

C R A N B R O O K  
H I S T O R Y C E N T R E

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Strategic Plan 2022-2026

## Context

The Cranbrook Archives Museum and Landmark Society (formally Foundation) began operating the Cranbrook Railway Museum in June 1976 with a mandate to preserve the railway heritage of Cranbrook. Since that time hundreds of passionate volunteers, board members and staff have contributed to the incredible development of the organization. In 2015, the museum was rebranded as the Cranbrook History Centre following a community survey and professional analysis of the facility's strengths. Since then, the first phase of a permanent roof over the core collection of historic railcars has been constructed and paleontology and history galleries have been developed as part of the museum's wider mandate. From a specialized mandate to preserve railroad history, the Cranbrook History Centre has grown into a significant community asset, not only as the authority and guardian of the community's diverse history but also as a tourism anchor and partner for the City of Cranbrook.

The Cranbrook History Centre has developed its strategic plan for the next 5 years, taking the organization to its 50th anniversary of serving the community. The Planning Team for the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan comprised of Bob Whetham, CAMAL Board Chair, board members Keith Powell and Jayne Clarke, and Honor Neve, Chief Curator of the Cranbrook History Centre. Strategic planning is a type of organizational planning defined as an *effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it*. The strategic planning approach is a methodology for helping organizations figure out what is important and what they should do about it. The strategic planning process helps organizations look at the *big picture* but also helps lead to specific, targeted actions. The Planning Team undertook a series of interviews, planning sessions and focus groups with the organization's key stakeholders to determine the key areas of focus and strategic goals.

In early 2021, a Board committee was formed to investigate the potential for rebranding the CHC after community feedback indicated poor name recognition. Initial budgets and conversations with stakeholders indicated a full rebranding of the organization would be undesirable and financially prohibitive at this time. The committee was also tasked with evaluating whether the Mandate, Mission and Vision Statements were reflective of the organization. The committee determined the statements required reworking to better reflect the work of CHC. The committee also recommended instead of re-branding, more focus should be placed on community engagement initiatives and marketing.

The committee went through several sessions and multiple exercises to refine its statements. Subsequently, new Statements were approved by the Board in May 2021. These values have been integrated into this document. This will help ensure their presence and prominence at strategic and operational levels.

## Mandate

The Cranbrook History Centre is a landmark site located in Cranbrook BC. We preserve and display internationally recognized paleontology specimens, a nationally designated railcar collection, and serve as a repository for the history of Cranbrook and the East Kootenay region for all to explore and discover.

## Mission

We believe in the power of history and science to ignite the imagination, stimulate curiosity, provide enjoyment, and engage communities through authentic programming, research, and dynamic displays. The Cranbrook History Centre brings the stories of the past to life.

## Vision

To build community spirit and serve as a gateway to exploring the history, cultures and stories of the land and the people of Cranbrook, the East Kootenay, British Columbia and Canada.

After significant changes to the organization in 2019 and two years of reduced operations throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Cranbrook History Centre is ready to take-on the new challenge of realizing its place as a landmark site which is both welcoming and accessible. The previous strategic plan emphasized creating stronger professional standards and financial systems. With these key components now in place, CAMAL stands on the precipice of renewal and growth.

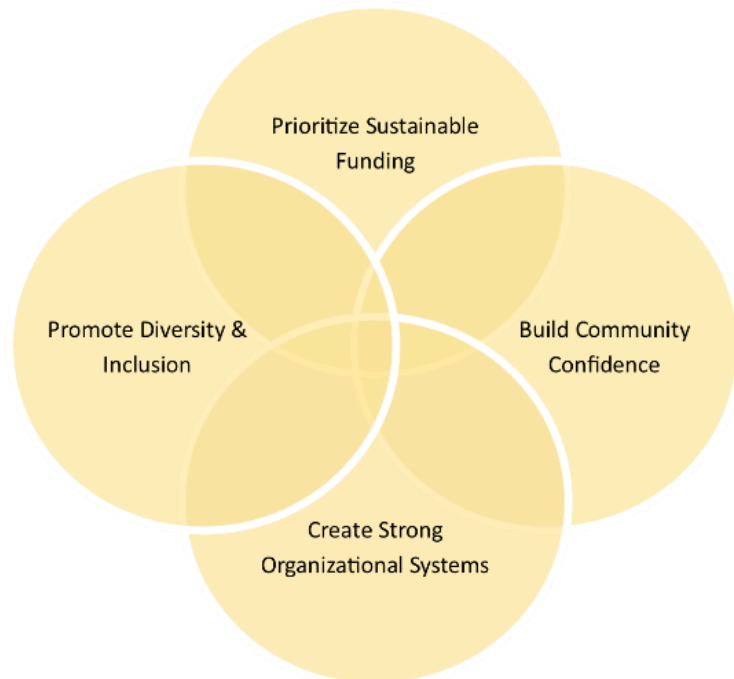
## Strategic Plan

Key Priority for 2026: Renewal and Growth

For the Cranbrook History Centre to realize its place as a landmark site through the development of a fully accessible museum and completion of Phase 2 of the Heritage Railcar Preservation Building. By 2026, the Cranbrook History Centre will also be a welcoming space where diverse voices are heard, where deeper connections with one another and the landscapes around us can be made.

Long-term sustainability will be at the fore front of every decision and will draw upon the strength of the community. In keeping with this priority, the strategic plan identifies four interconnected areas of focus for the next five years. Each area has a set of strategic goals and action steps to provide a roadmap to 2026. The goals will guide the work of the board and the staff as they develop annual business plans, fundraising campaigns, partnerships, and budgets.

The four areas of focus are shown in overlapping circles to demonstrate their interconnectedness:





**Prioritize Sustainable  
Funding**

**Strategic Goal**

Funding initiatives will focus on building a long term, sustainable future. The primary capital priorities over the next five years are: (1) construction of Phase 2 of the Heritage Railcar Building and (2) completion of the main museum facility.

*Over the next five years, we will:*

- Initiate a cohesive marketing program as part of the annual business plan directed towards local, provincial, and national audiences to highlight programs and displays, and strengthen the museum's brand.
- Make social, environmental, and financial sustainability a priority in decision making related to the museum's development and operations.
- Establish a fundraising committee to oversee the capital fundraising campaign for Phase 2 of the Heritage Railcar Preservation Building and the completion of the main museum facility.
- Create a preventative then predictive maintenance schedule for the long-term care of organizational assets including the railcar collection, Elko Station and Water Tower.




**Build Community  
Confidence**

### Strategic Goal

The organization will prioritize inclusive projects which build meaningful connections with and between visitors, newcomers, and long-time residents as well as residents with different social, cultural and economic perspectives through volunteerism, membership, programs, and partnerships.

*Over the next five years, we will:*

- Identify opportunities to collaborate with local school boards and post-secondary institutions to exchange and expand knowledge.
- Partner with other community organizations and local government to help foster community sustainability, strengthening our organizational vitality, identity and sustainability.
- Create accessible data-driven, and experiential programming that is inclusive, raises awareness of underrepresented parts of our community's history and brings out the richness of our diverse community with stories of strength.
- Bring together people from all walks of life in a cultural and heritage setting to foster dialogue, deepen social connections, and help to build a stronger and more connected community.




**Promote Diversity &  
Inclusion**

### **Strategic Goal**

The museum Board and staff will start conversations, begin relationships, and collaborate with underrepresented community members to reduce barriers for participation and achieve a deeper understanding of our collective experiences.

*Over the next five years, we will:*

- Be a leader, a champion, and an ally, creating a place and a platform for all members of the community regardless of their culture, physical capabilities, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
- Work collaboratively with Indigenous partners and stakeholders to build a respectful, trusting relationship.
- Contextualize the colonial/settler perspective of the collection and its impact on minority communities.
- Bring members of the Cranbrook community together to share their stories to foster a greater understanding of different perspectives among diverse ages, ethnic, religious, economic, and gender backgrounds.



**Create Strong  
Organizational Systems**

### Strategic Goal

The future of the organization will be strengthened by integrating reconciliation principles into our business practices and continuing to create HR, Programming, Development and Financial systems, ensuring funder confidence and organizational stability.

*Over the next five years, we will:*

- Commit individually and as an organization to the work of Reconciliation.
- Develop an adaptive organizational structure that supports all strategic goals.
- Prioritize opportunities for self-generated revenue.
- Adopt inclusive and accountable HR policies to build employee confidence.
- Prioritize human resource and succession plans that ensure a high-calibre and diverse team of board members, staff members and volunteers.



## Consultation

All board and staff members have been engaged in developing this strategic plan. Community stakeholders were asked to contribute their ideas and for their input. The final document incorporates many of their ideas and suggestions for improvement. Adoption of this document by the Board comes with a commitment for continued and ongoing stakeholder consultation in the development of the organization and yearly operational plans.

## Community Stakeholders Engaged

Organization	Contact	Format
City of Cranbrook	Darren Brewer, Economic Development Ron Popoff, City Councillor	Individual Interviews
Community Foundation of Kootenay Rockies	Lynnette Wray	Individual Interview
Columbia Basin Institute	Chris Johns Board of Directors	Board Engagement
CHC - Staff	Valerie Bourne, Business Manager Nathalie Lim Picard, Programming Coordinator Eileen Kosasih, Visitor Experience Coordinator Michaela Eckersley, Historical Interpreter Georgia Hamilton, Historical Interpreter Emily Russell, Museum Educator	Individual Interviews and Focus Group
CHC - Volunteers	Dave Humphrey Ken Rines Carl Harvey-Barnes	Individual Interviews and Focus Group
RDEK	Rob Gay	Individual Interview
Community Members	Dave Kaiser Norm Magee CAMAL Membership	Individual Interviews  Survey
SD5	Frank Lento Board of Directors	Board Engagement