

Cedar Lake Historical Association

2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan

Mission

Presenting the relevance of Cedar Lake history.

Vision

Shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources throughout the Calumet Region.

Priorities



Values

- History & Civic Engagement
- Quality & Excellence
- Fulfilling Donor Intent
- Authenticity & Credibility
- Honesty & Integrity
- Creativity & Innovation
- Collaboration & Partnerships
- Fiscal Responsibility

Strategy Statement

The Cedar Lake Historical Association (CLHA) is a social benefit, non-profit corporation providing historical, recreational, and educational opportunities. Since our founding through community-based grassroots efforts in 1977, we have developed programs that entertain and educate, offer historical understanding, and create experiences for the highest quality of community life. CLHA is focused on educating the public through its unique museum collection. We do so, within the context of changing demographics and social values, using the historic Lassen’s Resort Hotel to connect the collection to those who encounter our lessons and stories.

CLHA utilizes dedicated volunteer staff and community talent to provide extraordinary historical knowledge and serene recreation to residents and tourists. Our mission is accomplished by our board and volunteers. Through our vibrant museum, we leverage our connections, local expertise, and a regional network. These attributes, combined with a community-based fundraising model, intentionally contribute to financial efficiency and program effectiveness.

We are committed to improving lives by presenting the relevance of Cedar Lake's history. Our engaging programs and educational services create meaningful connections for diverse populations throughout the Calumet Region. An understanding of history encourages interpersonal engagement, critical thinking and an appreciation of multiple perspectives. By teaching Cedar Lake’s story, we create more informed and engaged citizens.

CLHA will implement a growth engagement model with the goal of becoming a community hub and recreational destination of choice in Northwest Indiana. By targeting strategic partnerships with aligned community champions, CLHA will be the premiere community asset in Cedar Lake.

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What Makes Us Unique

The Cedar Lake Historical Association is the foremost authority on the history of Cedar Lake in the state of Indiana. CLHA provides information and resources related to regional and local historical and community conditions for individuals, corporations, media outlets, other nonprofits, and trade groups. Established in 1977, we have evolved from a grassroots advocacy organization to one of most vibrant historical and community-minded organizations in Northwest Indiana by providing leadership among, and maintaining positive relationships with, our historical peers across the Calumet Region. Our passion is connecting partners to our resources and each other, and advocating the value of remembering.

Where We Do It

Our outstanding volunteer staff and driven board of governors deliver resources and programs from a museum in a historic Cedar Lake hotel. The museum building was built in 1890 on the west shore of the lake by the Armour Brothers as a boardinghouse for employees who cut and harvested ice from the lake.

In 1919, the Armour's sold their ice business. Chris Lassen and his brothers operated a well-known dance pavilion featuring live band performances and their 20-acre resort needed a hotel. They purchased and moved the old boardinghouse across the frozen lake to the east shore, where it was remodeled into a hotel that became part of the Lassen Resort.

The property and hotel were eventually purchased by the Town of Cedar Lake in 1976. In 1981, through the efforts of the CLHA, the former hotel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. CLHA is expertly telling the history of Cedar Lake and remains one of only two publicly accessible historic properties in the Town.



Who We Serve

We provide educational programming and community spaces to children, seniors, families, schools and history-minded adventurers. Additionally, we serve the community through hospitality space rental services. Most importantly, we serve our donors in order to become their first charity of choice.

Competition

Situated in the northwest corner of Indiana, adjacent to the vibrancy of Chicago and the varied treasures of the Calumet Region, CLHA recognizes the many opportunities that abound to fill leisure time for our residents and tourists and their families. Furthermore, we compete for volunteers, donors, and philanthropic dollars with other charitable organizations that are doing admirable work to improve the quality of life for citizens.

Programs

Museum Tours: guided experiences of historic vignettes depicting the Lassen's Resort era and significant Cedar Lake achievements.

Hands-on-History Kids Room: exhibit space where children are encouraged to learn Cedar Lake history through hands-on play.

Preserving History Seminar: annual networking luncheon for historians and volunteers with professional development and educational programs.

Pie & Ice Cream Social: Sunday afternoon tradition on the museum porch during the Cedar Lake Summerfest.

Community Art Show: non-competitive exhibition for local artists of all ages throughout the region.

Family Fun Fest: lawn games from Lassen's Resort era paired with butter churning, ice cream making, and more!

Resort History Cruises: one-hour lake excursions detailing the summer fun of Cedar Lake's bygone resort era.

Guest Speaker Series: citizens and scholars present topics of local, regional, national and world history for multiple-aged audiences.

History Road Show: programs held in sites throughout the community when the museum is closed (October-April).

Oral History Interviews: documenting and videorecording the family stories of Cedar Lake residents.

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Program Design

Cedar Lake Historical Association programs are evaluated for mission alignment, geographic impact, and tourist appeal as described below.

1) All programs of CLHA must contribute to at least 1 of the following mission objectives:

History

Inform members, partners, donors, and individuals about topics related to the antiquity of Cedar Lake in the Calumet Region to increase knowledge and encourage behaviors that support our mission.

Recreation

Bring together individuals from a broad range of perspectives and roles within the community and link them to our unique resources to learn from each other to support our mission.

Education

Present Cedar Lake's relevance to our members, partners, donors and individuals and promote policies, investments, and ideas that support world-class programming for all.

2) All programs must align with organizational capacity and contribute to the organization. Potential programs will be evaluated utilizing assessment tools and best practices available to CLHA at the time.

What Success Looks Like

Cedar Lake Historical Association will restore and dramatically expand its proud role as the hub of the Cedar Lake community – a major goal of this strategic plan. A typical day at the museum might include a preschool playtime in the hands-on history room, volunteer training, school field trip, educational seminar for seniors, an artist's club painting session, and a local business meeting. On a weekend, people will come to the museum for a new exhibit opening, nonprofit board retreat, bridal shower, family fun fest, grandparent's day celebration, or mother-daughter doll tea.

CLHA is poised to harness the potential of its renovated museum to extend its wide range of programs and services to those curious about our past, as well as to those seeking a greater connection to the community and opportunities around them.

