



Business Council of
British Columbia

**BUSINESS COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
2011-12 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY
INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

1. COMPETITIVE AND COORDINATED ECONOMIC POLICY

Provincial

- Provincial budgets and fiscal policy
- Harmonized sales tax – transition back to PST; development of a strategy to mitigate the negative impact of this on BC business and industry
- Business (class four) property tax review
- Complete work plan for a new Business Council Competitiveness Committee.
- Engage with provincial panel appointed by the Minister of Finance to examine BC's competitiveness
- British Columbia's Asia-Pacific Strategy
- Transportation policy and key infrastructure investments
- Launch new Business Council economic issues "blog" in 2012
- Monitoring of, and publication of analyses on, the provincial economy (regular publications include: BC Economic Snapshot, Policy Perspectives, and BC Economic Index)

Note: The Business Council is currently participating in:

- ⇒ British Columbia Minister of Finance's Economic Forecast Council
- ⇒ Greater Vancouver Gateway Council

Federal Government

- Federal budgets and fiscal policy
- Trade policy -- support for BC industry positions and priorities; advocacy in support of Canadian participation in bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.
- Business tax competitiveness (income tax, capital cost allowances, SRE+D tax credits)
- Issues affecting Canadian productivity
- Federal regulatory activity in areas impacting British Columbia business; Red Tape Reduction Commission
- Federal transportation policy



Note: The Business Council is currently participating in:
⇒ Economic Advisory Group to the Federal Minister of Finance

Metro Vancouver Regional District

- Implementation of new Regional Growth Strategy; advocacy aimed at the provincial government to influence development in Metro

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SECURITY AND ACCESS TO THE LAND
BASE

Provincial

- British Columbia government policies concerning climate change (carbon tax, GHG reporting, low-carbon fuel standard, cap-and-trade regulation, role of offsets, etc.)
- Western Climate Initiative process
- Provincial policies on ambient air quality; BC Air Action Plan
- Contaminated Sites legislation and regulation
- Water Act review; development of a new Water Sustainability Act
- Codes of Practice under the Environmental Management Act
- Environmental Assessment Act monitoring and review
- Development of a new provincial policy on Environmental Mitigation and Offsetting
- Species at risk issues in a provincial context
- Pesticide regulation under Integrated Pest management Act; (review of 'cosmetic' pesticide regulation)
- Aboriginal policy
- Promotion of aboriginal economic development
- Pursue and encourage business dialogue and relationship-building with First Nations
- Development of clear provincial government on consultation and accommodation requirements in respect of the development of projects on Crown land
- Continue to support and advocate for improvements in the BC Treaty process
- Legal interventions and assessment of court decisions

Federal

- Climate change policy
- Regulation of air pollutants
- Fisheries Act reform; operation of Department of Fisheries and Oceans in BC
- Implementation of the Species at Risk Act



Environmental assessment; review of Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

- Other federal legislation touching on the environment
- Federal government policy with respect to First Nations issues

Note: The Business Council is currently participating in:

- ⇒ The Industry Steering Committee on Climate Change and Clean Air Issues
- ⇒ Pacific Region DFO-industry stakeholder dialogue and consultation initiative
- ⇒ Industry Working Group
- ⇒ Direct discussions with First Nations leaders, including the First Nations Leadership Council, the First Nations Summit and the Assembly of First Nations.
- ⇒ Environmental Assessment Act Stakeholder Advisory Committee (joint BC and federal government body)

3. ENERGY ADVANTAGE

- Energy policy, including electricity supply and pricing; oil and gas development; advancing BC's LNG opportunity
- Bio-energy issues
- Support and facilitate LNG and natural gas export development; define strategies to attract business to BC using our energy advantage
- Review of BC Clean Energy Act

4. INNOVATION AND PRODUCTIVITY

- Create an Innovation and Productivity strategy for BC
- Develop a research, technology and applied research agenda that supports the policy
- Create and guide the agenda for the new BCBC Leadership Council on Productivity and Innovation to align with federal activity; review and comment on the recommendations of the federal Expert Panel on R&D support (Jenkins report)



5. LABOUR, EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL

Provincial

- Skill shortages and the development of a provincial human capital strategy for an era of talent scarcity
- Labour Relations Code, *Employment Standards Act* and regulations, occupational health and safety legislation/regulation, provincial Human Rights policy and legislation
- WorkSafe BC (rate-setting, regulation development, proposed changes touching on “mental stress” claims)
- Labour Relations Board legal interventions on cases of interest to the employer community
- Training policies and the role of the Industry Training Authority
- Pension and retirement policy issues affecting employers
- Structure, mandate and funding of provincial post-secondary education system
- Immigrant and aboriginal participation in the workforce
- Provincial Immigrant Nominee Program (PNP)
- Promotion of non-university career options (“The Third Option”)
- Maintenance of province-wide collective bargaining data base.
- Publication of the Industrial Relations Bulletin (monitors collective bargaining activity and settlements, wage trends, and other indicators)

Note: The Business Council is currently participating in:

- ⇒ WorkSafe BC advisory committees on various policy initiatives
- ⇒ Asia-Pacific Gateway Skills Table

Federal

- *Canada Labour Code* legislative changes (these apply to federally-regulated industries including banking, transportation, and telecommunications)
- Employment Insurance program (regular consultations on annual premium setting and program parameters)
- Monitor and provide input on immigration policy, programs and practices – admissions criteria, temporary workers, foreign credential recognition and related issues

Note: The Business Council is currently participating in:

- ⇒ Business Liaison Group to the Employers’ Commissioner for the EI program