

**City of Walker Historical Commission
Collections Management Policy
August 7, 2012**

Walker Historical Commission Mission Statement:

The Walker Historical Commission seeks to deepen community awareness and understanding in the City of Walker through the preservation, promotion, presentation and enhancement of Walker's historical resources.

Purpose of the Collection Policy:

This policy defines the scope of the Walker Historical Commission collections and establishes guidelines for acquisition, disposition, care and use of these collections. It is intended that these policies be presumptively followed in collection management and de-accessioning of all documents and artifacts.

Definitions:

1. *Acquisition* – A collection acquired and added to the archive through legal means, entailing physical custody and the tender and acceptance of legal title.
2. *Accession* – Assigning the collection of materials a unique number and creating a record for that collection on a database.
3. *Provenance* – Place of origin. The creator or generator of certain archival materials and the theory that certain materials from one creator or generator should not be mixed with others.
4. *Access* – The right, opportunity, or means of finding, using, or approaching documents and information. The authority to obtain information from the archival materials.
5. *Copyright* – A property right that protects the interests of authors or originators of works in tangible media.
6. *De-accessioning* – The formal process used to remove an artifact or document from a collection.
7. *Loans* – The temporary transfer of artifacts to or from the museum for a stated time and stated purpose. A loan is not a change in ownership.

What the Walker Historical Commission Will Accept and Collect:

1. The Walker Historical Commission may accept items that have an origin in, have been used by people within, or represent items within the geographical limits of the city/township of Walker and surrounding area.
2. The Walker Historical Commission may accept items that were created or used between 1830-present.
3. The Walker Historical Commission may accept artifacts that have a solid connection to the City of Walker.
4. The Walker Historical Commission will accept items such as News Print, Graphics, Manuscripts, Appliances , Furniture, Tools and Machinery, Weapons, Musical Instruments, Decoration, and Clothing considering above criteria.

Collection Policies:

1. The Walker Historical Commission welcomes gifts of artifacts that may assist us in carrying out our mission to preserve and celebrate Walker's past. However, due to space and budget constraints not every donation can or will be accepted. These decisions may be based on the following list of standards:

- Relevance to Mission Statement
- Timeliness
- Interpretive quality
- Scholarly quality
- Physical condition
- Appropriateness for collection

Before considering acceptance of a donation a **Request to Donation Form** which contains the following information should be completed by the potential donor:

- Item Type
- Item Description
- Item Age
- Item Significance the City of Walker

In order to establish scope of donation a member of the Walker Historical Commission should contact the potential donor to view a piece, or the entirety of the donation.

Items abandoned in the Walker Historical Commission's possession without having gone through the donation policy procedure will not be guaranteed acceptance and may be discarded at the Commission's discretion.

The Walker Historical Commission has the right to reject donations when necessary or appropriate.

All donated items accepted by the Walker Historical Commission immediately become the property of the Commission upon acceptance. The Walker Historical Commission retains the right to dispose of unneeded items in any way it sees fit (trade, sale, discard, donate). The Walker Historical Commission will immediately own all rights to accepted donation's including copyright where applicable.

Donations accompanied by terms and conditions that conflict with the above statement may not be accepted. Donations with excessive conditions may not be accepted.

The Walker Historical Commission will not place a value on gifts for tax purposes.

Anonymous donations will be accepted if so requested at the time of the donation.

Any donation accepted into the Walker Historical Commission collections will be accompanied by an **Acceptance Agreement** or other agreement, which legally transfers ownership of the artifact from the donor to the Walker Historical Commission and outlines the terms and conditions of the gift.

2. The Walker Historical Commission welcomes bequests of artifacts that may assist it in carrying out its mission to preserve and celebrate Walker's past. Accepted bequests will be judged with the same criteria as gifts and may be sold without being accessioned or de-accessioned.

These items will be identified as "Sold by the Walker Historical Commission, for the benefit of mission" and funds earned will be used for the operation of the Walker Historical Commission.

Any bequest accepted into the Walker Historical Commission collections will be accompanied by an **Acceptance Agreement** or other agreement, which legally transfers ownership of the artifact from the donor to the Walker Historical Commission and outlines the terms and conditions of the gift.

3. The Walker Historical Commission may purchase items that expand or enhance its collection. Proposals for purchase will be made to the Acquisitions Committee from within the Walker Historical Commission. The Acquisitions Committee shall approve each purchase using the same set of standards applied to gift acceptance.

The Walker Historical Commission will only purchase materials that the seller has a legal right to sell.

The Walker Historical Commission will not purchase materials for its collections from Commission members.

4. The Walker Historical Commission may elect to commission artists and/or craftspeople to create replicas of artifacts for display. These artifacts may not be represented in the collection or the original artifact may be harmed by being on display. Proposals for commission will be made to the Walker Historical Commission from within the Commission. The Walker Historical Commission shall announce a call for proposals for the production of a particular artifact. The Acquisitions Committee shall select a proposal from the resulting applicants. Reproduced artifacts will be accessioned into the collection.

Acquisition Committee:

All acquisitions will be approved by the Acquisitions Committee which shall be made up of three members including two members of the Walker Historical Commission and one City Commissioner.

All de-accessioning decisions will be made by the same Committee.

Acquisition Criteria:

1. Items must remain relevant to the Walker Historical Commission's Mission Statement and Purpose.
2. Items must represent an aspect of historical importance in the Walker community or add to the scope of the Walker Historical Commission collection.
3. Items with unknown provenance may not be accepted. Items should have a solid connection to the city/township of Walker.
4. Items must be in good condition. The Walker Historical Commission must be good stewards of our funds, for this reason the Commission may not accept artifacts that require extensive repair or extenuating conservation methods to maintain.
5. Items must deepen the community's awareness and understanding in the City of Walker. For this reason items not easily displayed due to size, material, or monetary value may not be accepted.
6. Unique or rare items may be accepted if the Commission has the resources to conserve and protect the item. If not, the Walker Historical Commission may attempt to locate a local museum or institution that will accept the item.

7. Items serving as a standard to their type may be highly valued. The Walker Historical Commission wishes to portray an accurate representation of Walker's past, therefore items that conform to the norm shall be valued over atypical examples of the same type.

8. Items already present in the collection may be accepted if the quality or significance of the item is greater than the Walker Historical Commissions collections' artifact, or, the acquisition of the item may allow greater interpretive use of either artifact.

9. Items known to have a fraudulent, unethical or illegal background will not be accepted or retained. The Walker Historical Commission abides all federal, state or local laws and ordinances when acquiring artifacts for its collection.

10. Items that present an unreasonable risk to the collection or staff may not be accepted. At this time the Walker Historical Commission does not have the resources to store items that pose an environmental risk.

Accessioning Procedures:

1. An artifact is to be considered for acceptance after completion of a **Request to Donate Form** by the potential donor and any investigation and research the Acquisition Committee determines is reasonable.

2. After the Acquisitions Committee accepts a donation an **Acceptance Agreement** citing donation/s will be provided to the donor by the Walker Historical Commission. The **Acceptance Agreement** shall legally transfer ownership of the artifact from the donor to the Walker Historical Commission and outline the terms and conditions of the gift. A copy of this Agreement should be made available to the donor for their records.

Wherever possible the Walker Historical Commission should obtain and retain the copyright to all artifacts and items in its collection. At the time of the acceptance of an artifact the **Acceptance Agreement** should expressly state that the copyrights of the artifact be granted to the Commission. Donations with restrictions on the grant of all copyright interests should be carefully considered. Once obtained the Commission should freely allow duplication of its copyrighted materials where it would advance the mission of the Walker Historical Commission but these rights should be retained for as long as the artifact is in the collection.

3. Access to and use of the information, images, media and sounds contained within the Walker Historical Commission Collections are limited to private use by donors, descendants of original benefactors, and museums/other institutions.

All other requests will be granted on a case by case basis and the Walker Historical Commission reserves the rights to charge a "service fee." The Acquisitions Committee or designated

representative must approve and supervise all requests for access. Each occurrence or period of access shall be recorded by an **Access Agreement** which covers the terms of the access period.

Commercial use or publication without written permission is strictly prohibited. Copying, redistribution, or exploitation for personal or corporate gain is not permitted.

De-Accessioning Procedures:

1. In order to maintain the integrity of its collection the Walker Historical Commission may de-accession artifacts. An artifact may be de-accessioned when:

- Artifact is no longer useful to the purpose or activities of the Walker Historical Commission
- The Walker Historical Commission can no longer provide necessary care for the artifact
- The Walker Historical Commission cannot display the artifact due to artifacts value, condition, lack of documentation or legal constraints
- Artifact is dangerous or may cause damage to other artifacts in the collection or to commission members working in the collection
- Monetary value justifies the sale

2. Proposals for de-accessioning will come from within the Walker Historical Commission and be submitted to the Acquisitions Committee.

3. If an artifact is approved for de-accession the Walker Historical Commission will locate the **Acceptance Agreement** or other paperwork to establish its legal ownership of an artifact.

De-accessioned artifacts will be offered to local museums/institutions, the original owner/donor, or be disposed or otherwise destroyed at the discretion of the Acquisitions Committee.

A permanent record of the artifact's de-accession and subsequent disposition will be kept on file by the Walker Historical Commission.

Loans:

As part of its mission to share Walker's historical resources and deepen community awareness, the Walker Historical Commission may loan artifacts in the collection to other museums and institutions. Requests from other museums or institutions for research or exhibit should be made in writing to the Commission and include the following information:

- The intended use and purpose of the loan
- Description of the material requested in as much detail as possible
- Where, and under whose responsibility, the artifacts will be housed while on loan
- The length of time the loan is needed

Loan requests will be reviewed by the Walker Historical Commission. The Walker Historical Commission will loan only to museums and institutions, not to individuals.

Some artifacts in the Commission's collections may not be available for loan. This includes artifacts judged too fragile or too environmentally sensitive to travel and artifacts needed for interpretation or display by the Commission. Care and guidelines for the artifact requested for loan maybe specified by the Walker Historical Commission.

All artifacts on loan from the Walker Historical Commission may be subject to the following stipulations:

- All loans must be documented with a **Loan Agreement** which conforms to the terms and conditions set forth in this section.
- Loaned artifacts may not be transferred or forwarded to another individual or institution, even if the person who requested the loan changes institutional affiliation, without prior written permission from the Walker Historical Commission.
- Artifacts on loan for research should be housed securely and according to professional standards. Artifacts should be protected from extremes of temperature and humidity, from insects, vermin, and dirt. Artifacts should be protected from light when not being studied. In the case of loans for exhibit, the Walker Historical Commission may specify handling and mounting methods, and lighting and security guidelines. In some cases, a borrowing institution will be asked to submit a facilities report before an exhibit loan can be approved.
- Loaned artifacts should not be replicated, remounted, reframed, repaired, coated for photography, fumigated, or in any way altered without prior written permission from the Walker Historical Commission.
- Exchange or permanent acquisition of a loaned artifact may be permitted or requested by the Walker Historical Commission.
- Documentation affixed to artifacts on loan such as accession or catalogue numbers must not be altered or discarded.
- Artifacts returning from loan may be the responsibility of the borrower until received by the Walker Historical Commission. Returning artifacts should be accompanied by an invoice, packed properly and with the same care as they were when sent out, and returned by the same shipping method, or as specified by the Walker Historical Commission at the time of return.

- The Walker Historical Commission reserves the right to require insurance be placed on its loaned artifacts. The Walker Historical Commission will indicate the appropriate value for insurance on the **Loan Agreement**; artifacts should be insured for this value.
- The Walker Historical Commission should receive credit in exhibit labels, catalogues, and publications based on the use of loaned artifacts from its collections.
- Failure to follow the Museum's policies may jeopardize the borrowing institution's future loan privileges.

Incoming Loans

The Walker Historical Commission accepts loans for research and for special exhibits. Any transaction whereby artifacts and/or documentary materials enter the Walker Historical Commission's possession must be covered by a **Loan Agreement**. It is the responsibility of the Walker Historical Commission to ensure that necessary documentation, including required permits, is in place for loans involving artifacts. The Walker Historical Commission will not borrow artifacts that knowingly have been collected or imported in violation of local, state, federal or international restrictions, or which may otherwise place the Commission in a compromising legal or ethical position.

Anyone who borrows material in the name of the Walker Historical Commission must agree to abide by these conditions.

Research Loans

A request to borrow research artifacts from another institution or individual should be made in writing. All incoming loans must be signed for by a member of the Acquisitions Committee. Insurance arrangements for incoming loans should be based on the value placed on the loan by the lender. All conditions set on an incoming loan must be reviewed by the Walker Historical Commission. Conditions set on use and storage of artifacts must be achievable. Once accepted, conditions will be binding, and the Walker Historical Commission will make every effort to adhere to these restrictions. No portion of an incoming loan may be transferred to a location or person that has not previously been approved in writing by the lending institution. Borrowed artifacts may not be altered in any way without written permission. It is the responsibility of the borrower to see that a loan is returned in a timely fashion. Artifacts that become damaged or lost while in the Walker Historical Commission's possession must immediately be documented in writing, and the lending institution must be notified.

Exhibit Loans

A request to borrow artifacts for exhibit must be made in writing. When an exhibit loan has been approved, originals or copies of the loan agreement, environmental requirements, or other written agreements may be given to the Acquisitions Committee. The Walker Historical

Commission completes condition reports in consultation with the Acquisitions Committee, and oversees compliance with conditions (mounting method, environmental considerations, etc.) set by the loaning institution.

Collection Management:

1. The Walker Historical Commission upholds its mission to the care and presentation of the artifacts in its collections.
2. The Walker Historical Commission shall preserve artifacts in accordance with the highest standards of conservation.
3. The Walker Historical Commission shall maintain an Emergency/Disaster Plan.
4. The Walker Historical Commission preservation standards shall be maintained for artifacts on loan to the Commission or borrowed from the Commission.
5. The Walker Historical Commission will provide adequate space, environment (specified below) and safe keeping for its collections.
6. The Walker Historical Commission will use its best efforts to store its collection in a facility providing a temperature controlled environment between 68 to 72 degrees that does not fluctuate weekly or seasonally due to maintenance practices or inadequate environmental control equipment. In addition; this facility should also maintain humidity levels of approximately 45–55 percent with minimum fluctuations.
7. The Walker Historical Commission may store collection artifacts in acid free containers and/or with acid free tissue paper, foam, folders and hangers. If the artifact is too large for a container, the artifact will be draped in a cover made from undyed, unbleached, cotton muslin.
8. The Walker Historical Commission may minimize artifacts in the collection exposure to indoor and outdoor light as much as possible while considering the artifacts use for interpretation. Artifacts in storage will be enclosed, if possible due to size and material of artifact, inside an acid free storage container or draped in a cover made from undyed, unbleached, cotton muslin.
9. The Walker Historical Commission should maintain an archival database which may be used to record as much of the following information as accurately possible:
 - When, how, and from whom the artifact was acquired (establishing legal ownership)
 - When the artifact was accessioned and with what accession number
 - A complete catalog entry including a full description of the artifact as well as a photograph
 - Details of condition of the artifact, any damage should be noted

- Details of any conservation treatments on the artifact
- The exact location of the artifact

Accession numbers should be well-secured to each artifact and stored in its appropriate location according to size, type and age.

Electronic database will be backed up monthly to a server or other secure location separate from collections area. Paper documentation such as donor agreements will be scanned and stored electronically and then locked in a secure designated area on or off site.

10. The Walker Historical Commission must maintain a secure environment to protect the collection. For this reason only members of the Walker Historical Commission and specified parties will be granted restricted access to the collections. When requested, museums, family descendants of original benefactor, and/or other institutions, will be allowed access to the Commission's collection. All other requests will be granted on a case by case basis and for bona fide research purposes only, and the Walker Historical Commission reserves the rights to charge a "service fee." The Collections Chairperson or designated representative must approve and supervise all requests for access. Each occurrence or period of access shall be recorded by an **Access Agreement** which covers the terms of the access period.