

# **Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation**

## **2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report**

**August 2023**



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## Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation 2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan published in 2022. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Brenda Bailey'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light background.

Honourable Brenda Bailey  
Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation  
August 10, 2023

## Minister of State's Accountability Statement

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation 2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan published in 2022. Under the Balanced Budget and Ministerial Act, I am accountable for achievement of the following results for 2022/23:



- (a) promote the 2022 BC Export Awards;
- (b) continue to consult with key stakeholders as ministry teams work towards developing a new B.C. Trade Diversification Strategy which should include new strategies to expand B.C.'s export opportunities;
- (c) continue to support Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd.'s efforts to actively maintain, create and diversify demand for B.C.'s manufactured wood products in key international markets;
- (d) continue to promote B.C. food and agriculture exports in collaboration with the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries;
- (e) promote trade readiness programs across B.C., including B.C.'s Export Navigator program, to help more small businesses export their goods and services;
- (f) continue to promote the benefits of free trade agreements to help B.C. businesses leverage new opportunities;
- (g) continue to engage with industry stakeholders to identify sector-focused special projects that would support economic development, trade and innovation in sectors including aerospace and broader forest innovation;
- (h) lead consultation to advance the Mass Timber Action Plan including engaging with the Mass Timber Advisory Council and industry stakeholders;
- (i) support the development and implementation of a made-in-B.C. Shipbuilding Strategy through engagement of stakeholders and partners, including the B.C. Shipbuilding Advisory Committee;
- (j) submit to Cabinet a report on the results referred to in paragraphs (a) through (i) on or before March 31, 2023.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jagrup Brar".

Honourable Jagrup Brar  
Minister of State for Trade  
August 10, 2023

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## Letter from the Minister

As Minister of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation, it is my pleasure to present the annual service plan report for the year 2022/23. This report highlights the significant strides we have taken toward making life better for people – from lowering the cost of living and training people for the jobs of tomorrow to tackling climate change and fostering an innovation economy.

Over fiscal year 2022/23, British Columbians continued to face challenges from the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, global unrest and inflation, and extreme weather events. In February 2022, we launched our StrongerBC Economic Plan -- A Plan for Today, A Vision for Tomorrow. This long-term economic plan is designed to meet the challenges of our time by achieving two big goals – clean and inclusive growth – to create a more prosperous B.C. today and for generations to come.

This annual report demonstrates our progress through the economic plan in closing the skills gap for people and businesses, building resilient communities, supporting economic reconciliation and helping businesses and people to transition to clean-energy solutions.

To help thousands of people get the skills they need in the changing economy and help close the skills gap many businesses are facing, we launched the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan.

To provide new opportunities for jobs, while reducing our carbon footprint and getting more value out of every tree, we launched the Mass Timber Action Plan, positioning B.C. to be a global leader in the sector.

More innovative companies will have opportunities to grow and create high-paying jobs, while advancing health care and pandemic preparedness at home and internationally through a new, made-in-B.C. Life Sciences and Biomanufacturing Strategy.

The new B.C. Maritime Industries Strategy will chart the course for a more competitive, modernized marine sector with reduced carbon emissions, and creating more highly skilled jobs to meet growing demands.

A new B.C. Centre for Agritech Innovation will further position the province as a world leader in agricultural technology, helping to improve food security in B.C. and around the world, while creating hundreds of well-paying jobs.

B.C. is providing funding to the B.C. Assembly of First Nations for the launch of their new Centre of Excellence in First Nations Economic Development to help advance the role of First Nations in B.C.'s inclusive economy and to work toward true and lasting reconciliation.

B.C. is launching a new international trade strategy that will help more B.C. businesses export and invest internationally in new and existing markets, and increase the diversity of exporters and global markets.



Honourable Brenda Bailey  
Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation  
August 10, 2023

## Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the [Budget Transparency and Accountability Act](#) (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

## Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2020 and former Minister Kahlon's [2020 Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

A second [Mandate Letter](#) issued to Minister Bailey upon appointment in December 2022 informs the ministry's go-forward strategic direction.

## Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation is working to make life better for people by building an inclusive, sustainable, and innovative economy that works for all British Columbians.

The Ministry delivers programs and services that leverage British Columbia's natural advantages to drive clean and inclusive economic growth.

Its priorities include encouraging business start-up and growth through innovation and adoption of new technologies, supporting emerging opportunities in manufacturing, shipbuilding, life sciences, agritech, hydrogen, clean technology, and mass timber. In addition, the Ministry will build on British Columbia's competitive advantages through the development of an Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) program. The Ministry also promotes trade and investment, positioning B.C. as a global exporter of low-carbon goods and services.

The Ministry supports First Nations and Indigenous peoples, small businesses and communities with economic development activities, the revitalization of traditional industries, economic diversification, job creation, exposure to export opportunities, and strategic investments to ensure everyone in British Columbia benefits from economic growth. To that end, our government is implementing [Stronger BC: A plan for today, a vision for tomorrow–British Columbia's guide to economic prosperity through inclusive and clean growth](#).

The Ministry has an oversight role for the following Crown corporations: [Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd.](#), [InBC Investment Corporation](#) and [Innovate BC](#).

## Operating Environment

B.C. is a small, open economy that operates in a very dynamic, competitive global environment and relies on its interaction with the rest of the world to grow and prosper.

In 2022, overseas shipments for B.C. products increased to \$64.9 billion, posting a year-over-year growth rate of 20.4 per cent. B.C. goods export increases from 2021 to 2022 were mainly driven by energy products (+59.0 per cent), machinery and equipment (+24.0 per cent), and agriculture, food, and fish products (+20.4 per cent). The majority of markets experienced an increase in B.C. goods exports, including exports to the United States, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Hong Kong. Exports to Mainland China and Taiwan decreased.

Small businesses remain the cornerstone of the B.C. economy and continued to help create jobs, supporting families and strengthening the business climate. In 2022—the most recent year for which data is available—there were a total of 519,300 businesses in B.C. Of these, 510,700 were small businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

The Ministry supports B.C. workers, companies and communities to maximize opportunities available under Canada's free trade agreements, and advances and defends provincial interests in domestic and international negotiations.

## Economic Statement

After rebounding rapidly in 2021, British Columbia's economy saw slower yet strong growth in 2022. B.C.'s real GDP growth of 3.6 per cent last year was the fourth highest among provinces (tied with Ontario) and grew at the same pace as the national average, following growth of 6.2 per cent in 2021. Growth in B.C.'s real GDP was mostly supported by service-producing industries such as transportation and warehousing, accommodation and food services, and professional, scientific and technical services. Goods-producing industries also experienced growth led by construction. While B.C.'s recovery broadened in 2022, it remained uneven as sectors such as transportation and warehousing; accommodation and food services; and arts, entertainment and recreation have yet to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels. B.C.'s labour market continued to grow in 2022, with employment growth of 3.2 per cent and an average unemployment rate of 4.6 per cent, while wages and salaries increased by 10.8 per cent.

Consumer spending on goods grew slowly after a rapid expansion at the beginning of the recovery and nominal retail sales posted overall growth of 3.1 per cent. Last year, prices rose dramatically as strong demand for goods and services was met with lingering supply-chain challenges and high prices for global commodities following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In 2022, B.C.'s inflation rate averaged 6.9 per cent, the fastest annual rate since 1982, and up from 2.8 per cent in 2021. B.C. housing starts totalled 46,721 units in 2022, down 1.9 per cent compared to the previous year. Despite the decline, housing starts in 2022 were the second highest on record. Home sales fell sharply in 2022 as they adjusted to higher mortgage rates not seen since 2008. B.C. MLS home sales decreased by 35.2 per cent in 2022 compared to 2021. Meanwhile the MLS average home sale price rose by 7.4 per cent in 2022 because of

strength early in the year, despite monthly declines in 9 of the last 10 months of the year. On the external front, B.C.'s international merchandise exports grew by 20.4 per cent, boosted by strong commodity prices in the first half of 2022.

## Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

### **Goal 1: Capitalize on our strengths, including low-carbon and Environmental, Social and Governance advantages, to build a brand that attracts investment, accelerates exports and supports business growth in British Columbia**

#### **Objective 1.1: Assist B.C. businesses to compete globally taking advantage of trade opportunities in existing and new markets and attracting investment to create resiliency**

##### **Key results**

- Represented B.C. interests in six international and two domestic Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, as well as regulatory reconciliation agreements to further open markets to support diversification.
- Protected B.C.'s interests in a range of trade initiatives to help protect B.C. businesses' competitiveness.
- Supported B.C. exporters and communities globally by delivering 252 campaigns in collaboration with B.C.'s Trade and Investment Representatives, promoting trade and investment attraction opportunities.
- *Alacrity B.C. Cleantech Program* supported B.C. companies to become economically and operationally self-sufficient in strategic global markets (Mexico, Singapore, India, and Northern Europe). Investment attraction (2020-2023) totalled \$81.4M which exceeded program metrics by 48 percent. Export revenue (2020-2023) totalled \$39.3M which exceeded program metrics by 31 percent.

##### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

Notable progress in FTA negotiations include the United Kingdom's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the completion of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement modernization.

The Ministry made progress on the provincial Trade Development Strategy (TDS), supporting an inclusive approach to trade, and enabling more BC businesses to export and diversify markets. Actions included completing several dedicated Free Trade Agreement outreach sessions, and installing a new BC trade representative in one of the key target markets.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
1.1 Number of trade and investment opportunities supported by the Ministry <sup>1</sup>	684	665	607

Data source: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, Trade and Industry Development Division

<sup>1</sup>PM 1.1 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 732 and 732, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

This performance measure measures the number of trade and investment opportunities supported by the Ministry and had a target of 665 opportunities for fiscal year 2022/23. The Ministry closed fiscal year 2022/23 with 607 opportunities supported: 287 in Trade and 320 in Investment. Despite a decrease in the number of supported opportunities in 2022/23, there was an increase in both the number and value of actual trade and investment deals resulting from these opportunities and compared to 2021/22. This progress is monitored through an internal ministry tracking system. The higher number of actual trade deals, and their increased value, is consistent with the overall trend of increased exports of B.C. origin in 2022. The Ministry continues to ensure strong support for trade and investment programs is provided through a network of Trade and Investment offices around the world, along with other innovative platforms to advance export promotion and investment attraction.

## Objective 1.2: Support business growth and anchoring in B.C.

### Key results

- Despite investor uncertainty resulting from higher inflation and higher interest rates in 2022, investment in B.C.'s small businesses under the Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit program was \$124 million, only marginally lower than the record level of investment achieved in 2021/22 of \$130 million.
- 2022/23 was an exceptionally strong year for investment in businesses located outside the Lower Mainland and Capital Regional District. Significant investment into capital intensive clean tech development businesses, followed by agritech businesses, helped increase the level of regional investment, and further solidified B.C.'s reputation as a location for clean tech and food security innovation and investment.
- The Ministry extended the Digital Marketing Bootcamp in March of 2022. Program access was provided to just over 2,000 B.C. businesses needing the skills to acquire customers in the digital marketplace and over 8,000 B.C. businesses acquired digital marketing skills to access other markets, connecting with consumers online between 2020/21 and 2022/23.
- Invested \$6.5 million in growing B.C.'s small and medium-sized agritech businesses by establishing the BC Centre for Agritech Innovation (BCCAI).

- Provided support to B.C. agritech and agri-food companies through the Agritech Concierge program, which supports agritech companies in finding government programs and services to grow their businesses.
- The Ministry ensured businesses were supported, through the Trade Accelerator Program (TAP) and the Export Navigator Program, to build capacity to export and to attract investment.
- Worked with Indigenous partners, equity-seeking and small business organizations, and entrepreneurs, to identify key issues and strengthen relationships in the development of an action plan. The Ministry hosted two minister-led roundtables to advance the action plan.

### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

The Ministry supports TAP offered through the World Trade Centre Vancouver, which provides support for export-ready businesses to expand their international business development and increase export revenue. TAP aligns with StrongerBC's commitment to clean and inclusive growth and benefits tailored cohorts of under-represented groups, including Indigenous and women-led businesses.

Since its launch in 2017, TAP has successfully hosted 30 cohorts across 9 BC cities and graduated 415 companies. In 2022/23, 56 companies completed the program. TAP received additional funding of \$913,000 from the Province to fund cohorts until 2025/26.

The Export Navigator program provides enhanced export advisory services to businesses throughout the province seeking to export. Since its launch in 2016, the program has supported 900 companies in rural BC, including Indigenous, women- and youth-owned businesses. In 2022/23, 121 new businesses were accepted into the program. Export Navigator underwent a redesign to reach more small businesses in Greater Vancouver and Greater Victoria beginning in 2023/24. The Province provided dedicated funding of \$1.2 million to support this effort until June 30, 2024.

The Ministry made progress on the development of a B.C. Maritime Industries Strategy. The Strategy identifies pathways for action, supporting growth, enhanced coordination within B.C. maritime industries, growing market and infrastructure capacity, workforce development, and clean fuels and technology innovation.

## Performance measures and related discussion

Performance Measures	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
1.2a Total small business venture capital leveraged through tax credit usage <sup>1,2</sup>	\$130M	\$89M	\$124M
1.2b Rural small business venture capital leveraged through tax credit usage <sup>3,4</sup>	\$8.6M	\$8M	\$11.2M

Data source:

<sup>1</sup>Innovation Branch, Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit Program. The 30% tax credit reduces risk to B.C. investors of their investment into eligible B.C. businesses.

<sup>2</sup>PM 1.2a targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as \$90M and \$95M, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

<sup>3</sup>Rural small business usage is a sub-component of the total small business venture capital tax credit usage detailed in 1.1a.

<sup>4</sup>PM 1.2b targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as \$8.5M and \$8.5M, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

The Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit Program provides investors with a 30 per cent tax credit to help off-set some of the risk of investing in B.C.'s small businesses. Businesses registered in the Tax Credit Program are typically new and young start-ups developing technologies or involved in small business manufacturing. The tax credit helps entrepreneurs and innovators raise seed and early-stage venture capital to help start a business, conduct R&D, develop technologies, commercialize ideas and create jobs.

In 2022/23 the total amount of investment raised under the Tax Credit Program was \$124 million, of which \$11.2 million was raised by rural businesses. Approximately 230 businesses raised investment in 2022/23, of which over 30 were rurally-based businesses. Venture investment is volatile and reflects multiple factors, including the number and quality of investment opportunities available in any given year, prevailing economic conditions, and the fund-raising activities of businesses to meet their specific operational requirements.

The strong performance of regional investment is attributed to growth in clean tech and agritech businesses located outside the Metro-Vancouver Regional District and Capital Regional District.

## **Goal 2: Accelerate the innovation economy to catalyze future opportunities in core and emerging sectors to support ongoing recovery in British Columbia**

### **Objective 2.1: Launch and implement the Mass Timber Action Plan that will accelerate the growth of a new innovative, inclusive, and sustainable economic sector in B.C.**

#### **Key results**

- Up to \$3.5M was committed for the third intake of the Mass Timber Demonstration Program to accelerate the use of mass timber in B.C.
- Fifteen capital projects using mass timber were announced, showcasing the province's global leadership in this area.
- The British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) announced the launch of the new Associate Certificate in Construction of Mass Timber Structures. The Province committed \$250,000 to BCIT to develop additional mass timber programming that builds on this success.
- Trade missions to Portland, Oregon (April 2022, March 2023) and Europe (Spring 2022) highlighted the Mass Timber Action Plan on the international stage.
- The Ministry collaborated to fund 28 mass timber research projects. The third intake of CleanBC's Building Innovation Fund also supported one mass timber project.

#### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

The Mass Timber Action Plan was launched on April 7, 2022. It is a cross-government initiative that plays a key role in the StrongerBC Economic Plan. The Action Plan is a bold, carbon-friendly, market transformation strategy established to build domestic demand for mass timber and to scale up B.C.'s manufacturing base. Developed in consultation with Indigenous leaders and major stakeholders in the forestry industry, actions are organized under three planks:

1. Develop mass timber as an innovative economic sector;
2. Maximize mass timber's benefits for people; and
3. Support a more sustainable low-carbon future.

The Plan commits to co-developing actions with Indigenous peoples to grow the mass timber sector. An engagement strategy is being co-developed with Indigenous peoples through partnerships with the B.C. Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), the First Nations Summit (FNS), and the First Nations Forestry Council. Representatives from BCAFN and FNS also attended the International Mass Timber Conference in Portland, OR and gave opening remarks at the Minister of State for Trade-hosted Industry Roundtable.

To support a more sustainable low-carbon future, the Ministry collaborated with other jurisdictions via the Pacific Coast Collaborative Low Carbon Construction Taskforce to develop a regional action plan for release in 2023. The focus is on reducing the carbon footprint of construction across the Pacific Northwest through building with more low-carbon materials such as mass timber.

### Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
2.1 Three year rolling average <sup>1</sup> of square meters of floor area in newly completed buildings which incorporate mass timber in one or more primary structural systems <sup>2,3</sup>	77,038	84,741	82,397

Data source: Forestry Innovation Investment/Sciurus Advisory Inc

<sup>1</sup>Three year rolling accounts for normal year to year variations in building construction starts.

<sup>2</sup>Primary structural system means load bearing walls, roofs, floors, and vertical shafts for stairs/elevators.

<sup>3</sup>Performance measure targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 93,216 and 102,537, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

The increase in square meters of floor area in newly completed buildings that incorporate mass timber is an indicator of the overall growth of the mass timber sector. Mass timber construction trended strongly upward in 2022 after experiencing a significant dip in 2021 (2022: 104,000m<sup>2</sup>; 2021: 46,200 m<sup>2</sup>; 2020: 93,500 m<sup>2</sup>). This dip is an outlier in an otherwise healthy overall growth trend for the mass timber sector. Despite this significant increase in floor area from 2021 to 2022, the performance metric for 2022/23 did not meet the Service Plan target of a 10 percent increase in year-over-year growth of the three-year rolling average. This was due to the outsized influence of the very low COVID-era 2021 figures.

## Objective 2.2: Grow sectors of emerging opportunity including agritech, life sciences, manufacturing and transformative technologies like artificial intelligence and position them as drivers of good jobs and revenues

### Key results

- In February 2023, the Ministry announced funding of \$2 million to establish a National Biomanufacturing Training Centre at the BC Institute of Technology, an initiative supporting the Life Sciences and Biomanufacturing Strategy (nearing

completion as of March 31, 2023). The initiative leverages \$5.2 million of federal funding. The Centre will provide hands-on training in a cleanroom environment to upskill the current and future workforces needed by B.C.'s growing biomanufacturing sector.

- In 2022, the government invested \$136.6 million to build a new Trades and Technology Complex at the BC Institute of Technology campus in Burnaby. The four-building complex will support more than 12,000 full- and part-time students in more than 20 trades and technology programs annually. This project will help meet the demand for an additional 85,000 new trades jobs over the next decade.
- Economic reconciliation can help advance the role of First Nations in B.C.'s inclusive economy. In 2022, the provincial government provided \$1.2 million to the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations to launch the independent, First Nations-led Centre of Excellence in First Nations Economic Development.
- To help grow our strong, innovative and inclusive technology sector, the Ministry invested in the Innovator Skills Initiative (ISI) and the Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator (CTTA) through the StrongerBC Future Leaders Program. As of March 31, 2023, all 3,000 ISI grant placements have been allocated to under-represented individuals. For the CTTA, 696 participants have enrolled in the program of which 75% identified as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Colour (BIPOC).
- In February 2023, the Ministry launched the BC Manufacturing Jobs Fund (MJF), a \$180 million program allocated over three years. The MJF reflects the Province's ongoing commitment to promote economic diversification and help grow the manufacturing sector in B.C. The BCMJF supports manufacturing projects that have a high degree of readiness and enable businesses to create or maintain jobs.
- The Supply Chain Resiliency Grant Program was implemented over 2021/22 and 2022/23, consisting of eight supply chain studies on priority economic sectors, (e.g., forestry, aerospace) with recommendations made to government ministries and the Industrial and Manufacturing Action Plan.
- Continued to support the progress of the Quantum Algorithm Institute to increase access, training, and industrial utilization of quantum computing technology, including the establishment of the Innovation Plaza, an operational space at Simon Fraser University to further promote collaboration towards technology and economic solutions.
- Launched the Integrated Marketplace initiative in fall of 2022, with an \$11.5 million investment to link groups of strategic industry buyers with domestic suppliers. The initiative aims to implement, scale up, and ultimately export local clean-tech solutions. The first testbed was announced at the Vancouver airport (YVR) in December 2022, focused on electrification of its airfield to help reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

- Established in September 2022, the B.C. Centre for Agritech Innovation is projected to see as many as 30 new industry projects, and as many as 200 new jobs and 750 people trained, by 2025.
- A three-year Agricultural Innovation Action Plan, established in 2022/23 between the Province and the Netherlands, will promote increased agritech productivity, food security, diversification and sustainability through Government-to-Government dialogue, scientific cooperation, and industry partnerships and exchange opportunities.

## Summary of progress made in 2022/23

To inform the development of the Province's Future Ready Action Plan, the Ministry consulted with businesses and industry associations to gain their perspectives on the unique workforce challenges their members are facing.

In addition to stakeholder engagement under the banner of the Future Ready Action Plan, Ministry staff engaged with 50+ stakeholder groups in the manufacturing sector to learn more about subsector challenges and opportunities. These engagements continue to inform the development of programs and initiatives which will seek to provide opportunities to grow manufacturing in BC.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
2.2 Develop strategies to leverage emerging economic opportunities in B.C. <sup>1</sup>	1	Develop strategies in multiple key emerging sectors	2

Data source: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation.

<sup>1</sup>PM 2.2 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as TBD and TBD, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

The StrongerBC Economic Plan was released February 2022 as an overarching plan for establishing the missions that will support a clean and inclusive economy. The Mass Timber Action Plan and The Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program were the first two strategies that were released under StrongerBC. Several other ministries also released strategies under this plan. The Ministry will continue to collaborate with the Federal Government and Canada Infrastructure Bank to support projects and opportunities under the StrongerBC Economic Plan.

## **Goal 3: Support businesses and communities to create sustainable, family supporting jobs and inclusive growth that works for all British Columbians**

### **Objective 3.1: Support B.C. communities, First Nations, Indigenous and other underrepresented peoples to increase participation in established and emerging economic sectors**

#### **Key results**

- In October 2022, the ministry announced \$1.2 million to support the launch of the B.C. Assembly of First Nations' Centre of Excellence in First Nations Economic Development. The independent, First Nations-led centre will work to advance the unique economic goals and priorities of nations by developing policy, delivering tools and resources, and advancing the implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- The ministry built on the success of StrongerBC programming through the Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator Program, Digital Marketing Bootcamps and the Innovator Skills Initiative, to continue to increase underrepresented groups' participation in the digital economy. In 2022/23, the Innovator Skills Initiative, Digital Marketing Bootcamp, and the Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator (combined) provided technology sector training and placements to an estimated 3,465 under-represented individuals in B.C.
- The Supply Chain Resiliency Grant Program funded 25 projects, of which 3 supported First Nations at 9.5% of the fund. With some projects extended due to pandemic-related delays, the Program's final report was delivered in September 2022.
- The Alacrity B.C. Cleantech Program (March 2020 – May 2023) supported women, youth, and Indigenous workers within client companies. Performance outcomes included support for 143 women, 163 youth workers and four Indigenous workers.
- Delivered presentations to 200+ businesses, including underrepresented export groups, on how to leverage opportunities in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to support export growth, diversification, and investment attraction.
- Released the Small Business Profile 2022, showcasing the role of 510,700 small businesses in British Columbia, and featuring trends in growth, geography and cross-provincial and national comparisons.
- Continued to support the Mobile Business Licence (MBL) Program and BizPaL to benefit businesses in all regions:

- BizPaL is now available in 135 local governments across B.C., most recently in the District of Clearwater and Harrison Hot Springs.
- There are now 104 participating communities within 17 MBL agreements.

## Summary of progress made in 2022/23

The BC Manufacturing Jobs Fund (MJF) was initiated to help grow the manufacturing sector in B.C. and prioritizes applications that are Indigenous-led or benefit Indigenous peoples. Ongoing outreach and engagement with First Nations and other underrepresented groups has resulted in a collaborative approach and intentionally-built program design, ensuring that applicants are supported in developing successful applications. Based on initial feedback during program development, MJF enables First Nation and Indigenous-owned enterprises, that are preparing to acquire or buy into an established manufacturing operation, to access funding. It is a demonstration of the Ministry's commitment to economic Reconciliation.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2020 Baseline	2021 Actual	2022 Target	2022 Actual
3.1 Support growth in the number of businesses with 10 or more employees <sup>1</sup>	49,900	49,700	51,600	52,575

Data source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada. Please note that the total number reflects the calendar year and final business counts for 2022 were released in March 2023.

<sup>1</sup>PM 3.1 targets for 2023 and 2024 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 52,500 and 53,400. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023– 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

This performance measure was introduced in the 2021/22 Service Plan as businesses with more than 10 employees are shown to have a more stable workforce with higher compensation. The 2022 actuals are higher than forecasted likely due to the ongoing recovery of businesses from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Objective 3.2: Strengthen regional economic development, support recovery and build resilience to economic disruption

Government supports and builds regional economic development, recovery and resilience through on the ground support and funding enabling inclusive economic development, diversification and job creation.

## Key results

- Recognizing the valuable contribution of B.C.'s three regional economic trusts to support innovation and enhance small business opportunities, in March 2023, the province committed \$30 million to the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT), Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) and the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior (ETSI-BC), to sustain economic development activity in their

- regions. This funding is a one-time payment, meant to provide short-term support and is subject to legislative amendments being passed later this year.
- The MJF was developed with a primary objective to support economic diversification in regional communities, and prioritizes projects located in rural, remote or forestry-dependent areas. By funding value-added manufacturing projects in B.C., MJF will support businesses, particularly in the forestry sector, to pivot and grow their manufacturing operations to add new business lines and make innovative use of limited fibre supply, resulting in increased economic resilience within regional communities.
  - A new three-year Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP), with annual funding of \$23 million, was launched to build economic capacity, and advance economic diversification and resilience in Indigenous and non-Indigenous rural communities.
  - The Forest Worker and Community Supports (FWCS) were launched, offering a comprehensive suite of programs and included:
    - Adding \$10 million to REDIP to support forest impacted areas for the next three years, bringing the total to \$33 million for 2022/23. Additionally in 2022/23, REDIP funding was doubled to \$66 million with 210 projects supported across the province.
    - On-the-ground Community Transition Services were provided to eight communities facing economic disruption through mill closures and curtailments.
    - Direct support was provided to forestry contractors and their employees to mitigate job losses by continuing to deliver the Forest Employment Program and supporting 99 projects through nearly \$12 million.
    - Launched the Rural Business and Community Recovery Initiative in partnership with the three regional economic trusts, with \$4.5 million to assist businesses and communities affected by forest policy changes and other economic impacts on the forest sector. The funding is provided to local organizations to hire advisors that help businesses and communities recover from impacts, develop and implement economic plans and launch new initiatives.
  - In support of the small business sector, coordinated cross-government responses to the BC Chamber of Commerce's 2022-2023 Policy and Position's Manual were conducted, including virtual engagement sessions including regional Chambers of Commerce covering 14 policies and 35 written responses.

## **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

Changes in the forestry sector are having big impacts on rural workers, businesses and Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. These impacts often move beyond the forest sector and include peripheral industries like construction and trucking, as well as more distant

industries like hospitality and healthcare, impacting community prosperity and resiliency. In 2022/23, the Ministry made significant progress in developing and implementing wraparound supports to offset these economic impacts and job loss. Significant investment and support, as described above, has been accessed in all rural areas across the province. Working in concert with other government programs such as Bridging to Retirement (Ministry of Labour), skills training programs such as Skills Training for Employment, Community Workforce Response Grants, and Employer Training Grants (Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills), as well as workforce employment services through WorkBC Centres (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction), these initiatives have been successful in helping to create more diversified and resilient economies in rural, Indigenous and forest-dependent communities, ensuring those impacted by changes in the forest sector all have pathways to government support.

### Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2020/21 Baseline	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
3.2 Percent of rural development grant funding spent <sup>1</sup>	100%	N/A <sup>2</sup>	100%	100%

Data source: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

<sup>1</sup>PM 3.2 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 100% and 100%. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

<sup>2</sup>No data available for this period. The performance measure for 2021/22 was the cumulative percentage of Forest Employment Program budget spent.

The Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program was initially allocated \$33 million in 2022/23. Due to oversubscription to the program, government doubled the funding to \$66 million, which was fully spent.

## Objective 3.3: British Columbia's evolving regulatory framework supports effective service delivery as well as business and economic growth

### Key results

- In line with B.C.'s commitment to equity and inclusion, 51 instances of gendered and binary language from 12 regulations were amended through the Better Regulations for British Columbians (BR4BC) initiative.
  - To date, over 1,400 instances of gendered language have been removed from B.C.'s regulations.
- On March 30, 2023, British Columbia became the first jurisdiction in Canada to systematically remove outdated gendered, binary and other forms of non-inclusive language across its legislative framework:

- The Miscellaneous Statutes (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2023, removed 2,363 instances of outdated gendered and binary language from B.C.'s provincial statutes.
- On June 30, 2023, the BR4BC Annual Report 2022/23 was publicly released, highlighting 30 stories of legislative, regulatory and service improvement and modernization from across government.
- B.C. became the first province in Canada, and one of a handful of jurisdictions in North America, to implement a permanent cap on fees charged by food-delivery companies. The Food Delivery Service Fee Act came into force on January 1, 2023, and will provide more cost certainty to restaurant and bar owners throughout the province. B.C.'s cap limits the fees for core services that delivery companies can charge restaurants to no more than 20% of the dollar value of an order.

### Summary of progress made in 2022/23

Building on the success of the BR4BC initiative, government started to focus on modernizing its legislative framework to remove outdated gender and binary language, clarify, modernize, correct, or repeal outdated information in provincial statutes. Prior to introducing the Miscellaneous Statutes (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2023, consultations were held with rightsholders and stakeholders/partners, including the First Nations Summit, Métis Nation British Columbia, and Trans Care BC to establish awareness of the project, communicate intended outcomes and seek input.

### Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
3.3 Number of regulatory requirements compared to the 2004 baseline of 197,242 <sup>1,2</sup>	169,189	0 net Increase	170,353

Data source: Economic & Regulatory Analysis Branch, Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation

<sup>1</sup>From the baseline regulatory requirements set in 2004.

<sup>2</sup>PM 3.3 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 0 net Increase and 0 net Increase, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

B.C. has been publicly reporting on the number of regulatory requirements required of British Columbians and their businesses since 2001 and following a policy of not exceeding a baseline count established in 2004, called the Net Zero Increase.

For the past 22 years, B.C. has not exceeded the 2004 baseline and this past fiscal year was no exception, where the total number of requirements across B.C.'s legislative and regulatory frameworks was 170,353, well below the 2004 baseline of 197,242.

## Financial Report

The discussion of results reports on the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation's financial results for the year ended March 31, 2023, and should be read in conjunction with the Financial Reporting Summary Table provided below.

The 2022/23 Other Authorizations of \$114.497 includes \$114.514 million to fund a number of priority initiatives (such as Stronger BC and Forest Worker Support Programs), offset by a reduction of \$0.017 million from the transfer out of the Parliament Secretary in the December 2022 Government reorganization. The Other Authorizations of \$114.514 includes contingency funding mainly for the following programs and initiatives:

- Old Growth – Forest Worker and Community Support Programs
- Stronger BC initiatives such as Integrated Marketplace, ESG Centre of Excellence, Indigenous Economic Advisory Organization and Agritech Centre of Excellence
- Mass Timber Demonstration Projects
- Maritime Infrastructure
- BC LifeSciences Biomanufacturing

Including the Other Authorizations, the Ministry's total Estimated budget was \$225.423 million compared to actual expenditures of \$225.173 million, prior to the adjustment for Prior Year's accruals.

## Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations <sup>1</sup> (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
<b>Operating Expenses</b>					
Trade and Industry Development	28,379	27,997	56,376	56,376	0
Small Business and Economic Development	7,454	1,231	8,685	8,476	(209)
Investment and Innovation	13,029	17,238	30,267	31,189	922
Regional Development	27,391	59,548	86,939	86,939	0
Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies	25,640	8,500	34,140	34,140	0
Executive and Support Services	8,533	(17)	8,516	7,803	(713)
Northern Development Fund	500	0	500	250	(250)
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>110,926</b>	<b>114,497</b>	<b>225,423</b>	<b>225,173</b>	<b>(250)</b>
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	(8)	(8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>110,926</b>	<b>114,497</b>	<b>225,423</b>	<b>225,165</b>	<b>(258)</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures</b>					
Executive and Support Services	3	0	3	1	(2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(2)</b>

"Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the "estimated amount" under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

<sup>2</sup>The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$0.008 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

## Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of August 10, 2023, the Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

### **BC Renaissance Capital Fund Ltd.**

The BC Renaissance Capital Fund (BCRCF) is a Crown corporation wholly owned by InBC, charged with managing legacy portfolio assets inherited by InBC. It invests in a range of technology sectors with a focus on information and communications technology, digital media, life sciences, and clean tech.

### **[Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd.](#)**

Forestry Innovation Investment (FII) is a Crown Corporation that helps create, maintain and diversify markets for B.C.'s world class, environmentally friendly forest products.

### **[InBC Investment Corporation](#)**

InBC is a Crown Corporation that contributes to investment capital in B.C. through investing in opportunities where there is both measurable social impact and financial return.

### **[Innovate BC](#)**

Innovate BC is a Crown Corporation that works with all levels of government, the private sector, non-government organizations, post-secondary institutions, and others to foster innovation and support a thriving, sustainable economy.

### **[Island Coastal Economic Trust](#)**

The Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) develops programs prioritized by and for the region and delivers government (both federal and provincial) programs.

### **[Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society](#)**

The Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society supports sustainable economic activity through programs and projects that meet each community's goals in northern communities affected by the Kitimat-Kemano project and by the creation of the Nechako Reservoir.

### **[Northern Development Initiative Trust](#)**

The Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) develops programs prioritized by and for the regions and delivers government (both federal and provincial) programs.

### **Premier's Chinese Canadian Community Advisory Committee**

The advisory committee provides advice to the Premier on government initiatives of interest and concern to members of the Chinese-Canadian community in B.C.

### **[Small Business Roundtable](#)**

The Small Business Roundtable supports targeted outreach and engagement, providing insight on issues and opportunities facing the sector and government priorities and policy.

**Economic Trust of the Southern Interior**

The Economic Trust of the Southern Interior (ETSI-BC) develops programs prioritized by and for the regions and delivers government (both federal and provincial) programs.

## Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in former Minister Ravi Kahlon's 2020 Mandate Letter.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Support people and businesses in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to deliver initiatives that will directly support small businesses and build an inclusive economic recovery across B.C.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invested more than \$530 million in COVID-19 recovery and relief grants to businesses providing short term relief and medium-term recovery to help them navigate the challenges of operating in the pandemic and to support economic recovery.</li> <li>Development of Small Business Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is Underway. Conducted significant outreach and engagement with Indigenous, equity seeking, and small business stakeholder and support organizations.</li> <li>Enacted Food Delivery Service Fee Act.</li> <li>Ongoing support through Small Business BC (SBBC) services.</li> <li>Export Navigator Program continues to provide support to small businesses looking to export outside of B.C.</li> <li>The Small Business Roundtable continues to provide feedback to other Ministries and agencies, who seek their input and advice on new policy initiatives.</li> <li>Sponsored the 2022 Small Business BC Awards (4): Business Impact Award &amp; Premier's People's Choice Award.</li> <li>Sponsored Junior Achievement BC's 2022 Celebrate Entrepreneurship Award to recognize the JA student company that demonstrates the most innovation (product or service).</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Work across ministries to lead the development and coordinate implementation of an industrial and manufacturing strategy that generates cleaner, more innovative, value-added economic activity across B.C., while supporting our commitments to Reconciliation and CleanBC.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry staff have completed comprehensive economic modelling on the manufacturing sector.</li> <li>The analysis has been used to develop the strategic framing of the Action Plan as well as inform government's investments in priority industries (e.g., through the MJF).</li> <li>Extensive internal and external engagement has been conducted.</li> </ul>
<p>With support from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, boost B.C. as a global exporter of climate solutions by investing in B.C.-based carbon capture and storage and other low carbon technologies.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively planned and delivered export programming for B.C.'s clean tech sector.</li> <li>Participated at select trade shows to support B.C. companies and promote B.C.'s low carbon tech capabilities.</li> <li>Established Deputy Ministers' Hydrogen Task Force and advanced work in the critical minerals and battery value chain.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Support the work of the Minister of State for Trade on special projects to support economic development, trade and innovation in areas such as B.C.'s shipbuilding sector, aerospace and forest sector innovation.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade Diversification Strategy is expected to be released in May 2023. Includes goals to increase trade opportunities in new markets (Mexico, Vietnam and Taiwan) and to increase the number and diversity of B.C. exporters.</li> <li>• Proactively planned and delivered export programming for B.C.'s aerospace, ocean/marine, and forest sectors.</li> <li>• The Minister promoted B.C.'s mass timber industry during an international conference held in Portland. The Minister led a trade mission to Europe to advance trade and investment relationships to strengthen B.C.'s economy, including signing an agreement with Finland to further develop the mass timber sector and forest bioeconomy. The Minister also signed a partnership with Japan to support transportation infrastructure that encompass marine and air gateways.</li> <li>• The BC Manufacturing Jobs Fund intake opened in February 2023 for up to two years. Projects promoting innovation in forest sector manufacturing, including mass timber, will be prioritized for funding.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Support B.C. shipyards to build capacity and become increasingly competitive with investments to support more shipbuilding, refit, repair, and maintenance here in B.C.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The BC Maritime Industries Strategy</i> is expected to be released in May 2023. Identifying pathways for action supporting growth; enhanced coordination within B.C. maritime industries, growing market and infrastructure capacity, investing in workforce development and supporting clean fuels and technology innovation.</li> <li>• Key <i>BC Maritime Industries Strategy</i> deliverables in 2023/24 include the formation of a West Coast Maritime Office and execution of a \$25 million B.C. Maritime Industries Infrastructure Modernization and Expansion Grant Program to modernize and increase the maritime dry dock and wharfage infrastructure capacity in British Columbia with an expected project intake in the fall 2023.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Capitalize on the potential of B.C.'s aerospace industry by expanding support for B.C. companies to integrate into global supply chains and access new markets.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerospace Industries Association of Canada (AIAC) delivered B.C. Aerospace Sector Study report in May 2022. The Ministry continues to work with AIAC to advance key recommendations in report.</li> <li>• The "Accelerating Manufacturing Scale-Up Program" provided \$882,000 in funding to B.C. aerospace manufacturing companies to enhance productivity and scale.</li> <li>• The Ministry Trade and Industry Development (export team) advances B.C. aerospace exports into strategic markets by working directly with B.C. aerospace companies and facilitating participating in global aerospace events.</li> </ul>
<p>Launch a strategic investment fund to support our government's objective of building a more innovative low-carbon economy by investing in high-potential B.C. businesses to help them scale up and grow here.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 2022, InBC announced its first investments, starting with venture capital funds that have strong connections to B.C. and are aligned with impact objectives to drive climate action, advance Reconciliation and innovate for the future.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Lead the Office of Mass Timber Implementation and, with support from the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, advance the mass timber action plan.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mass Timber Action plan was released on April 7, 2022, and implementation is underway with support from multiple ministries. Key ministry partners include Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Finance, and all ministries with capital plans.</li> <li>The Mass Timber Advisory Council continues to advise on implementation of the Mass Timber Action Plan, and met twice this year.</li> </ul>
<p>Work to expand on the investment that our economic recovery plan, StrongerBC, is making for people pursuing online courses to re-skill for the digital economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovate BC is delivering the Innovator Skills Initiative (ISI). ISI will provide 3,000 grants of up to \$10,000 each to employers to increase diversity in the tech sector and encouragement hiring in under-represented communities.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>With support from the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training, work with B.C.'s Innovation Commissioner to lead investment in innovation clusters, with a focus on emerging industries where B.C. companies have developed the early lead – such as life sciences, emergency management technology, engineered wood, clean tech, artificial intelligence, and quantum and virtual reality technologies.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Quantum Algorithms Institute (QAI) was established in 2020 to focus on B.C.'s strengths in quantum computing systems and quantum algorithm software development by creating a long-term talent pipeline for this transformative technology that has the potential to tackle real world problems that traditional computers cannot solve.</li> <li>• Created the Integrated Marketplace Initiative in 2022 to match local innovators with industry buyers to solve industry problems, while reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. The first Integrated Marketplace testbed was launched at Vancouver International Airport and will be followed by a second in Prince Rupert Port Authority in Spring 2023.</li> <li>• An industry-informed Cleantech Cluster Strategy report was released in July 2020, which led to the launch of the BC Net Zero Innovation Network (with EMLI) in February 2023.</li> <li>• In February 2023, announced the establishment of a National Biomanufacturing Training Centre to provide hands-on skills training in support of B.C.'s growing industry.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Support the work of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to move forward with the recommendations of the Food Security Task Force and develop a new Regenerative Agricultural Network, which will create jobs for workers, opportunities for farmers and greater food security by bringing together natural systems of production with agri-technologies that enhance production.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minister of Agriculture and Food's Advisory Group on Regenerative Agriculture and Agritech (MAGRAA) was established in June 2022 to build upon the groundwork laid by the Food Security Task Force and develop recommendations on opportunities for promoting innovation, technology adoption, and regenerative practices that will increase the productivity, profitability, and sustainability of B.C.'s food system.</li> <li>• In January 2023, the Advisory Group developed a Regenerative Agriculture and Agritech Strategic Framework which lays out their advice to the Minister on the vision, mission, values, goals, and strategic priorities for regenerative agriculture and agritech in the future.</li> <li>• The MAGRAA's term is expected to be completed in May 2023. The Ministry supported the work and development of recommendations from the Advisory Group to be submitted to the Minister of Agriculture in 2023/24.</li> </ul>

<p>Work across ministries and with the federal government to ensure British Columbia's interests are protected and advanced in trade negotiations and disputes, including the softwood lumber negotiations with the United States.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the formerly named Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations to advance and defend B.C.'s interests with the US on the softwood lumber disputes underway with the U.S.</li> <li>• Monitoring developments and providing B.C.'s response to other concerns with the U.S. and leading B.C.'s response to U.S. investigations of various seasonal fruits and vegetables.</li> <li>• Work with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to address complaints from trading partners regarding B.C. liquor policies.</li> <li>• Utilizing free trade negotiations to further open markets to support diversification through our domestic trade negotiations with other provinces, territories and the federal government, and by leading B.C.'s input to international negotiations the federal government is considering or negotiating.</li> <li>• Consulting stakeholders and partners on a Canada-ASEAN FTA and Canada-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, including a virtual roundtable with industry led by MGC.</li> <li>• Over 100 outreach activities to date, with over 3,700 participants, and over 20,000 views on the BC Gov YouTube channel.</li> </ul>
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Continue to support Forestry Innovation Investment's efforts to promote B.C.'s manufactured wood products, including mass timber.	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry staff and our international offices network are supporting programs that promote B.C.'s wood products.</li> </ul>
Support the work of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to continue to promote B.C. food and agriculture exports.	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B.C.'s network of trade and investment offices continue to plan and deliver food promotion initiatives to support B.C. exporters.</li> </ul>
Work with the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport to continue the development of the Chinese Canadian Museum.	<p>Completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chinese Canadian Museum will open in its permanent location in Vancouver's Chinatown in July 2023.</li> <li>The Minister of State for Trade has supported and participated in the initiative.</li> </ul>

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in former Parliamentary Secretary Brenda Bailey's 2020 Mandate Letter.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Develop an intellectual property strategy to support more innovation and commercialization by B.C. companies, including a First Patent Program</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten industry roundtable sessions were held in Summer 2022.</li> <li>• The Ministry is currently drafting the IP strategy that could be considered for release in Summer 2023.</li> </ul>
<p>Help more people from underrepresented groups get their first job in the tech sector, while simultaneously helping B.C.-based tech companies hire and grow, by increasing the number of Innovator Skills Initiative Grants and prioritizing placements for women, Indigenous people, people of colour and others currently underrepresented in B.C.'s tech sector.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovate BC is delivering the Innovator Skills Initiative (ISI). ISI will provide 3,000 grants of up to \$10,000 each to employers to increase diversity in the tech sector and encouragement hiring in under-represented communities.</li> <li>• Delivered in partnership with Mitacs, the Information and Communications Technology Council (ICBC) and BC Tech Association (BCTech).</li> <li>• Responsible for 847-960 grants, Innovate BC has received over 1,700 applications to date and has fully approved 939 grants.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Help more innovative B.C. businesses successfully scale up here by expanding the successful RevUp program that brings business owners together with experienced mentors who provide coaching and advice on growing small successful tech companies into larger ones.</p>	<p>Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovate BC funds a number of programs to support business scale up including BC Fast, IGNITE, Integrated Marketplace Initiative.</li> <li>• A key initiative out of the StrongerBC Economic Plan is the Integrated Marketplace Initiative (IMI or Zelda). The IMI received \$11.5 million of funding from the StrongerBC envelope in October 2022, with the first test bed at YVR announced in December 2022. A second test bed is expected to be announced at Prince Rupert Port Authority in Spring 2023, and along with first projects at these two test beds. The funding also supports a third test bed, which is in process of being identified</li> <li>• As part of the Future Ready: Skills for the Jobs of Tomorrow Plan, the Ministry has proposed companion skills and training programs to develop the workforce needed to support business scale up.</li> </ul>