



STRATHCONA COUNTY

**MUSEUM & ARCHIVES**

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030

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# Table of Contents



03	Land Acknowledgment
04	Introduction
05	Who We Are
06	Our Journey
08	Vision, Mission, Values
09	Code of Ethics
10	Strategic Priorities
11	Deepen Our Storytelling
12	Foster an Inclusive Visitor Experience
13	Expand Community Engagment
14	Safeguard Collections
15	Build Capacity and Foster Resilience
16	Implementation Plan

# Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional lands and territories of the Indigenous Peoples who have lived on these lands and taken care of them since time immemorial. We respectfully acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, lands which are known as Amiskwaciy, Cree for “The Beaver Hills”. This region has been important for the Nêhiyawak, Niitsitapi, Tsuut’ina, Anishinaabe, Nakota Sioux, and later the Métis. Many other tribes, including the Inuit, traveled and harvested on these lands. We acknowledge their collective stewardship. We are all Treaty People living together on these lands and we remain responsible to one another, the land, its resources, and to Treaty 6. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation.



The Past Shows Us The Way  
Mural by Aaron Paquette for the Strathcona County Museum & Archives





# Introduction

Strathcona County is a unique community with unique stories. Strathma – Strathcona County Museum & Archives – as operated by the Strathcona County Heritage Foundation (SCHF) strives to grow into new standards of excellence, facilitating the sharing of stories in novel ways that both challenge and reaffirm community identities. Strathma takes an active role in building our community, not only for those who live here but as an ideal model for others to emulate.

As a mirror of Strathcona County – its people, places, ecologies – Strathma will lead in the museum and archives field as an agile and definitive keystone institution. When Strathcona County is mentioned in conversation, the question, “Have you been to Strathma?” will inevitably follow. This five year strategic plan will take us there.



# Who We Are

The museum 's building was Sherwood Park's first fire hall, built in 1959. Almost a decade later, in 1967, an RCMP detachment was added to the facility. The two community services shared the building until 1975 when Fire Station #1 moved to its current location on Sherwood Drive. The RCMP occupied the building until 1992 when they moved to a new facility at 911 Bison Way. In 1995, Strathcona County generously provided it to The SCHF to establish a Museum & Archives dedicated to preserving and showcasing the County's rich history.

The SCHF was established in 1986 with the vision to gather and preserve the vibrant cultures, stories and community developments of Strathcona County. Strathma was then created by the SCHF to house and share the County's history. Starting in the 1980s, the SCHF gathered historical artifacts from the area and stored them in a temporary facility. In 1986, they became a registered, non-profit, charitable organization. Negotiations with Strathcona County began in 1993 to find a permanent location to house and display the artifacts. The keys to the old RCMP building were presented to the Board in June 1995. After much preparation and renovation, the Museum officially opened to the public July 12, 1997.

Today, the SCHF oversees the governance and funding of the Strathma, which now manages operations, programs, public engagement, and the care of its collections, artifacts, and archives on behalf of SCHF.



Windows Into Sherwood Park: Strathma Mural by Kris Friessen

# Our Journey

1967 - the RCMP joins the fire hall



1959 - Sherwood Parks first fire hall



1975 - Fire Station #1 moved to its current location on Sherwood Drive

1986 - SCHF is established



1992 - RCMP moved to the new facility at 911 Bison Way

1995 - SCHF is gifted the building opens a volunteer run museum & archives

1997 - Strathma opens to the public



2013 - Strathma becomes a recognized museum



Today - the museum is operated by full time staff on behalf of the SCHF





We've welcomed close to  
**74,000 VISITORS**



Our education team has put on over  
**573 OUTREACH EVENTS**



Our website attracts  
**45,000 VISITS**



Social media audiences total over  
**3,500 FOLLOWERS**



We've presented over  
**150 EXHIBITS**



Our collections contain about  
**38,300 ITEMS**



# Vision, Mission, Values

## Mandate

Strathma is a provincially registered community museum and archive dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating Strathcona County's history and heritage. We work to collect, conserve, exhibit, and ensure public accessibility to our collections.

## Vision

To be a dynamic cultural hub where the diverse stories, histories, and heritage of Strathcona County come alive through engaging and inclusive experiences.

## Mission

Strathma collects, preserves, and shares the stories - past and present - of Strathcona County's people, places, and heritage while fostering connections through education, engagement, research, and innovation.

## Values

### **Accessible and Inclusive**

We provide welcoming and inclusive experiences, ensuring accessibility for all.

### **Accountability**

We act with transparency, accountability, and respect, building trust through ethical practices and responsible stewardship.

### **Diversity Through Collaboration**

We prioritize diverse perspectives, build meaningful partnerships, and strengthen community relationships to amplify our collective impact.

### **Innovation and Engagement**

We create engaging programs and experiences using innovative tools and approaches to inspire and connect with our audiences upholding equality and respect, while fostering learning, creativity, and freedom of expression.

### **Local Heritage**

We are committed to preserving and sharing the tangible and intangible heritage of Strathcona County.

### **Stewardship**

We care for, preserve, and exhibit collections as vital cultural and historical assets, ensuring their longevity and public benefit.

# Code of Ethics

1

## Honesty, Integrity & Professionalism

Strathma members shall act with competence, honesty, integrity, respect and fairness while carrying out their obligations for the museum.

2

## Transparency & Accountability

The museum fosters a culture of transparency and accountability by embracing public interest, taking full responsibility for its actions and communicating truthfully.

3

## Protection of Cultural Heritage

Strathma recognizes its responsibility to preserve and protect cultural heritage for present and future generations and is committed to ethical stewardship of its collections. Cultural property acquired by the museum will be obtained through legal and ethical means, with full consideration given to provenance, ownership rights, and cultural sensitivity.

4

## Diversity & Inclusiveness

Strathma will seek diversity and inclusiveness in order to reflect our community. The museum will strive to ensure that a full range of perspectives contribute to the common good of our organization. In conducting its business, all members of the museum will listen to and treat all others who come together under the auspices of the museum with respect.

5

## Commitment to Growth

Strathma is committed to continuous improvement, adaptability, and the pursuit of innovation and creativity. It involves fostering resilience and ensuring holistic and sustainable development across personal and professional spheres, empowering individuals within the museum as well as the community members we collaborate with.

# Strategic Priorities

## OUR PRIORITY

## Capturing, Documenting, and Sharing the Stories of Strathcona County

Since 2023, Strathma has embraced a storytelling approach to its exhibits, emphasizing experiences over objects. This plan outlines our continued commitment to sharing the diverse stories of Strathcona County's people, places, and culture while fostering connections, inclusivity, and sustainability.



*detail photo of ᑭᓴᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᓂᓕᓕᓗᓂᓂ (kîsitêpowin sâkâhikan)*  
by Heather Shillinglaw



# 1. Deepen Our Storytelling

## OUR GOAL

We will continue to develop and deepen our story-driven approach to exhibits and programming to continue prioritizing experiences and inclusivity.

## Objectives

- Utilize new tools and methods to capture and share stories, including oral histories, community-generated content, and multimedia storytelling.
- Partner with local communities, including Indigenous and underrepresented groups, to give them a place to share their stories, culture, heritage, and knowledge.
- Work with community groups to introduce an annual event celebrating the community's evolving heritage through stories and performances.

## 2. Foster an Inclusive Visitor Experience

### OUR GOAL

We will create an inclusive, interactive, and welcoming environment for all visitors.

### Objectives

- Redesign exhibitions to include multi-sensory and hands-on elements.
- Offer extended hours and special programming to accommodate diverse schedules.
- Develop a larger education collection that can be used for interactive aspects of exhibits and provide guests with more hands-on learning programs.
- Implement tools like surveys and Net Promoter to measure visitor satisfaction.

# 3. Expand Community Engagement

## OUR GOAL

We will lower barriers to access and expand the museum's reach.

## Objectives

- Develop a "Museum on the Move" initiative with travelling exhibits and continue delivering pop-up events in community spaces.
- Continue providing rotating and pop-up displays in libraries, community centres, and public spaces.
- Strengthen partnerships with schools, continue offering tailored educational programs and loanable resources.
- Create an ambassador program to engage local residents in promoting the museum's events, programs, and mission within the community.
- Host and collaborate with groups on community-focused events, including cultural festivals and storytelling workshops, and interactive social media posts.



## 4. Safeguard Collections

### OUR GOAL

We will ensure the preservation and accessibility of the museum's artifacts and archives.

### Objectives

- Continue digitizing archival collections to improve accessibility and long-term preservation.
- Apply an equity-based lens to collection policies, prioritizing diverse acquisitions that tell stories of the community from all perspectives.
- Strengthen partnerships with other heritage organizations for resource sharing and expertise.
- Implement open storage and exhibit development practices to make parts of the collection and behind the scenes work spaces visible to the public.

# 5. Build Capacity and Foster Resilience

## OUR GOAL

We will work to secure the museum's financial and operational sustainability and ensure robust, diversified streams of income.

## Objectives

- Develop a fundraising strategy focused on donor engagement, sponsorship, and grant applications.
- Enhance professional development opportunities for staff and volunteers.
- Advocate for a feasibility study to address space limitations and explore expansion options.
- Incorporate environmentally sustainable practices in operations and future development.

# Implementation Plan

**2025:** Launch outreach programs, redesign exhibits to align with storytelling, and begin digitizing stories and archives.

**2026:** Establish “Museum on the Move” initiatives, evaluate space feasibility, and expand school partnerships.

**2027:** Host the first annual community storytelling festival and implement open storage solutions.

**2028:** Increase travelling exhibitions and complete a major fundraising campaign for facility enhancements.

**2029:** Review strategic plan progress, update priorities, and celebrate milestones with a signature event.

**2030:** Finalize preparations for the next five-year strategic plan.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Storytelling Impact: Record and share 150 community stories by 2030.
- Visitor Engagement: Increase annual visitors by 25% and achieve a Net Promoter Score of 80 or higher.
- Community Involvement: Double the number of partnerships and outreach programs by 2028.
- Financial Sustainability: Grow annual revenue by 35% through diversified funding by 2030.
- Sustainability Goals: Reduce operational energy consumption by 20% by 2030.



This strategic plan aligns the Strathcona County Museum & Archives with modern museum practices, ensuring it remains a vital and inclusive cultural resource. Through storytelling, community engagement, and sustainable growth, the museum will continue to inspire and connect generations to come.



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[www.strathma.ca](http://www.strathma.ca)



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