

January 2026 | Region of Peel IWG Meeting

Current State Assessment and Collections Implications

PAMA's Business and
Transition Planning
Framework



AGENDA

1. Scope and study process
2. Key Findings – Current State Assessment
3. Key Findings – Collections Assessment
4. Implications and Recommendations
5. Questions and Discussion

01

SCOPE AND STUDY PROCESS

SCOPE OF WORK

You have directed us to develop the following:

- A current state assessment for PAMA's markets, operations and facilities
- A collection assessment

- Key goals include:
 - To inform the proposed transfer of PAMA from the Region of Peel to the City of Brampton by outlining opportunities, issues or concerns
 - To set the stage for subsequent work by Ernst and Young

INTRODUCTION - STUDY PROCESS

Research and Consultations

- Background review and startup meeting
- Contextual research
- Staff workshop
- On-site visit to PAMA
- Regular IWG meetings

Implications and Recommendations

- Draft report
- Presentation to IWG
- Final report and Council presentation

We are here

02

KEY FINDINGS – CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

PAMA AND INDUSTRY AVERAGES

- We compared PAMA to performance benchmarks from the overall museum/gallery context
- Comparative data were also available in the context of medium and large Ontario museum averages, Canadian averages and U.S. medians
- While PAMA would technically be classified as a "large" museum according to budget size, we have compared to both "medium" and "large" categories for fairer comparisons

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

PAMA AND INDUSTRY AVERAGES

- On attendance, PAMA is close to the average for a medium-sized Ontario museums (18,600 per year at PAMA in 2024 vs. average figure of 17,869)
- Other measures of impact exist; PAMA reached 115,000 virtual visitors in 2025
- PAMA falls between the large and medium-sized categories on staffing with 18.5 FTEs (medium average is 3 FT and 6 PT, large average is 44 and 37).

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

PAMA AND INDUSTRY AVERAGES

- Average operating budgets for medium-sized and large Ontario museums are \$424,000 and \$11.5 million, respectively
- PAMA falls between these categories at \$6.3 million
- PAMA's staffing costs as a percentage of total operating costs are in line with industry averages (46% at PAMA vs. 45% for all Ontario museums and 46% for all Canadian museums)

MUSEUM INDUSTRY FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

<u>Comparative Sources</u> of Operating Revenues	Canadian Museums, 2017	American Museums, 2017	American Museums, 2024
Earned Income as % Total	38%	35%	32%
Government Sources %	49%	19%	24%
Private Donations %	11%	35%	30%
Interest/Endowment %	2%	11%	13%
<i>Sources: Canadian Heritage Survey 2017; American Alliance of Museums National Report, 2017 and 2024</i>			
<i>Canadian figures represent averages and U.S. figures medians</i>			

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

PAMA AND INDUSTRY AVERAGES

- The vast majority of PAMA's operating revenues come from government sources (Region of Peel) at 97%
- Reasons include facility and site constraints as well as operational issues
- City of Brampton will need to be the major provider of operating revenues at PAMA

FACILITY, OPERATIONS AND SITE CONSTRAINTS

- Small exhibition space (lower than average percentage of public experience space than museum averages) and free admission days
- Limited parking
- No dedicated retail
- Inability to host large rental events

STRATEGIC RESPONSE

- PAMA's mission is to provide "diverse opportunities for creative exploration and discussion to help build cohesive communities"
- Implies maximizing inclusion and accessibility
- Outreach strategy emphasized – both digital and physical – to maximize impact beyond on-site attendance

03

KEY FINDINGS – COLLECTIONS ASSESSMENT

PAMA's COLLECTIONS

- Divided into Museum and Art Gallery collections
 - About 14,000 Museum collection records
 - Some 6,200 Art Gallery records
- Collections are managed by a professional Collection Policy rooted in national and international best practices that sets out criteria and process for deaccessioning
- Mandates differ between Museum and Art Gallery; Museum collecting mandate focuses on Peel while Art Gallery's mandate is much broader in scope

PAMA'S COLLECTIONS - MUSEUM

- Museum objects organized by Chenhall categories rather than place of origin
- Similar to other historical collections originally founded by local volunteer groups, is heavily focused on 19th to mid-20th century European settlers, but is being diversified
- Holds some explicitly Region of Peel/Peel County/Regional organization collections
- May be some obvious candidates for transfer to other municipalities, but no easy way to assign municipal origin to many objects or constituent collections due to overlaps

PAMA'S COLLECTIONS - ART GALLERY

- Art Gallery holdings include works of national as well as regional and provincial significance
- Collection quality is not as appreciated as it should be
- Like Museum collection, development plans include diversification of holdings to improve relevance to local audiences
- Impact of any future mandate change arising from transfer to City of Brampton on Art Gallery collection or future collecting plans should be carefully considered

04

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Transfer implies a potential mandate change for PAMA with implications for strategic plan, collections, programs and operations
- The need for strategic alignment with City of Brampton implies a visioning and strategic planning exercise
- City of Brampton would inherit a Class "A" facility ideal for collection care
- City of Brampton would need to be the major provider of operating revenues at PAMA, unless other funding arrangements with Peel municipalities are agreed

COLLECTIONS IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- If Regional resolution is confirmed, PAMA should be transferred "as is" to City of Brampton rather than attempting to divide collections by municipality beforehand
- There is no easy way to assign or identify collections by municipality due to database issues and "grey" areas
- Determining which items are most closely associated with which municipality is therefore likely to be a lengthy process and may delay implementation of transfer

COLLECTIONS IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Process would include:
 - Criteria development
 - Provenance research
 - Honouring of donor agreements and wishes
 - Understanding any implications for endowment funds or CARFAC obligations

COLLECTIONS IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Any uncontroversial or easily-assigned candidates could be deaccessioned and transferred according to PAMA policy if mutually agreed
- Due diligence should be applied even to obvious candidates for transfer; any objects that are controversial or of disputed provenance would need to go through a process
- In all cases, PAMA policy and donor preferences should be observed to maintain public and donor trust
- Any implications re endowment funds or CARFAC agreements need to be observed

COLLECTIONS IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Guiding principles:
 - Maintain public trust in PAMA as a credible museum institution by observing museum ethics and existing policies
 - Work together to ensure its collections are accessible to and benefit those to whom they are most relevant to the greatest extent possible

05

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

THANK YOU.

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Making the World
a Better Place
Through Culture



January 2026

Region of Peel Transition Framework for PAMA

Assessment and Key Issues Report

Lord Cultural Resources is a global professional practice dedicated to making the world a better place through culture.

We assist people, communities, and organizations to realize and enhance cultural meaning and expression.

We distinguish ourselves through a comprehensive and integrated full-service offering built on a foundation of key competencies: visioning, planning and implementation.

We value and believe in cultural expression as essential for all people. We conduct ourselves with respect for collaboration, local adaptation and cultural diversity, embodying the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professional practice.

We help clients clarify their goals; we provide them with the tools to achieve those goals; and we leave a legacy as a result of training and collaboration.

Our Toronto office is located within the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. Toronto is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Our New York office is located on the traditional lands of the Lenape peoples. Our Los Angeles office occupies the ancestral and traditional lands still inhabited and cared for by the Gabrieliño-Tongva.

We honor and pay respect to the Elders and descendants — past, present, and emerging — as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We encourage you to acknowledge their presence, wherever you are.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction..... 3
- 2. Current State Assessment 4
 - 2.1 Contextual Analysis 4
 - 2.2 Comparative Examples..... 7
 - 2.3 Review of PAMA Facilities, Markets, Operations and Financials 11
- 3. Collection Review..... 19
 - 3.1 Policy Considerations 19
 - 3.2 Qualitative and Quantitative Collection Assessment 22
- 4. Key Findings and Conclusions 29
 - 4.1 Institutional Implications 29
 - 4.2 Collections Implications..... 31

1. INTRODUCTION

The Region of Peel has been operating the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives since its establishment in the 1970s. Originally a volunteer-operated community organization, the Region took the operation over at that time and it is now a fully professional museum institution.

In 2025 Region of Peel Council passed a Resolution aimed at transferring PAMA's ownership and management to the City of Brampton. As there are a number of key issues that must be clearly understood prior to any transfer, the Region has wisely decided to study the implications of such a move via a comprehensive review in two phases:

- A current state assessment and collections review
- A financial and legal review leading to a business case for the transfer.

In December 2025 Lord Cultural Resources was asked to conduct the initial phase, as above, to explore implications of any such transfer in light of PAMA's existing operations. Of special note are the implications raised by the potential transfer for collection management at PAMA, given the possibility raised by the Resolution that some collections may be transferred to individual municipalities within the Region.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized in the following sections:

Chapter 1, this Introduction;

Chapter 2, the Current State Assessment, which reviews PAMA in the context of museum industry norms and averages in Ontario, Canada and the United States, in comparison to other municipal line department museums, and in the context of its existing facility, site and strategic and business goals;

Chapter 3, a Collection Assessment, which examines potential issues and opportunities that may arise given the potential transfer of the institution to the City of Brampton;

And **Chapter 4**, Key Findings and Conclusions, which summarizes the results of all of the research and analysis to date.

2. CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

This chapter outlines PAMA's existing operations in comparison with industry norms and averages (as they are available), for the purpose of identifying implications of the proposed transfer for PAMA and the City of Brampton.

2.1 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

What follows is a high-level comparison between Canadian and American museums in 2017, as well as more recent data for American museums from 2024. Canadian figures are expressed as averages while U.S. data are medians. While available data (especially for Canadian museums) tend to be several years old, in general the basic findings still apply, according to our observations and work with museums in the field.

Comparative Financial Snapshot for Canadian and U.S. Museums

All museums require multiple sources of operating revenue, usually made up of a mix of earned, government, private donations and investment/endowment streams, as outlined by the data below, which are the most recent available. Note that "museum" is used throughout this report as a term that applies to history museums, art galleries, living history collections (zoos), science centres and all institutions that qualify as museums under accepted definitions as developed by ICOM (International Council of Museum) and similar bodies.

Earned income: Earned income includes such sources as admission fees, facility rental, program fees, retail revenue, membership fees and miscellaneous other sources. On average, earned revenue as a percentage of total operating revenue has for many years been in the 35-40% range for both Canadian and American museums. This is an average that will vary greatly by museum type; municipal/community museums and history museums, for example, tend to report lower levels of earned income, some in the 20%-30% range, while children's museums and science centres may report levels as high as 60%-70% earned income. But the general point is that no museum institution can survive on earned revenue alone; all need subsidies from other sources.

Revenue from government sources: Government sources provide the largest single income stream for Canadian museums at about 49% of total annual operating revenues, on average. This figure has fallen substantially from levels seen in the 1990s and before, when the figure approached

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

70%, which reflects pressure from governments on museums to become more self-sufficient. U.S. museums are much less reliant on government than their Canadian counterparts, averaging just 19% in 2017 (increasing to 24% in 2024, which is likely a reflection of COVID-era support programs) but make up the difference via private donations.

Private donations: As noted, U.S. museums are more reliant on private donations and contributions than their Canadian counterparts, with some 30% of total operating revenue coming from that source in 2024. This reflects American philanthropic culture and tax laws which encourage philanthropy. In Canada, the average museum in 2017 reported only 11% of its annual operating requirement from this source.

Endowment/investment income: Likewise, U.S. museums are more likely to have endowments that spin off operating revenue each year. Privately endowed museums are much more common in the U.S. than in Canada, where museums report that only 2% of annual operating income on average comes from this source.

Comparative Sources of Operating Revenues	Canadian Museums, 2017	American Museums, 2017	American Museums, 2024
Earned Income as % Total	38%	35%	32%
Government Sources %	49%	19%	24%
Private Donations %	11%	35%	30%
Interest/Endowment %	2%	11%	13%
<i>Sources: Canadian Heritage Survey 2017; American Alliance of Museums National Report, 2017 and 2024</i>			
<i>Canadian figures represent averages and U.S. figures medians</i>			

Comparative Data for Museums in Ontario, Canada and the U.S.

Additional data are available for museums in the Province of Ontario from the Canadian Heritage Survey and the American Alliance of Museums. The averages for Ontario museums are classified under “small”, “medium” and “large” museum categories, with operating budget being the main criterion. Technically speaking, given that PAMA has a budget of over \$1 million per year, PAMA would be considered under the “large” Ontario museum category, although this is somewhat misleading as the figures reported for that category are averages that include data from the country’s largest museums, including the national museums in Ottawa and major institutions in Toronto like the ROM, AGO and Ontario Science Centre which have a tendency to inordinately affect the results.

In many respects, PAMA is actually a mid-range institution, and therefore comparisons with both “medium” and “large” categories are made in the analysis below.

As above, U.S. data are median figures, not averages.

Key points are as follows:

Attendance: Average attendance was reported at some 27,000 for all museums in the province, taken together (the average figure for all Canadian museums is about 20,000 and the median figure for all American museums about 26,000). The average for the “large” museum category in Ontario is about 206,000 with the caveat noted above, since some of the museums in this category draw in the vicinity of a million visitors per year, while for the “medium” Ontario museum the average is just under 18,000 visitors per year which is close to PAMA’s 2024 numbers, when PAMA welcomed about 18,600 on-site visitors. (The 2025 on-site attendance figure was 16,500 which reflected impacts from the closure of the Art Gallery and the Courthouse for capital project work, which is to say that 2024 is a more representative year in terms of attendance performance.

School groups: Schools continue to be an important market for museums at about 7.6% of total attendance for the average Canadian museum and the figures for Ontario museums are similar. PAMA typically attracts somewhere in the range of between 25%-30% although barriers such as busing costs, shortages of school bus drivers and other issues have tended to depress school group on-site attendance at museums across the continent in the years since.

Staffing: The average museum in Ontario operates with just 5 full-time and 6 part-time staff (plus 2 contract workers), with the average Canadian museum faring even more poorly at just 3 and 6 with 1 contract worker (the median for U.S. museums is 7). The average “large” museum in Ontario reports some 44 full-time and 37 part-time staff and the average “medium” Ontario museum far fewer, at 3 FT and 6 PT staff. PAMA reports 18.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, placing it between the averages for the “large” and “medium” categories.

As understaffing is a chronic problem throughout the museum field, museums are heavily reliant on volunteers to fill the labour gaps that cannot be filled with paid staff. The average Ontario museum reports some 56 volunteers, with large museums in Ontario reporting 235 and the average Canadian museum about 42. US museums report a median of 65 volunteers.

Total operating revenue: The average Ontario museum’s operating revenue is just above \$1 million per year. The total operating revenue of the average “large” museum in the province is \$11.5 million and the average “medium” museum at just \$424,000. The average Canadian museum reports total operating income of just \$729,000 and the median U.S. museum of some \$1.2 million. Again PAMA falls into the middle of the range between the “medium” and “large” categories with a budget of just over \$6 million. Note that this figure is for the Museum and Art Gallery operation only; the Regional Archives operates under a separate budget.

Sources of operating revenue: The average Ontario museum reports that about 38% of its annual operating requirement comes from earned sources (mostly from admission charges, retail sales, facility rentals, membership fees and program fees); for large museums in the province the figure is slightly higher at 39%, with all Canadian museums at 38% (U.S. museums report a median of about 28%). Government sources comprise about 45% of the total operating requirement for the average Ontario museum and also the average “large” museum, with the overall Canadian figure at 49% and the U.S. figure lower at 24% (operating revenue from private donations is much higher in the U.S. than in Canada). The balance is made up mostly of private donations at 14% for the average Ontario museum, 13% for a “large” Ontario museum, 11% for the average Canadian museum and a much larger 36% for the median American museum, for the reasons noted above.

As outlined in the section below, PAMA reports much lower percentages of earned income (about 2%) and is much more reliant on government operating revenues than the average museum. The potential reasons for this situation are outlined in section 2.2, below.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

Sources of operating expenses: Staffing is almost always the single biggest expense line in museums, approaching 45-50% of total operating expenses in every case but the “small” Ontario museum category which has many volunteer-operated institutions. Occupancy costs, including utilities, insurance and facility maintenance, accounts for a similarly close range at 10-13%, with marketing remarkably similar across museum types (within the 3% range). Note that the survey did not reveal other cost lines, such as exhibition costs, non-staff public and educational program costs, retail cost of goods sold, collections care costs (U.S. museums report a median of about 8% of operating expenses for this category) or cost of fundraising, among other miscellaneous categories. PAMA’s operating expense allocations are comparable with industry averages in most respects.

Realities of the Museums Marketplace	Small Ontario Museums	Medium Ontario Museums	Large Ontario Museums	All Ontario Museums	Canadian Museums	US Museums
Sample Size	253	160	41	454	1,248	671
On-Site Attendance	4,063	17,869	206,535	27,213	20,519	26,500
School Groups as % of Total	7.4%	9.0%	6.6%	7.2%	7.6%	12.3%
Members	56	253	6864	740	444	795
Total Full-Time Staff	0	3	44	5	3	7
Total Part-Time Staff	1	6	37	6	6	5
Total Contract Workers	1	3	4	2	1	N/A
Total Volunteers	21	66	235	56	42	65
Sources of Operating Revenues						
Earned Income as % Total	47.3%	33.3%	39.1%	38.6%	37.9%	27.6%
Government Sources %	27.1%	45.9%	45.8%	45.4%	49.0%	24.4%
Private Donations %	24.6%	18.4%	13.3%	14.2%	11.0%	36.5%
Interest/Endowment %	1.0%	2.4%	1.7%	1.8%	2.1%	11.5%
Total Operating Revenue	\$45,838	\$423,913	\$11.5 million	\$1.2 million	\$729,953	\$1.2 million
Sources of Operating Expenses						
Staffing	30.7%	50.8%	44.5%	45.0%	45.9%	49.9%
Occupancy	12.6%	10.0%	11.8%	11.6%	13.3%	N/A
Collections Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.0%
Marketing	3.9%	3.3%	3.8%	3.7%	3.6%	4.1%
<i>Source: 2013 Canadian Heritage Survey (2015); 2013 Special Report on Museums & Art Galleries by Size and Province/Territory (2015) and 2009 Financial Survey of American Alliance of Museums</i>						
<i>Note: *Museums categorized as small have annual revenue of under \$100,000; medium \$100,000 to \$999,999; large \$1 million+</i>						
<i>Canadian figures represent averages and US figures medians</i>						

2.2 COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES

The following outline a few comparative examples of municipal museum operations in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada. While perfect comparability to PAMA does not exist, the examples chosen are all municipal line department operations and many have objects, natural history specimens and works of art in their collections.

Grey Roots Museum and Archives

The Grey Roots Museum and Archives in Grey County is on a rural site that includes a heritage village. The Grey Roots Museum included new construction of both a museum and archives when developed in 2004 as a County museum. It was a collaboration between Grey County and the City of Owen Sound, which had previously collaborated to develop what opened as a centennial project in 1967 as the Grey County-Owen Sound Centennial Museum.

The building is 28,178 net sq. ft., of which 6,648 sq. ft. is museum exhibition space. The building also includes a small space for a tourist information centre. Archive storage encompasses 3,481 sq. ft. of storage space and there is 1,425 sq. ft. for an archive reading room. The museum storage space is 8,388 sq. ft. There is no café, and the gift shop is small at 284 sq. ft. Venue rentals take place primarily in the 1,576 sq. ft. lobby and a 1,020 sq. ft. multi-purpose room.

The Grey Roots Museum and Archives is open year-round on Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. On-site attendance totaled about 25,000 in 2019. Current (2026) adult admission charges are \$10.50, with seniors at \$8.50 and children (5-12) at \$6.50. There is also a \$27.50 family rate. Taxes are extra.

The Museum and Archives operates with 13 full-time and 3 part-time staff. The Museum and Archives are supported by about 100 regular volunteers and 12 summer students each year.

In 2019, the operating budget was about \$2,174,000. About 86% of operating funds were from Grey County. It received 6% from other government funding, 7% was earned revenue, and 1% was from private donations.

Ken Seiling Waterloo Region Museum

The Ken Seiling Waterloo Region Museum is part of a group of museums, managed by the Region of Waterloo, that includes two separately-located heritage house attractions plus the Region of Waterloo Archives which is located on-site in the Museum's Curatorial Centre. The Museum also has a major heritage village component (Doon Heritage Village).

The Waterloo Region Museum began as Doon Pioneer Village in 1957. After takeover by the Region of Waterloo in the early 1980s, the institution stabilized financially and began a period of growth and development that began with the revitalization of the village in the 1980s, the construction of a new Curatorial Centre in 1995, and the opening of the new 47,000 sq. ft. Waterloo Region Museum building in 2011. It is now the largest community museum in Ontario.

The Museum drew 88,000 visitors per year in 2018; some 71,000 came when the attraction was fully open in the spring and summer season, with an additional 19,000 visiting the museum only during the months when Doon Heritage Village was closed. This is to say that the prime attraction is the heritage village in combination with the new Museum. Attendance has rebounded to similar levels in the post-pandemic period, reportedly in the same 90,000 visitor-per-year range.

Adult admission is \$15, students 13-17 \$10, children 5-12 \$8. Seniors aged 55+ are admitted for \$10. There is a single admission price for the entire site; the Museum does not offer separate or combination tickets for the Museum or the village. This has the effect of encouraging visitors to "get their money's worth" which is to say, to visit all of the attractions on offer.

As with all heritage villages and living history sites, Doon Heritage Village is closed during the winter - the issues around upgrading buildings so that they may house artifacts during the off-season are too

onerous and not deemed worth the capital costs nor the increased operating costs, which would be virtually impossible to recoup via admissions or other earned revenues. But the Museum is open seven days a week, even through the winter months, and the Museum schedules major temporary exhibitions during these months to keep interest and attendance up. These are not necessarily related to history, but nevertheless raise awareness of the institution and maintain winter attendance.

The annual operating budget in 2024 was \$6.3 million for the Ken Seiling Waterloo Region Museum only (not the entire museum system), of which about 13% is earned revenue. The bulk of the operating budget comes from the Region of Waterloo, as is the case for most municipal line department museums. The Museum operates with about 26 FTE staff, some of which are seasonal.

Museum of Surrey

In British Columbia, the Museum of Surrey is a municipal operation (a line department of the City of Surrey) that originally opened in its current facility in 2005. The Museum was expanded in 2018. The total facility size is 39,245 sq. ft. of which some 9,000 sq. ft. is exhibition space including a permanent gallery ("Surrey Stories Gallery"), a temporary exhibition gallery ("Feature Gallery") and a small children's area ("TD Explore Zone"). Some displays are also included in Indigenous Hall, which functions as both a display and circulation area and is included in the 9,000 sq. ft. allocation.

Annual attendance for 2024 was 130,040 based on free admission. Of this total, about 4,500 arrived in school groups, or under 4% of total visitation. While staff do not gather detailed data on origin of non-school visitors, they estimate that the vast majority of visitors (at least 70%) are from Surrey and the surrounding area. Young families are a major market segment for the Museum in part because of the children's gallery and contributes to substantial attendance levels. The Museum also includes spaces for rental events and is a popular destination in the Surrey area for community gatherings, and these attendees are included in the on-site attendance figure.

Although admission is free, donations are encouraged. Hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM and Sunday from noon to 5 PM.

The Museum of Surrey operates with 10 full-time and 17 part-time staff. Its total annual operating budget for 2024 was about \$1,584,000 of which 70% came from the City of Surrey. About 10% was from private contributions, sponsorships and donations, 10% from other grant sources, and about 10% from earned sources. There is no membership program although a support group, the Friends of the Surrey Museum and Archives Society, is an arms-length society that raises funds for special projects and sponsors the Museum's free admission program.

Simcoe County Museum

A line department of the County of Simcoe, the Simcoe County Museum occupies about 20 acres of a 327-acre site. The site includes a main building of about 20,000 gross sq. ft. and other buildings on site, some of which provide back-of-house support but many of which are historic in the Museum's heritage village.

The main Museum building includes close to 13,600 sq. ft. of exhibition space of which 1,800 sq. ft. is designated for temporary exhibitions and which includes the new Matthews Innovation and Transportation Gallery, an \$16.6 million expansion project which partially opened in June 2025 (full completion is scheduled for the summer of 2026) that included a new 5,000 sq. ft. gallery plus about 2,300 sq. ft. of additional collection storage and curatorial spaces..

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

In 2019, the Simcoe County Museum reported about 40,900 visitors, which represented an increase over the levels during the previous two years. Note that the increase coincided with the introduction in 2017 of admission by donation rather than fixed admission charges. School groups accounted for about 19% of total visitors in 2019, which is at the high end of a common range for history museums. Most are in the elementary school grades with Grade 3 as peak. Although there are school group visits from throughout the County, the majority are from Barrie given its population size and proximity. All school groups are provided with a program and are charged a modest admission.

About 65% of visitors reside within Simcoe County, with 20% from elsewhere in Ontario, 10% from other parts of Canada and 5% international.

The Museum is open daily with the exception of major holidays. About 60% of visitors arrive on weekend days and about 45% are repeat visitors. These figures are within common ranges. Regular public evening hours are not offered and not recommended given the relative isolation of the Museum site and the opportunity to encourage more evening venue rentals. The average length of stay of visitors is in the range of 60-90 minutes, except for school groups attending educational programs and who stay for up to four hours.

Rental event visitors accounted for 24% of all visitors in 2019. Venue rentals, including the divisible meeting room (for up to 100) and the Museum's 1872 Vespra Christ Church which is available for weddings generated a modest \$9,146. In part, the limited rentals revenue reflects a space that is not particularly attractive. More significantly, the limited revenue is because the space is used substantially without charge by County officials and because the Museum has sought to make it affordable or free to non-profit community groups.

The 500 sq. ft. retail store generated sales of \$37,869 in 2019. That translates to less than \$76 per sq. ft. and 93 cents per visitor, which are lower than museum retail averages for history museums (just over a dollar per visitor).

The Simcoe County Museum sold 196 memberships in 2019, generating \$9,361 in revenue, an average of \$47.76 per membership. Membership is motivated primarily by value for money considerations. Some members are motivated by support for the mission of the Museum or by civic pride, but philanthropic motivations are limited when the perception is that the Museum is well taken care of by the County. One of the downsides associated with admission by donation is that there is less value for money in joining.

The Museum operated with 13 full-time equivalent staff, supported by 6 part-timers and 55 regular and 150 periodic volunteers. Staffing accounted for close to 70% of operating costs in 2019, higher than the averages outlined above. This is not because of significant overspending on staff but rather underspending on other operating cost categories.

The Museum's operating budget was \$1,965,000 in 2019 but has likely increased since, due in part to the opening of the Matthews Gallery. While detailed current figures are not available, a 2022 planning study by Lord Cultural Resources for the Museum projected an operating budget increase to \$2.5 million per year.

As is commonly the case for county and other municipal museums, Simcoe County is the primary funder of its museum. In 2019 the County provided over 83% of operating revenues with 3% from the City of Barrie. Earned income accounted for about 13% of the total with private support at less than 1%.

2.3 REVIEW OF PAMA FACILITIES, MARKETS, OPERATIONS AND FINANCIALS

While neither the scope of work nor the time available for this process allows for a completely thorough, 360-degree assessment of PAMA's current state, it is possible to provide a reasonably accurate outline that should provide information as to the strengths, weaknesses and key issues facing PAMA as a museum institution, with reference where appropriate to implications for any transfer to the City of Brampton.

Institutional Context

This section outlines the institutional context in terms of PAMA's governance, its mission and its strategic goals and business plan.

PAMA's governance

Museums typically employ one of four types of governance setups:

Line department: a municipal museum typically falls into this category, in which the museum is incorporated into the municipal structure under a department with Council being the ultimate governing authority. There may be a board, but it is advisory only. Staff are municipal employees, and most operating funding comes from the municipality. This is currently the situation for PAMA and is assumed to continue to be the situation if the Region of Peel resolution is adopted and PAMA is transferred to the City of Brampton.

“Arm's length” institution: an example would include a provincial agency like the Royal Ontario Museum or the national museums governed by the federal Museums Act. In these cases, the organization has an independent governing board but members are usually appointed by the relevant Minister. The Museum is responsible to that Minister whose department provides an annual subsidy that is usually less than what is required to maintain operations, making the museum responsible for raising part of its operating requirement through earned, contributed/donated or investment/endowment income – which, along with the presence of a governing board, is a key difference with the line department model.

Independent not-for-profit charitable institutions: these represent independent, Board-governed museums that are autonomous registered charities, and as such entirely responsible for raising their annual operating requirement. In Canada, government grants (such as the Community Museum Operating Grant in Ontario, or CMOG) usually make up large proportions of their operating revenue, but there is also a high incentive to maximize earned revenue and private donations as well. These museums are operated by employees of the charity and/or by volunteers. Non-museum heritage organizations such as local historical societies, which are almost always run entirely by volunteers in the Canadian context, may also be incorporated in this way.

Private museums: a rarity in Canada but more common in the United States, these are unincorporated museums that are the sole property of an individual (as are the collections, which means they are not held in the public trust) and are therefore outside the norms of professional practice. A Canadian example would be the MZTV Museum in Toronto, which is a display space for the private collection of Canadian media entrepreneur Moses Znaimer.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

There are advantages and disadvantages for each governance type. For a line department like PAMA, secure funding built into departmental budgets, along with secure employment for staff who are not “museum” staff members but rather municipal employees, are the major advantages. Disadvantages include increased difficulty in raising private contributions and donations to supplement the departmental budget allocation (since they are essentially government departments) in comparison with other governance arrangements, and lack of policy and operational independence from the host municipality.

PAMA’s mission

A mission is a concise statement of an institution’s reason for being, a declaration of why it exists. It is crucial that mission statements are clear and concise so that they may be easily understood and internalized by staff, as the statement should be reflected in everything the institution does.

PAMA’s mission statement is as follows:

Mission: Heritage, Arts, and Culture, which operates under the name Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (“PAMA”), exists to share the story of Peel by providing diverse opportunities for creative exploration and discussion to help build cohesive communities.

This is an up-to-date museum mission statement. Formerly museum mission statements included key words such as “interpreting”, “collecting”, “researching” or “preserving” which have now been superseded by larger, higher-order goals leading to measures of real-world impact. PAMA’s statement reflects these trends, firmly placing its activities in the service of community benefit and social cohesion in the Region of Peel.

PAMA Business Plan 2023-27

This document provides PAMA with strategic direction for the current period, expiring in 2027. The guiding principle is “Community for life – Thriving – Communities are integrated, safe and complete.” This is essentially a vision statement – an aspiration for the kind of community that PAMA would like to see develop through its exhibitions and public and educational programs.

It is important that the contents of such a plan support the institutional mission and should be aligned with it. Three key pillars support this vision and the institutional mission as outlined above, each supported by a series of tactics and key performance indicators:

Community engagement: this is the front-facing visitor experience portion of the plan, leading to an outcome in which “Peel residents are engaged in an understanding of our varied histories, cultures and perspectives”. To achieve this, the plan mentions tactics such as “responsive and reflective collections, programs and exhibitions” and various other visitor experience and programmatic initiatives.

Institutional leadership and stewardship: More internally focused, this pillar reflects the expectations of a Class A institution, which PAMA is, and leading to tactics including an annual accessibility review, reflecting the institution’s commitment to equity and visitor centricity, policy reviews to ensure alignment with equity goals, as well as a number of other marketing, operational and fundraising goals.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

Innovation and good business: “Accessibility” and “visitor centricity” are key words that describe this pillar, supporting the visitor centricity and ensuring that PAMA increases its relevance to the communities it serves. Tactics include digitization, collection development to increase relevance of PAMA’s object and art holdings to Regional residents, and annual reviews of plans to ensure that the institution remains connected to community needs and market preferences, plus others. Increasing PAMA’s reach via higher on-site attendance and digital engagements are key metrics.

Facility assessment

PAMA’s strategic pillars as expressed above are, in some ways at least, responses to the nature of the facility and site at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets in Brampton. While PAMA’s facilities may be rightfully lauded as valuable community assets, they (and the site which they occupy) do include some functional limitations that have affected operations and attendance and financial performance.

There are some advantages as well. PAMA occupies a building of over 82,000 sq. ft. in size, including the historic Peel County Courthouse plus modern additions. Thanks to major capital investments over the past twenty years, PAMA has achieved Class “A” designation under the federal Cultural Property Export and Import Act. Essentially this makes the institution eligible for certain funding and tax incentives under the Act, and signifies the top standard of collection care and stewardship on a number of technical (museum environmental control, for example) measures. PAMA’s specific cultural property groups under this designation include natural history and archaeology objects, applied and decorative arts objects, fine art objects and archival material.

A Class “A” designation is not a requirement for a museum, nor is it a requirement for a potential museum destination for deaccessioned objects (although it may be a preference), but it is an indication that a museum has achieved the highest designation for stewardship of virtually all the object types in its collection. This is beneficial to attract collection donations, since donors are more likely to donate objects or works of art to an institution that can provide the highest standards of care.

When speaking of museum space allocation, it is often useful to compare to general museum averages, using a zonal system of classification. While percentages can vary widely, a typical collection-focused museum will include the following zones:

- **Zone A** spaces are public non-collection spaces - lobby, retail shop, lecture halls, auditoriums, education and classroom spaces, washrooms and the like - in other words, spaces into which the public is welcome but which contain no collections. The typical museum allocates some 20% of total net space for these Zone A functions.
- **Zone B** comprises public collection spaces - in other words, the exhibition galleries, both permanent and temporary - and they typically comprise some 40% of total available net space in a typical museum.
- **Zone C** includes non-public collection spaces - collection storage, “clean” collection workrooms, isolation spaces for incoming acquisitions or loaned objects and so on. These typically comprise some 20% of total net space.
- Finally, **Zone D** includes non-public non-collection spaces such as staff offices and meeting rooms, garbage disposal, “dirty” workshops (workshops where no collections are present, such as carpentry shops) and so on, which comprise about 20% of total net space in a typical museum.

While what follows should not be considered a thorough functional analysis, some top-line findings are possible and include the following:

PAMA's Zone A spaces, including classroom and education spaces, lobby, retail and washrooms, comprise less than the typical museum average for this zone. For example, there are two education or art studios, one of 469 sq. ft. and one of 1,664 sq. ft., along with two classrooms of 646 and 1,935 sq. ft., respectively. Retail and lobby spaces (at PAMA, these are one and the same) comprise only a few hundred square feet in total at each entrance. Rentable spaces, which some of these are, are somewhat limited and therefore limit potential earned revenues from these sources, suitable as they are for small community group or corporate meetings – although PAMA has generated revenue from alternative rental sources such as film and TV production in recent years, using the historic spaces in the Courthouse as a selling point for such productions.

The retail function lacks a suitable space. Normally a retail shop in a museum of PAMA's size might comprise some 400 sq. ft. or more, and be a discrete space, but here there is no dedicated retail shop, as in most museums. At PAMA, retail is confined to a few shelves and kiosks in the lobby near the welcome desk and comprises less than 100 sq. ft. in the lobby. This has the advantage of efficiency, since welcome desk staff can double as retail clerks, but has the disadvantage of a limited product line, which, given the limited shop floor size, limits sales potential.

PAMA's Zone B exhibition spaces also comprise a lower percentage of total space than typically seen. These spaces include 10,201 sq. ft. in total, of which 3,865 sq. ft. is dedicated to the Art Gallery and 6,636 to the Museum. The Courthouse space comprises 1,073 sq. ft. Taken together, this is well below the 40% average seen in the typical museum. In order to maximize the amount of product on offer, which therefore helps to maximize on-site attendance, it is advisable for museums to maximize such public experience space.

Despite this, it should be noted that spaces not typically considered exhibition gallery space, such as the tunnel leading between PAMA buildings, have occasionally been used for exhibition purposes. Normally such spaces are considered circulation spaces and are considered to lie within the building's grossing factor (i.e. they are not considered within the net space allocation), but their occasional use for exhibitions at PAMA signifies a well-intentioned attempt to increase public experience space in the museum. Note that the types of exhibitions installed in such hallways have not included collections sensitive to environmental conditions but have been photographic exhibitions (of prints) and the like.

If the Archives are included, Zones C and D occupy higher percentages of the total net space allocation than average. The remainder of the spatial allocation consists of back-of-house, non-public spaces such as collection storage and collection workrooms, exhibition preparation and staff offices and meeting spaces, along with the Archives space which is open to the public by appointment only. For the purposes of this analysis it is considered a non-public space since casual visitors do not gain access to it via their admission fees. While necessary for the institution's functioning, these back-of-house spaces comprise a much larger percentage of total space than typical museum averages.

It is worth noting that space programming undertaken at PAMA prior to the major building additions and renovations may have resulted in such anomalies due to the particular nature of the historic courthouse (adaptive re-use situations are notoriously difficult to adapt to museums' specific needs), the need to accommodate the archival facilities and the need for adequate collection storage space, among other potential reasons.

PAMA's Markets, Operations and Financials

Attendance and Impact: On-site attendance was 16,500 visitors in 2025, below the nearly 30,000 visitors that PAMA had reported in 2017, but, as noted, gallery closures and construction had depressed on-site attendance in 2025. This means that the 18,600 figure reported for 2024 is a more representative post-pandemic attendance number. While the 2024 figure is about average for medium-sized Ontario museums, the 2017 figure exceeded the average for all Canadian museums (about 20,000 visitors per year) and all Ontario museums (27,000 visitors per year). Recent data from the United States indicates that on-site attendance has yet to recover from pre-pandemic norms for more than half of all American museums responding to a 2024 survey, so this is an industry-wide concern.¹

The averages in the Contextual Analysis, above, show that the average Canadian museum draws about 7.5% of its attendance from school groups. PAMA exceeds this, with school groups comprising in the range of 25%-30% of its total on-site attendance.

PAMA's overall reach has been more impressive, with some 115,000 virtual visitors served in 2025. This is a conscious strategy: in order to broaden its reach and maximize its impact beyond those who can physically attend, and to overcome some of the built-in limitations of its building and site, PAMA has focused on community benefit initiatives (such as mental health-focused programs), an enhanced digital presence and pop-up exhibitions around the Region as noted in the 2023-27 Business Plan. Joint programs in partnership with other organizations have also been an increasing trend at PAMA to better serve those who cannot physically visit the downtown Brampton location. In other words, there are many ways in which a museum can generate impact beyond on-site attendance, and many of these impacts (such as the number of people viewing a pop-up exhibit at the Bramalea City Centre, say) cannot easily be quantified.

Admission fees: PAMA charges \$8 per adult and \$6 for seniors and youth (age 5-25). There is a family rate of \$20 for two adults and up to 5 children. Free admission is obtainable through library passes available through public libraries across Peel and in Vaughn, and for certain other groups (active military, for example, or Indigenous persons). There are also several free admission days scattered throughout the year (Family Day and days during Culture Days in September and Sikh Heritage Month in April). In the experience of other museums that pursue this strategy, people often wait for the free admission days rather than attending on regular paid-attendance days, thus lowering earned revenue totals from admissions, and this may be the case at PAMA as well. On the positive side, it does maximize public access.

Another issue for PAMA to consider in the future is the perception of value for money, given the limited size of the exhibition spaces and therefore the product on offer. While the \$8 adult admission fee is comparable with some local attractions (as a comparator, the Joseph Brant Museum in Burlington charges \$10 for adults – but only attracted 8,700 on-site visitors in 2024, suggesting the fee has had a dampening effect on attendance) there are also free admission options in the general area that may affect such perceptions. Both the Art Gallery of Mississauga and the Art Gallery of Burlington, for example, offer free admission for on-site experiences of comparable size (in terms of the art gallery exhibition space sizes, not PAMA's total exhibition space).

¹ Source: Wilkening Consulting, "Museum Visitation: Ongoing Recovery Trends from the Pandemic", <https://wilkeningconsulting.com/visitation-trends/>

Operating schedule: In order to maximize public accessibility, PAMA operates on a 7-day-per-week schedule being open from 10 AM to 4:30 PM on Mondays-Wednesdays and Friday, 10 AM to 9 PM on Thursdays, 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturdays and 1 PM to 5 PM on Sundays. In the future, PAMA may continue with this schedule if its strategic goals around accessibility remain the priority, or it may introduce changes depending on whatever new strategic approaches that may be implemented or if operational efficiencies are prioritized.

Marketing and social media: In accordance with its strategy to achieve impact beyond on-site visitation only, PAMA is active on social media, with accounts on the major platforms and new content regularly posted. As of January 2026, the institution had about 5,451 Instagram followers, 4,900 Facebook followers, some 4,549 X followers, and about 1,180 YouTube subscribers. These figures are comparable to follower figures for other local museum institutions. With regard to other marketing, press releases are regularly posted on news sites (for example, the Brampton Guardian) and exhibitions, programs and events are advertised on electronic billboards around the Region.

Staffing: PAMA delivers on its mission with 18.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. This is projected to increase by 1 FTE in 2027. While well above staffing levels for the average museum in Ontario (5 full-time, 6 part-time) and in Canada (3 full-time, 6 part-time), these levels are below that of the “large” museum category (44 and 37, respectively) and they include Archives staff. As noted above, they are in the mid-range between the averages reported for the “medium” and “large” Ontario museum categories.

Annual Budget: PAMA operated with a total budget of some \$6.3 million for the year 2025 (including Regional contributions plus earned, grant and contributed revenues), projected to increase to about \$6.6 million by 2029 to cover anticipated operating cost increases, with one additional FTE in 2026 to achieve required service levels (2026 Heritage Arts and Culture Budget Service Business Plan).

Operating Revenue and Expense Breakdown: The vast majority of PAMA’s operating revenue comes from the Region of Peel (about 97% of the total), which is supplemented by earned revenue (in the form of admissions, facility rentals, program fees and the like) at 2%, with the balance made up of provincial and federal grants plus contributed revenue in the form of donations and sponsorships, along with contributions from reserves. Earned revenue performance as a percentage of total operating costs is well below average at PAMA, part of which may be attributed to the existence of the Archives which takes up a certain percentage of the spatial allocation and operating budget while generating minimal (if any) earned revenue, part of which may be explained by PAMA’s strategy to maximize accessibility, and part which are may be explained by other facility, site and operational factors that limit its attendance and earned revenue potential as noted elsewhere in this assessment.

As with all museums, staffing costs are the largest single expense line at about 47% of total operating expenses, which is comparable to the averages noted above, although this is projected to fall to 43% in 2026. The next largest expense line, operating costs, accounted for about 32% of total expenses in 2025, followed by facility, IT, HR and other support costs at 13% with miscellaneous costs accounting for the rest.

Summary Assessment

With regard to the Contextual Analysis, PAMA falls somewhere between the averages for “medium” and “large” Ontario museums on most measures, despite the fact that its operating budget puts it into the “large” category. We have noted the impact of very large Ontario museums on the reported averages, and some further cautions are warranted when making comparisons from the contextual analysis above with the current PAMA operation as PAMA is more than a museum and art gallery and also operates the Region’s archives, which is a large operation on its own and, while it is an essential

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

service required by law, it is not a visitor attraction. Holding responsibility for a municipal archives is not the case for the majority of museums and therefore comparisons must be approached with caution. For this and other reasons, the assessment above compares PAMA with both categories (“medium” and “large” Ontario museums) as well as overall and national averages.

As articulated in its 2023-27 Business Plan, PAMA is reaching beyond the facility and seeking to maximize accessibility via tools such as the operating schedule, free admission days and the digital and outreach strategy. Taken together, these have yielded successes in terms of increased impact and increased visibility and contribute to the achievement of the institutional mission.

Some of this has also been in response to facility and site limitations. PAMA’s facility space allocations are atypical (partly because of the presence of the Archives), which affects the institution’s performance according to several measures as well as the strategies it employs to achieve its mission. For example, the main attractors for museum on-site attendance are exhibitions, but at PAMA these spaces are relatively small and exhibition space as a percentage of total building space is below the average normally seen (40% of total net space). Limited public experience space limits on-site attendance and forces the institution to maximize its impact in other ways as articulated above.

There are some other issues that affect on-site attendance performance and program participation, and parking availability is perhaps the major one. Currently PAMA has only 14 parking spots plus 3 accessible parking spots available for both staff and visitors, which is insufficient and a major barrier to on-site attendance. While reliance on auto travel to attend PAMA should lessen with the completion of the Hurontario rapid transit line, at the moment many potential visitors must rely on car transportation if they want to visit PAMA. Such limitations are important reasons why PAMA has focused on other ways of making its exhibitions, programs and collections accessible to visitors, using digital platforms, pop-up exhibitions and partnerships, among others.

Facility limitations also have an impact on other forms of earned revenue beyond that generated from admission fees. The nature of the heritage building and the lack of large meeting spaces (and perhaps competition from nearby venues in this regard) prevents PAMA from hosting larger and more lucrative rental events, an increasingly important earned revenue source for museums. Museum lobbies are often rentable event spaces, but this is not realistic at PAMA due to the lobby’s design.

Museums usually earn money on retail operations – provided they have a proper shop. But there is no dedicated retail shop at PAMA, with the retail operation confined to a few kiosks in the lobby near the welcome desk.

Visibility is an issue: the main entrance is hidden from street view and the entrance to the parking lot is a narrow, poorly-marked lane running off Wellington St. While a prominent presence on Main Street, awareness of PAMA continues to be an issue in Peel generally, given the large size of the Region. Work is continuing to increase PAMA’s presence in the community, as noted above and raise awareness that it is a place to which all are welcome to enter.

With regard to its operating budget, our experience in the field, and the performance of the municipal line department comparator institutions described above, indicates that municipal line department museums rely on government for a higher percentage of their operating revenues on average than do museums that are organized as independent not-for-profit charitable organizations. Some of this is due to the difficulties such municipal line department museums have in raising private donations and contributions (because they are seen, correctly, to be part of government and assumed to be well supported). Line department museums also perform more poorly on these measures than “arm’s length” institutions which report to a Ministry but have an enhanced degree of independence from government (such as the National Museums of Canada, which is Board-governed Crown corporation,

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

or a museum set up as a provincial agency like the ROM which also has a governing Board) and due to that enhanced independence are better able to supplement government revenues from earned and donated sources. That said, PAMA's earned revenue performance is poorer than normally seen even at other municipal museums.

With regard to the implications of this current state assessment for the transfer of PAMA to the City of Brampton, the following observations apply:

- The nature of future strategies or operational models (and so on) depend on the future vision for the institution and types of impacts that the City, if it does become PAMA's new owner, wishes PAMA to have. For example, if the focus is on boosting on-site attendance, then more and better parking, increased marketing, programming changes or even a free admission strategy may be advisable. If the focus is on maximizing accessibility, then many of the current strategies would remain – and so on. The point is that the City and PAMA leadership would need to work together to determine how PAMA should align with City priorities while also building on the institution's strengths, which will dictate much of the subsequent changes to the operation or future capital investments. This, essentially, suggests a future visioning and strategic planning process.
- Should the City of Brampton acquire PAMA, there are steps that can be taken to increase on-site attendance and earned revenue and perhaps also contributed revenue, at least somewhat. But, as illustrated by the Contextual Analysis, no museum operates on earned revenue alone, and the operation will need to continue to be subsidized by the City just as it is being subsidized by the Region currently.
- With regard to the quality of the facility as a museum institution, the City of Brampton would be inheriting a Class "A" facility in terms of its environmental systems and standards – and therefore, in terms of collection stewardship, one of the finest facilities of its kind in the Region. Money has been built into the future capital budget for other upgrades or improvements (normal with any building), and future facility interventions to improve other functions might be considered, but with regard to its ability to function as a collection-focused institution, the building is in good condition as is.
- If the City of Brampton acquires PAMA, the Archives (which will remain a Region of Peel operation) are very likely to remain in the PAMA building, at least over the short term, which will require operational adjustments since Regional employees will need access to a City of Brampton facility and operation. However, should proposals for a purpose-built Archives facility on another site come to pass, the space now occupied by the Archives could be repurposed to ameliorate some of the space allocation issues identified above.

The next chapter considers the collections held by PAMA and the collection-related implications of the proposed transfer.

3. COLLECTION REVIEW

This chapter focuses on the collection-related implications of the potential change of ownership, first introducing some key definitions, then assessing PAMA's existing collections and the potential implications of the potential options for the future PAMA.

3.1 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

It is important at this point to review the PAMA Collection Policy which defines terms related to museum collections and sets out proper procedures. The Policy provides many useful definitions, including this one:

“Collection” means “the accumulation of materials and intellectual property held, as a public trust, by PAMA to be used for the exclusive purposes of preservation, research and presentation to the public.”

The phrase “public trust” is key. According to the Ethics Guidelines of the Canadian Museums Association (CMA), the term may also be defined as follows, with many of the key elements remaining the same:

Museum collections consist of natural or cultural (i.e. manmade) objects and intellectual property directly owned by the museum, as a public trust, and registered as part of its permanent collection, to be used for the exclusive purposes of preservation, research and presentation to the public. Museums may also hold or steward collections on behalf of other parties, and have a stewardship interest in other such properties not directly owned by the museum. These might include heritage sites and cultural landscapes, material that has been acquired with public funds or is communally or publicly owned, and the living traditions, such as ceremonies, of communities served by the museum. Museum collections are not resources which are directly available to meet the financial obligations of the institution by conversion into currency or as security to raise monetary loans; however, they may be used to generate income for the museum in other ways, through admission fees and so on.²

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has set forth principles in its ethics statements that outline a museum's responsibility to its collections:

Museums have the duty to acquire, preserve and promote their collections as a contribution to safeguarding the natural, cultural and scientific heritage. Their collections are a significant public inheritance, have a special position in law and are protected by international legislation. Inherent in this public trust is the notion of

² Canadian Museums Association, *Ethics Guidelines*, 2006:
<https://www.museums.ca/uploaded/web/docs/ethicsguidelines.pdf>.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

*stewardship that includes rightful ownership, permanence, documentation, accessibility and responsible disposal.*³

While such professional bodies as CMA and ICOM update their ethics statements from time to time, the basic definition of collections as material to which a museum has made a stewardship commitment in the public trust in perpetuity remains constant.

Formal acceptance of an object into the collection is known as **“accessioning”**. In doing so the museum accepts stewardship responsibilities for that object in the public trust in perpetuity. Some museums also hold unaccessioned collections either as part of backlogs for those they intend to eventually accession, or for educational or “hands-on” purposes. The latter are usually duplicate, common or poor-condition items that are not intended for permanent preservation, conservation or interpretation and almost always comprise an insignificant proportion of the collection.

Many museums are fortunate to have acquisition budgets, to enable them to develop their collections via purchase. PAMA has dedicated endowment funds, such as the David Somers Works on Paper Endowment Fund for this purpose, but – like the vast majority of museums – it also depends on collection donations from the public for the majority of its collection development. And this reliance on donations, and the importance of the donor-museum relationship, is one reason why museum ethics around collections have developed as they have, prioritizing the commitment to indefinite preservation in the public trust, to ensure a trust relationship between museums and the public, without which many would be reluctant to donate anything at all.

Despite a museum’s commitment to perpetual stewardship of accessioned collections, it is possible to remove such accessioned objects from the collection through a process known as **“deaccessioning”** under certain specific circumstances – say, when numerous duplicates exist, where the object has deteriorated beyond the point of usefulness, where there are life safety issues (arsenic in old taxidermy, for example) or, more rarely, in cases where the museum radically changes its vision, mission and mandate and the object becomes an “out of scope” item, which is to say that it no longer fits within the collecting mandate of the reconceptualized museum.

Based as it is on guidelines developed by the Canadian Museums Association, the PAMA Collection Policy outlines the following as permissible and ethically sound reasons for deaccessioning:

- [The object, work of art or specimen] is not relevant to the Art Gallery, Museum, or Archives mandate and purpose statements; or
- Requires care and conservation beyond the means of PAMA, this may include materials of significant regional or national historical, cultural, or scientific value; or
- Is a duplicate of historically significant materials within the PAMA collection; or
- Is deemed by PAMA to be abandoned property; or
- Is under-used and would best be placed at another public institution; or
- Is required for repatriation; or
- Is hazardous to staff and the public; or
- Is not suitable for exhibition or loan; or
- Is in poor physical condition beyond reasonable repair.

³ International Council of Museums, *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*. ICOM, 2017.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

Because of the inherent ethical and reputational risks – museums must be extremely careful not to alienate past and potential future donors or erode public trust in the institution - deaccessioning is necessarily a strictly controlled process that has been developed in accordance with professional standards and ethical guidelines, and as such tends to be time-consuming and labour-intensive.

When collection objects meet the above criteria and are earmarked for deaccessioning, the priorities are as follows:

- Ensuring the object remains in the public realm via transfer to another museum or non-profit heritage/art/cultural organization capable of preserving the object in the public trust in perpetuity is always the most ethically desirable outcome, and the PAMA Collection Policy recognizes this as the priority as well.
- In earlier years, if it was deemed impossible that the object could remain in the public realm, returning objects to their original donors was seen as a desirable course of action. However, the Canadian Museums Association no longer recommends this as an option for disposal due to the complex tax implications for the recipient, and in any case, this is very difficult in cases where objects were accessioned years ago and for which good records do not exist. Therefore, while PAMA will not re-gift objects marked for deaccessioning back to their original donors (and this is stated clearly in the Collection Policy), it will allow the donors to re-purchase their items in such cases at “fair market value” if they so wish, with such proceeds funneled back into collection development and care.
- Generally speaking, sale of deaccessioned objects is permissible but only under specific circumstances. Museum professional ethics (and the PAMA Collection Policy is in alignment with these national and international standards) dictate that proceeds from sales of collections must be re-invested in collection development and never be channeled into general revenues or used for general operations. That said, collection sales are often problematic even when ethical considerations are strictly observed, because of the potential for negative impact on donor relations or damage to the museum’s public image.
- The final and least desirable outcome, destruction or disposal, is only ethically permissible where the objects are duplicated by others in the collection, are in poor condition or contain hazardous materials (such as old taxidermic specimens which often contain arsenic). When it does occur, documentation of the process is a must.

Deaccessioning is relevant to this discussion because of the potential for future transfers of collections re objects, specimens or works of art identified with Mississauga or Caledon to those municipalities, which would depend on the outcome of discussions between municipal representatives subsequent to the City of Brampton’s acquisition of PAMA. Assuming those discussions result in agreement that some objects, specimens or works of art should indeed be transferred to Mississauga or Caledon, they would need to be first deaccessioned according to the above guidelines. The determination of proper destinations for those objects or works of art, again in line with the policy as noted, would need to be part of the discussions in order to ensure proper stewardship in the future, which would ideally be an institution within the receiving municipality capable of providing museum-quality care for the object in the public trust in perpetuity.

3.2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COLLECTION ASSESSMENT

At present PAMA holds a large number of collection records in its database, divided as follows:

- Museum – just over 14,136 collection records
- Art Gallery – about 6,200 collection records

While a “record” is very often associated with a single object, there are sometimes instances in museums where a record is for a single accession which may contain several objects (a personal grooming kit, for example – one object that contains several smaller objects). This is to say that it is possible that the number of actual objects to be higher than the number of records in the system, and it is highly dependent on documentation practices which have likely varied somewhat over the years.

As the Archives is assumed to remain under Regional jurisdiction, this part of the collection is not considered further.

Museum Collection

According to staff, the collection has been organized into several categories as per the Chenhall museum classification system, which is a well-established system of organizing collection records. There are some 14,136 records entered into the database, and according to data made available to the consultants, the percentage breakdown for each category is as follows (all figures rounded; total may not add to 100%):

- Built Environment Objects (architectural and building fragments, etc.): Less than 1% of the total Museum collection size
- Furnishings: Just over 6%
- Personal Objects: About 21%
- Tools and Equipment for Materials: About 28%
- Tools and Equipment for Science and Technology: About 6%
- Tools and Equipment for Communications: About 8%
- Distribution and Transportation Objects: About 4%
- Communication Objects: About 20%
- Recreational Objects: Almost 5%
- Unclassifiable Objects: About 1%.

While small and medium-sized items are stored in Class “A” facilities at PAMA’s main downtown Brampton location, PAMA utilizes off-site rented storage facilities for larger items, which is a common situation for many museums.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

Noteworthy for this discussion is that the database is not organized to reflect municipal origin of objects, which, as a Regional institution, was not an issue for PAMA in the past and in any case does not fit with the Chenhall classification system which focuses on use category or type. This is to say that identification of which objects “belong” to or are most closely identified with one or another municipality would require additional research, in many (or perhaps most) cases.

In any case, there would potentially be several criteria to determine which objects would be subject to transfer from a City of Brampton institution to either one of the other constituent Peel municipalities. These might include place of manufacture, place of use, origin of donor, location of establishment (with regard to local company collections, say) or, in the cases of collections related to individuals, place of birth, primary residence or location of professional practice. This is to say that a process to determine which objects are more properly related to this or that municipality will require a process, in all but the most obvious cases.

Qualitatively speaking, and this is entirely typical for museum collections in Ontario that began with volunteer-driven community organizations (as this one had), most of the objects date from the late 19th to the first half of the 20th century, mostly relating to the period of European settlement and development in Peel, although there are of course materials that pre- or post-date this general time range. By and large, however, this general subject matter and chronological range describes the collection’s areas of strength.

It is not possible within the scope and timeframe of this study to conduct a thorough accounting of each and every one of the Museum’s 14,000+ objects, but it is possible to provide a good cross-section of the collection and its strongest elements. The following table was supplied by PAMA staff and while it is far from comprehensive, it is indicative of some of the strongest areas of the collection, which is to say those portions of the collection that are highly significant to the story of Peel or are particularly rare or valuable. Those certified by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB), which is a process through which cultural property of outstanding significance is certified for tax purposes facilitating transfers from private hands to a public institution (like a museum), are indicated on the table.

Highlight Collections	Comments
Foundational collections (those dating from the original founding of the local historical society). For example: Perkins Bull Collection Inc. Albion Bolton Historical Society Peel County Historical Society Russell K. Cooper collection	Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB) certified. Cooper collection devices and technology available to occupations and general lifestyles of Peel Region people from 1840 to the late 20 th century (including Dr. Dixie and Dr. Wm Stubbs).
Local sports memorabilia	
Quilts and coverlets	
Mississauga train derailment	
County and Region of Peel	Historical and contemporary corporate collections, including Peel County Courthouse and Jail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various Peel Townships came into existence between 1805 and 1819. • Peel County - 1852-1973. • Region of Peel - 1974-present.
Historic communities’ collections	Objects representative of towns, villages, hamlets

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

<p>Aerospace industry in Peel: A.V. Roe Canada Ltd./Avro Arrow MDA (Canadarm)</p>	<p>International significance</p>
<p>Local businesses. For example: Dale Estate Greenhouses Hewetson Shoe Company Dominion Skate Company St. Lawrence Starch Company Brampton Pressed Brick Canadian Admiral Corporation Ltd. Armstrong Bros./Armbro</p>	<p>CCPERB certified. Brampton Pressed Brick wall ornaments</p>
<p>Notable individuals and families. For example: Hazel McCallion and family Bill Davis Cyril Clark Harold Egan Robertson Matthews Cawthra family Beatty/McClure families McCleod family Manning family</p>	<p>Politician Provincially significant politician Politician and founder of Bramalea Long time donor and significant community member Notable photographer and inventor Long time, impactful, and significant family Early and long-time residents Longtime farming family Longtime donors - Manning fund (not endowment)</p>
<p>Ceramics collections: Peel merchants Nurse ceramics collection</p>	<p>CCPERB. Nurse collection includes extensive examples of Canadian 19th century utilitarian ceramics.</p>
<p>Personal and commemorative objects related to individuals who served WWI and WWII</p>	
<p>WWI Victory Loan Honour Flag, 1918</p>	<p>Rare and of national significance. Flag was treated by Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)</p>
<p>Archaeological materials both historic and Indigenous pre-contact</p>	
<p>Community organizations. For example: Women's Institutes of Peel Girl Guides The Pride Committee of Peel</p>	
<p>Healthcare collections. For example: Peel Red Cross Local hospitals and pharmacies Dr. Beaumont Dixie Drs. Armitage</p>	<p>Includes both historical and contemporary Materials, including objects related to COVID 19 response.</p>
<p>Objects that compliment or accompany Region of Peel Archives holdings</p>	<p>Significant portion of the collection. Some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wm. Perkins Bull • Women's Institute • V. Roe Canada Ltd. • Russell K. Cooper Collection • Chinn collection

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

Note again that this table is not a description of the entire collection – only of some of the strongest areas of the total collection, or collection highlights, and is included to give a cross-section of PAMA’s museum collection holdings by type.

A few observations:

- While there may be individual objects or collection areas that would appear to be clearly more relevant to one or another municipality (say, material related to the 1979 Mississauga train derailment), these would need to be reviewed on an object-by-object basis and donor wishes respected. Some items in a collection such as the example given might actually reflect Region of Peel responses to the disaster, for example. The point is that even in seemingly obvious cases, there may be grey areas and due diligence would have to be applied.
- Some of these collections are clearly regional in nature – most obviously collections relating to the Region or County of Peel, or the collections of region-wide organizations (the Women’s Institutes of Peel, for example), or that include mixed content relating to all municipalities, or that spans the entire region or beyond (such as the Russell K. Cooper collection). As objects relating to Regional or County government and services, they would likely need to be retained by PAMA as they likely cannot be assigned to any particular municipality.
- While it is possible that, over the course of future discussions, that all agree that certain collections are clearly related to one or another municipality and should therefore be transferred there, in other cases clarity may be more difficult to achieve. There are many reasons why an object might exist in such “grey” areas: for example, individuals may have lived in more than one place over the course of their lifetimes, or objects may have been manufactured in one place and used in another (or donated by an individual or family in some other place), or for any number of other reasons. Where disputes may arise as to where an object actually “belongs”, a clear process and set of criteria based on research will need to be developed.
- For constituent collections that include many objects (say, the Perkins Bull Collection or the Hazel McCallion Collection), it is usually desirable to keep such collections together. Moreover, donors may have stipulated that such a collection remain together in the deed of gift, which would make it difficult for individual items from that collection to be deaccessioned separately. This may become an issue if such a collection contains items of relevance to more than one municipality. In general, it is usually preferable (but not imperative) that such a constituent collection be kept intact, but as noted donor wishes should be respected in order to maintain trust and good donor relations.
- As noted, the collection is strongest in the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. Regarding future collection development, PAMA staff have been working to diversify the collection to better reflect the current population of Peel and to better represent more contemporary historical periods. Staff indicate that a current priority is to collect more mid-20th–21st century artifacts as well as objects from the Region’s demographic groups, which is in line with industry trends in history museums. But in any transfer to the City of Brampton, collection development plans may be affected by an institutional mandate change – which is to say that future collecting may not be Region-wide after the transfer. This issue would need to be determined via revised strategies and resulting policies.

Art Gallery collection

The Art Gallery holds almost 6,200 artworks by something like 1,000 different artists. A quantitative analysis of the Art Gallery collection breaks down as follows:

- Paintings - 1,500
- Prints - 2,740
- Drawings - 1,130
- Photographs - 230
- Mixed Media & Sculpture - 220
- Miscellaneous (textiles, artist tools, dolls, artist books, cards, etc.) - 370

The majority of the collection consists of works on paper – in a 2019 assessment, it was noted that some three-quarters of the collection were works on paper at that time – and this had been a focus of collecting in the 1990s and early 2000s. The David Somers Works on Paper Endowment Fund has been specifically set up for the cultivation of this stream of collecting, which is to say that the Fund provides an acquisition budget that must be used for works of this kind.

Only a minority of its holdings (perhaps a quarter or so) can be classified as having strictly “Region of Peel” origins. According to a 2019 collection assessment report, at that time the collection contained works by about 40 artists with a connection to Peel Region whether by birth, residence, work or through their depiction of the Region. Some of these include Charlotte Schreiber, David Milne, Fred Haines, Ronald Bloore, William Ronald and Peggy Taylor Reid.

This is because (unlike the Museum collection), the Art Gallery’s collecting mandate is provincial and national as well as regional. The original collecting mandate, which was focused on works by artists with ties to the Region of Peel, was changed during Curator/Manager David Somers’ tenure when it expanded to include national and international artists. This was intended to raise the status of the Art Gallery in the Canadian art world. At this point in time, most of the works in the collection are by artists who have lived and worked outside of the Region, in Ontario, across Canada and even beyond our national borders.

Qualitatively speaking, the collection’s main period of chronological strength is the 20th century (and especially the post- World War II period), although, as with the Museum collection, there are both 19th century and contemporary 21st century works as well.

While not a comprehensive list, the collection contains some key strengths, including the following:

- The Tom Thomson sketchbook, which is one of PAMA’s most requested loan items and perhaps the Art Gallery’s single most significant holding. Thomson needs no introduction to most Canadians and has achieved almost mythical status, in no small part due to the ongoing mystery surrounding his 1917 death. This is the only known intact sketchbook in a public collection and the item has been Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CPPERB) certified.
- Historical works on paper and some paintings by Franklin Milton Armington and Brampton-born Caroline Helena Wilkinson Armington, which at approximately 584 works comprises the largest public holding in the world of material by these artists.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

- A group of pre-World War II works from the private collection of local historian William Perkins Bull. This material forms the foundation of the Art Gallery collection and is relevant to the history of Peel.
- Over 100 works by Ronald Bloore, born in Brampton but a member of the well-known Regina Five group in the late 1950s and early 1960s. PAMA has comprehensive holdings of Bloore's later period pen and ink drawings, many of which are CPPERB certified.
- Over 100 works by William Ronald, member of the first abstract painters' group in Canada (Painters Eleven) including significant early works from the 1950s (many CPPERB certified).
- Collection of watercolours by Newfoundland-born artist David Blackwood, which are rare in public collections as Blackwood was mostly known as (and collected as) a printmaker.
- Some 150 artworks by Alex Cameron, highly comprehensive public holdings (many CPPERB certified).
- Over 400 works by contemporary artist Ted Fullerton which are highly comprehensive public holdings (many CPPERB certified).
- Toronto artist Charles Pachter's complete and limited boxed series of The Journals of Susanna Moodie.

As with the description of the Museum collection, this is far from a complete accounting of all 6,200 works, but a reasonable cross-section of the highlights of the Art Gallery holdings.

Increased diversity is, as with the Museum, the goal of future collecting. Currently the collection is dominated by male artists and artists of European heritage; future collecting plans include Indigenous artists, female artists and works by those of those representing the various cultural and demographic groups present in the Region of Peel.

A few observations may be made at this point:

- As the Art Gallery collection is mostly composed of works without a direct connection to Peel, the number that are clearly identifiable with, and potentially transferable to, Mississauga or Caledon is obviously lower. For any that were considered as candidates for deaccessioning and transfer, the same policies and guidelines surrounding the Museum collection apply here as well with regard to the deaccessioning process.
- As the Art Gallery's collection has been built mostly through donations made by artists and repeat donors, donor wishes would likewise need to be respected if any were to be deaccessioned and transferred.
- Any transfer of works of living artists are likely to have implications relating to CARFAC (Canadian Artists Representation/Le Front des Artistes Canadien) agreements, which would need to be honoured and/or renegotiated by the receiving institution. These include exhibition royalties, copyright protections, resale protections (the right of artists to receive a percentage of the sale price should any deaccessioned works be disposed of in this way) and other contractual issues as applicable.
- The provisions of endowment funds intended to be used for collection acquisitions would need to be honoured should any works acquired via those funds be considered for deaccessioning, such as those acquired via the David Somers Works on Paper Endowment Fund and any other endowments from which PAMA benefits.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

- The significance and importance of this collection is not as well known as it should be, which may be partly due to the very limited amount of exhibition space that PAMA provides for Gallery exhibitions, or possibly due to a lack of marketing, or perhaps due to strategic decisions that focus on outreach and other types of programming. Given the space limitations, it is not possible to provide a permanent exhibition of the best works in the collection as with major art museums; as is the usual case for many community and municipal art galleries with limited exhibition space, the institution presents a constantly changing schedule of temporary exhibitions to maximize access to its holdings.
- If PAMA were acquired by the City of Brampton and were to consider a mandate change, special consideration would need to be given to the Art Gallery, as it has spent at least the last quarter-century building up its collection of provincially- and nationally-significant art to the point that Peel-related holdings comprise only a minority of the collection. Given the significance of the collection, the City would likely be better served by seeking ways and means of leveraging that significance for future community benefit and continuing to build a nationally-significant collection, as opposed to restricting its mandate to the City of Brampton only, which would reduce the collection to a shell of its current self (not to mention trigger a deaccessioning process that would take years to complete).

4. KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This process has led to a number of key findings and conclusions that may assist the Region and the City of Brampton choose a way forward. What follows is a review of both institutional and collection implications:

4.1 INSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS

As noted in Chapter 2, the strategic pillars under PAMA's 2023-2027 business plan focus on mission-related impact, ameliorating the built-in limitations of PAMA's site and building to focus on digital and physical outreach as well as on-site attendance. Maximizing community benefit through maximizing access and inclusion and building social cohesion in Peel are the main goals.

PAMA's current vision, mission and resulting strategic and business planning approaches may be affected by any transfer of PAMA to the City of Brampton. Some key issues include the following:

- **Strategic alignment with City priorities:** The new governing body (Brampton City Council) may wish to review PAMA's current strategies in light of municipal strategic goals, focusing on aligning such strategies with goals as expressed in the municipal Culture Master Plan and other documents. A strategic planning process would likely be needed, leading to revisions to the institutional vision (aspiration) and to the mission (reason for being), with resulting changes in operations. Any changes are likely to affect future operations and performance measures.
- **Role of PAMA in Brampton cultural ecosystem:** This is related to the above point. How PAMA works in concert with other City cultural programs and institutions in order to achieve municipal goals will need to be considered.
- **A potential change in institutional mandate:** As a City of Brampton operation, there may, in some respects, be a mandate change, particularly with regard to the Museum portion of the operation. "Mandate" sets out the limits for a museum – chronological, subject matter and, in this case the most relevant criterion, geographical. The most obvious potential change would be the geographical mandate, which could conceivably go from "Region of Peel" to "City of Brampton" at least for the Museum; as we have seen, the mandate of the Art Gallery is much broader and any mandate change could potentially have a greater proportionate impact on its collections and operations as it is much less focused on the Region of Peel. Other aspects of the mandate, including subject matter focus or chronological scope, may also be up for discussion.

Mandate includes scope and range of exhibitions, public programming and certain operational aspects but in this case the collecting mandate would seem to be a particularly relevant issue. As the Museum holds many collections with overlapping provenance (i.e. they are related to individuals, organizations or events that go beyond the political boundaries of any one city or town) and many are truly Region of Peel or Peel County collections (the former jail, which was the Peel County Courthouse and the largest artifact held by the organization, or the collections relating to Regional agencies such as the police), the new mandate would need to be fashioned to encompass such objects if it were assumed that the future PAMA would retain them.

If, however, it was agreed that the mandate of the Museum was to be recast to be City of Brampton only, then collections relating to the Region would instantly become out-of-scope and therefore subject to deaccessioning. (For the Art Gallery, the impact would be magnified.) For Region-focused collections, should they become out of scope, the issue is that there is no obvious place for such deaccessioned objects, which represent valuable regional heritage, to go while still remaining true to PAMA policy and professional ethics. This would put PAMA in the ethically (and likely politically) untenable position of having to dispose of community heritage via other means. Thus, in order to avoid these issues and the loss of Regional heritage, the mandate of any City of Brampton-operated version of PAMA's Museum should at least include objects relating to the Region of Peel of which it remains a constituent part.

Of course the future PAMA could continue to collect Region of Peel and Peel County objects, but if it were decided that the future collecting mandate should only include the City of Brampton, then the mandate change might best be manifested in future collecting activities. In other words, existing collections would be "grandfathered" into the mandate, but any future acquisitions might be confined to those relating directly to the current City of Brampton and its predecessor communities, if a mandate change is contemplated. This would be an acceptable solution.

- **Implications for exhibitions and public programming:** The ways in which PAMA interprets its collections or, for that matter, conducts all programming will be affected by any revised vision or mission. Given the Art Gallery's broad regional, provincial and national mandate, and assuming no changes to that mandate, it is possible that little would change here; for the Museum, its future exhibition policy might be adjusted to focus on the City of Brampton and predecessor communities as opposed to its current regional focus. But in both cases, the course and direction of exhibitions and programming could change depending on changes in strategic priorities, let alone mandate. This again would need to be determined in a future visioning and strategic planning exercise.
- **Funding model:** Given that PAMA is now funded by all three municipalities via the Region of Peel, there may well be changes if the operation is the responsibility of just one of them, and exploration of this issue will be the subject of investigations to be completed by others in another phase of work.

4.2 COLLECTIONS IMPLICATIONS

The key issue with regard to the collection is the Resolution proposal that some collections may be transferred from PAMA to other municipalities, depending on their relationship to those municipalities. These implications are explored here.

Due to the labour-intensive nature of deaccessioning processes and the difficulties in determining (at least in some cases) which objects are most closely associated with which municipality, the most efficient way forward is to transfer PAMA “as is”, with collections intact, to the City of Brampton. There will be implications in any case – and these are laid out above – but (at least in terms of the museum operation itself) this is the most advisable immediate course of action, as trying to separate collections by municipality in advance of such a transfer would create lengthy delays.

However, it is entirely possible that subsequent discussions regarding either collection sharing or transfer to other municipalities may ensue after the fact. In this case, there are a few implications that would need to be noted:

- As noted, it is clear that most of PAMA’s collections are not easily divided by municipality and that there is no quick and easy way of determining this for the most part. Of course there may be exceptions – objects for which no one has any doubt as to where they belong – and in these cases, and if such transfers are agreed to by all parties involved, there would be minimal disruption or difficulty.

At this point, there may be no need to proceed further. But, if discussions reveal a desire that *all* collections, or a significant number of them, need to be separated by municipality (after which they would be deaccessioned and transferred), or if there are disputes as to which objects, specimens or works of art belong where, then the following process (to which PAMA curatorial staff should have input) might apply.

- For material *other* than the objects, specimens or works of art that are easily assignable and uncontroversial (and there may be some), a process would need to be put in place to determine which are most closely related to which municipalities:
 - Criteria development: A set of criteria would need to be developed by curatorial staff. Such criteria may include a number of questions: whether an object was manufactured, used or owned in any one municipality (there will be many instances where objects will meet multiple criteria – manufactured in Brampton but primarily owned or used in Mississauga, say), or the extent to which the origin of the object or the wishes of object’s donor be taken into account (they may conflict), and others as developed. For the art collection a related series of criteria should be developed.
 - If needed, and depending on the course and direction of discussions between the municipalities, a list of objects with unclear municipal origins, or perhaps those objects where there is controversy around where they properly belong, should be developed and the criteria applied. Additional research may be required. Again, this may take a considerable amount of time, given the thousands of objects and works of art currently held by PAMA.
 - A “short list” of the most likely candidates may then be developed. Donor concerns or wishes would need to be understood and considered.
- Potential collections should be assessed to see if potential transfer conflicts with any provisions in PAMA’s collection acquisition endowment fund agreements.
- For works of art, CARFAC obligations would need to be understood and applied.

Appendix II

Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) Business and Transition Planning Framework

- Once staff determine which objects are most closely identified with the municipalities in question, a destination for the objects will need to be identified. Normally the priority for any object that will be deaccessioned is to ensure it goes to another institution capable of stewarding the object in the public trust in perpetuity. This proviso will continue to apply here, except that the acquiring institution will likely be a municipality, which means that proper storage, conservation, care, security etc. will need to be provided - which in turn means that a museum within the municipality would be the preferred destination. (While the above is presented rather abstractly, in this specific case where objects may be transferred from Brampton to Mississauga, the potential destinations may be quite obvious.)
- If agreement is reached, the object would then be deaccessioned and ownership transferred to an institution capable of stewarding the object in the public trust in perpetuity. In cases of transfer from one museum to another, normally no money changes hands, and all museums (including PAMA and all professional museum organizations) have well-established procedures for effecting such transfers.

So far, we have considered only transfers from one municipality's museum to another's. But, should it come to pass that some collection materials become out of scope due to a mandate change and are considered for general deaccessioning (not transfer to Mississauga or Caledon), it is worth reiterating that the priority destination would continue to be a credible museum organization, and that other means of disposal, such as sale of any deaccessioned PAMA collections, would only be ethically permissible if the proceeds from the sale are used for care or development of the remaining collections (and taking into account donor considerations and CARFAC obligations for works of art). Destruction, the least desirable course of action, is only ethically permissible according to the guidelines noted in Chapter 3 (i.e. duplicate object, poor condition, safety hazards, etc.).

Retaining the trust of both donors and the public at large is key for the future of PAMA and should be a guideline for all parties concerned. In any situation where an individual donates an object or work of art to a museum collection, they are doing so because they trust that the museum will preserve their donation in the public trust in perpetuity, and museums make a commitment to doing so when they officially accession an item.

Should that trust be broken - for example, because a museum deaccessions an item in a way that contravenes a donor's wishes, or inappropriately disposes of a deaccessioned object - future donors will be far less likely to consider the institution as a destination for future donations, and the reputational harm may hamstring the museum's ability to further develop its collection. Such a scenario should be avoided at all costs.

As a concluding observation, the ultimate goal should be to ensure any such objects that relate more closely to this or that municipality are best used for the benefit of the people of that municipality - while minimizing the need for labour-intensive or years-long processes. Transfer of ownership, according to the process outlined above, is one way of doing so, and there are other ways to make municipal-specific collections accessible to the public in that municipality as well, such as a jointly-developed traveling or "pop-up" exhibition that would be installed at a public location in the municipality, or loan out the objects for display, educational, research or other purposes, or by other means as mutually agreed.

The point is maximization of public accessibility to objects and works of art that are held in the public trust, and organizations that share this mission commonly work collaboratively to make it a reality, which is very likely to be the case here as well.

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