

CLR-INFO

Federal News

[Canada Revenue Agency, union reach a deal to end the strike](#)



A second strike of federal public servants is over after a tentative deal was reached between the Canada Revenue Agency and more than 35,000 Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) members.

In separate Thursday morning news releases, the agency and PSAC's Union of Taxation Employees (UTE) said the four-year deal sends workers back to their jobs by 11:30 a.m. ET Thursday.

UTE workers, along with 120,000 other PSAC workers across about 30 government departments and agencies, went on strike on April 19.

As the tentative deal announced Monday for the larger group, the headlines of the CRA deal are a compounded wage increase of 12.6% over four years, according to the union, and a one-time pensionable payment of \$2,500.

Read more: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/psac-union-cra-strike-deal-1.6829165>

[Canada invests \\$500,000 in asset management for B.C. communities](#)



The Government of Canada is investing more than \$500,000 to help 11 communities in British Columbia improve their asset management. According to a news release, the funds will strengthen data-driven decision-making on key infrastructure projects and strategies.

The Town of Comox, along with eight other municipalities, is receiving \$50,000. Comox will use the funds to complete an assessment of the town's 86,000 m of sanitary sewer pipes.

The Corporation of the District of Saanich received \$50,000 to develop an asset management strategy.

A full list of which communities are receiving funding can be found [here](#).

Scott Pearce, acting president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, pointed out local governments own 60% of public infrastructure in Canada.

The funding comes from the \$110 million Municipal Asset Management Program.

Provincial News

The Province's new StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan

The Province's new StrongerBC Plan aims to help thousands of people get the skills they need to succeed in the changing economy and help close the skills gap many businesses are facing.

The action plan is focused on five pillars:

- making post-secondary education more affordable, accessible and relevant to British Columbians;
- helping people reskill to find in-demand jobs so more employers facing current and future skills shortages can find the people they need;
- breaking down barriers so everyone can find a job where they can thrive;
- addressing Indigenous Peoples' workforce priorities; and
- ensuring people new to B.C. find a career in the field in which they are trained.



Learn More:

To read the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Future-Ready-May2023.pdf>

To see a list of available future skills grant education and training programs, visit: <https://educationplannerbc.ca/futureskillsgrant>

To learn more about TradeUpBC, visit: www.tradeupbc.ca

Province assists communities with flood response, urges people to be prepared

With evolving flood conditions throughout B.C., the Province is continuing to help communities prepare for potential flooding.

B.C.'s Interior is expecting hot weather with accelerating snowmelt anticipated through Friday, May 5, 2023, followed by heavy rainfall and thundershowers that same day and through Saturday, May 6. Based on forecasts from the River Forecast Centre, conditions in areas that are currently flooding, including Cache Creek and Okanagan Indian Band territory, are expected to deteriorate over the coming days.

Moderate flooding areas are expected to expand, particularly in the Central Interior and Okanagan from Wednesday, May 3, until Friday, May 5.

People in affected regions should take precautions to ensure personal safety, including developing a household plan, putting together emergency kits, connecting with neighbours and learning about the local government emergency response plan for their area.

Learn More:

Flood-risk information and active evacuation alerts and orders can be found at @emergencyinfoBC on Twitter, or: <https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/>

River Forecast Centre: <http://bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca/>

PreparedBC Flood Preparedness Guide: www.preparedbc.ca/floods

[New training prepares more people for construction jobs](#)

Male survivors of violence and abuse can access supportive training for job opportunities in the construction industry in the Fraser Valley.

As many as 24 participants will receive 11 weeks of essential employment and technical skills training, four weeks of on-the-job experience with local employers and one week of followup support to prepare them for employment in the construction industry. In addition to the training provided, each participant will receive as many as 10 weekly sessions of one-on-one trauma counselling support.

The Province, through a Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) project is providing more than \$520,000 to Kinghaven Peardonville House Society to deliver skills and certification courses in its general construction training program, The Purpose Project.

The second cohort for this program will start May 29, 2023. Anyone interested in information about this or other CEP projects can contact their local WorkBC centre.

Learn More:

To learn how CEP is helping local communities, visit:

www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Community-and-Employer-Partnerships.aspx

Labour & Economy

[B.C. construction industry expected to cool in 2023, 2024 amid high-interest rates](#)



Housing starts and investment in residential construction are expected to weaken throughout 2023 and into 2024 as the impact of elevated interest rates cools B.C.'s construction industry, according to a new report from BuildForce Canada.

This period of decline comes after residential housing starts reached more than 45,000 units in both 2021 and 2022. Gains in renovations and maintenance investments are expected to offset potential losses in 2023 and 2024. The push to add density in B.C. municipalities as well as the shortage of previously undeveloped land in Vancouver will contribute to this, said Bill Ferreira, BuildForce's executive director.

The average annual unemployment rate for construction fell to under 4% in 2022. Rising demand and the expected retirement of 38,200 workers over the next 10 years means the industry will need to add 52,600 workers within that period.

Learn more: <https://www.buildforce.ca/en/annual-reports>

[Northern B.C.'s economy is still strong despite the forestry industry downturn](#)



Some of the northern B.C. towns and cities have been affected by major sawmill and pulp and paper mill closures over the last couple of years. A number of closures have happened in recent months and weeks.

But thanks to increased activity and investment in mining and energy, the economies of B.C.'s northern towns are proving resilient, despite a major downturn in the forestry sector.

Houston, for instance, saw one of its two sawmills permanently shut down in 2014, and more recently, Canfor shut down its sawmill and planer mill there, leaving over 300 people out of work. However, the Coastal GasLink pipeline project has provided some work for loggers and other workers. Meanwhile, Prince George, which has a more diversified economy, is able to absorb business losses better than smaller, one-industry towns, thanks to several sawmills that are still operating and new clean-tech industries being developed. Commodities produced in BC move through the Port of Prince Rupert, which is thriving and growing. Kitimat is also booming, thanks to heavy industry - specifically aluminum smelting and liquefied natural gas (LNG).

The LNG Canada project in Kitimat employs about 5,000 workers, and about 1,000 are employed at the Rio Tinto BC Works aluminum smelter.

Learn more: <https://biv.com/article/2023/05/northern-bcs-economy-still-strong-despite-forestry-industry-downturn>

[B.C. commits \\$2.95 million to help mill tradespeople start and grow businesses](#)

The Government of British Columbia is investing \$2.95 million in a program designed to help mill tradespeople and technicians start and grow businesses. The funding was granted to Hubspace's Build Your Own Future program. Hubspace is a non-profit in Prince George that helps technology initiatives and companies in the region grow.

The program will offer financial, marketing and sales, operations, project management, health and safety, customer service, leadership and diversity training. Completing the training makes people eligible for a \$5,000 grant to cover startup expenses, reads a news release.

"It is a big risk to venture into something that may fail without the proper resources and support," said Debbie Domeij, a Houston resident who was recently laid off after 12 years at the Canfor mill, in the release.

[CBTU hosts annual conference May 8 to 10 in Gatineau](#)

Canada's Building Trades Unions (CBTU) have released details of its annual conference scheduled for May 8 to 10, as building trades leaders from across Canada gather in Gatineau, Quebec.

The event has been assigned the theme Building Jobs for Tomorrow. The agenda includes the CBTU's Annual Distinction Awards and workshops focused on major projects in both hydrogen and carbon capture, use and storage.

Plenary speeches will include addresses from government, labour, industry and business leaders. Themes will include developing the skilled trades workforce to work in a net-zero economy and increasing opportunities for equity-seeking groups in the construction industry.

A keynote speaker will be former CBC news anchor Peter Mansbridge.

Learn more: <https://reg.eventmobi.com/cbtujobsfortomorrow>

Apprenticeship & Skills Training

[Construction Career Pathways helps create entry-level employment opportunities for individuals new to the construction industry](#)



Construction Career Pathways, a new program by BuildForce Canada, aims to connect construction companies to individuals who want to start a career in construction.

Participating employers can receive an onboarding wage subsidy of up to \$2,400 per employee who completes a 16-week work placement. Funding is provided through the Government of Canada, and is available for up to

1,000 employees across the country, with 500 employment opportunities targeted to people from traditionally under-represented groups in construction, such as women, members of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized communities, persons with disabilities, newcomers to Canada, and those who identify as LGBTQ2+; at-risk youth currently out of the labour market; youth entering the labour market from secondary school, and individuals displaced from other sectors of the economy.

Eligible businesses can hire up to two eligible workers. Construction Career Pathways can be combined with the CBTU's and CAF's initiatives.

The program runs until March 31st, 2024. However, most placements must begin no later than fall 2023 to meet program timelines.

For more information, visit www.CCP-PCC.ca, or contact John Viktorin, the Construction Career Pathways' project manager at 613.410.1750, email: info@ccp-pcc.ca.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Tender issued for Ford Road to Tappen Valley highway upgrades](#)

The contract for improvements to the Trans-Canada Highway between Ford Road and Tappen Valley Road has gone to tender.

Work on the 4.3-kilometre section of highway will include widening the two-lane highway to four lanes and replacing the aging Tappen overpass and constructing frontage roads.

Funding for the \$243-million project was announced in July 2021, with the provincial government providing \$161 million and the Government of Canada contributing approximately \$82 million.

In Budget 2023, the Province committed \$728 million to upgrading Highway 1 between Kamloops and the Alberta border over the next three years. It is anticipated the contract will be awarded in early summer 2023 and is estimated to be complete in 2026.

Learn More:

Highway 1 four-laning program: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation-projects/highway1-kamloops-alberta>

Job opportunities on Highway 1 improvement projects: <https://www.bcib.ca/>

For information about federal infrastructure funding, visit: <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca>

For the most up-to-date highway travel information, @DriveBC on Twitter or: <https://www.drivebc.ca>

[Backcountry access restored after wildfire closures](#)

Several backcountry roads that were closed to motor vehicles for environmental protection after the 2021 wildfires have reopened.

Due to severe wildfire damage in the Thompson Okanagan and part of the Kootenays, 15 areas were closed to motor vehicles in the fall of 2021 under the Motor Vehicle Prohibition Regulation of the Wildlife Act. After a review of fire severity, degree of recovery and restoration activities in the affected areas, the Province has determined the closures can be reduced and, in some cases, removed.

Learn More:

Maps of the area, including downloadable georeferenced maps, are available: <https://www.gov.bc.ca/motorvehicleprohibitions>



Stay safe,

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