

**MEETING NOTE**

Cliff #:148213  
Date: March 31, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness

**DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:** Monday April 6, 2020 4:00pm PST

**ATTENDEES:** The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade (*Attachment 1*)

**ISSUE(S):** A phone call to discuss Canada's and BC's COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, as well as discuss BC's engagement with small business community stakeholders.

**BACKGROUND:**

**On COVID-19 Response**

On March 27, Prime Minister Trudeau delivered significant new measures to help small and medium businesses (SMEs) get through the unprecedented difficulties resulting from COVID-19. This includes interest-free loans, wage subsidies, access to credit and other measures. The Province of BC has also announced its own \$5 billion COVID-19 Action Plan that includes \$2.2 billion for businesses and recovery, along with tax changes and additional benefits.

**DISCUSSION:**

Your biweekly meetings with the Small Business Roundtable provides an important opportunity to hear directly and understand what is happening on the ground for small businesses throughout the province and to get feedback on what support programs from government are most urgently needed.

The Government of BC is also receiving a large influx of correspondence from the business community in a number of categories of topics, including:

- **Offers of support** (such as donations of supplies or services)
- Concerns about the **impact of COVID-19 on their businesses**
- Inquiries on the designation of "essential services" (now announced)

A number of BC tech and manufacturing companies have offered support including converting manufacturing processes to the development and distribution of critical supplies, including ventilators, masks, and sanitizers. Additionally, BC life sciences companies have reached out asking for support in development of facilities and testing kit components, as well as offers of supplies to frontline healthcare workers. BC ICT companies have also reached out looking to collaborate on development of digital platforms to track infections and chains of transmission.

A key component of BC's COVID-19 response is the creation of a **Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit**. The Unit, involving the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and

Competitiveness, will take more active role in co-ordinating essential goods and services movement, The Province is receiving these offers and setting up a way to get this information efficiently to those that supply our hospitals, first responders and health care providers.

Amongst the major concerns being raised by BC's small and medium businesses impacted by COVID-19 include:

- Access to capital, including wage subsidies in order to keep employees working and keep businesses afloat.
- Concerns around the level of federal support (although generally well received), smaller companies are concerned with taking on additional debt.
- Paying rent during the crisis, and high rent costs in urban centres. Some landlords are willing to accommodate deferred payments, others are unable or unwilling to.

To assist BC companies, the Ministry continues to work closely with Small Business BC to activate sector supports and has created a guide to resources and supports available (*Attachment 2*). The Province and Western Economic Diversification Canada are also collaborating on the potential of a concierge service to help businesses navigate the resource available during the pandemic and recovery afterwards.

In further support of small and medium businesses operating in BC, the Province has taken measures to ensure these businesses are able to remain active, including:

- Allowing licensed restaurants to deliver alcohol
- Temporarily allow distillers to produce alcohol-based hand sanitizer products
- Funding of \$55,000 to the BC Association of Farmers' Markets to help member markets move to an online model of service

#### **SUGGESTED RESPONSE/KEY MESSAGING:**

The BC Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness is committed to working collaboratively with the Government of Canada in combating COVID-19.

BC will continue to work with both business and industry stakeholders on COVID-19 response and recovery. This includes addressing COVID-19 impact issues that BC tech companies face, and coordination of response and recovery measures.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment 1** – Biography of Mary Ng

**Attachment 2** – COVID-19 Small Business Supports

Reviewed by			
Dir:	ED: PI	ADM: TC	DM: FM

**Attachment 1**

**Mary Ng**  
**Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade**



Markham—Thornhill

The Honourable Mary Ng was elected as Member of Parliament for Markham—Thornhill in April 2017.

Minister Ng is a devoted community leader who has always believed in the power of public service. She has 20 years of experience in the areas of education, women's leadership, job creation, and entrepreneurship.

Minister Ng immigrated to Canada from Hong Kong with her family and grew up learning about the struggle and eventual success that many new immigrants experience in Canada.

Her years working for the Ontario Public Service, Ryerson University, and the Ontario Ministry of Education led to her being recognized as one of Canada's top-performing public sector leaders. She later served as Director of Appointments for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

## Small Business BC Supports

For the latest information on small business supports, resources and advisory services during COVID-19, please visit [Small Business BC](#). Advisors are ready to help by phone at 1-800-667-2272, [email](#) and daily [digital meetups](#).



## Supports for Small Businesses

Governments and the private sector are providing a wide-range of supports for small businesses in British Columbia affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of B.C.'s COVID-19 Action Plan, the B.C. government is providing an additional \$5 billion in income supports, tax relief and funding for people, businesses and services in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Please visit the links below for the most up-to-date information.

Need access to credit and financing?	
<p><b>Government of Canada</b></p> <p><b>Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)</b></p> <p>CEBA will provide interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to eligible small businesses. To qualify, small businesses will need to demonstrate they paid between \$50,000 to \$1 million in total payroll in 2019. Repaying the loan on or before December 31, 2022 will result in loan forgiveness of 25% (up to \$10,000). The CEBA will be implemented by eligible financial institutions in cooperation with Export Development Canada.</p>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>
<p><b>Business Development Bank of Canada</b></p> <p><b>Loans and Support from the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)</b></p> <p>Through the \$10 billion Federal government <a href="#">Business Credit Availability Program</a>, BDC has made available working capital loans of up to \$2 million, postponement of payments and reduced rates on new eligible loans.</p> <p>A new Co-Lending Program will bring BDC together with financial institutions to co-lend term loans to small and medium enterprises for their operational cash flow requirements. Eligible businesses may obtain incremental credit amounts up to \$6.25 million under this new program.</p>	<a href="#">Contact BDC &gt;</a>
<p><b>Export Development Canada</b></p> <p><b>Enhanced Financing through Export Development Canada (EDC)</b></p> <p>Through the \$10 billion Federal government <a href="#">Business Credit Availability Program</a>, EDC has enhanced financing and insurance programs to ensure that impacted exporters have access to the credit and support they need.</p> <p>EDC will guarantee new operating credit and cash flow term loans that financial institutions extend to small and medium enterprises, up to \$6.25 million.</p>	<a href="#">Contact EDC &gt;</a>
<p><b>Farm Credit Canada</b></p> <p><b>Financing Products through Farm Credit Canada (FCC)</b></p> <p>Through an additional \$5 billion received from the Federal government, FCC is offering loan payment deferrals and other financing products to the agriculture and food industry.</p>	<a href="#">Contact FCC &gt;</a>

# COVID-19: Supports for Small Businesses in B.C.

This version was last updated March 27, 2020 – subject to regular updates

## Financial Institutions

### Speak to your Lender

Canada's largest financial institutions ([BMO](#), [CIBC](#), [National Bank of Canada](#), [RBC](#), [Scotiabank](#), and [TD Bank](#)), as well as some credit unions like [Vancity](#) are committed to working with small business banking customers on a case-by-case basis to provide flexible financing solutions.

[Learn more >](#)

Small businesses operating in rural communities may also check with their local [Community Futures](#) office for emergency loans and business advice.

[Learn more >](#)

## Small Business BC

### Resource: 'Financing Options for Businesses Impacted by COVID-19'

Small Business BC has compiled an on-going list of financial supports for businesses impacted by COVID-19.

[Read more >](#)

## Need help paying your employees?

### Government of Canada

#### Temporary Wage Subsidy Program

A 75% wage subsidy will be available to qualifying businesses, for up to 3 months, retroactive to March 15, 2020. This will help businesses to keep and return workers to the payroll. More details on eligibility criteria will start with the impact of COVID-19 on sales and will be shared before the end of the month.

[Learn more >](#)

## Need help with taxes?

### Government of Canada

#### Federal Business Taxes

**General Sales Tax (GST) and Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)** remittances and customs duty payments are deferred to June 30, 2020.

[Learn more >](#)

**Income Tax:** The Federal government is allowing all businesses to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after March 18, 2020 and before September 2020. This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as instalments, under Part I of the Income Tax Act.

No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this period. For self-employed individuals or those who have spouses or common-law partners that are self-employed, the deadline to pay any balance due for your individual federal income tax and benefit return has been extended from April 30, 2020, to September 1, 2020.

## B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan

### Provincial Business Taxes

Businesses with a payroll over \$500,000 can defer their employer health tax payments until Sept. 30, 2020. Businesses with a payroll under this threshold are already exempt from the tax.

[Learn more >](#)

Provincial business tax filing and payment deadlines have also been extended until Sept. 30, 2020 for:

- provincial sales tax (PST);
- municipal and regional district tax;
- tobacco tax;
- motor fuel tax; and
- carbon tax.

The scheduled April 1, 2020 increase to the provincial carbon tax, as well as the new PST registration requirements on e-commerce and the implementation of PST on sweetened carbonated drinks, will be delayed with timing to be reviewed by Sept. 30, 2020.

## B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan

### B.C. Relief for Commercial Property Owners and Tenants

Business and light and major industry property classes will see their school property tax cut in half for the 2020 tax year, providing \$500 million in relief for business that own their property and for tenants on triple-net leases.

[Learn more >](#)

## Looking for ways to pivot your business operations?

### Government of Canada

#### Help Canada Combat COVID-19

Businesses are asked to contact the Government of Canada if they can [supply products and services](#), or rapidly scale up production or re-tool their manufacturing lines to develop products made in Canada, that that will help in the fight against COVID-19.

[Learn more >](#)

### Government of British Columbia

#### B.C. Restaurant Alcohol Delivery

Licensed restaurants are now temporarily allowed to use servers with a Serving it Right certificate to deliver liquor products alongside the purchase of a meal.

[Learn more >](#)

### Government of British Columbia

#### Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer Manufacturing

Distillers in British Columbia are temporarily authorized to manufacture alcohol-based hand sanitizer to help combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Learn more >](#)

### Government of British Columbia

#### BC Farmers' Markets Online

The B.C. government is providing \$55,000 to the BC Association of Farmers' Markets to help member markets move to an online model to continue providing consumers with locally grown and prepared food products.

[Learn more >](#)

### Small Business BC

#### Resource: 'Managing and Pivoting During a Time of Crisis'

Small Business BC provides practical ideas and inspiration to help you manage your business through this uniquely challenging time.

[Read more >](#)

## Other supports and resources available to small businesses

### B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan

#### B.C. Longer-Term Economic Plan

\$1.5 billion in provincial funding will support economic stimulus once the pandemic has passed. The BC government is working in partnership with the business and labour sectors to develop the long-term plan for economic recovery.

[Learn more >](#)

### BC Hydro

#### BC Hydro COVID-19 Customer Assistance Program

BC Hydro is providing residential and commercial customers the option to defer bill payments or arrange flexible payment plans with no penalty. Customers are encouraged to call BC Hydro at 1-800-224-9376 to discuss options.

[Learn more >](#)

### Insurance Corporation of British Columbia

#### ICBC Commercial Insurance

ICBC customers on a monthly Autoplan payment plan, who are facing financial challenges due to COVID-19, can defer their payment for up to 90 days with no penalty. Apply online or call 1-800-665-6442.

[Learn more >](#)

### Government of British Columbia

#### Understanding Changes to the Employment Standards Act

In response to COVID-19, the Employment Standards Act has been updated to provide new unpaid, job protected leave for British Columbians unable to work due to personal illness, injury or specified reasons relating to COVID-19.

[Learn more >](#)

### Private Sector Organizations

#### Other Goodwill Supports

Private sector organizations such as [Facebook](#) are offering cash grants and other supports to help small businesses through difficult times.

Check with your industry organizations for more information.

## Supports for Workers, Individuals and Families

Governments are providing supports directly to workers, individuals and families facing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Employers are encouraged to inform their workers of the supports available to them.

## Have you been impacted by COVID-19?

### Government of Canada

#### Enhancements to Employment Insurance (EI)

The Federal government has waived the one-week waiting period for individuals in imposed quarantine that claim EI sickness benefits. The requirement to provide a medical certificate to access EI sickness benefits has also been waived.

[Apply here >](#)

## Government of Canada

### EI Work Sharing Program

[Check eligibility >](#)

For Canadians who lose their jobs or face reduced hours as a result of COVID's impact, this program provides EI benefits to workers who agree to reduce their normal working hour as a result of developments beyond the control of their employers. The eligibility of such agreements has been extended to 76 weeks, eligibility requirements have been eased, and the application process has been streamlined.

## Government of Canada

### Canada Emergency Response Benefit

[Learn more >](#)

(Previously called the Emergency Care Benefit and Emergency Support Benefit)

The Federal government will provide a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to four months to:

- workers who must stop working due to COVID19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

Application details will be available through [My CRA](#) and [My Service Canada](#), beginning the first week of April.

## B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan

### Emergency Benefit for Workers

[Learn more >](#)

Provides a tax-free \$1,000 payment to British Columbians whose ability to work has been affected by the outbreak. The benefit will be a one-time payment for British Columbians who receive federal Employment Insurance (EI), or the new federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit as a result of COVID-19 impacts. This includes workers who have been laid-off, who are sick or quarantined, parents with sick children, parents who stay at home from work while child care centres and schools are closed, and those caring for sick family members, such as an elderly parent. The workers can be EI-eligible and non-EI eligible, such as the self-employed. The benefit will be paid to B.C. residents, in addition to their federal income supports.

## B.C COVID-19 Action Plan

### Enhanced Climate Action Tax Credit

[Learn more >](#)

In July 2020, eligible families of four will receive up to \$564 and eligible individuals will receive up to \$218 in an enhanced payment. This boosts the regular climate action tax credit payment of up to \$112.50 per family of four and up to \$43.50 per adult.

## Government of Canada

### Enhanced Canada Child Benefit (CCB)

[Learn more >](#)

The maximum annual CCB payment amounts will be increased, only for the 2019-20 benefit year, by \$300 per child. The overall increase for families receiving CCB will be approximately \$550 on average; these families will receive an extra \$300 per child as part of their May payment.



<div>Government of Canada</div> <div>Enhanced Goods and Services Tax Credit (GSTC)</div> <div>A one-time special payment by early May 2020 through the GSTC for individuals who file their income tax and benefit return before June 1, 2020. This will double the maximum annual GSTC payment amounts for the 2019-20 benefit year. The average boost to income for those benefitting from this measure will be close to \$400 for single individuals and close to \$600 for couples.</div>	<div>Learn more &gt;</div>
<div>Government of Canada</div> <div>Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) &amp; Registered Pension Plans (RPPs)</div> <div>Required minimum withdrawals from RRIFs will be reduced by 25% for 2020, in recognition of volatile market conditions and their impact on many seniors' retirement savings. This will provide flexibility to seniors that are concerned that they may be required to liquidate their RRIF assets to meet minimum withdrawal requirements. Similar rules would apply to individuals receiving variable benefit payments under a defined contribution RPP.</div>	<div>Learn more &gt;</div>
<div>Government of Canada</div> <div>Mortgage and Credit Product Assistance</div> <div>The federal government, through the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), is providing increased flexibility for homeowners facing financial difficulties to defer mortgage payments on homeowner CMHC-insured mortgage loans. CMHC will permit lenders to allow payment deferral beginning immediately.</div>	<div>Learn more &gt;</div>
<div>Financial Institutions</div> <div>Speak to your Lender</div> <div>Canada's largest financial institutions (<a href="#">BMO</a>, <a href="#">CIBC</a>, <a href="#">National Bank of Canada</a>, <a href="#">RBC</a>, <a href="#">Scotiabank</a>, and <a href="#">TD Bank</a>), as well as some credit unions like <a href="#">Vancity</a> are committed to working with personal and small business banking customers on a case-by-case basis to provide flexible solutions. Support will include up to a six-month payment deferral for mortgages, and the opportunity for relief on other credit products.</div>	<div>Contact your financial institution for more information.</div>
<div>B.C COVID-19 Action Plan</div> <div>Support for Renters and People Experiencing Homelessness</div> <div>In response to the pandemic and resulting financial stress, B.C. has increased funding for housing supports and is working to ensure people can maintain their housing in the event of job or income loss.</div> <div>The B.C. government is providing temporary relief for renters of up to \$500/month for 4 months through <a href="#">BC Housing</a>, imposing a moratorium on evictions (with some exceptions) while B.C.'s emergency order is in place, and placing a freeze on new annual rent increases by landlords. Benefiting people with low to moderate incomes, the temporary rent supplement will be available to renters who are facing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, but do not qualify for existing rental assistance programs.</div>	<div>Learn more &gt;</div>
<div>BC Rent Bank</div> <div>Rent Bank Programs</div> <div>For renters in some parts of the province it is possible to receive emergency help for rent payments and one-time interest-free loans.</div>	<div>Learn more &gt;</div>
<div>Government of Canada</div> <div>Canada Student Loan Assistance</div> <div>The Federal government is placing a six-month interest-free moratorium on the repayment of Canada Student Loans for all individuals currently in the process of repaying these loans.</div>	<div>Learn more &gt;</div>

<b>B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan</b> <b>B.C. Student Loan Assistance</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
Starting March 30, 2020, the BC government is freezing B.C. student loan payments for six months.		
<b>Government of Canada</b> <b>Tax Filing Deadlines for Individuals Extended</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
The deadline for individuals to file income tax and benefit returns has been deferred until June 1, 2020. The deadline to pay any balance due for individual income tax and benefit returns for 2019 has been extended from April 30, 2020, to September 1, 2020. This means individuals will not be assessed any penalties or interest if the balance due is paid by September 1, 2020.		
<b>Government of Canada</b> <b>Support for Indigenous Communities</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
Indigenous Services Canada is working closely with First Nation partners to protect the health and safety of First Nations and support First Nations communities in responding to the public health crisis resulting from COVID-19.		
<b>BC Hydro</b> <b>Support for BC Hydro Customers</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
BC Hydro customers have the option to defer bill payments or arrange for flexible payment plans with no penalty. Residential customers facing temporary financial hardship and possible disconnection of their service due to job loss, illness, or loss of a family member may be eligible for BC Hydro’s <a href="#">Customer Crisis Fund</a> , which provides access to grants of up to \$600 to pay bills.		
<b>Insurance Corporation of British Columbia</b> <b>Support for ICBC Customers</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
ICBC customers on a monthly Autoplan payment plan, who are facing financial challenges due to COVID-19, can defer their payment for up to 90 days with no penalty. Apply online or call <a href="tel:1-800-665-6442">1-800-665-6442</a> .		
<b>Government of Canada</b> <b>Emergency Travel Assistance</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
Global Affairs Canada is establishing an emergency loan program of \$5,000 to help Canadians who need immediate financial assistance to return to Canada. Canadians abroad who need urgent assistance can email <a href="mailto:sos@international.gc.ca">sos@international.gc.ca</a> .		
<b>B.C. COVID-19 Action Plan</b> <b>Support for Parents with Children in Child Care</b>	<a href="#">Learn more &gt;</a>	
The BC government has taken steps to support the child care sector while ensuring parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to child care.		
<b>Municipalities and Service Providers</b> <b>Other Supports</b>	Check with your municipality and service providers for more information.	
Some municipalities and service providers are announcing adjustments day by day. Look online to see if supports like these are available in your community:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deferred municipal utilities payments</li><li>• Waived local transit fares</li><li>• Payment and international roaming options from your telecommunications provider</li><li>• Freezing or refunding membership fees at facilities such as gyms</li></ul>		

## MEETING NOTE

Cliff #:148214  
Date: March 31, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness

**DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:** TBD

**ATTENDEES:** The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Government of Canada (*Attachment 1*)

**ISSUE(S):** An introductory phone call to discuss Canada and BC's COVID-19 response and recovery, as well as discuss BC's correspondance with business community stakeholders.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On March 13 Minister Bains wrote to you offering congratulations on your appointment as Minister. The letter noted the need for collaboration between the federal and provincial governments on science, technology, and research as it pertains to economic growth and job creation. The letter referenced a report titled *Building a Nation of Innovators* detailing the achievements of the federal government's *Innovation and Skills Plan*. (*Attachment 2*)

### **On COVID-19 Response**

On March 27, Prime Minister Trudeau announced measures to help small and medium businesses (SMEs) get through the difficulties resulting from COVID-19. (*Attachment 3*)

On March 31, the Prime Minister introduced Canada's Plan to Mobilize Industry to Fight COVID-19, which builds on Canada's COVID-19 Response Fund. The Plan focuses on domestic capacity building, innovative solutions, and procurement of essential supplies. (*Attachment 4*). The Province of BC has announced its own COVID-19 Action Plan, aligned with federal programming, to support people and business through the pandemic. (*Attachment 5*)

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Government of BC has received a large influx of correspondence from the business and industry community re: COVID-19. These messages from business stakeholders typically fall into a number of categories:

- **Offers of support** (such as donations of supplies or services)
- Concerns about the **impact of COVID-19 on their businesses**
- Inquiries on being designated an "**essential service**"; and
- Concerns about the impact of COVID-19 and how the government will assist.

BC's tech and manufacturing companies have reached out to the Ministry offering a wide range of supporting products and services, including converting manufacturing processes to the development and distribution of critical supplies, including ventilators, masks, and sanitizers. BC life sciences companies have reached out asking for support in development of facilities and testing kit components, as well as offers of supplies to frontline healthcare

workers. BC ICT companies have also reached out looking to collaborate on development of digital platforms to track infections and chains of transmission.

A key component of BC's COVID-19 response is the creation of a **Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit**. This Unit, involving the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness, will take more active role in co-ordinating essential goods and services movement. The Province is receiving these offers and setting up a way to get this information efficiently to those that supply our hospitals, first responders and health care providers.

In addition to offers of support, BC companies are expressing their concerns regarding the **impact of COVID-19 on their business**. For BC tech companies in particular, this means:

- **Access to capital** - companies need grants, short-term no interest debt funding, and are concerned that private equity and venture capital funding will dry up. They are looking to government for any new funding options.
- **Talent** – Tech companies are worried that they will lose workers because of difficulty recruiting and onboarding staff. They are looking for ways to retain staff.

To address concerns that BC tech companies are having on COVID-19 impacts on business, BC is taking the following steps to provide support:

- s.13

1

s.13; s.17

### **SUGGESTED RESPONSE/KEY MESSAGING:**

The BC Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness is committed to working collaboratively with the Government of Canada in combating COVID-19.

BC will continue to work with both business and industry stakeholders on COVID-19 response, recovery, and support to companies.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment 1** – Biography of Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry

**Attachment 2** – Letter from Minister Navdeep Bains to Minister Mungall

**Attachment 3** – Highlights of Canada COVID-19 Relief for Businesses and Workers

**Attachment 4** – Highlights of Canada's Plan to Mobilize Industry to Fight COVID-19

**Attachment 5** – Highlights of BC COVID-19 Action Plan

Reviewed by			
Dir:	ED: PI	ADM: TC	DM: FM

## Attachment 1

### Biography of Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry



#### Assignment

#### Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry

#### Location

Mississauga—Malton

The Honourable Navdeep Bains has been the Member of Parliament for Mississauga—Malton since 2015, and was previously the Member of Parliament for Mississauga—Brampton South from 2004 to 2011.

He has served as Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, and was the Parliamentary Secretary to former Prime Minister Paul Martin. Previously, he was the critic for Public Works and Government Services, the Treasury Board, International Trade, Natural Resources, and Small Business and Tourism.

Before entering politics, he was a distinguished visiting professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School, and worked for several years in accounting and financial analysis for the Ford Motor Company of Canada.

Minister Bains has deep roots in his community, as a longtime resident of both Mississauga and Brampton, and has strong ties to the social and cultural associations of Mississauga—Malton. He has been active in a variety of community organizations, as a board member for the Mississauga Food Bank and an Ontario board member with the Heart and Stroke Foundation. He has also worked with JDRF, a diabetes research foundation, and the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation.

Minister Bains has received a number of awards recognizing his work in promoting diversity within his community, and he holds a Master of Business Administration with a specialization in Finance.

Minister Bains has dedicated his time in Ottawa to growing the economy, strengthening the middle class, and creating new well-paying jobs for Canadians in Mississauga—Malton.

Minister of Innovation,  
Science and Industry



Ministre de l'Innovation,  
des Sciences et de l'Industrie

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H5

MAR 13 2020

The Honourable Michelle Mungall, M.L.A.  
Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness  
Government of British Columbia  
Room 301, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Minister's Office of:					
CLIFF #148040					
MAR 20 2020					
Mins Sig	<input type="checkbox"/>	DMs Sig	<input type="checkbox"/>	ADM Sig	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reply Direct	<input type="checkbox"/>	Info/File	<input type="checkbox"/>		
ROUTE TO _____					

Dear Minister Mungall:

Please accept my sincere congratulations on being appointed British Columbia Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness.

As Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, one of my priorities is to engage regularly with Canada's business, science, and academic leaders so that, together, we can promote both economic growth and scientific excellence in Canada. These relationships have been integral in shaping our efforts to help Canadian businesses innovate, grow, and export, creating good-quality jobs for Canadians. I would welcome your candid advice and insight at any time.

For your consideration, I invite you to read *Building a Nation of Innovators*, which can be found at [www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/062.nsf/eng/h\\_00105.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/062.nsf/eng/h_00105.html). This report lays out what our government has achieved under the Innovation and Skills Plan, a long-term plan for Canada's future success and global competitiveness.

While governments can create the right conditions for growth and innovation, businesses drive us to achieve these goals. Collectively, we must continue to remove barriers to success, invest as required, reinforce strong partnerships, and continue to demonstrate to the world our country's many strengths.

The Government of Canada also recognizes the fundamental role that science, research, technology, and innovation play in addressing global economic, social, and environmental problems. I am committed to continuing to work with our partners and stakeholders to support the science infrastructure, innovations, and breakthroughs that create jobs, boost economic activity, and improve the quality of life of Canadians.

...2

Canada

- 2 -

With determination and continued support across the innovation and science spectrum, we will further build on Canada's strong brand as one of the most innovative countries in the world. I would welcome your reflections on this report and your support in achieving the vision it lays out.

Once again, congratulations, and please accept my best wishes in your new role.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Navdeep Bains".

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, P.C., M.P.

**Attachment 3****Highlights of Canada COVID-19 Relief for Businesses and Workers**

- **Canada Emergency Business Account** — Up to \$40,000 loan, interest free for one year through financial institutions but fully backed by the federal government. For some businesses, up to \$10,000 may be forgivable.
- **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy** — Will help companies of all sizes, non-profits, and charities that have faced revenue decreases of at least 30% by providing employers a 75 per cent wage subsidy, back-dated to March 15. This subsidy will cover the first \$58,700 per employee - up to \$847/week per employee.
- **Business Credit Availability Program** — Support financing in the private sector with \$65 billion in direct lending and other types of financial support.
- **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)** — Provides \$2,000 per month for four months to any workers who have lost their income for reasons related to COVID-19 including reasons of sickness, quarantine, taking care of those with COVID-19 as well as working parents needing to stay at home with children. This applies to wage earners, contract workers, and self employed individuals. Applications for this benefit will begin April 6 at the earliest, with payments to Canadians set for April 16.
- **Tax Flexibility** — Businesses can defer paying income tax until September 1, 2020. GST payments, duties, and other remittances can be deferred until June
- **Opportunities for Canadian Manufacturers** — Call to action: Businesses that can assist in combating COVID-19.
- **Employment and Social Development Canada** — Details for employers on EI applications for their employees and Work-Share Program
- **COVID-19 Economic Response Plan** — \$27 billion in direct support to Canadian workers and businesses (cost and implementation)



## Attachment 4

**Highlights of Canada's Plan to Mobilize Industry to Fight COVID-19**

- **Build the industrial capability needed to manufacture critical supplies** at scale in Canada. This will be done either by re-tooling the manufacturing lines of existing Canadian businesses or rapidly scaling up the production of others that already produce these products.
- **Refocus Canada's existing industrial and innovation programs**, by adding to their mandate a requirement that they prioritize the fight against COVID-19. This includes:
  - The Strategic Innovation Fund to deliver direct support to Canadian companies for large-scale projects
  - National Research Council of Canada to expedite research and development with small and medium-sized enterprises
  - Innovation Superclusters to tap into a national network of 1,800 members, and Innovative Solutions Canada to help companies commercialize products more quickly
- **Deliver direct support to key Canadian companies** that are working on large-scale and later-stage research and development projects aimed, in the immediate term, at producing countermeasures to COVID-19.
- **Challenge innovative companies to develop research-based solutions**, technologies, and products that can address a variety of COVID-19 issues.
- **Source equipment needed to support Canada's response to COVID-19 here in Canada.** The Government of Canada will use existing supply arrangements and innovative, flexible procurement approaches. It is also reaching out to suppliers to identify and purchase equipment, supplies, and services needed for Canada's response to COVID-19. With a view to longer-term support, the Government of Canada will ensure procurement flexibility to support innovation and build domestic manufacturing capacity to supply critical health supplies to Canadians.

## Attachment 5

### Highlights of BC COVID-19 Action Plan

- BC COVID-19 Action Plan — \$5 billion plan that includes \$2.2 billion for businesses and recovery. Plan includes tax changes and additional benefits. Highlights include:
  - **Enhanced tax flexibility** — The Province is extending tax filing and payment deadlines for the PST, the Employer Health Tax, the municipal and regional district tax, the carbon tax, the motor fuel tax, among others to September 30, 2020
  - **Deferral of carbon tax increase** — The provincial carbon tax increase scheduled for April 1 will be delayed and reviewed by September 30
  - **Tax relief for Class 4, 5, 6 property classes** — School tax on the business property class as well as the light- and major-industry classes will be cut in half for 2020
  - **Delay of new PST registration requirements** — The new PST registration requirements on e-commerce and the implementation of PST on sweetened carbonated drinks will be delayed and their timing will be reviewed by September 30
  - **BC Emergency Benefit for Workers** — Tax-free one-time payment of \$1,000 to British Columbians (EI-eligible and non-EI eligible) whose ability to work has been impacted by COVID-19, to be aligned with federal government program
  - **Recovery Plan** — \$1.5 billion allocated to support long-term economic recovery, to be allocated once the pandemic has passed
- COVID-19 Leave: Changes to Employment Standard Act — Employees who are unable to work due to COVID-19 related reasons are permitted to take unpaid, job-protected leave. This is retroactive to January 27, 2020.

**MEETING NOTE**

Cliff #: 148644

Date: April 21, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness

**DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:** Thursday April 23, 2020 at 2:30 pm PST

**ATTENDEES:** Honourable Marco Mendicino, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

**ISSUE(S):** Bilateral call with federal counterpart

**BACKGROUND:**

Minister Mendicino is reaching out to his Provincial and Territorial counterparts to discuss the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigration. Topics for discussion include: flexibility for temporary foreign workers and provincial nominees; levels planning; settlement services; and refugee claimants. Minister Mendicino may also raise Canada's renewed border measures; international students; and processing times.

See Appendix A for a summary of federal immigration measures related to COVID-19.

**DISCUSSION:**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has been communicating frequently with Provinces and Territories (PTs) about the evolving COVID-19 situation and its impact on immigration. The approach has been collaborative and responsive to key PT priorities, such as the need to facilitate the ability of critical agriculture foreign workers to come to BC. BC is also pleased to see that international students, foreign workers, and recent newcomers are eligible for federal emergency benefits.

Continued dialogue between IRCC and PTs and a willingness to be flexible is important as we work to address the short-term impacts of COVID-19.<sup>s.13; s.16</sup>

s.13; s.16

Given the dramatic change in the labour market over the past two months, the upcoming immigration levels planning consultation process, scheduled to take place in June 2020, will take on a new importance.<sup>s.13; s.16</sup>

s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16 s.13; s.16

Research shows that newcomers do not fare well when they arrive in a recession year and struggle to recover even after the recession passes. This is an important factor to consider for both levels planning and the delivery of settlement supports.

Social distancing guidelines have disrupted the delivery of settlement services at a time when many newcomers may need additional support. Many services have transitioned to remote/online delivery; however, this creates barriers for the most vulnerable newcomers who may not have access to phone or internet services. BC is appreciative that IRCC has maintained funding for settlement organizations despite the shift to remote delivery. Although the flow of newcomers into the country has been disrupted, it is critical that those who are already here have access to supports to help them navigate the challenges ahead.

The federal government recently extended the restrictions with the United States border for another 30 days. s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16

#### **SUGGESTED RESPONSE/KEY MESSAGING:**

- BC appreciates the federal government's collaborative approach to coordinating with PTs on the COVID-19 response, in particular with addressing the need for agriculture TFWs and sharing of information and data.
- It is important that we be flexible and nimble in responding to the challenges that COVID-19 has placed on the immigration system and our economy.
- While dealing with the immediate challenges of COVID-19, we must also consider the medium-term impacts on levels planning, settlement services, and refugee claimants.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:** Appendix A: Federal Immigration Measures related to COVID-19

ADM Contact: Christine Little, 778-698-1708

Prepared by: Eben Watt, Director of Stakeholder & Intergovernmental Relations, SBJW

Reviewed by			
Dir: EW	ED: CH	ADM: CL	DM: FM

## **Appendix A: Federal Immigration Measures related to COVID-19**

### **Temporary Foreign Workers**

- Work permit (and study permit) holders are able to enter Canada as they are exempt from the border restrictions. However, they must adhere to the 14-day self-isolation period, and like all arriving travellers must demonstrate that they have an adequate plan for isolation.
- Employers must pay TFWs for the two weeks during they cannot work and are also responsible for providing workers with transportation and accommodations, as well as access to food and basic supplies needed to meet all the conditions imposed by public health authorities.
- The federal government has taken some steps to improve flexibility and reduce administrative burden in the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, such as extending the length of work permits issued and prioritizing application processing for occupations in essential services.

### **International Students**

- On April 7, 2020, IRCC introduced temporary policy changes for students who currently have a study permit, or who have been approved for a study permit, for a program starting in May or June 2020, but who are unable to travel to Canada at this time due to travel restrictions.
- For these students, if their in-class courses are being moved to an online-only format because of COVID-19, their eligibility for the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) Program won't be affected. International students in this situation may begin their classes while outside Canada and may complete up to 50% of their program while outside Canada if they cannot travel to Canada sooner.

### **Refugee Claimants**

- Canada has extended the border restrictions with the US through to May 20.
- Claimants crossing irregularly will be turned back to the country they were coming from, with some exceptions. s.13; s.16  
s.13; s.16
- The extension includes a change to allow the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) to once again apply to claimants at official land border points of entry. This means most claimants will be turned back to the US unless they meet one of the exceptions.
- The federal government will require claimants allowed to enter Canada to have an acceptable isolation plan in place, or if they don't, they will be placed in hotel facilities for the isolation period with basic expenses covered by Canada.

**INFORMATION NOTE**

Cliff #: 148621

Date: April 16, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness

**ISSUE:** Request for Funding to Support B.C. Women Entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 Crisis

**BACKGROUND:**

The Women's Enterprise Centre (WEC) has a long history of supporting women entrepreneurs in B.C. Founded in 1995, WEC is a non-profit organization devoted to helping B.C. women start, lead and grow their own businesses through loans, advisory services, skills training, and mentorship. WEC, primarily funded through Western Economic Diversification Canada, works closely with their partner organization, the Forum for Women Entrepreneurs.

WEC is raising concerns regarding the number of businesses facing significant or complete loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly women-owned businesses. Women entrepreneurs tend to be under-capitalized, and are often in the heavily impacted service, food and retail sectors. Women entrepreneurs are often less financially literate and lack business training comparable to their male counterparts.

s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16

**ATTACHMENTS:** 1. WEC Support for COVID-19 and Opportunities to Partner 2020;

ADM Contact: Christine Little, Phone #778 698-1708

Prepared by: Valsy Bergeron, Policy Analyst, Small Business Branch

Reviewed by			
Dir: PS	ED: JH	ADM: CL	DM: FM

**MEETING NOTE**

Cliff #: 148640

Date: April 28, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness.

**DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:** Wednesday, May 6, 2020 from 3:15-3:45 PM via conference call.

**ATTENDEES:** Joel McKay, CEO, and Margo Wagner, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT).

**ISSUE(S):** Conference call with NDIT to discuss COVID-19 related issues and response (Agenda in Attachment 2).

**BACKGROUND:** The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness (JEDC) manages the corporate relationship with NDIT, which was created by government in 2004 through the *Northern Development Initiative Trust Act*. They received an allocation of \$135 million in 2005 from the proceeds of the sale of BC Rail and a further \$50 million from the Province in 2006. NDIT supports economic development initiatives and job creation in central and northern British Columbia. In addition to their own range of programs, NDIT also administers funds on behalf of third-parties, including Connecting British Columbia on behalf of the Province and the BC Hydro Go Fund.

NDIT is guided by a Board of Directors and four Regional Advisory Committees (RACs), which include dozens of locally elected officials and MLAs. The Board includes eight members elected by the RACs and five members appointed by Order in Council.

Since inception in 2005, and as of the end of 2018, NDIT reports that its Board has approved \$139 million in Trust funding and \$67.1 million in third-party funding to 3,466 projects. The trust also reports that 6,238 jobs have been created and \$1.28 billion invested in the region through partnerships with over 1,200 organizations.

**DISCUSSION:** In April 2020, NDIT made two announcements regarding COVID-19 support for the region's businesses. First, they have adjusted their popular Forestry Affected Business Consulting Rebate program to include businesses impacted by the COVID-19 crisis (Attachment 3). The program will reimburse small and medium sized businesses up to 85 per cent, to a maximum of \$25,000, for the cost of hiring a consultant to assist with business efforts, including transitioning to e-commerce



platforms or alternative modes of operation during current social and physical distancing restrictions, as well as to support operational and systems improvements and business repositioning for a long-term return to profitability.

Second, they have partnered with Support Local BC to promote the purchase of gift cards from businesses in their own Love Northern BC program (Attachment 4). Launched in response to the COVID-19 crisis, Support Local BC provides a platform for communities and businesses throughout the province to support each other by purchasing gift cards for future use.

The conference call with the CEO and Chair will serve to hear directly about these programs, issues they are facing, and their short, medium and longer term plans to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on businesses and communities in their region.

**SUGGESTED RESPONSE/KEY MESSAGING:**

- Many thanks to the trust for its active role in spurring economic development in the region, and for your quick response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- It is heartening to see organizations like NDIT and your partners pulling together to help communities and businesses during these unprecedented times.
- We are all in this together and welcome the opportunity to collaborate in support of our province's economic recovery and the long-term health and prosperity of our local and regional economies.
- I look forward to a continued strong and mutually supportive partnership with NDIT.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 – Biographies

Attachment 2 – Conference Call Agenda

Attachment 3 – NDIT News Release re: Adjusted Rebate Program

Attachment 4 – NDIT News Release re: Partnership with Support Local BC

Contact: Greg Goodwin, Executive Director, 250-361-5571

Prepared by: Alanna Dixon, A/Senior Director, Cross-Government Initiatives

Reviewed by			
Dir: AD	ED: GG	ADM: SB	DM: FM

## Attachment 1 – Biographies



**Joel McKay** is the CEO of Northern Development Initiative Trust, a regional development corporation focused on stimulating economic growth in Northern British Columbia. He joined Northern Development in June 2012, where he handled the Trust's communications, marketing and research. Prior to that, Joel was assignment editor at Business in Vancouver Newspaper and a journalist specializing in coverage of B.C.'s natural resource industries.

Joel is an award-winning public relations professional and journalist and a proud British Columbian with family roots in the Robson Valley. He currently serves on Destination BC's board of directors and volunteers with the Rocky Mountain Rangers Regimental Association in Prince George. Joel holds a Bachelor of Applied Journalism from Kwantlen Polytechnic University and is married with two daughters.



**Margo Wagner** was acclaimed as the Chair of the Northern Development Initiative Trust board of directors in Spring 2019. She has been the Cariboo Regional District (CRD) Electoral Area H Director since 2011 and has served as the Vice Chair of the Cariboo-Chilcotin Regional Hospital District since 2012. She has been the Chair of the South Cariboo Rural Caucus for the past four years and is the current CRD's Finance Committee Chair, a position she has held for the past two years.

Wagner has played an integral role in the Interior Health strategic planning group for the recruitment and retention of health care professionals to the Cariboo-Chilcotin region. In 2014, she became a member of the Orange Shirt Day Committee, for the annual event held in recognition of the harm the residential school system did to children's sense of self-esteem and well-being. She also serves on a working group within the CRD to improve working relationships with First Nations.

Wagner is the safety officer and a first responder instructor for Forest Grove Volunteer Fire Department and a retired registered nurse. She is the President of Canim Lake Community Club and Captain of the Canim Lake Citizens on Patrol. With a keen interest in hockey, Wagner has held positions on numerous Boards for Hockey Alberta for 13 years. She and her husband Brian have two adult children.

## **Attachment 2 – Conference Call Agenda**

- Territorial Acknowledgement
- Introductions
- Purpose of call – JEDC
  - Information sharing
  - Possible areas of collaboration
- Issues and responses – NDIT
- Next steps

**Attachment 3 – NDIT News Release re: Adjusted Rebate Program**

Northern Development adjusts rebate program to support COVID-19-affected businesses

April 8, 2020

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Media Contact  
Holly Plato  
Director, Communications and Marketing  
Northern Development Initiative Trust  
[hollyp@northerndevelopment.bc.ca](mailto:hollyp@northerndevelopment.bc.ca)

**Attachment 4 – NDIT News Release re: Partnership with Support Local BC**

Northern Development partners with Support Local BC for gift card program to assist Love Northern BC businesses

April 27, 2020

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Media Contact  
Holly Plato  
Director, Communications and Marketing  
Northern Development Initiative Trust  
[hollyp@northerndevelopment.bc.ca](mailto:hollyp@northerndevelopment.bc.ca)

## MEETING NOTE

Cliff #: 148641

Date: May 5, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness.

**DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:** Monday, May 11, 2020 from 3:30-4:00 PM via conference call.

**ATTENDEES:** Laurel Douglas, CEO; Helen Patterson, CFO and former A/CEO; and Mayor Chris Pieper (pronounced *peeper*), Chair, Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust (SIDIT).

**ISSUE(S):** Conference call with SIDIT to discuss COVID-19 related issues and response (Agenda in Attachment 2).

**BACKGROUND:** The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness (JEDC) manages the corporate relationship with SIDIT, which was created by government in 2005 through the *Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust Act* and a one-time funding allocation of \$50 million. The trust provides loans and grant funding in support of economic growth and diversification in the Southern Interior region of the province.

SIDIT is guided by a Board of Directors and two Regional Advisory Committees (RACs), which include locally elected officials and MLAs. The Board includes eight members elected by the RACs and five members appointed by Order in Council.

Since its inception in 2006, SIDIT has focused on providing high interest loans and venture capital to regional businesses. According to SIDIT, since inception and as of March 31, 2019, the trust has invested over \$62 million in projects worth \$245 million that have created and preserved over 3,400 jobs across the region.

**DISCUSSION:** On March 9, 2020, it was announced that Laurel Douglas, long time CEO of the Women's Enterprise Centre, was appointed the new CEO of SIDIT effective May 4, 2020. Helen Patterson, CFO, had been the acting CEO since the departure of the previous CEO in summer 2018.

Given the upcoming change in leadership, SIDIT has focused its COVID-19 response efforts on working with loan clients that need help with relaxing monthly payments or



other supports depending on their circumstances, rather than rolling out any new programming.

The conference call with the CEO, CFO and Chair will serve to hear directly about issues they are facing, and their short, medium and longer term plans to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on businesses and communities in their region.

**SUGGESTED RESPONSE/KEY MESSAGING:**

- Many thanks to the trust for its role in supporting economic development in the region.
- We are all in this together and welcome the opportunity to collaborate in support of our province's economic recovery and the long-term health and prosperity of our local and regional economies.
- I look forward to a continued strong and mutually supportive partnership with SIDIT.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 – Biographies

Attachment 2 – Conference Call Agenda

Contact: Greg Goodwin, Executive Director, 250-361-5571

Prepared by: Alanna Dixon, A/Senior Director, Cross-Government Initiatives

Reviewed by			
Dir: AD	ED: GG	ADM: SS	DM: FM

## Attachment 1 – Biographies



### **Laurel Douglas, CEO, SIDIT**

Laurel was appointed CEO of SIDIT effective May 4, 2020. She brings significant economic development, leadership and development lending experience, along with strong understanding of the trust region, to her new role.

Laurel's background includes 15 years as CEO of the award-winning Women's Enterprise Centre (WEC), which supports women entrepreneurs throughout B.C. with business loans, advisory services, mentoring, training and export support. Over that time, WEC provided direct and leveraged financing totalling \$67 million to hundreds of women-led businesses, which helped create or maintain approximately 3,650 jobs in the province.

Under her leadership, WEC has become recognized as an important part of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in B.C. and a best practice internationally, which led to Laurel being invited to represent Canada on the W20 engagement group of the G20 since 2016. She has been part of the external advisory committee of UBCO since 2012 and was appointed to the Board of Governors of the Justice Institute of BC in 2019. She was named one of BC's most Influential Women in 2017 and 2019 by BC Business Magazine and was recognized by the BC Economic Development Association with an Economic Developer of the Year Silver Medal in 2009.

Prior to joining WEC, Laurel spent many years in the tech sector. She led what is now known as Accelerate Okanagan from 1997-2001, then spent several years with an affiliate of the National Research Council's IRAP program, providing IRAP clients in the Southern Interior with business advisory services to help them access financing and reach new markets.

Laurel lived in the Kootenays for several years in the 1990s, providing contract regional economic development services and teaching business planning at Selkirk College. While living in Nelson, she was appointed to the founding Advisory Council of the Columbia Basin Trust, was a member of the Kootenay Regional Advisory Group and served on the board of the Nelson & Area Economic Development Commission. Laurel is also a long-term advisory board member of the Economic Development Commission of the Central Okanagan.

## **Attachment 2 – Conference Call Agenda**

- Territorial Acknowledgement
- Introductions
- Purpose of call – JEDC
  - Information sharing
  - Possible areas of collaboration
- Issues and responses – SIDIT
- Q's and A's
- Next steps

Before moving to B.C., Laurel lived and worked in France, Germany, the UK and Southern Ontario working in the telecom and financial services industries. She has an MBA from a leading international business school and a post-baccalaureate diploma in Community Economic Development from Simon Fraser University.



**Helen Patterson, CFO, SIDIT**

Helen is a long-time staff member of SIDIT. She has spent the last year and a half serving in the dual roles of Interim CEO and Chief Financial Officer. With the recent appointment of Laurel Douglas as CEO, Helen has returned to her role of CFO.



**Mayor Chris Pieper, Chair, SIDIT**

Mayor Pieper was elected the Chair of SIDIT in June 2019. He is a lifelong resident of the Armstrong Area, first elected to Armstrong City Council in 1989, elected Mayor in 2008 and sworn in to his fourth term in November 2018.

He was honoured by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) in 2018 in recognition of his 25 years of municipal government service.

Mayor Pieper has always played an active role in the community. He worked in the forest industry for 32 years and then as a forestry consultant until 2016 when he retired. His beloved wife of 47 years Anita passed away unexpectedly in October 2018. Together they shared three children and three grandchildren.

MINISTRY OF JOBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS  
**DECISION NOTE**

Cliff #: 148818

Date: May 1, 2020

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness

**ISSUE:** Development of a “BC Marketplace” in response to COVID19

**BACKGROUND:**

COVID-19 has changed the landscape of how businesses in B.C. currently operate and has had significant impacts on businesses across the province in all sectors. Businesses that have been able to pivot to, and increase, online sales have been better able to maintain cash flow and employment. The need to develop and implement programs to support the success of B.C. business is needed now more than ever before.

The Small Business Branch has been exploring opportunities to implement a province-wide online platform similar to the model developed in Quebec. In addition, the Planning and Innovation Branch of JEDC is currently working on initiatives to train workers and develop digital marketing strategies. This includes the expansion of the existing Digital Marketing Bootcamp which will build capacity as businesses expand their online platforms to adjust to the new realities of post COVID-19 recovery environment.

**DISCUSSION:**

Some industry associations, and municipal and provincial governments have been trying to support businesses in shifting their business models, and help citizens find and access businesses online. Three examples of such programs are Victoria’s <https://supportlocalyyj.com/>, Kamloops’ <https://kamloops.thingsthatareopen.com/>, and LOCO BC’s <https://www.locobc.ca/cpages/bc-buy-local>, all of which have designed sites to help residents support local businesses. The Ministry of Agriculture has also leveraged the Buy BC program to support customers to find B.C. agriculture products.

The most prominent example of a “buy local” program on a province-wide scale is Le Panier Bleu (The Blue Basket) in Quebec <https://www.lepanierbleu.ca/>. The website, hosted by a non-profit agency, lists participating QC businesses that have the ability to do electronic commerce. The Province of Quebec introduced this initiative to encourage the purchase of Quebec-made goods online in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. The portal was promoted through media outlets and included strong social media. The cost to develop and launch the service is estimated at \$250,000 for the first few months. Retailers are responsible for creating their profile on the Blue Basket site and all transactions take place on the respective merchant sites. The digital platform allows Quebec residents to identify local products and services in each of the regions.

In British Columbia, Small Business BC (SBBC) has recently launched an online Marketplace for businesses <https://smallbusinessbc.ca/marketplace/>. This Marketplace is similar to Le Panier Bleu, and supports businesses in having a centralized, searchable online presence. Businesses are organized by sector type and the site includes a section for Indigenous businesses. Since the launch of Marketplace on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 580 businesses have uploaded to the platform and

there have been 14,000 page views in the first 14 days. Small Business staff have been in discussion with SBBC about their new Marketplace platform with a focus on opportunities for a provincial partnership with enhanced features and marketing.

s.13; s.16

<b>Approved / Not Approved</b>	Date:
Minister's Signature:	

ADM Contact: Christine Little, SBJW Division

Prepared by: Andrew Esser-Haines, Sr. Policy Analyst, Small Business Branch

Reviewed by			
Dir:	ED: JH	ADM: CL	DM: FM

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