purposeful Partners
 - Partnerships with UOIT/Trent-Durham/Durham College
 - Increase/broaden membership
 - Affiliation with Trent/UOIT/Fleming/Durham
 - Strategic partnerships

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- Expansion on community partnerships – beyond cultural institutions (eg, Simcoe Settlement House)
- Explore additional sources of funding
- More partnerships between Oshawa Museums
- Public Portals
 - Development of traveling displays which can be rapidly deployed
 - Continued/increased focus on publications
 - Portable displays
 - Historical speakers service – staff who will deal with historical topics as speakers for local groups
 - Expand our virtual presence
 - Extend/continue implementation use of social media
 - Online collections
 - More publications – annual historic calendar, heritage trails
 - Present collection/information through a variety of means
 - Larger on-line presence – digitize photos, online displays
- Cultural Heritage Centre
 - Space for operations (including programming, storage, etc)
 - New building
 - Village commons concepts – walkways, gardens, roadways & buildings
 - Expansion of facilities
 - Education/programming centre
 - Programming/exhibition space
 - Safe storage while on display
 - Development of new museum facilities to house modern offices, cutting edge electronics, attractive display galleries and a large community archives
 - Expanding facilities
 - Larger capacity to accept collectables
 - More onsite/offsite storage
 - Development of permanent programming space
 - Work to become an integral part of “new” Oshawa waterfront
 - Separate facility – programs, interpretation, administration