

# CORPORATE POLICY



Policy Title: **City of Waterloo Museum – Community Policy**  
Policy Category: **Administration**  
Policy No.: A-015  
Department: Community Services  
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Author: Karen VandenBrink, Museum and Collections Manager/Curator  
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## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Heritage value resides in tangible material culture (objects, structure and spaces), and in intangible associations such as memories, stories and folklore. The City of Waterloo Museum works to involve and engage the community in a successful relationship that benefits both the local community and the Museum and collections.

In order for the Museum to be an effective steward of the community's identifying material heritage, the Museum must be pro-actively engaged in the community and responsive to its needs.

## **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the policy is to outline how the Museum will function as an active contributor in a culturally diverse community and as a vital component of Waterloo's overall cultural and economic development. The goal of the policy is to ensure the Museum will be accessible, and relevant, and will draw support from its community.

**Mandatory Policy, *Municipal Act*:** No  
**Policy Administration Team, Review Date**  
**Corporate Management Team, Review Date**

**DEFINITIONS:**

**City:** The Corporation of the City of Waterloo.

**Director:** Director responsible for the management of the City of Waterloo Museum.

**Community:** The general public, including the residents of the City of Waterloo, Region of Waterloo and visitors served by the Museum.

**Museum:** The City of Waterloo Museum, as an institution that collects, preserves and makes available to the public heritage resources, which it holds in trust for society.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to the City of Waterloo Museum and associated collection, Museum staff, volunteers, and Council.

**POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

This policy will be communicated by:

- posting on the City of Waterloo website
- posting on the City of Waterloo intranet available to staff
- sharing with relevant interested parties and collaborators
- providing training to staff and volunteers

**POLICY:**

**1.0 Community Access**

The City of Waterloo Museum will make its cultural resources available to the community by:

- Providing services and programs consistent with the mission of the Museum that meet the needs and interests of the community.
- Respecting the values and traditions of the community in the development of programs and exhibits that are consistent with the mission of the Museum.
- Reaching out to a broad range of interest levels.
- Minimizing economic, social, geographic, physical, and cultural barriers.
- Advocating co-operation and participation by sharing, curatorial, and museological knowledge.

- Having a fully trained and qualified curator and staff to manage and maintain the collection.
- Housing the collection in a safe and secure environment for storage and display.

## **2.0 Community Partnerships**

The Museum will develop new relationships as well as maintain existing relationships with members of the community, local businesses and industries, and other cultural institutions by:

- Developing an organizational model based on consultation, best practices and other inputs that supports community development and capacity building as a priority.
- Formulating, managing and evaluating partnerships, joint ventures and other collaborative approaches to service delivery within the City, and on a broader geographic market basis as appropriate.
- Providing opportunities for all sectors of the community to give input about the Museum's decisions, goals and directions that may affect them or reflect on them.
- Identifying and pursuing partnerships with community groups in the development and implementation of public programs, collections development and preservation functions.
- All projects involving community partners will meet the requirements of the relevant City of Waterloo and the City of Waterloo Museum's policies and procedures.

## **3.0 Intellectual Access**

Primary access to the City of Waterloo Museum is provided through public programs. The Museum will also provide special access to its resources to scholars, students, and other interested parties, as appropriate.

Requests for access to collections and information resources that are not currently available to the public through public programs will be carefully considered, subject to the following:

- relevance to the mission of the City of Waterloo Museum
- available staff resources
- provisions of relevant intellectual property, municipal freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation and health and safety matters
- subject to the City's Fees and Charges By-law

#### **4.0 Physical Access**

The staff of the City of Waterloo Museum will foster physical access to the Museum's public areas by:

- Ensuring that standards and provisions regarding the health and safety of all visitors to public areas are at least equal to those provided for employees and volunteers
- Providing barrier-free access to all visitors to the public areas, within available resources
- Actively pursuing resources to mitigate barriers and/or provide alternative experiences

#### **5.0 Use of Public Areas**

The public areas of the Museum may be used for City of Waterloo Museum sponsored activities or private rentals, subject to the following conditions:

- The risk to the cultural resources is minimized.
- The event, in the opinion of the Director, is unlikely to harm the reputation of the City.
- There is full compliance with all City of Waterloo policies related to facility rentals and use.

#### **6.0 Communications**

The Museum will promote public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the cultural resources held in trust for the people of Waterloo, Canada and beyond. Communication is an essential component of this process.

The staff of the Museum will use accurate and respectful communication with members of the public and among employees and volunteers.

The staff of the Museum will be consistent, fair, accurate, and sensitive to community values in all its communications.

The City of Waterloo Museum staff and Communications staff will seek to influence the media in a positive manner.

Communication with the public will be provided through the City of Waterloo Museum website, social media, print, radio, Museum, tourist and cultural networks in order to reach the broadest audience.

## **7.0 Operational Hours**

The Museum will maintain and post regular operational hours for public access. The hours will also be displayed on the City of Waterloo website and in promotional material developed by the Museum. The Museum may also consider extending its hours during times when it is anticipated that there may be increased community demand for access.

## **8.0 Encourage Volunteer Participation**

The City of Waterloo Museum values its employees and volunteers as key assets. The Museum strives to provide a working environment that recognizes individual integrity, commitment, reliability, initiative and co-operation.

Recruitment for volunteers is handled through policy and procedures set forth by the City of Waterloo.

The City of Waterloo Museum and its staff shall:

- Recruit, appoint, and assign on the basis of merit, without discrimination, as defined by the Province of Ontario's Human Rights Code and City of Waterloo Policies.
- Enlist volunteers from the community by making volunteer opportunities known through a variety of means.
- Conduct interviews with prospective volunteers and ensure appropriate screening (e.g. references, police checks).
- Provide volunteers with appropriate orientation and job training.
- Ensure volunteers are aware that the Museum building and exhibits are maintained and provide a safe environment for themselves, visitors, and staff and to report any unsafe conditions to staff immediately.
- Place volunteers in a position suitable to their skills, preferences and interests (as per volunteer job descriptions).
- Encourage volunteer participation at meetings, as appropriate, to support Museum operations and planning exhibits, programming and special events.
- Ensure public and private volunteer contributions are recognized
- Ensure compliance with the City of Waterloo Code for Volunteer Involvement at the City of Waterloo Museum.

## **9.0 Other Considerations**

This policy provides direction for the development of the City of Waterloo Museum as an active partner in the community. Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, the City of Waterloo Museum will comply with all municipal, provincial and federal legislative requirements that have an impact on heritage resource management.

### **REVIEW**

The Policy shall be reviewed every four years and shall be updated as required.

### **COMPLIANCE**

In cases of policy violation, the City may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.