



1. **GENERAL STATEMENT**

As set out in the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum & Community Centre's (WSM&CC) Vision, Mission and Values Statement (2012), education and interpretation is recognized as a key function of the Museum. Through the use of the Museum's collection in exhibits, educational programs, and other related museum activities, the Museum & CC will provide educational, informative, entertainment, and leisure services to the widest possible audience. The WSM&CC's education and interpretation programs will be designed to create for our visitors an understanding of Whitchurch-Stouffville's natural and human heritage, as well as develop an awareness of the Museum's role in preserving the community's past.

In this policy, "interpretation" is defined as any time information is shared with the visiting public – regardless of the program genre or method.

2. **EDUCATION/INTERPRETATION PROGRAM**

2.1 **Commitment**

Education and interpretation programs will be developed in accordance with the WSM&CC's Vision, Mission and Values Statement, Exhibition Policy, Conservation Policy, Collection Development/ Management Policy, and Research Policy to ensure accuracy, objectivity, appropriateness, effectiveness and sustainability. With community needs and accessibility in mind, programs will be designed and implemented to stimulate interest in history and preservation, to foster an accurate understanding of the community's heritage, to encourage involvement with the WSM&CC, and, ultimately, to develop a broader, more thoughtful, supportive, and enlightened audience.

2.2 **Types**

The WSM&CC's education and interpretation programs will be developed in three broad categories and may be conducted on-site or off-site.

- *School Programs*: - including curriculum-based instructional tours on various themes, demonstrations, hands-on activities, changing exhibits, workshops, Outreach Programs, and Education Kits.
- *Public Programming*: - including tours, demonstrations, hands-on activities, workshops, lectures, changing exhibits, and outreach.
- *Special events and related exhibits*: - including adult & children's workshops, guest performances, lectures, conferences, seminars, and travelling exhibits.

2.3 Responsibility

The Supervisor/ Curator will ensure that an appropriate selection and schedule of interpretive and educational programs is delivered each year in order to fulfill the WSM&CC's educational mandate and to meet community needs and interests.

The Program Coordinator, Museum & Town Events is responsible for the development and implementation of the Museum's education programs for school groups and other organizations/groups – both youth and adult.

2.4 Planning and Development

Priorities will be established for the development of programs. These programs will be developed with flexibility in order to successfully serve the needs and expectations of the various user groups in the community. They will be designed to promote learning and enjoyment.

In accordance with the Research Policy, education/ interpretation programs will be developed from accurate, comprehensive, and objective research. All interpretive and educational activities will abide by the Ethical Guidelines as published by the Canadian Museum Association and be conducted in accordance with relevant municipal, provincial, and federal legislation such as copyright and accessibility legislation. The WSM&CC will maintain a commitment to fairness, accuracy, inclusivity, and respect in all its programs.

The WSM&CC will endeavour to complement other cultural institutions and organizations in the Region in their approach to interpretation, education, and other programming. Duplication of the work of other organizations will be avoided whenever possible.

The annual schedule of public programs and events will be presented to the Museum Advisory Committee (Committee) for their information and input. A list of clearly defined and measurable objectives will be developed for each educational program delivered as well as means of evaluation. A summary of a program's or event's evaluation will be presented to the Committee in a timely manner and retained for reference. A summary of attendance statistics by program type will be presented to the Committee annually. Customer satisfaction surveys will be presented to the Committee at each meeting.

2.5 Promotion and Publicity

Various marketing methods, including web postings, e-/direct mailings, press releases, social media, and presentations, will be used to provide updated information to and promote closer relations with local schools, community groups, and the general public about the variety of programs provided by the WSM&CC.

Staff will actively support media interviews that further the mission of the WSM&CC. Public speaking invitations on the Museum and historical topics will be accepted whenever possible.

3. PHYSICAL SPACE

3.1 Space Allocation

Suitable space will be provided within the WSM&CC to deliver interpretation and education programs. The space provided for programming will meet the specific visitor needs and program requirements and ensure that artifacts in the collection will not be endangered or harmed by program activities.

3.2 Safety and Access

The space will be sufficient to allow for the user group to move comfortably and safely at all times, including where possible, the movement of visitors with physical challenges.

AODA legislation/ requirements will be considered in all program development. The WSM&CC will endeavour to provide alternate methods of access for those visitors with accessibility challenges.

4. STAFF & VOLUNTEER TRAINING

The staff and volunteers developing and/ or delivering the WSM&CC's programs will have sufficient background and appropriate training – including interpretation techniques, education methodology, local and site-specific history, and other relevant topics.

Orientation and training programs shall be designed for all staff, volunteers, and Committee members. This will include standard Museum procedures, basic health and safety, accessibility awareness and customer service, and emergency procedures. External training opportunities will be provided as appropriate in accordance with the Town's Policy.

5. CONSERVATION

Successful and continued interpretation is dependent on the systematic and careful preservation of items in the Museum's Permanent Collection. The balance between interpretation and conservation is crucial. To that end:

5.1 Use of Duplicates and Reproductions

As noted in the Collection Development/ Management policy, the Museum will maintain a Hands-On Collection made up of duplicate and reproduction pieces. Items from this collection will be used whenever possible for hands-on activities and demonstrations.

5.2 Use of Artifacts

When accessioned items from the Permanent Collection must be utilized, staff and volunteers shall take every precaution to ensure that they are not harmed and are

utilized within the guidelines set out in the Conservation Policy.

6. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

6.1 Budget

Considering the importance of its public role, the WSM&CC, as part of its annual operating budget development in accordance with the Town's policies and budget process, will include adequate budget allocations for education and interpretation programs.

6.2 Revenue Generation

Fees charged by the WSM&CC for education and interpretation will be set based upon the costs to the Museum and/or through Council By-Law, in accordance with the Finance & Revenue Generation Policy.

7. PROGRAM EVALUATION

All programs will be assessed and evaluated on a regular basis to determine if intended objectives are being met. Programs will be reviewed periodically to assess how they contribute to the overall goals and objectives of the WSM&CC. This review will generate information to assist with strategic and business planning activities.

Program evaluations should consider both quantitative and qualitative factors, such as attendance figures, revenue generated, connection to the WSM&CC's Vision, Mission and Values Statement, and feedback received from participants, staff and volunteers.

8. INTERVAL OF REVIEW

The Committee will review this policy every three years, or as needed.

Committee Approval: May 3, 2017
 Previously: May 5, 2014, May 4, 2009, May 5, 2004

Council Adoption: _____, 2017
 Previously: June 24, 2014, June 23, 2009, May 18, 2004

Next Scheduled Review: 2020