



OAG

Office of the Auditor General

Report Summary

Performance Audit

Selected Stewardship Activities for Michigan's Historical Artifacts and Archival Records

Michigan History Center (MHC) Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Report Number:
751-2600-21

Released:
November 2022

MHC is responsible for the stewardship of the State's museum and archival collections. It operates the Michigan History Museum System, including 13 museums and historic sites, and the Archives of Michigan. MHC is charged with ensuring the preservation of nearly 103,000 artifacts illustrating the history of the State and its people and over 120 million archival records of Michigan government, other institutions, and individuals. Over the past several years MHC's appropriations totaled approximately \$7.0 million annually, and it had 37 full-time employees as of September 2022.

| Audit Objective | | | Conclusion |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Objective: To assess the effectiveness of selected MHC activities to provide stewardship for Michigan's historical artifacts and archival records. | | | Moderately effective |
| Findings Related to This Audit Objective | Material Condition | Reportable Condition | Agency Preliminary Response |
| Over 60% of selected devices used to monitor temperature and relative humidity did not capture and/or retain all daily readings during the audit period (Finding 1). | | X | Agrees |
| MHC was unable to provide documentation evidencing museum artifact inventories for its 2 Lansing facilities that house approximately 90% of the State's historical artifacts and informed us it did not perform artifact inventory activities during the 33-month audit period for 3 of the 7 museums and historic sites located outside of Lansing that house the remaining 10% of MHC's historical artifacts (Finding 2). | | X | Agrees |
| MHC estimates 40% of its 7,900 archival record collections are not yet fully described, necessitating continued development and full implementation of an archival record processing plan (Finding 3). | | X | Agrees |

| Findings Related to This Audit Objective (Continued) | Material Condition | Reportable Condition | Agency Preliminary Response |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| MHC did not obtain required disclosure forms of personal collecting interests from over 20% of museum employees and commission members and did not require disclosure forms from any of its archival records staff (<u>Finding 4</u>). | | X | Agrees |
| Approximately 30% of all users of MHC's collection management system had access that did not align with their job responsibilities, including the ability to delete artifact and archival records (<u>Finding 5</u>). | | X | Agrees |

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