



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2022

Tsilhqot'in Nation frustrated by proposed \$780 million spending for Royal B.C. Museum

Williams Lake, BC: The Tsilhqot'in Nation is frustrated by the current provincial government's plans to build a new museum complex for the Royal B.C. Museum with an expected total cost of \$789 million and a timeline of a decade to complete.

Firstly, the Royal B.C. Museum has been in poor standing with many Indigenous people and groups for years over their lack of Indigenous stories and histories and for showcasing stolen artifacts, archives and historical pieces that should be respectfully returned to the appropriate Indigenous groups and First Nations.

Additionally, inflation continues to rise and the cost of living continues to go up; including basic essentials such as gas, food and groceries and housing. The Tsilhqot'in communities have been burdened with a lack of food security and housing as the result of the mismanagement of the government, and now this continues as the prices of food at the grocery stores make feeding a family and having a home nearly unobtainable.

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequences from it, are not over. There are delays in surgeries, lack of doctors and nurses, and serious mental health and child development issues that our People have been left to deal with.

The government needs to re-evaluate its priorities since there are many economic, social and environmental issues that remain unaddressed and are being relinquished if they are to move forward with this museum spending proposal. The Tsilhqot'in Nation calls on the government to scrap the \$780 million spending proposal for the Royal B.C. Museum and allocate these funds to repatriating Indigenous cultural heritage to its home communities and supporting Indigenous communities and individuals struggling every day to meet basic social and economic needs.

Quote:

Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, Tsilhqot'in National Government

"The timing for this nearly 1 billion spending proposal could not be more tone deaf. It is irresponsible of this government to move ahead with this, when so many issues remain

D O W N T O W N O F F I C E

L A K E S I D E O F F I C E

253 4th Avenue North
Williams Lake, BC V2G 4T4
Ph: (250)-392-3918
Fax: (250)-398-5798

1729 South Lakeside Drive
Williams Lake, BC V2G 3A9
Ph: (778)-799- 2145
Fax: (778)-799-2142



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unaddressed in this province. Our Nation has to fight for every dollar we receive to improve the lives of our people, and it is a slap in the face to see such and astronomical amount of spending on something as frivolous as the Royal B.C. Museum. Further, the Royal B.C. Museum is not in good standing with our people or other B.C. First Nations. They have stolen artifacts that belong to Indigenous groups and First Nations and have not expressed the intention of returning them or asked how we would like to display them or what we would like to see done with them. The Nuxalk Peoples announced just this year that they are suing them over this. This government needs to re-prioritize and decide what is important right now.”

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Media Contact:

Jacey Warne

Communications Manager

Tsilhqot'in National Government

(778)-267-6197

jwarne@tsilhqotin.ca

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