

2025
-2028

Strategic Plan



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Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre

Operated by the Sooke Region Historical Society



updated March 2026

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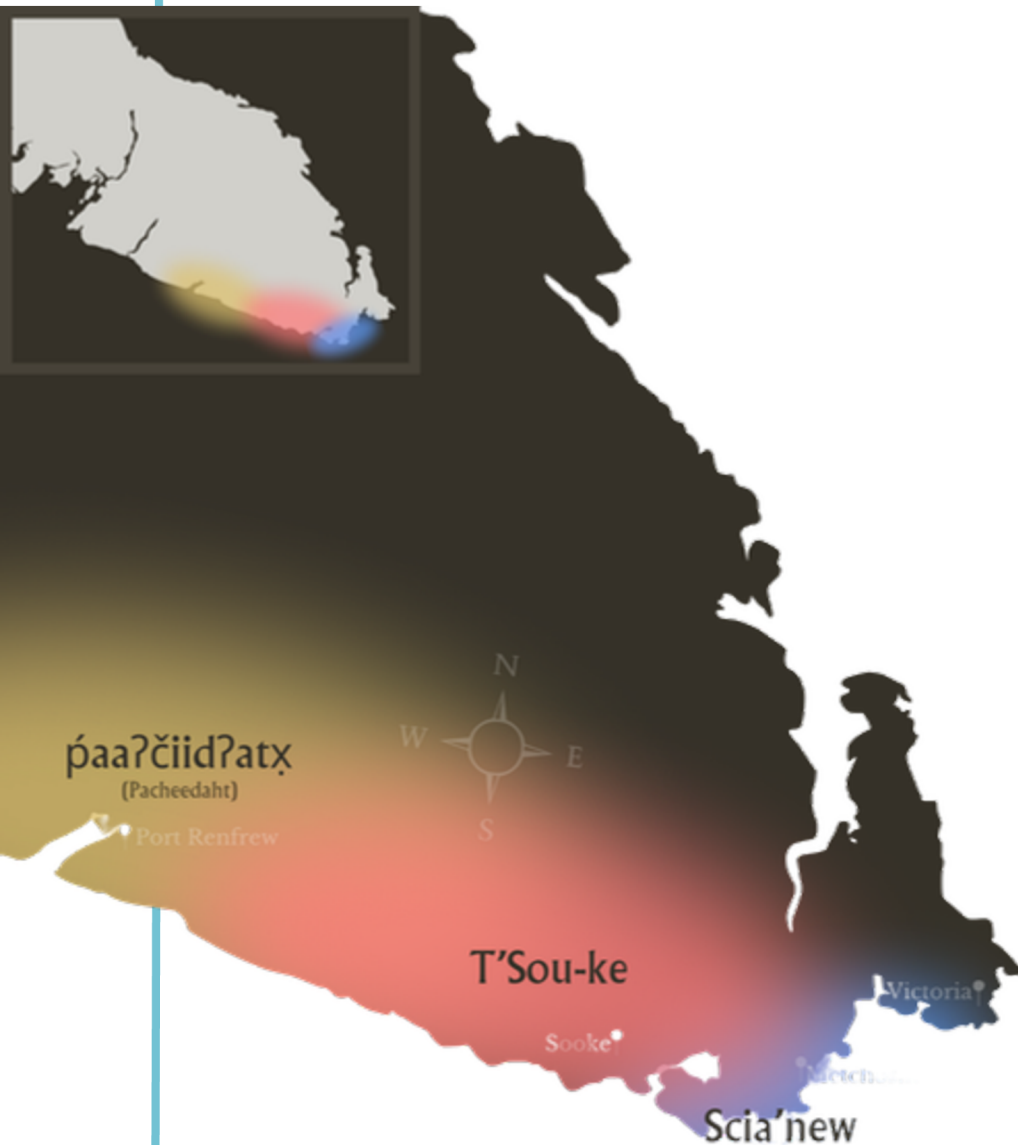
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about the place

The Sooke Region Museum is located on the territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation, and operates in the territories of the T'Sou-ke, Scia'new, and Pacheedaht peoples, who have inhabited this place since time immemorial, forming deep connections and living in harmony with the land.

The Sooke Region Historical Society is grateful to be situated on and to share the history of these lands and communities of East Sooke, Sooke, Otter Point, Shirley, Jordan River and Port Renfrew and we wish to extend our deep gratitude to the T'Sou-ke, Scia'new, and Pacheedaht.





purpose

This Strategic Plan is intended to guide planning and maintain focus over the next five years. This Plan has been developed internally with the Board of Directors and staff to operationalize the vision for the Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre.

Building on the strong foundations of this regional museum, our aim is to provide a sense of community and place by celebrating our collective heritage and to take us through the 50th anniversary celebrations in 2027.



vision, mission, mandate

VISION

To be a community museum that makes a difference ... improving the lives of residents and visitors to the Sooke Region.

MISSION

Inspiring an appreciation of the Sooke Region's past and its relevance to our present and future.

PURPOSE

- (a) To gather and preserve information, records, and objects of educational and cultural value associated with the natural and human history of the area, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing
- (b) To establish and maintain a museum for the purpose of preserving, recording and exhibiting for public enjoyment such material
- (c) To undertake other such activities, which from time to time, may be deemed appropriate.



values

Welcoming – Creating space for everyone

We create friendly, inclusive spaces where every visitor, volunteer, employee, and neighbour feels valued and part of the story.

Inspiring – Sparking curiosity and wonder

We encourage learning, creativity, and discovery, helping our community connect with our shared heritage.

Stewards – Caring for what has been entrusted to us

We responsibly look after our collections, resources, environment, and our relationships so they can be enjoyed for generations come.

Ethical – Acting with integrity and respect

We earn trust by being honest, fair, thoughtful, and transparent in all that we do.

Relevant – Listening, learning and adapting

We stay connected to our community's voices and experiences, ensuring our work reflects what matters today.



history

Sooke Region Historical Society was established in 1974.

Sooke Region Museum began in 1977 with a vision to preserve and interpret both Indigenous Nations and settler stories of the area through a variety of indoor and outdoor exhibits. Historian Elida Peers was a driving force behind the museum, operating it as a volunteer for many years and continues to write a weekly newspaper column on the region's history. From the start, the museum has attracted widespread community support in addition to being a centre of learning and stop of interest.

The region's official Visitor Centre was added in 1981, serving thousands of tourists each year since.

Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre has welcomed over 1.5 million visitors since 1977.

SSRHS#1912 corner of Sooke and Phillips Rd., 1979

SRHS#1963 working on steam donkey, August 1978

SRHS#5758 Susan Johnson, circa 1986-87

the people

The Sooke Region Historical Society is governed by a volunteer board of directors with an elected president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and six directors at large. A representative with full voting rights and board participation is appointed by T'Sou-ke Nation.

Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre operations in the areas of collections & exhibits, programs for youth and adults, gift shop, special events, and visitor services are carried out by staff, summer students and volunteers under the leadership of Executive Director, Michelle Richard.

Volunteers have been an essential part of the Museum, from building to cataloguing to program delivery to events assistance to research, governance and more.

Members support operations through fees, shopping at our gift shop and participating in programs.



Board of Directors and Staff, May 2024



Making a difference...together



Supported by the Province of British Columbia



fundere & supporters

The museum is a federally registered charity and receives funding from a variety of sources.

Support from regional residents is received through the Capital Regional District (CRD) in the form of a tax levy based on a series of referenda, the latest of which was carried by 83% of region voters in 2008, demonstrating overwhelming positive support for funding of museum operations.

Additional operating funding comes from the BC Arts Council and program funding from Canada Summer Jobs, Young Canada Works and BC Community Gaming.

The Visitor Centre is supported by Destination BC and the District of Sooke. Self-Earned Revenues form about 25% of our funding through donations, gift shop sales, program fees, etc.

strategic theme #1

storytelling

Goal: Present engaging narratives to help visitors relate to local culture, history and nature, creating a memorable experience.



visiting Cedar the cougar inside the Sooke Region Museum

Objectives:

- 1 - Reflect the diversity of residents through exhibits, programs, and events
- 2 - Share stories from the full geographic region, from Port Renfrew to East Sooke
- 3 - Present exhibits inspired by the collection, connected to the region and people
- 4 - Employ a variety of methods, formats, and locations to share stories
- 5 - Contribute to a sense of place and belonging

strategic theme #2

engagement & education

Goal: Engage audiences through exhibits, programs, events and services



volunteer Lanny Seaton gives a school tour, May 2024

Objectives:

- 1 - Encourage new and diverse audiences to engage with the Museum
- 2 - Offer programs and events inspired by the collection, connected to the region
- 3 - Invite ongoing collection and sharing of community stories and experiences
- 4 - Communicate the role of a community museum
- 5 - Ensure access to collections
- 6 - Build and nurture relationships with Indigenous Nations, community organizations, residents, funders
- 7 - Participate in community events
- 8 - Inform visitors to the region about local cultural and natural heritage

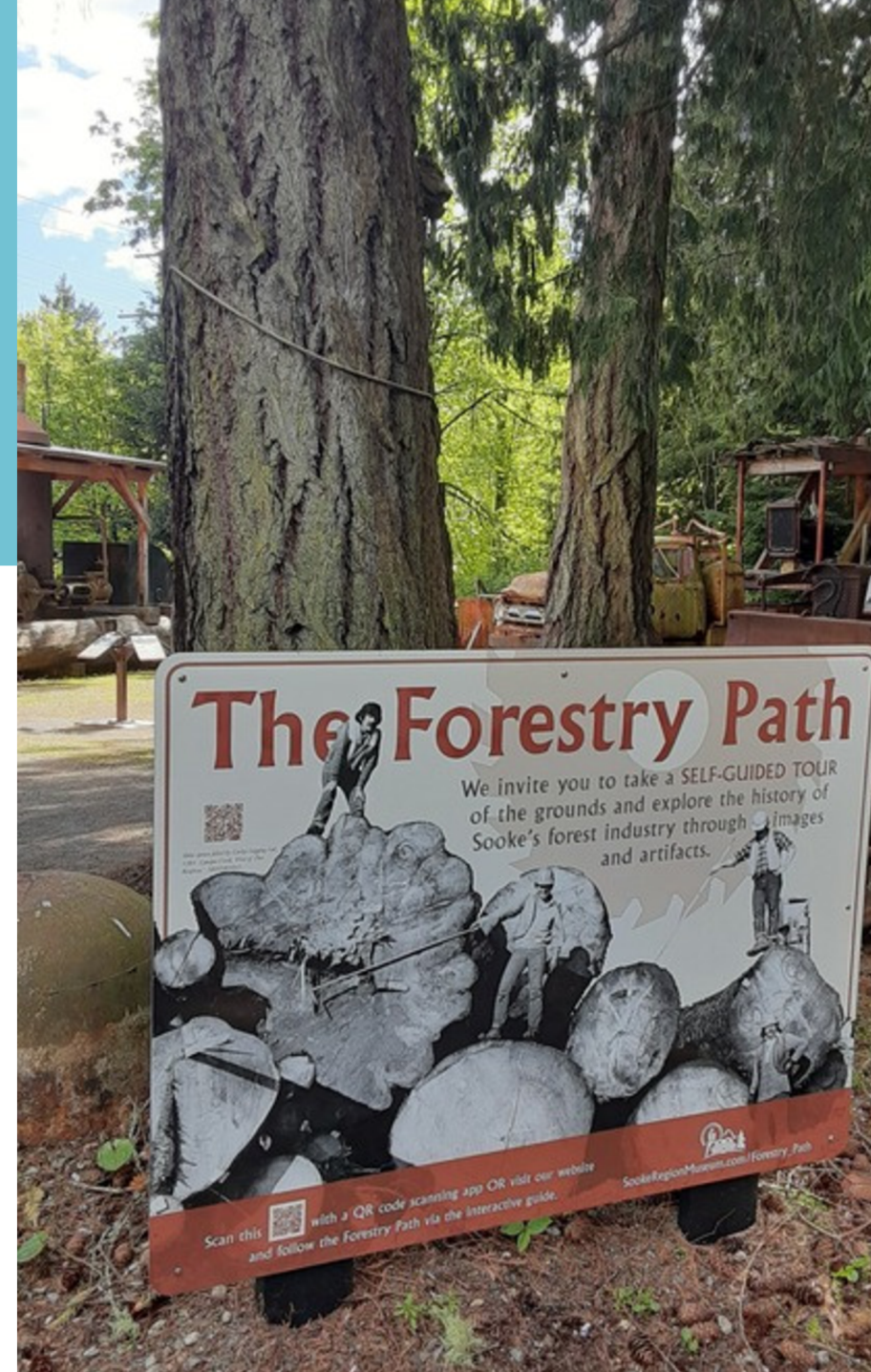
strategic theme #3

grounds & facilities

Goal: Present welcoming, attractive and accessible spaces

Objectives:

- 1 - Ensure grounds, facilities, exhibits are safe and accessible
- 2 - Maintain structures for continued use
- 3 - Anticipate future needs for collections, exhibits, programs and events
- 4 - Feature natural heritage through gardens and grounds
- 5 - Encourage visitation through wayfinding



strategic theme #4

sustainability

Goal: Ensure Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre is in a strong position to serve the community for the future.



SRHS#2920 visitors at opening of outside exhibits, June 15, 1980

Objectives:

- 1 - Secure funding for ongoing operations, maintenance and projects
- 2 - Develop opportunities for community members, businesses to support operations and projects
- 3 - Support local artists, organizations, and businesses to contribute to strong local economy
- 4 - Recognize and reward contributions of staff and volunteers
- 5 - Provide equitable compensation for staff in a supportive and inclusive workplace
- 6 - Steward relationships with members
- 7 - Implement systems to safeguard organizational knowledge

strategic theme #5

decolonization

Goal: Redress and take responsibility for power imbalances and our colonial past by identifying, deconstructing, and replacing colonial practices.



Detours exhibit opening, October 2024
Emma Wilton, Collections & Exhibits Manager and Jackie DeYaeger, T'Sou-ke Nation

Objectives:

- 1 - Maintain and steward relationships with the Scia'new, T'Sou-ke, and Pacheedaht
- 2 - Shift the colonial structures within the museum to make space for Indigenous knowledges and identities to be accurately and respectfully represented
- 3 - Uplift and support Indigenous sovereignty
- 4 - Reconnect intangible and tangible cultural belongings to Indigenous communities



celebrate 50th anniversary

Goal: Celebrate accomplishments and look forward to the future

Objectives:

- 1 - Present updated exhibits aligned with strategic goals and community needs
- 2 - Ensure grounds and facilities are welcoming, safe, accessible
- 3 - Build connections with community to grow together

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