



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**Tourism and Culture Division**

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	November 17, 2021
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Civic Museum Strategy (PED21212) (City Wide) <b>(Outstanding Business List Item)</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	John Summers (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1747
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Carrie Brooks-Joiner Director, Tourism and Culture Planning and Economic Development Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED21212, be received;
- (b) That Tourism and Culture staff be directed to implement Actions contained in the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy that do not require a change to policy or additional financial and staffing resources;
- (c) That Actions contained in the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy which have policy, financial or staffing implications be the subject of reports back to the General Issues Committee for approval prior to implementation;
- (d) That the matter respecting the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy be identified as complete and removed from the General Issues Committee Outstanding Business List.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Transforming Hamilton Through Culture: Cultural Plan 2013, called for staff to “Develop a Civic Museum Strategy and related plans to guide the long-term development and

sustainability of Hamilton's museums and associated collections and resources (under Quality of Life/Quality of Place; Celebrate and Preserve Hamilton's Cultural Assets). At the March 21, 2018 General Issues Committee Meeting, staff was directed to "include the investigation of a City of Hamilton Museum as part of the work of the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy and report to the General Issues Committee when the strategy is complete." The same motion noted the need "to preserve and present the many untold stories of Hamilton and Hamiltonians in a sustainable, accessible, inclusive and engaging manner." The investigation of a City of Hamilton Museum was presented to the General Issues Committee in October 2020 in Report PED20172, Investigating the Feasibility of a City of Hamilton Museum. This Report presents the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy and thereby fulfils the March 21, 2018 direction.

In the near term, the strategy will guide the Civic Museums successfully through COVID and position them to succeed and thrive in a post-pandemic world. In the longer term, it will establish the Hamilton Civic Museums as leaders in the field of municipal heritage. The Museums will have an impact both in the City and beyond, and they will become known for offering sustainable, accessible, equitable, inclusive and engaging visitor experiences.

#### **Alternatives for Consideration – N/A**

#### **FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Financial:**

There are no financial implications arising from Recommendations a, b, or c. Actions contained in the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy which have financial implications will be the subject of reports back to Council for approval prior to implementation.

##### **Staffing:**

There are no staffing implications arising from Recommendations a, b, or c. Actions contained in the Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy which have staffing implications will be the subject of reports back to Council for approval prior to implementation.

##### **Legal: N/A**

#### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Heritage Resource Management Section of the Tourism and Culture Division operates nine Civic Museums: five historic houses (Dundurn National Historic Site, Fieldcote Memorial Park and Museum, Battlefield House Museum and Park National Historic Site, Whitehern Historic House and Garden National Historic Site, Griffin House National Historic Site); three gallery-style Museums (The Hamilton Military Museum, The Hamilton Museum of Steam and Technology National Historic Site, Hamilton Children's Museum) and an underwater archaeology site (Hamilton and Scourge

National Historic Site). The primary visitor experience is through in-person guided tours. A smaller portion of the total audience also takes part in workshops, lectures and other site-based programs and events. A portion of the total audience is also engaged on-line through social media and YouTube.

Pre-pandemic attendance at the Hamilton Civic Museums attendance was strong. In 2019 Hamilton Civic Museums had 204,567 visits, a slight decrease from 207,702 visits in 2018. Revenues had increased year over year and accessibility had been increased through a partnership with the Hamilton Public Libraries that offers free admission to holders of library cards.

In 2019, a community consultation was conducted to inform the development of a Civic Museum Strategy. The resulting Report, “Reimagine Our Museums,” is attached as Appendix “B” to Report PED21212. From the results of the engagement, it is clear that citizens are deeply supportive of the Hamilton Civic Museums. 96% of those surveyed said they were very satisfied or satisfied. At the same time, they also see many opportunities for expanding audience engagement, going beyond existing stories, working outside the walls of the Museums, broadening the age range of audiences, changing exhibits more frequently and enriching the visitor experience through increased interactivity and opportunities for participation.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

The Hamilton Civic Museums are currently in compliance with all applicable external policy and legislative guidelines, including the *Government of Ontario’s Standards for Community Museums in Ontario*, the *Canadian Museum Association’s Code of Ethics* and *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. The Hamilton Civic Museums will continue to be in compliance with external policy and legislative guidelines if the strategy recommended in this Report is adopted.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

More than 1700 residents and museum visitors during the “Reimagine our Museums” engagement in 2019.

Tourism and Culture staff workshops and working group sessions in 2020 and 2021.

Community groups during the Hamilton 175 project in 2021.

Hamilton Public Library staff in 2020 and 2021.

Urban Indigenous Strategy staff in 2020 and 2021.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The Civic Museum Strategy is a transformative plan that guides the work of the Hamilton's Civic Museums from 2022 to 2030. Building on the City's past success in operating stand-alone Museums, it dramatically broadens the scope of engagement by articulating a new vision grounded in a whole-city approach to heritage. It empowers residents and community members as collaborators and co-creators in bringing untold stories to light.

The vision and strategy are a made-in-Hamilton approach to heritage presentation and community engagement that is informed by best practices from leading organizations and thought leaders in the Museum sector.

### **CIVIC MUSEUM STRATEGY VISION**

The Hamilton Civic Museums will become museums of, by and for the City rather than just museums which are operated by the City. To do this they will preserve and present the many untold stories of Hamilton and Hamiltonians in a sustainable, accessible, inclusive and engaging manner. The City itself, including its peoples, streetscapes, parks, theatres, neighbourhoods, buildings and public spaces, will be treated as a museum that embodies its collective history. The Hamilton Civic Museums will become equal parts physical, mobile and virtual.

### **CIVIC MUSEUM STRATEGY ACTIONS**

1. Embrace the City
2. Rethink Collecting
3. Embed the Shift to Digital
4. Collaborate and Co-Create
5. Develop the Workforce
6. Develop Additional Revenue Streams

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Not Applicable

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Community Engagement and Participation**

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.

### **Culture and Diversity**

Hamilton is a thriving, vibrant place for arts, culture, and heritage where diversity and inclusivity are embraced and celebrated.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix "A" to Report PED21212 – Hamilton Civic Museum Strategy

Appendix "B" to Report PED21212 – Reimagine Our Museums (2019)