

REPORT FROM THE MUSEUM CURATOR

DESCRIPTION

To propose the adoption of new museum policies, in accordance with the standards of community museums in Ontario, and a five-year Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the revised Policies and Strategic Plan for the Elliot Lake Museum, dated September 28, 2022, be received;

AND WHEREAS the necessary edits and additions are implemented;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Recreation and Culture Standing Committee refer the report to the October 11, 2022, Council meeting for consideration.

BACKGROUND

Every community museum is subject to the Standards set by the province and administered by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. These ten standards represent the minimum requirements for the operation of a good community museum, and are necessary to qualify for certain funding opportunities.

Having updated, comprehensive policies and a Strategic Plan allows us to provide the trajectory and goals for the future of our museum in a transparent manner, and puts us in a really good position for grant applications.

It is always optimal to revisit or conduct a strategical plan when facing any of the following circumstances: new professional standards, new leadership, new economic and social conditions, and new facilities and/or locations. As the complete list is more than less applicable to our situation, it is apt that we have these documents ready as we move forward.

At the September 22, 2022, Nuclear and Mining Museum Board meeting, the following resolution was passed:

Res#: 03/22

Moved By: D. Marchisella

Seconded By: L. Finn

Carried

THAT the revised Policies and Strategic Plan for the Elliot Lake Museum, dated September 20, 2022, be received;

AND WHEREAS the necessary edits and additions are implemented;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Advisory Board refer the report to the October 3, 2022, Recreation and Culture Standing Committee for consideration.

Since this resolution, minor edits regarding spelling and diction were implemented. Several points were also added to our Collections, Exhibition, Governance, HR, and Research policies so that we are in compliance with the new report, *Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums* which was released on September 26, 2022.

In 2015, the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) was named in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #67, to deliver a report and recommendations as part of a national review of museum policies and their relationship with United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). *Moved to Action* makes 10 sector recommendations and 30 new standards for museums. While at this time there is no requirement for community museums to uphold these new standards, it supports our vision and goals as an institution to incorporate them into our policies and practices.

ANALYSIS

The policies and Strategic Plan for the museum were last updated in 2018-2019 but never formally brought forward or approved by Council. The new policies and plan have been completed so that we are in accordance with the Standards for Community Museums mandated by the province, as well as the *Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums* report, and our goals, vision, and mission for the museum are set to best serve the public and preserve our heritage.

A major focus of the Strategic Plan is to rebrand our museum under new logo and title: The Elliot Lake Museum (E.L.M.). Simplifying the previous title "The Elliot Lake Nuclear and Mining Museum" does not mean we are removing the "Nuclear and Mining" from our displays; instead, this new terminology now fully encompasses all of the heritage and collections our museum represents—Geology, First Nations, Trapping and Logging, Prospecting and Mining, and Civic.

Operating the museum under the name "Nuclear and Mining" seriously limits our purview, makes our offerings stagnate, and acts on some level as false advertising to visitors. There is no room for growth as we cannot compete with the innovations of other mining institutions, like Dynamic Earth, because all of our mine sites have been completed decommissioned and that is no longer an active industry in our area.



The major advantage to our museum is that there is an abundance of equally important history in our area available at our disposal, and it is worthy of the same share of display and storytelling as our mining heritage.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The only costs for the museum implementing new policies and updating the Strategic Plan existed in the staff time to prepare such documents.

As we are in the developmental stages of a new physical space for the museum, there exists no costs to update any signage or literature, as opposed to if we adopt a new operating name and vision in the future.

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This project aligns with the City's Strategic Plan through efforts to:

- Create Strong Municipal Corporate Administration and Governance
 - Review and update by-laws, policies, and procedures
- Support the Arts and Culture Community
 - Strategic, vibrant, relevant museum for the future.
 - To cultivate in the citizens of Elliot Lake an appreciation of arts and culture through accessible programming, arts and cultural facilities and entertainment that is available to all citizens.
 - To maintain and improve arts and cultural facilities

SUMMARY

Elliot Lake's museum is in a unique position where we have the opportunity to completely rebrand ourselves to relaunch onto the museum scene. While we have been hard at work revitalizing the museum behind the scenes, focusing on administration and archives, it is apt time to bring these changes to the foreground as we prepare for our new physical space—starting with the adoption of new policies and a Strategic Plan for the future.

