



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

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**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee  
**Date:** October 6, 2025

**From:** Marie Fenwick  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
**File:** 11-7141-01/2025-Vol 01

**Re:** **Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Pilot**




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### Staff Recommendations

1. That Option 2, to provide support for the Steveston Historical Society's proposed enhanced operations as outlined in the report "Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Pilot", dated October 6, 2025, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be approved;
2. That one-time funding of \$180,000 to support the Steveston Historical Society enhanced operations for 2026, 2027 and 2028, be considered as part of the 2026 budget process; and
3. That the Chief Administrative Officer and the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture Division, be authorized to execute all documentation, including an amendment to the Operating Agreement to allow for a fourteen (14) month extension of the Term and to provide financial support for the Steveston Historical Society's proposed enhanced operations, all as outlined in the report "Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Pilot", dated October 6, 2025, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services.

Marie Fenwick  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
(604-276-4288)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>  Finance Department Law	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>   <hr/>
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b>  	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b>   <hr/>

## Staff Report

### Origin

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting held on July 23, 2025, the Steveston Historical Society delegated with a request for additional City funding of \$60,000 per year for three years to pilot a new organizational structure that would create organizational stability and provide new community programs that further activate the Steveston Museum and share the stories of Steveston's history. As a result of this delegation, staff received the following referral:

*That staff review the submission presented by the Steveston Historical Society, obtain a detailed plan for the additional funding and present options and analysis to Council by the 2026 budget process.*

The purpose of this report is to respond to this referral.

This report supports the *Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Framework*, endorsed by Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee on October 24, 2023, which identified the following interpretive goals for the Steveston Museum and Post Office:

- Evoke memories of and curiosity for the Steveston community;
- Foster greater understanding of the experiences and contributions of Steveston's Nikkei community;
- Highlight the past and present communication methods of Steveston people; and
- Encourage exploration of Steveston's unique history and heritage beyond the Museum's walls.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

*Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.*

*6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.*

*6.5 Enhance and preserve arts and heritage assets in the community.*

### Analysis

#### Background

The City has a long history of providing recreation, arts, culture and heritage programs and services in conjunction with non-profit community groups throughout the City, including at the Steveston Museum and Post Office with the Steveston Historical Society (Society). The Society was instrumental in the City's acquisition of the Steveston Museum property in 1977 and has had an agreement with the City to operate the Museum since 1979. The constitution of the Society,

updated in 2018, states, “The object of the Society is to preserve and promote the history of Steveston”.

The current agreement with the Society for the operation of the Steveston Museum and Post Office commenced August 3, 2022. This agreement requires the Society maintain open hours at the Steveston Museum, operate the Canada Post outlet, and offer heritage programming in Steveston. Over the past few years, the Society has provided valuable community programming such as the Steveston Vignettes walking tour, Songs in the Snow event, Pop-Up Art program, and a vintage fair. The current agreement includes the provision of \$40,000 from the City to support these operations. Based on the Society’s annual financial reports for the past three years, the current funding level of \$40,000 is adequate to meet the minimum obligations outlined in the current operating agreement with the Society.

When the Society originally began operating the post office at the Steveston Museum, it was seen as an opportunity to bring in additional revenue to support heritage programming. Over time, post office costs have increased, while sales have declined. Society front desk staff continue to serve the dual purposes of serving post office customers and maintaining open hours for the Museum, however, post office sales no longer generate enough revenue to support other programming. Over the past four years, the post office operation has averaged a net annual loss of \$26,000.

To set a path to having a greater impact in the presentation and preservation of Steveston’s heritage and history, the Society undertook a strategic planning process in 2023. A summary of the Strategic Plan is included as Attachment 1. This plan identified four strategic priorities:

- Strengthen relationships and organizational capacity;
- Identify target audiences and develop appealing offerings;
- Raise awareness of the Society and its work; and
- Advocate a clear position on development in Steveston Village.

To support the implementation of their Strategic Plan, the Society board is looking to shift towards a governance board model and away from an operational board model where board members are involved in the direct delivery of programs. This is in keeping with current volunteering trends in the non-profit sector where it has become increasingly difficult to recruit board members and volunteers. A move towards a governance board with funding for professional staff is expected to create more long-term sustainability for the Society and its programs.

#### Review of Society Submission

To support achieving their strategic priorities, in 2025, the Society undertook the development of a business plan which they spoke about in their delegation to Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee on July 23, 2025. The *Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Report* (Attachment 2) outlines opportunities to help the Society grow and fully achieve the priorities identified in their Strategic Plan. This Report was the foundation for the Society’s request for additional City funding of \$60,000 per year for three years to pilot new Society positions that would provide programming to further activate the Steveston Museum and share the stories of Steveston’s history.



Below is a summary of the key recommendations for Society actions described in the *Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Report* (Operations Report). The proposed enhanced operations pilot includes actioning each of these recommendations.

**1) Program Development**

- a. Expand interpretive programs with a focus on youth programs and collaborations with Indigenous and Japanese Canadian communities.
- b. Strengthen the Museum's identity as a visitor hub for heritage tourism and education.

**2) Community & Cultural Integration**

- a. Align programs with Steveston heritage sites plans and strategies.
- b. Increase visibility through local partnerships.

**3) Financial Sustainability**

- a. Diversify revenue sources.
- b. Evolve the Pop-Up Art Show into a year-round museum store showcasing locally inspired and mission-aligned merchandise.
- c. Advocate for increased municipal support, aligning with funding levels seen in comparable community museums.

**4) Leadership & Staffing**

- a. Hire a full-time Executive Director to lead fundraising, partnerships, programming, and operations.
- b. Transition the Board to a governance-focused body.

The Operations Report includes scenarios for both staffing and finances to achieve the recommendations outlined above. Currently, the Society has a .8 FTE Manager of Business Operations, several auxiliary front desk staff, and a summer student. With no dedicated programming staff, the Society relies heavily on board members and other volunteers to deliver programs making it challenging for the Society to develop sustainable and professional museum programming. The Society has stated they are interested in working toward Scenario C as a future staff structure.

Scenario A includes creating a new position of Manager of Programs and Partnerships and expanding the current staffing position for Manager of Operations to full time with the added responsibilities of managing a small gift shop. Both positions would report directly to the Board of Directors. To achieve this organizational structure, a City contribution of an additional \$52,000 would be required. This scenario is not ideal as it would not bring the professional leadership necessary to achieve the Program Development and Leadership actions described above.

Scenario B includes hiring a new Executive Director at .8 FTE with an expanded Manager of Operations (similar to Scenario A) and a new Manager of Marketing and Communications reporting to this person. To achieve this organizational structure, a City contribution of an additional \$60,000 would be required. This Scenario includes increases in revenues from gift shop sales, donations and grants. Staff have undertaken an analysis of the projected revenues and conclude that the revenue goals of \$514,900 identified in Scenario B are achievable in a time frame of five to eight years. However, this organizational structure outlined in this scenario is not

ideal as it would not bring the professional leadership necessary to achieve the Program Development and Leadership actions described above. Additionally, because the City already provides substantial marketing and communications support, a full-time position with these responsibilities is not recommended.

Scenario C includes hiring a new Executive Director with an expanded Manager of Operations (similar to Scenario A) and a new Manager of Programs and Partnerships reporting to this person. To achieve this organizational structure, a City contribution of an additional \$124,000 would be required. This Scenario includes substantial increases in revenues from gift shop sales, program fees, donations, memberships, and grants. This scenario would allow the Society to fully achieve the recommended actions outlined above. However, an organizational shift of this scale would require multiple years to fully realize. Moving to Scenario C would be a growth of approximately 2.2 FTE from the current levels. Staff recommend approaching this by phasing in different positions, starting with the hiring of a new Executive Director.

With this in mind, staff have spoken to the Society representatives to discuss the option of phasing the hiring of new staff. Not only would this allow for cost savings in the short term but would also allow the Society to grow its staff compliment in a thoughtful way to support sustainable organizational change. This would mean an Executive Director would be hired in year one of the pilot and take on some of the duties of a programmer in the short term. Once additional revenue streams are in place, a dedicated programmer could be hired in a second phase.

Should Council endorse the Steveston Historical Society enhanced programming pilot, it is anticipated the City would see the following benefits:

- The delivery of new community programs that instill local pride and understanding of place;
- The further enhancement of the Steveston Museum and Steveston Village as a tourism destinations;
- An increase of visitors to the Steveston Museum;
- Enhanced ability to leverage funding from other sources to support Museum operations and programming; and
- A more coordinated programming offer at the Steveston Heritage Sites.

Should Council endorse the proposed pilot, staff would support the Society by assisting in the recruitment, hiring and on-boarding of new staff. Staff would also continue to work with Society staff to promote Society programs and activities and to provide support for program delivery through access to the City's volunteer or other systems as appropriate. Additionally, the Society would provide to the City annual financial and program reports which show how the key recommendations described above are being actioned.

Options for Funding for the Steveston Historical Society

The following options are based on the financial models found in the Society's Operations Report and include analysis of each option. Options 1 and 2 propose a three-year pilot period to assess the feasibility and success of the proposed actions.

Option 1 – Additional one-time funding for three years of \$378,000

Scenario C of the Operations Report includes an increase of \$126,000 in annual funding from the City. Over a three-year period, this totals \$378,000. Based on a review of the financial estimates included in the operations Report, this funding would be sufficient to implement the staffing changes outlined in Scenario C and achieve the recommended actions.

This option is not recommended as it will take approximately two to three years to hire and on-board an executive director and give them time to put forward a vision for new programming and identify the appropriate staffing and funding resources needed to support these programs. Therefore, full funding for Scenario C is not required at this time.

Option 2 – Additional one-time funding for three years of \$180,000 (Recommended)

Scenario B of the Operations Report includes an increase of \$60,000 in annual funding from the City. Over a three-year period, this totals \$180,000. Based on a review of the financial model put forward in the Operations Report, this amount of funding would be the minimum necessary to achieve the recommended actions to deliver enhanced programming and create a more sustainable business model for the Society.

This option is recommended as it will create more sustainable Society operations allowing them to offer additional community programming. A three-year pilot will allow time for the Society to build its capacity and develop programming as well as time to review the impacts of the increased funding on Society operations prior to making a long-term recommendation to Council.

Option 3 – No Funding Increase

The current annual City contribution of \$40,000 made to the Society is adequate to maintain open hours for the Steveston Museum, operate the post office and deliver minimal community programming.

This option is not recommended as the current operation is not expected to be sustainable in the long term, and this would not enable the Society to take on additional museum programming or heritage interpretation in Steveston.

### Next Steps

Should Council endorse the proposed pilot program to support the Steveston Historical Society to offer enhanced programming, staff will submit a one-time additional level request as part of the 2026 budget process.

In 2028, in advance of the completion of the three-year pilot program, staff will work with the Society to review how the program has accomplished the stated objectives. The results of this review along with options for future operations will be shared in a future report to Council and inform the terms of the next operating agreement.

The current operating agreement with the Society expires on August 2, 2027. Should Council approve additional funding for the Society, staff recommend amending the current operating agreement with the Society to reflect the new funding amount and extending the current agreement for a period of fourteen (14) months to allow time to assess the pilot program and receive Council direction on next steps.

### **Financial Impact**

Pending endorsement by Council, staff will submit a one-time additional level request as part of the 2026 budget process for \$180,000 to support a three-year pilot. Staff recommend distributing a higher level of funding in the first year and a lower level of funding at year three (\$80,000 in 2026, \$60,000 in 2027 and \$40,000 in 2028) to enable the Society to have adequate funding to develop operations while they build revenue streams over time.

### **Conclusion**

On July 23, 2025, the Steveston Historical Society delegated to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee with a request for additional financial support to support a three-year pilot project to enhance their operations at the Steveston Museum and Post Office. The Society developed an Operations Report outlining the necessary financial resources required to implement the plan. Following a review of the Operations Report, staff recommend that Council endorse the proposed enhanced operations pilot and support a one-time additional level request for \$180,000 to be brought forward as part of the 2026 budget process.



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- Att. 1: Steveston Historical Society Strategic Plan 2024-2026  
2: *Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Report*

# Steveston Historical Society Strategic Plan 2024 - 2026

## Vision

Celebrate the Village's uniqueness and showcase its past, present, and future

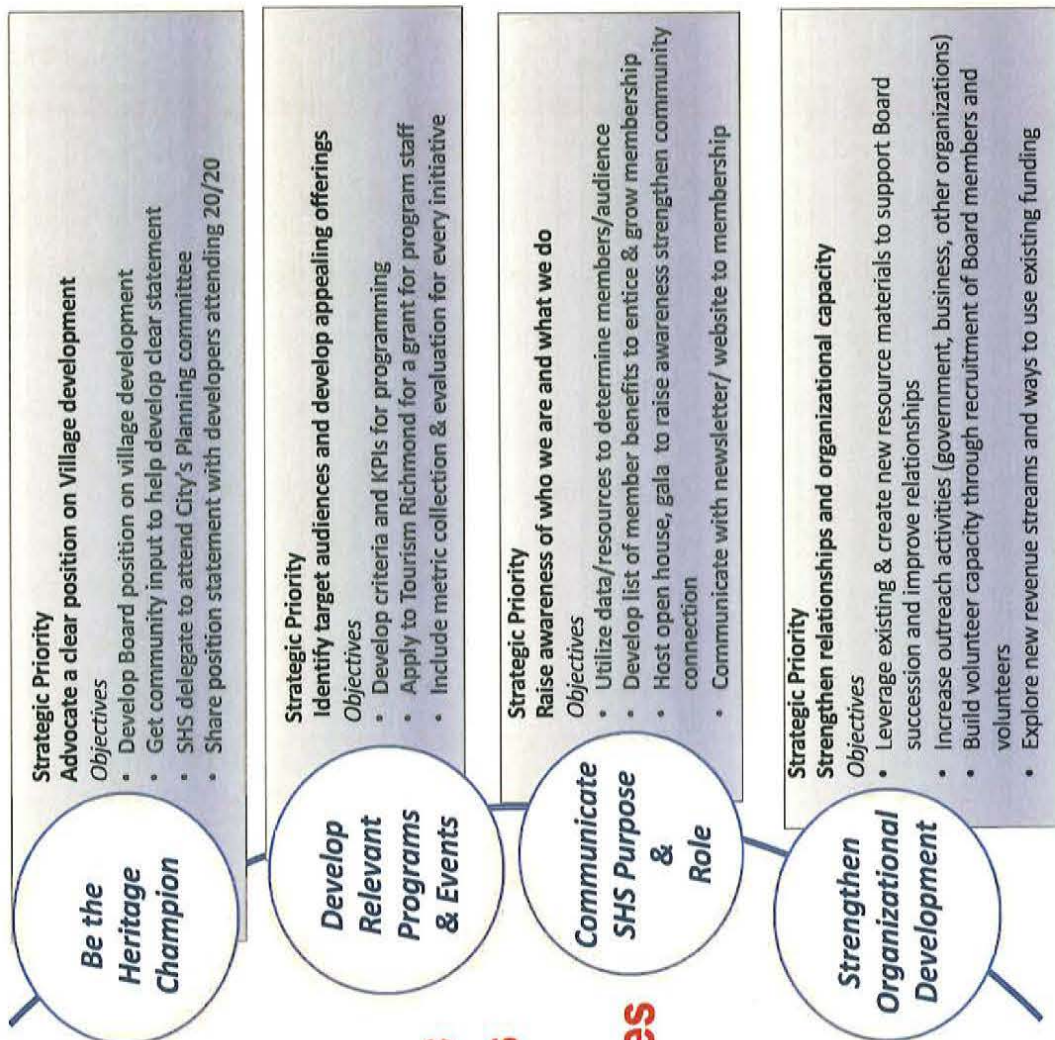
## Mission

To connect Steveston's diverse heritage with the community through advocacy and by creating programs and events

## PRCS Values

- Collaboration:** We work together to support alignment with other community-based organizations
- Appreciation of Cultural Diversity:** We celebrate the heritage and people of our community
- Community & Belonging:** We create opportunities for people to spend quality time together
- Sharing Knowledge:** We support learning about our community and its diverse heritage

## Strategic Priorities & Objectives

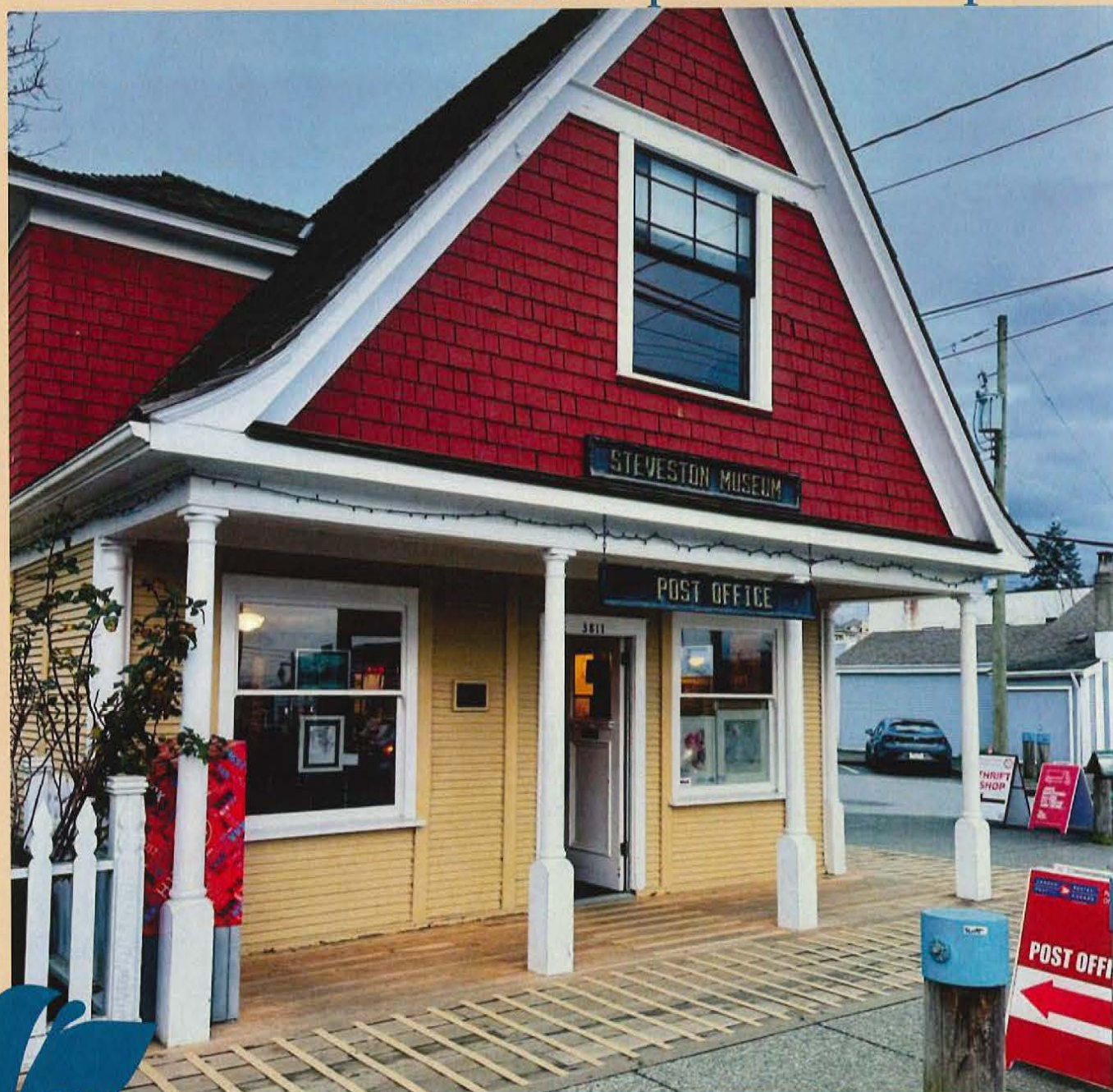




Enhanced Operations Analysis | July 21, 2025

# Steveston Historical Society

## Enhanced Operations Report



**Crocus** CULTURAL  
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*Crocus Cultural Strategies acknowledges we operate on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish people. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work and learn with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities across the country, and are committed to advancing reconciliation and recognizing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination.*



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## Introduction

The Steveston Historical Society (SHS) has been operating since 1976 to preserve and promote the history of Steveston, British Columbia. The Society manages the Steveston Museum in partnership with the City of Richmond. The volunteer Board of Directors works on events, programs, and community outreach, and oversees the Society's Manager of Business Operations. The building that houses the Museum and Post Office was built in 1905 as Steveston village's first bank and is a heritage building in the heart of the community.

With the Steveston Historical Society's recent launch of its Strategic Plan outlining priorities to deliver renewed programming to the community, the organization is at a key point in its evolution. The first step has been undertaken to articulate the organization's vision and priorities through a Strategic Plan. The next step is to identify the organizational and community needs, opportunities and aspirations, answering questions like *"Why is this important to the community we serve?"* and *"Why is it important now?"*

The Board and Staff are eager to advance development of much-needed operational planning that fosters awareness of its role in the community, strengthens organizational capacity, and grows its audiences, relationships and programming. This report analyzes and recommends actionable strategies to begin the work toward long term sustainability and initiatives that better serve the growing community. The work identifies actions and opportunities to support the Strategic Plan and recommends revenue-generating activities to increase earned and contributed revenues that serve the organization's mission.

The Steveston Historical Society's Board of Directors and Manager, Business Operations have identified the need for the development of a comprehensive Operational Plan with a recommended staffing plan and economic model to support the renewed operation.

### Enhanced Operations: Analysis & Recommendations

- Analyzing and recommending staffing and resources required to develop enhanced revenue-generating activities
- Preliminary recommendations to cultivate community, funder and audience support



### Indigenous Relations in the Museum and Heritage Sector

The Arts, Culture and Heritage sector in Canada and around the world has been examining its role in the community and central to this work is strong collaboration with First Nations and Indigenous communities. Ensuring authentic representation, language and culture are woven through a cultural organization's values and activities uphold core principles which guide the arts sector today: the concepts of right relations, Indigenous self-determination, and reconciliation.

The City of Richmond has expressed its commitment to advancing reconciliation and strengthening connections with Indigenous communities through the development of the [Indigenous Relations Strategy](#).

Organizations such as the Canadian Museums Association, BC Museums Association, BC Arts Council, Heritage BC, and the Department of Canadian Heritage support Indigenous culture through programs that preserve and present Indigenous heritage, foster public understanding, and promote an approach that respects Indigenous arts, culture, language, rights and worldviews.

This report recommends that Steveston Historical Society, as a City partner, commit to this thoughtful approach to build strengthened partnerships and shared understanding with Indigenous and First Nations communities, and create new opportunities that improve the visibility and contributions of Indigenous Cultural Heritage. During the initial phases of organizational development, it will be essential to work closely with the Indigenous community to foster trust and respect. Integrating these principles into the organizational culture will provide the commitment and understanding required for this much-needed work.



## Executive Summary

The Steveston Historical Society Enhanced Operations Report, prepared by Crocus Cultural Strategies, outlines a comprehensive plan to revitalize and sustain the operations of the Steveston Museum and Post Office in Richmond, BC. As the organization enters a pivotal stage following the release of its Strategic Plan, this report provides analysis and actionable recommendations to increase relevance, improve community engagement, and enhance financial sustainability. This report charts a clear path forward for SHS to evolve into a resilient, community-rooted, and mission-driven cultural organization—celebrating Steveston’s past while engaging its present and future.

Since its founding in 1976, the Steveston Historical Society (SHS) has worked to preserve the heritage of Steveston. With the region’s growing population, increased cultural diversity, and evolving community needs, SHS must transition from a volunteer-led “working board” model to a professionally managed governance structure with full-time leadership.

Major recommendations include:

**Leadership & Staffing:** Hire a full-time Executive Director (ED) to lead fundraising, partnerships, programming, and operations; Transition the Board to a governance-focused body.

**Program Development:** Expand interpretive programs such as children’s camps, after-school art sessions, and guided historical tours; Introduce curated talks and outdoor events tailored to Steveston’s cultural heritage; Focus on inclusivity and future collaborations with Indigenous and Japanese Canadian communities.

**Museum Store & Revenue Generation:** Evolve the Pop-Up Art Show into a year-round Museum Store showcasing locally inspired and mission-aligned merchandise; Invest in retail infrastructure including POS systems, flexible displays, and curated inventory; Strengthen the Museum’s identity as a visitor hub for heritage tourism and education.

**Community & Cultural Integration:** Align SHS programs with City of Richmond and Steveston Heritage Sites plans and strategies; Increase visibility through partnerships with local institutions, artists, and tourism organizations; Engage in reconciliation practices by building strong Indigenous partnerships and inclusive programming.

**Financial Sustainability:** Diversify revenue sources including memberships, donations, grants, program fees, and store sales; Advocate for increased municipal support, aligning with funding levels seen in comparable community museums; Launch a \$50,000 capital campaign for start-up costs.

The report presents a clear, actionable roadmap for Steveston Historical Society HS to strengthen its role as a vital cultural and heritage institution in Richmond. By investing in staff leadership, community-rooted programming, inclusive partnerships, and diversified revenue, SHS can realize its mission to celebrate and share Steveston’s diverse and evolving story.

## Historic, Cultural, and Local Context

### Historic

The Steveston Museum and Post Office is situated in the centre of Steveston Village, a Historic Conservation Area. The Museum is comprised of three distinct areas, each with their own history and offering unique but complementary experiences that celebrate and share the history and heritage of Steveston and its residents.

The **Northern Bank Building** was built 1905 as Steveston's first bank and serves as the main entrance to the site. Located on a prominent corner in the busy commercial area of Steveston, the former bank was acquired in 1978 by the Township of Richmond and following restoration by the municipality and the Steveston Historical Society, it opened as the Steveston Museum in 1979. The heritage value of the Northern Bank building is due in part to its historic role as part of an almost-continuous façade of simple, wood frame buildings along Moncton Street. The building is one of the earliest surviving structures in Steveston, and one of the first financial operations in the area.

Today, the building has a variety of services for locals and visitors including a working Canada Post office, Pop-Up Artist show space, and museum displays. The Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society (JFBS) building, connected to the Northern Bank building, features an exhibit telling the fascinating story of Steveston's Japanese Canadian community. Steveston Town Square Park is adjacent to the Northern Bank building off Moncton Street and provides a community green space in the spirit of the town squares in early settler towns.

The **Japanese Fisherman's Benevolent Society Building (JFBS)** is located within the Steveston Museum property, facing 1st Avenue. Built in 1900, the JFBS building was first used as the administration office for the Japanese Fishermen's Hospital (the first hospital built in Richmond) and the Japanese School. It was the primary health care provider for the community; although built and funded by the Japanese community, it was open to everyone in Steveston. It is the only surviving structure of the original cluster of hospital, school and administration buildings.

**Steveston Town Square Park** was redeveloped as a community gathering place. The guiding principles for the Park include: flexibility for a variety of year-round activities; accessible, casual public use as well as programmed use for activities organized by the Steveston Historical Society; seating and display areas to increase enjoyment and linger time; and honouring the Japanese heritage of Steveston by adapting a Japanese garden approach to materials. A key feature of the park is the Suikinkutsu feature, a Japanese garden element that speaks to the sacred nature of a secluded garden corner.

### Cultural

The Steveston Museum is part of Steveston's heritage and cultural ecosystem. There is potential for Steveston Museum to develop a reputational identity that recognizes it as an important contributing member to the historic region alongside its prominent neighbouring heritage attractions. The Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site serves to "showcase the history of Canada's West Coast fishing industry", the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site tells of the oldest shipyard in British Columbia, the Steveston Tram invites visitors to climb aboard one of the few remaining BC Electric Railway cars, and London Farm illustrates early agricultural life in the area. With enhancement of its spaces, exhibits, and



program offerings, Steveston Museum has the potential to become the community hub of this history – telling the stories of the people here and their contributions to the culture and evolution of the area.

Recognizing that its community is growing and changing, the Steveston Historical Society has undertaken strategic planning to envision a path forward for the organization.

The four key priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan are to:

- ❖ Be the Heritage Champion
- ❖ Develop Relevant Programs & Events
- ❖ Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
- ❖ Strengthen Organizational Development

#### Steveston Historical Society

Vision – Celebrate the Village’s uniqueness and showcase its past, present, and future

Mission – To connect Steveston’s diverse heritage with the community through advocacy and by creating programs and events

#### Values

**Collaboration:** We work together to support alignment with other community-based organizations

**Appreciation of Cultural Diversity:** We celebrate the heritage and people of our community

**Community & Belonging:** We create opportunities for people to spend quality time together

**Sharing Knowledge:** We support learning about our community and its diverse heritage

The mission, vision, and values articulated above align with the important trends and best practices for Canadian museums and should be consciously woven into the work of the Steveston Historical Society. This report highlights two new mission-driven activities to help develop the organization’s relevance and sustainability: the expansion of the Museum Store, an important way for visitors to museums and heritage sites to connect with local stories and bring home meaningful memories of Steveston; and the addition of a staff position to support these activities.

## Local

The City of Richmond has carried out numerous studies to develop an inclusive cultural vision for the Steveston Museum and for the broader community.

1. 2024: Steveston Museum Visitor Survey Annual Report
2. 2023: Richmond Community Needs Assessment
3. 2021: Steveston Museum and Post Office Interpretive Plan
4. 2020-2021: Steveston Museum – A Vision for Improving the Visitor Experience
5. 2019: [Richmond Arts Strategy](#) (2025 update in progress)
6. 2019: Tourism in Steveston (2025 Tourism Master Plan in progress)

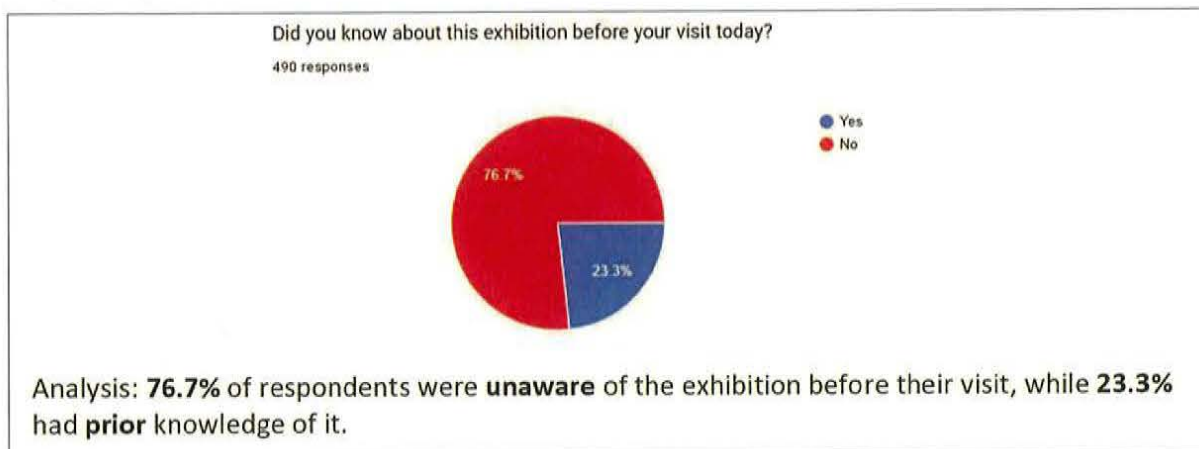
These important guiding documents serve to inform the analysis and recommendations within this report. They also must continue to serve as inspiration and guidance for the Steveston Historical Society as it develops new programs and events that align with community priorities.

### 1. 2024: Steveston Museum Visitor Survey Annual Report

This report presents an analysis of visitor feedback collected through a survey conducted at the Steveston Museum throughout 2024. Visitor satisfaction is high overall, with some specific recommendations for improvement:

“Areas for improvement highlighted in the survey include a strong demand for **interactive, hands-on activities** to enhance visitor engagement. Respondents also suggested **expanding the museum’s space** and **improving overall maintenance** to create a more comfortable and immersive experience.”

A key finding that must be addressed in the next phase of organizational development is the following:



### 2. 2023: Richmond Community Needs Assessment

The presentation of the broad community needs assessment for Richmond contained important key facts about the Steveston Planning Area: it has both the oldest median age and the third highest household income in Richmond. Of the 30,860 residents of Steveston, 6,345 are under the age of 19, and 17,375 are

a visible minority. For Richmond residents, the Steveston Heritage Buildings were the most commonly used Arts, Culture and Heritage facilities, with 36.7% of respondents having visited the Sites in the year prior to the survey.

### 3. Steveston Museum and Post Office Interpretive Plan

Created by the City of Richmond's Heritage Services team, the 2021 Interpretive Plan (with minor updates in 2025) outlines the museum spaces, site significance, operations, target audiences, interpretive vision and goals, interpretive themes, visitor experience objectives, interpretive methods, and interpretive strategy. It identifies the following actions to support the plan: use digital technology to enhance exhibits related to Steveston's community history and the post office, increase awareness of exhibits in the Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society building, work with local Japanese Canadian community to enhance interpretation, and work with SHS to explore additional programming opportunities.

Potential Experiences (museum activities and initiatives) are outlined in addition to existing Experiences, including guided tours of the museum, summer camp and school field trips, workshops, self-guided walking tour resources, among others.

The goals of interpretation at the site are to:

- Evoke memories of and curiosity for the Steveston community;
- Foster greater understanding of the experiences and contributions of Steveston's Nikkei community;
- Highlight the past and present communication methods of Steveston people; and
- Encourage exploration of Steveston's unique history and heritage beyond the Museum's walls.

### 4. 2020-2021: Steveston Museum – A Vision for Improving the Visitor Experience

The 2021 Doug Munday Design report: *Steveston Museum – A Vision for Improving the Visitor Experience* had the purpose of establishing a clearer identity for the Steveston Museum, to better support programming and increase visitation. With the museum planner's identification of a range of potential visitor experience concepts, a consultation process was undertaken to get feedback from the public, summarized in the following community engagement findings.

1. The facility provides a valued community service and neighbourhood meeting point, within a unique heritage setting.

Recommendation: Retain a mix of services at the Steveston Museum that serve locals year-round.

2. A majority strongly value heritage interpretation at the site.

Recommendation: Explore the potential for refreshing displays in the Bank building and continue to support on-going heritage programming.

3. A strong majority of respondents favoured retaining the Post Office.

Recommendation: Consider how to reframe Post Office operations – more than just a business, a community meeting place that celebrates local heritage and provides valued services.

4. There is particular interest Steveston's Nikkei heritage, and support for a continued and expanded sharing of these stories.



Recommendation: Identify possible actions for increasing the profile of the JFBS exhibits.

5. There is a lesser but strong interest in the provision of tourism visitor information services, though an openness to how and where this takes place.

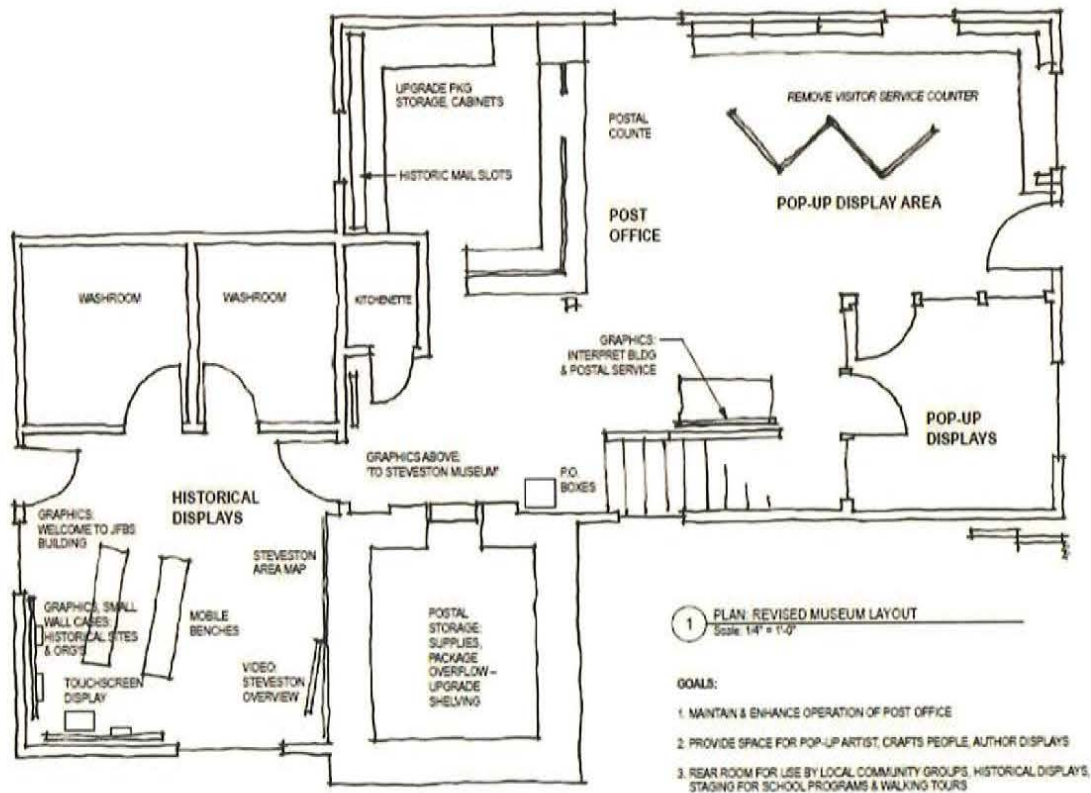
Recommendation: Review options for Tourism Richmond's visitor services throughout Steveston.

6. There is an openness to the addition of retail to the space, if focused on unique Steveston products.

Recommendation: Explore the potential for additional retail services – possible offerings, operational costs and potential revenues.

The Steveston Museum has implemented the recommended approach to increasing visitation and space utilization at the main entrance by hosting rotating cultural programming in collaboration with the Richmond Arts Coalition. A Pop-up Art Show features local artists and artisans who exhibit and sell their work through a consignment arrangement with the Steveston Museum and Post Office. This program also provides flexibility for the Museum to offer other activities or rentals as needed.

To support the recommendations described above and continued post office operations, a design plan was developed by Doug Munday Design: Revised Museum Layout image from the Report:





The design effectively supports the Museum and Post Office operations, including heritage displays and programming, with support for additional cultural programs. The design outlines the physical spaces needed to deliver the desired new operations, which are outlined in this report and are in the process of being implemented.

Highlights include:

- supporting flexible cultural program use through flexible pop-up display units
- new historical displays that use audiovisual solutions and updated interpretation
- new signage and curb appeal elements to improve visibility
- improved storage and furnishings for post office operation

#### 5. 2019: Richmond Arts Strategy (2025 update in progress)

In 2019, the City adopted the Richmond Arts Strategy, a guide for residents, the municipality and its interest holders to advance policies, programs, and services needed for the arts to thrive. In it, the strategy calls on Richmond museums to collaborate with visual, literary and performing arts to foster partnerships and connections among diverse organizations. To increase awareness and participation in the arts, encourage and offer lecture series and community dialogues on arts, culture and heritage issues. Steveston's natural beauty and cultural heritage was highlighted as being most often mentioned as a favourite feature of Richmond.

*"Steveston heritage area is lovely to walk around and paint."*

– Community Engagement Survey Respondent

#### 6. 2019: Tourism in Steveston (2025 Tourism Master Plan in progress)

Also in 2019, Tourism Richmond embarked on a process with Steveston tourism partners and stakeholders to "develop a coordinated approach to responsible tourism in Steveston – so our destination is competitive and set for success". The Steveston Tourism Plan outlined four goals:

- Increase visitation in fall, winter and spring
- Increase visitor spending in Steveston
- Welcome more year-round overnight visitors
- Build capabilities to manage capacity of visitors

Some key considerations included the small footprint of Steveston which necessitates leveraging existing assets and the popularity of Steveston with visitors and its strong heritage product with small-town appeal. It also highlights that while heritage is the cornerstone of the village, there was very little representation of Indigenous heritage that came before the village.

## Current Museum Operations

### Spaces and Programs

The Steveston Museum, open daily year-round, is comprised of three areas, each with its own story and offering unique, complementary experiences that celebrate and share the evolution of Steveston and its residents. The Steveston Historical Society has an operating agreement with the City of Richmond to “operate a museum in the [Steveston Museum & Post Office building] open to the public...for a minimum of 25 hours per week” and to collaborate with City of Richmond Arts, Culture and Heritage Services in the “development and installation of exhibits”, to “consult ... on the collection of artefacts related to the [Museum]” and to “work with the City to provide public and educational programs and events that create activity and tell the story of the development and social life of Steveston in keeping with the Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan.”

The Japanese Fishermen’s Benevolent Society Building is located in the Steveston Museum & Post Office. The exhibition explores the arrival of the first Nikkei (people of Japanese descent) and their many contributions to Steveston, including fishing, farming, cultural arts, education, and traditional martial arts. The stories delve into the Japanese community’s internment during World War II and their postwar return to Steveston and features objects, photographs, and stories of the Japanese Canadian experience. The local Nikkei community played a significant role in shaping the JFBS exhibits, and they remain closely connected to the building and these stories. The Steveston Museum contributed exhibit content development to this multi-partner project, with contributions from the Nikkei National Museum, City of Richmond, and exhibit design by David Jensen and Associates. Steveston Town Square Park is adjacent to the Northern Bank building off Moncton Street and provides a community green space.

Until 2020, the City of Richmond offered programs and tours for students and groups at the Steveston Museum. Curriculum-based school programs and special interest tours focus on topics such as social history, cultural heritage, innovation and sustainability. This type of programming is not currently offered at this Heritage Site, although [Education Kits](#) related to Steveston Museum themes and content are available to rent for in-school programs from the City of Richmond.





**Steveston Alive! Walking Tour Vignettes**, in its eighth year, is a theatrical experience that blends storytelling, youth engagement, and education. Twice-daily, 75-minute costumed interpretation tours through the village are held on Saturdays in July and August. Tours begin at Steveston Museum & Post Office and progress through sites significant to Steveston's fishing, agricultural, and multicultural history. Steveston Historical Society, Local High School Drama Department, Community Volunteers & SHS Board Members partnered on the collaborative program involving students, educators, arts professionals, and community volunteers, providing about 20 young actors with experience in public performance, historical interpretation, and storytelling. In its most recent year, the program engaged 87 registered participants and it is estimated approximately 1,200 people encountered these performances in public spaces.

## Events

**Songs in the Snow: A Vintage Christmas**, in its seventh year, is a free, annual outdoor and hybrid virtual holiday event that brings the community together through live music, historical storytelling, and interactive seasonal activities in Steveston's Town Square Park, adjacent to the Steveston Museum. Free arts and crafts stations for children, a caricature artist, a selfie station, and vendor booths offering handmade crafts and baked goods. This free event was designed to be inclusive, accessible, and community-driven, fostering seasonal joy and cultural engagement while supporting local artists and businesses. The event welcomed approximately 1,500 in-person attendees, and additional online participants, showcasing local musicians and artists. Carried out by Steveston Historical Society, Richmond Arts Coalition City of Richmond, Volunteers, the program took place over two consecutive Saturdays in December. Promotional strategy included digital and print media as well as municipal amplification and media outlet coverage.

**The Steveston Vintage Fair** is located in Steveston Town Square Park, adjacent to the museum, during five Sundays in August filled with vintage treasures, handmade goods, and local charm. Visitors can shop from a curated collection of vintage vendors, enjoy live music, and soak in the community spirit.

## Museum Store

The year-round Pop-up Art Show on display at the Steveston Museum and Post Office features creations by local artists, with a percentage of sales going toward the Steveston Historical Society's programs and events that support the Steveston community. The Pop-Up Art Show consists of month-long installations of local artists, who display their work and occasionally provide on-site demonstrations or artist events. The Manager of Business Operations, in collaboration with the Richmond Arts Coalition, selects new artists monthly and coordinates all aspects of this show, including art sales and related events.

According to the Museum Store Association, "Nonprofit retail stores have a broad mission: to be profitable revenue generators for their cultural institution; to provide educational relevance with their products; to act as brand ambassadors for the mission and values of their institution. Everything from products, displays, promotions and store activities reflect the mission of their respective institutions. When visitors choose to spend their time at your museum... they have a heightened expectation of your quality and service to the public."

The desired outcomes of the Pop-Up Art Show contribute to the mission and vision of the organization, namely:

- providing year-round activity at the Steveston Museum
- entrenching the Museum as a key part of the local community
- engaging and highlighting artists and craftspeople in Steveston
- complementing existing historical interpretation with stories of contemporary Steveston
- addressing the need for display space and economic opportunities for local artists
- providing ongoing revenue to support the mandate of the Society

## Enhanced Operations: Analysis and Recommendations

In researching the path forward for the Steveston Historical Society in operating the Steveston Museum & Post Office, four interviews with interest holders were carried out, in addition to the careful research and analysis of previous community consultation and studies.

The analysis of the research points to strong opportunities for Steveston Museum & Post Office to become a more vibrant contributor to the Steveston experience for residents and visitors. Drawing on the research, we understand that the population is increasing and becoming more diverse, that Steveston has a physical and historical character that residents and visitors value, and that the tourism sector is planning for growth. The City is investing in local infrastructure, with the 60,350 square foot Steveston Community Centre due to open in late 2026. The goal of the City's Steveston Area Plan is to create a vibrant Steveston community in a way that will enhance the Village character, be sensitive to its history, and balance the unique needs of the waterfront with the Village and residential community.

We will outline the resources typically required to support the creation of mission-driven museum activities that contribute to financial sustainability and advance the mission and vision of the Steveston Historical Society. There are some challenges that exist with the Steveston Museum & Post Office property, including small rooms which do not allow for events that many museums use for revenue generation through a dedicated venue rental program.

### Museum Programs: Connecting the Community

A "Program" is any activity, service, function or event provided by an organization that addresses a community need, opportunity or aspiration. Programs are distinct from components, which are physical elements—buildings, exhibits, theatres, workshops, equipment, etc.—that provide the means to deliver the programs.

The Steveston Museum & Post Office has been identified by the City of Richmond in many of its guiding documents and Council discussions as an important asset, with significant heritage, cultural and community value, and with strong potential as a community gathering space in keeping with its historic uses. The following Programs would contribute greatly to the economic impact of the Steveston Museum & Post Office as a regional draw for tourists and program users:

- Expand the Pop-up Art Show to include a curated inventory of local art and artisan products in the permanent Museum Store, to be displayed throughout the year and maintained in the inventory.



Develop relationships with new suppliers and local artists whose work connects with the exhibits and the stories that the Museum tells. Objects that reflect the diverse stories of the Nikkei in particular, items that may be inspired by the various stories and historical themes in the exhibits, and local Indigenous art and products reflecting the connection to the settlements the Musqueam called qʷey̓aʔχ̓ and qʷley̓əm. Economic benefits to local artists and Indigenous makers are an important role of the modern museum store.

- Programs and events to support a vibrant and sustainable operation would include camps, school programs, tours, workshops, event hosting, community partnership development, and significant fund development initiatives. Developing contemporary links to the historical content provides visual artists and arts organizations with opportunities for public programming, artist talks, and short-term exhibitions.
- Design a Visitor Experience-focused approach to staff training and visitor services. This may include heritage interpretation training for all staff, scripts for staff to encourage visitors to enter the exhibit galleries, using “sneak peek” digital or traditional signage with appealing visuals or stories, and cultivating a culture of philanthropy within the organization by having staff invite admission donations and communicating the value of the “free” experience being offered to Museum visitors.
- Strategic partnerships with local heritage sites, museums, schools, art galleries, tourism, and municipal, provincial, and national organizations should be developed or strengthened, providing cross-marketing and collaboration to keep the organization relevant and effective. Steveston’s existing arts, culture, and heritage ecosystem must continue to develop and respond to the changing community to continue to serve as vital contributors to a vibrant community.

### *Museum Interpretive Programs*

A varied roster of Programs and events contribute to a vibrant and sustainable operation that helps link the community to the Museum and Historical Society in ways that meet residents and visitors where they are and with their interests in mind.

Potential new Programs to be developed include:

- Children's Summer Camps
- Weekly After-school Pop-Up Art Programs
- Site-specific Guided Tours
- Talks & Events (youth, adult, families)
- Museum Orientation and Admission by Donation

**Children's Summer Camps** run from the Steveston Town Square Park using enclosed event tents and event tables and chairs for activities, with access to the Museum exhibits and Steveston Village. The outdoor tent-style set-up would provide shade, protection from rain, and an outdoor experience that can incorporate experiential and inquiry-based outdoor learning. Perhaps in time and in collaboration with Indigenous knowledge-keepers this program may be shaped by [First People's Principles of Learning](#), which describes a set of holistic learning principles that supports well-being and involves exploration and a deeper sense of place. The half-day camps, run by SHS-Steveston Museum Staff would include

experiences in the galleries, a Steveston Walking Tour that would include Steveston Historic Sites like the popular and kid-friendly Tram, and related activities such as arts and crafts, simple object interpretation activities, play-based “What Makes a Neighbourhood?”-style explorations of home and community life, or other relevant themes, and would develop soft skills such as observation, collaboration, critical thinking, and civic responsibility. This type of Program may also be adapted for local Camp providers to visit the Museum on a “field trip” for campers, supervised by the third-party Camp providers but guided by Steveston Museum Interpretive Staff.

**Weekly After-School Pop-Up Art Programs** would leverage the success of the Pop-Up Art Show Program, with potential for guest artists from the Program to lead arts-based learning. A weekly, two- or three-hour hands-on program by a local artist would provide continued support to the local Richmond arts community and would develop the potential for more diverse cultural heritage programs led by local artists or cultural groups. These programs would be coordinated by SHS Staff, including coordinating participant registrations, and selecting and hiring the artist-facilitator. The after-school program would be held in the Town Square Park when weather permits or in a suitable room with the Museum (previous programs were run in the exhibit spaces, such as in the photograph below).



Image: School program at Steveston Museum and Post Office

**Site-specific Guided Tours** would be similar in content, potentially, to the Walking Tour Vignettes but should be undertaken by trained, year-round Interpretive Staff who can participate in Steveston Village events and be booked for custom tours and Experiences (including for schools, conferences, festivals, and tourism events). The current model for the Program relies heavily on amateur theatre students to deliver the tours, which has the ancillary benefit of providing opportunities for young people in Steveston. However, from the standpoint of an efficient use of resources and enhancing visibility and operational effectiveness, it is not sustainable to invest every year in hiring and training new guides for the 12 tours that run per summer.



**Talks & Events** are opportunities to feature guest speakers and subject specialists to engage and attract diverse audiences including history lovers, diverse cultural communities, educators, artists, teens or young adults, and those interested in learning more about Steveston Village and its residents. Although indoor space is limited, the Steveston Town Square Park is currently used for festivals and events throughout the year and can be easily adapted during the mild months (between April and September) to host outdoor, daytime and evening paid events. Events and workshops may be included in this Program and would serve to attract an all-ages audience eager for hands-on experiences such as arts, music, and crafts, that reflect the traditions of the cultures and industries of the area.

**Museum Orientation and Admission by Donation** is considered a program in the sense that currently, orientation to the Museum and admission donations can be improved. Passive donations are being received on site at a donation box, however, to realize the greater potential that exists to augment donation received by visitors attending the Museum, an intentional and thoughtful approach must be developed. This will include training for staff to orient visitors to the Museum that lies beyond the Lobby, developing key messages, creating appealing visual materials, and offering a variety of payment options (cash, credit or debit, especially mobile “tap” options; in addition to the traditional donation box). With suitable training, front desk staff will be expected to interact with visitors about the themes and content of the exhibits, Steveston Heritage Sites and Steveston Village context and wayfinding, and offer an initial point of contact or orientation to further explore the Village, reinforcing the central role of the Museum and Post Office. There are significant opportunities, particularly during well-attended events and festivals, to cultivate not only the community’s philanthropic support, but to increase the perceived value of the Museum and Steveston Historical Society.

According to the American Alliance of Museums [Study, The influence of staff on museum engagement and visitation: A 2024 annual survey of museum-goers data story](#), “providing well-trained frontline staff who can assist with everything from basic information to specialized guidance creates a welcoming environment. Museums that hire for attitude and provide ongoing training ensure that all visitors feel valued and understood. Although staff interactions are only one part of the museum visit, they have an outsized effect on visitor experience. Addressing concerns, supporting staff, and implementing tools like surveillance and signage can help visitors feel more welcome, secure, and inspired to return.”

### *Looking Back to Plan for the Future*

The following table analyzes three current key programs run by SHS. We strongly recommend that the SHS Board and Staff, as part of its work to provide relevant Programs benefitting both its audiences and the organization’s sustainability, define, measure, and assess the impact and success of their initiatives through the use of metrics like number of attendees, cost per attendee, and in some cases, more complex data like ancillary benefits such as number of memberships sold at event, donations obtained at event, testimonials and other qualitative data, etc.

It is vital that the organization assess the relevance and feasibility of the Programs and Events it invests in, and makes some objective decisions about whether it can continue to run a Program in its current form or whether it requires some changes to make it more appealing and more viable.

Steveston Historical Society - Analysis of Current Programs					
Program Name	Total Program Expenses	Total # Attendees	Cost per Attendee	Annual # of event/tour dates	Average # of Attendees per event/tour
Walking Tour Vignettes	\$ 19,412.78	87	\$ 223.14	12	7.25
Songs in the Snow	\$ 12,827.55	1850	\$ 6.93	2	925
Steveston Vintage Fair	\$ 2,022.63	8500	\$ 0.24	5	1700

An evaluation team consisting of the Executive Director, Manager of Operations, and potentially a future Manager of Programs and Partnerships, in collaboration with key partners and with input or oversight from a strong governance Board, will develop Programs with these metrics and evaluation criteria in mind. Far from being an “after the fact” look-back at how a Program performs, the incorporation of this type of evaluative thinking into the early conceptual phase of Program development is essential. And this work will set the organization up for compelling, informative Impact Reports and Annual Reports.

On this note, the Society has indicated an interest in developing an Oral History Program. This report does not recommend that an Oral History Program be launched as the staffing, costs, and technical requirements are prohibitive. The community of Richmond currently has an Oral History Program so the need within the community is being met. Collection management of and public access to Oral Histories (recordings and transcripts) should ideally be managed by a qualified professional such as an archivist so would fall outside the purview of the Steveston Historical Society.

*“Defining a museum project’s success doesn’t need to be a laborious process, but it is a process that should be undertaken with the same level of commitment other project aspects receive.”* [Define Museum Success & Measure It | Lucidea](#)

### *Invest in Sustainability*

Currently, the City of Richmond maintains the Steveston Museum with an annual operating grant to the Steveston Historical Society of \$40,000, or approximately 13% of the total annual revenues. Currently, the Steveston Historical Society must allocate the full municipal contribution to supporting the Post Office operation, which has been identified as a priority by the Richmond City Council and residents.

While Post Office operations are not examined as part of this analysis, we do know that Post Office outlets, and Canada Post more broadly, are experiencing contracting services and revenues as more and more people move to digital communications like email. The postal sector is increasingly precarious. According to the Government of Canada’s [Report](#) on the recent Canada Post Labour Dispute, “Canada Post is facing an existential crisis: It is effectively insolvent, or bankrupt.”



The following data, courtesy of the City of Richmond, illustrates the requirements and shortfalls of the Steveston Post Office operation:



We know from the 2021 Report *Steveston Museum: A Vision for Improving the Visitor Experience, Phase 2 Consultation* commissioned by the City of Richmond, that “a majority of respondents favoured retaining current Post Office operations” and this outcome was supported by City Council. In order to support the Post Office, both the Steveston Historical Society and the City of Richmond are funding the deficit created by the Post Office operation. Both organizations, SHS and the City of Richmond, must come to terms with the long-term viability of this postal service in the face of escalating costs and diminishing returns.

Regardless of the decision made in future on the value of continuing to support Post Office operations in Steveston Village, we recommend new funding from the City of Richmond be directed specifically to Heritage and Community Services offered by the enhanced operations of the Steveston Historical Society. Museum Funding Structures

According to the Canadian Museums Association, “for every dollar invested in Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums, Canadian society gets nearly four dollars in benefits — a return that is on par with government investments in transportation infrastructure projects” ([GLAM Fact Sheet](#)).

Canadian museum operations are typically funded by various levels of government, with a scan of small British Columbia museum operations showing that, on average, **municipal governments make up approximately 37% of the annual revenues**; a chart can be found in the [Comparison Organizations](#) section below.

Once the operation has been expanded to its optimal level over a number of years, Economic impacts would include the creation of 1-3 new fulltime equivalent staff roles with a living wage or better<sup>1</sup>, enabling local arts and culture workers to contribute to the local economy by increasing consumer spending, productivity and narrowing the wage to rent gap.

With the introduction of an Executive Director to support fund development in the first year of enhanced operations, a \$50,000 Capital Campaign would be launched to raise the necessary financial resources for

<sup>1</sup> [BC Living Wage Rates, 2024](#)

the first year of start-up costs which are detailed in the next section, [Capital and Operating Estimates](#), and are estimated to be approximately \$50,000. The Campaign would have the ancillary benefit to increase awareness, effectively building a community of support for the Steveston Historical Society and Steveston Museum as a community museum, communicating its strategic vision, and inspiring supporters.

The success of any operation depends upon reaching an audience by building awareness and connection in the community. The City of Richmond provides marketing and communications support to the Steveston Museum & Post Office, with content developed and supplied by SHS staff and board. To develop effective and compelling content that recentres the vital role this work plays in the organization and community, we recommend new and existing staff positions receive training on how they can effectively support awareness-building, including capturing visitor comments, data collection, and photos and videos (with appropriate permission). Effective marketing has a greater impact on attendance than does price, so it would be a significant risk to add Programs without investing in Communications & Marketing. It is likely that new programs would not achieve attendance targets without building community awareness of them and the Museum, as we saw with the 2023 Steveston Museum Visitor Survey in which over 76% of respondents were not aware of the exhibition, and will therefore not pay for themselves because audiences are unaware of them.

The City of Richmond recently invested in a full refit of the Steveston Museum Entrance Lobby, replacing the former Tourism Richmond Visitor Centre counter with furnishings to support flexible cultural program use, in order to support increased visitation to the Steveston Museum and Post Office and best utilize the space. The City has also supported the Steveston Post Office by providing a new point of sale system, which is restricted by Canada Post to post office transactions. These investments in the community's services provide a good foundation for the operation to expand and become more sustainable.

**We recommend the City of Richmond contributes new annual operating funding for the Steveston Historical Society's Museum operations, which should be prioritized for the creation of a new Executive Director position.** Details are included in the [Operating Estimates](#) and [Wage Analysis](#) sections below.

#### *Museum Store: Connecting Contemporary Objects to Heritage*

The Pop-Up Art Show program has been successful in generating interest and awareness from the local Steveston community. The Museum has hosted local artists who not only display and sell their works, but provide community outreach, workshops, and contribute to the community festivals held by the Historical Society. The program has the potential to fill a gap in the tourism market for authentic local merchandise, however, it requires some reassessment to articulate its purpose, to link artworks and artists to the history and evolution of Steveston Village, and additional marketing and inventory investments, in order to fulfill its potential.

This program is administratively demanding, with the identification, selection, and promotion of new artists on a monthly basis being more frequent than a typical art exhibition in a gallery. The art and products for sale during the one-month period generate a small return for SHS, with the majority of the proceeds paid directly to the artist. It is an informal commission-based system and sales records are manually kept by Museum & Post Office staff. As a result of the short display period, staff field regular



inquiries from visitors about art works no longer available for sale on site, and they direct the visitor to the artist, with no economic benefit to the Museum. The Steveston Museum & Post Office is therefore generously and importantly contributing to fostering awareness and economic opportunities for local artists, but it must evaluate how the program is contributing to its own sustainability.

Additional data must be collected and used to identify trends and potential areas for improvement, including detailed assessment of the types of products that are most popular, the favoured price points and maximum sales prices that the market may bear, researching new artists that will align closely to the Museum's themes and having an inventory of products that are available for purchase on site that will satisfy visitors during their visit to the Museum. Further, sales from the Pop-up Art Show have been primarily from local residents and must generate greater interest from the tourist market.

The inventory of artworks and products inspired by the Museum themes outlined in the Museum Interpretive Plan may include:

- Indigenous art and products,
- Japanese-Canadian books, artworks and products,
- Tourist art and souvenirs, Steveston images, art photographs and artworks,
- History books,
- Children's books and toys,
- Archival photograph cards, postcards, stationery, housewares (mugs, tea towels, etc)
- Agricultural and Fishing books, products and crafts.

To support the overall viability of the Program, we recommend the following changes to the Pop-Up Art Show, in favour of a Museum Store model:

- Move from a monthly exhibition of artworks to an inventory model, focused on artworks, crafts, and local products, with a selection of higher-value works for sale through a commission-based model;
- Host artist events and create social media content that highlights one artist or product line bi-monthly or quarterly;
- Research and implement an industry-standard mark-up on prices of artworks and store products (this may include using the [keystone](#) model, or a [variation](#), and testing the market over a reasonable period of time: seasonally and annually);
- Research artists, or put out a public call to artists, to develop a curated inventory of artworks and products that relate directly to the Museum themes outlined in the Museum Interpretive Plan, and train visitor services (front of house) staff to connect with and inspire visitors to "take home a piece of Steveston" when they visit the Museum and Post Office.

To expand and enhance the impact of this initiative, a modest investment of store inventory, moveable display fixtures, and retail equipment is recommended, outlined in more detail in the Estimates section of this report. With this expansion, the Pop-Up Art Show can transition to a year-round Museum Store with more consistent local product selection to become a vibrant shopping experience for residents and tourists alike.

We reviewed four Point of Sale (POS) systems that include hardware and software, including inventory management. The equipment costs range from about \$69 for a simple handheld device that requires a tablet (not included) to an all-in-one terminal or POS workstations, ranging in price from \$899 to \$4,000. Ongoing subscription costs for the systems vary, with some starting at \$30 per month, and others upwards of \$100 monthly. The cost of these systems has become more manageable for small not-for-profits and more Canadian suppliers are available. The comparison chart has been provided to the Society for further review and decision. Although the POS system for the Post Office was upgraded fairly recently, the SHS Operations Manager has indicated there is a need for an additional retail software system to manage inventory and sales that do not pertain to the Post Office operation. We recommend a reasonably-priced, compact and flexible model that can be added to the existing Sales Counter.

Given the space limitations in the Steveston Museum, store fixtures must be flexible and moveable; a recommended feature includes lockable display cases or cabinets with multi-tiered shelves on casters, to maximize inventory storage space and security. Slatwall displays provide flexible vertical hanging space. The Society should obtain a minimum of three quotes from local suppliers. The Society's Manager of Business Operations is a knowledgeable and experienced resource, and capable of executing the necessary tasks. A table of typical start up costs for a small Museum Store is included below in the Capital and Operating Estimates section.

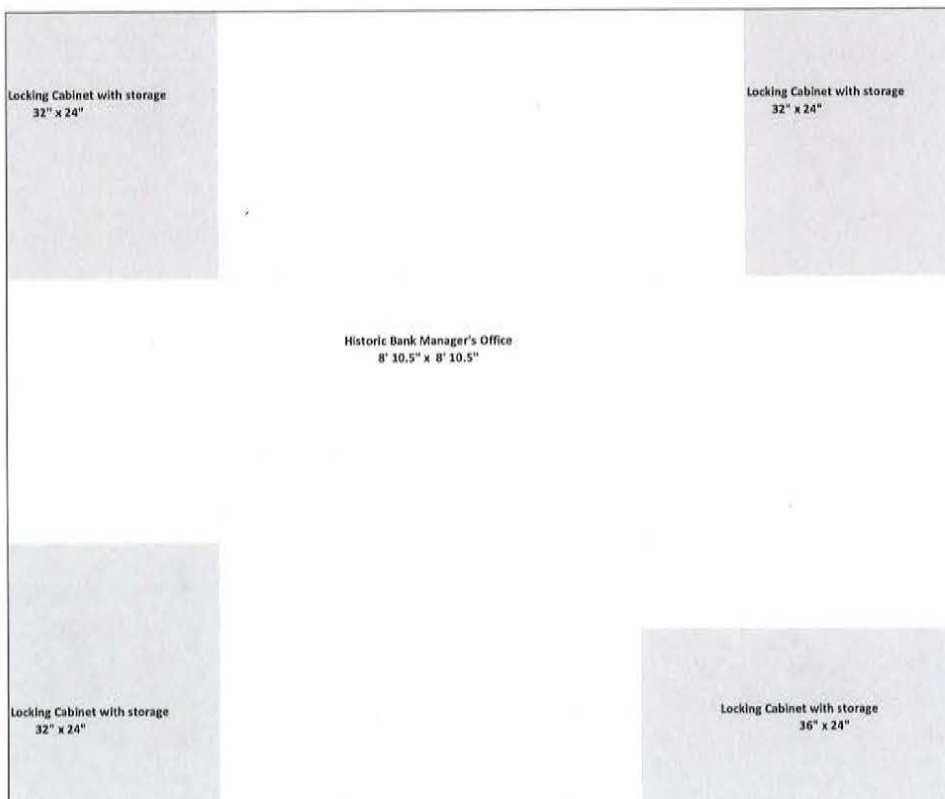


Above: MONOVA: Museum of North Vancouver store with examples of flexible, multi-tiered locking display cases and slatwall display.





Above: Steveston Museum "Bank Manager's Office" showing one example of the Pop-Up Art Show configuration with slatwall display.



Above: Sample configuration within the "Bank Manager's Office" in the Steveston Museum; existing slatwalls to remain in place.

To enhance the Museum Programs outlined above, including Visitor Services and the Museum Store, the organization must invest not only financial resources but human resources. In order to develop a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable operation that serves its community well, the Society must have staff skills and capacity to implement it. The Steveston Museum must refocus efforts on telling its impact story to the community and to its current and potential funders.

To do this effectively, it must collect relevant quantitative and qualitative data, and sufficient staffing levels with appropriate policies and procedures are required to support these initiatives. We discuss staffing needs in the next section.

### Organizational Chart

The current organizational chart below outlines a management structure that is focused on operations with oversight from a working board that is actively participating in daily activities. The Board of Directors currently manages and oversees staff, administration, finance, volunteers, members, community relations, certain events, fundraising, contractors, and setting and implementing strategic priorities. As part of the Society's Strategic Planning process, it has identified the need to increase its public activities and presence as well as to strengthen organizational development, with a key objective to move from a working board model to a governance model. The rationale for this is to create long-term sustainability through an increased focus on strategic outreach activities and board succession planning, given that their ability to operate the Museum, Post Office, and host events and programs with a reliance on volunteer hours is diminishing rapidly, which is in line with the broader trend in volunteerism.

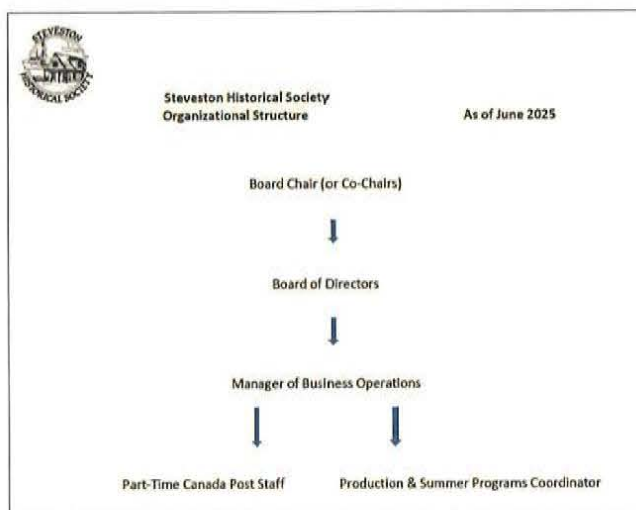
In the recent [Volunteering and Charitable Giving in Canada, 2018 to 2023 Study](#), Statistics Canada found that: "The overall volunteer rate—which includes formal and informal volunteering—decreased by 8% in 2023 compared to 2018. Meanwhile, the total number of hours of formal and informal volunteering by Canadians fell from 5.0 billion hours in 2018 to 4.1 billion hours in 2023, a drop of 18%. On average, people who volunteered dedicated 173 hours to volunteering in 2023, or 33 fewer hours than in 2018." [Imagine Canada](#) has interpreted the Statistics Canada data thus: "The percentage of Canadians volunteering for nonprofits and charities dropped significantly, from 41% in 2018 to 32% in 2023. This is an additional decline from 44% in 2013. Total volunteer hours dropped to 1.2 billion, down by over a quarter from 1.7 billion in 2018 and nearly four fifths from 2.0 billion in 2013. In total, this is equivalent to a decline of roughly 451,000 full-time jobs."

This type of pressure on the non-profit sector has had devastating impacts: according to reporting by the [CBC](#) "up to 65 per cent of organizations in the country are struggling with a shortage of volunteers, and up to 35 per cent of those that are have had to reduce services as a result."

The previous Executive Director position within the Steveston Historical Society was a volunteer position and then a limited-term, grant-funded position. It is important to note that the Executive Director role is vital to the continued success of any Community History Museum, particularly one located in an edge-city municipality like Richmond, which is a rapidly growing diverse community, a popular tourist area, and a Municipality that values its culture and heritage and has expressed a clear objective to become a leading museum and heritage destination in the region. To advance that objective, the Steveston Museum must be managed by a Museum professional who is able to be a strategic community-builder, with a good understanding of sector best practices.



The City of Richmond's Official Community Plan states: "With a network of unique, historic assets, an excellent archive, vibrant heritage programs and a new destination museum, Richmond will be in a unique position to become the leading museum and heritage destination in the Metro Vancouver region."



**A word about Board succession planning:** Although this very important topic falls outside the scope of this analysis, the Board has indicated a strong desire for and a recognition that intentional succession planning must begin. Free resources like those from BC-based [Vantage Point](#) are excellent places to start and provide non-profit community organizations with best practices and templates such as a [Board Skills Matrix](#) and [Steps to Organization-wide Succession Planning](#). Resources like [Governance 101 for Arts, Culture, and Heritage Organizations in British Columbia](#) and [Arts BC's Insight Team](#) are other low-cost resources that provide support in the areas of governance, HR, and roles (membership required). We recommend working toward a governance model and building an effective and inclusive non-profit Board through professional development and learning resources.

### Recommended Organizational Chart

In order to implement the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan, this report considered the staffing levels needed to support the outcomes that were articulated in the Strategic Plan as well as the community consultation carried out over the past 4 years.

The recommended organizational chart below (**Scenario C**) outlines a management structure that creates a new Executive Director (ED) staff position, with an expanded focus on fund development and partnerships, allowing the Board to focus on strategic oversight and development of the organization, including succession planning, as opposed to operational management. An effective Executive Director will build organizational impact and resources through staff development and economic capacity building. This scenario is represented in the Operating Estimates as Scenario C.



The qualifications for the role of **Executive Director** would be:

- Dynamic leadership: an Executive Director, management team, and a volunteer governing board of community members that are representative of major interest holders;
- Strong fund development capabilities, supported by an organizational culture of philanthropy;
- Inclusive and collaborative community approach to working with partners, residents, community members, programmers, and artists, incorporating modern Museum practices.

This scenario provides significant support to the Board in operationalizing all four key priorities of the Strategic Plan: “Be the Heritage Champion”, “Develop Relevant Programs & Events”, “Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role”, “Strengthen Organizational Development.”

This scenario also directly supports the City of Richmond’s Strategic Focus Area of “A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community” by enhancing an important arts and heritage asset in the community and fostering social connection through inclusive, relevant programming developed for the community’s diverse needs and interests. A sample Executive Director Job Description suitable for the Society has been included in **Appendix A**.

Of critical importance is the hiring of a qualified museum professional in the Executive Director role. We recommend that the Society request support and participation in the hiring process or interview/selection panel from the City of Richmond Heritage Services department and/or partner organizations. A professional recruitment service is out of reach for an organization of this size, we therefore recommend the Board research alternatives by seeking advice from local and provincial arts and heritage organizations (such as BC Museums Association, [Vantage Point](#), Arts BC, among others) and include the offer of an honorarium for selection panel participants, where appropriate.

To support inclusive and diverse hiring practices, and encourage the selection of an Executive Director who will be able to build relationships with diverse local communities, a thoughtful approach is required, and possibly additional assistance such as leveraging partner networks. These strategies are necessary to build relationships with cultural groups whose stories are represented in the Museum, including local First Nations, Japanese, Chinese, South Asian, and Vietnamese communities.

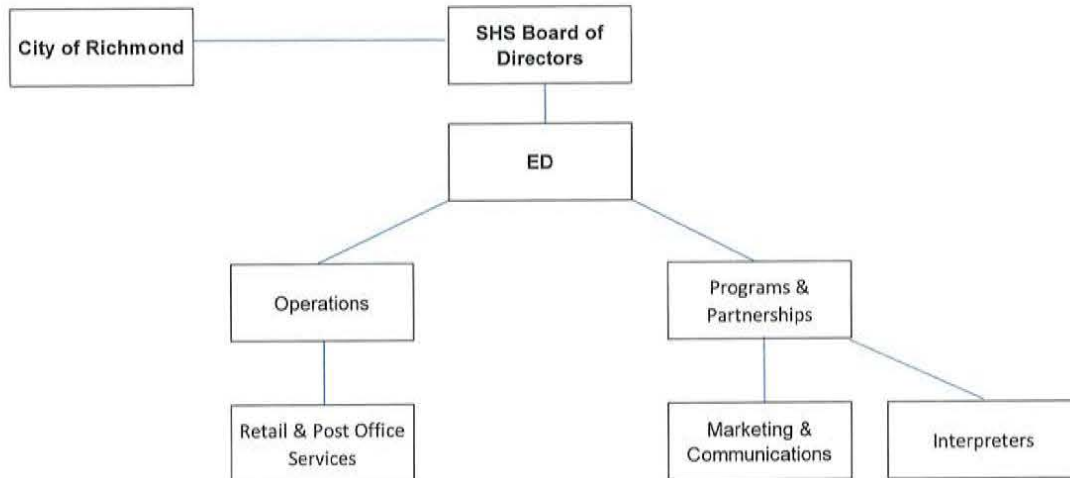
For future hiring phases, particularly for public-facing positions, it is vital to ensure that jobs are posted and shared with diverse community members by making them available in locations like public libraries, community centres, cultural centres, newsletters and community papers directed at specific cultural and community groups, providing broad coverage and accessibility, including explicit language that welcomes diverse applicants.

Key staff positions include leadership roles overseeing Operations and Programs & Partnerships.

**Operations Department:** Continues to encompass facility oversight, venue rental, visitor services, retail, administration and Post Office functions. Introduces the management of the Museum Store and integrating its products and offerings with Museum content and local themes. Working with the Programs department, relevant statistics would be kept.

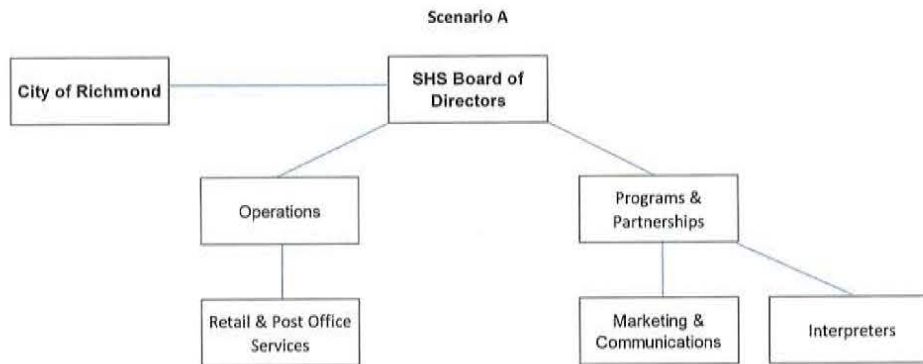
**Programs & Partnerships Department:** Introduces a new Manager position and as-needed program-related facilitator and interpreter positions, encompassing community and partner relationships, events and programming, Indigenous outreach, and oversight of artist-facilitators and interpreters. This

department works closely with the Executive Director to plan, implement, and oversee the communications and fundraising strategies, including grants, fundraising, and marketing, which support the organization's financial sustainability.



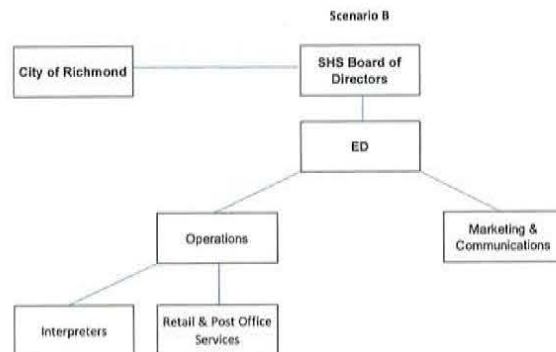
#### Alternative Organizational Charts

The organizational chart below (**Scenario A**) outlines a management structure that creates the position of Manager of Programs & Partnerships as described in the Recommended Organizational Chart, but with direct oversight and management by the Board of Directors. This scenario provides some support to the Board in operationalizing the Strategic Plan, particularly to “**Develop Relevant Programs & Events**” and “**Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role**”. This approach may serve as a starting point for building the profile and offerings of the Steveston Museum through expanded programs and events, with some limited community relations and fund development activities such as grant-writing carried out by the Manager of Programs & Partnerships. This scenario is represented in the Operating Estimates as Scenario A. **Note that the findings of previous community consultation and recent interviews indicate that the role of a galvanizing and visionary Executive Director may be a critical component to successful long-term organizational development and sustainability.** Because the Board of Directors will continue to oversee the staff positions, this scenario weakens the SHS Board’s aim to become a governance board.



A third potential option is explored in **Scenario B** in the Operating Estimates Table and outlines a management structure that creates the position of Executive Director as described in the Recommended Organizational Chart, but without support from the Manager of Programs & Partnerships, and with a budget allocation for a 0.8 fulltime equivalent position (80%). This scenario provides senior staff leadership to support the Board in operationalizing the Strategic Plan, particularly to “Be the Heritage Champion”, “Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role”, and “Strengthen Organizational Development.”

This approach may serve as a strategic path forward to build and expand partner and government relationships for the Steveston Museum, with a focus on fund development activities and the cultivation of donors and sponsors. It should be noted that this role, without the Manager of Programs and Partnerships to support, will also require a good understanding of and commitment to developing museum education, heritage interpretation, programs, and events. This scenario is represented in the Operating Estimates as Scenario B.







"From the town's First Nation's roots, providing summer fishing camps for the Musqueam Peoples, to the lasting and impactful legacy of Japanese Canadians who made Steveston their home, the Steveston Historical Society has been collecting, displaying and telling the stories of this quaint village since 1976. The Steveston Historical Society is passionate about bringing the past to life through interactive and tactile displays, ranging from exquisitely preserved buildings, powerful videos and walking tours that take visitors back in time."

*"The community has changed a lot over the years...and I think these stories would help people who are new to the community understand the significance of their new home."* – Community consultation respondent, 2021



## Capital and Operating Estimates

The following section is the financial analysis of new mission-driven activities. The Operating Estimate on the following page is for the entire organization. A spreadsheet calculator was constructed in order to investigate the impacts of different utilization scenarios and helps answer some important questions, particularly, “What happens when we examine different levels of staffing, fund development, public sector contributions, and program participation? Where should we direct our attention to maximize income and minimize expenditures?”

In examining this budget, consider that management needs the flexibility and authority to make adjustments to particular budget lines in response to ongoing analysis, current economic conditions, and the need to operate with a balanced budget.

ESTIMATION FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, A POTENTIAL – NOT A PREDICTION.

The estimations in this report are referred to as “potential” estimations because they represent the potential to achieve a certain attendance range and economic outcome, assuming:

1. The start-up/capital investments needed to achieve the potential are completed at full scope
2. On-going marketing investments are adequate
3. Management assures consistently high-quality guest service and guest experience
4. Management executes recommended staff recruitment
5. Market and economic conditions remain reasonably constant

This estimation is just that – a range estimate for planning purposes. It is designed to provide a useful framework for decision making and for establishing initial budgets and service levels. Reasonable allowances have been allocated, which may be adjusted within the ranges as plans are finalized. Similarly,



revenues can only be estimated within a range. More definitive budgets will be prepared as planning progresses.

### Operating Estimates: Steveston Historical Society Museum

Line	ATTENDANCE	2024	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
A1	General Attendance*	25,877	32,300	37,100	42,700
A2	Program & Event Attendance	10,437	13,000	15,000	17,300
A3	<b>TOTAL ATTENDANCE (On-site)</b>	<b>36,314</b>	<b>45,300</b>	<b>52,100</b>	<b>60,000</b>
*Post Office customers excluded					

Line	MEMBERSHIPS AND FEES		Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
	<b>MEMBERSHIPS</b>				
A4	Supporting Memberships	30	40	75	150
A5	Admission by Donation (average)	unavailable	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
A6	Supporting Membership Fee (average)	\$75.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$150.00

Line	REVENUES	Base (2024)	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
	<b>Government Contributions</b>				
R1	Municipal Annual Operating Contribution	\$ 40,000	\$ 92,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 166,000
R2	<b>Subtotal Government Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 40,000</b>	<b>\$ 92,000</b>	<b>\$ 100,000</b>	<b>\$ 166,000</b>
	<b>Donations, Grants and Sponsorships</b>				
R3	Grants & Project Funding	\$ 35,167	\$ 45,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 90,000
R4	Annual Campaign Donations & Sponsorships	\$ 3,848	\$ 7,500	\$ 20,000	\$ 50,000
R5	Memberships	\$ 310	\$ 4,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 22,500
R6	<b>Subtotal Donations and Sponsorships</b>	<b>\$ 39,325</b>	<b>\$ 56,500</b>	<b>\$ 87,500</b>	<b>\$ 162,500</b>
	<b>Earned Income</b>				
R7	Admission by Donation	\$ 1,781	\$ 9,700	\$ 18,600	\$ 21,400
R8	Programs (net of direct staff costs)	\$ 3,343	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 36,000
R10	Gift Shop Revenue (net of costs of goods sold)	\$ 10,944	\$ 42,500	\$ 65,100	\$ 93,800
R11	Post Office: Revenue & City Support (status quo)	\$ 226,650	\$ 226,700	\$ 226,700	\$ 226,700
R12	<b>Subtotal Earned Income</b>	<b>\$ 242,718</b>	<b>\$ 295,900</b>	<b>\$ 327,400</b>	<b>\$ 377,900</b>
R13	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 322,043</b>	<b>\$ 444,400</b>	<b>\$ 514,900</b>	<b>\$ 706,400</b>

#### NOTES

**R1 Government Contributions:** The projections foresee local government support at a level that is reasonable, based broadly on information available on museums operated by Historical Societies, or museums in similar communities, and the average funding Canadian community history museums typically receive in operational support.

**R5 Memberships:** The estimate for memberships is based on averages obtained from other similar organizations, and the assumption that with an increase in mission-aligned Museum Programs with effective and consistent impact reporting by skilled Staff, an increase in supporting memberships will follow.

**R6 Donations, Grants, and Sponsorship:** The estimates for these contributions are based on the Base level of current operations (2024) and reasonable increases to contributed revenue streams based on the sector today. It is a difficult period for grants, donations, and sponsorships, so conservative estimates are used.



**R7 Admission by Donation:** This amount is based on a conservative estimate of a percentage of visitors providing a small donation upon each visit, and is based on sector averages and experience.

**R8 Programs:** Programs are the revenue-generating activities undertaken by trained staff and include camps, after-school activities, custom tours, and heritage-related talks and events. Costs related to Program staff and contractors are included in this net amount, but supplies and materials are excluded from this line.

**R9 Museum Store:** Museum Store net revenue estimates are based upon industry averages for mark-up of inventory, and per capita average spends. The average spend is based upon a conservative estimate of projected attendance.

Line	EXPENSES	Base (2024)	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
	Operating Expenses				
E1	Salaries and Benefits	\$ 104,495	\$ 155,995	\$ 164,295	\$ 255,380
E2	Program & Community Event expenses	\$ 33,002	\$ 49,500	\$ 72,520	\$ 113,720
E3	Facilities & Admin, incl prof fees	\$ 18,431	\$ 24,900	\$ 37,400	\$ 62,300
E4	Fundraising, Volunteers, and Marketing expenses	\$ 5,266	\$ 27,000	\$ 43,100	\$ 68,500
E5	Post Office: Costs of Goods Sold & Support (status quo)	\$ 174,673	\$ 174,700	\$ 174,700	\$ 174,700
E6	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 335,867	\$ 432,100	\$ 492,000	\$ 674,600
N1	NET SURPLUS/DEFICIT & RISK MANAGEMENT RESERVE	-\$ 13,824	\$ 12,300	\$ 22,900	\$ 31,800

*All Estimates Rounded to nearest hundred*

**E1 Salaries and Benefits:** These are discussed in more detail in the Organizational Chart section below. Salaries are based on a scan of staff positions within comparable local and national organizations. Note that wages for staff who support specific program delivery, as opposed to management or development staff, are captured in the specific Program costs.

**E2 Programs & Events:** These expenses include consumables and repairs for Programs. Note that Program-specific wage costs for delivery are included in net Program Revenue (line R8).

**E3 Facilities and Administration:** Maintenance, Insurance, Cleaning, Utilities, Security, Office and Technology. No salaries are included; however, contracted services are included in this estimate.

**E4 Fundraising, Volunteers, and Marketing:** These expenses are in addition to salaries, and include recognition events, administrative costs including specialized donor management software subscriptions and supplies. This also includes marketing and communications that fall outside the City of Richmond-supported marketing activities.

**R10 and E5 Post Office Operations:** These figures are supplied by the Steveston Historical Society and are status quo amounts. The Post Office Operations fall outside the scope of this analysis.

Staffing to support new activities: Wage analysis

Scenario C shows the recommended staff complement, which is detailed below:

FTEs	Staff Positions	TOTAL WAGE COSTS	NOTE
<b>2025 Staff Costs</b>			
0.7 RPT	Manager of Operations	\$ 44,252.00	5 days/wk
0.7 PT	Post Office	\$ 28,445.66	3 days/wk
0.5 PT	Post Office	\$ 18,963.78	2 days/wk
0.3 PT	Post Office	\$ 14,222.83	2 days/wk
0.1 PT	Post Office	\$ 5,594.29	2 days/month
0.3 Seasonal	Summer Student - Interpreter	\$ 10,041.57	5 days/wk summer
<b>2.7 FTE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 121,520.13</b>	
<b>2026 Recommended New Staff Costs</b>			
FTEs	Staff Positions	TOTAL WAGE COSTS	NOTE
1 RFT	Executive Director	\$ 71,300.00	5 days/wk
0.8 RPT	Manager of Programs and Partnerships	\$ 51,520.00	4 days/wk
0.3 Seasonal	Interpreters/Guest Services	\$ 11,040.00	3 days/wk half year
<b>2.1 FTE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 133,860.00</b>	
<b>4.8 FTEs</b>	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 255,380.13</b>	

## Enhanced Programs

The following table examines the potential for revenue-generating activities that the Society may undertake to promote the mission and vision of the Society and the Steveston Museum. As noted elsewhere in the report, for a successful outcome, the marketing and communications activities to support these new Programs must be sufficient to build awareness and an identity for the organization.

It must be stated that there is no one Program that will provide the Society with enough visibility, impact, and revenue to sustain the Museum in a meaningful way. Non-profit organizations are experiencing a deep shift in their approach to fund development that goes beyond traditional grants and donations, to include mission-aligned operations, mutually beneficial partnerships, visibility, and leveraging [diversification](#) and [assessment](#). A nonprofit can't sustain its mission without a community of support. Diversifying revenue streams can help foster connections with local businesses, government agencies, and the general public. The more visible you are – with a variety of points of connection and entry – the more people can get involved in your efforts.

	Annual # delivered	Session hours/day	Annual Hours	Price/ participant	Participants /session	Total Participants	Total
Week-long children's Half-day Summer Camps	12	3	180	\$ 150.00	12	144	\$ 21,600.00
Weekly after-school Pop-Up Art Programs	30	2.5	75	\$ 60.00	12	360	\$ 21,600.00
Site-specific guided tours	52	1.5	78	\$ 30.00	10	520	\$ 15,600.00
Outdoor Talks & Events (youth, adult, families)	12	2	24	\$ 20.00	30	360	\$ 7,200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>14</b>				<b>1,384</b>	<b>\$ 66,000.00</b>
<b>Fee revenue to the nearest 1000</b>							<b>\$ 66,000.00</b>

Role	Annual # delivered	Session hours/day	Annual Staff time	Wage	Annual Wage	Annual Wage Costs
Camp Facilitator (2)	12	4	480	\$ 20.79	\$ 9,979.20	\$11,476.08
Artist-Facilitators (2)	30	3.5	210	\$ 20.79	\$ 4,365.90	\$ 5,020.79
Interpreter (2)	52	3	260	\$ 20.79	\$ 5,405.40	\$ 6,216.21
Event Staff Liaison	12	3	36	\$ 20.79	\$ 748.44	\$ 860.71
Guest Speaker (Honorarium)	12	3		\$ 500.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
<b>Total</b>			986			\$29,573.78
Fee revenue to the nearest 1000						\$30,000.00
<i>Does not include management and development wage costs</i>						
			FTEs	0.54	Net Programs	36,000.00

## Comparison Organizations

Following is a table outlining the attendance statistics for local Steveston Heritage Sites and Richmond Museums, for the most recent year available (2022 or 2024).

This table offers insight into the number of visitors who are engaging in programs and visiting sites in proximity to the Steveston Museum and Post Office. The information is useful in understanding the context in which the Museum and Post Office operates, and the potential for visitor numbers who are interested in engaging in cultural heritage and museum programs.

	Gulf of Georgia Cannery	Britannia Shipyards	London Farm	Steveston Tram	Richmond Museum
	2024	2022	2022	2022	2022
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>					
General Attendance	15,129	84,519	5,300	29,375	15,221
Program Attendance	18,461				
<b>TOTAL ATTENDANCE (On-site)</b>	33,590	84,519	5,300	29,375	15,221

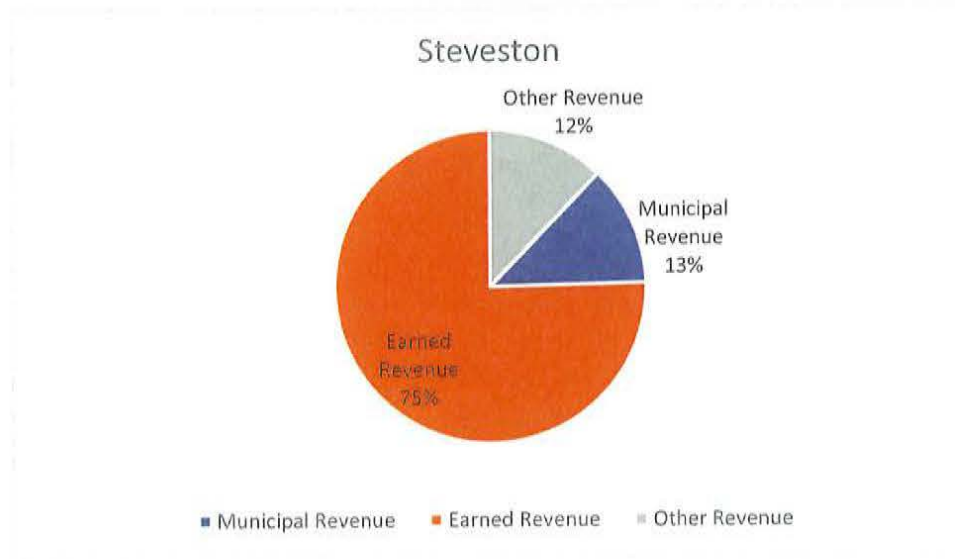


Following is a table outlining the statement of operations for comparable Historical Societies that operate Museums, for the most recent year available (2022, 2023 or 2024):

Organization	Fort Nelson Museum	Maple Ridge Museum	Nelson Museum	Shawnigan Lake Museum	Campbell River Museum
Year	2024	2023	2022	2023	2024
Receipted Donations	\$ 1,720.00	\$ 930.00	\$ 45,757.00	\$ 79,810.00	\$ 34,540.00
Non-receipted Donations	\$ 10,197.00	\$ 11,984.00	\$ 2,212.00	\$ 10,132.00	\$ 18,580.00
Gifts from Other Registered Charities	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 5,075.00	\$ -	\$ -
Government Funding	\$ 240,196.00	\$ 302,235.00	\$ 610,633.00	\$ 879,368.00	\$ 606,286.00
Earned Revenue	\$ 58,159.00	\$ 73,219.00	\$ 230,734.00	\$ 12,457.00	\$ 405,300.00
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 320,272.00</b>	<b>\$ 388,868.00</b>	<b>\$ 894,411.00</b>	<b>\$ 981,767.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,064,706.00</b>
Charitable Programs	\$ 194,724.00	\$ 375,194.00	\$ 789,596.00	\$ 129,026.00	\$ 1,020,265.00
Management and Administration	\$ 24,887.00	\$ 9,087.00	\$ 123,280.00	\$ -	\$ 17,175.00
Fundraising	\$ 2,066.00	\$ 2,584.00	\$ 473.00	\$ 692.00	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,209.00
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 221,677.00</b>	<b>\$ 386,865.00</b>	<b>\$ 913,349.00</b>	<b>\$ 129,718.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,040,649.00</b>
Compensation (within Expenses, above)	\$ 127,301.00	\$ 303,087.00	\$ 396,046.00	\$ 75,697.00	\$ 597,980.00
Part-time Employees	9	8	9	4	6
Full-time Employees	2	3	5	1	11
Admissions /Visitors /Attendants	not available	44,586	7,177	not available	24,097
City/Town	Fort Nelson	Maple Ridge	Nelson	Shawnigan Lake	Campbell River
Province	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC

*Municipal Support: a key to sustainability*

Organization	Maple Ridge Museum	Campbell River Museum	Shawnigan Lake Museum	Nelson Museum	Fort Nelson Museum	Langley Centennial Museum	Average	Steveston
Municipal Revenue	\$ 228,767.00	\$ 414,695.00	\$ 87,096.00	\$ 237,395.00	\$ 193,254.00	\$ 579,000.00	\$ 248,601.00	\$ 40,000.00
Earned Revenue	\$ 465.00	\$ 343,111.00	\$ 8,469.00	\$ 94,767.00	\$ 55,406.00	\$ -	\$ 71,745.43	\$ 242,718.00
Other Revenue	\$ 159,636.00	\$ 306,900.00	\$ 886,202.00	\$ 562,249.00	\$ 71,612.00	\$ 246,000.00	\$ 345,005.71	\$ 39,325.00
Total	\$ 388,868.00	\$ 1,064,706.00	\$ 981,767.00	\$ 894,411.00	\$ 320,272.00	\$ 825,000.00	\$ 665,352.14	\$ 322,043.00



Charts showing the level of Municipal Funding for select British Columbia Museums

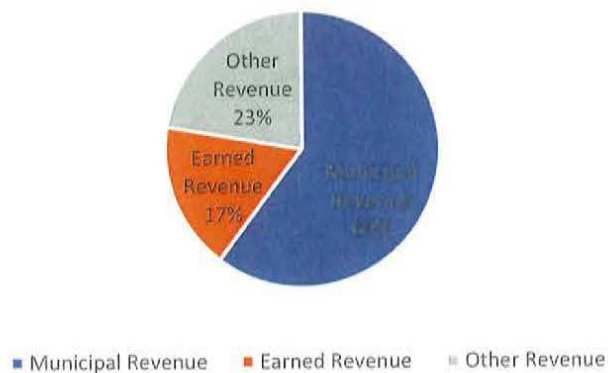
Average



Campbell River Museum



Fort Nelson Museum





### One-time Start-up Requirements

To support the start-up, a community fundraising campaign should be considered, if the new management staff have relevant experience. In addition, government funding for capital projects may be considered, including the BC Gaming Capital Project Grants. A suggested Gift Range Chart, for discussion purposes, has been outlined in the table below. Further investigation of community fundraising capacity should be sought, and fundraising training for staff and the Board is recommended.

One-Time Start-up Costs	Year 1
POS System Software & Equipment	\$ 2,700
Museum Store Fixtures	\$ 6,000
Inventory	\$ 9,000
Staff Training	\$ 4,000
Hiring Costs	\$ 1,500
Website, Graphic Design & Collateral	\$ 10,000
Outdoor event tent 10' x 20'	\$ 1,000
Signage	\$ 13,000
Contingency	\$ 2,000
<b>TOTAL One-Time Costs</b>	<b>\$ 49,200</b>

### Capital and Annual Campaigns

#### GIFT RANGE CHART

Campaign Goal		\$ 50,000			
Percentage	Gift	Successful Requests	# of Prospects	Amount	Suggested Recognition
10%	\$ 5,000	2	8	\$ 10,000	Champion
5%	\$ 2,500	4	12	\$ 10,000	Platinum
2.0%	\$ 1,000	6	12	\$ 6,000	Gold
0.25%	\$ 500	25	50	\$ 12,500	Year-end fundraising campaign
0.075%	\$ 100	100	200	\$ 10,000	Supporting Memberships
	\$ 25	60	120	\$ 1,500	Small gifts & donations box/swipe
<b>POTENTIAL YIELD</b>		<b>197</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>	

## Key Recommendations

- Increase staffing levels to support heritage and community programs. This report strongly recommends a paid Executive Director role (1 FTE) be established, and a new Manager of Programs and Partnerships position (0.8 FTE) be created.
- The Executive Director position must focus on: Dynamic leadership, experienced working with a Board and Staff; Strong fund development capabilities; Inclusive and collaborative community approach incorporating modern Museum practices.
- SHS Board and Staff must work to define, measure, and assess the impact and success of their initiatives through the use of quantitative and qualitative data.
- Prioritize mission-driven activities that develop the organization's relevance and sustainability.
- Cultivate and strengthen relationships and partnerships in the community.
- Expand the Museum Store to include items that reflect the Museum exhibit themes so visitors can connect with local stories and bring home meaningful memories of Steveston.
- Develop a curated inventory of local art and artisan products in the permanent Museum Store.
- Develop a reputational identity as the community hub of the Steveston Heritage Sites area through effective storytelling, training, impact reports, marketing and communications.
- Work with professional marketing and communications partners, including the City of Richmond, Richmond Tourism, Destination Vancouver and others, to create compelling content for a variety of marketing channels.
- Redefine current part-time staff positions to include heritage interpretation and museum visitor services. To do so, training and professional development for existing Post Office staff must be undertaken and low-cost resources utilized. Examples of these include Steveston Heritage Sites and Richmond Museums offerings, the BC Museums Association [School](#), Lower Mainland Museum Educators [group](#), the Canadian Museum Association Moved to Action [Web Course](#); National Association of Interpretation [training](#) (local instruction [available](#)), among others.
  - Note: Alternative staffing plans that consider the addition of only the Manager of Programs and Partnerships or the Executive Director should be regarded as transitional approaches to achieving the optimal recommended staffing levels in the long-term.
- Provide new staff with training and professional development in the following areas: fundraising and grant-writing, communications or storytelling (for marketing and fundraising), data collection and evaluation.
- Steveston Historical Society, as a City partner, should commit to reconciliation learning, initiatives and inclusive Museum Programs and hiring practices.
- Leverage and communicate the successes and impact of the organization. Collect statistics – qualitative and quantitative data – to tell the story of the Society's and the Museum's impact.

## Risk

A comprehensive assessment of risk is outside the scope of this analysis and requires thoughtful discussion and research guided by key interest-holders, including the Board and staff. However, the following outlines a few of the key risks that Steveston Historical Society may face if it is unable to implement enhanced operations with oversight from professional museum staff:

RISK	OUTCOME
Reputational	If the organization is unable to remain relevant to the community it serves through effective and Programs of high quality that enhance the unique value of the Heritage Site and Museum, there is great reputational risk to the Historical Society and the City of Richmond, as visitor experience and the perceived value of the Museum diminishes.
Economic	If the organization cannot implement or maintain new revenue-generating Programs and fails to attract a community of support, the financial results of the operation will become unsustainable. The precarious nature of the Post Office operation contributes to this risk.
Management	If the organization is unable to hire a senior manager to oversee all the Programs and services that are undertaken at the Museum and Post Office, and support the volunteer Board in its role as a governing body, there is significant risk that the Steveston Historical Society will encounter difficulty in finding new Board members willing to participate in a working board, and may be unable to attract staff in future, without an effective management structure in place to support them.

## Conclusion

The Steveston Museum and Post Office, operated by the Steveston Historical Society, presents the community and the City of Richmond with an opportunity to support culture in its community. There are significant benefits to investing in the renewal and expansion of the Society's Programs and Operations, with positive impacts on current and future residents by enhancing this valued heritage building which contributes to a vibrant cultural sector with renewed economic, social and educational opportunities. The addition of new staff positions that will enhance the activities undertaken by the Steveston Historical Society will lead to organizational sustainability and greater relevance to the community of Steveston.



## Appendix A: Executive Director Job Description

The Steveston Historical Society (SHS), which operates the historic Steveston Museum & Post Office in Richmond, BC is seeking applicants for the position of Executive Director. Reporting to the SHS Board of Directors, the Executive Director works collaboratively with the Board to provide leadership and management as the organization transitions into a new and sustainable business model.

The Executive Director will examine and provide direction on fund development, project management, implementing the strategic plan, budget, grant writing, communications, and financial and administrative oversight with the goal of determining business priorities moving into the future. This is a new position, and the successful candidate will work with the volunteer Board of Directors and the City of Richmond Museum and Heritage Services Department to provide direction and foundation for successful ongoing operations, and a vision of the future for the institution. The Executive Director is responsible for hiring, training and overseeing the staff, with support from the Manager of Business Operations.

This position is a permanent, full-time position, 30-40 hours/week, Monday – Friday with some availability on weekends or event days as needed.

### Key responsibilities:

- Manage the museum operation with a focus on strategic business and development functions;
- Under the direction of Board, develop, implement and revise, as necessary, an operating plan that includes the goals, objectives, policies, and priorities of the organization as guided by the Strategic Plan, and provide recommendations on strategies for ongoing sustainable operations;
- Research grant opportunities and apply for appropriate grants, ensuring all application and reporting deadlines are met;
- Attend Board meetings and work closely with the Board on research and development of policies, with a focus on data collection and impact reporting;
- Evaluate and report on Museum projects;
- Undertake activities that link to museum practice and bring value to the community;
- Work with the Board to ensure legal, contractual and other obligations of the Museum are met;
- Develop a marketing and social media plan and identify resources required;
- Provide vision and leadership to inform the trajectory and sustainability of Museum operations;
- Develop professional partnerships with community and the Arts, Culture and Heritage sector in Richmond, and promote and advocate for the Museum to all levels of government and donors;
- Act as a public spokesperson for the Museum, and respectful ambassador of Steveston Museum & Post Office at community events and during collaborations as required;
- Act as a liaison with the City of Richmond and manage all aspects of the operating agreement;
- Remain flexible to the needs of a business that is changing.

### Experience and Qualifications:

- A degree or diploma from a recognized post-secondary institution in a related discipline (ex: Cultural Management, Museum Studies, History, Art or Public Administration, etc) or the equivalent in experience and education;

## Executive Director Job Description continued

- Experience in successful leadership and management of a non-profit organization;
- Proven skills in inclusive and respectful leadership with experience in building an effective organizational culture;
- Experience working with a non-profit Board of Directors and knowledge of governance structures;
- Experience in interacting with the public in small and large groups;
- Experience with successful fund development activities and optimizing financial resources, stewarding donors, and grant writing;
- Understanding of museum and tourism practices and the ability to support this type of work;
- Strategic planning and project management experience;
- Effective and demonstrated strategic partnership building experience;
- Experience bringing an entrepreneurial eye to a not-for-profit setting;
- Knowledge of and experience with government relations and advocacy;
- Highly organized with good time management skills, excellent communication skills and experience with change management;
- Experience managing volunteers as well as HR practices and labour laws an asset;
- Program development skills with an interest in designing participatory learning activities an asset.

Compensation: Annual salary of \$65,000/year plus 2 weeks' vacation.

### Working Relationships:

This position will work closely with the following:

- Parks Canada (Gulf of Georgia Cannery) <https://parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/bc/georgia>
- Steveston Heritage Sites <https://stevestonheritage.ca/>
- Local and Provincial professional museum and heritage organizations
- Municipal, Provincial and Federal government partners and funding agencies



## Appendix B: Framework for Implementation

SHS Framework for implementation

	Recommendation	Timeline	Strategic Plan Priority
<b>Funding</b>			
1.1	Request (and obtain) new annual funding from the City of Richmond for Heritage and Community Services, which should be prioritized for the creation of a new paid Executive Director position	Q3 2025	Strengthen Organizational Development
1.2	If new staff have (or develop) relevant experience, a community fundraising campaign should be launched for Program capital enhancements (preferably with guidance from professional fundraiser)	Q1 2027	Develop Relevant Programs & Events
<b>Human Resources</b>			
2.1	Implement an organizational chart that creates a new paid Executive Director (ED) staff position	Q4 2025	Strengthen Organizational Development
2.2	Hire an ED, with professional HR and heritage sector guidance and support	Q1 2026	Strengthen Organizational Development
2.3	Redefine current part-time staff positions to include heritage interpretation and museum visitor services	Q2 2026	Develop Relevant Programs & Events
2.4	Heritage and interpretation training required for new and existing staff positions, including visitor services and data collection	Q3 2026	Develop Relevant Programs & Events
2.5	Increase staffing levels to support heritage and community programs	Q4 2026	Strengthen Organizational Development
2.6	Provide new staff with training and professional development in the following areas: fundraising and grant-writing, communications or storytelling (for marketing and fundraising), data collection and evaluation	Ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
<b>Organizational Development</b>			
3.1	Commit to reconciliation, strengthened partnerships, shared understanding with Indigenous and First Nations communities, create new opportunities for contributions of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.	Ongoing	Be the Heritage Champion
3.2	Work toward a governance model and build an effective and inclusive non-profit Board through professional development and learning resources	Ongoing	Strengthen Organizational Development
3.3	Fund development training for Executive Director and board	Q2 2026	Strengthen Organizational Development
<b>Operational Development</b>			
4.1	Use quantitative and qualitative data to define, measure, and assess the impact and success of Programs	Q4 2025	Develop Relevant Programs & Events
4.2	Prioritize mission-driven activities that develop the organization's relevance and sustainability	Ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
4.3	Develop a curated inventory of local art and artisan products in a permanent Museum Store	Q4 2025	Develop Relevant Programs & Events
4.4	Host artist events and create social media content that highlights one artist or product line bi-monthly or quarterly;	Q4 2025	Develop Relevant Programs & Events
4.5	Research and implement an industry-standard mark-up on prices of artworks and store products (this may include using the keystone model, or a variation, and testing the market over a reasonable period of time: seasonally and annually);	Q4 2025	Strengthen Organizational Development
4.6	Research artists, or put out a public call to artists, to develop a curated inventory of artworks and products that relate directly to the Museum themes outlined in the Museum Interpretive Plan	Q4 2025; ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
4.7	A modest investment of store inventory, moveable display fixtures, and retail equipment, including a reasonably-priced, compact and flexible POS system	Q2 2026	Strengthen Organizational Development
4.8	Expand the Museum Store to include items that reflect the Museum exhibit themes so visitors can connect with local stories and bring home meaningful memories of Steveston	Q4 2025	Strengthen Organizational Development



## Framework for Implementation continued

Visibility and Sustainability			
5.1	Develop a reputational identity as the community hub of the Steveston Heritage Sites area through effective storytelling, impact reports, marketing and communications	Ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
5.2	Leverage and communicate the successes and impact of the organization. Use qualitative and quantitative data to tell the story of the Society's and the Museum's impact	Ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
5.3	Cultivate and strengthen relationships and partnerships in the community	Ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role
5.4	Work with professional marketing and communications partners to create compelling content for a variety of marketing channels	Ongoing	Communicate Steveston Heritage Society Purpose & Role

## Appendix C: Cost comparison of POS systems

Name	Helcim Smart Terminal			Helcim Card Reader			MyPOS Connect				Square				Clover	
Form	Handheld Card Reader			Handheld			Software				App, Variety of Terminals				Handheld Cardreader + Subscription	
Base Price	\$ 399.00			\$ 129.00			\$99.95/mth + \$49.95 per additional device				Fee Based with Additional Optional Subscription starting at \$60/mth				\$29.95/mth	
Software	Optional free app			Download free app							Free App				Free App	
Hardware	Includes "All in one" Card Reader, Optional app requires computer, tablet, or smartphone			Includes simple Card Reader Requires computer, tablet, or smartphone			Optional POS workstations				Smartphone with "tap to pay" feature, or hardware between \$69 (device required) and \$899 (device included)				Handheld cardreader	
Hardware Cost	included			included			\$3000 - \$4000				\$69 - \$899				included	
Transactional Fees	in-person	online/key	Interac	in-person	online/key	Interac	in-person	online	Interac in-person	Interac online	credit card	credit card online	Interac	keyed In	in person	Typed In
Percent Fee	1.67%	2.29%	0.00%	1.67%	2.29%	0.00%	2.65%	2.85%	0.00%	0.00%	2.50%	2.80%	0.75%	3.30%	2.60%	3.50%
Additional Fee	\$ 0.08	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.09	\$ 0.08	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.09	0.1	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.10	\$ 1.00	\$ -	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.07	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.10
Fee Threshold	\$ -	\$ 6.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6.00	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -					
Admin Fees	No			No			No				No				No	
Setup Fees	No			No			\$ 2,000.00				No				No	
Cancellation Fee	No			No							No				No	
Funding time	1-2 business days			1-2 business days			1-2 business days				1-2 business days				3-5 business days	can be shortened to 1-2 business days
Features																
Inventory management	included			included on app			included				Free version or paid upgrade (\$79/mth)				Basic Inventory with current subscription	
Sample: 5 transactions @ \$100	\$ 8.75			\$ 8.75			\$ 13.75				\$ 12.50				\$ 13.50	



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