

StrongerBC

for everyone

STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23





Stronger together

Our government is tackling the biggest challenges we're facing, so everyone can build a good life in B.C. There's more to do, but by working together, a brighter future is within reach.

The Strategic Plan Annual Report covers the 2022-23 fiscal year, a time during which B.C. continued a steady recovery from unprecedented disruptions. Global inflation and rising interest rates challenged countries around the world and stretched household budgets. We witnessed the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities and our province's economy. Meanwhile, work continued with First Nations and local governments to rebuild from climate-related disasters.

Through it all, B.C.'s economy remained strong, and our government committed to making B.C. a place where everyone can build a good life. By taking decisive action, our government was able to get things done and make progress on people's priorities.

People want a decent home they can afford in a community they love. Our government responded by creating a new rental protection fund, ending unfair strata rules that kept tens of thousands of homes off-limits to renters and families, and accelerating investments to get more homes built faster.

People want access to high-quality health care, including a family doctor. Our government delivered by helping more family doctors take on new patients, streamlining the process for internationally educated doctors and nurses to start working here, and continuing to build new hospitals and cancer care centres.

People want a little help to ease the pressure of rising everyday costs. Our government acted quickly by putting hundreds of dollars in people's pockets through new benefits and tax credits. This was an immediate boost for people while work continued on reducing the big cost pressures, like child care, car insurance and ferry travel.

People want to feel safe in their community, with easy access to the services they count on. Our government delivered \$1 billion to help meet the needs of growing communities. Our government also took new steps to improve public safety, including enhancing enforcement and mental-health services, cracking down on the profits of organized crime and leading national efforts to restrict bail for repeat violent offenders.

Our government is focused on a future based on rights, respect and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. This past year, significant progress has been made on B.C.'s action plan to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We continue to welcome record numbers of people to B.C. They are the doctors, nurses and skilled trades professionals our province needs. They are grandparents, parents and young people who are drawn to B.C. as a place of opportunity for many. In turn, these newcomers bring diverse backgrounds, skills and experiences that make our province stronger.

There are still challenges ahead, but our government has kept B.C.'s economy strong and provided support for people when it's needed. People in British Columbia have shown that we're stronger together and that a good life is in reach for everyone.

Strengthening health care

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated gaps and inequities in health care around the world. Our government is building back stronger and ensuring people get the high-quality public health care they need at every stage of life.

- Launched B.C.'s Health Human Resources Strategy, which focuses on 70 actions to recruit, train and retain health-care workers, while redesigning the health-care system to foster workplace satisfaction and innovation.
- Helped more people get a family doctor by launching a new compensation model and

offering incentives to early-career and new-to-B.C. family doctors to encourage them to work in family practice.

- Helped more internationally trained doctors start working in B.C. faster by tripling the number of seats in a program that allows them to get licensed to practise in B.C.
- Made it faster, easier and less expensive for internationally trained nurses to start practising in B.C. by streamlining the assessment process and providing financial supports.

The first new medical school in Western Canada in more than half a century will be based at Simon Fraser University. In 2022-23, our government provided the university with \$4.9 million in startup funding for the new school.





- ▶ Started the process of expanding pharmacists' scope of practice so they can assess and prescribe for contraception and minor ailments.
- ▶ Continued work on 18 new or expanded hospitals and three new cancer care centres.
- ▶ Launched the new Cancer Care Action Plan to better detect, treat and prevent cancers; expanded cancer coverage for firefighters; and launched a new lung cancer screening program.
- ▶ Helped more people access urgent and primary care by expanding B.C.'s network of urgent and primary care centres (UPCCs), with 30 open and 20 more in development. In 2022-23, there were nearly 700,000 patient visits to UPCCs.
- ▶ Improved Indigenous people's access to culturally safe care by adding traditional Indigenous health-care providers to local primary care teams and creating new First Nations-led primary care centres in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority.
- ▶ Helped more people get their surgeries and scans faster with a \$300-million investment over three years. In 2022-23, B.C. delivered over 350,000 surgeries – the most surgeries ever recorded in our province in a single year.
- ▶ Strengthened ambulance services by hiring more paramedics, call takers and dispatchers.
- ▶ Ensured more seniors have access to high-quality long-term care by creating eight new homes with a total of more than 1,500 beds, reducing multi-bed rooms, continuing wage increases for staff and enhancing the role of resident and family councils.
- ▶ Ensured Ukrainians arriving in B.C. with a Canada-Ukraine authorization for emergency travel were able to access health care by granting them immediate and permanent Medical Services Plan coverage, as well as 100% coverage of eligible prescription costs for one year.
- ▶ Secured \$3.3 billion over 10 years in new bilateral funding from the federal government to address shared health-care priorities, as well as \$273 million in immediate funding to address urgent issues.

With the largest investment in mental-health and addictions services in B.C.'s history, our government is building a new, integrated system of care, while urgently addressing the poisoned illicit drug crisis.

- ▶ Helped lessen the shame and stigma that prevents people with substance-use challenges from reaching out for life-saving help by becoming the first jurisdiction in Canada to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of certain illegal drugs for personal use.

- ▶ Helped more youth get the mental-health and addictions care they need close to home.
 - ▶ Expanded the network of Foundry youth mental-health care centres, opening four new centres and announcing four more for a total of 23 throughout the province. In 2022-23, more than 17,500 youth visited centres.
 - ▶ Expanded Integrated Child and Youth Teams to seven additional school districts, bringing the total to 12 districts with more to come. These teams provide wraparound mental-health and substance-use services for children, youth and families, including peer and cultural supports.
- ▶ Announced complex-care housing services for 427 people with complex mental-health and substance-use challenges throughout B.C.
- ▶ Added 76 new substance-use treatment beds.



Delivering more homes for people faster

Our government is tackling the housing crisis to ensure everyone in B.C. has an affordable place to live. Led by a new standalone Ministry of Housing and through record investments, our government is unlocking more homes for people – not speculators.

- Built more than 4,300 affordable homes throughout the province, bringing the total to more than 76,000 built or underway since 2018.
- Launched the \$500-million Rental Protection Fund to preserve affordable rental homes.
- Amended the Strata Property Act to make it possible for homes that are vacant to be rented, while also removing discriminatory age and rental restrictions in approximately 300,000 strata units.
- Introduced the Housing Supply Act, which allows our government to work with municipalities to set targets to deliver more homes faster.
- Implemented a new homebuyer protection period to prevent people from being pressured into high-risk purchases.
- Expanded the speculation and vacancy tax to additional communities to help eliminate speculative real estate practices and turn empty units into homes for people. Since 2018, the speculation and vacancy tax helped convert 20,000 empty units into homes in Metro Vancouver alone.

- Took several actions to address and prevent homelessness, backed by \$633 million over three years, including creating supportive housing units and launching the new Supported Rent Supplement Program, which provides rental, health, social and cultural supports to people at risk of homelessness.
- Opened 398 student beds at the University of Victoria and marked the groundbreaking for 470 student beds at the British Columbia Institute of Technology in Burnaby as part of our government's 2018 commitment to create 8,000 new beds by 2028.
- Launched a new provincial permitting strategy to accelerate approvals and construction of new homes.
- Made changes to the Transportation Act to allow the Province to acquire land to build housing and community amenities near transit stations.

More than 51,000 new homes were registered in 2022, including over 14,000 purpose-built rental homes – the most since BC Housing started collecting this data in 2002.



Easing the pressure of everyday costs

Global inflation and rising interest rates have made it more difficult for British Columbians to make ends meet. Our government is working hard to bring down costs for people.

- Made it easier for people to find affordable, high-quality, inclusive child care in communities throughout B.C. Since 2018, our government has:
 - ▶ Created more than 12,700 \$10 a Day ChildCareBC spaces.
 - ▶ Reduced average child care fees by 50%, saving families up to \$900 per month per child.
 - ▶ Funded the creation of 31,800 new licensed child care spaces.
- Increased minimum wage to \$15.65 an hour, the highest in Canada.
- Created the new BC Affordability Credit, which provided about 85% of people three payments of up to \$164 per adult and \$41 per child.



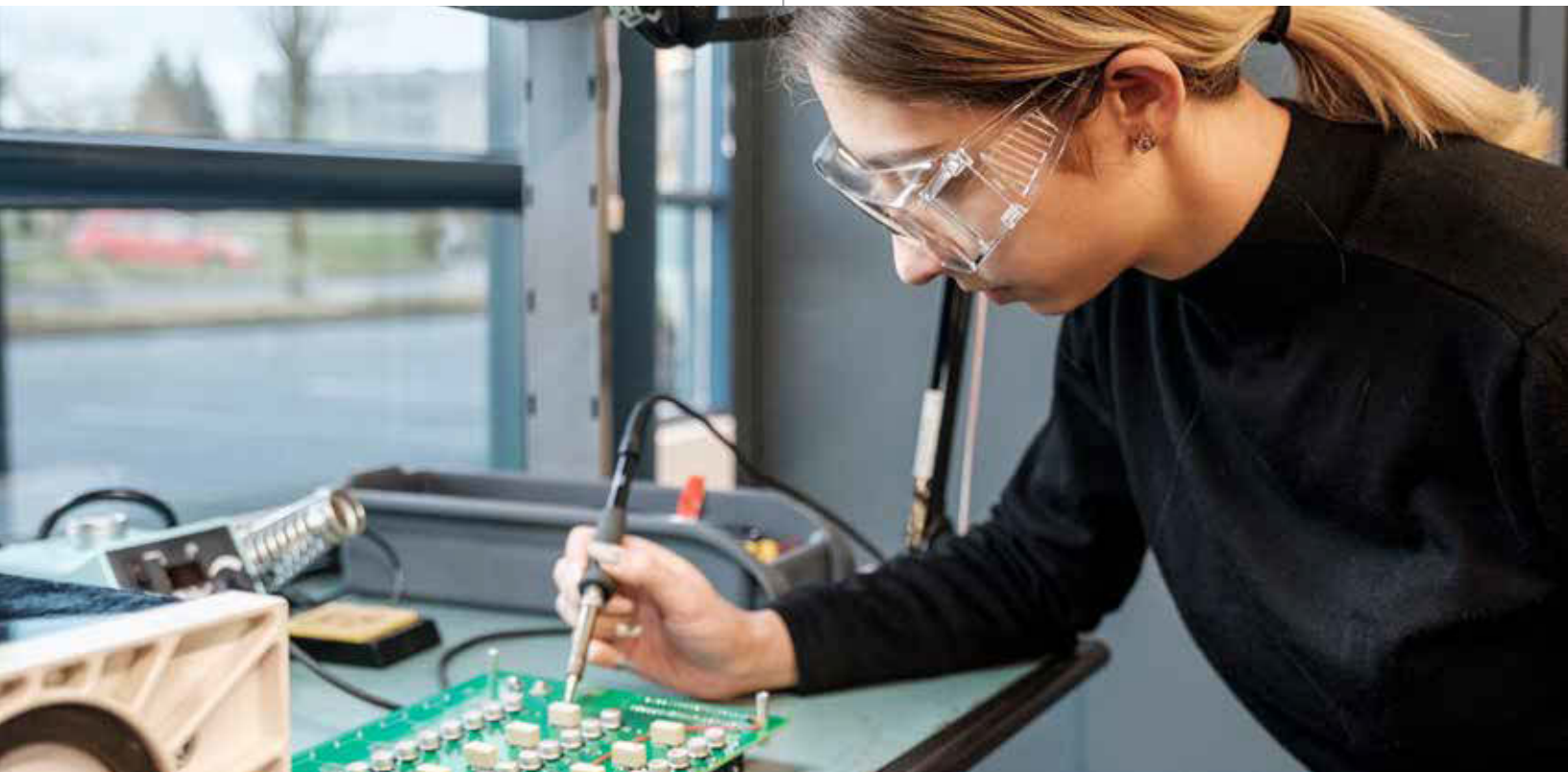
- Supported approximately 75% of families with children with three enhanced BC Family Benefit payments of up to an additional \$350 for parents with two children.
- Gave people and businesses a BC Hydro cost-of-living credit. Residential customers received \$100, while commercial ratepayers received an average of \$500.
- Froze ICBC basic auto insurance rates for two years, keeping them among the lowest in Canada.
- Helped keep ferry fares affordable with \$500 million in new funding.
- Made going back to school more affordable with \$60 million to help school districts expand meal programs, buy school supplies and cover the cost of field trips.
- Placed a 2% cap on rent increases for 2023.
- Supported people who are vulnerable and have low incomes by providing municipalities and regional districts with funding for local poverty-reduction projects, including:
 - ▶ A food distribution program in Stz'uminus First Nation.
 - ▶ A financial literacy program in Nelson.
 - ▶ An expansion of the free recreation centre pass program in Prince George.
- Helped improve people's access to affordable local food through a historic \$160-million investment in food security.
- Continued offering children 12 and under free public transit, saving families up to \$703 annually per child.
- Provided more financial supports for former youth in care, including new earning exemptions and a \$600 monthly rent supplement.

Building a stronger, cleaner economy for everyone

Our government is investing in today's talent so people can land good jobs and businesses can find the workers they need.

- Created new post-secondary education and training seats in high-growth areas, such as technology, trades, health care and child care.
- Continued expanding the life-sciences sector with almost \$195 million for Genome BC and Michael Smith Health Research BC.
- Launched the new B.C. Centre for Agritech Innovation to improve food security in B.C. and around the world and create hundreds of good jobs.

- Partnered with the federal government to create a National Biomanufacturing Training Centre at the British Columbia Institute of Technology.
- Helped tradespeople and apprentices receive standardized training, secure more stable jobs, earn higher wages and better navigate evolving industry needs by creating a made-in-B.C. skilled trades certification system.
- Continued helping the tourism sector recover with a \$25-million investment, supporting projects such as exhibition revisions at the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre and accessibility upgrades at the Barkerville Historic Town and Park.



Our government is strengthening rural economies, while helping foundational industries like forestry and mining become more sustainable.

- Created the new Manufacturing Jobs Fund to diversify rural economies, promote value-added innovation in the forestry sector and create thousands of good jobs.
- Created the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program to help local governments, First Nations and other organizations build capacity and diversify rural and remote economies.
- Created a support package for forestry workers, industry, communities and First Nations affected by new restrictions on old-growth logging and other changes in the forestry sector.
- Provided \$18.8 million in provincial-federal funding to support Paper Excellence's Crofton mill's transition to the production of water-resistant paper packaging to replace single-use plastics.
- Supported the continued growth of the mining sector with \$18 million over three years, which will help meet global demand for the metals and minerals needed for a clean energy future.



Our government is keeping people, goods and services moving, and connecting people to jobs, education and training.

- Continued work to connect every household in B.C. to high-speed internet services by 2027, improving people's access to jobs, education, training and services, such as health care. In 2022-23, high-speed internet services were expanded to 24,000 households in 280 rural, remote and Indigenous communities.
- Expanded cellular coverage on highways 14, 95 and 97, making travel safer along 165 kilometres.

The Province's initial investment of \$38.4 million toward improving connectivity throughout the northern region will yield seven times the return on investment in economic benefits.
– BC Stats, Northern B.C. Connectivity Benefits Study

- Continued building safer, more resilient roads and bridges, including major projects such as the five-lane Steveston Interchange in Richmond and the replacement of the Massey Tunnel and Pattullo Bridge, as well as repairs to flood-damaged sections of highways 5 and 1.
- Improved public transit for people in Metro Vancouver through a \$2.4-billion investment to advance projects, including the Surrey Langley Skytrain, the Broadway Subway and electrification of the bus fleet.

Fighting climate change and protecting our environment

British Columbians have recently experienced the devastating impacts of several climate events, including heatwaves, wildfires and floods. Our government is keeping people safe today, while building a more climate-resilient British Columbia for generations to come.

- Committed an additional \$1 billion to CleanBC to reach a low-carbon future faster.
- Created a new Clean Building Tax Rebate to support deep energy retrofits of large rental and commercial buildings.
- Launched a new energy action framework to ensure oil and gas sector projects fit within B.C.'s climate commitments and create opportunities for people in clean energy and technology.
- Announced a new oil and gas royalty system that eliminated the largest oil and gas subsidy, as well as other outdated and inefficient programs.
- Launched the CleanBC Local Government Climate Action Program to help municipalities, regional districts and Modern Treaty Nations accelerate local climate projects and build a better future for people in their communities.

Our government is helping people and communities prepare for, respond to and recover from climate events.

- Committed \$1.5 billion to help people and communities recover from climate-related disasters.
- Provided more than 400 farmers affected by the November 2021 floods with more than \$61 million in provincial-federal funding to help them return their land to agricultural production.
- Launched the new Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy with a broad range of actions for 2022-25 to address climate impacts and build resilience throughout B.C.
- Ensured British Columbians are better protected from wildfires by transforming the BC Wildfire Services into a year-round service and supporting wildfire prevention, preparedness and resilient communities through a \$359-million investment.
- Boosted the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund to support First Nations and local governments with projects like a new dike on the Coldwater River in Merritt, a climate and disaster risk assessment for the T'lat'lasik'wala First Nation and misting stations to keep people cool during extreme heat in Victoria.
- Launched the BC Heat Alert and Response System to warn people about heat events, give them information on how to protect themselves and ensure First Nations and local government have the tools they need to keep people safe.

- Created B.C.'s first standalone ministry dedicated to emergency management and climate readiness, a reflection of our government's commitment to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate events.

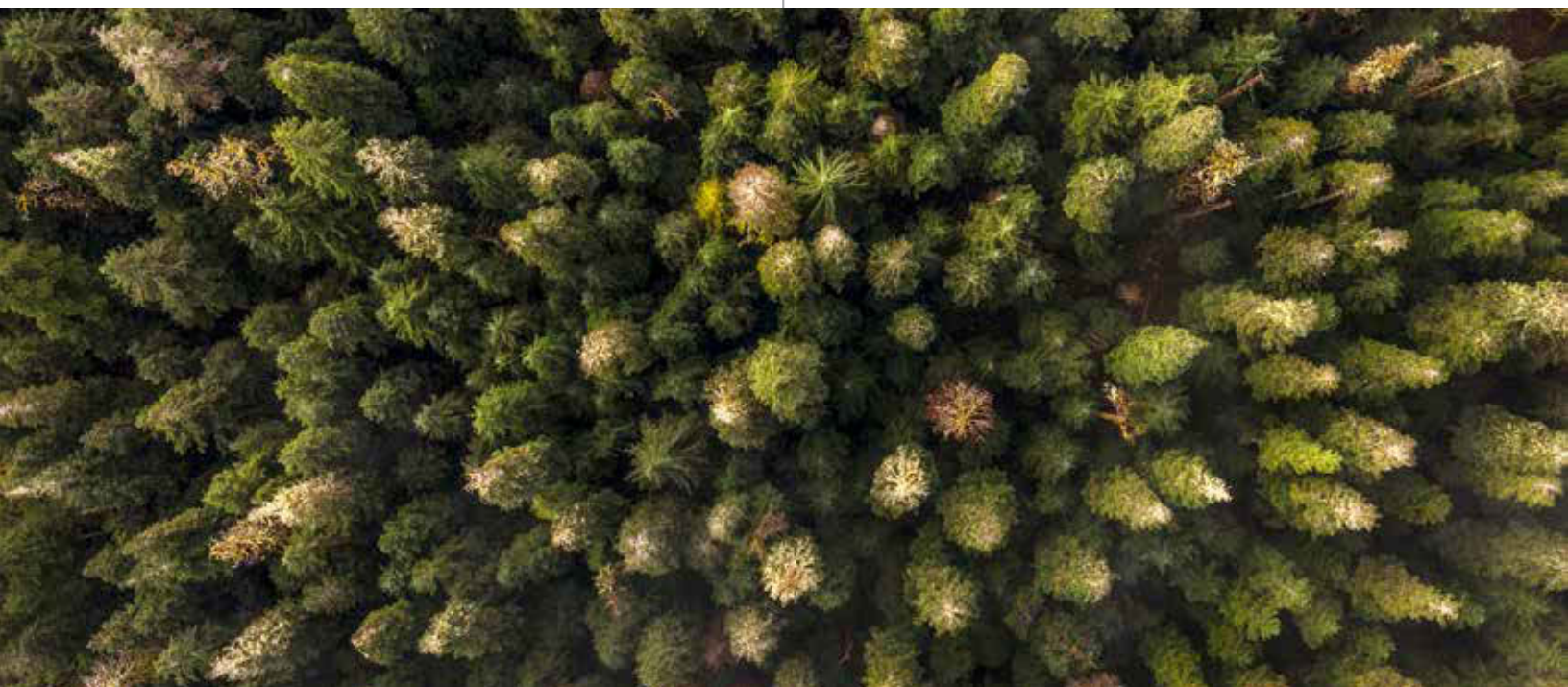
Our government is protecting the forests, lands and waters that make our province so special.

- Protected more than 58,000 hectares of B.C.'s rare inland temperate rainforest by creating the Incomappleux Conservancy.
- Implemented deferrals to protect old-growth forests, reduced old-growth logging to the lowest level on record, fast-tracked innovation and co-developed new local plans with First Nations to better care for B.C.'s forests.
- Helped ensure safe, clean water is available in communities throughout B.C. with \$100 million for the Watershed Security Fund.

- Protected B.C.'s north coast by endorsing a plan for a vast network of marine protected areas.
- Helped ensure a sustainable fisheries sector by supporting several fish and seafood innovation projects and enhancing funding for a Pacific salmon program.

Our government is making it easier and less expensive for people to make climate-smart decisions.

- Removed the PST from heat pumps and used electric vehicles (EVs), increased maximum EV rebates and ensured those rebates go to the people who need them most.
- Expanded the network of EV charging station by 44 and accelerated work toward the CleanBC goal of completing B.C.'s electric highway by 2024.



Creating true and lasting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples



In consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Peoples, our government is advancing reconciliation in meaningful ways.

- Created a new Declaration Act Secretariat to ensure legislation is consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and is developed in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Peoples.

Learn more about the progress on implementing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act at declaration.gov.bc.ca.

- Formally recognized the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour the strength and resilience of residential school survivors and remember the children who never came home.

Our government is supporting Indigenous Peoples' self-determination and inherent right of self-government.

- Helped keep Indigenous children and youth safely connected to their families, cultures and communities by passing historic legislation to uphold Indigenous jurisdiction over child welfare.
- Signed the first child welfare agreement in B.C. co-created with a First Nation. *Tcwesétmentem: Walking Together Agreement* integrates the Simpcw First Nation's practices, customs, laws, language and traditions.
- Signed a co-ordination agreement with Splitsin and the federal government that supports the ongoing exercise of Splitsin's jurisdiction of their child, family and community services. It was the first co-ordination agreement signed in B.C.

Our government is protecting the title and rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the rights of First Nations to own, use, develop and control lands and resources within their territories.

- Entered into a consent-based decision-making agreement with the Tahltan Central Government, the first under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. The

agreement honours Tahltan's jurisdiction in land-management decisions on its territory.

- Signed a historic agreement with the Blueberry River First Nations that guides the Province and the Nations on a partnership approach to land, water and resource stewardship and provides stability and predictability for industry in the region.
- Reached a consensus on a collaborative approach to land and resource planning with four Treaty 8 First Nations – Fort Nelson, Saulteau, Halfway River and Doig River First Nations.
- Signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ahousaht First Nation, committing to developing a way forward that recognizes Ahousaht's culture, history, title and rights.
- Signed a reconciliation agreement with the Stz'uminus First Nation, committing to work together on community priorities and future land transfers, providing support for economic development and establishing funding for environmental remediation activities in Ladysmith Harbour.
- Launched a pilot program with the Kitsoo Xai'xais and Nuxalk First Nations that gives Indigenous guardians the same legal authorities as park rangers within the parks and protected areas in their ancestral territories.

Our government is working to end Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination.

- Continued work with the BC First Nations Justice Council and the federal government to dismantle systemic racism and discrimination in the justice system and support the revitalization of Indigenous legal traditions.
- Continued implementing the recommendations from the In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care report.

Our government is working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to create economic opportunities for everyone.

- Supported the launch of the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations' new Centre of Excellence in First Nations Economic Development.
- Issued an Environmental Assessment certificate for Cedar LNG, which will be the first Indigenous-majority owned LNG export facility in Canada, honouring the self-determination of the Haisla Nation and creating economic opportunity for the Nation and the region.
- Transferred 20,000 hectares of land back to the Lake Babine Nation, enabling the Nation to expand its forestry business and drive economic growth in the region.
- More than doubled the forestry revenues that will be shared with First Nations as part of the work to co-develop a new forestry revenue-sharing model.
- Created new forestry agreements with First Nations to allow faster action on harvesting areas damaged by wildfire, provide more timber for mills and set up faster reforestation.
- Signed a forest tenure opportunity agreement with the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, which includes the largest First Nations Woodland Licence in B.C. to date.



Making our communities safer and stronger

More people are moving to British Columbia than ever before. Our government is strengthening communities to ensure everyone feels safe and welcome and has access to the facilities and amenities they need.

- Created the \$1-billion Growing Communities Fund to help municipalities and regional districts address the needs of their growing communities. Projects include:
 - ▶ A new fire hall, library and park in Saanich.
 - ▶ New artificial turf fields in Nanaimo and Delta.
 - ▶ A new skating rink and multi-use active transportation overpass in Kamloops.
- Supported more than 70 inclusive, resilient and clean infrastructure projects throughout B.C. with more than \$163 million in provincial-federal funding, including new or upgraded community halls, pools, parks, active transportation corridors and water treatment systems.
- Strengthened northern communities by supporting projects that improve health care, housing, public safety and economic development through the Northern Healthy Communities Fund.
- Helped people get back to enjoying fairs, festivals and events, as well as amateur sports, by supporting community organizations.

- ▶ Provided \$30 million to support 1,172 events in communities throughout B.C.
- ▶ Helped approximately 350 children and youth in care participate in sports and cultural activities.

Our government is ensuring all B.C. children learn in safe, supportive schools.

- Announced \$433 million for new and improved schools and site purchases for future schools throughout B.C., including:
 - ▶ New or expanded schools in seven communities, including Kamloops, North Vancouver and Coquitlam.
 - ▶ Seismic replacement of Eric Langton Elementary in Maple Ridge.
 - ▶ Site purchases in five communities, including Langley and Smithers.
 - ▶ Together, these projects are adding more than 2,500 new student seats and 680 seismically upgraded student seats.
- Improved indoor air quality and reduced the transmission of airborne illnesses in 97 schools by funding the purchase, installation and improvement of ventilation and filtration systems.
- Continued funding the creation of new child care spaces on school grounds, for a total of more than 10,300 since 2018.
- Created the new Ministry of Education and Child Care as part of government's work to establish child care as a core service for British Columbians.

Our government is making sure everyone feels safe in their community – no matter where they live.

- ▶ Launched the Safer Communities Action Plan, which includes several measures to keep communities safe, including:
 - ▶ Creating new dedicated teams of police, prosecutors and probation officers to co-ordinate responses across the justice system and support better outcomes for offenders.
 - ▶ Expanding mental-health crisis response teams into more communities so police can focus on crime, and people in crisis can get appropriate supports.

- ▶ Opening 10 new Indigenous justice centres to provide culturally appropriate support for Indigenous people involved in the justice system.
- ▶ Cracking down on organized crime by creating new enforcement tools, such as unexplained wealth orders, which require people to explain how they acquired assets if they are suspected of unlawful activity.
- ▶ Ensured people can get the help they need when experiencing a life-threatening emergency through a \$150-million upgrade of B.C.'s 911 emergency communications system.
- ▶ Directed the BC Prosecution Service to update B.C.'s bail policy to address, to the full extent possible under the law, the risk that repeat violent offenders pose to public safety.
- ▶ Led efforts to secure a federal commitment to address repeat offending countrywide.



Our government is working to create a more equitable province and break down barriers for people from under-represented communities.

- Passed the Anti-Racism Data Act and formed the anti-racism data committee to help racialized people get better access to government programs and services.
- Empowered students and educators to identify and take action against racism and discrimination in schools by launching a new provincial K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan.
- Introduced legislation to help close the gender pay gap in B.C. and move toward pay equity.
- Introduced stable funding of \$10 million annually for sexual assault programs to support the recovery of survivors. This builds on \$20 million provided from March 2020 to March 2023 to support the delivery of emergency sexual assault services throughout B.C.
- Became the first province in Canada to amend provincial laws to remove outdated gendered and binary language, better reflecting the diversity of people in B.C.
- Amended the Vital Statistics Act to allow people to get birth certificates without gender markers, building on previous actions to make it easier for people to have their government-issued identification match their gender identities.
- Improved accessibility throughout the province by:
 - ▶ Launching a new accessibility plan that outlines how provincial ministries will embed accessibility and inclusion in their work and services over the next three years.
 - ▶ Creating the new Accessible British Columbia Regulation, which requires public-sector organizations to establish

accessibility committees, accessibility plans and public-feedback mechanisms.

- ▶ Providing municipalities and First Nations with funding to upgrade community facilities.
- ▶ Releasing BC Parks' Commitment to Inclusion, which comes with additional funding to upgrade park facilities to accessibility standards.
- Provided newcomers with better access to labour-market services, trauma counselling and co-ordinated community connections through funding for settlement-service organizations.
- Continued building support networks for Ukrainians arriving in B.C., including by creating a new Welcoming Ukraine website that connects them with free services to find housing, sign up for health-care coverage, look for a job, sign up children for school and learn about other community services.



Moving forward together

Our government is going to keep working hard to address the big challenges we're all facing.

This past year, our government delivered on people's priorities – strengthening health care, delivering more homes for people and easing the pressure of everyday costs.

Our government also brought people together to address big challenges that affect us today and into the future, including tackling climate change

and creating true and lasting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Much has been accomplished, but there is more work to do. Our government is committed to doing this work by continuing to put people first.

Together, we will create a province where everyone can build a good life and no one is left behind.





