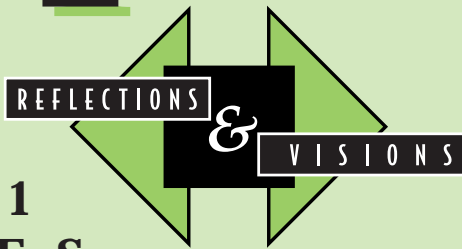


# UBCM DAILY

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPALITIES  
**CONVENTION 2001**  
**DAILY UPDATES**



## WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- 7:30 a.m. Clinics
- 8:30 a.m. Convention Opening and Annual Meeting
- 9:20 a.m. "A" Resolutions
- 10:45 a.m. Address by FCM President
- 11:00 a.m. - BC Communities Agenda 2001  
- Consideration of "Cooperation Agreements"  
- Consideration of Resolutions
- 2:00 p.m. Address by the Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, Hon. George Abbott
- 3:00-5:00 p.m. Community Charter Presentation and Discussion

**DON'T FORGET TO VISIT MUNICIPAL MARKETPLACE, EXHIBIT HALLS B/C  
7:00 am to 4:30 pm**

DAILY #1

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2001

## Community Charter: Nebbeling extends invitation for collaboration

**A**T A MONDAY MORNING study session, **Ted Nebbeling**, Minister of State for Community Charter, observed that the session inaugurates a consultative process between the province and local government which will be essential for the successful establishment of a new foundation for municipal government in British Columbia, the Community Charter. Minister Nebbeling stressed that this process would be very open to, and welcoming of, any and all comments, observations and suggestions from local government. He noted that the convention week provides further opportunities for discussion.



*Hon. Ted Nebbeling*

As well, the newly appointed Community Charter Council will be holding workshops throughout the province during the month of October, seeking local government input. Mr. Nebbeling stressed that there is no draft of the Charter available. At the present time it is only a working paper which he views as a tool to enable further consultation. The key issues addressed in the Charter are the broadening of municipal government powers, the strengthening of intergovernmental relations and the improvement of public participation. He pointed out that the challenge will be to balance local government's sphere of broadened authority with provincial financial, economic and social interests.

He assured the study session participants that the Community Charter will prohibit forced amalgamations and prohibit the downloading of provincial responsibilities without corresponding funding arrangements. A "basket of tools" will be assembled to provide enhanced opportunities for creating new financial resources.

The first phase of the charter will address only municipal provisions and at this time excludes elections, regional growth strategies, planning and land use, heritage conservation and regional districts. The second phase, which will occur in two years' time, will cover regional district provisions and the remainder of local government provisions. In February of 2002, an exposure bill will be introduced in the legislature and again, there will be an opportunity for further discussion and local input. ■

## On the road to safety

**A**T A TUESDAY MORNING clinic, representatives from ICBC provided information on their Community Road Safety Planning program – a program that invites communities to work with ICBC and community partners to improve road safety. International research has shown that there is a significant potential to improve road safety through community planning. A similar safety plan implemented in an English community has reduced crash incidents by 38% since 1996.

A goal of the program is to ensure that road safety is treated as a priority in all planning initiatives, including land use planning, pedestrian, bicycle and transit planning, transportation network planning and road form, access and intersection planning. As well as planning, or engineering safety, the other components of the program are education and enforcement. Kamloops is the program's pilot project and having identified many

*continued (over)*

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## More Charter discussions

MORE ASPECTS OF THE PROCESS involved in implementing the Community Charter and its substance were discussed during Tuesday afternoon's sessions on the Charter. **Ted Nebbeling**, the Minister of State for Community Charter, advised the Small Community session that local government will have support from the province for interpretation of the Charter in the transition period, so that legal costs will not be incurred in interpreting and enacting the new powers.

**Gary Paget**, Executive Director of Planning and Governance, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, informed the same session that communities wishing to maintain the status quo and not exercise new powers or use new tools will be able to do so, and that if bylaw courts were not seen as suitable for a small community, other methods may be considered. Flexibility could also be found in the removal of counter-petitions and in conflict of interest provisions.

At the Large Communities session, the discussion focused on four key issues: regulatory powers, inter-municipal and provincial disputes, economic development and taxation. ■

## Road Safety – continued from page 1

high incident areas in the project's first year, has carried out a number of initiatives. For example, on a street identified as having a problem of high speeds and left-turn lane access, the city has narrowed the lane width to decrease speed, improved access visibility and established a permanent speed monitor to educate motorists. A pull-off area has been established to facilitate the RCMP enforcement of the speed limit. Kamloops has also established multi-use paths to promote alternative transportation, introduced a roundabout to decrease intersection incidents and to foster public acceptance, substituted new day-glow yellow signage for better visibility, and upgraded stop signs to diamond grade.

The clinic was also informed about ICBC's Safer School Travel program which helps to address road safety problems around schools. Seven schools are now pilot testing this program and another seven are being added. The program supplies a CD-ROM to the parent advisory committee which guides them through a safety audit of the children's routes to and from school as well as the safety of vehicle access in the school zone.

For further information, contact **Mavis Johnson**, Manager, Road Improvement Strategies, ICBC, (604) 661-6426, e-mail [mavis.johnson@icbc.com](mailto:mavis.johnson@icbc.com) ■

## Energy Forum

DELEGATES ATTENDING Monday afternoon's Energy Forum were provided with an overview of energy issues and global conditions before focusing on the preparation of a working paper that identifies common issues and themes, and sets a focus for delegate attention on key energy policy matters. Panelists gave the forum information on how the prices of the two main sources of energy, natural gas and electricity, are determined. Whereas the natural gas market was deregulated in 1985, and is now decentralized and market-driven, electrical power is highly centralized and largely a publicly controlled utility. Gas prices are affected not only by supply and demand, but by available storage levels and distribution costs. The recent sharp increase in gas prices is attributed to rising supply costs, as distribution costs have been relatively stable since 1997. **Rich Ballantyne**, Director of Planning and Project Development, BC Gas, stated that it now costs \$700 more to heat a home per year using natural gas than it did two years ago. Natural gas consumption has increased by 60% since 1985, and there is a 51% increase in demand forecasted to 2015. Gas supply remain fairly stable with the discovery of new reserves.

Electricity demand is growing faster than overall energy demand, what with the proliferation of technology. British Columbians have some of the lowest retail electrical prices in North America and customers are insulated from market prices through average cost of service regulation. **Bev Van Ruyven**, Vice-President, Marketing and Sales, BC Hydro commented that globally, BC ranks as one of the largest consumers of electricity and that conservation is a high priority for BC Hydro. There will be an increased investment in, and focus on, Power Smart. New Power Smart programmes and initiatives will be introduced to further the goal of reducing energy use.

After the panel discussion, the workshop then discussed the following issues which are based on the 18 resolutions received that concern energy policy matters:

- the removal of PST/GST on energy commodities,
- the conversion to energy efficient systems,
- the deregulation/regulation of electricity,
- alternative energy sources for generating electricity,
- energy rebates, and

## New minister attends Electoral Area Forum

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNITY, Aboriginal & Women's Services, **George Abbott**, stated that one thing he would like to accomplish as Minister is to put in place a set of guidelines to facilitate the resolution of disputes at the local government level. Speaking to delegates at the Electoral Area Directors' Tuesday morning session, he acknowledged that generally, regional districts were operating extremely effectively, but that too many disputes, such as boundary issues, come to the Ministry as the court of last resort for resolution.

The Minister also advised that the Ministry had received \$1.2 billion worth of applications for the \$600 million available in green infrastructure grants, and for the \$200 million available for other infrastructure grants, they had received \$1 billion worth of applications. ■

## Tradeshow opens today

Visit the Municipal Marketplace, located in Exhibit Halls B/C, open today and tomorrow from 7:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Continental breakfast is available at the marketplace from 7:00 a.m. and coffee is available during session breaks and also between 11:30 a.m and 1:00 p.m.

## It's another BIG one!!!

UBCM is a big week – lots of events and lots of participants. So far, those registered include:

- 743 voting delegates
  - 149 non-voting delegates
  - 486 government officials and observers
  - 342 partners and guests.
- 1,720 total attendance as of Tues.

- the development of an energy strategy.

The session Chair, Councillor **Dan Rogers**, will present a report with recommendations at Friday morning's plenary session. ■