

B.C. TO BUILD ON OLYMPIC MOMENTUM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

October 1, 2010

WHISTLER – The Province will build on B.C.'s Olympic momentum with the next phase of a capital vision that began in 2002 and a strategy that focuses on smart growth and smart communities, Premier Gordon Campbell announced at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.



Premier Gordon Campbell addressed the Union of B.C. Municipalities annual convention about moving our economy forward and building on British Columbia's sport and cultural legacies.



Hon. Gordon Campbell

Check Against Delivery

Well, it's great to be back here on the traditional territories of the Squamish and Lillooet First Nations in the incredible resort municipality of Whistler. The last time I was here was in the middle of the Olympic Games, so it is great to be back. It brought back lots of memories.

I want to start today by saying thank you to Harry for the great work you've done as president and leader of the UBCM over the last year. Without the time, effort and commitment of people like Harry, the UBCM wouldn't have continued to grow over the last number of years to be the preeminent municipal association not just in British Columbia but in Canada. Congratulations to you and thank you very much to Harry. Thank you, Harry.

And you can all imagine how thrilled I was to see that Barb Steele has been elected your next president. I've asked her how she managed that come-from-behind victory. I love those words, "come from behind" and "victory." Congratulations to you, Barb.

Today as we start I just wanted to recognize some municipal leaders who have now passed away. I want to recognize Ross Marks who was a great leader of 100 Mile House and the UBCM for so long, was a real exemplar of what public service is about. Lela Irvine, Creston's first female mayor, and of course a member of the UBCM executive while I was on the UBCM executive. She too was a strong advocate, particularly for smaller communities. Alan Emmott, the former Reeve of Burnaby; someone who was known as Mr. Burnaby and served for year after year and was never shy about telling us here at the UBCM exactly what we should do if we wanted to get it right. Nelson Leeson, the president of the Nisga'a Lisims government and what a great leader he was for the Nisga'a people and a great example he was for all of us. And finally as we gather here in Whistler in this great convention centre in this host city to the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, I couldn't help but think about my old friend and colleague Ted Nebbeling. Those people all gave incredibly to the people of British Columbia, and I want to recognize their service.

So how many of you remember what you were doing 215 days ago today? Well, I can tell you what you were doing. You were gathered with most Canadians who were very nervous at this particular time about who was going to win the hockey game -- the hockey game -- and you were like most Canadians when it finished; you were full of celebration. Who would have thought a small hockey game in Vancouver, British Columbia would have resonated from coast to coast to coast, to the far most northern point of Canada, southern point of Canada? You were celebrating Sidney's great goal and the best Winter Olympics in the history of the Games.

I loved those days. I loved those days and the celebration and the red mitts. Remember the red mitts? I just loved those red mitts. I'd go by and people would be waving their red mitts. And the great thing about the red mitts was you could never be quite sure what people were doing with their fingers. I don't have the same problem today, unfortunately.

It really does seem like it was quite a long time ago, quite a long time ago that we were awarded the Games to begin with. Quite a long time ago that we had that feeling of excitement that was building up in community after community after community after community, first across this great nation and then across our province, from north to south, from the Kootenays to the coast. All over British Columbia people were celebrating the Olympic Games. And then it was over as fast as a zip-line ride.

Bang, it was done.

But what an incredible show it was. 3.5 billion people from around the world saw British Columbians, in many cases for the first time, really in our hearts we all celebrated as we saw those images on television of this spectacular province and this incredible country. As we listened to the comments about not just our cities and our communities, but you listened to the words of our athletes and you watched the performances and every day we seemed to see that sea of red pouring into the streets and celebrating British Columbia, Canada, excellence, performance and all we could be as Canadians.

You know, the last time you were here at the UBCM I was with you in 2002 and we hadn't been even awarded the Games yet, but we said let's try. We said let's make the effort. Let's strive to be the best we can be. Let's win that international competition. Of course there were some people that said you'll never do it. You shouldn't try. What if it doesn't work? Then we were awarded the Games, and there were people that said you'll never do it. It'll never be built on time. Or why did we do it? I knew why we did it, and you in this room knew why we did it. We did it because we know when we reach high and we strive, when we actually work together as communities, as a province, as a country, there really is nothing we can't accomplish as Canadians, and that Olympics was not just superb because of our athletes, but we exceeded every expectation. Every expectation we set for ourselves we exceeded it.

Salt Lake City. I was talking to you about the great number of people they watched their Games in Salt Lake City; two billion. British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada's Games, 3.5 billion. Remember talking about Own the Podium? How many of you remember the discussion about Own the Podium in the first couple of days, three days, four days of the Games? Oh, we never should have said Own the Podium. Oh, you know, for Canadians to say they're going to own the...What will we do? It's too much pressure on our athletes. How will we manage? And then our athletes, Canada's athletes, our team, Canada's team won more Olympic gold medals than had ever been won in a Winter Olympic Games in history. That's what happens when we set our goals. That's what happens when we learn. That's what happens when we focus our attention. And that's what happens when we celebrate success. What an incredible show.

And it was more than our athletes; it was all of the people that were part of the Olympics. I remember saying that one of the things that touched me as I went from community to community, that the real gift of the Olympics was the inspiration it gave to the next generation of Canadians. A friend of mine had tickets for the closing ceremony. Now, you might recall the closing ceremony was pretty close after Sidney Crosby scored his gold medal goal that won that game. But my friend was committed to his kids and wanted to be sure they were down there in plenty of time to get their seats for the closing ceremonies, and he left his house just before he knew the results. They were driving downtown, driving along and there were people on the street and there were people on the bridges and they all seemed to be celebrating. His little five-year-old daughter looked at him and said: "Daddy, those people out there are crazy." They got to the parking lot and they parked, and they walked the eight blocks to the closing ceremonies, to the stadium. At every intersection where they had to stop they diligently stopped. At every intersection she started singing O Canada, and at every intersection everyone with her joined her in singing O Canada.

These Olympic Games for her aren't going to be Alexandre Bilodeau's first gold medal or Maelle Ricker's incredible efforts as she went through and won her gold or any of that sort of thing that you and I might remember. She is going to remember the time that everyone was singing O Canada. What an incredible gift to our children as they march into the 21st century holding their heads high as Canadians.

And let me just tell you one more story. Dick Ebersol, the genius of NBC sports, who has done Olympics after Olympics after Olympics, had been involved with us, with Jack Poole and John Furlong, and I'd had a chance to meet with him on a number of occasions. I went to see him a couple of days before the close of the games. He said: "You know, Gord, it's been incredible here. I've never felt safer at an Olympic Games." He said: "The amazing thing. I never saw a weapon. We saw police, we saw volunteers, we saw thousands of people in the streets, we were safe, but I never saw a weapon." That is Canada. That is British Columbia.

So make no mistake. When you set your goal to say forging gold medal standards, we've already managed to reach a number of gold medal standards in our country, in our province, in your communities. People around the world know, to use the line we used from our advertising campaigns throughout the Olympics, you've got to be here. I want to send a special thank you to the 95 Spirit Committees across this province who did such an exceptional job of fostering that Olympic spirit and giving it to every single British Columbian and Canadian across this country.

If you think about it, they really touched all of us. I want to just tell you one last story. We're in Golden. It's the first big torch celebration as we arrive in Golden. I'm there, and the torch bearer from Golden was 94 years old. He wasn't going to win any races, but he got up those stairs. He was incredibly proud of what he'd done, and he was clearly someone that the whole community embraced and loved, and he was someone that everyone in the community knew. Golden, I think, is a community with a population of about 4,000. I think they had about 4,500 when the torch came in. He was asked a question by the person on stage. "What's the secret to your longevity?" he was asked? His answer? "It's simple. I'm from Golden, British Columbia."

So as we think of forging gold medal standards, we should think of all the lessons we learned as we

went through the experience of hosting the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, the experience and the example that Jack Poole set, that exceptional volunteer, for the last eight years of his life volunteering to give the Olympics to all of us, the people across our country; to give the Olympics and the opportunities to our athletes and our artists. That will be commemorated for some time with Jack Poole Plaza in Vancouver, as I announced at last year's UBCM.

Today I can tell you that we will be commissioning three totem poles on the lawns of the Legislature to tell the story of our Olympics and to celebrate our athletes, the Four Host First Nations and artists of this country, the federal government, local governments, the people of British Columbia and the 26,000 blue-coated volunteers which were the face, the spirit and the character of Vancouver, Whistler, Richmond and British Columbia in 2010.

So as we look out to the 21st century, we should have confidence. We should have confidence as we move forward, as our athletes had confidence. We should have confidence as we move forward that we can accomplish our goals. We have to set our goals. We have to learn from our mistakes. Sometimes we may not succeed as well as we might. Maelle Ricker had, I think, eight operations before she finally got on the mountain and won her gold medal. There are days, I'm sure, when she doubted whether she should try to do it, but she did. She persevered. Build on our strengths and focus on our goals.

The new realities we face are here for good: the realities of global warming, soaring health care costs, true reconciliation with First Nations. The realities of urban sprawl and ever-tighter budgets challenge us all, local, provincial and federal governments, but if we follow the example of our gold medal athletes, if we set the vision, learn from our mistakes, build on our strengths, focus on our goals, we will exceed our expectations.

The possibilities of the future for British Columbia will be built on smart growth and smart communities. Our goal is to continue to give British Columbians the best quality of life and the highest standard of living for our families, for our children. We want to make sure we have an economy that's thriving, that encourages investment and job creation, that gives families the paycheques they need so they can take care of themselves and build for their future. That encourages small business and recognizes the strengths of our industrial plant. We want to build on our clean-energy advantage, our wealth of natural resources and the exceptional and diverse human talents that currently reside in this great province.

We're going to drive our economy forward by controlling costs of government, for sure. By leaving more money in people's pockets while investing still more in critical government services. We can create clean, smart, healthy, vibrant communities designed to meet the needs of the families of our 21st century, to foster the best in sports, in arts, in culture, in volunteer creativity, the best in all of us.

We will make smart investments in rapid transit, transportation, in community facilities, in infrastructure; and plan for environmentally sustainable growth and housing strategies that minimize costs, maximize convenience and access to jobs, amenities and services that people need and want. We will build schools designed for 21st century needs in the hearts of our neighbourhoods and communities large and small across this province. We will expand international tourism, trade and investment, particularly with our partners in Asia. We will focus on healthy lifestyles and healthy communities. And we will continue to build on the strengths of our communities and our province and our geographical location as we move forward.

Some will always say that that is too ambitious. Some will say that we shouldn't reach too high. I say we should reach high, we should work together, and the time to act is now.

We've done this before. In 2002 I came and I spoke with you at the UBCM, and I laid out a plan to open up British Columbia, the opportunities of British Columbia, to the Pacific century. Remember in 2002 we were in the throes of the turmoil and the economic disturbance that had been created by 9/11.

Remember the Sea to Sky Highway in 2002? Anyone remember that? Any of you guys drive the Sea to Sky Highway to get up here? We said we would build it. We said it would be a public-private partnership. We built it, on time, on budget, met all of the needs that we had for the Olympics. It's safer by 50%. There are 50% less accidents today since we opened that road, and we've got literally tens of millions of dollars of additional value. That Sea to Sky Highway was an investment worth making. It was an investment for this region, it was an investment for the province, and it was an investment we did together because we had the vision to do it.

In addition to Sea to Sky, we said we were going to start making improvements to the Kicking Horse Canyon. Have any of you seen the Park Bridge? We said we were going to build a new floating bridge in Kelowna. Have any of you seen the W.R. Bennett Bridge? They're all there today because we had the vision to do it in partnership, reinforcing the needs of communities, connecting communities with transportation infrastructure.

I can remember saying in 2002 we were going to have a container port in the town of Prince Rupert, something people had been talking about for almost a century. Guess what? Today we have the first phase of a container port in Prince Rupert. And with Prince Rupert and with the northwest region of this province, with the Skeena region of this province, we are looking at phase 2 which will strengthen

aboriginal economies, local economies, the regional economy and Canada's economy as we move into the 21st century.

Together we built Spirit Squares, Olympic Live Sites, Towns for Tomorrow improvements, Local Motion projects and sewage and water treatment plants. We set the foundation for the future. But now is no time to stop. It's no time for us to feel tired. Now is the time for us to build on that foundation. Now is the time for us to build smart, compact, liveable communities that are conducive to rapid transit, more affordable housing, vibrant neighbourhoods. We know how to reduce service costs and traffic congestion and senseless urban sprawl. Let's build greener communities and start approving smarter designs while we improve our air quality, our human health and the quality of life for everybody that we serve that lives here in British Columbia. As Rich Coleman told you this week, we're going to drive for that vision with you and we're going to accomplish that vision together.

Here's another Olympic gold medal story: The Canada Line. Lots of discussion about the Canada Line. Should we do it? Shouldn't we do it? Can we build it in time for the Olympic Games? We started. We built it not just on time, on budget and opened it three months ahead of schedule. But here's what's really important. We built it for the future of the region.

How many have used the Canada Line? How do you like it so far? Exactly, and that's what you hear from citizen after citizen, from Kamloops, from Kelowna, from Cranbrook, from Prince George, from Richmond, from Vancouver. You hear about the value of the Canada Line.

A young man came up to me maybe four or five weeks ago and said: "You know, I love that Canada Line." I said: "Well, that's good." He said: "You know what? I'm looking for a house really close the transit stop because I think if I actually get to have a home close to where that transit stop is I've figured it out. I'll save \$7,000 a year. I won't have to buy a car, another car. I won't have to buy the insurance. I won't have to keep it working. I figured it out. I won't have to pay for the parking. Do you know how much parking costs?" I said: "I have an idea." Seven thousand dollars a year after taxes he figures he'd save. Think of what most families could do with \$7,000 a year for their kids and for their lifestyle. That's why we have to continue to build transit, build transit to meet the needs of the people we all serve. We all serve the same people. The mayor of Port Coquitlam serves the same people that I serve as the Premier of the province, the same people as the MLA for Port Coquitlam serves, the same people as the MP for Port Coquitlam serves. They're all the same folks. We have to find ways that we build partnerships that allow us to actually do what people want us to do and need us to do if they're going to enhance their quality of life.

So the province is working with the Mayors' Council of TransLink to make sure that we have integrated cities. That we can provide for that transit service that's so critical in the long term with sustainable funding, because we can't pretend that it doesn't cost something to do it. I can tell you it costs us something not to do it as well, and equally important, it costs our families lots if we don't do it and we don't do it well. I want to thank Peter Fassbender for his leadership in understanding that there is only one taxpayer and it's only through partnerships that we will be successful.

So the federal government has provided \$417m towards the Evergreen Line. We've provided \$400m. TransLink is going to provide their share. I can tell you this, and I can tell you with a degree of confidence that you can take to the bank. The TransLink Evergreen Line is going to start in the spring of 2011, and it's going to be there for people of the northeast sector of Metro Vancouver by 2014 when we open it up. And we're going to do more.

It's time to get started doing the SkyTrain to Langley City which has planned itself to actually provide the opportunities for the future that are required to make sure that transit works. It's time to get ready to build a rapid bus from Langley to Chilliwack. It's time to build rapid transit to UBC. It's time we got started. We decided finally on the technology. We made the decisions within the next year so we can get on with building the kind of communities and cities that we need that will serve the needs of our citizens.

We need to expand a rapid bus from Kelowna to West Kelowna. We need to get the rapid bus launched in the capital regional district, and we're going to significantly expand public transit options in other regional centres like Prince George and Kamloops and Nanaimo and Courtenay-Comox as we create cities for the 21st century that can meet the needs of the people of the 21st century in an environmentally sound way.

And the transportation system is not just transit. We're going to fast-track the Cariboo Connector and expedite major improvements on Highway 97, Highway 3, Highway 16 and the Trans Canada Highway. We've just started opening the Pacific Gateway. We're going to open it even wider as we move into the 21st century.

These transportation networks are vital links to our environmental and our economic future. They are the way that we tap into the promise of British Columbia and Canada in the 21st century. And we should recognize that this is not just about smart growth for British Columbia's economy. It's smart growth for Canada's economy. And I want to take a moment to say we have to recognize the contribution of the partnership that we've had from the federal government in meeting our transportation and capital objectives across this province, and a special thank you from ferry-dependent communities for remitting that \$119m that they will use to reduce ferry fares across the province. Thank you to the federal government for that partnership.

Now, there are people that say we shouldn't get started, similar voices, probably, to what we heard in 2002. But we all know this. The cost of borrowing is not going to get cheaper than it is today. The skilled labour available is not going to be more available in the future than it is today. And waiting won't save us a penny. It only costs us time, money and benefits to the families, communities and our environment.

Partnerships BC has already become recognized around the world for the gold medal standards that it's had in delivering projects on budget and on time. The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Shirley Bond, will work with Partnerships BC. They will come forward with a plan that will make sure that we move this second stage of opening the Pacific Gateway on to completion.

We will encourage private sector investment. Frankly, the more we can get of private sector investment, the more we can do, the more rapidly we can do it, and we will work on behalf of Canada and the people of British Columbia in opening this Pacific Gateway as wide as possible to create opportunity after opportunity after opportunity for every person in British Columbia and particularly for the children that depend on our making right decisions

I can say to you with confidence today that British Columbia can have the most dynamic, exciting and diversified economy north of California. We can have it. We have to reach for it, we have to work together, but we will accomplish that goal if we stay committed to it. We have a chance to become the clean energy powerhouse and supplier of natural gas not just to new customers in the United States but new customers across North America and across the Pacific. This is a national priority. We want to see Site C developed pending environmental reviews and First Nations consultation. We're going to build and open up the Highway 37 transmission line in northwestern BC to open up literally untold amounts of economic opportunity in the Skeena region of our province. We are the world's best forest products producer anywhere. We have the best workers, the most productive. We will be poised for prosperity when the US economy turns. But in the meantime we are going to go and we are going to access and we are going to drive to become the primary supplier of wood products not just in China but in Korea, in Japan, in India and throughout the Asia Pacific, and that will create jobs and opportunities in town after town after town in this province.

You and I both know that we are still suffering through a huge transition. The festering problem of the pine beetle remains, and it remains as a challenge not just for local governments but for the provincial and the federal governments. I want to take a moment just to say thanks. We have three pine beetle action committees. They call themselves the "three-backs." We have these pine beetle action committees that are working to find ways to diversify their economy, to opening up opportunities, new things that they can do to make sure they have the jobs and opportunities they need. They have been the leaders of creating the partnership between the provincial government and our federal government and I think we have to say thank you to them for the time, effort and energy they've put in on behalf of all of us.

Literally dozens of communities are impacted, and here's something that's great. In terms of a gold medal standard those communities have hung together. They've found common purpose and common objectives. And to reinforce their efforts and to make sure that they know that we will be their partner in working with the federal government to access the millions of additional dollars that are yet to come to help the pine beetle we will be providing each of the "three-backs" with one million dollars a year to help you pursue your goals so that you can act now and we can build the kind of economy that each of your communities needs in each of your parts of the province.

I want to be clear. Forestry is a critically important part of our economic future in this province, and we are going to make sure that we are not just the most competitive and most productive forest industry. We're going to be creative, and we're going to access those markets and get them on behalf of all of our workers. I want to congratulate Pat Bell and all of the industry for working together so diligently to bring that together for all of us.

But I also want to tell you there's more out there. Here in this great province, this great sea of mountains, we have some of the richest mineral resources anywhere in the world. Mining is a critical cornerstone of our economic future, and that's why we've been such strong proponents of one project and one process.

You know, one process for one project does not mean that there's not thorough and detailed and comprehensive and diligent scientific review in terms of the environmental objectives. It doesn't mean we won't review issues with First Nations and make sure they share in the part of the prosperity that mining can present. It does mean this. When you have a project like the Prosperity Mine, which has gone through process after process after process, consultation after consultation, 17 years, received environmental approvals, received support, we should actually get on with sending the message that mining is here in British Columbia. We're going to do it responsibly, and this government says let's get on with the Prosperity Mine in this province.

This is a critically important decision that the federal government is faced with right now, because the decision will not just have an impact on mining in British Columbia. It will have an impact on mining across Canada. And we should remember this. We can be smarter. We can be better. We can supply that mineral resource that's so critical. It will be a cornerstone of our economic future, our families' economic future.

Our province was built on mining. When you talk about setting a gold medal standard, anyone ever heard of the gold rush in British Columbia? That was mining. You don't have gold medals if you don't have mining. Let's get mining going in this province, let's build on it, and let's say thanks for the contributions they make to our quality of life.

It's why it's so important that we continue to work, as challenging as it can be and as difficult as it can be for First Nations and non-First Nations alike. It's why it's so important that we continue to build towards true reconciliation and true recognition of the contributions that First Nations make across this province. They're going to be real partners -- real partners -- in the future prosperity generated by mining and forestry and tourism and energy, real partners in our future so every British Columbian says: "When this province prospers, I have a chance to prosper as well." That's gold medal performance, and First Nations should know we're there for them on that.

And as we look to the future, I think it's important for us to recognize another incredible natural resource we have that has huge economic potential. Our park lands in British Columbia are something that we should all, and we rightfully do, take great pride in. You know, next year will be the 100th anniversary of BC Parks. We often forget this, but they are a huge tourism magnet, and tourism is a huge part of our economic future in this province. So I can tell you today that there is going to be a celebration of parks in British Columbia in 2011. We will restore interpretive and enhance interpretive programs so people understand the incredible opportunities that we have here: our natural environment, our natural living systems, our salmon runs, all of those things, our aboriginal history. All of those we will use to remind British Columbians of how fortunate we are and how important it is that we follow stewardship practices that protect those parks for the future.

Part of that system, part of this vast land that we call British Columbia, we have had access to in the past through the use of rural resource roads. I know that they have been a critical component of your discussions over the last year with former minister Bill Bennett, and they continue to be with Ben Stewart, but let me tell you this. We understand how important rural resource roads are to attract and retain skilled workers in your communities. They are critical to your quality of life; they are critical to our quality of life.

You should know that we support the vision of making sure that we maintain and protect our rural resource roads for rural communities across this province. We will be introducing a comprehensive and cost-effective program to help stop the unabated decommissioning of resource roads, because we know that that makes a huge difference in your quality of life. We want to keep those roads in place so citizens can continue to use them safely as the essential links that they are for all of us.

We will also, as we move into the celebration in 2011 of BC Parks 100th anniversary, we will join with 20 communities and 20 First Nations along the Fraser River from Hope to the Salish Sea in the "Experience the Fraser" project that they have been working so hard to put together. The Fraser River is one of our most majestic resources. Protecting and celebrating that remarkable waterway has been a goal and an objective of parks committees in both the Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley regional districts. Almost 20 First Nations and 20 municipalities I mentioned are touched by it. I want to say to Gayle Martin, to Randy Hawes, to James Atebe and to Marc Dalton, thank you for your leadership. We will all experience the Fraser as we put that broad and sweeping vision together with you. We will be your partner, and we will make it happen together.

Now, as we look to the future and we think of what we can do, it is important for us to look back. It is important for us to learn from our mistakes. Let me underline that? Learn from our mistakes. There is no gold medal athlete that will tell you they didn't occasionally fall on the way to their destination. Well, we have to be willing to learn from our mistakes, as well, in our government. To put it charitably, the way we introduced and communicated the HST didn't exactly forge the gold medal standard for public support and understanding.

I don't know how many of you remember the incredible performance of Scott Moir and Tessa Virtue in the Olympics, what a picture of grace and discipline. They just were magnificent. They were a symphony on ice. They got a gold medal. Okay. I think it's fair to say that my skating partner, Colin Hansen, and I could have maybe used a little more practice and were no Moir and Virtue. We probably would have been wise to skate around a little bit to get the crowd into this program before we launched it. Of course, we were attempting an incredibly difficult manoeuvre, the quadruple-double axel with a flip.

But the clock was ticking, we didn't have a lot of time, and we were told that if we didn't get out on the ice, the fact is we were going to be off the ice for at least two years. So we got out there, and we started skating, and we rushed out, and we threw the HST up in the air, and we promptly fell on our faces.

Well, we soldiered on with the program. Some were saying that the only thing that we had really mastered was the death spiral. Few disputed the degree of difficulty that we attempted, but we did fail to convey its technical merits, and -- let's be honest -- we bombed on artistic impression.

Having said all that, we can learn from our mistakes. This is a serious issue, and people have been very clear about it. First, a lot of people don't think we told them the truth before the election. I can tell you this. Not once did I have a discussion about moving to a harmonized sales tax prior to the election. I heard about it back in the 90s; dismissed it. Not flexible enough; can't set our own tax rates: not once did we consider it.

Now, I know there's a lot of people that are never going to believe that. The great irony is the only way that I can convince some people I was telling the truth is to tell them a lie. I'm not going to do that. I am, though, going to learn, and I am going to listen to what people said to us.

This is what they said, pretty clearly, over the last number of months: "We want a say on something that is that important." I can tell you this: I agree with the legislative committee that said you and every British Columbian should have a say. I want to tell you this too. If 51 per cent of British Columbians say it's better to go back, to restore the PST, we'll follow that. If they say let's get going and move forward, we'll follow that. It's your call. For one day in 2011 every eligible voter in British Columbia gets to be the Minister of Finance.

Now, how many of you have said to me: "If only I could be the Minister of Finance"? You're it. Now, as Minister of Finance you know this is a very serious matter. This decision has consequences. Regardless of which way we go, it has consequences. It has consequences on people, on their jobs. It has consequences on your community, on our economy. But it is your call.

It's important, I think, for us to remember that this is a province that has actually laid a foundation to be one of the most competitive taxation regimes in the world. That's why we've been attracting investment. It's why, since 2002, when I talked to you, we've created over 400,000 new jobs in British Columbia. But as we go through the next year, let's see if we can just take a moment to put this politics aside and to focus on the issue, because it's the issue that's important. It's the issue that will have a direct impact on people's lives.

Today, under the new system, 1.1 million low-income British Columbians get a cheque, quarterly cheques adding up to \$230 a year, in the mail to help them get through the challenges they need. Ask yourself if the seniors in your community would like to give that \$230 back and get zero instead. A low-income family of four gets quarterly cheques amounting to \$920 a year to help them -- to help them meet whatever the challenges they may find with the new harmonized sales tax but really to help them make their own choices about their lives. Ask yourself this. Will they be better off if they don't get that \$920? That's what a change back will mean. It's their choice. It's your choice.

How many of you here think it's important to have a vibrant forest industry in British Columbia? How many workers depend on forestry in British Columbia? I can tell you this. This decision will have an impact on those forest workers and on our forest industry. How many care about mining in British Columbia? This decision will have an impact on people in the mining industry and the investors in mining in British Columbia.

How many care about tourism? How many care about the film industry? How many care about small business? These decisions have an impact on their businesses, on their lives, and most importantly, on people's jobs. So we have a chance, you have a chance. I get one vote. There's about two million other British Columbians that get the same vote.

I think we made the right decision on the HST. Here's Dalton McGuinty, the day after we said we were giving British Columbia the chance: "I hope British Columbia votes against the HST because it will give Ontario an incredible advantage."

We knew it would give Ontario the advantage. And I'll tell you this. This government wants all the jobs we can get for British Columbia and we want to send none to Ontario. We want investment in British Columbia.

The HST has to be about more than politics. It's about economics, it's about the financial well-being of our families, of our communities. It's about financial reality. And the reality is, according to experts -- economists, financial analysts, tax experts -- the HST is far superior to what we had.

Various estimates suggest that over the next ten years it will help generate an additional, an additional 100 thousand jobs. They actually estimate it will generate about \$11b of additional investment. More jobs, more investment and higher wages.

But say those numbers are wrong. Let's cut them in half. Let's say it's only 50 thousand jobs and \$5b of additional investment. Do we want to encourage that or do we want to turn our backs on it?

I can tell you this. The people in this province want to have jobs they can depend on, they can count on for pay cheques that start to grow so they can take better care of their families and their kids and their futures.

And that's what I want and it's why I support the HST. But the choice is yours.

One last point I'll make to all of us in government. I just announced a number of new infrastructure projects we'll make, capital projects. Every time we invest in a capital project we will save under the current system. The Evergreen Line itself, the estimate is -- and listen to this. Listen to this in the context of the meetings you've had this week with ministers. The estimate is, on the Evergreen Line alone, we would save, the public would save, about \$25m under the current regime. But this is a serious matter and it's a matter for you.

I heard the message loud and clear. I totally understand it. In fact, I embrace it. That's why the

government, this government, will be guided by what people decide. And we've also another message and I think each of us have to think of this message as we go forward. As we go to the federal government and provincial and local governments and regional governments, our regional district directors Ted, all of you, as we go forward let's remember this.

People are saying they're working a lot harder. In spite of the fact that we've reduced personal income taxes by 37%, most people will say to me. "I'm working a lot harder. I don't feel like I'm getting any further ahead."

If we want to have confidence in our economy, if we want to have confidence in our investors, we have to have our families feeling confident that we're working on behalf of them and I can tell you this. Over the next few months you are going to hear about all the things we can do to reinforce families in British Columbia so they have the confidence they need to build the future and make the decisions they want in their lives, regardless of the community they live in this province.

So we've done pretty well over the last eight years. We've got lots of opportunities ahead of us, and one of the keys that every one of our gold medal athletes will tell you is you've got to build on your successes.

As I mentioned, 3.5 billion people saw British Columbia during the Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. We want to build on that. We now have a wide open window of opportunity to attract those literally millions of tourists to our communities, millions of tourists to our region of the province. And we want to work with all of our local governments to make sure that happens.

So I know there's been something, a lot of, about 50 local governments have been concerned about. Are we going to continue on with the additional hotel tax program after June 30, 2011? Just so you can rest, yes, we're going to continue on with the additional hotel room tax program after June 30, 2011.

We have already agreed to reduce the aviation fuel tax in 2012 which will liberate expansion into major international air service to airports across British Columbia. Airports that we built together, expansions we built together in Prince George, in Abbotsford, in Kamloops, in Cranbrook and Kelowna and Victoria and Comox and other communities. You will become a landing place for international carriers that will bring international visitors to your part of the province and generate economic opportunities for each and every one of us.

To help you make sure you achieve the full potential of your region, we will be launching a major, multi-year commitment to marketing our province that will be unprecedented in its size, in its scope and in its consistency. It'll be integrated, it'll be focused, it'll be relentless and it'll be well funded.

It is time for us to grab the advantage of the Olympic torch, or we will see it pass us by. Together we will open up tourism opportunities in every single part of British Columbia, with your help.

And as we move forward, we're going to introduce them to some of the healthiest communities in the world. We're going to introduce them to some of the healthiest that think about physical, active lifestyles, as well as work, as well as connecting people to where their opportunities are. There's probably very few communities in the province that do as good a job of that as right here in Whistler. Walk around in this region of the province and you're not sure whether you're on a bike trail or a walking trail but you know someone is being more physically active than you're used to. Walk around here and you'll see the public spaces and the opportunities for people to do. When I come to Whistler I never get in a car again once I stop.

So there's a real opportunity for us to do that in other communities as well and we intend to build a partnership for healthy communities with each of you who want to join us in making sure we do create those kinds of communities. We're going to provide for additional programs and additional funding for things like cycle paths and bicycle paths. As long as you're a community that looks at integrative zoning and trying to connect people with the places they need, and reduce their dependence on automobiles. Not everyone can do that. But many, many of us can do that if we work together to do it.

We are in danger of being the first generation in the history of the world whose children will not live as long as we do. That is not going to happen on my watch. It's not going to happen on your watch. Our children deserve us to act on their behalf, think long-term and that's exactly what we intend to do in partnership with the UBCM.

It's been an incredible time and one of the things I think that the Olympics showed us is the power of the volunteer. How many of you saw one of those blue-jacketed volunteers as you went and enjoyed the Olympics, even on the television? Twenty-six thousand people and one of the things that we have to do is recognize our strengths in this province. And one of our strengths is we have some of the most socially innovative non-profits anywhere in the world right here in British Columbia. They go to other parts of the world to tell them how to solve some of their problems.

So we're going to launch a new social innovation model. We're going to provide for new ways that we can encourage volunteers. We're going to make sure, for example, that when someone wants to be a

volunteer and help our kids, there's only going to be one time that they have a criminal record check and more than that, we're going to provide the support they need to make sure that they don't have to pay for that criminal record check.

Tapping into the creativity of our volunteer community, of our non-profit community, will give us the opportunity to solve some of the most vexing problems we have, from homelessness to addiction services to literacy. And we can actually find new models that will pay for results, not for good intentions but for good results. And that's what we intend to do.

You know, think back. As you say gold medal standard. It's hard to believe we did as well as we did sometimes. But we do have to learn those lessons. So here's one of the lessons. The celebration that was the Olympics was much more than what was taking place on the field of play. I went to Turin in 2006 and I came back and I said to Colin and to my caucus colleagues and cabinet colleagues, "You know what guys? We've got to make sure that whether you've got a ticket to those Games or not, you know the Olympics are here and you're part of that celebration."

So what they called the Cultural Olympiad was the largest cultural event in the history of Canada. And when you think about it, it's what defined the energy and the vibrancy in the streets that we all enjoyed. We should never underestimate the power of culture to bring us together and to help us celebrate the great strengths that we have as communities. So in the future, we're going to build on that.

Future BC Summer Games and Winter Games will showcase our cultural communities as well our athletes. And to help our host communities solve that, each host community will get \$1m to build a sporting and cultural live site that will become a community legacy and a legacy of the fact that they're hosting the BC Summer or the BC Winter Games.

One last thing: Does anyone know what's happening in 2015? Anyone other than the council from Prince George and the MLAs?

In 2015, Prince George is hosting the Canada Winter Games.

Thank you Prince George. They're hosting the Canada Winter Games. And you know I can tell you this. As your Premier when I travel across the country, I knew that every single one of our communities was reaching out and trying to make our Olympics Canada's Olympics, and you succeeded.

I want Prince George to know this. You've got a big partner in the Province of British Columbia. We're going to make these the best Canada Winter Games that the country has ever remembered. We're going to make sure that all British Columbians are part of them. We're going to make sure you show them the northern capital of British Columbia, the northern future of British Columbia. We celebrate our artists, we celebrate our athletes and everyone knows in 2015 the Canada Winter Games are coming to Prince George, British Columbia.

A long time ago, eight years, I came here. And at the end of my speech eight years ago, Ross Rebagliati was in the crowd and he had a gold medal and I held it up. I showed you what we could do.

See that gold medal? This is an Olympic gold medal for our Games.

It was built with partnerships. The VANOC group, artistic designers, Teck Corporation, minerals from the province of British Columbia: a gold medal. This is yours. You own this. You earned this. You did this. Thank you all.

Thank you very much.



NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier

B.C. TO BUILD ON OLYMPIC MOMENTUM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

WHISTLER – The Province will build on B.C.’s Olympic momentum with the next phase of a capital vision that began in 2002 and a strategy that focuses on smart growth and smart communities, Premier Gordon Campbell announced at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

“The Olympics united all British Columbians and showed us that we can exceed all expectations when we work together,” said Premier Campbell. “We will create smart, clean, safe and vibrant communities that are designed to meet the needs of families in the 21st century and build on the vision and investments we have made in British Columbia.”

The Premier announced the next phase of the Province’s capital vision that began in 2002 with projects such as upgrades to the Trans-Canada Highway through the Kicking Horse Canyon, William R. Bennett Bridge, the Port of Prince Rupert and Sea-to-Sky Highway. Partnerships BC will cost out and develop a plan for the next phase of the capital vision, which will include:

- Extending SkyTrain through Surrey to Langley.
- RapidBus service to Chilliwack.
- Extending rapid transit to the University of British Columbia.
- Expanding RapidBus service from Kelowna to West Kelowna and in Greater Victoria.
- Expanding public transit options in regional centres like Prince George, Kamloops Nanaimo and Courtenay-Comox.
- Fast-tracking the Cariboo Connector.
- Expediting major improvements to other portions of Highways 97, 16, 3 and the Trans-Canada Highway.
- The Province will develop a practical and cost-effective program that will help stop the unabated decommissioning of resource roads so citizens can continue to safely use them as links to the backcountry.
- The Province will provide additional financing for cycling paths and sidewalks.

Premier Campbell also announced new support for communities, tourism, culture, parks, natural resource industries and initiatives that will build on the Province’s Olympic momentum.

- To commemorate the upcoming 100th anniversary of B.C.’s park system, expanded interpretive programs in key provincial parks will make parks places of learning and discovery.
- The Province will join with communities and First Nations along the Fraser River from Hope to the Salish Sea to develop trail projects and create a seamless park-like corridor on both sides of the river as part of the Experience the Fraser project.
- Communities hosting future BC Winter Games and BC Summer Games will receive \$1 million to build sporting and cultural legacies in their communities.
- Launching a new multi-year commitment to marketing British Columbia that will be

unprecedented in its size, scope and consistency. The campaign will be integrated, focused and well-funded. It will showcase British Columbia and attract new visitors, investors and customers.

- The Province will extend the Additional Hotel Room Tax program beyond June 30, 2011.
- The Province will commission a trio of totem poles to be erected on the lawns of the legislature that will stand as a permanent tribute to all Olympic partners – volunteers, athletes, the Four Host First Nations, artists, the federal government, local governments and all British Columbians.
- The three Beetle Action Coalitions will each receive \$1 million a year in additional funding.
- The Premier expressed his full support for moving forward with the Prosperity Mine Project in the South Cariboo.
- The Province will establish a new Volunteer Support Network and Social Innovation Forum to help bring the creativity of B.C.'s exceptional volunteers to solving some of our most vexing community problems - from homelessness to addiction services to literacy enhancement.

“Working together we will enhance and market the advantages that exist in our communities and across our province,” said Premier Campbell. “We will build on a vision to create a better province that will provide unlimited opportunities for British Columbians today and tomorrow.”

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PREMIER ADDRESSES UBCM

October 1, 2010



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