

More Affordable Housing

Vaccination update – almost 75% of adults have their first dose!!!

Province approved the request of the Pacheedaht, Huu-ay-aht, and Ditidaht First Nations to defer old growth logging

Benefits for individuals/families, businesses and people in tech

Housing / Vaccination / Old Growth / Benefit deadlines

Dear Community Member,

Here in BC the focus this week has been to keep moving forward in making progress through the pandemic, providing the much needed services for people in BC, while working hard towards inclusion for all, and taking action with First Nations to move forward with reconciliation.

Housing

People in our province continue to struggle to find affordable homes. We are making good progress, but there is more to do. Recently we took another huge step in the right direction. Our government announced that [more than 2,400 new affordable rental homes](#) will be built for people with moderate and low incomes throughout the province – with 92 units being built here in the Comox Valley. The Wachiay Friendship Centre Society will build 40 new units for Indigenous peoples (not just Indigenous people), and the Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society will build 52 new units for low-to-middle income seniors. Communities here on the island and throughout BC will see new projects to accommodate the unique needs of individuals, families, and seniors, including housing geared to people with disabilities. For the local news release click here: [MLA Leonard says new, affordable rentals coming to Comox Valley | New Democrat BC Government Caucus \(bcndpcaucus.ca\)](#)

This is a neat interactive map to see all the project that the government is supporting across the province: : <https://www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/Building-BC/homes-for-BC>

Restart plan for the province

Yesterday we heard from Dr Henry that, “British Columbia is in a good position to continue to safely move forward with BC’s Restart plan. Community transmission, hospitalizations and deaths are all declining as immunizations are going up.” We have all been working extra time and overtime to keep one another and our health care system safe. Dr. Henry graciously acknowledges that it’s been a long haul as she said, “The key to our success is all of you – first to lessen the spread and now to get immunized. We are grateful for how you have done and continue to do your part. For 16 months, it has been your individual and collective efforts to use the layers of protection and follow all of the public health orders. Now, it is also getting fully immunized with your first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine that is making the difference.” It really is amazing that BC is in a position of 75.1% first dose vaccinated. Getting your second dose will help with any variant disruptions and so thank-you to all those who have made the efforts for the collective! If you need a refresher on what orders are easing when, double check here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

Old Growth logging deferrals

This week I heard from community members that retaining old growth and taking strong actions on climate change is important, and I agree. As the BC government honoured the Pachedaht, Huu-ay-aht and Ditidaht First Nation request to defer logging in Fairy Creek and Central Walbran, I am proud how these actions reflect First Nations rights as title holders and managers of their territories. This deferral allows more time to help fix the forestry sector that was long mismanaged by the BC Liberals and seek out a path forward that honours the right of First Nations in their own territory. We know that there is still much to do but this deferral adds to the 200,000 hectares of old growth the BC NDP government has already recently protected, including in Clayoquot Sound and the Skagit “Donut Hole” in Manning Park. This is in addition to the 10 million hectares of old growth already under protection or uneconomical to harvest. [Fairy Creek an important step for old growth protection, says MLA Leonard | New Democrat BC Government Caucus \(bcndpcaucus.ca\)](#)

Updates for individuals, businesses and people in tech

Moving forward for everyone means that we need your help to get the word out about opportunities available out there.

- **Individuals/Families** If you haven't yet, and you are eligible, make sure you submit your 15 minute application for the BC Recovery Benefit of \$500 for individuals and \$1000 for families. Application deadline is June 30th. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/benefit>
- **Businesses** – The Province has added \$140 Million to the recovery benefit for small and medium businesses, and the deadline has been extended to July 2, 2021. Here is the link to apply: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/business-recovery-grant>
- **Diversity in Tech** – An exciting announcement this week around enabling more IBPOC, gender-diverse, and people with disabilities to access the tech sector. There will be 3000 spaces of \$5000 per placement, available. Keep in the loop and check out more info here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/24651>

My constituency office is available by phone or email. The office is open Monday to Thursday 10am-4pm, and Fridays by appointment only. You can reach us at 250.703.2410 or Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca if you have any questions or need assistance with provincial supports.

Sincerely,
Ronna-Rae Leonard
MLA Courtenay-Comox

COVID Resources:

- For medical info, visit bccdc.ca or call 811
- For provincial supports and BC's Restart Plan, visit gov.bc.ca/covid19 or call 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300
- For employer guidelines on returning to work safely, visit WorkSafeBC
- Take the self-assessment at covid19.thrive.health
- For seniors looking for additional support, or for those looking to support seniors, call 2-1-1 or visit bc211.ca

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RonnaRaeLeonard/>

Instagram: @ronnaraeleonard

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYLQfuaKQV-itCluryo2hQg>

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Community Office Hours: Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 4 pm

MY OFFICE REMAINS OPEN TO ASSIST BY PHONE OR EMAIL

www.ronnaraeleonard.ca



It is a privilege to live and work on the traditional lands of the K'omoks First Nations.

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