

April 20, 2021

BACKGROUND

Preparing B.C. for a greener recovery

Budget 2021 builds on the progress government has made creating a cleaner, stronger economy for everyone through CleanBC by investing an additional \$506 million to reduce emissions and create new opportunities and promote affordability. These investments in the low-carbon economy and emission reductions are key to positioning B.C. for a strong recovery.

With a range of partners, government has laid the foundation for a better future by rising to the challenge of climate change, protecting our communities, expanding B.C.'s economy and creating new jobs and opportunities for people around the province.

The province has seen a dramatic increase in new electric light duty vehicle sales, the highest rate in North America. B.C.'s zero-emissions vehicle sector contributes approximately \$600 million to the provincial economy. CleanBC rebates and low interest financing are making energy-saving building improvements more affordable, and government is working with industry to reduce emissions with cleaner technology and increased energy efficiency through the CleanBC Program for Industry.

Through StrongerBC, government invested \$190 million to support jobs and a more resilient economic recovery. This will help reduce emissions in transportation, support low-carbon innovation, restore and protect critical watersheds and habitat and tackle climate change while preparing for its impacts.

Budget 2021 investments brings the total funding for CleanBC to nearly \$2.2 billion over five years.

Cleaner transportation

The Province continues to invest in the transition to cleaner transportation by making electric cars more affordable, investing in charging stations and shifting to renewable fuels. Budget 2021 includes \$130 million for zero emissions vehicle incentives, electric charging stations, technological development and electrification of school buses, ferries and government fleets. This includes:

- \$94 million in Go Electric program rebates for purchases of zero-emissions vehicles, charging stations and supports the commercialization of heavy-duty vehicles.

- \$18 million for active transportation infrastructure like bike lanes, sidewalks and multi-use pathways.
- A PST exemption on electric bikes to encourage more active transportation that will save British Columbians an estimated \$7 million annually.
- \$10 million to further develop policy on reducing the carbon intensity of fuel and developing the hydrogen economy in B.C.

Better buildings, stronger communities

Budget 2021 supports cleaner, stronger communities with increased funding for energy efficiency in buildings, city planning and reducing diesel use in remote and Indigenous communities.

This includes:

- \$46 million in energy-efficient buildings and communities, which includes \$34 million to reduce diesel consumption for electric generation in remote communities.
- \$12 million for energy efficiency upgrades to schools under the Carbon Neutral Capital Program.
- \$11 million to develop and fund a new program to help local governments plan for compact, energy-efficient communities.

The Province also remains committed to developing a property assessed clean energy framework to help home owners and building owners finance energy-efficient improvements that reduce costs and emissions.

Working with industry and cleantech

The Province continues to partner with industry by providing \$96 million in new funding for the CleanBC Program for industry to reduce emissions, expand the clean-tech sector and support global competitiveness. The three-year allocation is up to \$519 million and aligns with planned increases to the carbon tax. Budget 2021 also provides:

- \$60 million to support the Centre for Innovation and Clean Energy and for cleantech investments to expand partnership opportunities with the federal government. The centre will support development and commercialization of clean technology in B.C.—creating good jobs and accelerating technology development to help transition to a low-carbon future.
- Additional funding of \$4 million for the Climate Action Secretariat to strengthen analytical capacity to develop climate action measures that support clean, inclusive economic growth.
- Continued funding of \$519 million over the fiscal plan through CleanBC's Program for Industry to help industry, including forestry and mining operations, transition to low-carbon technology.

Climate adaptation and preparedness

The Province also continues to invest in initiatives to support climate preparedness and adaptation. Budget 2021 provides \$6 million to support planning and action as the first phase of B.C.'s Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy to better respond to climate risk and reduce the impacts.

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