

Mayor and Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to formally present to you the Lake of the Woods Museum's Strategic Plan for 2008-2013.

Last year, at this time, during our budget presentation, the Museum Board made a commitment to you to develop a long-term Strategic Plan, and so for this year's budget discussion, we are pleased to present you with that plan a plan that is both responsible and reasonable. A plan that is founded on our passion, our values, our professionalism and our pride; and a plan that builds on our strengths and experience, and points us in new directions.

We began this process last October. And I would first like to publicly acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Jan Fletcher who volunteered her time and considerable knowledge to lead us through this strategic planning process. We're grateful to Jan for her very significant role in this.

We started by involving the community through a series of focus groups, one of which some of you participated in, and a web survey. The responses we received and the discussions that we heard confirmed what we also felt were many of the museum's strengths. The feedback also provided the Board with many ideas on how the museum can improve both its relevance and presence in the community, and we would like to thank the many people who showed their interest by participating in this way.

We then spent time surveying the environment in which the museum exists and invited presentations from the City, the Lake of the Woods Development Commission, BIZ, Treaty #3, and Common Land/Common Ground. We also consulted different written sources that would provide us with a sense of where the community is at this time and where it might be in the years ahead. This context allowed us to examine the museum's place in it all.

We find the museum in a unique position to assist the City in advancing some of its stated priorities and supporting its guiding principles like:

1. Economic Development.

The City's plan states that "a key part of diversifying our economy will be to add to our cultural heritage." Museum is one of the key anchors of cultural heritage in this city, and has and will continue to contribute to:

Population Attraction and Retention;  
Four-season Tourism; and  
Downtown Revitalization.

2. Understanding and respecting its citizens.

3. Stewardship.

4. Quality of life.

5. Informing and engaging its citizens.

6. The exploration and pursuit of new opportunities.

We think that you'll find that the museum's Strategic Plan dovetails beautifully with these, beginning with the Museum's Vision:

To contribute to a stronger community by inspiring a passion for our history, our diversity, and pride in our heritage.

We plan to achieve our Vision by:

- Being a historical centre of excellence;
- Being well managed and financially sustainable;
- Building partnerships and relationships;
- Protecting our heritage and our collection of artifacts; and
- Representing our cultural diversity.

To that end, we have defined five Strategic Goals:

- 1 Community Engagement and Partnership -  
To be recognized as a relevant and involved community partner operating as an essential part of the community.
- 2 Excellence in the Museum Visitor Experience  
To ensure an environment that creates and inspires a passion for the history and the heritage of the community.
- 3 Awareness and Profile of the Museum  
To strengthen and enhance the profile, the image, and the relevancy of the Museum in the community.
- 4 Excellence in Museum Standards  
To achieve excellence in the organization and management of the Museum.
- 5 Organizational Sustainability  
To operate within a balanced budget, and to have the resources to maintain, add, renew or upgrade exhibits, programmes and facilities.

We look forward to working towards and achieving these goals. We would ask for Council's support of this Plan, both in principle and through sufficient financial provision to enable us to fulfil our commitment to implement this Plan, and fulfil our commitment to contribute to a stronger community.

Thank you.