



PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE NO: 119•1

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TITLE: Grande Prairie & District Museum
Collection Guidelines

APPROVAL DATE: January 27, 2014

POLICY: 119, Grande Prairie & District Museum
Collections Management

REVISION DATE: January 27, 2021

SECTION: Administration

RESPONSIBLE

DEPARTMENT: Culture & Heritage Resources

MANDATE:

1. The Collections staff, in consultation with the Department Manager, will make recommendations on the suitability of artefacts for the Collection which reflect the history of Grande Prairie and the Peace Region.
2. The artefacts are owned by the City of Grande Prairie and held in public trust at the Museum facilities for present and future generations.
3. The Collection is composed of artefacts which must possess sufficient historic, geographic or cultural criteria to support the Museum's Collection Policy.
4. All artefacts in the Collection are specifically collected for their value, form and significance to the community and area.
5. The Collection should represent the full range of cultures within our community.
6. The Collection will evolve by continuous growth.
7. The long term success of the Collection will be ensured by managing growth at a sustainable pace.

ACQUISITIONS:

Artefacts may be permanently added to the Collection through **donation, purchase, transfer of ownership or field collection**. Artefacts donated to the Collection must be appropriately documented so that title of ownership is clearly transferred to the Museum. The "Certificate of Gift" records the legal transfer of title and as such is a critical component of the Museum's official records.

GUIDELINES FOR ACQUISITION:

1. The artefacts should fall within the Collection's mandate.
2. All artefacts are acquired outright and unconditionally.
3. All artefacts are accepted into the collection with the presumption of permanence.
4. All acquisitions will be appropriately documented.

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5. All acquisitions for the Museum are in compliance with municipal, provincial, federal and international laws and conventions.
6. All artefacts are supported with verifiable records of authenticity and provenance and have clear legal titles.
7. All artefacts shall be in reasonable condition and not require significant treatment.
8. Artefacts with contents, i.e.: liquids, must be emptied prior to acceptance.
9. All artefacts will be used for preservation, display, research and presentation to the public.
10. Duplicate artefacts may be acquired for the purpose of display, research and education.
11. Consideration has been given to the implications of acquiring the artefacts i.e.: sufficient resources (physical space and human resources) are available to adequately document, display, protect and preserve the artefacts. Artefacts will only be acquired if collection staff can provide proper care for the artefact, both at present and in the future.
12. Artefacts that fall outside the collection mandate may be acquired if it is so unusual that it represents an exceptional circumstance.
13. When acquiring sacred and ceremonial artefacts, the process is guided by respect for Cultural meaning or significance.
14. Donors may be re-directed if the offered artefact better supports the collection's specialization or mandate of another museum.
15. Loaned items will not be accessioned into the collection.
16. Field collecting is the practice of gathering artefacts for the Museum from their native environment as a result of research and exploration undertaken by Museum staff.
17. A purchase is an acquisition made when an artefact is sold to the Museum. The legal documentation of a purchased acquisition is the bill of sale which will be retained with the Museum's collection records.

DONATION:

1. A donation is anything acquired by the museum as a gift. The donor voluntarily transfers ownership to the Museum without any expectation of benefit from the transaction. Donations can include artefacts for the collection, financial gifts or supplies and services required for the museum's operations.
2. Should the Museum be a beneficiary of a person's will, the Museum will obtain a copy of any pertinent legal documents for its records.

COLLECTIONS CARE AND PRESERVATION:

1. Proper care, handling and storage are essential in the long term care and preservation of the museum's collection.
2. All staff and volunteers will be trained to handle artefacts appropriately.
3. The Collections staff will follow the Collection Management procedures and processes outlined in the Standard Practices Handbook for Museums.
4. Storage facilities for the collection conform to established standards of artefact care.
5. Collections staff will exercise the option to request the use of a trained Conservator as required.

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RISK MANAGEMENT:

The Museum undertakes to protect staff and patrons from potential health and safety hazards in its collection by following the guidelines for handling of artefacts established by the Canadian Conservation Institute. The Museum has developed safe work procedures by continually performing hazard assessments and providing staff with required personal protective equipment. The Museum will consult with the City's Health & Safety team, Canadian Conservation Institute and legal representatives for concerns related to insurance, legal matters and other concerns outside of the identified risks.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

Artefacts may be accessed for research, educational and interpretive purposes by prearranged visitation. The Collection staff has the right to deny access when the request imposes:

1. Excessive costs in terms of staff effort and facility use.
2. Security or safety concerns for the artefact and the public accessing it.

DE-ACCESSION STRATEGY:

Periodically the Museum, through its Manager, will recommend to City Council, as the governing board as identified by the Alberta Museums Association, the de-accession or removal from its collection artefacts which it legally owns that have:

1. Become damaged, deteriorated beyond repair or vandalized and are no longer of use to the collection. These items may be destroyed (depending on the severity of the condition) or used for other purposes.
2. No relevance to the collection's purpose or mandate.
3. Been lost or stolen and need to be removed from the collection record.
4. Lost their historical value.
5. The artefacts pose a health or safety risk to staff or public.
6. De-accessioned artefacts in good conditions may be disposed of by means of accepted standards such as gift, transfer of ownership, and sale.

DE-ACCESSIONING GUIDELINES:

1. First consideration will be given to other museums, public collections or institutions that can provide appropriate care and public access.
2. Each de-accession will be approached with caution and artefacts will only be disposed of upon the recommendation of Collections staff.
3. The Museum makes every reasonable effort to ensure that de-accessioned artefacts remain in the public domain.
4. No action pertaining to the de-accession or disposition of an artefact will be undertaken that would impair the integrity or good standing of the Museum within the community or the Museum profession.
5. As a courtesy, the Museum will make every reasonable effort to advise the donor or family member.

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6. All information regarding the de-accession will be fully documented and maintained in the Museum's collection records.
7. All de-accessions for the Museum are in compliance with municipal, provincial, federal and international laws and conventions.

TEMPORARY CUSTODY:

Artefacts entering the Museum on a temporary basis should be identified accordingly and must have supporting documentation including:

1. Temporary custody form indicating why the artefact is at the Museum.
2. Supporting documents pertaining to ownership, provenance, history, and other pertinent information.
3. Condition report and photos taken documenting the artefacts physical status upon entry and return.
4. A tag attached to each artefact noting source and date of entry.
5. A location record.

Supporting documentation enables staff to determine the artefact's suitability for possible acquisition into the Collection.

INCOMING LOANS:

On occasion, the Museum may borrow artefacts for the purpose of exhibition or public education from public and private sources.

The following applies for short term loans:

1. Require a contract accompanied by a condition report.
2. Incoming loans shall be for a specific purpose and for a specific length of time.
3. Materials on loan shall receive professional care.
4. While in the possession of the Museum, artefacts shall be insured under coverage provided by the City of Grande Prairie.
5. The cost for handling, crating, damage, transportation and renewal of artefact loans shall be negotiated.

The Museum reserves the right to request from the owner, a formal appraisal of the value of the artefacts for insurance purposes.

OUTGOING LOANS:

On occasion the Museum may loan out artefacts to other Museums, heritage institutions, cultural groups or private sources for the purposes of public education or exhibitions.

The following applies for outgoing loans:

1. There must be a reasonable assurance that the artefacts loaned will receive a continuous level of care and security.
2. All loans require an outgoing loan contract accompanied by a condition report (including photos) and duration of loan.
3. If the borrower of the artefacts represents a group, the borrower must be a responsible, recognized authority and signatory on behalf of the group.
4. Museum staff must pre-approve all shipping containers and means of transport.

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5. The borrower will comply with professional standards, the conditions of the contract and bear the full cost for handling, crating, insurance and transportation of artefacts.
 6. The borrower of the artefacts is responsible for the costs of repair/replacement in the event of damage/loss.
 7. No artefacts shall be loaned which are too fragile to travel or might be placed at risk by conditions during the loan period.
 8. All documentation regarding loans will be retained in the Museum records.
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REPATRIATION POLICY:

There may be instances where the right to hold an artefact could be challenged by a group on the basis that the artefact is sacred, may belong to another museum/collection, or that a community considers the artefacts to be part of their culture.

The Museum recognizes the complexities of the repatriation issue and will deal with each case individually.

APPRAISALS:

The Museum is not able to offer and/or recommend appraisal services.

REVIEW:

This Procedure will be reviewed when it may be made necessary by any changes in any applicable legislation or regulations for Museum practices.