



**CON FOSTER MUSEUM
POLICY STATEMENT ON COLLECTION
ACCESSIONS, DEACCESSIONS AND LOANS**

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose of Document: This document establishes policies and guidelines for accessions to the collections of the City of Traverse City's Con Foster Museum, and delineates the circumstances by which objects shall be deaccessioned from the Museum's collections. It also establishes policies regarding loans to and from the Museum Collections. The term "accession" includes gifts, purchases, exchanges and other transactions by which title to incoming material is transferred to Con Foster Museum. The term "deaccession" includes gifts, sales, exchanges, and any other transaction by which outgoing institution or individual, as well as disposal by intentional destruction. Temporary physical transfers of material to or from the Museum which do not involve a change in ownership are termed "loans."

Elements to be considered in this policy statement are:

1. To development basic priorities for adding new material to the collections.
2. To affirm that the Con Foster Museum shall be in full compliance with the laws and regulations, both domestic and foreign, governing the transfer of ownership and movement of objects across political boundaries.
3. To affirm that the highest ethical standards continue to be met by the Museum and its employees and any individuals or organizations involved in its management and/or operations and their employees.
4. To assure that the documentation for the collections shall equal or exceed prevailing museum standards.
5. To define the conditions of acceptance that may be placed upon objects from the Museum's collections.
6. To define the contributions governing loans to and from the Museum.

B. Background of Collections

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Con Foster Museum, of the City of Traverse City, is a non-profit, public institution whose purpose is to collect, preserve, and present the cultural history of the Grand Traverse region. (Adopted by the City Commission 4/16/84) The Museum will develop its collection through purchase, gift, bequest or exchange for the purpose of meeting the objectives outlined in its mission statement.

The Museum cooperates with other museums, educational and public institutions to further the objective of its mission and to assist these institutions in meeting our mutual objectives. To this end, the Museum makes loans to, or exchanges with, responsible museums, educational and public institutions.

The Museum has three types of collections (approved by the City Commission 4/16/84):

1. Permanent Exhibit Collections: These items relate directly to the Museum's purposes. Used primarily for exhibition, they are original and generally priceless.
2. Study Collections: These usually are duplicate or worn items that have definite teaching quality. These items are used for exhibition, study or sometimes loaned to other museums and institutions.
3. Expendable Collections: These items usually are donated by individuals or institutions which no longer need them. The museum normally will not classify them as type 1 or 2, but will use them to acquire artifacts or other pertinent materials to fill out its permanent or study collection.

II. Policy for Acquisition

A. Acquisition Evaluation

1. All potential acquisitions must be evaluated first in accordance with the mission of the Museum, and then in terms of:
 - a. Documentation as to origin, previous ownership and use,
 - b. needs in the collection in terms of condition and duplication,

- c. possible resolution of legal or ethical standards regarding possession and use, and
 - d. storage availability.
 - 2. All acquisitions to the collection will be considered permanent as long as they retain their physical integrity, their identity, and their authenticity, and as long as they remain useful within the objectives and purposes of the Museum, and as long as the Museum retains the ability to store them properly.
 - 3. The Museum shall not acquire, either by purchase or gift, bequest or exchange, any object unless the City Manager is reasonably satisfied that:
 - a. The object has not been stolen.
 - b. The object, if exported from a foreign country, was done so legally.
 - c. The circumstances of the recovery of the object did not involve any unscientific or intentional destruction of a site or monument either in the United States or elsewhere.
- B. Accession Records: Adequate accession records evidencing the place and circumstances of the origin of each object in the Museum collections shall be obtained and maintained on Museum computer with a back-up disk provided to the City Treasurer.
- C. Method of Acquisition
 - 1. Acquisition through purchase, gift, bequest, or exchange shall be made whenever possible so that title to all objects acquired for the collection shall be obtained free and clear, without restriction as to use or future disposition.
 - 2. Objects with restrictions may be accepted only with the approval of the City Manager and City Commission.
 - 3. For an object acquired as an unconditional gift, a Con Foster Museum Donation Agreement shall be signed by the donor and the City Manager. In the case of an object acquired as a conditional gift, a Con Foster Museum Donation Agreement shall be signed by the donor and by the City Manager, Mayor, and City Clerk, upon approval and authorization of the City Commission.
 - 4. All gifts to the Museum, unconditional or conditional, must be reported to the City Commission.
 - 5. The Museum cannot provide appraisals for purposes of tax deduction or other external purposes. The Museum may, however, do its utmost to suggest reputable appraisers to assist the donors in obtaining appraisals for tax deduction purposes. The Museum cannot pay for appraisals done by other for the donor.
 - 6. For an object acquired through purchase, a purchase order shall be prepared in accordance with current City of Traverse City policy regarding purchase of property.
- D. Behavior: Employee, Volunteer, Any Individual or Organization Involved in the Museum's Management and/or Operations

1. All of the above shall act responsibly, ethically and legally in acquiring, accepting or disposing of any collection object.
 2. All of the above will not be discouraged from maintaining collections in their areas of responsibility within the Museum. However, they should provide the City Manager with a statement of their personal collections and submit records of private transactions. In instances where a privately acquired object is integral to the Museum's collection, the purchasing individual or organization shall offer the object to the Museum for their purchase price, to prevent personal profit. Collections acquired prior to employment or involvement with the Museum are not subject to this rule.
 3. All of the above shall not use their Museum affiliation for personal profit or engage in any activity that may compromise the integrity of the Museum or undermine the public confidence.
 4. All of the above shall comply with City Charter, Ordinance and Executive Orders regarding conflict of interest and private use of public property.
- E. Policy Violation: In difficult cases regarding the acceptance of objects by gift, bequest, exchange, purchase or loan, the final decision will be made by the City Manager and City Commission.

III. Policy for Deaccession and Disposition

- A. Criteria for Deaccession: Objects in the collection shall be retained permanently in the Museum as long as they continue the objectives and purposes of the museum and if the objects can be properly and adequately stored, maintained, preserved and used. Deaccessioning of objects may, in some cases, be considered when these factors can no longer be met, or in the interest of improving the collections and scope of the Con Foster Museum.
- B. Method for Deaccession: Objects in the collections shall be accessioned only upon the recommendation of the City Manager. Final approval must be granted by the City Commission.
- C. Restrictions to Deaccession and Disposition
 1. The Museum must have clear title to any object in the collection before it can be disposed of.
 2. If the object under consideration is subject to conditions or restrictions on its use or disposition, the Museum will adhere to same, unless otherwise ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.
 3. When necessary, the Museum shall seek legal counsel regarding restrictions.
 4. As a matter of courtesy, the Museum will attempt to inform the previous owners of the intended deaccession of donated objects, and this process will be in accordance with Section 11(3) of State of Michigan PA 24 of 1992.
 5. All information regarding the deaccessioned objects will be available to the general public upon request.
- D. Manner of Disposition
 1. Permanent removal and disposition of deaccessioned objects will be done in an ethical and legal manner.

2. The method of disposition chosen shall represent the best interests of the Museum, the public it serves, the public trust it represents in maintaining and preserving the collections, and the scholarly and cultural community it represents.
 3. Primary consideration shall be given to placing deaccessioned objects, either by gift, exchange or sale, in other tax-exempt institutions wherein they might serve a valid purpose in research, exhibition, education or public service. If objects are offered for sale elsewhere, primary consideration will be given to sale or advertised public auction or the public marketplace in a manner that will best project the objectives, purpose, activities and legal status of the Museum.
 4. Objects will not be given or sold, directly or indirectly, to individuals or organizations employed by or involved with the management and/or operations of the Museum or the City of Traverse City. In the event of a public sale, such individuals shall be eligible, as any other private individuals, to bid on offered objects.
 5. In the case of exchanges, when the fair market value is estimated to be over \$1000.00 for an individual object or when the aggregate value of the collection is estimated to be more than \$1000.00, an independent professional appraisal may be required by the City Commission to verify the equality of the exchange.
- E. Allocation of Proceeds: All proceeds realized from the deaccession of objects shall be placed in the City's General Fund and designated as Museum Collections Fund, and shall be allocated to support collections acquisition and conservation. No funds realized from the sale of objects shall be used to support the general museum or City operations.

IV. General Policy on use of the Collections

- A. Availability of the Collections
 1. Due to storage constraints, the collections of the Museum shall be available for examination and study only when on public exhibit, except by special arrangement.
 2. All standard Museum security procedures will apply to individuals studying or otherwise using the collections.
 3. The City Manager will make the final determination upon the credentials of those seeking access to the collections.
- B. Appraisals, Identification and Authentication: No member of the Museum staff or any individual or organization involved in the Museum's management and/or operations shall give appraisals for the purpose of establishing the tax deductible value of gifts offered to the Museum, nor shall they appraise, identify or otherwise authenticate objects for other persons or agencies under circumstances that would encourage or benefit illegal, unethical or irresponsible traffic in such objects. Identification and authentication may be given for professional or educational purposes and in compliance with the legitimate requests of professional or governmental bodies or their agents.

V. General Policy for Loans

- A. Policy for Loans to the Museum

1. The same criteria for the permanent acquisition of objects shall apply to the acceptance of loan projects. Loans shall not be accepted by the Museum except for the purposes of a special exhibit, educational or research purposes.
2. Items in the Museum for consideration as potential acquisitions will be considered as loan objects.
3. Receipt of loans shall conform to Section 11(3), PA 24 of 1992.
4. An Agreement Form for Incoming Loans to Con Foster Museum shall be completed and executed prior to receipt of all loans.

B. Policy for Loans from the Museum Collections

1. To further the general objectives of research, exhibition, education and public service, the Museum makes loans to responsible museums and other educational and public institutions.
2. Loaning of objects from the Museum's collections for decorative purposes will not be permitted.
3. The Museum shall not loan any object the condition of which is too unstable to withstand normal shipping or display procedures.
4. Loans shall not be made from Museum's collections to further commercial purposes without City Commission approval.
5. An Agreement for Outgoing Loans from Con Foster Museum shall be completed and executed prior to loans leaving the Museum.

VI. Insurance

- A. Insurance shall be carried on the permanent collections at their established current market value.
- B. Objects in the Museum on loan shall be insured at their current market value by the City unless otherwise specified per Loan Agreement.
- C. In instances of loans to other institutions or agencies from Museum, the borrowing organization must provide insurance on each object for the time that object is outside the Museum according to the terms of the Loan Agreement.

VII. Implementation

This policy statement shall be effective upon approval of the City Commission and shall apply to all collection objects listed on the Con Foster Museum Accessioning Inventory.

Approved by the City Commission (date): November 21, 1994

I hereby certify that the above policy was adopted by the City Commission of the City of Traverse City at its regular meeting of November 21, 1994, held in the Commission Chambers, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan.


 Benjamin C. Marentette, CMC, City Clerk