
A New Economic Direction for British Columbia

October 2026

BC **greens**



A Message from BC Green Party Leader Emily Lowan

When I travel around British Columbia, I hear a lot of anxiety about the economy. But I also hear frustration with the choices we are being offered. Too often, the debate seems to come down to accepting the status quo or lowering our expectations for what is 'feasible'.

I think we should expect more. British Columbians should be able to work hard and build a secure life here. Communities should have a real say in the economic decisions that shape their future. Workers should share in the prosperity they help create. And when we make decisions about our land, resources and public money, we should be thinking about what we are leaving behind for the next generation.

That is why I wanted us to put forward this economic vision. The BC Greens have always been willing to question the economic and political systems which benefit the few at the cost of the many. In a time of profound economic uncertainty, these questions become more critical than ever. We should be prepared to ask who our economy is working for, where wealth and power are accumulating, and what we could do differently.

As BC Greens, we believe in better.

We believe in local economies, where small businesses don't have to worry about sudden rent hikes because they are protected by rent control. Where municipalities can tax the storefronts that sit empty because their corporate owner would rather speculate than let local enterprise thrive.

We believe in resource communities, once tied to volatile industries, rebuilt with thousands of good, union jobs developing the green industry BC so desperately needs, using those industries to bring down the cost of our energy bills, transportation, and construction.

We believe in taxing the wealth of those who make more in one night's sleep than what a worker makes in a year, and using that revenue to fund the high-quality, accessible public services British Columbians deserve.

This is the politics of imagination and hope that is desperately needed when times feel so bleak.

The ideas in these pages are an invitation to think more ambitiously about what is possible in British Columbia, and to have a bigger conversation about the choices we make together.

Our politics must begin and end with the purpose of materially improving British Columbians' lives. I am proud to put forward this vision to offer this province the chance to believe in better.

Emily Lowan

Leader, BC Green Party

A note on this vision

This is the BC Greens' vision for British Columbia's economy. It doesn't try to cover every issue facing the province. Instead, it takes on one central question: how do we build an economy that makes more, keeps more, and shares more with the people and communities who create its wealth?

Our answer centres on four things: strengthening regional economies, electrifying our economy, creating and retaining more value in BC, and making sure prosperity reaches everyone who helps build it.

Housing, health care, education, corporate accountability, poverty reduction, labour rights, biodiversity, and climate action are core BC Green priorities, and our platform will set out our plans for each. This vision is the economic foundation those plans stand on.

We're publishing it to start a conversation. These ideas will get sharper through dialogue with First Nations, communities, workers, businesses, unions, and people across BC. We're looking forward to building this vision together.

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1.0 Introduction

British Columbia already has much of what it needs to build a prosperous and resilient economy that can work for all of us. We have clean electricity, a highly skilled population, strong public institutions, and communities and sovereign Indigenous nations with deep knowledge of their lands and regions. We are home to entrepreneurs, tradespeople, farmers, researchers, artists, and resource workers whose work reaches around the world. First Nations are strengthening and reasserting the governance and economic systems that sustained these lands for thousands of years before Canada existed as a country, building stronger communities and creating economic opportunities that benefit the province as a whole.

Yet the economy is not delivering the security or opportunity that it should. Too many people are working hard without getting ahead. Housing consumes a significant share of household incomes. Young people wonder whether they will be able to remain in the communities where they grew up. Small businesses struggle with high costs and uncertain access to workers, commercial space and financing. Resource communities face mill closures and economic disruption without a plan for what comes next. The wealth created from land, resources and public investment too often leaves the communities where it was generated.

BC needs to make different choices about what we build, what we support and who our economy is meant to serve — because right now, too much of the wealth this province creates leaves the communities that generate it. This vision is a starting point for a broader public conversation about the direction of our economy and the future we can build together. The choices we make today will shape life in this province for generations.

1.1 The Old Economic Model Isn't Working

BC's identity has long been tied to natural resources. Forestry, mining, fishing, agriculture and energy shaped the province and remain essential to many communities. They will continue to form an important part of our economy. But the economy we have today is no longer the economy described by the province's traditional economic narrative. Service-producing industries now account for approximately 78 per cent of provincial GDP and 82 per cent of employment, and this has continued to rise in recent years.¹ In contrast, the natural resource sector accounts for just 7.2 per cent of provincial GDP and 3.1 per cent of jobs – continuing to decline over the past decade. Manufacturing output declined by 6.2 per cent in 2024, representing the third year in a row of contractions in this sector.²

These changes mean we need to think differently about the role that natural resources play in our economy. For too long, success has been measured by how much we extract, and how much investment we attract. Too little attention has been paid to what we build around those investments, including the businesses that supply them, the processing and manufacturing that happens here, the skills and technology we develop, who ends up owning the assets, and how much of the resulting wealth actually stays in BC.

The world around us is changing as well. Climate change is reshaping forests, agriculture, infrastructure and communities. Trade relationships that once appeared stable are becoming less certain. Countries around the world are investing in clean energy, advanced manufacturing and strategic industries, while governments are paying renewed attention to economic security and domestic supply chains. An economy built around cheap imports, raw exports and ever-rising real estate values will leave BC increasingly vulnerable, especially in the age of Trump.

The BC Greens have a different vision. BC can use its clean electricity, natural resources, skilled workforce, public institutions and research capacity to build an economy that is more productive, resilient and locally rooted. We can generate more of the energy we need right here in BC, make more of the things we use here, build BC businesses that can compete beyond our borders, and get more value, here at home, from the resources we develop. We can strengthen the foundational sectors that make every other part of the economy possible, from housing and transportation to health care, education and child care. And we can build new models of ownership that allow First Nations, workers and communities to share more directly in the wealth they help create.

That requires us to ask more of economic development. What lasting capacity does an investment build? Who owns the assets? Where do the profits go? How many permanent jobs will remain? What public resources does it require? Does it make BC more productive and resilient? And will the communities that make development possible be better off because of it?

These are the questions that guide our economic vision. Our objective is an economy that makes more, retains more value, distributes opportunity more widely and gives British Columbians greater control over their economic future.

We believe that the economy of the future must be:

- Focused on improving people's lives, making the essentials of a good life more affordable, reducing inequality and ensuring that rising prosperity is broadly shared;
- Climate-aligned and able to withstand a changing climate;
- Capable of creating good, secure and family-supporting work;

¹ BC Tech. 2026. "A New Economic Narrative for BC: Five Years On, The Case Is Stronger." https://wearebctech.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/ANewEconomicNarrative_2026_Digital-1.pdf

² British Columbia Ministry of Finance. 2025. "2025 British Columbia Financial and Economic Review." <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/government-finances/financial-economic-review/financial-economic-review-2025.pdf>

- Built with First Nations as full participants in shaping the economy, with greater ownership, decision-making power and opportunities to build wealth, consistent with Indigenous rights and title;
- Diverse in structure, without monopolies, and capable of reining in corporate profiteering and pollution;
- Rooted in the strengths of communities and regions, with more wealth and decision-making remaining close to where it is created.

1.2 Believe in better

For decades, governments of different political ideologies have accepted a narrow view of what government is capable of and why it exists. There is a dominant narrative that government is inherently inefficient and that the role of government should be limited to getting out of the way, correcting occasional market failures and managing the consequences when things go wrong. Public institutions have been encouraged to outsource expertise, minimize risk and measure success through lower costs.

This way of thinking has constrained our political imagination. It has taught us to treat ambitious public institutions with suspicion, while accepting enormous private concentrations of power as natural. It has made governments reluctant to build, own, invest or plan for the long term. Even when public money, infrastructure and resources are essential to private development, governments often hesitate to demand a proportionate public return.

As BC Greens, we believe in better. We believe it should be the role of government to shape the economy and markets for our collective future. It can invest in people and communities where private capital will not, coordinate action across sectors and regions and ensure that economic development serves long-term public interest goals.

BC's history already demonstrates this. Public choices helped build our electricity system, transportation networks, schools, hospitals and social institutions. These were built through collective investment because people understood that some goals were too important to leave to short-term commercial incentives.

Government must be willing to lead, to establish a direction for the economy, build the capacity needed to pursue it and make deliberate choices about which activities public policy will support. We must be prepared to be bold, set conditions in the public interest, take risks and ensure that the people of BC share in the rewards.

That conviction is the foundation of this economic vision. We are proposing a direction to make the province more affordable, productive, resilient and fair, and to ensure that prosperity reaches people and communities throughout BC.

1.3 An Economy Built with First Nations

British Columbia's economic future is inseparable from the economic future of First Nations. First Nations are governments, rights-holders, landholders, business owners, investors and employers, and they are part of every major sector discussed in this vision. Decisions about forestry, mining, electricity, infrastructure, housing, tourism and regional development all intersect with First Nations territories, economies and institutions.

For First Nations, economic prosperity relies on resolving access to and governance over land, and having the same opportunities as all other people and governments. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples spoke to the importance of this in 1996, where they wrote: *"Self-government without a significant economic base would be an exercise in illusion and futility. How to achieve a more self-reliant economic base is thus one of the most important questions to be resolved. What measures need to be taken to rebuild Aboriginal economies that have been severely disrupted over time, marginalized, and largely stripped of their land and natural resource base?"*

For too long, colonial laws and institutions restricted First Nations' control over land, resources, capital and economic decision-making. A stronger economic relationship starts with self-determination. First Nations must have the authority, institutions and access to capital needed to define their own priorities, build businesses and infrastructure, own projects and share fairly in the wealth generated from their territories.

Significant progress has been made towards this goal in BC, but the work is far from finished. For that reason, we support the continued implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). The Act affirms UNDRIP's application to the laws of British Columbia and requires the Province to work in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples to bring provincial laws into alignment with the Declaration. UNDRIP itself recognizes Indigenous Peoples' rights to self-determination and to pursue their own economic, social and cultural development.

The [National Indigenous Economic Strategy](#) provides a useful blueprint for this work. Its recommendations include removing barriers to Indigenous access to capital, supporting Indigenous-led institutions, improving infrastructure and connectivity, expanding equity ownership and resource-revenue sharing, and increasing Indigenous representation in economic decision-making.

There is no single Indigenous economy, and it is not the Province's role to design one. Indigenous people and nations have their own priorities, institutions and economic goals. This vision therefore does not set out a separate list of policies "for" First Nations and Indigenous peoples. First Nations are part of the policies that follow across energy, forestry, infrastructure, regional development, procurement and industrial policy. Where Indigenous peoples and First Nations have their own economic strategies and priorities, provincial policy should support those choices rather than ask Nations to fit into programs designed elsewhere.



2.0 What We Will Build

The following sections set out the key areas where we believe government should focus its efforts over the coming decade to set a new direction for our economy. They do not attempt to cover every sector of the economy or every policy challenge facing BC. Instead, they identify areas where ambitious public leadership can have the greatest impact on building a stronger, more resilient and more affordable provincial economy. Some proposals are specific actions that could be implemented relatively quickly; others establish a direction for longer-term change that will require further development with communities, First Nations, workers, businesses and other partners.

2.1 Strong Regional Economies

Our Destination

Most of the wealth created through local work, natural resources and public investment will remain in the communities where it is generated. People will be able to build secure lives in their communities, with access to good work, essential services and opportunities to own and shape local economic assets. First Nations, local governments, cooperatives, workers and community organizations will play a stronger role in decisions about development, investment and the use of local resources.

Strong regional economies are also diverse economies. They have thriving small and medium-sized businesses, locally owned enterprises and new entrepreneurs alongside larger employers and public institutions. A community with many sources of employment, ownership and investment is better able to adapt when industries change and more likely to keep wealth circulating locally.

A strong provincial economy depends on strong local economies. Our goal is for every region to have the capacity to build on its own strengths, support the people and businesses already rooted there, respond to local challenges and retain a fair share of the value it creates.

Why This Matters

Across BC, communities generate enormous economic value. They produce timber, minerals, food and electricity that support prosperity across the province, yet much of the profit, decision-making and value-added processing happens somewhere else.

A large project can increase provincial GDP while leaving relatively little lasting economic capacity in the place where it is built, or even resulting in liabilities for the community. Raw resources can leave a region and take the processing jobs, corporate offices and investment returns with them. When too little ownership, expertise and productive capacity remain local, communities are more exposed when markets shift or a major employer closes.

The same is true of the businesses that make up local economies. Independent retailers, manufacturers, restaurants, tradespeople, professional services and other small and medium-sized firms create jobs, train workers and provide the goods and services communities rely on. A region with many locally rooted businesses has more places where people can build careers, start something of their own and reinvest earnings close to home. When ownership and employment become concentrated in a handful of large firms, the consequences of a single closure or corporate decision become much greater.

We often judge the economy by whether GDP, investment, production and exports are growing. These measures tell us how much economic activity is taking place, but much less about who benefits from it or what it leaves behind. They do not necessarily show whether local businesses are growing, whether people can find secure work, whether ownership is becoming more concentrated or whether a region is building the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances.

The consequences of weakened regional economies are especially visible in rural, remote and resource-dependent regions. Many have lived through mill closures, volatile commodity cycles, declining services and decisions made in distant corporate offices or government departments. Too often, they have also been expected to respond without the staff, financing or institutions needed to develop new opportunities.

The Economic Opportunity

BC has an opportunity to build stronger regional economies from the businesses, institutions and resources that are already rooted in communities across the province.

Small and medium-sized businesses are a big part of that opportunity. When independent businesses can start, invest and remain in their communities, they create more sources of employment and ownership. They buy from other businesses, train workers, fill storefronts and industrial spaces, and often make decisions with a much closer understanding of the places where they operate. Helping more of these businesses survive and grow makes local economies more diverse and less dependent on any single employer or industry.

Public institutions can help build that capacity. Every year, BC's provincial government, Crown corporations, health authorities, school districts, post-secondary institutions and local governments spend billions of dollars on housing, health care, schools, food, transportation and infrastructure. Used more intentionally, that purchasing power can create predictable demand for local suppliers, strengthen regional supply chains and help businesses reach the scale needed to compete across BC and beyond.

Regions also need the capacity to turn opportunities into projects. Communities are often best placed to understand their economic strengths and emerging challenges, but understanding an opportunity is different from having the staff, financing and institutions needed to act on it. Durable regional institutions can bring businesses, First Nations, workers and governments together, develop projects and connect local priorities to provincial investment.

What We Will Do

2.1.1 HELP SMALL BUSINESSES START, GROW, AND STAY LOCAL

Small and medium-sized businesses are the backbone of diverse regional economies. They provide employment, fill main streets and industrial areas, train workers and create opportunities for people to build something in their own communities. They also have less capacity to face challenges than larger firms, ranging from rising commercial rents and property costs to complex permitting processes.

We will make it easier for independent businesses to put down roots, invest and remain in their communities. We will also give local governments more tools to protect vibrant commercial areas and tackle practices that leave usable land and buildings sitting empty.

To help small businesses start, grow and stay local, we will:

- A. Introduce province-wide commercial rent protections for businesses.** Establish province-wide rent protections for commercial tenants, including limits on rent increases during a tenancy, at renewal and between tenants. The regulated rent will remain with the commercial space when a tenant leaves, preventing rents from being reset to market because a business closes or moves. [Legislation proposed in New York State](#) provides one model for this approach. An independent provincial process will establish allowable annual increases based on operating costs, commercial real estate conditions and other relevant factors, with a process for landlords or tenants to seek adjustments in exceptional circumstances. A provincial commercial rent registry will record rents, leases and additional charges and support enforcement of the rules. The framework will also establish reasonable protections against eviction or non-renewal intended to circumvent rent protections and clear rules around additional costs charged through commercial leases.

Implementation will begin with province-wide collection of commercial rent and lease data, with rents recorded from a specified baseline date to prevent landlords from avoiding the new protections through pre-emptive rent increases or changes in tenancy. The protections will then be phased in across the province, allowing the system to be tested and refined as coverage expands.

- B. Give municipalities the power to tax vacant commercial properties.** Amend provincial legislation so local governments can require the registration of vacant commercial properties and levy a graduated vacancy tax where appropriate. Municipalities will be able to design the tool around local conditions, with exemptions for genuine redevelopment, renovation, unsafe buildings and places where there is demonstrably insufficient demand. [Quebec has taken a similar approach](#) with underused farmland, giving municipalities the option to tax workable agricultural land that is left unused.
- C. Help communities and businesses own the places where they operate.** Give existing commercial tenants, municipalities, First Nations, cooperatives and eligible community organizations the ability to register a right of first refusal or first opportunity to purchase qualifying commercial properties when they are put up for sale. Provincial financing and loan guarantees will help locally rooted buyers acquire strategically important commercial properties and keep them in productive use. Scotland's [Community Right to Buy](#) provides one model, allowing eligible community bodies to register an interest in land or buildings and receive the first opportunity to purchase when they come up for sale. Over time, this will allow more storefronts and workspaces to move into stable local, cooperative and community ownership.
- D. Make government easier for small businesses to navigate.** Build a "Think Small First" approach into provincial and local government. New regulations, permits, licences and administrative requirements will be reviewed for unnecessary complexity and disproportionate impacts on smaller businesses, without weakening protections for workers, consumers or the environment. The province will create a single front door for business approvals and require ministries to coordinate behind the scenes, so entrepreneurs do not have to navigate government agency by agency. We will also work with municipalities to establish and incentivize the use of common application forms and clearer approval timelines. To this end, provincial economic development funding will support local governments that modernize permitting and reduce unnecessary differences between jurisdictions, with a goal of making straightforward business processes intersecting with government as simple as possible. New York City's [OPEN for Small Business initiative](#) offers one recent example, combining coordinated permitting reform, one-stop navigation support and ongoing review of unnecessary regulatory burdens.

2.1.2 USE PUBLIC SPENDING TO BUILD COMMUNITY WEALTH

The provincial government, Crown corporations, health authorities, school districts, universities, colleges and local governments collectively purchase billions of dollars in goods, services, food and construction each year. This spending can meet public needs while also strengthening local supply chains, creating good jobs and supporting businesses with deep roots in their communities.

[Scotland is one of the leading jurisdictions](#) in this area, using the purchasing power of public anchor institutions to strengthen local supply chains, expand opportunities for smaller suppliers and generate wider community benefits. The broader approach is explored in more detail in CLES's [Community Wealth Building: Theory, Practice and Next Steps](#).

To use public spending more strategically, we will:

- A. Establish regional anchor-institution partnerships.** Regional economic-development councils will bring together major public institutions, including health authorities, school districts, post-secondary institutions, Crown corporations and local governments, to analyze and coordinate their purchasing and identify opportunities to source more goods and services within BC. Coordinating demand

across institutions and sharing best practices will create larger and more predictable markets for local suppliers.

- B. Publish where public money is spent.** Major public bodies will report procurement spending by region, sector, supplier size and relevant ownership categories, including First Nations businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises. This information will be used to identify where spending is leaving the province, where local supply chains are already strong and where targeted business development could fill gaps. Progress will be measured by how much public spending builds lasting capacity within BC, not simply by the location of a supplier's mailing address.



In 2012, the English city of Preston started asking a simple question: where does the money spent by our public institutions actually go?

The city worked with major local institutions including Lancashire County Council, the University of Central Lancashire, colleges, police and a housing association to examine their procurement. Together, these institutions were spending hundreds of millions of pounds every year on everything from food and construction to furniture and printing. But the analysis found that just 5 per cent of their procurement spending was staying in Preston, while only 39 per cent remained in the wider Lancashire economy.

Public institutions looked for contracts where local businesses could realistically compete, gave businesses earlier notice of upcoming opportunities, built better information about local suppliers and, where practical, broke large contracts into smaller pieces. The changes were remarkably ordinary. School furniture could be made by local carpenters. A £2-million food contract could create opportunities for regional producers. Police printing work could go to a local printer.

Within five years, the share of participating institutions' procurement retained in Preston had risen from 5 per cent to 18.2 per cent. Annual spending with Preston-based suppliers reached £112.3 million — £74 million more than at the beginning of the initiative. Across Lancashire, retained spending increased by about £200 million.

The approach became known as the Preston Model. Its central idea is that hospitals, universities, local governments, schools and other large institutions are already major economic actors. Paying attention to where they buy their food, construction, professional services and supplies can help turn money that the government was going to spend anyway into demand for local businesses, workers and supply chains.

BC has the same opportunity. Our provincial government, health authorities, school districts, universities and colleges, Crown corporations and local governments collectively purchase enormous amounts of goods, services and construction every year. These institutions are rooted in communities across the province and will continue spending that money year after year. By better understanding where those dollars go, helping local businesses compete and coordinating procurement across public institutions, we can keep more of that spending circulating in BC and use purchases we already need to make to strengthen local businesses and supply chains.

[Learn more about the Preston Model here](#)

- C. Make public contracts accessible to smaller suppliers.** Contracts will be divided into smaller components where practical, qualification and insurance requirements will be proportionate to the work, and common bidding documents will be simplified. Smaller firms will be able to bid as partnerships or consortia when a contract would otherwise be beyond the capacity of a single business. Public bodies will also adopt fair payment timelines so that smaller suppliers are not required to finance government operations while waiting to be paid.
- D. Build local supply before contracts go to market.** The province will publish multi-year procurement pipelines for major areas such as housing, construction, health care, food, clean energy and public infrastructure. Regional innovation and business-support hubs will help local firms obtain certifications, develop partnerships, improve productivity and prepare competitive bids. Where important goods are not currently produced in BC, procurement planning will be coordinated with industrial and workforce policy to help create that capacity.
- E. Adopt a 'Buy BC' approach to public procurement.** Use public purchasing power to support BC businesses, workers and local supply chains, including small and medium-sized businesses. Where trade agreements allow, public bodies will prioritize BC suppliers and BC-made goods, services and materials. Where they do not, contracts will give greater weight to the value created here through local manufacturing, employment, apprenticeships, research and development, and BC supply chains. When we spend public dollars, we should keep more of the economic benefits here in BC.
- F. Attach enforceable community benefits to major contracts.** Public tenders will give weight to commitments such as local employment, apprenticeships, First Nations participation, fair wages, local subcontracting, emissions reductions and investment in domestic supply chains. These commitments will become enforceable terms of the contract, with regular public reporting and consequences when suppliers fail to deliver. Requirements will be proportionate to the value and nature of each contract.
- G. Use procurement to support more inclusive forms of ownership.** Public institutions will actively identify opportunities to purchase from cooperatives, employee-owned businesses, First Nations enterprises, social enterprises and locally owned small and medium-sized firms. Supplier-development programs will help these businesses grow and compete, rather than relying only on preferences within individual tenders.

2.1.3 GIVE REGIONS THE POWER AND CAPACITY TO SHAPE THEIR ECONOMIES

BC's regions have different strengths, challenges and opportunities. Economic development in the Kootenays will look different from economic development on Vancouver Island, in the Northeast or along the North Coast. Communities understand these differences, but they often lack the staff, funding and authority needed to act on them.

Too much regional economic development depends on short-term grants, temporary partnerships and programs designed in Victoria. Communities are asked to develop long-term plans while repeatedly competing for the basic resources needed to carry them out. Provincial decisions about infrastructure, training, land use and major investment are also too often made without a clear connection to regional priorities. The OECD's [work on place-based economic development](#) similarly emphasizes the need for long-term regional capacity, coordination and investment tailored to the distinct assets and challenges of different places.

We will make regional economic development a permanent part of how BC governs its economy. Every region will have a durable institution responsible for bringing governments, businesses, workers and community organizations together, setting shared priorities and turning those priorities into projects.

To give regions greater power and capacity, we will:

- A. Build on regional institutions that already work.** BC already has economic trusts, regional partnerships and other locally rooted organizations with valuable experience and relationships. We will strengthen and expand these institutions rather than impose a single new structure across the province. Where strong institutions already exist, they will be supported to take on a larger role. New regional partnerships will be established where there are gaps. Their boundaries and governance will reflect local economic relationships, First Nations territories and community circumstances.
- B. Establish a provincial framework for regional economic development.** Every part of BC will be covered by a regional economic development strategy, with regular planning cycles, public reporting and clear responsibility for implementation. This will build on existing structures and institutions as noted above. Regional strategies will connect economic development with infrastructure, workforce planning, housing, transportation, land use and public services. This will help ensure that economic priorities are supported by the broader investments communities need to grow. The goal is for regions to have ownership over their economic strategies, within a provincial framework that connects decisions across regions and levels of government.
- C. Connect regional priorities to provincial decisions.** Regional strategies will have a formal role in provincial planning. Ministries and Crown corporations will be required to consider regional priorities when making major decisions about infrastructure, workforce programs, public procurement and economic investment. The province will report on how it has responded to regional strategies and explain where priorities have not been advanced. The [OECD highlights](#) France's long-running State-Region Planning Contracts as one model for connecting regional priorities to national investment and planning through multi-year agreements between levels of government. Regional institutions will also provide regular advice on changing economic conditions, emerging opportunities and barriers that require provincial action.
- D. Bring First Nations into regional economic planning.** Build on [work already underway](#) to strengthen First Nations participation in BC's regional economic trusts by ensuring First Nations are also represented at regional economic development tables alongside local governments, the Province and other regional partners. First Nations are major economic actors across BC as governments, employers, landholders, investors and development partners. Their participation should extend beyond consultation on individual projects to the broader conversations that shape regional priorities, infrastructure, investment and economic development.
- E. Provide stable funding and professional capacity.** Regional institutions and First Nations will receive multi-year core funding to employ economic-development staff, collect and analyze regional data, engage communities and develop projects. Smaller and rural communities should be able to access expertise without relying on temporary grants or asking local staff and volunteers to take on economic development work alongside their existing responsibilities. Regional teams will also help communities navigate provincial and federal programs, coordinate partners and prepare proposals for larger public or private investment.
- F. Create flexible regional investment funds.** Each regional institution will have access to multi-year funding that can be directed toward locally identified priorities. This could include feasibility studies, small infrastructure projects, cooperative development, business succession, workforce initiatives and the early costs of preparing larger projects.



Northern BC already has a strong example of regional economic decision-making.

The Northern Development Initiative Trust was created in 2004 with the idea that economic-development decisions for the North should be made in the North.

The Trust was given a long-term capital base and operates independently from the Province. Regional advisory committees bring local knowledge into its strategy and funding decisions, while its staff work directly with communities, First Nations, businesses and local governments.

That has allowed Northern Development to support thousands of locally identified projects, from housing and tourism to business development, infrastructure and community economic capacity. The value of the model is that communities have an institution that understands the region, can build relationships over time and can respond to opportunities that do not fit neatly into a province-wide program.

BC already has several regional economic trusts and other locally rooted institutions doing this kind of work. Their experience shows the value of giving regions permanent institutions, local decision-making power and resources to pursue their own economic priorities. We should build on what is already working, strengthen these institutions where needed, and extend that capacity to every region of the province.

[Learn more about the work of the Northern Development Initiative Trust](#)

2.1.4 GROW TOURISM AROUND BC'S NATURAL ADVANTAGES

Tourism is already a [major part of BC's regional economies](#). In 2024, it supported more than 113,000 direct jobs, paid \$5 billion in wages and salaries, and contributed nearly \$8 billion in real GDP. Much of the sector is made up of small businesses rooted in communities across the province.

BC also has an advantage that cannot be easily reproduced elsewhere: the landscapes, ecosystems, communities, cultures and recreation opportunities that make different parts of the province distinctive. Those assets support a much wider local economy, from accommodation and restaurants to guiding, transportation, arts and cultural experiences. A healthy forest, an accessible coastline, a thriving downtown or a well-maintained trail network can keep creating economic value year after year. Protecting and investing in the qualities that make a place worth visiting can therefore be part of building its long-term prosperity.

Tourism also fits the kind of economy we want to build in BC. It creates opportunities for small and locally owned businesses, supports jobs that cannot easily be moved elsewhere, and gives communities an economic stake in protecting the natural and cultural assets around them. Investments in parks, trails, public spaces and transportation can support local businesses while making communities better places to live. For rural and resource-dependent regions in particular, tourism can also help diversify local economies and create new sources of income and employment alongside existing industries.

What We Will Do

- A. Streamline adventure tourism permitting.** Expand the [Adventure Tourism Hub](#) into a broader, permanent one-window system for tourism and recreation tenures on public land. The Hub currently focuses on a limited group of activities, including heli- and cat-skiing, helicopter-assisted guiding and commercial snowmobiling. We will move more quickly to clear existing backlogs, establish transparent service standards and extend streamlined permitting to a wider range of responsible outdoor recreation. We will also review where public land can support guiding, huts, trails and other low-impact tourism businesses, with clear environmental standards and early involvement of First Nations. Proposals that fit the land and meet those standards should be able to reach a decision in a reasonable amount of time.
- B. Invest in the public recreation infrastructure that supports tourism.** BC's parks are among our greatest public assets. They protect ecosystems and give people access to nature, while supporting tourism businesses and regional economies across the province. [More than 27 million visits](#) are now made to BC Parks each year, while growing use, underinvestment in aging infrastructure, and extreme weather are putting increasing pressure on trails, campgrounds and other facilities. We believe there is a strong economic case for investing in these assets. No individual tourism business has an incentive, or ability, to build and maintain the shared public infrastructure that supports an entire regional tourism economy. These are public assets that can support hundreds of businesses over decades while remaining publicly owned and available to residents. We will develop a long-term investment plan for BC Parks and recreation infrastructure that recognizes these wider economic benefits alongside conservation and public access, and directs new investment toward both heavily used destinations and places where better recreation infrastructure can unlock new opportunities for regional tourism.
- C. Establish regional transit in key corridors.** It is still difficult to explore much of BC without owning or renting a car. Even in the Sea-to-Sky, one of the province's busiest corridors, [Destination BC](#) has identified a lack of connectivity options between communities as a barrier to tourism development. We will identify key parts of the province where improving connectivity through public transportation can support the economic future of the province, and implement regional transit. In coastal regions, this will include examining where new or expanded passenger ferry routes could provide practical connections between communities.
- D. Support communities to plan for tourism growth.** Communities across BC have very different relationships with tourism. Regional tourism planning will assess housing and workforce capacity, transportation and public infrastructure, pressure on natural areas and resident perspectives before setting growth priorities. Places with capacity for more visitors will receive support to develop new businesses and destinations. Where visitor numbers are already creating significant pressure, the focus can shift toward shoulder seasons, longer stays and increasing the value tourism creates.
- E. Integrate tourism into regional land-use and economic planning.** Tourism should have greater weight when BC makes long-term decisions about land, infrastructure and major industrial development. The regional economic strategies proposed elsewhere in this vision will identify important tourism and recreation assets and consider how different land uses interact over time. This is particularly important where tourism, recreation and resource industries depend on the same landscapes. The [proposed Record Ridge magnesium mine](#), for example, would establish a new open-pit mine approximately seven kilometres southwest of Rossland, one of BC's resort municipalities and a community whose economy is closely tied to outdoor recreation and tourism. The City of Rossland has raised concerns about potential impacts on tourism, recreation, water and the community's long-term economic development. Decisions of this scale should better consider what is already working in a regional economy and whether a new project supports or puts at risk the development path a community has spent years building.

2.2 Abundant, Affordable and Reliable Clean Power

Our Destination

BC will have an abundant, affordable and reliable supply of clean electricity capable of replacing fossil fuels across transportation, buildings and industry.

BC Hydro will remain the backbone of the system, but electricity will increasingly be produced, stored and managed across thousands of homes, businesses and communities. Households, First Nations, local governments and businesses will be able to own more of the energy infrastructure around them, lower their own costs and earn a return when their equipment helps meet the needs of the wider grid.

These resources will add to BC's electricity supply while making better use of the grid we already have. Over time, a larger and more flexible clean electricity system can also create opportunities to sell more power to other jurisdictions, generating public returns while helping reduce emissions beyond our borders.

Why This Matters

Energy is the foundation of our future economy. People need it to heat and cool their homes and move around their communities. Businesses need dependable and affordable energy to invest, expand and remain competitive. Rising to the challenge of climate change will require much of the energy now supplied by gasoline, diesel and natural gas to be replaced with clean electricity. Electric vehicles, heat pumps and cleaner industrial processes can reduce emissions and protect households and businesses from volatile fossil-fuel prices and growing inflation.

BC Hydro has [begun preparing for this growth](#), with electricity demand expected to increase by roughly 50 per cent by 2050. Calls for power in 2024 and 2025 secured roughly 8,500 GWh of new renewable electricity each year, largely from wind projects with significant First Nations ownership. BC Hydro is also undertaking a \$36-billion, 10-year capital program to expand and reinforce the grid, while Power Smart 2.0 will invest more than \$1 billion over three years in energy efficiency and demand response.

These investments are an important start, but we also see the opportunity to use the electricity system differently. For most of its history, BC's grid was built around large hydroelectric dams delivering power in one direction to customers whose role was largely to consume it. Solar panels, batteries, electric vehicles and smart devices increasingly allow electricity to be generated, stored and shifted across thousands of homes, businesses and communities. These resources can add supply, reduce peak demand and make better use of the infrastructure we already have.

There is an opportunity to make these resources a more central part of how we plan and build our electricity system. A household battery, a community solar project or thousands of electric vehicles charging at the right time can provide significant value to the grid, just as larger infrastructure does. Building a system that recognizes that value can help meet growing demand more efficiently, while giving households, First Nations, communities and businesses more opportunities to own energy infrastructure and share in the economic returns from BC's growing electricity system.



Australia demonstrates the scale of what is possible when governments make small-scale generation easy and widely accessible.

More than 4.3 million Australian households now have rooftop solar, representing approximately 35 per cent of homes and providing over 14 per cent of electricity in the country in the second half of 2025.³ Together, Australia's rooftop solar systems now have more generating capacity than the country's remaining coal-fired power stations.

Part of that success comes from making installation very simple. Accredited installers can handle most of the connection process for the homeowner, and many standard residential systems move through simplified or automatic approval pathways. The result is that installing solar can feel much more like buying a household upgrade than undertaking a major infrastructure project.

That abundance of solar is beginning to change how the electricity system works. Since July 2026, eligible households in New South Wales, South Australia and southeast Queensland have been able to [opt into three hours of free electricity](#) every day during the solar-rich middle of the day, whether or not they have solar panels themselves. The idea is to move demand to the hours when electricity is abundant, while reducing pressure on the grid during the evening peak.

BC is arguably in an even better position to integrate distributed renewables. Our large hydroelectric reservoirs can complement solar generation by conserving water when solar is abundant and generating more electricity when it is needed. Australia shows how millions of small energy resources can become an important part of a modern grid.

[Learn more from the Clean Energy Council](#)

³Clean Energy Council Rooftop solar and storage report - July to December 2025 | Clean Energy Council

The Economic Opportunity

Building an abundant clean electricity system is one of the largest economic opportunities available to BC. Today, electricity supplies only about 20 per cent of the energy used across the province, with fossil fuels providing most of the rest.⁴ Replacing a growing share of that energy with clean electricity will require decades of investment in generation, transmission, buildings, vehicles and equipment. The Pembina Institute estimates that reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 could grow BC's clean-energy workforce by 317,700 jobs across clean electricity, buildings, transportation, critical minerals and mass timber.

A more distributed electricity system can spread some of this investment into communities across the province. Installing solar and batteries, upgrading buildings and managing local energy systems are jobs that happen where people live, supporting local trades and businesses. Communities can also produce more of their own power, earn revenue from electricity and grid services, and use reliable and affordable clean power to attract new businesses and investment. Greater ownership by First Nations, local governments, cooperatives and households can keep more of the long-term returns from this infrastructure in the communities making the investment.

⁴ Pembina Institute, BC 2026 General Election Platform Brief (2026)

The scale and predictability of this investment can also help build industries in BC. Public procurement and long-term electricity planning can create a stable domestic market for companies producing electrical equipment, grid technologies, software, building systems and other clean-energy products and services. Done strategically, this can help BC and Canadian firms develop expertise, grow their supply chains and compete in markets beyond the province.

Electrification can change where billions of dollars are spent on energy flow. Instead of purchasing as much gasoline, diesel and natural gas, households and businesses will increasingly purchase electricity generated in BC and delivered through a publicly owned utility. Combined with greater First Nations and community ownership of energy infrastructure, that creates an opportunity to keep a larger share of our energy spending, investment and returns circulating within BC.

What We Will Do

2.2.1 LAUNCH A PROVINCIAL RESIDENTIAL SOLAR & HOME BATTERY STRATEGY

We will launch a province-wide strategy to make rooftop solar, home batteries and plug-in balcony solar easier and more affordable to install. Our goal is to create a high-volume market in which standard systems can be purchased, approved and connected quickly, while ensuring customer-owned energy strengthens BC's electricity system.

This strategy will include:

- A. Restore net metering and set a target for distributed solar.** Restore one-for-one net metering for households and small businesses and use it to rapidly grow distributed solar across BC. Net metering will remain available to new participants until distributed residential and small-business solar supplies approximately 5 per cent of provincial electricity demand, providing a simple and predictable incentive for households and businesses to invest while the market scales. This will support household electricity affordability, meeting provincial electricity needs, and good jobs installing household renewables.
- B. Make rooftop solar simple to install** by creating a single, province-wide approval portal for standard rooftop solar and battery systems. One digital application will cover provincial incentives, municipal permits, electrical approvals, BC Hydro interconnection and enrolment in the provincial demand response program. Standard residential systems using certified equipment and approved designs will qualify for rapid approval, while more complex projects involving structural concerns or local grid constraints will continue to receive technical review. The province will work with local governments, BC Hydro and Technical Safety BC to establish consistent technical standards, common application forms and clear approval timelines. The United States has [already developed SolarAPP+](#), an automated permitting system that allows participating local governments to approve standard rooftop solar and battery installations quickly.
- C. Build a high-volume market for standardized solar systems.** Work with installers, manufacturers, local governments, Technical Safety BC and BC Hydro to develop pre-approved system designs using certified equipment. Standard systems will be able to move quickly through permitting and interconnection, while municipalities, First Nations, cooperatives and community groups will be supported to aggregate household demand and competitively procure installations at scale.
- D. Enable plug-in balcony solar** by establishing a clear legal and technical pathway for certified plug-in balcony solar systems. Provincial standards will set requirements for approved equipment, mounting systems, electrical protection and safe operation, allowing compliant systems to be installed through a simple registration process rather than a full interconnection review. This will make solar accessible to renters, apartment residents and households that cannot install a conventional rooftop system, allowing more British Columbians to participate in and benefit from the clean energy transition. Momentum is growing rapidly elsewhere with [legislation to legalize plug-in solar now advancing](#) across much of the United States.

- E. Make clean energy upgrades affordable upfront.** BC Hydro will offer low-cost on-bill financing for household solar, batteries and related electrical upgrades, allowing customers to repay the cost over time through their electricity bill rather than paying the full cost upfront. Financing will be designed so that longer repayment periods can make projects accessible to households that would otherwise struggle with the upfront investment, with strong consumer protections and the ability to repay early without penalty. Manitoba Hydro [offers one model of doing this](#), financing upgrades such as solar, heat pumps and electrical work with repayment added directly to the household energy bill.



What if installing solar was more like buying an appliance than undertaking a home renovation?

That is the idea behind plug-in solar. Instead of a conventional rooftop system requiring thousands of dollars, professional installation and a lengthy approval process, a typical system consists of one or two solar panels, a small inverter and a cord that connects directly to a household electrical circuit. The electricity is used first by appliances in the home, reducing the amount purchased from the grid.

The systems are inexpensive enough to bring solar within reach of many people who could never install rooftop solar - or who don't own their own home. An 800-watt system in Germany typically costs about €400-€800 and can generate around 760 kWh a year.

The simplicity is what makes the idea exciting. Imagine being able to walk into Canadian Tire, buy a certified solar kit, mount the panels on your balcony or in your yard, plug it in and start lowering your electricity bill. You would not need to own your roof, hire a solar installer or invest tens of thousands of dollars. That opens small-scale solar to renters, apartment residents and households that have largely been left out of the rooftop solar market.

Germany has shown [how quickly this can scale](#). About 435,000 new plug-in solar systems were registered in 2024 and another 430,000 in 2025, as the country simplified registration and made small systems easier to install. But the idea is no longer confined to Europe.

Across the United States, [states are rapidly rewriting their electricity rules](#) to make plug-in solar possible. Eight states have now enacted plug-in solar laws, and legislation has been introduced or considered in 30 states. Many of these laws allow certified systems of up to 1,200 watts without the permits, utility approvals and interconnection agreements required for conventional rooftop solar.

Plug-in solar is still new in North America. That creates an opportunity for BC to be among the first jurisdictions in Canada to establish clear rules for certified systems and make this technology available to renters, apartment residents and homeowners - improving affordability and supporting action on climate change.

Learn more about the [potential for this technology here in Canada](#)

2.2.2 UNLOCK COMMUNITY-SCALE ENERGY PROJECTS

First Nations, local governments, cooperatives, strata corporations and community organizations should be able to develop solar, wind, storage and microgrid projects without needing the resources and expertise of a major energy company. These projects can keep energy revenues in communities, strengthen local resilience and help meet growing electricity demand close to where power is used.

To support community-scale energy, we will:

- A. Create a clear legal framework for community ownership of energy assets.** BC Hydro will establish standardized rules for community-scale projects owned by First Nations, municipalities, cooperatives, strata corporations and community organizations. While these ownership models are

already largely possible in BC, the pathways for developing them can be fragmented, complex and difficult for communities to navigate. The framework will clarify who can own and operate a project, how revenues and bill credits can be distributed, how assets will be governed over their operating life, and other areas. Standard agreements and model ownership structures will reduce legal costs and make it easier for communities to move from an initial concept to an investable project.

- B. Create a Community Energy Project Office** that provides feasibility studies, technical assistance, legal and governance support, grid-connection guidance and help securing financing. The office will act as a single point of contact and support communities through project design, permitting, interconnection, procurement and construction. It will also develop shared templates, technical resources and model business cases so that every community does not have to build the same expertise from scratch. Similar models exist elsewhere, [including in Scotland](#), where the government provides dedicated support for local and community energy projects.
- C. Expand and improve BC Hydro's Community Generation Service.** As the [new service begins operating](#), we will direct BC Hydro to review size limits, compensation, eligible technologies, ownership structures and administrative requirements. The province will work with early project proponents to identify barriers and make the service practical for cooperatives, First Nations, municipalities, strata corporations and community organizations across BC.
- D. Support public participation in community ownership.** Enable residents to invest in local projects through cooperatives, community bonds and other accessible ownership models and receive a fair share of the long-term returns. The province will work with relevant partners to develop securities, consumer-protection and financing rules suited to smaller community offerings.

2.2.3 MODERNIZE THE GRID

BC's electricity grid was largely built for a simpler system where electricity was generated at large, centralized hydro-electric dams and delivered in one direction to relatively passive customers. The system we are building now will look very different. Millions of electric vehicles, heat pumps, batteries, solar panels and smart devices will connect to the grid alongside new industries and large sources of renewable generation.

A modern grid should be able to coordinate all of these resources to make the system as efficient as possible. A traditional approach would be to build infrastructure to accommodate the maximum possible demand point that occurs for a few hours each year. A smarter grid can reduce the need for some of that infrastructure by coordinating when electricity is used, stored and supplied back to the system. For example, an electric vehicle can charge when electricity is abundant and eventually return power when it is scarce. Water heaters, thermostats and industrial equipment can shift some electricity use by minutes or hours without affecting the service they provide. Modernizing the grid means reforming and incentivizing BC Hydro to provide people and communities with the technology, information and other tools needed.

To modernize the grid, we will:

- A. Make BC Hydro a partner in building a distributed electricity system.** BC Hydro will have a clear mandate to help households, First Nations, communities and businesses produce, store, share and manage electricity, rather than treating these resources as exceptions to a centralized system. It will create simple and predictable pathways for community energy, independent generation, batteries and other distributed resources to connect to the grid, and fairly compensate them for the electricity and grid services they provide. BC Hydro's success will be measured in part by how effectively it enables investment and ownership across the province, alongside affordability, reliability and its responsibility as BC's public utility.

- B. Electrify more of BC's economy and build the clean power to match.** BC will set long-term, ambitious electrification and electricity-supply targets so BC Hydro can plan for the electricity our future economy will need as opposed to responding to forecasted demand. As a [first milestone](#), we will target electricity supplying at least 35 per cent of BC's total energy needs by 2035, up from approximately 20 per cent today. The [2025 CleanBC Review](#) similarly recommended setting electrification targets for BC's energy use. Regular competitive calls for clean power will provide certainty for First Nations, developers and suppliers. New supply will focus on wind, solar and emerging clean technologies, supported by storage, demand flexibility and the flexibility of BC's existing hydro system. We will not build new large hydroelectric dams in BC. Existing reservoirs can help integrate new renewable energy by shifting hydro generation to times when wind and solar production is lower. When power is available beyond domestic needs, stronger connections with neighbouring electricity markets can allow BC to sell clean electricity when it is valuable and generate additional returns from our public electricity system.
- C. Make better use of the electricity system we already have.** Batteries, electric vehicles, water heaters, thermostats and other flexible devices can collectively provide significant capacity to BC's electricity system. BC Hydro has begun testing these technologies. We will move them much more quickly from pilots and voluntary programs into the core of how the grid is planned and operated. BC Hydro will scale up virtual power plants, smart charging and automated demand response across the province, with customers retaining control and being paid for the services they provide. Utility planning will put energy efficiency, flexible demand and distributed resources on an equal footing with investments in new generation, transmission and distribution, so that the most cost-effective option can be chosen. Distributed energy will be treated as a core resource in electricity planning and considered alongside new substations, transmission lines and generation when it can provide capacity more quickly or at lower cost.
- D. Create a faster path for connecting new businesses and clean generation.** The province will establish clear service standards for grid connections, including transparent timelines, costs and technical requirements. BC Hydro will simplify and standardize the process for common projects while dedicating specialized teams to complex industrial, community and generation proposals. Applicants should know early whether capacity is available, what upgrades are required and when a connection can be delivered.
- E. Build open and interoperable grid standards.** Build on BC Hydro's [emerging work to coordinate](#) customer-owned energy resources by establishing common, open standards so electric vehicles, batteries, chargers, solar inverters and other flexible devices can securely participate in grid programs regardless of manufacturer. Customers will have a simple way to connect eligible devices, retain control over their energy data and choose who can manage their participation. Qualified aggregators, cooperatives and community-energy organizations will be able to combine smaller resources and offer their capacity to BC Hydro, opening grid services to far wider participation. Australia is developing [a national framework](#) along similar lines, establishing common interoperability requirements so consumer energy devices can work across different manufacturers, technologies and energy providers.
- F. Use BC Hydro's purchasing power to build BC's electricity supply chain.** BC Hydro will use its long-term procurement to increase the share of equipment, services and expertise for the electricity transition produced in BC and Canada. Procurement will give greater weight to Canadian content, supply-chain resilience, Indigenous economic participation and wider economic benefits. BC Hydro will also publish long-term procurement forecasts so businesses can invest with confidence in new facilities, workers and production capacity in BC.
- G. Build the workforce for BC's electrification ambitions.** Align workforce planning, training funding and apprenticeship capacity with the sectors where BC expects sustained investment and job growth, including electricity, building retrofits, clean technology, critical minerals and value-added

manufacturing. The province will work with industry, unions, First Nations and training institutions to forecast regional workforce needs, expand training where shortages are expected and give colleges and apprenticeship programs greater certainty to build capacity ahead of demand. Particular attention will be given to expanding access to training in rural and remote communities so that more of the jobs created by major investments can be filled locally.

2.3 A Province That Makes and Retains More Value

Our Destination

BC will build a more productive, low-carbon economy with stronger industries rooted in the province. We will develop areas where BC has the potential for lasting advantage, retain more value from our resources and knowledge, and build the infrastructure and productive capacity that allow businesses and communities to succeed.

Our forests and minerals will support higher-value uses where they make economic and ecological sense. BC will grow its technology sector and apply new technologies across the economy. Better transportation and rail connections will help industries reach markets and strengthen regional economies. Across these sectors, we will expand opportunities for First Nations, workers and communities to own productive assets and share in the value they create.

Why This Matters

For too long, economic development in BC has often meant waiting for investment to arrive, approving major projects and hoping the benefits spread through the economy. That approach leaves too much of our economic future to decisions made by large companies and investors whose priorities may have little to do with the long-term interests of British Columbians.

The result is an economy that can be productive and prosperous at times while still being vulnerable. We export large amounts of raw resources, depend on supply chains we do not control, and have lost important manufacturing, processing and transportation capacity over time. When industries change or major employers leave, workers and communities are often left carrying the costs.

We believe BC should take a more active role in shaping its economic future. Public investment should build lasting productive capacity, good jobs, stronger local businesses and infrastructure that serves the province for decades. Workers, First Nations and communities should have a significant role in deciding how industries develop, and when public money helps create private wealth, the public should receive a fair return.

The Economic Opportunity

BC starts from a strong position. Clean electricity, natural resources, research institutions, skilled workers and access to Pacific markets give us advantages in a number of industries. The investments that the province makes in electricity, housing, transportation and climate resilience will also create large and relatively predictable markets for materials, equipment and technology.

We can use these advantages to build deeper industrial ecosystems. Our forests can support advanced wood manufacturing and biomaterials. Critical minerals can support processing, recycling and downstream industries. Clean electricity can underpin low-carbon manufacturing and processing. Materials already circulating through our economy can support repair, remanufacturing and new production.

The opportunity is also regional. Different parts of BC have different resources, infrastructure, skills and industrial strengths. Industrial policy should build from those differences, connecting provincial priorities with the economic opportunities identified by First Nations, communities, businesses and workers in each region.

What We Will Do

2.3.1 STRENGTHEN GREEN INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Industrial policy refers to deliberate government action to shape the direction of economic activity. BC has long used many of the tools of industrial policy, from public infrastructure and access to resources to research, training, tax incentives and support for major projects. What has often been missing is a coherent strategy connecting those tools to a clear view of the productive capabilities we want to build in the province over the long term. Too often, economic development has proceeded project by project or program by program, rather than as part of a sustained strategy for building industries, supply chains and expertise in BC.

Industrial policy has moved back to the centre of economic policy in Canada and around the world as governments respond to changing trade relationships, new technologies, supply-chain vulnerabilities and the energy transition. We believe that BC should be clear about where we want that renewed public ambition to lead.

A green industrial strategy starts with the economy we want to build and works backwards to the capabilities needed to build it. We will focus public effort on areas where BC has an opportunity to compete and where demand is likely to grow as the world electrifies, decarbonizes and uses resources more efficiently. Our clean electricity, natural resources, existing businesses, workforce and research capacity give us advantages to build from. The goal is to move our economy away from raw, emissions-heavy exports, and towards creating deeper supply chains, technologies and expertise, skilled workers and productive infrastructure.

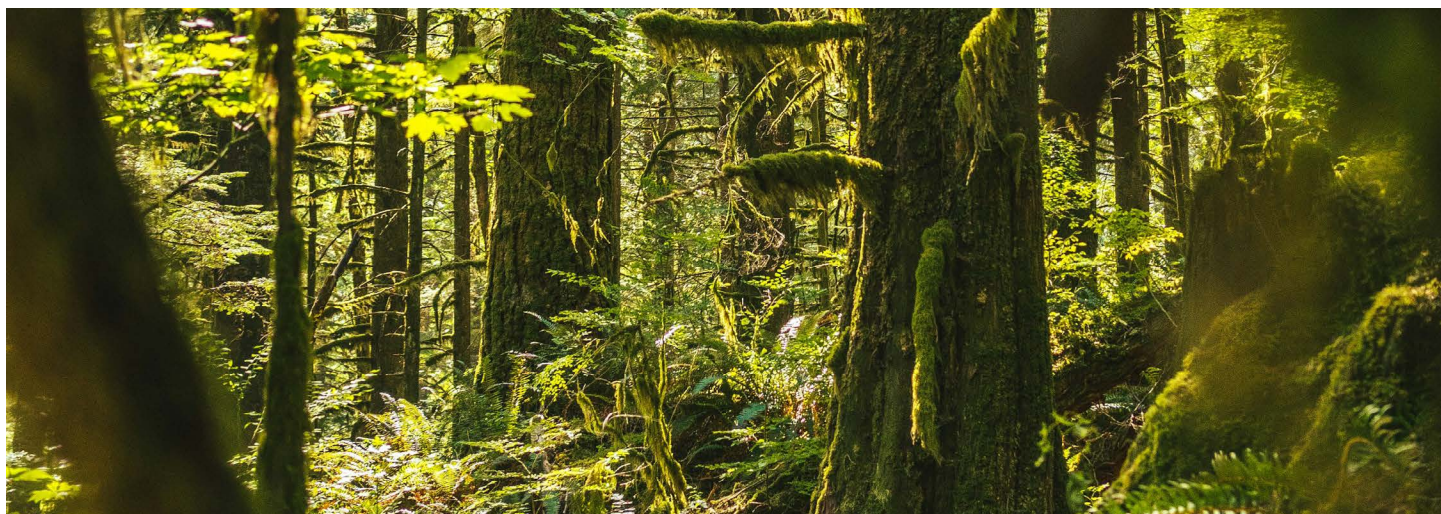
Industrial strategy is therefore not a fixed list of subsidies or projects. Opportunities and barriers are specific to individual industries, technologies, regions and supply chains, and they will change as markets develop. Government's role is to establish clear public goals, build the institutions needed to identify problems as they emerge, and coordinate the tools available to solve them. Many of these ideas are explored in greater detail in the Transition Accelerator's [Building the Future Economy](#), which examines how governments can coordinate investment, infrastructure and other policy tools to build productive capabilities and lasting competitive advantages.

The policies below establish that capacity and set the direction for a more active green industrial strategy.

We will:

- A. Build the capabilities and value chains where BC can develop advantages.** Identify a small number of strategic opportunities where BC has existing strengths or pathways to build them, based on growing markets, our workforce and knowledge base, access to clean electricity and resources, opportunities to retain more value in the province, and alignment with a low-carbon economy. Strategies will look beyond individual projects to the capabilities that make whole industries competitive, including energy, infrastructure, manufacturing, skills, research and demonstration capacity, and access to markets. Each priority will have a ten-year strategy with clear goals and regularly updated milestones.
- B. Create permanent partnerships for priority industries.** Establish sector partnerships that bring together businesses, workers and unions, First Nations, researchers and regional partners to identify emerging opportunities and barriers as industries evolve. A small industrial-strategy unit at the centre of government will coordinate electricity, procurement, infrastructure, skills, research and public investment around the strategies those partnerships develop. Both [the CCPA](#) and [the Centre for Industrial Policy identify](#) sustained sectoral coordination as missing pieces.

- C. Plan energy and industry together in each region.** Develop [Regional Energy-Economy Plans](#) that identify where clean electricity, industrial land, rail and transportation, housing and workforce investment can combine to support new economic activity. These plans will be developed with First Nations and regional institutions and reflected in BC Hydro, infrastructure and industrial-investment decisions. They will also identify the constraints that could prevent promising industries from growing, such as insufficient transmission capacity, industrial land, rail connections, housing or skilled workers, so that government can address them before they become barriers to investment.
- D. Use public spending strategically.** Give [the Strategic Investment Fund](#) a green industrial mandate supporting this strategy (alongside the technology focus outlined in this document). Public support will prioritize investments that strengthen a strategic BC capability, fill a missing link in a supply chain, help businesses reach competitive scale, contribute to regional economic development or unlock wider private investment. Government will strengthen its own technical capacity to assess commercial and technological risks rather than relying primarily on project proponents. Major support will come with enforceable commitments around jobs, training, First Nations participation, BC supply chains, emissions and productive investment here. Agreements will include clawbacks when companies fail to deliver, and the public will share in successful returns where taxpayers have assumed substantial risk. BC will also use its purchasing power, infrastructure investments and public financing to help promising industries reach scale. Where government knows it will need large quantities of building materials, electrical equipment, clean-energy technology, transportation infrastructure or other goods over the coming decade, it will publish long-term procurement pipelines and identify opportunities to build competitive supply in BC.
- E. Build a circular economy.**⁵ BC uses enormous quantities of materials and resources, while valuable products and materials continue to leave the economy as waste. We will build an economy that keeps products in use longer, recovers more value from materials, and creates new businesses around repair, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling. We will develop a circular economy strategy focused on the largest opportunities to reduce waste and build economic value, including construction materials, metals, electronics, batteries, plastics, organics and industrial by-products. We will strengthen right-to-repair and reuse, improve systems for recovering high-value materials, and use public procurement to create reliable markets for reused, remanufactured and recycled products. Industrial and regional planning will identify opportunities for one business's waste or by-products to become another's inputs, including shared infrastructure that makes these exchanges possible.



⁵ While focused on a few specific sectors, [a Government of Canada study](#) looked at the potential to create more economic value by keeping products and materials in use longer.



Norway is building new industries from strengths it already has.

Norway has a long history of government taking an active role in economic development, most famously through oil and gas. That history created enormous public wealth, but also engineering expertise, industrial infrastructure and supply chains that Norway is now trying to apply to a changing global economy. Norway remains a major oil and gas producer, so its transition is far from complete.

In 2022, the Norwegian government launched its Green Industrial Initiative. It identified industries where Norway believed it already had the foundations to transition its economy, including offshore wind, batteries, hydrogen, carbon capture, maritime industries, forestry and low-emission manufacturing. The choices drew on things Norway already had, including abundant renewable electricity, offshore expertise, established industries, natural resources and strong research capacity.

Government then worked across the pieces needed to help those industries grow. The first roadmap included 100 measures touching electricity and grid capacity, skills, research, financing, infrastructure, industrial development and public procurement. An updated roadmap added new areas such as manufacturing and solar and expanded the package to almost 150 measures.

This is the kind of green industrial policy we envision for BC. We should identify a small number of areas where the province has the opportunity to build capabilities in a low-carbon economy, then line up the things those industries need, such as electricity, infrastructure, workers, research, financing and markets. BC's clean electricity, natural resources, existing businesses and research capacity give us strong foundations to build from.

[Learn more about Norway's Green Industrial Strategy](#)

2.3.2 FIX THE FOREST SECTOR

Forestry will remain an important part of BC's economy, particularly in rural and resource-dependent communities, but the industry is undergoing a fundamental transition. Available fibre is declining, mills have closed, trade barriers are growing and climate change is altering the forests themselves. BC cannot build a stable forest economy around attempting to return to the harvest levels of the past.

We do not need another review to tell us this. Over decades, successive governments have commissioned reports and consultations on how BC's forests should be managed. The [Old Growth Strategic Review](#) called for fundamental change in 2020. More recent work, including the Provincial Forestry Advisory Council's (PFAC) [From Conflict to Care](#), has again concluded that systemic reform is needed. Yet many of the hardest recommendations remain unfinished or unimplemented.

The result is a system that seems to satisfy almost no one. Communities are losing mills and jobs, companies face an increasingly uncertain and costly operating environment, many First Nations are still fighting for a meaningful role in decisions over their territories, and conservationists have little confidence that the forests they value most will be protected.

The challenge now is having the courage to make the changes that are needed. That means making clearer choices about where and how forests are managed, putting more decisions in the hands of

community-based regional decision-makers, rebuilding ecological health and creating a forest economy that gets more value from the trees we harvest. Our goal is to build a more productive forest sector that creates more jobs, businesses and value from every cubic metre harvested, while restoring the health and resilience of the forests on which the industry ultimately depends.

In order to accomplish this, we will:

- A. Plan forests from the landscape up.** First Nations and the Province, working with communities, workers, forest companies, community forests, environmental organizations and technical experts, will develop long-term plans for each forest region. Planning will begin by determining what each landscape can sustainably support, including requirements for ecosystem health, biodiversity, watersheds, cultural values, wildfire resilience and climate adaptation. This is a different approach from the Province's proposed [Working Forest Landscape Model](#), which would designate areas primarily for timber production and explore a "no-net-loss" approach to maintaining the working-forest land base. We will not predetermine how much land must remain available for timber production or work backwards from a provincial harvest target. Sustainable fibre supply and harvest levels will instead be established within the ecological limits identified through regional planning. Big-treed old growth and old second growth on publicly owned lands will be removed from the timber supply, providing certainty that they will not be relied upon to meet future harvest targets. We will expand conservation financing so that protecting these forests does not come at the expense of First Nations' economic opportunities. Building on existing conservation funds and agreements, the Province will work with First Nations to provide durable funding for Indigenous-led conservation, stewardship and economic development associated with protected landscapes. As regional plans are implemented and existing tenures expire or are restructured, tenure will increasingly shift toward area-based and locally rooted models, with expanded opportunities for First Nations and community forests.
- B. Create trusted public information.** Complete a modern province-wide forest and ecosystem inventory, including LiDAR and other technologies needed to understand forest conditions at the landscape level. The underlying information used to make decisions about forests, timber supply and ecosystem health will be publicly accessible. Key inventory, monitoring and reporting functions will be independent from the agencies responsible for allocating timber. An independent forest oversight body will report publicly on the implementation of forest reforms, changes in ecosystem conditions and whether regional plans are meeting their objectives. This information will also make forest management more responsive. Harvest levels and management plans should be able to change as wildfire, drought, insects, climate change and new information alter what landscapes can support.
- C. End clearcutting across BC's public forests.** Work with First Nations, forest communities, workers and the industry to transition away from conventional clearcutting and toward forestry that maintains forest structure and reflects the ecology of each landscape. Partial harvesting, variable retention, commercial thinning, longer rotations and other approaches will become increasingly standard, with practices adapted to different forest types and local conditions across the province. BC Timber Sales will help lead this transition by testing new approaches, publicly reporting their costs and ecological outcomes, and building contractor and workforce expertise. The transition will be developed regionally with First Nations and forest-dependent communities, recognizing that changing harvesting practices will have different economic implications across BC. Where a reduced harvest or different forestry model affects local employment and revenues, the Province will provide long-term economic diversification, worker transition and community development funding so that communities have the resources to take the reins and build new sources of lasting economic activity. For First Nations, economic diversification will look different for every Nation, from tourism and clean energy to food production, restoration and locally owned businesses, and will be guided by each Nation's own priorities and economic vision. New provincial forestry standards will be developed from this work and progressively applied across Crown lands.

- D. Connect forest planning to regional economic development.** Based on the sustainable fibre supply identified through regional forest plans, the Province will support regional forest economic strategies developed with communities, workers, contractors, forest companies and manufacturers, and in partnership with First Nations that choose to participate. These strategies will identify existing and potential manufacturing capacity, local fibre needs, facilities at risk, workforce requirements and opportunities for new investment and higher-value production. Regional priorities will guide provincial decisions on infrastructure, skills, financing and industrial policy, connecting decisions about forests and fibre more closely with the economies that depend on them.
- E. Get more value from every tree we harvest.** BC's forest economy needs to create more value from a smaller and more constrained fibre supply. We will set regional objectives for increasing the economic value and employment generated from each cubic metre harvested. Policy will support engineered wood, industrialized and manufactured housing, furniture, building systems, biomaterials and other higher-value uses of BC fibre. Public housing, schools and infrastructure will provide predictable demand for high-performing BC wood products. Long-term procurement pipelines will give manufacturers greater confidence to invest, while patient financing will help existing businesses retool and new manufacturers reach commercial scale. Industrialized construction is a particularly important opportunity to connect BC's forest resource, manufacturing capacity and need for more housing.
- F. Reconnect Crown timber to regional jobs and manufacturing.** We believe access to a publicly owned forest resource should carry a responsibility to support productive economic activity in the regions where that timber is harvested. As major tenures are renewed or restructured, licence conditions will require plans for supporting regional processing, independent manufacturers, First Nations businesses and value-added production. Restoring BC's former [appurtenancy requirements](#) may no longer be possible due to a loss of local mills and changing forest conditions, but we envision a more flexible system that re-connects where trees are harvested to greater local economic benefits.
- G. Build a forest restoration and resilience economy.** Treat forest restoration, wildfire resilience and climate adaptation as long-term sources of skilled work rather than intermittent emergency programs. Regional plans will expand ecosystem restoration, prescribed and cultural burning, thinning and fuel management where ecologically appropriate, particularly around communities and critical infrastructure. Markets for low-grade fibre and residues will be developed where they improve the economics of restoration and wildfire-risk reduction. These markets will follow ecological objectives, and will not be used to justify additional harvesting.

2.3.3 BUILD A RESPONSIBLE CRITICAL MINERALS STRATEGY

Critical minerals are essential to electricity grids, batteries, renewable energy and modern technology, but producing them can permanently alter landscapes and watersheds, generate large volumes of waste and create impacts that fall disproportionately on First Nations and nearby communities. A Green critical-minerals strategy must hold those realities together by using fewer materials where we can, recovering what has already been extracted, upholding strong environmental and Indigenous-rights standards, and building more public value from the minerals we do produce.

BC should be intentional about what mineral development is for. We should understand where the minerals we produce are going, what they are being used for where possible, and whether their development is building lasting economic value in BC. Our priority should be minerals that contribute to the energy transition, resilient infrastructure and economic opportunities here at home, rather than expanding production simply because global demand is growing.

Canada's [existing critical-minerals strategy](#) recognizes the importance of building a full value chain running from extraction through processing, manufacturing and recycling. But amid the current push to streamline major projects, BC needs a renewed focus on high standards and on building midstream and downstream processing capacity.

We will:

- A. Set ecological limits before identifying where mining should occur.** Map critical watersheds, intact ecosystems, biodiversity values, cumulative industrial pressures and areas identified by communities and First Nations before making long-term mineral-development decisions. Some places are too ecologically or culturally important for mining, regardless of the value of the deposit beneath them. Regional planning should identify those limits early, while giving proponents greater clarity about where development may be compatible with ecological and community objectives.
- B. Set world-leading standards for mining.** BC should aim to set the global standard for how critical minerals are developed, not aim to extract more of them more quickly. We will establish world-leading standards for water, tailings and mine waste, biodiversity, pollution, reclamation and closure, drawing on leading international frameworks and continuously raising them as practices improve. Public incentives and industrial policy will prioritize minerals, processing and recycling that support the energy transition and other low-carbon industries, including clean electricity, batteries and electrified transportation. We will also invest in recovering and recycling critical minerals so that new extraction is not the only way to meet growing demand. Permitting should be clear, adequately staffed and predictable, but faster decisions cannot come from weakening environmental assessment, Indigenous rights or opportunities for affected communities to shape projects. We will support projects that earn durable community support, respect First Nations' rights and decision-making authority, expand opportunities for Indigenous ownership and leave a lasting economic legacy while minimizing ecological harm.
- C. Keep more value from the minerals we produce.** Publish a BC Critical Minerals Value Chain Plan identifying where BC has opportunities to build complete value chains, from recovery and recycling through processing, refining and manufacturing. Mining is only one part of these value chains, and processing and refining can carry significant environmental impacts of their own. BC will focus public support on areas where these activities can be competitive and meet high environmental standards, drawing on clean electricity, existing industrial capabilities and a skilled workforce where they provide an advantage. Any public support will require First Nations participation, a long-term economic case and strong standards for air pollution, water, waste and greenhouse-gas emissions.
- D. Mine our waste first.** Create a public inventory of mine tailings and other mineral-rich waste, including standardized information on their composition and environmental condition, and establish a dedicated pathway for re-mining projects that combine mineral recovery with remediation. Pilot projects will test new recovery technologies and resolve liability and regulatory barriers while maintaining strong cleanup requirements. Action Canada's [Waste Not report](#) explores how Canada could recover critical minerals from mine waste in greater detail.
- E. Know where BC's minerals go.** Require mines operating in BC to publicly report where the minerals and concentrates they produce are sold, their destination countries and, where known, where they are processed or refined. The Province will publish this information in an accessible mineral supply-chain database, giving British Columbians a clearer picture of where value from publicly owned resources is being created and where it leaves the province. This information will also inform decisions about where BC has opportunities to build more processing, refining, recycling and manufacturing capacity at home.



The Record Ridge mine puts Rossland's existing economy at risk.

Seven kilometres outside Rossland, a company is proposing the Record Ridge open-pit magnesium mine. Magnesium is considered a critical mineral in BC, and the project would create an estimated [30 to 40 seasonal jobs](#).

Rossland has also spent decades [building another economy](#) as a Resort Municipality. Tourism generated approximately \$39 million in revenue in 2024, including \$19 million outside the ski season. Tourism employment grew from roughly 200 people in 2004 to more than 1,200 in 2025. Local tourism organizations and the City of Rossland have raised concerns about what the mine could mean for recreation, water, noise and the reputation of a community whose economy is closely tied to its surrounding landscape.

The mine was originally proposed with production of 200,000 tonnes of ore a year. In August 2024, the Environmental Assessment Office concluded that the project at that production level required an environmental assessment. The company then reduced the proposal to 63,500 tonnes a year, below the threshold that automatically triggers a provincial environmental assessment. The Province subsequently decided not to designate it for an environmental assessment, and issued a Mines Act permit in October 2025. The fight over Record Ridge is not over. While the mine has received several major approvals, remaining permits are still being considered and local opposition continues as the project moves closer to construction.

Record Ridge shows why we reject the idea that faster permitting is an economic strategy. When governments focus on getting major projects approved faster, they risk narrowing the question to the investment and jobs promised by the project itself, while overlooking what is already there. A mine can put existing businesses, tourism, recreation, water and other sources of long-term prosperity at risk. As BC Greens, we believe economic development should strengthen communities and build value for future generations. Strong environmental assessment is part of good economic decision-making, not an obstacle to it. We should be asking more of major projects, not finding new ways to ask less.

[Learn more about the fight to Save Record Ridge](#)

2.3.4 BUILD A TECHNOLOGY ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR BC

Technology is [already a major part of BC's economy](#). The sector accounts for approximately 9.6 per cent of provincial GDP, employs 271,000 people and contributes roughly \$30 billion in wages each year. It has also grown much faster than the rest of the provincial economy over the past five years.

But the importance of technology is bigger than the technology sector itself. New technologies are changing how we generate and manage electricity, use natural resources, manufacture goods, deliver health care and public services, and organize work. Used well, they can help us use energy and materials more efficiently, increase productivity, improve public services and develop new solutions to some of the challenges we face. We believe that green economic policy should help steer innovation toward these purposes rather than treating technological change as an end in itself.

That also means being clear-eyed about the changes technology can bring. Automation and artificial intelligence can displace or fundamentally change jobs, concentrate economic power, increase surveillance and place new demands on electricity, water and public infrastructure. The benefits of technological change will not necessarily be widely shared on their own. We believe that workers and the public should have a say in how technologies are introduced, and government should be prepared to set rules where private incentives do not align with the public interest.

At the same time, BC should capture more of the economic value from the technologies developed here. Too many promising companies struggle to reach scale, are acquired before they do, or move elsewhere in search of capital and customers. Public procurement, investment and research have helped create many of the technologies on which modern economies depend. We should use those tools deliberately to help competitive BC companies grow, retain intellectual property and expertise here, and ensure that when public resources help create economic value, British Columbians share in the benefits.

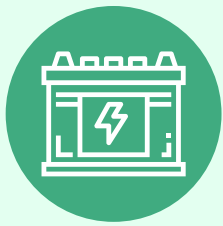
What We Will Do

- A. Establish a standing Premier's Technology Council.** Create a permanent council to provide the Premier and government with strategic advice on emerging technologies, economic opportunities and barriers to building and retaining technology companies in BC. The Council will bring together technology entrepreneurs and leaders, workers in the sector, researchers and public-interest experts, with representation from different regions of BC. Its membership will reflect the diversity of BC's technology economy and ensure that perspectives extend beyond the province's largest companies and major urban centres. The Council will meet regularly and publish an annual report, with government required to respond publicly to its recommendations.
- B. Develop a Public Interest AI Strategy for BC.** Artificial intelligence is already changing how people work, how businesses operate and how public services are delivered. It has the potential to provide significant public value, from improving health care and reducing administrative work to managing energy systems and making BC businesses more productive. It also raises serious questions about jobs, privacy, surveillance, misinformation, concentration of economic power and the growing electricity and water demands of AI infrastructure. BC will develop a Public Interest AI Strategy, working directly with British Columbians and key stakeholders to set a clear direction for where and how to harness the benefits of this technology in the public interest. The strategy will identify where AI can provide public and economic benefits, while establishing strong protections for privacy, transparency and human oversight. Workers and their unions will have a strong voice in decisions about how AI is introduced in the workplace, with protections against AI surveillance and automated decisions that unfairly affect employment, pay or working conditions. The strategy will also address the risk of job displacement, including worker transition and retraining and the particular challenges automation could create for young and entry-level workers. It will also distinguish between where provincial action can protect people while supporting innovation, and where BC will be better placed to work with other provinces to influence national-level regulation. The strategy will be informed by a rapid, province-wide public engagement process. It will combine public input with targeted discussions involving workers, First Nations, researchers, businesses, public-interest organizations and affected communities. Government will publish what it heard and show how that input shaped the final strategy.
- C. Major AI infrastructure will also be subject to a moratorium** until a detailed public-interest audit is developed. This will include consideration of access to electricity and other public resources, the economic value created in BC alongside electricity and water use, impacts on communities and the environment, and demands on other public infrastructure.
- D. Use public procurement to grow BC technology companies.** The Province spends billions of dollars each year purchasing technology and services. We will use more of that purchasing power to buy from competitive BC companies and build BC's technology sector, while maintaining value

for the public. Technology procurement will include a Value-for-BC approach that gives weight to the economic benefits created here, including BC jobs, intellectual property, local supply chains and opportunities to build expertise that can be exported around the world. This will support successful BC technology company pilots in moving into larger government contracts.

- E. Invest in promising BC technology companies.** Expand the mandate of BC's Strategic Investment Fund to invest alongside private capital in promising BC-headquartered technology and clean-technology companies that have demonstrated commercial potential and are ready to scale. Investments will prioritize companies capable of building significant employment, intellectual property and productive capacity in BC, with conditions to retain those benefits in the province and investment structures that allow the public to share in the returns when companies succeed.
- F. Improve how BC measures and reports on its economy.** BC Stats will improve measurement of BC's service economy and service exports, including technology and other knowledge-intensive industries, and publish regular information on their size, growth, employment, exports and destination markets. Provincial budgets and economic reports will give service exports analytical attention comparable to goods exports, giving governments and the public a clearer picture of where BC is creating and retaining value.
- G. Make it easier for workers to change careers.** Economic change should not leave people stranded in jobs or industries with shrinking opportunities. As technology, automation and the transition to a low-carbon economy reshape work, BC will build a stronger system to help people move into new careers. We will establish a Career Transition Program providing workers with individualized career advice, skills assessment, training and income support while they prepare for a new occupation. Support will be available before displacement where major changes can be anticipated, and training will be linked to occupations with demonstrated demand. BC will also work with employers, unions and public post-secondary institutions to develop clearer pathways between jobs and make it easier for workers to have existing skills recognized when moving into a new field. Over time, BC will work toward a system of paid career-transition leave, allowing experienced workers to undertake substantial retraining without giving up their income entirely. We will also examine how BC's income-security system needs to change as AI, automation and other technologies reshape employment. Working with workers, unions, businesses, young people and researchers, BC will assess emerging labour-market impacts and options for providing greater income security through periods of disruption, including the role of a guaranteed or universal basic income.





Corvus Energy started in Richmond in 2009, developing batteries for ships at a time when electric marine transportation was still a small market. One of its breakthroughs came thousands of kilometres away.

In 2015, Corvus supplied the batteries for Ampere, the world's first fully electric car ferry, operating in Norway. The ferry was the result of a Norwegian public tender that specifically required new environmental technology.

Norway kept building that market. Public procurement pushed ferry operators toward low- and zero-emission vessels, while grants, pilot projects and an established maritime industry helped companies develop and sell the technology needed to supply them. The Norwegian government later pointed to Corvus as an example of how these policies created an international competitive advantage for a company.

Corvus followed its customers. It opened a Norwegian office in 2015 and moved its global headquarters to Bergen several years later, establishing a battery factory there. The company has remained strongly rooted in Richmond, which is still home to some manufacturing and its core product-development team. But Norway succeeded in attracting Corvus's headquarters and a major new production investment because it had created one of the world's leading markets for electric ships.

This shows how BC can support research and help companies get started here, but their next investments will often happen where they see customers and opportunities to grow. Long-term public procurement, clear industrial priorities and strong local supply chains can help create that market here and give BC companies more reason to build their next factory, hire their next workers and develop their next technology at home.

Learn more about the [history of Corvus Energy](#) and the groundbreaking [Ampere electric car ferry](#) powered by its batteries.

2.3.5 RESTORE RAIL FOR BC'S ECONOMY

Good transportation infrastructure is good economic policy. Businesses need reliable ways to move goods to markets, workers need to be able to reach jobs, and communities need strong connections to one another. For much of BC, rail once played a much larger role in providing those connections. Today, many communities and businesses are almost entirely dependent on highways and private vehicles.

A renewed rail strategy should move both goods and people. Better freight rail can connect forestry, mining, agriculture and manufacturing businesses to processing facilities, ports and markets. Better passenger rail can expand the places people can reasonably live and work, connect regional labour markets and make smaller communities more attractive places to build a life and a business.

Rail can also help BC build a lower-carbon and more resilient transportation system. Moving more freight by rail can reduce truck traffic and pressure on highways, while well-used passenger rail can provide an alternative to driving and short-distance flights. Strategic rail corridors also give the province additional transportation options when highways are disrupted by floods, fires and other emergencies.

We believe that BC should treat its rail network as a long-term public asset and plan for where renewed freight and passenger service can strengthen regional economies.

- A. Protect and revitalize rail corridors.** Develop a province-wide rail strategy identifying existing and former routes with long-term economic and transportation value, and keep these corridors in public ownership if or when commercial service ends. An early priority will be returning the publicly owned Squamish–100 Mile House corridor to active use, including working with shortline operators, First Nations, communities, and other partners along the route. The focus will be on restoring freight service, supporting regional industry and connecting businesses to the broader rail network, and enabling future passenger service. Strategic rail corridors are productive infrastructure that connects BC businesses to markets, strengthens regional economies and provides redundancy in our transportation system.
- B. Reconnect communities by passenger rail.** Develop a long-term plan to rebuild regional passenger rail in BC, prioritizing corridors that can connect communities to major employment, education and service centres and provide a practical alternative to driving. The province will identify a first group of routes for investment and establish a pathway to expand service as ridership grows. Passenger rail is regional economic infrastructure, helping workers reach jobs, widening the labour market available to businesses and making communities more attractive places to live and work.
- C. Make rail work for more BC businesses.** Work with rail companies, ports and regional industries to identify where strategic infrastructure investments could open rail service to more businesses. The province will identify opportunities to invest in shared loading and transload facilities, industrial side tracks and connections that allow businesses without direct rail access to move goods efficiently between trucks and trains. Rail providers and major shippers will participate in the sector tables established through this strategy to identify service gaps and priority investments. Public investment will focus on improvements that can serve multiple businesses, connect new areas to rail service and strengthen regional supply chains.
- D. Plan industry and rail together.** Build on existing coordination between transportation and economic planning by making rail access a more important part of BC's future industrial strategy. When the province identifies opportunities to grow manufacturing, mineral processing, forestry production and other trade-oriented industries, it will consider rail alongside electricity, ports, roads and workforce needs.

2.4 A Fair Economy That Shares Prosperity

Our Destination

BC will have a tax system that rewards work, productive investment and entrepreneurship, while treating different ways of building wealth fairly. People who earn their living through work pay tax as they earn it. For those with very large fortunes, wealth can grow by millions of dollars as businesses, shares and other assets appreciate, without those gains being taxed as income unless they are realized.

Extreme wealth should contribute to the society and economy that make that wealth possible, just as people who build their lives through work already do. Our tax system should reflect people's ability to contribute, regardless of whether their economic gains come through a paycheque or the growing value of assets they already own.

We will build a tax system that asks more from extreme accumulated wealth, windfall gains and speculation. The revenue raised will help restore BC's fiscal position, sustain strong public services and make the long-term investments that expand opportunity and strengthen the economy. This is part of building a more durable tax base as the sources of wealth and income in our economy change.

Our goal is an economy where the circumstances of your birth play a smaller role in determining the opportunities available to you, and where more people can build businesses, own homes, take risks and create financial security through their own efforts.

Why This Matters

The way people build wealth is changing. Most British Columbians still rely on income from work to pay their bills and build financial security, while a growing share of wealth is accumulated through appreciating assets. In 2025 alone, Canadian household wealth [grew by more than \\$1 trillion](#), largely because of increases in the value of financial assets.

Wealth is also extraordinarily concentrated. [The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates that](#) the richest one per cent of Canadian economic families hold approximately 24 per cent of the country's net wealth. The richest 10 per cent hold more than half. The bottom 40 per cent collectively hold just 3.3 per cent.

Taxation is partially about raising revenue for public services but just as importantly it's about driving behaviours and building an economy that works for British Columbians – not international extractors.

When all forms of income and wealth are treated more equally, and people receive value for money for their tax dollars, the social contract implicit in taxation is well understood and has broad support. Challenges arise when people consider they are paying more than others, or receiving fewer services than they expected – which is what we see happening in BC right now. Without reform, the increasing tax burden placed on middle-income earners, the lack of fairness with the very wealthy, and the strain on public services are creating resentment, radicalization, and growing incentives for people to leave the province.

The Economic Opportunity

A more broadly shared economy is also a stronger one. When wealth becomes concentrated in property and financial assets, access to opportunity increasingly depends on the wealth people already have. BC's own-source revenues have dropped from [19 per cent of GDP to 15 per cent of GDP since 2001](#). This represents \$18.7 billion in forgone revenues annually. A fairer tax system can keep more money circulating through the economy and give more British Columbians the financial security to start businesses, pursue education, buy homes, change jobs and take risks.

It can also turn a greater share of BC's accumulated wealth into investments that expand our productive capacity. Revenue from these reforms can help build housing, clean electricity, transportation, education and research.

Combined with the industrial strategy in this vision, tax reform can help build an economy where prosperity comes increasingly from creating things of value, including productive businesses, new ideas, skilled work and strong communities. The measure of a successful economy should be how many people have the opportunity to build wealth, and wealth tax reform will help support this vision.

What We Will Do

2.4.1 PUT WEALTH TO WORK IN BC

British Columbia has enormous private wealth alongside a government struggling to pay for the infrastructure and services on which a prosperous economy depends. Yet much of that wealth sits largely outside the provincial tax base, even as people who earn their living through work pay tax on every paycheck.

We believe that a fair tax system should reflect people's economic resources regardless of how they are held or accumulated. Someone with \$50 million or \$500 million in assets may see their wealth grow by millions of dollars in a year without reporting anything close to that amount as taxable income. Bringing extreme wealth into the tax base would help close that gap without taxing the savings or homes of ordinary British Columbians.

To put more of BC's wealth to work for the public, we will:

- A. Introduce a one-time tax on extreme wealth.** Apply a one-time progressive tax to net wealth above \$50 million, with higher rates on larger fortunes. This would bring a portion of the extraordinary wealth accumulated outside the income tax system into the tax base, raising an estimated \$22.2 billion from approximately 0.1 per cent of BC families. The revenue would give BC significant capacity to strengthen its fiscal position and invest in the infrastructure, public services and economic transformation the province needs.

Policy Approach	Estimated One-time Revenue	Number of Families Affected
5 per cent tax on \$50M+, 10 per cent on \$100M+, and 20 per cent on \$1B+	\$22.2B	2,332

- B. Establish an annual tax on extreme wealth.** Following the one-time levy, introduce a smaller annual progressive tax on extreme net wealth above \$50 million. This would bring very large stocks of wealth into the tax base on an ongoing basis, so that the tax system better reflects people's economic resources regardless of whether their gains come through income or the growing value of assets they already own. Annual rates are also designed to remain below typical long-run investment returns, allowing even those subject to the tax to continue growing their wealth. Modelling estimates that it could raise approximately \$5.4 billion annually, after accounting for behavioural responses and administrative costs.

Policy Approach	Estimated Annual Revenue	Number of Families Affected
2 per cent tax on \$50M+, 3 per cent on \$100M+, 5 per cent over \$1B+	\$5.4B	1,922

- C. Close wealth tax loopholes.** A wealth tax will only work if it is designed to limit opportunities for avoidance. The [OECD's review of net wealth taxes](#) shows that broad exemptions, weak valuation rules and limited transparency can erode the tax base and undermine the effectiveness of the tax. The OECD recommends measures including clear valuation rules, transparency around trusts, stronger reporting and information exchange, and regular evaluation. BC will establish a dedicated tax-design and enforcement process alongside the introduction of the wealth tax to identify and close avoidance opportunities as they emerge. This will include reviewing the treatment of different asset classes, trusts, debt and residency under the tax, strengthening information-sharing with other governments, and regularly assessing whether exemptions or reliefs are being used for purposes they were not intended to serve. Where effective enforcement depends on information or authority held outside the province, BC will pursue federal and interprovincial cooperation. There is good evidence that stronger enforcement can work. The [EU Tax Observatory's Global Tax Evasion Report](#) estimates that offshore tax evasion by wealthy individuals fell by roughly a factor of three over the previous decade following the introduction of automatic international exchange of bank information. This shows how stronger transparency, information-sharing and enforcement can substantially reduce tax evasion and non-compliance.

2.4.2 PUT THE RIGHT INCENTIVES IN PLACE

BC’s tax system should make it easier to build homes, invest in new equipment and technology, train workers, and grow businesses here. It should also collect a fairer share of the value generated by scarce land, publicly owned resources, and very large corporate profits.

We will change the tax system so it does a better job of rewarding the investments BC needs. That means relying more on taxes that do less to discourage new building and investment, and making sure large companies and resource projects contribute fairly when they earn exceptional returns.

To do this, we will:

- A. Pilot a shift towards land value taxation. Work with interested communities to test approaches that shift property taxes away from buildings and towards the underlying value of land. Today, adding homes to a property or investing in a building can increase the property tax owed. Taxing land value more heavily could make it more attractive to build apartments and other housing on valuable, underused land, particularly in communities facing housing shortages. The CCPA-BC’s work on [property tax reform](#) shows how shifting more of the tax burden onto land could encourage denser housing in high-demand communities while avoiding a tax penalty on new construction.
- B. Capture more public value from BC’s resources. BC’s forests, minerals, natural gas and other publicly owned resources are a major source of wealth. British Columbians should receive a fair return when companies profit from their development. We will reform the oil and gas royalty framework to achieve the Province’s original objective of collecting 50 per cent of net profits after production costs, with clear rules for allowable costs and public reporting on the royalties actually collected. The difference is substantial: for 2027/28, the Province forecasts approximately \$1.14 billion in natural gas royalties, while an estimate based on achieving the original 50 per cent objective would generate approximately \$4.09 billion — a difference of nearly \$3 billion in a single year.

2027/28 natural-gas royalties	Estimated Revenue
Estimated revenue under original 50 per cent of profits objective	\$4.086B
Provincial royalty forecast	\$1.144B
Additional Revenue	\$2.942B

- C. **Make large profitable corporations pay their fair share.** Large, highly profitable corporations should make a reasonable baseline contribution to the province in which they operate. BC can still use the tax system to reward investment, hiring and growth, but companies should not be able to combine tax breaks and deductions to drive their tax bill far below the headline rate. We will develop a minimum effective tax for large corporations, working with the federal government where needed, so that tax preferences cannot be stacked to drive their provincial corporate income tax below a reasonable floor. Canadians for Tax Fairness have [called for similar changes](#), and the [OECD has published](#) on how deductions, accelerated depreciation and other features of corporate tax systems can create a significant gap between statutory and effective tax rates.
- D. **Tax extraordinary corporate profits during periods of crisis.** Introduce a temporary excess-profits tax when major economic disruptions, such as wars, energy shortages or other crises, allow large companies to earn profits far above their normal levels through circumstances they did not create. The tax will apply only to profits substantially above a company’s average profits in preceding

years, protecting normal returns and incentives to invest. Similar approaches have been used internationally, including the European Union's [temporary levy on windfall profits](#) during the energy crisis. Revenue raised will help offset the costs that the same disruption imposes on households and the public.

- E. Act on excessive profits in essential markets.** British Columbians should not be forced to pay inflated prices for goods and services they cannot do without. Building on BC's fuel-price transparency regime, the Province will require large firms in essential sectors such as groceries and other highly concentrated consumer markets to disclose the costs, margins and fees behind the prices they charge. Where prices or margins are excessive, BC will set limits on what companies can charge and strengthen oversight of fees and markups. Companies that evade these rules or continue to earn extraordinary profits at consumers' expense will face penalties, including targeted excess-profits taxes where appropriate. We will also press the federal government to take equivalent action in federally regulated sectors such as banking and telecommunications.

