



Museums of Burlington: 5-Year Strategic Plan

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Delivered to:

Museums of Burlington

Prepared by:

Nordicity



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1. Introduction

The Museums of Burlington (MoB) has developed a strategic plan to guide its direction for the next five years (2024-2029).

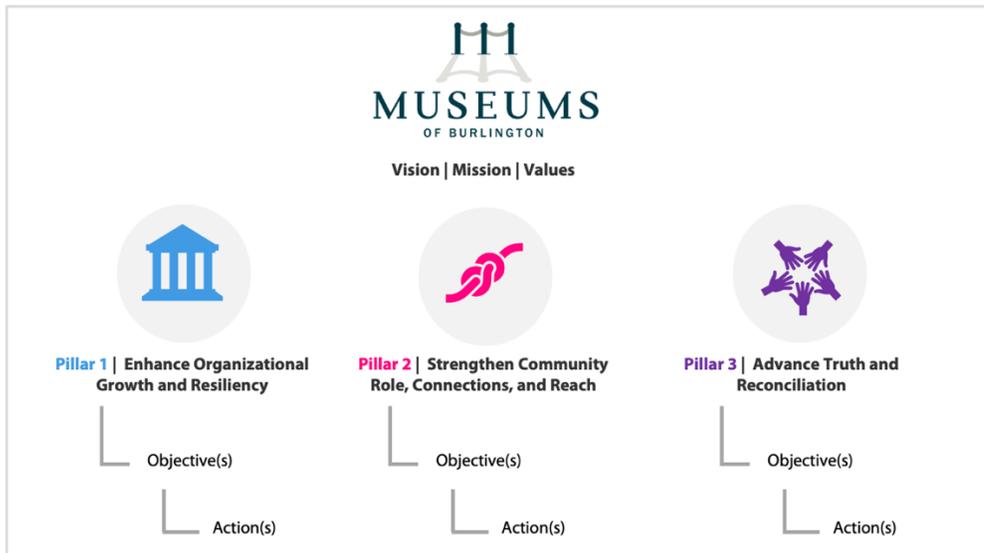
The strategic plan was developed with the assistance of Nordicity, a global consulting firm with roots in the Canadian arts, cultural and creative industries. As the first step in the strategic planning process, Nordicity embarked on a multifaceted research phase to better understand the context surrounding the Museums. This research involved a high-level review of museum trends, a digital analysis and assessment of the Museums of Burlington using Nordicity’s proprietary Digital Portrait™ tool, and extensive engagements in the form of focus groups and a Burlington community survey. Nordicity then held a strategic planning session with the Museums’ board and staff members to build on the compiled research findings and begin materializing a new direction for the Museums.

This document details the strategic plan, which includes a new vision, mission, and values as well as three overarching pillars:

1. **Enhance Organizational Growth and Resilience**
2. **Strengthen Community Role, Connections, and Reach**
3. **Advance Truth and Reconciliation**

The overarching structure of the plan is depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Overview of Strategic Plan Structure



As noted in this framework, each strategic pillar is further defined with more targeted objectives in service of the broader goals, followed by actions to undertake in achieving those objectives.

2. The Strategic Plan

Vision, Mission, Values

Vision: To be a beacon in the community – the Museums of Burlington is *the* place for connection, discussion, and exploration in Burlington.

Mission: To fulfill curiosity by engaging audiences in the sharing of Burlington's rich history, culture, and stories in creative and innovative ways.

Values:

- **Stewardship through Storytelling:** Sharing Burlington's history and heritage in a way that preserves its past and is mindful of its continually evolving history
- **Inspire and Educate:** Pushing boundaries and sharing perspectives that ignite ongoing curiosity and discovery
- **Community and Connection:** Providing a safe place for community gathering that invites reflection, discussion, and dialogue
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Pursuing equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects to ensure that the Museums continue to be a safe space for (and reflective of) all of Burlington

Strategic Plan Overview

The following strategic pillars were determined based on the key needs and priorities identified through various streams of research. These pillars were then further validated and refined through the strategic planning session. These pillars respond to, and seek to advance, the overarching vision, mission, and values of the organization. Each pillar is further outlined by:

- **Goal statement:** What the pillar seeks to accomplish.
- **Objectives:** A set of objectives that will help guide decision-making and monitor progress.
- **Actions:** A series of actions to achieve each objective, including opportunities at both current sites: the Joseph Brant Museum (JBM) and the Ireland House Museum (IHM).

Pillar 1 | Enhance Organizational Growth and Resilience

Goal statement: Cultivate a growth mindset in the organization and establish the internal infrastructure necessary to allow the MoB to grow and thrive.

Ensure Organizational Growth & Resilience

Objective 1.1: Build organizational capacity and capabilities

- 1.1a: Review current staff complement to map skills and resources, and identify gaps to be filled by additional positions
- 1.1b: Conduct a skills inventory of the Museum Board and document what skills are required for future recruitment
- 1.1c: Continue to pursue professional development and cross training opportunities for all Museums of Burlington staff and Board
- 1.1d: Continue to develop a succession plan for volunteers

Objective 1.2: Pursue increased financial resources to fund growth

- 1.2a: Establish a strong membership and development program
- 1.2b: Explore opportunities to increase earned revenue as a means to diversify sources of funding
- 1.2c: Approach discussions around increasing municipal funds

Objective 1.3: Improve current understanding of audiences through improved data tracking and market research

- 1.3a: Establish more formalized processes for gathering audience feedback
- 1.3b: Improve the collection and measurement of longitudinal audience analytics
- 1.3c: Explore additional approaches to information sharing with the Burlington Museums Foundation (BMF)

Pillar 2 | Strengthen Community Role, Connections, and Reach

Goal statement: Further the Museum's reach and integration in the community by solidifying the Museums' role as a space for community gathering and ongoing discovery; finding ways of connecting with the community within and beyond its physical locations; as well as keeping programming relevant, responsive, and inclusive of diverse audiences and (entertainment) trends, and the evolving history of Burlington.

Strengthen Community Role, Connections, & Reach

Objective 2.1: Spread awareness and reach by enhancing the visibility of the Museums and meeting the community where they are

- 2.1a - Address perception and visibility challenges related to signage at the IHM and the JBM name
- 2.1b - Explore additional opportunities for community outreach
- 2.1c - Pursue joint programming with other cultural partners
- 2.1d - Identify opportunities for regional collaboration and alignment

Objective 2.2: Become a community gathering space that invites dialogue and discussion across all of Burlington's community

- 2.2a - Consider inviting opportunity for the community to crowdsource/partake in an exhibition
- 2.2b - Emphasize the Museums' community contribution
- 2.2c - Bring in big special events to generate excitement in the community and signal the MoB as a key space for exploration and discovery
- 2.2d - Establish a lecture or speaker series to delve deeper into specific topics of interest in the community

Objective 2.3: Infuse contemporary and diverse aspects into Museums' programming to ensure relevance and audience interest

- 2.3a - Continue to keep abreast of entertainment trends and adopt practices into the Museums' special events and programs
- 2.3b - Incorporate MoB curated temporary exhibits into the temporary exhibition cycle to share new narratives about Burlington and share more of the collection currently in storage
- 2.3c - Explore ways of utilizing digitized assets to make more information available online and promote discoverability

Objective 2.4: Solidify MoB as a core resource for Burlington's education sector

- 2.4a - Continue to build on hybrid-format programming for use in classrooms



Pillar 3 | Advance Truth and Reconciliation

Goal statement: Pave a path forward for truth and reconciliation in the Museums by fostering relationships with local Indigenous communities and pursuing opportunities for continual education, learning, and action in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) calls to action for museums and archives.

Advance Truth & Reconciliation

Objective 3.1: Determine what decolonization means for the Museums of Burlington

- 3.1a - Create a taskforce to explore the advancement of TRC Calls to Action
- 3.1b - Develop an internal policy that outlines the Museums' commitment to advancing truth and reconciliation
- 3.1c - Open community conversation around the Joseph Brant name
- 3.1d - Revisit the manner in which Indigenous topics can and should be addressed at the Museums

Objective 3.2: Build bridges with local Indigenous communities

- 3.2a - Continue to foster positive relationships with local Indigenous communities, leveraging assistance and connections from the City and Halton Region

Objective 3.3: Enhance internal understanding around Indigenous topics and issues

- 3.3a - Increase Museum Board and staff education around truth and reconciliation
- 3.3b - Consider a curatorial resource or position for Indigenous content at the Museums

Objective 3.4: Advance community awareness and education around Indigenous history and cultures

- 3.4a - Support and/or partner with Indigenous communities on initiatives to tell the Indigenous stories of Burlington

Appendix: List of Those Engaged

Museums of Burlington Staff

Kim Watson, *Director*
 Marianne Paley, *Administrative Assistant*
 Chris Selman, *Curator*
 Lynna Nguyen, *Assistant Curator*
 Robin Hill, *Volunteer Program Administrator*
 Kate Almeida, *Supervisor of Public Programs*
 Janet Stephens, *Manager of Marketing & Community Engagement*
 Miriam Martens, *Public Programs Coordinator*

Museums of Burlington Board

Susan Kun, *Chair*
 Bryan Beatty, *Vice-Chair*
 Glynis Wright, *Director*
 Len Collins, *Director*
 Gerald J. Park, *Director*
 Adam Belovari, *Director*
 Simone Balata, *Director*
 Raj Chopra, *Director*

Burlington Museums Foundation (BMF)

Elaine Scrivener, *Chair*
 Tim Dobbie, *Vice Chair*
 Evan McDade, *Treasurer*
 John Doyle, *Director*
 Richard Burgess, *Director*
 Rob Stonehewer, *Director*
 Cheryl Jorritsma, *Development Officer*

The City of Burlington

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
 Councillor Paul Sharman
 Councillor Kelvin Gailbraith
 Councillor Rory Nisan
 Councillor Lisa Kearns
 Councillor Shawna Stolte
 Councillor Angelo Bentivegna
 Angela Paprizo, *Manager of Art and Culture*
 Denise Beard, *Manager of Community Development*

Special Interest Groups

Kristene Smith, *Executive Director of Tourism Burlington*
 Brian Dean, *Executive Director of Burlington Downtown Business Association*
 Maria Fortunato, *Executive Director of Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association*
 Terry Caddo, *Burlington Chamber of Commerce*
 Joan Downey, *President of Burlington Historical Society*
 Dennis Scott, *Chair of Halton Black History Awareness Society*
 Hanadi Al Masri, *Chair of Inclusivity Advisory Council and Halton Multicultural Council*
 Atiya Husain, *Head of Ashwood Glen*
 Lee Anne Burke, *Teacher at St Mark Catholic Elementary School*
 Lexie Tracey, *Sales Consultant at Rivera the Williamsburg*
 Sarah Logue, *Team Logue Real Estate*
 Dan Lawrie, *Lawrie Insurance Group*

The broader Burlington community was also engaged through an online public survey, which circulated from November 29, 2022 – January 17, 2023. The survey garnered 149 completed responses.