

FOR MORE INFORMATION

RELATED MINISTRIES

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

www.gov.bc.ca/cd

**Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour
Market Development** www.gov.bc.ca/aved

Ministry of Housing and Social Development
www.gov.bc.ca/hsd

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
www.gov.bc.ca/tran

**Ministry of Small Business, Technology and
Economic Development** www.gov.bc.ca/sted

Ministry of Finance www.gov.bc.ca/fin

Ministry of Labour www.gov.bc.ca/lcs

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
www.gov.bc.ca/empr

USEFUL LINKS

Small Business BC www.smallbusinessbc.ca
(Information on starting and running a small business)

Vancouver: 604 775-5525

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 667-2272

TTY: 711 (long-distance charges accepted)

2010 Commerce Centre

(Business opportunities related to the 2010 Olympic
and Paralympic Winter Games)

www.2010commercecentre.com

FrontCounter BC

Toll-free provincewide: 1 877 855-3222

www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca

Economic summits

www.gov.bc.ca/tted/popt/economic_summits

BC Regional Science and Technology Network

www.bcrstn.com/bc

Labour Market Agreement

www.workbc.ca/lma_lmada/index.htm

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER



B.C. communities are working with the Province to invest in infrastructure, develop new clean, green industries, and ensure that B.C. remains the best place on earth to live, work and raise a family.

Now more than ever, with the economic downturn, we are committed to helping local governments deal with these challenging times and prepare for a more prosperous future. We have acted quickly in the past year to accelerate financial support to communities in an effort to maintain stability and keep British Columbians working.

Regional trusts and the Strategic Community Investment Fund, which includes Small Community and Regional District Grants and traffic fine revenues, provide resources for local projects that help communities flourish.

The 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games will be an exceptional opportunity to promote communities in every region of the province, inspiring our youth to reach their goals. We are working with industry and communities to help bridge the digital divide, linking communities with high-speed broadband internet access to ensure they can fully participate in a knowledge- and information-based economy.

Working together, we can help our communities grow into safe, clean and sustainable regions that meet the needs of citizens all across the province.

Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier of British Columbia



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SERVICE BC

(For information on any provincial government service or program)

Monday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 663-7867

Telephone device for the deaf (TDD) in B.C.: 1 800 661-8773

WWW.SERVICEBC.GOV.BC.CA

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E-MAIL: PREMIER@GOV.BC.CA

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OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY

The Province is helping ensure all of British Columbia benefits from our once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to host the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The 2010 Torch Relay provides an early showcase of over 200 B.C. communities starting in the fall of 2009.

The arrival of the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay signals a truly historic moment for our province and a time for communities to take pride in their people and their culture as we welcome the Games to British Columbia.

PROVINCIAL FUNDING FOR LOCAL PROJECTS

Since 2001, the Province has provided more than \$10 million to the B.C. Regional Science and Technology Network, a non-profit society dedicated to helping B.C. science and technology businesses and organizations grow and market their products and services. The network's nine regional member councils encourage investment throughout B.C. and support innovators through business analysis, professional development, promotion, advocacy and networking.

This support has helped B.C.'s high-tech industry outpace the overall economy in GDP growth, accounting for about 5.9 per cent of GDP in 2007, up from 5.2 per cent in 2006 and more than triple the 1.8 per cent it generated in 1984. With 81,140 employees and a total payroll that exceeded \$4 billion in 2007, the B.C. technology sector now employs more people than the mining, forestry, and oil-and-gas exploration industries combined.

CONNECTING PEOPLE, CONNECTING THE PROVINCE

Ninety-two per cent of British Columbians have access to broadband connectivity. The Province has facilitated expansion of broadband Internet services in 326 of 366 communities, helping people in all regions participate in B.C.'s knowledge-based economy.

We have supported First Nations-led connectivity in 123 First Nations. The Province granted over \$40 million in the past two years to help First Nations bridge the digital divide in all 203 First Nations in B.C. We will continue to work with municipalities and external organizations to expand broadband infrastructure and cellular services to rural and remote areas.

EMBRACE BC

In July, we launched Embrace BC, which will support leading-edge programming and public education that engages communities around issues of racism, multiculturalism and inclusion. Embrace BC replaces the B.C. Anti-racism and Multiculturalism Program and includes a broader range of ministry-led and community-led activities and a new website, www.embracebc.ca.

The new program will help build strong and inclusive communities that seek to eliminate racism through the support and promotion of multiculturalism and inclusion, and inspire communities to embrace cultural diversity as an integral part of life in British Columbia.

PROVINCIAL FUNDING FOR COMMUNITIES

The Province is helping local governments build strong, stable economies while meeting the needs of residents through programs such as:

Strategic Community Investment Fund: Since March 2009, the Province has dispersed \$191 million through this restructuring of provincial grant programs, providing communities with more funding sooner and giving them greater certainty and improved financial flexibility.

This investment has included:

- » \$96 million from the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing program, helping municipalities enhance policing and community-based safety programs. Since the program's expansion in 2004, it has provided an additional \$297 million to qualifying municipalities.
- » \$95 million in Small Community and Regional District Grants, supporting local governments to provide services in areas with smaller tax bases. This year's payment fulfils the Province's commitment to double these grants over four years.

Regional Trusts: The Province has funded the \$185-million Northern Development Initiative Trust, the \$50-million Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust, the \$50-million Island-Coastal Economic Trust and the \$15-million First Nations Benefits Trust.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH JOB TRANSITIONS

Under the Labour Market Agreement, we provided \$17 million for 10 projects around B.C. to improve the skills of unemployed or under-qualified people. The training will benefit employed people who need essential skills or recognized credentials, and unemployed people who are not on employment insurance. The funding will help small businesses build and maintain a well-educated and skilled workforce. This year, the Province organized two conferences — Opportunities North: The Northern Economic Summit in Prince George, and the British Columbia Economic Summit in Vancouver — bringing together hundreds of municipal, business and academic leaders to identify opportunities to help British Columbia recover from the global economic downturn.

