



December 7, 2022

Honourable Dan Coulter
Minister of State for Infrastructure and Transit
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Coulter:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as Minister of State for Infrastructure and Transit. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.
- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling

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**Office of the
Premier**

Web Site:
www.gov.bc.ca

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Location:
Parliament Buildings
Victoria

that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.

- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

Rapid growth in British Columbia is putting strain on transit and infrastructure – from highways, to bridges, to public transit. As we continue to recover from the effects of the pandemic, wherever possible we are looking for ways to get people out of their cars sitting in traffic and into more efficient means of transportation. Rural communities need support on transit opportunities that work for them. This will mean that people will spend less time commuting or trying to find a ride and more time with family and friends.

Our transit infrastructure needs to respond to the ways we are building our communities – our focus should be on providing affordable, public transportation that efficiently moves people from where they live to where they work and facilitates access to all the community amenities that enrich our lives. Linking housing and transportation is essential to ensuring that we are building livable communities and prioritizing affordability and quality of life.

A resilient transportation system must be built with an eye towards future growth and designed in a way that supports our climate goals. Our transit and transportation system should prioritize providing people with options so that they can choose what works best for them and their families – from accessible, affordable, public transit to active transportation and efficient roadways that move goods, as well as people, and support our province’s continued economic growth.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Making public transit a priority - transit is now free for kids 12 and under in BC, we’ve hit milestones in the construction of the new Surrey-Langley Skytrain, and have made major investments in Metro Vancouver transit improvements.
- Supporting continued transit operations and recovery from the pandemic through restart funding to TransLink and BC Transit

- Building more livable communities by amending the Transportation Act to allow BC to acquire land for housing and community amenities that serve people near transit stations and bus exchanges.
- Making significant progress on major transportation infrastructure, including the new the Fraser River tunnel replacement project and the Patullo Bridge replacement.

Over the remaining period of this mandate, I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to advance B.C.'s major infrastructure projects, including Highway 1 expansion in the Fraser Valley, the Fraser River tunnel replacement project, and the Surrey-Langley and UBC SkyTrain projects.
- Work with BC Transit and TransLink to ensure ridership continues to recover to pre-pandemic levels.
- Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure in working with cabinet colleagues, communities and Regions to assess and support the planning of transit projects to reduce commute times for fast growing urban areas, including evaluating possible extension of the West Coast Express.
- Work with local communities to develop options to improve public transit and other transportation modes on Vancouver Island, including building on the South Island Transportation Strategy.
- Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to complete the Transit Oriented Development framework to advance sustainable communities along transit corridors to help achieve our housing and affordability goals.
- Work with BC Transit, TransLink and BC Ferries on improving service integration to ensure passengers experience more seamless travel.
- Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure highway improvement projects result in more integrated transportation corridors through incorporating improved active transportation and transit amenities.
- Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure in working with First Nations, local governments, and the federal government to advance rural transportation solutions.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,



David Eby, KC
Premier