

Corporation of the City of Oshawa
2025 Budget
External Agency – Oshawa Historical Society

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— Collections. Spaces. People. —

Oshawa Historical Society
operating the Oshawa Museum
Business Plan 2025

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1. Introduction



Since 1960, the Oshawa Museum, operated by the Oshawa Historical Society, has been collecting, researching, and telling the stories of Oshawa’s history. As the only museum with a focus on the community of Oshawa, we take great pride in showcasing the history of our city from the earliest First Nations settlements to the present day.

The Oshawa Museum’s Business Plan for 2025 presents four strategic objectives for key areas of focus that will guide and build on the ways

the Museum serves the people of Oshawa, including:

- managing the artefact and archival collections that tell the stories of Oshawa and the land on which it sits;
- researching, interpreting, and presenting Oshawa’s history;
- guided by collaborations with our partners, colleagues, and stakeholders, providing compelling experiences to the public, that will connect them to Oshawa’s past; and
- remaining resilient and prepared for the future.

The objectives of the Business Plan 2025, along with the related strategies and actions outlined in the Action Plan 2025, will ensure that the Oshawa Museum continues to play a central role in the cultural life of Oshawa, and that it remains:

- visitor oriented
- flexible and responsive to change
- accessible and engaging to diverse audiences
- fiscally responsible
- connected with the community
- supportive of the City’s culture and heritage tourism goals.

The four strategic objectives, along with each of their associated strategies and action items, will help the staff and directors of the Oshawa Museum to shape the work to be accomplished over the next year, in order to realize the mission of the Oshawa Historical Society, and the goals shared with the City of Oshawa.

2. Mission and Values

The Oshawa Museum preserves and actively promotes awareness and appreciation of Oshawa’s history for the education, enrichment and enjoyment of a diverse audience.

The Oshawa Museum will be guided in all its activities by the following values:

- **Respect:** trustworthy, respected in the community, professional, accurate
- **Pro-active outreach:** collaborative, creative, community focused
- **Inclusive:** accessible, open, representative, welcoming
- **Education:** engaging, original, imaginative, diverse
- **Presentation:** our collection helps us to understand and connect with our city, both past and present
- **Diligence:** accomplished, consistent, mindful



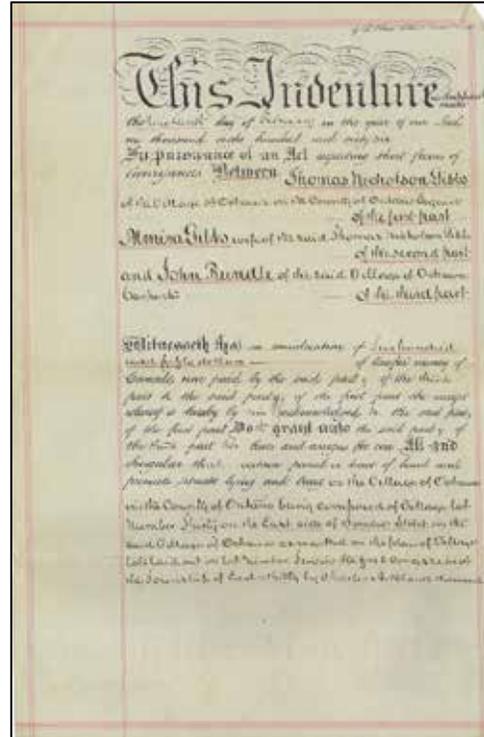
3. Service Description and Client Identification

a. The Organization

The Oshawa Historical Society is a not-for-profit charitable institution, and maintains the Oshawa Museum as a repository for artifacts and written records of historical interest to the community of Oshawa.

The Oshawa Museum is the only museum in Oshawa focused on the history of the community and the land on which the present city sits. It is comprised of three heritage-designated houses, along with a more recent Drive Shed.

The Oshawa Museum is home to more than 50,000 objects and archival materials, the scope of which covers all of Oshawa’s history, from pre-contact to the present day, covering social history, science, technology, and more, and provides an accurate and dependable source of information on Oshawa’s past.



b. The Collections



The Oshawa Historical Society recognizes the stewardship of its artefact and archival collections, and the museum structures themselves, as a public trust. Members of the Historical Society, and Museum staff and visitors value the trust placed with them to safeguard the artefact and archival collections. We recognize our responsibility to strategically develop and protect the collection for future generations.

Just like Oshawa’s history, the collections are diverse. The Oshawa Historical Society is committed to expanding the narratives that are collected and shared, to be more inclusive of underrepresented communities. Museum staff care for over 50,000 artifacts and archival records, and will continue to strategically manage and develop the collections as a resource for education and research.

c. The Spaces



The three heritage-designated buildings, Guy House (1846), Henry House (1840), and Robinson House (1854), as well as the Anniversary Drive Shed (2009), are comprised of programming areas, workspaces, artifact storage, and exhibition space. The buildings are owned by the City of Oshawa and, in 2010, a 20-year occupancy license was signed between the Oshawa Historical Society and the Corporation of the City of Oshawa.

The Oshawa Museum promotes its spaces as an asset to the community, to engage visitors, and raise the visibility of the Museum. These buildings are used for educational programming, for community events and commemorations, as workspaces for museum staff, and to house the museum's collections.

Future plans include the construction of a new visitor center designed to offer an elevated, welcoming museum experience, including a larger and improved community gathering and programming space.

d. The People

The Museum is operated by an elected Board of Directors, as an external agency of the City of Oshawa. As outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws (2005), the Board is responsible for all decisions relating to the operation of the Museum. The Board consists of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Directors at Large. There are several standing committees, each with a chairperson. Each Board position is assigned specific responsibilities, as are the committees.

The Board of Directors for the Oshawa Historical Society is made up of volunteer members of the community who are recruited for their strong community spirit and skills in areas that ensure the resiliency and strength of the Society and the Museum. Members are recruited regularly from diverse backgrounds.

The staff of the Oshawa Museum is currently made up of five regular full-time positions (Executive Director, Archivist, Curator, Community



Engagement Coordinator and Visitor Experience Coordinator), one regular part-time position (Maintenance), and six casual positions (Visitor Hosts). The number of staff are also boosted by contract staff, funded by project grants, as well as interns, co-op students, and volunteers. It is important facet of staff activities to share their expertise with the next generation of museum professionals.

The Oshawa Museum employs professional, committed and highly-knowledgeable people. The specialized knowledge of the staff is what gives significance to the Museum's activities, as they strive to share unique, diverse, and relevant stories with the public through various means including exhibitions (on- and off-site, and online), a quarterly newsletter, workshops and presentations, publications, social media, blogs, regular *Oshawa This Week* articles, and OshawaMuseum.org. The staff and volunteers additionally raise the visibility of the museum and the community by sharing their expertise through their work on community committees, in various publications, and by presenting at conferences.

e. The Programming

Programming at the Oshawa Museum includes regular and special events, educational presentations or workshops offered both on and off the main museum site.

These opportunities are open to booked groups, or for drop-in or registered individual participants.



The Oshawa Museum offers curriculum-based educational programming, facilitated by staff to meet the needs of teachers and group leaders. Topics include specific neighbourhoods or events in Oshawa's history, the experiences of past Oshawa residents, exploring the past using primary resources, and more.

Some of the most popular programs in 2024 have been:

- Be Prepared: Guiding and Scouting in Oshawa
- Letters from the Trenches (WWI workshop)
- Photography in the Archives
- Oshawa's Black History: One Family's Journey
- A Carrying Place: Archaeology and First Nations in Oshawa
- A Day in the Life (of a Victorian Child)
- Stories From the Homefront (Wartime Rationing)

In addition, the Oshawa Museum offers programming during school professional development days, and during school breaks.

The Oshawa Historical Society, in partnership with Oshawa Public Libraries, hosts eight lectures per year on historical topics.

Annual events offer an accessibly-priced opportunity for families and individuals to participate in special programming at the Oshawa Museum.

- July: Grandpa Henry’s Picnic
- October: Hallowe’en at the Harbour
- December: Lamplight Tour

Throughout the year, there are also workshops, tea and talks, walking tours, and Curator’s tours. In partnership with Yoga Connect Durham, the Henry House Gardens are animated by pop-up classes each Friday from May to September.

4. 2024 Objectives and Accomplishments

OBJECTIVE 1: To be a dynamic and essential part of the community and cultural landscape in Oshawa.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with representatives of Club Carib, Fleming College, Oshawa Civic Band, Oshawa Public Libraries, Whitby Archives, Canadian Federation of University Women (Oshawa Chapter), Durham Storytellers, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, Metrolinx Community Engagement, Friends of Second Marsh, Parkwood National Historic Site, Oshawa Tourism, the Royal Canadian Legion on various events, projects, and programs • Staff members sat on committees, including Heritage Oshawa, Fleming College Program Advisory Committee, Regional Museum Network, Cultural Leadership Council, York Durham Museum Archives Association, and more • Staff worked with Ontario Museum Association to present webinar on Disaster Preparedness Policies for Museums • Appeared on What’s On Durham (Rogers TV) • Participated in the City of Oshawa 100+ Centennial event, Oshawa Peony Festival, Durham District School Board Heritage Fair, Doors Open Oshawa, Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival, Canada Day at Lakeview Park, and more • Hosted Postcards to the Front workshop • Hosted 16 editions of Yoga in the Henry House Gardens • Fielded many interviews and research requests by community members and students
OBJECTIVE 2: To present relevant and meaningful exhibits, collections, and content.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published a new book, <i>Untold Oshawa: An Expanded History</i> (to be released November 19, 2024) • Produced a new exhibit based on <i>Untold Oshawa</i> (opening November, 2024) • Produced a new walking tour of the Hollows area of Oshawa • Produced a centennial-themed walking tour during Doors Open • Produced a new Scenes From the Cemetery presentation • Contributed content for the City of Oshawa’s Centennial booklet • Developed and installed <i>Made in Oshawa</i> exhibit at Art in the Hall at Oshawa City Hall • Produced new educational archeology kits for loaning to area primary schools • Produced and distributed four print and digital newsletters • Recorded a podcast with Oshawa Public Libraries

- New listings added to *Discover Historic Oshawa* website
- Contributed monthly articles to *Oshawa This Week* online newspaper
- Held the first edition of Grandpa Henry's Picnic since the pandemic
- Launched *Reflections of Oshawa: 100+ Years of Cityhood* online exhibit
- Launched *Oshawa in 1924* resource page (part of Oshawa Museum blog)

OBJECTIVE 3: Foster a culture of inclusivity and recognize the value of diversity.

- Began a long-term re-description project for archival and collections records, to address past systematic bias and oversights
- Awarded five awards to Oshawa secondary school students, and the OHS Golden Anniversary Award to a group of primary school students, to recognize outstanding achievement in the celebration of Oshawa's history
- Hosted three co-op students/educational placements
- Helped develop a unit for Ontario Tech University's XBIT course
- Redeveloped selection, hiring, and review procedures to develop wider hiring pools and retain staff and Board members.

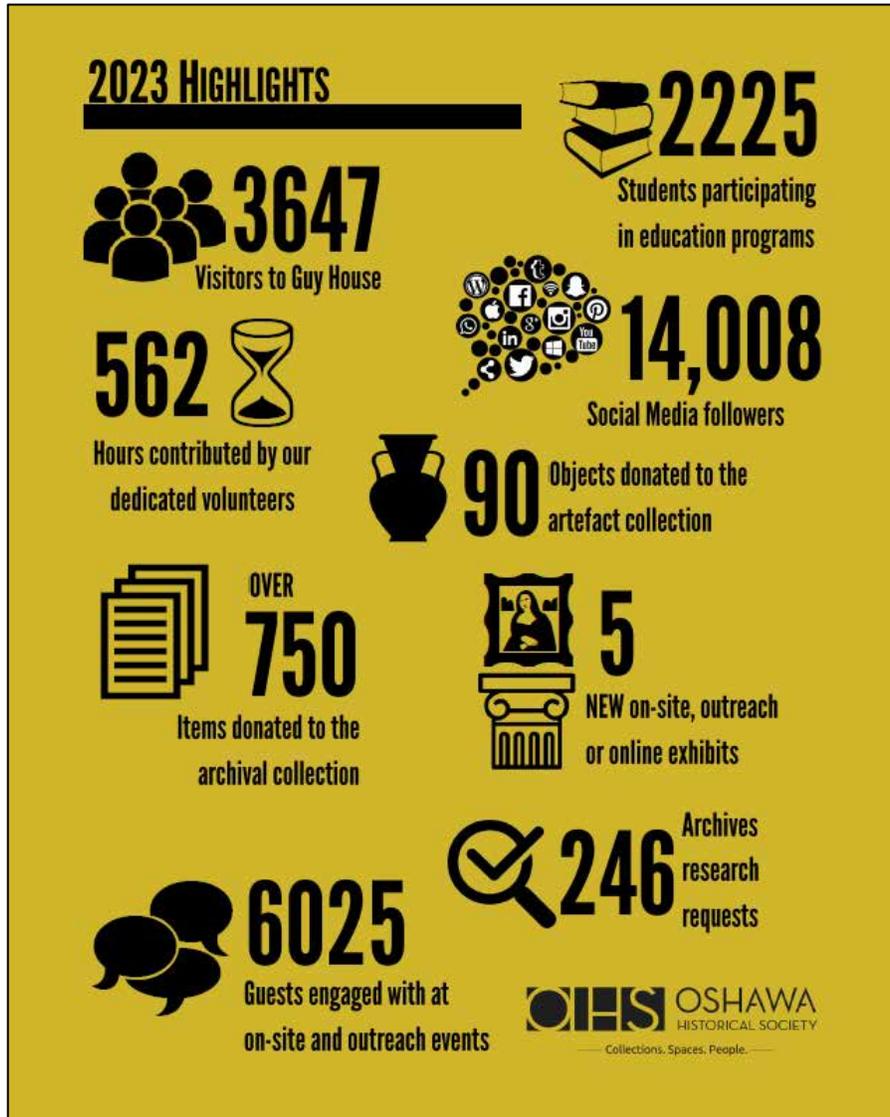
OBJECTIVE 4: Continue to be resilient and flexible.

- All staff received First Aid training
- Project/employment grants allowed the hiring of three post-secondary students
- Updated Emergency and Disaster Plan
- Completed financial risk assessment process
- Installed Oshawa Broadband to improve internet speed

OBJECTIVE 5: Provide inspiring and efficient spaces and facilities for museum functions, the community and our visitors.

- New Spaces Committee (of the Oshawa Historical Society Board) met several times to coordinate new Visitor Centre project
- Archival storage spaces were reorganized for efficiency, to allow for new large-scale donations
- Created and installed new signage to direct visitors to welcome centre at Guy House
- Removed old, redundant signage outside of museum buildings
- Met with City of Oshawa Parks and Capital Planning for long-term facility assessments
- Coordinated repairs of Henry House windows and doors with City of Oshawa Facilities
- Coordinated the removal of a squirrel infestation at Guy House with City of Oshawa Facilities
- Replaced outdated computer system at Volunteer/Researcher workspace
- Replaced Guy House toilet system to repair pressure problems with holding tank
- Robinson House furnace serviced, repaired, and cleaned

5. 2023 Highlights



6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Oshawa Museum is Oshawa’s only museum dedicated to the history of the community of Oshawa and is recognized as the definitive source on Oshawa history • Most extensive archival and artefact collections representing Oshawa’s history • Well-known, beautiful, and easy-to-find location in Lakeview Park can easily be optimized for City’s waterfront development plans • Excellent and longstanding relationship with members of Council, City staff, Heritage Oshawa and other boards and committees • Highly-knowledgeable, skilled, respected and committed staff, board and volunteers • Strong social media and blog following and engagement numbers • Flexible and responsive to change and new challenges • Strong usage of the Museum’s programming by Oshawa schools and community groups • Multi-year partnerships and relationships in place with many community organizations (Trent University, Durham Storytellers, Oshawa Little Theatre, Oshawa Public Libraries, Club Carib, Yoga Connect Durham, and more) • Broad thematic scope of programs that engage visitors • Respected by the public and colleagues • Known for transparent and positive interactions with the public
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to increase self-generated revenue with spatial limitations and lack of programming, storage, and exhibit space • Increasing professional (insurance, audit), repair, fuel, and service fees put pressure on the budget • Collections and building interpretation have historically over-examined the experiences of white, middle-class, 19th century residents of Oshawa, underserving other experiences and communities • Difficult to apply for many major grants due to restrictions on major projects associated with capital, lack of matching funds • Self-generated revenue is contingent on external factors such as weather, adequate space for events, and external events happening in Lakeview Park • Difficult to increase rates for agency revenue-raising activities in an economically-challenged society • Vulnerable to vandalism, environmental impacts due to location • Adapting historic homes for museum functions leads to Infrastructure challenges (ex.: HVAC, accessibility, space restrictions) • Insufficient funds for artifact acquisition, to address gaps in the collection • Staff compensation packages are below the average (in some cases, by more than 20%) for community museums in Ontario

Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low public profile for the Oshawa Historical Society and lack of awareness for heritage locally • Multiple paths of approach to the Museum creates confusion for visitors and accessibility challenges
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City's future plans for waterfront development • Continued support from all levels of government and multiple departments • Oshawa's centennial celebration in 2024 has raised recognition for Oshawa's history – we can build on this • Facility expansion project will address several space challenges • Fundraising plans associated with the facility expansion will also increase awareness of the museum and its activities • Use of web-based tools and more virtual programming helps to increase profile, broaden reach and connect with the Museum's audience • Partnerships and collaborations with post-secondary institutions and community groups maximizes the reach of the Oshawa Museum • Strong online presence by the museum – social media, blogs, online articles, websites • Location in Lakeview Park allows for maximum visibility for museum programs and events, especially during the summer months • Participation in Cultural Leadership Council, Heritage Oshawa, and other groups raises our visibility and our awareness of current issues in local heritage and culture
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential cuts to operating budget and project grants from all levels of funders – Federal, Provincial and Municipal • Reliance on employment grants means uncertain seasonal staffing levels • Year-on-year inflation of non-discretionary, fixed costs • Uncertainty in local economy • Safety challenges require greater number of staff on site during opening hours, leading to increased costs • Sector-wide difficulty in recruiting volunteers, members, and Board members • Lack of communication regarding externally hosted events in Lakeview Park or on major nearby roads has a negative impact on museum operations (Ribfest, Simcoe St. construction etc.) • Membership model is not as popular as in the past, resulting in a narrower audience and difficulty with communication • Lack of museum's relevance to younger generations • Lagging return to event participation, membership renewal, and gift shop purchases following the pandemic-related closures/slowdown • Lack of a community newspaper or widespread method of local communication makes marketing events and programming difficult

7. 2025 Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1: To be a dynamic and essential part of the cultural landscape of Oshawa.	
Relevant City Strategic Goals	<p><i>Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024-2027</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INNOVATE 3: Continue to foster strong partnerships with education institutions, community partners and employers. • INNOVATE 4: Attract and promote a vibrant artistic and cultural economy. • INNOVATE 6: Promote the waterfront as a destination and innovative mixed-use community. • BELONG 1: Commit to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous communities. • LEAD 4: Enhance effective communication and encourage all community members to actively participate and learn about services, programs, and spaces. <p><i>Oshawa Economic Development Strategy, 2023</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1A: Enhance local business development • Strategy 5A: Create a vibrant community for people to live, work, learn and play. <p><i>Culture Counts: Oshawa Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan, 2014</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Direction 3.1: Increase and Strengthen Communication within and about the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector • Strategic Direction 3.2: Increase Community Awareness and Promotion of Cultural Resources

IX

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
1.1: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will provide excellent learning experiences that demonstrate the Oshawa Museum's value, contributions, and connections to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director • Archivist • Curator • Community Engagement Coordinator • Visitor Experience Coordinator • Visitor Hosts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham District School Board • Durham Catholic District School Board 	Share and promote the catalogue of education programs with Oshawa schools.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of schools to receive catalogue	100% of primary schools in Oshawa
			Through effective and ongoing training, equip museum staff to offer positive and rewarding visitor experiences.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of average customer service training hours for staff	FT staff: 4 hours; PT staff: 2 hours

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
1.2: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will seek out and engage in meaningful partnerships and collaborations that build community and awareness of Oshawa's heritage, arts, and cultural facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Directors Executive Director Archivist Curator Community Engagement Coordinator Visitor Experience Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oshawa Public Libraries post secondary institutions Union Cemetery Parks and Facilities Maintenance Services Yoga Connect Durham Durham District School Board Durham Catholic District School Board Durham Storytellers 	Continue to seek out and participate in partner events throughout Oshawa.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of events	6
			Support awareness for culture and heritage in Oshawa through a variety of mediums and outlets.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of media posts promoting other heritage or cultural orgs in Oshawa	12
						# of partner events participated in	4
1.3: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will increase the community's awareness of the Museum and its resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Directors Executive Director Archivist Curator Community Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oshawa Public Libraries post secondary institutions Union Cemetery Parks and Facilities 	Increase all user interactions with the museum, including research requests, tickets sold, participants in educational programs, off-site event interactions, etc.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of total visitor interactions	+10% over 2024

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Experience Coordinator • Visitor Hosts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance Services • Yoga Connect Durham • Durham District School Board • Durham Catholic District School Board • Durham Storytellers 	Create more opportunities for the public to interact with the museum.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of new events, partner events, or means of visitor interaction	4

New Resource Requirements	N/A
Outcomes Per Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of how the Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum’s activities add value to the community • Increased community pride • Increased public use of the Oshawa Museum and its programming • Increased appreciation and awareness of the value and economic value of culture in the community of Oshawa.

OBJECTIVE 2: To present relevant and meaningful content that reflect the communities of Oshawa.	
Relevant City Strategic Goals	<p><i>Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024-2027</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INNOVATE 3: Continue to foster strong partnerships with education institutions, community partners and employers. • INNOVATE 4: Attract and promote a vibrant artistic and cultural economy. • INNOVATE 6: Promote the waterfront as a destination and innovative mixed-use community. <p><i>Oshawa Economic Development Strategy, 2023</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 5A: Create a vibrant community for people to live, work, learn and play. <p><i>Culture Counts: Oshawa Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan, 2014</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Direction 4.4: Conserve and Celebrate Oshawa’s Rich History and Heritage

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
2.1: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will develop and deliver excellent on-site, in-class, and virtual educational programming experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director Community Engagement Coordinator Visitor Experience Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Durham District School Board Durham Catholic District School Board City of Oshawa 	Develop an ongoing marketing calendar for seasonal and regular educational programming.	Q1	Under development	Calendar produced and in use	Yes
			Develop an ongoing marketing calendar for public programs and events.	Q1	Under development	Calendar produced and in use	Yes
			Develop a teacher's guide to support learning before and after visiting the Museum.	Q2	Under development	Guide produced and available	Yes
2.2: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will continue to explore digital engagement opportunities to expand accessibility and awareness of the Museum's activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Directors Executive Director Community Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ontario Tech University Durham College Trent University Durham Oshawa heritage partners 	Redesign the Museum's websites for ease of navigability, accessibility, and to raise awareness of the Museum's online resources.	Q3-Q4	Under development	Website launched	Yes
			Establish a dedicated area on the Museum's website to share plans and updates on the new Visitor Centre project with members and stakeholders.	Q3-Q4	Under development	Member's area launched	Yes
			Share news of the Museum's activities using social media	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of posts specifically regarding	24

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
			and other digital outlets.			museum activities	

New Resource Requirements	N/A
Outcomes Per Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased public use of the Oshawa Museum Increased public knowledge of a community identity Increased public awareness of Oshawa’s diversity Increased community engagement in the Oshawa Museum and heritage/culture in Oshawa.

OBJECTIVE 3: To foster a culture of inclusivity, expertise, and to recognize the value of diversity.	
Relevant City Strategic Goals	<p><i>Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024-2027</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BELONG 1: Commit to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous communities. • BELONG 2: Reduce systemic barriers and deliver engaging, equitable and culturally inclusive programs and services for all participants • LEAD 2: Expand and embed equity, inclusion, accessibility, anti-racism and reconciliation across policies, practices, and procedures within the organization. • LEAD 7: Offer community engagement activities that enhance transparency and bring diverse voices and perspectives into decision-making processes. <p><i>Oshawa Economic Development Strategy, 2023</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1A: Enhance local business development • Strategy 5A: Create a vibrant community for people to live, work, learn and play. <p><i>Culture Counts: Oshawa Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan, 2014</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Direction 4.1: Build and Sustain Partnerships across the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector • Strategic Direction 4.3: Increase Opportunities for Cultural Programming for all Ages • Strategic Direction 4.4: Conserve and Celebrate Oshawa’s Rich History and Heritage <p><i>Research Report: City of Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan, 2017</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Direction 1: Leadership • Strategic Direction 3: Community Development • Strategic Direction 4: Human Resource Development • Strategic Direction 5: Education and Awareness

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
3.1: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will connect its collections, exhibitions, and programs with new audiences that reflect the diversity of identities and experiences within Oshawa's communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director • Archivist • Curator • Community Engagement Coordinator • Visitor Experience Coordinator • Visitor Hosts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oshawa Public Libraries • post secondary institutions • Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation • Oshawa and Durham Métis • Bawaajigewin Aboriginal Community Circle • Club Carib • Pride Durham • Library and Archives Canada • Ontario Jewish Archives • Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives • Durham District School Board • Western University • Durham Catholic 	Present and promote programming that supports the <i>Untold Oshawa</i> publication and exhibit, and the historically underserved communities that it represents.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of <i>Untold Oshawa</i> -related programs delivered	8
			Continue to develop and offer varied programming and content, with the participation of new partners.	Q1-Q4	In progress	New educational programs developed and available	3

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
		District School Board • Durham Storytellers					
3.2: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will review its human resources policies, with the aim to retain and develop staff, board members, and volunteers, to ensure the Museum has sufficient human resources to deliver on its mission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Directors Executive Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trent University Durham Durham College Ontario Museum Association Training partners 	Establish a regular part-time Museum guide position, to welcome visitors to Guy House and offer tours of the other Museum spaces.	Q1	Under development	Guide hired and in place	Yes
			Organize and make available educational opportunities for all staff, board members, and volunteers, to promote excellence in service to the public.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of average training hours for staff	FT staff:6 hours; PT staff: 3 hours
			Develop a retention plan for all positions to reduce employee turnover, prevent attrition, increase retention, and foster greater engagement.	Q2	Under development	Plan approved and in place	Yes
			Develop a Volunteer	Q2	Under development		

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
			Recruitment and Retention Plan.				
			Review and develop the Personnel Policy.	Q1	In progress	Redeveloped policy approved	Yes

New Resource Requirements	An increase in museum hours required an increase in staffing. We are proposing a consolidation of several Visitor Host positions to create a regular, part-time Visitor Host, with casual part-time support staff.
Outcomes Per Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased connection with the community • Increased ability to reflect Oshawa’s community and share Oshawa’s diverse stories • Increased public use of the Oshawa Museum • Increased public knowledge of a community identity • Increased public awareness of Oshawa’s diversity • Increased community pride in Oshawa’s history and the current community • Increased public use of the Oshawa Museum and its programming

OBJECTIVE 4: To ensure the resiliency and flexibility of the museum's operations and collections.	
Relevant City Strategic Goals	<p><i>Oshawa Strategic Plan 2024-2027</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INNOVATE 3: Continue to foster strong partnerships with education institutions, community partners and employers. • INNOVATE 4: Attract and promote a vibrant artistic and cultural economy. • INNOVATE 6: Promote the waterfront as a destination and innovative mixed-use community. • BELONG 2: Reduce systemic barriers and deliver engaging, equitable and culturally inclusive programs and services for all participants • LEAD 1: Provide transparent, efficient, and responsible fiscal stewardship and use of resources. • LEAD 7: Offer community engagement activities that enhance transparency and bring diverse voices and perspectives into decision-making processes. <p><i>Oshawa Economic Development Strategy, 2023</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1A: Enhance local business development • Strategy 5A: Create a vibrant community for people to live, work, learn and play. <p><i>Culture Counts: Oshawa Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan, 2014</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Direction 2.4: Work Collaboratively with Oshawa’s Educational Institutions • Strategic Direction 4.1: Build and Sustain Partnerships Across the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Direction 4.3: Increase Opportunities for Cultural Programming for all Ages • Strategic Direction 4.4: Conserve and Celebrate Oshawa’s Rich History and Heritage
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Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
4.1: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will review its earned revenue-generating activities to support a sustainable future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Executive Director • Archivist • Curator • Community Engagement Coordinator • Visitor Experience Coordinator • Maintenance • Visitor Hosts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate sponsors • Granting bodies • Retail suppliers • Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport • Oshawa Public Libraries • Cultural Leadership Committee • Local heritage partners • Community sponsors 	Expand the museum's event and programming sponsorship program.	Q1	In progress	# of total sponsor organizations	+3 over 2024
			Investigate new grant funding for Museum activities.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of total grant applications submitted	+3 over 2024
			Redevelop the gift shop strategy to offer more locally-produced and relevant items.	Q1-Q4	In progress	% of Ontario-produced stock	30%
			Continue to develop and offer educational programming and events for audiences new to the Museum.	Q1-Q4	In progress	# of programs and events delivered	+10% over 2024
4.2: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will continue to pursue an expansion of its facilities in the form of a new Visitor's Centre, and in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Executive Director • Archivist • Curator • Community Engagement Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trent University Durham • Durham College • Oshawa Historical Society members 	Recruit and retain a Fundraising Coordinator to plan and execute a development strategy toward developing relationships, sponsorships, and	Q1	Under development	Fundraiser hired and in place	Yes

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
refreshing existing visitor spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Experience Coordinator • Maintenance • Visitor Hosts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Oshawa Staff and Council • Indigenous community members • Community members and stakeholders • Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport • Government of Canada 	donations, and a roadmap toward a new Visitor's Centre.				
			Engage in a meaningful dialogue with community members and stakeholders to develop a plan for the new Visitor's Centre that will reflect Oshawa's needs.	Q1-Q4	In progress	# of invitations to collect feedback	4
			Refresh and update <i>A Carrying Place</i> exhibit in the Indigenous Gallery, following up on planning and research completed in 2024.	Q2-Q3	In progress	Updated exhibit re-opened	Completed by EOY 2025
			Redesign the Vera Conant Gallery to better welcome and engage drop-in visitors to the Museum.	Q2-Q3	In progress	Updated gallery re-opened	Completed by EOY 2025
4.3: The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will practice good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Executive Director • Archivist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oshawa Public Libraries • City of Oshawa 	Present reports to members of the Oshawa Historical Society at each member's meeting	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of reports delivered	8

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Action	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
governance to ensure effective, efficient, and open management of the Oshawa Museum and the Oshawa Historical Society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curator • Community Engagement Coordinator • Visitor Experience Coordinator • Maintenance • Visitor Hosts 		(8 meetings per year).				
			Present quarterly financial reports to the City of Oshawa.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of reports delivered	4
			Present monthly financial and activity reports to the Board of Directors.	Q1-Q4	Under development	# of reports delivered	12
			Review, and develop an ongoing schedule for reviewing, existing policies and guidelines.	Q1	Under development	Schedule in place and in use	Yes

New Resource Requirements	The addition of one regular part-time Fundraising Co-ordinator to oversee sponsorship and fundraising for the museum expansion project.
Outcomes Per Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened social capital • Improved organizational performance • Increased transparency • Well-trained, satisfied, professional staff • Increased earned revenue • Increased opportunities to support the work of Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum • Improved organizational efficiency • Support for City of Oshawa’s waterfront plans • Increase self generated revenue by accommodating larger groups for programming and events • Increased opportunities to offer public services • Improved visibility of the Museum and Oshawa’s heritage assets • Improved visitor amenities

8. Resource Requirements

The Oshawa Historical Society appreciates the support from members of Oshawa City Council and City staff for the work of the Museum, and we recognize the need for responsible action that ensures the sustainability of the agency on behalf of Oshawa going forward.

For 2025-2026, the Oshawa Historical Society has produced a responsible operating budget that controls expenses and aligns resources consistent with the direction provided by the City of Oshawa Strategic Plan, the Oshawa Economic Development Strategy, and Culture Counts.



The Oshawa Historical Society is therefore respectfully submitting a budget request for 2025, with a minimal but required increase of 11.3% (\$54,926), and a further 3.7% increase (\$20,128) for 2026.

This increase includes a modest 4% cost of living increases per year, along with the cost of two new regular part-time positions. Retaining a regular, part-time museum interpreter would increase the number of hours that the museum could be open – to 6 days per week, year-round – as well as raise the level of professional and knowledgeable service available to the Museum’s visitors. Meanwhile, the new fundraiser position would generate revenue towards the Council-approved Museum expansion project.

The Oshawa Historical Society expects to see a decrease in some operating expenses as a result of improvements and maintenance projects undertaken in the last two years, particularly regarding the installation of a new security system. The Society also anticipates an increase in agency-generated revenue.



9. Conclusion

The Oshawa Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Oshawa for the Oshawa Museum and its efforts to preserve and promote awareness and appreciation for the history of Oshawa.

The Oshawa Museum is an important part of the cultural community in Oshawa and will continue to tell great stories, expand the historical narrative and spark interest in local history. As the only community

museum in Oshawa, the three heritage homes and the drive shed that comprise the Museum are ideally situated to tell the story of Oshawa from the earliest First Nations settlements to present times. The Oshawa Museum helps to communicate community identity, enhance public knowledge, encourage community engagement and contribute value to our community.

The Oshawa Museum's strength is in its collections, spaces, and people, along with the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. History organizations make their communities more attractive places in which to live, work, learn and play. With astute leadership, compelling vision, and partners and resources sufficient to the task, the Oshawa Historical Society will continue to be a leader in the arts, culture and heritage community of Oshawa.



10. Contact Information

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The Corporation of the City of Oshawa
2025/2026 Operating Budget
Oshawa Historical Society

Description	2024 Projected Actuals	2024 Approved Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	2025-2024 Variance \$'s	2025-2024 Variance %	2026 Proposed Forecast	2026-2025 Variance \$'s	2026-2025 Variance %
Personnel Costs	418,600	418,600	507,010	88,410	21.1	527,305	20,294	4.0
Program and Office Supplies	25,093	25,093	18,487	(6,606)	(26.3)	18,857	370	2.0
Professional Services	41,407	41,407	44,505	3,098	7.5	45,395	890	2.0
Maintenance and Repairs	27,895	27,895	9,029	(18,866)	(67.6)	9,210	181	2.0
Utilities	26,251	26,251	21,063	(5,188)	(19.8)	21,633	570	2.7
Contributions and Financial Charges				-			-	
Agency Generated Revenue	(52,632)	(52,632)	(58,569)	(5,937)	11.3	(60,746)	(2,177)	3.7
City of Oshawa Grants	(486,600)	(486,600)	(541,526)	(54,926)	11.3	(561,654)	(20,128)	3.7
Total Oshawa Historical Society	14	14	-	(14)	(100.0)	-	(0)	

Variance Explanations:

2025

Personnel	12.20%	Addition of two new regular, part-time positions, 4% cost of living increases.
Utilities - Electricity	-0.50%	Electricity only. This percentage tied to City inflationary increase.
Utilities - Water and Sewer	3%	Water only. This percentage tied to City inflationary increase.
Program and Office Supplies	2%	CPI - stationery, security, and janitorial supplies only
Utilities - Fuel	3%	Fuel only. This percentage tied to City inflationary increase.
Maintenance and Repairs	2%	CPI
Professional Services	2%	CPI

2026

Personnel	4%	4% cost of living increases.
Utilities - Electricity	2.5%	Electricity only. This percentage tied to City inflationary increase.
Utilities - Water and Sewer	5%	Water only. This percentage tied to City inflationary increase.
Program and Office Supplies	2%	CPI - stationery, security, and janitorial supplies only
Utilities - Fuel	3%	Fuel only. This percentage tied to City inflationary increase.
Maintenance and Repairs	2%	CPI
Professional Services	2%	CPI