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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Justice  
Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services

### **New Abbotsford courthouse to increase jobs, access to justice**

ABBOTSFORD – The Province and City of Abbotsford are moving forward with the development of a new Abbotsford courthouse that will create new jobs, increase access to justice and build a brighter future for British Columbia.

The new courthouse will be constructed within the City Centre Civic Precinct on land leased to the Province by the City of Abbotsford.

The 14-room courthouse will include three Supreme Court courtrooms, eight provincial court courtrooms and three judicial conference rooms. The facility plans also incorporate justice programs like Crown counsel, community corrections, and a Justice Access Centre, as well as a parkade to supplement parking requirements for the City of Abbotsford.

The estimated \$150 million project will proceed through requests for qualifications and proposals in 2017 with design and construction expected to commence in mid 2018. It is estimated that the project will also create over 1,000 jobs during the course of construction and will be open and operating in 2021.

Located in one of B.C.'s fastest-growing regions, Abbotsford's new courthouse is part of the Lower Fraser Valley Court Strategy, which is based on demographic and courtroom demand analysis over the next 20 years.

The B.C. government is making record investments in modern, safe infrastructure projects throughout the province – and in doing so, these construction projects are creating high-paying, family-supporting jobs.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Suzanne Anton, Attorney General and Minister of Justice –**

“Our government is committed to increasing court capacity to enhance access to justice in British Columbia. With this new courthouse facility in Abbotsford, we are taking action for the fast-growing Lower Fraser Valley region. The commitment to build a new Abbotsford courthouse ensures cases will be heard expeditiously and is a giant step forward for justice in this region.”

#### **Amrik Virk, Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services –**

“The new courthouse will not only double the size and capacity of courthouse services in Abbotsford, it will also provide easier access to justice services for citizens.”

#### **Michael de Jong, MLA for Abbotsford West –**

“As a rapidly growing centre for business, leisure and culture, Abbotsford is a centre of activities in the Fraser Valley. The demands of this flourishing community will be met by construction of the new courthouse and will ensure residents and businesses have a strong base for expansion for the next 20 years.”

**Henry Braun, mayor of Abbotsford**

“The City of Abbotsford is proud to partner with the Province of B.C. for this much needed and significant investment in our community. The new Abbotsford courthouse will help to shape the evolving face of our City Centre and provide services to residents across our region, further establishing Abbotsford as the Hub of the Fraser Valley.”

**Quick Facts:**

- The Lower Fraser Valley Court Strategy identifies the most effective way to address courtroom pressures based on demographic and court demand analysis over the next 20 years.
- Priority projects are expansion of the Surrey courthouse, currently underway, and construction of a new courthouse in Abbotsford.
- Abbotsford courthouse goes to request for proposal (RFP) later in 2017.
- With 89 court locations throughout the province, 96% of British Columbians live within an hour of a staffed court location.

**Learn More:**

Lower Fraser Valley Regional Plan Court Capacity Expansion:

<http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/public/courts/LFVCourtsCapacityExpansionProject.pdf>

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