

*Cook County Historical Society*

# *Facilities Plan*

*Updated to March 2022*

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*Special thanks to the Hammer Family*

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

**Introduction:** The Cook County Historical Society (CCHS) was founded in 1924, and since that time has worked to collect, preserve, and share the history of this unique part of Minnesota. The organization established a museum in 1966 when the federal government “decommissioned” the former Lightkeeper’s House in Grand Marais. Cook County acquired that building, and it has served as the Cook County History Museum ever since.

The organization has acquired or built four other properties over the last 30 years, most recently, the Bally Blacksmith Shop. In 2013, it was purchased with funds granted by the Minnesota Historical Society’s Legacy Program. “**Historic Cook County**” is the name adopted to represent this collection of five properties under the management of CCHS—as well as any future locations.

As this special corner of Minnesota undergoes rapid changes, CCHS is dedicated to preserving historic properties and telling their unique story. Planning is central to accomplishing this important work. With three buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, a thriving art gallery, and collections needing a home—the challenges are diverse and the opportunities are endless.

This document is a follow-up to a 2013 Long Range Site Plan which addressed the organization’s historic properties but did not include the Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery (JHP). The gallery has been part of the organization since it was built in 1990 and is an important part of the artistic legacy of our community. A section for a future maritime site has also been added to this 2018 update.

**Purpose:** This 2018 facilities planning report was developed to provide the CCHS board with information and tools to assist them in developing a comprehensive approach for advancing the mission of CCHS and the role of the individual sites toward that objective. The report is funded by a grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation and support from private donors.

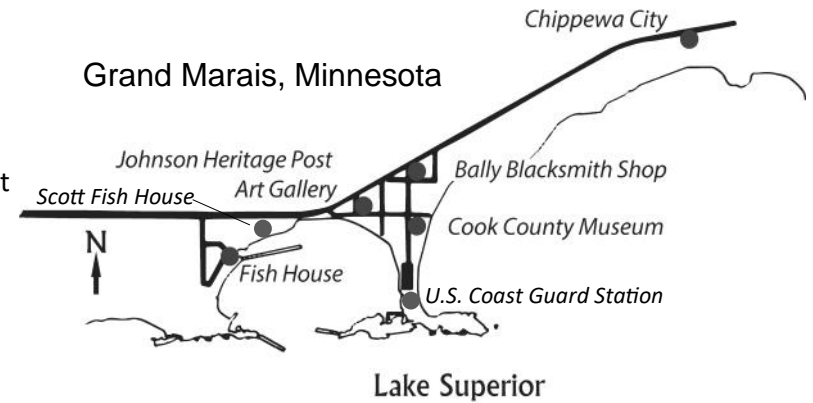
This report is directed to do the following:

- Continue clarifying the history and story of each location. What is the intended experience for visitors at each site? How does it fit into the community on a local as well as regional context?
- Identify the physical components and characteristics intrinsic to their historic designation as well as site and facility enhancements that strengthen the story and increase interest, attraction to visitors and support from contributors;
- Identify the overarching needs and opportunities for the organization in relation to existing and new sites including collection management, staffing, governance, and financial management;
- Refine the comprehensive planning framework to inform and advance the plan of each location.



**Processes:** Several distinct but coordinated processes informed the Facilities Planning for Historic Cook County properties.

**Unification of Sites Management – Capacity Building:** Over the last three years CCHS staff, board members, and other volunteer stakeholders have participated in a number of Capacity Building processes including an assessment of the organization’s growth. The focus has been on how to best support this growth through financial management, professional practices, definition of personnel roles, and policy for effective management and governance. The major theme has been restructuring and unification for more effective and efficient management under an Executive Director.



**Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery Work Group and Visioning:** Capacity Building processes have prompted the inclusion of the Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery (JHP) as an integral part of the overall plan. A JHP Work Group was formed in 2017 to envision the gallery’s potential for improvement and integration into the whole of Historic Cook County. This Work Group continues to meet as needed and guide the art gallery’s development and visioning.

**Maritime History Center Concept Development:** Most recently, architectural consultants were hired to aid in conceptualizing a future maritime site based on this significant history, collections, and community assets.

**Current CCHS maritime sites and collections include:**

- ◆ Lightkeeper’s House property (Cook County History Museum)
- ◆ 1930s fish house replica
- ◆ Fishing tug, *Neegee*
- ◆ Fifth order Fresnel Lens from the Grand Marais Harbor entrance light
- ◆ Historic collections from the Hammer family of Hovland including several wooden boats
- ◆ Historic collections from Scott Fish House business in Grand Marais

**Historic properties being considered for potential acquisition/partnerships:**

- ◆ U.S. Coast Guard Station (eligible for nomination for National Register of Historic Places)
- ◆ Jim Scott Fish House (National Register of Historic Places)

**Evaluation of Past Planning Goals:** The 2013 Long-Range Site Plan used the following principles to guide site development.

- ◆ Improve financial security
- ◆ Increase visibility/welcome visitors
- ◆ Increase CCHS significance in the community and in relationship to the region along the North Shore
- ◆ Expand museum space for growing collection storage and program needs
- ◆ Define and exhibit clearer interpretive messages

**Recommendations, Next Steps and Long-Range Planning:** Each site has specific assets and individual themes and actions associated with their particular history and needs. However, a comprehensive plan is required to ensure that the Board and Staff of CCHS have the tools necessary to proceed in a coordinated manner in order to prioritize issues at each site in a manner that is consistent with the overall story.

The Facility Committee of CCHS is directed to consider the following items for each of the sites:

- An action plan to address the near-term repair, maintenance, security, safety, etc., issues identified in the planning process (see individual site sections of report)
- A long-range vision statement that describes the recommended profile of programs, functions, exhibits and activities to be accommodated
- A conceptual diagram that describes how these elements should be sized and configured in relation to one another and the resulting building and site requirements
- A preliminary cost estimate range for implementation of the recommended plan for each site

This Committee will appoint one member to be the “point” person for each site. The Board should continue to seek ad hoc community groups/committees to advise and assist in implementation of the recommendations. Ad hoc committees may address collections storage, interpretation, exhibitions, personnel needs, and financial management in addition to the needs relating to the physical structure at each site.

The Board needs to also establish a schedule for reporting progress. These recommendations will provide the Board the information necessary to frame a comprehensive long-range plan incorporating all locations, exhibits and programs, and a financial and administrative support strategy.

It is also recommended that CCHS use the recently created prototype of the storybook *Stories from Superior’s North Shore* as a fundraising tool and to build interest in Historic Cook County. This beautifully written and illustrated book highlights each site as well as a future maritime site. It blends these stories into one picture of this area’s people and places of the past.

## STORIES FROM SUPERIOR'S NORTHERN SHORE

### HISTORIC COOK COUNTY MINNESOTA

Ruth E. Allard



Cook County Historical Society • Grand Marais, Minnesota

circus ponies, and one osprey male. The animals settle down when Charlie and the boys leave the house in the morning. This is her time to work on her art—perhaps a new landscape, some painted shams, or a stained glass shade for an oil lamp.

In 1907, before Lloyd was born, a young cow moose accompanied Anna on Charlie's trading post with his lunch. The moose also ran down to the dock whenever the *American* came in, to check disembarking passengers' pockets for chewing tobacco. When Lloyd was five, a hunter brought Charlie three muskrat skins. She hid them—first with an eyelid, then with a baby bottle—and before long, they were following her to the trading post. She stopped mothering wild animals after that. They didn't fare very well in town, and she didn't enjoy becoming a tourist attraction. The trading post is attraction enough. Everyone admires the cross-shaped log building that Charlie's carpenters constructed in 1906.



It houses his fur trading headquarters, his ready and dank company, his mercantile store, and the post office. Charlie's numerous businesses and political pursuits have earned him a lofty title—The King.

After lunch, Anna goes back to the house and sets out supplies for her art class. The small group of young women who attend are painting porcelains on vases and pitchers with the enamel and brushes she provides. Their delight when she takes each item out of her portable kit is always gratifying. She teaches watercolor classes, too. The birches near the terrace and the fish houses on the harbor are frequent subjects. Anna burns Debussy's "Clair de lune" as she cuts a bouquet of poems for the worktable. Her current crop of budding artists will be arriving soon.



Charlie's trading post burned down in 1926. The temporary building constructed in its wake remained in place for more than six decades. Anna opened a gift shop there. Along with her paintings, pressed-ink drawings, ceramics and stained glass, she featured Elizabeth Arakawa Donillard's baskets, and other selected works of art by area residents. Anna and Charlie moved into an apartment attached to the post when their log house became too much of a chore. She continued to paint throughout her married life. Shortly before Anna died in 1944, Ellen Douglas gave her friend a title of her own: *Queen of the Art*. For sixty years, Anna created art that reflected her ongoing relationship with the natural world. Her paintings and her classes encouraged other residents to make a place in their own lives for art and nature.



Three years after Anna Johnson's death, Birney Quick came to town to start an outdoor painting school where students could be near to nature. Twenty students took part during that first summer session. All of them were men, and most of them had been soldiers during World War II. Monday-night fish fires, local homesteads, the dramatic lakeshore and the surrounding forest were all irresistible. Keith Havers, whose paintings that summer included one of the blacksmith shop and another of a harbor tug, summed up his experience in four words—*Hey, this is paradise*. Initially a summer program of the Minneapolis School of Art, then a private business run by Birney Quick and Byron Bradley, and ultimately a nonprofit organization, the Grand Marais Art Colony changed names and locations several times during the decades that followed, even as it kept its focus on providing students with an environment in which they could flourish.



During the same decades, local artists began making an impression regionally and nationally. George Morrison, grandson of Chippewa City's James Morrison Sr., emerged as a leading modern artist and gifted teacher in the 1930s.

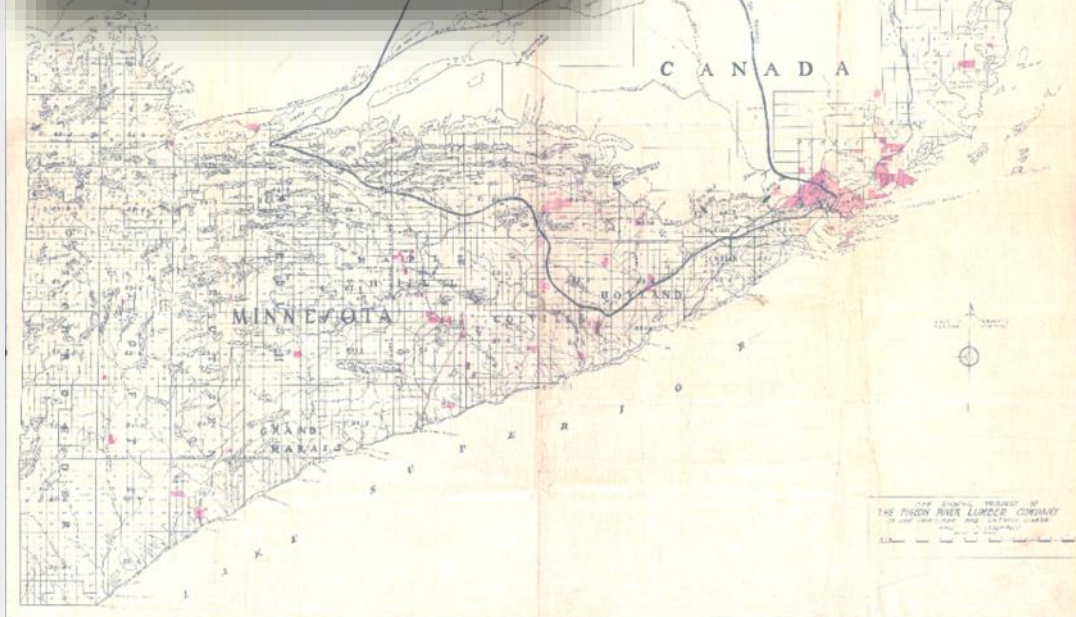


Sampling of CCHS photos and archives

Boat forms discovered in the Scott Fish House

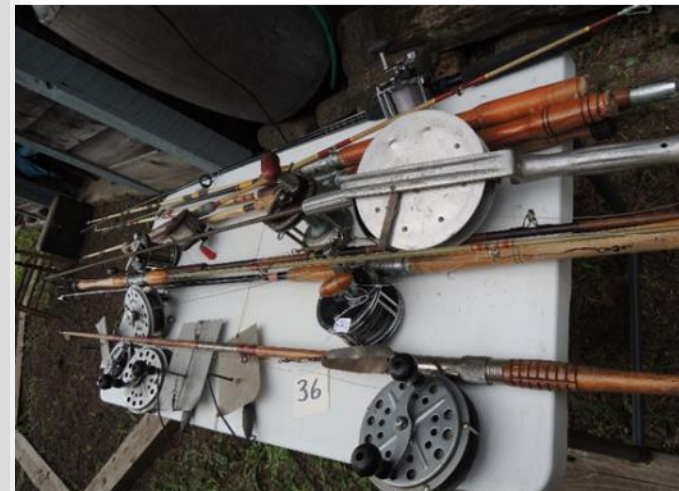


Metal sign found in Scott Fish House; in addition to commercial fishing they served as dealers of Scott-Atwater outboard motors



**COLLECTIONS OF  
THE COOK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Wide variety of rods and reels among the many items in the Hammer Family Collection



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES: RECENT CAPACITY CHANGES

There have been several major developments over the last few years that will have long lasting impacts on the future of the Cook County Historical Society. These developments demonstrate the need for continued capacity growth as the organization changes course. It is essential as planning moves forward that these challenges and opportunities are kept in the forefront of all conversations about site development.

### 1) Unifying the Organization

A Lake Superior Coastal Zone Program grant funded the creation of signs that unify the five current sites of the newly named “Historic Cook County.” This rebranding allows us to talk about the whole organization under one name, projecting to the public the unity of the sites. Over the years, the name “Historical Society” became associated specifically with the Museum, not accounting for the fact that the organization has been responsible for the Johnson Heritage Post since 1990 in addition to the other historic sites.

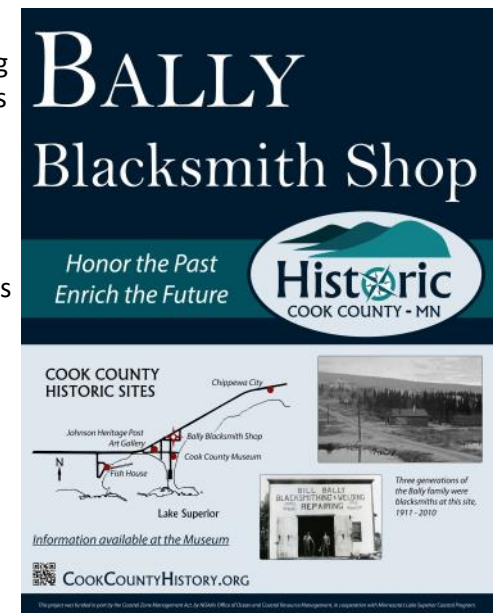
The outward change in our look was followed by an internal restructuring to unify overall operations and site management. The Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation provided two years of Capacity Building grant funding. One of the important outcomes of this work was the unification of all budgeting, memberships and staffing for the whole organization. This restructure has major benefits for how CCHS addresses the responsibilities associated with managing five sites.

Staff is now structured as follows: Executive Director, Carrie Johnson leads overall operations of the organization including direction of site management and staff. JHP Manager, Elizabeth Davis is responsible for the day to day activities of the Johnson Heritage Post. Liz also serves as technology support person and web designer. Museum Manager, Martha Marnocha is responsible for the operation of day to day activities at the Museum and historic sites. Martha also serves as the collection manager. Office Manager, Bob Spry assists in business concerns including budgeting, bookkeeping and financial reporting. Facility Caretaker, Doug Andrus performs maintenance and upkeep needs for all of the facilities. The Executive Director position is a full-time position with an hourly pay rate and paid time off as the only benefit. All other positions are part-time with no fringe benefits.

CCHS’s Board of Directors also experienced some restructuring. Standing committees were consolidated and streamlined with an Executive Committee empowered with more clearly defined responsibilities and authority. The Facilities Committee has a very active role with the following board members and community members contributing to this planning effort: Barbara Backlund, Myron Bursheim, William Clayton, Duane Ege, Dean Farnum, Dick Gilyard, Ivy Hocking, John Jacobsen, and Bob Pratt.

Select committees will be developed as needs arise and standing committees will continue to be active and empowered. Community advisors will be sought to bring perspective and specific knowledge to committees and staff.

CCHS seeks to formalize our decades-long relationship with Cook County government. Clarifying this relationship with our most consistent financial supporter and owner of two of our properties will be key to enacting our plans for the future. The Museum is a county owned building, as is the Bally Blacksmith Shop. A management agreement for Bally’s exists, but nothing is in writing regarding the Museum.



***New Historic Cook County Site Signs  
featuring a new logo and motto:  
“Honor the Past, Enrich the Future”***

Currently, CCHS does not have a formal relationship with the area's other historical organizations. However, the Passport to the Past program is one tangible example how the CCHS supports and provides resources for those more localized organizations. CCHS has fostered relationships with the Gunflint Trail Historical Society (Chik Wauk Museum), Schroeder Area Historical Society (Cross River Heritage Center), Tofte Historical Society (North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum), Grand Portage Tribal Museum, Grand Portage National Monument, Grand Portage State Park, and the Sugarloaf Cove Nature Center. All of these locations around Cook County tell part of this region's story.

CCHS will continue to monitor ways in which unified management can be improved while assessing the need for more staffing as responsibilities grow. Developing formal relationships and partnerships will be more important than ever as the organization's work becomes more significant in the community.

## 2) Storing Historic Collections

CCHS was founded in the 1920s and has worked to collect artifacts that demonstrate local and regional history since that time. With the acquisition of the Lightkeeper's Residence in 1966, the organization had a permanent location to house these collections. The Museum was acquired by Cook County in partnership with CCHS when the federal government declared it as surplus property. Most of the CCHS's historic objects were placed on display in the museum while paper archives and photographs were filed in various locations.

In 2005 the CCHS acquired grant funding from sources including the Lake Superior Coastal Program and the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation to build an addition to the Museum providing its first dedicated archival storage for its collections. The two-story addition provided about 1,200 square feet of storage in the lower level with exhibition and office space on the main floor. Once the addition was completed, the organization acquired PastPerfect (specific software dedicated to cataloging museum collections). Work began immediately to catalog and store artifacts in the new facility with an attempt at proper conservation methods.

**Flooding:** Unfortunately, the storage area flooded during a 2017 storm event causing damage to items that were stored on the bottom shelves and in bottom drawers. The compromised basement flooded again in 2018 but efforts had already been underway to remove items from areas of potential flooding. After this second flood, CCHS has decided that the storage space is vulnerable to further water intrusion and is reconsidering its use for archival storage.

Collection management is a major part of the mission of this organization. From important paper documents to the priceless Fresnel Lens from the Grand Marais Lighthouse, CCHS is entrusted to preserve our region's history through its material culture. It would be irresponsible to return artifacts to the lower level of the Museum's addition with known recurrent flooding. It is unlikely to be waterproofed and will be of limited use.

The Cook County Commissioners authorized the installation of an interior drain tile and sump pump system in the addition's lower level. This is an important solution for the preservation of the building; however, it does not prevent water from entering the basement. This solution will pump the water out and away from the building when it floods. Other solutions will need to be sought for preventing water intrusion before CCHS could consider using this area as archival storage again.

As a side note, CCHS preserves many important official documents from Cook County's history, but the County courthouse also contains original, handwritten documents from the earliest days of local government. CCHS is hopeful that the commissioners will understand the significance of proper storage of these irreplaceable documents and work to ensure their preservation.





***Open section of break wall on the east bay in Grand Marais, behind Museum.  
Would repair prevent future flooding?***



Currently, overflow storage has displaced Museum exhibits and filled a substantial portion of the Johnson Heritage Post storage facility. These are temporary solutions as the conditions are not archival quality with temperature and humidity control. In order to arrive at a solution for our storage issue, a careful assessment of the entire collection must be done to determine what is needed in terms of space and environmental conditions. Also, an up-to-date collections policy will be needed to help guide future collecting.

At this time there is no clear path toward resolving the flooding problem, nor has an alternative location been identified to develop archival storage. To add to storage concerns, CCHS has three shipping containers— two with maritime collections and one with Bally Blacksmith collections. What was a shortage of archival storage space prior to flooding has become a crisis. None of these important collections are being stored in secure, environmentally controlled conditions.

### **3) Acquiring Maritime Collections**

Two major collections have been acquired recently that add greatly to the capability of CCHS to represent a whole picture of the everyday life of commercial fishing families and the business of commercial fisheries, as well as inland lake fishing.

#### **Hammer Family Collection**

The Hammer family of Hovland donated an amazing array of fishing gear and wooden boats as well as household items representing decades of North Shore history. Seven wooden boats represent a diversity in fishing techniques for different bodies of water. Currently, artifacts from the Hammer Collection are stored in a 20-foot storage container on the family's property in Hovland, Minnesota. The boats are being stored by the Hammers until CCHS has a place for exhibiting the collection.

#### **Contents of the Scott Fish House**

Prior to the sale of the Dockside property to North House Folk School, Harley and Shele Toftey offered the historic contents of the Scott Fish House to CCHS. The Fish House was the site of consecutive commercial fishing businesses since it was built in 1907. Little had been removed from the building over the years, and the loft contained historic documents dating back to the Scott family commercial fishing operation.

The Scott Fish House is on the National Register of Historic Places. Now that the Fish House is in the ownership of the North House Folk School, there is reason to believe there will be interest in removing it from the site. More information is outlined in the document's section on the proposed Maritime History Center.



*From Hammer Family Collection;  
E.J. Croft built boat*

## SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING

### 1) Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery



**History:** The Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery was generously gifted to CCHS by Lloyd K. Johnson. He was the benefactor and donor of the building site, the beautiful log building itself and the permanent collection of his mother's paintings. Lloyd was the son of Charles and Anna Johnson who were early settlers in Cook County. Charles was primarily a fur trader and his wife, Anna, was an artist and art teacher who worked in several mediums including oils, watercolors, pen and ink, ceramics and stained glass.

The Gallery was modeled after the original Johnson Trading Post which was constructed in 1906. That original log building burned down in 1926 and was replaced with a white frame building that was used for many years for a variety of retail purposes including the sale of Anna's artworks. After several decades that building was no longer used and was torn down. In 1989 Lloyd K. Johnson made his gift to the Cook County Historical Society with the stipulation that a new log building

be built to closely resemble the original trading post and that his mother's paintings be permanently displayed in one wing. Lloyd's nephew, Duane Johnson from Duluth, was the architect. He worked with Glenn Peterson, a local contractor, and Mike Senty, owner of Senty Handcrafted Log Homes.

**Brief History of Anna C. Johnson:** The Johnson Heritage Post Art Gallery's west wing is dedicated to the original artwork of Anna C. Johnson. The permanent exhibit is a lasting testimony to her leadership in the arts. Anna typified the strength of early 20th century women pioneers, and she had lasting influence in this region as an art teacher. Born in Arvika, Varmland, Sweden, in 1881, she migrated with her parents to Manistee, Michigan, when she was 10, and became a frequent visitor to this region at the turn of the century. Before her 1907 marriage to Charles J. Johnson, her artistic interests had been stimulated and guided by a brother. She also had some formal, classical training in painting as a student at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. While her husband's sincere interests in painting and music had long been characteristic of his colorful, bachelor lifestyle, Anna reinforced and deepened his interests and eventually others in Grand Marais. Interpreting scenes and the relationships between people and nature along the North Shore and up the rugged Gunflint Wagon Road, she created many paintings and drawings, many of which are displayed at the Johnson Heritage Post while others are preserved in homes throughout the country. Her artwork had a lasting impact on this community as an influence on other artists and the culture which is now well-known for its legacy of artistic expression.



**Description, Current Use and Condition:** The logs used in the construction of the building are lodgepole pine from Montana. Each tree stood for at least three years after being killed by a fungus deposited under the bark by the mountain pine beetle. The interior was finished with a white stain to allow the natural color to come through. Thanks to a 2021 Lloyd K Johnson Foundation grant, significant rot in several locations on the exterior of the logs is being repaired and Mike Senty has provided directions for continuing maintenance to prevent further rot.

In addition to the Anna Johnson Collection displayed in the west wing, the gallery's east wing and center room are used for a wide variety

of rotating art exhibits year round. There is over 1500 square feet of public exhibition space total.

An archival storage space and a full kitchen were added in 2015 with the help of a grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation. The HVAC system used to control the humidity levels and the heating system need to be evaluated to ensure proper conditions for collection storage.

The JHP's storage facility now holds CCHS's historic textiles and paper collection (since the Museum's 2018 flood) in addition to the permanent art collection. Besides the 50 individual artworks created by Anna Johnson, CCHS owns a collection of artwork by a variety of local and regional artists. Most notable are works by renowned artists Birney Quick, founder of the Grand Marais Art Colony, and George Morrison, internationally acclaimed modern artist who was born in Chippewa City. The entire art collection has been appraised and will be insured. The Anna Johnson Collection will be further evaluated to determine if any conservation treatment may be required to stabilize the art.



The JHP's kitchen has been a very useful amenity and allows for preparation of food for special events and the art openings that are hosted with each new exhibit. As a result of the Capacity Building process, it was decided to focus more heavily on offering rental opportunities of this wonderful facility. Several steps were taken to make it more useful for potential renters including the purchase of chairs and tables to seat up to 100 guests with flexible figuration for large or small groups. With large indoor and outdoor spaces, and an ideal location, the JHP has great potential for being utilized for a variety of purposes.

In addition to rentals, CCHS itself has been making greater use of the facility as the primary location for a series of history talks. Thanks to the installation of a sound system with grant funding from the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB), the JHP is better suited to host musical performances, readings, slide shows, history lectures, art demonstrations and artist talks.

The JHP has an excellent location in the heart of the Grand Marais business district. However, it remains somewhat obscured due to signage issues and overgrowth of foliage. Recent attempts to remedy this problem included removal of large trees that over-shadowed the entrance and the installation of a new sign that ties JHP into the Historic Cook County family. Landscape planning is a priority to make the front entrance and yard of the JHP more inviting and interesting to visitors while making best use of its lovely view of the Grand Marais Harbor.

The Gallery is open year round with reduced hours during the winter. Primarily, the front desk is staffed by volunteers, but it is challenging to recruit enough volunteers to keep ideal hours open to the public.

**Capacity Building:** Major changes took place in the management of the JHP as staff and financial restructuring joined it more closely with CCHS management. JHP had long been independent due to its separate funding sources. It has operated primarily on the income provided by the dividends earned from two endowment funds set up by Lloyd K. Johnson and CCHS in the 1990s. Art exhibitions and gift shop sales have also been a source of income.

Evaluation of the finances highlighted the fact that the JHP was in need of increasing earned income sources while closely monitoring spending. The gift shop at the gallery has been an area of immediate improvements resulting in greater earned income. Earnings from exhibition sales are also improving with careful financial management and choice of exhibitors.

A Work Group made up primarily of artists met several times throughout the Capacity Building process and will continue to meet to assist the JHP in envisioning the Gallery's future. This Work Group seeks to identify and define JHP's role in the community and with the area's local artists. There will be ongoing discoveries with the formation of an artist group run by artists. Formalizing procedures, policies, and

relationships has been part of defining the future of the JHP.

**Recommendations, Suggested Themes and Uses:**

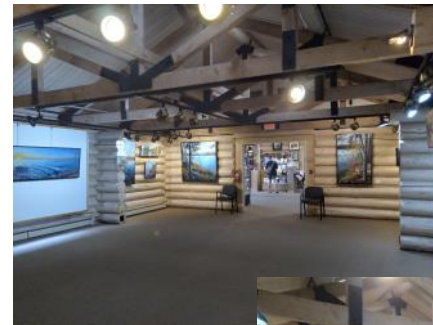
- Inviting outdoor space (*new landscaping completed in 2021 from Lloyd K. Johnson grant*)
- Increase use as rental and for community events
- Public gallery
  - \* Support local artists
  - \* Quality exhibitions
- Improve business plan
  - \* Gift shop (*doubled the gift shop footprint in 2021 without losing gallery space*)
  - \* Art exhibitions
  - \* Online sales
- Educational
  - \* Display featuring countywide art history and Anna Johnson specifically (*New interpretive panels on Anna Johnson completed in 2021 from Lloyd K. Johnson grant*)
  - \* More history and art talks



**JHP Gift Shop**

**Next Steps:**

- Site development
- Log rot repaired
- Heating system repaired/updated
- Improvement in archival storage facility
  - \* HVAC update
  - \* Enhanced conservation of artworks
- Assess interior space layout
  - \* Gift shop
  - \* Operational needs
  - \* Flexibility for a variety of exhibition configurations
  - \* Rental needs



**Main West Gallery**

**Long-Range Planning:**

Planning for art exhibition goals

Envisioning JHP's role in the larger art community

Strategies for utilizing the property for maximum benefit for CCHS as a whole

Assessing best financial planning for related investments

## SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING

### **2) Cook County History Museum (Lightkeeper's House)**

**History:** The history of the Lightkeeper's House parallels that of settlement and development along Lake Superior's North Shore and, in particular, that of the community of Grand Marais. In 1895, the Lighthouse Service began planning for a badly needed keeper's residence to serve as both official quarters and reception for the lightkeeper and his family. In October of that year, the United States Government purchased lots Three and Four of Block 30 of the Village of Grand Marais for \$300 from Samuel Bayless to serve as the location for the new residence. Lighthouse Keeper Mayhew posted notice calling for bids on the new residence in February of 1896. Plans and specifications were prepared by the Lighthouse Service's engineering office in Detroit. The contract for the building was awarded to the Duluth firm of Wilson & Nauffts. Total cost for the 2,200 square foot residence was \$2,800. Construction of a building of this magnitude had not been undertaken in Grand Marais before, and the whole affair was cause for great interest among the citizens of the community. ***"When completed, this will be the finest residence in Cook County and will be a credit to the village."*** **Cook County News Herald, August 8, 1896.**

Joseph E. Mayhew along with his wife and five children were the first occupants of the house. Joseph had been appointed first keeper of the Grand Marais Lighthouse in February of 1886. Sadly, after waiting ten years for its construction, Joseph's wife, Carrie, died shortly after moving into their new home. Several lightkeepers lived here. In the 1950s it became the U.S. Coast Guard Commander's residence and was acquired by the Cook County Historical Society in 1966. In 1971 the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Current use, description and condition:** The original Lightkeeper's House is a two-story frame dwelling with concrete, brick and stone foundation. The base measurements of the building are 42 feet long by 28 1/2 feet wide. The lower story of the structure's exterior is finished with horizontal siding while the upper is faced with shingles in what might be called a "modified mansard roof." The building is one of the few structures remaining in Cook County that is a direct link to the centuries-old history of the area.

A porch was later enclosed during the time it was used for the Coast Guard Commander's home. The porch addition now serves as a bridge to a 2006 addition. The new addition is also wood frame with foam insulation. The first level houses the CCHS administrative offices and a restroom. It is currently also serving as overflow storage space after the flooding in the lower level. This concrete lower level had been used for archival storage. **However, due to 2017-2018 flooding all collections have been removed from the archival storage facility and rehoused throughout the Museum and at other CCHS properties.**

The Museum's exhibition space has been compromised with storage emergencies displacing exhibits. The original building will still house several history exhibitions including a modified maritime exhibit, history of music and CCC history. The parlor area and gift shop have been modified over the last few years to be more people friendly and welcoming. The parlor is now a comfortable area for our volunteers who staff the front desk.



The Museum serves as the primary administrative office location (JHP has an office for the gallery manager). It is not clear, however, with the storage concerns and increasing staff if it is sustainable for that purpose while also housing exhibits. Education has been an important part of the services provided at this facility, from school tours to academic researchers. The Lightkeeper's House is associated with the history of Cook County and as the resource location to access the vast collections of this organization. As storage and administrative space needs are addressed, ideal uses of the Lightkeeper's House (Cook County History Museum) will be carefully considered.

**Recommendations, Suggested Themes and Uses:**

- Specialized storage
- Office and administration
- Store/gift shop
- Research
- Exhibitions of Cook County history
- History Tours

**Next Steps:**

- Monitor conditions in temporary storage areas
- Determine how/if archival storage can be protected from future flooding
- Develop site's interpretive plan **within the framework of an overall/comprehensive interpretive plan**
- Determine how to improve HVAC and environmental controls for storage and exhibition
- Paint exterior of new addition (mindful of moisture levels in siding)
- Determine steps for repainting of original building with consideration of lead paint remediation
- Inspect entire roof, determine condition of cedar shake shingles and solution for moss covering

**Long-Range Planning:**

Explore possibilities and identify long-range facility plan (e.g., ADA compliance modifications, facility expansion, etc.).

**The former Lightkeeper's House has been the flagship but will it continue to be?** As indicated in our 2013 report, "because of its location, site and size, and being the first and principal property of CCHS, it has been required to accommodate many services and functions, some of which compete for space, visibility and access." This concern has become even more meaningful and this location's many uses must be carefully reconsidered as more responsibilities require a greater capacity. This formerly overtaxed building has been further compromised by flooding, growing archival collection, and increased staffing.



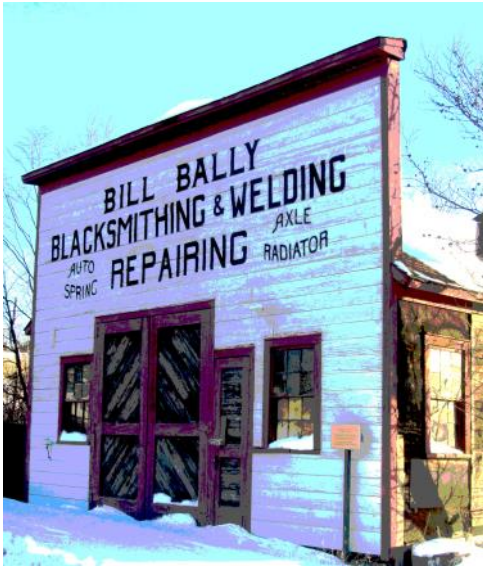
*Museum's front entrance (above). Sidewalk was added to the south of the building for handicap accessibility at the back of the building. However, an accessible front entrance needs to be considered for ADA compliance.*



*Museum's addition main floor, previously used for maritime exhibit, now being used for temporary storage and administrative overflow*

## SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING

### 3) Bally Blacksmith Shop Property



**History:** The shop's original owner, Sam Bally, relocated from Bayfield, Wisconsin, to Grand Marais in 1903. He was first employed as a blacksmith with the Cook County Manufacturing Company, which established Grand Marais' first sawmill on the Grand Marais Harbor. Bally went into business for himself in 1911, purchasing a parcel of land on Broadway and erecting the Bally Blacksmith Shop. Sam Bally was highly regarded among the early settlers while serving for several years as the "village president" and as county commissioner from 1914-1922. After Bally's death in 1922, the shop was taken over by his son, Albert, who was a fixture there for decades, even after he bequeathed it to his own son, William, in 1946. Known as a well-respected community member, Al was a World War I veteran, an electrical engineer, and a Grand Marais Village Councilman.

William "Bill" Bally, third generation Bally in Grand Marais, continued his family's tradition as a blacksmith and metalworker, operating the business until 2009. For most of those 98 years, it was one of just a few blacksmith operations in Grand Marais. This family site, through its repair work, chronicles the county's general economic history progressing from horse-drawn lumber camp equipment to motorized commercial fishing rigs to tourist automobiles and snowmobiles. The blacksmiths' story is universal; each burgeoning U.S. village depended on those skilled in the trade. But the Bally story is also unique due to this region's particular isolation and development. Steamships and dog sleds were virtually the only transportation to the area until 1928. Limited

access to and from the "outside world" until that late date extended the period that the community depended on the blacksmith. That isolation along with an economy based in natural resource extraction meant these crafters and repairers of machinery were essential.

The Bally Blacksmith Shop is architecturally and historically significant as a rare and intact example of an early twentieth-century blacksmith shop. Much of the original antique equipment is present: the original forge, an approximately 6-foot bellows, the swage block, pullers, anvils, mandrels, a hand drill press, various tongs, a Hossfeld bender, hand formers, hardies, a wagon wheel tire bender, and miscellaneous handmade tools remain at the site.

The metal structure was used by the late Bill Bally as a business until 2009. The original blacksmith shop, a wood structure built in 1911, gradually fell into disuse. When CCHS and the County (manager and owner, respectively) acquired the property in 2013 with grant funds from the Minnesota Historical Society's Legacy Fund, the property had not been in use for a few years. The historic wood building and grounds had not been utilized, and were minimally maintained for decades. The site was neglected and in need of immediate care.

**Current use, description and condition:** The original Bally Blacksmith Shop is a simple structure that was substantially unaltered from the time of its construction. The building has been under one ownership since the time of its construction and the story of the building, business and the people involved is well documented and organized. Originally set on wooden posts, the building had to be raised onto timbers and cement block footings during the summer of 1971; re-building and re-surfacing of the adjacent streets and Highway 61 had caused severe water run-off problems for the building. Under Bally ownership no other major building renovations were ever done.

When acquired, both buildings were completely filled with machinery, tools, and debris. Another grant from MNHS paid for an individual to catalog each of the significant artifacts while many hours of volunteer time helped in the overall clean-up of the site. Any delicate paper artifacts were removed from the site to be housed at the Museum's main storage while more durable artifacts were organized and stored in the property's metal building. Artifact storage continues to be a challenge as decisions are made for the site.

The overall vision is to have a working shop for CCHS and community in the metal structure while preserving the historic wooden shop as a Museum where many of the artifacts will be placed on display. The outdoor space will be a blacksmithing demonstration area and will likely have other outdoor features creating a lively public space that educates visitors about the nature of the Ballys' work.

A grant from the IRRRB provided matching dollars with the remainder coming from donors for the first phase of stabilization of the historic wooden shop. Since that project, CCHS has worked closely with the State Historic Preservation Office to better understand the parameters of the Department of Interior Standards for historic preservation. CCHS hired LHB, Inc., to provide a Historic Structure Report for the old building. They have also produced architectural drawings and engineer specifications for further work to be done on this important structure.

### Recommendations, Suggested Themes and Uses:

- Interpret local blacksmithing story and related industries such as logging
- Preserve historic 1911 structure based on Department of Interior standards
- Develop metal building into working shop for members and guests, exhibit preparation, and restoration of historic objects
- Demonstrations in public, outdoor space to be a regular feature at the site and will require seating and creation of welcoming spaces

### Next Steps:

- Insulate and heat metal building
- Create exhibits for wooden building
- Identify staffing needs to have shop open with regular hours within the next two years (*both shops were open to the public during the summer of 2021 for touring*)
- Recruit and train volunteers
- Determine best location for storage of artifacts not on display at site
- Complete needed stabilization and preservation work on historic building based on standards
- Identify group of blacksmiths to ensure regular demonstrations
- Update fundraising brochure to hand out
- Create a self-guided, one page summary of site's history (*to be completed in 2022*)
- Metal shop to be cleaned and organized as well as at least partially insulated and heated for year-round work

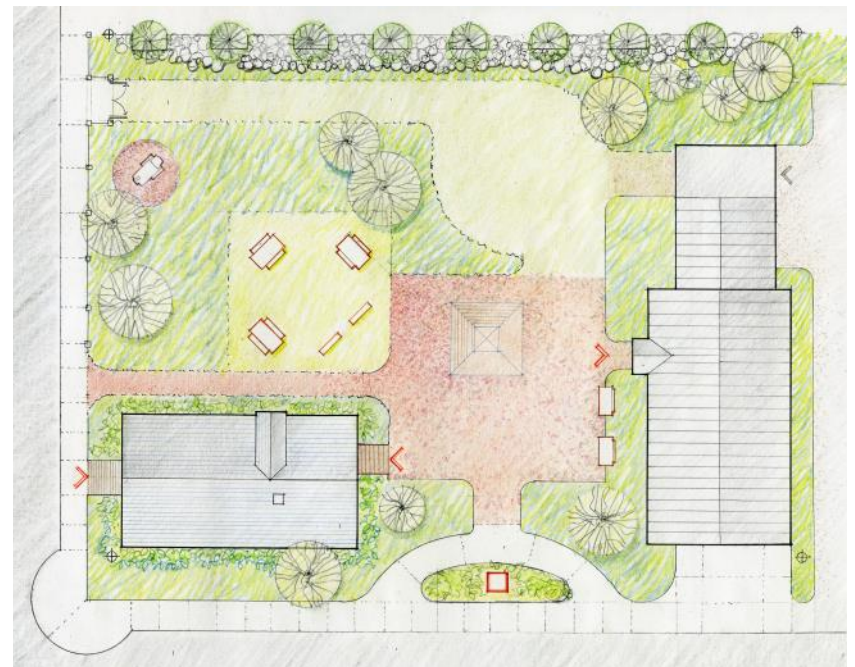
### Long-Range Planning:

Who else might be interested in partnering at this site?

What services might be offered to the general public?

Could any of these be income-generating activities?

Determine appropriateness of events at site.



***Bally site planning from 2014, some updates are needed***



## SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING

### 4) St. Francis Xavier Church, Chippewa City



**Archaeologist test dig near the church's foundation**

**History:** As land changed hands and Europeans moved into Cook County in greater numbers, the Anishinaabe (also known as Ojibwe or Chippewa) summer settlements along the Grand Marais Harbor were pushed eastward into an area that would be called Chippewa City. The present day Aspen Lodge now stands at the western edge of what became that short-lived but thriving village. There are few physical remnants of the old village other than St. Francis Xavier Church located on the lake side of Highway 61. It was built in 1895. There is also a cemetery located north of the highway.

The St. Francis Xavier Church, commonly referred to as the Chippewa City Church, was built by Ojibwe carpenter Frank Wischop, who used hand-hewn, dovetailed timbers. It was the center of village life. The graveyard, which was moved from the area of the church, originally had traditional Ojibwe grave houses, natural stones, wooden fences and wooden crosses. It looks very different today.

Chippewa City thrived in the 1890s with roughly 100 families at its peak population. Reasons for its decline include the reroute and expansion of the highway, the forest fires of 1908-1910 which destroyed many homes, and the

influenza epidemic of 1918. The crew of the *S.S. Gopher* helped the community save the church from the 1908 fire with a bucket brigade. As land ownership changed, the original Native communities at Grand Marais and Chippewa City dispersed, many people remaining in the Village of Grand Marais, while others moved to the reservation at Grand Portage.

**Current use, description and condition:** The Chippewa City Church, now owned by the Cook County Historical Society, is open to the public on summer Saturdays and Sundays with limited hours. This is dependent upon the initiative of volunteers. Currently, there are few, if any, other public functions or events taking place at the site. The CCHS owns a considerable amount of property surrounding the church. Excluding the church structure, a small parking area and interpretive signage, no other development has occurred on the property.

There are no plans or illustrations documenting the building's original construction. According to an 1895 newspaper article, the building was originally of "hewn lumber," measuring 25 x 30 feet with an 8 x 14 lean-to. The church is a small, gable-roofed, clapboard-sided, one-story, rectangular structure consisting of a log-framed nave with a wood-framed narthex centered on the south facade and a wood-framed vestry attached to the north facade. A diminutive altar section connects the principal portion of the nave to the sacristy. The nave is surmounted on its south end by a square-shaped belfry with peaked roof. The church was recently roofed with asphalt shingles and contains six-over-six, double-hung wood sash. The nave features an open interior plan with exposed log framing, hand-hewn pews, a small balcony on the south end, and an altar on the north end. The structure rests on a concrete-block foundation. In 1903, the lean-to was replaced by the present sacristy. At that time, the building may also have been covered with wood siding, which appears in a photograph taken about 1915. The same photograph shows a clapboard-sided narthex, which was subsequently removed. The present narthex, of similar design, was constructed in 1963. The structure was placed on a concrete-block foundation in 1970.

*Rotten logs in vestry above back door*



In 2016 an archaeological survey was conducted around the perimeter of the church building to ensure that, when upcoming work on the church foundation and other structural improvements are conducted, there are not any sensitive objects disturbed in the churchyard. Relatively little in the way of cultural artifacts was discovered. And, while the archaeologists had revealed the foundation, it allowed for assessment of the foundation itself. A local consultant advised that the foundation does not need to be replaced or dug deeper—however there are a couple of key areas of the block structure that do need repair.

Without a professional inspection it is impossible to accurately assess the structural condition of the property. Cleaning, housekeeping, grounds keeping, and light maintenance are accomplished by volunteers, staff, and CCHS board members. There is no operations or maintenance manual to provide guidelines for ensuring that the facility is kept in optimum condition.

**Recommendations, suggested themes and uses:** The Chippewa City Church is a special jewel in the CCHS necklace of properties. Although it is prominently positioned on Highway 61 and seen by tens of thousands from the road, relatively few people stop to tour and experience the historic treasure. Over the last several years, attendance has risen slightly due to regulars hours on Saturday and Sunday. Amazingly, many residents of Grand Marais and Cook County still haven't been inside its doors.

- Tell the larger story of the church and cemetery in relation to the Ojibwe communities, Grand Marais, Grand Portage, and Cook County
- Continue use of church for history talks, concerts, and other special events
- Local author and researcher Staci Drouillard will publish a book in 2019 on the history of Chippewa City. Programs, book release and other related fund-raising events should be considered in conjunction
- Original organ was donated back to the church in 2012 by Alex Sjoberg. It provides a wonderful opportunity for musical performances. The organ is a specific type that is highly sought after by some individuals and its history might also be interpreted
- The former task force decided to focus primarily on the stabilization of the church building itself rather than any development of the larger site
- Continue to work with the Native American Advisory Committee that was established prior to the archeology project of 2016

*Staci Drouillard presents history of Chippewa City*



**Next Steps:**

- Special fundraising efforts are underway with the goal to repair the church following the Department of Interior Standards
- Seek historic architectural firm to prioritize preservation needs and prepare plans to proceed on stabilization of the building
- Take necessary action to protect structural integrity of church (foundation, log rot, and wall spreading)
- Rebuild chimneys

- Look at ways to make the front entrance the primary focal and entry point, honoring the history of its orientation toward Lake Superior rather than the highway. Included would be proper accessibility to the front entrance. Brushing and other cleanup of the parking area and driveway to the front entrance could help direct visitors to that entrance.
- Front entrance as a display area. Must consider conservation and lighting concerns in this area. Conservation of artifacts in the church more generally must be considered.

**Long-Range Planning:**

Continued discussions should take place regarding specific recommended uses, including uses appropriate to the church structure and allowable under terms of agreement with the Catholic Church (note: special consideration to be given to the relative fragility of the structure and its contents and the potential impact of increased use).

Identification of those services (i.e., power, heat, security, restroom facility) which may be required to facilitate and support increased programming on the site and near the building.

*1933 aerial photo of Chippewa City*



## SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING

### 5) Proposed Maritime History Center

#### Planning, Assets and Assumptions

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to assist the CCHS Board of Directors in defining the relationship of its maritime assets to the overall mission of CCHS and its other properties and collections. The study explored alternative scenarios for developing a coordinated approach to maximize the importance and value of these assets including the Scott Fish House and Contents Collection, the *Neegee*, the Replica Fish House and the Hammer Boat, Family Home and Fish House Contents Collection.

The study examined the potential of the Coast Guard Complex as a location and facility for accommodating portions or all of the maritime collections and telling the Cook County maritime story. The primary objective of this study is to provide the information and ideas necessary for the CCHS Board to arrive at a consensus plan that defines the preferred 10-year master plan for the maritime assets and programs.

#### Planning Information and Assumptions

The following information and assumptions have informed the planning studies and the development of the consensus plan.

**Clustering of Related Assets:** In order to tell the story of Cook County's maritime history in the most readily comprehensible manner, like and related elements should be assembled and displayed in proximity to one another. This principle will involve relocations, acquiring new properties and the building or remodeling of structures.

**Scott Fish House and Contents Collection:** The Scott Fish House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, on property now owned by North House. This asset has recently been greatly enriched by the Harley and Shele Toftey donation of its historic contents, a century-long record of the business aspects and gear of early North Shore commercial fishing and boat building. It is located directly on the harbor front and adjacent to a boat dock that is of marginal service. It is behind the Dockside Fish Market, also owned by North House, and a restaurant parking area and vehicular access service route.



*Scott Fish House, photograph by Gordon Ray*

The executive director of North House and the campus planning consultant have expressed the view that although they respect the importance of this historic structure; they do not envision how it fits with their programs. The idea that the fish house could be restored to its original function and offer educational living history experiences similar to the Edisen Fishery at Isle Royale was discussed and evaluated as a possibility. It was determined that this was not a program North House could support. This site is important to its existing programs and if the building were to be retained it would be repurposed and modified in a manner not consistent with National Register of Historic Places standards.

In order to avoid what seems to be an inevitable conflict with North House programs and restaurant functions, and to be consistent with the CCHS objectives of locating like and reinforcing assets in proximity to one another, the Scott Fish House should be relocated. It is possible that the planned reconstruction of Highway 61 and its impact on the vehicular service route and additional traffic could prompt this action in the near future.

Note: An introductory meeting with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding this structure was held in January 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to bring the agency up to date on historic district and maritime planning progress and specifically to discuss issues related to the Scott Fish House. The SHPO representatives made clear that relocation of a structure on the National Register of Historic Places is not a preferred action. However, if the alternatives are demolition or modification of the structure, we believe it may be possible to persuade SHPO that relocation is an acceptable alternative to losing the structure and the story it tells.

**Replica Fish House and Nee-Gee:** The Grand Marais Recreational Park manager has made clear on several occasions over the past two or three years that the location of these CCHS maritime assets are not compatible with the park board's long-range view of this portion of the harbor shoreline. Although at this time no request has been made for the removal and relocation of the Nee-Gee and Replica Fish House, the CCHS 10-year plan should identify a preferred new location for these assets.

**Hammer Boat, Family Home and Fish House Contents Collection:** The Hammer Collection consists of seven boats ranging in size from the 24-foot Croftbuilt boat to a 17-foot herring skiff built by Reuben Hill. The collection also includes the contents of their home, fish house and the gear related to bringing in the catch. This is a rare, large and comprehensive acquisition; it is a rich and compelling component in telling the story of Lake Superior commercial fishing. The boats and the gear related to their use need to be housed in a protective environment and accompanied by exhibits that explain their history. This will require approximately 2,500 to 3,000 square feet of exhibit space.

**Coast Guard Station Complex:** The complex consists of three buildings on 1 acre of land:

- a two-story building with basement structure including administrative offices, living space and sleeping rooms for the Coast Guard crews,
- a 2,000 square foot boat house with a ramp configuration for storage and launching,
- a shop-garage building of 1,000 square feet.

The complex is eligible for but not on the Register of Historic Places.

It is the expressed intent of the United States Coast Guard to divest itself of its property on the Grand Marais Harbor. It is anticipated that it may require one to two years to formalize this action. The city of Grand Marais has reported that the property will revert to the city.



*Near-term protection and preservation of the Neegee is a priority. Fish house replica cribbing must be inspected.*



*U.S. Coast Guard Station and boat house built in 1928-29*

The city administrator has stated the city will seek to award it, by sale or lease to, an entity whose proposed use and program will make the greatest contribution to the vitality of Grand Marais and the broader community.

The U.S. Coast Guard Complex provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity to consolidate the CCHS maritime collections, exhibits, structures and boats at a location on the harbor where history was made.

### **City and Harbor Context**

The facilities, activities and mission of CCHS are an integral part of the broader community, its landscape and the built fabric of the city of Grand Marais and Cook County. The following describes those places and primary stakeholders who will be involved in determining the development of the historic district and the possibility of the Coast Guard Complex becoming a CCHS Maritime History Center.

Although not the focus of the Maritime Study, the proposed reuse of the United States Coast Guard Complex from a “closed-to-the-public” facility to one that seeks to attract visitors calls for a rethinking of the current parking-only use of the area that links the Lightkeeper’s Residence to the proposed Maritime History Center. It must become a people-oriented space fully capitalizing on its relationship to Lake Superior and the harbor. Although vehicular access to the Coast Guard Complex and some parking must be maintained, this area should be softened, “greened” and made people-friendly.

### **Boulder Park and Parking Area**

The included design study illustrates how the area can be landscaped, made green with incorporation of pedestrian walkways and connections as well as a waterfront amphitheater and community event structure. Reimagining and replanning this area in alignment with these and features desired by the city will greatly enrich the waterfront experience and reinforce the connection between Artist’s Point, the Lighthouse breakwater, Coast Guard Station/Maritime History Center to the Lightkeeper Museum, the Bally Blacksmith shop and clearly define and make real the Grand Marais Historic District concept.

Principal features:

- reorganized vehicle parking for 80 standard-sized spaces (the current configuration provides approximately 70 oversized spaces),
- harborside lakewalk wrapping the entire harbor with its eastern segment extending from the area of Boulder Park to the Coast Guard Complex / Maritime History Center and the Artist’s Point and Lighthouse breakwater,
- harborside amphitheater nestled into the Boulder Park grove of evergreens,
- event center site adjacent to the Boulder Park amphitheater that will include public restroom facilities and a flexible-use space configuration suitable for a wide range of public and private events. It is anticipated the center would initially be a sculptural fabric structure with the potential to transition to an enclosed facility.

The city has expressed a strong interest in seeing the development of a community space and public restrooms in the general area between and including Boulder Park and the Coast Guard Complex.

### **Public Boat Launch**

The DNR has completed plans to construct a new boat launch on the west side of the harbor replacing the existing dock in that area. Currently this work is scheduled to begin in 2019. This plan and supporting parking area will become the primary site for harbor boat launching. This action vacates the DNR boat launch on the east side of the harbor.

## Historic District

At the time CCHS received the Grand Marais Lighthouse lens, an inventory was completed for the purpose of identifying a potential historic district that would link the several assets located around the harbor, including Artist's Point, Coast Guard Point, the harbor seawall, Lightkeeper's House, the United States Coast Guard Station and the West Breakwater.

## Comprehensive Harbor Plan

Planning for and realizing a comprehensive harbor plan including the historic district will be powerful elements in contributing to the successful transformation of the Coast Guard Station into a Maritime History Center. Arriving at a consensus plan and strategy will be a complex undertaking; it will involve many stakeholders and interested and invested partners, and its implementation will require substantial resources. With a bold vision that demonstrates how the harbor plan and historic district can contribute to the community's self-image, reinforce its attractiveness to visitors and business investment as well as preserve the buildings, artifacts and stories of the region's maritime history, this undertaking has the potential to capture the imagination and energy of the entire community as well as those organizations and individuals who love this special place. Although the CCHS may not be the leader of this broad planning initiative, the organization, its members and supporters will need to be at-the-table participants and advocates to make it happen.

## City of Grand Marais and Other Stakeholders

In addition to the city of Grand Marais' role in leading the process for determining the future use of the U.S. Coast Guard Complex and its interest in improving and developing Boulder Park, there are a broad range of governing, regulatory, business, private and institutional community stakeholders who will have a voice influencing the reuse of the Coast Guard Complex and the CCHS proposal.

The U.S. Forest Service, which owns Artist's Point, the Minnesota DNR, private businesses along the harbor and in downtown, marina users and others will all have an interest in how the CCHS proposal affects their properties, programs and uses. It is beyond the scope of this study to identify all of the players and issues that may accompany a preferred CCHS plan but it has endeavored to identify what some of the primary issues might be.

In order to influence the city's decision about the future of this property, it will be essential for CCHS to have a clearly defined consensus proposal in hand at an early date so the city and others are aware of Cook County Historical Society's vision and intentions for a Maritime History Center and its relationship to the Grand Marais Harbor.



## **Going Forward**

The report summarizes the work of the CCHS Task Force and Board in analyzing the criteria for exhibiting its maritime assets and telling the history of fishing and shipping on the North Shore of Lake Superior. It sets forth a series of objectives and proposes a plan for housing its inventory of fish houses, boats, a rich collection of photos and artifacts, as well as future exhibits. The preferred plan calls for transforming the Coast Guard Complex into a Maritime History Center with the fish houses and boat collection on this site as well as on a site adjacent to this property.

### **Maritime History Center**

#### **Reimagining the Grand Marais Coast Guard Station / Making the Case**

##### **Making the Case**

Grand Marais and its harbor are the recognized jewel of Lake Superior's North Shore. The white, three-building assemblage of the U.S. Coast Guard Station is intrinsically linked to Lake Superior and the Grand Marais Harbor and etched in the mind of all who have seen it.

It's a one-of-a-kind site that will attract the interest and reuse proposals of many if the Coast Guard proceeds with its plan to decommission and dispose of this property.

When ideas and proposals for this site and its structures are considered, it's impossible to imagine a steward of this property and its future more appropriate and capable of honoring this responsibility than the Cook County Historical Society.

The Cook County Historical Society was founded in 1924 with the aid of the Minnesota Historical Society and established a mission to collect, preserve and share local history in the broader context of the region and state. Since that time it has worked side by side with state and federal organizations dedicated to that end.

Over the past 90 years CCHS has acquired and maintained a broad-based collection of artifacts, photographs, archives and four buildings, three of which are on the National Register of Historic Places. This record of accomplishment, sound management and leadership demonstrates CCHS's capacity to preserve and manage a community-oriented facility of this scale and importance.

##### **Why is the CCHS/Maritime History Center important?**

###### **To the Community**

The CCHS's guardianship of this complex will assure that what has been a "closed-to-the-public" facility will become and remain accessible, used to not only preserve an iconic and memorable symbol of Grand Marais and its harbor, but tell the story of Cook County/Maritime history.

The Coast Guard Complex in the care and management of CCHS will strengthen the sense of community ownership and assure that this piece of the community's built fabric will remain intact and used in a manner in harmony with community interests and values.

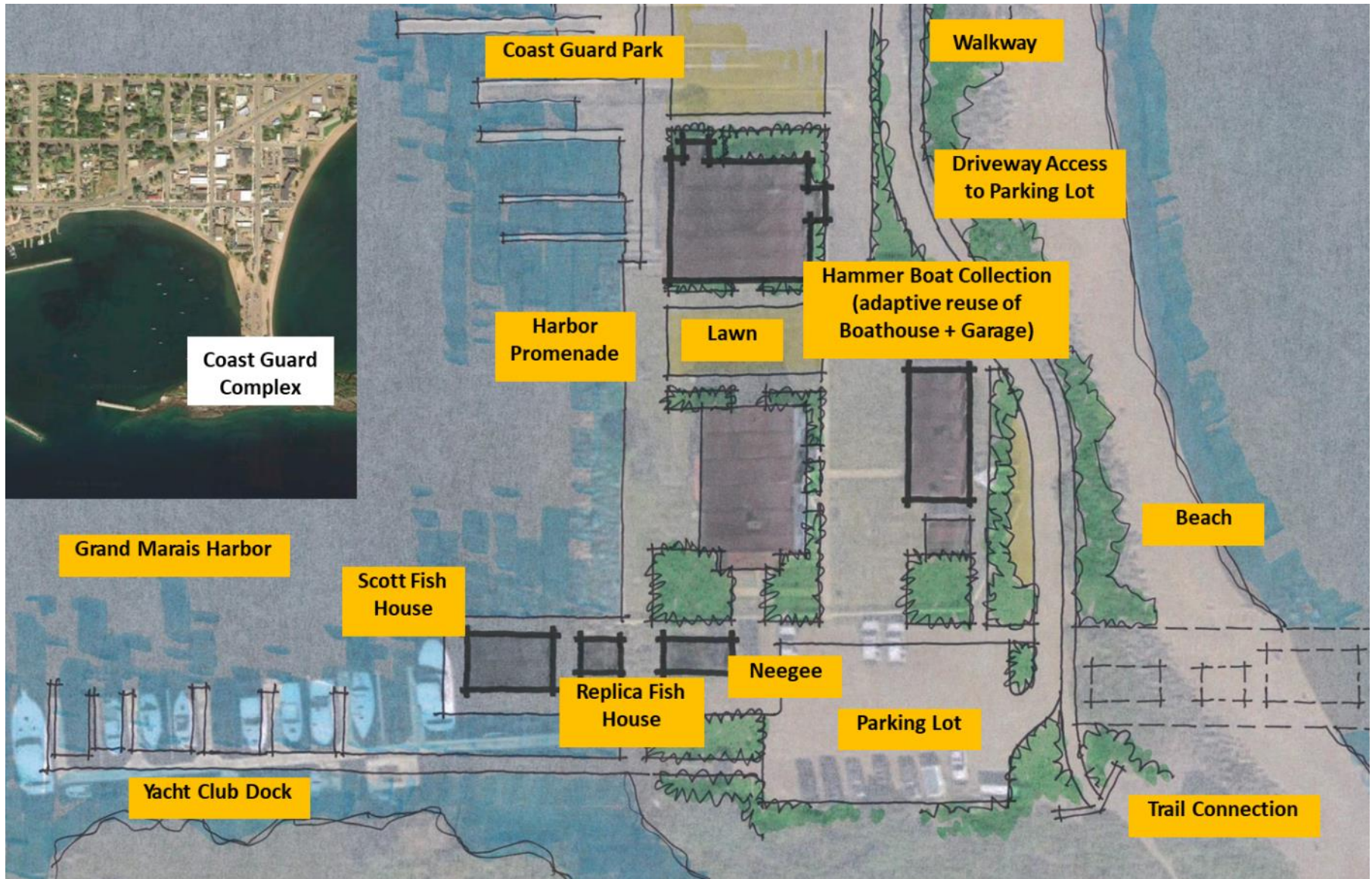
###### **To the Region**

The value of this assemblage is an iconic component of the Grand Marais/North Shore picture; keeping these structures intact and developing the complex as a Maritime History Center will greatly magnify Grand Marais as a historic destination.



### To the Cook County Historical Society

The Coast Guard Station building and site will allow CCHS to consolidate its maritime assets and thereby tell a more complete and cohesive story of how this integral component shaped the development of the community. By consolidating the maritime asset collection (historic Scott Fish House, Replica Fish House, *Neegee*, Hammer Boat Collection) at this uniquely appropriate site, CCHS will be able to reimagine the use and exhibits of the Lightkeeper Museum.



**Next Steps / Detailed Plans / Costs:** The Coast Guard Station Complex occupies 1 acre of land and the buildings provide approximately 8,500 square feet of space. If CCHS affirms its intent to pursue acquisition of the Coast Guard Station and works with the city, the county and others in the development of the harbor waterfront and historic district concept, it is recommended that the next step in the planning process be development of a detailed program that defines building and property space allocation for exhibits, events, meetings, gift shop, library, overnight rental and other CCHS and community uses. It should address building access issues as well as operating systems criteria and preliminary cost estimate for the required work. The costs of transforming this facility into a Maritime History Center together with the budget for operation and maintaining existing assets will be vital in securing supporters and project funding.

**Interim Plan:** It is recognized that the timing of the Coast Guard's transfer of this property is somewhat unpredictable; if the city of Grand Marais is the recipient of this property there will be a community engagement process for determining the use that will be of greatest long-term benefit to the community. That process is yet to be defined and may, together with the transfer of ownership, require two to three years. It is very likely that before this process is complete and the future of the Coast Guard Station is determined, the North House may ask for remodeling, demolition or removal of the Scott Fish House from their property. This, together with having the Hammer Boat Collection available for display, makes clear the need for an interim plan.

It is our recommendation that the Cook County Historical Society initiate parallel discussions for two other properties that will be important to both the near term and future. CCHS should initiate discussions with the Forest Service and the Yacht Club to explore the factors related to gaining permission in the form of a long-term lease to construct a dock-like structure on the Forest Service land adjacent to the Coast Guard Complex to accommodate the Scott and Replica fish houses, the *Neegee*, as well as serve the ongoing needs of the Yacht Club.

Additionally, we recommend initiating discussions with the owners of the book store property directly north of the museum to identify the factors involved in gaining a long-term lease or ownership of that property. This site and building, together with the existing Lightkeeper Museum site, would provide the space necessary to display a portion of the Hammer Boat Collection in the near term. If it evolves that the boat collection is ultimately able to move to the Coast Guard site and adjacent dock, this property will remain as a historically and functionally important asset for CCHS.

Independent of the choice the community and city of Grand Marais make regarding the future use of the Coast Guard Station, the potential of the book store and Forest Service sites to support future CCHS exhibits and activities is significant. Discussions with owners of these properties should be pursued in the very near time frame. It will be important to have clear, up-to-date knowledge of the opportunities (or lack thereof) these sites provide, and, if appropriate, the issues involved in securing those opportunities.

**Comprehensive Harbor Plan:** Finally, because the CCHS programs and activities will best attract advocates and supporters if CCHS is seen as a partner in an undertaking that is, in addition to preserving and honoring the people, events and pieces of Cook County's history, a leading force in creating a place and experiences that enrich everyday community life.

In order to advance and promote the CCHS proposal to create a Maritime History Center on the site and in the buildings of the U.S. Coast Guard Complex, it will be important for residents of the of Grand Marais, Cook County, other governing bodies, businesses, stakeholders and funders to see the Maritime History Center as a compelling, magnetic attraction contributing to the vitality and success of other waterfront interests and the broader community.

The story CCHS must convey is how a connected and coordinated mix of history, an event park, food, boating, learning and recreational opportunities provide an assemblage of community-enriching offerings greater than what could be achieved in a series of separate single-purpose projects. Although CCHS may not be the leader of this broad-based planning initiative, the organization should, through its members and supporters, be a leading advocate for a comprehensive harbor plan with a Maritime History Center at its heart.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Facilities Committee, as directed by the CCHS Board, will be the primary group leading site development and facilities maintenance as a whole. Visioning for the Johnson Heritage Post will continue as will conceptual planning for a potential maritime history site, and these sites will likely maintain specific Work Groups to guide progress. Community advisers, other committees and staff will be called upon to contribute to the other concerns that will contribute to the Comprehensive Long-Range Plan.

As a unified whole, Historic Cook County will seek a complementary telling of the wonderful stories that each site has to offer. This work will be done by continued focus on the whole when developing interpretation, collection management, and programmatic elements for each site.

### Comprehensive Long-Range Plan

- **CCHS Board assessment of recommendations:** Receive and assess recommendations for each site. Develop a coordinating Comprehensive Long-Range Plan. Identify costs of site, facility, exhibits, services and actions required to develop the Long-Range Plan. Develop phased action plan for implementation.
- **Staffing requirements to support Comprehensive Long-Range Plan:** Develop comprehensive, professional services, administrative support plan describing the personnel, talents, professional, and other services required. Identify costs of associated salaries, benefits.
- **Maintenance and operations program:** Outline maintenance plan in timeline form for predictable costs: roofing, painting, mechanical system upgrading. Identify heating, power, IT systems, and communication costs. Identify projected ten-year budget.
- **Financing strategy:** Develop financial plan to support implementation of the Comprehensive Long-Range Plan and all its components. Adopt fund-raising and resource development strategy.
- **Marketing, promotions strategy:** Develop a coordinated information and promotion program to broaden the membership base, and inform funders as well as potential project partners and long-term sponsors.

The finalization of a Historic Cook County Comprehensive Long-Range Plan, which coordinates the vision, history, exhibits and programs at the individual sites, will require additional time as well as input from professionals in areas of planning, construction, exhibit design and fabrication and program management.

In order to build community interest and momentum during this period of planning and design, it is our recommendation to share the newly developed Storybook to spark interest in stakeholders that would further our mission. Our goal will be to attract a broader audience of supporters, partners, sponsors and funders.

Near term actions should follow, as closely as possible, the Three-year Facilities Action Timeline on the following pages. CCHS Board will instruct the Facilities Committee, other Work Groups, and staff on goals and priorities to advance the organization toward the Comprehensive Long-Range Plan.

## Facilities Action Timeline

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>JOHNSON HERITAGE POST</b>	Log rot repair	Landscape phase 2	Landscape work finalized	Complete log repair
	Minor interior remodeling	HVAC upgrade in archival storage	Repair heating systems	Seal and stain logs
	Development of A. Johnson gallery	Roof repair	Remove outside faucet	Install gutters
	Heating system upgrade	Stain building		Mosaic competition
	Landscape phase 1	Address sprinkler system		Landscaping
<b>Overall Goals</b>	<i>LKJ Grant &amp; Use of endowment funds for capital improvements</i>			
<b>COOK COUNTY MUSEUM &amp; COLLECTIONS</b>	Paint addition	Explore options for breakwall solutions	Paint museum building and addition	Paint porch, new signage
	Monitor water table	Paint keeper's house/lead abatement		Repair sump outlet pipe
	Grade work			Install sump backup power
	Gutters			Make all exhibits accessible
	Other flooding prevention measures			Landscaping
<b>Overall Goals</b>	<b>Evaluate collection storage and access-MNHS grant</b>		<b>PLAN IN PLACE FOR STORAGE OF COLLECTIONS</b>	
<b>MARITIME SITE POTENTIAL</b>	Preferred Coast Guard Site concept	Enact stage 1 of interim plan		
	Explore interim plan ideas			
	Determine Scott Fish House situation			
	Consideration of adjacent properties and outdoor space at Museum site			
<b>Overall Goals</b>	<b>Summer 2019 - Simple, visible boat display to introduce concept</b>	<b>Connect with local, regional and state partners</b>		

## Facilities Action Timeline

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
	Note: Grand Marais Hwy 61 & DNR dock construction.... 2019 - 2021			
<b>BALLY BLACKSMITH SHOP</b>	Specs and drawings complete	Rebuild chimney	Landscape project	Create interpretive displays
	Install screw jack(s)	Stabilize walls and loft	Build shelter for blacksmith	Continue sorting, storing
	Repair hole in floor	Rolled roofing/exterior cladding	Other outdoor exhibits	Provide demos, yours
	Stabilize and restore façade	Trim and other finishing	Clean up lot	Dedication ceremony
	Insulate and heat metal shop			Consider continuing hosting yearly spring-time metal smithing festival
	Begin exhibits for blacksmith shop			Install rolled roofing siding
<b>Overall Goals</b>	<b>More OPEN HOURS May – September 2019</b>	Establish programs for site & fundraising		
<b>CHIPPEWA CITY CHURCH</b>	Getting estimates from historic architects	Foundation repair	Stabilize wall spreading	Secure funding for repairs
	Hire historic architect		Other carpentry needs	Collaborate with Grand Portage on direction/usage of site
	Conditions assessment and scope of work construction needs		Address log rot	Continue to offer open hours/tours
<b>Overall Goals</b>	<b>Fundraising with Grand Portage</b>	<b>Seek grant for repairs</b>	Rebuild chimneys	Minimize heavy usage due to fragile stage it is in