

Impact Statement

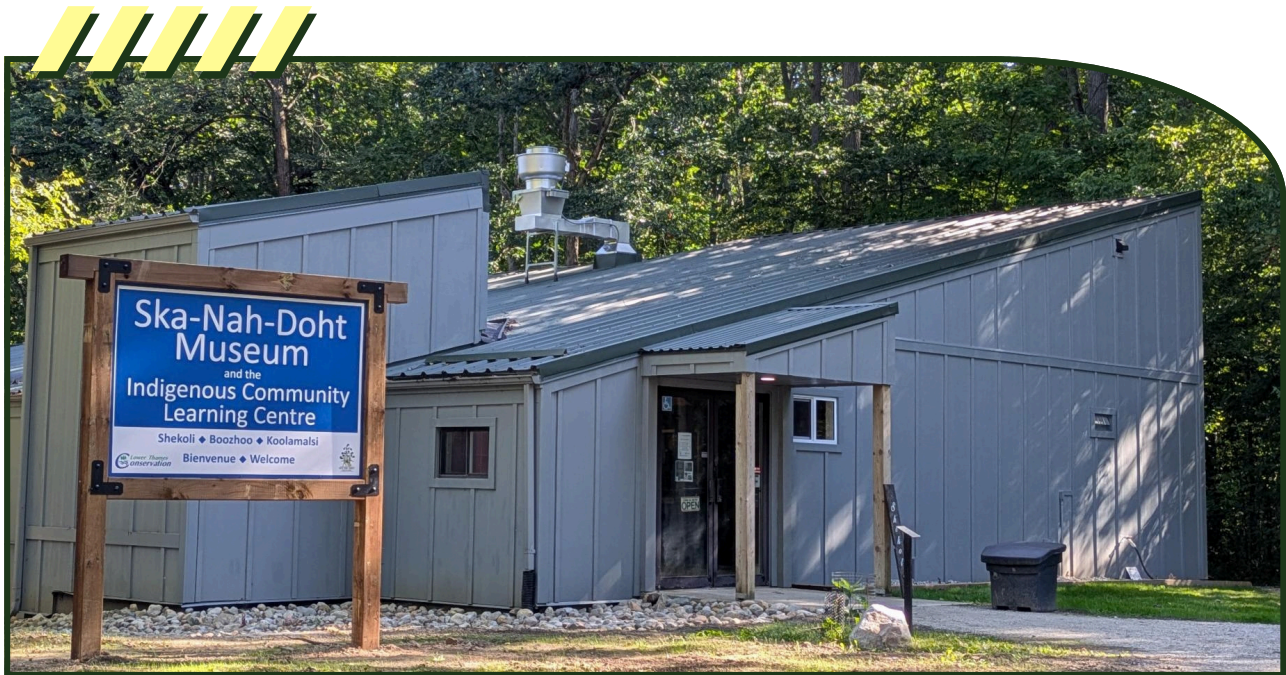




Table of Contents

About Us	3
Rationale	6
Background	8
Facts and Figure	10

About Us

Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum

Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum (SND) is owned and operated by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA).

Our Mission Statement

Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum is an interactive museum that engages the public in the preservation and presentation of local Indigenous history, through experiences both on-site and in the community.

Our Vision Statement

Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum is a community leader in collecting and preserving local history, while faithfully interpreting the heritage of the Haudenosaunee – People of the Longhouse, and other local Nations.

Our Values

Innovation:

We are leaders in heritage interpretation through research and experimentation.

Inclusivity:

Our museum is for the whole community; families, educators, researchers, visitors both local and through tourism.

Stewardship:

We are committed to preserving important cultural resources.

Excellence:

We strive to meet the highest standards of the cultural heritage profession.



Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation

We envision a Lower Thames River Valley where vibrant ecosystems thrive, cherished heritage sites inspire, and communities unite in stewardship. We are passionate about connections for conservation, ensuring a resilient environment and cultural legacy for generations to come.

Our mission is to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Lower Thames River Valley by strategically advocating for and supporting sustainability, and fostering inclusive community partnerships.

The Conservation Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit, federally registered charity – Number 898198171 RR0001.

A focus of the Foundation for nearly 30 years has been its memorial forest program with nearly 11,000 memorial tree seedlings planted. Annual donations are received for trees, dedicated to loved ones, at four Foundation memorial forests throughout the lower Thames River watershed:

- Sharon Creek Memorial Forest near Delaware
- McKinlay Woodlands Memorial Forest at Campbell Conservation Area near Merlin
- Rowsom's Tilbury West Memorial Forest near Tilbury
- Tilbury Northside Memorial Forest in Tilbury

The Foundation also operates a Bursary program for youth living within the lower Thames River watershed.

Additionally, the Foundation holds funds in trust for Sharon Creek Conservation Area, as well as the Carey Carolinian Arboretum and Trail, located within Longwoods Road Conservation Area.



Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority

It has jurisdiction over watersheds of all streams draining into the Thames River from Delaware to Lake St. Clair. The Southern boundary includes the watersheds of streams draining into Lake Erie, from the Talbot Creek watershed in the east, to the Two Creeks watershed in the west. Total area 3,275 square kilometres (1,264 square miles). Policy and budget decisions are made by a Board comprised of 12 members appointed by our 10 municipal partners.

The LTVCA is organized into three departments: Watershed and Information Services; Conservation Lands and Services; and Corporate Services. Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum is part of the Corporate Services Department.

Our Mission

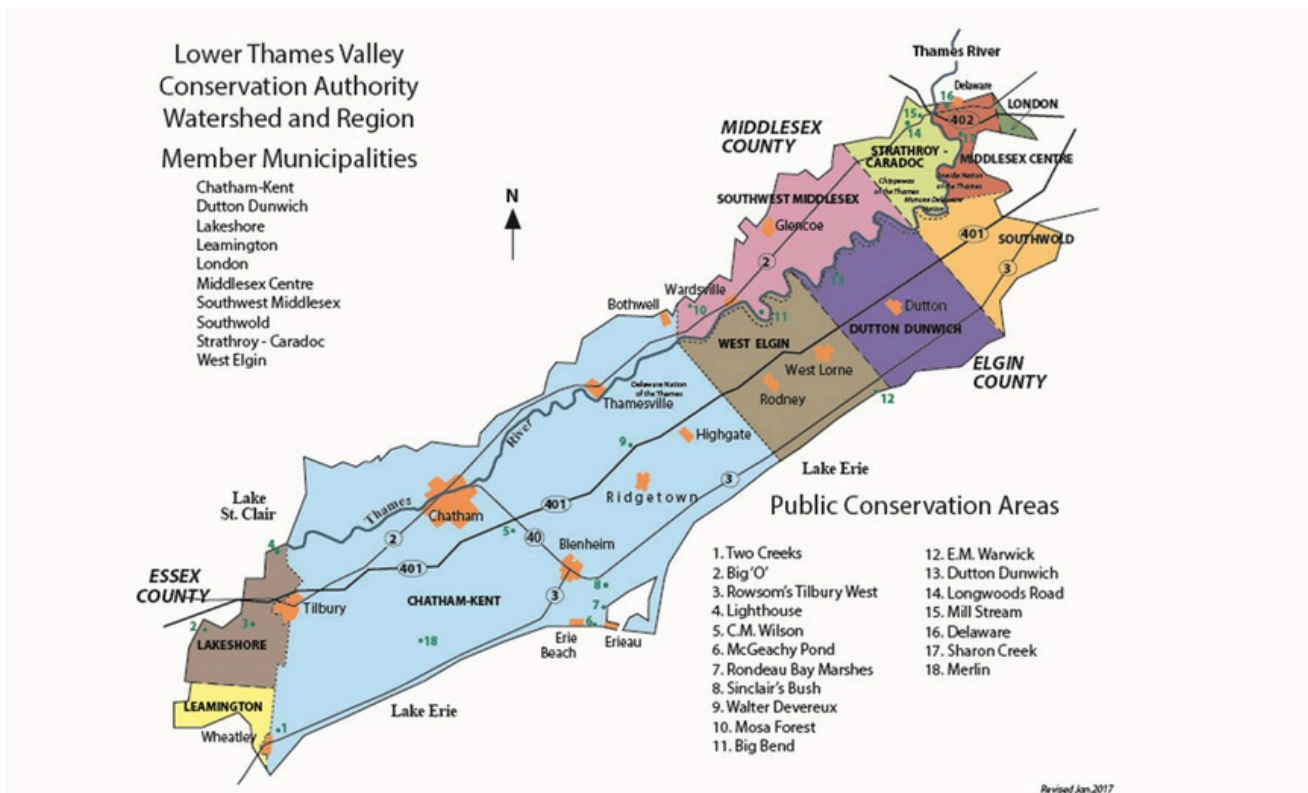
Leading by example in environmental protection in partnership with the community.

Our Vision Statement

The LTVCA... for a balanced and healthy watershed.

Our Values

Respect, integrity, commitment, objectivity, and collaboration.



Rationale

The Project

Since 2023, through the support of the donors and grant funding, Ska-Nah-Doht Museum has undergone extensive renovations including:

- 2000 square foot extension
- large gathering space with capacity for 150 people
- a catering kitchen
- additional exhibit space
- installation of a Limited Use, Limited Application Elevator
- washroom renovations and new accessible washroom
- new roof, siding, and windows

Approximately \$1,213,417 in support was garnered for the Indigenous Community Learning Centre and Ska-Nah-Doht Museum Revitalization project which began in 2023 and ran through 2025. Financial support was provided by 3 Government of Canada grants. Fundraising was undertaken by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation, who organized a capital campaign in support of the project which raised \$187,417.

The Foundation and the LTVCA have a long history of partnership. Spanning 31 years of collaboration, the Foundation provides ongoing support for Education, Events, and Watershed Conservation Projects organized by the LTVCA.

The Indigenous Learning Centre will provide a venue for community engagement in Indigenous cultural heritage and environmental action—supporting our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action. The vision for the revitalization of the Ska-Nah-Doht Museum and the creation of a new Indigenous Learning Centre began in 2022 based on the results of 2 research reports that included Indigenous and community public input in 2017 and 2019. These reports are a further example of the collaboration between the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation and Authority.





Background

Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum

Ska-Nah-Doht, from the Oneida language meaning ‘a village stands again,’ is a recreation of a longhouse village reflective of those lived in by the Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse) about 1,000 years ago. The Haudenosaunee are just one of the many Indigenous communities that call this place home. The Village opened in 1973 and is located in the natural surroundings of Longwoods Road Conservation Area.

The Ska-Nah-Doht Museum offers hands-on exhibits focused on Indigenous culture. Displays feature cultural belongings from the archaeological excavation that took place at 2 archaeological sites within the conservation area. The evidence confirms these sites to be approximately 1000 years old (800 to 1200 CE), a perfect compliment to the Ska-Nah-Doht Village.

As a result of community consultation, and direct input from leaders from our local Indigenous communities, we recently revitalized our indoor space! Working with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation, the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, has been undertaking a number of construction and renovation projects at Ska-Nah-Doht Museum.

Longwoods Road Conservation Area

Longwoods Road Conservation Area spans 63 hectares of forest, ravines, and wetlands in the Carolinian Life Zone. Its highlight is Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum, a recreated Indigenous settlement, alongside heritage log cabins and a museum with artifacts, exhibits, and a gift shop. Visitors can explore 10 km of scenic trails with boardwalks and bridges offering stunning views, many of which are wheelchair accessible,. The site also features a significant wetland, picnic areas, group camping, and a rentable pavilion. Educational programs and public events run year-round, making it a vibrant destination for nature lovers, families, and history enthusiasts alike.

History

Founded in 1973, Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2023! The museum was conceived of by 4 educators during a road-trip in 1966. A volunteer committee including these educators, local community members, and representatives from three of the local Indigenous communities was formed (Bill Dolsen, Munsee-Delaware Nation; Max Ireland, Oneida Nation of the Thames; Chief Harry Miskokomon, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; and Irvin Chrisjohn, representing a Haudenosaunee cultural group).

The original plans for the museum focused on the creation of an Attawandaron longhouse village. Following the excavations of 3 village sites by archaeologist Ron Williamson, the Village's mandate was updated to focus on the heritage of the Haudenosaunee- today our mandate has been further expanded to include all three local Nations (Oneida Nation of the Thames, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Munsee Delaware Nation).

In addition to the Village, the indoor Museum opened in 1974, while the three Heritage Log Cabins were donated and moved to Longwoods Road Conservation Area in 1972/73.

Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum rebranded in both 1995 and 2008 to remove outdated or offensive terms from our name.

The Village has undergone many changes over the years but, as always, the information we share is based upon knowledge shared with us by local Indigenous community members and archaeologists who continue to conduct research into the history of this area 1000 years ago.



Facts and Figures



Longhouse Village One of the most recognized parts of Ska-Nah-Doht, the Village was first opened in 1973.

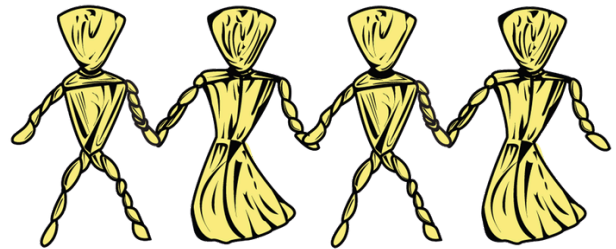
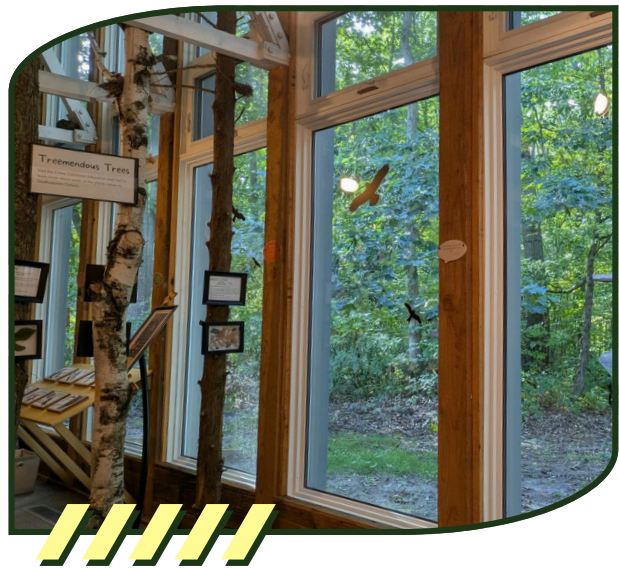
Collections Care Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum acts as steward for over 300, 000+ cultural belongings (artifacts).

Grants Just over \$1 million in grant funding received from the Government of Canada to support revitalization projects.

Fundraising 22 private and public donors contributed \$188,417 to the LTVCF's capital campaign.

Visitation Approximately 5000 people participate in pre-booked group programs, and people visit the Village, each year.





Thank You



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