



CHRIS ROBINSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## BUILDING YOUR MUSEUM

*82,000 Square Feet*

While it's easy to follow the physical progress of your new Museum building by checking out the [web-cam](#) aimed at the downtown construction site or by looking through the viewing portal at the site itself, tracking gallery development is a little harder to follow. I can assure you, however, that, as the building takes shape, Museum staff members are working hard to fill over 7,600 square metres (82,000 square feet) of public exhibition space—twice the area of our current quarters—in an effort to create the ultimate experience for you, our visitors.

The new Museum will comprise 18 distinct galleries over two floors. In addition to admission and general orientation, the main floor will include 11 galleries occupying 51,000 square feet. It is where our new Bug Room, a dedicated children's gallery and eight galleries looking at 13,000 years of human history in Alberta will be located. There will also be space for temporary exhibitions, both home-grown and international. One of the main advantages of the new site will be state-of-the-art environmental controls that will allow us to bring in international collections requiring specialized conditions. Many renowned exhibits have been unavailable to us at the Glenora location, because we are unable to meet strict and specific exhibition standards. That will change when we move downtown.

The second floor is also largely dedicated to public exhibition, with five galleries looking at Alberta's dynamic natural history, from the ancient past through to today, and a dedicated community gallery. In developing these galleries, we have committed to two overarching principles that, we believe, will make for a richer visitor experience. Displays will be collections based, allowing us to share more from our vaults, and they will be audience focussed, giving visitors what they expect from a museum visit—to be intrigued, informed, challenged and entertained. We believe that by keeping these commitments central to the development process, we will create galleries that tell the best possible stories in the most engaging ways.

The expansion of exhibition space gives us the ability to delve into subjects we've wanted to explore for years. Imagine a new gallery called Changing Landscapes where, through 14 pods

representing actual places in the Alberta landscape, you will journey through the province, looking at our geological and biological history and developing a better understanding of the landscapes we see today. Imagine coming face to face with extinct species—mammoths, mastodons, giant ground sloths, American lions, camels and giant short-faced bears—and gaining a greater appreciation of the animals that walked this land before us. Imagine a gallery dedicated to showcasing Alberta's present biodiversity, one that explains how plants and animals—think caribou, grizzly bears and even fish under ice—thrive and interact in Alberta's dynamic environments. First Nations stories about the land, Métis river pilots, ranching and rodeo, the beginning of Alberta's oil industry, the era of '50s prosperity—these are just some of the fascinating stories we'll be sharing with you. Not enough? How about gems, minerals, archaeology, evolution, agriculture, energy, and community building, all told through the Museum's collections.