

**Royal BC Museum**

**2024/25 – 2026/27  
Service Plan**

**February 2024**



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## Board Chair's Accountability Statement



The 2024/25 – 2026/27 Royal BC Museum Service Plan was prepared under the Board's direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. The plan is consistent with government's strategic priorities and fiscal plan. The Board is accountable for the contents of this plan and is responsible for the validity and reliability of the information presented.

All significant assumptions, policy decisions, events and identified risks, as of February 2024 have been considered in preparing the plan. The performance measures presented are consistent with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, Royal BC Museum's mandate and goals, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance. The targets in this plan have been determined based on an assessment of Royal BC Museum's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment and past performance.

Signed on behalf of the Board by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leslie Brown".

Leslie Brown  
Board Chair, Royal BC Museum  
February 12, 2024

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## Strategic Direction

In 2024/25, public sector organizations will remain focused on providing the services and infrastructure that people depend on to build a good life. Public sector organizations will continue to support Government in delivering results that matter to British Columbians including helping people with costs, attainable and affordable housing, strengthened health care, safer communities, and a secure, clean and fair economy. Public sector organizations will also continue to work closely with Government as it works collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples to implement the Action Plan for the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and delivers initiatives that advance reconciliation in ways that make a difference in communities throughout the province.

This 2024/25 service plan outlines how the Royal BC Museum will support the government's priorities and selected action items identified in the most recent [Mandate Letter](#).

## Purpose of the Organization and Alignment with Government Priorities

The 2024/25 service plan outlines how the Royal BC Museum supports government's priorities, including contributing towards lasting and meaningful reconciliation by implementing the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act \(Declaration Act\)](#) and the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's \(TRC\) Calls to Action](#); increasing the Royal BC Museum's presence throughout the province by increasing accessibility for all British Columbians; enhancing equity, diversity and inclusion policies and practices to ensure the Museum is a place of cultural safety for all; prioritizing modernization of the Museum infrastructure, operating and organizational policies and procedures; and building and strengthening relationships with First Nations, diverse cultural communities and existing and emerging cultural organizations throughout the province.

Under the [Museum Act](#) (2003), the Royal BC Museum, which includes the BC Archives, is required to fulfil the government's fiduciary role of public trustee. Furthermore, as the archives of government, the Royal BC Museum also falls under the [Information Management Act](#) (2015; amended 2019).

## Operating Environment

On behalf of government, the Royal BC Museum manages \$111 million of building assets and a further \$56 million in contents (exclusive of collections) in Victoria, B.C. It also cares for more than seven million objects, records and specimens and over 30 linear kilometres of archival records.

In 2024-25, the Museum will receive an annual grant of \$13.086 million from government, which represents approximately 43 per cent of its core operating budget. The other approximately 57 per cent is funded by own-source revenues derived primarily from

admissions revenue, programming, licensing, sponsorship, and philanthropic contributions, all of which are variable funding sources.

The Royal BC Museum, acting in service to British Columbians, has a diverse mandate including working to advance reconciliation with Indigenous communities across B.C. in the following ways:

- Resetting the relationship between the Royal BC Museum and Indigenous Peoples in B.C.;
- Proactively and collaboratively working with communities to support repatriation of cultural belongings and ancestral remains and improving access to the residential school records in the BC Archives;
- Supporting the development of a provincial repatriation policy framework;
- Working closely with the Songhees Nation and Esquimalt Nation on the archives, research and collections building project; and
- Connecting British Columbians, and the world, to their pasts, in order to better understand the present and inform the future. The thoughtful and deliberate inclusion of deepened Indigenous perspectives is a vital precursor to reconciliation.

The Royal BC Museum is working with communities to reimagine and fully reopen the third-floor galleries to the public with engaging exhibitions and relevant, sustainable provincial content. This work requires a collaborative effort from teams across the organization, as well as engagement with communities to co-create and physically design and build the gallery spaces.

The Museum continues to conduct broad-scale engagement on the future of the existing Museum throughout the province, strengthening and building new relationships with communities and historical and cultural organizations. At the same time, work continues to prepare to move collections to the new purpose-built, state-of-the-art sustainable collections and archives facility opening in Colwood in 2026. During this transition, there will be temporary limitations on access to some collections in order to support future access improvements that will benefit all British Columbians.

The Museum draws visitors from across the province, country and internationally each year and is a key contributor to the local economy. It is expected that 2024/25 tourism will be similar to 2023/24. As the Museum is physically located in Victoria, on Vancouver Island, it relies on strong and effective transportation links from both the provincial mainland and the United States. Challenges with transportation, such as public and private ferry operations and impacts to transportation routes due to construction or weather-related events such as wildfires, impacts visitation levels both to Victoria and the Museum.

Continued high levels of inflation and the increase in cost-of-living impact disposable income, which, in turn, influence decisions on patronage and donations to the Museum. To support accessibility the Museum will continue to offer ways to access its services and facilities that are inclusive to all, such as Community Days with admission by donation, and the MyMuseum initiative through the City of Victoria Leisure Involved For All (LIFE) Program.

As with many employers in British Columbia, the Museum faces recruitment and retention challenges in a number of key positions, which may affect the delivery of operational goals.

All of these factors have an impact on the operating environment, including operational and financial planning.

## Annual Economic Statement

B.C.'s economy posted modest growth last year as interest rate increases weighed on the economy, and employment continued to expand, supported by immigration. Inflation in the province continued to ease and the Bank of Canada has not raised its policy interest rate since July 2023. The impact of higher rates on borrowing costs and elevated household debt led to lower consumer spending and reduced home sales. Lumber, natural gas and coal prices declined in 2023, reducing the value of the province's goods exports. Meanwhile, there was a record number of housing starts in the province in 2023. There is uncertainty over the transmission of high interest rates to the residential construction sector and the duration of slower growth for the rest of the economy in B.C. and among our trading partners. The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) estimates that B.C. real GDP expanded by 0.9 per cent in 2023 and expects growth of 0.5 per cent in 2024 and 2.1 per cent in 2025. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC estimates growth of 1.1 per cent in 2023 and projects national real GDP growth of 0.5 per cent in 2024 and 1.9 per cent in 2025. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to be broadly in line with the national average in the coming years. The risks to B.C.'s economic outlook continue to center around interest rates and inflation, including the risk of price increases stemming from geopolitical conflicts, the potential for interest rates remaining higher for longer, and uncertainty around the depth and timing of the impact on housing markets. Further risks include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies, lower commodity prices, climate change impacts and the volatility of immigration levels.

## Performance Planning

### **Goal 1: The Museum is modern and inclusive.**

The Royal BC Museum is for all British Columbians. Reflecting its Mandate Letter, the Museum will continue to innovate and create relevant, sustainable, engaging, and accessible programs, exhibitions and unique experiences in partnership with the public.

#### **Objective 1.1: Continue to nurture a relationship-focused approach to serving British Columbians.**

The Museum will continue to engage with communities across B.C., proactively and collaboratively working to support repatriation, advancing partnerships with existing and emerging cultural organizations to further improve access to the collections and support cultural sovereignty.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue supporting the process of reconciliation through Indigenous community-led repatriation of belongings, furthering stewardship policies and providing access to belongings in the Museum and Archives collections, and welcoming communities to the Museum as a safe space for all visitors (e.g., whether for research, repatriation, gatherings, commerce, leisure or inspiration).
- Work in partnership with communities to reimagine and reopen the third-floor galleries with a phased-approach throughout 2024.
- Continue to build trust-based relationships with the First Nations Leadership Council, First Peoples Cultural Council and Indigenous communities across B.C.
- Connect with existing and emerging cultural organizations to leverage opportunities to increase accessibility through co-created programs and exhibits.
- Continue to reduce barriers to access for low-income British Columbians through existing and new programs and partnerships such as the MyMuseum initiative through the City of Victoria LIFE program and Community Days.
- Continue to work in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, deliver and build on a province-wide dialogue and engagement strategy into 2024.

#### **Discussion**

Repatriation is the return of Indigenous belongings and ancestral remains to their community of origin. Cultural objects were often stolen or taken under duress from Indigenous communities by settlers, and reconciling ownership, repatriation, and/or stewardship agreements for those objects is key to supporting reconciliation.

The Museum is focused on reimagining and fully reopening the third-floor galleries, collaboratively with communities. This work is founded on building new and strengthening existing relationships with communities whose voices may have been marginalized or

excluded from museum narratives in the past. This work is naturally aligned with the province-wide engagement process and part of that process will be to ask British Columbians how their stories and histories can be better communicated.

Travelling exhibitions around the province and continuing to build relationships with other cultural organizations allows the Museum to increase the accessibility of the collections, share resources and serve more British Columbians with unique experiences. In 2024/25 Dinosaurs of BC will travel to Kelowna and Mushrooms of BC will travel to Smithers and Fort St John.

The Museum continues the commitment to reduce barriers to access through new and existing programs and partnerships such as Community Days with admission by donation and the MyMuseum initiative through the City of Victoria LIFE program, where low-income British Columbians receive complimentary tickets as part of their enrolment.

The Museum continues to facilitate opportunities to receive robust feedback through comprehensive engagement to ensure the Royal BC Museum of the future reflects all people of British Columbia. Phase 1 of the community engagement began in January 2023 and phase 2 began in January 2024. Engagement opportunities will continue with 2024 tours, community events, information sessions and an online survey. This comprehensive engagement is necessary to ensure the Museum's long-term, relationship-focused commitment to serving the people of the province is satisfied.

## **Objective 1.2: Continue the work required for systemic cultural transformation within the Museum and Archives.**

This objective directly supports the mandate to work to embed inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in all policies, practices, procedures, and programming.

### **Key Strategies**

- Ensure that equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) principles are embedded in organizational culture through ongoing initiatives, including Hive Minds, an internal monthly discussion group open to all staff and lead by the Museum's Cultural Transformation Team, and the Truth and Reconciliation Committees.
- Continue to reflect the relevant affirmations and articles from the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act)* in museum policies and practices and support implementation and reporting on the Declaration Act Action Plan including action 4.34 to reset the relationship between the Royal BC Museum and Indigenous Peoples in B.C. by ensuring that Indigenous voices are prioritized and inform the development of narratives, exhibitions and learning programs.
- Continue to support and advance the work of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (TRC) by embracing the [10 Principles of Reconciliation](#) and also acknowledging and responding to the [Calls to Action](#), especially those related to the defined responsibilities of museums and archives, or missing children and burial information.

- Continue to implement the *Declaration Act* supporting Indigenous Peoples' inalienable right to know the truth with regard to human rights violations committed against Indigenous peoples in residential schools, ensure that record holdings related to residential schools are accessible to the public, and commit more resources to public education materials and programming on residential schools.
- Continue the implementation of the Strategic People Plan prioritizing employee wellbeing.

## Discussion

Embedding the Declaration Act into museum policies and practices and work to address action 4.33 to co-develop a policy framework to support repatriation initiatives reflects the organization's commitment to prioritizing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. This key strategy dovetails with Objectives 1.1 and 1.2, as successful implementation requires a focus on relationship-building with both staff members and Indigenous communities, and efforts will simultaneously advance conversations and awareness building with partners, the public, the audience and users.

The Museum will consult and collaborate with Indigenous Peoples in many areas of work, including the integration of Indigenous knowledge into the Museum's permanent public galleries, robust consultations with Indigenous communities as part of our community engagement process, and programming for the archives, research and collections building project.

The Museum will continue with community engagement and outreach to support the development of inclusive and diverse narratives/stories for the museum galleries.

The Museum supports the [TRC's Calls to Action](#) that describe the responsibilities of the Canadian Museums Association and Library and Archives Canada. Its primary commitment is to support Indigenous communities, including support to search for information about residential schools in B.C., accessing digitized copies of materials with Indigenous content (such as photographs), and/or assisting with the conservation of belongings within communities. In doing so the Museum also acknowledges it can play an important role in highlighting new community narratives.

The Museum is committed to providing a psychologically safe workplace and organizational culture. A workforce that is led by a team that prioritizes EDIA principles and ensures staff has been provided the appropriate training to build awareness, skills, and capacity, is far more likely to consider innovative and thoughtful ways to make the future Royal BC Museum more inclusive for all British Columbians and those visiting the province. The Strategic People Plan is a multi-faceted, cross-departmental workforce plan to support employee wellbeing and organizational cultural transformation.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
1.1 Number of community engagement participants (in person and online)	5,000	2,500	1,000	1,000
1.2 Percentage of staff and volunteers trained in EDIA practices and policies	80%	100%	100%	100%

Data sources: Royal BC Museum.

### Discussion

1.1: Community engagement sessions will take place throughout the province to have meaningful conversations about what a reimagined and inclusive museum looks like in the future. The targets for community engagement participation have been amended to reflect an updated approach. The amended forecast for 2023/24 reflects a concentrated period of engagement and the launch of a province-wide survey that will continue throughout 2024. It is anticipated the number of participants will reduce as the engagement progresses and as we move toward communicating feedback received and the yet-to-be-determined way forward for the Museum. Furthermore, as we progress with engagement and move toward co-creation with communities, more in-depth conversations and a greater time commitment from those participating will be required. Third party engagement partners will help capture data to accurately report on this measure.

1.2: Orientating staff in EDIA principles and working with experts in this field in the creation of and education on museum polices is a key step in embedding EDIA in culture and practice throughout the organization. The target for 2024-25 reflects that mandatory EDIA training has been integrated into the Museum's onboarding process.

## Goal 2: The provincial collections and records are accessible.

Reflecting the *Museum Act*, the Museum's mandate is to fulfil government's fiduciary role as a public trustee of specimens, artifacts, archival records (government and private), and other materials that illustrate B.C.'s natural and human history, and to hold and make accessible these collections for current and future generations.

### Objective 2.1: Support repatriation as a collaborative journey with Indigenous communities.

Repatriation is the return of control over Indigenous belongings and ancestral remains to their community of origin. Globally, cultural objects were often stolen or taken under duress from Indigenous communities by settlers, and reconciling ownership, repatriation, and/or

stewardship agreements for those objects is key to supporting reconciliation. The Museum recognizes that harmful impacts resulting from these actions continue today in B.C. and is committed to reconciliation and the repatriation of belongings through collaboration, care and time.

### **Key Strategies**

- Continue repatriation of Indigenous Peoples' belongings with an open, collaborative and community-led approach.
- Continued focus on improving or building relationships with Indigenous communities whose collections are in the care of the Museum.
- Work with the Province and partners including the First Peoples' Cultural Council, the B.C. Museums Association, the Museum-appointed Indigenous Advisory and Advocacy Committee, respective First Nations, and others to develop a strategy to prioritize the repatriation of ancestral remains.
- Support the Province in the development of a provincial repatriation policy framework under the [Declaration Act Action Plan](#).

### **Discussion**

The Museum will collaborate with the Province in support of a co-developed Provincial repatriation policy framework as part of the Declaration Act Action Plan.

Repatriation must be community-led. Inviting communities to lead on repatriation initiatives is part of an evolving continuum of operational and philosophical change at the Museum (and reflects Goal 1.1, that the Museum is modern and inclusive).

The impact of each act of repatriation is widespread and often connected to important evolving initiatives, including the revitalization of languages, laws, governance, spirituality, food sovereignty, art, ceremonies and cultural practices. Acts of repatriation are distinct and more meaningful than the simple return of belongings or ancestral remains.

Each repatriation is unique and guided by community. The Museum is dedicated to connecting communities and families with their belongings and it is through this work that the Museum is learning how to be more proactive rather than reactive when it comes to repatriation as resources and financial capacity allow. In some repatriation cases, communities have wished for the Museum to retain or steward belongings but to reconcile ownership back to the Nations, while others have wished for the belongings to be physically returned home. Through ongoing communication, community visits, and open dialogue the Museum is working with communities to ensure that their wishes for their belongings are being honoured whether that is through repatriation or other aspects of Museum work.

The Museum consults with communities about cultural protocols throughout the repatriation process, ensuring cultural protocols are observed and a psychologically safe place for repatriation is provided throughout the process from preliminary discussions to the movement of belongings from the Museum to communities.

## **Objective 2.2: Continue digitizing museum collections and experiences.**

Much of the Museum's audience from B.C. and across the globe experiences the Museum online rather than in person. The Museum continues to refine existing and produce new digital programming and, in doing so, provides new opportunities and experiences for learners of all ages and in all regions of the province. An online experience allows visitors to engage with the Museum, Archives, staff experts and collections, as well as supports improved services, relevance, interests, and patronage.

### **Key Strategies**

- Continue digitizing the Museum collections and BC Archives collection to improve public accessibility, including to continue the expedited digitization of residential school records.
- Continue to provide enhanced digital experiences to better serve the province, including online curriculum support for K-12 and post secondary students and teachers through the online [Learning Portal](#) and [Digital Field Trips](#).
- Expand digital programming to provide new opportunities and experiences for learners of all ages across the province and beyond to engage with the Museum and Archives.
- Ensure adequate resourcing to explore new ways to make Indigenous belongings, photographs, audiovisual and other materials currently in the care of the Museum available online as appropriate.

### **Discussion**

To improve accessibility to the collections, the Museum continues to consider cultural, economic, physical, geographic, technological, linguistic, educational and other barriers. Identifying and eradicating these obstacles continues to be an organizational priority. For example, the Museum and Archives has increasingly used digital technology to facilitate remote access and will continue to waive fees for Indigenous community members seeking reproductions of records documenting cultural heritage.

As the gateway to the Royal BC Museum and Archives' collections and genealogy data, the Museum's website is the primary portal to its digital records. Digitizing the collections supports two operational priorities for the Museum: preservation and accessibility. Both help ensure the Museum and Archives collections remain available and relevant for audiences now and for generations to come.

At the BC Archives, staff digitize fragile, rare and at-risk archival materials like textual records, publications, maps, paintings, photographs, and audio and visual materials, then make those records accessible to the public in a durable format through online collections databases. The BC Archives is working to expedite digitization of records transferred by two organizations that assisted in running residential schools in B.C., Sisters of St. Ann and Oblates of Mary Immaculate. In addition to providing access on-site and through the BC Archives online, digitized, indexed records with supportive contextual information are also being transferred to

the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to aid research, individuals' searches, and other reconciliation initiatives across the county.

To reach the largest possible audience, the Museum promotes access to digitized materials from its natural and human history collections through online exhibitions and online learning offerings including those accessible through online social mediums, the Learning Portal and Digital Field Trips for schools.

Enabling this greater digital access supports key EDIA principles: a more diverse set of cultural and demographic groups from across B.C. and around the world are better able to engage meaningfully with the Museum and Archives collections.

### **Objective 2.3: Continue work to deliver the archives, research and collections building project.**

The Museum is working with the support of the Province and key partners, namely the Transportation Investment Corporation and Infrastructure BC, the Songhees Nation and the Esquimalt Nation, on the development of a new, state-of-the-art, sustainable archives, research and collections building. This innovative mass timber facility will provide future growth space for continued care of the collections and archives, house improved research facilities and collaborative workspaces, and improve public access to the collections.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue the development of the new archives, research and collections building project with key partners in alignment with project timelines and budget.
- Continue plans for the preparation, pack and move of collection items designated for the new archives, research and collections building.
- Ensure that the Songhees Nation and the Esquimalt Nation continue to be respectfully and appropriately engaged, including observing their cultural protocols, and working collaboratively to integrate their feedback into programming.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
2.1 Number of repatriation visits per year	110	116	121	127
2.2a Number of objects BC Archives will add to BC Archives online collections databases annually, in thousands (K)	7K	7K	7K	7K
2.2b Number of records to be added to Royal BC Museum collections management system annually, in thousands (K)	21K	20K	20K	25K
2.2c Number of banker's boxes of government records to be processed annually, in thousands (K)	2.5K	2.5K	2.5K	2.5K
2.2.d Reach of digital programs	3300	4000	4000	4000

Data sources: 2.1: Royal BC Museum Indigenous Collections and Repatriation department records.

2.2a, 2.2b., 2.2c., 2.2d.: Royal BC Museum

Objects is an archival term including photographs, digital files and PDFs of textual records.

### Discussion

2.1: This performance measure has changed from the 2023/24 Service Plan. Repatriation visits include community access to museum held collections and ancestral remains, in person and virtually, in furtherance of repatriating community cultural belongings and ancestors. These metrics reflect community access to the museum held collections and ancestors and not the number of people attending. Repatriation is a community-led process, and the length of time it takes can vary greatly depending on a variety of factors, including community readiness and/or timing considerations, funding, complex engineering considerations, conservation requirements and more. The targets have been set based upon the expectation that as engagement with communities and internal capacity increases the number of visits will increase incrementally 5 per cent each year.

2.2a: This performance measure indicates the Museum's progress in digitizing BC Archives collections (photographs, digital files and PDFs of textual records), duplicating often fragile,

one-of-a-kind material, thereby protecting the source material, enabling easier access to this area of the archival collection, and lengthening the lifespan of the content (duplicated and digitized). When users browse individual catalogue entries on the BC Archives collections database (from anywhere in the world), users can see that a digital image is attached to the description, click on it, and see the digitized image of the archival document. The source of the data is an external facing, Royal BC Museum database controlled by internal policies and practices. Targets have been set per year using historical data and resource plans and only include the digitization work that the BC Archives undertakes.

2.2b: This performance measure evidences the Royal BC Museum's progress in uploading records (i.e., detailed information, including catalogue number, taxonomic data and collection location for each specimen, artifact and belonging in the Museum's collections) to the Museum collection's online management system, which is an effective and modern way to protect material records. Targets are set per year based on resource allocation. The source of data is an external facing, Royal BC Museum database controlled by internal policies and practices. Targets have been reduced as the work to advance the archives, research and collections building means that accessions are limited while the collections are prepared, packed and moved to the new building. As this work is undertaken, records will continue to be updated and enhanced, improving accessibility, but the creation of new records will be lessened.

2.2c: This performance measure indicates the Museum's progress in digitizing original government records, duplicating often fragile one-of-a-kind material, thereby protecting the source material, enabling easier access to this area of its collection and lengthening the lifespan of the content (duplicated and digitized). Bankers Box is a standard unit of measurement for government records and represents a 10" x 12" x 24" box filled with paper records. Targets are aligned with current resources. The source of the data is an external facing, Royal BC Museum database controlled by internal policies and practices.

2.2d: This performance measure represents the reach of digital programs delivered by the Museum by audience size. Digital programs are accessible throughout the province and beyond, and include online lectures, courses, events, live streamed distance learning programs and digital fieldtrips. Data is collated from the number of attendees on each Zoom session, the number of views of the YouTube recording, and the number of Facebook video views. Targets have been set based on the anticipated schedule of exhibitions and events that can offer a digital component, in conjunction with current resources available to deliver programs.

### **Goal 3: The Museum is financially responsible.**

This goal reflects the long-term financial viability of all aspects of the Museum, Archives and IMAX® Victoria operations. It also reflects the Museum's commitment to fiscal responsibility and responsible financial stewardship. By continuing to offer world-class exhibitions and programming that are not typically available at any other venue in B.C., the Museum will attract visitors from across the province and around the world who will contribute to the organization's financial viability through admission fees, memberships, IMAX® Victoria, venue

rental fees, sponsorship, donations and grants. The Museum will also continue to take steps to improve efficiencies to carefully manage operating costs.

### **Objective 3.1: Increase revenue generation from operations.**

In 2024-25, the Museum's key revenue drivers will include: reopening more of the third-floor galleries; hosting key feature exhibitions and accompanying programming: *Wildlife Photographer of the Year 59, Stonehenge, Canadian Modern and Wildlife Photographer of the Year 60*; leveraging IMAX® Victoria to create unique visitor experiences; and increase visitors to the Museum site. The Museum will work to increase its revenues by diversifying and increasing its streams of self-generated revenue.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Drive admissions revenue by providing world-class visitor experiences and hosting feature exhibitions (developed in-house and loaned) that draw local and international audiences.
- Engage effectively with Museum members, IMAX® passholders and Combo Pass holders to increase visitation.
- Work with transport hubs and tourism partners to draw visitors to the destination and drive awareness of the Museum's offerings through at these key connection points.
- Pair feature exhibitions with IMAX® Victoria films that have a strong thematic connection to create a more immersive visitor experience and continue to offer a varied program of documentaries and Hollywood movies at IMAX® Victoria to attract a wide range of visitors.
- Continue to diversify the Museum's funding base through the venue rental program, IMAX® movie concessions, retail, philanthropy, sponsorships and grants.

#### **Discussion**

The Museum views major operational decisions through the lens of responsible financial stewardship. As noted in the Annual Economic Statement, global economic forces have an impact on the Province's outlook and growth. Similarly, the state of the economy directs the feasibility, scope and scale of many of the Museum's initiatives. The Museum takes an approach of fiscal prudence in all its decision-making.

Sponsorship and philanthropy are key revenue streams that the Museum looks to re-establish and build in the coming years and plans to dedicate resources towards advancing this work, beginning in 2024/25.

Serving B.C. includes providing visitors with meaningful, "must-see" museum experiences, and building on the expectations and feedback the Museum consistently receives indirectly through annual attendance numbers.

The Museum will work with the local Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and diverse communities throughout B.C. to reopen the third floor and provide visitors with engaging

provincial content on-site. The Museum will also continue to provide visitors with inspiring and diverse feature exhibitions. In 2024/25 the Museum will host four visiting feature exhibitions: *Wildlife Photographer of the Year 59*, *Stonehenge*, *Canadian Modern* and *Wildlife Photographer of the Year 60*.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
3.1a Revenue from operations, in millions (M)	10.3M	10.5M	11.2M	12.8M
3.1b Number of visitors to Royal BC Museum physical site (including BC Archives and IMAX® Victoria), in millions (M)	0.52M	0.6M	0.62M	0.64M
3.1c Number of visitors to Royal BC Museum website (including IMAX® Victoria, BC Archives and Learning Portal), in millions (M)	13.8M	14.2M	14.4M	14.8M

Data sources: 3.1a: Royal BC Museum financial reporting systems. 3.1b: Royal BC Museum financial reporting systems and BC Archives statistics. 3.1c: The Royal BC Museum collects web statistics through Google Analytics, which allows for detailed tracking of user behaviour and traffic volume across all web assets. Data is tightly controlled and reliable.

## Discussion

3.1a: In service to British Columbians, a modern museum must be financially responsible, and the commitment to own-source revenue generation is a key indicator of the Museum’s dedication to responsible financial stewardship. Revenue from operations includes admissions, memberships, annual passes, leases, licensing, philanthropic contributions, sponsorships, grants and retail. The primary factors for estimating revenue are the types and topics of scheduled exhibitions and films and the projected visitation of the destination.

3.1b: This performance measure includes paid attendance (including membership visits); complimentary ticketed attendance; school groups; visits to the Archives; tours, courses, lectures and private events in rental spaces; visits to public programming events; events hosted by third parties; and visits to IMAX® Victoria. Combined Museum and IMAX® Victoria tickets are counted as a single visit. Targets have been adjusted from last year and are based on tourism trend indicators and historical data in addition to planned exhibitions and events.

3.1c: This performance measure reflects the number of visitors to the Museum’s [corporate website](#) (including the B.C. Archives and [Learning Portal](#)) and the [IMAX Victoria website](#). A session is defined as a group of interactions that takes place on a given site. A single session may contain a single page view, or multiple page views.

# Financial Plan

## Financial Summary

[\$000s]	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
<b>Revenues</b>				
Province of British Columbia Operating Contributions	12,940	13,086	13,086	13,086
Other Provincial Funding	7,921	3,960	5,680	7,210
Museum Admission Fees	7,310	8,215	8,422	9,324
Other Income	2,897	3,190	7,316	11,658
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>31,068</b>	<b>28,451</b>	<b>34,504</b>	<b>41,278</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Salaries and benefits	15,999	16,654	17,330	17,497
Building	2,739	2,806	2,890	3,183
Grant – in lieu of taxes	832	857	883	909
Security	1,125	1,162	1,197	1,233
Amortization	1,252	1,363	4,764	8,165
Special Exhibitions	2,145	1,800	1,800	1,863
Other Operating Costs	9,511	9,262	9,224	11,042
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>33,603</b>	<b>33,903</b>	<b>38,088</b>	<b>43,892</b>
<b>Annual Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(2,535)</b>	<b>(5,452)</b>	<b>(3,584)</b>	<b>(2,614)</b>
<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Accumulated Surplus</b>	<b>14,997</b>	<b>9,545</b>	<b>5,961</b>	<b>3,347</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>	<b>70,916</b>	<b>142,622</b>	<b>38,356</b>	<b>500</b>

Note: The above financial information was prepared based on current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

## Key Forecast Assumptions, Risks and Sensitivities

Forecast Budget assumptions are based on the following:

### Revenues

- Increase in Province of British Columbia Operating Contributions for negotiated wage increases.
- Revenues from both the Museum exhibitions and the IMAX® Victoria theatre will continue to recover to pre-pandemic years. The planned reopening of the permanent galleries during 2024/25 and an exciting series of special exhibitions will encourage visitors throughout the coming years. The IMAX® Victoria theatre will continue to offer an expanded mix of documentary and Hollywood films including those that complement feature exhibitions.
- There will be a continued focus on expanding both the museum membership program and the IMAX annual pass program, including the new “Combo Pass” that will provide visitors with an attractive option to experience of all that the museum has to offer.
- Increase in external funding will focus on sponsorships, donations and grants.

### Expenses

- Salary costs will continue to be managed through a rigorous managed staffing process that requires all new permanent and temporary hires to be reviewed and approved by executive.
- Estimated operating costs for the new archives, research and collections building are not included in the Service Plan Financial Table as they may materially change once building and program decisions are finalized. Updated estimates will be available later in fiscal 2024/25.
- Many operating costs will continue to experience inflation but all opportunities to reduce costs will be explored including rationalization of services and zero-based budgeting for program operating budgets.

The following risks and sensitivities are considered for the budget:

- Risk of economic downturn is incorporated based on Q2 forecast information from Ministry of Finance.
- Visitor traffic estimates based on an average year (pre-pandemic). Weather, economic impact of higher interest rates on tourism, and proper functioning of transportation systems will affect visitation rates and spending.
- Inflation is based on 3 per cent for uncontrollable costs in 2024/25 – each 1 per cent difference drives approximately \$160,000 in costs.
- Stonehenge is anticipated to on par with previous successful exhibitions. Lesser or greater visitor demand will impact museum admission revenues.

## **Management's Perspective on Financial Outlook**

Museum and theatre admission revenue are a major factor for our revenues. As the Museum moves forward there is a focus on recovery, looking at strategies and opportunities to increase visitors returning to both the site and online. If expected Tourism does not materialize this will impact anticipated revenue generation.

## Appendix A: Mandate Letter from the Minister Responsible



August 15, 2023

Leslie Brown  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Royal British Columbia Museum  
675 Belleville Street  
Victoria, BC V8W 9W2

Dear Leslie Brown:

On behalf of the Honourable David Eby, Premier, and the Executive Council, I would like to extend my thanks to you, your board members, and your organization's leadership for your dedication, expertise, and service to the people of British Columbia.

Public sector organizations—including Crowns, Health Authorities, and Post Secondary Institution Boards—support British Columbians by delivering vital public services and are accountable to the public through their responsible Minister. Your leadership in advancing and protecting the public interest strengthens trust in public institutions.

You are serving British Columbians at a time when people in our province continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, an ongoing toxic drug crisis, and climate-related natural disasters, and while global inflation is driving up costs. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a prosperous, low-carbon, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home—in rural areas, in cities, and in Indigenous communities.

This mandate letter, which I am sending in my capacity as Minister responsible for Royal BC Museum, sets out overarching principles relevant to the entire public sector and specific direction on priorities and expectations for your organization for the remainder of Government's term.

Government and public sector organizations must continue to advance results that people can see and feel in these key areas: strengthened health care, safer communities, attainable and secure housing, and a clean and fair economy that delivers affordability and prosperity.

In doing so, you will continue working towards lasting and meaningful Reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the province we are building together, and delivering on specific commitments as outlined in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* action plan.

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As required by the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, please ensure your organization implements targets and strategies for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and managing climate risk, including achieving carbon neutrality each year and aligning with the CleanBC target of a 50 percent reduction in public sector building emissions and a 40 percent reduction in public sector fleet emissions by 2030. Your organization is expected to work with Government to report out on these plans and activities as required by legislation.

Our province's history, identity, and strength are rooted in its diverse population, yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government, and their lives. The public sector has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms—and every public sector organization has a role in this work. As part of this work, your organization is expected to adopt the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens to ensure gender equity is reflected in your operations and programs.

British Columbians expect that public sector organizations operate in a responsible manner to deliver quality services equitably in all regions of the province. This requires strategic stewardship of planning, operations, and policies in the areas of financial, risk, and human resource management including information security and privacy protection.

The protection of government data and networks is a priority, especially where it concerns personal information of British Columbians. Public sector organizations must maintain up to date systems and effective cybersecurity practices, including maintaining current information management and cybersecurity policies, guidelines, and standards; evaluating your organization against industry standards; and maintaining appropriate security and privacy practices. The Office of the Chief Information Officer within the Ministry of Citizens Services is available to support and offer guidance to your organization in any of these areas.

Public sector organizations must also implement and maintain an effective fraud risk management strategy. The Office of the Comptroller General and the Risk Management Branch in the Ministry of Finance is available for consultation.

The Crown Agencies Secretariat (CAS) in the Ministry of Finance supports public sector organizations to operate effectively, in the public interest, and aligned with Government's strategic direction and priorities. Within CAS, the Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office (CABRO) will continue to support you and your board on recruitment, appointments, and professional development, as well ensuring Board composition and governance reflects the diversity of our province. CAS can support you in public sector governance best practices, policy, and planning.

I expect you to ensure the important priorities and areas of focus listed in this letter are incorporated into the practices of your organization and develop plans to address the following new priorities within your approved budget:

- Continue to work closely with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, partners, and communities to advance reconciliation and support repatriation of cultural belongings and ancestral remains to Indigenous communities in British Columbia through:
  - resetting the relationship between the Royal BC Museum and Indigenous Peoples in B.C.;
  - proactively and collaboratively working with communities to support repatriation and improving access to the residential school records in the BC Archives; and
  - supporting the development of a provincial repatriation policy framework.
- Increase the Royal BC Museum's presence across the province and prioritize making the Museum and BC Archives' collections and records more accessible to all British Columbians by:
  - ensuring appropriate capacity and joint Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport decision making to advance the design and building of the Collections and Research Building in Colwood; and
  - advancing partnerships with existing and emerging cultural organizations such as the Chinese Canadian Museum and the South Asian Museum to make collections more accessible to the public, support cultural sovereignty, and expand public engagement.
- Deliver relevant, sustainable, and engaging exhibitions and programs reflective of British Columbia and contemporary museum and cultural practice, including financially responsible and sustainable operations through:
  - maximizing unique visitor experiences, both onsite and online, by continuing to offer relevant and engaging exhibitions, programs, and services; and
  - increasing revenues from exhibitions, programming, services, and commercial opportunities to support operations and return to a balanced budget.
- Advance work to support a modern, accessible, and inclusive Museum through:
  - continuing the work with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport to engage in a robust consultation with Indigenous communities, British Columbians, and stakeholders to inform next steps in the Museum's future; and
  - continuing the work required for cultural transformation within the Museum and archives, including embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion in all policies, practices, procedures, and programming.

Each board member is asked to sign this letter to acknowledge this direction from Government to your organization. The signed letter is to be posted publicly on your website by summer 2023.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your Board colleagues to meet the high standards set for us by all British Columbians.

Sincerely,



Lana Popham  
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport  
Date: August 15, 2023

pc: Honourable David Eby, KC  
Premier

Shannon Salter  
Deputy Minister to the Premier, Cabinet Secretary  
and Head of the BC Public Service

Heather Wood  
Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board  
Ministry of Finance

Mary Sue Maloughney  
Associate Deputy Minister, Crown Agencies Secretariat  
Ministry of Finance

Neilane Mayhew  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

Tracey Drake  
Acting Chief Executive Officer  
Royal British Columbia Museum

Lorne Brownsey  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

pc: Bob Chamberlin  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

Dan George  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

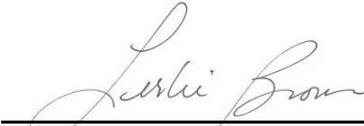
Ry Moran  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

Carole James  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

Robert Jawl  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

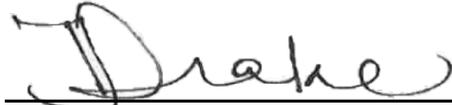
Lenora Lee  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum

Peeter Wesik  
Board Member  
Royal British Columbia Museum



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Leslie Brown  
Chair, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



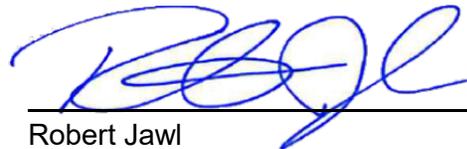
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Tracey Drake  
A/CEO, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Lorne Brownsey  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



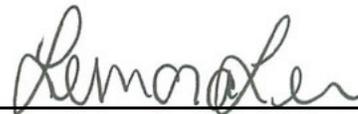
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Robert Jawl  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Bob Chamberlin  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Lenora Lee  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Dan George  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Carole James  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Ry Moran  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023



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Peeter Wesik  
Director, Royal BC Museum  
Date: September 11, 2023