



Lunenburg Academy® National Historic Site

“There is an everything-ness to culture...ultimately we want a culture that makes us feel proud and fulfilled to live where we do....”

Tourism NS Culture Action Plan

DRAFT STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES 2021 - 2024

Lunenburg Academy Foundation

Since 1981

K MURPHY, CONSULTING ED, LAF



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Lunenburg Academy® National Historic Site

History

The Lunenburg Academy, National Historic Site, was built in 1895 to provide an opportunity for higher secondary education for youth throughout Lunenburg County. It replaced a former school which had been destroyed by fire. This impressive three-storey structure sits atop Gallows Hill, and due to its size and elevation, the Academy is visible when approaching the town from most directions.

The Academy operated as a public school until 2012, when the School Board at the time reorganized school districts and abandoned the building. It was turned back to the Town of Lunenburg, the original owners of the property. The Academy was designated a National Historic Site in 1983 on the merits of its distinctive architectural features and its illustration of Nova Scotia's education system in the 19th century.

Founded in 1981, Lunenburg Academy Foundation served primarily as an alumni association, while the Academy continued to function as a public school. When the Academy ceased to operate as a school in 2012 the Lunenburg Academy Foundation worked with its partners to repurpose the building into a Community Cultural Centre began. Since August 2019, interior upgrades and historically sensitive renovation and exterior restoration has taken place. With the building's transformation the LAF is evolving its role, and transforming the organization accordingly. The Academy now houses the local public library and an internationally renowned graduate music school and performance space (LAMP), as well as a variety of other organizations including the Lunenburg Academy Foundation office and the newly built Heritage Interpretive Classroom.

Executive Summary

This 3-year Strategic Plan was developed in the last quarter of 2021, to optimize opportunities and develop programs and services to better equip the Lunenburg Academy Foundation to achieve our mission and mandate. Three key overarching strategic directions were identified, which support an operational plan for both LAF, and the Heritage Interpretive Classroom (HIC). This plan identifies strategic directions necessary to continue the mission and mandate of LAF, while launching the Heritage Interpretive Classroom, and continuing the Next Century Capital Campaign.

While continuing to build on these successes, the LAF will next be mapping out the steps required to effectively track and measure results along the way. We will adjust for environmental and economic factors when necessary. Hence, with the repurposing of the building, the mission of the LAF has evolved. These strategic priorities will identify investment in additional resources (both physical and human) to achieve this growing mandate. New goals and objectives will be generated, measured and adjusted where required.

In providing a framework for LAF's future, including the operation of Heritage Interpretive Classroom, the following vision and mission statements are inspired by the original objects of the Society, dated October 2, 1981 as being: *"The upkeep, preservation and restoration of the Academy"*.

Vision



Lunenburg Academy® National Historic Site

The Lunenburg Academy continues to contribute to the heritage and culture of the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding area while sustaining and celebrating itself as a National Historic Site, a centre for cultural and educational experiences and a visitor attraction.

Mission

Preservation, restoration and care of the Lunenburg Academy, a National Historic Site

Introduction

The Lunenburg Academy Foundation (LAF), formed in 1981, has built upon its mandate with the launch of its first ever “Next Century Capital Campaign” in 2019. With the Heritage Interpretive Classroom (HIC), the LAF now plays a greater role within the heritage and cultural community of Lunenburg. The HIC, located in room 106 of the main level of the Academy, is scheduled to open spring of 2022. This interpretive site addresses a growing demand for public access to this architectural gem. HIC tells the story of the Academy in times of educational reform in the late 19th century, and of the school’s integral place within the community during that period. LAF now enters into a new stage of operations, requiring full time staff, public hours of operation, and a larger presence as a National Historic Site of growing significance. Academy.

Recent capital projects for the Academy have been shared by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Parks Canada, the Province of Nova Scotia, Town of Lunenburg, and the Lunenburg Academy Foundation:

2015 Tenant Readiness Renovations	\$1.5 million
2017-2018 Exterior Restoration Phase I	\$2.3 million
2017 - 2018 Library Construction	\$500,000
2019 – 2000 Exterior Restoration Phase II	\$1 million
2019 – 2021 Heritage Interpretive Classroom	\$350,000
Future Lot Development	\$1 million

Additional projects completed by the Foundation during this time include: digitization of Seagull yearbooks, inventory of artifacts, replacement of furnace boiler, addition of entrance railings and an engineering study of drain tile projects....

With a strong, collaborative approach, LAF has leveraged support for these projects, and many other smaller projects have received anonymous “gifts in kind” for additional enhancements and repairs.

The Foundation is quickly closing in on its capital campaign goal \$1.5 million. The final phase of the exterior restoration of the Academy is the Lot Development Plan, featuring a new public plaza and additional parking. LAF has contributed close to \$1,000,000 towards the most recent capital improvements. Recently a drain tile study has been scheduled in anticipation of a requirement for foundational work on the basement level of the building. At this time, it is unknown as to the role of the Town of Lunenburg in supporting future capital improvements to Lunenburg Academy.



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Guiding Principles

- **Excellence:** In line with the sights set with the construction of this beautiful building we will work toward this standard in all that we do.
- **Respect for heritage:** As a National Historic Site the Academy is an important symbol of the heritage of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia and Canada. We will demonstrate respect for this heritage and must also be open to other historical narratives now emerging and the voices of those who had been silenced or overlooked in the past.
- **Education:** The Academy is a monument to the importance of education. We understand that learning never stops and facilitating education for all is an ongoing quest.
- **Building Community:** The Academy was an integral part of this community and helped Lunenburg grow and prosper as it helped the students within it's walls do the same. Continuing this legacy is possible as the building takes on a new role as a Community Cultural Centre.

Strategic Directives

1 Goal: Ensure Financial Sustainability

- Increase revenue through effective donor stewardship
- Be competitive in fundraising within industry standards
- Adopt a leading-edge approach to diversifying revenue
- Achieves optimal ROI
- Has a strong network of new and existing partners/donor
- Creates and delivers great experiences
- Maintains low admin fee ratio

2 Goal: Increase Visibility and Brand Awareness

- Improve brand awareness
- Be consistent in messaging
- Be a "go to" partner
- Alumni and supporters are engaged and connected
- Builds, maintains and executes on integrated Marketing, Communications and Social Media strategy
- Outwardly focussed on donors, partners, and relevant environment

3 Goal: Ensure Excellence In Board Governance

- Has strong governance model and optimize effectiveness
- Effectively oversees organization and measure results
- Diverse skills set required for success



Lunenburg Academy® National Historic Site

LAF will strive to achieve the above noted Strategic Directions which will drive the operational plan for future growth and success of Lunenburg Academy. The recommendations of this Strategic Plan will serve as the guiding work plan for staff, volunteers, and LAF. Progress will be measured and reviewed on a quarterly basis, and adjusted where necessary.

Summary

There is much to be accomplished during this period of transition. Our operational plan stems from our strategic directions and includes the necessary requirements in order for LAF to qualify for additional support both provincially and federally, such as:

1. Year round services
2. Full time employee equivalents (FTE)
3. Required policies and procedures

We will strive to optimize opportunities, drive community engagement, increase support and ensure the long-term viability of Lunenburg Academy National Historic Site. Our work has underpinnings in the rich heritage and culture of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia and as one of the few remaining examples of an historic Academy building of its type in Canada. These strategic directives will be the foundation for the operations of LAF, in our continued growth and transformation.