



LAKESHORE MUSEUM CENTER

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

Muskegon Museum of History & Science
Muskegon's Historic Sites
Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry
Muskegon's Collection & Archives

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Lakeshore Museum Center Mission, Vision, Core Values

Mission

To tell the story of Muskegon County by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of its people and natural environment.

Vision

We provide immersive experiences that reveal Muskegon County's identity, inviting guests to explore themselves and the world around them. Our history, science, and technology content is often developed in collaboration with community partners and always delivered by knowledgeable and personable staff and volunteers.

Core Values:

We are trustworthy through honesty, integrity, and ethical conduct.

We think big. Our vision for the future guides our day-to-day work.

We are caring, respectful, and inclusive.

We encourage creative, innovative problem-solving.

We possess the skills to get the job done professionally and value each other's contributions.

We strive to be leaders in the museum profession and the greater community.

INTRODUCTION

The Lakeshore Museum Center (LMC) was created by community for community and has been the central institution in the county charged with preserving history, objects, artifacts, and memories. The organization currently has three public sites.

1. The Muskegon Museum of History & Science, which has both permanent and changing exhibits, programs, workshops, and day camp experiences.
2. The Historic Sites, encompassing two Victorian houses with a shared horse barn, an 1875 replica Fire Barn, and an interactive Depression-Era house.
3. The Heritage Museum of Business & Industry, that preserves and interprets Muskegon's economic and industrial history.

In addition, the LMC also manages a separate Collections Center building which houses all of the 3D objects and an Archives Building that stores and protects the paper documents such as photographs and maps.

This Strategic Plan establishes clear goals to help determine by 2028 how the LMC will move towards an expansion and consolidation of the current collections center and archives, move forward with major facilities initiatives, and create financial security and stability for the organization.

List of Acronyms

C&A = Collections and Archives

COMENG = Board Community Engagement Committee

CW = Chuck Ware, Buildings and Grounds Manager

DEV = Board Development Committee

ES = Erin Schmitz, Historic Sites Director

EX = Expansion Committee

FAC = Board Facilities Committee

FB = Fire Barn

FIN = Board Finance Committee

HS = Historic Sites including Fire Barn and Scolnik House of the Depression Era

JB = Jeff Bessinger, Collections and Exhibits Director

JH = Jackie Huss, Director of Operations

KB = Kirk Bunke, Heritage Museum Site Manager

KC = Kennari Consulting

MD = Marci Dalm, Volunteer and Events Coordinator

MH = Melissa Horton, Executive Director

MHMB&I = Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry

MMH&S = Muskegon Museum of History & Science

PH = Patrick Horn

RR = Riza Rodriguez

SEH=Andrea Riegler

Facilities

LMC’s collections and archives are stored in several buildings across the City of Muskegon, many of which are unsuitable for protecting and preserving our objects. In recent years, inadequate investment has been made in maintaining our Historic Sites and public structures. Ensuring the sustainability of LMC’s collections, archives, and historic sites is a top priority for the next five years. In addition, the History and Science Museum has accessibility issues. Proceeding with maintenance that has been deferred and expansion efforts will create stability within the organization.

1. Develop a long-term plan to protect and preserve our Historic Sites, Collections, and Archives
 - a. Identify and document long-term needs
 - b. Evaluate current facilities’ ability to meet long-term needs
2. Address facilities issues in current buildings to ensure they are maintained and deferred maintenance is not occurring.

GOAL: Develop a long-term plan to protect and preserve our 9 buildings that protect the collection.				
	OBJECTIVES	SITE	LEAD	SCHEDULE
a.	Replace Hackley, Hume, and City Barn Roofs	HS	ES	2024-2026
b.	Replace and Restore Porches	HS	ES	2027-2030
c.	Fix Scolnik House of the Depression Era Turret	DEH	ES	2024
d.	Replace Fire Barn Doors	FB	ES	2024
	Fire Barn Roof	FB	ES	2024
f.	City Barn HVAC updated	HS	ES	2024
g.	Fire Barn Windows Replaced	FB	ES	2027
h.	Replace Roof at MMHS	MMHS	CW/MH	2024
i.	Asbestos Removal on pipes	MMHS	CW	2024
j.	Replace Windows	MMHS	CW	2028

Expansion

LMC’s collections and archives are stored in several buildings across the City of Muskegon, many of which are unsuitable for protecting and preserving our objects. Consolidation of buildings has been identified as a top priority by the Board of Trustees. In addition, a new accessible museum facility will be built on the property adjacent to the current museum building.

1. Develop a plan to finance and build a new History & Science Museum
2. Remodel the current building to a modern storage facility
3. Create a plan for moving the Collections and Archives out of current buildings and into new.

GOAL: Expansion				
	OBJECTIVES	SITE	LEAD	SCHEDULE
a.	Feasibility Study via Kennari	LMC	MH	2024
b.	Identify Grants for Expansion	LMC	MH/KC	2024
c.	Get Bond Approval from County Commission	LMC	MH/EX	2024
d.	Bond Millage Campaign	LMC	MH/EX	2025
	Campaign for Private Donations	LMC	MH/KC	2024-2026
f.	Hire Lobbyist Firm	LMC	MH	2024-2026
g.	Create a DEI policy/statement	LMC	MH/RR	2024
h.	ADA Accessibility-create a committee	LMC	MH	2025
i.	Obtain quotes from Space Saving Shelving Systems	CC	JB	2025
j.	Finalize Costs for moving the Collection	CC	JB	2024
k.	Evaluate storage of collections at all sites	ALL	JB	2024-2026
l.	Prepare or 2030 millage increase	ALL	MH	2026

Marketing

The LMC is now three separate public destinations under one parent organization. For the next 5 years, the museum must maintain current levels of marketing ensuring that our programs and events are not sacrificed to the expansion efforts.

Marketing

1. Market to our outlying communities
2. Hold “listening sessions” in the community
3. Develop a strategy to promote expansion efforts

GOAL: Build Awareness for each site

	OBJECTIVES	SITE	LEAD	SCHEDULE
a.	Continue Marketing at all Sites	LMC	Revel	ongoing
b.	Create strategy to market to outlying communities	LMC	MH/JH/Revel	2024
c.	Host Listening Sessions	LMC	Revel/JH/COMENG	2024-2025
d.	Increase Surveys at all Sites	LMC	ES/JH/KB	2024
e.	Promote expansion efforts	LMC	MH/JH/Revel	2025

Community Engagement

The exhibits at the LMC are all over 10 years old and need to be changed out or updated. Also, the temporary space is too small for most rentals, which decreases the museum’s ability to bring in exhibits that could benefit the community. A plan is needed to update/refresh current spaces. With the museum having 3 different sites that all have exhibits, a plan to prevent overlap also needs to be developed, and where overlap occurs a decision needs to be made for which site displays the topic. Furthermore, all exhibits need to be evaluated to make sure that the complete story is being told and we are not forgetting or deliberately leaving out a cultural group’s voice.

Exhibits and Programming

1. Coordinate exhibits and programming across all sites to eliminate duplication
2. Ensure that our exhibits and programs are inclusive, reflecting the stories of all Muskegon County residents
3. As demand increases, expand hours at all sites to accommodate year-round guests

GOAL: Align exhibits and programming to better represent the full Muskegon Community				
	OBJECTIVES	SITE	LEAD	SCHEDULE
a.	Implement plans for Permanent Gallery updates and changes at all 3 visitor sites	MMHS	JB	2024-2026
b.	Define Communities that are not represented currently and work with them in a meaningful way to develop future program and exhibits, both	LMC	Staff & COMENG	2024-2026
c.	Work with Community organizations to engage outlying communities and bring stories and exhibits to them or the outlying communities to the museum sites.	LMC	JB/JH/COMENG	2024-2026
d.	Find service groups that will allow us to present about the museum.	LMC	JH/COMENG	2024-2026
e.	Create a plan for transitioning programs and events ensuring that services don’t stop during expansion.	MMHS	PH/JH	2026
f.	Develop plan for permanent exhibit builds in new facility and coordinate with packing up collection to ensure smooth transition.	MMHS	JB	2026

Fund Development

Long term fund development has not been a priority in recent years. LMC needs to identify strategies for procuring corporate and private funds to ensure that all goals included in this plan are successful.

Fund Development

1. Establish a fund development strategy to meet the needs of protecting and preserving our objects
2. Build Endowments and Internal Funds for future financial, staffing, and facilities maintenance sustainability.

GOAL: Establish a fund development strategy to meet needs of protecting and preserving our objects				
	OBJECTIVES	SITE	LEAD	SCHEDULE
a.	Create a Legacy Program	ALL	DEV	2024
b.	Build internal “endowment” to 2.5 million	ALL	MH/DEV	2024-2028
c.	Solicit sponsors for temporary exhibits, events, galas, programs	LMC	MH/DEV	2024-2028
d.	Set yearly initiatives for Board Members through DEV committee	ALL	MH/DEV	2024-2028
e.	Build Restoration Fund at Shelby State Bank to \$250,000	HS	ES/MH/DEV	2028
f.	Add Capital Projects into budget in a more transparent way	ALL	MH/FIN	2024
g.	Staff training for fundraising	ALL	MH	2024
h.	Host Donor Receptions/Events	LMC	MD	2024-2028
i.	Hire lobbyist for H&H needs	H&H	MH	2024

Staffing & Equity for the Future

In preparing for a major expansion, the LMC will need the stabilization of current staff and their expertise. In order to combat costly turnover, the museum will need to put together a plan for not losing staff during this process.

Staffing & Equity for the Future

1. Retain and Attract Staff that will further the goals and plans of the LMC.

GOAL: Evaluate and Retain Staff				
	OBJECTIVES	SITE	LEAD	SCHEDULE
a.	Use AAM and Employers Association records to conduct salary studies on current staff and positions.	LMC	MH	2024-2028
b.	Through the budgeting process, plan and implement increases that offset cost of living.	LMC	MH	2024-2028
c.	Create a plan to add new staff during the Expansion Process so current staff do not burn out.	LMC	MH	2024-2028

IMPLEMENTATION-

Plan implementation will be overseen by Executive Director, Melissa Horton, with progress against each objective tracked at regularly scheduled staff meetings. The Board will ensure staff continues to maintain focus on achieving the strategic goals.

- Melissa and the staff will report out to the Board of Trustees in June and November on where we are with our goals.
- The strategic goals will be part of all committee meetings and those committees will also report to the board after they have met.
- Results need to tie back to the mission.