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**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
**Date:** 2/6/2023 5:42:13 PM  
**Subject:** Summary - Provincial Speech from the Throne 2023

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Today, Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin delivered the Speech from the Throne on behalf of the Government of British Columbia. The Speech from the Throne outlines the government's legislative and policy agenda and priorities this session. The provincial budget, which will be tabled on February 28<sup>th</sup>, will give more details on the implementation of the government's Speech from the Throne commitments.

This is the first Speech from the Throne since Premier Eby was sworn in as Premier on November 18, 2022. The theme of this year's Speech from the Throne is building a stronger, more secure future.

Detailed commitments mentioned in the Throne Speech are outlined below.

#### Vancouver-specific References

- Downtown Eastside:
  - Urgent action is being taken in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver to move people from dangerous encampments to more secure housing.
  - A long-term plan is being developed with every level of government and the community to address the ongoing crisis in that neighbourhood.
- Progress will continue on the Broadway Subway project in Vancouver.
- The speech also noted that:
  - Vancouver's tech sector is growing at the highest rate in North America.
  - Our province will play host to national and international sporting events for three years in a row starting in 2024 with the Grey Cup, followed by the Invictus Games, and the FIFA Men's World Cup.
    - ⦿Note: All these events are being hosted in Vancouver.
  - And this summer will be the grand opening of the Chinese Canadian Museum in Vancouver Chinatown's historic Wing Sang Building.

#### Cost of Living

- Introduce new transparency legislation that will shine a light on the gender pay gap and move the province closer to equal pay for equal work.
- Ensure that child care savings that are currently provided to children who are kindergarten aged will be extended to school-aged children.

#### Affordable Housing

- Make major new investments to increase housing and services near public transit hubs around the province.
- Invest \$500 million in a new *Rental Protection Fund* to safeguard renters against evictions or rent hikes by the big investment companies that want to buy affordable rental buildings and make money through exploitation and eviction.
- Work with municipalities to set ambitious targets to deliver more housing where it is needed most.
- Make major new investments to increase housing and services near public transit hubs around the province.
- Launch a refreshed Housing Strategy and introduce new laws to turn that strategy into new affordable homes.

### Health Care

- Strengthen public health care and increase the ability to do surgeries, offer family doctors, and make sure people have care they can count on.
- Attract more internationally trained doctors, nurses, and health workers into hospitals and clinics to provide care to British Columbians – including 2,000 internationally educated nurses currently being fast tracked into BC’s health care system right now.
- Investing in new hospitals, a new medical school at SFU, and an expanded medical school at UBC. Moving forward on a historic health care funding agreement with the federal government.
- Invest in new tools to fight cancer through enhanced access to screening and early detection, diagnostic imaging, and treatments.

### Safer Communities

- Introduce new legislation to fight organized crime and money laundering.
- As part of its *Safer Communities Action Plan*, implement new response teams to track, arrest and jail repeat violent offenders. These response teams will be made up of police, dedicated prosecutors, and probation officers.
- Invest in the RCMP so that it can operate at full capacity to keep people safe, particularly in rural British Columbia.
- Direct the B.C. Prosecution Service to strengthen their bail policy.
- Joining with all province and territories to press for urgent reforms to *Criminal Code* bail rules.

### Mental Health and Homelessness

- Build on historic investments in saving lives with further expansion of treatment and recovery services, so more people can access care.
- Expanding mental health crisis response teams into more communities, so people in crisis get help from mental health experts, and so police are freed up to focus on crime.
- Urgent action is being taken in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver to move people from dangerous encampments to more secure housing.
- A long-term plan is being developed with every level of government and the community to address the ongoing crisis in that neighbourhood.

### Strong and Inclusive Communities

- B.C. will make record investments to support local governments in responding to the growth they are seeing in a way that

makes our communities stronger and more liveable for families.

- Continue funding enrolment growth in classrooms, recruitment of new teachers, and building new schools in fast-growing parts of the province.
- Roads, bridges and childcare centres will be built and maintained in every part of the province to support parents and families that commute to work and want to spend more time at home.
- Working in partnership with Indigenous, Black and other people of colour, B.C. will release data to help identify and address systemic discrimination and barriers in government programs and services as part of the *Anti-Racism Data Act*.
- Progress will continue on the Broadway Subway project in Vancouver and the Surrey-to-Langley Skytrain, the first rapid transit project south of the Fraser River in 30 years.

### **Indigenous Reconciliation**

- Work together with Indigenous Peoples to close the unjust gap in access to primary health-care services.
- Through work on the BC First Nations Justice Strategy, the government is starting to address the over-representation of Indigenous people in the justice system.
- Continue work on the ongoing implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

### **A Cleaner Economy that works for everyone**

- Government will introduce *Future Ready*, a skills-training action plan to make education and training more accessible, affordable, and relevant to help prepare British Columbians for the jobs of today and tomorrow.
- Continue work to develop a *Goods Movement Strategy* that will ensure goods are moving as efficiently as possible so businesses can scale up.
- Work to connect every underserved community to high-speed internet by 2027.
- Increase efficiency in food production through the use of new technologies and investments such as the B.C. Centre for Agritech Innovation in the Fraser Valley.
- Make trade missions to emerging markets a priority.
- Continue to remove unnecessary barriers to growth. The changes being made to speed approvals for housing permits will also be applied to other projects, including those in natural resources and tourism.
- Develop a new ESG (environmental, social, and governance) Centre of Excellence.

### **Climate Action**

- Act with increased urgency to make sure B.C. meets its ambitious climate targets in the *CleanBC: Roadmap to 2030*.
- In the spring, legislation will be introduced to strengthen the government's ability to ensure polluters pay the cost of environmental cleanup on abandoned sites.
- New legislation will also be introduced to improve access to electric vehicle charging stations in condo buildings.
- B.C. will work with Indigenous Peoples, the federal government, industry, workers and communities to protect 30% of our

land and water by 2030.

- ☐ Accelerate work on government's plan to protect more of B.C.'s old-growth forests in partnership with First Nations rights holders in the months to come.

#### Climate Readiness

- ☐ Invest to make B.C. an international leader in future-proofing our infrastructure to make it more climate resilient.
- ☐ *A New Emergency and Disaster Management Act* will be introduced to better improve B.C.'s ability to respond and recover from whatever might be in store

The full speech can be found [here](#).

The news release can be found [here](#).

Best,  
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x̱m̱əθḵəy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.