

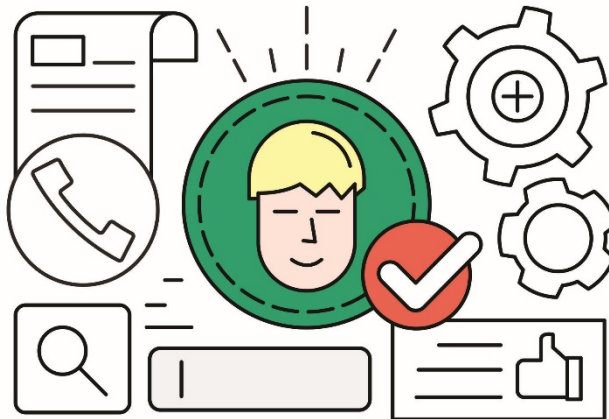
April 20, 2020

Notice: The BCEDA COVID19 Bulletin will now be emailed on Monday, Wednesdays & Fridays.

#COVID19 Bulletin



Resources for Businesses



Live Resources for BC Businesses Document

Recently Updated:

- [New Ventures BC Grants: Innovation initiative supports BC businesses + students](#)
- [BCBusiness: What you need to know about federal and provincial support for B.C. businesses and workers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[View More](#)



New Announcements from the Government of Canada

Small and medium-sized businesses unable to access other support measures

We are providing \$675 million to give financing support to small and medium-sized businesses that are unable to access other COVID-19 business supports, through Canada's [Regional Development Agencies](#).

Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA)

We intend to introduce the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program for small businesses that, will seek to provide loans and/or forgivable loans to commercial property owners who in turn will lower or forgo the rent of small businesses for the months of April (retroactive), May, and June.

Implementation of the program will require a partnership with provincial and territorial governments who are responsible for property owner-tenant relationships.

More details will be available soon.

Funding for small and medium-sized Indigenous businesses, and Aboriginal Financial Institutions

We announced up to \$306.8 million in funding to help small and medium-sized Indigenous businesses, and to support Aboriginal Financial Institutions that offer financing to these businesses.

The funding will allow for short-term, interest-free loans and non-repayable contributions through Aboriginal Financial Institutions, which offer financing and business support services to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis businesses.

These measures will help 6,000 Indigenous-owned businesses get through these difficult times.

Financial support for Indigenous businesses will be provided through Aboriginal Financial Institutions, and administered by the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association and the Métis capital corporations in partnership with Indigenous Services Canada.

Rural Businesses and Communities

We are providing \$287 million to support rural businesses and communities by providing them with much-needed access to capital through the [Community Futures](#) Network.

Assisting innovative and early-stage businesses

We are investing \$250 million to assist innovative, early-stage companies that are unable to access other COVID-19 business supports through the [Industrial Research Assistance Program \(IRAP\)](#).

IRAP provides advice, connections, and funding to help Canadian small and medium-sized businesses increase their innovation capacity and take ideas to market.

Young Entrepreneurs

We are providing \$20.1 million in support for [Futurpreneur Canada](#) to continue supporting young entrepreneurs across Canada who are facing challenges due to COVID-19. The funding will allow Futurpreneur Canada to provide payment relief for its clients for up to 12 months.

[Read More](#)

Resources for Economic Developers & Local Leaders



Just Announced: Helping Rural, Remote and Indigenous Communities Respond to COVID-19

April 20, 2020, VICTORIA – A new collaborative framework will help ensure people living in rural, remote and Indigenous communities in B.C. have access to critical health care they can count on to meet their unique needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and into the future.

“People living in rural, remote and Indigenous communities have unique challenges in accessing the health care they need,” said Premier John Horgan. “This new collaborative framework will bring immediate relief to these communities, including a commitment to moving patients to the critical care they need at a moment’s notice. This will help our work to stop the spread of COVID-19, while supporting better health outcomes into the future.”

The framework was developed through a partnership between the First Nations Health Authority, Northern Health and Provincial Health Services Authority. The work is guided by the principles of cultural safety and humility, and adds to work underway by the Rural Coordination Centre of BC.

The framework provides flexibility so local leaders in rural, remote and Indigenous communities can adapt it to meet their unique needs. It will be implemented through full engagement with each of the communities’ local leaders.

The framework outlines immediate actions to improve health-care services and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- improved medical transportation options to larger centres, including flight and ambulance;
- housing options for people looking to self-isolate near their families while remaining in their home communities;
- new and faster COVID-19 testing technology;
- culturally safe contact tracing that respects privacy in small communities;
- access to Virtual Doctor of the Day, a program that connects First Nations members and their families in remote communities to a doctor or nurse practitioner using videoconferencing;
- options for accommodation near larger centres with more medical services; and
- increased mental-health supports in communities.

Local leadership will determine how these services operate in their communities, with the priority being to ensure residents can make informed choices about how they receive care.

“COVID-19 is a virus that can move extremely quickly and cause a serious decline in health,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “This presents real challenges for rural, remote and Indigenous

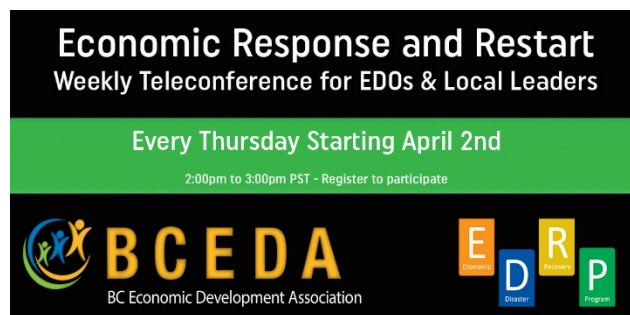
communities, for whom access to critical care may not always be close to home. We're working with our partners to make sure people can access the health care they need, no matter where they live in the province."

As part of this initiative, BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) has prepared significant additional resources to its fleet. This amounts to an additional 55 ground ambulances throughout the province, including six in Northern Health. In addition, BCEHS has prepared seven fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters for medical transport.

The faster testing methods underway include GeneXpert test kits, which take less than 45 minutes to complete. Several GeneXpert instruments are in B.C. now and are being used in First Nations Health Authority, Northern Health, Interior Health, Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health. A priority was given to more rural and remote sites where the instruments for testing are already in place. More GeneXpert instruments will arrive in the coming weeks.

"Indigenous communities have been harder hit in past pandemics and are vulnerable to COVID-19. Elders in particular, as critical knowledge keepers and holders of language, culture and teachings, must be protected," said Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. "Having plans and supports tailored to the unique circumstances and challenges in remote Indigenous communities will support these communities in caring for their residents."

[Read More](#)



On the Next BCEDA Economic Response & Restart Call

Thursday, April 23

2:00pm to 3:00pm PST

Workforce – Current Situation, Trends and the Future

Hear from guest speakers:

- Trudy Parsons, Executive Vice-President, MDB Insight
- Ken Peacock, Chief Economist and Vice President, Business Council of BC

These weekly calls are hosted by the BC Economic Development Association through the Economic Disaster Recovery Program. It is open to every local, regional and Indigenous government in BC as well as Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures, and others involved in supporting the local economy. We'll share relevant information, facilitate dialog, explore collaboration opportunities and tactics for recovery.

SPACE IS LIMITED SO REGISTER SOON

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

[Register for the next call](#)



What BC Communities Are Doing

South Island leaders form taskforce to address economic crisis amidst COVID-19

[More info](#)

City of Colwood targets 0% residential tax increase and reductions to business tax

[More info](#)

RDNO helps fund website full of things to do during COVID

[More info](#)



ZoomBusiness: A new way to support your local businesses right now

Over the last month of progressive shutdowns to mitigate the loss of life from COVID-19, we heard from our clients and webinar participants that your primary concern is supporting the existing businesses in your region. They are, after all, the lifeblood of any area economy. And right now, they need your help more than ever.

We heard you. Our development team got right to work. The result of this incredible turnaround is the launch of our brand new mobile-responsive tool called ZoomBusiness for economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, cities, towns, and counties across the US and Canada.

ZoomBusiness helps people search for local businesses in different categories of essential services, such as groceries, pharmacies and banks. With this interactive GIS tool, you can keep those dollars in your own area, where they are most needed right now.

ZoomBusiness puts your economic development organization, chamber of commerce, town, county, state or province in a position to directly and immediately help direct people to the shops, services and restaurants in your region that desperately need all the help they can get to survive this pandemic. Best of all, it's simple to use. Your area businesses can enter their information on their own, so the data is easy to manage.

We know this is a difficult time for everyone, and GIS Planning has committed to helping our clients when they need it most. That's why we are providing ZoomBusiness free for all full edition ZoomProspector clients. If you aren't currently a GIS Planning client, you can add ZoomBusiness for a nominal charge, with price indexed to population to keep it affordable.

[Read More](#)