DECISION SOUGHT – NEW APPROACH TO FUNDING OF CITY MUSEUMS

To: Executive Policy Committee
From: Christian Robin and Daria Rakowski, Co-Chairs, City of Winnipeg Museums Board
Date: November 18, 2014

BACKGROUND

Winnipeg City Council created the Winnipeg Museums Board in 2006, made up of heritage and museums experts appointed by Council, to be the municipal grant-making authority to a specific list of (14) city museums. Since inception, and despite formal recommendations to Council through a Heritage Preservation Policy Committee Report, the Board has been only an advisor to Council, with Council ultimately deciding on the disposition of each individual grant to each museum, totaling nearly $1 million annually.

KEY ISSUES

1. NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY: While the Board has attempted to help City Council make the best use of its museum-dedicated resources, with no formally adopted vision and mandate for the Board, it has no authority to ensure its recommendations are adopted, and the City has no real way to measure success.

2. NEED FOR AN APOLITICAL APPROACH: The member museums are advocating directly to Council and to individual Councilors for a greater share of the available grant pool, ultimately undermining the process and disregarding the very reason the Board was created by Council in the first place.

3. STATUS QUO IS NO LONGER AN OPTION:

a) Recent budget debates surrounding museums funding have put the spotlight on the status quo and demonstrated the need for a better approach.

b) Current Citizen members of the Board, who have embarked on a very thorough and highly consultative strategic planning process, unanimously agree that the status quo is not an acceptable way forward – a decision is needed on the mandate and powers of this City-created Board.

PROPOSAL

The City of Winnipeg Museums Board wishes to de-politicize the funding of museums, while dramatically improving the accountability of this funding by setting measurable goals and reporting publicly on progress. The Board proposes that City Council formally approve and enact the remaining unmet 2006 Heritage Preservation Policy Committee recommendations. These recommendations (**attached in Annex A**) were intended to provide greater flexibility to Council, greater transparency to taxpayers and improved returns on investment with individual museums. Concluding these recommendations will allow Council to focus its decisions at the macro-political and macro-economic levels (i.e. how much funding should be allocated annually overall to the fourteen member museums, without being drawn into debate about individual funding to each museum).

DECISION SOUGHT

The City of Winnipeg Museums Board is seeking the endorsement of the Executive Policy Committee to City Council that City Council:

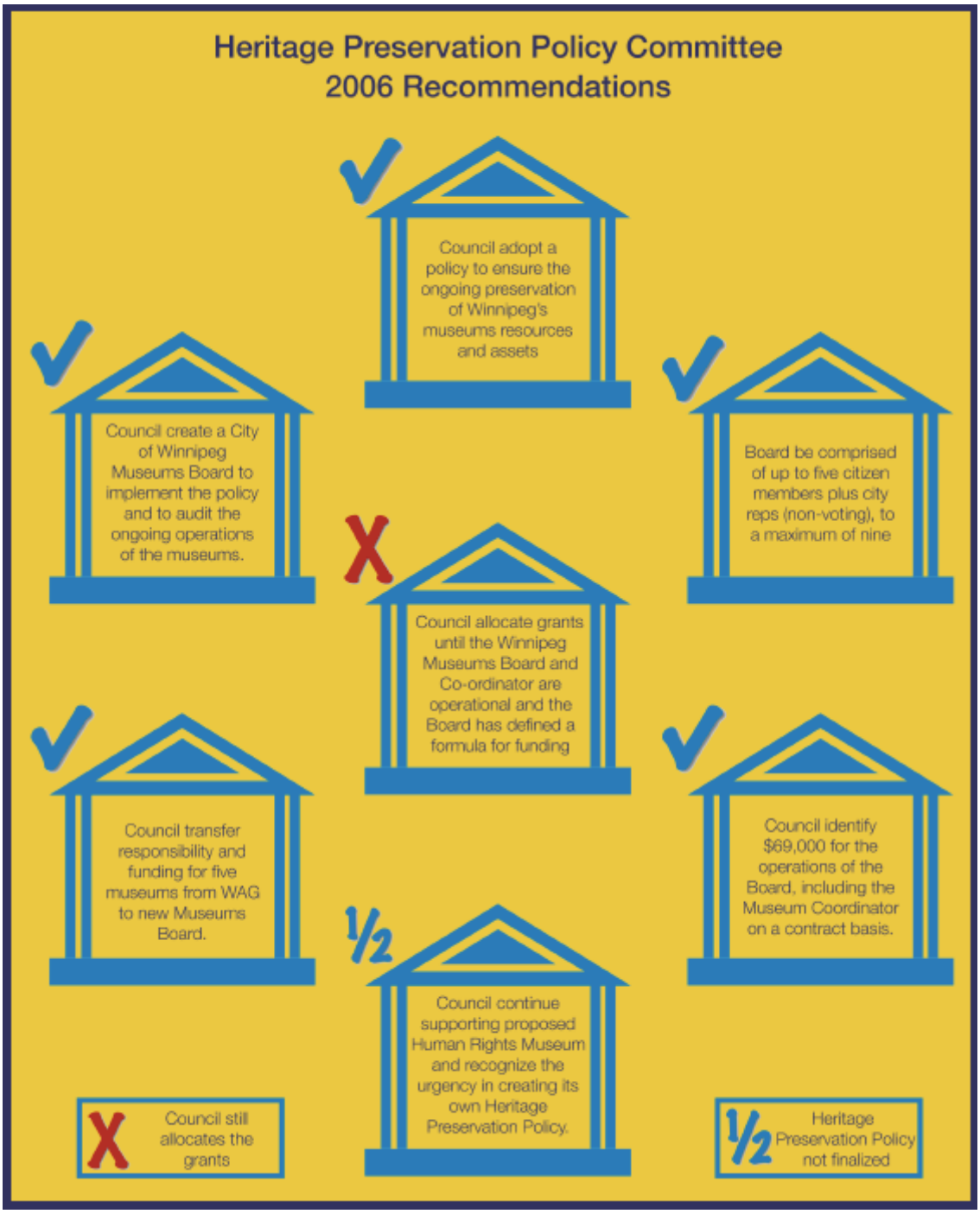
1. Delegate to the Board ultimate decision-making authority for the allocation of individual museum grants.

2. Approve a Vision and Mission and Mandate (**attached in Annex B**) that will, along with a defined funding formula, serve as the foundation for the juried allocation of the individual museum grants, as well as mandate the Board to play a coordinating role in heritage preservation with all museums within the City of Winnipeg to increase return on investment through partnerships, shared services and coordinated expertise.

ANNEX A – STATUS OF 2006 COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

To: Executive Policy Committee

From: City of Winnipeg Museums Board



ANNEX B – CITY OF WINNIPEG MUSEUMS BOARD PROPOSED VISION AND PRINCIPLES

To: Executive Policy Committee

From: City of Winnipeg Museums Board

VISION

Winnipeg's Museums, its heritage resources, artifacts and historic buildings are protected and preserved for generations to come. All people have access to Winnipeg Museums; they visit, volunteer and participate in their programs and activities, recognizing that Winnipeg Museums are important and vibrant neighborhood gathering places for the rich interpretation of one's past, present and future.

MISSION

To Fund, support and foster development of, for and within the Winnipeg Museums community, according to rigorous criteria of best practices, on behalf of the people of Winnipeg.

PRINCIPLES/VALUES

The Board will be:

- Transparent and accountable to the citizens of Winnipeg
- Rigorous, equitable and fair in their consideration of museums in Winnipeg;
- Creative advocates for museums in Winnipeg;
- Collaborative partners with museums in Winnipeg, seeking input, assisting where possible, and recognizing that different museums have different needs;
- Museum driven - the investments of the members of the Board are for the betterment of the City and its museums; knowing that museums and heritage are essential to a vibrant and healthy community
- Engaged with museums, and;
- Long-term focused.

GOALS/MANDATE

- Ensure the ongoing preservation of Winnipeg's museums resources and assets.
- Define a measurable and rigorous formula for funding.
- Implement the funding policy and audit the ongoing operations of the museums that receive grant funds and in-kind services from the City. Ensure accountability for the taxpayers' investment in museums.
- Support the improvement of and overall quality of Winnipeg Museums.
- Complement and enhance the Winnipeg Museum experience in support of CMHR.
- Advise the City on Heritage Policy pertaining to Museums, proposing solutions to challenges in the ongoing landscape.
- Explore partnerships and initiatives with other groups, including funding bodies, in support of Winnipeg Museums.
- Develop and maintain a collaborative relationship with all Winnipeg Museums and city staff working for and with the museum sector.
- Promote and advertise, visitation, participation, volunteerism, and support for Winnipeg Museums. Increase public awareness.
- Successfully advocate on behalf of Winnipeg Museums for continued and appropriate levels of funding and support.