



# UNIONS WORK TO BUILD BC

**Our province is built by union members across BC.** Infrastructure projects large and small have helped to define our province, shape our economy and secure prosperity for future generations.

Demand for that kind of construction **will grow quickly in the coming years.** We need to repair, replace and upgrade aging infrastructure; address the pressures of our growing population; effect swift repairs when climate disasters strike; and respond to the tariff war (and our long-term economic and social needs) with large-scale “province- and nation-building” projects.

None of this can happen without workers — and that’s where BC faces serious challenges.

**BuildForce Canada projections** show our province will need **an additional 60,100 skilled trades workers in non-residential construction by 2034.** But **trades training providers** are in a funding crisis, and a much-needed promise to **deliver increased funding of \$50 million/year for three years** has seen no movement, while **smaller funding programs are running their course.** And the next set of skilled trades certifications has yet to be implemented, to ensure only qualified workers perform high-risk tasks like crane operation and ironwork.

Meanwhile, trade workers are being **exploited on the job through misclassification,** and work is becoming more precarious. And we have a long way to go until women, Indigenous workers and other underrepresented groups have equal opportunities to build careers in the skilled trades.

Which makes it especially frustrating to see BC pass **projects like building the next fleet of ferries** on to our overseas competitors. We are missing out, not only on the immediate job potential, but the enduring benefit of building sustainable industries here for the long haul.

Unions are ready to stand beside government to build a British Columbia that delivers for all of us.

## HOW UNIONS ARE BUILDING BC TODAY

**BC union members are contributing their skills and expertise to major infrastructure projects right now.**

*Many of the same workers who built the Site C project are now at work on projects like the Broadway Subway line, the Pattullo Bridge, and BCIT’s Trades and Technology Complex. When our province needs new roads, transit, schools, and hospitals, union workers are there to deliver them. And they do the job right.*

*They’re also **ready when disaster strikes,** protecting and repairing critical infrastructure. Union members defend our communities from forest fires and play key roles in rebuilding efforts after disasters like the devastating floods in the Fraser Valley.*

*Union tradespeople are helping to **prepare our province for a low-carbon future,** by conducting building retrofits to reduce energy consumption. They’re building transit like the Broadway Subway line to reduce transportation emissions, one of our province’s most polluting sectors. And workers are installing charging stations to increase electric vehicle uptake.*

*And because these projects are built by skilled, unionized workers, British Columbians can be confident the infrastructure their communities rely on is **built right — and built to last.***



## WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED TOGETHER

Unions working together with progressive governments toward shared goals are a powerful force. We help the BC government understand the most pressing issues facing working people — and work to create the political room to address them.

That's how we've made important progress together in building BC, including:

- historic **investments in infrastructure**;
- **restoring skilled trades certification**, establishing 7 initial trades to ensure workers have the qualifications they need;
- created the BC Centre for Women in the Trades, a provincially-funded partnership led by tradespeople with participation from industry and labour, working under the BCFED umbrella to remove barriers to the trades faced by equity-priority people;
- implementing **project labour agreements** on several key infrastructure projects; and
- investing in **labour-delivered programs** promoting equity and diversity in the trades.

## WHAT'S NEXT

BC workers need action from your government in these key areas:

- making a significant investment through Skilled Trades BC so union trades schools and public universities can **train the workforce we need**;
- implementing **Project Labour Agreements** more broadly to prioritize the hiring of local workers, ensure hiring practices are inclusive and provide workers with fair wages and safe working conditions through good union jobs;
- procuring **made-in-BC products** — like new ferries, wood products and steel;
- moving more urgently to **expand skilled trades certification** by adding new trades;
- investing in **strategic infrastructure projects like public transit** to deliver multiplier impacts to our communities and build the foundation for future growth; and
- developing a **workforce development strategy, including for CleanBC**.

### WHAT ARE PROJECT LABOUR AGREEMENTS?

*A Project Labour Agreement (PLA, also known as a Community Building Agreement) is a collective agreement for major public infrastructure projects between the project owner and building trade unions.*

*PLAs keep projects on track, costs in line, and protect labour standards and equity measures:*

- *They establish wage standards, making sure everyone working on the project is being paid fairly.*
- *They prohibit strikes, helping to ensure the project finishes on time.*
- *They guarantee apprenticeship ratios, so we're training the next generation of skilled tradespeople.*
- *And they promote the hiring of local, underrepresented workers, including women, Indigenous people and other equity-deserving groups, opening doors to rewarding careers in the trades.*

In challenging times, **unions** are a crucial part of the solution to many of the problems BC is facing. Whether it's affordability and the economy, health and safety, equity or building the infrastructure we need, **unions help make our province and our communities stronger.**

