

A 2017 PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION TO
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY



Executive Summary

We are the Vancouver Art Gallery and we are proud to play a central role in celebrating British Columbian and Canadian artists while also introducing audiences to art and ideas from around the world.

The Gallery is in the midst of one of the most exciting endeavours in its long and distinguished history: to create a new, purpose-built museum that will better serve our communities of today and for decades to come. At a time of growth and change for both the institution and the cultural life of this country, we respectfully ask the Government of Canada to join us in the next phase of our journey.

This submission outlines how federal funding will help our community support residents, visitors and businesses from across Canada and contribute to the nation's economic growth.



As the largest public art museum in Western Canada, the Vancouver Art Gallery has experienced unprecedented growth in the last decade—in its artistic and educational programs as well as in its organizational capacity. **The almost tripling of the Gallery's attendance figures in the last 15 years, a 5-fold increase in membership, the enormous increase in public demand for our many programs, and a 67% increase of the permanent art collection clearly illustrate how our institution has outgrown our building.**

After more than a decade of research and planning, we are moving forward with our vision to establish an innovative new building for the Gallery. This project will forever change the creative and physical landscape of the city and will play a pivotal role in enhancing Vancouver, BC and Canada's reputation as a vibrant, creative and desirable place in which to live, work and visit.

The new Gallery will be a purpose-built art museum that creates and strengthens links between artists, contemporary and historical art, and culturally diverse communities throughout the city, province and around the world.

The Gallery will engage well over a million visitors each year and will serve as a hub of creativity in an important cultural precinct in Vancouver. Our multifaceted programs for our diverse audiences will continue to have positive impacts on our economy, augmenting job opportunities and supporting the tourism industry while raising Vancouver's, BC's and Canada's cultural profile internationally.

As a major infrastructure project, a MNP study¹ found that the construction of the new Gallery will add \$253.6 million to Canada's GDP, create 2,973 jobs and generate new government tax revenues of \$53.6 million. The conservative projected annual tourism economic impacts generated by the spending of out-of-town visitors, in a growing tourism destination, to the new Gallery will add \$38 million to Canada's GDP, create 1,002 jobs and generate new government tax revenues of \$21.5 million. [See Addendum 1]

Together, with the help of the Government of Canada, we will build a new Vancouver Art Gallery that will welcome and inspire the world.

¹ MNP, a major chartered professional accountancy and business advisory firm based in Vancouver led by engagement partner Ed Mansfield, PhD, conducted a detailed study of the economic impacts contributed by the Vancouver Art Gallery's current operations, the construction of the new Gallery, the expected future operations of the new facility, and from increased tourism factors.

Leadership funding from the federal government is essential to the success of the Gallery's plan to build a new museum—a vital Canadian arts and culture project, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with enormous social and economic benefit for BC and Canada, one that will provide a lasting legacy for generations to come.

We are requesting that Budget 2017 include a federal contribution of \$100 million toward the capital costs of the new Vancouver Art Gallery for the project's construction phase over the next three years.

Who We Are

Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of Canada's most respected and dynamic visual art institutions. Our innovative, groundbreaking exhibitions, our extensive public programs and our emphasis on advancing scholarship—all focus on the historical and contemporary art of British Columbia and international centres, with special attention as well to the accomplishments of First Nations artists and the art of Asia.

Our artistic initiatives are guided by the following core values: a commitment to contemporary art, a commitment to Vancouver and the region, a sense of place, inclusiveness and diversity, and to cultural and civic leadership.

The Gallery's increasingly impressive and diverse permanent collection—the foundation of every museum—has grown significantly over the years and currently contains over 12,000 works with approximately half of these works produced by Canadian artists from the West Coast.

Through our exhibitions, many of which tour nationally and/or internationally; an award-winning publications program; the augmentation of an increasingly dynamic art collection—a treasure for all Canadians; wide-ranging public programs for visitors of all ages, including our highly successful school programs and activities for teens and families; and through broader national and international engagement, the Gallery continues to contribute significantly to the long-term legacies of Canadian culture.

The Gallery's annual operating budget has grown substantially in the past ten years, from approximately \$7 million to \$19 million, reflecting the institution's growth in its exhibitions and public programs, as well as the corresponding revenues. Government funding represents only 19.6% - the Gallery earns and fundraises 80.4% of its operating budget.

Who We Serve

- **Approximately 570,000 visitors including 40,000 members** (Approximately 30% are under 35)
- **202,000 participants in our art education activities**
- **20,255 students in our school programs** (7,000 receive subsidized access)
- **17,000 exhibition tours provided in multiple languages**
- **55,000 visitors are welcomed free of charges under our community access programs**
- **90,000-150,000 visitors annually attend the Gallery's touring exhibitions and activities in Canada and abroad**

Fostering a Deeper Understanding Between Cultures

Aligned with the Gallery's commitment and determination to embrace cultural diversity of all kind, we explore the most compelling art of our times by recognizing the unique and rich demographic mix in Vancouver, BC and Canada.

Our **First Nations** art collections, exhibitions and related educational programs strengthen Canada's ability to tell the story of indigenous peoples' history and art to all Canadians and visitors from around the world. Our programs are organized in close collaboration with First Nations curators and artists.

The **Institute of Asian Art** recognizes the extraordinary art being produced by Asian artists residing in Asian countries and around the world, and articulates our desire to reflect the communities in which the Gallery resides, especially those with cultural links to China, Japan, Korea and India. This initiative is the culmination of a two-decades-long record of presenting the art of Asia, particularly of China, through such activities as curatorial research, collaborations, exhibitions, publications, exchanges and travel programs.

Why We Need to Move

As a result of our successful growth, the Vancouver Art Gallery is essentially 'bursting at the seams' and we have been running beyond capacity in all areas of our operations for many years. The renovated Provincial Courthouse has served the Gallery and the community well over the past 30 years but, faced with an aging, deteriorating and overcrowded facility, the time has come for a new Vancouver Art Gallery.

Our current building is without many of the important components museums require to appropriately serve their audiences and communities, such as dedicated permanent collection galleries, education facilities, and a theatre space to accommodate large events such as high-profile lectures, performances, symposia and community collaborations. Our building also has inadequate environmental climate controls and portions require seismic upgrading.

The New Vancouver Art Gallery

- **86,000 square feet of exhibition space**, which is double the current space, including galleries dedicated to the Institute of Asian Art.
- A **350-seat theatre and 40,000 square feet of open and accessible courtyard space** will be designed and programmed by the Gallery and collaborative community partners.
- **Four expansive, fully-equipped studio workshops** will provide dedicated space for young students and visitors to engage in the Gallery's multifaceted educational art programs.
- A **4,000 square-foot Resource Centre** for research, library services and institutional artist archives.
- A **45,000 square-foot state-of-the-art museum services facilities** will offer greatly expanded storage and art preparation areas, and a conservation lab that will be a resource for BC organizations.

Strong Public Support

Public engagement has always played an intergral role in the planning process and will continue to be a part as we move forward. In March 2016, Rushbrooke Communications was commissioned to conduct an additional series of online surveys and focus groups across BC – the results were highly positive:

- **The Vancouver Art Gallery is top of mind as an institution.** The Gallery has a strong brand recognition and high reach with 1-in-3 individuals in BC having heard about the new Gallery; this percentage rises to 45% in Vancouver.
- **Support for building a new Gallery is very strong.** Nearly half of British Columbians are supportive (47%), while few oppose (14%).
- **The new Gallery project is not a partisan issue.** Support is solid throughout supporters of all major federal and provincial political parties.
- **Support for the new Gallery is all about the importance of and the need for the arts in British Columbia.** Most stated that the arts are an essential part of educating young people and a catalyst for building a creative economy.

Investing in a Legacy of Learning and Art for All Canadians

Our objective is to raise \$300 million for the building project and \$50 million for an operating endowment.

To date, major local and provincial commitments of in-kind and financial support include:

- City of Vancouver: unanimous support of City Council, plus the donation of 2/3 of a downtown city block (estimated value of \$100 million).
- Province of British Columbia: a leadership gift of \$50 million by the Province, with an understanding that additional future financial support would be provided once all levels of government have signed onto the project with financial support.
- The quiet phase of our Capital Campaign has so far achieved commitments of nearly \$30 million from private sector donors, led by our committed and enthusiastic Trustees. We are moving into the formal phase to reach our target of \$150 million in private contributions (\$100 million for capital, \$50 million for endowment).

The new Gallery construction project is well within the expected timeline. **We will be “shovel-ready” and prepared to break ground in late 2017. We are scheduled to open in 2021.**

The Importance of Support from the Government of Canada

We are requesting that Budget 2017 include a federal contribution of \$100 million over the next three years toward the capital costs of the new Vancouver Art Gallery related to the project's construction phase.

Support of this project from the federal government will illustrate its important commitment to strengthening the culture of Canada from coast to coast to coast. Today's citizens will look back on this endeavour in the decades ahead as a model of inspired civic leadership when governments, organizations and individuals came together to invest in and build a major new art museum for Canada and the world.

Thank you.



David Calabrigo
Chairman of the Board of Trustees



Kathleen S. Bartels
Director

ADDENDUM: Economic Impacts

MNP conducted an economic impact study of the Gallery's current operations, the construction and expected future operations of the new Gallery, and the impact from increased tourism.

Cumulative Development and Construction Impact	Output (million)	GDP (million)	Employment (FTEs)	Federal taxes (million)	Provincial taxes (million)	Municipal taxes (million)
Direct	\$288.0	\$127.2	1,638	\$15.0	\$8.4	\$1.1
Indirect and Induced	\$213.0	\$126.4	1,335	\$14.8	\$10.7	\$3.6
Total	\$501.0	\$253.6	2,973	\$29.8	\$19.1	\$4.7

Projected Economic Impact from the Annual Operations	Output (million)	GDP (million)	Employment (FTEs)	Federal taxes (million)	Provincial taxes (million)	Municipal taxes (million)
Fiscal 2015 Operations	\$31.0	\$20.1	238	\$2.4	\$1.5	\$0.3
Projected YR2 Operations of New Gallery	\$43.9	\$28.4	325	\$3.4	\$2.2	\$0.1

TOURISM IMPACT PROJECTIONS

Annual impacts	Output (million)	GDP (million)	Employment (FTEs)	Federal taxes (million)	Provincial taxes (million)	Municipal taxes (million)	Total Taxes (million)
Direct	\$47.0	\$23.1	756	\$4.3	\$5.5	\$1.9	\$11.8
Indirect and Induced	\$31.6	\$14.9	246	\$4.6	\$4.2	\$1.0	\$9.7
Total	\$78.6	\$38.0	1,002	\$8.9	\$9.7	\$2.9	\$21.5

