

The past couple of years have challenged us in ways we've never imagined – from the pandemic to the effects of climate change. British Columbians have come a long way by looking out for each other. We know we are stronger together. We also know that strength doesn't just happen – strength is built.

AS A GOVERNMENT, WE ARE COMMITTED TO BUILDING ON THE WORK WE HAVE DONE AND HOLDING STEADY TO OUR PRIORITY: WORKING FOR PEOPLE.

In *Budget 2021*, we responded to the immediate challenges we were facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In *Budget 2022*, as we continue to respond to the effects of the pandemic still with us today, we are also building on our strengths to prepare our province for the challenges – and opportunities – of tomorrow.

We are making the investments needed to build a stronger B.C. where no one is left behind.

MEANINGFUL RECONCILIATION

Our government is committed to working with Indigenous Peoples and communities to advance true and lasting reconciliation.

Working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples over the past number of years has resulted in some important milestones.

We were the first government in Canada to pass legislation to establish the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the framework for reconciliation in British Columbia.

To begin to address the need for better housing in Indigenous communities, B.C. became the first province in Canada to fund on-reserve housing.

The historic agreement to share gaming revenue has meant First Nations have more resources to invest in their communities.

We know there is still a lot more work to be done.

Budget 2022 takes another important step forward in advancing meaningful reconciliation with the establishment of the new Declaration Act Secretariat, which will focus on ensuring Indigenous rights are woven through all the work government does and bring the province's laws into

harmony with B.C.'s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).

To further improve management of B.C.'s land and resources, we are creating a new ministry to better support goals of reconciliation, economic development and environmental protection.

Budget 2022 will also help the province support more culturally-safe services for Indigenous Peoples, from health care and child care to justice services.

BUILDING A STRONGER SOCIETY BY PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Our government's top priority is protecting people's health and livelihoods as we continue to face the challenges of COVID-19. Thanks to the guidance of public health experts and everyone who rolled up their sleeves, B.C. has one of the highest vaccination rates and one of the lowest fatality rates in North America.

During the height of the pandemic we delivered more help to people and small businesses than any other jurisdiction, and we kept schools safely open. The pandemic re-enforced the importance of government supports and services. But even before the pandemic, our government was working to improve the services on which British Columbians rely.

The 26 urgent primary care centres that have opened over the past few years are making it easier for British Columbians all over the province to see a doctor and other health professionals. New hospitals are being built throughout B.C., including in fast-growing communities like Surrey and Richmond.

Thousands of families across B.C. are accessing quality, affordable child care services through our ChildcareBC plan. To date, more than 26,000 child care spaces have been funded and announced.

Through Homes for BC, our 10-year housing strategy, more than 32,000 affordable homes have been completed or are underway.

We recognize that the pandemic has threatened more than our physical health. It has taken a significant toll on our mental well-being. And tragically, the poisoned drug crisis has only worsened.

Budget 2021 made a historic three-year investment to support people facing mental health and substance-use challenges. Included in this on-going work is the creation of 195 new adult treatment beds and 15 new Integrated Child and Youth Teams. There are currently 11 Foundry centres

throughout the province, and we are continuing our work to more than double the locations to provide integrated health and wellness services for young people in rural and urban communities.

Budget 2022 also responds to this on-going crisis, including funding to expand the first-of-its-kind Complex Care housing model to at least 20 more sites across B.C. This will support British Columbians with severe mental health challenges, substance-use issues, or traumatic and acquired brain injuries who are currently homeless or unstably housed.

Budget 2022 builds on the work already underway to build a stronger society by putting people first, with new funding for responding to and preventing homelessness, for creating more affordable child care spaces, and for opening more urgent primary care centres.

Budget 2022 also invests in supporting survivors of sexual assault by providing permanent and stable funding to more than 50 sexual assault services centres throughout B.C., undoing cuts that were made to these services in 2002.

BUILDING A STRONGER ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR FUTURE

From wildfires and floods to extreme heat, the realities of climate change have become all too real for British Columbians in recent years. We need to protect this beautiful place we call home. That is why our government is working to fight climate change and protect people and communities from climate-related disasters.

After last fall's flooding, our government worked quickly to reopen roads and highways. Now we're working to build back better, with more climate-resilient communities.

Budget 2022 provides more than \$1.5 billion in funding for rebuilding and recovery. It also includes significant new funding for Emergency Management BC and the BC Wildfire Services, delivering new facilities and equipment to respond to future disasters and moving to a proactive, year-round service model for the BC Wildfire Service.

We're building on our internationally-recognized CleanBC plan to reduce carbon emissions and make clean alternatives more affordable for people and businesses.

Budget 2022 invests over \$1 billion in new funding for CleanBC and the Roadmap to 2030, with support for clean transportation, clean industry, clean buildings and clean communities. This includes: rebates for zero-emission vehicles and charging infrastructure; grants for communities to build bike lanes, multi-use pathways and other

transportation infrastructure; funding for clean industry and innovation, including enhancing the CleanBC Program for Industry; PST exemption for heat pumps and used zero-emission vehicles; and helping local governments take action to reduce their emissions with a new Local Government Climate Action program.

BUILDING A STRONGER ECONOMY FOR EVERYONE

Building a strong province is about making life better for people now and preparing for the future. We know that climate change, economic shifts and strengthening the public services people rely on are intertwined. The global transition to climate action and a low-carbon future will create new opportunities. By making investments now, we can make sure people, businesses and communities across B.C. are poised to benefit.

B.C. is an economic leader in Canada. Last year, more than 160,000 new jobs were created in the province, and we have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. In addition, British Columbia's most recent Labour Market Outlook projects more than one million job opening over the next ten years.

OUR GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING AND BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE, NOT JUST THOSE AT THE TOP.

Budget 2022 invests a total of \$27.4 billion in important infrastructure like schools, hospitals, affordable housing, highways and bridges to help people and communities recover and build B.C.'s economic resilience. This record level of capital spending will also support 100,000 jobs in communities throughout the province.

We have a long-term Economic Plan to ensure that growth is sustainable and works for people. *StrongerBC: A Plan for Today, a Vision for Tomorrow* is focused on preparing people for the jobs of the future. To realize this vision, we will be supporting skills training, closing the digital divide, driving innovation and building on B.C.'s strengths in clean energy and tech.

Our government is advancing more sustainable resource development and taking historic action to protect B.C.'s iconic, old-growth forests.

To support this, *Budget 2022* provides funding to support a growing, safe and thriving mining sector in British Columbia, and creating a new Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship, to support economic activity, environmental sustainability and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

The budget also delivers support for forestry workers, businesses and communities impacted by old-growth logging deferrals by connecting people to skills training and short-term employment opportunities, supporting older workers and contractors transition to retirement through investment in the Bridging to Retirement program, and working to create jobs through diversified economies and infrastructure projects.

While our province is seeing remarkable growth, we know many people are facing challenges, particularly when it comes to the cost of living.

Over the past several years, our government has taken action to make life more affordable for people. We eliminated MSP – the biggest middle-class tax break in a generation. We cracked down on housing speculation and started building the affordable homes that were not being built before. We introduced the B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit, providing a tax-free monthly payment to families with children under the age of 18. We made significant changes to ICBC, and now rates are down almost 30%, an average of \$490-a-year savings.

But we know this on-going challenge requires more action from our government.

That is why we will be raising the minimum wage to keep up with inflation, so people don't fall behind. And workers in B.C. now have access to five days of paid sick leave a year, so people don't have to choose between losing pay or going to work sick.

With *Budget 2022*, we are also continuing to tackle the cost of child care for families. As we work toward our goal of \$10/day child care, we are lowering average full-day fees for children under six by 50 per cent, to approximately \$20/day, through our shared agreement with the federal government. In addition, the Province is lowering costs by cutting fees for school-age care to lower than that by the 2023/24 school year.



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