

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR A MORE EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE BC

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INTRODUCTION

It is clear that 2020 is one of the most unprecedented years in modern history. Multiple overlapping crises - the affordability crisis, the overdose crisis, the climate crisis - were already coming to a head even before COVID-19. We need to act urgently to get people and businesses the support they need now, and make sure we're building a stronger, more resilient province in the long term.

Consecutive BC Liberal and BC NDP governments have promised to make life better for people, but have failed to deliver security and long term sustainability. Their actions have not followed through on the promises they make.

The BC Greens are different. We worked hard in the last minority government to improve the NDP's policies and to stand up for the issues that matter to people's wellbeing. We've shown that partisanship is less important than advancing policy that makes a difference in the lives of British Columbians. Now as we face down COVID, we need this commitment more than ever.

Our plan proposes new, targeted supports where they are needed most. We know the anxiety that British Columbians are feeling about the present and future. We know that for many people, COVID-19 has simply further entrenched the cost of living challenges they were facing. For others, the economic security that was already feeling distant now seems completely out of reach.

People are worried about their health and safety, their kids going back to school, and the future of their jobs and the economy. To address these concerns, we need to build a stronger, more resilient province so that people can be safe and secure in their communities.

WE ARE PROPOSING REAL SOLUTIONS, LIKE:

- Support for small business owners by helping with rent payments through the winter;
- A new grant for those facing unaffordable rents as part of ensuring everyone has affordable housing;
- Better quality care and an end to the privatization of our long-term seniors' care;
- Supporting young families with affordable

childcare, income for stay at home parents, and more flexible work arrangements;

- Implementing principles of basic income into our social safety net;
- A green recovery from COVID-19 with an ambitious climate plan at its centre.

These priority actions won't just help address the immediate challenges in front of us - they can help position our province for success coming out of COVID-19. We need to ensure that the investments we make today to address the health and economic impacts of COVID, allow us to build a stronger, more sustainable, more resilient economy.

While COVID is the most pressing crisis we face, it is not the only one.

For many, the cost of living in BC is far outstripping the ability of people to cover the necessities, let alone save for the future. Not enough has been done to address the growing number of people who are being left out of the prosperity of this province.

Some fear that the massive disruption caused by COVID will pale into insignificance compared with the disruption caused by the changing climate. Our communities face growing threats and our government is not moving fast enough to adapt, and reduce our emissions.

In all of this is an opportunity. By making deliberate, strategic choices in how we navigate COVID-19, we can seize new opportunities from these challenges. We can build an economy that is more inclusive, that has secure jobs for British Columbians across the province. We can establish BC as a world leading low-carbon economy, exporting the ideas and the technology that the world needs to solve the climate crisis.

We know that the government works better when no party has all the power. No matter the outcome of this election, we will fight for the immediate and targeted support that can get us through COVID-19, and we will hold the government accountable for positioning our economy to emerge stronger, cleaner, and more equitable on the other side.

AFFORDABILITY AND EQUITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has created not only a health crisis, but widespread economic insecurity for people across our society. While governments at all levels have responded quickly with a range of supports to meet people's immediate financial needs, we need to ensure that going forward we have the programs in place to protect the wellbeing of British Columbians.

Our plan for supporting British Columbians goes beyond the provincial and federal government programs already in place, and focuses on the longer term security provided by having the education and skills to be part of the post-pandemic economy. It provides a strong start for our children's education and assists women, especially, get back into the workplace through the provision of quality early childhood education and care.

It recognizes that investing in education is the single most important investment we can make in our society and starts to fund our K-12 system to the levels it needs to support children, teachers, and learning outcomes. It envisions a less frenzied work culture that allows for a higher quality of life and more time with loved ones, and it recognises the importance of a home that people can afford and that meets their needs. It also envisions an inclusive society where no-one is left behind, where everyone has income security and is free from the fear of not being able to afford basic necessities.

COVID has shown that any of us can be subject to income insecurity and that we need to keep in place broader financial supports that do not stigmatize those who need them.

The recovery will not be complete unless all British Columbians feel valued and part of the recovery, and we need to take steps to address long standing inequities and systemic injustices in our society.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

We are entering uncharted territory as we move through the 2020s. Rapid changes in the economy mean that many of the jobs our children will have don't even exist today and they will be using technology that has not yet been invented to solve the incredible challenges facing us.

We need to redesign our education system to prepare our children for this future, and instill in them a commitment to lifelong learning. For our children to be able to prosper in the world that is taking shape before us, adaptability, perseverance, problem solving and creativity are some of the most important skills they will learn.

Sixteen years of austerity under the BC Liberals has left classroom sizes large, teacher salaries struggling to compete nationally and school districts struggling to find the dollars needed to ensure a quality education for all students.

While the BC NDP have taken some action around the edges, they have done very little transformative work, where it really matters. This won't be something we can change overnight, but it is essential that it starts now.

COVID 19 has complicated the challenges that already existed, adding new stressors to our education system. While some resources have been put in place, not enough has been done to address the fears and challenges in our system.

Parents shouldn't have to feel that they have to choose between their child's safety and the quality of the education they receive.

Teachers shouldn't have to worry about their personal safety and districts shouldn't be facing uncertainty about whether they have the funding needed to ensure a high quality education for all students, regardless of how they receive it.

With a focus on ensuring that the money needed to address the current school year is in place, the BC Greens education plan is based on bringing the age of scarcity in education to an end.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR EDUCATION:

To ensure a quality education, a safe school environment and flexibility for parents and students, the BC Greens would:

- Fund operating grants for school districts to 100% of the grants received in the 2019/2020 school year to ensure that enrollment during COVID does not compromise the quality of education, nor the ability of schools to retain current teachers or education assistants.
- Maintain additional COVID funding for PPE and online learning throughout this school year, and into the 2020/2021 school year as required.
- Ensure every school district has the resources to develop credible and robust remote learning and hybrid learning options. This will help ensure that even when learning from home, students are able to keep a connection to the school they attend and the community they live in.
- Support the mental health of our students with \$24 million in new funding to enhance the number of counsellors in our schools, starting with the current school year.
- Develop and implement a province-wide plan to address racism that exists in schools, and commit to additional, ongoing funding to deepen the work of reconciliation and Indigenous education across K-12.

To help support the integration of ECE into our public school system, the BC Greens will:

- Provide \$300 million in new funding to begin the phase in of up to 25 hours free early childhood education programs per week for 3 and 4 year olds, rising to \$550 million as capacity expands;
- Provide \$100 million in new funding to create a new capital program in the Ministry of Education to fund renovation and additions to existing schools to support ECE spaces.

To help address affordability, to ensure that no child attends school hungry and to better integrate nutrition into our curriculum, the BC Greens would create a new \$25 million fund for school districts to develop a food program for their schools in their district.

- Proposals would be developed by the district to ensure local needs are addressed;
- Funding would be conditional on ensuring the program integrated nutrition into the curriculum and showed how the plan would eliminate the stigma associated with accessing food programming.

Work with our education partners on a long term plan for how BC can improve its per student funding. This would include:

- Addressing the continued disparities in wages, class size and composition between districts;
- Access to speech-language pathologists and school psychologists, and develop new resources for students with special needs.
- This starts with the development of a new funding formula that supports a 21st century education system.
- Double the funding of the B.C. Access Grant to help support post-secondary part-time students, and those enrolled in multi-year programs.

CHILDCARE AND FLEXIBILITY FOR FAMILIES

Families are under tremendous pressure in BC today. The generation raising young children today juggles long working hours and multiple demands on their time, as their household incomes stagnate, and housing costs skyrocket.

The BC Greens' plan to support young families is designed to promote the opportunity for parents to achieve a balance that works for them. Parents who choose to return to work will be supported by enhanced access to quality childcare, and more flexible work arrangements, those who choose to stay home with their children will have an income supplement, and we will encourage flexible working options to support people to find a balance.

First of all, we need to accelerate the work of building a universal childcare system. It's been well-established that the COVID-19 pandemic has had disproportionate effects on women, and that we risk losing all the gains made in women's labour force participation over the past number of decades, without targeted programs that support women. But it is not enough just to deliver childcare. It matters how we build this system. In our haste to create spaces, we shouldn't be reinforcing a flawed system that's overly reliant on for-profit providers.

We also need to improve flexibility for parents by promoting the opportunity for parents to achieve the right balance between work and family time for their needs. It's time to move beyond a 20th century approach for working lives and develop supports that recognise the needs of families today.

Our economy has been structured to encourage more work, more spending, and more economic growth -- but the benefits of economic growth haven't been shared by most. Instead, the wealth has been concentrated at the top, while more people feel like they're working harder and harder but still falling behind. Ultimately, we need to make sure our economy benefits people. Our plan to support families is about giving people real options.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR CHILDCARE AND FLEXIBILITY:

SUPPORT FOR STAY-AT-HOME PARENTS

- Provide up to \$500 per month for families with children under 3 and a stay at home parent.

CHILDCARE

The BC Greens will create a comprehensive program for childcare and increase funding for child care programs from \$674 million in 2020/21 to \$897 million in 2023/24. This is in addition to the \$300 million funding for preschool for 3 and 4 year olds that is included in the Education budget.

Funding would cover the phase-in of the various elements of this plan for a comprehensive program that would include:

- The expansion of available physical spaces, prioritizing partnerships with public schools, community non-profits, and First Nations
- Free childcare for working parents with children under 3;
- Professional development opportunities to increase qualifications of existing child care workers, and the training of more early childhood educators in certified programs;
- Establishment of professional wages for early childhood educators;

We will maintain child care subsidies and and supports as needed to ensure adequate financial support for all families.

We will move the Ministry of State for Childcare into the Ministry of Education in recognition of the importance of ECE in the educational outcomes for our children.

SUPPORTING FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

We would take the first steps towards policies that ensure that families have a viable choice between going back to full-time work, staying at home or balancing both, including:

- In consultation with business, labour and other stakeholders, explore options for reduced work weeks and or flexible work hours. For example, encouraging employers to adopt a 4-day work week, or reduced hours for a standard work week while maintaining full-time status to maintain benefits, or modified work week arrangements.
- Supporting telecommuting to save commuting time
- Helping employers to continue to support telecommuting where feasible.
- Enhancing investments to deliver high-speed internet access across BC

INCOME SECURITY

The growth of BC's economy has not benefited people equally in this province. Many British Columbians were feeling left behind and left out of the benefits of our prosperity well before COVID. Now, COVID is exacerbating existing inequalities in our society and expanding the number of people facing economic insecurity.

As we rebuild, we can't afford to go back to our old patchwork of social supports that weren't meeting the needs of people. We need to build a more resilient social safety net, that lifts people up and doesn't leave anyone behind.

It's not only the most marginalized people in our communities who suffer from economic insecurity. We, like every other jurisdiction, have large multinational corporations operating here, paying less than livable wages while they hand out massive profits to shareholders abroad. That's a problem and it contributes to the cycle of poverty in our province, even amongst those with full time jobs. At the same time, we recognise that for many local businesses, significantly higher minimum wages may hurt their viability, particularly while we deal with COVID.

Our priority is to ensure that all British Columbians enjoy income security and eliminate the fear of being unable to afford the necessities of life. We can begin this task by integrating the principles of basic income - simplicity, economic security, and reduced stigma - into our social safety net. We entrench people in poverty with programs we have right now, but it doesn't have to be this way. The purpose of our social safety net should be to help people get out of poverty. To do that, people need certainty, security, and the ability to save and plan for their futures.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR INCOME SECURITY:

- Implement a basic income for youth aging-out of care.
- Begin a transition towards basic income with the following initial steps:
 - Increase income support levels, beginning with making the \$300 crisis supplement permanent and indexing assistance to inflation;
 - Eliminate the asset test;
 - Reduce clawbacks on earned income to reduce the disincentive to work;
 - Establish a 12-month period where those who qualify for income assistance can earn extra income without clawbacks.
- Establish a housing office specifically charged with assisting people with disabilities and youth aging-out to find suitable accommodation and supporting the transition;
- Establish a task force to advise on modernizing employment standards and reducing inequality in modern employment relationships.
 - The task force will include representatives of the technology sector, business, workers, and economists.
 - The task force will recommend ways to modernize our employment standards to adapt to the changing nature of work and technology, and assess jurisdiction and advise on strategies for working with the federal government to ensure that multinational companies are paying their fair share of taxes in BC.
 - The terms of reference will include considering profit-sharing as a means to ensure businesses who are profitable are paying their workers a living wage, and that workers benefit from the profits that are too often only accrued at the top of an organization.
- Establish a permanent Fair Wages Commission to recommend consistent and predictable increases in the minimum wage and reduce political interference.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Despite some progress to cool the housing market somewhat in recent years, housing remains nowhere near affordable, particularly for young people. Far too many British Columbians have struggled to find affordable homes to rent and have been shut out of the housing market.

There is much more that we need to do to ensure that our housing is affordable for people who live and work in our cities, and isn't being treated as a vehicle for speculators to profit from.

We need to begin with a clear goal on affordability and an action plan to achieve it. Our goal is that everyone has a home that they can afford and that meets their needs. To achieve this we need a comprehensive suite of policies to deal with the housing affordability crisis for all.

As a first step, we need to do more to support B.C. renters, who are facing sky-high rents and escalating cost of living. In BC, 43% of renter households pay more than 30% of their income in rent. This is having significant adverse effects on their mental health and wellbeing and makes it more difficult to save and plan for the future.

The rising cost of strata insurance is also a significant stressor for condo owners. In the last year we have seen a huge leap in the cost of insurance - in some cases doubling or tripling. While work is done to look into the root causes of the spike in rates, we must take steps to ensure British Columbians on fixed incomes are not out of their homes.

We also need to work with local governments to expand our supply of more diverse forms of more affordable housing, including co-op housing, affordable rentals, and the missing middle, such as townhouses and triplexes. And we need to tighten up our laws and policies to close loopholes and reduce speculation in our market.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR HOUSING AFFORDABILITY:

- Take further steps to expand diverse forms of housing in our communities and ensure that our housing is affordable for people who live and work in our cities. These steps include:
 - Taking a housing first approach and accelerate investments to affordable, supportive and social housing on a priority basis;
 - Expanding supports for co-op housing through extending leases for existing co-ops about to expire, create a land bank for new co-ops, and provide security of tenure for co-ops on leased land;
 - Work with local governments to expand the "missing middle", such as townhouses and triplexes;
 - Establish a capital fund to support the acquisition and maintenance of rental housing by nonprofits to maintain affordable rental units and address the financialization of the rental market;
 - Close the bare trust loophole;
 - Close loopholes in the speculation tax that allow too many foreign owners and satellite families to be exempt.
- Introduce a rental supplement that will:
 - Close the gap between affordable rent and what renters are actually paying.
 - Introduce means-tested grant that applies to low and moderate income earners who are paying more than 30% of their income in rent.
- Convene a taskforce to deal with the rising cost of strata insurance and develop solutions as soon as the BC Financial Services Authority (BCFSA) finishes their investigation. The taskforce should include insurance brokers, insurers and strata owners.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

COVID-19 has not impacted everyone equally. Like most crises, it has exploited and exacerbated many of the inequalities we already struggle to deal with in our society.

Low income workers were caught between losing their jobs, and being among the first to be forced back into work places. These jobs were also disproportionately held by Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) workers and in particular, women.

We need to renew our commitment to fighting for inclusion and equity across our province and in every aspect of our society. The BC Greens are committed to ensuring that every British Columbian is treated justly and has the means to benefit from our recovery strategy. Systemic racism and gender inequities exist in BC, and it will take systemic change to ensure that we move beyond words to achieve the outcomes we all wish to see. The BC Greens have and will continue to put forward systemic solutions to systemic issues with evidence-based policies.

To accomplish this goal, stimulus spending should target opportunities to correct the underrepresentation of certain genders or demographics in specific sectors, such as caring professions and trades. It should apply a “Gender Based Analysis Plus” (GBA+) and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act (DRIPA) lens in policy development and implementation, address structural inequalities in wages, and build on the work underway to develop a suite of genuine progress indicators to provide a more holistic view of the health of our economy.

The BC Greens are committed to addressing a number of long standing inequities in our society - work that must be done in partnership with Indigenous peoples and BIPOC organizations and advocates.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

- Restart the Police Act review that was set aside when John Horgan called an election. This would include a review of: all provincial police force contracts, a comprehensive analysis of funding, the depth of policing activity in BC and the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement.
- Review procedures for wellness checks in consultation with Indigenous and BIPOC organizations, advocates and health professionals, with a goal of expanding the use of integrated mental health crisis teams in BC for mental health wellness checks.
- Invite the BC Human Rights Commissioner to do a study on the impact of police violence and racial discrimination on Indigenous peoples in BC.
- Support better collection of disaggregated demographic data as required to better understand disparities in our society, for health, education, housing, and employment outcomes in particular.
- Provincially recognize the International Decade for People of African Descent and carry out the requests of the BC Advisory Committee on the UN Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD).
- Re-introduce legislation to ban conversion therapy in BC.
- Introduce equal pay legislation.
- Address barriers to accessing contraception by making prescription contraceptive products free for those under 25 and removing the PST on all prescription contraceptive products.
- Introduce a BC Accessibility Act, including actioning the themes of breaking down barriers; advancing human rights; and promoting fairness and equity.
- Establish permanent core funding for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre in order to support indefinite, integrated care for survivors. This funding would be part of a larger strategy that establishes a new funding model for medical and police integrated sexual assault services, ensuring communities across BC can establish clinics that meet their needs.

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

Have you ever been somewhere and just had the feeling that you belong there? It is often referred to as a “sense of place”, and expresses the way we feel about a street, a neighbourhood, town or city. It can influence our desire to visit a place again or to want to live there. How we perceive the places where we live can have a significant impact on our wellbeing.

Our sense of place might be influenced by architecture, gardens, or parks, events or people. History is also an important factor, but it can be positive or negative. The history of the colonial relations with Indigenous People clouds our sense of place, as does the treatment of people of colour and members of the LGBTQ community. Indigenous reconciliation is an essential part of our collective prosperity.

During COVID our sense of place has been disrupted by empty streets and closed businesses. We tend to take for granted the amenities in our community, but once they were gone we realised how much we missed vibrant streets with cafes and restaurants, and interesting shops. We missed going to the theatre, summer festivals and the thriving arts and culture scene that not only enhances the health of our community but also attracts tourists. And we became conscious of the serious impacts of COVID on the many small businesses that are the lifeblood of our communities.

The tourism industry has been severely affected by COVID and as global tourism has dried up, thousands of jobs in the small businesses that tourists (and locals alike) frequent have been affected, with many businesses facing uncertain futures.

If there is an upside to COVID, it is that we have developed a greater connection to our communities as we explored our communities on foot or by bicycle. We started to appreciate streets free of traffic congestion, and less time wasted sitting in traffic jams. Many of us are not in a hurry to return to the stress of the morning commute, the noise and the air pollution - not to mention the Greenhouse gas emissions!

Getting around on foot or by bicycle or public transport enhances our sense of place, increases our connection to the community, and makes a positive contribution to our health and wellbeing as well as the environment.

In coastal BC and some interior communities, ferries are an essential part of the transportation network that enables communities to remain connected and tourists to enjoy some of the most spectacular cruising in the world.

The feeling of belonging has a powerful influence over our personal health and that of the community. The BC Greens are committed to supporting investment by local governments and the province to create a positive sense of place. COVID has shown the importance of things close to home, and the BC Greens have a plan to shape thriving places that create a healthy and inclusive economy.

SMALL BUSINESS AND TOURISM

In every community right across this province you will meet innovators and entrepreneurs who through hard work have built their own business. These businesses are often at the heart of the communities we live in. They employ our friends and neighbours, bring a vibrance to our streets and contribute immensely to the surrounding neighbourhood.

And with COVID they faced trials like never before.

It's not just the costs they face - it's the uncertainty they feel about the future. It's the anxiety of not knowing whether what they have built will last. Whether they will have to lay off employees who worked for them for years. As they struggle to transition to new business models that offer no more certainty.

For tourism operators, the challenges have been exacerbated by the border closure and travel bans. Many are wondering how they can navigate the winter, when the revenues they usually count on in the summertime never arrived, and next year's bookings have yet to materialise.

The simple fact is that the provincial government has not done enough to address the challenges that are facing our small business and tourism sectors. They have not shown that they understand the reality facing businesses across these sectors. They don't seem to get that convoluted and delayed grant programs are not as helpful as support paying next month's rent. That for a tourism operator, a potential grant in 2021 won't help ensure that your business can survive the winter.

The BC Greens plan is different.

We know the immediate challenges facing small business owners and tourism operators and urgency of action that is required.

With our plan we will step up with immediate funds to help pay the rent this winter, taking some of the stress off of business owners and letting them know that we will be there with the help they need.

For tourism operators, it's about ensuring that grants can flow immediately, and are not locked behind complicated application processes and criteria that ensures few are eligible.

Simple, straight forward financial support that is deployed urgently to meet the challenges facing businesses this winter. That's our plan.

THE B.C. GREENS' PLAN FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND TOURISM:

- Allocate \$300 million to create a 6 month rent subsidy program for small businesses.
- For qualifying businesses, we would cover 25% of the rental costs
 - Criteria:
 - Small business limited to \$50,000 in monthly rent costs
 - Simple, accessible criteria developed to support access to program
- Retool the provincial grant program to focus on supporting small tourism operators
 - Immediately work with industry to establish criteria that make sense
 - Accelerate the timeline to ensure grant money can start to flow immediately
- Work with the not-for-profit tourism businesses, cultural facilities and attractions to develop a separate granting program that will ensure these signature businesses can survive COVID-19.
- Work with the federal government to establish a repayable loan program for the hospitality sector and for tourism operators that exceed the criteria for the small tourism operator grant program.

VIBRANT CITIES

Across the entire province, COVID-19 has had a huge impact. It closed our social networks and cancelled our travel plans. Where at one time we would have gone to bars or restaurants, enjoyed concerts or attended events, COVID-19 required us to stay closer to home.

That put our communities in a spotlight like never before, forcing all of us to think about how we live and play, how we work and how we get around.

For many this meant walking and cycling instead of driving, and spending more time in parks. People filled outdoor spaces as one of the only areas where we could socialize while adhering to the social distancing guidelines. As businesses slowly reopened, we saw them expand out onto our streets in order to take advantage of the relative safety of serving outdoors.

As BC turns its attention to economic recovery, we have a unique opportunity to hold on to some of these changes that have improved our quality of life, and helped build more resiliency into our communities. While local governments have shown leadership on this front, what has been missing is a provincial partner that tirelessly pursues the vision of enhancing the liveability and sustainability of our cities.

There are many things we can do, in partnership with local governments, to make our cities more attractive and inclusive places to live, work and play. We would partner with local governments to drive development of more walkable neighbourhoods, complete communities, and healthy community design. We would expand provincial funding for sustainable projects such as bike lanes, paths, parks, community spaces, and pedestrian-only streets. And as part of our plan to support vibrant cities in BC, we also need to have an honest conversation about sustainable funding for local governments, that would allow them to plan and to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR VIBRANT CITIES:

- Partner with local governments to drive development of more walkable neighbourhoods, complete communities, active transportation and healthy community design, by providing funding for cost shared funding for projects such as bike lanes, trails, parks, community spaces, and pedestrian-only streets.
- Make the expanded patio program permanent, working with local governments and stakeholders to ensure that patio expansions are maintained in a safe and sustainable way.
- Make electric bikes more accessible by:
 - Removing PST from electric bikes,
 - Requiring offices and commercial premises to provide secure bike parking with charging capabilities;
 - Creating more safe storage options including bike lockers at key locations e.g. transport hubs.
- Promote neighbourhood car co-ops with insurance instruments and parking areas.
- Work with local governments to explore modernization of revenue models to fully capture the public's fair share of the land lift from transit oriented development.
- Work with local governments in partnership to reform our local government finance system, which leaves local governments overly reliant on regressive property taxes and unable to properly deliver the projects required for cities in the 21st century.
 - This would include a committee to consider relevant recommendations in the UBCM report Strong Fiscal Futures.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

One of the most important areas in truly establishing livable cities is to address transportation needs in a forward-thinking way.

Before COVID-19, we saw public transit ridership growing at significant rates, as many residents chose transit over a single-occupancy vehicle. COVID has dealt a temporary, but significant blow to the finances of our transit agencies. We cannot let our transit infrastructure be compromised by the pandemic - instead we need to double down on these investments.

We need to have the courage to tackle regional planning in a holistic and thoughtful way, rather than simply picking projects according to their potential to win more votes. We also need to integrate our climate goals into every infrastructure decision we make, and ensuring any public money spent on transportation is expanding our transit and active transportation networks. Investing in transit, livable cities and active transportation will not only help us meet our climate targets - it will improve our physical and mental wellbeing, the strength and connectedness of our communities, and our overall quality of life.

The BC Greens' transit strategy would prioritize investments in transit service coming out of COVID-19 and ensure that long term financial support is provided to TransLink, BC Transit and BC Ferries. For coastal communities and some interior communities, ferries are part of the way of life and a core part of the transportation network. We need to stop pretending that ferries should, or could, be run with a profit motive and bring their focus back to the essential services they provide to our communities.

We have an opportunity to reimagine what we want our communities to look like. That means making them safer, healthier and more connected for everyone. These changes are entirely within our grasp. It's time we started thinking beyond a four-year election cycle and focused on ensuring our communities are prepared for the decades ahead.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT:

- Work with local governments to establish a vision for sustainable transportation in an era of expanded population growth on the South Island, including through:
 - A regional transportation strategy;
 - Establishing a regional governance body to overcome fractured decision-making and deliver integrated planning for the growing region;
 - Investing to support expansion of public transit options to help people move around more easily;
 - Building frequent and affordable public transportation links between cities, such as between Cowichan and the CRD.
- Prioritize investment in transit service coming out of COVID-19 to support economic recovery, improve livability of communities, and reduce GHG emissions.
- Ensure that the projected long-term losses facing TransLink, BC Transit and BC Ferries are dealt with so that service levels are maintained, allowing ridership to quickly bounce back through the economic recovery period.
- Ensure no disruption in future expansion due to the pandemic.
- Work with local and regional governments to redesign the transit funding model and establish an equitable, stable long-term funding model for transit.
 - This review would include consideration of mobility pricing.
- Develop climate and sustainability criteria, including consideration of cumulative impacts, that will be applied to all future capital projects including transportation infrastructure investments.

BC Ferries

- Bring BC Ferries back into government as a Crown Corporation, and conduct a full review of BC Ferries operations focused on providing an efficient, public service for British Columbians, and the role of ferries in BC's transportation network.

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

The passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) was a historic step in the fight to recognize and affirm Indigenous rights. We're at the beginning of a long journey of reconciliation and the next steps are to put the legislation into practice and apply UNDRIP to the laws of British Columbia.

The BC Greens are committed to working every day to ensure that the provincial government delivers on its commitment to create an action plan, as required by the legislation, to implement the DRIPA. The time for lots of words is over. The provincial government needs to be sitting across the table in a good way, ready to implement and live up to what we have committed to do.

In the face of COVID, we need to double down on the urgency of the action plan, committing new resources and energy to reforming our relationships with Indigenous communities across all aspects of our society and our economy.

Even as the work on the action plan begins, it is clear that urgent action in specific areas is needed. On energy security, child welfare, economic development, healthcare and wild salmon we are proposing concrete first steps that the BC Greens will work in partnership with Indigenous communities to advance.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION:

- Ensure that the Action Plan for implementation is adopted and supported with adequate resources. The budget for implementation will be determined once we have a clearer idea of the scope of work and timetable;
- Ensure that there is meaningful progress towards reconciliation based upon a collaborative relationship as we implement the Action Plan;
- Work with First Nations to ensure a pathway to energy independence, including following the BCUC's recommendations regarding the creation of Indigenous owned utilities;
- Build a new focussed approach to preserving and rebuilding our province's salmon fisheries and wild salmon populations in partnership with First Nations ;
- Expand broadband access for First Nations communities to meet the basic needs of those who live there, and ensure they can take part in new economic development opportunities;
- Urgently move away from the colonial MCFD structure by supporting indigenous-led child welfare programs in their communities that provide wraparound services and supports to help families stay healthy and together.
- Continue to advance cultural competency training for existing healthcare practitioners and support the training of new Indigenous doctors while prioritizing opportunities to expand public healthcare services within communities, as led by Indigenous leadership.

MEASURING SUCCESS

GDP was an accounting tool that originated in the 1930s to measure the size of the US economy. Somewhere along the way, governments started to treat it as a measure of the health of our economy and human wellbeing - a purpose for which it was not intended.

The flaws of measuring success in this way have been known for years - back in 1968, Robert Kennedy gave a famous speech in which he noted that if you just look at the aggregate number, the US looked to be in fine shape, but he went on to say that:

“ (GDP) does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials....it measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile”

Kennedy's words still ring true. B.C. has enjoyed the strongest GDP growth in the country, but the benefits of our economic growth aren't being felt by many.

Younger British Columbians, in particular, are being squeezed by the extremely high cost of living. GDP doesn't capture this pressure, nor does it tell us how difficult it is for British Columbians to start business, or how long it takes to save money for a down payment on their first home. It doesn't tell us about the state of our natural environment, or whether our resources are being managed sustainably and for the benefits of local communities.

We need to move away from an exclusive focus on GDP, and start measuring what really matters to the health and wellbeing of people in this province. Other countries are already embracing this approach. New Zealand has adopted Wellbeing budgets, which force Ministers to work together closely, focusing on how they could collectively address the wellbeing priorities.

We can do the same thing here, adopting budgets focused on health and wellbeing, and measuring our success with a suite of genuine progress indicators that more adequately capture the real health of our economy and our society.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR MEASURING SUCCESS:

- Adopt health and wellbeing budgets with genuine progress indicators focused on economic, health, social and environmental factors, and require Ministries to justify spending in accordance with measurable progress on these indicators.

A GREEN RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

With all of the challenges that COVID 19 has presented us with, it's easy to forget that it's not the only crisis we face. It was only a few short weeks ago that our communities were choked with smoke from the forest fires raging across the pacific northwest. It was a pointed reminder that even as we navigate the health and economic challenges of COVID 19, the climate crisis is ongoing.

The Emerging Economy Taskforce looked at future opportunities and challenges facing our economy zeroed in on climate change as one of the major forces shaping our economy. Most governments have acknowledged this fact but have been slow to act fearing it will be unpopular with voters or that it will compromise their connection to the fossil fuel industry. Above all, they fail to understand that the cost of inaction far outweighs the cost of acting decisively.

The Emerging Economy Task Force was the brainchild of the BC Greens, and CleanBC would probably not exist without pressure from the Green Caucus. The NDP's attitude to meeting GHG emission reduction targets is, at best, ambivalent. The BC NDP finished the work of the BC Liberals to bring LNG Canada to our province and proceeded to throw more subsidies at the venture than even the BC Liberals were willing to do. Fossil fuel subsidies have climbed to higher levels under the BC NDP than under the BC Liberals. This year alone the NDP are giving \$1 billion dollars to fossil fuel companies.

You cannot have it both ways - expanding the fossil fuel industry does not make us a climate leader. If BC is going to build a world leading low carbon economy, it has to move away from fossil fuels altogether.

The BC Greens are the only party with a plan that will actually meet our climate commitments while taking full advantage of the economic opportunities that a clean recovery offers. We'll do this by supporting innovation and the development of clean industries in BC, providing the tools and incentives needed to meet our targets, and ensuring a just transition for those workers impacted by the ending of the fossil fuel economy.

CARBON NEUTRALITY

The Emerging Economy Taskforce zeroed in on climate change as one of the major forces shaping our economy and didn't mince their words about the scale of threat we face:

"The science is clear: without massive intervention to reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases, we are heading toward a catastrophe."

In BC, the record of both the BC NDP and BC Liberals is mixed at best. Both have had moments where they've embraced climate action, and moments when they've done everything possible to undermine it. Only the BC Greens see GHG reduction as non-negotiable.

The first step is setting clear goals. We are committed to making BC carbon neutral by 2045. This commitment sets us 5 years ahead of the federal government commitment and puts us in line with California, a leading jurisdiction on climate action; and, we will set interim targets to keep us on track, as well as sectoral targets for industry.

We will also develop a robust strategy to meet the 2030 target, and develop an accountability framework to ensure we get there. We will take immediate steps to send a signal of our intent by ending government support for the fossil fuel industry.

The BC Greens will act immediately to set an interim target for 2025 and develop, sectoral targets. We will also end oil and gas subsidies and implement a moratorium on fracking.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR CARBON NEUTRALITY:

- Commit to be carbon neutral by 2045, matching California.
- Set sectoral targets to ensure industry is contributing their fair share to emissions reductions.
- Set an interim target for 2025 to make sure the government is on track to 2030.
- Develop comprehensive plans to meet the 2030 and 2045 targets.
- Immediately end oil and gas subsidies and redirect that money to spurring innovation, to help grow businesses in BC and help us meet our climate commitments.
- Prioritize natural climate solutions, protecting and restoring our forests and wetlands to maximize their potential as carbon sinks.
- Develop an accountability framework to ensure our targets are met.

INNOVATION FUNDING

While we wrestle with the immediate economic impacts of COVID 19, we cannot afford to miss the opportunity to lay the groundwork for long-term prosperity.

The Emerging Economy Taskforce the BC Greens championed to look at the future opportunities and challenges facing our economy zeroed in on climate change as one of the major forces shaping our economy and highlighted the opportunities that come with developing a low carbon economy.

To accomplish this, our aspirations have to extend beyond mitigating climate change in our province and instead focus on the new opportunities to make deliberate investments into green innovation.

The first step the BC Greens would take is to align our innovation strategy with our mission of establishing BC as a world-leading low-carbon economy. This means establishing a strategic innovation fund that can make targeted investments that align with our climate goals. We must also leverage government procurement processes to prioritize BC based, low carbon products and technology.

Making a deliberate choice to build on our strengths in green innovation means moving away from fossil fuels. We need to be immediately ending the subsidies that the BC NDP have offered to the fossil fuel industry, and put this funding behind new green economic sectors. BC has to make a choice - we can't have it both ways.

Too many government's use innovation as a buzzword and do little to help channel the direction it takes. The BC Greens are committed to making our innovation policy in BC a bigger part of the economic strategy we use to deliberately build towards the future we want.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR INNOVATION:

- Establish a \$1 billion strategic investment fund to support business innovation that aligns with the province's goals, with a particular emphasis on supporting innovations that help the shift to a zero carbon economy.
- Support the creation of a biofuels strategy and clean hydrogen roadmap as part of the energy mix we use to replace fossil fuels in our transportation sector.
- Integrate a GHG emissions lens into all government procurement processes.
- Immediately reinstate the scheduled carbon tax increase and return to regular and predictable increases in the carbon tax of \$10 per year.
- Partner in innovation clusters in areas where BC has a strategic advantage, based on the proposal from the Innovation Commissioner's report.
- Enact Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)-enabling legislation.

CLEAN, SUSTAINABLE JOBS

We need to ensure that British Columbians are able to take advantage of the countless opportunities for meaningful, secure jobs that a low-carbon economy can create. Over time, many new jobs will be created as innovation occurs and new businesses are created, but there is an immediate need to provide people with well-paying, meaningful jobs, especially for those who have lost their jobs during this pandemic, and for workers in industries in transition..

Our clean jobs plan has three major components.

First, we would implement a just transition program for workers in the oil and gas sector and other industries in transition and work with them on a pathway to a guaranteed job in the clean economy.

Second, we would establish a clean jobs program to help us recover from COVID-19 and get people back to work immediately. This program would create thousands of jobs enhancing BC's natural assets, tree planting, habitat restoration, remediating environmental liabilities, as well as climate adaptation and improving community resilience to climate change.

Finally, we can expand the CleanBC Better Buildings program and make it a true jobs creator by increasing the short-term incentives offered to stimulate retrofits, accelerating the requirements of the building code and efficiency requirements of equipment to drive long-term action and strengthen the business case for retrofits, and partner with colleges, technical institutes and private organizations to develop the training programs to expand employment in the green retrofit space. Programming should focus on supporting those sectors impacted by COVID-19, as well as support the just transition program for workers in the oil and gas sector.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR CLEAN, SUSTAINABLE JOBS:

- Establish a \$500 million fund to support sustainable jobs;
- Develop a clean jobs program focused on enhancing BC's natural assets, tree planting, conservation, remediating environmental liabilities, as well as climate adaptation and improving community resilience to climate change.
- Implement a just transition program for workers in the oil and gas sector and other industries in transition, working with them on a pathway to a guaranteed job in the clean economy.
- Work with industry partners to enhance the Clean BC Better Homes, Better Buildings program, including by:
 - Increasing the short-term incentives offered to stimulate retrofits;
 - Accelerating the requirements of the building code and efficiency requirements of equipment to drive long-term action and strengthen the business case for retrofits;
 - Partner with colleges, technical institutes and private organizations to develop training programs to expand employment in the green retrofit space. Programming should focus on supporting those sectors impacted by COVID 19, as well as support the just transition program for workers in the oil and gas sector.

ELECTRIFYING TRANSPORTATION

Nearly 40% of the greenhouse gas emissions in BC are from the transportation sector. Establishing a world leading zero-emission transportation system from one side of the province to the other would not only make a major dent in our emissions, but would also support our COVID recovery. Our plan would prioritize investments in electrifying our transit systems, including partnering with the federal government to accelerate support for BC Transit and Translink's efforts to electrify their bus fleets.

We also need to set out a clear vision for our transportation sector. This means enhancing the ZEV mandate and undertaking a comprehensive build out of public charging infrastructure on all highways in the province, particularly in remote and rural BC, to enable EV drivers to travel across BC with ease. Government should lead the way in this by requiring all BC government agencies operating in urban centres to shift to 100% ZEV fleets by 2030.

We also need to lower the cost of electric vehicles so that ordinary British Columbians can afford them. As a first step, we would make ZEV ownership more accessible by removing PST on used electric cars and supporting electric vehicle charging in multi-unit buildings.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR ELECTRIFYING TRANSPORTATION:

- Take early action to enhance the ZEV mandate by accelerate the ZEV mandate to require 100% ZEV non-commercial vehicle sales by 2035; and making ZEV ownership more accessible by removing PST on used EVs
- Work with industry to develop additional innovation incentive programs
- Work with industry to set new ZEV targets for commercial vehicles and on and off-road medium and heavy duty vehicles;
- Shift to a 100% ZEV passenger vehicle fleets for BC government agencies by 2030.
- Prioritize investments in electrifying our transit systems, including partnering with the federal government to accelerate support for BC Transit and Translink's efforts to electrify their bus fleets.
- Undertake a comprehensive build out of public charging infrastructure on all highways in the province, particularly in remote and rural BC, to enable EV drivers to travel across BC with ease.
- Support electric vehicle charging in multi-unit buildings through a variety of tools, including building code changes and establishing "right to charge" rules to facilitate access to home charging infrastructure for British Columbians living in multi-family buildings.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE

While a crisis can bring out the best in people, it can also expose the cracks in society that are papered over during the normal times. COVID has done just that, bringing the crises in seniors care, mental health and addictions into full public view.

The crisis in seniors' care is a perfect storm fueled by the growing number of seniors; the costs of providing care; the inadequate capacity of the health authorities to provide the care; overworked and undervalued staff; the contracting out of seniors' care to private for-profit care homes; and, the failure of government to ensure that the quality of care is maintained.

Mental health care is also failing at all levels, from early intervention for children and youth through to tertiary care for adults with complex psychological problems, the system is inadequately resourced, with people waiting for weeks and months to get publicly funded help, and then the help they receive does not always fully address their needs.

At the same time, British Columbia is in the grip of two other very serious health crises. Since early spring in 2020, the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has preoccupied British Columbians. But at the same time, British Columbia has been Canada's epicentre for the opioid crisis. . Successive governments have failed to provide adequate treatment options for addicts and dependence on toxic street drugs.

The COVID crisis has aggravated the opioid crisis by disrupting supply chains and making street drugs even more toxic. British Columbia recorded 147 overdose deaths in August, pushing the death toll in the first eight months of 2020 past the total for all of 2019. 1,068 people have died of a fatal overdose so far this year, compared to a total of 983 deaths in all of 2019.

Many of these problems were caused by the austerity years under the BC Liberals when the province thought that saving money by not investing in services for our loved ones was a good idea. The NDP is taking steps in the right direction, but there is a long way to go

SENIORS' CARE

For years serious questions have been raised around accountability, monitoring and financial oversight in BC's long term care homes. COVID-19 has exacerbated and shone the spotlight on these issues. COVID-19 has thrust an issue that has too often been wilfully forgotten into the spotlight. It's made clear that our seniors have borne the worst outcomes of the pandemic, and that they deserve much better than the care they've received.

We also need to have a broader discussion about how people age and we need to reduce isolation amongst seniors. We should be expanding our imagination about the place that seniors occupy in our neighbourhoods, our communities and our society.

We need to improve wages and working conditions in the sector, and we need to address the issue of for-profit ownership in our public care system. Our public money supports people in care homes whether they are run by health authorities, not-for-profit organizations or private companies.

We need to ensure that the companies that exist today are meeting the standards required for adequate care. There is far too little accountability about how public funds are being used. We would establish annual inspections, and require standard financial statements and audited expense reports of all private facilities, so that there is confidence that public funding is being used to create better health-care outcomes for seniors, not creating more profit for shareholders.

Most of all, we need to begin to shift the sector away from a for-profit private company model. Our seniors are not a commodity that should be earning some investor a profit - they are our parents, our grandparents. It's time we shifted our tax dollars away from for-profit long-term care in BC, and instead build a high quality and accessible system of seniors care in this province.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR SENIORS' CARE:

- Begin to shift the sector away from a for-profit private company model to a mix of public, non-for-profit, community-based services and co-ops;
- Ensure that public funding is only being used to support direct care for seniors, and enhance accountability by requiring annual inspections, financial statements and audited expense reports;
- Establish caregivers as a recognized healthcare profession with the salary they deserve;
- Support pilot projects that bring young people and seniors together and integrate seniors more deeply into communities;
- Give the Office of the Seniors Advocate more independence and an expanded mandate.

MENTAL HEALTH

Increasing numbers of British Columbians are struggling with their mental health and we need to treat it like any other health issue by properly resourcing it in our public system.

Mental health care is failing at all levels, from early intervention for children and youth through to tertiary care for adults with complex psychological problems. The uncertainty and instability around the pandemic is placing increased psychological strain on us all. On top of that, young people are also facing compounding crises of climate change and affordability. Young people are the emerging leaders of our province and they should feel hopeful and excited about their future.

We must act quickly and decisively to protect our mental health as we did our physical health. This begins by increasing accessibility to mental health services. Data clearly shows that lack of access to mental healthcare is most pronounced in those with lower incomes, fewer years of education, as well as among vulnerable and minority groups.

We must also remind ourselves that the lack of mental health options for the majority of the population led to many problems even before COVID-19. If we are serious about building back better as a province then increasing the accessibility and affordability of mental health services needs to be a priority going forward.

This lack of access has led to our medical system becoming the de facto provider for those with mental health concerns. However, this system does not have the capacity to appropriately treat these individuals, leading them to over-utilize the medical health system because their mental health needs are not being treated.

For many patients, even just a few appointments with a mental health professional can significantly improve mental and physical health. We need to invest in mental health services at every stage of British Columbians' lives so that they can be supported to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

THE B.C. GREENS PLAN FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING:

- Invest to build an affordable and accessible mental healthcare system where cost is not a barrier to seeking help.
- Allocate \$1.0 billion over a four-year cycle to address mental health care within the medical services plan. Funding should be provided for a comprehensive suite of initiatives including:
 - Establishing accessible mental health treatment options for all those struggling with anxiety or depression.
 - Early intervention, youth mental health initiatives, integrated primary care specific to youth and mental health enabling families to easily navigate resources in a supportive environment.
 - Community based options for responding to those who need mental healthcare and their families such as Clubhouse International.
 - Enhanced counselling outreach services to work with the homeless community.
- Allocate \$200 million per year to invest in facilities to provide mental healthcare services and community-based centres for mental health and rehabilitation; and, accelerate capital plans for the construction of tertiary care facilities and detoxification beds. Protect operating funding for facilities.
- Develop and implement a Loneliness Strategy.
- Conduct a public information campaign to increase awareness and provide information on where to get help.

OPIOID CRISIS

British Columbia is in the midst of our worst overdose crisis ever. About 170 British Columbians die every month from overdoses related to the illegal and toxic drug supply. Since a public health emergency was declared in 2016, over 6,000 people in B.C. have died of preventable overdose. COVID-19 has made the situation more dangerous for people who use drugs by disrupting supply sources and reducing services in place to help people remain safe. Drug policies need to support public health and be based on a compassionate and evidence-based response. Key in this approach is providing people who use drugs with adequate resources to minimize the risks of drug use and support individual and public health.

Harm reduction interventions, such as providing sterile equipment, supervised consumption services, overdose prevention sites, and naloxone are cost-effective and key to ensuring that people at risk of overdose are kept alive. Harm reduction has been proven to reduce the risks of transmissible disease, prevent overdose fatalities, reduce public disorder, and create links for people to access healthcare services and enter treatment.

Decriminalization of personal possession of drugs is a policy option that is increasingly being called for by experts. Recently called for by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, decriminalization will reduce the stigma of drug use, which creates barriers to accessing important health services. It would allow us to reduce the costs of policing and the criminal justice system, which we can reallocate into improved evidence-based treatment programs and education.

In the face of an illegal, toxic drug supply, safe supply is a crucial intervention to keep people safe. By providing access to alternatives through physicians and nurses, safe supply helps people at risk of overdose connect with healthcare professionals and reduce the risk of overdose death.

One of the most pressing crises of our generation has so far not received the attention and action it deserves. Through courageous, evidence-based leadership, we can change this and save lives.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR FOR THE OPIOID CRISIS:

- Scale up safe supply beyond its current level by:
 - Working with the colleges of physicians and pharmacists to encourage their members to participate in existing programs;
 - Funding a wider range of safe supply resources, including low-barrier ways of dispensing (e.g. dispensing machines);
 - Ongoing consultation with people who use drugs in order to create low-barrier and accessible programs.
- Enhance funding for harm reduction services and create COVID-friendly plans to ensure people have access and don't use alone.
- Decriminalize simple possession of drugs through:
 - De-prioritizing policing of simple possession through implementing Dr. Bonnie Henry's recommended amendments to the Police Act, and;
 - Strongly pursuing decriminalization with the Federal government for B.C.

PRIMARY CARE

British Columbians rightfully take pride in how our healthcare system and our frontline healthcare workers responded to COVID-19. Despite surgery cancellations and total shift to dealing with a pandemic of at the time unknown proportions we adapted.

Now as we head into the fall we need to start to balance competing priorities: we must remain vigilant and able to respond to a second wave even as we start to bring back surgeries and slowly open up more of our healthcare system to non-COVID care.

One of the more important priorities we must once again tackle urgently is the family doctor shortage in BC. Successive governments have struggled to increase the number of family doctors available in communities across BC.

The BC Greens will continue to work with physicians and other stakeholders to improve the incentives for doctors to set up family practices in BC. There is also a greater role that qualified foreign-trained physicians could play in providing services in our province.

In the last government, the BC Greens helped champion the creation of primary care networks. These interprofessional and integrated teams are providing more access to physiotherapists, nurse practitioners, midwives, dieticians and other health professionals, helping alleviate the burden on doctors, increasing their ability to take on new patients.

While promising, the primary care networks will need ongoing support in order to be successful in their goals. It's more important than ever that British Columbians can get access to the care they need in their community.

This accessibility of care goes hand in hand with another core value of the BC Greens approach to healthcare - ensuring that a far greater share of our health care spending is shifted to support prevention.

THE B.C. GREENS PLAN FOR PRIMARY CARE WILL:

- Continue the roll-out of primary care networks in BC to expand accessibility of healthcare services, while increasing the number of British Columbians with a family doctor.
- Develop a proposal to implement an essential drugs program beginning in 2022, designed to reduce the costs of prescription drugs and ensure the cost of drugs is not a barrier to health management.
- Establish a task force to develop a plan to transition the balance of resources between acute care and preventative care. The task force will review the funding and range of services covered by the health care system to ensure the mix of services better meets the treatment and prevention needs of the population. The task force will deliver its recommendations to the government by May 2022.
- Consult with physicians and other stakeholders to improve efficiency, reduce administration, and incentivize becoming a General Practitioner.
- Work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia to create a pathway for qualified foreign-trained physicians to practice in BC.

MANAGING OUR NATURAL ASSETS

Climate change is threatening our communities in myriad ways. It's not only wildfires, but also drought, sea level rise, and flooding. Like any crisis, these impacts will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable among us. Yet successive governments have failed to invest in measures to adapt to these threats and keep people safe.

In recent months, food security has been thrust into the spotlight, as COVID-19 has created instability in our food system for people who have never experienced it before, and the changing climate affects agricultural production in places we rely on for our food supply.

The changing climate is also threatening the health of our forests, presenting a double threat to communities that do not always get the full benefit of the resources that surround them. For too long, foreign-owned multinationals ship minimally processed resources out-of-province and we suffer the environmental consequences of our model of resource extraction.

Climate is also exacerbating threats to our watersheds that are already threatened by decades of poor management decisions that have left communities vulnerable.

It's clear that the status quo is not working. It's not working for our environment, and it's not serving the needs of local communities.

We need to manage our resources for the benefit of local communities, while recognizing the vulnerabilities to a changing climate

Small communities are on the front lines of this. They have seen raw products continue to leave their communities, as they lose jobs and witness environmental degradation at their doorstep.

FOOD SECURITY

Food security has been top of mind for many who have never thought about it before, as empty shelves became common earlier on in COVID, and more recently as we've watched the wildfires in California with horror.

The food security of British Columbians is threatened by the changing climate in major supplying regions such as California, Florida and Mexico. Recognizing this threat, we need to be prepared. We must do more to protect agricultural land in our communities, expand the area of land under food production, and establish a long-term food sustainability strategy for the province. This way we can decrease reliance on increasingly unreliable import supply chains and diversify our farming in BC, so that we aren't overly reliant on an export-import model.

And as everyone knows, you can't have real food without farmers. We need to urgently identify and implement options to make farming a more attractive and lucrative endeavour, especially for younger farmers. In recent years, agricultural land has become tied to the escalating housing market in many parts of BC, and it's become untenable for young farmers to get on the land.

There are tools at government's disposal to remedy this. Just as government stepped in to create the agricultural land reserve many decades ago, we can take action to ensure farming has a future in B.C. One way to do this is to create a publicly owned agricultural land bank available to lease by new farmers.

We also need to recognize that all of these decisions are connected. The decisions that we make about our forests, and about development, all impact our food security. We need to get smarter about how we make decisions and recognize this interconnection. Operating in silos won't solve these challenges.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR FOOD SECURITY:

We will Create a Food Secure B.C. strategy to make B.C. agriculture more climate resilient, improve local food security and support local agricultural producers.

- Establish a long-term food sustainability strategy for the province to decrease reliance on increasingly unreliable import supply chains and diversify farming in BC.
- Make food production and food security part of the Agricultural Land Commission's mandate.
- Expand the area of land under food production and create a publicly owned agricultural land bank available to lease by new farmers.
- Recognize income and regional disparities in food insecurity across BC and work to enhance access to high quality, healthy food for low-income British Columbians, including developing systems for First Nations that honour Indigenous knowledge and values.
- Incentivize agro-ecological farming practices.
- Support small-scale farms to adopt new technologies to reduce carbon emissions.
- Identify options to make farming a more attractive and sustainable endeavour:
 - Ensuring that farmers have access to local processing facilities and that they share in the returns from processing.
 - Enabling the growing of high value crops, such as cannabis, to supplement farm income.
- Provide \$10 million per year to fund research and establish regional agricultural bureaus to provide expertise and support to local farmers to apply innovations on-farm and adapt to a changing climate.
- Restrict and regulate foreign ownership of ALR land.

FORESTRY

We need to take back control of our forests from major corporations, ensuring forestry is meeting the needs of local communities, both economically and ecologically. Our forests are a public resource that belong to the people of BC, and we need to start managing them that way. This means reinstating government authority in decision-making, undertaking major tenure reform, and enhancing scientific capacity in FLNRO.

Despite promising to do things differently, the NDP have not changed, in any substantial way, the status quo of forestry management in this province. Over the last 3.5 years, the cutting of old growth has continued as fast as it did under the BC Liberals, and they have failed to make any meaningful reforms to how forestry is managed, as we've continued to see local job losses and unsustainable forestry practices.

We need to start managing our forests holistically, for all the values they hold. Most fundamentally this means enacting legislation that establishes conservation of ecosystem health and biodiversity of BC's forests as an overarching priority, with timber supply as just one benefit. Different planning processes and harvesting methods flow from this fundamental shift in how we manage our forests.

We can't continue to liquidate our natural resources for the benefit of shareholders of massive corporations, while continuing to shed local jobs in communities across BC as mills close. Instead we need to generate far more jobs and revenue from what we harvest. There are tools the government can use to make this happen, from ensuring that small producers have access to fibre, incentivizing value-added wood products and non-traditional uses of wood fibre, and revenue-sharing with First Nations, municipalities, and regional districts.

Finally, we need to recognize the crucial importance of our forests to biodiversity and protect our remaining old growth forests forever. This means fully implementing the recommendations of the old growth review panel in partnership with First Nations and an immediate end to the logging of old growth forests in high risk ecosystems across the province, with the funding needed to back this up and create new opportunities for communities. We can't afford 4 more years of talk, "consultations" and little action. We need to move now to protect what we have left.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR FORESTRY:

- Reform forestry management in BC so that it serves the long-term needs of local communities and supports a truly sustainable industry, where community and ecosystem values are the primary focus of management.
- Take back control of our forests from major corporations, ensuring forestry is meeting the needs of local communities. Our forests are a public resource that belongs to the people of BC, and we need to start managing them that way. To achieve this goal the BC Greens would:
 - Reinstating government authority in decision-making at provincial and local levels, beginning with enhancing the authority of district managers to refuse or amend permits.
 - Begin a process of tenure reform to redistribute tenures from a few major companies and grow the proportion of tenures held by First Nations and community forests.
 - Establish a forester general position, an officer of the legislature who is non-partisan and reports to the House annually.
 - Establish a Chief Scientist as a counterpart to the Chief Forester to ensure multiple values are adequately incorporated into timber supply analysis.
 - Enhance capacity in FLNRO and establish more community based Ministry of Forests staff, to support the sustainable management of local forest resources and provide well-paying community jobs.

Manage our forests holistically, for all the values they hold. We would:

- Shift the management framework through reforming legislation, away from an exclusive focus on timber supply to managing for all the values that our forests hold.
- Adopt a wider variety of logging practices, including selective logging and longer stand rotations.

- Undertake landscape-level ecosystem-based planning, reforestation and restoration in partnership with local communities and First Nations.
- Protect communities from wildfires and flooding through landscape level, ecologically-centred, forest management and fuel treatment projects.
- Restore government capacity to ensure forest stewardship, monitoring and enforcement, and enhance funding for forest inventory research and primary research.

Protect our remaining high value old growth forests forever. We would:

- Immediately move to fully implement the recommendations of the old growth review panel in partnership with First Nations. This includes:
 - An immediate end to the logging of old growth forests in high risk ecosystems across the province.
 - Enacting legislation that establishes conservation of ecosystem health and biodiversity of BC's forests as an overarching priority.
- Establish funding mechanisms to support the preservation of our old growth forests.

Generate more jobs and revenue from what we harvest. We would:

- Ensure that small producers have access to fibre and incentivize value-added product innovation, including non-traditional uses of wood fibre including bio fuels, and productive uses of residual fibre.
- Apply the carbon tax to slash-pile burning to reduce carbon emissions from our forestry sector and ensure that we use residual materials.
- Put an end to raw log exports.
- Ensure the benefits of B.C. resource flow to local communities by directly sharing more resource revenues with local First Nations, municipalities, and regional districts.
- Better support forestry workers and communities, including through expanding investments into retraining and support finding new job opportunities.
- Investigate opportunities to diversify milling and secondary manufacturing to better use existing timber.
- Promote more sustainable development of forest resources, including investing in tourism opportunities and low-carbon economies.

WATER

Water is fundamental to so many aspects of our lives: to agriculture, energy production, transportation, freshwater fisheries, recreation and industrial processes, not to mention drinking and personal use.

The forecast impacts of climate change on water supply vary across the province from extreme rainfall events to extended periods of drought. Each end of the spectrum presents different challenges for communities from storm and wastewater management to water contamination, turbidity and salination of groundwater in coastal areas.

Climate-related risks to drinking water are many and are often exacerbated by poor management decisions. Forestry management and water quality are also inextricably linked. As the timber supply has become more constrained, logging has moved closer to communities and into community drinking watersheds, causing painful divisions in the community and threats to drinking water.

There are a number of steps we can take, starting today, to protect our water. First, we need to conduct comprehensive watershed management planning in collaboration with communities and First Nations.

We need to include watersheds as part of a landscape-level ecosystem-based management approach to development. We also need to implement tools that we already have at our disposal but haven't used - like the Water Sustainability Act, which provides a potentially powerful way to secure the environmental flows needed to sustain healthy and functioning rivers, lakes and watersheds.

We need to create a dedicated Watershed Security Fund that will create sustainable jobs in communities across BC in watershed restoration, monitoring, technology, training, and education.

And most fundamentally, we must recognize that access to clean water is a human right and ensure B.C. communities have long-term, reliable, and equitable access to clean water.

If we start taking these steps and prioritizing community resilience, we can make ourselves resilient to the inevitable changes we will experience in coming years, while also creating jobs and opportunities for British Columbians.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR WATER:

We must recognize that access to clean water is a human right and ensure B.C. communities have long-term, reliable, and equitable access to clean water. We can start by:

- Allocate \$50 million to create a dedicated Watershed Security Fund that will create sustainable jobs in communities across BC in watershed restoration, monitoring, technology, training, and education.
- Expanding the model of the Cowichan Watershed Board across the province and establishing shared decision-making authority with watershed boards, with watershed sustainability as a core mandate.
- Conducting comprehensive watershed planning in conjunction with First Nations, communities, government agencies, stewardship organizations and industry and including watersheds as part of a landscape-level ecosystem-based management approach to development.
- Implementing the Water Sustainability Act to secure the environmental flows needed to sustain healthy and functioning rivers, lakes and watersheds.
- Working with local governments, school districts and other stakeholders to upgrade municipal infrastructure and replace household pipes through grants and incentives.
- Exploring science-based solutions to reduce water acidity.
- Implementing a ban on fracking, a chemical-intensive process that has been shown to contaminate freshwater, trigger earthquakes, leak methane, and poses an unacceptable risk to human health.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Communities need to be aware of the risks they face from a changing climate and have plans to address them. We need to build capacity in communities so they can respond safely and effectively to extreme weather and natural disasters - and so they can recover quickly when the threat has passed.

We need to protect communities from wildfires and flooding through landscape level, ecologically-centred, forest management and fuel treatment projects. We must also increase the resilience of regional ecosystems by restoring habitats and protecting biodiversity.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE:

- Provide \$100 million over 4 years to fund climate adaptation initiatives in our communities, including the development of a coordinated approach with First Nations and other levels of government to disaster risk reduction.
- Build capacity in communities so they can respond safely and effectively to extreme weather and natural disasters - and so they can recover quickly when the threat has passed.
- Protect communities from wildfires and flooding through landscape level, ecologically-centred, forest management and fuel treatment projects.
- Increase the resilience of regional ecosystems by restoring habitats and protecting biodiversity.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

The beauty and wonder of BC's wilderness is rightly a source of pride for all of us who call this province home, but it is more than that too. Our ecosystems and the stunning biodiversity that live within them are central to the health of British Columbia - our physical, mental, social, and cultural wellbeing are inextricably linked to the survival of the natural world around us. Humans, of course, are part of nature, not isolated from it.

While it is something we instinctively understand, our policies need to get better at recognizing this interdependence - an appreciation that the wellbeing of people is connected to the wellbeing of the river, the forest, the ocean, even future generations. We need to embed in our management practices an understanding and acceptance that what we do to the world, we do to ourselves.

And it is clear, unfortunately, that BC's native ecosystems are reaching a crisis point.

Many fish and wildlife populations have been in decline for decades and are currently at record lows. Foundational species like mountain caribou, moose, Interior Fraser Steelhead, Fraser River salmon, and sturgeon are at serious risk.

A lack of funding over many years for wildlife and habitat conservation, and a lack of commitment to science, vague objectives, and a tendency to side with industry instead of threatened species has meant that some of B.C.'s fish and wildlife populations are being managed to zero.

The fundamentals of responsible fish and wildlife stewardship are funding, science, and social support. We need increased and dedicated funding, science-based objectives for habitat and populations, establishing healthy hunting and fishing limits, and accountability for the ministries that are managing fish and wildlife. If we work urgently, with inspiration and vision, we can heal and restore BC's incredible biodiversity.

THE BC GREENS' PLAN FOR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY:

- Prioritize protection of wildlife and their habitat across government, including through:
 - Establishing a strategy to manage our wetlands;
 - Protecting coastal ecosystems with a Coastal Law and Strategy;
 - Ensuring appropriate legislative oversight through creating legislated objectives for fish and wildlife;
 - Moving the fish and wildlife branch from FLNRO and the Ministry of Environment;
 - Urgently match and exceed historic provincial funding levels for the fish and wildlife branch to match the unprecedented challenges we now face.
 - Ensuring that science about the status of our wildlife and environment is independent from political interference and made freely available to the public.
- Enhance funding for wildlife conservation, habitat protection and habitat acquisition and dedicate all fishing, hunting, guide-outfitting, and trapping license fees for this purpose.
- Create an endangered species law that establishes legal protection of species and their habitat to ensure their recovery and survival.
- Take action on fish farms to protect wild salmon:
 - Support the full implementation of the Wild Salmon Advisory Council recommendations and Cohen Commission recommendations, working urgently to enforce all measures within provincial jurisdiction;
 - Negotiate strongly with DFO to complete the recommendations under federal jurisdiction;

- Working with DFO, First Nations, local communities, and industry, provide stimulus and incentives to create a close-containment land based fish farming industry and cancel open-pen fish farm tenures.
- Establish a made-in-BC Environmental Charter that lays out:
 - Substantive rights to clean air, clean water, and healthy ecosystems
 - Procedural rights that allow everyone to participate in decisions that affect the environment
 - Information rights that ensure we all have the access to all the information relevant to decisions that affect the environment
- Application of the precautionary principle to decisions that affect the environment.
- Enhance funding for B.C. Parks and the Conservation Officer Service, to a level that will improve infrastructure and ensure that our natural ecosystems are not being degraded.
- Create more campgrounds to meet demand, ensuring that the creation of more sites is commensurate with expanding overall park land and does not cut into existing protected areas.

OUR INVESTMENTS

The table below breaks out the estimated additional costs that will be incurred in order to implement the BC Greens plan. The costs are presented in the form of the annualized costs of the program rather than by fiscal year, since almost three quarters of the current fiscal year will have elapsed by the time a new government is in place and it takes time to get new government programs off the ground.

The BC Greens are planning to invest over \$10 billion over three years to deliver a green and inclusive recovery from COVID.

It is important to note that there will be additional revenue and offsetting savings that will mitigate the impact on the province's bottom line. For example, approximately \$1 billion per year will be saved by ending oil and gas subsidies; reinstating the regular increments of the carbon tax and increasing the annual increase to \$10/tonne CO₂e will draw in additional revenue in the short term; and, investment in social programs will avoid future costs, while investing in education and innovation will yield future returns.

We recognise that the province's financial picture is significantly weaker than in 2017, but now is not the time for austerity. Smart, deliberate investment by government is required in order to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of British Columbians,; and, we cannot put on hold climate action or ignore the opioid crisis while we deal with COVID.

These are challenging times that demand bold action.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	(\$ million)	(\$ million)	(\$ million)
Supporting British Columbians			
Education	557	657	807
Supporting families	500	500	523
Housing affordability	700	600	600
Other	138	138	138
TOTAL	1895	1895	2068
A healthy and inclusive economy			
Small business and tourism	300	0	0
Other	20	20	20
TOTAL	320	20	20
A green recovery from COVID-19			
Green innovation	500	0	0
Clean, sustainable jobs	500	550	600
Other	25	25	25
TOTAL	1025	575	625
Taking care of ourselves and those we love			
Mental health	250	250	250
Other	125	125	125
TOTAL	375	375	375
Strong communities, healthy environment			
Water	40	40	40
Climate resilience	25	25	25
Other	155	155	155
TOTAL	220	220	220
TOTAL INCREMENTAL EXPENDITURE	3835	3085	3308