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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Budget 2022 moves us forward together to build a Stronger BC**

VICTORIA — Budget 2022 reflects the choices government is making that are needed to build a stronger B.C. and make life better for people, by investing in B.C.'s economic, environmental and social strengths.

Budget 2022 supports bold actions to fight climate change and to protect people and communities from climate-related disasters. In addition, the budget helps with the cost of living by reducing child care costs, delivers a comprehensive approach to respond to and prevent homelessness, makes investments needed to close the digital divide and grow an inclusive and sustainable economy, and continues to strengthen the public services British Columbians rely on.

“We know that we are at our best when we work together and look out for each other. The scale of the problems we have seen recently – from the ongoing pandemic to the devastating effects of climate-related disasters – require government leadership and collective action,” said Selina Robinson, Minister of Finance. “We know that the strength of our economy is intertwined with the well-being of people, communities and the climate.”

As B.C. continues to respond to the effects of the pandemic, Budget 2022 builds on the province's strengths, and holds steady to what is right: putting people first.

#### **Building a stronger society by putting people first**

- Saving parents money on full-day child care, preschool and before- and after-school care by cutting average fees to approximately \$20 per day, while delivering 40,000 new licensed spaces in the next seven years.
- Better health care closer to home, with new urgent and primary care centres, and cancer care centres in preliminary planning stages in Kamloops and Nanaimo.

- Working in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority to continue creating up to 15 First Nations Primary Care Centres throughout the province.
- Taking a proactive approach to respond to and prevent homelessness through new complex care housing, rent supplements with integrated supports, and extending support for youth aging out of care until age 27.
- Supporting survivors of sexual assault by providing stable funding to approximately 50 community-based sexual assault response organizations to support victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

### **Building a stronger environment for our future**

- Building B.C.'s low-carbon future by expanding the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and making clean energy and transportation the more affordable option for people and businesses.
- Building and rebuilding more resilient infrastructure with landmark projects, including the Broadway Subway, Fraser River tunnel, Pattullo Bridge, and Highway 1 through Kicking Horse Canyon underway, with more projects in planning stages including the Surrey Langley Skytrain.
- Protecting people and communities from climate-related disasters, including moving BC Wildfire Services to a proactive year-round model, supporting local governments to prepare for climate disasters through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, supporting Indigenous-led emergency management priorities, and strengthening B.C.'s defences through the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy.

### **Building a stronger economy for everyone**

- Creating a new Declaration Act Secretariat that will guide and assist government to meet its obligation to ensure legislation is consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and is developed in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous Peoples.
- Connecting more than 280 remote, rural and Indigenous communities to high-speed internet, improving access to digital health-care services, education, employment and business opportunities.
- Investing in an inclusive and clean economy with the Stronger BC Economic Plan, which will close the skills gap, grow B.C.'s life sciences, manufacturing and agricultural sectors, and build an economy that works for more people.
- Accelerating investments to build more affordable and mixed-income housing projects faster.
- Creating opportunities for workers by investing in training opportunities in the skilled trades, health care and life sciences sectors, and expanding and diversifying the construction workforce through Community Benefits Agreements.

“Our government knows that building a strong economy is not about pulling back and leaving people without support,” Robinson said. “By continuing our investment in a stronger B.C. and building on the work we are already undertaking to build a strong economy, environment and society, our province will be ready for the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.”

B.C. is in a strong economic position for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and recent climate-related disasters. The province's economy expanded by an estimated 5.0% in 2021 and is forecast to expand by 4.0% in 2022 and 2.5% in 2023. Budget 2022's three-year fiscal plan presents declining deficits, with a projected \$5.5-billion deficit in 2022-23 declining to \$3.2 billion in 2024-25.

Four backgrounders follow.

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