

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
BRIEFING NOTE FOR DEPUTY MINISTER

Ref #: 165535

FOR MEETING

Date: December 17, 2015

Title: BC's Infrastructure Priorities and Canada 150

Issue: Meeting with Erica Tao, Regional Director General, Department for Canadian Heritage (PCH) to discuss Canada 150 and BC's infrastructure priorities.

Background:

In the 2015 federal election, the Liberal Party made a commitment to double federal infrastructure investment to almost \$125 billion – from the current \$65 billion – over the next decade.

This will include new, dedicated funding to provinces, territories, and municipalities for:

- Public transit infrastructure,
- Social infrastructure – including affordable housing and seniors facilities, early learning and child care, and cultural and recreational infrastructure,
- Green infrastructure – including local and wastewater facilities, climate resilient infrastructure, and clean energy.

In preparing for this influx of funding, colleagues at PCH are gathering information on major cultural infrastructure projects coming up in each jurisdiction. They have also made contact with the RBCM for more information on their project.

Funding and program decisions related to Canada 150 are also pending at the federal level.

Mandate Considerations: Support for cultural institutions is a critical component of creating culturally rich communities within BC. Accessing federal funding to develop British Columbia's cultural infrastructure and to support the celebration of key historical milestones is a priority for CSCD.

Liquefied Natural Gas Considerations: N/A

Fiscal Considerations: Organizations receiving funding from the federal government may have expectations for matching funds from the province. Currently, BC does not have a cultural infrastructure program.

First Nations Considerations: Reconciliation may be identified as a focus for Canada 150

Communications: New funding anticipated from the federal government provides an opportunity to promote BC's existing cultural institutions, programming and infrastructure. 2017 also provides an opportunity to celebrate the diverse histories, heritage and cultures that contribute to building inclusive, respectful and collaborative communities for the benefit of all British Columbians.

Discussion:

Infrastructure:

In British Columbia, there are currently three main projects that have indicated that they are ready to build, contingent on funding from the federal and provincial governments:

1. **Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG):** The new Vancouver Art Gallery will be a purpose-built art museum at the intersection of West Georgia and Cambie Streets—two thirds of the Larwill Park site—a two-acre, city-owned parcel. It features over 85,000 square feet of exhibition space—more than doubling its current size—with 40,000 square feet of galleries dedicated to the museum’s vast collection. It also features a new education centre that includes a 350-seat auditorium, workshops and a resource centre for research, library services and artist archives.

The VAG has engaged the Swiss firm, Herzog & de Meuron, to take the lead on the design. Planning and feasibility stages are complete. Anticipated project costs of \$350 million with an expected \$150 million government contribution (\$50m Province / \$100m Feds). The Province of BC allocated \$50 million to this project in 2008.

2. **Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (AGGV):** AGGV has plans for a renovation and expansion of their Moss Street location. They have engaged an architectural consultant (de Hog & Kierulf) to complete an in-depth feasibility study. The AGGV hopes to complete construction by 2017. Victoria artist **Anthony Thorn** has gifted a \$ 2.5 million endowment towards the project. The City of Victoria approved rezoning of the Moss Street site in December 2015. [s.13,s.17](#)
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3. **Royal BC Museum (RBCM):** In 2013, the RBCM released its multi-phased master plan for redevelopment of its facilities and site. Estimated for completion in 2017 to coincide with Canada’s 150th anniversary. Phase One features a new Emily Carr gallery and museum revitalization, including:

- Seismic upgrades
- New Emily Carr Gallery and Totem Display
- Renovated Clifford Carl Hall
- Temporary Café Reconfiguration
- New Temporary Gallery and Supporting Functions
- Second Floor Natural History Gallery
- New Theatre and Orientation Hall

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Each organization has been advised on a number of occasions that there is no allowance in the current fiscal plan for a provincial contribution. However, federal funding could increase expectations for

matching provincial funds. Without a provincial infrastructure program, this may create pressures on existing budgets.

CSCD staff has also been working with colleagues from PCH to identify provincial creative cluster infrastructure projects as a part of the creative economy action plan. Up to \$500,000 has been allocated for the next three years for these projects. A list of projects has been identified but funding priorities have not yet been determined.

Canada 150

The Canada 150 Fund is a \$210M program administered by the Department for Canadian Heritage (PCH) and is focussed on signature initiatives, events, festivals and performances. Applications for the “signature initiatives” portion of this funding are closed but organizations may still apply for small scale community grants.

The Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program was a \$150M fund administered Western Economic Diversification (WD). The maximum available grant through this program was \$500,000 and a number of projects have already been announced.

Staff has been communicating regularly with PCH and the Canada 150 Secretariat on the upcoming sesquicentennial but limited information has been available. While the programs were announced last year, the recent election and resulting new government has impacted the timing and implementation.

Staff at PCH has recently indicated that they expect changes to the existing theme, funding programs and priorities. s.13

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Funding decisions for many of the infrastructure projects have already been announced but the remaining are pending approval from the new Minister of Canadian Heritage. It is expected that decisions and announcements on both events and infrastructure will be made in January.

Recommended Response:

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