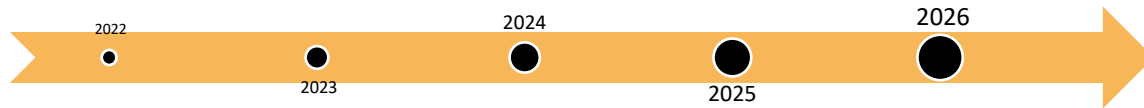




Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

Strategic Plan 2022–2026



The 2022–2026 Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre (CFDC) Strategic Plan highlights a series of achievable objectives: I) to enhance our financial resilience and growth, II) to renew and enhance our experiential tourism assets, and III) to chart a sustainable roadmap to erect and occupy a stand-alone facility. Yearly reviews will ensure that it is also a ‘living document’, thereby providing sufficient flexibility to address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Our Vision

“To be recognized as a leading centre for fossil discovery experiences.”

Our Mission

“To stimulate curious minds by passionately sharing and promoting Manitoba and Canada’s fossil heritage through discovery, preservation, research, and education.”

Priorities, Goals, and Strategic Approach

Our way forward focuses on three main interrelated priorities. The first builds on expanding our financial self-sufficiency and resilience through development of aggressive yet feasible business and fundraising plans; the second focuses on increasing visitor uptake via exhibit renewal together with development of our field property to accelerate research discovery, reputation, and market outreach; while the third charts the path towards construction of a new stand-alone facility for our world-class fossil collection.

1971-2021  Years of Learning Experience



Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

Priority 1 Financial Self-Sufficiency and Revenue Resilience


Recent Progress and the Current Situation

From humble beginnings reliant primarily on local taxpayer support, the CFDC has diversified and markedly improved our financial position in recent years. Milestone achievements from 2015–2020 include establishment of an endowed CFDC Development Fund (currently \$100,000+ in assets), a Sustainability Fund (~\$37,000 and growing monthly), and perpetual, incremental-growth Signature Museum Funding (~\$75,000/per annum) through the Province of Manitoba. Since the start of the pandemic, an emphasis on tapping into external revenue has increased annual funding from these sources from \$179,940 in 2019, to \$282,169 in 2020, to \$350,798 in 2021. Finally, the footprint of the gift shop has been expanded to enhance the quality, diversity, and number of items for sale, doubling the revenue per visitor, while establishing an online gift-shop presence.

Goal 1

Over the next five years we will identify new revenue streams and establish meaningful philanthropic targets to build upon this upward financial trajectory.

- ◇ Re-envisioning and renewing our Business Plan, thereby defining how the CFDC will pursue self-sustainability/financial resilience within and beyond the current COVID-19 environment.
- ◇ Devise innovative strategies for marketing by adapting available resources to ever changing circumstances to optimize the performance of each marketing campaign.
- ◇ Establishment of a professional fundraising campaign route map to pursue the financing and ongoing operations of a new facility.
- ◇ Development of a strategy to run our Dig Tour Program for visitors/customers in a safe, profitable manner. This program is envisioned to become one of the biggest assets for marketing and self-generated income for the CFDC for years to come.

1971-2021  Years of Learning Experience



Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

Goal 1 CONTINUED

- ◇ Continued focus on expanding offerings of sought after products—including original signature merchandising—in the gift shop, further growing our online presence, and a plan to develop external sales at festivals (e.g. Corn and Apple Festival) and events.
- ◇ Conceiving and developing new projects to attract available and emerging grants for the current facility and exhibits, with the future new facility in mind. Today's investment will become tomorrow's assets.

Goal 2

Safeguard financial resilience through continued growth of our endowment and sustainability reserve funds.

- ◇ Revive and enhance our Annual Dig Deeper Gala Event when circumstances permit, with the aim of contributing \$30,000 to the CFDC Development (endowment) Fund yearly.
- ◇ Maintain monthly contributions to the CFDC Sustainability Fund to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, unanticipated loss in funding, or uninsured losses, or for one-time, nonrecurring expenses that will build long-term capacity, with the aim of achieving a target minimum balance equal to six months of average operating costs.

1971-2021  Years of Learning Experience



Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

Priority 2 Exhibit renewal and development of our field property to expand our market outreach and scientific discovery

Recent Progress and the Current Situation

Since its inception, the CFDC has grown its exhibit space though many of the original displays have not been updated for decades. With the hiring of a new Executive Director in February 2020, a plan to modernize the current exhibits to showcase authentic fossil specimens was implemented to increase the in-kind value of our displays by \$100,000 annually. Work has also begun to increase the accessibility of the CFDC property in anticipation of constructing a permanent Field Station. Finally, a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Manitoba and CFDC was enacted through the appointment of Assistant Professor Dr. Kirstin Brink as our Adjunct Curator of Vertebrates in 2020 to oversee research on our fossil collection.

Goal 1

The construction of a dynamic, permanent Field Station at the CFDC property, furnished with the necessary equipment to better manage field work and accelerate academic research and fossil discovery in a professional, safe, and reliable manner. It is envisioned that the Field Station will become the corporative image of the CFDC. Additionally, we plan to:

- ◇ Secure additional funding and begin construction on a modular (expandable) Field Station.
- ◇ Conduct public Dig Tours in the CFDC's property once the goal of an equipped, permanent Field Station is reached. This paid program is projected to become an important self-generated income source for the CFDC.
- ◇ Begin development of a paid, guided geologic trail along the CFDC property, with multiple stops in strategic points equipped with signage explaining for example, the geology, geography, palaeontology, glacialism, First Nations trade routes, and bentonite mining history of the land.

1971-2021  Years of Learning Experience



Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

Priority 2 CONTINUED

Goal 2

Enhancement of the existing exhibits, and creation of new exhibits every year, with a design suitable to seamlessly incorporate them into a new facility.

- ◇ To attract new patrons and encourage re-discovery by past visitors, we will both upgrade existing and develop state-of-the-art new exhibits for the current facility on a yearly basis, with exhibit design and implementation tailored with a new facility in mind.

Goal 3

Accelerate our rate of discovery and promotion of scientific research on our fossil collection.

- ◇ Aggressively prospect and locate new fossil specimens in the CFDC's property, and other fossil bearing locations, which will be facilitated by the construction of a Field Station and associated equipment (front-end loader/back hoe).
- ◇ Expand our research outreach and scientific reputation via collaborative initiatives with professional paleontologists and their graduate students, with emphasis focused on publishing and promoting research on both newly collected specimens and un-analyzed legacy finds in our fossil collection.
- ◇ Help train the next generation of paleontologists through rigorous training programs developed and delivered through the University of Manitoba.

1971-2021  Years of Learning Experience



Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre

Priority 3 Charting the course for a stand-alone CFDC facility

Recent Progress and the Current Situation

A Feasibility Study for a stand-alone CFDC facility was conducted by Sputnik Architecture Inc., and submitted to the CFDC in Late-January 2022.

Goal 1

Review, evaluate, and address financial and logistical challenges identified through the Feasibility Study.

- ◇ Identify and initiate communications with the future funders of a new CFDC facility, the vision of which is evolving through both the Feasibility Study and the forthcoming Business Plan.
- ◇ Enhance communication with stakeholders involved either directly or indirectly with the CFDC, including Federal, Provincial, and Municipal officers and politicians, as well as private foundations and members of the general public, to convey a better understanding of the purpose and mission statement of the CFDC.
- ◇ Expand our base of lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with local businesses. The priority is not to simply ask for funds, but emphasizes reciprocation thereby creating a permanent collaboration.

Goal 2

Begin work on a formal Museography Project.

- ◇ Development of a solid, professional, Museography Project for the new facility. Times are rapidly changing for museums worldwide, with successful museum experiences shifting to be more focused on the visitor than on the collections. This this project will facilitate the successful transition to a new facility, and is essential for defining and focusing our vision going forward.

1971-2021  Years of Learning Experience