

THE TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

Section: Community Services

Policy: Museum Exhibition

Creation Date: January 1978

Revised Date: May 2016

Resolution Number:

Supersedes Resolution Number: N / A

Policy Number:

Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Town of Fort Frances By-Law 29/77 and the Statement of Purpose of the Museum and Cultural Centre of Fort Frances, the Museum adopts the following Exhibition Policy:

Purpose

To communicate to the public the significance of the community and regions' heritage through appropriate display of the collection.

Objectives

1. The scope of the Exhibition program undertaken by the museum shall take into consideration the availability of resources including staff, collection, finances, and the constraints of the facility. Exhibitions will be developed to meet the criteria established in research, education and interpretation, conservation and other relevant policies. Any municipal, provincial and federal legislative requirements shall be met in the development of exhibits.
2. Exhibition themes will be developed to educate and inform the visitor about local history, and on occasion will include special interest temporary exhibits that support education and advance learning.
 - Permanent exhibit space will be dedicated to the chronological history of the Rainy River District including pre-history, exploration and fur trade, early settlement and transportation, and industry. Artifacts that illustrate themes will be selected from the collection, and rotated periodically as required for conservation standards and to ensure interest for repeat visitors.
 - Temporary exhibit space will be changed three to four times per year and will feature, whenever themes allow, components that will be inclusive of youth and school curriculum.
 - The Museum will develop an exhibition schedule that includes traveling and short-term exhibitions and may include: arts, crafts, science, and human and natural history. The Museum may also exhibit privately held collections, but only with full and complete agreement governing terms and conditions.
 - The Museum will look to partner with other museums, community organizations, and cultural groups.

3. Spaces designated for exhibitions will meet museum standards and building safety requirements.
 - The Museum will ensure that galleries meet facility requirements for accessibility and safety, including strict adherence to all fire and building codes.
 - Exhibits will be fabricated to ensure a safe and secure environment. Any risks to staff, participants and resources shall be identified, and reduced through proper training and the establishment of safety procedures.
4. The Museum will include in its annual operating budget funds for exhibits and displays.
5. Planning for exhibits will take place well in advance, with consideration given to their purpose, targeted audience and significance. Sufficient time will be allocated for research to ensure accuracy of information, and a selection made of appropriate artifacts. Exhibit components will be determined and funds budgeted for the purchase and/or fabrication of support materials and text.
6. The Museum does not guarantee to display all artifacts in the permanent collection in any given time period. Artifacts will be selected for display according to their relationship to selected themes.
7. All artifacts for display must be in stable condition, fully catalogued and installed securely in the exhibit. The lighting and environment of the gallery will reflect the Museum's adherence to the best achievable conservation standards. All exhibits and displays will be checked regularly to ensure that no artifact is subject to damage.
8. Only competent Museum staff will produce exhibits. Written material will be accurate, but simple, and approved by the Curator. Staff designing, fabricating and installing exhibit components will be trained; handling of artifacts will be under the direction of the Curator.
9. Sacred artifacts in the museum's care will be given extra attention to ensure proper handling and interpretation.
10. Each exhibit will be evaluated to ensure initial goals are met, and visitor responses satisfactory.

In summary: a museum is judged by the character of its exhibits, therefore exhibitions should reflect the policies and objectives of the museum. An Exhibition Program is the most valuable and flexible interpretive instrument that the museum possesses.

Principles to follow in formulating the Exhibition Program:

1. Exhibit galleries should be attractive and inviting through use of harmonious colours and proper lighting.
2. Exhibits must be objective and truthful, and be presented only after the verification of information.
3. Good exhibit practice must be used in the choice and arrangement of accessories such as labels, photographs, maps, charts, and diagrams. They need complement, not detract from or overwhelm the exhibit.
4. Permanent exhibit themes need be revised and refreshed on a regular basis.
5. Artifacts on exhibit must be protected from both the environment and an overzealous public.
6. Visitors must be made to feel welcome and permitted to browse at leisure.
7. Visitor traffic patterns under both normal and crowded conditions need be considered.

Policy Review & Approval

The Exhibition Policy will be reviewed every three years by the Curator, Museum Advisory Committee and Community Services Manager. Recommended changes will be forwarded to Town Council for approval.