

British Columbia Aviation Museum Strategic Plan Summary

Introduction

The British Columbia Aviation Museum (BCAM) is a complex of buildings and artifacts located on the grounds of Victoria International Airport in North Saanich, British Columbia. It was created in the mid-1980s by four groups of aviation enthusiasts in the Victoria region. The BCAM name also applies to the non-profit society registered in 1988 as the basis for conducting museum activities. The Museum is focused on preserving the history of aviation in Canada, most particularly in British Columbia.

In 2019 there were some 700 members of the Museum, each having voting rights to direct the Museum's evolution. The Board of Directors consists of seven members elected for two-year terms. From among its membership, the Museum is run entirely by volunteers.

The Museum's Board of Directors has adopted this Strategic Plan to guide decision making over the coming five-to-ten years. It makes no effort to take into account the current COVID-19 pandemic, but rather is based on the assumption that social norms will return in the coming year or two at most. The Plan will be revisited in 2026, or earlier if circumstances should change to a degree that renders it out of date.

This Strategic Plan identifies six high-level Goals, and a number of Key Initiatives relevant to each.

Goal 1: Tourist Destination

To be a destination tourist attraction known for its excellence in presenting aviation history and technology specific to British Columbia and other western provinces

Key Initiatives:

- 1.1 Begin to document more fully the number and nature of visitors, and introduce an exit survey to learn about their motivations and suggestions;
- 1.2 Seek input from cruise operators to determine what is needed to have the Museum as part of a shore excursion;
- 1.3 Create a marketing team to prepare a road map for improving the public profile of the Museum;
- 1.4 Work with local and Island tourism groups to promote BCAM and to expand the visitor base for the museum; and
- 1.5 Develop a marketing strategy which may include rebranding for the Museum consistent with the Vision and Mission statements and the Museum collection..

Goal 2: The Collection

To conserve and display a widely acclaimed array of aircraft and artifacts focus on the history of aviation and aerospace in British Columbia and the other Western Provinces

Key Initiatives

- 2.1 Define and adopt formal criteria for planned acquisition and disposition of aircraft, artifacts and other assets;
- 2.2 Pursue the acquisition of:
 - o the Martin Mars used in firefighting.
 - o a DHC-2 Beaver used in both coastal and bush flying.
 - o a Sikorsky S-55 helicopter used as a ‘heavy lift’ helicopter in building key power lines in BC.
 - o a Firecat converted and used by CONAIR in fighting forest fires.
 - o a helicopter with a ‘Bambi’ bucket used in fighting forest fires.
 - o a Tiger Moth – BCATP initial trainer.
 - o a Handley Page Hampden – A BCATP operational training aircraft based at Pat Bay (currently one at Langley).
 - o a CF-100 - an iconic, Canadian built all-weather aircraft.
 - o a Fleet Canuck - another iconic, Canadian built light aircraft that was used to train Air Cadet pilots in the early 1950’s
- 2.3 Actively seek out new assets to illustrate Canada’s contribution to astronautics and aerospace technology.

Goal 3: Infrastructure

To provide infrastructure appropriate to a first-class museum

Key Initiatives

To ensure long-term stability of suitable infrastructure at the current location, the Museum will:

- 3.1 seek to extend the current lease with the Victoria Airport Authority;
- 3.2 design and prepare a cost estimate for a new display building, which may take the form of:
 - a. an additional building to accommodate the largest anticipated aircraft the Museum may obtain within the next ten years, or
 - b. a new building that would be large enough to display all of the current collection as well as anticipated new acquisitions, and
 - c. additional space for administration, educational activities, storage, etc.;
- 3.3 prepare a business plan to confirm the merits of expansion;
- 3.4 identify potential funding sources to support expansion;
- 3.5 renovate existing buildings to meet future needs for repair and restoration of various aircraft; and
- 3.6 improve the Library so that it can better accommodate aviation research.

Goal 4: The Staff

To ensure that a strong team of knowledgeable, skilled and enthusiastic volunteers can achieve the Museum's vision and fulfill its mission

Key Initiatives

To strengthen the critical element of human resources, the Museum will proactively work to expand the membership and volunteer base by:

- 4.1 ensuring the Museum presents a healthy and safe working environment for all staff and visitors;
- 4.2 developing processes for continuous input from volunteers so that the Museum is a rewarding place to work;
- 4.3 establishing an *ad hoc* focus group to identify any barriers to people becoming volunteers;
- 4.4 work with volunteers to develop job descriptions that can be used for recruiting replacement knowledge and skill sets;
- 4.5 organizing membership and volunteer recruitment initiatives to access expertise needed by the Museum and diversify its membership;
- 4.6 examining programs with the various schools, colleges, and universities to assess the potential for active outreach to them;
- 4.7 assessing the merits of offering internship or training opportunities to students;
- 4.8 examining the possibility of hiring one or more students each summer to assist in administrative and operational duties; and
- 4.9 identifying functions or specific needs that cannot be adequately discharged by volunteers and therefore require paid support.

Goal 5: Finances

To ensure the Museum is financially sound

Key Initiatives

To ensure a sound financial base, the Museum will:

- 5.1 establish annual budgets and processes for managing revenue and expenditures, and ensure that financial reporting is sound;
- 5.2 develop an explicit risk management plan;
- 5.3 establish a Marketing Team to contact tour operators, BC Ferries Vacations, the hospitality industry, particularly on the Saanich Peninsula, and other major tourist attractions, all with a goal of creating packaged tours that include the Museum;
- 5.4 continuously search for stable, sustainable funding sources from any and all levels of Government, and consider appropriate changes to the Museum's governance or operations if required to meet funding criteria;
- 5.5 biannually examine the Museum's fee structure;
- 5.6 increase the frequency at which the Museum rents space for private and corporate events by other parties;
- 5.7 examine the prospect of introducing limited commercial enterprise, provided that would not unduly compete with neighboring businesses;

- 5.8 seek out corporate and philanthropic donations of cash, bequests in Wills, and in-kind contributions, with tax receipts issued for donations above some threshold amount; and.
- 5.9 Examine the opportunities for adding the Gift Shop to online sales.

Goal 6: Operations

To ensure that operations are well run

Key Initiatives:

To ensure that the Museum is run well:

- 6.1 The constitution and bylaws will be reviewed at least once every five years.
- 6.2 Museum representatives will meet regularly with the Victoria Airport Authority, the District of North Saanich, and the Town of Sidney;
- 6.3 A formal communications plan will be prepared to ensure on-going two-way dialogue between volunteers and the Board. The plan will be a framework for:
 - a) soliciting the opinions and desires of volunteers as changes are contemplated;
 - b) providing a structured way of having their ideas for improvement evaluated and decided upon, including appropriate feed back to the originator; and
 - c) making volunteers aware of the rationale for any significant change and the intended value improvement;
- 6.4 The Museum will ensure that communications with the general membership are timely and informative;
- 6.5 Members will be invited to work on project teams tasked with fleshing out the design and implementation of specific changes.