



Economic Report

Ministry of Small Business, Technology
and Economic Development

MARCH 2009

The Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development is the primary provincial agency for creating a strong, prosperous and diverse economy, as well as the ministry responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative.



TILMA Update

On Feb. 24, Minister Ida Chong met with Ron Stevens, Alberta Deputy Premier and Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations, at the B.C. legislature to update media on the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement. Signed in 2006, TILMA will take full force on April 1, reducing and eliminating barriers to the free movement of workers, goods, services and investments between the two provinces.

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BizPaL Coming to a Municipality Near You

Opening a business in the City of Coquitlam is now easier and quicker, thanks to the recent launch of BizPaL, a user-friendly online tool that helps entrepreneurs start up faster. The government aims to have BizPaL available to all municipalities in British Columbia by 2010. [Read More>>>](#)



Left to right: Yuen Pau Woo, president and CEO of the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada; Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative; Arthur Hara, past-chair of the Asia-Pacific Trade Council; Joan McIntyre, Minister of State for Intergovernmental Relations; Richard T. Lee, MLA Burnaby-North and parliamentary secretary for the Asia-Pacific Initiative.

Asia-Pacific Business Centre Opens for Business

March 6, 2009 - Minister Chong gathered with dignitaries for the official opening of the Asia-Pacific Business Centre, in Robson Square, Vancouver. The Asia-Pacific Business Centre is a first point of contact for B.C.-based businesses seeking strategic market intelligence, referrals and information on doing business in Asia. It will also assist incoming investors from Asia connect to business and economic opportunities in British Columbia. [Read More>>>](#)



B.C. Wood on China Roof Tops

The Shanghai government has approved a B.C.-designed roofing system as part of a plan to renovate 10,000 city apartment buildings in the lead-up to the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai. China represents the greatest growth opportunity for B.C. forest products of any market around the world. [Read More>>>](#)

Did You Know?

- The Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement will create the second-largest economy in Canada, with a combined B.C.–Alberta market of almost 7.8 million people.
- TILMA streamlines business registration and reporting requirements so that businesses registered in one province are automatically recognized in the other.

Vancouver's BioPartnering Show

On Feb. 8 - 10, British Columbia welcomed delegates from Japan, South Korea and China to BioPartnering North America 2009, a top international life sciences partnering conference in Vancouver. The networking conference brought together top decision makers from leading biotechnology, pharmaceutical and investment companies from around the world. [Read More>>>](#)



Major Construction Projects Hold the Line

Despite the global economic downturn, the number and value of major construction projects across the province went up during the fourth quarter of 2008. According to December's 2008 Major Projects Inventory, 880 major capital projects, worth an estimated \$179.4 billion were planned or underway across B.C. between October and December 2008. [Read More>>>](#)



From left to right: Cathy Yao, British Columbia's Guangzhou trade and investment representative; Chen Wenjie, president of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Guangdong Sub-council; Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development; Liang Guixuan, deputy director general of the Guangdong Provincial Department of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation; and David Bostwick, acting Canadian Consul General in Guangzhou.

Minister Opens New Guangzhou and Beijing Trade and Investment Offices

On Feb. 7 - 8, Minister Ida Chong was in China to open British Columbia's new trade and investment offices in Beijing and Guangzhou. Including the established Shanghai location, British Columbia now has three trade offices in China. The offices promote British Columbia as a destination for investment and trade and a leader in research and development, as

well as showcase B.C. products and resources. [Read More>>>](#)



B.C.'s Clean Technology Wows Asia

On Feb. 25 - 27, British Columbia led the way at the Fifth International Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Expo (FC Expo 2009) in Tokyo. Tagged as the world's largest fuel cell and hydrogen technology trade exposition, the show drew a crowd of over 26,000 visitors. The Canada Pavilion gained the attention of delegates, businesses and governments interested in clean, sustainable technology from B.C. and the rest of Canada. [Read More>>>](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2009STED0012-000295
March 6, 2009

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

NEW ASIA-PACIFIC BUSINESS CENTRE BOOSTS TRADE LINKS

VANCOUVER – The new Asia-Pacific Business Centre, established to increase trade, investment and research and development opportunities between British Columbia and markets in Asia, was officially opened today by Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development.

“The Asia-Pacific Business Centre is now open to serve B.C.-based companies and, at the same time, welcome Asian investors to British Columbia,” said Chong, also Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative. “Asia represents a tremendous opportunity for British Columbia, and our government has been very active in building bi-lateral relationships. The Asia-Pacific Business Centre will work in collaboration with B.C.’s Trade and Investment offices in Asia, helping our home-grown companies establish partnerships in these key markets.”

Located at Vancouver’s Robson Square, the Asia-Pacific Business Centre will be a first point of contact for B.C.-based businesses seeking strategic market intelligence, referrals and information on doing business in Asia. The Business Centre will also help incoming investors from Asia connect to business and economic opportunities in British Columbia.

In addition to front counter services, the Asia-Pacific Business Centre houses country market specialists whose services will be available to qualified businesses and entrepreneurs. Meeting and video conferencing facilities are available for use, and the Business Centre’s staff will be able to help clients access services available at the neighbouring 2010 Commerce Centre.

“The Asia-Pacific Business Centre is a clear signal of the Province’s commitment to stronger trade and investment ties with Asia,” said Yuen Pau Woo, president and CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada. “In a time of global economic slowdown, the need to build business relationships in Asia is more critical than ever. British Columbia is playing a leadership role in helping Canadians prepare for a world where Asia will be an even more important player in the global economy.”

The Asia-Pacific Business Centre will complement the Province’s five Asia-based trade and investment offices, located in Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Seoul and Tokyo. These offices promote British Columbia as a destination for investment and trade, and a leader in research and development, as well as showcasing B.C. products and resources in these key markets. This spring, British Columbia will open its first office in India, to be located in Bengaluru.

In 2008, bi-lateral trade between British Columbia and the Asia-Pacific, including India, was worth \$28.2 billion, an increase of over \$10 billion or nearly 56 per cent compared to 1999’s amount. Over this same period of time, British Columbia’s exports to these Asian countries have increased by 52 per cent.

By 2020, the trade gain with the Asia-Pacific could be worth an estimated \$76 billion for British Columbia and \$230 billion for Canada. The total employment impact is estimated to be 255,000 jobs in British Columbia.

The Asia-Pacific Business Centre builds on the Province's Asia-Pacific Initiative and will help British Columbia solidify its position as Canada's Pacific Gateway. For more information about Canada's Pacific Gateway, visit the multilingual website www.CanadasPacificGateway.ca.

Businesses, entrepreneurs and investors can contact the Asia-Pacific Business Centre at 604-660-9727 or toll-free at 1-888-880-ASIA (2742) or through email, asia.pacific@gov.bc.ca. In addition, potential clients can visit the centre in person. The Asia-Pacific Business Centre's address is 800 Hornby St., Suite 288.

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Canada

BRITISH
COLUMBIA
The Best Place on EarthNEWS RELEASE
COMMUNIQUÉ

Coquitlam

For Immediate Release
2009STED0010-000211
Feb. 20, 2009

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

COQUITLAM JOINS THE BIZPAL NETWORK

COQUITLAM — Opening a business in the City of Coquitlam just became easier thanks to BizPaL, an online permit and licence service that helps entrepreneurs start up faster.

The launch of BizPaL in Coquitlam was welcomed today by James Moore, MP for Port Moody-Westwood-Port Coquitlam; MLA for Port Moody-Westwood Iain Black; Burquitlam MLA Harry Bloy; and Coquitlam Mayor Richard Stewart.

“We are pleased to bring BizPaL to the City of Coquitlam,” said Moore. “By working with the Province of British Columbia and the City of Coquitlam, we are bringing a service that will cut red tape, help entrepreneurs get started, and help small businesses grow. It is especially important in the current global economic instability to make things easier for Canadian businesses, particularly small businesses, to encourage job creation.”

“BizPaL is another way our government is supporting the success of businesses in the Tri-Cities,” said Black, Minister of Labour and Citizens’ Services. “As government reduces red tape, small business owners spend less time dealing with paperwork and more time servicing customers and growing their businesses.”

“Through BizPaL, all levels of government can provide permit and licensing information conveniently online,” said Bloy. “Coquitlam’s small businesses will benefit greatly from a more streamlined and simplified startup process.”

Entrepreneurs can use BizPaL to receive a personalized list of the permits and licences needed to establish and run their business. This unique partnership between federal, provincial, territorial, regional and local governments is designed to cut through the paperwork burden small businesses face.

“BizPaL and the OneStop Business Registry are two examples of how we can support local businesses by making it easier to grow their enterprise in our community,” said Stewart. “We’re looking for new and better ways to facilitate growth and add value, and BizPaL is a great step in the right direction.”

“BizPaL is a user-friendly, time-saving tool that cuts red tape and reflects our government’s commitment to making British Columbia the most small-business-friendly jurisdiction in Canada,” said Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development. “Coquitlam’s BizPaL launch provides another great example of what can be achieved when all levels of government work in partnership.”

The BizPaL service in Coquitlam was developed with the support of Industry Canada, in collaboration with the City of Coquitlam and the Province of British Columbia. Area business owners and entrepreneurs can access the service by visiting www.coquitlam.ca/bizpal.

Last year, the Premier’s Innovation and Excellence Awards recognized the BizPaL program in the partnerships

category. The goal is to have BizPaL available to all municipalities in British Columbia by 2010.

Visit www.bcBizPaL.ca for more information and to access the websites of participating partners.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2009FOR0017-000163
Feb. 9, 2009

Ministry of Forests and Range
Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

B.C. WOOD TRUSS ROOFING GETS GO-AHEAD IN CHINA

BEIJING – The Shanghai government has formally approved a B.C.-designed roofing system as part of a plan to renovate 10,000 city apartment buildings in the lead-up to the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai, Forests and Range Minister Pat Bell, and Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development, announced today.

“Shanghai officials have recognized that building with wood is cost-effective, energy-efficient, and good for the environment,” Bell said. “With this approval, B.C. wood producers now have access to a market for as many as 10,000 new roofs over the next two years.”

The approval applies to a wood truss roofing system designed by Chinese officials in collaboration with B.C. Forestry Innovation Investment, the Province’s international marketing agency for B.C. forest products, provided engineering assistance, access to B.C. lumber, and demonstration sites donated by B.C.

“China represents the greatest growth opportunity for B.C. forest products of any market around the world,” said Chong, who is Minister responsible for the Province’s Asia-Pacific Initiative. “And with government and industry working together, we’re quickly establishing B.C. as the leading supplier of high-quality lumber and wood products.”

In the first nine months of 2008, exports of B.C. wood products to China were more than for all of 2007 and were valued at more than \$166 million.

The Shanghai Light Wood Roof System Cost Quota is a guideline for government-funded construction projects aimed at levelling the playing field in the tendering process. It establishes the price for labour, some materials and also sets timelines for construction with different construction materials. The system is designed to work in lock step with the Wood Truss Standard Drawing Manual, due to be issued later this month.

For the past five years, the Province and forest sector, along with the federal Canada Wood Export Program, have targeted China as a major growth market for forest products. The renovation market, in particular, has been identified as having high growth potential due to a deteriorating infrastructure of apartment buildings and medium-rise housing.

Several wood-frame public buildings are being built as part of the Wenchuan earthquake reconstruction program funded with \$8 million contributed by Canada and British Columbia. Through the earthquake project, Chinese officials in the central part of the country are learning more about the benefits of wood-frame construction and Canadian advanced wood technology.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Feb. 19, 2009

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS HOLD STRONG

VICTORIA – Despite the global economic downturn, the number and value of major construction projects planned or underway across B.C. went up during the fourth quarter of 2008, Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development, announced today.

“British Columbia continues to show resilience, with 880 major construction projects, worth an estimated \$179.4 billion,” Chong said. “With Premier Gordon Campbell’s announcement of \$14 billion in new infrastructure spending and the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games around the corner, B.C. has what it takes to build for a strong future.”

According to the Major Projects Inventory, December 2008 edition:

- Eight hundred and eighty major capital projects, worth an estimated \$179.4 billion, were planned or underway in B.C. between October and December 2008.
- This is an increase of 21 per cent in estimated value from the same time period in 2007, when 835 major capital projects worth an estimated \$148.1 billion were planned or underway.
- Thirteen major construction projects started during the fourth quarter with a total value of \$1.9 billion. The largest of these projects is the Gateway Program’s South Fraser Perimeter Road in the Surrey/Delta area, valued at \$1 billion and expected to create an estimated 7,000 new jobs by 2021. It is estimated that the remaining 12 projects will generate 8,334 direct and indirect jobs.
- Construction was completed on 17 projects in the fourth quarter, with an estimated capital cost of \$1.3 billion, including the \$298-million Vancouver Island Transmission Reinforcement project near Tsawwassen.
- Forty-nine major construction projects are on hold, worth an estimated \$14.2 billion.

Published quarterly by the Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development, the Major Projects Inventory lists all major projects that are proposed, planned or underway in British Columbia. The inventory includes projects with a capital cost of at least \$20 million within the Lower Mainland and projects valued at \$15 million or more in the rest of B.C.

Budget 2009 is investing almost \$14 billion in infrastructure projects, separate from the investments listed in the Major Projects Inventory, in every region of British Columbia. The Province will move forward on its capital plan and partner with the federal government and municipalities to build and upgrade housing, hospitals, schools and roads. These new and accelerated investments will generate as many as 88,000 jobs across B.C.

The December edition of the Major Projects Inventory will be available online at www.gov.bc.ca/sted.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2009STED0008-000167
Feb. 9, 2009

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

B.C. SPONSORS ASIA-PACIFIC PANEL AT BIOPARTNERING SHOW

VICTORIA – B.C. is welcoming delegates from Japan, South Korea and China to BioPartnering North America 2009, a top international life sciences partnering conference, which runs Feb. 8–10 at the Westin Bayshore Resort, Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development said today.

“Our government recognizes the importance of promoting British Columbia’s leading-edge life sciences industry to investors,” said Chong, who is also Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative. “Life Science companies and organizations from the Asia-Pacific are looking to forge new global partnerships; and our government wants to make British Columbia their destination of choice.”

The Province is sponsoring a panel discussion that will feature prominent business leaders and academics from the Asia Pacific who have built successful partnerships in life sciences and biopharmaceuticals. The panellists will cover topics including global opportunities, emerging technologies in Asia, the roles of academia and governments, technology transfer and commercialization strategies and challenges.

Panellists include Dr. Ruhong Jiang, founder and CEO of Applied Stemcell Inc. (China); Dr. Akifumi Matsuyama, Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation (Japan); and Christopher Boyer, Bio-Link executive director (Australia); and Mr. Paul H Kim and Dr. Joong-Myung Cho, representing CrystalGeonomics (Korea).

The panel will take place on Tuesday Feb. 10 at 2:45 p.m. Admission to BioPartnering North America 2009 will be free to the public after 2:00 p.m. on Feb. 10.

British Columbia is the seventh largest biotechnology centre in North America by number of companies, and the fastest growing in Canada. The sector employs approximately 2,700 people with annual revenues worth approximately \$700 million. The Asia-Pacific is a world leader in many areas of life sciences, including stem cell research and personalized medicine.

Since 2001, British Columbia has invested over \$1.7 billion in research and innovation, which has brought in another \$1 billion in research funding from other sources.

Government is also funding 2,500 new graduate student spaces at the province’s four research-intensive universities by 2010, as well as providing \$10 million for graduate student scholarships.

In addition to promoting innovation and technology, the Province’s participation at BioPartnering North America 2009 supports the Asia-Pacific Initiative, a long-term strategy to increase and diversify economic and cultural ties, and further establishes British Columbia as Canada’s Pacific Gateway. A multilingual website,

www.CanadasPacificGateway.ca, has been launched, outlining the advantages and opportunities of investing in British Columbia.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Feb. 6, 2009

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

B.C. GOVERNMENT OPENS NEW TRADE OFFICES IN CHINA

BEIJING – British Columbia’s economic presence in China is being strengthened thanks to the opening of two new trade and investment offices by Small Business, Technology and Economic Development Minister Ida Chong.

“China is British Columbia’s second-largest trading partner and is a vital and growing export market for our products,” said Chong, who is also the Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative. “Our trade and investment offices bring proven local, on-the-ground connections and expertise to help B.C. companies connect with potential partners. These offices will enhance British Columbia’s already strong business and cultural ties with China.”

The two new Trade and Investment Representative Offices are located in Beijing and Guangzhou and will work in conjunction with the existing B.C. trade office in Shanghai. The offices promote British Columbia as a destination for investment and trade and a leader in research and development as well as showcasing B.C. products and resources.

The offices also support British Columbia-based companies through trade mission activities and will help identify potential business and investment leads.

The Province has contracted Ho Hing Consultancy Inc., headed by Kevin Tsui, to provide trade and investment representative services in Beijing. Previously, Tsui worked for Boxalino, a Swiss-based information software company. He also served as the managing director in China for the Canada China Business Council. Before moving with his family to Beijing in 2003, Tsui was based in Vancouver. Tsui is fluent in English, French, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Guangzhou Jiayue Business Consulting Co. Ltd., headed by Cathy Yao, has been awarded a contract to provide trade and investment representative services. Previously, Yao spent 10 years in the trade section at the Canadian Consulate General in Guangzhou as a Trade Commissioner and Investment Champion. Yao is fluent in English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

The opening of the Beijing and Guangzhou offices brings the number of trade and investment offices in Asia to five. In addition to the locations in China, British Columbia has offices in Tokyo and Seoul. The Province also expects to open an office in the Indian city of Bengaluru by the end of April.

By 2020, the annual trade gain with Asia-Pacific is estimated at \$76 billion for B.C. and \$230 billion for Canada. The total employment impact is estimated to be 255,000 jobs in B.C. China is expected to play a very important role in the economic future of B.C.

The establishment of B.C.’s trade and investment offices is a component of the Province’s Asia-Pacific Initiative and helps establish British Columbia as Canada’s Pacific Gateway. For more information, please visit

www.CanadasPacificGateway.ca.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Feb. 24, 2009

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

B.C.'S FUEL CELL & HYDROGEN INDUSTRY POWERS-UP IN ASIA

VICTORIA – British Columbia's world-leading fuel cell and hydrogen technology will be front-and-centre at the 5th International Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Expo (FC Expo 2009) in Tokyo, announced Ida Chong, Minister of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development.

“The world, especially Asia, is seeking new and clean energy sources,” said Chong, who is also Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative. “There is no doubt that British Columbia's fuel cell and hydrogen industry will continue to grow, creating jobs and strengthening the economy, as the world embraces this sustainable technology. Our government is pleased to support B.C.'s home-grown technology on the world stage.”

The Province has teamed up with the Government of Canada and the Canadian Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association to create a Canada Pavilion, promoting made-in-British Columbia hydrogen and fuel cell technology to global markets. The pavilion will be the focal point for delegates, business and governments interested in acquiring British Columbia and Canadian commercial technology.

Five British Columbia-based companies will be featured at the pavilion: Ballard Power Systems; QuestAir Technologies; Palcan Energy Corporation; Dpoint Technologies and Greenlight Innovation. In addition, the National Research Council's Institute for Fuel Cell Innovation, housed on the University of British Columbia's campus, will also be present.

FC Expo 2009 will take place at the Tokyo International Convention Centre (Tokyo Big Sight) from Wednesday, Feb. 25 to Friday, Feb. 27, 2009. Last year's show drew almost 25,000 visitors from 44 countries along with 467 exhibitors from 16 countries.

B.C.'s participation at FC Expo 2009 is being supported by the Province's Japan Trade and Investment Office. Located in Tokyo, the office promotes British Columbia as a destination for trade and investment, and a leader in research and development, as well as showcasing B.C. products and resources to the Japanese market. B.C.'s Trade and Investment Offices in Seoul and Shanghai are also helping visiting delegations from Korea and China arrange meetings with the British Columbia-based companies at the Canadian Pavilion.

In addition to the B.C. presence at FC Expo 2009, a seminar for leading Japanese and Asian companies, organizations and government officials will be held Feb. 24 at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo to promote Canadian fuel cell innovation and technology. Ballard, QuestAir and Greenlight Innovation will give presentations on their companies' technology.

British Columbia is home to the world's first hydrogen capture, collection, distribution and dispensing system, the Integrated Waste Hydrogen Utilization Project. A working hydrogen highway, from Vancouver to Whistler will open in time for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. B.C.'s hydrogen fuel cell industry employs

approximately 1,200 employees at 35 organizations.

By 2020, the annual trade gain with the Asia-Pacific is estimated at \$76 billion for British Columbia and \$230 billion for Canada. The total employment impact is estimated to be 255,000 jobs in British Columbia.

The Province's participation at the FC Expo 2009 supports the Asia-Pacific Initiative and helps establish British Columbia as Canada's Pacific Gateway. For more information, please visit www.CanadasPacificGateway.ca.

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