



1. **GENERAL STATEMENT**

Research is an integral part of the operation of the Museum. It is an ongoing activity which enables the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum & Community Centre (WSM&CC) to fulfil its Vision, Values, and Mission Statement (2012) and serves as the basis for the Museum's education, interpretation, exhibition, collection development and community service activities.

2. **INTERNAL RESEARCH PROGRAM**

2.1 **Commitment**

The WSM&CC supports research by staff and volunteers, in order to fulfil the Museum's Vision, Values, and Mission Statement and to develop a body of knowledge and understanding about our community's historical development, natural history and material culture. A library of resource and reference material is maintained and developed to support research activities. Each year, the Museum will allocate a portion of its resources including personnel, space, equipment, and budget for the purposes of research.

All research conducted by staff or volunteers for museum purposes is the property of the Museum.

All staff members will conduct research as required and staff will be provided adequate time to carry out appropriate research for the assigned project or task. Staff access to resources outside of the Museum is encouraged and facilitated through budget allocation and staff scheduling procedures. Research priorities are established through the setting of objectives by the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum & Advisory Committee (Committee), the Curator and other Museum staff on an annual basis, based on objectives identified through the Museum's medium- and long-term strategic planning exercises.

The Museum's permanent staff will endeavour to ensure that internal research is as accurate, exhaustive and objective as possible given the available resources. To this end, required references will be recorded and cited. The confidentiality of records will be respected. Any ambiguities, uncertainties or contradictory evidence will be noted; and any assumptions made will be identified in publication and exhibition activities undertaken by the Museum. All research and publication will be conducted in accordance with relevant municipal, provincial and

federal legislation such as copyright legislation and the Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act.

2.2 Collection Development Research

Artifacts accepted into the Museum collection will be utilized in research. Research will be carried out on artifacts for identification purposes and to gain insight into its local significance, relationship to the community and/or collection, and its larger social context. Such research enhances the interpretive, educational and contextual value of the artifacts collected and will be recorded and maintained with the artifact's accession/ cataloguing records, both in printed and electronic format.

2.3 Education Programming Research

General research will be carried out to ensure the quality, accuracy and authenticity of exhibitions, interpretive programs or any other educational initiatives developed at the Museum. This information, in the form of summary notes and/or text panels, will be kept for future use by Museum staff, volunteers and/or the public.

2.4 Community/Local Research

Visiting researchers will be encouraged to voluntarily share a copy of their findings with the Museum and to permit public access to this information. Whenever Museum staff responds to inquiries from other Town Departments, government agencies or the public, summaries of the research findings will be maintained and added to the Museum's reference files for future use as appropriate and given available resources. Local history research conducted for the Museum's exhibition and interpretation/education programs will likewise be filed in the Museum's reference files for public access.

2.5 Museum Operation Research

Research regarding Museum operations such as collection care, education, exhibition, marketing strategies, social media and other operational functions will be carried out as required for the successful development of the Museum. Research of acceptable and current museum standards and practices will also be ongoing.

Any research conducted by the Museum involving public participation such as visitor surveys or program evaluations will:

- disclose fully the objective of the study,
- involve participation that is completely voluntary,
- guarantee confidentiality of information provided, and
- guarantee that the personal information gathered will be used for

NO other purpose than the study in question and will NOT be shared with any other Town Department, government agency or other organization or individual.

2.6 **Public Research**

Public access to the Museum and its collection will be facilitated in accordance with the parameters of this policy and the Museum's Finance & Revenue Generation Policy. See Section 3 Public Access.

3. **PUBLIC ACCESS**

The Museum supports and encourages research by the public. While the Museum recognizes its obligation to provide public access to its collection, the Museum is equally committed to protect and preserve its primary resources including three dimensional artifacts and archival materials, for future generations. Therefore, public access to the collection, facilities and services of the Museum may be limited at the discretion of the Curator, with the following being taken in to consideration:

- Privacy and/or legal concerns, object fragility and Museum operational requirements will influence the access to the collection available to the public at any given time.
- Items in the collection that invade the privacy of either the donor or the persons depicted or mentioned therein, or may expose these individuals to personal risk through their availability to third parties, shall not be accessible to the public.
- If the information requested by a researcher can be readily gathered by Museum staff within the duration of the researcher's visit, it will be done at no extra charge.
- If the nature of the request requires additional staff involvement, the request will be treated as a corresponding researcher request and/or a Freedom of Information (FOI) request.

Individuals making enquiries by phone will be directed to make an appointment for research. Whenever possible, appointments should be made in order to ensure the availability of staff and the accessibility of materials. Those unable to make appointments will be assisted over the phone or via email at the discretion of the Curator or designate and as time permits.

3.1 **Control**

- a. All public researchers must complete a "Registration of Visiting Researchers" Form (Appendix 1) prior to or at the time of their appointment.

- b. Public research utilizing the Library/Archives or collection must be supervised by the Curator or designate.
- c. In order to mitigate the potential for damage to artifacts being examined by researchers, the Curator or designate will be responsible for the retrieval from and return to storage of all artifacts in the Museum's permanent collection.

3.2 **Space**

The Research Room, equipment, tables and chairs are allocated for the use of staff, volunteers and the public for research. Archival/library materials utilized for research must not be removed from the research area by the public unless an arrangement has been made in writing with the Curator.

3.3 **Conservation Standards**

Research must be carried out in compliance with the Conservation Policy of the Museum. In order to ensure the conservation of the Museum's archival materials and artifacts, certain guidelines have been established and are included in the "Registration of Visiting Researchers" Form (see Appendix 1).

3.4 **Reproduction and Sharing of Information**

Any copying or reproduction from the collection will be for personal research purposes only unless a written request for publication and/or use for commercial gain is submitted to and approved by the Curator (See Section 5.1.) Researchers will be encouraged to donate their research and/or consent to be listed as a reference for other researchers.

4. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

4.1 **Budget**

The Museum budget will support research activities through annual budget allocations to appropriate budget lines, including staff salaries, photocopying, reproduction, training, mileage and purchasing reference resources (including relevant annual memberships).

4.2 **Fees**

Fees charged by the Museum for research services, access and photocopying /reproduction are identified in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Recoverable Fees By-law. These fees will be reviewed annually by staff and recommendations for their adjustment will be presented to the Committee for approval.

5. PUBLICATION

The Museum's research is made public primarily through exhibition, interpretive or educational programming and public relations communications such as the Members' Newsletter and/or local newspaper articles. When opportunity provides and resources permit, staff will be encouraged to submit research articles for publication in relevant periodicals and professional journals, subject to Committee approval of the choice of periodical and subject of the article. Editorial review of the article will be the responsibility of the Curator.

The Museum will consider formal publication of its internal research as a special project to be identified and incorporated within the Museum's medium- to long-term strategic planning exercises and budgeting/forecasting process. The Museum further supports the publication of local history information by others by providing controlled access to the Museum's archival materials and artifacts. Individuals are invited to submit their requests to publish any of the Museum's images, documents or artifact material in writing to the Curator.

5.1 Rights

The Museum holds all copyright and reproduction rights for the materials in the Museum's permanent collection. No copying or reproduction of material from the collection will be allowed unless approved by the Curator. The Museum will adhere to existing copyright laws. Reproduction requests for use in publication or other commercial gain ventures must be made in writing to the Curator and include a complete description of the project, the publication and distribution methods as well as how the Museum will be acknowledged.

Photography of exhibitions may be allowed for general information at the discretion of the Curator. No photography is permitted for flash sensitive materials.

Donated research material from public researchers is to be utilized for research purposes only unless a relationship has been established for formal publication of the donated work.

5.2 Acknowledgement

If approval for publication is granted for any of the Museum's images, documents or other artifact material, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum must be acknowledged.

6. INTERVAL OF REVIEW

The Committee will review this policy at least every 3 years, or as required.

Committee Approval: March 3, 2016
 July 6, 2011
 September 6, 2006

Council Adoption: ??, 2016
 September 20, 2011
 October 3, 2006

Next Scheduled Review: 2019

APPENDIX 1

REGISTRATION OF VISITING RESEARCHERS at the WHITCHRUCH-STOUFFVILLE MUSEUM

NAME: _____ CITY/TOWN: _____

RESEARCH TOPIC (S): _____

The above information is collected to calculate cumulative statistics for year-end reporting only.
Your name will not be used or shared in any way unless you authorize otherwise on this form.

Please Indicate the purpose of your research:

- _____ Personal Interest
- _____ Academic Projects
Please specify school/course _____

_____ Publication _____ I agree to credit the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum in the publication either as a bibliographic entry or listed in an acknowledgement section

Please describe the nature of the publication project and its anticipated distributions:

Other Commercial Gain - Must be approved by the Curator

Please specify: _____

Any photography, copying or reproduction of the Museum's artifacts including historic photographs and archival materials will be permitted **for personal use only**. A written request for use of images in publication or for other commercial gain must be submitted to the Curator for approval. Such a request must include a description of the project, the publication and distribution methods, and how the Museum will be acknowledged. Acknowledgment of the Museum must occur on the same page on which the image occurs within the publication.

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The Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum fully supports and encourages research by visitors in order to develop and enhance the knowledge and understanding of our community's historical development, natural history and material culture. The Museum, however is equally committed to protecting and preserving its collection of primary resources including three-dimensional artifacts and archival materials, for the enjoyment of future generations and therefore has established the following conservations measures for visiting researchers.

PLEASE SEE REVERSE.

APPENDIX 1 - continued

Conservation Measures:

Please help us to conserve the Museum’s archival materials and artifacts for use by future generations, by adhering to the following guidelines when utilizing the collection for research.

- a. Proper hand covering must be worn while handling archival research materials and/or artifacts in order to lessen the impact of use on the artifact.
- b. Only pencils are to be used by the researcher. No ink is allowed.
- c. No objects, elbows or arms are to rest on archival materials or artifacts being utilized for research.
- d. If utilizing portable computer equipment, it must not rest on any archival materials or artifacts, nor should any archival materials or artifacts rest on the computer equipment. Separate table spaces must be used for each.
- e. No eating, drinking, or smoking is allowed.
- f. No manipulation of the artifacts is allowed. Artifacts and archival materials must be returned in the format presented. The Curator or designate is to be called for any movement of an artifact. No alterations to archival materials is permitted. When facts are disputed, a separate note or submission, with references cited whenever possible, shall be added to the file.
- g. The hands-on collection and secondary resources may be utilized without the requirement of hand covering.
- h. Mechanical reproduction of materials will only be allowed when it does not conflict with the parameters of the Museum’s Research Policy and when it can be done without damage to the material as determined by the Curator or designate. Reproduction of materials is only permitted for personal research use. When appropriate, printed non-accessioned materials may be photocopied only under the supervision of the Curator or designate. Professional reproduction of the photographic images will be arranged by the Museum upon request. Fees for these reproductions must be paid in advance. Current fee rates are outlined in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Fees and Charges By-Law.

I have read the above and agree to abide by the regulations. To the best of my knowledge, the information I have provided is true and accurate.

_____ Signed _____ Date _____

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum is also very committed to the sharing of research and advances in knowledge about our community’s historical development, natural history & material culture. For this purpose, would you agree to:

- A. Be contacted in the future by Museum personnel working on the development of an exhibit or educational program on a subject related to your research topic? **Yes No**
 - B. Have your name forwarded to another researcher working on the same topic? **Yes No**
- If Yes, to either in the above, please provide the information you are willing to have shared in order to contact you in the future
 Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

PURSUANT TO THE MUNICIPAL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT,
 All personal information collected on this form will be used solely for the purpose for which it was collected.
 Questions about this collection should be directed to:
 Town Clerk, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
 111 Sandiford Drive, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 0Z8
 (905) 640-1900