# PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT 2006/07







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PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT 2006/07



#### **VISION**

To be a prosperous and just province, whose citizens achieve their potential and have confidence in the future.

#### **GOVERNMENT'S CORE VALUES**

- Integrity to make decisions in a manner that is consistent, professional, fair, transparent and balanced;
- Fiscal Responsibility to implement affordable public policies;
- Accountability to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and the credibility of government;
- *Respect* to treat all citizens equitably, respectfully and compassionately; and
- Choice to afford citizens the opportunity to exercise self-determination.



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## LETTER FROM THE PREMIER



The year 2006/07 was an exciting one for British Columbians, and it is my privilege to table the 2006/07 Strategic Plan Annual Report.

We continued building a New Relationship with First Nations. Three Final Agreements under the

treaty process were initialled, and tangible progress was made toward closing the gap in the education, health and social outcomes for Aboriginal people in B.C.

Government launched the Conversation on Health to engage British Columbians in discussions to improve health care delivery in B.C. ActNow BC was successful in helping British Columbians to be more active and make healthier lifestyle choices.

Having a well-educated citizenry is a cornerstone of a modern, prosperous economy and critical to our ongoing competitiveness. In 2006/07, government strengthened student achievement through record levels of per-pupil funding, smaller class sizes in every district and more upgrades to schools. Opportunities for post-secondary education increased, with more investment in institutions and in skills training for essential trades. Efforts to ensure we have vibrant, sustainable communities are paying off. Building on the work of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Health and Addictions, Housing Matters BC was launched and is helping to meet the housing needs of British Columbians, from the homeless to low-income working families. B.C. communities were supported through programs like Towns for Tomorrow, LocalMotion and Spirit Squares. These programs will help build B.C. communities' pride and spirit, improve environmental management and enhance opportunities for green transportation and physical fitness.

Work continued to capitalize on B.C.'s position as Canada's Pacific Gateway, through highway, port and airport investments necessary for our economy and environment, and through services for immigrants and visitors.

B.C. continued to strengthen its partnerships with other jurisdictions through the groundbreaking Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement with Alberta, and through collaboration with California, Washington, Alaska, and other states.

I am very pleased with the progress British Columbians are achieving as we work together to make the best place on earth even better.

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Honourable Gordon Campbell Premier of British Columbia



## **FIRST NATIONS**

The Province and First Nations are advancing in our mutual goal of reconciliation through the New Relationship and closing the socio-economic gaps between First Nations and other British Columbians. Tangible progress has been made in a number of areas over the last year.

#### **EDUCATION AND LITERACY**

The Province and the First Nations Education Steering Committee signed a historic First Nations Education Jurisdiction Agreement in July 2006. The agreement recognizes First Nations' control over the K-12 education of their community members, enabling increased Aboriginal school completion and achievement and the creation of culturally appropriate curricula.

"This agreement secures federal and provincial recognition of First Nations' jurisdiction over education and strengthens the voice of First Nations in a significant way," said Nathan Matthew, Chief Negotiator, First Nations Education Steering Committee. "First Nations' governance in education will assure culturally relevant programs and lead to improved educational outcomes for First Nations learners."

#### **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

In the fall of 2006, the First Nations Leadership Council and the Province launched a First Nations Health Plan to take action towards closing the gap in health outcomes between First Nations and other British Columbians by 2015. Among other things, the plan allows for increased input for First Nations into First Nations' health programming and puts in place a new Aboriginal physician in the Provincial Health Officer's organization and an Aboriginal-specific ActNow program. The federal government joined B.C. and First Nations leaders to sign a First Nations Health Memorandum of Understanding to provide funding and co-ordinate programs. Both were released at a National Summit on Aboriginal Health, which brought together premiers, national Aboriginal leaders and the federal government together in Vancouver.

Through the Aboriginal Housing Strategy released in 2006, the Aboriginal Housing Management Association is now managing 2,600 devolved federal units of subsidized housing. An additional \$51 million was allocated for the construction of 200 new off-reserve housing units.

Work has also been underway to build capacity in Aboriginal communities to deliver a full range of culturally appropriate early childhood development services in 43 communities throughout B.C. Over \$7 million has been dedicated to supporting a continuum of services, including prevention, early intervention, home visiting, parenting support and outreach to communities both on and off reserve. Work is also ongoing to support Aboriginal communities to establish their own child and family service agencies with delegated child welfare authority, in recognition of the importance of culture and heritage to preserve ties to the community and family.

## **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

The strong provincial economy and increasing investment from the business community have created numerous economic opportunities for First Nations. The B.C. Summit on First Nations Economic Development, held in January 2007, focused on practical tools and approaches to increase Aboriginal participation in B.C.'s economy.

To support economic growth and participation, the Province committed \$15 million to deliver high-speed, broadband Internet connectivity to approximately 100 rural and remote First Nations bands. The Blueberry First Nations Economic Benefits Agreement was concluded in 2006, and it provides for an initial payment of \$2.4 million, followed by payments of up to \$3.2 million per year for 15 years, to support those First Nations in improving their economies.

Forest and Range Opportunities Agreements are providing First Nations with the opportunity to participate in forestry activities. The Mountain Pine Beetle Protocol Agreement with the First Nations Forestry Council, signed in 2006, commits \$8.4 million, plus \$1 million per year, for fuel and forest management, research and fire risk reduction. The Province has now signed forestry agreements with 127 First Nations, providing \$166.5 million in revenue and access to 24.4 million cubic metres of timber.

## TREATIES

Significant strides were made in treaty negotiations in 2006 as the first Final Agreements under the "made in B.C." treaty process were initialled with the Lheidli T'enneh, Maa-nulth and Tsawwassen First Nations. Final Agreements are the last stage before treaties are ratified by the respective First Nations communities, provincial and federal governments. Negotiations at a number of other treaty tables such as the Sliammon, Yekooche, Yale and In-SHUCK-ch tables also made significant progress towards concluding a Final Agreement.

# HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Our health and well-being is of primary concern to each and every one of us. Our health care systems, and the supports we put in place for our more vulnerable citizens, are fundamental to our society. During the past year, government has focused attention on the broader challenges facing our health care system and invited British Columbians to participate in finding solutions to them. One of the keys to achieving success in this area will be the commitment by all of us to improve our individual health, supported and encouraged by government.

## **CONVERSATION ON HEALTH**

Health care funding is at an all-time high, more surgeries are done than ever before, investments in new technology are at the highest level ever and training of health care professionals has never been stronger – but our current health care system is not sustainable. We need to consider the future of our health care system to ensure increasing demands on it can continue to be met.

In September 2006, the B.C. government launched the Conversation on Health, an unprecedented discussion with and among British Columbians about how to strengthen and improve the province's health system. The Conversation on Health invites British Columbians to share their ideas, solutions and recommendations for the health system through a variety of avenues, or to attend one of a series of community meetings. By the end of March 2007, more than 115,000 people had visited the Conversation on Health website, and almost 10,000 people had made oral or written submissions. All input received will be summarized into a report for government in fall 2007 to help guide future decisions about the health system.

## ACTNOW BC

ActNow BC is designed to improve the health of British Columbians through increased physical activity, healthy eating, healthy body weight, reduced use of tobacco and healthy choices during pregnancy. In 2006/07, 51 schools participated in the ActNow School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, which introduces children to B.C.-grown fruit and vegetables at no charge. All schools are expected to participate in the program by 2010.

ActionSchools! BC contributes to the health of children by integrating physical activity and healthy eating messages into the fabric of the school community. As of March 2007, almost 1,300 schools and 300,000 students were participating in the program, double the number of students from the previous year.

More than 3,400 Income Assistance clients who smoke received help to reduce or quit smoking through the "Quit Smoking Now!" pilot program. Participating clients were provided with nicotine replacement therapies (the nicotine patch or gum), as well as information and counselling from the BC Lung Association's QuitNow – all at no cost.

## **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

A number of key actions to assist persons with disabilities were launched in 2006/07. A 1-800 Personal Supports Information Line was established to provide advice about government programs that provide equipment and assistive aids. Government is investing \$20 million per year in employment programs for persons with disabilities, and government launched a WorkAble Solutions website that connects British Columbians with disabilities who are looking for work directly with employers who have jobs available. The province also issued the 10 by 10 Challenge to municipalities to increase employment for people with disabilities in each community by 10 per cent by 2010.

#### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Government provided \$54 million for the Supported Child Development Program to provide enhanced childcare services for 5,500 children with special needs. Over \$285 million was spent on additional services for students with special needs in public schools in 2006. The province continues to increase program funding for children with autism spectrum disorder. In the February budget, government committed to build on its ongoing investment in services to children and youth by providing \$93 million over three years to maintain services to children at risk and children with special needs. In addition, \$43 million over four years was allocated to independent schools to enable them to provide special needs services.

#### **SENIORS**

Government has continued to improve the range of residential, home and community care options to better meet the needs of seniors. These include in-home supports like home care nursing, rehabilitation, home support and palliative care, and community-based services that include adult day programs, meal programs, assisted living, residential care and hospice care. As of March 2007, the Province had opened 3,200 net new residential care, assisted living and supportive housing units across British Columbia. These beds are part of government's commitment to create 5,000 net new beds by December 2008.

## *VIBRANT, CONNECTED, ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES*

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

In October 2006, the Province released *Housing Matters BC*, a comprehensive provincial housing strategy to address the continuum of housing needs, from homelessness to home ownership. *Budget 2007* included \$338 million for housing and homelessness, the highest allocation ever. Since 2001, 12,950 units of new social housing and assisted living units have been created or are in development.

In June 2006, the federal and provincial governments signed the Canada - B.C. Social Housing Agreement to transfer the administration of 51,600 social housing units to the Province of British Columbia. This will help the Province provide access to housing services through one-window delivery. The Province will also invest \$106 million in federal Affordable Housing Trust funds to create new housing through the Provincial Homelessness Initiative and Independent Living B.C. In October 2006, government introduced the \$40-million Rental Assistance Program and then enhanced it in March 2007 by raising the maximum eligible income ceiling to \$28,000 per year from \$20,000. This will help over 20,000 families each year. As of April 1, 2007, shelter rates were increased by \$50 per month for people on income assistance.

To assist the homeless, a commitment has been made to fund almost 2,300 housing units in 22 communities across the province. Twenty homelessness outreach teams are now being funded in 18 communities.

To complement services for those with housing challenges, addiction treatment services have been expanded: 164 new addictions treatment beds have been put in place, for a total of 1,038 beds in 2006.

#### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Government's vision, and its Great Goals for a Golden Decade, is dependent on vibrant, connected and environmentally sustainable communities that have the ability to grow and support our diverse culture. During the past year, a number of significant initiatives were launched to help B.C. communities achieve their potential. Towns for Tomorrow, a three-year, \$21-million program, provides infrastructure funding for B.C.'s smaller communities for water quality and energy infrastructure; emergency infrastructure services; and recreation, tourism and cultural amenities. LocalMotion provides \$40 million over four years for projects supporting cycling and pedestrian pathways, reduced air pollution and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities. B.C. Spirit Squares is a \$20-million program to create or enhance outdoor public celebration spaces.

The Green City Awards Program will provide \$2.5 million over five years to recognize and showcase local governments that design communities that encourage physical activity and energy conservation, and produce environmental benefits.

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

In February 2007, government set an aggressive target: to reduce B.C.'s greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent below current levels by 2020. This will place British Columbia's greenhouse gas emissions at 10 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020. Milestone targets will also be set for 2012 and 2016.

Credible, aggressive and economically viable sector targets will be established so each sector of the economy contributes to achieving this target.

Incentives to spur individual action to address climate change, such as a \$2,000 tax exemption on new hybrid vehicles, will encourage all British Columbians to help meet targets.

Government itself will be carbon-neutral by 2010. Government has already purchased over 300 hybrid vehicles to be used in its fleet. A new Pacific Coast Collaborative extending from California to Alaska will drive partnerships and joint action to address climate change issues, and realize a broad vision of Pacific North America as the centre of innovation and sustainable living in the Pacific Century. An example of a co-operative initiative is the hydrogen highway that will be established from San Diego to Whistler.

#### **ENERGY**

In February 2007, the Province released its new *BC Energy Plan: A Vision for Clean Energy Leadership.* This plan will allow B.C. to achieve electricity self-sufficiency by 2016, and puts British Columbia at the forefront of environmental leadership, with aggressive targets for zero net greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation facilities, and an ambitious target to acquire 50 per cent of the Province's incremental energy needs through conservation by 2020. The plan also provides for \$25 million for an Innovative Clean Energy Fund to encourage the development of clean power and energy efficient technologies in the electricity, alternative energy, transportation and oil and gas sectors.

## PROTECTING UNIQUE SPACES AND BIODIVERSITY

British Columbia is globally acknowledged as one of the most beautiful parts of the world, with many unique ecosystems, dramatic geography and biodiversity. B.C. has taken unprecedented steps to preserve these special features for our children, and continued to do so in 2006/07.

## *The total amount of protected area in British Columbia is now equivalent to the size of England.*

In 2006, 24 new conservancies, encompassing approximately 541,000 hectares, were established as part of implementing the Spirit Bear Central Coast/North Coast Land Use Plan. Conservancies are a new land use designation that protects biological diversity, recreational values and First Nations' social, ceremonial and cultural uses, but allows for some low-impact, compatible development. Additional conservancies will be established in 2007 and 2008.

Implementation of the Spirit Bear Central Coast/ North Coast Land Use Plan will be facilitated through a unique federal, provincial and private non-profit organization partnership. This was established in spring of 2007 to provide \$120 million for the Conservation Investments and Incentives Initiative Fund. The fund will be invested in sustainable economic development ventures, such as tourism and non-timber forest products, and conservation management and research projects in the region.

## CANADA'S PACIFIC GATEWAY

B.C. is a gateway between the world's two largest economic regions, the Asia-Pacific and North America. The estimated benefits of enhanced Asia-Pacific ties are as high as \$76 billion in increased trade and 255,000 additional jobs by 2020 – more than the province's entire manufacturing sector today.

#### **PACIFIC GATEWAY**

The Pacific Gateway will establish a competitive, full-service trade corridor between Asia and North America through west coast ports, airports, roads and rail links. In 2006/07, work was underway on such projects as the Pitt River Bridge; Kicking Horse Canyon upgrades; expansion of capacity for Lower Mainland ports by over 800,000 TEUs<sup>1</sup>; expansion of the Prince Rupert port by 500,000 TEUs; a new, \$28-million container inspection facility; and four new gates to the Vancouver International Airport.

These investments are complemented by opportunities to reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions, such as by using green locomotives, upgrading equipment and technology, and using alternative fuels.

## ASIA PACIFIC INITIATIVE

B.C. is working to capitalize on the opportunities the Asia-Pacific region presents. In 2006, B.C. worked to become the Asia-Pacific destination of choice for education, tourism and culture, and trade and immigration; to ensure Asian immigrants are welcomed and assisted to settle; and to ensure the province's labour force is equipped with skills to thrive in the Pacific Century economy. In November 2006, the Premier led a trade mission to Tokyo, Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong and Guangzhou to highlight business opportunities in B.C.'s ports, forestry, tourism and alternative energy sectors. B.C. representatives were permanently based in Asia and tasked with increasing trade and investment opportunities on behalf of the province. A Memorandum of Co-operation in Investment was signed between B.C. and the Beijing Investment Promotion Bureau. This memorandum will help expand business opportunities, cultural understanding and maximize Olympic opportunities on both sides of the Pacific.

## COMPETITIVENESS AND PRODUCTIVITY

British Columbia's economic growth is among the best in Canada. In 2006/07, unemployment was at its lowest level in over 30 years and investment continued at record levels. Government undertook a number of actions to improve our competitiveness and productivity to ensure continued economic prosperity.

## **EDUCATION AND LITERACY**

In early 2007, the Province launched the first phase of ReadNow BC, a \$27 million initiative to help British Columbians improve their reading skills. In 2006/07, one of the first initiatives under ReadNow BC was \$3.5 million for Ready, Set, Learn to help preschoolers get ready for school.

**<sup>1</sup>** *TEU is a standard measurement for containers and stands for "twenty-foot equivalent units". It refers to a 20 ft. container / "box".* 

Families with three-year-old children are invited to attend an open house session at their local school, where their children receive a free book and parents receive information to help support their preschooler's learning and development.

Sixteen new StrongStart BC early learning centres were opened in 2006/07. These offer a free drop-in program for parents or caregivers and their young children. Qualified early childhood educators lead learning activities, including stories, music and art to help children get ready for success in kindergarten.

In 2006/07, the Province provided record levels of per-pupil funding in the kindergarten to Grade 12 school system. School districts received an additional \$470 million in funding, for an average per-pupil grant of \$7,596, an increase of \$1,326 per pupil since 2000/01.

In 2006, the Province amended legislation regarding B.C. class room size limits. In 2006/07, construction began on 13 schools and 17 were completed.

The Community Adult Literacy Program provided support for adult literacy projects for 5,000 students across the province. In addition, \$5.7 million was made available for the Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Program, which provides grants to students with financial need who are enrolled in postsecondary Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language and Adult Special Education programs.

To ensure all students benefit from the ability to obtain a post-secondary education, starting in 2007, government is putting \$1,000 into a Children's Education Fund for every newborn in B.C.

Government has committed to funding 2,500 new post-secondary seats and 7,000 apprenticeship spaces by 2010. By the end of 2006/07, the cumulative number of new post-secondary seats funded was 12,000 and there were over 34,000 active apprenticeship spaces, representing 132 per cent growth in just three years. To encourage employers to take on apprentices, in 2006/07, the Province introduced a tax credit program worth \$90 million over three years.

#### **IMMIGRATION**

Over the next 12 years, B.C. will have an estimated one million job openings and a shortage of 350,000 workers. Immigration will be vital to ensure workers are available.

The British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program offers accelerated immigration for qualified skilled workers and experienced entrepreneurs who wish to settle in B.C. and become permanent residents of Canada. Government expanded the Provincial Nominee Program from 800 approved skilled worker and business applicants in 2005/06 to over 1,300 in 2006/07, and expects to approve over 1,700 applicants in 2007/08. It is anticipated 30 per cent of applicants in the skilled worker category and 60 per cent in the business immigration category will be from the Asia-Pacific.

## **RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY**

Since 2001, government has invested over \$1.5 billion in research and innovation activity in British Columbia. In 2006/07, the government awarded almost \$32 million through the British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund for 71 projects. This investment leveraged additional funding from the federal government and other non-government sources for a total investment in B.C.'s research infrastructure of over \$136 million.

## 2010 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Preparations for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games are on time and on budget. To date, more than 4,300 businesses have registered on the 2010 Commerce Centre website to learn about Games-related business opportunities that match their company profile, and over 6,400 registrants have signed up to receive the 2010 Commerce Centre newsletter. The 2010 Winter Games will help B.C. to market itself to the world, and all communities will benefit.

## CONCLUSION

2006/07 was an exciting and successful year for British Columbia. While progress has been made to bring the Province closer to achieving the Five Great Goals, we cannot be complacent about our achievements. The world continues to change around us, putting pressure on us to adapt our approaches, strive harder to make progress, and work collectively to realize our vision for British Columbia – the Best Place on Earth.



# PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Goal 1: Make B.C. the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent			
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	BASELINE (YEAR)	STATUS	TARGET - (2015/16)
<ul> <li>School Readiness</li> <li>% of kindergarten students entering school "ready to learn"</li> </ul>	75% (2004/05)	Not available until 2007/08	85%
<ul> <li>Student Literacy</li> <li>Program for International Student Assessment Ranking</li> </ul>	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Canada 3 <sup>rd</sup> overall (2003)	Not available until 2007	1 <sup>st</sup> in Canada Improve internationally
High School Graduation	79% (2004/05)	79% (2005/06)	85%
Post-Secondary Completion	56% (2004) Canadian average 57%	57% (2006) Canadian average 59%	Exceed Canadian average
Goal 2: Lead the way in North America in h	ealthy living and phy	sical fitness	
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	BASELINE (YEAR)	STATUS	TARGET - (2015/16)
Life Expectancy at Birth	81 yrs (2004)	81 yrs (2005)	>81 yrs
<ul> <li>Physical Activity of British Columbians</li> <li>» More than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day</li> </ul>	58.1% (2003)	57.7% (2005)	73%
British Columbians Who Are Overweight	42.3% - Lowest % in Canada (2003)	45.2% - Lowest % in Canada (2005)	32%
Tobacco Use	15% - Lowest % in Canada (2003)	15% - Lowest % in Canada (2005)	13%

# Goal 3: Build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk and seniors

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	BASELINE (YEAR)	STATUS	TARGET - (2015/16)
<ul><li>Disabled British Columbians Who Are Working</li><li>» Of those who wish to work</li></ul>	44% (2001) Canadian 41.5%	To be updated Spring 2008	56%
Disadvantaged Children in an Age-appropriate Grade	85% (2005)	87% (2006)	95%
<ul> <li>British Columbia Seniors Living in Institutions</li> <li>Seniors 75 or older in health-care or related facilities</li> </ul>	10.3% (2001) 2 <sup>nd</sup> lowest in Canada	To be updated Fall 2007	Maintain Canadian 2 <sup>nd</sup> place rank

# Goal 4: Lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	BASELINE (YEAR)	STATUS	TARGET - (2015/16)
Average Fine Particulate Concentration in Major Metropolitan Areas	Vancouver is 2 <sup>nd</sup> Iowest in Canada (2004)	Vancouver is 2 <sup>nd</sup> lowest in Canada (2005)	Lowest in Canada
<ul> <li>Greenhouse Gas Emissions<sup>†</sup></li> <li>Ranking for per capita greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>within Canada</li> <li>amongst B.C., Washington and Oregon</li> </ul>	3 <sup>rd</sup> (2003) 2 <sup>nd</sup> (2001)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (2004) 3 <sup>rd</sup> (2001)	Improve overall ranking
<ul> <li>Water Quality</li> <li>% of 30 B.C. water bodies with stable or improving trends</li> </ul>	96% (2004/05)	96% (2006/07)	96% or greater

t In 2007, B.C. established aggressive targets for greenhouse gas emissions of 33 per cent below current levels by 2020.

Goal 5: Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada			
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	BASELINE (YEAR)	STATUS	TARGET - (2015/16)
Number of New Jobs Per Capita	1 <sup>st</sup> (2005)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (2006)	1 st



# 1

Make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.

# 2

Lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.

# 3

Build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk and seniors.

# 4

Lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none.

# 5

Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.



