

Fort Calgary Preservation Society **Strategic Plan** **2020 – 2023**

ADOPTED BY RESOLUTION OF THE
FORT CALGARY PRESERVATION SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Strategic Plan 2020-2023

Vision

Fort Calgary – histories, peoples, futures – reconnected.

Mission

Sharing the histories and cultures of this place, with Calgarians and the world, to deepen understanding of the past and shape the future.

Values and Guiding Principles

Community
Reconciliation
Integrity
Sustainability
Inclusiveness
Respect

The place that we now call Fort Calgary National Historic Site has played a central role in both ancient and more recent histories of this region.

Positioning Statement

Situated where the Bow and Elbow Rivers meet in Treaty 7 territory, the place that we now call Fort Calgary National Historic Site has played a central role in both ancient and more recent histories of this region.

The site is rooted in place-stories and memory practices of the Blackfoot, Iyârhe Nakoda, Tsuut'ina and Métis peoples; the land was a natural gathering place to hunt, trade, and hold ceremony. Later, due to the land's natural topography and social significance, it was where the North West Mounted Police built Fort Calgary in 1875. Recognized as a National Historic Site in 1925, it served as a train yard until 1975 when the lands were bought by the City of Calgary. Today it is at the heart of the city.

We recognize that Fort Calgary is a layered place. It has multiple histories. We seek to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation through the adoption of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's guiding principles.

As caretakers of this unique National Historic Site, we aim to present these histories in an honest way to connect people by deepening their understanding, enhancing their curiosity, and informing their context for contemporary life.

Target Audiences

Fort Calgary targets two key audiences: **Connecting Calgarians and the world**

Fort Calgary's audience strategy aligns with Tourism Calgary's strategy, which seeks to create momentum around events—for both locals and international tourists—to augment Calgary's position as a destination of choice. We know that our largest visitor numbers are either from our immediate community or are international travellers. We have a strong reputation for high-quality hospitality services and for our event-based programs. We seek to build on our strengths.

Calgarians and Southern Albertans

We will connect with teachers and students in primary, secondary, and post-secondary education, and with lifelong learners as well. Today we deliver strong programming for primary students, and we have just begun actively seeking immersive learning for post-secondary students. We aspire to grow this segment of our work.

Through partnerships, alignment to community events, and participation in the work of reconciliation in our city, we seek to connect with our community across Calgary, Southern Alberta, the peoples of Treaty 7, and the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

International Community

Fort Calgary is well positioned to offer exceptional product for our international guests. We can offer a deep cultural learning experience with diverse elements: national pride in the iconic red serge of the RCMP; Canada's current work toward reconciliation; the cultures and lifeways of Indigenous peoples; and, the exceptional hospitality services for which we already have a strong reputation.

*We will seek to work at an international level as a destination for **immersive cultural experience** and progressive museum work. We will seek to offer content from our **national and international museum sector partners**.*

Operational Framework

Core Services:

1. **Gathering our community** – *We are a welcoming place where all peoples can come together, learn, and build relationships.*
2. **Learning our past** – *We seek to encounter the past honestly and to gain an understanding of history through many perspectives. We are learners, and we seek to share our learning with others.*
3. **Stewarding our resources** – *We are the caretakers of this place. We work in a civic and museum environment to preserve and protect the stories, the lands, the historic buildings, the artefacts, and the belongings entrusted to us for the public good.*

We have a strong reputation for high-quality hospitality services and for our event-based programs.



We seek to encounter the past honestly and to gain an understanding of history through many perspectives.

Our Strategy

Our strategy is grounded in our vision, mission, and values.

Programming is the foundation from which our vision and mission evolve; through programs we have impact. Our strategy is this:

- **Programs:** *We focus first on our programs and content.*
- **People:** *We support our people.*
- **Place:** *We draw on the strength of our programs and our people to create a place where all can thrive. This will be further realized in a new museum building.*
- **Preservation:** *We are a museum, and we will preserve the collections, histories, stories, intangible heritage, and lands that support our vision and programming. We will support others who are also doing this work.*
- **Policy and Governance:** *We will develop the policy and governance structure to support our work for generations to come. With full participation of our Board, we will facilitate the resource development necessary to implement the strategy.*

Strategic Priorities and Objectives

As stewards of this National Historic Site, we care for the histories of all peoples in relation to the long history of this place.

We are dedicated to cultural preservation, learning, and dialogue about history. We seek to build community today, with a view to promoting a more connected future. To reach our goals and realize these outcomes, we have set five strategic priorities and fifteen supporting objectives:

Priority 1: **Programs**

Our focus, as a museum, must always be on presenting content—through storytelling and public connection. Fort Calgary will focus on three programming elements over the next three years: 1) exhibitions, 2) public programs, and 3) learning.

Each year we will put forward a clear, focused program of activities and events developed in partnership with our stakeholders for Calgarians, and international audiences.

The specific goals and objectives intended to support a focus on content and program development are as follows:

Objective 1: Exhibitions and Programs

Over the next three years, Fort Calgary will develop five new exhibitions and related public programs to connect the peoples and stories of this place, to peoples today. The first of those new exhibitions, about the influence of Métis culture, will be completed in early 2020. Over the next three years a minimum of four additional exhibitions and related programming will be developed. (Q1 2020 – Q1 2023)

Objective 2: Cultural Program Framework

We will create a framework for planning cultural activities, public programming, and other creative projects in alignment with our vision and mission. The framework will identify relevant Calls to Action from report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, inclusive process for content development, preservation conditions for sharing exhibitions, and how we will meet the learning needs and expectations of our intended audiences. (Q2 2021)

Objective 3: Open to the World – Immersive Learning

In keeping with our Cultural Program Framework, we will develop a cultural tourism program that builds on our capacity for gathering, our hospitality services, and our site-specific knowledge to share the stories of this place with the world. (Q1 2023)

Objective 4: Partners and Partnerships

We will review and evaluate our partners in light of this strategy and seek to build relevant partnerships to support our programs. (Q2 2020 – Q4 2023)

This includes the work of Fort Calgary’s Indigenous Advisory Committee, the RCMP, the RCMP Veterans’ Association, and all others with whom we seek to collaborate in alignment with our vision and mission in a structured way. This also includes work to identify key partners across our field, and in our city, including Calgary-based museums and other Calgary tourism destination sites, as well as our peer national institutions and bodies whose mission includes the preservation of history and place, and others yet to be determined as an outcome of the strategy. We will expand our reach to include a minimum of ten partnership agreements in the next three years. (Q4 2023)

Priority 2: **People**

Our future depends on our people, the Fort Calgary team. To deliver on our objectives—to grow and sustain our impact—we must invest in developing the people who serve our vision and mission. Any success Fort Calgary has experienced has been due to the work and dedication of staff and volunteers, including our Board and advisory committees. We are committed to building a high-performing team dedicated to the support of an evolving vision and mission.

Objective 5: Staff Development

We will ensure our staff complement has the capacity, skills, and abilities to meet our program aspirations. We will build a human resources plan to meet our program aspirations and work to secure the resources to support staff development needs. (Q3 2020)

Objective 6: Ready for the World – Internal Learning

We will develop an internal training program to ensure all staff, Directors of the Board, and volunteers can speak to the significance of this site, its past, and our focus today, and we will communicate this important endeavour broadly to our stakeholders. (Q4 2020)

Objective 7: Volunteer Recruitment and Development

While the Board provides leadership, and the staff serves as the backbone for realizing vision, volunteers bring to us a spirit of generosity and a connection to community. We will renew and revitalize our volunteer program, and continue to recruit volunteers actively from diverse segments of our community. (Q1 2023)

Priority 3: **Place**

Our success is based on working with community and in community on the preservation and evolution of Fort Calgary. As a National Historic Site, Fort Calgary draws significance from the long Indigenous history of this place, and from the establishment of Fort Calgary by the North West Mounted Police in 1875. Today, Fort Calgary draws significance from its position as a contemporary gathering place for our neighbours and communities at the heart of the City of Calgary.

Objective 8: Build the New Museum Building

We will reignite our building project, working from inside out: starting with our program offering, evolving the work done to date and the plans that currently exist. We will modify our functional program only to the extent necessary to ensure it aligns with our vision and mission, to confirm it serves our program offering, and to respect the full extent of our history. (Q4 2020)

We will build a new museum. (Q4 2023)

Objective 9: Dynamic Fund Development Enterprise

We will begin in Q2 2020 to develop a comprehensive multi-year fundraising plan, that includes the establishment of a fully-staffed fund development department with three fundraising programs (annual giving, major giving, planned giving) and launch a fundraising campaign to complete the construction of the new museum. (Q2 2020 – Q2 2023)

Objective 10: Connect with the World – Brand Identity

We will renew our brand to ensure alignment with our revitalised identity and strategy. We will connect with our visitors and our community by using relevant technology and storytelling. (Q1 2023)

Priority 4: **Preservation**

Fort Calgary is dedicated to cultural and historical preservation. We preserve the lands, histories, intangible heritage, buildings, collections and belongings, and public art related to Fort Calgary National Historic Site. We recognize that preservation is collaborative work.

Objective 11: Collections Policy

We will develop a collections policy (including emergency response) and collecting strategy in line with our vision, mission, and values. (Q2 2020)

Objective 12: Collections Care Plan

We will review our collections and database to ensure that records are up to date, and to ensure that what we are holding is relevant to the vision and mission; we will deaccession objects as necessary. We will develop a care plan for the collections. (Q4 2020)

Objective 13: Collections Environment

We will create and maintain a standard preservation environment for those collections which are deemed significant over the long term. (Q2 2021)

Priority 5: **Policy and Governance**

Strong governance policies and structures are at the heart of our ability to serve our vision and mission. Inclusivity, diversity, and discipline in governance are essential for our long-term viability. We can only have impact if we have the resources to do the work. We aspire to fiscal sustainability so we can spend the majority of our time, energy, and other resources attending to the realization of our vision, mission, and program priorities.

Objective 14: Bylaws and Processes

We will update our Board-approved policies and bylaws to ensure they are clear, concise, and relevant to our evolving vision and mission. (Q2 2020)

We will also review internal controls, processes, and systems to inform effective decision-making and responsible stewardship of funds. (Q1 2020 – Q4 2020)

Objective 15: Board Development

We will conduct a Board skills and diversity analysis to identify any gaps between the strengths and diversity we have, and the strengths and diversity we need. (Q1 2020, Q1 2021, Q1 2022, Q1 2023)

We will implement a plan to meet those needs for Board growth and development. (Q1 2021)

Conclusion

Our strategic plan is an expression of our aspiration for Fort Calgary Preservation Society to recognize the many histories of this National Historic Site. These histories include stories of the long history of Indigenous connection to this place, the establishment of Fort Calgary in 1875, and histories of colonialism. All of these histories are key to an understanding of this place found in the heart of the city of Calgary today.

This is a living plan. Its purpose is to further the evolving vision and mission of the Fort Calgary Preservation Society.

As we move this plan from concept to action, and from action to completion, we do so with the belief that we must have the right individuals, the right team, the right leadership, and the right motivation to empower us to meet and exceed the challenge this plan places before us all.

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