



## Strategies for Interpretive Renewal

Interpretive renewal strategies for the Nova Scotia Museum are designed to attract and engage visitors over the next 20 years or more. These strategies will ensure that the museum finds a relevant and meaningful place in the lives of Nova Scotians and tourists, and that the interpretation of the province's stories thrives well into the future.



## 4.1 Objectives and Strategies

This section presents the goals, objectives and strategies of the Interpretive Master Plan. The goals presented in section 3.1 are repeated here for clarity, as the objectives and strategies presented have been specifically created to ensure that the main goals of the project are met and interpretive renewal is successful. These goals, objectives and strategies have been developed by the consultant team in close coordination with key Division staff members and were reviewed and discussed at several workshops and meetings throughout the planning process. They can be used in concert with the best practices presented in Section Three.

Strategies (both short and long term) will guide the Heritage Division as it renews interpretation over the next several years. Although they cannot all be addressed immediately, they should serve as a reference point for staff during future initiatives. **In Section Five, a list of prioritized strategies and relevant actions will be used to determine immediate renewal projects.**



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## Goal 1:

**Contribute to a common understanding and appreciation of the heritage of Nova Scotia through interpretation.**

**Objective 1:** Ensure a balanced approach to natural and cultural heritage.

### Strategies

- A. Increase emphasis on natural history.
- B. Reduce redundancies in cultural history interpretation.
- C. Where possible, integrate natural and cultural history stories.



Nova Scotia Museum (2 images)

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**Objective 2: Regain authority as the voice for Nova Scotia Heritage; be respected.**

## Strategies

- A. Increase visibility through public outreach in non-traditional places (e.g., presentation at a shopping centre).
- B. Increase the museum's presence in the media with respect to current public issues (e.g., promote museum exhibits).
- C. Increase the museum's presence at colleges and universities (e.g., encourage staff to teach courses or guest lecture).
- D. Acknowledge and provide orientation to the Nova Scotia Museum at every site, including connecting visitors to other sites and resources.
- E. Ensure that interpretation at NSM sites is connected to the "big picture", using the Interpretive Master Plan themes and provincially significant stories outlined in the content framework.

**Objective 3: Develop two-way communication between the museum and visitors.**

## Strategies

- A. Develop a vision for and implement "The Museum Online," an online extension of the NSM that is a vital component of the Heritage Division.
- B. Create opportunities for the public to co-produce museum interpretation.



The Minnesota Historical Society



The Toy Tractor Times.com

## ► Goal 2:

Achieve sustainability by ensuring that the Heritage Division thrives and survives into the future.



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Objective 1: Achieve resource sustainability.

### Strategies

- A. Increase earned revenues.
- B. Develop low-volume, high-yield programs and experiences.
- C. Enlarge the fundraising and donation base.
- D. Work to achieve greater support by various levels of government.
- E. Begin interpretive renewal efforts with small scale projects that will build momentum over time.

Parks Canada



Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage



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"paris. franz" (flickr)



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Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage (2 images)



### Objective 2: Achieve social relevance through community involvement.

#### Strategies

- A. Reflect community values.
- B. Develop a partnership plan to formalize networks and synergies within the Heritage Division and with outside agencies (e.g., meet with Parks Canada and the Department of Natural Resources to develop shared initiatives with respect to species at risk).
- C. Achieve a balance between the responsible social function of the museum and adherence to a responsible corporate business model.
- D. Build relationships with the community and encourage community use of museum sites, including non-traditional uses that relate to the mandate of the sites.
- E. Exploit the specific potential of each site to attract and retain specialized audiences (e.g., hold weekly pottery classes at Sherbrooke Village).
- F. Support new initiatives with promotion and marketing.

## Objective 3: Deepen engagement through new and repeat visitation.

### Strategies

- A. Stimulate repeat visitation by offering a variety of changing visitor experiences (e.g., rotating exhibits/programs related to the content).
- B. Create memorable, high-quality, engaging visitor experiences.
- C. Develop programs that encourage a long-term relationship (e.g., Nature Exchange program).
- D. Make connections and information about the heritage of Nova Scotia accessible to a broad range of audiences in an engaging and effective manner.
- E. Provide a gateway experience in urban centres that links visitors to all NSM sites.



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Nova Scotia Tourism,  
Culture and Heritage



Maritime Museum of the Atlantic



Richard Lien



Nova Scotia Museum

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### Objective 4: Be innovative.

#### Strategies

- Stay current: be responsive to the latest trends in media, interpretation and time-sensitive public issues.
- Acknowledge and retain successful interpretive initiatives, enhancing them as may be needed.
- Make innovation a priority for new initiatives where renewal is indicated.
- Embrace new technologies to expand audiences and increase access to information.
- Experiment; encourage test projects and risk taking.
- Facilitate staff to give creative input on a regular basis.

### Objectives 5: Be green.

#### Strategies

- Introduce and maintain environmentally sustainable operating practices.
- Increase public awareness of environmental issues.
- Develop environmentally responsible exhibits.
- Use historic sites to promote architectural conservation as a sustainable activity.
- Where appropriate, use museum sites to promote sustainable lifestyles and skills.



Scott Jones (flickr)





## Goal 3:

Ensure that interpretation is authentic, relevant and inclusive for all audiences.



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Objective 1: Speak with authority: be accurate and authentic.

### Strategies

- A. Encourage applied research in all projects.
- B. Make the research process, as well as the researchers, more visible to the public.
- C. Monitor, update and evaluate the content framework regularly.
- D. Distinguish myth from reality in all interpretation.
- E. Exploit the specific history of each site as a basis for interpretive development.



Luanne Austin



Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association



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Nova Scotia Museum



### Objective 2: Be relevant to visitors' personal experiences.

#### Strategies

- Conduct market research (utilize tourism product development models) when developing interpretive products.
- Create multi-dimensional visitor experiences that relate to multiple audiences.
- Link exhibits and programs with the Nova Scotia school curriculum.
- Use real things to put history in context (e.g., an exhibit or program about fishing on a fishing wharf).



Wikipedia

### Objective 3: Expand the content to be inclusive of Nova Scotia's diverse population.

#### Strategies

- Research and interpret new stories that are inclusive.
- Address controversial subjects.
- Encourage multi-dimensional (layered) storylines.
- Encourage partnerships with groups within and outside of the Heritage Division.



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## Objective 4: Strengthen the relationship between interpretation, the provincial collection and other heritage resources.

### Strategies

- A. Ensure that interpretation uses and makes effective use of the provincial collection and other heritage resources that the province holds.
- B. Allow interpretation to help define (in addition to science and collections research) collecting needs.
- D. Allow science and new knowledge from collections research (in addition to interpretation) to drive interpretive development and opportunities.
- E. Increase curatorial involvement in designing interpretive exhibits and programs (i.e., as part of project teams).
- F. Draw on communities to enrich the museum's knowledge of the collection.
- G. Collect and present contemporary objects that are familiar to visitors.



Pier 21 Society

## Goal 4:

Ensure best practices in interpretation are followed.

Objective 1: Increase training and skills development.

### Strategies

- A. Increase staff attendance at out-of-house conferences and professional development courses.
- B. Enhance and support staff training and professional development within the heritage division and other government departments (i.e., develop programs that can be attended by interpretive staff across all government departments).
- C. Implement a site job-switching program to educate staff about other sites in the system.
- D. Ensure staff have access to published best practices.
- E. Develop and formalize more student internship programs with universities and colleges.



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Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage



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## Objective 2: Retain and build capacity.

### Strategies

- A. Develop clear succession planning to build corporate memory.
- B. Ensure staff have access to skills-building networks and partnerships, such as the Nova Scotia Museums Association.
- C. Support the development of university and college programs in museology and interpretation.
- D. Develop mentoring and volunteerism within the Heritage Division.
- E. Develop a needs assessment and professional development tool for the museum sites that will evaluate the skill set, staffing requirements and interpretive products in order to assist them.
- F. Develop project teams (a “swot team”) to assess interpretive opportunities, research, design, implement, and promote interpretive products.



## Objective 3: Live in a policy framework.

### Strategies

- A. Develop an interpretation policy based on the principles outlined in the Interpretive Master Plan.
- B. Use the Interpretive Working Group to oversee the implementation of an interpretive policy and continually monitor and evaluate interpretive exhibits and programs.

**HERITAGE DIVISION  
INTERPRETATION  
POLICY**



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