

## REPORT

### Council

**Meeting Date: April 25, 2022**

---

**FROM:** Recreation and Culture

**DATE:** April 12, 2022

**SUBJECT:** **Oakville Museum Coach House Operating Model and Fee Request**

**LOCATION:** 114 King Street, Oakville

**WARD:** Ward 3

Page 1

---

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the report titled Oakville Museum Coach House Operating Model and Fee Request dated April 12, 2022, from the Recreation and Culture department be received;
2. That the proposed rental fee outlined in Appendix A, be approved and appended to the 2022 Recreation and Culture Department Rates and Fees schedule.

#### **KEY FACTS:**

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The Oakville Museum Coach House Restoration, a \$2.75M Capital Project approved by Council on April 2, 2019 is scheduled to be completed in April 2022.
- This restoration represents a significant enhancement to the museum's ability to offer a mix of cultural programming, exhibits, events and heritage programming delivered by the Recreation and Culture department as well as public access through strategic partnerships and rentals.
- The central multipurpose space will be available for rent for small scale events.
- Given its unique landmark destination and the important heritage features of the Oakville Museum Coach House, a new facility rental fee structure has been proposed for private events.
- The base rate is based on market benchmarks, and consideration of a discount for eligible non-profit community groups is included.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Coach House is one of the historic building amenities that comprise the Oakville Museum campus at Erchless Estate, a property which is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. There is additional protection of the property through an easement agreement with the Ontario Heritage Trust, which requires the Trust's approval for alterations to the property, including the Erchless Estate buildings and the Coach House building. The property has been recognized under the [Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy](#), adopted by Council in 2014, has its own Cultural Heritage Landscape Plan and is covered by the *The Livable Oakville Plan* which includes the following language:

5.3.3 The Town shall conserve cultural heritage landscapes in accordance with the *Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy*.

The grounds of Erchless estate are also a registered archaeological site.

The Coach House was designed by the architectural firm of Dick & Wickson. It was constructed for Alan Chisholm in 1899 as part of a major renovation of the landscape and estate. Originally, the layout included stalls for horses, a tack room, a manure pit, a second storey hayloft and a large central space for carriages, which was converted to a garage in the early 20th century. The eastern end of the building was a residence for the estate's gardener. Beginning in the late 1940s and until her death in 1964, the gardener's residence was used as an office and examining room for Dr. Juliet Chisholm's pediatric practice.

In 1976, the Erchless Estate was purchased by the town. Over the years, various studies have been undertaken to determine the best use of the Coach House. After extensive public consultation, a team led by TCI Management Consultants in 2016-2017, recommended that the building be redeveloped as an extension of the Oakville Museum's exhibition and programming space and recommended the following:

- The Recreation and Culture Department should plan and operate the Coach House as an extension of the Oakville Museum's current exhibition, programming and interpretive responsibilities.
- The Coach House should be renovated to allow public use in a multipurpose capability, which should include: museum exhibits; additional programming opportunities; a small outdoor performance venue promoting the culture and heritage of Oakville; space for an artist-in residence program; and be available to the public and community groups for the holding of appropriate small scale events. The facility should be designed to allow flexibility of uses.
- A small catering kitchen or server facility should be part of the concept to support events and activities requiring some level of food service.

- A re-purposed Coach House should be able to be programmed and staffed by the existing full-time complement of Museum staff and volunteers. Additional part-time staff may be required for an expansion of revenue generating programs such as summer camps.
- Plans to restore the Coach House focused on goals identified in the Town of Oakville's Cultural Plan 2016-2021 that highlighted the need to invest in cultural anchors specifically, to drive the following measures:
  - Percentage of residents satisfied with arts, culture and heritage offerings
  - Number of visits to cultural facilities and spaces
  - Oakville museum attendance
  - Number of artists engaged in the community
  - Number of registered cultural programs offered
  - Accessibility of arts, culture and heritage offerings
  - Number of registered cultural programs offered

**COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

The renovation of the Coach House has transformed this unique building into a mixed-use facility that will expand museum programming as well as offering a mix of arts, cultural and heritage programming and increase public visits to the museum campus. The Oakville Museum team will actively program the Coach House space for exhibitions, courses, workshops, camps and school programs.

In alignment with MS-FAC-01: Facility Allocation Policy, town programming and Community Organizations in Recreation and Education (CORE) organizations will be prioritized.

The Coach House will also be available for appropriate small scale rentals that would be in alignment with the high passive use of the park and neighbouring residents. It is anticipated that there will be demand for small private functions, receptions and ceremonies. Typically, ideal rental times, weekend afternoons and evenings, are not preferred times for programming. Staff will assess demand through the first year of operation and ensure appropriate event restrictions including type and frequency of events and sound mitigation are implemented.

The new rental fee, reduced rate eligibility and application of existing fees to this new facility is required to administer facility rental contracts.

Community Organizations who meet the CORE General Membership criteria will be eligible for the reduced facility rental rate proposed in Appendix A, which is fifty percent less than the private rental rate. This is in line with the QEPCCC CORE Culture facility rental rate reductions, but expands eligibility to Core General

Membership. CORE General Membership criteria is outlined in Appendix B, Oakville Museum Coach House User Guide.

Administration of facility rentals at the coach house will follow the existing Policy MS-REC-004 – [Administration of Recreation and Culture Programs and Services Policy](#) and Procedure – MS-REC-004-001 [Administration of Recreation and Culture Programs and Services Procedure](#).

## **CONSIDERATIONS:**

### **(A) PUBLIC**

The recommendations outlined in this report would expand programming and increase public visits. Coach House rentals limited to appropriate small scale and community use to reduce the impacts to neighbouring community and residential areas.

### **(B) FINANCIAL**

Coach House should be able to be programmed and staffed by the existing full-time complement of Museum staff and volunteers. Additional part-time staff may be required for an expansion of revenue generating programs such as summer camps.

### **(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

This report would provide guidelines to staff regarding usage of the Museum Coach House.

### **(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to • enhance our cultural environment • enhance our engaged community.

### **(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

N/A

## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – **Oakville Museum Coach House Rates and Fees**

Appendix B - **Oakville Museum Coach House User Guide**

Prepared by:

Robin Howarth

Acting – Senior manager of Cultural Services

Recommended by:  
Julie Mitchell  
Director - Recreation and Culture

Submitted by:  
Colleen Bell  
Commissioner- Community Services