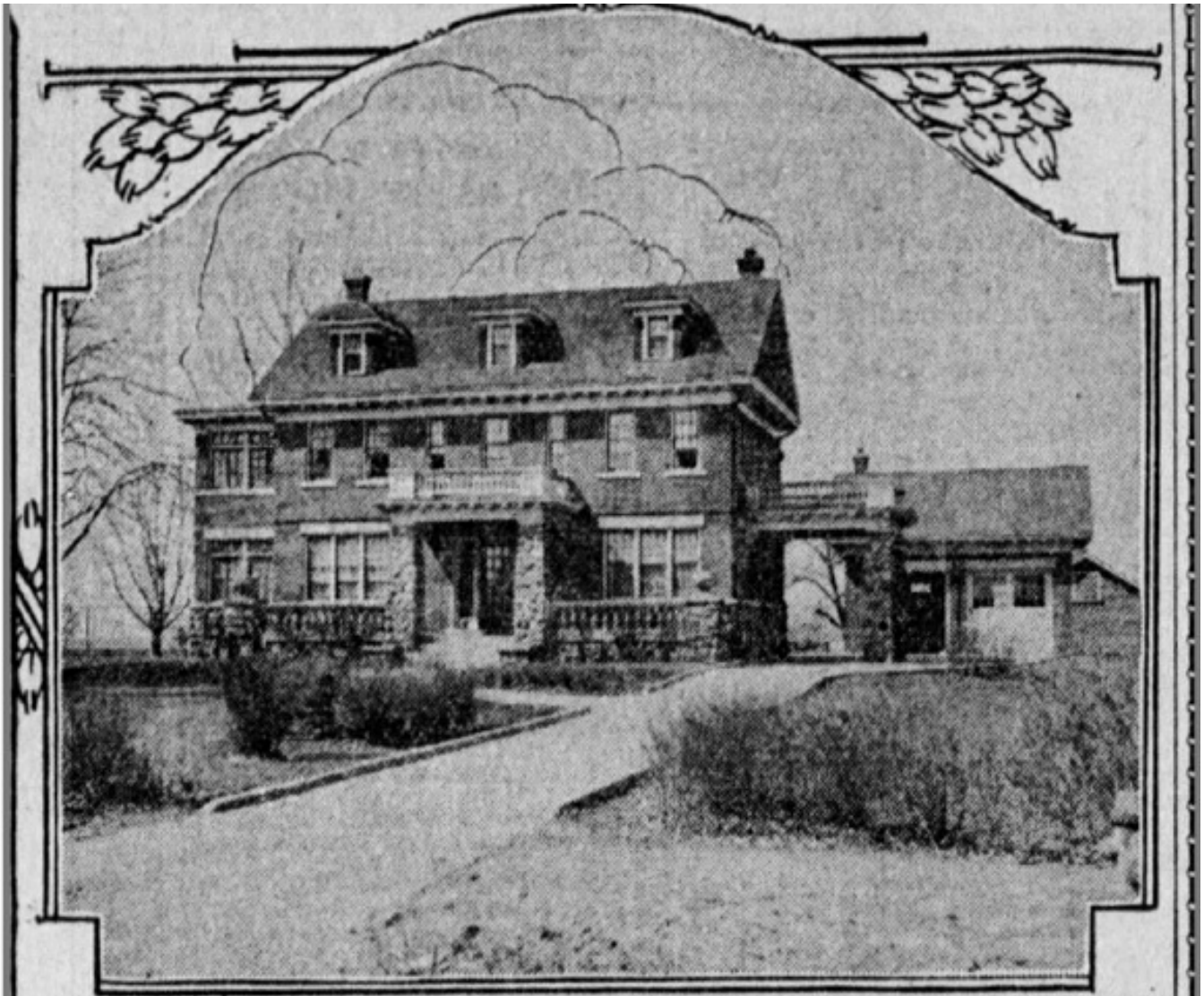


# TOWN OF LASALLE

## BENOIT HOUSE STRATEGIC PLAN

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The Town of LaSalle is undergoing a multi-phase redevelopment along the Detroit River called the "LaSalle Small Coast Waterfront Experience". This will be an interconnected, multi-amenity environment that offers the community an expanded, year-round destination.

The property at 752 Front Road (now known as the Benoit House) is the former home Vital Benoit, the first Mayor of LaSalle. This site was purchased by the Town to be used as a museum as part of the Heritage Zone of the Small Coast project. This strategic planning process is intended to determine next steps for the site.

The Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries' "Standards for Community Museums in Ontario" (which must be met to qualify for provincial funding), includes the provision that museum operations and activities must be:

- directed by a short and long-term written plans (e.g. business plan, strategic plan, visioning plan or master plan) that are:
  - approved by the governing body (e.g. Municipal Council)
  - contain goals and objectives relative to the museum's statement of purpose

# PURPOSE

The purpose of this phase of the planning process was to seek feedback from the public and community stakeholders about possible future use/s, while ensuring the rich history of the buildings, property and wider LaSalle community is reflected wherever possible.

Common themes, mission and vision and high level recommendations were developed from these public consultations along with Steering Committee feedback and research into best practices in the heritage sector. Meeting the Town of LaSalle's overall strategic goals in a fiscally responsible way, while ensuring the Museum meets provincial and federal Ministry standards for future funding opportunities was also incorporated into this process.



# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

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## COMMON THEMES

Based on the discussions and feedback from the community, stakeholder groups, Council and Steering Committee consultations, several common themes became apparent:

- The time has come for the Town to have its own heritage attraction to celebrate and share local history and to create pride in the community
  - Year-round use is preferred for both indoor and outdoor activities and programming
  - Inclusion of key elements of LaSalle history, from Indigenous pre-settler, pre-colonial era to to Francophone and British, to Vital Benoit's era and Prohibition up until modern day should be part of exhibitions, collection acquisitions and programming
  - Acquisition, exhibition, preservation and conservation of historic objects and cultural artifacts are a preferred use
  - Educational programming and lifelong learning should be a core function
  - Use of technology (that is easy to use and understand) should be a priority both for accessibility purposes and for interactive options to engage with visitors both inside and outside the Museum and online
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# MISSION STATEMENT

The Benoit House will be a year-round vibrant gathering place where our community can meet, learn and connect. We will engage the public and preserve the heritage of LaSalle and the surrounding area through unique, diverse and equitable activities.

# VISION STATEMENT

The Benoit House will be an innovative historic site dedicated to inspiring our visitors by providing authentic experiences through our diverse stories.



# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



A master list of goals and objectives for the buildings and property was developed based on feedback from the public consultations. These opportunities were assessed within the framework of the Town of LaSalle's Strategic Goals.

## **1. Develop the Benoit House as a centre of heritage excellence and source of community pride.** *Meets LaSalle Strategic Goal: The Town of LaSalle will build on our high quality of life.*

### **To do this, we will:**

- Promote the enjoyment of local history through education, exhibitions and interpretation
  - Invest in training, hiring and retaining staff with expertise in all aspects of museum operations
  - Develop an exhibition plan to help visitors understand, learn, enjoy and experience the past
  - Consider the development of a permanent collection that meets museum-quality standards and safeguards these items on behalf of the citizens of LaSalle
  - Develop a collections management policy: acquisitions, storage, training, conservation, exhibitions, budget, de-accessioning
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# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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**2. Ensure all visitors have a positive and engaging experience and want to return.** *Meets LaSalle Strategic Goal: The Town of LaSalle will build on our high quality of life.*



## **To do this, we will:**

- Provide customer service training to staff and volunteers
  - Create a regularly changing roster of exhibitions
  - Seek out and welcome partnership opportunities
  - Encourage and promote input from our users
  - Host special events that promote and explore different elements of the history of LaSalle and surrounding areas
  - Ensure our site is inclusive and open to diverse groups of people, programming and collaboration
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# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**3. Provide innovative and authentic educational programming and lifelong learning opportunities.** *Meets LaSalle Strategic Goal: The Town of LaSalle will strengthen the community's engagement with the Town.*



## **To do this, we will:**

- Create positive relationships with local and regional educational institutions and organizations
  - Invest resources to ensure staff can create interesting and engaging Ministry of Education curriculum-based programming
  - Establish partnerships and build capacity by working with community groups and different levels of government to provide unique and interesting activities for all ages
  - Create inspiring and enriching special events and provide a variety of rental opportunities
  - Develop year-round indoor and outdoor events and activities
-

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**4. Ensure diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion are maximized in all aspects of museum operations and programming. Meets LaSalle Strategic Goal: The Town of LaSalle will strengthen the community's engagement with the Town.**



## **To do this, we will:**

- Develop a diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion plan for the Museum
  - Provide ongoing diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion training to Museum staff and volunteers
  - Ensure that diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion are incorporated into building design plans and renovations
  - Have regular dialogue with the Town of LaSalle Accessibility Committee
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# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## **5. Incorporate technology and innovation in all aspects of the Museum.**

*Meets LaSalle Strategic Goal: The Town of LaSalle will sustain strong public services and infrastructure.*



### **To do this, we will:**

- Incorporate energy conservation measures and innovative technologies wherever possible
  - Use technology where appropriate for interactive opportunities to engage with visitors both inside and outside the Museum, and online
  - Create a collections digitization plan for preservation, inventory and access purposes for researchers, historians and heritage enthusiasts
  - Ensure Benoit House is strongly linked to all areas of the Small Coast Waterfront site through signage, cross promotion, and other connections
  - Develop and implement a digital communications strategy to ensure ongoing engagement with the community
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# CONCLUSION



**Why is the Benoit House project important? Because heritage and culture are how we create meaning as human beings. Museums are an integral part of their communities and perform many different functions. Museums create and collect stories, objects, and ideas. Museums create conversations. Museums have a deep history throughout civilization as places of learning, study, research. In the 21st century museums continue to change and evolve, as they should. They are social gathering places you can go with family and friends, unique locations for special events, forums for ideas and much more. Museums can be catalysts and drivers of economic growth, create educational opportunities, encourage tourism and bring a wide variety of benefits to its community. This is a remarkable opportunity to create these same catalysts for LaSalle.**





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