

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

STRATEGIC PLAN



2017/18 – 2020/21





Contents

2 Strong Economy

- 2 Fiscal Responsibility
- 2 Small Business and Red Tape Reduction
- 3 Job Creation and Investment
- 4 First Nations

4 Natural Resources Sectors

- 5 Forestry
- 5 Mining
- 5 Energy
- 6 Agrifood and Seafood
- 6 Natural Gas and Liquefied Natural Gas

7 Knowledge-Based Sectors

- 7 Technology, Clean Tech and Green Economy
- 9 Tourism
- 10 Transportation
- 11 Education and Skills Training

14 Secure Tomorrow

- 14 Family Affordability
- 14 Supporting Vulnerable Families
- 16 Safe Communities, Strong Families
- 19 Healthy Citizens
- 21 Open Government

Strong Economy

British Columbia retains a strong, diverse economy, along with a skilled workforce, that continues to build and shape our province's future.

Fiscal Responsibility

Having a strong fiscal plan is key to growing B.C.'s diverse economy. Our government's fiscal management helps attract investors to British Columbia, which gives us the ability to provide skills training so that British Columbians are first in line for well-paying jobs. It also enables government to provide supports and services and to build infrastructure.

British Columbia is expected to be among the top economic performers in the country, but with modest growth, compared to the past three years. The external economic situation has been mixed and uncertainty remains, which means we must remain vigilant and continue to put B.C. on solid economic footing to weather any downturns. Now, more than ever, B.C. needs to focus on maintaining a healthy economic profile that balances spending with debt repayment, diversification of our industries and seeking new trade partners abroad.

Including Budget 2017, B.C.'s government will have delivered five balanced budgets during these challenging financial times and is the only province or territory in Canada to accomplish this. Operating surpluses are forecast throughout the three-year fiscal plan.

Small Business and Red Tape Reduction

Our goal is to expand Mobile Business Licence agreements by more than 50% by 2020

The Mobile Business Licence program is an innovative tool that allows businesses to operate in multiple jurisdictions, increasing efficiencies for small businesses and reducing the administrative burden on local governments.

In order to achieve this, the ministry will continue working with local governments to develop additional agreements by acting as a facilitator, sharing best practices, supporting revenue analysis and coordination at a municipal level. Targets will be measured by the number of comprehensive agreements struck up to 2020.

Government will partner with industry to identify and address red tape associated with employment and skills training opportunities in two growth sectors

This target is aligned with B.C.'s commitment to regulatory reform and will support ongoing efforts to train workers for current and future labour-market opportunities. Identifying and addressing the challenges employers and employees face in navigating employment and skills-training programs is expected to result in more uptake for these programs.

Delivering on this target will involve:

- ▶ Analysis to identify target sectors;
- ▶ Consultation to identify red tape pressures, improvement opportunities;
- ▶ Development of an action plan to deal with the pressures, in collaboration with sector associations and industry.

Success will be measured via:

- ▶ Uptake for employment and skills training programs;
- ▶ Feedback on program accessibility from employees, employers in key sectors

Job Creation and Investment

British Columbia will have almost one million job openings by 2025. Eight out of 10 of these jobs will require post-secondary education or trades training.

Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan supports this job creation. Our plan is built on the natural, strategic and financial advantages of British Columbia: our location as Canada's gateway to Asia, our multicultural population, our world-class infrastructure, our strong balance sheet and low-tax environment, our natural-resource advantages, and our highly skilled labour force.

The **BC Jobs Plan** was founded on three pillars:

- ▶ Working with employers and communities to enable job creation across British Columbia.
- ▶ Strengthening our infrastructure to get our goods to market.
- ▶ Expanding markets for B.C. products and services, particularly in Asia.

The BC Jobs Plan 5 Year Update sets out 25 new targets to maintain the province's economic momentum and build resilience as we continue to diversify, strengthen and grow our economy. These new targets fall within four overarching goals that will direct us as we move forward:

1. British Columbia will be the most diversified economy in Canada in 2022.
2. The Province will continue to ensure British Columbians are first in line for the nearly one million jobs openings through to 2025.
3. British Columbia will be a leader in Canada in driving innovation and competitiveness, while demonstrating climate leadership.
4. British Columbia will continue to be a leader in Canada in breaking down barriers to business and trade and support the export capacity of B.C. businesses.

Raising Our Game in Asia: the BC Jobs Plan Strategy builds on the **BC Jobs Plan** by employing a targeted and strategic approach to growing trade and investment with Asia.

This approach also involves three pillars:

- ▶ Increasing the number of B.C. companies that export to Asia,
- ▶ Increasing investments that make B.C.'s sectors competitive, and
- ▶ Reducing barriers that impede the flow of goods, services, investment and people between B.C. and Asia.

For example, the B.C. government is supporting local companies to export through its Guidebook for Doing Business in Asia, and Asia Business Literacy workshops, as well as its new Export Navigator program currently offered in four communities: Prince George, Vernon, Port Alberni and Comox. This program provides B.C.-based companies with personalized, step-by-step help with exporting.

Also, last year B.C. added two new trade and investment offices in Southeast Asia – in the Philippines and Indonesia. In 2017, we plan to open an office in Malaysia, which will bring the total to 14.

First Nations

Closing social and economic gaps between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians requires the full engagement of First Nations and Indigenous people in economic development. B.C. is focused on actions that support prosperous and healthy communities where social, economic and cultural values are united.

More than 485 economic and reconciliation agreements between the Province and First Nations have been reached since 2005. Through the Aboriginal Skills Training Development Fund, at least 1,200 people received training last year. Another 1,000 are receiving training this year.

B.C. is supporting the B.C. Assembly of First Nations with up to \$2.5 million over three years to develop a ***First Nations Sustainable Economic Development Strategy***. The goal is to improve economic outcomes and business development opportunities in First Nations communities. The Province is also adding up to \$2.1 million in funding to the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund over the next three years to support capacity and equity projects, including helping remote First Nations communities move away from using diesel fuel as a source of electricity.

Work toward improving social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in British Columbia continues. This is being done through anti-violence partnerships, such as the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women and the Moose Hide campaign, a B.C.-born campaign to stop violence against women and girls; a memorandum of understanding with the First Nations Health Council to find new, practical approaches to improving First Nations people's health and wellness; and the development of First Nations courts to take a culturally appropriate approach to Aboriginal people in the justice system.

While economic growth is essential to achieving social progress, government recognizes that reconciliation with First Nations involves all citizens — and is based on awareness and understanding. We are ensuring that the history and ongoing legacy of the residential school system is taught in schools, particularly when learning about topics such as discrimination, inequality, oppression and the impacts of colonialism. Aboriginal perspectives are part of learning for all students and part of the B.C.'s new curriculum.

B.C. is committing \$2 million to the Royal BC Museum to enable the creation of a First Nations department and repatriation program. This commitment provides support to all interested Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia seeking the return of their treasured ancestral remains and belongings of cultural significance. Government understands that the respectful return of cultural belongings and ancestral remains is essential for the preservation and continuation of First Nations' cultures and traditions, and community well-being.

Natural Resources Sectors

Natural resources are a key component of our economy that continue to enjoy high demand across a diversity of sectors, supporting well-paying jobs for British Columbians.

The development of British Columbia's natural resource sectors complements our commitment to our world-leading environmental protection laws. We continue to provide the leadership and guidance necessary to strike the balance where both the environment and economy thrive. Our commitment to environmental protection is clearly demonstrated through our global leadership on climate change and clean energy, our commitment to world-leading environmental

protection laws, protection of species-at-risk, improving the BC Parks system, focussing on conservation, recreation, sustainability and the increased rigour of our environmental assessments.

Forestry

Forests are a vital part of our diverse economy and the recovery of our forest sector from the 2007-2009 global economic downturn continues. By the end of 2015, the value of forest products to all markets increased to a total of \$12.9 billion, a 69% increase from 2009, the worst year of downturn.

During 2017/18 and beyond, we will be implementing the 49 strategic actions from ***Strong Past, Bright Future, B.C. Forest Sector Competitiveness Agenda***, which was released in August 2016. The agenda has three inter-related goals: healthy, resilient forests; diverse, globally competitive industry; and stable communities and First Nation partners.

B.C.'s forest sector has changed over time and will continue to evolve to remain a strong part of our economy. This is our articulation to guide future actions.

Our government continues its commitment to help forestry-dependent communities that were affected by the mountain pine beetle outbreak. As our government is committed to making B.C.'s forest industry a sunrise industry again, we have invested \$1 billion in forest management and economic development opportunities in the Interior. We will continue every effort to keep this key sector growing, including annual forest-industry trade missions to Asia to find new markets, while creating jobs at home.

For example, in January 2017, government announced the largest shipment of mass timber from British Columbia to India would be used to build the first major commercial wood demonstration project to showcase B.C. forest products in India.

Mining

British Columbia continues to be a leader in mining and mineral production nationwide. As Canada's single largest exporter of coal, the largest producer of copper and the only producer of molybdenum, we also produce significant amounts of gold, silver, lead, zinc and more than 30 industrial minerals.

From an environmental perspective, mining takes up a tiny portion of B.C.'s land base – less than 1%. But it has a huge economic impact. In 2015, net mining revenue in B.C. was \$6.3 billion. It is a significant driver of employment as well, given that more than 30,000 British Columbians are employed in mining and mineral exploration.

Energy

B.C.'s population and diverse economy continue to grow. The corresponding demand for power is expected to increase as well, by 40% over the next two decades. To feed that demand, our government approved the Site C Clean Energy Project in December 2014. Its benefits are many, including that Site C will provide British Columbia with the most affordable, reliable clean power for more than a century. Over the first half century of Site C's project life, ratepayers will save an average of \$650 million to \$900 million each year, compared to alternatives.

Agrifood and Seafood

British Columbia's agrifood and seafood sector continues to grow. We have seen an impressive 25% increase in the sector's annual revenue from \$10.5 billion in 2010 to a record \$ 13 billion in 2015.

To build on the momentum, our government launched the new **BC Agrifood and Seafood Strategic Growth Plan** in 2015 that identifies the next steps in our goal to grow the B.C. agrifoods industry to a \$15-billion-a-year industry by 2020.

The B.C. government is helping build our domestic and export markets for B.C. foods. Through the \$8-million BC Buy Local program, we have helped 200 B.C. companies expand their reach and sales in communities throughout B.C. and leveraged \$29 million in investments through matching funds.

The B.C. government's network of 13 international trade offices, B.C. trade missions, and innovation and market development funding have all played roles in increasing our exports, which reached a record \$3.5 billion in 2015. The Ministry of Agriculture launched the **International Market Development Strategy**, its plan to help connect B.C. products with foreign buyers and markets. We also released our Export Catalogue, which includes the profile of about 100 B.C. producers that are ready to export their products to foreign markets.

Partnering with the federal government continues to benefit B.C.'s food producers. About \$427 million is being invested in B.C. from 2013-2018 under the Growing Forward 2 (GF2) agreement. GF2 provides funding for risk-management programs, new product development and commercialization that increase sustainability and competitiveness, and other funding that focuses on developing new markets, or expanding production capacity.

There are significant opportunities for the sector through agriculture technology (Agritech). It can help maximize productivity, minimize inputs and create greater value from B.C.'s farmland and coast. We are supporting Agritech through GF2 and the **BC AG-Tech Venture Acceleration Program**, which provides training and mentoring to agritech companies to maximize commercialization opportunities and accelerate growth. We also launched the Agritech Innovation Challenge, which brought together innovators with industry to develop a product or process to enhance productivity, sustainability and resiliency of B.C.'s agrifood sector.

The B.C. government is continuing to support the socially and ecologically responsible management of B.C. fisheries, including an environmentally and economically sustainable aquaculture industry. We formed the Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Council on Finfish Aquaculture to advise the ministry on finfish aquaculture. By working with industry leaders of Canada's most diverse agricultural province, and with our colleagues in local, provincial, federal and international governments, B.C. agrifood producers will see the benefits of **The B.C. Agrifood and Seafood Strategic Growth Plan** in achieving economic growth, adapting to climate change, and maintaining food supply security. This will drive the future of the B.C. agrifood and seafood sector.

Natural Gas and Liquefied Natural Gas

After five-plus years of planning, including a fiscal and policy framework to provide certainty for proponents to make final investment decisions, British Columbia's liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry is taking shape.

Woodfibre LNG has announced it will move forward, representing \$1.6 billion in new investment and hundreds of jobs. Pacific NorthWest LNG is completing a full review of its proposal before a final investment decision can be completed. Pending this decision, Pacific NorthWest LNG

could result in up to \$36 billion in new capital spending, 4,500 new construction jobs and close to 350 permanent positions. These benefits are in addition to the thousands of jobs created and sustained to support the proposal's long-term operations and supply needs.

Both Woodfibre LNG and Pacific NorthWest LNG join the work already underway in Delta where FortisBC is expanding its facility to serve domestic needs and potential export. This expansion has already provided \$60 million in contract work to more than 100 companies and businesses in communities such as Vancouver, Langley, Abbotsford and Coquitlam.

A scenario of five export facilities moving forward holds the prospect of \$175 billion being invested in British Columbia. That's an unprecedented economic boost on which we are capitalizing.

LNG has enormous job creation and economic opportunities. Diversification within the natural gas sector will mean approximately 100,000 new jobs are possible. These jobs would result in a brighter future and growth for First Nations and communities throughout the province. Collaboration with First Nations is ongoing as we strengthen environmental stewardship programs and finalize economic benefits agreements. Partnerships with trades associations are also coming together to increase skills training for Aboriginal communities and for those interested in finding a career in the natural gas sector.

Alongside economic growth, investments are also being made to build a cleaner natural gas sector. In 2016, the Government of British Columbia introduced a Clean Infrastructure Royalty Credit Program – the first of its kind in Canada – with royalty deductions attracting new private-sector funding for clean technologies. The first pilot iteration of the program was a huge success, providing \$13.7 million in royalty deductions to support the construction of 13 clean infrastructure projects in B.C.'s petroleum and natural gas sector. Once built and in operation, these projects will reduce greenhouse-gas emissions linked to the industry, complementing our commitment to have the cleanest LNG facilities in the world.

British Columbia also has an Infrastructure Royalty Credit Program, which continues to facilitate new roads and pipelines construction. Since 2004, when the program was launched, it has supported the development of over 300 resource roads and pipeline projects in northeast B.C., creating jobs and representing more than \$2.7 billion in private-sector capital investment.

Since the *BC Jobs Plan* was released in 2011, we have been focused on developing a viable, competitive new industry to diversify our economy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help our natural gas sector grow. An LNG export industry will continue to build on six decades of oil and gas experience by turning an abundant domestic resource into a global commodity. We have enough natural gas to meet domestic and international demands for 150 years or more.

Knowledge-Based Sectors

A vibrant population of knowledge workers are embedded in communities throughout B.C., bolstering our economy with its progress and successes in every part of this sector.

Technology, Clean Tech and Green Economy

British Columbia's growing and vibrant technology sector provides employment for more than 100,000 people and includes over 9,900 established companies. New technology companies are emerging at an increasing rate throughout the province. In 2015, more than 185 new technology companies started up in B.C., a growth rate of 1.9%.

Our government's vision for the technology sector is to be a recognized leader in developing and growing innovative technology companies, and to be a destination for technology investment.

That is why our government released a multi-year **#BCTECH Strategy** that will support the growth of B.C.'s technology sector in 2016, strengthening British Columbia's already diverse, knowledge-based economy. We provided an update to the 50 initiatives within the strategy in fall 2016. Many of these are complete and the rest are underway.

The strategy focuses on three key pillars: access to capital for promising companies; talent development; and market access. Within this strategy, a \$100-million BC Tech Fund is creating an avenue for venture-capital funding to promising start-up companies, while the K-12 curriculum will provide the opportunity for more than 600,000 B.C. students to gain the basic skills needed for careers in technology.

The technology industry is a key driver of economic prosperity and diversity in British Columbia. Not only is it one of the nine key sectors that make up the **BC Jobs Plan**, it's a catalyst for cross-sector growth, helping B.C. companies put technology to work to develop their competitive advantage in the global marketplace. We developed the **#BCTECH Strategy** to create and support those new opportunities. To accelerate our work, we have a ministry focused on technology and innovation, with a mandate to work with industry. Together with our Crown agency, the BC Innovation Council, government is doing everything possible to help the industry move ahead.

In fact, in January 2016, the BC Innovation Council and the Province brought together more than 3,500 people for the inaugural **#BCTECH Summit**. It provided unprecedented opportunities for business leaders, industry experts, tech companies, entrepreneurs, academics, students and government to meet and collaborate. The Province is hosting its second **#BCTECH Summit** on March 14-15, 2017, with made-in-B.C. tech innovations, thought-provoking keynotes and outstanding networking opportunities.

The technology sector includes five sub-sectors:

- 1. Clean technology** is a quickly developing subsector, crossing over into many traditional industries and creating more efficient, effective and sustainable practices. It includes power generation, energy efficiency, transportation and industrial processes. There are 6,400 jobs at 200 clean-tech companies, producing \$1.7 billion in revenue. British Columbia's commitment to continued leadership on climate and energy policies helps to foster innovation and growth in this sub-sector.
- 2. Information and communication technologies and wireless** consists of more than 2,600 companies that engage in software publishing, computer manufacturing and systems design, engineering services, and wired and wireless communications. This subsector employs 20,550 people and generates \$9.5 billion in revenues.
- 3. The life sciences** subsector in B.C. is one of the largest in Canada, with the second-highest number of companies, including firms engaged in drugs and pharmaceutical development, research testing and medical labs, medical devices and equipment, and agricultural feedstock and chemicals. B.C.'s life sciences subsector employs 8,500 people and generates an estimated \$805 million in revenues.
- 4. Digital and screen-based media** companies include more than 1,150 firms that employ more than 16,500 people involved in areas like interactive design; digital entertainment and games; digital film; animation and special effects; mobile content and applications; and e-learning.

Digital media generates total revenue of \$3 billion annually. In fact, B.C. is home to a strong and internationally recognized gaming cluster, featuring a high concentration of specialized talent.

- 5. Engineering** and other is one of the most developed and mature subsectors, producing \$7.5 billion in revenue. It makes up a significant portion of firms and a strong talent pool: 27,480 jobs at more than 3,900 companies. This subsector features companies engaged in engineering activities, research and development, consulting services, surveying and mapping services and robotics.

A strong technology sector will benefit from government's ongoing work toward our target to improve high-speed Internet access provincewide. High-speed Internet provides British Columbians in rural and remote communities with better opportunities to learn, do business, access services and stay connected. We are working with other levels of government and the private sector, including large and small Internet service providers, to improve connectivity throughout B.C.

For instance, TELUS has provided more than 1,700 kilometres of additional cellular coverage along unconnected primary and secondary highway segments as part of government's non-monetary agreement.

A total of 375 public schools have had their Internet connections upgraded to high-speed fibre-optic cables to enable faster access to information for our youngest learners. In 2017, all school districts will be connected to high-speed Internet.

Tourism

British Columbia is a world-class tourism destination. We have the natural beauty, the tourism infrastructure and the people here to make the industry hum. And it is thriving.

Tourism is a key sector in the *BC Jobs Plan* and plays an important role in our diverse, strong and growing economy. B.C.'s tourism industry generates over \$7 billion in GDP and more than \$15 billion in revenues.

Growth in international visitors to British Columbia has been strong during the last few years. This momentum continued in 2016. Nearly 5.1 million international visitors came to B.C. during the first 11 months of 2016. This is an increase of 12.2%, or nearly 546,632 more visitors, compared to the same period in 2015.

This increase in visitors helps support almost 19,000 businesses of all sizes in the tourism sector. These businesses employ over 127,500 people – roughly one out of every 15 people employed in B.C.

The Province continues its commitment to the sector through the Tourism Events Program. It supports events and celebrations around the province that generate economic activity and build awareness of B.C.'s tourism brands. The Province also provides \$10.5 million a year in support through the Resort Municipality Initiative which helps resort-oriented municipalities develop and enhance tourism infrastructure and amenities.

To ensure the momentum continues into future years, government updated its Provincial Tourism Strategy, *Gaining the Edge: 2015-2018*. This strategy maximizes government's \$98-million-plus annual investment in the tourism sector and leverages significant provincial investments in transportation infrastructure, BC Parks, recreation sites and trails, culture and heritage, small business supports, landmark attractions and hosting programs.

Destination BC, our tourism marketing Crown corporation, launched a marketing plan to grow tourism in B.C. It supports the second year of its three-year corporate strategy. The strategy and plan are designed to ensure British Columbia is positioned to keep this critical part of our economy growing in a globally competitive environment.

Destination BC has also launched programs, which include the Co-op Marketing Partnerships Program, Remarkable Experiences Program and Destination Development Program. Destination BC will continue to work with all tourism partners to collaborate more effectively to boost their collective impact on tourism revenue, GDP and jobs.

Transportation

Our government continues to build on *B.C. on the Move*, our 10-year comprehensive transportation plan. The plan lays out a number of priorities with a focus on moving goods and people safely and reliably, growing the economy, connecting and strengthening communities, and maximizing collaboration and investment with partners, including First Nations, the federal government, local governments, and the private sector. As well, we are committed to helping meet the transportation needs of the Metro Vancouver region and will continue to work in collaboration with all levels of government and TransLink on Phase 1 of the Mayors' Council plan, as well as to advance Phase 2 of its 10-year vision.

Projects announced and in development include:

- ▶ the 10-lane bridge that will replace George Massey Tunnel, estimated to cost \$3.5 billion – for which construction begins in 2017;
- ▶ a \$70.09-million project to improve capacity and reduce congestion on the Alex Fraser Bridge;
- ▶ the \$1.43-billion, 11-kilometre Evergreen rapid-transit line extension that's now open, connecting the cities of Coquitlam, Port Moody and Burnaby to Metro Vancouver's existing SkyTrain system;
- ▶ \$246 million toward the modernization of the transportation system in the Lower Mainland;
- ▶ \$17.6 million in federal and provincial funding toward a major highway upgrade to the Coquihalla Highway; and
- ▶ \$2.1 million invested in new Remote Avalanche Control Systems, which will allow for avalanche control on a 24-hour basis, shortening the duration of closures on the Trans-Canada Highway near Revelstoke.

In 2016, the BikeBC program provided \$6.5 million for 25 projects in 23 communities throughout the province to encourage cycling and walking for commuting, recreation and tourism.

The Province continues to combat distracted driving by strengthening our laws and penalties to curb this dangerous behaviour.

Through *BC on the Move*, we continue with our commitment to increase the number of four-lane sections on the Trans-Canada Highway between Kamloops and the Alberta border, improving the flow of trade and increasing safety along this corridor. This \$650-million commitment has progressed with construction beginning on the \$38-million North Fork Bridge replacement and four-laning project. As well, both Phase 2 of the \$61.6-million Pritchard to Hoffman's Bluff section and the \$35-million Malakwa Bridge and four-laning project. Planning and design work is ongoing as well for other projects, such as the Bruhn Bridge replacement and four-laning at Illecillewaet.

Education and Skills Training

Our government is laying the groundwork to ensure that British Columbians are first in line for the nearly one million job openings that are forecast in B.C.

The objective is to maximize our workforce's potential and that of our future workforce. To reach this goal, government launched *B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint: Re-engineering Education and Training* in 2014 and the *#BCTECH Strategy* in 2016.

These plans set out the fundamental changes we have to make to the best use of our existing resources and future investments in education and training.

The *#BCTECH Strategy* includes three pillars:

- ▶ improving access to capital
- ▶ deepening the talent pool, announced in January 2016
- ▶ and opening access to markets overseas and here at home.

The Ministry of Education is now halfway through the three-year roll out of the redesigned curriculum, which has been fully implemented in every kindergarten-to-Grade 9 classroom since September 2016. Teachers are trying out new draft curricula in grades 10 to 12 and offering their feedback. By the start of the 2018-19 school year, the 10-12 curriculum will be completely in place, creating a seamless path for students to university, college or trades training.

B.C.'s new curriculum includes a hands-on learning approach to help encourage collaboration, critical thinking and communication to help young learners prepare for college, university and the workforce. The new curriculum includes the basics, like reading, writing and arithmetic, while teaching students the collaboration, critical thinking and communications skills needed in today's changing world. It fits in with the *#BCTECH Strategy* and *B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint* goals of re-engineering education and training, so B.C. students are first in line for jobs.

The B.C. government is investing \$6 million to support coding and the new curriculum. This includes training teachers and helping buy computers so coding and the new curriculum are a success. Beginning in 2018/19, every student in B.C. will take a coding module or course between grades 6 and 9.

The Blueprint lays out three objectives to make education and training more effective and more relevant to the needs of industry and today's workforce.

These objectives are:

1. A head-start to hands-on learning in our schools

Students in elementary, middle or high school will get a better, earlier start to hands-on learning so they will be ready for the workforce, or more advanced training, when they graduate.

2. A shift in education and training to better match with in-demand jobs

For students in a college, university or an institute, or those thinking about attending, we're better matching training with in-demand jobs and maximizing the spaces available to provide the programs they need to compete successfully in the workforce.

3. A stronger partnership with industry and labour to deliver training and apprenticeships

For those looking to move into or upward on the worksite, we are building stronger partnerships with community, industry and labour to better connect them with the on-the-job and classroom training they will need to boost their skills or achieve certification.

Our government has made extensive investments in British Columbia's K-12, post-secondary and skills and training programs over the past decade. These investments are helping to ensure British Columbians are best-positioned and first in line to benefit from the opportunities being created.

Our government's total education budget was \$5.6 billion in 2016/17. That's more than \$1.2 billion higher than in 2001.

Average per-student funding for public schools has increased by 42% since 2000/01, now an estimated \$8,963.

Infrastructure is also continuously upgraded. Government has committed more than \$4.5 billion to school capital and maintenance projects throughout the province, since 2001. To date:

- ▶ 192 school additions have been completed
- ▶ 163 seismic high-risk school replacements or upgrades have been completed
- ▶ 123 new and replacement schools have been built
- ▶ almost 400 school enhancement projects have been completed
- ▶ 32 sites have been acquired
- ▶ there have been 30 school renovations

There are 61 school seismic projects throughout B.C. under construction, proceeding to construction, or in business-case development under the Seismic Mitigation Program.

Over the next three years government has set aside \$560 million to upgrade high-risk seismic schools around the province.

Accomplishments in the Blueprint so far include:

- ▶ Fourteen skills and trades training facilities under construction at public post-secondary institutions throughout B.C.
- ▶ Government funding 3,730 critical trades training seats in post-secondary institutions throughout the province.
- ▶ Providing more than \$27 million to 21 public post-secondary institutions to purchase new industry-standard training equipment.
- ▶ Thirty-three school districts, each receiving a \$17,500 grant from the Province's Shoulder Tappers Program in December 2016. Shoulder tappers are connecting students with innovative workshops and on-the-job opportunities in skilled trades and technology careers, encouraging them with positive input and advice, and cultivating their passions.
- ▶ Thirty school districts each receiving \$5,000 from the Province's 2016/17 Skills Training Access Grant. This grant helps school districts connect students with training in fields such as carpentry, coding and culinary arts.
- ▶ Publishing an online *Careers Skills and Training Toolkit* for school-district career programs.
- ▶ Hiring 15 Apprenticeship Advisors around the province through the Industry Training Authority.

Resources like Find Your Fit, the Apprentice Job Match Tool and My Blueprint Builder are getting more British Columbians, particularly youth, interested and aware of in-demand occupations.

In order to enhance and strengthen our trades training system, the McDonald report was submitted in February 2014. Some highlights of the work done by the Industry Training Authority since then include:

- ▶ Reconstituting the ITA board of directors and appointing the CEO

- ▶ Completing the ITA 90-Day Transition Plan
- ▶ Establishing 11 Sector Advisory Groups
- ▶ Hiring four Industry Relations Managers to engage industry on apprenticeship and skills training
- ▶ Hiring a Manager of Apprenticeship Completions
- ▶ Hiring 15 Apprenticeship Advisors, including six Apprenticeship Advisors who are focused on supporting apprentices within Aboriginal communities

Government invests approximately \$1.9 billion a year to support post-secondary education and, over the last decade, we have increased funding to operate our post-secondary institutions by more than 45%.

Students benefit from government investments as well. In British Columbia, students pay less than one-third of the actual costs of their education. Tuition for undergraduates in B.C. is the fourth-lowest in Canada. Increases are capped at 2% annually. These investments in post-secondary education have helped make British Columbia the home of world-class universities.

Our government maintains a number of programs that provide supports to students and their families to encourage access and participation in post-secondary education and training,

These include disability-support programs and increased weekly maximum student-loan limits for students with a dependent, and a one student/one loan approach that supports students by extending lead time for defaults, shortening the amortization period and matching repayment assistance. In 2012/13, we introduced a student-loan-repayment assistance program for low-income families and those with significant family obligations.

The \$1,200 B.C. Training and Education Savings Grant helps parents plan and save early for their child's post-secondary education.

As of December 2016, approximately 55,000 children have an additional \$1,200 in their federal registered education savings plan (RESP) to support their post-secondary goals. That's \$66 million invested in the future.

In Budget 2016, we extended the eligibility for the provincial savings grant to children born in 2006. That's 45,000 more eligible kids who can apply for the grant.

We are working with our Aboriginal partners to ensure that Aboriginal students are able to access and succeed in their post-secondary studies. The B.C. government will continue to provide education and training in Aboriginal communities and support Aboriginal service plans at public post-secondary institutions. Connecting Aboriginal students to education and training will enable Aboriginal British Columbians to take advantage of the economic opportunities throughout the province.

British Columbia was the first jurisdiction in Canada to launch a government-sponsored open textbook project. Students and faculty can access open-education resources online, including more than 170 textbooks.

Secure Tomorrow

A strong economy allows government to strongly support citizens who need it. A healthy, growing economy creates new sources of wealth that allow government to do more. Our government is acting to improve the lives of individuals and families of all kinds in every part of British Columbia.

Family Affordability

B.C. families generally have one of the lowest overall tax burdens in Canada, including income taxes, consumption taxes, property taxes, health-care premiums and payroll taxes. In fact, British Columbia has the lowest provincial personal income taxes in Canada for individuals earning up to \$125,000 a year. To help support B.C. families and keep life affordable, the Province has extended Medical Services Plan (MSP) premium assistance to higher income levels, and offers tax credits and exemptions designed to help families with costs like the purchasing their first home, fitness or art programs for kids, back-to-school costs, and training for a career in the trades.

Supporting Vulnerable Families

British Columbia is home to some of the most comprehensive supports of any jurisdiction for low-income families in Canada and we will continue to improve those supports because we know that they are making a difference.

We believe that the best way to help British Columbians reach their full potential is through a combination of economic growth, job creation and targeted supports for individuals and families that need them. That is exactly what we are doing. And we will continue to do so.

B.C.'s economy continues to grow and strengthen at an amazing pace. On average, private-sector economists expect B.C. to continue to lead the provinces in economic growth in 2017. Our growing economy creates thousands of sustainable, in-demand jobs that provide, and will continue to provide, British Columbians with the secure employment they need to support their families.

Between 2006 and 2014, the total number of British Columbians living in poverty dropped by about 162,000 – or 27% – and the number of children living in poverty fell by 50%.

Because not everyone starts life from the same place, the Ministry of Children and Family Development has worked with the Ministry of Finance to help with the costs of raising a young child. Our B.C. Early Years Strategy introduced the B.C. Early Childhood Tax Benefit, which provides \$145 million annually to approximately 180,000 families with children under the age of six years (up to \$55 a month per child, or \$660 a year per child).

Because every child deserves the best possible start in life, we will continue to invest in supportive early childhood development programs, as well as access to affordable child care, under our B.C. Early Years Strategy. We have invested \$26.5 million to support the creation of more than 4,300 new licensed child-care spaces in B.C. since 2014. These spaces build on the more than 113,000 licensed child-care spaces that are funded throughout the province, and are part of government's commitment to create 13,000 spaces by 2020.

We are committed to helping families get the services and supports they need, no matter where they live in the province, while reducing red tape.

As part of this commitment, the Ministry of Children and Family Development launched a new, interactive online child and youth mental-health and substance-use services map in 2015 to make it easier for families to find the services their children need as soon as possible. It's working. The map has helped approximately 10,000 children, youth and families find the services they need.

Government is also continuing to increase the number of child and youth mental-health intake clinics throughout the province. There are now more than 90 of them. For people living in rural and remote locations, we have introduced telehealth videoconferencing. We want British Columbia to continue to be one of the healthiest provinces in the country, so we will stay the course, investing wisely in our health-care system.

We want British Columbia families to live healthy, productive lives and we know that each barrier we can remove that gets in the way of this goal is beneficial. That's why we will continue to make changes that will benefit British Columbians.

We also want British Columbia to become the most progressive place in Canada for people with disabilities. To support that vision, we launched Accessibility 2024 in June 2014. This is a government-wide action plan that identifies what we as a society can do to reduce barriers and create more accessible, inclusive communities.

Since its launch, we have worked with the disability community and business on the range of activities identified in Accessibility 2024. For example, families asked us to remove barriers to financial independence for people receiving disability assistance. In response, B.C. became the first province to introduce an Annual Earnings Exemption. This means people receiving disability assistance can calculate earnings annually instead of monthly, providing flexibility for people whose ability to work can fluctuate. In 2015, we increased asset limits for people receiving disability assistance from \$5,000 to \$100,000 for a single person and from \$10,000 to \$200,000 for a family in which two people have the Persons with Disabilities designation.

In 2016, we increased assistance rates for 100,000 people with disabilities and extended transportation supports to everyone receiving disability assistance. We also modernized the Guide Dog and Service Dog Act, released an emergency planning guide for people with disabilities, and exempted Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits for people on income and disability assistance.

For those who are able to work, we know that a good job with a steady income is the most effective way for parents to provide for their children. That's why we have made substantial changes to help families on income and disability assistance move into the workforce. More than 26,000 British Columbians with disabilities have found a job through the Employment Program of BC since 2012.

Through the Single Parent Employment Initiative (SPEI), more than 17,000 single parents on income and disability assistance are eligible to receive up to 12 months of funded training or a work placement, child-care costs during their training or work placement and throughout the first year of employment, as well as transportation costs to and from school. By providing a full range of supports, this innovative program removes barriers to employment that single parents who are receiving assistance often face. It also gives people an opportunity to create a secure future for themselves and their children. Through SPEI, hundreds of single parents have found work and dozens are joining the program every week.

Since 2001, our government has invested \$4.9 billion to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals, seniors, and families in communities throughout British Columbia.

The B.C. government continues to take action to control the cost of housing, increase access to affordable rental units, and help families make their dream of homeownership come true. We introduced the Newly Built Homes Exemption program and the BC HOME Partnership Program to help first-time buyers enter the housing market. We implemented the 15% additional property transfer tax on foreign buyers and a 3% rate on properties over \$2 million to help cool housing demand in Metro Vancouver, while new homes are built to meet local need. We increased the homeowner grant threshold to \$1.6 million to protect existing homeowners. The Province will continue to work with municipalities to increase housing supply and is investing \$855 million in affordable rental homes for those who need it most.

We have also taken significant action to protect real-estate customers and safeguard the public interest, overhauling the regulatory framework and strengthening oversight and accountability of the sector.

Launched in 2012, *Expect Respect and A Safe Education (ERASE) Bullying*, was a five-year, comprehensive prevention and intervention strategy designed to foster school connectedness, promote positive mental health, and address bullying and worrisome behaviours in B.C. schools.

A key component of the ERASE bullying strategy was a multi-level training program for educators and community partners. The training helped educators and community partners foster safe school cultures, identify and respond to bullying and threat-making behavior, as well as help educators identify signs of domestic violence and mental health issues. All public elementary and secondary schools have participated in the ERASE training to ensure administrators and other staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond to bullying and any kind of worrisome behaviour. A key goal of the training is to improve multi-agency collaboration and develop community protocols for violence threat/risk assessment and information sharing. To date, approximately 16,000 public, independent and First Nations educators and community partners have been trained.

As part of the strategy, there is an ERASE website, which provides resources for parents and includes an online reporting tool for students to report bullying and other safety concerns. Every school district and many independent schools have a District Safe School Coordinator (DSSC) who is responsible for district-wide safety initiatives and responding to reports through the online reporting tool.

Safe Communities, Strong Families

Our government is firmly committed to measures that help ensure safe communities and protect our sense of community.

Over the last year, the joint response to the fentanyl public-health emergency has been without equal in terms of its life-saving efforts. Law enforcement is working to interrupt supplies of fentanyl and other drugs, and by early in 2017, all B.C. police departments should be trained and equipped to administer naloxone. Health officials are working to address the immediate and longer-term health needs. In April 2016, British Columbia declared a public health emergency and in July, Premier Clark established a Joint Task Force to provide expert advice on the provincial response. British Columbia has earmarked more than \$64 million for measures that will help combat the crisis.

Actions across the health system have included immediate harm reduction, such as expanding access to naloxone, establishing overdose prevention sites and applying for federal approval for additional supervised consumption sites. Longer-term solutions introduced have included

increased access to opioid substitution treatments like Suboxone, additional treatment beds and services, and the establishment of the BC Centre on Substance Use. These actions help ensure B.C.'s treatment system is evidence-based and as effective as possible.

As well, police have led public forums and, with provincial support, delivered workshops to first responders on the safe handling of fentanyl and administering naloxone. BC Corrections not only made naloxone readily available in correctional centres, but also began offering take-home naloxone kits and related training to vulnerable inmates upon their release.

To help fight crime, our ***Guns and Gangs Strategy*** got a \$23-million boost, including an investment in the integrated police teams that are putting gang members in jail and getting guns and drugs off our streets. In November 2016, the ministry launched the \$1-million End Gang Life Gang Exit Pilot Program, which will provide meaningful job opportunities and other supports to adults who are serious about leaving gang life for good. Half of this funding will go toward a range of services for participants, and to program operation and evaluation. The other half will expand the BladeRunners skills training program. We are optimistic that our gang intervention and exit supports have never been stronger or more capable of helping to save young lives, by engaging young people, their families and their friends in making them safer.

In addition to the enhanced ***Guns and Gangs Strategy***, the Province also committed to \$7.8 million over three years to support 22 positions for the Joint Illegal Gaming Investigation Team (JIGIT) involving the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch and the RCMP. JIGIT provides a dedicated, coordinated, multi-jurisdictional investigative and enforcement response to money-laundering and illegal gaming in B.C. With a focus on organized crime, the team works within the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU-BC).

In March 2016, government provided more than \$7.3 million in civil and criminal forfeiture grants to support public safety priorities. Nearly \$2 million was dedicated to gang and youth crime prevention and over \$3.5 million was provided for projects that address violence against women, supporting the ***Vision for a Violence Free BC Strategy***. As part of the Province's Guns and Gangs Strategy, \$500,000 in civil forfeiture grant funding will support the Integrated Community Safety Initiative in Cariboo-Chilcotin to target gangs, the roots of crime and safety in the community. A local steering committee is working to prioritize community safety goals and guide targeted projects and activities over two years.

B.C.'s ninth domestic violence unit (DVU) opened in Prince George, with a dedicated, three-member team, including an RCMP officer dedicated to domestic violence cases, a community-based victim service worker and child protection worker from the Ministry of Children and Family Development. DVUs involve a team of experts that takes on the highest-risk cases of physical and psychological abuse by family members and provides an integrated approach to supporting victims and ensuring their safety.

To give communities a voice in court during sentencing, the Province established a new Community Impact Statement Program. Once an offender is found guilty and the presiding judge is considering what kind of penalty or sentence to apply, courts can admit – and judges can weigh – statements about how a particular offence has impacted the community. This allows a community representative, such as a local organization, civic government, religious organization or First Nations community to prepare a statement describing how a community has been affected by a crime – emotionally, physically or financially – and to describe any concerns they have for their own safety, as well as that of their family and friends.

Work to save lives on B.C.'s roads continues. On June 1, 2016, government increased fines and added more driver penalty points for electronic-device distracted driving offences. Statistics show that distracted, inattentive and drug-affected driving are persistent and growing concerns. As a result, monitoring the impact of the increased penalties will be ongoing. As the federal government continues to develop its cannabis legalization approach, we are exploring ways to enhance both deterrence and enforcement to keep drug-affected drivers off our roads.

The Province also continues to invest in correctional facilities. In September 2016, the new \$200-million Okanagan Correctional Centre was completed. It began housing inmates on a phased-in basis in January 2017. With 378 cells, B.C.'s 10th provincial correctional centre is expected to enhance capacity and safety across the system.

Since 2012, when we released a green paper identifying challenges facing the justice system, followed by an independent review by Geoffrey Cowper, we have released a two-part white paper on justice reform that details government's action plan to create a transparent, timely and balanced justice system for British Columbians. In a 2016 update to his review, Cowper concluded that, "British Columbia has become a leader in justice system innovation and performance."

We will continue to build on a solid foundation for reform that includes:

- ▶ A Justice Reform and Transparency Act that supports our commitment to increased transparency and continued justice reform
- ▶ The Justice and Public Safety Council, which consults with major justice participants and stakeholders, has set improving Aboriginal justice outcomes as its strategic focus for our justice system
- ▶ Appointment of 15 judges to Provincial Court, bringing the total appointed since 2012 to 58
- ▶ Addressing time-to-trial for criminal matters – resulting in the shortest wait times in over a decade
- ▶ Completion of two court backlog reduction projects with the Office of the Chief Judge
- ▶ Working to address delays and backlogs in traffic court by passing legislation with the power to create a driving notice review board
- ▶ The Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) – a platform that opened in July 2016 for strata claims, and will allow British Columbians to resolve small claims disputes online, beginning in spring 2017
- ▶ The Independent Investigations Office continues to increase transparency and accountability for policing in the province by conducting in-depth, prompt and independent investigations of all police-related incidents involving death or serious harm
- ▶ A Family Law Act that puts children's interests first and encourages families to solve disputes outside the courtroom
- ▶ An Aboriginal Family Healing Court Conference pilot in New Westminster that works with Elders to help keep families together and be connected to their cultural roots as their child welfare case is presented to a judge.

Public safety is something we all contribute to and for which we have a responsibility. If you see something, say something and do your part to keep our streets and communities safe.

Emergency Management

Emergency management is part of enhancing public safety for British Columbians. It's a shared responsibility that begins in every home with preparation of an emergency kit and planning.

Our government continues to explore all possible opportunities to enhance B.C.'s emergency preparedness. Key initiatives include:

- ▶ Delivery of a \$1.2-million full-scale provincial-level catastrophic exercise in June 2016.
- ▶ Investment of \$95,000 in improvements to the provincial emergency notification system to speed the delivery of emergency information into the hands of those who need it.
- ▶ Testing of the new national emergency broadcast alerting system.
- ▶ Launch of public education initiatives, including the PreparedBC site and corresponding guides and guidance for personal and neighbourhood preparation.
- ▶ Increased planning and capacity for provincial-level emergencies.
- ▶ Support for partner agencies like HUSAR (Heavy Urban Search and Rescue), as well as 2016 grants of \$10 million to the BC Search and Rescue Association (BCSARA) and \$5 million to Ocean Networks Canada's earthquake warning system.
- ▶ A renewed emergency management agreement with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada that will enhance the delivery of emergency management service to on-reserve First Nations in B.C.

Since 2001, the Province has invested approximately \$17 billion in capital funding for seismic upgrading of schools, health facilities and provincial transportation infrastructure. This includes over \$4 billion in new bridge and large highway infrastructure projects, built to modern-day seismic standards; \$1.2 billion to complete 155 high-risk school seismic projects; \$2.8 billion in capital projects to seismically upgrade advanced education schools; and, \$3.9 billion in new construction and upgrades to health-care facilities in high-risk seismic zones, since 2001.

In February 2016, the Province announced \$65 million in projects to help keep communities safe, including \$15 million for public safety preparedness initiatives (Ocean Networks and BCSARA) and \$50 million for 17 community-hazard mitigation projects, such as upgrades to dikes and flood protection. This is on top of a \$3-million increase over three years being provided to Emergency Management BC (EMBC) to support outreach that is related to emergency preparedness, program capacity and system support.

The Province has also invested significantly in flood mitigation and prevention. Since 2008, our government has committed \$173 million with the federal and local governments for 168 flood mitigation projects in 65 B.C. communities.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism also plays an important role in encouraging safe, welcoming and inclusive B.C. communities. That's why over the last two years, government has spent over \$1.6 million annually on programs that promote multiculturalism, address racism and build inclusive communities in British Columbia. This includes provincial Organizing Against Racism and Hate Networks, and public education programs to help school students understand and challenge racism.

Healthy Citizens

Healthy Families

The B.C. government supports a robust health-care system that continues to meet the needs of British Columbians wherever they live. The provincial health-care budget increased by 3% to a total of \$17.97 billion in 2016/17.

This funding pays for new doctors, nurses and nurse practitioners who are treating patients throughout the province. These investments have also helped to increase the number of MRI exams and surgeries to ensure that patients are diagnosed early and treated appropriately.

A number of major health-care investments are planned and underway. Among these projects are hospitals, clinics and residential and complex-care buildings. In addition to infrastructure, investments in medical equipment, like CT scanners, MRI machines, and lab and surgical equipment help to take care of the needs of B.C.'s growing population. Key projects include:

- ▶ Children's and Women's Hospital Redevelopment, a \$678-million, three-phase project. The Phase 2 Teck Acute Care Centre is expected to open in fall 2017.
- ▶ The \$606-million North Island Hospitals Project includes new facilities for the Comox Valley and Campbell River. Both facilities are scheduled to open in fall 2017.
- ▶ The \$312.5-million Patient Care Tower at Penticton Regional Hospital is expected to open in spring 2019.
- ▶ The \$258.9-million Phase 1 of Royal Columbian Hospital's redevelopment includes a new 75-bed mental-health and substance-use facility and energy centre. It is expected to begin in 2017 and be complete in late 2019.
- ▶ A new St. Paul's Hospital will be a campus of integrated care, focusing on the needs of the most vulnerable.
- ▶ A new Patient Care Tower for the Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, with a focus on surgical services, emergency services and inpatient beds.
- ▶ A new Acute Care Tower in Phase 2 of the Royal Columbian Hospital redevelopment with inpatient beds, surgical and interventional suites and a new emergency department.

Several other new facilities will support British Columbians with mental-health and substance-use needs, including:

- ▶ The \$101-million, purpose-built 105-bed mental health facility on the Riverview lands, scheduled to open in 2019.
- ▶ The \$82-million, purpose-built 100-bed Joseph and Rosalie Segal Family Health Centre at Vancouver General Hospital, scheduled to open in summer 2017.
- ▶ A \$4.7-million dedicated hospital unit for youth with mental-health and substance-use challenges, expected to open in spring 2017. This unit will be located at the Greta and Robert H.N. Ho Centre for Psychiatry and Education (HOpe Centre) at Lions Gate Hospital in North Vancouver.
- ▶ The new \$4.02-million Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Stabilization Unit at Surrey Memorial Hospital will provide short-stay assessment and crisis stabilization for children between the ages six and 17 years in acute psychiatric crisis, requiring urgent hospital intervention. The unit is expected to open in spring 2017.

Building a comprehensive system of supports for people facing mental illness and substance-use challenges is a government priority and part of our strategy to strengthen health care in B.C. More than \$1.42 billion per year is invested to provide care through targeted prevention and risk/harm reduction, promotion of mental health, community-based services and hospital care.

Over the past year, through a cabinet working group initiated by Premier Clark, we have been developing an integrated, cross-government mental-health and substance-use strategy for British Columbia. Our goal is to address key gaps in the system and ensure individuals and families can access support services early, before they find themselves in a crisis.

With the third-lowest cost per capita and some of the best outcomes in Canada, the B.C. health-care system is already one of the most efficient in the country. Building on an already strong health-care system, our government's strategic vision helps make sure we are getting the most out of every dollar invested, while providing top-notch care to B.C. families. We will continue to explore new ways to make lasting improvements to the health-care system, such as for patients in rural and urban areas, as well as to primary health care and seniors care.

Our vision – informed by the expertise and input of frontline caregivers and health-care partners – is a patient-centred, fully integrated health-care system that relies more on community services. It's a system that helps people stay healthy and in their homes longer.

This includes a focus on patients who typically require health-care services more often, such as those suffering with mental-health issues and addictions, aging British Columbians struggling with chronic illnesses and frail seniors.

The Ministry of Health is also working on a strategy to provide patients seamless and timely access to the information, care and service they need around specialized surgical services.

Our goal is to have health care that is focused on the patient from the beginning – working on prevention, health management and primary care in a patient's community, supported by a strong acute and emergency care system – a health-care system that truly works for patients.

Open Government

The Province of B.C. remains committed to improving access to information and modernization of information management practices in a digital context.

In the past year, government has increased resources to respond to freedom of information (FOI) requests and to pursue opportunities for proactive release of government information, including high-value and directly awarded contracts, calendar entries for ministers and deputy ministers, ministers' receipted travel expenses, community gaming grants and more.

The Information Management Act was brought into force, replacing the Document Disposal Act of 1936, and a corresponding robust training initiative has been rolled out across all levels of the public service.

This year, government is working toward establishing a committee to provide advice to the Chief Records Officer on the life cycle of government records, considering legislative amendments to the Information Management Act, such as a 'duty to document,' and updating information management policies including transitory records.

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, compassionately and respectfully; and*
- * *Choice: to afford citizens the opportunity to exercise self-determination.*

