

**Ministry of
Citizens' Services**

**2021/22 – 2023/24
SERVICE PLAN**

April 2021



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Citizens' Services 2021/22 – 2023/24 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Beare".

Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Citizens' Services
March 30, 2021

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Purpose of the Ministry

Dedicated to making life better for British Columbians, the [Ministry of Citizens' Services](#) (the Ministry) delivers accessible, multi-channel services, through a single-point-of-contact service approach to people in urban and rural communities through [Service BC](#), and delivers the digital face of government at www.gov.bc.ca. In addition, the Ministry supports other ministries to reach out, engage and learn from British Columbians on issues that matter to them, and is guided by a number of pieces of [provincial legislation](#).

To help people connect to government supports and services, including virtual health care and online learning, the Ministry provides leadership, management, facilitation, and support for the expansion of high-speed internet connectivity throughout this vast and diverse province. Internet connectivity supports job growth, a strong and diversified economy, health care and stronger communities.

Providing strategic direction across government, the Ministry is modernizing information-management and information-technology resources to effectively meet the needs of British Columbians. This includes prompt and relevant responses to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests; providing trusted data services to government agencies; and statistical and economic research, information and analysis to businesses and the public sector.

The Ministry manages the Province's real estate assets, technology systems and equipment. It also leverages procurement to increase business opportunities and create rewarding jobs to benefit individuals, families, and communities. Moreover, this Ministry is creating more opportunity for businesses of all sizes to engage in government procurement. With a focus on supporting increased participation by Indigenous businesses and communities in government procurement, the Ministry is working to support a resilient vendor marketplace and increased business opportunities to benefit individuals, families, and communities across the province.

Strategic Direction

In 2021/22 British Columbians continue to face significant challenges as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of British Columbia is continually evolving to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Government has identified five foundational principles that will inform each ministry's work and contribute to COVID recovery: putting people first; lasting and meaningful reconciliation; equity and anti-racism; a better future through fighting climate change and meeting our greenhouse gas reduction commitments; and a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced economic activity in B.C. in 2020. The ongoing evolution and economic cost of the pandemic on B.C. and its trading partners remains highly uncertain. The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) estimates a 5.1 per cent decline in B.C. real GDP in 2020 and expects growth of 4.9 per cent in 2021 and 4.3 per cent in 2022. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC projects national real GDP growth of 4.7 per cent in 2021 and 4.2 per cent in 2022, following an estimated decline of 5.4 per cent in 2020. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to outperform Canada's in the coming years. The pandemic has increased risks to

B.C.'s economic outlook, such as the timing of the global vaccination rollout, extended travel restrictions, a weaker global recovery, and the continued impact of a slower recovery in some sectors of the B.C. economy. Further risks include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies and lower commodity prices.

This 2021/22 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Citizens' Services will support the government's priorities including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the November 2020 [Minister's Mandate Letter](#).

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Support a strong, sustainable, and innovative economy by making it easier to participate in government procurements and create opportunities for communities across the province.

The Ministry is making it easier for companies of all sizes to do business with government by streamlining processes and modernizing procurement practices. Through engagement across the province, the Ministry will continue to explore how to: improve the procurement experience for businesses, particularly those in rural and Indigenous communities; adopt innovative and advanced technology products; and, further improve BC Registry services.

Objective 1.1: Create opportunities for small, medium, and large businesses to access government procurements.

Key Strategies

- Create culturally appropriate procurement practices and help build procurement capacity for Indigenous businesses, communities and government employees through the [Indigenous Procurement Initiative](#).
- Enhance the [Procurement Concierge Program](#) to match government requirements with market innovations.
- Invest in continued upfront planning, engagement, and collaboration with small, medium, and large suppliers in communities across B.C. to make it easier to do business with government.
- Implement a modern, easy-to-use [BC Bid](#) platform for government procurement.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
1.1 Number of suppliers registered with the Province's BC Bid sourcing application ^{1 2}	4,800	5,575	5,800	6,000	6,200

¹ Data source: BC Bid database – monthly BC Bid Subscribers Report.

² Data indicates the number of suppliers who purchased e-Notification and e-Bidding subscriptions. e-Notifications allow suppliers to be alerted when opportunities that match their areas of interests are posted to BC Bid. e-Bidding capabilities allow a supplier to submit their bids electronically through BC Bid.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

BC Bid is a tool that businesses use to gain access and insight to contract opportunities offered by core government and hundreds of publicly funded organizations, such as Crown corporations, health authorities, and municipalities. The number of suppliers who are registered with BC Bid provides a measure for the breadth of small, medium, and large suppliers who do business with government in communities across British Columbia.

Discussion

This performance measure has been included in the Ministry's Service Plan since 2019/20. Initial baseline targets were set in 2018 and since that time, the Ministry has refined the data to clarify the definition of an active registered user in the BC Bid system. Actuals reported in 2018/19 and 2019/20 are above the baseline and the target; however, this is a result of data refinement, not a substantial increase in users. As users of BC Bid do not need an account to review and bid on opportunities, suppliers who have paid for subscriptions is an indicator of those who are active registered users.

Objective 1.2: Enhance the experience for businesses when interacting with government.

Key Strategies

- Ensure government services for businesses remain responsive through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.
- Reduce and automate processes across ministries to simplify procurement interactions between government buyers and suppliers.
- Refine service and technology enhancements for extra-provincial business registration.
- Streamline and simplify BC Registry services to make it easier for British Columbians to start up and maintain a business in B.C.

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
1.2 Satisfaction with services to businesses provided by Service BC. ^{1,2}	89%	At least 90%	Biennial survey; next survey in 2022/23	At least 90%	Biennial survey; next survey in 2024/25

¹ Data source: [BC Stats](#).

² The margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ at the 95% confidence level.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

Biennial survey results reflect the overall experience that business representatives have when requesting or receiving support from Service BC.

Discussion

Service BC strives to reach a business satisfaction score of at least 90%, which indicates Service BC met businesses' needs in a convenient and timely manner. Business satisfaction levels are evaluated using an arms-length survey conducted by BC Stats on a biennial basis. Data provided by these surveys are used to inform continuous improvement efforts in service delivery.

Goal 2: Provide greater public accountability by improving access to government information, while ensuring the protection of privacy.

Access to, use, and protection of government information and data is the foundation of a functioning democracy and is a fundamental duty of public servants. Government information, including the use of data, allows for evidence-based decision making and innovation that meets the needs of British Columbians. The Ministry is undertaking several measures to fulfill this commitment and enhance privacy, security and access to information and data in B.C.

Objective 2.1: Enhance public access to government records.

Key Strategies

- Review and improve access to information rules.
- Improve response and processing times for Freedom of Information requests.
- Engage with and support government bodies in creating and maintaining government information.

Performance Measure	2016/17 Baseline	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.1 Percent of on-time Freedom of Information requests. ¹	80%	85%	85%	90%	90%

¹ Data source: AXIS System, the Ministry's internal Freedom of Information tracking system.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

The percentage of on-time responses to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests is an essential way for government to measure the effectiveness of its access to information program. This measure is of significant interest to the public and provides an indication of government's annual performance in responding to FOI requests within the timelines defined in the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

Discussion

Government has received near all-time highs for requests over the last few years – FOI requests increased by 40% between 2016/17 and 2019/20. A recent trend over time is displayed on page 5 of government's [2017/18 & 2018/19 Report on the Administration of FOIPPA](#).

Government also releases a high volume of records without the need for an FOI request, including executive calendars, travel expense summaries and contract summaries. In December 2020, transition binders and estimates notes were added to the list of records released proactively.

The Ministry is planning a multi-year project to improve and modernize FOI services. Work will focus on improving timelines and making access to information services easier for citizens.

Targets represent realistic results given the increased demand, volume, and complexity of FOI requests.

Objective 2.2: Improve the use, management, sharing and protection of data for all British Columbians.

Key Strategies

- Continue to expand the use of cross-government data to increase evidence-based decision making and better inform public policy.
- Support innovation through open data initiatives.
- Continue to improve government's public sector data security and privacy practices to ensure that British Columbians' personal information is safeguarded.
- Support the Parliamentary Secretary responsible for Anti-Racism Initiatives in the collection, housing, and analysis of race-based data.
- Establish and promote data-driven partnerships.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
2.2 Number of datasets in B.C. Data Catalogue. ¹	2,750	2,900	3,000	3,050	3,100

¹Data source: DataBC Website - <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset>.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

By working with departments across government and the broader public sector to increase the amount of data sets in the B.C. Data Catalogue, the Ministry is ensuring greater public accountability and improving access to government data, resulting in evidence-based decision making. The availability of data and mapping expertise helps other government departments and agencies deliver on their mandates.

Discussion

The targets for the number of data-sets for 2021/22 and 2022/23 have been increased due to increased profile of the value of data through the B.C. Data Council and its dedicated engagement efforts. B.C.'s Data Council is a cross-government group of data experts that support an all-of-government approach to management of public sector data to facilitate data use by government, academia, the private sector, and citizens.

The Ministry is planning to develop a qualitative based performance measure, capturing the baseline within the three-year period of this service plan.

Goal 3: Make life better for British Columbians by delivering the services that people count on.

Rapid social change, technological innovation, climate change and rising citizen expectations are changing the way government does business. The Ministry is focused on delivering better services for people regardless of where they live in the province, providing easy to use online services, making better use of data, and improving engagement with British Columbians. Connectivity is the ability to affordably connect to the internet and access the information and services people need when and where they need them. The Ministry will work to ensure everyone, including those living in rural and Indigenous communities, has access to high-speed internet services and can fully participate in the digital economy.

Objective 3.1: High-speed internet is expanded with increased bandwidth in rural and Indigenous communities.

Key Strategies

- Support the expansion of high-speed internet services (broadband) to underserved rural and Indigenous communities.
- Leverage funds from other levels of government and the private sector to support investments in transport and last-mile digital infrastructure.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
3.1 Number of rural, remote, and Indigenous communities ¹ that have benefitted from investments in high-speed internet. ^{2,3,4}	417	525	570	620	685

¹ Data source: Government of Canada: Geolocated placenames dataset:

<https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/fe945388-1dd9-4a4a-9a1e-5c552579a28c>.

² Data source: Ministry of Citizens' Services (Network BC) internal analysis.

³ The definition of 'community' refers to rural and remote communities and includes named places such as districts, Indigenous communities, municipalities, towns, villages as well as incorporated areas and strategic landing sites required for a network to operate. Communities may require one or more projects to be wholly served at the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Universal Service Objective of 50 Megabits per second download and 10 Megabits per second upload.

⁴ Figures represent a cumulative number of communities.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

The Province helps develop strategies and programs that enable the private sector to expand broadband infrastructure in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. This performance measure demonstrates the level of success in expanding the number of communities benefiting from broadband internet investments.

Discussion

The targets presented for the next three fiscal years are based on information received from different sources and are subject to change; factors like weather conditions, terrain and the remoteness of each community can affect the build process. This measure does not consider the take-up usage or subscription rate (i.e., end-user) of how many users there are and does not include access to cellular service. There are multiple factors that may impact the Province's ability to realize these targets, as this initiative depends on several factors, including the ability to coordinate funding sources from federal and local governments and the private sector.

Objective 3.2: Government services are accessible, effective, and efficient.

Key Strategies

- Ensure government services remain responsive through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.
- Increase social and environmental benefits from the goods and services government purchases.
- Expand the integration of in-person government services in communities.
- Expand the usage of the BC Services Card for government programs.
- Improve the quality of citizens' experience with government – in person, by telephone and online.
- Make government buildings smarter¹, more energy efficient and increase their accessibility.

Performance Measure	2012/13 Baseline	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target
3.2 Citizen satisfaction with Service BC Centres and Contact Centre. ^{1,2}	90%	At least 90%	Biennial survey; next survey in 2022/23	At least 90%	Biennial survey; next survey in 2024/25

¹ Data source: [BC Stats](#).

² The margin of error is $\pm 1\%$ at the 95% confidence level. Citizen satisfaction is calculated as a weighted average of the in-person and telephone survey results based on the volume of citizens served by each channel.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

This measure is based on biennial surveys that focus on the overall citizen experience when people access government programs and services, either in person through the province's 65 Service BC Centres or by telephone through the Service BC Provincial Contact Centre. The measure shows how satisfied people are with overall quality when they access government programs and services.

¹ Smarter buildings are those which combine extensive data collection with advanced, integrated, and predictive digital control systems to achieve environmental benefits, improve comfort, occupant experience and reduce costs.

Discussion

Service BC strives to reach at least 90% satisfaction, which indicates citizens' needs were met in a convenient and timely manner. Resident satisfaction levels are evaluated using an arms-length survey conducted by BC Stats on a biennial basis. Data provided by these surveys are used to inform continuous improvement efforts in service delivery.

In the [Ministry of Citizens' Services 2020/21 – 2022/23 Service Plan](#), the 2019/20 forecast and 2021/22 target were inadvertently published as “At least 90%”. The last correct targets noting that this measure is based on biennial surveys was published in the [Ministry of Citizens' Services 2019/20 Annual Service Plan Report](#).

Financial Summary

Core Business Area	2020/21 Restated Estimates ¹	2021/22 Estimates	2022/23 Plan	2023/24 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Services to Citizens and Businesses	31,083	31,528	31,528	31,528
Office of the Chief Information Officer	2,670	2,695	2,695	2,695
Digital Platforms and Data	14,949	19,072	23,072	23,072
Information Communication Technologies	1,486	11,505	11,505	21,505
Procurement and Supply Services	4,313	8,053	8,053	7,053
Real Property	320,368	345,970	347,142	347,675
Enterprise Services	130,819	136,174	135,989	135,748
Corporate Information and Records Management	21,862	22,146	22,146	22,146
Government Digital Experience	8,054	8,136	8,136	8,136
Executive and Support Services	18,918	19,025	19,034	19,044
Total	554,522	604,304	609,300	618,602
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Digital Platforms and Data	110,511	110,000	110,000	110,000
Procurement and Supply Services	150	150	150	150
Real Property	202,621	246,658	187,334	132,745
Enterprise Services	36,893	32,543	31,152	31,154
Executive and Support Services	91	145	131	131
Total	350,266	389,496	328,767	274,180

Core Business Area	2020/21 Restated Estimates ¹	2021/22 Estimates	2022/23 Plan	2023/24 Plan
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)				
Strategic Real Estate Services program				
Receipts	(1,400)	(1,100)	(600)	(500)
Disbursements	3,000	2,500	2,300	2,300
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	1,600	1,400	1,700	1,800
Total Receipts	(1,400)	(1,100)	(600)	(500)
Total Disbursements	3,000	2,500	2,300	2,300
Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)	1,600	1,400	1,700	1,800

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2020/21 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2021/22 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Capital Expenditures

The Nanaimo Correctional Centre Project is reported by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, as the project lead for reporting purposes. The capital budget for this project resides with the Ministry of Citizens' Services.