

BUDGET 2024 CONSULTATION

StrongerBC
for everyone



B.C. is a great place to live, but people here, and around the world, are currently facing some big challenges. Higher costs are stretching household budgets, and even with inflation easing from record highs, there remains the possibility of a worldwide economic downturn.

In the face of these challenges, we are dedicated to making choices that work for people. When times are tough, government should be in your corner. That's why we want your ideas – how can we help you and your family deal with the effects of global inflation while securing a stronger future for all?

B.C.'s stronger future is built on a solid foundation. Before the pandemic hit, we were seeing the results of our commitments to working for people. These commitments continue today as we face ongoing challenges like inflation, a housing crisis and workforce shortages.

Thousands of new affordable homes are currently under construction or complete. Families are accessing new affordable childcare spaces in their communities and saving as much as \$550 more per month. More people are learning new skills and finding good-paying jobs. And we're taking new actions to help people with everyday costs by making all prescription contraception free in B.C., and increasing the

B.C. Family Benefit and Climate Action Tax Credit. That's on top of limiting rent increases and eliminating tolls and MSP premiums.

We're focused on what matters to you, and every year, we work hard across government to ensure the provincial budget reflects what we hear from you.

As we look ahead to developing Budget 2024, we ask you again: what are your priorities? And how can our government create a stronger future where you and your family can build a good life?

Thank you to everyone who participates in the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services' budget consultation this year. Your thoughts and ideas are integral to the provincial budget process. I look forward to ensuring your voices are reflected in B.C.'s plan for the future.

HONOURABLE KATRINE CONROY
MINISTER OF FINANCE



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Budget 2024 Consultation:
bcleg.ca/FGSbudget

The pages ahead outline how government acted on what we heard from people last year. Budget 2023 focused on priorities like keeping people safe and healthy in their communities, supporting people with the rising cost of living, creating more accessible and affordable housing options, and building a strong, clean economy that works for everyone.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH CARE



Over the next three years, \$6.4 billion will strengthen public health-care services to make sure people get the care they need, when they need it. This includes transformative cancer care services, a new health workforce strategy and a new payment model to help more family doctors start or continue their practice. Mental health care is health care – and we are making the most significant improvements to services for people needing mental health and addictions services in B.C.'s history.

- » \$2.6 billion to help with growing demand and increased costs, including \$270 million for the BC Cancer Care Plan, to expand and enhance cancer care services in communities across B.C.
- » Bolstering B.C.'s health workforce strategy to help recruit and retain staff and train more health-care professionals, redesign and rebalance work and embed reconciliation and cultural safety into our health-care system across the province.
- » A new payment model for family doctors, who play an essential role as people's gateway to the health-care system.
- » Strengthening mental health care and substance use services through new complex care housing, mental health, addictions, and treatment services.

AS PEOPLE GROW OLDER AND MORE PEOPLE MOVE TO B.C., OUR GOVERNMENT IS WORKING TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

TACKLING THE HOUSING CRISIS



Even though we are building more housing than ever, it's still not enough to meet people's needs at all ages and stages of life. From students struggling to find a place to live for the school year to seniors looking to live independently, affordable and accessible housing is a challenge for everyone in B.C. That is why we are taking action across the housing spectrum to help deliver the types of homes people need and can afford.

HOMES FOR PEOPLE IS B.C.'S REFRESHED HOUSING PLAN TO SPEED UP DELIVERY OF NEW HOMES, INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF MIDDLE-INCOME HOUSING, FIGHT SPECULATION AND HELP THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST.

- » Delivering more middle-income, small-scale, multi-unit housing.
- » Offering forgivable loans for homeowners to build and rent secondary suites below market rates.
- » Building thousands of new homes for renters.
- » Preventing real estate speculation through the speculation and vacancy tax and the creation of a new flipping tax.
- » Building thousands of new homes through BC Builds and Building BC, the Indigenous Housing Fund and the Community Housing Fund.
- » Helping renters:
 - Implementing a new income-tested renter's tax credit
 - Strengthening enforcement of short-term rentals
- » Helping people find a path out of homelessness:
 - New complex-care spaces for people who need more support
 - Regional rapid response teams to help communities dealing with substantial encampments

HELPING PEOPLE WITH COSTS



Global inflation and higher prices are stretching people's budgets. That's why our government is focused on helping to reduce costs and offer extra support to those who need it most. To get money into people's pockets quickly, we took action with almost \$2.4 billion in supports since summer 2022. Budget 2023 continues this targeted support with an additional \$4.5 billion over the next three years.

\$3.2 billion in tax measures that help address cost-of-living pressures:

- » Families with children will see a 10% increase to their BC Family Benefit starting in July 2023, and single parents will also receive up to \$500 in an annual top-up to help make ends meet.
- » A new income-tested renter's tax credit will provide as much as \$400 annually to renting households starting in 2024, giving the most support to households with moderate and low incomes.
- » An increase to B.C.'s Climate Action Tax Credit to help people with the costs of a changing climate and increases to the carbon tax.

\$1.3 billion to break down barriers for people:

- » Expanding existing school food programs so more children and young people can access healthy meals and snacks at schools.
- » Free prescription contraception so cost is not a barrier for people to make choices about their reproductive and sexual health.
- » Doubling student loan maximums and increasing the income threshold beyond student loan repayment so students have better access to education and training.
- » Increasing the shelter rate by \$125 so people receiving income and disability assistance have a little more support.

BUILDING A STRONG, CLEAN ECONOMY



We are laying the groundwork for a greener, more sustainable future powered by good-paying jobs, holistic management of natural resources, healthy and active communities, reducing emissions, responding to a changing climate and partnership with Indigenous peoples.

Finding the right person for the job is one of the top concerns for B.C. businesses right now. Our Future Ready strategy paves the way for the most inclusive and talent-driven workforce in Canada to create good-paying jobs and provide businesses with the talent they need to succeed.

THE CLEANBC ROADMAP TO 2030 LAYS OUT B.C.'S PLAN TO CUT EMISSIONS AND BUILD A SUSTAINABLE, LOW-CARBON FUTURE THAT BENEFITS EVERYONE.

Budget 2023 builds on the cornerstones of our CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 to reduce emissions and move toward a clean, sustainable economic future:

- » A new carbon pricing framework for industry to help reduce emissions while staying affordable and competitive and aligning with the federal benchmark.
- » Building more active transportation networks so communities have the walking, cycling and public transit needed to get people where they need to go.
- » The CleanBC Go Electric Commercial Vehicle Pilot Program to help B.C. businesses, non-profit organizations and eligible public entities switch to zero-emission vehicles, including medium- and heavy-duty trucks.

Changing how we work with B.C.'s natural resources:

- » Speeding up natural resource permitting and modernizing B.C.'s permitting service delivery model to help reduce backlogs and move projects forward.
- » Maintaining and upgrading forest service roads to support safe transportation between rural and Indigenous communities.
- » Partnering with First Nations on forest landscape planning to protect more old growth while providing greater certainty on where sustainable harvesting can occur.

- » Launching a new critical minerals strategy to leverage B.C.'s natural resource advantages and continuing to assess the critical mineral value chain potential.
- » Preserving and enhancing outdoor recreational opportunities in BC Parks.

CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



People deserve to feel safe in their communities. Helping people feel safe and secure wherever they live in B.C. means stepping up enforcement to keep repeat, violent offenders off our streets, strengthening intervention services and creating better access to the justice services people need.

BUDGET 2023 REFLECTS B.C.'S SAFER COMMUNITIES ACTION PLAN, WHICH LAYS OUT CONCRETE STEPS TO MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER THROUGH ENFORCEMENT AND INTERVENTION.

Stronger enforcement and intervention:

- » Launching the Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative and the new Special Investigation & Targeted Enforcement (SITE) program to help reduce repeat offending, improve criminal justice response and speed up information sharing among justice partners.
- » Modernizing policing in B.C. through consultation and public engagement to inform new policing and police oversight legislation.
- » Hiring over 250 RCMP officers, including support for rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

Access to justice:

- » Creating more free and culturally safe centres for Indigenous people to seek legal help and help address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system.
- » Boosting funding for the BC Human Rights Tribunal and the Community Legal Assistance Society to remove barriers and help more people access free legal services.
- » Creating virtual and after-hours bail hearings so people can stay supported by their family and community rather than travelling to a bigger city where they are disconnected from home.

HAVE YOUR SAY

What are the top priorities you want your government to focus on to build a stronger future for you, your families and your communities?

SHARE YOUR PRIORITIES WITH THE SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services is one of 10 permanent parliamentary committees of the Legislative Assembly of B.C.

Each year the committee holds a province-wide consultation on the next provincial budget and presents a final report with recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.

You can share your views and priorities by sending in written input.

For full details on how to participate, contact:
Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services.
Room 224, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Web: bcleg.ca/FGSbudget
Email: financecommittee@leg.bc.ca
Phone: 1 (877) 428-8337 (toll-free)
Phone (250) 356-2933 (collect)

The consultation closes Friday, June 16, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. (Pacific).