



Wellington County Museum & Archives Destination Development Project **Visitor Experience Plan**

February 2023





Table of Contents

Background	3
Project Process.....	4
Goals	5
Essence of Place	6
WCMA’s Unique Features and Experiences.....	7
Essence of Place Statement	8
Current Environment	9
Regional Tourism Environment.....	9
Visitors to Elora & Fergus.....	11
Current Environment for Tourism, Museums and Archives	12
The Current WCMA Environment	15
Target Market	17
Visitor Target Market	18
Resident Target Market	20
Refining the WCMA Visitor Experience.....	22
New Visitor Experiences	25
Augmented Reality Storytelling	26
Balado Discovery Tour	28
A Day in the Life of a Poor House Inmate	31
Barn Projection Mapping Production	33
Jane Lewis’s Tobacco & Whiskey in Wellington.....	35
Instagram Crops	37
ELDERberryfest	39
Barn Dance.....	41
Marketing and Positioning Visitor Experiences	43
Summary	45



Background

The Wellington County Museum and Archives (WCMA) is a County run facility located between the communities of Elora and Fergus in Wellington County, Ontario. Located in the former 'House of Industry and Refuge', a designated National Historic Site, it serves County residents and visitors as a place to learn the Poor House story, see the historical past of Wellington County and research using the Archives.

"The Mission of the Wellington County Museum and Archives is to serve as a cultural centre providing resources, programs, exhibits, support and services for the historical, educational and artistic interests of the communities of Wellington County."

Expansive grounds surround the facility as part of the Wellington Place campus. The Museum and Archives hosts numerous events, has rotating themed exhibits and has a talented and dedicated staff of 16.

The Wellington County Museum and Archives initiated the Destination Development Project in 2022, in order to explore the future potential for visitor experiences in the hopes of positioning WCMA as a place that stands out among peers, residents and visitors. This *Visitor Experience Plan* is the output of this project.

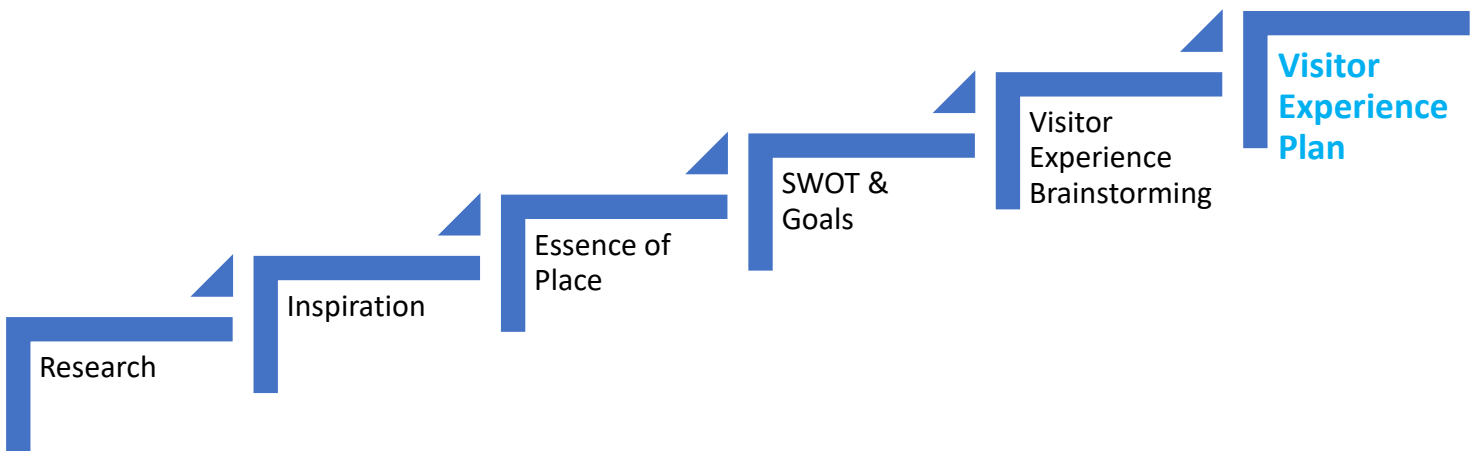


Project Process

The *Visitor Experience Plan* is the result of a multi-staged process designed to examine the visitor experience offer at the Wellington County Museum and Archives and to determine options for experience development for the future. This evidence and inspiration-based process is designed to help staff plan for visitor experience developments in a logical, as well as a creative way with an understanding of the essence of place of the site and who will visit.

The project reviewed the Museum and Archive's current strategic plan as well as other research, considered the current and future tourism environments and gathered staff and stakeholder input, while inspiring outside the box thinking along the way. The process resulted in this *Visitor Experience Plan*, with recommendations surrounding how to support and enhance the visitor experience offer at the Museum and Archives, bearing in mind the goals and the Museum and Archive's unique positioning.

The *Visitor Experience Plan* will act as a five-year planning tool that will help the WCMA determine how to invest in memorable experiences. It hinges on creating a deeper connection with visitors, while remaining true to the Museum and Archive's mandate and the essence of the attraction.





Goals

The goals guide the recommendations in the *Visitor Experience Plan*. Developed with input from WCMA staff, the goals consider the visitor experience strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and the *Essence of Place*. They are outlined in relation to the future development and refinement of the visitor experience at the Wellington County Museum and Archives and strive to ensure that WCMA attracts visitors and provides them with a positive experience.

Visitor Experience Goals

When developing and delivering visitor experiences, the Wellington County Museum and Archives will strive to:

- Embrace opportunities for dynamic, interactive and innovative experiences that promote discovery and learning.
- Deliver authentic, engaging, memorable visitor experiences that amplify the unique Poor House story.
- Generate revenue and visits through the development and delivery of intriguing visitor experiences.
- Explore strategic partnerships where beneficial for experience delivery.
- Preserve the designation as a National Historic Site.
- Continue to garner the support of County council while working with County services in a mutually beneficial manner.
- Create an inclusive and accessible attraction that welcomes and entices a diverse group of County residents and tourists visiting the area.



Essence of Place

The *Visitor Experience Essence of Place* defines what makes the Wellington County Museum and Archives a unique place for people to visit. It expresses its appeal as a destination and why people will be drawn to visit. It defines its distinct value and intrinsic character; its reason for being and what sets it apart from others.

Essence

Definition: noun

The intrinsic nature or indispensable quality of something, especially something abstract, that determines its character.¹

¹ Oxford Languages online.



The *Essence of Place* answers the question “What can visitors experience here that they can’t experience anywhere else?” and guides the approach for future visitor experiences in the hopes of positioning the WCMA as a place that stands out among peers, residents and visitors.

WCMA’s Unique Features and Experiences

The following key features are most representative of the WCMA’s Essence of Place.

1. House of Industry & Refuge (Poor House Story)
2. Unique Events & Programming
3. National Historic Site

The iconic features of the WCMA help it to stand out as a tourism destination and attract visitors. These are the must do, must know or must see visitor features that set the WCMA apart from others.

- The grand building that is a National Historic Site and was the House of Industry
- The Poor House story, as experienced through a tour and the photographs and stories of the former residents
- The scenic setting with the historic building, stately grounds, trails and access to the Grand River
- The cemetery
- The archives and exhibits that tell the history of Wellington County

There are experiences that you can take part in at the Wellington County Museum and Archives that you can’t do anywhere else. They make the WCMA unique as a destination for visitors.

- Learn the Poor House story and take a Poor House tour
- Visit the oldest remaining rural Poor House in Canada, a National Historic Site
- Take a cemetery tour
- Participate in Poor House inspired events
- Light a candle at the Remembrance Day ceremony
- Access the database to learn about Wellington County’s past



Essence of Place Statement

The Essence of Place Statement defines the visitor experience at the Wellington County Museum and Archives.

Essence of Place Statement

If these walls could speak, what would they say? They would whisper a story of desolation, grief, and redemption; of struggles that helped to build the community that we call home today.

Nestled between the quaint towns of Fergus and Elora, in the heart of Wellington County, sits a commanding and majestic limestone building on a hill. What was once a place of refuge for the poor and destitute, this grand reminder of the past is now a National Historic Site and the home of the Wellington County Museum and Archives.

Take the Poor House tour and learn the stories of men, women and children, the inmates and workers who lived, loved, worked and died within these grounds. Wander the sprawling scenic property as they once did, discover the heritage barn where chores were once done and visit the graves of those who once called this place home. Walk through the door and climb the stairs of the place that once welcomed them home.

Every person has a story. Discover the past at the Wellington County Museum and Archives, where you can live history, where you can reflect and where you can remember.



Current Environment

Regional Tourism Environment

Wellington County is located in Regional Tourism Organization 4 (RTO4), one of 13 tourism regions in Ontario. Supported by funding from the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture, RTO4 works to sustainably grow the tourism economies of Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Wellington.

Product areas of focus for the region include:

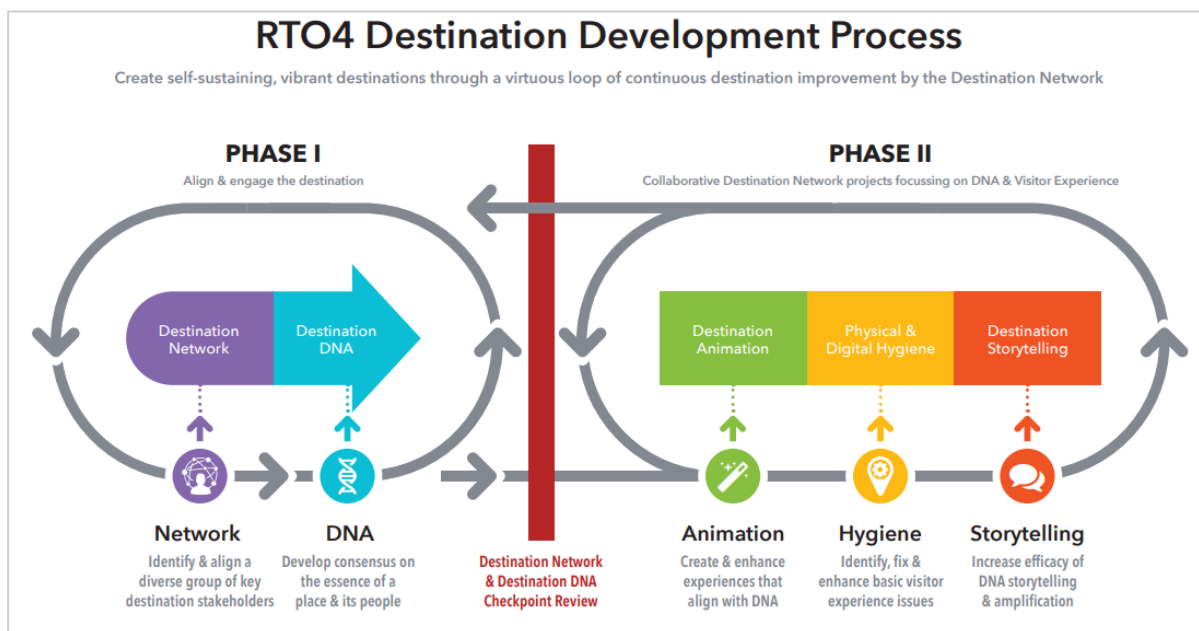
- Heritage Towns
- Theatres
- Soft Outdoors
- Agri-culinary
- Sport Tourism
- Motorsports

RTO4 has adopted a destination development process that seeks to create vibrant destinations for visitors who primarily come to the region from the 401 corridor. The process hinges on aligning stakeholders and the DNA or essence of place of a destination to undertake visitor experience projects that focus on²:

- Animation
- Hygiene
- Storytelling



² Regional Tourism Organization 4 Inc., Business Plan, 2022-2023



Source: Regional Tourism Organization 4 Inc. Business Plan, 2022-2023

Working with its tourism partners, RTO4 supports the creation of new, highly shareable experiences through the Destination Animation Partnership (DAP) program. In the spirit of this partnership program, the Elora & Fergus Destination Animation Strategic Co-Investment Project was first launched in 2017. The project annually supports experiential development projects for amounts from \$500 to \$5000, which are assessed for their fit with Elora and Fergus' DNA, the level of social media shareability, potential to attract out of town visitors and create economic benefits and collaboration with other tourism stakeholders.³

³ <https://www.centrewellington.ca/Modules/News/index.aspx?newsId=76032826-6fdd-45da-b03d-62afce87db62>

Visitors to Elora & Fergus

The WCMA is located between Fergus and Elora. Each of these towns fall under the RTO4 product focus category of heritage towns. The RTO4 DNA or focus of Elora is described as nature and heritage, while Fergus centers around its Scottish flair with a combined vision as “Ontario’s idyllic experience showcasing its natural setting, heritage towns, and arts and culture.”⁴

The Elora and Fergus *Economic Impact Visitor Survey* commissioned in 2020 by RTO4 and completed by Ipsos and PRISM Economics and Analysis, provides insight into the economic impact of tourism and visitors to Elora and Fergus. The report estimates the economic impact of tourism spending in the communities at \$125 million in 2019 with an estimated 498,000 visitors. Tourism spending supported an estimated 1,120 jobs across the region.



Pleasure and personal trips to the destination of more than 40 kilometres included 71% daytrippers, with 29% staying overnight in the community. Of these trips, 83% of people arrived for personal reasons, with 52% travelling for vacation, leisure or recreation, and 26% visiting friends and family. The average age of those surveyed was 48, composed of 52% males and 48% females, with an average group size of 2.5 persons. Of these visitors, 58% originated from the Greater Toronto Area.

The 2022 *RTO4 Workforce Development/ Retention Strategy and Labour Plan* further notes that the largest portion of visitors to Fergus and Elora came from Guelph, Kitchener Waterloo and Toronto in 2019, with Orangeville added to the list when considering the communities providing the largest visitor spend in the towns.

⁴ Regional Tourism Organization 4 Inc., Business Plan, 2022-2023

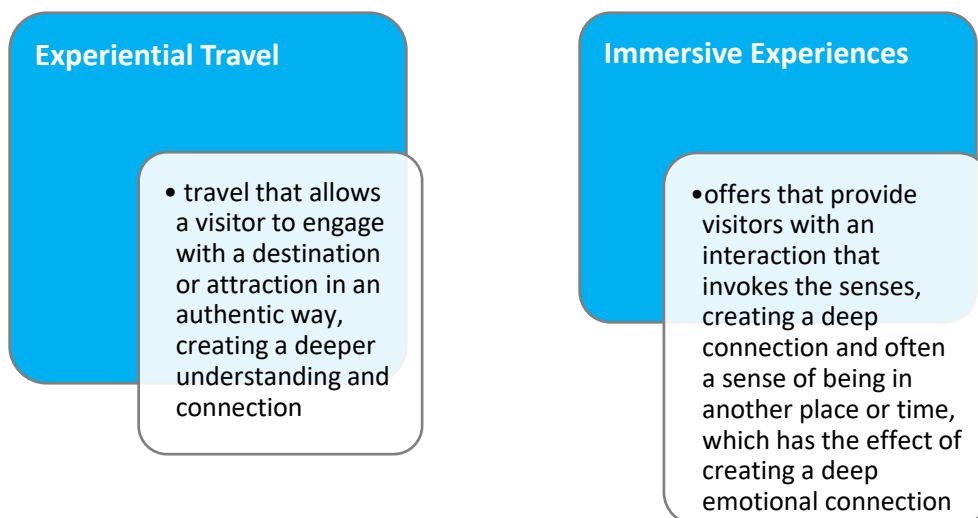


Current Environment for Tourism, Museums and Archives

Current trends in tourism, museum and archives include experiential travel and immersive experiences which aim to create a deeper connection with visitors, further engaging them in the experience offer.

Experiential Travel – There is increased demand for sophisticated tourism experiences. Experiential travel defines travel that allows a visitor to engage with a destination or attraction in an authentic way, creating a deeper understanding and connection.

Immersive Experiences – Similarly, immersive experiences define offers that provide visitors with an interaction that invokes the senses, creating a deep connection and often a sense of being in another place or time, which has the effect of creating a deep emotional connection. Immersive experiences can be interactive or use technology such as virtual reality.





The current tourism, museum and archives environment is examined in terms of political, economic, social, technological and environmental (PESTLE) factors that may affect visitation.

It is important to note that the *Visitor Experience Plan* is being formulated at a time when the world is beginning to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. After an extended period of travel restrictions which saw people required to stay at home and businesses required to close their doors to curb infections, travel has opened up and restrictions have eased. While travel is returning to normal, it is expected to take years for tourism to recover, with some estimates pegged at 2024 before there is a return to previous operating levels. However, it remains to be seen what the long-term effects of the pandemic will be on people's travel patterns. As the Wellington County Museum and Archives implements the plan, the current environment and related changes should continue to be monitored.

Factor	Observations
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in government at the municipal, provincial and federal level can result in changes in priorities and funding • Governments recently restricted travel and business operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding opportunities for cultural and heritage projects exist • Funding for COVID-19 recovery support may be available • An economic downturn may affect traveller spending patterns in the short term • High gas prices may affect travel intentions • Staffing issues are a concern as the labour pool shrinks
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on tourism, and the way people travel • Nature and the outdoors are of increased interest to visitors, as they allow for personal space • Day trips and drive-to destinations may currently be of greater interest to older audiences due to pandemic concerns • The world's population is aging, including the two biggest age groups, Millennials (born from the early 80s to the mid 90s) and Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) • The Canadian population is becoming increasingly diverse • Social media provides consumers with the ability to get advice from other visitors, changing the way people plan their travels



Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Virtual reality and augmented reality are providing immersive opportunities for learning and interaction• Artificial intelligence is being used to engage visitors, to learn more about them and to simplify operations• Mobile phones, and apps are being used by travellers before, during and after their trip• Wi-Fi and cellular connectivity are expected by travellers• Virtual, offsite experiences and learning have gained traction• Online gamification is being used to engage visitors in learning• Social media platforms allow visitors to share user generated content, providing information in new ways, often in real time
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intellectual ownership, patents, copyrights and trademarks require consideration when creating visitor offers• Considerations surrounding cultural appropriation are advised when representing another culture• Requirements surrounding inclusivity and accessibility
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate change is negatively affecting the planet• People are becoming more environmentally conscious• Destinations, operators, and governments are increasingly looking to employ sustainable practices to demonstrate their commitment to the environment• Rural destinations are of increased interest as people seek space and less busy environments• Interest driven by social media can create issues of overcrowding and sustainability



The Current WCMA Environment

The internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats surrounding the visitor experiences offered at the Wellington County Museum and Archives were examined during a workshop with staff and key partners.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compelling story to tell • Strong unique selling proposition • National Historic Site designation • Grand building • Scenic and expansive grounds with potential for expansion • On-site meeting space • Community hub • Professional, dedicated and passionate staff • Ample parking • Kids activities • Archives • Events offered on site • Strategic Plan and Plan of Action have recently been completed and provide guidance • Plans for further investment on campus through the development of Indigenous gardens, playground and pavilion • Central location in the County • Close to Fergus and Elora (which is a draw for tourists) • Close proximity to major source markets of Toronto, Guelph and Kitchener Waterloo • Financially accessible for visitors • Accessible washrooms and elevators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor House story is not brought to life (two-dimensional panel presentation requiring reading) • Lack of original rooms from Poor House era • Limited alignment of extended offers with unique selling proposition • Not engaging the five senses • Current visitor offer is not considered intriguing, engaging, interactive or memorable • Limited use of technology • Exhibits are not accessible (i.e. no audio tour) • Space is limited and site flow is challenging • Food & beverage amenities are not offered on site • Parking and electrical are not sufficient for large events • Visitors are primarily older • Visitor experience expectations may not be met • Limited promotion • No control over social media accounts, online presence is limited • Visitor data is limited • No alternative forms of transportation for access/ public transit • Operation is entrenched in routines • Several areas are competing for resources – exhibits vs programming vs events

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County and other government support • Virtual reality, augmented reality, artificial intelligence and other technology are popular • Donations • Community partnership and support • New residents moving to area • Exhibits from outside of the region • Partnerships with Fergus and Elora, other local attractions or township events and offers • Government funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential future changes in the priorities of elected County officials • Funding is reliant on the County budget. Changes to this budget could impact the site's operations • Loss of National Historic Site designation • Fast changing technology • Changing visitor expectations • High gas prices • COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding changes in travel patterns and interests, especially in older markets





Target Market

The Museum and Archives currently has limited statistical information on visitors. Anecdotal information indicates that visitors are part of an older demographic. In order to develop and deliver appealing visitor experiences, it is beneficial to consider the market that the WCMA will be aiming to attract in the future.

While it is tempting to try to provide something for everyone, it is far more effective to provide experiences that resonate with a defined target market. Targeted experiences have more appeal and make it easier to market an attraction. As an alternative to creating experiences that focus on a specific age group, it is beneficial to focus on a type of visitor, and their interests, which often cross age categories, while continuing to be inclusive.



Visitor Target Market

Explorers' Quotient segmentation is used to define categories of visitors. These segments are beneficial in defining who will be targeted and learning more about their traits for purposes of experience development and marketing.

The Cultural Explorers, Cultural History Buffs and Authentic Experiencers Explorers' Quotient segments are suggested as a target for future visitor experience developments at the Wellington County Museum and Archives.

Cultural Explorer^{5 6}

- Seek opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse in the entire experience – culture, people and setting – of the places visited
- Not content to just visit historic sites and watch from the sidelines – want to participate in the modern-day culture as well
- Want to experience beauty, surprise and astonishment
- They believe in giving back to those in need
- Does not need to stay in commercial hotels
- 74% took child-free trips

Top experience interests include:

- #3 dining in restaurants offering local ingredients
- #4 visiting national, provincial parks to visitor interpretive centres/museums
- #9 visiting small towns, villages

Products:

- Interactive immersive experiences
- Beautiful scenery, active adventure, shopping, dining and outdoor festivals/events
- Allows free exploration
- Environmentally, socially responsible

Travel values:

- Enjoy ancient history and modern culture
- Seek to learn everything about a place, time and culture
- Enjoy cultural immersion
- Chose destinations with opportunity to experience natural beauty

⁵ <https://quiz.canada.travel/caen/traveller-types/ttCE>

⁶ https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/2013-01-01/Tools_ExplorerQuotient_Profiles_2015_EN.pdf



Cultural History Buff^{7 8}

- Strive to go beyond own roots to understand history and culture of others
- Want to learn about themselves and others, to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of those before them
- Want to see natural settings
- Enjoy doing, not just seeing – want to interact with culture
- Stay at B&Bs
- Likely to travel child-free
- Often travel on their own or in small groups
- Environmentally conscious

Products:

- Museums, galleries, heritage sites
- Festivals
- Dining with locals
- Explore the diversity and uniqueness of landscape, people and cuisine
- Emphasis on active adventure, nature

Travel values:

- Want to learn everything about a time, place or culture
- Likely to pursue a personal interest or hobby while travelling
- Like to understand past cultures and their present context

Authentic Experienter^{9 10}

- Looking for authentic, tangible engagement with destinations, with particular interest in understanding the history of the places they visit
- Appreciate the understated beauty of natural and cultural environments
- Want to be fully immersed in travel experiences
- Focus on learning
- 78% child-free vacations
- Environmentally conscious

⁷ <https://quiz.canada.travel/caen/traveller-types/ttCHB>

⁸ https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/2013-01-01/Tools_ExplorerQuotient_Profiles_2015_EN.pdf

⁹ <https://quiz.canada.travel/caen/traveller-types/ttAE>

¹⁰ https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/2013-01-01/Tools_ExplorerQuotient_Profiles_2015_EN.pdf



Top experience interests include:

- #3 visiting small towns, villages
- #6 visiting national, provincial parks to visitor interpretive centres/museums
- #7 visiting well known historic sites and buildings
- #8 dining in restaurants offering local ingredients

Products

- Nature reserves, hiking travels
- Historical travel, world heritage sites, museums
- Authentic, living culture
- Meaningful connection with locals
- Low impact activities, with some active and hands on
- Home-stays, campsites

Travel values:

- Like to learn everything about a place, time or culture
- Enjoy natural setting and wonders
- Integrate into local culture
- Seek self-improvement through understanding others

More information on each of these segments can be found on Destination Canada's website which defines a [list of travel types](#) and provides documentation about [categories of visitors targeted in Canada](#).

Resident Target Market

Based on place of origin, visitors to the WCMA will include Wellington County residents, (especially where Wellington County exhibits and the archives are considered) in addition to visitors to the region.

Although Wellington County residents may not be defined as tourists (travel more than 40 kilometres to visit a destination), when creating experiences related to the Wellington County, the characteristics of the Personal History Explorer can be considered.

Personal History Explorer ^{11 12}

- Travels to gain a deeper understanding of personal ancestry and heritage
- More interested in understanding their own history and culture than culture of others
- Seek meaningful connection with others that lead to a better understanding of their roots
- Will indulge and splurge, staying at luxury accommodations, enjoying great cuisine

Products:

- Cultural heritage, reconnection
- Allows cultural immersion
- Group activities/tours
- Seeing all the highlights with greater focus on nature
- Less active options

Further information about this target audience can be found on Destination Canada's website.



¹¹ <https://quiz.canada.travel/caen/traveller-types/ttPHE>

¹² https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/2013-01-01/Tools_ExplorerQuotient_Profiles_2015_EN.pdf



Refining the WCMA Visitor Experience

Refining visitor experiences can take the experience at a museum and archives or National Historic Site from good to great. Making changes that better reflect the wants and needs of the target audience will help to ensure people have a memorable visit to the Wellington County Museum and Archives.

Enhance the Poor House Story

The Poor House story is a fundamental piece of the Essence of Place of the WCMA, and intrinsic to the designation as a National Historic Site.

Use the original building portion of the WCMA to exclusively tell the Poor House story - At present, the amount of square footage allocated to the Poor House story is quite limited. Consider utilizing all of the rooms at the front of the building to expand the Poor House story through interactive exhibits and immersive experiences. Separating the portion of the Museum and Archives that is dedicated to portraying Wellington County history from the Poor House story will help to elimination confusion when viewing exhibits and better tell the site's individual stories.



Align with Essence of Place - The Essence of Place defines the unique positioning that makes the Wellington County Museum and Archives a special place to visit. Developing experiences and exhibits that align with the Essence of Place, will strengthen the offer and the experience for visitors.

Create immersive experiences that bring the story to life – Immersive experiences are interactive and memorable. Often, they make the story come to life for a visitor. There are several ways to create immersive experiences, including self-guided experiences that use new technology to augment learning, special ticket guided experiences that offer hands on learning and special events that focus on a distinct story. While several options for augmenting the Poor House story have been documented below, choices will need to be made based on budget, with the potential of implementing all of the options, select offers, or a portion of each of the options available. Care should be taken to ensure that the Museum and Archives always provides an interactive and immersive experience, regardless of the events or activities that are planned that day.

Develop additional special themed events around real people or events - Continue to use staff knowledge and Poor House archives to explore the opportunity to create themed events around real inmates or historical happenings at the Poor House. While an example of a new special events has been presented below, there may be an opportunity to create a series of such events aligned with the Poor House story.

Enhance the welcome and check-in experience – The chance to create a memorable experience starts the second a visitor enters the grounds of an attraction. Welcoming visitors to the Poor House in an authentic way sets the stage for an enriched experience. Staff posing as the Matron or Keeper, dressed in period costume, would provide a notable first impression.

Enhance Site Branding and Wayfinding

Ensuring all visitor touch points throughout the property are on brand is important in creating a professional experience. Wayfinding creates a seamless and stress-free environment for visitors.

Guide people to the front entrance - There is currently some confusion where to go to enter the Museum and Archives once the car is parked. The archives and meeting space entrance is well defined and is the first entrance viewed. Ensure additional wayfinding signage is present from the parking area, directing WCMA visitors to the correct entrance.



Signage and materials on brand – Ensuring all visitor touch points, including signage and wayfinding, brochures, maps and exhibit materials follow the WCMA brand, will create a professional environment and a recognizable brand identity.

Monitor Visitor Profiles

Gather visitor details – Having visitor details can provide a wealth of knowledge for planning purposes. Collecting postal codes or town of residence, by experience type, and analyzing the results periodically can provide information about visitors, their origin and their characteristics. Details determined can also be used to verify and/or adjust target markets on an ongoing basis.

Develop experiences for the target audience – Determining a target audience and developing experiences with them in mind will ensure offers resonate and are impactful. While continuing to be welcoming to everyone, it is beneficial to not strive to be all things to all people.

Leverage Staff Enthusiasm and Knowledge

The Wellington County Museum and Archives is lucky to have a team of dedicated staff that is enthusiastic about making the experience at the site the best that it can be.

Continue to empower staff to explore ideas – A number of additional ideas came out of the workshops. Some may be worth investigating further at a future time. As technologies and peoples' interests change, continue to examine new experience ideas, under the lens of the Essence of Place, and with the goals of staying current and relevant.

Continue to provide helpful archives services - Provide a welcoming and helpful environment for archives research, leveraging the knowledge of staff to assist visitors and provide them with available information. Stay abreast of technology changes in order to provide an up to date archives offer.



New Visitor Experiences

Research, staff and stakeholder workshops were used to determine applicable options for new visitor experiences at the Wellington County Museum and Archives. Alignment with visitor experience goals, how each option supports the *Essence of Place* and the fit with the target market resulted in eight new experiences being proposed:

- Augmented Reality Storytelling
- Balado Discovery Tour
- A Day in the Life of a Poor House Inmate
- Barn Projection Mapping Production
- Jane Lewis's Tobacco & Whiskey in Wellington Tasting
- Instagram Crops
- ELDERberryfest
- Barn Dance

The conceptual plans for each of the chosen experiences are outlined below. These are the proposed details related to each of the potential new experiences, including the vision for the experience and the details surrounding it. Staff are encouraged to build off these ideas and potentially expand them into a series of themed events around real inmates like the notorious Jane Lewis.



Augmented Reality Storytelling

Experience Vision:

You are a bit critical of museums, thinking that all facilities are comprised of reading and seeing their artifacts and collections behind glass. You are 'dragged' to the Wellington County Museum and Archives thinking it will be more of the same. Upon checking in at the front desk you are told to download the augmented reality app onto your phone for a more enriched experience. You do so skeptically.

As you reach the top of the stairs you see a model of the building and grounds...guess what? It's behind glass. You then see some instructions to pull out your phone and pan over the model. Suddenly it comes to life. You see people walking, hear children laughing and the voice of keeper Griffin welcoming you to the House of Industry and Refuge.

Your mind is blown and you can't wait to get to the next activation. As you virtually peer into the kitchen, you see people peeling potatoes, stirring soup and rolling dough. The Museum and Archives has come to life.

There are several activations throughout the tour and you are amazed at the technology and absorb the content as you go. You had no idea that the Poor House story was so moving. You take a picture at one of the activations and post it to your Instagram story. You declare yourself a critic no more.

Experience Details:

- Self-guided immersive tour
- Augmented reality activations at key locations throughout the site
- The story is brought to life using technology, demonstrating the Poor House daily tasks, and the inmates
- Tablets may be offered to people without mobile phones



Inspiration:

- [How Museums are Using Augmented Reality](#)
- [ARLOOPA – van Gogh’s Bedroom](#)



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjqlZQxiitc>

Group Size:

- Individual

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Creative direction
- Storyboarding
- Augmented reality content production
- Signage prompting use of technology

Operational items:

- Technology subscription and/or updates as required

Revenue Potential:

- Increased entrance fees

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Medium term



Balado Discovery Tour

Experience Vision:

It's a beautiful Sunday afternoon and you decide to take the family on a little adventure to the Wellington County Museum and Archives. You've been many times, but on this occasion, your guide is an app called Balado. Balado is a GPS enabled smartphone app that acts as a virtual tour guide. It is easily found in the app store and you've already downloaded it and the tour before you arrived.

Once parked, the app guides you to stop number one, on the front steps of the building that houses the National Historic Site. Here the tour is kicked off with a virtual audio welcome from the keeper and some insights about the significance of the site and building. Your second stop and third stop are on the second floor, where you learn the story of several inmates that spent time at the Poor House.



You head outside when the fourth location directs you to the barn where you learn about the importance agriculture played in the operation of the facility. The fifth stop has you walking the gardens and learning about how important they were to the inmates and staff.

Wandering further afield, you follow the trail down to the cemetery where stop six, perhaps the most impactful, tells the stories of the inmates who died on site. You walk across the railway bridge to the Grand River and stop number seven, where you learn the story of the importance of the river to the House of Industry and Refuge and the region.


As you finish up your tour with a visit the gift shop. As you begin the walk back to the car, you reflect on how much more aware you are of the Poor House and its story.

Experience Details:


- The self-guided tour uses a GPS enabled smart phone with the Balado app
- Follow an indoor and outdoor discovery route, providing the story of the Poor House as visitors make their way among key stops on site
- Staff create and manage the content

Inspiration:

- [Balado Discovery Routes](#)
- [Balado Discovery Tour of the Notre Dame Cathedral](#)


Home Tours Creation FAQ About Blog
Q EN Login

Self-guided Tour of Quebec City's Notre-Dame Cathedral



Presented by
Paroisse Notre-Dame de Québec


Welcome to this self-guided tour of the Quebec City's Notre-Dame Cathedral, the official home of the oldest catholic diocese from North America to northern Mexico. This is where the first mission chapel of New France was erected in 1647, followed by the first parish church of New France, in 1664. This church was then turned into a cathedral in 1674, before being expanded and altered by several generations of architects. It remains a model of religious architecture.

Bombarded during the siege of Quebec in 1759, the cathedral was rebuilt with proximate accuracy during a five year period from 1766 to 1771. In 1843 it was equipped with an impressive neoclassical façade, which elevated this cathedral to the rank of basilica in 1874. Ravaged by a fire in 1922, it was, again, almost entirely rebuilt. Keeping its monumental appearance in the mid-19th century, it was proclaimed Canada's primatial cathedral in 1956.

Notre-Dame de Québec is a cathedral because it is the Bishop of Quebec's church. It is also a basilica, i.e., recognized as an important place of Catholicism, a place of pilgrimage. Eventually, it was given the title of primatial church, as it is the mother church of the first catholic diocese in Canada.

At / Near
Quebec (Quebec), Canada


Language(s)
[English](#)
[Español](#)
[Français](#)

Suggested Mode of Travel : 

Points of interest : 8

Rating : ★★★★★

Target audience
Everyone

Accessibility
 Permanently, the whole year


[Directions to get there](#)

Other Options

[Share this Tour](#)
[Contact this Tour Creator](#)
[QR Code of Tour](#)

Source: Baladodiscovery.com



Group Size:

- 1-4

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Storyline content
- Content creation
- App design and uploading

Operational items:

- Annual Balado app fees

Revenue Potential:

- Increased entrance fees

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Short term

A Day in the Life of a Poor House Inmate



Experience Vision:

You and five other inmates arrive at the Wellington County Museum and Archives at 9 am and are greeted at the bottom of the grand front steps by keeper William Griffin. He cross references your name on the house register, checking you in with your new identity, that of an actual inmate from 1905. He guides you inside to receive your apparel for the duration of your stay. You are introduced to Matron Margaret Griffin who looks after all indoor operations including the assignment of chores. Matron Griffin seems kind, yet stern in her approach as she guides you through a tour of where you will call home for the day.

Together, you head outside to your first task and get to work on the farm chores, collecting the eggs, feeding the chickens and working in the garden. You are instantly transformed to what it was like back in 1905 and how everyone contributed. When chores are done, you enjoy fresh baked muffins and tea on the garden patio.



Heading back inside, you learn how to make the beds and tidy up the house. You help prepare lunch; a hearty stew and fresh bread. After lunch, Matron Griffin takes you outside to gather elderberries, and teaches you how to make an elderberry pie, placing it in the oven to bake while you head outside to play some lawn games.

Keeper Griffin then takes you on a walk to the cemetery to pay your respects to fellow inmates who have passed away. You return to the Poor House, and enjoy a slice of elderberry pie before giving back your inmate apparel and re-assuming your present-day identity. You spend some time discussing what you learned before you depart.

Experience Details:

- Assume inmate identity
- Period dress
- Authentic food
- Real work (chores as assigned by the Keeper and Matron)
- Recap of the experience

Inspiration:

- [Upper Canada Village War of 1812 Education Days](#)

Group Size:

- 6-10

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Period clothing
- Storyline experience
- Develop speaking parts

Operational items:

- Preparation for chores
- Food & beverage
- Staff to guide experience

Revenue Potential:

- Estimate \$100-125 per person

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Short term

Barn Projection Mapping Production

Experience Vision:



As you walk up the gangway you see beams of light coming from inside the barn, between the cracks in the barnboard. You open the door and step inside. Following a lit path directing you to stand in the middle of the barn, the projection mapped show begins.

It starts with an old-fashioned barn raising showing how bank barns like this were built. Your virtual tour guide is Andrew Gorrie who was one of five farm workers from West Garafraxa Township, hired in 1884 to thrash grain. Mr. Gorrie talks about the daily farm chores, farm animals, the crops grown and how much food was produced on the farm. He says it was rewarding work, knowing that the fruits of his labour were helping to provide for those at the 'House'.

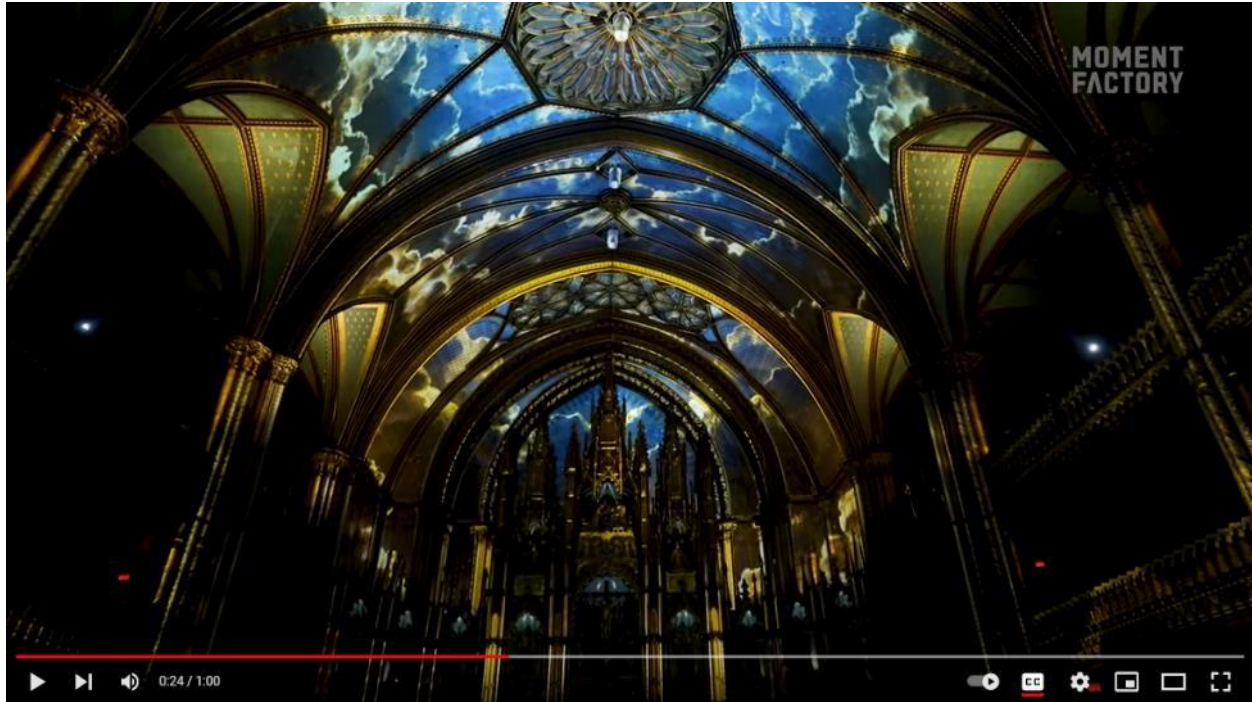
The 12-minute show is very impressive, and uses all 365 degrees of the barn to help tell the story. The sound is incredible as you feel the floor shake when the train goes by and the thrasher starts up. After the show you walk back down the gangway having a new appreciation and understanding of what happened at this industrial farm.

Experience Details:

- Projection mapped production inside the barn

Inspiration:

[Aura – Notre-Dame Basilica Montreal](#)



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDeNqjW3FRI>

Group Size:

- Varies

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Storyboard, produce and install projection mapped show with third party

Operational items:

- n/a

Revenue Potential:

- Increased entrance fees

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Medium term



Jane Lewis's Tobacco & Whiskey in Wellington

Experience Vision:

You arrive at the Wellington County Museum and Archives and follow the directions around to the garden where you see the silhouette of an inmate in a rocking chair; the pungent smell of a cigar mixes with the fragrant roses in bloom. She stands and greets you, welcoming you to her garden party.

Jane Lewis was one of the most notorious Poor House residents who liked to indulge in life's guilty pleasures. Tonight, she is going to share her story, as well as her bad habits with you as you sample cigars and whiskey.

You are immediately guided through the process of making an arrival cocktail; one of Jane's favourites, the Wellington Whiskey Sour. Marty from the Elora Distilling Company is your mixologist, helping you to concoct the first cocktail of the evening.

Jane always pairs a fine cigar with her drink and Peter from Kitchener's Walper Tobacco, Canada's oldest tobacco shop, provides insights on the cigars enjoyed during Jane's residency at the Poor House. While savouring her cocktail, Jane recalls several stories from her life of crime, hard living and her time spent at the Poor House.

Marty kindly interrupts, indicating it's time to make the second cocktail. He once again guides you through the process, this time guiding you to harvest some herbs from the garden for another one of Jane's favourites, the Fergus Old Fashioned.

Sipping and smoking, you enjoy the garden and more of Jane's stories.

Experience Details:

- Arranged transportation
- Potential overnight accommodation as part of package
- Jane in period costume, storytelling
- Make your own cocktails
- Cocktail recipes to take home
- Cigar education and smoking

Inspiration:

[Cocktail making and Bourbon Tasting – Air BnB Experiences](#)

[Cigar Passion – Air BnB Experiences](#)



Group Size:

- 15-20

Potential Partners:

[Walper Tobacco Shop](#)

[Elora Distilling Company](#)

Accommodation

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Develop the Jane Lewis character & script
- Partnership development

Operational items:

- Food and beverages, cigars
- Staffing

Revenue Potential:

- Estimate \$120-150 per person

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Short term

Instagram Crops



Experience Vision:

You've seen your friends posting videos and photos of themselves in canola fields. While you too want to capture some fun pictures with your friends, you realize that your friends are trespassing on private property and negatively impacting a farmer's crop.

You're visiting your grandmother at the hospital at the Wellington County campus when you see an area of vibrant crops. Canola is currently in full bloom and creating a hue of yellow. You google "canola Wellington County Museum" and find that the Museum is offering various crop photo opportunities throughout the season in partnership with the Wellington County Federation of Agriculture. Now here is a place where taking your photos in the field is actually permitted and encouraged as a way to educate people about the various crops grown in Wellington County.

You drive to the parking lot, park your car and go to check it out. Following the path, you make your way to the middle of the small plot, place your phone on the selfie stand and take some photos and videos to share with your friends. You also learn that canola is used to produce food grade oil which is used in cooking.



While on site, you also wander over to the corn plot and get a picture as its almost shoulder high already. You use the hashtags #wellingtoncountymuseum&archives and #wellingtoncountycrops and plan to return with your friends in late August when the sunflowers are full height.

Experience Details:

- 1-2 acre plots of corn, canola, wheat, soya beans, sunflowers, alfalfa for visitor access
- Signage to explain each crop
- Selfie stations to get the best photo or video
- Contest to encourage use of the hashtag

Inspiration:

- [Petteet Park Farm](#)

Group Size:

- Various - self guided

Potential Partners:

- Wellington County Federation of Agriculture
- Farming subcontractor

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Plot development
- Signage

Operational items:

- Seeding supplies
- Farm equipment and labour, or subcontracted farming
- Care and harvest of crops throughout the year

Revenue Potential:

- Plot access donation fee

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Medium Term

ELDERberryfest



Experience Vision:

You grew up hearing stories told by your grandma about how they used to go elderberry picking in the back forty on Sunday afternoons, then roll up their sleeves in the kitchen and turn the wild fruit into pies, jams and even wine. You see a Facebook post about ELDERberryfest being held at the Wellington County Museum and Archives, so you sign up to see if you can learn more about this industrious fruit. This exclusive event is only open to 20 people as it involves very hands on activities and learning from real community grandmas and grandpas.

As you arrive on site, you're greeted by your host for the day who introduces the community grandmas and grandpas who will be teaching you today, and you're given your very own branded ELDERberryfest apron. First you head down the path to a bush you've seen before, but didn't realize held a delicious fruit. You pick an ample supply then return to the kitchen where you are split into four groups of five people and begin your rotation through the elderberry stations:



- Pie baking
- Berry stomping
- Wine making and tasting
- Jam canning

Each station is led by an elder expert in their craft. It's fun, delicious, social and sometimes messy. Your favourite part was rolling up your pant legs and stomping the berries to make juice for the wine. You are amazed that you get to go home with jam, a pie and a bottle of ready to drink wine, recipes and your apron. You can't wait to start a new tradition with your family.

Experience Details:

- Immersive, hands-on learning from community elders

Inspiration:

[Elderberry Syrup Making – Air BnB Experiences](#)

[Pasta With Grandmas – Air BnB Experiences](#)

Group Size:

- 20

Potential Partners:

- Community elders

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Kitchen space
- Aprons and other cooking supplies
- Storyline experience
- Recipe development
- Planting of elderberry bushes

Operational items:

- Staffing
- Elder paid partners or volunteers
- Care of elderberry bushes

Revenue Potential:

- Estimate \$120 per person

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Short term



Barn Dance

Experience Vision:

You used to love to dance, especially with your partner, twirling around the dance floor. It seems like no one hosts community dances anymore and you miss the chance to be active, social and to listen to local music. You see the Barn Dance flyer when you're shopping in downtown Fergus and you think to yourself, "I know the perfect couple who will go to this with us". You immediately buy tickets to the event.

The barn dress code is country so you pull those old boot-cut jeans and cowboy boots out of your closet and bingo, country-fied. You arrive at the Wellington County Museum and Archives at 7:30 pm on Saturday night and head to the barn and instantly feel the country vibe as you walk the lit path to the gangway. Classic country music is coming from the barn, and people are stomping along to the beat.

The dance is capped at 50 people so it's an intimate event with lots of smiling, excited faces. As the event gets underway, the caller introduces herself and the local band, and she begins with simple dances to get everyone warmed up. As the night progresses, the dances become more complex but that's okay as everyone is just learning. You're surprised to see some young folks in the audience, and assume they must share your love for country music and a rural night out.

During the break, you head to the cocktail station hosted by the Elora Distilling Company and Guelph's Brother's Brewing Company and purchase the featured drink of the night, the whiskey inspired 'Barnstormer'. The dance goes until 10 pm but you have another drink and enjoy the warm summer evening on the grounds. You can't wait until the next dance so you can practice what you've learned. You might even get a new pair of boots.

Experience Details:

- A traditional barn dance with a 'dance caller'
- Local sourced drink station
- Snacks
- Local band

Inspiration:

[Barn Dance Video](#)

[Prince Edward County Barn Dance](#)



Group Size:

- 50

Investments Required:

Development items:

- Source barn dance caller and band
- Sound system
- Tables and chairs

Operational items:

- Set up and clean up of barn
- Staffing

Revenue Potential:

- \$50-75 per person

Estimated Time Required for Development:

- Short term



Marketing and Positioning Visitor Experiences

The most effective form of marketing is word of mouth. If people have a memorable experience at the Museum and Archives they will tell their friends, take pictures and share those moments on social media. The first step in savvy marketing is to develop a memorable experience, thereby ensuring the product or experience will sell itself, with subtle nudges to get the word out. Once this is done, the marketing becomes more about storytelling, especially in the Museum and Archives space where there are many fascinating stories to tell. The following are suggestions to enhance the WCMA positioning and marketing.

Further leverage National Historic Site positioning

National Historic Site status comes with a certain cachet and meaning that creates credibility and brand recognition. Consider using the “National Historic Site” wording as a formal part of the Wellington County Museum and Archives identity. The site would become the “Wellington County Museum and Archives” and “House of Industry and Refuge National Historic Site”. Both of these names would be used on forward-facing communication related to Poor House experiences and the Wellington County Museum and Archives would be used on its own for experiences relating solely to the history of Wellington County.

Create a separate Museum and Archives website

The current website is very limiting in its ability to tell the brand story of the Museum and Archives. A dedicated custom-built website would have the ability to set the stage for an experience before users set foot on the property. Utilize a content-driven approach that emphasizes blog-based technology, providing limitless possibilities to share Museum and Archives stories. Professional, on brand, photography and videography that aligns with the Essence of Place should be used to enhance the story.



Create additional Museum and Archives social channels

It's important for the Museum and Archives to have its own authentic voice on social media in order to effectively engage the target audiences. Work with the County communications department to develop and manage additional WCMA-specific accounts including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok.

Create a Museum and Archives digital content creator position

This new position would be responsible for telling the stories of the Museum and Archives on all relevant digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok in order to connect to target audiences. Social media posts, digital ad campaigns, blogs and vlogs should be used as part of the overall digital strategy.

Digital advertising to sell the experience

Digital advertising is an effective way to target advertising to markets that will be interested in an offer. Ads should use professional photography and videography, and target key geographic areas and the interests of the target market aligned with the experience.





Summary

Experiences are the new currency; the more authentic, engaging and immersive, the more valuable. People want to get their hands dirty, learn a new dance, taste a handmade locally distilled cocktail, or learn from a local expert.

The Wellington County Museum and Archives is the regional authority on the past, connecting people to the local landscapes, people, and places that make up Wellington County. As a National Historical Site and the former House of Industry and Refuge, the oldest Poor House in Canada, the Wellington County Museum and Archives has extra credibility as the place to tell an authentic story and to give visitors the opportunity to learn, be inspired and engaged in what life was like, and is like in the County.

The Visitor Experience Plan creates a framework to develop new and exciting experiences that will entice visitors and residents. Combining unique events with an upgraded Museum and Archives experience using technology, immersive learning, leveraging staff ideas and skills, and providing more square footage to tell the Poor House story, will position the Wellington County Museum and Archives for future growth.