

**Canadian Energy Museum | Leduc/Devon Oilfield Historical Society**

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## **2024-2026 Short-Term Sustainable Plan**

**As approved by the 2024 Leduc/Devon Oilfield Historical Society Board of Directors  
(June 2024)**

### **Who We Are:**

On February 13<sup>th</sup> 1947 Leduc No. 1 struck oil in the Devonian region. Since then, Alberta has flourished as an energy leader in the nation and across the globe. The discovery of oil at Leduc No. 1 led to the creation of the Town of Devon, further developments in areas like Redwater, Bonnie Glen, Golden Spike, Brazeau, Pembina, and Drayton Valley, along with the continual development of the energy sector and Canada's economy.

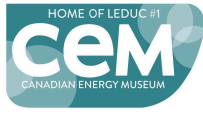
The above is why Leduc No. 1 is a National Historical Site.

Since 1997, the Canadian Energy Museum (previously the Leduc #1 Energy Discovery Centre) and the Leduc/Devon Oilfield Historical Society have worked to preserve the stories of Leduc No. 1 and educate guests on Canada's larger energy history and future. Progress has not stopped since the work of Imperial Oil on Leduc No. 1, and energy consumption is a key issue of our time. The Canadian Energy Museum is committed to the sector's founders, present industry innovators, and future thinkers. The Museum holds many unique artifacts and original documents in public trust.

A visit at the Museum includes a walk through the Devonian period and the material that became our fossil fuels; a look into the Town of Devon in the late 1940s and the early 1950s and the typical life of a family dwelling in a skid shack; through the 1950s and 60s where the Atlantic No. 3 blowout disaster led to new technology and safety protocols; to today where we discuss reclamation and the pros and cons of alternative energy sources. Energy issues can be complex, and the Canadian Energy Museum is committed to telling a balanced story of nuanced perspectives.

### **The Financial Struggle:**

Operating as a not-for-profit organization (Leduc/Devon Oilfield Historical Society) since its doors opened, the Canadian Energy Museum has struggled to generate income annually. Between 1997 and 2007, the Museum saw large corporate sponsors and heavy-handed funding from the province, leading to extensive growth and expansion of the collection and facilities. In the years following, however, provincial policy and governmental spending has dropped, and corporate donors have also shifted their



attention and support. As such, the Museum has not received as much funding as it grew accustomed to in the early 2000s.

Since then, the Museum has diversified its offerings in order to remain operable. These offerings include our long-term and short-term land rentals, our facility rental spaces, and the Leduc #1 Campground. In recent history, the Museum Board of Directors also decided to sell the Atlantic No. 3 property in order to create cash to keep operable.

In 2018 a new sustainable initiative began at the Museum, to broaden the Museum's scope to the entire energy story, not specifically the history of oil and gas. We are still working on completing this transition and making our information as accessible as possible.

2022 was stagnant at the Museum with large spending and little documentation. This led to a lag in the 2023 year, as a result of the lack of reporting. The halt in grant applications for 2022 and 2023 also impacted the cash shortage the Museum is seeing now.

In brief, the current lack of cash and the financial crisis the Museum is facing can be attributed to:

- Lack of strategic financial planning since the founding of the Museum in 1997.
- Large expenditures on projects like the 65<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, the Leduc No. 1 documentary, and facility storage projects.
- Incomplete applications and financial reporting which has led to a lack of municipal, provincial, and other interested party funding.
- Poorly functioning Leduc/Devon Oilfield Historical Society

### **The Museum is creating a two-year “Sustainable Plan” in order to try and continue operations.**

If operations become sustained, the Museum must pursue revenue-diversifying projects. This could include the utilization of the theatre since there is not one in the Town of Devon, an increase of local goods in the gift shop or making the shop available online, opening a small café, continual facility rental bookings and development of rental spaces, and many more!

### **Our Journey So Far:**

In 2018, the Museum shifted focus from the “oil and gas” sector to the “energy” sector. This change in scope led to a broader audience for the Museum, attracting a younger demographic, and a more national demographic.



In 2020, all field trip programming was overhauled to better parallel Alberta curriculum in order to attract educators. Since 2020, the number of field trip bookings has doubled annually.

In 2023, we onboarded a new Collections Manager who, since her arrival, has appropriately overhauled the collection's management protocols, located and digitized donation documentation, and is working to make our collection publically accessible through an online database. This was not previously completed.

In 2024, we began new partnerships for events and exhibits. These partnerships have led to successful events and upgrades like the "Our Oil History" exhibit launch (with Ingenium and the University of Calgary), better visibility in Devon through presence at summer market days and community events, and the "Girl Power" Mother's Day Event (with Local small business, Devon Dyno).

### **Our Intellectual Heft:**

Prior to 2023, the artifacts and research collection of the Museum had not been fully or consistently documented, with many items becoming separated from their donation records and provenance. This was a result of inexperienced and untrained staff overseeing the collection's storage and records; as well as repeated staff turnover. Since then, our Collection and Exhibition Manager has taken great efforts to implement a comprehensive system of record-keeping to better care for our collection. Included has been the writing and actioning of well-documented policies and procedures; the adoption of a more modern collections management system which allows for online publishing of the collection to a global audience; the complete digitization of all donation documentation and the creation of a complete searchable spreadsheet of donors and objects; and the reorganization of how objects are arranged and stored. To date, nearly 1,000 objects (roughly 1/5th of the predicted collection volume) have been accessioned into the new software, with many being reconnected to previously misplaced or disconnected donation records. Many of these efforts are ongoing and will take some years to complete, but improvements have been rapid and noticeable.

The projected size of the collection is as follows:

- Oil and Gas Memorabilia
- Photographs
- Oil and Gas Industry Small Publications and Printed Ephemera
- Original and Published Drilling Records
- Corporate Documents, Publications, Manuals, and Training Materials
- Historical Documents and Newsprint
- 2,500 — Industry Periodicals, Including over 550 Roughneck Issues
- Energy Industry-Related Published Non-Fiction Books
- Association of Oil Wives Clubs Records, Artifacts, and Memorabilia



- Desk and Derrick Records, Artifacts, and Memorabilia
- Oil and Gas Related Promotional Object and Memorabilia
- Oil and Gas Industry Belt Buckles
- Leduc No. 1 Records, Artifacts, and Memorabilia
- Local History and Artifacts, including many from Devon's Early Years
- Instrumentation Pieces
- Items of Personal Safety Equipment
- Drill Bits
- Small, Medium, Large, and Oversized Industrial Hardware and Equipment:
- Structures (doghouses, rigs, etc) and Vehicles
- Small-Large Hand-Made Models, Dioramas and Toys
- Energy Themed Pieces of Art (including Paintings, Illustrations, and Sculptures)
- Minerals and Fossils
- Oil and Related Industry Material Samples

These above numbers are based on a 2024 manual inventory of items, both on public display and in storage, and are likely to grow as accessioning continues in the coming years.

## Mission

To educate Albertans and Canadians on the history of the energy sector and encourage curiosity and development in Canada's energy future.

## Vision

To educate the province on energy science and history.

## Values

Sustainability

Transparency

Preservation

Inclusivity

## Where We Are Going:

In response to a recent cut in expected spending, the Museum has had to shift its focus away from growth and development, and instead towards remaining operable. We want the Museum to become top of mind for industry educators, community groups, and schools.



## Our Goals:

1. Expand the Museum team (including The Board of Directors) for further expertise.
2. Strengthen public reputation, both locally and nationally.
3. Become financially sustainable.
4. Make the Museum's artifacts and information more accessible.

## How We Will Do It:

### 1. Expand Museum Team

**Aspiration:** Have a diverse, sophisticated Board of at least 10 members (currently 5) that is task and goal-oriented.

**Background:** The Museum has a small but passionate Board currently made up of five directors; Board President Shawn Ryan (AspenLeaf Energy), Board Secretary Sandra McIntosh (Economic Development of the Community of Calmar), Dan Claypool (former Leduc No. 1 rig hand and retired CEO of Safety and Control Ltd), Director Grant Geldert (Town of Devon Representative), and Director Brian Morris (Historian and Member of the Devon Historical Society). What our Board lacks in business and museum savvy, it makes up for industry and history passion.

Moving forward, we will:

- Create relationships with leaders in industries like Museums, Petroleum, Finance, Event or Fundraising Planning, (etc.) and express the benefit they could bring to the Museum.
- Create a larger network of "need to know" leaders and stakeholders who need to be up to date on Museum goings (Town of Devon reps, City of Leduc and Leduc County reps, Petroleum Historical Society).
- Have timely AGMs (on or by March 31) as defined by Society By-laws to communicate information to Members and stakeholders.
- Start inviting reputable individuals to Board Meetings.

We will highlight our unique artifacts and facilities, both of which have under-utilized potential, due to a past lack of skillset in handling. We will also emphasize our need for professional opinions and business insights from museum personnel.

## 2. Strengthen Public Reputation

**Aspiration:** The Museum is supported by neighbouring communities and is top of mind for families and educators when planning events and programs.

**Background:** Over the past 2-4 years, relations with Leduc County, the City of Leduc, and the Town of Devon have become unstable. Financial reporting was not completed on time, as well as other information not being transparently shared. We are working to partner with these communities on local events, and we are also improving our communication with necessary parties.

- Continue our Field Trip development to be tied to Alberta curriculum, and be made virtually accessible if a school group cannot physically come in.
- Maintain partnerships with the Devon Library and build similar relationships with other children's outreach groups.
- Improve on program offerings which could include summer day camps, afterschool programs, PE day programs, and events.
- Attend community events wherever we fit.
- Communicate with municipal representatives eagerly and timely. Have documentation handed in on time. Ask for feedback when necessary. Be transparent. Invite important stakeholders to AGM and open Board Meetings.
- Maintain an up-to-date website and social media platforms.

We will communicate with Members and community stakeholders as transparently as possible, and actively partner and participate in community events. We will advertise and make available both our archives and our facilities for public use and education.

## 3. Become Financially Sustainable

**Aspiration:** The Museum receives enough funding and support through diversified avenues on an annual or renewing basis in order to remain operable year after year.

**Background:** The Museum has relied heavily on grant funding in the past, which has drastically shifted over recent years. We are working to receive municipal funding again in 2025. The Edmonton Community Foundation grant policy has recently changed and can no longer be relied upon. The Museum was not an AMA member in the past and could not apply for grants through their programs. We have renewed this membership since.



- Grow our programming department and bookings.
- Increase marketing and programming awareness.
- Look for avenues of grant funding. Maintain our AMA membership, strengthen our relationship with the City of Leduc and Leduc County, and look for other large/re-occurring donors.
- Create a network of industry leaders with possible contacts or interest in large donations, partnerships or sponsorships.
- Shed redundant and unnecessary assets (like farmland) to create short-term cash on hand that can be re-invested into our long-term goals.
- Continue to organize assets, define ownership, and identify artifacts.
- Keep working on cost-cutting. Potential decrease of hours etc.
- Get in touch with Parks Canada regarding their role in the National Historic Site and its maintenance.

We will report on and provide appropriate documentation and information to key stakeholders on a timely basis. We will remain transparent with all funding contacts and representatives when we have questions, concerns, or need feedback. We will continue to diversify and build upon our offerings.

#### 4. Make Museum Information More Accessible

**Aspiration:** The Museum's information and importance reaches the people who value it. The Canadian Energy Museum is recognized for its artifacts and historical importance.

**Background:** The Museum has not focused on digitizing archives and information due to lack of continuity. Current staff are working to organize all Museum documentation and create systems for Museum procedures. Once information is organized in a meaningful way, we can focus on making the information more available.

We will continue to improve our communication with our audience; from students and teachers, to communities in Leduc County, to key stakeholders like Museum organizations and industry leaders.

- Fully utilize available online platforms to make our digitized artifacts, photographs, and archival material easily available to the public.
- Improve marketing for Museum programs and exhibits, with a spread of physical promotions, social media promotion, and expansion of our website.
- Create systems of communication to ensure all necessary parties are involved and in the know, including streamlining newsletters and production of transparent annual reports.



## We know we are successful when...

**There has been a decrease in assets outside of the Museum's scope.** Farmland and long-term rental properties that do not align with the Museum's and Historical sites mission and educational goals are sold to create cash on hand for operations.

**We have received funding from our closest communities,** the City of Leduc and Leduc County. If we have not received funding, we have received feedback and steps forward to receive funding again in the future. All financial information must be reported in a timely fashion. We would like grant funding from both parties in 2025 and forward.

**We have created interest in the Museum Board and attending Board meetings.** We have contacted potential resources, and large networks that could add value to the team. Use current networks and relationships like the AMA, Petroleum Historical Society, and UCalgary to reach out to more possible stakeholders. Host “wine and cheese”/ mingling nights, and yearly AGMs. Discuss with board and representatives how to attract talent.

**There is a network of key personnel with interest in the Museum and its continuity.** We have established our relationship and what “need-to-know” information will be passed along to them. Whether we gain traction in Board interest or not, there is a list of people who have interest in the Museum and what we offer.

**There is an increase in program bookings and outreach program bookings.** We will increase advertising and flexibility in program bookings. We will accommodate diverse crowds in order to educate as many guests as possible, and ignite passion for the energy sector. We have a number of re-bookings from parties who enjoyed their program or service. We also continue to draw in new schools and organizations to book our programs and use our facilities.