



Report n° PROG2025-004
Date: September 25, 2025
Submitted by: Martin Irwin
Subject: Clarence-Rockland Museum Governance and
Management Interim Agreement

Nature/Goal

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of the proposed interim agreement concerning the governance and management of the Clarence-Rockland Museum.

Directive/Previous policy

On 11 December 2024, Council passed Resolution 2024-128, approving the Clarence-Rockland Museum Strategic Plan as outlined in Report PROG2024-003.

Subsequently, on 11 June 2025, Council passed Resolution 2025-54, authorising the Clarence-Rockland Public Library Board to assume governance and management responsibilities for the Clarence-Rockland Museum. The resolution also authorised the administration to negotiate an agreement with the Library Board, to be presented to Council for approval at a later date.

Department's recommendation

WHEREAS the Library Board and the City have negotiated and agreed upon the terms of an interim agreement for the governance and management of the Clarence-Rockland Museum; and

WHEREAS both parties wish to enter into this interim agreement to ensure the continuity of Museum operations while a long-term agreement is developed;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council approve the Clarence-Rockland Museum Governance and Management Interim Agreement, as recommended.

ATTENDU QUE le conseil d'administration de la bibliothèque et la municipalité ont négocié et convenu des modalités d'une entente provisoire pour la gouvernance et la gestion du Musée Clarence-Rockland; et

ATTENDU QUE les deux parties souhaitent conclure cette entente provisoire afin d'assurer la continuité des activités du musée lors de l'élaboration d'une entente à long terme ;

QU'IL SOIT RÉSOLU que le comité plénier recommande au conseil d'approuver l'entente provisoire de la gouvernance et de la gestion du Musée de Clarence-Rockland, tel que recommandé.

Background

As there were previously no formal strategies or plans set in place for the Clarence-Rockland Museum, the administration recognized the importance of developing a strategic plan that will guide the City in the Museum's operations through clear strategic goals into 2030. The plan was presented to Council and approved in late 2024.

The Clarence-Rockland Museum Strategic Plan identifies six critical issues. These key issues shape the goals of the Strategic Plan:

1. Establishing a governance and management framework
2. Professionalization of staff and operations
3. Improving physical access
4. Increasing presence and awareness
5. Improving intellectual access and overall visitor experience
6. Connecting and integrating with the community.

The administration explored various governance models and weighed the benefits and implications of each of them. It considered factors such as resources, accountability, community engagement, and the consultant's guidance when recommending that the Clarence-Rockland Public Library Board assume governance and management of the Clarence-Rockland Museum.

Discussion

The purpose of the interim agreement is to formalize the responsibilities of both parties to ensure continuity of Clarence-Rockland Museum operations during the negotiation of a long-term agreement and the completion of the sale of the Clarence-Rockland Museum property, located at 687 Laurier Street. If approved by Council, it shall remain in effect until the execution of the long-term agreement.

A clause in the interim agreement stipulates that the Clarence-Rockland Public Library Board will develop a long-term operating plan for the Museum. This plan includes a proposed annual operating budget, which will be subject to Council approval and annexed to the long-term operating agreement.

As the Museum building remains closed to the public due to non-compliance with AODA standards, health and safety concerns, and to support the sorting and inventory of artefacts, alternative exhibition spaces will be made available within municipal facilities. These spaces will allow the public to view artefacts of historical and community significance in a safe and accessible environment.

Consultation

N/A

Recommendations or comments from committee/other departments

N/A

Financial impact (expenses/material/etc.)

An advance of \$100,100 will be provided to the Library Board as seed funding, pending the completion of the sale of the Clarence-Rockland Museum property located at 687 Laurier Street. The funds will be advanced from the general reserve and reimbursed upon receipt of proceeds from the completed sale.

Legal implications

The interim agreement has been reviewed and approved by the City's legal counsel.

It stipulates that the Library Board will manage and operate the Clarence-Rockland Museum in accordance with the Standards for Community Museums in Ontario, as set out by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

Additionally, the City will retain ownership of the Museum's artefact collection for the duration of the interim agreement. The formal transfer of ownership to the Library Board will require legal oversight to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and best practices.

Risk management

The Museum currently has limited municipal oversight. The implementation of a governance and management framework, through the Clarence-Rockland Public Library Board will address this critical issue identified in the Strategic Plan.

Strategic implications

The City's vision as outlined in the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan is that "Clarence-Rockland will continue to be a growing and prosperous community with an enduring small-town feel." The Museum has an important role to play in fostering this vision through engaging exhibitions and programming that bring residents together to explore and discover their history.

The recommendation of this report is aligned with all three of the City's Strategic Plan; Balanced Growth, High Quality Services, and Community Cohesion.

Supporting documents

Attachment 1: Clarence-Rockland Museum Strategic Plan

Attachment 2: Plan stratégique du Musée de Clarence-Rockland

Attachment 3: Clarence-Rockland Museum Governance and Management Interim Agreement