

# Information Report

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Service Area	Public Services
Date	Friday, March 27, 2020
Subject	<b>Guelph Museums Advisory Committee 2019 Annual Report</b>

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

To provide Council with the annual report of the Guelph Museums Advisory Committee.

### Key Findings

The Council-appointed Guelph Museums Advisory Committee continues to guide and support the work of Guelph Museums, ensuring the Museums meet professional standards and actively engage citizens in meaningful ways. The Advisory Committee met nine times in 2019. Advisory Committee members contributed over 300 volunteer hours, participating in meetings and assisting with Museum initiatives.

In 2019, the Advisory Committee oversaw the implementation of the third year of the Museum's strategic operating plan, focused on service excellence, sustainability, and innovation. To this end, the Museums carried out activities to attract new and repeat visitation, increase earned revenue and donations, and embark on innovative approaches to enhance visitor experiences.

### Financial Implications

N/A

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## Report

### Details

The objectives of the Guelph Museums Advisory Committee are:

- To participate in strategic planning activities
- To act as ambassadors for Guelph Museums in the community
- To initiate and participate in fundraising activities
- To advise on approaches to increasing and maintaining members, visitors, volunteers, and supporters
- To approve community museum operating policies as required by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries

- To serve as the museum-dedicated committee required by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries in order to be eligible to receive an annual Community Museum Operating Grant.

In 2019, the Museum aimed to attract and satisfy diverse audiences; deepen audience engagement; increase earned revenue, donations, and sponsorships; improve efficiencies; establish community partnerships; embrace leading-edge museum practices; and embrace technology and new media.

To increase new and repeat visitation, the Museum offered:

- Seven featured exhibitions: Brewing Changes Guelph; Konnón:kwe; Indianized; B&W and Read All Over; The Dailies: Frontispieces and Front Pages; VibraFusionLab; and Into the Light: Eugenics and Education in Southern Ontario.
- Galt 240, a year-long commemoration of the 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of John Galt, that expanded Guelph's founding story to include Indigenous history prior to Galt's arrival. This initiative included the creation and presentation of a new musical theatre presentation, John Galt and the Instant City, which debuted in Scotland in May and which was staged in Guelph to nearly 1,000 audience members, including over 800 students, during Treaty Recognition Week in November.
- 42 free or admission-by-donation opportunities.

These activities resulted in attendance of 30,540 in 2019, a 3% decrease from our 2018 attendance of 31,525.

To increase revenue, the Museum was successful in securing new sponsorships, as well as Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund and Guelph Community Foundation grants to support Galt 240 and VibraFusionLab initiatives. In addition, the Museum increased earned-revenue for education programs by offering premium-priced programs including No Word for Art and John Galt and the Instant City. Together, earned- and contributed-revenue increased 23%, from \$256,000 in 2018 to \$316,000 in 2019.

To deepen audience and community engagement, the Museum worked in partnership with EarlyON to replace the monthly Tiny Tots program with a free, weekly program for early learners support by Early Childhood Educators.

In embracing leading-edge museum practices, the Museum continued its work to centre the voices of Indigenous people; diversify the stories and perspectives reflected at the Museum; and offer groundbreaking and provocative exhibitions and programs that encouraged community dialogue in a safe, inspiring space.

In 2020, the Museum will complete its current three-year strategic operating plan, with a focus on improving environmental sustainability and supporting community health and wellness. We will present four feature exhibitions: Guelph Circa 1999, Lay of the Land, Witchcraft, and May I Take Your Arm: Alex Bulmer Project. We will help facilitate the move of Locomotive 6167 to its new, permanent home at John Galt Park. As well, we will develop a new strategic operating plan, aligned with the City's new strategic plan, to guide our work from 2021 to 2024, while also planning for updates and upgrades to our permanent exhibition spaces.

Guelph Museums Advisory Committee members and museum staff are proud of our accomplishments over the past year, and we look forward to the work ahead as we continue to preserve and share Guelph's stories.

### **Financial Implications**

N/A

### **Consultations**

Shannon Coles, Chair, Guelph Museums Advisory Committee

### **Strategic Plan Alignment**

Building our Future. Guelph Museums is contributing to strong, vibrant, safe and healthy communities that foster resilience in the people who live and work here. Programs and exhibitions challenge Guelph to learn and develop. Guelph Museums contribute to the community as a tourism asset offering a unique view of Guelph's present and history. The Museum is currently developing a new three-year strategic operating plan that continue to align with the City's new strategic plan.

### **Attachments**

None

### **Departmental Approval**

Danna Evans, General Manager, Culture, Tourism, and Community Investment

### **Report Author**

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### **This report was approved by:**

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