“In our hospitals, at our airports, on our ferries and tugs, on construction sites, in our forests, and mines, at radio and television stations, in offices and businesses of every size throughout BC, BCIT graduates are hard at work. Whether they’re helping to save lives, innovating to improve our quality of life, or contributing to our prosperity by earning a living, BCIT’s alumni are everywhere work needs to be done.

Their focus on applied knowledge, on continuous skill development, and on making a meaningful contribution to BC’s economic development make them, the BCIT graduates, BC’s most valuable natural resource, by far.”

BOB BRYANT
Chair, BCIT Foundation and Chairman Emeritus, TBWA Canada
BCIT: Integral to the economic, social and environmental prosperity of British Columbia.

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Last year I identified the development of a fully coherent planning process as a core requirement in moving BCIT forward. Such a process would have the following characteristics:

› it would start with a vision developed through an open and inclusive process;
› this vision would inform the development of a five-year strategic plan, which would also be developed by an open and inclusive process;
› this strategic plan would inform the annual development of operating plans, budgets and service plans;
› the strategic plan would be refreshed annually to reflect our ability to identify new priorities as we move some of our objectives into the “done” column, and respond to changes in our environment and the evolving needs of those we serve.

Earlier this year we took the draft vision, mission, mandate and commitments that resulted from our year-long visioning exercise out to the BCIT community. There have been some minor modifications to these guiding statements in response to what that community told us, which are reflected in the version of those statements in this document.

This strategic plan is the next step in moving BCIT forward. It builds on the guiding statements and reflects input from literally hundreds of engaged and committed members of the BCIT community. It represents our best informed judgment as to what BCIT’s strategic priorities should be over our planning horizon.

In an uncertain world, the only thing we know for certain is that a year from now our environment will look different than it does now. Accordingly, we will continue to consult with members of the BCIT community and adapt our programs and services to best support our students and their future employers.

I sincerely thank all of those who contributed to the vision and the strategic plan. I am confident that these will be powerful tools for us because they are jointly owned by so many passionate believers in BCIT’s integral role in British Columbia’s economic, social and environmental prosperity.

DON WRIGHT
President, British Columbia Institute of Technology
This plan sets out a series of principles, core services and strategic actions through which BCIT will serve British Columbia over the next five years. The plan acknowledges the Institute’s role in the province’s education system and outlines a set of strategic initiatives and objectives that are important to achieving our vision for the Institute. The objectives are achievable and designed to return substantive value to the broad BCIT community, especially students for whom the Institute operates and to the industries and businesses that will employ them in the future.

THE PLAN
The strategic plan is presented in four sections:

Our Legacy
In section one, the history of BCIT and its substantive contribution to British Columbia is outlined. The Institute has earned a remarkable reputation for providing highly skilled graduates for the trades, and a broad range of business and professional sectors. BCIT has an enviable history and will continue to build on its strengths.

Vision and Guiding Statements
Section two outlines the Institute’s new Vision, Mission, Mandate, and a set of Commitments made to stakeholders and to its employees. These foundation statements provide—at the highest level—a means to direct the activities of the schools, departments and employees of BCIT over the next five years.

Context
Context for the plan is provided in the third section. It lists environmental factors impacting BCIT, its students and the industries it serves. In economic circumstances that could be best described as uncertain, BCIT is anticipating considerable change over the next five years that will require an annual review of its strategic initiatives and objectives. A number of assumptions underpin the manner in which strategic initiatives are being prioritized and core operations sustained.

Strategic Actions
In the last section, four strategic initiatives are described, each with a list of associated objectives. The initiatives are considered high priority and strategically important for the Institute. Each will require special attention over the next five years. The initiatives will be undertaken either through distinct, pan-institutional projects, in the annual operational plans set out by each of the schools and departments or realized by the individual efforts of employees throughout BCIT. Pan-institutional projects are outlined in more detail within a separate Implementation Plan that specifies deliverables, timelines and assigned resources for each.
To remain integral to BC’s prosperity we accept that change is the only constant and that excellence is always our goal.
Our fundamental commitment to graduate career success is woven throughout our history.

OUR LEGACY

An Economic Engine of British Columbia for more than 40 Years
When BCIT opened in 1964, its philosophy was to prepare job-ready graduates. Over the years the Institute has seen many changes, but its basic philosophy continues. For that reason, graduates of BCIT trades, technology and professional programs remain some of the most sought-after graduates in Canada. Our fundamental commitment to graduate career success is woven throughout our history.

In 1960 the British Columbia Vocational School (BCVS) was established in Burnaby. It was the first permanent trades training school of its kind in the province. Programs included carpentry, welding and aircraft maintenance. It was on adjacent land, four years later, that the British Columbia Institute of Technology opened its doors to 647 students. It was the first institution for advanced technical education in BC, offering training in the areas of Engineering, Business and Health. Programs were two years long and lead to a diploma of technology. In its first decade BCIT received widespread acceptance by business and employers. To this day, our two-year programs remain a core strength.

Program expansion, building development, and administrative autonomy characterized BCIT and BCVS in the 1970s. The Institute’s first Board of Governors was formed in 1974 and four years later BCVS and the Haney Educational Centre amalgamated to form the Pacific Vocational Institute. PVI’s satellite facilities included the Aircraft Maintenance Centre at the Vancouver Airport.

In the 1980s BCIT emerged as the leader in trades and technology training in British Columbia. PVI celebrated the opening of an Electrical Training Centre and Applied Technology Training Centre on the Burnaby campus and in 1986 PVI and BCIT merged.

The mandate of the “new” BCIT included an important new responsibility: to be the province’s focal point for the transfer of applied technology. As a result the Technology Centre, a facility for multi-disciplinary research and development, was created in 1989.

BCIT continued to foster innovation, conduct applied research and specialize in advanced technology training in the 1990s. The Pacific Marine Training Institute amalgamated with BCIT in 1994. Programs included navigation, marine engineering, and seamanship.

In 1996 BCIT proudly granted its first Bachelor of Technology degree in Environmental Engineering and celebrated its new downtown campus in the core of Vancouver to accommodate the expansion of its part-time programs.

In 2007 BCIT opened its new 300,000 square-foot Aerospace Technology Campus at the gateway of the Vancouver International Airport.

Student enrolment now exceeds 45,000 annually and the ranks of BCIT alumni have increased to more than 125,000. The Institute’s international partnerships have grown to include training, education and research initiatives in South America, Central America, Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe.

BCIT is now poised to build on the considerable strengths evident in our history; to focus on initiatives that make BCIT integral to the economic, social and environmental prosperity of British Columbia.
ON BEING INTEGRAL TO BRITISH COLUMBIA’S PROSPERITY

VISION

BCIT: Integral to the economic, social and environmental prosperity of British Columbia.

Our vision is not just a proud statement of past accomplishments—nor is it a mere definition of our current role. More importantly, it sets out the boldest of challenges for our future.

We believe that BCIT is already integral to the success of British Columbia. Over 40 years we have developed an enviable reputation. That reputation is built on the strengths of a quality learning experience for our students and on-the-job performance of our alumni. Employers are part of our client base. They demonstrate their confidence in BCIT every time they hire a BCIT graduate.

BCIT is proud of what it has accomplished but remaining integral to the province’s social, economic and environmental prosperity represents a daring goal.

British Columbia is a dynamic place to live and work—it’s growing and changing daily. BCIT plays an important role in supporting that growth and so there is no success in defining BCIT as a static enterprise. Instead, this strategic plan is designed to keep BCIT responsive. In order to carry out the Institute’s mandate; in order to meet the high and growing expectations of the province; BCIT needs to listen, respond, lead and ultimately be prepared to change quickly. Through our gifted faculty, skilled staff, innovative teaching practices, integrated applied research and the provision of the highest quality educational experience for our students, we will succeed.

Through this strongly stated vision BCIT is marking its place not only in the post-secondary education system but its role within BC’s economy. To remain integral to the province’s prosperity we must provide a level of education that makes our graduates the first choice of many businesses and industries around the globe. We must continue to challenge our students through programs that provide real-life, contextual instruction that not only makes them productive on the first day of employment but soon sets them apart as leaders in the workplace. To remain integral to the province’s prosperity we need to advance the states-of-practice within the broad sectors we serve; to integrate applied research into our curriculum and to conduct research that makes a tangible contribution to our society. To remain integral means that the citizens of BC have a clear understanding of our value and the contribution that BCIT makes to their lives and businesses. It is important that we pay attention, anticipating that their expectations will change. In this strategic plan BCIT accepts that challenges will arise and expectations will grow. In response, BCIT is establishing an unconfined vision that acknowledges a shifting environment, an uncertain economic landscape and a growing demand for education that leads to rewarding careers.

In being integral to the prosperity of the province, BCIT will focus on four strategic areas: Education and Research, Our Learners, Our Employees and Stewardship and Resource Development. Within each area we are setting out objectives that sustain our strengths and extend our expertise and services; keeping us responsive, innovative and leaders within the field of education. To remain integral to BC’s prosperity we accept that change is the only constant and that excellence is always our goal.

We must provide a level of education that makes our graduates the first choice of many businesses and industries around the globe.
MISSION

The mission of BCIT is to serve the success of learners and employers:

› by providing high quality technical and professional education and training that supports our graduates as practitioners and as citizens; and
› by advancing the state-of-practice.

MANDATE

BCIT’s foundation is comprised of certificates, diplomas and degrees — the entry-to-practice credentials that lead to rewarding careers. These are enhanced by programs and courses that are coordinated with career development and growth of the practitioner, and include industry services, advanced studies and continuing education.

BCIT offers experiential and contextual teaching and learning with the interdisciplinary experiences that model the evolving work environment.

BCIT conducts applied research to enhance the learner experience and advance the state-of-practice.

BCIT exercises its provincial mandate by collaborating with the post-secondary system and employers in activities that improve learner access and success.
COMMITMENTS TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

BCIT is committed to:

› providing a learner experience that supports learners as individuals, provides superior returns on their investment, and actively supports lifetime career success;
› the success of employers by educating and training practitioners capable of being immediately productive, being a source of new ideas, and advancing the state-of-practice;
› being responsive and adaptive to the evolving needs of British Columbia; and
› prudently stewarding resources entrusted to it in a manner that provides the citizens of British Columbia with the best possible return on their investments.

COMMITMENTS TO OURSELVES

BCIT is committed to:

› valuing employees as individuals by supporting their ambitions, encouraging their development, recognizing their achievements and promoting their well-being. We understand that we are the primary determinants of BCIT’s future and success;
› continuous improvement and performance measurement. We will constantly ask ourselves how we define success, measure our results, and improve performance;
› a culture of team work. Our decision-making processes are transparent and based on engagement with stakeholders. We will share our challenges and celebrate our successes; and
› a sustainable financial strategy that will ensure BCIT is appropriately resourced. This will entail actively pursuing public and private funding, developing entrepreneurial approaches aligned with our mandate, and making the decisions necessary to support the things that we do best.
ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES

We deliver education and conduct research in an environment that is increasingly more competitive, more global—and in the year 2009—economically uncertain. Over the next five years we plan to build on our considerable strengths, recognizing that a BCIT education remains highly valued in a broad range of industry sectors. Still, there are opportunities for advancement and we are defining our future with a strategic plan that is focussed, achievable and built on the traditions of educational excellence, high standards and the creation of job-ready graduates.

In the Spring of 2009 the world finds itself in a severe economic downturn—its full impact yet to be realized or confidently predicted. In uncertain times we will focus on sustaining and building on our strengths, while undertaking strategic efforts of substantial benefit to our stakeholders. The environment within which the Institute operates is complex. The following factors will underpin BCIT’s strategic actions over the next five years.

New Workplace Skills
Industry and business continue to respond to a growing and more competitive international marketplace fuelled by exponential technological change. Employers expect BCIT to produce graduates who are job-ready, who can lead and work effectively in a global context. The development of new, innovative programs and the revision of existing programs are important factors in our ability to compete.

Environmental Sustainability
The new BC Climate Action program and other global initiatives focussed on creating a sustainable environment will require us to incorporate the principles of environmental sustainability in our programming wherever appropriate. Graduates will be expected to understand and apply sound environmental principles in their chosen careers. The Institute will be expected to model these principles in an exemplary fashion.

High Demand Sectors
Growing demand for professionals in a number of sectors served by BCIT, such as the health sector, will remain a primary driver in the development of new curriculum, training facilities and the application of innovative instructional methods and educational technologies.

Transferability
Students are increasingly more mobile and continue to study throughout their careers. The transferability of credentials to and from BCIT remains a critical component in the success of our students and the ability to advance their studies and careers. BCIT is committed to providing students with pathways to rewarding careers.

Enrolment
There are many factors that can affect enrolment, but in 2009 two factors are particularly relevant. First, demographic changes are resulting in a decline in the overall post-secondary-aged population and that decline is expected to continue for the next five years and beyond. A second factor is worth noting. Student enrolment and economic well-being are often counter cyclical. The unemployment rate in BC reached 8% in March of 2009—the highest rate in seven years. While unemployment remains high during an economic downturn of undetermined duration, many people will likely return to school, looking for programs that lead to career positions that are in high demand. In the short term, then, enrolments are expected to stabilize but the ongoing, changing demographics will demand that BCIT invest in its recruitment and retention strategies.

Accreditation
BCIT has built a reputation on providing education and training that leads to employment. In order to sustain and extend that reputation we need to foster our relationships with industry, business, accreditation and regulatory bodies. In particular, employers seek graduates with recognized licences to practice. The accreditation of BCIT programs by industry, professional organizations and regulatory bodies will be an important factor in sustaining and improving the value of a BCIT credential.

We are defining our future with a strategic plan that is focussed, achievable and built on the traditions of educational excellence, high standards and the creation of job-ready graduates.
Student Expectations
Students continue to demand more from their educational institutions. Quality of education, employment opportunities, learner services, convenience, and access to technology are important factors in a student’s decision to register. Students view education as an investment that can be compared and purchased. Competition for students will remain high.

Student Diversity
BCIT’s student body is culturally diverse; reflective of the population it serves. Aboriginal and international students, for example, represent a growing constituency within BCIT. Accounting for a broad range of preferred learning styles, cultural identities and expectations that students might exhibit while attending BCIT, is a growing challenge.

Labour Market
There is an increased appreciation for employees who can effectively work within a knowledge-based society. BCIT and our competitors face a shrinking labour market pool. The recruitment and retention of excellent employees will remain challenging.

Revenue
With global markets in decline, endowment revenue will decrease. Tuition fee increases are currently capped at the rate of inflation. Counter to these limiting factors, government grants have increased 7% in 2009/10 and are projected but not guaranteed to grow in the 3–4% range over the next two years. There is considerable financial uncertainty. Post-secondary institutions will need to steward resources in a prudent and strategic manner and seek other means to develop resources that fund growth and innovation.

Connectivity
Students increasingly expect to access their educational institutions, their services and their instructors online. BCIT’s provincial mandate and international interests demand that students be connected to the Institute from all parts of the world, 24 hours a day. The Internet and the application of social software bring our resources, faculty and students together in a virtual learning space. Increased connectivity is a requirement and its innovative provision represents a competitive advantage for BCIT.

Accountability
Increasingly across the western world corporations and government agencies are expected to steward their operations in a more public and responsible manner. There is a need for post-secondary institutions to be more accountable. The BC government increasingly expects post-secondary institutions to set key performance indicators and achieve goals outlined in their Service Plans.
PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Building on Our Vision
BCIT’s strategic plan is founded on the Institute’s Vision, Mission, Mandate and Commitments. These foundation statements were established by the BCIT community and are fundamental to achieving our strategic objectives. Our vision acts as a compass that can be used by all members of the community to direct their work and make decisions that best serve our students and our partners.

Building on Existing Core Strengths
Our core strengths are outlined in our Mission statement. BCIT’s success relies on the provision of entry-to-practice credentials and the conduct of applied research that meet the growing needs of British Columbia.

BCIT’s reputation is a core strength. We expect a lot from our students—that they work hard and perform at a level that makes them immediately job-ready and valuable to their employers.

Applied research that is integrated within our curriculum and that enhances the learning experience and advances the state-of-practice is an important part of our future.

Sustaining BCIT’s core operations is fundamental to this strategic plan. Sustaining and improving that core is set out as the plan’s primary objective and it will receive the vast majority of the Institute’s resources.

Building a Feasible Plan
Four strategic initiatives—developed in consultation with the BCIT community—are stated in this plan. Beyond the core, they are deemed to be of the highest priority and achievable in the next five years using existing resources.

Building on Sound Decisions
Over the life of this strategic plan BCIT will reach its 50th year. In the past five decades the Institute has changed considerably. New programs and services were introduced. Facilities were built and acquired. Technology changed radically. States of practice evolved.

In order to move forward, decisions will be made to better serve our students and our industry partners. Our ability to anticipate, respond to and lead change in how we teach, conduct research, serve our students, support our employees and steward our resources is fundamental to achieving and sustaining our vision.
Our vision acts as a compass that can be used by all members of the community to direct their work and make decisions that best serve our students and our partners.

Individual Employee Contributions

Strategic plans, operational plans, policies and procedures play an important role in the success of an organization. Over the next five years, the strategic plan’s initiatives, responsibilities, and associated projects will be reviewed annually. If necessary, the strategic plan will be revised to reflect changing circumstances and priorities.

Implementation and Progress Reviews

Pan-institutional projects—those undertaken by multi-disciplinary teams from around the Institute—will be described in the accompanying Implementation Plan. Project plans will identify specific deliverables, resources, timelines and accountabilities. Project plans will be established to achieve some of the objectives set out in the strategic plan. These projects are outlined in the Implementation Plan, and are best accomplished through the day-to-day work of individual employees. The most fundamental of which are goals set out in this strategic plan that will be described in the annual operational plans of the schools and departments of BCIT. Other activities, in support of the strategic initiatives, will be described in the annual operational plans of the schools and departments of BCIT.

Over the next five years, the strategic plan’s initiatives, responsibilities, and associated projects will be reviewed annually. If necessary, the strategic plan will be revised to reflect changing circumstances and priorities.

Individual Employee Contributions
Strategic Initiative 1
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

BCIT programs and courses clearly and directly contribute to the success of learners and employers. Our programming is characterized by our technical and professional nature, value in advancing state-of-practice, and ability to graduate practitioners who are also contributing citizens.

Successful completion of BCIT programs is acknowledged by the granting of entry-to-practice credentials—specifically certificates, diplomas and degrees that lead to better livelihoods through rewarding careers. The range of BCIT programming also enhances ongoing professional and career development and growth through the flexible provision of advanced studies, and continuing education. A BCIT education is widely valued and recognized allowing graduates to advance their careers and continue their studies throughout Canada and around the world.

At its most fundamental, a BCIT education is founded on excellent teaching and services that support effective learning. It's strategically important that BCIT continually advance its teaching practices to serve a student body that increasingly connects, communicates, learns and works through information and educational technology.

BCIT schools and programs need to better reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the modern workplace. The development of programs that integrate curriculum across two or more courses, programs or schools will represent a competitive advantage for BCIT.

BCIT strives to be at the forefront of changing technology and the state-of-practice relevant to the success and competitiveness of the employer community. BCIT also supports employer success and economic development by focusing applied research activities in areas that engage faculty and students to solve business and industry problems to increase competitive strength.

To remain integral to the economic, social and environmental prosperity of British Columbia, BCIT has set the following objectives:

Programming
1. Develop and renew programs that address changing demographics, economics, environmental trends and the needs of our students and employers;
2. Develop programs of interdisciplinary study that span the curriculum of two or more courses, programs or schools;
3. Foster a world view in our programming to ensure students understand the challenges and opportunities of a global marketplace;
4. Produce graduates who excel in their roles as practitioners, leaders, and citizens; who act in a professional, social, environmental and ethical manner;

Teaching and Learning
5. Advance the BCIT learning experience through excellent instruction, the innovative and appropriate use of educational technologies, the provision of modern learning spaces and access to a virtual BCIT that provides a gateway to many Institute services online;

Recognition and Validation
6. Ensure programs meet standards set by appropriate external accreditations, certifications and articulations by industry, and professional organizations to increase the employability of our graduates;
7. Increase the transferability of our programs so we can accept qualified students from other post-secondary learning institutions both international and domestic and ensure that our graduates can further their studies at BCIT, across Canada and around the globe;

Research/Advancing the State-of-Practice
8. Remain at the forefront of technological change and the state-of-practice through our programming and applied research.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND OBJECTIVES
BCIT strives to be at the forefront of changing technology and the state-of-practice.
Exemplary services support the connection between instructors, learners and the educational process.
**Strategic Initiative 4**

**STEWARThip AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

BCIT recognizes that a sustainable financial strategy is required to serve the success of our students, staff, and community. BCIT is accountable for the financial, organizational and physical assets provided to the organization, and will maximize the use of these assets.

BCIT generates the resources required to achieve our objectives from public, private and philanthropic sources and will leverage these assets to create new opportunities and entrepreneurial activities. Cultivating relationships with our alumni is fundamental to the development of a broad BCIT community and represents a source of sustainable support for the Institute. Resource allocation will focus on generating the best possible returns on investment and support our strategic vision.

BCIT is committed to developing an integrated strategy that provides resources for core operations, leading-edge curriculum, facilities, technology, innovation and student financial aid and awards.

We are committed to delivering education and services for our students in an environmentally responsible manner. Proper and cost-effective management of our resources is key to our long-term success.

*To remain integral to the economic, social and environmental prosperity of British Columbia, BCIT has set the following objectives:*

**Financial Stability**
19. Develop resource allocation processes that support the strategic plan, including annual and multi-year budget and operational plans that integrate activities and support decision making;

20. Develop a management framework that provides accountability and transparency for the long-term financial sustainability of the organization;

**Resource Development**
21. Strengthen partnerships with public and private sector agencies, investors, donors and our alumni to benefit our students and their future employers;

22. Leverage our assets to create additional and sustainable revenue that will support our strategic vision;

**Environmental Sustainability**
23. Provide a safe and healthy environment for our employees, students and for the communities where we live and operate by integrating sound environmental practices into our business decisions; and by establishing quantifiable goals and accountabilities for environmental performance in accordance with the *BC Climate Action* plan;

**Facilities**
24. Ensure that physical facilities and campus infrastructure needs are met through an integrated plan that accounts for teaching space, research facilities, equipment, information and educational technology and the manner in which we teach and our students learn.
BCIT is committed to developing an integrated strategy that provides resources for core operations, leading-edge curriculum, facilities, technology, innovation and student financial aid and awards.