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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the summer of 1994, a group of dedicated citizens united to identify strategies to preserve the history of Burk's Falls. The ideas and interest generated from the group led to the collection of historical artifacts and the creation of the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society. In 1996, as a result of expressed interest from the Township of Ryerson, the Historical Society entered into discussions about the use of the 1893 - built Wisemen's corners schoolhouse located at 112 Midlothian Road in Ryerson Township. The discussions proved positive, and in 1997 the Historical Society took over the space to operate the museum.

Since inception, the Burk's Falls Historical Society is volunteer-run, operating under an affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society. The organization continues to focus on the preservation and education of heritage in the area. With close working relationships and support from Ryerson Township, Armour Township and the Village of Burk's Falls, the Burk's Falls Historical Society continues to prioritize opportunities for community growth. Working in concert with the three organizations, the mandate is to preserve the local heritage of the region.

The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society is committed to:

- Collaborating, communicating and working with public and private sector partners to develop programs and initiatives to support the heritage;
- Providing an educational environment for residents and visitors to promote the heritage aspects of the region;
- Ensuring responsible handling of all collections and artifacts acquired by the organization; and
- Operating a sustainable and financially stable organization.

To ensure seamless implementation of the organization's deliverables, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society will be guided by four core pillars. These pillars include Heritage Preservation, Education, Community Partnerships and Marketing & Communication. The organization is committed to building a sustainable model that fosters success. To ensure alignment and synergy with existing mandates and priorities, the organization continues to take several steps to begin implementing key initiatives. A variety of objectives have been identified to guide the direction of the marketing initiatives. The organization will implement initiatives aimed to:

- Promote awareness;
- 2 Increase visitor traffic including tourism;
- 3 Secure stable funding;
- 4 Increase membership and volunteer base; and
- 5 Develop a partnering network.

With limited financial resources, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society is committed to fostering balanced growth through community partnerships that leverage resources and allow for seamless expansion.

#### **ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW**

In the summer of 1994, a group of dedicated citizens united to identify strategies to preserve the history of Burk's Falls. The ideas and interest generated from the group led to the collection of historical artifacts and the creation of the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society. In 1996, as a result of expressed interest from the Township of Ryerson, the Historical Society entered into discussions about the use of the 1893 - built Wisemen's corners schoolhouse located at 112 Midlothian Road in Ryerson Township. The discussions proved positive, and in 1997 the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society took over the space to operate the museum.

Since this time, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society has relied on a committed group of volunteers to operate the museum from May to October. Operating with a limited budget, the museum has witnessed steady growth in visitors since inception in 1997. Over the past three years, the museum has averaged 694 annual visitors, a rise from the seven year average of 597 annual visitors.

The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society continues to focus on the preservation and education of heritage in the area. With close working relationships and support from Ryerson Township, Armour Township and the Village of Burk's Falls, the Burk's Falls Historical Society continues to prioritize opportunities for community growth. Working in concert with the three organizations, the Historical Society's mandate is to preserve the local heritage of the region. Through partnerships and collaboration with community stakeholders, citizens and funding partners, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society is committed to growing the organization, encouraging community collaboration and attracting more visitors to the area.

The visitor base of the Burk's Falls & District Museum includes tourists to the area, local school groups and youth organizations who wish to learn about the challenges faced by pioneers. Services include the preservation of artifacts donated to the centre, archiving documents that are of importance, promoting the area and the heritage aspects of region, and providing educational activities for school groups and service groups.

# MISSION, VISION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Historical Society is committed to adhering to the parameters set out in the Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Guiding Principles.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

To educate and preserve the deep-rooted heritage of the Burk's Falls area while providing educational learning opportunities, fostering community partnerships and stimulating visitor traffic throughout the region.

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

The District of Burk's Falls is recognized as a community with a deep heritage connection and a historical attraction that draws visitors from the region and beyond.

# **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society is committed to:

- Collaborating, communicating and working with public and private sector partners to develop programs and initiatives to support the heritage;
- Providing an educational environment for residents and visitors to promote the heritage aspects of the region;
- Ensuring responsible handling of all collections and artifacts acquired by the organization; and
- Operating a sustainable and financially stable organization.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE**

Working collaboratively with community partners, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society will adhere to its mission and vision statement by ensuring the following deliverables are accomplished. The organization will:

- Provide leadership, direction and representation of heritage components of the area.
- Work directly with community stakeholders to grow and develop the museum in a way that reflects the heritage of the area.
- Provide programming and initiatives that promote heritage.
- Create educational learning opportunities for youth.
- Establish a cultural/heritage hub that fosters collaboration between artisans, historians, service organizations and members of the public.
- Develop partnerships with private sector organizations.
- Promote and educate the community about the historical assets of the area.

To ensure seamless implementation of the organization's deliverables, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society will be guided the following four pillars.



#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Assign a committee to each pillar. The committee's roles are to identify and oversee annual goals and priorities. The goals for each pillar are agreed upon by the membership at-large.

# **Heritage Preservation**

Heritage Preservation focuses on collecting and preserving the heritage components that relate to the Burk's Falls area. Cataloging collections, preserving artifacts and seeking new additions to the collections are important aspects of this pillar.

#### **Education**

Education relates to the learning opportunities associated with the historic elements in the area. Working with school groups, youth, service clubs and community organizations to promote genealogy and increase awareness about historical events by providing educational resources, programs and information is a critical aspect of this pillar.

#### **Community Partnerships**

Community Partnerships are focused on new and existing projects that relate to the mandate of the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society. Working on initiatives that foster community development will provide benefits and opportunities for growth to the organization and the region. Youth engagement, membership drives, volunteer recruitment and public/private partnerships are important aspects of this pillar.

#### **Marketing & Communication**

Marketing & Communication will involve developing and implementing tactics to promote the heritage of the area and increase traffic to the museum. Marketing tactics will vary based on the audience and the objective of the program. Developing the brand, maintaining the newsletter and increasing awareness are important aspects of this pillar.

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The following analysis provides an overview of the unedited community input as it relates to the current situational landscape for the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society. The information was collected on July 3, 2014 during a community consultation. Please refer to Appendix A for a list of attendees.

# **STRENGTHS**

- People are aware of the school house
- Proximity to Magnatewan River & Screaming Heads
- Original school house with bell
- New furnace, chimney, electrical updates
- Cooperation with three communities including councils
- Volunteers committed to running facility
- Involvement with Guides and Scouts
- Collections are owned by Historical Society with exception of a few
- Cataloging has been completed electronic and hard copy
- Virtual museum tour
- Affiliated with Ontario Historical Society
- Families don't have to pay which provides opportunities for less fortunate
- Ryerson Township staff keep an eye out for issues at school house
- Ryerson Township's commitment to covering maintenance costs
- Strong relationship with 3 municipal councils
- Newsletter provides information to community
- Small Community

# **WEAKNESSES**

- At capacity with space to hold collections
- Unable to hold more collections
- Lack of parking when outdoor events are being held
- Upgrades needed to building in some areas (e.g. shingles)
- No water at school house (no washrooms)
- School House not wheelchair accessible
- Distance to town
- Limited funding no revenue generation plan
- "Donations only" can be a challenge
- Lack of volunteers and HR support
- No overall plan to set direction of roles and responsibilities of volunteers
- Lack of strategic plan and direction
- Continuity and action plan is missing
- Lacking experts to showcase preservation requirements
- Website is non-existent
- Hours of operation are based on volunteers
- No staff
- Lacking formalized "membership" structure/plan or new member form
- Unappealing for youth to buy in

# **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Education facility
- Surplus desks in storage and books
- Increase volunteers
- Using new facilities to establish partnerships
- Swing bridge available for use at school house location
- Promote newsletter
- Create added value for members ticket sales, admissions
- Define role of volunteers/board members
- Youth engagement interactive activities, inspiration
- Best practice review (The Museum Kitchener)
- Heritage Creation and Preservation creating connections with significant aspects (e.g. Stanley Cup)
- Profiling family connections
- Screaming Heads Attraction opportunity to build on it
- Showcase arts and local heroes (music, sports, art heroes) go back in history and profile this
- Packages to recruit new volunteers using interest developed from local survey
- Recruit "retired" individuals to employ
- Increased funding opportunities for year round operations
- Canoe/kayak rentals at school house
- Near North Heritage Group connect museums and provide needed HR support
- Find ways to ensure municipal buy-in
- Membership drive (volunteering, meeting, events)
- Travel exhibits in partnership with other museums
- Determine ways to have three Councils provide more support to preserve heritage
- Create committees to engage volunteers
- Partnerships with area trades people to assist with upgrades (in-kind contribution)
- Partnership with Board of Education to sustain school house or retired Teacher's Federation, local schools, principals, etc.
- School house (e.g. "Summer School")
- Genealogy Group to become engaged and host meetings
- Day camp visitors organized by staff (students)
- Programming (e.g. ghost hut, history lessons)
- Create relationships with experts in historical environment
- Music groups and performers to work with museum (e.g. choral society)
- Elementary school programs
- Utilize pre-recorded information and talk to more people to gather stories
- Create streams for collections (e.g. Farming, River, Alt. Energy, Aboriginal)
- Look into NFP/Charitable status
- Heritage aspects to build on including Ontario female mayor born in Burk's Falls

#### **THREATS**

- Volunteer burn out and declining numbers
- Loss of local history
- Sustainability HR & Financial
- Preservation is lacking
- Unable to access certain funding due to lack of accessibility
- School house facility plan if re-located

#### **REGIONAL MUSEUMS**

An analysis of regional museums in the area was conducted. The museums selected ranged in scope, size and geographic location. The following museums were visited:

- Qunits Museum, North Bay
- Discovery North Bay, North Bay
- Nipissing Museum, Nipissing Township
- Muskoka Heritage Place, Huntsville
- Orillia Museum of Art and History, Orillia
- The G & Sf Regimental Museum, Barrie

The analysis identified the following trends:

- To sustain growth revenue sources must include a mix of paid entry, municipal contributions, government grants and programming.
- The museums do not serve as destination attraction. Visitors are not traveling to the communities for the sole purpose of visiting the museum. However, visitors to the region are interested in visiting the local museums as a way to explore the culture/heritage of the community.
- It is common for museums to identify ways to establish strong community partnerships with service organizations, local artists, retailers, youth, and other relevant markets.
- Exhibits must be changed on a regular basis (e.g., annual) to encourage repeat visitors to come back.

An opportunity to work together with regional museums exists. This will strengthen relationships, increase opportunities to work together, leverage resources and share best practices.

# **TOURISM INDUSTRY**

According to Consumer Insight Research Data conducted by Ontario Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC), Northeastern Ontario is a main domestic gateway to the North. The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society's proximity to Northeastern Ontario presents ideal opportunities to capitalize on visitors travelling through the region. Opportunities exist to attract visitors from Southern Ontario, however, research suggests that other source markets could yield growth in the longer term. This includes other parts of Ontario, Quebec, and Boarder States, which are currently being explored for tourism.

The research findings indicate that this growth could be stimulated in a variety of ways including:

- Giving current core visitors reasons for continuing existing behaviour (e.g. repeat visitors);
- Articulating a broader, integrated offer that draws on the Region's under-appreciated strengths and provides compelling reasons for current non-visitors with aligned interests to consider a trip;
- Innovating, renovating and packaging product while improving quality to optimize growth potential among both current and prospective visitors; and
- Identifying traveller segments and geographic markets most likely to yield volume.

Based on the statistical data, the following outlines geographic markets that are likely to yield volume. The table identifies percentages of travellers by area of residence that have ever visited Northeastern Ontario, have visited in the last two years, and the percentage of travelers indicating interest in visiting Northeastern Ontario in the next two years.

Percentage of Travellers from each Market Stating Visited Northern Ontario – North East Visited ....

	Ever	In Past	Very Interested in
Travellers Residing In		Two Years	Visiting in next 2 years
ONTARIO	38%	14%	18%
• GTA	30%	10%	19%
Other Ontario	45%	17%	18%
QUEBEC	13%	3%	6%
NEARBY U.S.	9%	2%	13%
• Michigan	11%	2%	13%
New York	10%	4%	15%
• Ohio	7%	2%	12%
• Pennsylvania	8%	2%	11%
OTHER U.S.	7%	2%	13%

This data can be used by the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society to determine marketing strategies and key messaging directed to potential visitors.

The data indicates there is a continuing interest in visiting Northeastern Ontario from Ontarians outside the region and in the Greater Toronto Area. The data also indicates a slightly softer interest from travelers residing in Quebec. Nearby States such as Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania have been identified as stronger markets with plausible interest in travelling to the area.

Based on this data, marketing and communication outreach tactics should include reaching these geographical segments. Due to the size and resources of the Burk's Falls & District Museum, opportunities for regional partnerships should be explored.

While a deep understanding about the current consumer market exists, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society should identify profiles for each market segment that could be attracted to the museum. According to Consumer Insight Research Data provided by Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC), one of the strongest visitation drivers to Northeastern Ontario is Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR). Data collected indicates that over the past two years the region has had the following volume from VFR travellers.

Data collected indicates that over the past two years the reg volume from VFR travellers.	ion has had the following
ONTARIO	388,596
NEARBY U.S. (Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania)	72,277
QUEBEC	16,915

It is important to encourage the VFR segment to experience more on their trip. This may include visits to regional museums to learn more about the local heritage of the community in which they are staying.

# **TARGET MARKET**

The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society is committed to working with the community members, stakeholders and museum visitors. The following provides an overview of each audience group.

#### **MUSEUM VISITORS**

The Consumer Insight Research Data identifies 12 consumer segments relevant to the tourism sector. Based on the 12 segments identified, the following four groups have been identified as the target markets for Northeastern Ontario. As such, The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society has an opportunity to capitalize on this market.

Based on tourism industry research, the following four visitor groups scored the highest and identified as ideal target audiences for the region. The score was calculated based on the following attributes:

- Affinity (familiarity & future interest in the region);
- Alignment (consumer interest and product offering within the region);
- Size (number of travelers and travel budget);
- Value (average per person spend on trips).

#### 1. KNOWLEDGE SEEKERS

Travellers in this segment are looking to appreciate and understand the places they visit. Their trips are typically about expanding their knowledge and stimulating their minds rather than resting and relaxing. They are driven by a desire to explore culture, history, architecture and natural landmarks and often focus on sight-seeing, museums, galleries and historical sites.

#### 2. UP & COMING EXPLORERS

This is a youth-oriented group that is on its way up in the world. These travellers are emerging into a new life stage, often characterized by greater affluence and new opportunities. Visible minorities and immigrants often fall into this segment. Travel is not about connecting with family or friends. These people often want to be adventurous and energetic. Their travel experiences often start with what is nearby and typically with core tourist attractions. Ontario is popular with this group and visitation is typically very recent.

#### 3. CONNECTED EXPLORERS

This segment has a psychological need to take a break from the everyday and be exposed to new experiences and knowledge. They are committed to expanding their horizons through travel. Interestingly, the Internet and new technologies are key instruments in facilitating these travel interests & experiences. They research, book and share travel experiences through new technologies – before, during and after trips.

#### 4. NATURE LOVERS

This is a consumer segment attracted to outdoor experiences aligned to Ontario's quintessential parks and lakes offering. Camping and associated activities (e.g., hiking, canoeing, fishing) are key interests for this group. The majority classify as "nature lovers". Activities align with the recreational aspects of the outdoors and not necessarily the extreme aspects of the outdoors, (e.g., avid angling or hunting). Not surprisingly, the travel style is basic with camping prevalent.

# **VALUE METRIC DEMOGRAPHICS**

The following chart provides demographic information related to income, travel budgets and travel visit information for each of the four priority travel segments.

	Average Annual Household Income	Average Annual Household Travel Budget	Number Of Trips In Past	Average Trip Length (In days)	Average Party Size Per Trip	Average Spend Per Person In Travel Party
Knowledge Seekers	\$102,480	\$4,713	3.1	8.0	2.7	\$1,386
Up & Coming Explorers	\$88,361	\$4,637	3.5	4.6	2.8	\$947
Connected Explorers	\$93,080	\$4,267	3.6	5.8	2.8	\$862
Nature Lovers	\$70,547	\$2,172	3.1	5.4	3.7	\$382

Green indicates above average

Blue indicates below average

#### **GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS**

Ontario, Quebec, and nearby US (Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania) have been identified as geographical targets for Northeastern Ontario based on industry trends.

Over the past two years, statistical data indicates that the neach area is as follows:	umber of visitors from
ONTARIO	993,853
NEARBY U.S. (Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania)	1,606,163
QUEBEC	100,087

The following Consumer Insight Research data table identifies where each travel segment is coming from in relation to the priority geographic markets.

Percent of travellers residing in falling into each segment						
	Ontario	Quebec	Nearby US			
Knowledge Seekers	8%	10%	6%			
Up & Coming Explorers	7%	3%	11%			
Connected Explorers	7%	5%	7%			
Nature Lovers	11%	13%	6%			

When assessing data as presented above, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society will have more insight into who is travelling in the region and from what areas. The research will be used as a guide but will not be relied upon solely to determine how to market to the identified consumer segments. The information provides insight into the types of visitors the museum may attract. This will provide strategies to increase awareness about the museum offerings and increase the number of annual visitors.

	The following trends have been identified based on the information provided.						
Ranking	Knowledge Seekers	Up & Coming Explorers	Connected Explorers	Nature Lovers			
Income Level*	1	3	2	4			
Travel Budget*	1	2	3	4			
Spend per person*	1	2	3	4			
Percentage of travel spend per income	4.6%	5.25%	4.6%	3.7%			
Stay per trip*	1	3	2	4			
Area	<ol> <li>Quebec</li> <li>Ontario</li> <li>US</li> </ol>	1. US 2. Ontario	<ol> <li>Equal US &amp;         Ontario</li> <li>Low Quebec</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Quebec</li> <li>Ontario</li> <li>US</li> </ol>			
Average spend per day per trip	\$173.25	\$207.87	\$148.62	\$70.74			

<sup>\*1 =</sup> highest - 4 = lowest

#### **KNOWLEDGE SEEKERS**

- Tend to have the highest incomes and larger travel budgets, spending 4.6% of household income on travel.
- Spend more per person and average a longer stay per trip.
- Are fairly evenly distributed across the three target geographical areas (Ontario, Quebec, and nearby US), with a slightly larger percentage residing in Quebec.
- Spend approximately \$173.25 per day per trip.

#### **UP & COMING EXPLORERS**

- Have the second lowest income; however, they tend to have larger travel spending budgets and spend 5.25% of household income on travel.
- Represent a lower stay per visit; however, they average the second largest spend per trip.
- A larger proportion of Up & Coming Explorers reside in nearby US, with average residency in Ontario and below average residency in Quebec.
- Spend approximately \$207.87 per day per trip.

#### **CONNECTED EXPLORERS**

- Have the second highest income and third highest travel budget, spending 4.6% of household income on travel (comparable to Knowledge Seekers).
- Spend less than Knowledge Seekers and Up & Coming Explorers, but average the second highest stay per trip.
- Appear to be evenly distributed across Ontario and nearby US, with the smallest percentage residing in Quebec.
- Spend approximately \$148.62 per day.

# **NATURE LOVERS**

- Have the lowest income and lowest travel budget of the four consumer segments, spending 3.7% of household income on travel
- Spend less per trip, but have the third highest stay per trip. Lower spend could possibly be attributed to interest in camping and the outdoors.
- Predominately residing in Quebec and Ontario, with an average residency in nearby US.
- Spend approximately \$70.74 per day.

## **COMMUNITY MEMBERS & STAKEHOLDERS**

In addition to the visitors to the museum, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society will focus attention on a variety of local audience groups within the region. It is important that every audience group is engaged. The engagement strategies will differ based on the audience and the overall communication goal. The following outlines a list of stakeholders that play a role in the heritage preservation of the region.

- Members of Historical Society
- Area Residents
- Ryerson Township Council & Staff
- Armour Township Council & Staff
- Village of Burk's Falls Council & Staff
- Ontario Historical Society
- Service Clubs & Chambers of Commerce
- Funding Agencies (e.g. Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Sport, Ministry of Northern Development & Mines/Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, NECO, FedNor)
- Tourism Associations/Regional Tourism Organization 12 Explorers' Edge
- Regional Museums
- Local and Regional Media Partners
- Private Sector Philanthropists



# MARKETING PLAN

# **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure balanced and sustainable growth, a variety of objectives have been identified to guide the direction of the marketing initiatives. These includes:

- 1 Promoting awareness;
- 2 Increasing visitor traffic including tourism;
- 3 Securing stable funding;
- 4 Increasing membership and volunteer base; and
- 5 Developing partnering network.

# **LOCATION**

Currently operating from one location, the museum is required to draw visitors to Ryerson Township. Although outside of the Village of Burk's Falls, the museum is ideally located on route to the Screaming Heads attraction. Visitors are often drawn in to the museum before or after their visit to Screaming Heads.

However, as the museum continues to grow, space has been identified as an existing weakness. Due to this limited space, the museum is unable to hold more collections and artifacts or handle large groups for programs or tours. Furthermore, the facility is not winterized and therefore year-round operation is not a possibility. As such, facility expansion is recommended. A strong partnership with Northland Power has been established and an opportunity to expand the operations has been presented.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Northland Power has presented the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society with use of the Watt Farmhouse, creating an opportunity for the museum to expand its operation. It is recommended that the organization accept this offer and maintain the operation of both locations for the next two years. Following a review of the financial statements after two years, a decision on moving forward can be presented. With the operation of two locations, a regional draw between the two facilities can be created. The two locations will drive traffic from Ryerson Township to Armour Township while creating a central hub in the Village of Burk's Falls.

Through promotional efforts, the Burk's Falls & District Museum can market both locations and provide unique activities to encourage visitation at both locations.

#### PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The Burk's Falls & District Museum services include tours and programming for youth, however, due to space restrictions and seasonal operating hours, opportunities are limited. With the expansion to the Watt Farm House new programs and services could be provided.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

**Historic Setting** - Using the schoolhouse to replicate an actual teaching environment will allow for educational programs and learning opportunities for museum visitors. Capitalizing on the historical perspectives of the museum will also provide unique perspectives for all identified target market audiences. An opportunity to have a volunteer dress up as a teacher from the era will add an additional perspective.

Rooms within the Watt Farm House could be set up as historical living environment. Museum visitors would be provided with insight into the historical way of life.



Using ancestor stories to build a connection between the two facilities would draw visitors to both places. This could be done by creating a link between the school house in which the ancestors studied at and the house in which they grew up. Fun facts, scavenger hunts and interactive activities could be implemented that appeal to youth markets and drive traffic between the two locations.

**Space Sharing Rentals** – An opportunity to maximize the community's use of both facilities exists. Local community groups could attend the Farm House and the School House for workshops, meetings and special events. The implementation of a nominal rental fee for the space would assist with ongoing operational costs. The Farm House could accommodate meeting room rentals year round on the second floor if space was designated specifically for this purpose. The School House could rent space in the summer months when the museum was not open to the public.

In addition, incorporating an artist showcase and/or gallery could link the art and heritage aspects of the region. A commission/consignment model should be considered for artists interested in selling their work.

By offering space for the community an opportunity to develop the partner network exists.

**Gift Shop** – A gift shop with local memorabilia and artisan products could be added at the Watt Farm House. A small rack of related products may also be sold from the School House to maximize retail sales.

**Activity, Events, Workshops** – The Burk's Falls & District Museum could host their own programs with guest speakers on a rotational basis at both locations. A registration fee could be charged for entry. Fees should be established based on the speaker and length of program.

**Membership** – An opportunity to engage the local community through annual membership programs should be considered. Members could receive special invites to events, entry to both museum locations at any time and discounts for event registration and gift shop merchandise.

#### **PRICING**

The current pricing model for the museum is by donation only.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Nominal fees should be applied over the next two years. Once demand has been generated and the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society has had an opportunity to reflect on the two-year financial statements, a decision to alter the pricing model should be made. The following provides an overview of the recommended pricing model for museum admission and space rental for 2015 and 2016.

Daily Admission: \$2/person

Children 16 and under free.

Annual Membership: \$10/year for individual membership

\$20/year for family membership

\*Admission includes Watt Farm House and School House

Space Rentals: \$15/hour

\$75/day

\*Additional fees for clean-up may be charged if required.

#### **PROMOTION & ADVERTISING**

When developing strategies, emphasis should be placed on looking for ways to create awareness, increase visitor traffic and generate excitement among the community. By executing a marketing strategy that targets the identified audience, the overall objectives can be met. The following provides a variety of tactics that should be considered.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

#### **Develop a Brand**

A brand should be developed that reflect the mission, vision and guiding principles of the organization. The look and feel of the brand should be incorporated into all marketing materials, newsletter, website, signage and any other communication tools used.

## **Develop Promotional Materials**

A professional and appealing brochure and flyer that speaks to the target audience should be created. The material should include the following components:

- Photographs of both locations;
- Information on annual exhibit;
- Available services and things to do at museum;
- Admission fees;
- Space rental fees and information (if applicable);
- Locations of facilities; and
- Contact Information (including website).

The promotional material should be distributed to regional visitor information centres, hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, regional partnering museums and any community organizations that are interested in cross-promotion.

#### Newsletter

The newsletter should continue, as it is represents an ideal vehicle for communication and awareness. Content can be expanded to include updates from the committee's progress, guest articles from local community members, volunteer recruitment, and other relevant information related to the growth and expansion of the organization.

Expansion of an email distribution list will provide additional opportunities for outreach. As contact information is collected from visitors, permission to add them to the email distribution list should be requested.

#### **Develop Billboards & Signage**

Billboards and signage promoting the museum locations should be explored. As the majority of travellers in the region will be driving the Highway 11 corridor, billboards are an effective way to market the museum. The billboard and signage should reflect the brand of the museum with a call to action that drives traffic to the museum locations and the website. As awareness continues to increase, the number of visitors will as well.

# **Develop Online Presence**

A website should be created that can be easily updated by volunteers of the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society. Working with a website developer to build a basic website on a Wordpress (or equivalent) platform will allow for a professional look and feel in a cost effective way. Once the system has been created, new content including text, photographs and videos can be uploaded on the back-end. The system should be built to be user-friendly, allowing the organization control and access at all times. Training tutorials should be arranged for the volunteers designated to update the site. This will allow for fresh content to be added which will maximize Search Engine Optimization, leading to an increase in awareness online for potential visitors. Once the website is operational, consideration to social media strategy using tools such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is important.

As the museums target audience will be planning their travel primarily online, it is imperative for the Burk's Falls & District Museum to have a strong web presence.

### Implement an Electronic Visitor Tracking System

An electronic visitor tracking system should be implemented to analyze where visitors are coming from, how long they are staying and the purpose of their trip. The data collected will be essential for refining the target audience, tweaking marketing tactics and identifying new opportunities for growth. The tracking system can also be used to collect contact information for promotional distribution purposes, including special events, the newsletter and upcoming exhibits. In the early stages, a visitor tracking system can be built using an excel spreadsheet, a simple program to create a database. As budget increases and visitor demand rises, a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) may be considered.

#### **Community Outreach**

To increase awareness at the local level, community outreach is essential. This can be done by making presentations at local organizations, hosting community-focused events, working in partnership with other museums in the region, working with media partners to promote the initiatives and activities, maintaining ongoing communication with private sector partners such as Northland Power and working closely with funding agencies and tourism organizations. Once the organization is ready to announce the direction of the museum, a community event should be held to increase awareness and recruit volunteers.

Based on the success of the past Near North Heritage Group, an opportunity exists to re-create a similar model. Regional museums could meet on a regularly scheduled basis to share best practices, work on joint marketing initiatives and leverage resources.



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# **OPERATION PLAN**

The Burk's Falls & District Historical Society is well positioned for growth. The following provides an overview of the current situation with a recommendation on how to make changes to foster growth.

#### **LEGAL STRUCTURE**

The Burk's Falls Historical Society is volunteer-run, operating under an affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society. While this structure provides a low-cost method of operating, it does not provide a solid foundation to ensure sustainability into the future.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

In two year's time, upon review of the financials, the organization should consider incorporating as a non-profit organization with a formal Board of Directors. Board makeup should include one council representative from Armour, Ryerson and the Village of Burk's Falls, along with a youth representative and members at large. Ex-Offico positions representing municipal staff, provincial and federal government agencies is strongly recommended.

#### **LOCATION**

The Burk's Falls Historical Society is located at 112 Midlothian Road in Ryerson Township. Operating from the Wiseman schoolhouse for over 17 years has proved to be extremely beneficial. As a result of the committed Council and Municipal staff in Ryerson Township and a group of dedicated volunteers, the museum has been a great success. Generous donations from the community has allowed for the growth of collections and artifacts. Due to this success, the museum has outgrown the physical space. Collections are unable to be displayed effectively and due to the building structure the museum can only be operational in the summer months.

An opportunity to utilize space at the Watt Farm House has been presented by Northland Power. This generous offer provides the museum more space to display artifacts at a subsidized lease rate of \$10/year. In addition to the generous lease rate, Northland Power has also committed to providing \$30,000 in leasehold improvements, including the installation of a well for the museum. As such, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society must decide on how to best proceed. A decision on whether to expand or re-locate the operation must be made.



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The following provides an unedited situational analysis from the July 3rd, 2014 community consultation as it relates to housing the museum at Northland Power's Farm.

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Potential for Northland partnership with expressed interest and generous financial commitment from the company
- Watt Farm has entrance into Algonquin Park and a number of lakes
- Watt Farm is a century home but not limited to updates as it is not designated as a heritage building

#### WEAKNESSES

- Location is not wheelchair accessible
- Distance to town
- Security/watch currently not in place at Watt Farm

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Capitalize on Buffalo attraction near Watt Farm
- Drive traffic to both locations
- Large space in farmhouse space to display hearse
- Rotating exhibits Quilters and Artists
- Gift Shop option
- Implement Heritage Garden
- Meeting rental space tea party, workshops, meetings, weddings
- Two properties provides more networks and relationships with region
- Create security plan for Watt House
- Northland power alternate energy workshops
- Increase buy-in from community with two locations in different townships and the Village of Burk's Falls
- 4-season potential at Watt Farm

#### **THREATS**

- Increased stress to carry load of operations for two facilities
- Difficulty getting Screaming Heads visitors to re-route to Watt Farm House if school house location did not exist
- Watt Farm ownership Northland Power vs. Municipal ownership
- Costs associated with restoring and updating Watt Farm House (cosmetics, clean up)

# **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Based on the research conducted, the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society should consider the following approach until the end of 2016. At the end of 2016, the organization's operations should be revisited and changes made to reflect new demands and opportunities. For 2015 and the 2016, the following recommendation should be implemented:

- 1. Maintain the summer operation of the School House located on Midlothian Road in Ryerson Township; and
- 2. Open a year-round museum at the Watt Farm House on Northland Powers site.

#### MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL

Currently the Burk's Falls & District Museum lacks a formalized operating structure. As identified in the Situational Analysis, volunteer burn out and declining members is a threat to the organization. With a lack of Human Resources, the sustainability and growth is a challenge.

The following provides recommendations on how to overcome this barrier.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

#### **Increase the Number of Volunteers**

A strong volunteer base is required to support the efforts of the organization. Building on the work of the existing volunteers, new volunteer recruitment is essential to strengthen the volunteer base and reduce volunteer burn out. A membership drive is needed as a means to recruit new volunteers. This can be done by:

- Encouraging existing members and community stakeholders to use networks to spread awareness about the cause and need;
- Using media partners to disseminate the information;
- Posting information online;
- Creating a membership information package;
- Making public presentations during council and economic development meetings;
- Providing awareness to the community about the type of volunteer the organization is seeking, the
  activities that require help and how people can get involved; and
- Promoting short-term commitment/project opportunities to ensure potential volunteers do not feel as if long-term commitments are mandatory.

#### **Create a Committee Structure**

During the transition period over the next two years, a committee structure will be essential to ensure deliverables are implemented and growth occurs. Keeping in line with the four pillars, Heritage Preservation, Education, Community Partnerships, Marketing and Communications, a committee structure is required to oversee the progress of each pillar.

Each committee will strive to identify and implement new initiatives annually as they relate to the pillar.

#### Hire an Intern

While there is no budget to hire full-time employees, there exists an opportunity to apply for a two-year internship. The purpose of this Internship will be to work full-time at the museum and oversee the priorities set under each of the four pillars. In addition, this position will be required to execute deliverables as identified by the organization, committees and members. It is recommended that the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society in partnership with Ryerson Township, Armour Township and the Village of Burk's Falls, apply for a two-year Internship with Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). Through the application process, the consideration should be given to building an internship workplan that requires a candidate with skills and expertise in business development and marketing with a passion and understanding of community heritage and culture.

Upon funding approval, a hiring committee to should be established to develop the workplan, job description and conduct interviews.

#### **Establish a Board of Directors**

When the organization incorporates as a non-profit organization, a solid board presence will be required. The Board of Directors should play an active role in the shaping of the organization. This includes identifying high-level tactics, leadership and setting the direction for volunteers, committees and future staff. This should be explored at the end of 2016. In the interim, the members should continue this role.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

The activities identified focus on tactics to ensure that the organization moves forward seamlessly. Through the implementation of the identified recommendations, the community will have greater awareness about the overall vision and future growth plan for the Burk's Falls & District Museum.

The following provides a summary of the presented recommended actions to help the organization fulfill its objectives of achieving the following:

- Promoting awareness;
- 2 Increasing visitor traffic;
- 3 Securing stable funding;
- 4 Increasing membership and volunteer base; and
- 5 Developing a partnering network.

Pillar Legend:	Heritage Preservation	Education	Community Partnerships
	Marketing & Communica	tion Memb	oer at Large (sub-committee may be established)

Recommended Action Items	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Accept Northland Power's offer									
Create Committee Structure									
Host Project Launch event									
Create Internship Funding Application									
Create Project Funding Application									
Identify Products & Services for implementation									
Create Membership Program									
Implement Fee Structure									
Hire Intern									
Develop a Brand*									
Develop Promotional Material*									
Identify new content ideas for newsletter and design to incorporate brand									
Create and maintain website with input from all committees/members*									
Work with schools and service organizations to create educational programs based on needs									
Develop Billboards & Signage*									
Assess and build upon cataloging processes									
Implement and maintain Electronic Visitor Tracking System*									
Conduct Community Outreach									
Increase volunteers									

# **FINANCIALS**

MUSEUM Start-Up Budget 2014	
INFLOWS	
Northland Power Contribution	\$30,000.00
Public Sector Contribution (to be generated)	5,000.00
Total Inflows	\$35,000.00
EXPENDITURES	
Relocation Costs	1,000.00
Electronic equipment	2,000.00
Signage	1,125.00
Furnishings	4,000.00
Leasehold Improvements	21,875.00
Marketing	5,000.00
Total outflows	\$35,000.00
CASH ON HAND	\$6,100.00

To maximize the private and public sector contributions, it is recommended that additional funding be applied for to leverage existing resources. A larger project should be developed that incorporates a variety of recommendations within the business plan. An application to the Rural Economic Development Program (RED) is encouraged.

# FINANCIALS

MUSEUM Projected Income Statements			
REVENUES			
Operating	2014	2015	2016
Admissions and Memberships	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,600.00
Space Rental	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Public Donations	5,000.00	2,100.00	2,425.00
Partnership Funding	30,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Provincial Support	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Municipal Donations	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Intern	0.00	31,500.00	31,500.00
Total non-operating revenues	35,000.00	42,100.00	42,525.00
In-Kind			
Northland power Partnership	0.00	6,800.00	6,800.00
Ryerson Township	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Municipal summer student funding	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Total In-Kind Revenues	0.00	13,800.00	13,800.00
Total All Revenues	\$35,000.00	\$55,900.00	\$56,325.0
EXPENSES			
Operating	2014	2015	2016
Memberships	0.00	60.00	0.00
Phone & Internet	0.00	1,200.00	1,350.00
Office supplies & Printing	0.00	190.00	225.00
Maintenance & Repairs	0.00	650.00	750.00
Relocation Costs	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
Marketing & Events	6,125.00	1,000.00	1,200.00
Intern	0.00	39,000.00	39,000.00
	7,125.00	42,100.00	42,525.00
In-Kind			
Summer Students	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Rent & Utilities	0.00	9,800.00	9,800.00
Total In-Kind Expenses	0.00	13,800.00	13,800.00
Total All Expenses	\$7,125.00	\$55,900.00	\$56,325.0
Net Surplus or Deficit	\$27,875.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

# **FINANCIALS**

MUSEUM Projected Balance Sheet			
ASSETS			
Current Assets Cash	2014 \$6,100.00	2015 \$6,100.00	2016 \$6,100.00
Fixed Assets Equipment Furnishings Leasehold Improvements	2,000.00 4,000.00 21,875.00	2,000.00 4,000.00 21,875.00	2,000.00 4,000.00 21,875.00
Total Assets	\$33,975.00	\$33,975.00	\$33,975.00
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY			
Equity	\$33,975.00	\$33,975.00	\$33,975.00

MUSEUM Projected Cash Flow		,	
	2014	2015	2016
OPERATIONS			
Cash received from admissions and memberships	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,600.00
Cash received from rentals	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Cash received from public donations	5,000.00	2,100.00	2,425.00
Cash received from contributions	30,000.00	0.00	0
Cash paid for operations	-7,125.00	-42,100.00	-42,525.00
Net cash flow from operations	27,875.00	-36,500.00	-36,500.00
NON-OPERATING			
Cash received from partnership funding	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Cash received from provincial support	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Cash received from municipal support	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Cash received from intern	0.00	31,500.00	31,500.00
Net cash flow from non-operating	0.00	36,500.00	36,500.00
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Net change in capital assets	27,875.00	0.00	0.00
NET INCREASE (DECREASE IN CASH)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Opening balance in banks Closing balance in banks	6,100.00 6,100.00	6,100.00 6,100.00	6,100.00 6,100.00
NET INCREASE(DECREASE) IN BANKS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

# **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PARTICIPATION LIST**

		"YES,
First Name	Last Name	please keep me updated on the Business Plan Initiative"
Rosland	Hall	yes
Andrew	Farnsworth	yes
Barbara	Marlow	yes
Cathy	Still	yes
Julie	Bungess	yes
Rebecca	Zanussi	yes
Haley	MacDonald	yes
R.Lois	Bridgman	yes
Dona	Crawford	yes
Betty	Caldwell	yes
Lawerence	Main	yes
Jerry	Brandt	yes
Diane	Brandt	yes
Peter	Hall	yes
Dave	Gray	yes
Judy	Ransomi	yes
Linda	Maurer	yes

#### POTENTIAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

In addition to the funding programs identified below, discussions with NECO about available support is recommended. As a funding partner for the development of the business plan, additional funding may be available to support the implementation of key initiatives.

# **Rural Economic Development Program (RED)**

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/red/

The Rural Economic Development (RED) Program be useful when considering cosmetic upgrades and leashold improvements. This program has 2 streams - planning and implementation. The implementation application requires that a planning process has taken place. Utilizing the business plan as a road map would allow for access to the Implementation Stream. Under the Business/Sector Development and Diversification, the rehabilitation of cultural and/or heritage and/or tourism attractions are listed.

Minor capital is listed as an eligible costs and would include things like, sub-contractor fees, equipment for structural modifications to accommodate the installation of equipment, architectural design work, renovations and retrofits to existing structures (materials or supplies and labour to renovate existing space) technology upgrades such as a computer hardware, software and network cables.

Partnership and collaboration is not a requirement, however, the application will be scored higher if partnerships can be demonstrated, particularly those involving the private sector. Funding is available as per the published brochure up to 90%. As explained, it will be scored lower when asking for 90% funding and it is only in extreme cases where the applicant would need to demonstrate dire and special need and has a strong economic impact for the region. Funding from other granting programs (Federal only) or private sector investment can be leverage to achieve a 75% contribution. Stacking with other provincial funding programs would not be eligible. The majority of applications approved have been for 50% funding.

An application for this funding program is recommended first.

## **Northern Ontario Heritage Program (NOHFC)**

www.nohfc.ca

**Northern Ontario Heritage Internship program:** The intent of the program is to provide a recent graduate (from an accredited college or university) with a first-time employment opportunity in his or her field of study. Not-for-profit organizations can receive a conditional contribution of up to 90% of the salary to a maximum of 31,500.00. If EDAC training is provided and required for the field of study, then a two-year Internship can be requested.

Community Capacity Building Initiative: This is a non-capital program meant to promote or support economic growth in Northern Ontario. In order to qualify under this program, the applicant should be identified as one of the priority sectors outlined in the Growth plan. Arts, culture and creative industries is one of the sectors identified. For regional partnership-based projects, the amount of NOHFC assistance will be up to 50% to a maximum of 100,000. The program is intended to support economic development including job creation.

**Event Partnership Program.** This program provides different scales of funding depending on the project. It is geared towards growth in the tourism and economic development sectors (not community based). If regional initiatives with other museums was developed this program may be a fit. The Community Capacity Building program could assist in planning.

#### **TOURISM & CULTURAL PROGRAMS**

# **The Culture Development Fund**

www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/PRDRoo7505

This program seeks to strengthen cultural organizations and their leadership, helping them to increase their knowledge and skills. This will help organizations become better at what they do and more successful in achieving their mandates. Increased performance through new and innovative projects will build the capacity of the sector, leading to a stronger and more stable culture sector.

# The Summer Experience Program (SEP)

www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/OSAPQA005131

This program provides not-for-profit organizations, municipalities and Aboriginal/First Nations communities with funding to create meaningful summer employment opportunities for students. SEP positions must focus on activities supporting key sectors within the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, including citizenship, voluntarism, seniors, women, tourism, culture, sport and recreation and offer training for future careers or work experience in skills transferable to the general workforce.

# **Community Museum Operating and Pay Equity Grants**

www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/OSAPQA005138

This program provides annual operating grants to eligible community museums across Ontario. These museums contribute to their communities' economic well-being as employers and tourist attractions, attracting over 2,300,000 visitors per year. This support strengthens their role in their communities as custodians and interpreters of the province's irreplaceable heritage collections. Museums that receive this support are required to meet the criteria established in Regulation 877, "Grants for Museums" under the Ontario Heritage Act and this ministry's Standards for Community Museums in Ontario.

#### **HERITAGE CANADA PROGRAMS**

The Museums Assistance Program supports heritage institutions and workers in the preservation and presentation of heritage collections, providing financial assistance to Canadian museums and related institutions.

The Canadian Cultural Spaces Fund seeks to improve physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation by increasing access for Canadians to performing arts, visual arts, media arts, and to museum collections and heritage displays.

## **ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL (OAC)**

www.arts.on.ca/Page2848.aspx

The Ontario Arts Council that has many programs that could assist should artists become a part of the business model.

# **Contact Information**

Program	Contact Name	Contact Information
RED Program, NOHFC Programs	Carole Mantha Northern Development Officer, Ministry of Northern Development & Mines	North Bay Office 705.494.4084 carole.mantha@ontario.ca
Tourism and Cultural Programs	Caroline Loiselle, Regional Advisor, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport	North Bay Office 705.494.4161 Caroline.Loiselle@ontario.ca
Heritage Canada Programs	Andrew Elgee Museum Advisor Department of Canadian Heritage	Sudbury Office 705.671.0308 Andrew.Elgee@pch.gc.ca
Ontario Arts Council	Laurie McGauley Northeastern Consultant	705.673.5812 lmcgauley@arts.on.ca

