

FUN ON THE FARM

Living the History at Pickering Museum Village

VISION:

Pickering Museum Village will ignite imaginations through a museum that fosters a connection to Pickering by collecting, preserving and interpreting artifacts and social culture.

MISSION:

Pickering Museum Village will be a community hub where people come together to learn, share stories, and build relationships through progressive, fun, and vibrant experiences.



Prior to 2021, the museum's 18 Heritage Buildings have been used for a combination of living history displays, storage, and programmable space. In 2019, the museum undertook a significant construction project (\$1.2 million) to transform an existing building into the Conservation Building which includes collections storage, an exhibit fabrication workshop and conservation lab. As part of this project, the City built additional collections storage on the upper museum site, reducing the need to store artifacts in the heritage buildings.

Prompted by a Master Site Plan facilitated by Lord Cultural Resources in 2019, the museum team has worked to make more effective use of heritage buildings, putting the visitor experience first in the design and re-imagining of these spaces to meet the following goals:

01. The museum's collection will be used to spark imagination, encourage creativity, and explore play as a form of learning.

02. Visitors are the core of our work. We will seek to understand what delights our visitors as our core audiences continue to evolve and grow.

03. We will establish and nurture partnerships to collaborate and innovate.

04. We will be resilient, sustainable and responsible for the longevity of the museum as a community resource.

05. We will innovate with technology to improve our visitor's experience.





90%
of guests that visited the exhibit through the barn & butter program reported that they were very likely to return to the museum for another experience.



In the past, museum exhibits were designed for visitors to look only; the museum used barriers and display techniques to keep visitors from touching and interacting with exhibit elements and artifacts.

Our goal is that the museum's collection will be used to spark imagination, encourage creativity and explore play as a form of learning. Visitors will explore the museum through social, fun, and unique experiences that create a depth and density of experiences that create reasons to visit again and again.

The combination barn was the first heritage building to be transformed into a participatory, hands-on experience. Targeting children, each hands on station promotes learning through play. From grinding corn for animals, creating quilt patterns at the fair or discovering the importance of animal care, this exhibit has something for everyone. Through guided programs, hands on activities, and text panels, this space provided a layered experience that engages visitors in multiple ways.

Our goal is to put visitors at the core of our work. We will seek to understand what delights our guests as our core audiences continue to evolve and grow.

The re-imagining of the Combination Barn included better integration of programming with exhibit elements. Exhibit exploration was built into programming as a core visitor experience and reason to visit.

The museum team developed a new public program that launched in 2021 called Barn & Butter. Targeting kids and families, visitors were able to make their own butter and then explore the hands-on exhibit.

Barn & Butter was soft-launched in 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions that limited hands-on activities, and limited number of visitors per session. The museum team adapted program materials to create COVID-safe, individually packaged butter making kits. Over the 8 program days, 326 visitors participated.



"My family really enjoyed the Barn & Butter workshop!"

"My kids (2 and 5) loved the program and have not stopped talking about it. They especially loved the interactive barn."

"It was GREAT!"

The museum team has recognized that we need to tell more diverse stories, and include more people in our storytelling. One way to achieve this is through partnerships in our community.

Our goal is to establish and nurture partnerships to collaborate and innovate.

The Combination Barn exhibit includes a reading nook courtesy of the Pickering Library, featuring children's books about farming and farm animals.

The re-imagining of heritage buildings provides an opportunity to create new partnerships and tell a greater variety of diverse and dynamic stories. Consultation with the City of Pickering's Cultural Advisory Committee, Accessibility Committee and Diversity and Inclusion Committees has helped identify new partnerships for the re-imagining of additional heritage buildings.

In 2020, visitors to the museum generously donated \$10,000 toward the development of this exhibit, which allowed us to purchase 'buttercup' the milking cow. Special thanks to Laura Drake for her generous contribution.



**Our goal is to be resilient,
sustainable and responsible for
the longevity of the museum as a
community resource.**

Pickering Museum Village participates in the Ontario Standards for Community Museums, and meets the 10 standards that are set out by the Province.

Part of this goal includes innovating with technology in order to improve our visitor's experience.

Significant structural repairs were made to the structure of this heritage building in 2020 including a new foundation, structural supports, cladding and a new roof. These repairs will ensure that the Combination Barn is an artifact that will be enjoyed by visitors for many more years.

As a measure of resiliency and innovation, electrical and track lighting was added to the barn to improve safety for visitors and make the hands-on activities more accessible to our visitors. We also added WIFI to the building, providing the infrastructure for further digital content creation or interaction in the future. The addition of electricity means that 'buttercup', the large fiberglass cow can be plugged in to 'moo' while visitors 'milk' her.

BEFORE



AFTER





HISTORY OF THE BARN

The Combination Barn c. 1875, represents one of the most common barn architectural styles known as “Three Bay” or “English-style” in Ontario. The barn is called a ‘combination barn’ because it mixes livestock and grain under one roof. It originally stood on Lot 18, Concession 6 of Pickering Township. Thomas Stevenson (1814-1891) owned this section of land in 1870.

A portion of this lot and Concession transferred to William Newman in 1951 (Land Registry, 229). He donated the barn (on the southwest corner of that land) to the Pickering Township Museum, in the late 1960s.

THE EXHIBIT

The combination barn was the first significant redesign of a permanent exhibit at the museum since the 1970s. Construction of the building was completed by City of Pickering Capital Assets team, and the exhibit was led by the Museum Conservator, with the assistance of the staff team, volunteers and partners. The exhibit explores farming in Ontario in the 1850s-70s and highlights the Pickering farmers who led the province in purebred stockbreeding.

Each stall was given a theme with hands-on activity stations designed to be fun, educational and connect directly to Pickering’s history of farming.

- ✓ The activity stations were designed and fabricated in house by museum staff and volunteers.
- ✓ The exhibit was developed and installed on time and on budget.
- ✓ The blend of programming and exhibit elements allowed for visitation during Covid 19 at a time when education programs were not able to run.
- ✓ Children loved the play based learning.
- ✓ Recognized that our key audience is children and designed the programs and activities to meet their needs.
- ✓ Visitors spent an hour on average in the barn exploring.

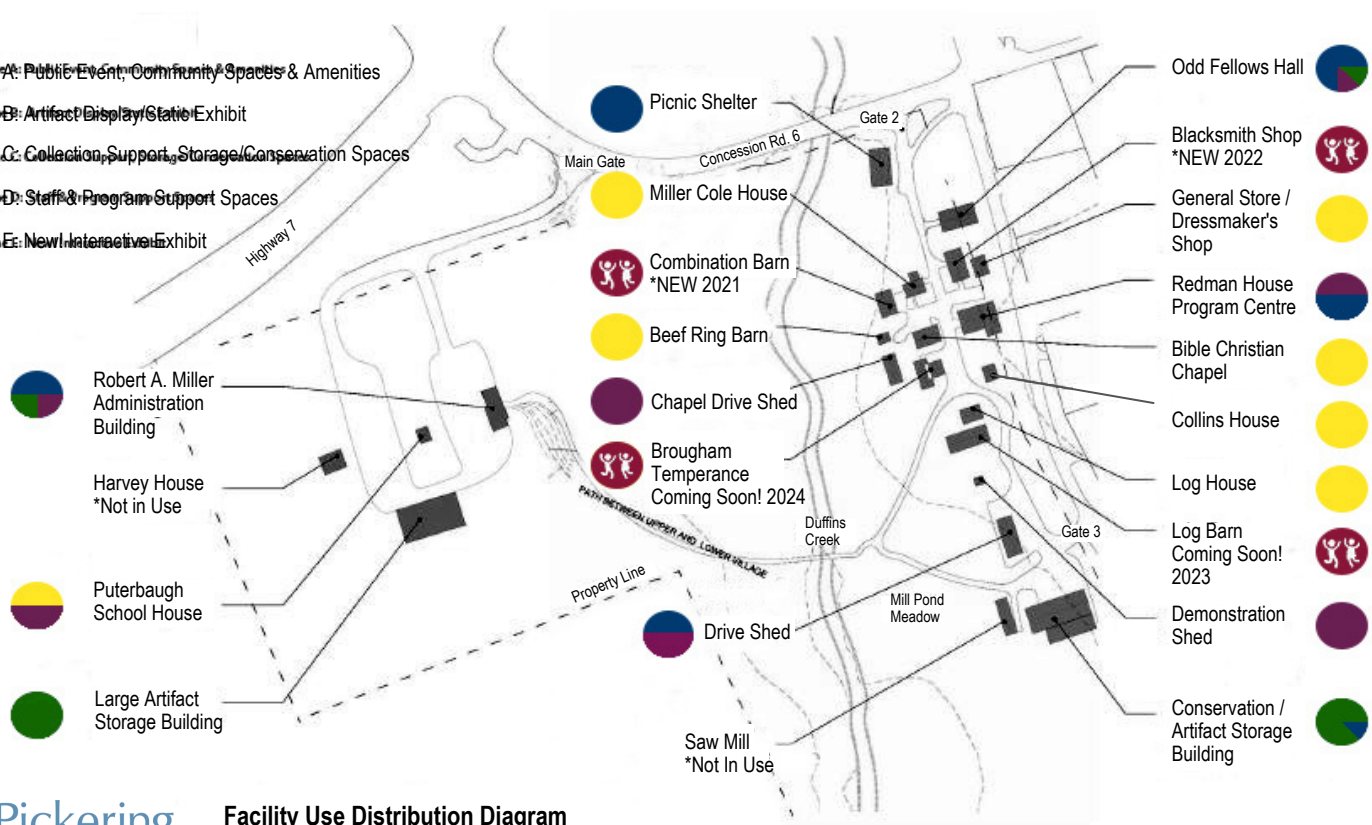
RE-IMAGINING OUR FUTURE

The museum's re-imagining of heritage buildings, prioritization of visitor experience, and commitment to provide a wider range of diverse and dynamic experiences on site has proven to be successful with the combination barn experience. This approach has also resulted in much more significant capital repairs to the building that will ensure its preservation for significantly longer than piecemeal repairs would have achieved. Given the success of this initiative, the museum team will apply this approach to the Blacksmith Shop in 2022, Log Barn in 2023, and Temperance Hotel in 2024.*

*pending grant and budget approvals

Legend:

- Zone A: Public Event, Community Spaces & Amenities
- Zone B: Artifact Display/Static Exhibit
- Zone C: Collection, Support, Storage/Conservation Spaces
- Zone D: Staff & Program Support Spaces
- Zone E: New/Interactive Exhibit



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Located 15 minutes north of Pickering City Centre,
Between Brock Road and Westney Road, just off Highway #7.

Explore our collection online at pickering.pastperfectonline.com



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Pickering Museum Village is grateful for the generous support and contributions from our community that made this project a success.