

**Royal BC Museum**

**2021/22 – 2023/24  
Service Plan**

**April 2021**



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## Board Chair's Accountability Statement



The 2021/22 – 2023/24 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 the plan, including what has been included in the plan and how it has been reported. The Board is responsible for the validity and reliability of the information included in the plan.

All significant assumptions, policy decisions, events and identified risks, as of March 2021 have been considered in preparing the plan.

The performance measures presented are consistent with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, the 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 the Royal BC Museum's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment and past performance.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Daniel F. Muzyka". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dr. Daniel F. Muzyka  
Board Chair

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## Strategic Direction and Alignment with Government Priorities

In 2021/22, British Columbians will continue to face significant challenges as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Recovering from the pandemic will require focused direction, strong alignment and ongoing engagement between public sector organizations and the Government of British Columbia. The government has identified five foundational principles that will inform each Crown agency's policies and programs and contribute to COVID-19 recovery: putting people first, lasting and meaningful reconciliation, equity and anti-racism, a better future through fighting climate change and meeting our greenhouse gas commitments, and a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

Under the *Museum Act* (2003), the Royal BC Museum (the Museum), which includes the BC Archives, is required to fulfil 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).

In its 2021/22 Mandate Letter, government directed the Royal BC Museum to focus on the strategic priority actions related to repatriation, enhanced accessibility and access, exhibitions and educational programs, RBCM modernization, equity, diversity and inclusion and COVID-19 recovery.

## Operating Environment

On behalf of government, the Royal BC Museum manages \$72 million of building assets and a further \$56 million in contents (exclusive of collections) located in Victoria, B.C. It also cares for more than seven million objects, records and specimens and 28 kilometres of archival records.

The museum and archives receive an annual grant from the government of \$11.866 million, which represents approximately 55 per cent of its core operating budget. Combined with operational revenues, the Royal BC Museum presents high profile and visitor-acclaimed initiatives such as learning programs and new exhibitions.

Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 50 per cent of the Royal BC Museum's operating budget was funded by admissions revenue, IMAX Victoria revenue and philanthropic contributions, all of which are variable funding sources. Shifts in the global economy, and uncertainty about visitor numbers and the discretionary spending of those visitors, make financial planning challenging; the additional impacts related to the pandemic particularly impact the ability to prepare financial modelling over the next four years. That is why the Royal BC Museum continues to seek ways to diversify revenue sources, including hosting engaging exhibitions that appeal to a wide audience. Many of these exhibitions take several years to develop. The tourism industry is a key driver of economic success across B.C.; the museum, archives and IMAX Victoria play a part in the visitor economy.

Key financial and operational challenges include the costs of maintaining and repairing the museum and archives' aging infrastructure (which puts collections at risk), the costs of collections storage and digitization, and the potential that the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to have an impact on museum, archives, and IMAX Victoria operations through capacity restrictions, travel restrictions, and temporary closures to the public; and a subsequent decrease in revenue through ticketed admissions. Fundraising will also see impacts as donors have less discretionary funds available. Negative publicity around organizational challenges to improve equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) at the museum have also had an impact on philanthropic contributions.

## **Performance Planning**

This Service Plan outlines the Royal BC Museum's goals for the 2021/22 to 2023/24 fiscal years and the strategies to achieve them. During the course of this Service Plan, the Royal BC Museum will employ a number of protocols and mechanisms to facilitate strategic, proactive engagement with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, including quarterly meetings of the Minister and the Board Chair and monthly meetings between the Deputy Minister and the Chief Executive Officer to discuss strategic priorities, performance measures and emerging opportunities. Several amendments have been made to the performance measure targets since the 2020/21 – 2022/23 Service Plan, because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on museum and IMAX Victoria operations during the 2020/21 fiscal year, and the pandemic's potential to continue disrupting operations in future years; as well as the impacts of prioritizing work required to prepare for the move to the new Collections and Research Building.

### **Goal 1: Build back financial stability**

This goal reflects the museum, archives and IMAX Victoria's role in supporting a sustainable economy in British Columbia. Specifically, this goal is about building income, and securing long-term financial viability and flexibility for investments in the modernization project. Improving financial performance will allow for improvements to the museum's programming and infrastructure, thereby attracting more visitors to British Columbia and the museum, archives and IMAX Victoria. The Royal BC Museum is subject to significant financial pressures from the effects of increasing costs of human resources, utilities, property taxes and services to the Royal BC Museum. This goal also takes into consideration the likelihood of the COVID-19 pandemic's ongoing impact on local, national and international tourism, including its impact on the accessibility of the museum site to visitors.

#### **Objective 1.1: Generate revenue from operations**

The Royal BC Museum will work to build back operational funding by capitalizing on opportunities for self-generated revenue.

## Key Strategies

- Continue to host feature exhibitions that draw local and international audiences when restrictions are lifted.
- Strengthen and diversify its funding base:
  - Develop and implement business strategies for commercial opportunities.
  - Pursue new sources of research funding.
  - Re-establish philanthropic investment.
  - Ensure a creative and engaging film offering at the IMAX Victoria.
- Continue to increase revenue by offering new online products and experiences.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
1.1a Revenue from operations, in millions (M)	\$12.0 M	\$3.0 M <sup>1</sup>	\$5.3 M <sup>1</sup>	\$8.0M	\$8.6M

Data source: Royal BC Museum financial reporting systems.<sup>1</sup> Changed from 2020/21-2022/23 Service Plan, in which the 2020/21 Target was \$8.8M and 2021/22 Target was \$9.1M. Please see Discussion section for more information.

## Linking Performance Measure to Objective

- 1.1a These figures are a measurement of the Royal BC Museum’s ability to generate revenue from operations.

## Discussion

Revenue from operations includes admission fees, IMAX Victoria tickets, memberships and annual passes, lease and licensing revenue. It also includes donated collections and artifacts, sponsorships and donations received to offset program expenditures incurred in the fiscal year. The primary factors for estimating revenue are the types and topics of scheduled exhibitions.

This Service Plan reflects the significant, ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on visitors purchasing admission to the museum and IMAX Victoria. The targets for 2022/23 onward are conservative and based on results over the past four years, in addition to estimates about the popularity of each exhibition.

## Objective 1.2: Leverage community support

Recognizing that admissions sales alone cannot guarantee long-term financial stability, the Royal BC Museum will also continue fostering strategic connections and support from other resources: volunteers (when capacity restrictions ease), mutually beneficial relationships, coverage earned from the news media, and limited donations and grants (public and private foundation.)

## Key Strategies

- Build community support:
  - Ensure the Volunteer Program meets the needs of the organization by maintaining a qualified, dedicated and diverse group of volunteers (this will be reviewed when pandemic restrictions ease).
  - Maintain earned media coverage and in-kind advertising ratios.
  - Continue to raise awareness of the value of the museum and archives collections.
- Increase the Royal BC Museum’s presence across the province with regional outreach, to make the museum and archives more available to all British Columbians.
  - Continue to develop and deliver the [Digital Field Trips](#) school program, and new digital learning opportunities for all ages for regions outside Vancouver Island and the lower mainland.
  - Provide continued support to other heritage, scientific and cultural institutions with scientific, curatorial and archival expertise on a case-by-case basis.
  - Act as a resource for research and the sharing of knowledge about British Columbia, which includes loans of objects and specimens, on a case-by-case basis with COVID-19 restrictions and a focus on preparing collections to move.
  - Support government objectives (e.g. the Royal BC Museum is the official repository for material arising from the Fossil Management Framework, an initiative led by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development).
  - Increasing online access to photography and audiovisual collections.

Performance Measures	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
1.2a Number of volunteer hours in thousands (K) <sup>1</sup>	46.2 K	7.5 K <sup>5</sup>	34.6 K	40.4 K	46.2 K
1.2b Value of media, both in-kind <sup>2</sup> and earned <sup>3</sup> , in millions (M)	in-kind: \$0.70 M  earned: \$109.9 M	in-kind: \$0.30 M  earned: \$17.5 M <sup>6</sup>	in-kind: \$0.50 M  earned: \$20 M <sup>6</sup>	in-kind: \$0.84 M  earned: \$22.5 M <sup>6</sup>	in-kind: \$0.84 M  earned: \$25 M <sup>6</sup>
1.2c Donations (cash & in-kind) and grants, in millions (M) <sup>4</sup>	\$3.1 M	\$0.95 M	\$0.25 M	\$0.5 M	\$0.5 M

Data source: Royal BC Museum financial reporting systems.

<sup>1</sup>Volunteer, <sup>2</sup>Marketing, <sup>3</sup>Communications and <sup>4</sup>museum philanthropy records.

<sup>5</sup> This figure replaces the target identified in the 2020/21 Service Plan. See discussion section below for more detail.

<sup>6</sup> These figures replace the targets identified in the 2020/21 Service Plan. See discussion section below for more detail.

## Linking Performance Measures to Objective

- 1.2a Volunteers contribute significant support, enabling the Royal BC Museum to carry out programs and exhibitions, freeing up staff to tackle priority files and cementing the sense of community investment in the organization’s future.
- 1.2b Media value—which is both the result of media relations coverage and leveraging of paid-for advertising—reflects public engagement with Royal BC Museum’s initiatives.

Earned media value is based on the amount it would cost to purchase the equivalent space/time for a published press article/broadcast. In-kind media refers to the value of all additional advertisements or advertorials negotiated with media for no cost. The ad equivalency formula is the readership of the publication (based on unique monthly visitors) times the potential viewership (assuming that not everyone on the site reads the article) times the average ad cost (a proprietary and constant value).

- 1.2c Donations, which assist with financial sustainability for the museum, reflect grants from public and private foundations, and private philanthropy.

## **Discussion**

Targets for 1.2a have been reduced to reflect the Royal BC Museum's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since mid-March 2020, volunteers have not been permitted to volunteer onsite due to capacity limitations in all areas, and the 2020/21 forecast has been reduced accordingly. The museum's pandemic recovery, and consequently limited volunteer opportunities, may extend into the 2022/23 fiscal year; targets for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 fiscal years have been reduced as well.

We have revised all future targets for 1.2b (earned media) in this Service Plan. These revisions reflect three elements: an updated analysis of how of the museum's third-party media monitoring company measures value; an expectation that the Royal BC Museum will continue to generate strong earned media results; and a realistic recognition that many factors (including the pandemic) contribute to this measurement and determining future targets should be approached conservatively.

Targets for 1.2c have been reduced to reflect the impacts of the pandemic on donors' financial situations and the impact of the negative publicity received for the challenges surrounding the EDIA issues.

## **Goal 2: Create dynamic and relevant visitor experiences**

Achieve exceptionally high levels of satisfaction from local, provincial and international visitors (when travel restrictions are lifted) and users through temporary exhibitions, programs and events, digital content and publications.

### **Objective 2.1: Build back on-site visitor volume numbers**

The annual number of visitors is an indication of the relevance of the Royal BC Museum, the strength of its brand and its attractiveness as a must-see travel destination, hub of immersive learning and originator of innovative special events.

As the provincial museum, archives and IMAX Victoria, the Royal BC Museum is committed to creating experiences visitors would not find anywhere else in the world. This sets the museum and archives apart, enabling it to attract and engage visitors. Visitor volumes are highly impacted by capacity limits and travel restrictions.

## Key Strategies

- In collaboration with stakeholders, continue to provide world-class visitor experiences by promoting feature and travelling exhibitions and museum sector partnerships, including promoting the 2021 feature exhibition *Orcas: Our Shared Future*.
- Continue the museum and archives’ partnership with 15 other research and cultural institutions on the *Landscapes of Injustice* project, funded by the *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council*. Our role in the partnership includes developing the national travelling exhibition, *Broken Promises*, which opened at the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre in Burnaby in September, 2020.
- Continue to offer wider access to British Columbians through events and programs such as Community Days and the Greater Victoria Public Library pass program, in which library patrons can check out a Royal BC Museum family pass.
- Provide creative and engaging film schedules in the IMAX Victoria to enhance visitor experience (once the theatre opens per public health schedules.)

Performance Measure	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.1a Number of visitors to main site, in millions (M) <sup>1</sup>	0.72 M	0.10 M <sup>2</sup>	0.28 M <sup>2</sup>	0.51 M <sup>2</sup>	0.65 M <sup>2</sup>

Data source: Royal BC Museum Finance & Procurement reporting systems. Ticketed visitors to the museum and the IMAX Victoria are counted automatically by entrance systems. Data is reliable. Non-ticketed visitor numbers are recorded manually via registration for events/courses and by head counts at events. (Non-ticketed visitors accounted for about 11 per cent of the overall total in 2019/20.)

<sup>1</sup> This figure includes paid attendance (including membership visits); complimentary ticketed attendance; school groups; visits to the archives; tours, courses, lectures and private events in rented galleries; visits to public programming events and events hosted by third parties; and the IMAX Victoria visits (accounting for about 283,000 visitors a year, for which the Royal BC Museum provides services and amenities). Note that combined museum/IMAX Victoria tickets are counted as a single visit to the museum.

<sup>2</sup> Changed from the previous 2020/21-2022/23 Service Plan targets. Please see Discussion section for more information.

## Linking Performance Measure to Objective

2.1a Visitor volume is a key indicator that the museum and archives provide dynamic services and experiences that appeal to and meet the needs of British Columbians and visitors alike.

## Discussion

Future targets have been revised to recognize the probability that the pandemic will continue to exert an influence on museum and IMAX Victoria operations, including capacity, health and safety measures and travel restrictions that, although necessary, will result in lower admission numbers than are typical.

Targets for 2021/22 forward also consider market research, which is conducted annually with museum, archives and IMAX Victoria members and the public as part of the exhibition planning process, and reflect a measure of unpredictability, as upcoming feature exhibitions (2022/23 onward) have not yet been finalized.

## Objective 2.2: Maintain high visitor satisfaction levels

Visitor volume is important to the Royal BC Museum, indicating that it is indeed creating dynamic, relevant experiences—but the real impact of the previous measurement is amplified when viewed in the context of outstanding levels of visitor satisfaction. Matching and exceeding the expectations of the Museum’s diverse audiences is a challenge. To meet this objective the Museum provides remarkable exhibitions, engaging learning experiences in its core galleries and thought-provoking programming centred on the histories of the peoples in B.C.

The museum’s ongoing commitment to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities is a key contributor to this objective, as the perspective of Indigenous right and title holders is of paramount significance. The Royal BC Museum continues to work closely with Indigenous communities to advance repatriation, supporting Indigenous peoples seeking the return of ancestral remains and objects to their communities and providing digital access to collections.

### Key Strategies

- In collaboration with stakeholders, continue to provide world-class visitor experiences by promoting feature and travelling exhibitions and museum sector partnerships, including the 2021 feature exhibition [\*Orcas: Our Shared Future\*](#).
- Support increased engagement by incorporating digital connections into gallery and exhibition content.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.2a Per cent of visitors surveyed satisfied with services	92%	95%	95%	95%	93%

Data source: Royal BC Museum Marketing & Business Development records. Data is gathered in comprehensive ICount surveys two times per year with a random sample of on-site visitors, and is reliable with 95% confidence, 19 times out of 20.

### Linking Performance Measure to Objective

2.2a This performance measure evaluates visitors’ perceptions of their experiences at the Royal BC Museum. By offering a singularly compelling “unique” experience, the museum and archives consistently attracts high numbers of visitors—who express high rates of satisfaction. The consequence is higher admissions revenues and increased success in attracting donors, sponsors and volunteers.

To evaluate if the Royal BC Museum is continually meeting its high levels of visitor satisfaction, the museum and archives conducts periodic evaluations to determine visitor composition, needs, interests and satisfaction, and features a comprehensive Visitor Service Strategy in partnership with all visitor-facing service providers on site.

## Discussion

Targets from 2021/22 onwards remain constant at 95 per cent until 2023/24 when the impacts of the move to the new Collections and Research Building may impact visitor spaces and experiences. Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, data indicates that visitors continue to enjoy the museum experience, and visitors welcome the museum's pandemic-related health and safety measures.

### **Objective 2.3: Continue growing attendance numbers at learning programs and events**

Royal BC Museum programming constantly evolves, reflecting contemporary tastes, learning expectations and the adoption of new technologies. The following performance measure considers the response received from learners of all ages in offering learning experiences that are inherently unique: as its programming is based on, and drawn from, the collections of the provincial museum and archives of B.C., no other institution can offer these types of programs.

### **Key Strategies**

- Provide curriculum support for students and teachers, including developing and crowd-sourcing resources on the online [Learning Portal](#), teacher workshops, school tours, school partner projects, [Digital Field Trips](#) and school visits.
- Continue demographic and geographic outreach, consulting with diverse cultural groups to deepen the museum and archives' institutional knowledge and connecting with learners and educators throughout the province to develop a user-focused experience.
- Expand digital programming to provide new opportunities for learners of all ages in all regions of the province to engage with the museum and archives; especially while impacted by pandemic restrictions.

Performance Measures	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.3a Number of people at our learning programs/events <sup>1</sup>	182,063	178,000	193,900	211,300	193,500
2.3b Learning program and event participants on site <sup>2</sup>	32,850	0	2,000	11,000	5,500
2.3c Outreach outside the Capital Region <sup>3</sup>	4,370	178,000	178,000	178,000	178,000
2.3d Animation participants <sup>4</sup>	144,843	0	13,900	27,800	10,000

<sup>1</sup> Data is compiled from head-count clickers operated by staff, photographs, third-party providers and the Human Resources Volunteer Impact database. The figure in row one (2.3a) represents the total of the three following measures.

<sup>2</sup> Visitor numbers are recorded by security guards at Helmcken House/St. Ann’s and by staff at programs and events, using head-count clickers, with some additional verification by photographs. The data is considered reliable.

<sup>3</sup> Data is supplied by third-party providers and is considered reliable. Starting in 2020/21, during the pandemic’s first wave, the Royal BC Museum rapidly accelerated the number of online Learning programs. These programs were hosted live on Zoom, with recordings posted on the museum’s Facebook page and YouTube channel. Data for 2020/21 onwards is based on the number of attendees on each Zoom session, the number of views of the YouTube recording, and the number of Facebook video views.

<sup>4</sup> Data is compiled from the Human Resources Volunteer Impact database, which gives the number of people served by learning volunteers, or “animators,” as recorded in their reports and verified by a second volunteer. The data is considered reliable.

## Linking Performance Measures to Objective

2.3a This measure shows the extent to which Royal BC Museum learning programs and events support its strategies, government’s direction and the range of learning styles and approaches, both curriculum-driven and independent. This overarching measurement includes the following metrics (2.3b, 2.3c and 2.3d)—all measured at un-ticketed events—which provide a clear intention to grow attendance at learning programs year-over-year.

## Discussion

The forecast and targets for 2.3b (onsite learning program attendees) fluctuate, based on best-case assumptions about the status of the pandemic and the museum’s modernization plans. The Royal BC Museum anticipates a 70 per cent drop in tourism (with international borders closed due to pandemic restrictions), and a resulting drop in attendance at onsite learning programs, for 2021/22. As recovery grows, the museum assumes 2.3b targets will rise 40 per cent the following year (2022/2023). However, this figure will likely drop again in 2023/24 as the museum’s core galleries are impacted, as the museum readies for the pack and move to the new Collections and Research Building.

The Royal BC Museum anticipates targets in 2.3c to remain stable, with a constant demand for the [RBCM@Home webinars](#), [Digital Field Trips](#) and future opportunities to offer digital outreach to multiple classes simultaneously in collaboration with streaming education companies.

Performance measures for 2.3d are dependant upon the return of volunteers, who play a key role in facilitating learning programs in the museum galleries. This measure follows the trajectory of 2.3c (above). The Royal BC Museum anticipates a conservative return to 20 per cent of pre-pandemic numbers year over year, followed by a drop in 2023/24 as the core galleries close.

### **Objective 2.4: Increase visitor volume online**

Our online presence is the digital face of the museum, archives and the IMAX Victoria, supporting the Museum's reputation and, by extension, that of British Columbia. Recognizing that not all British Columbians (or people around the world) are able to travel to Victoria to experience the Royal BC Museum in person, this objective reflects the view that digital visits are as valuable and important as in-person, on-site visits.

A key component of this objective is to continue the steady digitization of the Museum's collections, a process that helps to preserve fragile/at risk records and provide users with a more durable medium online, to make the museum and archives more accessible to all British Columbians.

### **Key Strategies**

- Explore ways to make Indigenous belongings, photographs, audiovisual and other materials, currently held in Royal BC Museum's Indigenous collections available online.
  - Complete the Digital Totem Gallery project, allowing for dynamic knowledge-sharing with Indigenous partners through user-generated content.
- Look for means to preserve at-risk media and provide Indigenous communities in B.C. with access to photography and audiovisual collections.
- Continue to add collection data to the museum, library and archives collection systems.
- Continue to support preservation and access by digitizing and make accessible key photograph collections.
- Increase engagement, by supporting Learning goals through digital initiatives:
  - Continue the ongoing development of the [Learning Portal](#).
  - Build on the [Digital Field Trips](#) school program for teachers and students across the province, offering sessions with museum staff linked directly, through digital technology, to classrooms.
  - Continue annual teachers' professional development workshops focused on digital learning opportunities, offering online both live and recorded access.
- Continue to create partnerships to fill gaps in internal digital knowledge and to tap into innovation taking place outside of the museum and archives.

Performance Measures	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.4a Total visitors to website, in millions (M) (does not include Learning Portal or IMAX Victoria website)	11.4 M page views 1.9 M sessions	12 M page views 2.2 M sessions	12.6 M page views 2.3 M sessions	13.2 M page views 2.4 M sessions	13.8 M page views <sup>1</sup> 2.5 M sessions <sup>1</sup>
2.4b Total visitors to Learning Portal, in thousands (K)	116.7 K page views 37.3 K sessions	122.5 K page views 39.1 K sessions	128.6 K page views <sup>1</sup> 41.1 K sessions <sup>1</sup>	135 K page views <sup>1</sup> 43.1 K sessions <sup>1</sup>	148.8 K page views <sup>1</sup> 45.3 K sessions <sup>1</sup>
2.4c Total visitors to IMAX Victoria website	1.2 M page views 510 K sessions	450 K page views 125 K sessions	585 K page views 160 K sessions	700 K page views 190 K sessions	910 K page views 250 K sessions

Data Source: 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.

<sup>1</sup> These figures replace the targets identified in the 2020/21 Service Plan. See discussion section below for more detail.

### Linking Performance Measures to Objective

- 2.4a This measure reflects the growing number of visitors to the Royal BC Museum’s [corporate website](#), year-over-year. 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.
- 2.4b This measure reflects the growing number of visitors to the interactive [Learning Portal](#).
- 2.4c The Royal BC Museum acquired IMAX Victoria in August 2020. The IMAX Victoria has a standalone website. This measure reflects the number of visitors to the [IMAX Victoria website](#).

### Discussion

Online visitor volume is a strong measure of the strength of the Royal BC Museum’s digital infrastructure and reputation. The Royal BC Museum website includes the interactive [Learning Portal](#), access to online experts, exhibitions, films, and publications, shopping and ticket sales. As the gateway to museum and archives’ collections data and genealogy data, the Royal BC Museum website is the primary portal to its digital records.

In 2.4 a, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative effect on the corporate website in the last quarter of 2019/20: the museum lost visitors to its exhibition pages in the latter half of March 2020, because the exhibitions were closed, although it gained visitors on other content-rich pages. The museum anticipates that trend to continue moving into 2021/2022 and onwards.

The new target for 2023/24 reflects an anticipated (conservative) progression of growth in all performance measures, based on previous years’ data. The historical trend—and continued

projection—of steady growth reflects the Royal BC Museum’s ability to connect with new digital audiences around the world, its adherence to technical improvement and its consistent integration of new web content (including material on the [Learning Portal](#)) that website visitors value.

For 2.4b, the Learning Portal saw a significant increase in visitor traffic in the latter half of March 2020, immediately after the pandemic closure. The Royal BC Museum estimates that this trend will plateau over the next three years but will continue to see incremental improvement. With this in mind, the museum targets a five per cent increase year over year.

Performance measure 2.4c, is new and is a result of the Royal BC Museum’s purchase of the IMAX Victoria in August 2020. The IMAX Victoria website saw a significant decrease in visitor traffic beginning in March 2020 and continuing into the present. This decrease in traffic is caused by rolling closures of the IMAX Victoria to comply with public health orders. Anticipating that public health orders will be gradually lifted over the next three years; the Royal BC Museum estimates increases of 20 to 30 per cent each year from 2020/21 numbers.

## **Objective 2.5: Provide access to, and facilitate the repatriation of, Indigenous belongings to communities in BC**

This objective supports and aligns with BC’s *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Province’s commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The objective reflects the Royal BC Museum’s central and long-standing role in supporting reconciliation through meaningful action that addresses government priorities and, just as importantly, the desires of our partners in Indigenous communities.

Wherever possible, the Royal BC Museum expedites repatriation requests from the Indigenous collections it safeguards. The Royal BC Museum provides expertise to Indigenous communities in B.C. seeking the return of ancestral remains and cultural belongings from other museums, anywhere in the world. The Royal BC Museum also provides expertise and advice, modelling a way for cultural institutions and partners to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities.

### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to provide Indigenous communities and individuals with reproductions of records documenting their cultural heritage. Indigenous researchers can access copies of photographs, textual records, sound recordings and other items from the collections.
- Continue to prioritize the digitization of Indigenous materials, with a focus on digitizing linguistic tapes in order to support language revitalization programs within Indigenous communities.
- Continue to identify and share information about residential schools from our collections with educators and learners.
- Continue to offer a wide variety of school programs aimed at increasing awareness of Indigenous cultures and histories.

- Continue to consult with relevant Indigenous communities when end-of-life poles on the Royal BC Museum grounds in Thunderbird Park are laid to rest; including the community that inspired the pole, the communities of the pole carvers and the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, upon whose traditional territories the Royal BC Museum exists today.
- Consult and engage Indigenous communities on the protocols and appropriate processes for caring for their cultural belongings and the incorporation of Indigenous voices during the modernization project (e.g. packing and moving Indigenous belongings).

Performance Measures		2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.5a Number of digitized files (sound recordings, photographs, etc.) repatriated to Indigenous communities in BC		1,367	500	300	300	300
2.5b Number of visits by Indigenous groups to the Indigenous collections, to assess and access historical materials from their communities	Outreach at events like Hobiye (and virtual outreach)	2,259	750	300	600	1,100
	Archaeology	65	250	0	30	30
	Indigenous Collections	298	0	0	150	150
	Wawadit'la (Mungo Martin House)	783	0	0	500	700

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

### Linking Performance Measures to Objective

2.5a The number of repatriation requests, repatriated files of intangible cultural heritage and visits by Indigenous communities to the Indigenous collections all reflect the desire and ability of the museum and archives to play a significant and meaningful part in the process of reconciliation. Each of these performance measures reflects our ability to provide Indigenous communities in B.C. with access to cultural belongings and/or to repatriate them. Repatriation requests are honoured, but, for varied and often complex reasons, these requests often take many years to reach fruition. The pandemic has severely affected and will continue to affect the museum’s ability to facilitate repatriation with travel restrictions and the safety of elders and community members being paramount.

### Discussion

Targets for these performance measures are conservative. The targets for 2.5a are forecasted to decline significantly between 2020/21 and 2023/34 in alignment with responsibilities around preparation, pack and move and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous

communities. This work is of vital importance to the Royal BC Museum and the Indigenous communities it serves, and there is much more work to be accomplished in future years. The Royal BC Museum has set targets for future years at an achievable level, recognizing that this work requires careful and often lengthy consultation, the development of mutual trust and resources and technical support.

Targets for 2.5b have been significantly reduced over the next two fiscal years (2021/22 and 2022/23) due to a re-alignment of responsibilities around preparation, pack and move and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially the elevated risk to Indigenous communities.

### **Goal 3: Effectively steward our collections**

The Royal BC Museum will continue to develop and care for museum and archives collections, ensuring the collections and knowledge remain relevant and accessible for audiences now and for generations to come.

#### **Objective 3.1: Protect our collections**

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. To do this, the Museum provides the necessary conservation, research, management, financial and environmental supports.

Digitization is a key aspect of preservation and access: capturing fragile archival materials like textual records, publications, maps, paintings, photographs and audio and visual materials, and making them accessible to the public through Access to Memory (AtoM) – the [BC Archives collection search website](#) and [Sitka](#), the BC Archives integrated library system. Growing access to digitized materials from our natural and human history collections is provided by online exhibitions, through the [Learning Portal](#) and through [Digital Field Trips](#) for schools.

Enabling access involves increasing regional outreach, providing access to experts on site, off-site and online and connecting meaningfully with diverse cultural and demographic groups.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to grow the AtoM and Integrated Museum Management (IMM) databases to provide resources for research and sharing of knowledge about British Columbia, as well as provide a preservation method related to the digitization of records.
- Continue to develop the Sitka BC Archives Library Database to provide expanded access to provincial archive and genealogy records.
- Continue to provide access to the collections through the new public-facing [catalog and search system for the BC Archives library](#).
- Continue to process and make publicly accessible government records transferred to the Royal BC Museum.

- Continue to introduce new incremental preservation and conservation steps as budgets allow.
- Review and update the principles and guidelines of the Conservation Policy of June 2012.

Performance Measures	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
3.1a Collection Risk Management Index (CRMI) score <sup>1</sup>	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
3.1b Number of objects attached to AtoM, in thousands (K)	30.7 K	7 K <sup>2</sup>	7 K <sup>2</sup>	7 K <sup>2</sup>	7 K <sup>2</sup>
3.1c Number of boxes of government records processed, in thousands (K) <sup>3</sup>	2.6 K	2 K <sup>4</sup>	3 K	3 K	3 K
3.1d Number of records added to IMM, in thousands (K)	299 K	70 K <sup>5</sup>	25 K <sup>5</sup>	25 K <sup>5</sup>	25 K

Data source: Royal BC Museum

<sup>1</sup> The CRMI refers to the number of outstanding risks to the collection as a percentage of those originally identified in the Royal BC Museum’s comprehensive collections risk assessment.

<sup>2</sup> These figures replace the targets identified in the 2020/21 Service Plan. See discussion section below for more detail.

<sup>3</sup> “Processing” entails reviewing and describing the boxes, carrying out preservation assessments, carrying out basic preservation treatment and rehousing the records (as required), reviewing the records for access/Freedom of Information (FOI) issues, making the descriptions available online for researchers, providing reference services and managing access to the records.

<sup>4</sup> This figure replaces the target identified in the 2020/21 Service Plan. See discussion section below for more detail.

<sup>5</sup> These figures replace the targets identified in the 2020/21 Service Plan. See discussion section below for more detail.

### Linking Performance Measures to Objective

- 3.1a This performance measure reflects the risk to the material holdings of the Royal BC Museum, identifying the predominant threats to our objective of safeguarding the province’s natural history and human history collections.
- 3.1b This performance measure indicates the Royal BC 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 its collection and lengthening the lifespan of the content (duplicated and digitized).
- 3.1c This performance measure indicates the Royal BC 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). 3,000 boxes have been identified as a target to be processed on an annual basis within the Service Level Agreement, making government records accessible to the public.

3.1d This performance measure indicates the Royal BC Museum’s progress in uploading records to IMM, the museum collection’s online management system, a tangible way to protect material records.

## **Discussion**

Outstanding risks identified in the CRMI pertain to the fabric, structure and environment of the collections building. To improve the CRMI score (and increase the figure above 80 per cent), earthquake and flooding risks and environmental conditions must be brought up to international standards. Other incremental improvements identified within the Collection Risk Management Plan have been completed. Once the collections and archives are relocated to the new purpose-built Collections and Research Building, the CRMI score (3.1a) will improve. Completion of this move, an integral part of the museum’s modernization plan, is scheduled to occur by 2024/2025.

The 2020/21 forecast for target 3.1c has been reduced to reflect the Royal BC Museum’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff were unable to process boxes of government records while working remotely full-time between March and June 2020.

Records from the Royal BC Museum that are processed, catalogued, digitized and uploaded to searchable website databases like IMM and AtoM benefit enormously from this process, because it helps ensure scientifically significant, historically valuable (and often fragile) material is conserved and public access to knowledge is secured as well as providing the public with access to records of the provincial government. The IMM and AtoM data sets (3.1b and 3.1d) are a measure of the amount of historical material that is uploaded into museum and archives databases for the public. Targets set for these measures demonstrate the Royal BC Museum’s commitment to progress on the digital front, management of collections inventory control, and preservation.

The 2019/20 actual figure for 3.1d is anomalously high because two large data sets (paleontology and archaeology) were imported this year. The ongoing work of updating data and adding new records to IMM is captured in the targets going forward. The Royal BC Museum is on track to exceed its 2020/21 target for 3.1d, originally identified as 25K in the 2020/21 Service Plan, as staff were able to clear a significant number of backlog and new collection records this year.

## **Goal 4: Museum Modernization Project**

The Royal BC Museum will continue to work with development partners on museum modernization, including the construction of the Collections and Research Building in Colwood, and the modernization of the main museum on the inner harbour.

### **Objective 4.1: Modernize the museum experience**

The Royal BC Museum is in the midst of a modernization project which includes a capital aspect. The Museum’s capacity to house its vast collections is strained and the buildings no longer meet today’s accessibility or seismic standards. The Museum has been at its current location since 1967 and has not been substantially renovated in over 50 years. The Province

committed to modernizing the Museum in the 2019 and 2020 Throne Speeches and in the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport's 2020 Mandate Letter.

On September 18, 2020, the Province announced the first phase of the Royal BC Museum modernization project, the construction of the Collections and Research Building in the Royal Bay development of Colwood, B.C. The Collections and Research Building will store and protect the collections, artifacts and archives; provide research areas and laboratories; and support public access to more of the collections. This building will use mass timber and support CleanBC energy efficiency standards. The project implementation will result in economic benefits during both the construction phase and ongoing operation of the Collections and Research Building. The project will also result in the continuation and enhancement of long-term economic benefits in the region through tourism and the staffing/operations of the building. The main museum and public galleries will remain at the downtown site in Victoria. The Province is committed to redeveloping the museum space downtown and will announce plans in 2021.

Key goals of the modernization project are to enhance visitor experiences and increase access to the collections. It was evident during the public engagement undertaken on the modernization project that visitors are looking for a more holistic, interactive and accessible experience. The strategic direction is to engage with community, honour Indigenous knowledge, and embody cultural awareness. The modernization project will reflect government commitment to affordability and will contribute to a strong sustainable economy that works for everyone; as it is a major capital project in the Greater Victoria region, helping businesses grow and hire more employees.

In addition to modernizing the facilities, the Royal BC Museum will also be applying a modernization lens to museum practices, policies and procedures.

## **Key Strategies**

- Preparing for packing and moving collections into the new Collection and Research Building.
- Defining and initiating the process for the development of the new narrative for the new museum galleries including related staff research.
- Continuing to develop the programmatic scheme for the new Collections and Research Building.
- Engaging Indigenous peoples, honouring Indigenous knowledge, and incorporating Indigenous views into the building design, exhibit design and development of culturally appropriate programming.
- Continuing the physical development of the Collections and Research Building in cooperation with the development partners (Transportation Investment Corporation, Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport and Infrastructure BC).
- Continue to work with development partners on the modernization of the main museum.
- Continuing Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) staff training programs.

Performance Measures	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
4.1a Number of engagements with communities on the modernization projects <sup>1</sup>	8	25	25	20
4.1b Percentage of staff completed the EDIA training <sup>2</sup>	NA	100%	100%	100%
4.1c Activation against preparation, pack and move plan <sup>3</sup>	5%	40%	85%	100%

Data source: Royal BC Museum

<sup>1</sup> Refers to the number of community engagements (traditional and self-identified) that the museum has planned. Does not include individual meetings and consultations with private groups and stakeholders.

<sup>2</sup> These figures represent the mandatory training presented by the organization.

<sup>3</sup> Represents the accumulated percentage of work against the PPM plan over time.

### Linking Performance Measures to Objective

- 4.1a This performance measure reflects the implementation of the comprehensive engagement plan on the Collections and Research Building programmatic scheme, new museum gallery narratives and specialized stakeholder meetings, e.g. Friends of the BC Archives.
- 4.1b This performance measure indicates the Royal BC Museum’s improved staff understanding and awareness of equity, diversity, inclusion and access and how these pillars will support modernization of practices and systems within the museum and archives.
- 4.1c This performance measure represents the accumulation of preparation, pack and move work against the move plan through time.

### Discussion

Objective 4.1 and the associated performance measures are new for 2021/22. Targets for these measures represent planned approaches to modernization. Additional engagements with stakeholders, other traditional and self-defined communities, private and small group meetings and individuals will also take place.

EDIA training is essential to the modernization of museum and archives’ practice, including systems, processes and procedures. Better staff understanding and internalization of new ways of doing, will improve inclusion and lead to better input and decision-making.

The packing and moving of the collections, target 4.1c, will be a key focus for the Royal BC Museum in the years ahead. The target is conservative and allows for incremental progress to be made over the next three years, prior to the anticipated completion of the Collections and Research Building in late 2024. This Performance Measure tracks the progress made on the pack and move process.

## Financial Plan

### Financial Summary

(\$000)	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Plan	2023/24 Plan
<b>Total Revenue</b>				
Province of British Columbia Operating Contributions	11,866	11,866	11,866	11,866
Other Provincial Funding	21,370	3,917	3,917	3,417
Museum Admission Fees	1,071	2,911	5,297	6,038
Other Income	1,940	2,348	2,734	2,609
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>36,247</b>	<b>21,042</b>	<b>23,814</b>	<b>23,930</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>				
Salaries and Benefits	12,081	13,542	13,314	13,361
Building	2,070	2,380	2,428	2,476
Grant - In Lieu of Taxes	739	832	862	892
Security	892	955	974	947
Amortization	1,102	1,212	1,212	1,212
Special Exhibitions	500	1,500	1,250	1,250
Other Operating Costs	6,766	5,860	5,924	5,617
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>24,150</b>	<b>26,281</b>	<b>25,964</b>	<b>25,755</b>
<b>Annual Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>12,097</b>	<b>(5,239)</b>	<b>(2,150)</b>	<b>(1,825)</b>
<b>Total Liabilities [even if zero]</b>	<b>19,108</b>	<b>128,814</b>	<b>283,741</b>	<b>376,668</b>
<b>Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) [even if zero]</b>	<b>28,767</b>	<b>23,528</b>	<b>21,378</b>	<b>19,553</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>	<b>21,196</b>	<b>111,279</b>	<b>156,500</b>	<b>94,500</b>

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

## Key Forecast Assumptions, Risks and Sensitivities

- The Royal BC Museum continues to develop strategies to manage expenditure growth while maximizing programs in order to meet its mandate in a cost-effective manner.
- Other income includes earned income, access services, related retail operations, corporate sponsorships and gifts in-kind (donated collections and artifacts).
- During the past several years the Royal BC Museum Foundation has made financial contributions to the Royal BC Museum through its established endowments.
- Other expenses include information systems, project specific expenditures, marketing and supplies.
- Royal BC Museum operations are supported by a large and dedicated group of volunteers.
- The Royal BC Museum is subject to significant financial pressures from the effects of increasing costs of human resources, utilities, property taxes and services.

## Management’s Perspective on the Financial Outlook

Going forward, financial projections indicate a gradual return of admission and other revenues due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. However, these projections depend to a large extent on revenues that are difficult to forecast and subject to changing external factors.

The Royal BC Museum is focussing on growth of internal and external business channels and the continued growth of its online sales, publishing revenue and licensing of materials from the collections.

Government is working on a modernization project, to modernize and renew the Royal BC Museum to preserve, protect, and provide access to the human and natural history collections of British Columbia.

## Capital Expenditures

Major Capital Projects (over \$50 million)	Targeted Year of Completion	Project Cost to Dec 31, 2020 (\$m)	Estimated Cost to Complete (\$m)	Approved Anticipated Total Cost (\$m)
Collections and Research Building	2024	15	162	177
A new collections and research building in Colwood, BC, to house the Royal BC Museum’s collections, the BC Archives and the museum’s research facilities.				

## Appendix A: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

### Corporate Governance

- [Board of Directors](#)
- [Board Committees](#)
- [Senior Management](#)
- [Governance Principles](#)
- [Key Accountability Relationships](#)

### Organizational Overview

- [Enabling statute](#)
- [Mandate provided in enabling statute](#)
- [Vision and Values](#)
- [Business areas](#)
- [Benefit to the public](#)
- [Principal partners, clients and stakeholders](#)
- [How services are delivered](#)
- [Royal BC Museum's Risk Register](#)