

Halifax Regional Municipality Archives Preliminary Acquisition Policy

Proviso

The Halifax Regional Municipality Archives (Municipal Archives) is in the process of establishing itself within the corporate structure of the Municipality and within the local heritage community. Its Acquisition Policy must reflect the Archives' mandate and role within both of those spheres; however in its early years of development the Municipal Archives must focus exclusively on its primary responsibility to acquire and preserve municipal records. This Preliminary Acquisition Policy will apply until the Municipal Archives, in consultation with the Council of Nova Scotia Archives, HRM's Heritage section, and the local communities, assesses the need to acquire, preserve and provide access to community records.

Policy Statement

In accordance with its mandate the Municipal Archives acquires archival records created by the Halifax Regional Municipality or its predecessor municipalities. Municipal records are the primary focus for acquisition.

The Municipal Archives may acquire archival records created by individuals, families, businesses or non-governmental organizations active within the sphere of the municipality, if the records are not within the acquisition mandate of a local repository.

The Municipal Archives is committed to the Council of Nova Scotia Archives' Cooperative Acquisition Strategy and so will not acquire records that are within the acquisition mandate of an established repository.

The Municipal Archives is committed to the principle of *respect de fonds* .

Objective

This policy delineates the sphere of acquisition for the Halifax Regional Municipality Archives and provides guidelines for acquiring additions to its holdings.

Scope

This policy applies to all potential acquisitions to the Halifax Regional Municipality Archives, and to all staff and volunteers working at the archives.

Pertinent Policies

- Appendix A: Appraisal Criteria

- Deaccessioning Policy

Definitions

Accessioning - the process by which the Archives gains administrative control over newly deposited material.

Archival records - records appraised for archival disposition, which are no longer required for current administrative, legal or financial needs (ie. their required retention period has expired)

Appraisal - the act of determining the disposition of records based on their current administrative, legal, or financial value, their historical, informational, evidential or research value, as well as their physical condition and accessibility

Records - recorded information, regardless of physical format or characteristics, created in the regular course of activity

Respect de fonds - principle that the archival records of a single creator will be preserved together, not split between archival repositories.

General Acquisition Policy Statements

The Municipal Archives may add to its holdings through direct transfers and deeds of gift. Temporary deposits of material will not be accepted.

All acquisitions will be accessioned.

The Municipal Archives may acquire records in any media format.

The Municipal Archives will not acquire records if it cannot acquire the funds to responsibly preserve and provide access to the records.

The Municipal Archives will not acquire non-record material (published material or artifacts) unless it is inextricably integral to records being acquired. The Municipal Archives will refer donors to the HRM Corporate Library regarding the acquisition of published material, and to area museums regarding the acquisition of artifacts.

The Municipal Archives may select among records acquired in order to preserve the best, most succinct archival record.

HRM Archives Acquisition Policy

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Policy Statements for the Acquisition of Municipal Government Records

The Municipal Archives will acquire inactive archival records created and/or acquired by all business units of the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Municipal government records will be transferred to the Archives through scheduled archival dispositions in the *HRM's Records Management Manual*; however direct transfer of unscheduled inactive records will be accepted if they are appraised as archival. The business unit will be encouraged to implement regular records scheduling in the future.

The Municipal Archives will recommend to the Information Resource Management Committee changes to records dispositions as currently set out in the *HRM Records Management Manual*, based on appraisal of the value of the records as evidence of functions, policies, decisions, procedures and operations of the HRM.

Policy Statements for the Acquisition of Non-Government Records

The Municipal Archives may acquire archival records created by individuals, families, businesses or non-governmental organizations active within the sphere of the municipality, if the records are not within the acquisition mandate of a local repository.

Municipal Archives will refer potential donors to the appropriate institution if the material offered falls within the acquisition mandate of another institution.

Municipal Archives will track offers of donations to assess the need to preserve community records; and, in the interim, request potential donors to continue to care for their records.

Municipal Archives will encourage donor organizations of any significant size to establish their own archives, but if this is not possible, Municipal Archives will pursue a partnership in which the organization transfers funds to assist in processing its records in return for having its records cared for by the Municipal Archives.

Municipal Archives will not accept donations of records for which the donor wishes to impose impracticable or lengthy access or use restrictions.

Municipal Archives will explain options available to donors in deciding the terms of the deeds of gift, especially regarding decisions about tax receipts, monetary appraisal, transfer/waiving of intellectual property rights, and imposing restrictions on access and use.

The Municipal Archives will create an appraisal report for each donation, which must be

approved by the Municipal Archivist. Appraisal criteria to be considered are outlined in Appendix A.

If material is found at the Municipal Archives without proper acquisition documentation, the Municipal Archivist will make a reasonable attempt to contact the owner or creator of left material. If no owner can be found, the Archives will assume ownership and acquire or not acquire the material according to its acquisition policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Information Resource Management Committee - promotes the implementation of the *HRM Records Management Manual*, and specifically, the regular transfer to Municipal Archives of municipal records with an archival disposition. Considers recommendations to change the disposition of records series.

Manager, Information Resource Management - will ensure that this Acquisition Policy is implemented, and that the prerequisite developments towards a more formal Acquisition Policy, as outlined in the *Proviso* above are pursued.

Municipal Archivist - will assess the need to acquire community records. The Municipal Archivist will appraise and acquire archival records according to professional archival best practices. The Municipal Archivist will maintain current and adequate Acquisition Policies and Procedures.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in two years. Comments or concerns should be directed to the Municipal Archivist.