



## Message From Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges never faced before. It arrived suddenly and our government moved quickly to protect people, communities and businesses. The impacts of the pandemic continue to be felt throughout BC and that's why we reached out to people and groups throughout the province to understand how COVID-19 is affecting them, and what their ideas and priorities are as we move forward together towards the economic recovery of our province.

In June 2020, we invited British Columbians to share their feedback as we developed a plan for a strong economic recovery that works for people. I want to thank each and every person who shared their experiences, priorities and proposals.

By consulting widely and listening carefully, our plan to protect people's health and livelihoods will reflect the needs of British Columbians, and your valuable input will help guide us as we move forward with our next steps.



With tens of thousands of people and organizations completing the survey, sending in submissions and attending telephone and virtual events, we have a better sense of what people's lives have been like throughout the pandemic. This report offers a snapshot of what we learned.

We received overwhelming feedback on strengthening health care, especially for seniors, insights on how to manage COVID-19-related risks at the workplace, suggestions on managing children's return to school, and a continued call to make sure our pandemic response recognizes the climate crisis. We also heard people's concerns about the rising cost of living and the financial impacts of the pandemic on their families.

The responses show this crisis has hit some people harder than others. Nearly half of all jobs lost due to COVID-19 have been in accommodations, food services and retail. Women, young adults and low-wage workers have all experienced relatively greater job losses.

These are pressing issues for people across the province, and they are priorities for our government.

As we move forward with building BC's recovery, we need to make sure no one is left behind. Foundational to our work are BC's core values of equity, taking care of each other, sustainability and reconciliation.

It gives me hope that a majority of British Columbians told us they feel optimistic about our future, and that we are striking the right balance in our province's response to COVID-19. That's a vote of confidence for our front-line workers and the trust we have in each other.

Over the last six months, we've come together to face challenging times. In our families, workplaces, and communities we've adapted and changed to cope with new restrictions to keep people safe, and I'm confident that we can chart the way forward to build a stronger future, together.

Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier



## **Contents**

MESSAGE FROM MINISTER OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY PREMIER	П	WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE RECOVERY	24
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / Online and Telephone Townhall		Priorities for improving health care,     quality of life and work prospects	24
Public Engagement	2	Priorities for coming out of COVID-19     stronger than before	29
INTRODUCTION	5	3. Priorities for government spending	31
1. Background	5	4. Financial assistance considerations	34
2. About this report	5		
3. Public engagement on BC's		ADDITIONAL IDEAS AND	
recovery from COVID-19	5	THEMES FROM CITIZENS	36
HOW WE REACHED OUT	6	Additional advice from questionnaire participants	36
WHAT WE HEARD		Summary of public email themes	38
ABOUT COVID-19	8	Summary of written submission themes	40
1. The most important issues facing		Summary of voicemail questions,	
British Columbians in the year ahead	8	concerns, and ideas	42
Optimism vs Pessimism about     the future after COVID-19	12	APPENDIX A / How We Reached Out	46
WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE RESTART	15	APPENDIX B / Demographics of Online Questionnaire Participants	48
Are we striking the right balance between restarting the economy		APPENDIX C / Summary of Public Email Submissions	50
and keeping people safe?	15	, ,	
2. How safe do people feel in stores?	17	APPENDIX D /	
3. How safe do people feel at work?	21	Summary of Written Submission Themes	56

## **Executive Summary / Online and Telephone Townhall Public Engagement**

## What we heard about COVID-19

What are the most important issues facing **British Columbians in the year ahead?** 



ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES / **TOP THREE ISSUES:** 

**Economic** aspects of COVID-19

Health aspects of COVID-19

Cost of living



**TELEPHONE TOWN HALL RESPONSES / TOP THREE ISSUES:** 

**39%** Health aspects of COVID-19

Cost of

**Economic** aspects of COVID-19

What is your sense of Optimism vs. Pessimism for the future?

of online questionnaire respondents are somewhat or very optimistic about their own future

of online questionnaire respondents are somewhat or very optimistic about the **future of BC** 

of telephone townhall participants of telephone townhall participan are somewhat or very optimistic about the **future in general** about the **future in general** 

## What we heard about the restart

Are we striking the right balance between restarting the economy and keeping people safe?



**68%** of Online Ouestionnaire respondents said YES



**76%** of Telephone Town Hall respondents said YES

#### How safe do people feel in stores?



**Approximately** 

of respondents

#### **SAFETY ENHANCEMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR STORES:**

- Provide and use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Implement stronger safety protocols and guidelines
- Provide more employee training Provide more delivery/
- pickup options Focus on sanitation

#### How safe do people feel at work?



**Approximately** 

of respondents feel safe

#### **SUGGESTED SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS:**

- Provide flexible work options
- Implement stronger safety protocols and guidelines
- Provide Personal Protective **Equipment (PPE)**

## What we heard about the recovery

What matters most to online questionnaire respondents as we work our way through COVID-19:

#### **IMPROVING HEALTH CARE:**



- Better care for seniors / 17%
- More health care workers and family doctors / 13%
- Equitable access to healthcare for all / 8%
- Better access to PPE / 7%

#### **IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE:**



- Make life more affordable / 22%
- Opening of parks and rec spaces / 14%
- Well funded social programs / 6%
- ♥ Financial assistance / 6%

#### **IMPROVING WORK SPACES/WORK PROSPECTS:**



- Increased education and training / 15%
- Flexible working arrangements / 9%
- Subsidies for small businesses / 8%
- Re-opening of more businesses / 7%

#### **COMING OUT OF COVID-19 STRONGER THAN BEFORE:**



- Greener, more innovative economy / 10%
- Increased access to social programs / 9%
- Addressing climate change / 9%
- A secure local food supply / 9%

What are your top priorities for additional spending on programs designed to help the province recover well from COVID-19?



ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES /
TOP THREE ISSUES:

12%
Increased support for addictions and mental health

11% Supporting local farms to secure the food supply 11% More affordable housing



TELEPHONE TOWN HALL RESPONSES / TOP THREE ISSUES:

21%
People getting
back to work

20% Slowing the spread of COVID-19 20% Make life more affordable

What criteria should the province consider when evaluating requests for financial assistance?

#### **TOP FIVE SUGGESTED CONSIDERATIONS:**

Does the business **pay taxes** in British Columbia **?** 

Will the funds be used to **keep workers and operations going** in BC **?** 

Will it help people move from minimum wage jobs to better, *living wage jobs* ?

Will groups of people who are **unemployed right now benefit ②** 

Where is the company headquartered?— Is **support for BC businesses** the priority **?** 



## Introduction

#### 1. Background

On March 17, 2020, the BC government declared a provincial state of emergency to support the provincewide response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

BC Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister of Health, Adrian Dix, like authorities across Canada and around the world, called for unprecedented stay-at-home and social distancing measures to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens. The federal and provincial governments instituted economic supports to assist individuals and companies who would be financially impacted by the closure of businesses.

Since March, people from all regions of the province have experienced job loss or change, health concerns, and much uncertainty about the future of their families, communities, and businesses. Throughout this time, British Columbians have also demonstrated resilience and resolve as they have worked hard together to follow the procedures recommended by health authorities. They have significantly reduced the prevalence of COVID-19 and successfully slowed down the spread of the virus

A cautious restart of the economy has been underway since May, allowing for businesses that were shut down to begin reopening – while still observing recommended safety precautions. As the BC economy restarts, the government is now also focusing on long-term recovery.

Through this public engagement, the government reached out to all British Columbians for feedback on how they have been experiencing the Restart Plan and to gather their ideas to ensure that the province recovers in a way that builds BC back even better than before.

#### 2. About this report

This report summarizes feedback received from all streams of the COVID-19 Recovery Ideas engagement, including:

- Online Questionnaires
- Virtual Townhalls
- ▶ Telephone Townhalls
- Public Email Submissions
- Written Submissions from BC Organizations

Concurrently, Premier John Horgan and Finance Minister Carole James are leading roundtable discussions with businesses, Indigenous peoples and organizations to understand their concerns and gather their ideas for recovery. This engagement summary does not include feedback gathered through this parallel but separate process.

## 3. Public engagement on BC'S recovery from COVID-19

This province-wide engagement reached out to people from across British Columbia to gather input on what recovering from COVID-19 looks like from their perspectives, and their priorities for the future. The views and ideas of the thousands who participated are summarized in this report. This important input will help the BC government set priorities for investing in recovery efforts and planning for the next provincial budget.

### **How We Reached Out**

With this engagement, we sought input from tens of thousands of people about their experience with COVID-19 and their priorities for the future. From June 17 to July 21, 2020 citizens throughout the province were invited to join the conversation about British Columbia's ongoing recovery from COVID-19, the recent restart of the economy, and the priorities the government should set for longer term economic recovery. There were multiple ways of providing feedback that included an online questionnaire, two virtual townhalls, and four telephone townhalls. Citizens were also able to email their feedback, and organizations were invited to provide written submissions. Figure 1 depicts the response rates for each of the engagement methods.

The online questionnaire contained 13 questions and was open for the duration of the engagement. The two virtual townhall events were hosted live on June 25 and July 13 via the BC government's Facebook page and Youtube. Participants were invited to submit

their questions before the event or ask in real time during the livestream. The four telephone townhalls were hosted between July 7 and July 16. As with the virtual events, participants were invited to submit their ideas ahead of time or provide comments or questions during the live session. Participants were also able to provide input by responding to polling questions using their telephone keypads. Callers who felt their ideas or questions had not been addressed at the end of the sessions were invited to leave a voicemail. Participants left 200 voicemails. In addition, the Province received 996 email submissions from the public, and 135 written submissions from individual organizations.

You can find more detail about how we reached out and who participated in *Appendix A* and *Appendix B*. A summary of public email submissions can be found in *Appendix C*, and feedback from written submissions is summarized in *Appendix D*.

FIGURE 1

#### **PARTICIPATION BY THE NUMBERS**















### **What We Heard About COVID-19**

# 1. The most important issues facing British Columbians in the year ahead

British Columbians provided a great deal of input – using a number of engagement methods – on what they feel are the most important issues facing the province in the year ahead.

I am concerned about people's mental health after the pandemic and whether plans are being put in place for poverty reduction and possibly a guaranteed annual income?"

- June 7 Telephone Townhall Participant

#### **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

Online questionnaire participants were asked:

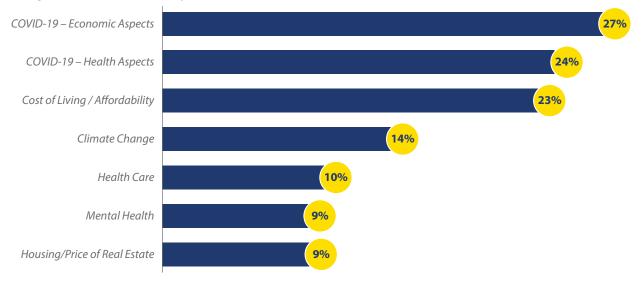
What would you say will be the two most important issues facing British Columbians like you in the year ahead?

Participants were able to select two issues from a menu of 26 options.

Of the 11,805 responses to this question, 27% are most concerned with COVID-19 economic aspects, followed closely by COVID-19 health aspects with 24% of responses and Cost of living/affordability with 23% of responses. These three themes make up a total of just over 74% of all responses, clearly identifying them as the most important issues for British Columbians, based on questionnaire results. Figure 2 shows the percentage of respondents who selected each of the options as one of their top two most important issues.

FIGURE 2

## **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** What would you say will be the **MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE** facing British Columbians in the year ahead.





However, some differences in the overall percentages emerge when viewing the data by various demographics. For example, significantly more respondents under 29 years of age identify Cost of living/affordability as a top issue and they cite their second and third highest responses as COVID-19 economic aspects and Climate change respectively. Respondents 30 to 40 years of age identify Cost of living/ affordability as the second most important issue behind COVID-19 economic aspects. Most respondents over the age of 70 indicate that COVID-19 health aspects is the most important issue.

Renters identify *Cost of living/ affordability* as their top issue –
selecting it significantly more
often than *COVID-19 economic aspects. COVID-19 health aspects and Housing/price of real estate*tie for third. Homeowners' top

issues match those of overall participants, but they identify COVID-19 Economic aspects as the third highest issue, slightly more often than Cost of living/affordability. For respondents living with a parent or relative, the top three issues are Cost of living/affordability, COVID-19 health aspects and COVID-19 economic aspects.

If respondents did not see what they felt was the most important issue for British Columbians reflected in the list provided, they were invited to select "other" and type their response in the comment box. Respondents provided 160 comments. The comments were themed and the top two themes most mentioned are Senior issues and Increased employment opportunities. Senior issues pertain to improving care facility options, increasing senior subsidies and an overall improvement in senior medical

care. Long-term care is cited most often under senior issues, with respondents identifying a growing lack of care and professionalism in long-term care homes, particularly those run privately. Increased employment opportunities includes job security, getting people back-towork, improving income levels and working from home.

**TOP PRIORITIES** for the **3,370** people who rent:



**18%** are concerned about the cost of living



**10%** note the health aspects of COVID-19



**10%** name housing and real estate prices

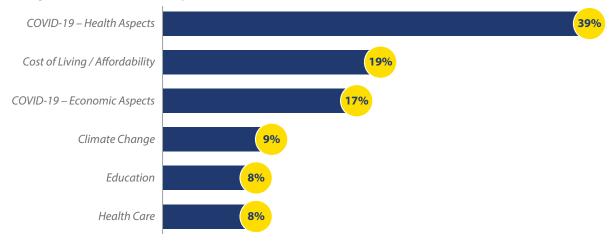
#### **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL RESPONSES**

For telephone townhall participants, the options from which to select the most important issue facing British Columbians were necessarily much fewer, as participants had to remember the options they heard and use their telephone key pads to indicate their responses. When asked to select the most important issue facing British Columbians in the year ahead, 1,737 answered the polling question by selecting from six options. Figure 3 shows how telephone townhall participants ranked each of the options. COVID-19 – health aspects received a significantly higher response rate of 39% than the second and third most frequently selected options of Cost of living/affordability (19%) and COVID-19economic aspects (17%). Responses did not differ significantly across the four telephone townhall sessions.



FIGURE 3

## **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL:** What would you say will be the **MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE** facing British Columbians in the year ahead?



#### **VIRTUAL TOWNHALL RESPONSES**

The virtual townhalls were used as a platform to answer participants' questions, rather than to collect feedback. Together, the June 25 and July 13 virtual townhalls reached 23,574 people, either on Facebook or through the YouTube live stream. Participants posted 535 comments through the Facebook chat feature.

Virtual townhall participants asked 161 questions, either prior to the event through the online feedback form or Facebook, or during the live event. Virtual townhall hosts were able to answer 22 of the questions during the live events in the time available.

Through their questions, virtual townhall participants identified several issues that were addressed by the hosts. Specifically, during the June 25 virtual townhall, discussions centred around:

- Sustainable opportunities for Indigenous peoples
- ▶ Funding to help young workers acquire skills
- Opportunities to move towards sustainable economic development
- Planning for a second wave of the virus
- ▶ Infrastructure investments to make our communities more livable
- Fixes to the rental housing crisis
- Working from home option to cut back on traffic and pollution
- Considerations regarding CERB and Employment Insurance
- Mental health and addictions.
- Childcare
- Tourism

During the July 13 virtual townhall on supporting business, discussions focused on:

- Supports for seasonal tourism, summer businesses and hospitality
- Tax breaks, subsidies and grants
- Compliance and monitoring with health protocols
- Ideas for how citizens can support small businesses
- Border security concerns

Virtual townhall participants were encouraged to also go online to govTogetherBC to take the online questionnaire and consider attending a telephone townhall session.



#### This is our time

to create an inclusive. just and sustainable society. Please consider taking this opportunity and be remembered as the government who actually took action. I am terrified of the future due to climate change risks and I want to feel like my government is responding adequately. I am tired of writing letters, attending protests, etc. just to ask for a future I can depend on and feel good about bringing my own kids into. Let's come out of COVID-19 better, not just business-as-usual."

Online QuestionnaireParticipant fromVancouver

Will we use recovery funding to lessen inequality and create durable and sustainable opportunities for the many *Indigenous people in BC*? Will we have a framework in place to ensure that will happen?"

June 25 Virtual Townhall Participant

## 2. Optimism vs Pessimism about the future after COVID-19

British Columbians were asked whether they are feeling optimistic or pessimistic about the future after COVID-19. Across all streams of input, there was an overall sense of optimism.

Ensure that the businesses have the support they need to ensure long term viability. *We need jobs* that provide a green economy that help decrease risk of poor health."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from Fort St. John

#### **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

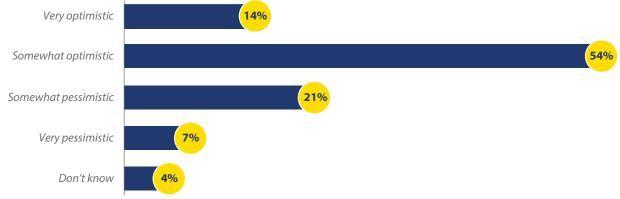
Approximately 11,760 online questionnaire participants answered these two questions:

- ♦ When thinking about your own future after COVID-19, are you pessimistic or optimistic?
- ♦ When thinking about BC's future after COVID-19, are you pessimistic or optimistic?

The majority (68%) of questionnaire respondents report feeling *somewhat* or *very optimistic* about their own future after COVID-19. When it comes to BC's future, they are also optimistic but to a slightly lesser extent with 61% feeling *somewhat* or *very optimistic*. Approximately 28% report being either *somewhat* or *very pessimistic* about their own future and 35% are *somewhat* or *very pessimistic* about the future of BC Responses do not differ significantly with regional or other demographic variations. Figures 4 and 5 show how all questionnaire participants answered these two questions.

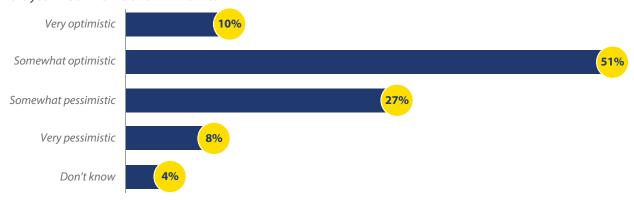
#### FIGURE 4





#### FIGURE 5

## **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** When thinking about **BC's** future after COVID-19 are you **PESSIMISTIC** or **OPTIMISTIC**?



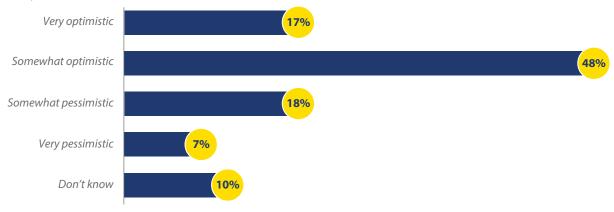
#### **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL RESPONSES**

Telephone townhall participants were asked a similar question:

♦ When thinking about BC's future after COVID-19, are you pessimistic or optimistic? In total, 1,658 participants responded to this polling question. The majority of telephone townhall participants (65%) indicate that they are either *somewhat* or *very optimistic* about the future. There are no significant differences by region in the responses to this question. Figure 6 shows how participants attending all four telephone townhalls answered this question.

#### FIGURE 6

## **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL:** When thinking about **BC's** future after COVID-19 are you **PESSIMISTIC** or **OPTIMISTIC**?





## What We Heard About the Restart

## 1. Are we striking the right balance between restarting the economy and keeping people safe?

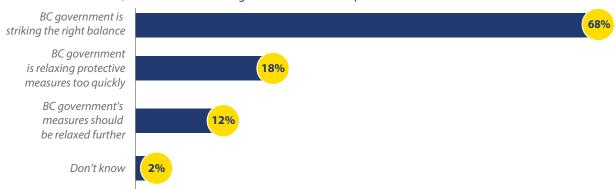
The BC government announced careful steps to restart non-urgent and elective surgeries and to re-open parks and businesses that closed due to COVID-19. Participants of the online questionnaire and the telephone townhalls were asked whether they feel the BC government is striking the right balance between keeping the public safe and restarting the economy. The overall response from participants was positive.

#### **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

Of the 11,751 online questionnaire participants that answered this question, 68% feel the BC government is striking the right balance. About 18% feel the government is relaxing protective measures too quickly and 12% feel the measures are still too strict and should be relaxed further. Figure 7 shows how all questionnaire participants answered this question.

FIGURE 7

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** Based on what you've seen or heard about BC's Restart Plan, which of the following is closest to **YOUR** opinion?





# We need to find a balance between providing emergency funds but also providing incentive for people to return to work. A lack of balance means many workplaces are short-staffed." - Online Questionnaire Participant from the Okanagan

Have mandatory face mask
policies for everyone. My mask protects
you: your masks protects me."

Online Questionnaire Participant from Whistler

Older participants tend to be more confident in government's response to COVID-19, with 75% of the 1,075 participants over 70 years indicating the government is striking the right balance. No other significant differences are seen in the data when looking at other demographic variations.

#### **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL RESPONSES**

Telephone townhall participants were also asked a similar question:

Based on what you've seen or heard about BC's Restart Plan, do you think the BC Government is striking the right balance between keeping the public safe and restarting the economy?

A total of 1,413 participants responded to the polling question. Responses were slightly more

positive than the online questionnaire responses, with 76% of those responding to the poll saying they either *somewhat* or *strongly agree* that the BC government is striking the right balance. About 20% indicate that they either *somewhat* or *strongly disagree* with the statement. There are no significant differences in how people answered this question by region.

## C

#### Some businesses are doing a great

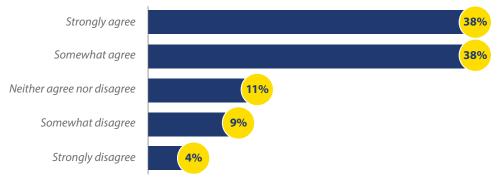
*job* – employees are wearing masks, hand sanitizer is readily available, and the business is set up to encourage social distancing. Others seem to be doing nothing at all. Obviously, we can make personal choices about where to shop and conduct business, but I would feel more secure if all businesses adopted a policy of requiring employees (and customers) to wear masks."

 Online Questionnaire Participant who owns their Home

Figure 8 shows how all telephone townhall polling participants answered this question.

FIGURE 8

**TELEPHONE TOWNHALL:** Based on what you've seen or heard about BC's Restart Plan, do you think the BC Government is **STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE** between keeping the public safe and restarting the economy?



#### 2. How safe do people feel in stores?

The Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC have been working with industry associations and local businesses to develop Safe Operations Plans for businesses

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE AND TELEPHONE TOWNHALL RESPONSES

Online questionnaire participants and telephone townhall participants were asked the same question:

▶ How confident are you that most of the stores that you would normally shop at are able to ensure the safety of staff and customers?

Most participants indicate a high level of confidence in the stores they shop in. Of the 11,759 questionnaire participants that answered this question 69% say they are *somewhat* or *very confident*. Similarly, 68% of the 1,238 telephone townhall participants responding to this poll say they feel *somewhat* or *very confident*.

About 30% of questionnaire respondents and 29% of telephone townhall participants indicate they are either not too confident or are not at all confident that stores are able to ensure safety of staff and customers. There are no significant differences seen in the data by region or other demographics.

See Figures 9 and 10 to show how telephone townhall participants and online questionnaire participants answered this question, respectively.



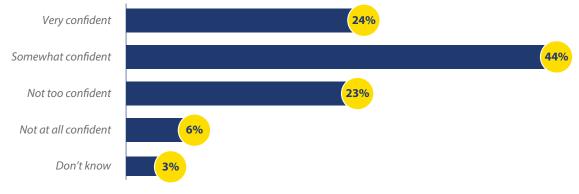
#### Businesses can set expectations,

but that doesn't necessarily mean the public will meet them. It's how the public behaves that I worry about the most."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from Maple Ridge

#### FIGURE 9

**TELEPHONE TOWNHALL:** How confident are you that most of the stores that you would normally shop at are able to ensure the safety of staff and customers?



**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** How confident are you that most of the stores that you would normally shop at are able to ensure the safety of staff and customers?



Stricter guidelines in communities that have outbreaks as opposed to guidelines for the whole province. Worried more about the second wave that is probably coming."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from Vancouver Island

## ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

Questionnaire participants were also asked:

• What other things could businesses in your community do to help you feel more secure in their stores?

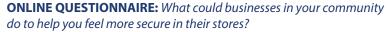
**TOP THREE THINGS** businesses can do to help people feel more secure in their stores

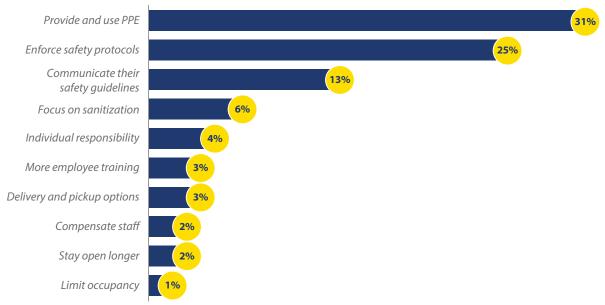
- 1. Provide and use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- 2. Implement safety protocols
- **3.** Focus on sanitization



Respondents offered 176 comments. A number of themes emerged from their ideas with the top four themed responses being *Provide and use PPE* (31%), *Enforce safety protocols* (25%), *Communicate their safety guidelines* (13%), and *Focus on Sanitization* (6%).

Figure 11 shows the top 10 themes and the percentage of total comments allocated to each theme.





Participants identify a greater demand for employers to *Provide* and use personal protective equipment (PPE) in businesses. They call for businesses to enforce a mandatory non-medical face mask (or face shield) policy for both employees and customers. Respondents also note that businesses could provide masks for customers, either for free or at a charge.

Alongside providing a greater sense of security, they note that a mandatory mask policy would help to slow COVID-19 transmission rates in British Columbia. Other PPE considerations include providing hand sanitizer at store entrances and installing plexiglass barriers between employees and customers at the point-of-sale.

After PPE, the next major theme was Enforce safety protocols within businesses. As mentioned, these protocols include mandatory mask wearing in stores and providing hand sanitizer. Ensuring physical distancing between customers in stores also emerged as a primary concern. Respondents suggest that businesses could redesign or repurpose their spaces and limit occupancy levels to make physical distancing easier. Respondents call for greater consistency when enforcing safety protocols and mention that while they feel secure in some businesses, other businesses are not adhering to any safety protocols at all.

Many respondents request that businesses post safety guidelines.

#### British Columbian's suggestions to increase shopping safety:

- Supply non-medical face masks for all staff and customers
- Hand sanitizer at entrances
- Plexi-glass barriers at point of sale
- Re-design spaces to support physical distancing
- Limiting occupants

- Posted safety guidelines
- Consistency of protocols from store to store
- Pick-up/drop-off options
- Extended hours including seniors-only hours
- Employer-paid sick time benefits



Examples include signage reminding people to physically distance and wear masks, and arrows directing customers throughout the business.

Focus on Sanitization was also an important theme, with requests for businesses to increase sanitization on high-touch areas, including door handles and debit machines. Many respondents are disappointed to note that some businesses have relaxed their sanitization policies. They suggest that More employee training could ensure that stores stay sanitized and safe.

I've never stopped working and make less doing so than I would have on CERB. I pay 75 percent of my income on rent but always seem to be in that group that barely survives but gets no assistance. Single parent, essential worker, left out. Barely making it."

 Online Questionnaire Participant who Rents their Home

Respondents note that they would feel more secure if businesses provide longer operating hours and improved online ordering and *Delivery* 

and *pickup options*. Reasoning includes allowing a greater window of time for customers to shop in addition to incorporating "senior hours" – hours of the day reserved for seniors to shop.

Make work from home 5 days
a week allowed for ALL employees.
My employer is a leader in the industry for COVID-19 and we have a contact tracing app, masks, social distancing, sanitizing and work from home initiatives."

Online Questionnaire Participant from Mission

This response is correlated with respondents in the 50 to 70+ year-old age group. Respondants highlight the need to *Compensate staff* in the form of paid sick days. Respondents feel that paid sick days would reduce the number of employees coming to work sick. There is also a sentiment of the importance of *Individual responsibility*. Many respondents note that while businesses are doing their best to meet safety standards, the onus is on individual customers to ensure their own safety.

#### 3. How safe do people feel at work?

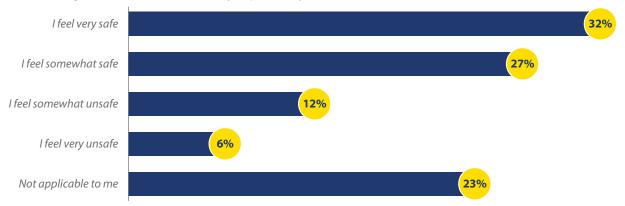
#### **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

Online questionnaire participants were asked an additional question about safety:

When thinking about your own workplace and working through the next stages of COVID-19, how safe do you personally feel? Over half (59%) of the 11,742 respondents who answered this question say they feel *somewhat* or very safe in their workplace, while 18% feel *somewhat* or very unsafe at work. About 23% of those who answered this question, indicate the question was not applicable to them because they are either working from home, are unemployed or are retired. Figure 12 shows how respondents answered this question.

FIGURE 12

**ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** When thinking about your own workplace, and working through the next stages of COVID-19 how safe do you personally feel?



Raise minimum wage to meet the realistic financial requirements of living in Vancouver. This would make 'minimum wage jobs' a long-term possibility for people, remove the necessity of working multiple jobs to afford food/housing, improve the quality of work being done at those jobs, etc. Institute Basic Living Income and help break the cycle of poverty for thousands of people. Eliminate the need for people to choose whether they eat or their child eats. Stop people from going to work sick because otherwise they may be evicted. Open doors to a better life by eliminating constant struggle."

- Online Questionnaire Participant from Vancouver

Those who indicated they are employed were also asked:

What other things could your employer do to help you feel safer on the job?

This is your chance to make big changes. Changes that seemed impossible before. Create a better foundation from the bottom up that has the values of caring for others, doing things collectively and fairly, not only for each other but for the environment we live in and depend on as well. Now is your chance to start again, start different, make it better."

Online Questionnaire Participant of Indigenous descent

**Top three things** employers can do to help employees to feel safer on the job:

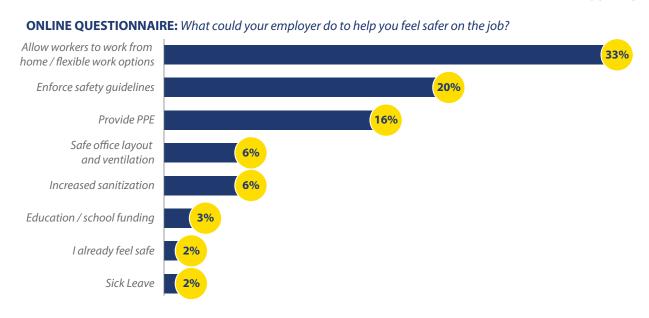
- 1. Provide flexible work options
- 2. Enforce safety guidelines
- **3.** Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Respondents offered 814 comments. Several main themes emerged from their ideas. The top three themes identified included *Allow workers to work from home / flexible work options* (33%), *Enforce safety guidelines* (20%) and *Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*(16%). Questionnaire participants with young children (2-13 years) suggest *Allow workers to work from home* much more frequently than they identify any other theme. Figure 13 shows the themes that emerged and the percentage of total comments allocated to each.

Put more money into *infrastructure projects*, especially neighborhood projects and heritage restoration. This would create lots of jobs and people see the results of funding spent in their own neighborhood for projects they care about and can relate to. This is the time to give back to local communities and help restore their history as people are locked up more or are not traveling away from home."

Online Questionnaire Participant over 70 years of age

#### FIGURE 13





## What We Heard About the Recovery

## 1. Priorities for improving health care, quality of life and work prospects

BC has taken a careful approach at each stage of the pandemic, from protecting public health, to restarting businesses. Online questionnaire participants were asked three open-ended questions:

- ◆ Thinking about the things that matter most as we work our way through COVID-19, in each of the following areas, what is your top priority when it comes to:
  - >> Strengthening and improving health care?
  - >> Improving your quality of life?
  - Improving your work life or work prospects?

#### The most often-cited topics

related to improving health care:

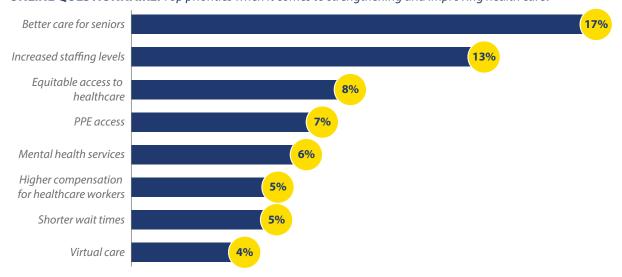
- 1. Better care for seniors
- 2. Increase medical staff across the province
- 3. Ensure healthcare that is accessible for all

#### **HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENTS**

When it comes to strengthening and improving health care, participants provided 2,283 comments on priorities that matter most to them. When closely analyzed, these priorities could be categorized into several themes. The top four themes were better care for seniors (17%), increased staffing levels (13%), equitable access to healthcare (8%) and PPE access (7%). Figure 14 shows the predominant themes that emerged and the percentage of total comments allocated to each.

#### FIGURE 14

#### **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** *Top priorities when it comes to strengthening and improving health care?*



We need a completely new and more humane way of *looking after our seniors*. Segregating them into for-profit institutions has been a complete and heartbreaking disaster. We can do better."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from Vancouver

Better care for seniors was the top priority across the majority of demographics of respondents. Sentiments within this theme include improving care for seniors in long-term care homes as well as a call to support workers (increase wages) of long-term care homes and to overhaul/ restructure senior care.

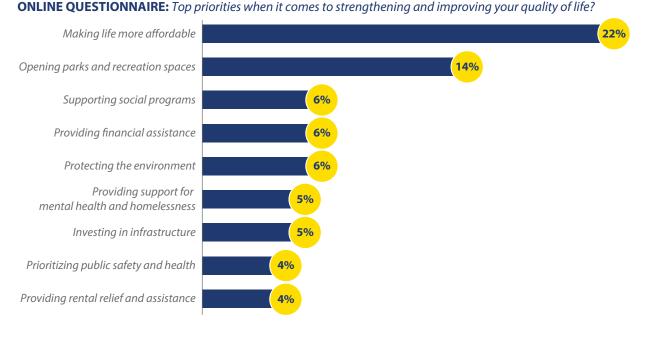
Increased staffing levels in general across the healthcare system was identified as a top priority for all demographics of respondents. The main theme is the need for more doctors and primary care providers. Another prevalent theme is funding for staffing and supplies for hospitals, clinics and health care workers.

Equitable access to healthcare was also in the top priorities for all respondents of the questionnaire. The most prevalent theme is the need for more inclusive access to care. Respondents also indicate a need for alternative or preventative types of care and better medical coverage for those treatments. Access to personal protective equipment (PPE) was another priority when it comes to strengthening and improving healthcare. Many comments suggest stockpiling enough PPE to get BC through a second wave. Closely related was the access to PPE for all, including the homeless.

#### **QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS**

When it comes to improving their quality of life, participants provided 1,785 comments (priorities) that matter most to them. When closely analyzed, the priorities could be categorized into several themes. The top four themes were making life more affordable (22%), opening parks and recreation spaces (14%), supporting social programs (6%) and providing financial assistance (6%). Figure 15 shows the predominant themes that emerged and the percentage of total comments allocated to each.

FIGURE 15





## **The most often-cited topics** related to improving quality of life included:

- **1.** Affordability of housing, childcare and other essential services
- 2. Access to parks and other forms of recreation
- Access to social programs and supports for seniors, persons with disabilities, mental health, treatment for opioid and other substance use
- **4.** Financial supports including Universal Basic Income (UBI) and living wages
- 5. Protecting the environment

Overall, participants indicate *Making life more affordable* as the top priority with significantly more comments than any other theme. Within this theme, respondents' comments were slightly varied with about 57% of themed responses specifically noting a need for affordable housing, 17% commenting that the cost of living is too high and 8% highlighting a need to address childcare.

# We need serious investments in building and maintaining outdoor spaces (water access, beaches, parks and trails) in rural BC to improve quality of life of residents, attract skilled professionals, and support the continued growth of tourism. This is important for our mental and physical health."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from the Kootenay Region

Opening parks and recreation spaces was a wide-ranging theme with respondents noting the importance of access to community centres, gyms, parks (provincial and otherwise), recreational spaces (indoor and outdoor), and camping. Within the theme of Supporting social programs, most respondents expressed a need to address affordable, safe childcare, while some themed responses, roughly 8%, note a need to increase support for seniors both within and outside of long-term care facilities. Lastly, the fourth most popular theme was Providing financial assistance, with 30% of themed comments noting a need to implement a universal basic income (UBI) and roughly 7% highlighting a need to provide COVID-19 financial supports to mitigate the immediate and long-term economic effects.

Ensuring the continuing improvement and *consideration of environmental impacts* as we move forward. I volunteer in several initiatives and am seriously concerned about losing our small gains. This includes air quality, protection of endangered species, clean ocean protections, etc."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from Victoria Priorities shift somewhat when looking at the data by various demographics. Of the 658 homeowners who provided comments, two themes tie for top place - Opening parks and recreation spaces and Making life more affordable. However, of the 370 renters who provided comments, the vast majority are concerned with matters of finance – with top themes being Making life more affordable and Providing financial assistance. For the 98 comments provided by participants with young children (2-6 years) the top two priorities are Making life more affordable and Supporting social programs. The Opening parks and recreation spaces theme passes Making life more affordable in count within the Thompson/Okanagan and Cariboo regions only. Within the Vancouver Island/Coast region, the theme of *Providing support for mental health* and homelessness ranks third – with respondents highlighting a need to address the opioid crisis, homelessness, and mental health – whereas in other regions, respondents note a greater importance of Supporting social Programs which included childcare, living wage, support for persons with disabilities (PWD), and a Universal Basic Income (UBI).

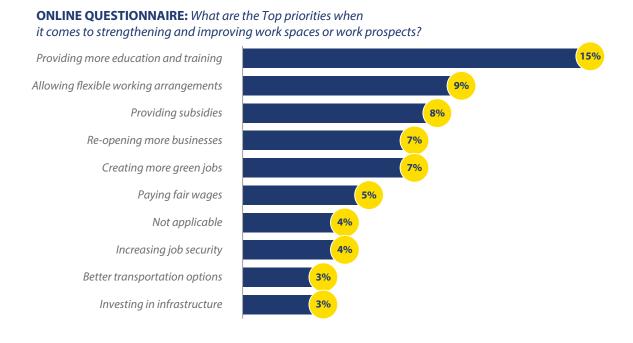
## WORK LIFE OR WORK PROSPECT IMPROVEMENTS

When it comes to improving work life or work prospects, participants provided 1,595 comments (priorities) that matter most to them. When closely analyzed, the priorities could be categorized into several themes. The top four themed responses were *Providing more education and training* (15%), *Allowing flexible working arrangements* (9%), *Providing subsidies* (8%), and *Re-opening more businesses* (7%). Figure 16 shows the predominant themes that emerged and the percentage of total comments allocated to each.

**The most often-cited topics** related to work life / work prospects include:

- 1. Access to affordable education opportunities
- **2.** Flexible, compressed and reduced work schedules / ability to work from home
- **3.** Subsidies, grants and other financial aids to support small businesses, especially in light of mandatory COVID-19 closures

FIGURE 16



is my top priority here. We will need a well educated and trained workforce to help reduce our emissions and combat further pandemics we will face."

 Online Questionnaire Respondent from the Okanagan

Across all demographic data, Providing more education and training was the top priority regarding improving respondents' work life or work prospects. Affordability of post-secondary education was a dominant theme, in some instances with respondents calling for free postsecondary education. Many respondents say they wished to upgrade their existing education whether though post-secondary education or online courses/certifications. Responses call for investment into the public education system. There is also a desire for training and retraining courses, as well as investments into apprenticeship programs. Training in the digital sphere is noted as a way to help qualify for new and emerging jobs in British Columbia.



Respondents also indicate that Allowing flexible working arrangements would improve their work life. Respondents who express support for a flex work model are largely homeowners with children. For respondents, flexible work is primarily focused around reduced hours in the workweek. A four-day workweek is a prevalent suggestion to create a better work-life balance for employees. In addition to flexible hours, respondents support shifting away from the traditional office model and towards telecommuting and working from home. Respondents not only feel safer from COVID-19 while working at home, but also note the positive environmental effects of less commuting and report an overall decrease in personal stress. Those who wish to work from home call for support from employers in terms of supplies for home offices.

As the economy further re-opens and medical experts says a second wave is imminent, what is the province doing to ensure workers have access to paid sick time and can stay home while sick without fearing they'll be fired or losing out on money on their next paycheque?"

- June 25 Virtual Townhall Participant

The final themes of *Providing subsidies* and *Re-opening more businesses* focus on supports for small businesses in the form of subsidies, grants, or loans. As well, respondents express that government should support small businesses over larger corporations. Many respondents indicate that they are negatively affected by business closures and want their business or place of employment to reopen to increase personal wellbeing but also to stimulate the BC economy. In some instances, respondents note that the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) proves detrimental to opening their business, as employees are not incentivized to return to work.

#### 2. Priorities for coming out of COVID-19 stronger than before

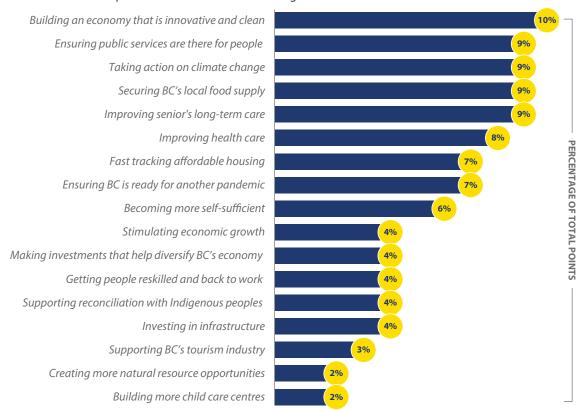
Online questionnaire participants were asked to identify what they believe are the top three priorities that the government could set to help BC come out of COVID-19 stronger than before. A list of 17 possible priorities was provided from which participants were asked to rank their top three in order of preference. A total of 11,404 participants answered this question and ranked in order of importance their first, second and third top priorities. Responses were weighted (that is three points were given to the first priority, two points to the second priority and one point to the third priority) so that an overall picture of highest to lowest priorities could be generated. Overall, the top three priorities that emerged from the data include (from highest to lowest priority):

- 1. Building an economy that is innovative and clean and developing and exporting made-in-BC, low-carbon services, products and technologies around the world.
- **2.** Ensuring public services like childcare, mental health care and other supports are there for people and are responsive to their needs.
- **3.** Taking action on climate change to meet our pollution-reduction targets and create good jobs in the clean energy sector.

Figure 17 shows the percentage of points given to each of the 17 options based on participants' responses.

#### FIGURE 17

## **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** What are the **TOP THREE PRIORITIES** the government should set to help BC come out of COVID-19 stronger than before?





There has been a great deal of discussion of making this recovery a 'green' or sustainable one. This would mean rethinking BC's reliance on non-renewable resources and problematic activities. Is BC considering the **opportunity to move more towards sustainability** in terms of economic development options and, if so, how?"

– June 25 Virtual Townhall Participant Some variation in the priorities can be seen when examining the data by various demographics.

#### **The top three priorities** cited by those who rent their homes include:

- **1.** Fast tracking affordable housing projects to support lower and middle-income families.
- **2.** Ensuring public services like childcare, mental health care and other supports are there for people and are responsive to needs.
- **3.** Securing BC's local food supply by supporting farmers and agricultural workers.

#### **The top three priorities** for Indigenous participants include:

- **1.** Ensuring economic recovery supports reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.
- **2.** Fast tracking affordable housing projects to support lower and middle-income families.
- **3.** Securing BC's local food supply by supporting farmers and agricultural workers.

For those over 70 years, *Improving senior's long-term care* was within their top three priorities. And for many who are of ethnic minority descent, *Ensuring BC is ready for another pandemic* was within their top three priorities.



#### 3. Priorities for government spending

The government sought to understand British Columbians' priorities for additional spending on programs designed to help the province recover well from COVID-19.

#### **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

Online questionnaire participants were asked:

▶ If you had \$100 to put towards new and expanded programs and services across government that could help our province come out of COVID-19 stronger, how would you choose to divide it?

Participants were provided with a list of 17 options representing some of the areas that the government could prioritize (the options did not represent all of the programs and services funded by the province). They were asked to only devote dollars to the priorities that they personally think should receive additional funding. Approximately 11,440 participants chose to allocate the \$100. Figure 18 shows the percentage of total dollars allocated by respondents to each of the potential spending areas.

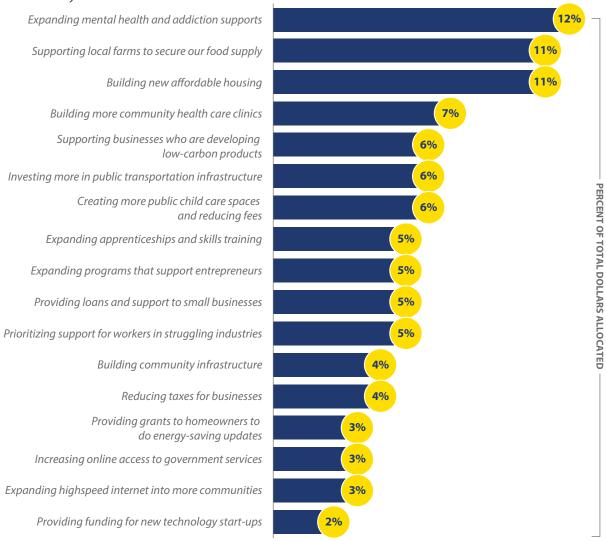
#### Participants indicated the following priorities

for how funding should be allocated by the Provincial government to recover from COVID-19:

- Mental health and addictions support
- ▶ Food security including support for BC Farmers
- New affordable housing
- Getting people back to work
- Slowing COVID-19

The cost of living in BC is far beyond the means of the average person. Now more than ever as people try to regain financial independence after COVID-19, we need the support of government in making things more economically sustainable for middle and lower class."

 Online Questionnaire Participant who Rents their Home **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** If you had \$100 to put towards new and expanded programs and services across government that could help our province come out of COVID-19 stronger, how would you choose to divide it?



## **The top three areas** to allocate extra funding include:

- **1.** Expanding mental health and addictions supports
- 2. Supporting local farms to secure our food supply with financial support to attract more workers
- 3. Building new affordable housing

Responses were consistent across regions. However, those who rent their homes tend to allocate more money to *Building new affordable housing* while participants with small children (2-6 years) at home allocate more money to *Creating more public childcare spaces and reducing fees*.

#### **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL RESPONSES**

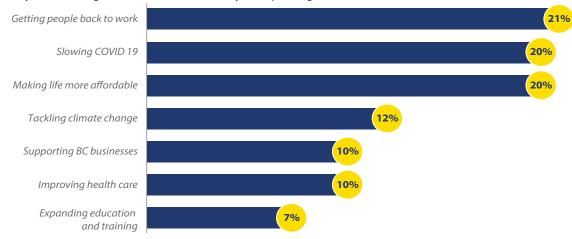
Telephone townhall participants were also asked to identify the top priority they think the government should focus any new spending on. Participants were given seven options from which to choose, and were asked to use their telephone keypads to indicate their top choice. The top three priorities received very similar response rates and included *Getting people back to work* (21%), *Slowing COVID-19* (20%), and *Making life more affordable* (20%).

To see all of the options provided to telephone townhall participants and the percentage of respondents that choose each as their top priority for all telephone townhall sessions, see Figure 19.



#### FIGURE 19

### **TELEPHONE TOWNHALL:** As BC builds our recovery, what is the top priority that you think the government should focus any new spending on?



#### 4. Financial Assistance Considerations

Questionnaire participants were asked about different factors the BC government could use to evaluate requests for financial assistance from BC businesses. They were provided with a list of nine options and asked to rank each on a scale of 1 to 5, with one being not at all important and 5 being very important. Responses were weighted so that an overall picture of highest to lowest priorities could be generated. To do that, each response was assigned the number of points corresponding to the rating chosen. For example, a response of 1 (lowest rating) received 1 point and a response of 5 (highest rating) received 5 points.

**The top five most important factors** identified by the 11,658 questionnaire participants who answered this question, in order of importance from highest to lowest, include:

- 1. If the business pays taxes in British Columbia
- **2.** If the funds are used to keep workers and operations going in BC
- **3.** If it helps people move from minimum wage jobs to better, living wage jobs
- **4.** If it benefits groups of people who are unemployed right now
- Where the company is headquarteredprioritizing support for BC businesses

Figure 20 shows the percentage of total points given to each of the 9 options based on participants' responses.

#### FIGURE 20

## **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE:** Which factors do you believe the BC government should use to evaluate requests for financial assistance from BC businesses?





### **Additional Ideas and Themes from Citizens**

# Additional advice from questionnaire participants

As a final question, online questionnaire participants were asked:

▶ Is there any other advice or opinion that you want to share with the government as it considers ways to help come out of COVID-19 stronger and more prepared than before?

Diversify the economy and ensure the backbone of the provincial economy is not driven by large businesses only.

Small businesses in every community are the lifeblood of communities and the economy – stop exporting everything and focus on sustainability and food sovereignty."

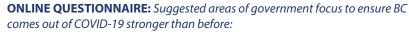
 Online Questionnaire Participant from the Okanagan

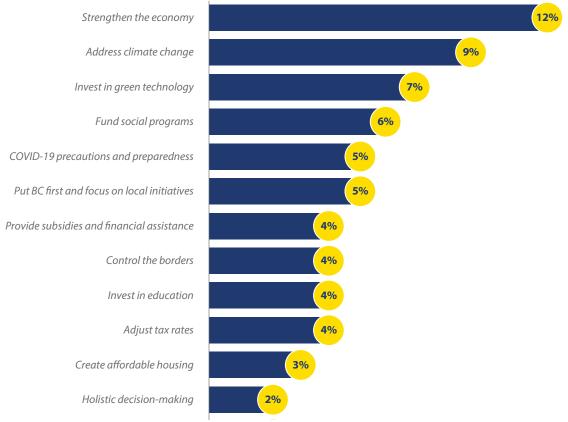
Participants offered 1,745 comments in response to this question. When closely analyzed, the priorities could be categorized into several themes. The top themed responses were Strengthen the economy (12%), Address climate change (9%), Invest in green technology (7%) Fund social programs (6%), and COVID-19 Precautions and prepardness (5%). Figure 21 shows the predominant themes that emerged and the number of comments allocated to each.

Continue this model of civic engagement to crowd source ideas to inform government policy direction. As a 41 year old male with a young family, this is a great way for me to provide feedback to my provincial government. I especially like the \$100 allocation exercise as it highlights in a simple way the fiscal challenges faced by organizations. Direct funds and grants to local municipalities to help train, educate and support growth of emergency response plans both financial, health and physical plans to respond to wide range of emergency situations (Pandemic, flood, earthquake, etc)."

 Online Questionnaire Participant from Victoria

Due to the open-ended nature of the question there were many additional comments and suggestions that did not fit neatly into the identified themes. A few examples include: praise for the government response and for Dr. Bonnie Henry, suggestions about job creation, regulations around real estate investment, building pipelines and natural resource development, eliminating provincial trade barriers, reducing taxes and business regulations, reconciliation with indigenous peoples, moving towards local food production and supply chains, focusing on personal heath, removing restrictions on businesses or conversely turning safety guidelines into mandatory rules.





Strengthen the economy was the top theme for responses overall. This reflects concerns about jobs, training, viability of existing businesses during the recession, incentives to CERB recipients to return to work and, in some cases, shortages of labour. Many responses are tied to using green technology as a response to climate change and to renew the economy at the same time. Another major concern for respondents is fiscal responsibility within government.

The second most popular theme was the need to *Address climate change*. Specifically, in the age group 70 and older it was more pronounced. Some respondents see climate change as more important than COVID-19 and compare the government's response to each issue. On this theme, many see a new economy emerging from the solutions to climate change.

Invest in green technology was tightly associated with responses about climate change.

Respondents see green tech as an opportunity to help move the economy in a new direction while creating new jobs and industries. Respondents are calling for training in trades related to green tech jobs, subsidies for renewal energy and the removal of subsidies for oil and gas, investment in electric charging stations, distributed grid electricity production, bike lanes/routes for the increasing numbers of people using e-bikes as a transportation solution, incentives for retrofitting homes, and reforming BC Hydro to allow for more green energy generation.

Fund social programs was the fourth most popular response. This reflects concerns about supporting people who are experiencing homelessness, addictions and mental illness.

Repondants are also concerned about the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on people with disabilities.

COVID-19 precautions and prepardness is the top concern for some respondents, who state that a focus on the prevention of spreading the virus is needed by having more public education and communication on proper hygiene practices and protocols (e.g. PPE). There is also a call for government to have a pandemic playbook or emergency response plan so that BC can be better prepared for outbreaks in the future.



# Summary of public email themes

The province received 996 emails messages from British Columbians throughout the province. While many came as a result of a letter-writing campaign and contained identical sentiments, many were written by individuals who communicated a wide range of concerns, hopes, ideas and advice that they wanted the province to understand. Below is an abridged version of the 30 themes that emerged. For a more detailed review of email message themes, please see *Appendix C*.

#### **FREQUENTLY CITED THEMES**

- ◆ Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Some suggest PPE should be mandatory, others feel it should be a choice and still others are concerned that the province would not have enough PPE for a second wave.
- **Travel Restrictions** Many suggest the need for travel restrictions, border closures and curbing illegal pleasure travel into BC along with stricter monitoring.
- Sports, Recreations, Arts Some call for loosening restrictions to allow more cars at drive-ins, and opening indoor facilities. Others want the government to invest in an equity fund to encourage Canadian owned productions to film in BC and provide funding for artists. They feel we should allow production companies to come into BC provided they are COVID-19 free.
- ▶ Food Supply and Agriculture Suggestions include cultivating fruit trees rather than forests, avoiding transporting goods, creating opportunities for vertical farming, improving food security, and supporting urban and suburban agriculture.

- Schools and Education Respondants suggest additional financing for post secondary institutions and opening more spaces for BC students, training and apprenticeship programs; avoiding using school as daycares; and more cleaning to maintain school safety.
- Business Suggestions include support for small business, enhanced local shopping; allowing business a broader range of tax exempt expenses; and promoting 100-mile diet and products.
- ◆ Taxes Some suggest giving back carbon tax, allowing tax breaks for local manufacturers, putting PST money in hands of hardest hit, lowering property taxes, creating tax free zones for major ports, and lowering sales tax on local products.
- ▼ Technology Ideas include providing internet access for all; rural broadband for Indigenous Peoples, along with remote and low income communities.
- ▶ Jobs and Employment Suggestions include reducing the number of government employees; focusing resources on the hardest hit; and encouraging employers to provide practicums, coops or job training – especially in areas of future growth like digital fields.
- Manufacturing Ideas include supporting hemp textile and paper manufacturing; investing in emission-free vehicles.
- Long-term Care and Seniors Suggestions include more visiting and greater access; funding to increase staffing and standards of care; supporting those caring for family members.

- Phousing Affordability is a big issue; reconsidering restrictions on evictions to meet needs of small landlords; setting up a financial support system for renovations rather than need for debt; amending building code to reach passive design and provide design training; considering partnerships with Indigenous groups for land lease to house homeless rather than hotels.
- ▶ Financial Supports Increasing support for people with disabilities; allowing citizens to withdraw from their pension contributions without penalty; one time financial payment for all Canadians.
- ◆ Transportation Suggestions include converting public transit to electric and promoting the purchase of unoccupied middle seats for reduced fees.
- Indigenous Many suggest upgrading infrastructure in remote communities, supporting economic prosperity; providing economic opportunities, providing provincewide Indigenous fund like Coast Opportunity Fund to elevate conservation alongside the economy.
- ◆ Climate Ideas include rapid transition to clean energy and ending investments in fossil fuel infrastructure; puting climate change at the centre of economic recovery; creating power using wind and solar; making climate action financing available; installing solar panels on every public school; protecting habitats.

#### **LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGNS**

- Several emails were received from the Canadian Mental Health Association online writing tool and topics included:
  - Long-term impacts of COVID-19 on the mental health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities in BC and provide more support for mental health and substance use disorders
  - A call for province to partner with people with lived and living experience of mental illness and substance use to address the disproportionate impacts they have face
  - Steps to cover all licensed counsellors and psychologists under BC Health Care
  - Legalize heroin and provide clean medications and treatment available for those in addiction
- Emails were received from West Coast Environmental Law's online writing tool and topics included:
  - Transitioning to alternative and renewable energy
  - Renewing rebates for energy efficiency in homes and businesses and maintaining the assistance rebates for electric and hybrid vehicle purchase
  - Support for small business and entrepreneurs over big business and green energy projects over "Big Oil" in BC's recovery plans
  - Canceling plans to use clean energy from site C for fracking natural gas and liquifying it for the LNG industry
  - Making British Columbian homes and buildings more energy efficient

#### Summary of written submission themes

This section of the report contains a thematic summary of the submissions for the purpose of public information., of the 135 written submissions provided by BC organizations. For the full list of organizations that provided written submissions, see **Appendix D**.

## THEMES ARISING IN WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

The province received 135 written submissions from a variety of for profit and not-for-profit organizations across the province. Below is an abbreviated summary of the main themes found in the submissions. *Appendix E* contains a more complete list of the key themes.

#### Business and Industry Enhancements –

Focus relief on initiatives that get people back to work and sectors that have a positive multiplier effect for the region such as tourism; create additional flexibility for cannabis retail so retailers can better compete with the unregulated market; support adaptation costs that will enable small and medium sized enterprises to adapt their operations to the health and safety requirements of COVID-19; establish a Resilient Recovery Action Team to guide economic recovery; establish a mineral exploration investment fund to develop new mining operations; consumer confidence promotions/dining incentives; cap third party delivery fees; keep Canadian supply chains open and resilient with multiple export pathways.

• Childcare – Reduce daycare fees (\$10/day); subsidize wages for early childhood educators; provide temporary emergency funding for childcare centers; create more childcare spaces.

- Ocean Community / Not-for-Profit Supports
  - Prioritize investments in BC's community social services sector; establish time-limited matching donation program for non-profits in BC; fund projects that deliver benefits to the people most impacted, including youth, women, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, and service sector and low-paid workers; invest in stabilization for the non-profit sector to enable access reliable and adequate technology; double the size of the BC charitable tax credit to the end of December 2021.
- Climate and Environment Protect natural habitats and forests; pursue green technologies including renewable energy and negative emission technology to reduce greenhouse gas; restructure production and waste management to zero waste; fund local government efforts related to climate adaptation; Build out the CleanBC industrial incentive programs; address the disparities in flood protection faced by Indigenous communities; make BC's economy cleaner, regardless of impacts on competitiveness; fund electric rebate programs, end of life vehicle recycling initiatives, and add EV charging stations.
- **Employment** Support immigration pathway for nurse and care aides; support job creation for youth, Indigenous communities, and the agriculture and tourism sectors; doubledown on CleanBC programs that generate skilled, resilient jobs; support skills training programs; invest in aerospace training, job protection, apprenticeship and marketing; provide industries with operational funding to support recovery.
- ► Financial Supports Improve eligibility criteria of the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy program; implement emergency relief fund and waive business-related fees for small businesses for two years; ensure

- marine renewable energy is eligible for existing provincial supports and programs; provide financial assistance to sole proprietors who do not qualify for CEBA and/or CEWS; provide a partial business license refund for those ordered to close; introduce tax credits and reductions for small and medium sized organizations; provide access to funding to help SME's pay for PPE; support financial institutions to re-imagine debt in order to provide relief.
- ▶ Food Supply and Agriculture Grow, feed, and buy BC; secure BC's local food supply; allocate funds to expand food hubs; support cross sectoral coordination to address food security; invest in sustainable farming practices; support R&D; introduce strategic land use policies; remove barriers to local farming.
- Health Research innovations that advance health care; virtual health care; cautious reopening plan; identify and address inequality in healthcare system; innovative regional plans and coop approaches; fill healthcare assistant shortage, increased wages and work environment for healthcare workers; mental health supports; increased support for opioid dependency, sexual assault response.
- ▶ Housing Provide consistent funding to transform housing; create a housing renewal strategy to address poverty and homelessness; overhaul the Community Amenity Contribution rules to improve housing affordability; support non-profit societies to accelerate the construction of affordable housing; establish commercial rent eviction protection and relief; eliminate rental eviction restrictions that are a financial burden to landlords.

- Indigenous Advance reconciliation; invest in Indigenous community infrastructure; include First Nations in the economic recovery supports; continue to invest in programs that reduce barriers to post-secondary education for Indigenous students; annual funding for First Nations mandated post-secondary institutes; funding for First Nations led management and stewardship.
- Infrastructure and Technology Build BC's economic resilience through investment and sustainable infrastructure; rural development and revitalization; invest in water treatment for communities without safe drinking water; invest in age-friendly infrastructure and active transportation; fast-track large natural resource and infrastructure projects; use wood to construct public buildings; upgrade and maintain resource roads object window timeline, award royalty credits earlier, increase overall size of the program).
- ▶ Long-term Care and Seniors Provide core funding to seniors organizations; minimum standards in long term care for quality of life; develop a capital plan for building new seniors' care facilities; independent review of long term care facilities.
- Schools and Education Provide emergency student financial aid; freeze / reduce tuition fees; equal access to online and distance learning; forgive or defer student loans, and increasing scholarship funding; fund development of new curricula that is responsive to economic needs; increase the number of student spaces in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics programs.
- ◆ Sports, Recreations, Arts Double the BC Arts Council budget; support rehabilitation of snowmobile infrastructure; create safe and reliable access corridors; ensure sport is accessible to all British Columbians.

## Summary of voicemail questions, concerns, and ideas

The Province hosted four telephone townhalls between July 7 and July 16. British Columbians were invited to submit their ideas on BC's recovery ahead of time but were also given the opportunity to ask their question or state their idea live by calling in using the number provided on the Province's website. Callers who did not have a chance to share their idea or question, or those who felt their questions had not been answered at the end of the sessions were invited to leave a voice mail following the telephone townhall. Participants left 200 voicemails. The main concerns expressed in the voicemails from each of the four Telephone Townhalls are summarized below. More information on these events can be found in **Appendix A**.

#### **JULY 7, LOWER MAINLAND**

- ◆ Affordable Housing The high cost of real estate; the lack of affordable developments; the increasing condo insurance deductibles.
- **Economic Recovery** Creating more jobs; supporting small businesses; opening the economy with health regulations in place.
- Quality of Life Creating more outdoor spaces for people to congregate at a safe distance; keeping programs going during the second wave.
- Government Spending The increasing provincial deficit; recouping the losses from financial assistance; potential tax increases.

## I lived through the polio

epidemics and nurses were sent to businesses and schools to test proactively. They were able to identify quickly who had the disease and keep businesses and schools open. I wonder if we can do that? That way we can have jobs and we don't have to shut down schools and businesses so drastically."

- July 7th Caller

#### **JULY 9, ISLAND AND COAST**

- ◆ Affordable Housing The inability for the younger generation to own homes; the need for rent control.
- **Economic Recovery** Re-skilling the unemployed labour force; supporting small businesses; stifling money laundering; investing in local economies.
- **Childcare** Ensuring childcare is affordable and accessible; supporting women reentering the workforce.
- Climate Change Building circular economies; investing in green industries.
- Care for Seniors Allowing visitors in care homes; providing financial relief for seniors.

Set funds aside to provide proper N95 masks to seniors until there is a vaccine. Also assign funds for oversight around border closures/ travel."

– July 9th Caller

- "Raw resources are leaving the territory without manufacturing in situ. Why not help local areas make incentives to manufacture locally."
- July 9th Caller
- "Re-opening Care Homes should be based on Health Regions, since on the Island we've done well, and should be able to visit/enter care homes."
- July 9th Caller

## JULY 14, NORTH, INTERIOR AND KOOTENAY REGION

- Natural Resources Phasing out raw log exports; supporting geothermal industries; re-training in the forestry sector; investing in local manufacturing.
- ▶ Border Controls Re-opening the border to support tourism; keeping it closed to keep everyone safe.
- ♠ Regional Considerations Rural citizens receiving the same amount of aid as those on the Coast, but struggling with a higher cost of living; greater investments in rural transportation and rural internet.
- ▶ Economic Recovery Creating more jobs; retraining unskilled workers; getting people back to work and off CERB; supporting small businesses.
- **▶ Financial Assistance** Increasing disability assistance; financially supporting seniors.

I would really like to talk about the Senior Residences that we have in British Columbia, they are inconsistent in how good they are. I would like to see a separate governing body in charge of inspections rather than the health ministry."

- July 14th Caller

"My suggestion is regarding jobs and climate change. I feel like the only way to tackle that is a huge green energy program that would create thousands and thousands of jobs in manufacturing various components of solar panels, electric charging stations, whatever is involved in creating a green energy economy."

- July 14th Caller



- Opening Schools Keeping students and teachers safe; ensuring there is adequate PPE; keeping parents well informed
- **Economic Recovery** Getting people back to work; creating more jobs; fair wages; supporting local economies, supporting small businesses.
- **Output Output O**
- ▶ Financial Assistance Supporting front line care workers; supporting those experiencing mental health challenges, supporting persons with disabilities.



Stats are delivered too broadly in BC (at the Health Authority level) which is not helpful – people can't relate or feel safe, share them with greater granularity."

– July 16th Caller

"Look at businesses that can start up and fill the gaps of work that is outsourced so we can improve the economy. Also property tax incentives, and loans for new business should be available at a lower rate for a period of time."

- July 16th Caller



# **APPENDIX A /**How We Reached Out

Between June 17 and July 21, the BC government provided several opportunities for British Columbians to participate in planning BC's ongoing recovery from COVID-19. The engagement focused on gathering input on the impacts of COVID-19, the province's recent restart of the economy, and what priorities the government should set for longer term economic recovery.

#### **Online questionnaire**

An online questionnaire, containing 13 questions with a mix of multiple choice, ranking and openended responses, was available between June 17 and July 21. The questionnaire was promoted via traditional radio, television and newspaper as well as the province's website and social media channels. A total of 11,805 questionnaires were submitted, with most submissions being received from the Lower Mainland (50.8%) and Vancouver Island/Coast (31.4%). The greatest percentage of participants (40%) falls between the ages of 30 and 49 years and most respondents (61%) are women. Approximately 64% of respondents own their own home and 69% report having no children living at home. The majority of respondents (78%) are Caucasian/European and approximately 1% report being of Indigenous descent.

#### Virtual townhalls

Two Virtual Townhalls events were hosted live via the BC government's Facebook page and live streamed on YouTube. Participants were able to register ahead of time and submit their questions in advance or ask questions in real time through the Facebook comments pane. In total, the two events reached an estimated 23.574 individuals.

#### **Telephone townhalls**

The province also hosted four telephone townhalls between July 7 and July 16 with approximately 17,295 people attending in total. However, not all participants remained on the call the entire time with people joining and leaving the calls during the 90-minute sessions. Peak attendance for the sessions averaged 1,427 callers. Approximately 186 participants used the closed captioning feature. During the sessions, participants provided their feedback by responding to five live polling questions, which they answered using their telephone keypads.

British Columbians were invited to register for the telephone townhall events and submit their questions ahead of time or call in using the number provided on the province's website and ask questions in real time through an operator. During the four sessions, participants submitted 534 questions, with many of the questions being of a similar nature. Questions were screened and the hosts answered 62 questions from callers in real time during the four sessions. Callers who felt their questions had not been answered at the end of the sessions were invited to leave a question on the voice mail feature and they received a call-back from a government representative with the answer to their question. Participants asked 200 questions via the voice mail option and all received a call back.

#### The four telephone townhalls included:

- JULY 7 7 P.M. Lower Mainland with Carole James Minister of Finance and Bob D'Eith Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and MLA for Maple Ridge-Mission
- **2. JULY 9 7 P.M.** Vancouver Island and Coast with Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham and Parliamentary Secretary Ronna Rae Leonard
- 3. JULY 14 7 P.M. North, Interior and the Kootenays with Michelle Mungall Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness and Ravi Kahlon, Parliamentary Secretary for Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
- **4. JULY 16 7 P.M.** Lower Mainland with George Heyman Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Lisa Beare Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture

## **Email submissions from British Columbians**

British Columbians also had the option to send their input to the province via email. In total, the province received 996 emails – many as a result of letter-writing campaigns that included that included similar themes and messages.

# Written submissions from BC organizations

The province also received over 135 written submissions from organizations throughout British Columbia. A list of organizations that provided written submissions is available at: https://engage.gov.bc.ca/recoveryideas/organizationsubmissions.

# **APPENDIX B / Demographics of Online Questionnaire Participants**

Between June 17 and July 21, the BC Government provided an opportunity for all British Columbians to complete an online questionnaire to provide their input into BC's ongoing recovery from COVID-19. The questionnaire included 13 questions that included a mix of multiple choice, ranking and open-ended responses. As well, the questionnaire asked participants about themselves, for example their age range,

ethnic background, gender, housing status, region of the province in which they live, whether they have children living at home. The demographic data allows the province to see questionnaire responses from various demographic perspectives. This appendix provides a more detailed overview of the demographics of the 11,805 British Columbians who participated in the questionnaire.

TABLE 1: Online Questionnaire: What ethnicity do you iden	ntify as?
Caucasian/European	78%
Chinese	3%
Indian	1%
Indigenous	1%
Southeast Asian	0.8%
South American	0.6%
Filipino	0.6%
Japanese	0.4%
Korean	0.3%
Caribbean	0.2%
African	0.2%
Prefer not to answer	8%
Caucasian/European	6%
Other	6%

emale gender	61%
Male gender	33%
Prefer not to answer	5%
Gender diverse	1%
Jerider diverse	170
TABLE 3: Online Questionnaire: What is your age?	
< 19	0%
9 to 29 years	10%
30 to 49 years	40%
50 to 69 years	29%
70 years or over	9%
Prefer not to answer	2%
TABLE 4: Online Questionnaire: What is your housing status?	6.40/
Homeowner	64%
Renter	29%
Live in parent or relatives home	4%
Prefer not to answer	3%
Own more than one residence	3%
Own a vacation property	2%
Other	1%
TABLE 5: Online Questionnaire: Do you have any children under tl	he age of 19
No kids at home	69%
Ages 13 to 18	10%
Ages 6 to 13	13%
Ages 2 to 6	8%
Ages 0 to 2	4%
TABLE 6: Online Questionnaire: What region of British Columbia on Mainland/Southwest	
	51%
/ancouver Island/Coast	31%
hompson/Okanagan	9%
Contangu	5%
Kootenay	20/
Cariboo	3%
	3% 1% 0.6%

# **APPENDIX C / Summary** of Public Email Submissions

# Emails were received from across the province. Common themes were:

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- The need to take responsibility and wear masks.
- Suggestion to make masks compulsory inside stores and on public transit.
- Another said that masks are not necessary and it's personal choice.
- The need to have enough PPE for a second wave.

#### **TESTING**

- Proactive testing.
- ◆ Test people when arriving across the border and then let them let them know how long to quarantine.

#### **VACCINE**

Provide free high-dose flu vaccines to ALL residents over the age of 65 this fall.

#### TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- There were several emails regarding the need for travel restrictions and border closures.
- Suggestion to restrict international travel for a couple of years.
- US property owners who would like access to visit their properties.
- Advise the public of the location of outbreaks for awareness of residents or those who plan to travel to that area.
- ◆ Features hotels in ads so travellers can see the health protocols in place.
- ◆ The need to stop illegal travel on US pleasure boats to Vancouver Island.
- ▶ BC needs to work with the Federal Government on border crossing and come up with a method to ensure that American plates from Arizona; Colorado, Washington, California and everything between have gone through a thorough inspection, interrogation by CBSA and provincial health officials at the border, completed 14 days of isolation, are symptom-free and been tested and cleared from being Asymptomatic.

#### **TOURISM**

Be a tourist in your own home province. Enforcement of this make people feel safe.

#### SPORTS, RECREATIONS, ARTS

- Several emails called for loosening of the restrictions to allow for more than 50 cars at drive in theatres.
- Reopening of indoor facilities such as indoor pools and arenas.
- With the restriction of film and television production entering BC — invest in an equity fund to encourage Canadian owned productions to film in BC.
- Provide funding for artists and small business owners who are unable to sell at markets now.
- ◆ Add COVID-19 testing as an option to production companies so that a 14 day quarantine is not needed with one test when they arrive in Vancouver, to clear them to work straight away.
- ◆ Letting Americans cross the border for work would help the local film industry.
- Create a \$500 million stabilization fund for the not-for-profit sector.

#### **RESTAURANTS**

There was a suggestion to give restaurants a fair wholesale price for alcohol.

#### **FOOD SUPPLY, AGRICULTURE**

- Various ideas to increase food supply such as cultivating fruit trees instead of forests.
- ▶ Food manufacturing companies to create satellite distribution using present employees to run businesses more efficiently by avoiding transporting goods too far and workers travelling too far.
- Create opportunities in vertical farming in all municipal areas by having grants to help fund the process of set up and distribution.
- Projects to improve food security, like a BC seed bank that would collect, store and distribute hardy varieties suited to different zones of the province.
- Support for urban and suburban agricultural initiatives, funding for small farms, particularly that practice regenerative agriculture (and thereby also help to store carbon).

#### **SCHOOLS, EDUCATION**

◆ A parent said they want schools to open in the fall. A teacher said if schools do open in the fall there needs to be changes such as that classrooms currently that are without carpeting, toys and games are uncomfortable and unfriendly.

- Launch a program that will allow educational institutions to fill those otherwise empty seats with young people from BC. This would require additional financing for colleges and universities to keep operating at capacity by admitting more qualified BC residents (who might otherwise not be able to attend) as well as providing financial help to support these students.
- ◆ For training and apprenticeships - target occupations related to High Technology such as Software Engineers and Designers, Web Designers and Developers, and Computer Network Technicians.
- We should not be using teachers for daycare. Decisions about the education system should not be based on what's convenient for parents.
- For students that are in K 5, the focus should be on literacy, numeracy and wellbeing (teaching and reporting). With the new reality of reduced amount of time available for teaching due to COVID-19 cleaning/ social distancing requirements, focussing on these core elements will reduce stress for students and staff while building a solid educational foundation for all students.
- More cleaning and maintenance staff at public schools.

#### **DAYCARE**

Free education for daycare workers and increased wages.

#### **BUSINESSES**

- Support small businesses by shopping local.
- ◆ For a specific period of time, firms be permitted to expense for tax purposes 100% of the cost of the acquisition of new machinery and equipment and intellectual property rights.
- Provide free business counselling to established businesses.
- Support and implement a program to help small businesses with lease payments.
- ▶ 100 mile diet and products (local construction, crafts, manufacturers).

#### TAX

- Give the carbon tax back equally; it could be part of a universal income.
- Tax breaks for local manufacturers.
- Cut PST to put money in hands of the hardest hit.
- ▶ Tax breaks for local manufacturers.
- Lower property taxes or increase threshold for exemptions on properties to 1.7 million to free up money that would more than likely be spent within communities.
- Create tax free zones for Major ports of call.
- ▶ Lower sales tax by 2% on all locally manufactured items.

#### **TECHNOLOGY**

- Pass legislation that Internet Access is a critical need for any household and that ISPs must provide that service free for groups that have been hit the most in the pandemic.
- Rural broadband for Indigenous, remote, and low-income communities which lack affordable or fast Internet.

#### **JOBS, EMPLOYMENT**

- Develop a website for employers to post job openings.
- Reduce the amount of government employees. If not by outright staff reductions, at least offer buyouts or enhanced pensions to the older employees, thus preserving employment for young people.
- ◆ Concerns regarding the practice of excluding local non unionized construction firms from participation in provincial infrastructure projects stifles economies in the smaller cities and towns of this province.
- Focus resources on the hardest hit; working class lower paid workers.
- ◆ Establish a link on the CERB application page and/or the El reporting page to go to BC GOV page for a new Recruitment Strategy platform.
- Engage employers interested in delivering Practicums, Coop, or jobs training with initiatives.
- ◆ Create an apprenticeship program in areas for future growth – Robotics, artificial intelligence, computer graphics, gaming, security, film, animation, coding.

◆ A Youth Conservation Corps to put unemployed young people back to work.

#### **ECONOMY**

- Suggestion to fully open the economy.
- ◆ Get BC up and working again; give incentives to foster responsibility and industry; and improve WorkSafe protocols that business currently have to abide by in order to remain operational.

#### **MANUFACTURING**

- ▶ Hemp textile manufacturing: Hemp fibers can be woven into fabric that is much stronger than cotton. To replace single use plastic grocery bags, manufacture multiuse, washable hemp grocery bags. Perhaps even offer a laundry service to grocery stores so stores can insure their patrons have clean bags.
- ▶ Hemp paper manufacturing: There is a demand for single use products. Where possible, use paper instead of plastic and use BC manufactured hemp paper.
- ▶ Bicycle and velomobile building: The velomobile is completely emission free and this one has electric power assist. It's a pedal electric hybrid vehicle that would do so well here.

#### **LONG-TERM CARE**

- ◆ Long term care homes was listed as a priority and wanting to visit loved ones.
- Allow at least one family member access to residents.

▶ Funding to increase staffing in care homes (and potentially increasing standards of care and regulation of private homes, or taking this vital social service out of private hands).

#### **SENIORS**

Consider a seniors or caregivers allotment of funds for those helping such as family members.

#### **HOUSING**

- One family said they might have to live together again in one household because it is so difficult to afford housing individually. Can there be similar programs as for the first time owner also for families with jobs and concurrent health conditions?
- Reconsider the restrictions on evictions as they disregard the needs of small landlords.
- Deferrals or mortgages and rental subsidies that aren't tied to cost of living.
- Set minimum costs for housing such as one bedroom apartment, two bedroom, whole house.
- ▶ Set up a system of second mortgages for renovation for commercial and residential properties, debts that are long term and attached to the property, for the purposes of replacing oil and gas furnaces by heat pumps and sealing and insulating buildings to high standards (Step 5 Code).

- ◆ Change the building code rapidly, within a couple of years, to reach Step 5 and passive design. Provide training for the new building techniques.
- ▶ Partner with major utilities and BC companies that manufacture windows, roofing, heat pumps, exterior siding, insulation etc. give Rebates in a sliding scale to seniors that need to upgrade by 15% provincial rebate, 15% utility rebate and no PST or GST.
- ▶ Stop purchasing units and hotels and consider a partnership with indigenous groups for land (lease) and house homeless in trailers cost is much lower overall and also could work with all services to care and treat addiction and then go into training programs on site or elsewhere.
- Job creation by doing house deconstruction.

#### **FINANCIAL SUPPORTS**

- Raise the rates for people with disabilities to citizens can be above the poverty line.
- Suggestion to allow citizens to withdraw from their pension contributions without penalty in order to assist those struggling financially and inject money into the economy.
- ◆ All Canadians should receive a one time financial payment.

#### **CLARITY ON REGULATIONS**

- ◆ Too many grey areas on WorkSafeBC regulations.
- Concerns that protests and marches allowed to occur.

#### **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

◆ Encourage the bubble idea and create a log to keep info about contacts with other bubbles of people who have been able to stay healthy.

#### **MARRIAGES, WEDDINGS**

▶ Please consider allowing couples to get married with the ceremony itself officiated by a member of their bubble and not a stranger who is performing multiple elopements, out of concern about preventing COVID-19 transmission

#### **ICBC**

• Expand ICBC to provide home and strata insurance.

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

- ◆ Convert the entire public transit fleet to electric by replacing every out of date diesel bus with an electric one. No natural gas buses.
- Fully electrify our transit systems now to greatly reduce GHG emissions and air pollution to keep our air cleaner.
- ▶ Planes are about the same as cruise ships for transmission of COVID-19. Promote an option where passengers can buy an unoccupied middle seat for a smaller amount than an occupied one, with all seat assignments done at booking time with no charge.
- ▶ 100% electric buses and shuttles manufactured across BC

#### **PARKING**

- Provide one hour free parking to support local business.
- Free parking.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Separate out traffic enforcement from all the other policing duties our police force is challenged with and invest in training a highway patrol force, that could be integrated with the force that monitors trucks.

#### **INDIGENOUS**

- Resurfacing and upgrading Bamfield road will be essential foundation for Huu-ay-aht First Nations to prosper in new business and deliver employment, growth and HFN prosperity. Road improvements will greatly improve travel safety for all.
- The economic opportunities for local businesses, local employment opportunities, international recognition, the empowerment and employment for the Coast Salish First Nation peoples whose territories form a large part of the Sea-to-Sky landscape, would be incredible.
- Province wide Indigenous fund akin to the Coast Opportunity Fund that would place conservation alongside the economy.

#### **IMMIGRATION**

Immigration pathway that will be structured to educate, train and retain qualified Health Workers particularly Nurse Aides/HCA (front liners) in BC.

#### **CLIMATE**

- Rapid transition to clean energy and immediately stopping build out of fossil fuel infrastructure.
- ▶ Build BC back better and to put climate change at the centre of BC's COVID-19 recovery by promoting clean energy projects over projects such as LNG.
- We need to build an innovative, creative and clean economy.
- Create power using wind and solar etc.
- Our tax dollars fighting the results of COVID-19 crisis should be used for green energy and other green recovery projects – not bailouts for oil, gas fossil fuels.
- Make available Climate Action Financing (also called PACE loans) for building efficiency retrofits, converting gas furnaces to electric heat pumps and solar panels on roofs, but please do not stop at this.
- ▶ Attack climate change by building distributed solar and wind energy installations and to massively retrofit poorly insulated buildings and convert from fossil fuels to clean energy wherever possible electric and hydrogen vehicles, heat pumps etc.
- Put solar panels on every public school.
- Protecting habitats, especially old growth forests, is also vital in fighting climate change.
- Green jobs are needed now to help society transition to sustainable approaches.

- There were also letter writing campaigns. Comments from the following included:
- Several emails were received from the Canadian Mental Health Association online writing tool and topics included:
  - >> Concerns about the long-term impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the mental health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities in British Columbia.
  - A call on the Provincial Government to partner with people with lived and living experience of mental illness and substance use to address the disproportionate impacts they have faced.
  - Steps are needed to cover all licensed counsellors and psychologists under BC Health Care.
  - Legalize heroin etc and provide clean medications to the addicts and make treatment more readily available for all.
  - >> There must be more support for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders.
- Emails were received from West Coast Environmental Law's online writing tool and topics included:
  - >> Transitioning to alternative and renewable energy.
  - Renewing rebates for energy efficiency in homes and businesses, as well as maintaining the assistance rebates for electric and hybrid vehicle purchase.

- Consider helping small business and entrepreneurship over big business and green energy projects over "Big Oil" in BC's recovery plans.
- Cancel plans to use clean energy from site C for fracking natural gas and liquifying it for the LNG industry.
- Make British Columbian homes and buildings more energy efficient (and comfortable.



# **APPENDIX D / Summary of**Written Submission Themes

This section of the report contains a brief thematic summary of the submissions for the purpose of public information. The content and requests contained in the full written submissions are under review and consideration by relevant ministries.

## Themes Arising in Written Submissions

#### TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- Support adventure tourism businesses that rely on international travellers to open with monitored and controlled access protocols in place
- Address challenges of resort communities
- Borders must re-open to support the tourism industry

#### SPORTS, RECREATIONS, ARTS

- ◆ Double the BC Arts Council budget to address the growth and diversity of the sector
- Support projects that involve the construction, upgrade, renovation or rehabilitation of snowmobile trails, infrastructure and equipment
- Create a safe and reliable access corridor to the Elk River for all river users
- Provide financial support to low socio-economic families to ensure sport is accessible to all British Columbians

## FOOD SUPPLY AND AGRICULTURE

- Grow, Feed, and Buy BC
- Secure BC's local food supply
- ◆ Allocate funds to support the expansion of food hubs
- Support cross sectoral coordination to address food security
- Invest in local food processing throughout the province
- Invest in sustainable farming practices, and the production of biodiversity through investment in restorative agriculture
- Support R&D and innovation across the sector and introduce strategic land use policies to strengthen food security, farm income, and help BC emerge as a global agritech leader
- Remove the barriers that discourage young people from farming

#### **SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION**

- Provide emergency student financial aid
- Freeze and reduce tuition fees at public colleges, institutes and universities

- Promote graduate education to develop BC talent and to support innovation
- Provide equal access to Online and Distance Learning
- Amend the Tuition Fee Limit Policy to cap fee increases for international students
- Stabilize the post-secondary sector by supplying bridge funding, allowing emergency transfers, allowing deficit or loan financing, forgiving or deferring student loans, and increasing scholarship funding
- ◆ Allocate \$10 million in onetime funding to support the development and implementation of new curricula that is responsive to the needs of employers and students across the economy
- Allocate an additional \$20 million to workintegrated learning
- ▶ Enhance partnerships with postsecondary institutions, to advance high-impact research, accelerate innovation and build critical skills for British Columbians

- Adequately resource the provincial approach to public geoscience
- > Fund open education resources
- Increase the number of student spaces in STEM programs across the province
- Review funding in the advanced education, skills and training sector to determine gaps in government funding

### BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ENHANCEMENTS

- Provide industries with operational funding to support recovery
- Set aside all tax and regulatory measures that add to the cost of doing business
- Provide a partial business license refund for those ordered to close
- ▶ Lower commercial school tax rates for businesses in 2021
- ▶ Introduce a PST tax credit on business inputs
- Provide access to funding to help SME's pay for PPE
- Forgive upcoming provincial bills coming due in the fall
- Support financial institutions to re-imagine debt in order to provide relief
- Focus relief on initiatives that get people back to work
- Focus relief on sectors that have a positive multiplier effect for the region such as Tourism
- Create additional flexibility for cannabis retail so retailers to better compete with the unregulated market

- ▶ Fund electric rebate programs, end of life vehicle recycling initiatives, and add EV charging stations
- Postpone Potential Extended Producer Responsibility Changes and Plastic SUI Bans
- Consumer Confidence Promotions/Dining incentives
- Cap Third Party Delivery Fees
- Nemove the 50% vehicle capacity rule for Drive-ins
- ◆ Do not amend the Adventure Tourism Policy and the Tourism Wildlife Guidelines to make them more restrictive, without consultation with the sector
- Accelerate the diversification into green, renewable carbon solutions to support diversification and renewable carbon solutions that can be produced by pulp and paper companies

#### **TAXES**

- ◆ Double the size of the BC charitable tax credit to the end of December 2021
- Five year renewal of BC Book Publishing Tax Credit
- Incentivize renovations through expanded programs and tax credits, with one stream for general renovations and a second supplementary option for energy-efficient retrofits
- Offer tax incentive parity to geothermal developers
- ◆ Exempt work trucks in BC from the luxury sales tax
- Consider short-term changes to the property transfer tax for new homes

- Address Speculation and Vacancy Tax on small-volume development projects
- Refrain from further tax increases, including those on the extensive property that is required to site the infrastructure necessary to support our network
- Review and re-examine fiscal, tax and regulatory elements to ensure competitiveness to attract investment
- Remove the PST from medical cannabis sales
- Revert the PST on cannabis vaping products back to 7 percent
- Reduce PST paid on new construction and renovation materials
- ◆ A competitive tax system supports recovery and growth
- Support business organizations by advocating that Canada Border Service Agency collects appropriate taxes for persons cross-border shopping to deter practice
- Do not cut taxes for large corporations
- Maintain Provincial Sales Tax (PST) Restaurant Meal Exemption
- Develop a more equitable distribution of taxes amongst all property classes be pursued by the province. This could be accomplished by creating a Utility Property Tax Credit (UPTC) based on the Industrial Property Tax Credit (IPTC) policy and be applied to Class 2 properties

- Restructure municipal finances to be less dependent on tax generated from gas
- Mitigate the cost of local government and improve its function

#### **TECHNOLOGY**

- Focus on cultivating and keeping companies local, growing the tech ecosystem, and commercializing data in BC
- Support the widespread internet access across the province including rural and remote regions
- Support businesses and communities in technology adoption
- Expand enterprise level WiFi services to government buildings, social housing and public open spaces
- Adopt and deploy next generation technologies like artificial intelligence
- Support small and medium enterprises by facilitating retraining and upskilling in order to grow the IT and cybersecurity workforce
- Fund expansion of LiDAR to improve sustainable forest management
- Support initiatives that offer innovative alternatives to service delivery in areas such as education, health, emergency services and public safety
- Provide a mechanism for residents of the Downtown Eastside to access reliable information in diverse/accessible languages and formats

#### **JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT**

- Support immigration pathway for nurse and care aides
- Support job creation for youth, Indigenous communities, and the agriculture and tourism sectors
- Double-down on CleanBC programs that generate skilled, resilient jobs
- Support British Columbians back to work
- Support skills training programs to enhance job prospects for all British Columbians
- Invest in aerospace training, job protection, apprenticeship and marketing
- Address transit and employment lands shortage
- Work with forest-concerned stakeholders to increase the number of jobs generated per cubic metre of timber
- Foster a green economic recovery plan
- Build a coaching system for individuals, teams, and businesses in BC and to assist getting people back to work as quickly and safely as possible

#### **MANUFACTURING**

- Become more self sufficient
- Keep Canadian supply chains open and resilient with multiple export pathways
- Support local production, distribution and sales of local goods with a strong emphasis on local food
- ◆ Encourage advanced cleantech green manufacturing

## LONG-TERM CARE AND SENIORS

- Provide core funding to seniors' centres and other non-profit community-based seniors' organizations
- Establish minimal standards of access to therapy and to medical specialists within the LTC setting, we have the potential to address these gaps (resources to deliver rehabilitation treatment plans, inconsistent staffing and training) and help our seniors in LTC live healthier lives and enjoy better quality of life
- Re-establish a sectoral standard in the long-term care sector
- Develop a capital plan for building new seniors' care facilities
- Conduct an independent Review of Long Term Care

#### **HOUSING**

- Provide consistent, annual funding to transform housing with energy retrofits and increased density
- Address poverty and homelessness across the province
- Housing affordability supports inclusive growth and builds communities
- BC needs a housing renewal strategy to ensure every home and building in BC is clean, and resilient in the face of emerging threats
- Overhaul the Community
   Amenity Contribution rules to
   improve housing affordability

Support non-profit societies to accelerate the construction of affordable housing

#### **FINANCIAL SUPPORTS**

- Support tourism industry and seasonal business
- Improve the eligibility criteria of the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy program to better allow seasonal businesses to qualify
  - Implement a Seasonal Tourism Emergency Relief Fund and waive fees and costs for adventure tourism companies for two years
  - Support adaptation costs that will enable BC tourism and hospitality businesses to adapt their operations to the health and safety requirements of COVID-19
    - ► A \$150M fund that could provide between \$2,500 to \$30,000 to each tourism business
    - Establish a BC Tourism
       Resilience Fund of \$125M
- ◆ Establish a Resilient Recovery Action Team to guide recovery in a way that contributes to building a more just, resilient and sustainable economy
- ▶ Increase the Canada Emergency Business Account
- Establish a mineral exploration investment fund to develop new mining operations.
- Establish recovery support fund and programs for BC book publishers
- ◆ Explore other sources of public funding to support BC recovery
- ▶ Invest in stabilization for the non-profit sector

- Provide \$500 million to stabilize non-profit sector and to help them access reliable and adequate technology
- Establish time-limited matching donation program for non-profits in BC
- Establish \$500 million provincial resilience fund
- Ensure marine renewable energy is eligible for existing provincial supports and programs
- ▶ Fund projects that deliver benefits to the people most impacted, including youth, women, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, and service sector and low-paid workers
  - Introduction of a basic energy rebate for qualifying low-income and atrisk BC households
- Establish commercial rent eviction protection and relief
- Provide financial assistance to sole proprietors who do not qualify for CEBA and/or CEWS
- Prioritizes investments in BC's community social services sector
- Relief for small businesses not big box stores
- ▶ Recovery programs should prioritize employment stabilization, job creation for service sector workers, expanding the Province's aggressive capital plan consistent with its public housing and green commitments

#### **INDIGENOUS**

- Advance reconciliation with Indigenous communities
- Invest in Indigenous community infrastructure
- Align with the interests and aspirations of Indigenous Nations
- ▶ Include First Nations in the economic recovery supports
- Continue to invest in programs that reduce barriers to postsecondary education for indigenous students
- Annual funding for First Nations mandated post-secondary institutes who do not currently meet the eligibility criteria
- Recognizing the First Nation Land Use Visions in Clayoquot Sound and increasing funding for First Nations led management and stewardship

#### **CLIMATE / ENVIRONMENT**

- Partner with organizations to protect habitat from invasive species
- Focus on the health and wellbeing of ecological systems
- Increase support for community forests
- ▶ Invest in the rehab and the remediation of polluted sites
- Pursue marine renewable energy technology
- Invest in negative emission technologies
- Invest in projects that lower BC's GHG emissions
- Transition to a lower carbon model

- Advance energy sovereignty by investing in wind and solar (among other green technologies)
- Continue to support transportation of uneconomic wood to bioenergy
- Support the geothermal industry
- Enable accelerated innovation, collaborative technology, infrastructure, and financing to be supportive of commercializing electrification
- restructure production and waste management with the goal of zero-waste
- Improve air quality by investing in pedestrian/ cycling infrastructure and accelerating the electrification of transportation
- ▶ Include existing, developmentstage clean energy projects in the recovery strategy, to take advantage of the existing relationships, feasibility analyses and project understanding
- Invest in climate adaptation, wildlife and wild salmon conservation, and land use planning
- > Fund wildfire reduction research
- Provide local governments with funding to complete the design-phase of their climate adaptation planning
- Create a robust, efficient and credible offset system for British Columbia that can enable further emissions reductions while helping to protect the competitiveness of industry

- Build out the CleanBC industrial incentive programs to provide greater protection for Emissions Intensive Trade Exposed (EITE) industries
- Support the Lower Mainland Flood Management Strategy to reduce the risk from the Fraser River and coastal storm surge flood events across the Lower Mainland, respond to climate change and begin to address the disparities in flood protection faced by Indigenous communities in the region
- Support initiatives that advance earth-science research
- Make BC's economy cleaner, regardless of impacts on competitiveness
- ♦ Shift to a circular economy

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

- ▶ Invest in active transportation infrastructure including mapping and management programs that are integral to the development and management of recreational trails
- Fund key activities outlined in the Provincial Active Transportation Strategy
- Invest in more bike lanes
- Develop private Public Partnerships to improve transportation infrastructure
- ▶ Fund the transition to electric bus fleets
- Prioritize the region's transportation projects that stimulate economic activity
- ▶ Fund BC Transit to enable the expansion of transit routes

- ◆ Continue the Broadway Skytrain to UBC
- Invest in more pedestrian/ cycling routes

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- ▶ Build BC's economic resilience through sustainable investment and sustainable infrastructure
- Invest in rural development, rural revitalization, and rural infrastructure
- Invest in mass deep neighbourhood scalebuilding retrofits
- Invest in water treatment for communities without access to safe drinking water
- ▶ Fund community resilience plans across the province
- ➤ Fund infrastructure that focuses on improving agefriendly, inclusive design that supports active transportation
- Invest in sea dike construction
- ◆ Fast-track large natural resource and infrastructure projects
- Continue to support wood use in public buildings and build BC's critical infrastructure
- Make available fibre more accessible to communitybased forestry mills
- Upgrade and maintain resource roads to create jobs and enhance safety, access, and environmental management
- Accelerate programming to grow domestic for, and promote the benefits of, building with sustainability harvested, renewable, lowcarbon wood products

- Support Pacific Trade Gateway Infrastructure
- ▶ Introduce changes to CGIRP to encourage the development of larger projects (expand project window timeline, award royalty credits earlier, increase overall size of the program)

#### **HEALTH**

- Leverage innovations in research to advance health care and the knowledge economy
- Have a cautious reopening plan
- Address inequality in our healthcare system
- ◆ Evaluate the response to COVID-19 to continually improve outcomes
- Develop innovative regional plans aligned with the provincial primary care strategy
- ◆ Continue to invest in virtual health care
- Build health co-ops into the recovery plan
- Establish new medical innovation capacity to unlock new treatments for critical illnesses, including promising new therapies for patients with late-stage metastatic cancers
- Support a BC Health Care Aide Pathway that encompasses BC Educational health standards to fill the health care assistant shortage in BC
- Increase support for healthcare workers
- Anticipate and map BC's health workforce to changing demographics and societal needs

- Continue the options of flex work, virtual medical care, and virtual counselling options to support those with myalgic encephalomyelitis going forward
- ▶ Invest in supportive programing like the Travel Treatment Fund
- Invest in mental health supports for the public and students on campus
- Develop more mental health virtual platforms
- Fund and coordinate an improved health response to sexual assault in BC
- Develop community based supports and treatment for people with Opioid dependency

#### **CHILDCARE**

- Implement ongoing government-subsidized wage increases for early childhood educators
- ▶ Enhance fee reduction initiatives (e.g., CCFRI) to further reduce daycare fees
- ◆ Lobby the federal government for sustained childcare funding
- Urgently begin moving all currently licensed child-care programs to \$10-a-day childcare sites
- ◆ Temporary Emergency Funding (TEF) for childcare centres
  - >> This will ensure childcare operators survive, incentivising and streamlining new employer-based childcare options, and continuing and expediting the creation of new permanent childcare spaces.

▶ Increase the number of licensed childcare spaces

#### **OTHER**

- Urge law enforcement to adhere to harm reduction policies
- Prioritize community resilience and the needs of people, not corporations
- ◆ Ensure that BC is on strong fiscal footing
- ▶ Implement 3-feet or 1-meter social distancing requirements for restaurants in Phase 3
- ▶ Increase Legal Aid BC funding to provide full, comprehensive legal representation for child support applications if the recipient or their child (children) are at risk of family violence
- Work with businesses and communities to improve outcomes for underrepresented and marginalized groups
- Update the underlying legislation of the Local Government Act and the Community Charter

A list of organizations that provided written submissions is available at https://engage.gov. bc.ca/recoveryideas/organizationsubmissions



