

BUDGET 2023

STRATEGIC PLAN



StrongerBC

for everyone



TAKING ACTION ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES, TOGETHER

British Columbia is a great place to live, but it's not always easy. People are facing challenges. Global inflation is squeezing household budgets, and the possibility of an economic downturn worldwide can make it feel like an uncertain time. Our province is also experiencing the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our health-care system.

We've faced a lot over the past few years. And those experiences have taught us that going it alone doesn't work. We're all in this together, and we've come a long way by working together and helping people in B.C. While we can't control global forces, our choices as government can help protect people and build a more secure future for our province.

OUR PRIORITIES

- » *Helping people with costs*
- » *Tackling the housing crisis*
- » *Helping our healthcare system recover*
- » *Making communities safer*
- » *Fighting climate change and building a sustainable and secure economy that works for everyone.*

ADVANCING MEANINGFUL RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Through each of the priorities listed above, government is also working to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

The Declaration Act Action Plan, released on March 30, 2022, includes collectively identified goals and outcomes that form the long-term

vision for implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in B.C.

The four main goals in the plan are to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration over time include:

- » Self-Determination and Inherent Right of Self-Government
- » Title and Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- » Ending Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination
- » Social, Cultural and Economic Well-Being

ADVANCING OUR PRIORITIES

High global inflation has meant people are facing increasing costs. Government has responded by significantly lowering childcare bills for families, reducing and then freezing ICBC rates and delivering rebates for drivers, enhancing the BC Family Benefit, and introducing new affordability credits for people.

We know more needs to be done. With Budget 2023, we are continuing to help alleviate cost pressures by introducing new measures to help everyone and targeting support for those who need it most. This will include free prescription contraceptives, and expanding free meals at schools, as well as increasing support for families with children, middle- to low-income renters, people on income and disability assistance, post-secondary students, and caregivers for children in care and people with support needs.

For years, B.C. has been in an affordable housing crisis, rooted in deep, systemic problems. Since 2017, our government is taking on real estate speculators, building record levels of new homes for people and closing loopholes that made B.C.'s housing market vulnerable to money laundering.

Now we're seeing new pressures coming out of the pandemic and we can't afford to turn back now. We have more work to do. With Budget 2023, we are building even more new homes, supporting renters, new housing for Indigenous Peoples both on and off reserve, more student housing, and clearing the way for more housing with zoning changes and a faster permitting process. Budget 2023 also invests in a new housing action plan coming this spring to deliver more homes for people, faster.

The COVID-19 pandemic put tremendous pressure on our health-care system and health-care workers. Allowing those with money to buy their way to the front of the line won't fix the health-care system for the rest of us. Instead, we are strengthening public health care by investing in hospitals, improving cancer care and the people we need to deliver the quality care we all deserve. We know that we need to train, attract, and keep more doctors, nurses, and other health-care professionals. That is why Budget 2023 is funding a health workforce strategy, as well as the new compensation model for family practitioners and incentives to attract recent graduates into family practice, to make sure B.C. has the health-care workers we need.

Our government also remains determined to build a system of care to better support people facing mental-health challenges and people living with addiction. This includes care that is culturally safe for Indigenous peoples. We are building on our work with significant new investments in treatment and recovery to expand available beds and roll out a new model of seamless care to support people throughout their recovery journey from detox through treatment and after care. Government is also continuing to invest in complex-care housing with enhanced mental-health and substance-use supports, and expanding mobile response teams.

The toxic-drug crisis has cut short the lives of so many of our friends, family and loved ones. Improving access to treatment and recovery continues to be an important cornerstone of government's action on this public-health emergency. At the same time, we are implementing additional ways to help make progress on this critical issue. Beginning in January 2023, B.C. became the first province in the country to decriminalize small amounts of illicit drugs for personal use, as an additional way to help reach people who need support. Budget 2023 supports this critical step in fighting the stigma that prevents people who use drugs from seeking support and life-saving care, and continues to invest in access to safe prescription alternatives to the toxic-drug supply.

Everyone deserves to feel safe in their own community. Our government is helping make B.C. communities safer by taking action to keep repeat violent criminals off the streets. We are also introducing more laws to crack down on gangs, money laundering and the non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

Safer communities also mean access to justice, for everyone. To ensure our legal system is serving and supporting everyone, government is making investments such as opening new Indigenous Justice Centres and boosting the funding of the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

From wildfires to heat waves, British Columbia has faced the very real effects of climate change on our planet. While we need to adapt and prepare for more events such as this in the future, we also know that we can't lose sight of fighting the root cause of the problem. With *CleanBC*, we have one of North America's boldest climate-action plans. Through *CleanBC*, our government continues to invest in clean energy and reduce emissions.

People in British Columbia take great pride in our natural landscape. It is incredibly beautiful. It's also a wealth of economic opportunity, when done sustainably and responsibly. The future lies in a rights-based partnership approach to decisions respecting land, water and resource stewardship.

Through government's approach to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, we see results that balance environmental restoration and resource development. This includes new agreements with Blueberry River First Nation and other Treaty 8 Nations, and the first consent-based decision-making agreement under the Declaration Act with the Tahltan.

B.C.'s latest Labour Market Outlook forecasts more than one million job openings in the next decade, which is both a great opportunity and also a significant challenge for businesses looking for workers. As nearly 80% of these jobs will require some amount of post-secondary education or training, Budget 2023 lays out the funding for government's Future Ready Plan coming this spring that will make training more affordable and accessible to help people secure good-paying jobs, as well as help make sure employers will have a skilled workforce to fill these job openings.

Meeting the challenge of filling one million job openings means getting more people with multiple barriers and underrepresented groups into the workforce. This includes support for Indigenous-led initiatives, such as the Indigenous Guardian Watchmen program.

BUILDING A STRONGER BC

Our government is determined to solve problems and build a stronger B.C. for everyone. We can do this by staying focused on people and taking action on the issues that matter most. We are investing today for a stronger tomorrow.



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