

2023 - 2024

ELLIOT LAKE MUSEUM'S **STRATEGIC PLAN**



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An amenity of the City of Elliot Lake, the Elliot Lake Museum facilitates the preservation of, and access to our area's heritage.

MUSEUM HISTORY

The Elliot Lake Museum was established in 1963 as a centennial project—a mere eight years after Elliot Lake was formed. This provided the museum with the unique privilege of documenting the City's history as it unfolded.

Recognizing the museum's value as the keeper of the community's heritage and a tourist attraction, the museum continued to grow under the City's guidance. In 1971, the museum's collections were moved from their original location in the Elliot Lake Hotel, to City Hall. This space, however, would soon prove to be too small. With the closure of Elliot Lake's last mine on September 26, 1996, the museum's collection and responsibility for documenting the area's history grew. It was no coincidence that the museum moved to the Lester B. Pearson Civic Center, a location twice as large as its City Hall office, a mere two days after the last mine's closure.

JANUARY, 30, 1963

THERE'S ONLY ONE BUILDING SUITABLE FOR 'NUCLEARAMA'

It was reported from the government offices in Toronto last week that some owners of property at Elliot Lake objected to the plan to move the municipal offices to the empty Elliot Lake Hotel, which would be used also for a nuclear museum.

The property owners had every right to object, if they felt that the board of trustees had not given thorough consideration to other empty buildings which might be suitable for both projects. The order from the department of municipal affairs to call tenders for the space should satisfy the objectors, since they now can offer their buildings to the municipality.

But we would ask those objectors to take a second look at the museum project, which is the true deciding factor in the decision to move the municipal offices to the hotel.

The museum, as far as is known, will be the first of its kind. The plan is an ambitious one, which, if successful, could be a major attraction and therefore a means of boosting this important secondary industry.

One of the reasons the board of trustees agreed to the hotel-museum proposal, was the excellent location of the hotel, which, if it were not made use of, would be torn down for scrap, meaning the loss for good of a building valuable to the community.

The building is located on Elliot Lake's only highway well-placed for easy access by visitors from out of town, an important point in attracting casual visitors.

The interior of the hotel building, particularly the lounge and bar, are suitable for conversion to a museum, the space and layout being unequalled by any other building here.

The board of trustees was not just looking for alternative office space, when it decided to move to the Elliot Lake Hotel. The decision was made because the hotel was suitable for the museum, but was large enough also to accommodate the municipal offices, the double use being a means of cutting costs of operating a museum.

There would have been little point in continuing to pay stiff rent in the Plaza Building, while spending similar sums for maintenance of the hotel-museum. If the object was to reduce office rent only, the board could have taken over one of several buildings in the commercial area now in process of registration for unpaid taxes.

But, we ask you property owners who objected, what other building anywhere in the improvement district, or within a 100-mile radius of Elliot Lake is in as eye-catching a position as the hotel?

There isn't one.

We believe further that for a museum plan of the kind discussed to date, to locate it anywhere but in the best available location — in the hotel, in other words — would be sheer folly. The museum might be called a gamble. But it is a worth-while gamble which could repay itself in a large number of tourists. To gamble on success of a museum located in some hole-in-the-wall alternative downtown space would be sheer foolishness.

It is the size of the Elliot Lake Hotel, its impressiveness on the visiting tourist, its excellent location and easy access, which will make it successful.



Irene Stoliker, Doug Stoliker and Bob Manuel look at some of the most recent donations made to the museum by the Stolikers last week.

Building our museum

New town residents Irene and Doug Stoliker already contributed to their new community last week with several donations to the Elliot Lake Nuclear and Mining Museum.

Among the items donated were a collection of Indian arrowheads, two corn huskers, a steeple puller and shotgun from the 1840s.

Mr. Stoliker said he had collected the items over the years and was looking for the perfect place to show them off.

Bob Manuel of the town's community affairs department, accepted the gift graciously, saying it was just the kind of help from community citizens that has made the museum as attractive as it is today.

The museum is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and on weekends by special appointment. During the summer months, the museum is a popular tourist attraction and is open seven days a week.

Nuclear museum a popular place

Students employed for the summer at the Elliot Lake museum help keep the tourist attraction running smoothly and efficiently for appreciative tourists.

Andra Johnston, a second-year tourism management student at Georgian College helps pull things together.

Other students employed with the museum are, Rosa Alves, a translation student at Laurentian University, Shelley Ann Lalonde, a theatre and french student at Western University, Tina Goulet a Grade 12 student at Elliot Lake Secondary School and Jennifer Ramsay, a Grade 13 student at

ELSS.

Bob Manuel, community relations officer, said the girls help organize tours for seniors from bus companies from down south. "They are impressed in general with the museum and the town," said Mr. Manuel. Once again this year the museum has qualified for a \$5,000 grant from the Ministry of Culture and Recreation, even though the criteria is becoming stricter every year.

"Our museum is accredited with the government. We are listed in government publications giving us good publicity and good public relations."

The museum successfully maintained its position in the Civic Centre for a tenure of 23 years. During this time, the museum displayed permanent exhibitions including the Mining Hall of Fame, provided countless programs like "Night at the Museum," and hosted several travelling exhibits from institutions like Science North and the ROM.

Tragically, in the evening of February 21, 2019, Elliot Lake experienced its second roof collapse of the decade when the Civic Centre caved in. The museum was able to secure almost all of our artefacts, but most of the recordkeeping was unsalvageable.

Once again displaced, the museum found temporary home in Hillside Plaza, a small site for exhibition. During this time, our artefacts suffered from being displaced across City facilities where they were stored in less than ideal conditions, and from insubstantial documentation. To remedy this and bring our focus back to administration and collections management purposes, the museum moved into the offices of the W.H. Collins Hall Centre where we were able to consolidate our collections with the proper storage requirements and begin re-archiving.

Operating our museum without a physical space and through a global pandemic proved less than ideal, but these circumstances allowed us the time reorganize our collections and exhibits of the past, and to begin strategizing for the future.

The Elliot Lake Museum is very excited to be relaunching onto the museum scene in the coming years with a new trajectory and new physical space for our collections. We welcome you to join us for the next steps of our journey.



COLLECTIONS

The museum's artefacts—objects, photos, documents, and other—are categorized into five collections:



Geology

The Elliot Lake area sits upon some of the oldest rocks in the world. The geology collection pays tribute to our community's foundation—not just the array of minerals beneath our feet, but also the uranium which put us on the map.



First Nations

Elliot Lake is part of the traditional territory of the Serpent River First Nation and Huron Robinson Treaty land. The First Nations collection facilitates our Indigenous neighbours—Serpent River, Mississaugi, and Sagamok—to tell their stories.



Trapping & Logging

Minerals are not the only capital our area had to offer; the trapping and logging collection provides insight into the history of harvesting other abundant, local natural resources: wildlife and forest.



Prospecting & Mining

Elliot Lake sits atop a geological reservoir ripe for assaying and extracting. This collection traces the history of the prospecting and mining of the mineral which, for a period, branded Elliot Lake the "Uranium Capital of the World," through to the decommissioning of this industry.



Civic

The civic collection documents Elliot Lake's history from mining encampment, to Township, to City, highlighting the rise and fall of industries and the individuals whose dedication to the community made it a true "jewel in the wilderness."

CONSTITUENTS

The Elliot Lake Museum is the caretaker of the area's heritage, and oversees these two extraneous sites:

Miners' Memorial Park

Elliot Lake's Miners' Memorial Park, located on the shores of Horne Lake, is home to the Mining Monument, the Miners' Memorial, and the Prospectors' Monument. The park is dedicated to the area's heritage of uranium mining and celebrates the miners who often risked their lives everyday to support the community and their families.



Fire Ranger's Heritage Centre

The Fire Ranger's Heritage Centre, located atop Fire Tower Rd, is the restored ranger's cabin which housed the tower watchman and his family during fire watch months. This cabin now acts as a seasonal satellite location for the Elliot Lake Museum where you can pick up souvenirs, snacks, and brochures as well as historical information on the Fire Tower Lookout and surrounding area.



NAME & LOGO



Our logo was created by local, esteemed artist Linda Finn. Finn has been a long time supporter of arts and culture in our community, and a member of the Elliot Lake Museum Advisory Board for several terms.

The initials of Elliot Lake Museum connote the tree of the same name. Only several elms have grown in the Elliot Lake area—one of which is fortuitously right on the outskirts of the Miners' Memorial Park, a constituent of the museum.

This elm is perfectly placed to oversee several key aspects of the museum's collection including Civic, Prospecting and Mining, and Geology, as the backdrop of the Miners' Memorial Park elm is the Mississagi Formation. This 2.2 billion year old geological feature sits atop the Matinenda Formation, whose uranium deposits are what brought tens of thousands to develop and settle this "jewel in the wilderness".

Overlooking Horne Lake from the heritage trail, two elms are visible rising above the landscape.

The elm can represent hardiness, longevity, and unity, traits reminiscent of our community. The elm symbolizes laying down strong roots and constantly growing from our past.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The development of the Elliot Lake Museum's Strategic Plan was based upon the input of various stakeholders including staff, volunteers, Council, and the public.

Why conduct a Strategic Plan?

Strategic Planning allows an organization to be proactive, to think beyond current activities and traditions by considering new approaches and innovation. Cultural institutions can benefit from this framework and improve their overall performance, through the following:

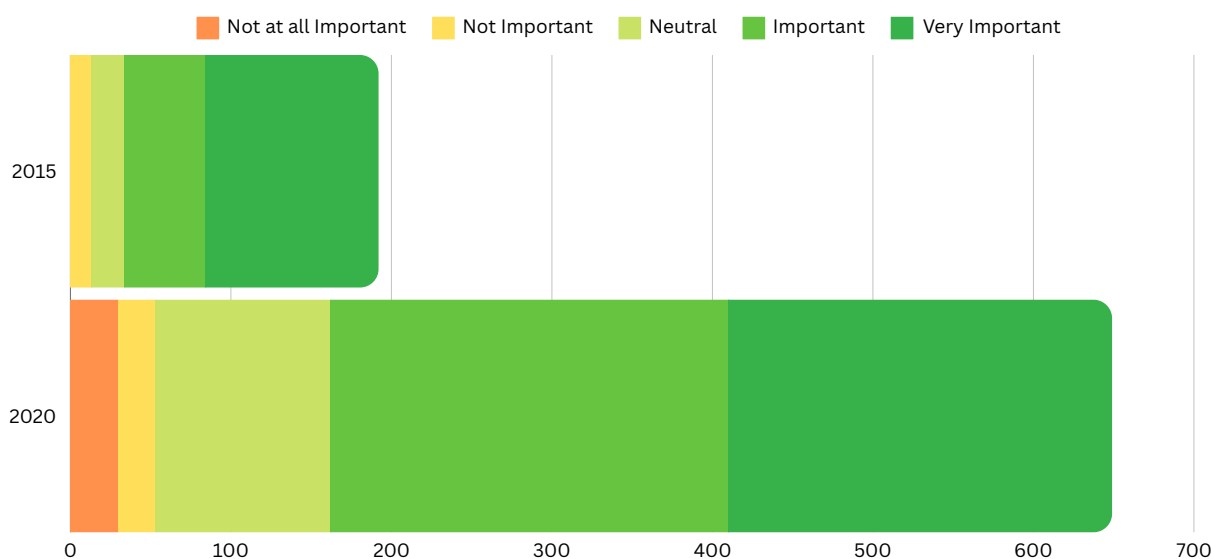
- qualify for funding; private and public donors increasingly require evidence of accountability, such as long-term planning
- achieve accreditation either from a recognized authority or from patrons and community members
- provide frameworks for new projects, initiatives, or expansions
- address forces of change in the environment, both internal and external

The Museum's Strategic Plan was last updated in 2014 under authority of Andra Dobratz, the chair of the Elliot Lake Nuclear and Mining Museum Board for the 2010-2014 term.

During the 2014-2018 committee term, chair Fran Perkins and members Pat Ferrell, Linda Finn, and Jacque Grummett revised the Strategic Plan for 2018, but it was never formalized or adopted by Council. During their planning stages, a community survey was conducted in 2015 whose feedback was the basis for the plan prepared in 2018, and, consequently, the 2022 version before you now.

This survey and another done in 2020, regarding the creation of a new Arts Centre, shows the overarching support from the community for the museum.

How important is the museum to you and our City?



In preparation of a new exhibition space in 2023, the curator of the Elliot Lake Museum, Amelia D'Amato, initiated a rebranding campaign which included new name, logo, and strategic plan for the future. With input from the 2018-2022 term committee members Pat Ferrel, Linda Finn, Gordon McCarthy, Edo Ten Broek and chair Jacque Grummett, a revision of the museum's Strategic Plan and Policies began in the summer of 2022 upon the resources and drafts prepared the previous term.

The first draft of the Elliot Lake Museum Strategic Plan was developed over approximately 5 months (June 2022 - October 2022) through four working meetings with museum staff and committee. At the October 3, 2022, Recreation and Culture Standing Committee meeting, the item was deferred pending revisions, which were complete throughout the next few months (October 2022-December 2022).

The Elliot Lake Museum's Mission and Vision align with the City of Elliot Lake's corporate values, and sets our trajectory and standards for administration and operations through the coming years.

The Elliot Lake Museum's Mission is:

The Elliot Lake Museum is dedicated to engaging and educating our community and visitors by collecting, preserving, interpreting, and sharing our ongoing heritage and history in an inclusive capacity.

The Vision for the Elliot Lake Museum is:

The Elliot Lake Museum (ELM) will be an inviting destination for education and entertainment, accessible to all. It will be the preserver of the community's stories and collective identity, and will be valued and supported as a vital asset in the area.

The ELM will be innovative and take advantage of new technologies and partnerships. The ELM will seek collaborations within Elliot Lake, our First Nations neighbours, and the museum community, to help build a thriving membership and a strong, committed volunteer base.

The ELM will foster participation and interest in the community's heritage and contribute to the overall cultural vitality of Elliot Lake through its exhibitions and quality programs for residents and visitors of all ages and circumstances.

GOALS & ACTIONS

In order to achieve and upkeep the Mission and Vision for the Elliot Lake Museum, four key focus areas have been identified:

01 Communication

To create awareness and generate support for the Museum through in-person and digital platforms with the purpose of enhancing Elliot Lake's cultural identity and creating beneficial partnerships.

02 Economic Development and Tourism

To support the continued development of the Museum as a destination site, in recognition of the economic benefit of visitors and tourists to Elliot Lake's economy, to establish ourselves as a vital community asset.

03 Education

To encourage community engagement and participation through the provision and promotion of educational and cultural programming, activities, and events as well as by fostering active volunteerism and partnerships.

04 Collection and Conservation

To collect, preserve, interpret, exhibit, and house artefacts, in a responsible and sustainable manner, which illustrate the heritage and evolving history of the City of Elliot Lake.

4.1 COMMUNICATION

To ensure we are addressing our focus areas, here are some of the measurable actions and goals the museum has set with our desired outcomes and timeline.

Action	Outcome	Timeline
Mailer Section <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include updates and a specially curated artefact of the month 	Mailer goes to every household so this would broaden our audience and increase awareness and interest in museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval required Launch Q1 2023
Electronic Newsletter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sign up mailing list provide monthly updates on exhibits, programs, interesting tidbits 	Keeps our supporters informed on goings-on; strengthens relationship. Potential outreach for new patrons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch Q2 2023
First Nations Roundtable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> representatives from Serpent River, Mississaugi, Sagamok, and Thunder Mtn 	Strengthen our cultural partnerships. Collaborate on programs. Receive input for temporary exhibitions & translations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly meets Approval required Launch 2023
Community Museum Roundtable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> representatives from Timber Village Museum, Massey Area Museum, Heritage Park Museum 	Strengthen industry partnerships. Collaborate on programs. Share resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly meets Launch Q3

4.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

To ensure we are addressing our focus areas, here are some of the measurable actions and goals the museum has set with our desired outcomes and timeline.

Action	Outcome	Timeline
App <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cultural and historical landmarks mapped guided cultural and historical tours 	Broadens ancillary museum space to entire community. Invites new audience from out of town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding Nov 2022 Launch 2023 (TBD)
Interpretive Trail Signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs along our trails that indicate places of cultural or historical significance 	Broadens ancillary museum space. Augments trail experience for visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration with EcDev Dept Launch 2024
Microsite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital platform for museum news, programming, and digital archive 	Broadens audience outreach. Establishes as a destination site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pending grant availability Potentially budgeted for 2024



4.3 EDUCATION

To ensure we are addressing our focus areas, here are some of the measurable actions and goals the museum has set with our desired outcomes and timeline.

Action	Outcome	Timeline
Community Museum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students provide artefacts and tags • in conjunction with schools • displayed for public 	Strengthens relationship with schools. Accessible programming. Spurs interest in youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2023 - ongoing • Hosted annually around International Museum Day (May 18)
Rotating Exhibits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategically placed throughout community at high traffic areas • informative, engaging, and interactive 	Broadens community outreach. Accessible programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 2022 - ongoing • Rotates bi-monthly • Library • Centennial Arena • City Hall • Community Partners
Trivia Nights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involves category about community history • informative, engaging, and interactive 	Engages our older audience. Engaging and entertaining method to provide education and promotion of museum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Friday of month • Nov 2023 - ongoing
Language Translations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all of our programming, exhibitions, and events will be available in English and French 	Programming and exhibitions will be accessible to all members of our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan 2023 - ongoing



4.4 COLLECTION & CONSERVATION

To ensure we are addressing our focus areas, here are some of the measurable actions and goals the museum has set with our desired outcomes and timeline.

Action	Outcome	Timeline
Condition Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each artefact will undergo an annual condition review to ensure no deterioration 	Artefacts are preserved in a responsible and sustainable manner. Compromised objects are conserved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> last week of month for everything archived within that month of previous year duty of staff
Collections Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhere to policy to ensure we are accepting and using resources on artefacts which meet criteria 	We collect and display artefacts which have cultural significance to the evolving history of Elliot Lake and its people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Collections Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly updates made to Council on collections management status 	We are transparent with our collections, deaccessions, and storage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update at first Council meeting every March, June, Sept, and Dec

REVIEW & EVALUATION

The Elliot Lake Museum will have a stringent review and evaluation process to ensure we are on task and serving the community to our utmost abilities and resources.

March	First quarterly review to Council.
June	Second quarterly review to Council.
August	Survey will go out to public for feedback on museum's standing within the community and how to improve.
September	Third quarterly review to Council.
November	Strategic Plan will be audited by staff and committee to determine if we are meeting our actions and goals and if the desired outcomes have transpired. A new action and implementation plan for the next year will begin based upon these findings and public survey.
December	Final quarterly review to Council and presentation on Strategic Plan updates for the following year.

This Strategic Plan for the Elliot Lake Museum was approved by the Council of the City of Elliot Lake at their regular February, 13, 2023, meeting, bound by Resolution 71/23.

This document forms the guiding principles and goals of the Elliot Lake Museum for the next four years, ending in December of 2027.

While museums deal with the fixed past, how we interpret and share these histories is forever innovating. As such, the principles and goals outlined in this Strategic Plan will be in a constant state of review—which will rely on the input of the Committee, Council, staff, and the public—to ensure we uphold the mission and vision of the museum, and properly serve our community.

The concept and coordination of this plan was completed in partnership with the Elliot Lake Nuclear and Mining Museum Board, whose insight and efforts are deserving of the highest praise:

Edo Ten Broek, Member
Pat Ferrell, Member
Linda Finn, Member
Jacque Grummett, Chair
& Gordon McCarthy, Member

Special thanks to Mayor and Council for their input and approval:

Andrew Wannan, Interim Mayor
Charlie Flintoff, Councillor
Rick Bull, Councillor
Norman Mann, Councillor
Merrill Seidel, Councillor
& Luc Morissette, Councillor

We thank you for your continued support of the Elliot Lake Museum and its constituents.

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