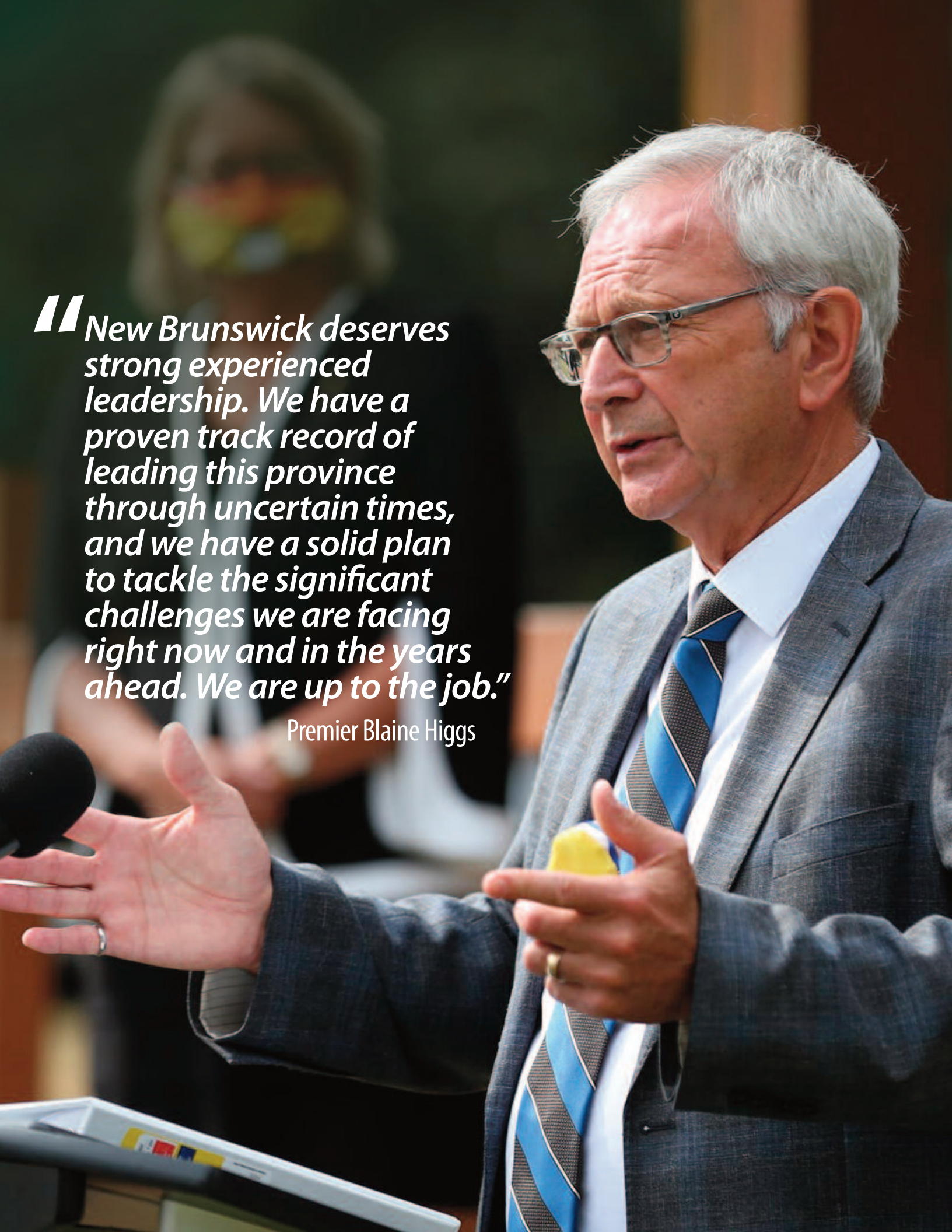


UP TO THE JOB.

Recover. Reinvent. Renew.

2020 POLICY PLATFORM



A photograph of Premier Blaine Higgs, an older man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a grey suit, white shirt, and blue and grey striped tie. He is speaking at a podium, gesturing with his hands. A microphone is visible on the left. The background is blurred, showing other people in a room.

“New Brunswick deserves strong experienced leadership. We have a proven track record of leading this province through uncertain times, and we have a solid plan to tackle the significant challenges we are facing right now and in the years ahead. We are up to the job.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

Message for New Brunswickers

To serve New Brunswick is an honour like no other. Every day, I am continually impressed by the resilience and perseverance of our people.

I said a long time ago that we must do politics differently. That means putting the priorities of New Brunswickers ahead of political self-interest. We must think long-term and create policies that will extend beyond one government's mandate, to ensure our province's success for years to come.

New Brunswickers deserve that kind of leadership. Over the course of the pandemic, by working together, they have shown us all just what is possible. We beat the odds, delivering some of the best performance in the world in the face of COVID-19.

We learned a lot too. We learned how to work smarter. How to maximize our existing resources and embrace technology. How to speed up decision making. How to be more inclusive and collaborative.

When re-elected, we will continue to stay focused and deliver results. We have a lot of work in the days and years ahead, and we have a plan to tackle some of the most significant issues of our time – mental health, economic recovery and growth, food security, homelessness. Our government won't raise taxes. We also won't make promises we can't deliver.

Our plan is designed to strengthen our economy, improve public services, and enhance the quality of life for all New Brunswickers, and ensure that after this pandemic, New Brunswick is stronger than ever before.

We've proven we can do it. Whether it was restoring our credit rating and getting the province's financial house in order, modeling cooperation and inclusiveness during COVID-19, bringing critical focus to required outcomes in healthcare and education, this government actioned 62% of its 2018 platform commitments in just under two years, all while dealing with a global pandemic.

We are up to the job!

Blaine Higgs, *Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of New Brunswick*



Accomplishment highlights

wage increase

April 2019, wage increase for home support workers

improved credit rating

April 2019, credit rating improved from negative to stable

tuition tax credit

May 2019, reinstated NB Tuition Tax Credit

housing agreement

May 2019, federal/provincial agreement to invest more than \$63 million in affordable rental units

nursing strategy

July 2019, nursing resource strategy, focused on recruitment, retention, promotion of nursing profession

road infrastructure

August 2019, federal/provincial agreement to invest \$59 million in road infrastructure upgrades

physician billing numbers eliminated

September 2019, reduced major barrier to doctor recruitment

reduce regulatory burden

October, 2019, measure and reduce regulatory burden on NB businesses, target to reduce it by \$14 million

minimum wage increase

February, 2020, minimum wage increase announced



62%

of our 2018 platform commitments have been advanced, in only 2 years, during a global pandemic*

41% complete 21% in progress

EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Prior to taking office:

- Debt costing almost \$700 million per year in interest payments
- Skyrocketing WorkSafeNB premium increases
- Net debt at \$14.1 billion
- A projected deficit of \$188.7 million
- A negative outlook for credit rating

By 2020, we achieved:

- A \$92.4 million surplus
- Net debt reduced by \$129.3 million
- Restored our credit rating from negative to stable
- Rate decreases on workers compensation fees
- Rejected a federal tax increase of 2.5%, which would have hurt businesses
- Built our own made in New Brunswick carbon pricing reduction plan, at a lower cost

* <https://www.polimetre.org/en/ca/nouveau-brunswick/59-higgs-pc>

“The hard work we did prior to the pandemic to restore our province’s financial health was essential to our ability to manage the crisis so effectively. We gave critical financial support to New Brunswickers when they needed it most, while at the same time investing in technology in healthcare and education, tourism incentives, and early daycare openings to get parents back into the workforce. As a result our economy is rebounding nicely.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

- **Housing sales are up, hitting record highs this summer in both average sale price and numbers sold**
- **Statistics Canada reported in July that we’ve had the most complete employment recovery in Canada – employment is at 96.6% of its pre COVID-19 shutdown levels**
- **Bank of Montreal reports that our economy is projected to fully rebound and grow 1.2% beyond its pre-pandemic levels by next year – second best rate of recovery in all of Canada**

After the tourism rebate was announced there were 10,000 new bookings in the first two weeks

provincial park
campground stays
up 30%

**record-high
visitors**
from southern
New Brunswick to
Acadian Peninsula

Fundy Trail
Parkway
up 48%

Mt. Carleton
up 45%

New River Beach
up 48%

Platform highlights	7
Our COVID Response	8
Economic Recovery	9
Healthcare	11
Mental Health & Addictions	13
Population Growth	15
Education	17
Internet	19
Conservation	20
Environment	22
Housing	24
Food Security	26



Platform Highlights



Economic recovery

- e-commerce skills to compete in a digital world
- productivity & technology adoption for manufacturers
- prioritizing NB businesses in procurement policy
- extension of tourism rebate
- advancing SMRs for energy innovation



Mental health & addictions

- walk-in mental health clinics
- virtual psychiatric network
- education for professionals
- drug prevention, treatment & enforcement plan



Food security

- year-round farming
- promote NB Food Basket
- workforce development



Healthcare

- increased funding to recruit doctors, nurse practitioners, & extra mural liaison nurses
- improved wait lists for hip & knee replacement surgeries
- expanded use of virtual appointments for rural healthcare
- free universal flu vaccinations, including high-dose flu vaccinations for seniors
- expanded role for pharmacists to improve access to healthcare



Education

- raises for early childhood educators
- pilot food school programs in 10 schools, province wide in 2021
- modernize curriculum & the delivery of lessons online
- introduce civics classes, refreshed Indigenous & Black history



Environment

- expanded glass recycling
- extended producer pay program
- ban single-use plastic bags & plastic bottles
- stricter controls on illegal dumping



Internet

- expand rural Internet access & speeds
- pursue 5G
- build cybersecurity cluster to attract foreign investment and jobs



Housing

- build new affordable housing units
- repair existing stock
- create mixed housing communities



Conservation

- double protected areas
- boost online licensing & education
- protect waterways within provincial boundaries



Population Growth

- invest in communities with growth plans
- pilot model for temporary foreign workers & year-round employment
- partner with universities for more international students
- FutureNB hands-on experiential learning
- partner with associations for faster credential recognition
- Francophone newcomers – 33% by 2024

Our COVID Response

COVID financial support for New Brunswickers:

- Working capital loans for business
- Emergency fund for impacted workers
- Wage top-ups for essential workers
- Support for daycares to reopen and keep parents in the labour force
- Waived late penalties on property taxes
- Deferred principal and interest payments on existing loans

Before the pandemic struck, our government had been working diligently to prevent New Brunswick from falling off a financial cliff. We improved our credit rating from negative to stable, meaning we pay less interest, and investors are more confident in doing business in our province. We also implemented a number of changes to protect the financial security of the province, our employers and workers.

We've increased wages for home support workers, announced a regulated annual minimum wage increase, and rejected the federal tax change that would have seen many small businesses suffer another 2.5% on their tax rate. WorkSafe premiums for employers were reduced, and we presented a balanced budget.

As we look ahead, we know we need to not just recover, but we need to reinvent and renew our economy because doing business in a post-COVID world will be very different.

93% of New Brunswickers believe the government communicated effectively during the pandemic, keeping them safe & up-to-date

Helping businesses compete in a digital economy will be absolutely key to the province's long-term success when international trade missions are no longer occurring and travel is restricted. Under our leadership, Opportunities New Brunswick will be working with our businesses across the province to support their transition to a digital economy so sales and exports can continue. They will support businesses in learning how to sell online, use enhanced marketing and e-commerce strategies, and promote our province's brand through social media.

Productivity must improve to help New Brunswick businesses close the gap. Opportunities New Brunswick is designing programs to offer assessments and help our businesses close the productivity gap – especially our manufacturers who are struggling to scale their operations. This could mean embracing robotics, artificial intelligence, and just using existing technologies more effectively to increase outputs and improve overall competitiveness so they can weather this storm and come out the other end stronger.

“As we look ahead, we know we need to not just recover, but we need to reinvent and renew our economy because doing business in a post-COVID world will be very different.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

NB First procurement strategy has been under development to help New Brunswick businesses compete in their own province. A re-elected Higgs government will modify procurement policies to support New Brunswick suppliers where possible under trade agreements, ensuring New Brunswick companies have the best opportunity possible to compete.

Helping businesses

compete in a
digital world

automate and
boost capacity

modify procurement policies for
local business opportunity

Economic Recovery

Developing emerging sectors will be key to our province's long-term prosperity

At the January State of the Province Address we announced that our government would be focusing on cybersecurity, digital health and energy innovation. Already we've made substantial progress on energy innovation through our small modular nuclear reactors (SMR) action plan. SMRs have significant potential to generate clean and low-cost energy, and reposition New Brunswick's economic growth well into the future. Our plan is working:

- Signed an MOU with the governments of Ontario and Saskatchewan for the co-development and deployment of SMRs, which will unlock potential right across Canada
- Completing an economic analysis through the Université de Moncton which will allow us to begin stakeholder engagements. We have an untapped industrial and mechanical supply chain that could benefit from this global market by manufacturing and exporting SMRs. If New Brunswick achieved just 1% of the estimated Canadian market, it would mean \$190 million in annual direct and indirect impacts
- Working with two private-sector partners, Advanced Reactor Concepts (ARC) and Moltex Energy and have already established strong links with global leaders like GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy
- The project is also collaborating with leading experts at the University of New Brunswick's Centre for Nuclear Energy Research

**Carbon-free, affordable,
reliable and safe energy through SMRs**



Healthcare

- **Increased funding to recruit doctors, nurse practitioners, & extra mural liaison nurses**
- **Improved wait lists for hip & knee replacement surgeries**
- **Expanded use of virtual appointments for rural healthcare**
- **Free universal flu vaccinations, including high-dose flu vaccinations for seniors, and immunization registry**
- **Expanded role for pharmacists to improve access to healthcare**

Our government's spring budget increased spending on healthcare, with an allocation of more than \$2.9 billion in funding for health, a 3.9% increase over last year which is double the rate of inflation expected for New Brunswickers. The budget included increased investments for mental health, free flu shots for New Brunswickers, a new immunization registry, \$4.2 million to add nurse practitioners to clinics and emergency rooms around the province, and \$5 million for recruiting doctors to rural areas. Earlier this summer, we confirmed there would be no closures to emergency rooms or reduced hours.

Hips and knee replacement surgery: Our government has committed to improve wait times for hip and knee replacement surgery. New Brunswickers are waiting far too long, and we are not meeting national standards. The national benchmark in Canada for such surgeries is six months. In the first quarter of fiscal year 2020-21, only 30% of hip and knee replacement surgeries were done within that benchmark. When we are re-elected, we will cut our excessive wait lists in half by March 2021. We'll do this by expanding operating capacity province wide, improving scheduling through a new centralized system to ensure a province wide-view of wait lists, and more accurate records, and by piloting virtual technologies and tele-medicine for pre and post operative assessments.

**Maximize
resources**

\$2.9 billion
healthcare spending up

85%
virtual doctor appointments

Making it easier for seniors to stay in their homes: We will continue to introduce improvements to bridge the distance for citizens to connect with specialists, and provide more timely support when they need care the most. We will continue to incorporate the use of technology and expand virtual doctor appointments for specialist appointments and assessments to help connect seniors and rural residents with resources and specialists who are in urban centres. We will also add more extra-mural Liaison Nurses to support the transfer of seniors out of hospital and back to their homes or Special Care Homes. Their role is to coordinate with extra-mural so that when a patient is discharged, they perform a full assessment of what medical equipment may be needed in the home, along with any other support they may need while they recover. To protect seniors in nursing homes or special care facilities, we will maintain the COVID PROMT team model until a vaccine is available so team members can rapidly respond to nursing homes and special care facilities should circumstances arise.

Flu and immunization: In our budget this spring we announced optional free flu shots for everyone. We will also provide high-dose vaccinations for seniors which are proven to strengthen immunity. And we're going to build New Brunswick's first vaccination registry – which is even more important during COVID. When re-elected, we'll work closely with our pharmacists to continue to expand their roles and find ways to improve access to services. In our spring budget we announced pharmacists would be able to diagnose and prescribe treatment for urinary tract infections and renew routine prescriptions for such health matters as high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes.

"I'm very proud of the work we've done over recent months in the face of COVID-19 to both respond to the crisis and restore levels of service in recent weeks. We went from zero to 85% virtual doctor appointments practically overnight, and incredibly, we've restored elective surgeries to 105% of pre-COVID levels. There are many lessons about what we can accomplish together and how we can improve the system going forward."

Premier Blaine Higgs

105%

elective surgeries restored
to pre-COVID levels

**free
flu vaccinations**

Mental Health & Addictions

- **Make Walk-in services available province wide to provide immediate, same-day access to counselling support**
- **Build a virtual province wide psychiatric network**
- **Ensure professionals get improved education to respond to mental illness and addiction challenges**
- **Tackle addictions through a mix of long-term programs that target youth prevention, near-term expanded treatment facilities, and immediate drug enforcement support**

Since taking office, we've been working on a strong action plan to address rising mental illness and addiction. For the first time ever, we have built a plan that is truly inter-departmental and province wide, placing mental health and addictions as a priority not only for healthcare professionals, but also for educators, employers, the justice system and many non profit organizations.

Key components of the action plan are already funded and underway including the expansion of mobile crisis units for appropriate community response, and a new app to help citizens navigate services more easily.

We are on track. Our plan is focused on doing more on the front end of this crisis, which mean investing more in prevention and early intervention. A re-elected Higgs government will make sure we act, and we act quickly.

51% In a recent survey, over half of New Brunswickers said they are at higher risk of mental health concerns due to COVID, driven by isolation, financial stress, higher use of substances, and an increase in domestic and intimate partner violence.

33% In New Brunswick, over the last five years, referrals have increased 33% for children and youth, and the system is currently not capable of accommodating low priority cases. In many communities, staff cannot meet the national standards on medium and high priority cases.

Mental Health & Addictions

Walk-in clinics will be available province wide to provide immediate, same-day access to counselling support. Currently, citizens are placed on long waiting lists. This change will ensure that when an individual is ready to seek help, there will be an available counsellor to assess them and help them put a plan in place for care. These walk-in services will be added to the current 14 mental health clinics province wide, as well as our satellite offices, building on the existing resources in those facilities.

Provincial psychiatric resources are limited given the challenges of recruiting and retaining specialists, especially in rural communities. The government will develop a virtual network that leverages technology and incorporates video counselling for patients to cut down on long wait lists and the travel time that is often required to see a specialist.

Improved education and support is necessary for professionals working in the realm of mental health and addictions, given the pace of change and the magnitude of the crisis. A re-elected Higgs government will ensure better training, including culturally competent training, culturally safe care for wellness checks, as well as boosting support in schools through guidance counselor and staff training.

Drug prevention and enforcement will be critical as we tackle the challenge of hard drugs that has gripped our communities. In the last three years crystal methamphetamine has increased at alarming rates. Our plan sees a mix of long-term programs that target youth prevention through community-based interventions, near-term expanded treatment facilities for detox and rehabilitation services, and immediate drug enforcement support to target organized criminal activity and disrupt the supply.

“The rising level of mental illness and addiction in our province is alarming. It’s a crisis that is eroding the very fabric of our communities and destroying our families. For months now we have been working on a new five-year action plan that places greater priority on prevention and early intervention to ensure citizens have access to immediate and high-quality care.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

Population Growth

- Invest in communities with growth plans
- Pilot new model for temporary foreign workers and year-round employment
- Partner with universities for more international students
- Continue FutureNB hands-on experiential learning
- Partner with associations for faster credential recognition
- Target Francophone newcomers – 33% by 2024

At the State of the Province Address last January, we announced our government is targeting 10,000 people per year by 2027. To support this growth we worked with the Federal Government and secured an increase of nearly 30% in the number of nominees under the Federal Program. Since taking office we also invested in several programs to improve attraction and retention, including a new business navigators service to help newcomers cut through red tape, a new office in India to attract investment and talent, \$900,000 for newcomer training programs, and additional flexibility around wage subsidy programs to ease access for employers.

When re-elected, we will continue to advance several initiatives with a strong focus on achieving retention targets of 75% over five years.

Community leadership: Going forward, government infrastructure and settlement services funds will be contingent on communities having a well-developed strategy for population growth. Excellent examples exist in St. Quentin, Chipman and St. George where rural community leadership has resulted in job growth, increased housing sales, and newcomer retention.

Population Growth

Partnership with post-secondary institutions and professional associations: Our government will work with universities and colleges to improve the number of international students they attract, while also ensuring that programming helps meet labour market needs. We will continue to invest in experiential learning such as FutureNB that has matched over 1,000 students with 240 employers for work-integrated learning opportunities. We will also work with professional associations so that international professionals have an easier transition in meeting the credentials required to participate in New Brunswick's workforce.

Francophone newcomers: We will advance our stated action plan to target a 2% annual increase in French-speaking immigrants through the provincial immigration programs to reach a total of 33% by 2024.

“Under our government, we have seen significant gains in population. Last year labour force and employment both grew at rates not seen in a decade. We added more than 4,000 people and that growth was driven almost exclusively by new Canadians. It's a great start, but we must do better to meet the 120,000 jobs that will be vacant over the next 10 years”

Premier Blaine Higgs

30% increase

in Federal program nominees

75%

retention over 5 years

33%

Francophone newcomers by 2024

- **Hourly raises for trained early childhood educators**
- **Piloting food school programs in 10 schools this fall, with a plan to expand them province wide next year**
- **Modernized curriculum and the delivery of lessons online with an investment in equipment, connecting all high schools with Internet, and subsidies for equipment and technology**
- **Introduce civics classes to teach students about ways to get involved in their communities, and to make sure they are learning about NB history, including the most up-to-date information about our Indigenous and Black history**

As our kids head back to school amidst a pandemic, we know things will be different. We are fortunate that we can safely re-open our schools, when many places around the world are still wondering what to do.

Our schools were the first in the country to close when COVID hit. It wasn't without controversy at the time. But it was a critical move that helped us to prevent the virus from spreading, and it ultimately led to the enviable position we find ourselves in today.

No one could have foreseen this. We've been tested, and I believe our team has shown that we understand how to handle challenging situations.

We learned a lot through COVID about how we can improve the system, and we are ready to seize those opportunities.

Early childhood educators: Our government opened New Brunswick daycares earlier than most provinces across the country, recognizing it was essential to kickstarting the economy by allowing parents to get back to work. In the budget earlier this spring, we raised the salaries of trained early childhood educators by \$0.75 per hour, and committed to continue to raise them from \$16 to \$19 by 2023.

School food program: Up until now, New Brunswick has been the only province without a school food program. In the spring budget, we invested \$200,000 to pilot the first phase of a new school food program. The pilot is currently under development in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and will be in place in 10 locations this year. When re-elected, we will deliver on our budget commitment and make food programs available in every school in New Brunswick starting in 2021-22.

Modernizing curriculum & delivery: We will continue to improve New Brunswick's education system for a modern learning environment, and to ensure better outcomes. During COVID, the government invested over \$800,000 to equip students with laptops, wired every high school with Internet connectivity, and as part of back-to-school preparations we offered subsidies to support families with the cost of technology. When re-elected we will continue to expand technology and blended learning approaches. We will also update civics classes, engaging students in discussions about how to participate in their democracy and contribute to their communities. As part of the new civics classes, we will ensure an educational review of Indigenous and Black history and will work with those communities to ensure materials reflect accurate and up-to-date information available.

“Another thing we learned through COVID is that our schools are much more than places to be educated. They are community hubs that fill many gaps in our society, like hunger. The research is clear that kids can't learn if they are hungry. Sadly, many of our kids who rely on breakfast programs went without during the early phase of COVID. Our government had been looking at more comprehensive school food programs, and in our spring budget we committed to make food programs available in every school in New Brunswick.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

from \$16 - \$19

raises for trained early childhood educators

\$800 thousand

for laptops plus Internet to every high school

food program

10 schools pilot, province wide in 2021

- **Expand rural Internet access and speeds**
- **Pursue a province wide 5G network**
- **Strengthen New Brunswick's Cybersecurity Ecosystem to attract private investment and grow jobs**

Extending rural Internet and improving speeds requires partnerships with Internet service providers. In 2019 with provincial investment through ONB, 16 sites and over 10,000 households were connected. Our government plans to further increase rural broadband speeds in over 70,000 households to 100 mbps over three years.

A goal of a province wide 5G network was announced in the State of the Province address in January where our government invited carriers and equipment manufacturers to propose 5G pilots across communities and campuses. Businesses will need this advanced network to fuel innovative technologies like artificial intelligence and robotics that will help them compete more effectively. Our government is committed to creating the right environment for collaboration among carriers and to entice private investment. As a first step, we've begun discussions with ACOA to determine a long-term financial plan and a path forward for province wide 5G. We are also closely watching progress with the SpaceX Starlink satellite-based broadband network.

"We all know how important broadband is for our province's competitiveness, but what we learned from COVID is that it's not just important – it's absolutely critical for living, working and learning."

Premier Blaine Higgs

Strengthening NB's CyberSecurity ecosystem will be essential to win new jobs and attract investment. With increased digital activity comes an increase in cybersecurity risks – in severity, frequency and impact around the world. A number of industries will need cybersecurity expertise, and with an estimated two million vacant cybersecurity jobs around the world by 2022, New Brunswick should be poised to attract its fair share. Our government will continue to promote our ecosystem and prioritize the talent pipeline, from early learning of coding skills, to supporting university research and curriculum, all the way through to attracting skilled immigrants in this sector.

70 thousand +

more homes to 100 mbps
over three years

5G

network province wide

2 million

vacant cybersecurity jobs
around the world by 2022

Conservation

- **Doubling protected areas**
- **Boosting online licensing and education**
- **Protecting waterways within our provincial boundaries**

Our government not only delivered on our 2018 conservation platform commitments, we've gone above and beyond, introducing many positive changes to protect our woods and waterways. Many of the accomplishments we've made over the last two years are a direct result of the Department of Natural Resources having an open line with stakeholders, listening to them in unprecedented ways to shape policies and respond to ideas for improvement. As a result of this strong engagement and action, the team has been recognized with several awards, including by the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

Since taking office, we introduced bundled licenses and discounted licenses, eliminated the fee for minor hunter licenses, combined summer and winter fishing licenses, and opened up over 70 new lakes to ice fishing. We also delivered on the Spring turkey management program and we're prepared for the first hunt in 2021.

When re-elected, our government will continue to protect woods and waterways by:

Doubling conserved and protected areas in the province by the end of this year from 4.6% to 10%, which marks the largest conservation gain in the history of New Brunswick. The new area is the equivalent of 19 Fundy National Parks dedicated to conservation. It allows the province to create of a bio diverse and ecologically sustainable forest where it can target very specific areas of improvement for wildlife habitat, protected waterways, and better tracking and measurement of increases in fish and wildlife populations.

Conservation

Encouraging the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts through phone registration, enhancing online curriculum for hunter safety and education, and issuing the first-ever dashboard to give a mobile and connected generation real-time information about Crown Lands, licenses, regulations and more.

Securing better control over waterways within the provincial borders: Currently, in New Brunswick there is a significant amount of control over waterways by the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Our government believes New Brunswickers are best positioned to understand the local needs and to respond quickly to issues and opportunities. Having better control over provincial waterways will accelerate the province's ability to develop and implement comprehensive action plans on such critical matters as restocking and invasive species.

"We are doubling the protected areas in this province – it will be the single-largest gain for conservation in the history of New Brunswick."

Premier Blaine Higgs

**doubling
protected areas**

from 4.6% to 10% –
the equivalent size of 19 Fundy National Parks

**over 70
new lakes open**

to ice fishing



- **Expanded glass recycling**
- **Atlantic-Canada first extended producer pay program**
- **Long-term goal of banning single-use plastic bags and plastic bottles**
- **Stricter controls on illegal dumping**

Our government is prioritizing the environment through tangible actions and steady progress. Since taking office we have allocated more money than ever to climate change initiatives, and when re-elected, we'll lead Atlantic Canada with many of our exciting programs.

In the spring budget, our government allocated \$36 million to invest in climate change initiatives. These dollars will be invested in energy efficiency programs such as upgrading buildings and infrastructure with green technology, and making sure that communities have the tools they need to plan for and adapt to flooding. We also invested a record high of \$9.1 million in the Environmental Trust Fund. Spraying was reduced by 30% by expanding bans within designated water sheds and on NB Power transmission lines within Crown Lands. And we created the Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship Standing Committee, which is a permanent, all-party committee that is fully transparent.

We'll continue to lead the way on critical environmental initiatives.

Expanded glass recycling program: In December 2019 we partnered with the Town of Oromocto, TRI-R Redemption Centre and Rayan Environmental Solutions for a glass recycling pilot program. While beverage containers are recycled in the province, many other glass bottles are not, including pickle jars, jam jars and maple syrup bottles. Glass takes over a million years to decompose, yet it is 100% recyclable. When re-elected we will expand the glass pilot project to other communities to eliminate more glass waste from the landfills, which will ultimately save taxpayers money while also protecting the planet.

On track to surpass our 2030 carbon emissions reduction targets

Province wide ban on single-use plastic bags and plastic bottles: We will embrace a ban on single-use plastic bags and plastic bottles. Our government is setting a long-term goal to eliminate single-use plastic bags and plastic bottles in New Brunswick. We will phase this in over the coming years as our economy begins to strengthen, and we'll work with industry to identify the best path forward. It's the right thing to do.

Extender Producer Responsibility program: Our plan will hold major producers responsible for plastic packaging and printed-paper waste. We first announced the program in 2019 and it is currently under development. Once the program is in place, New Brunswickers will be able to recycle more products from their homes, commercial buildings and schools. It is estimated that New Brunswickers are already diverting 30% of packaging and printed paper through existing voluntary curbside recycling programs. An extended producer responsibility program is expected to divert more than 60% of this material.

Illegal dumping: Under our government stricter enforcement will be enacted to reduce illegal dumping. We will partner with non profit organizations and community groups to help fund cleanup projects in their communities, and we will hold people accountable through reverse onus. If evidence is found in illegally dumped waste, it will be up to the owner to prove that they didn't dump it illegally.

“Our government is setting a long-term goal to eliminate single-use plastic bags and plastic bottles in New Brunswick. We will phase this in over the coming years as our economy begins to strengthen, and we’ll work with industry to identify the best path forward. It’s the right thing to do.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

\$36 million

for climate change

\$9.1 million

Environmental Trust Fund
– a record

Increase recycling from 30% to

60%

with producer pay program

Housing

- **Build new affordable housing units**
- **Repair existing stock that is in need of major repairs**
- **Create mixed housing communities**

When re-elected we'll continue to advance our 10-year plan to ensure affordable housing and to end chronic homelessness: *A Home for Everyone: New Brunswick Housing Strategy 2019-2029*. In New Brunswick today, approximately 450 people are homeless, and 5,000 more are waiting for subsidized housing support.

Last year, we announced the first three years of the 10-year provincial-federal agreement that aligns with the National Housing Strategy. In the first three years of the plan, \$62 million is being invested to build new flexible housing options, repair and renovate existing housing stock, and create mixed housing solutions that support social inclusion and help people transition to home ownership programs.

Target of eliminating

1200

households from the waiting list
for subsidized housing

151

new subsidized housing units
will be created in the first 3 years

By 2022, renovate more than

5,100

affordable rental units



Building new flexible housing options is critical to reducing the wait lists of people who need affordable housing. Over the life of the agreement, we've set a target of eliminating 1200 households from the waiting list for subsidized housing. By 2022, 151 new subsidized housing units will be created to support this goal.

Repairing old housing stock is required to make what exists more usable. In New Brunswick, approximately 12,000 low-income households are categorized as needing major repairs, and that is higher than the national average. By 2022, the agreement will fund the repair and renovation of more than 5,100 affordable rental units across the province.

Mixed housing solutions will be created to advance social inclusion and support a pathway for people to transition to home ownership. These solutions aim to increase access to affordable housing in inclusive and diverse neighbourhoods to the benefit of low-income families, seniors, people with disabilities, as well as women and children. Importantly, our government will ensure that energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from new constructions will be at least 25 per cent lower than National Building Code requirements.

“Meeting basic needs, like shelter, is critical to help people transition to a better life of independence and security. That’s why in the 2020 budget, our government provided \$5.4 million to increase social assistance rates and we announced that going forward, social assistance rates will be indexed to growth in the Consumer Price Index. This is a near-term improvement that 15,000 New Brunswickers will see the benefit of immediately. But for more New Brunswickers to realize their full potential, we need long-term solutions and we’ve built a plan to get us there.”

Premier Blaine Higgs

- **Make year-round farming a priority to strengthen food security**
- **Develop retail sales & export opportunities for local providers**
- **Enhance workforce with farming education, and immigration pilot project**

The pandemic provided important lessons about our reliance on foreign markets and the resiliency of our supply chain. While we are self sufficient when it comes to poultry and dairy, and we are world leaders in potatoes, seafood and blueberries, we saw an over-reliance on imports of other types of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as some meats.

We immediately went to work and commissioned a Food Security review to identify an action plan for growing, buying and exporting the NB Food Basket:

Year-round farming is a priority for our government: We are actively exploring controlled-environment farming and indoor farming through more sophisticated greenhouses, tunnels, hydroponics, and enhanced storage and refrigeration.

We are also assessing vulnerabilities that exist, and that includes processing and lack of automation. We must help our businesses increase outputs and become more productive and scale up. That is critical when it comes to helping our farmers increase the variety and quantity of homegrown fruit and vegetables.

In the summer we supported 45 projects to test technology and new methods. A feasibility study is underway and scheduled to be completed in September with a multi-year action plan to follow by year-end.

Food Security

The NB Food Basket is strong, and our province is home to many global leaders. In July our government invested in several domestic campaigns. We promoted seafood products including True North Salmon, Striped Bass from Eel Ground First Nation, Rocky Point Lobster from Westmorland, and Chebooktook Oysters from Village Bay in Bouctouche. In August, the campaign was expanded to include 58 retailers across the province. In September the government is due to review a five-year Local Food and Beverage Strategy.

Furthermore we've activated an export plan with Opportunities New Brunswick and the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, who are working jointly to host virtual trade shows to promote the NB Food Basket abroad.

Labour availability and education is critical. We know we've got a significant vulnerability in the food supply. We saw that this summer when our farmers needed help and our borders were still closed.

Right now, we are supporting a workforce development plan by the agriculture alliance. We are reaching out to our universities to discuss opportunities with research and curriculum. And we are actively working on an immigration pilot project for agriculture to attract farmers with experience growing a variety of crops.

“Under a Progressive Conservative government, the next generation of New Brunswickers will have the skills to grow their own food, lessen their dependency on foreign markets, and in doing so, limit our carbon footprint.”

Premier Blaine Higgs



“I’ve never shied away from doing what’s right – even if it hurts me politically. That’s not my way.

At the end of the day, when I say that we have to move forward as a province together, those aren’t empty words.

I want everyone to see a place for themselves in our party and in New Brunswick.”

Premier Blaine Higgs