

PROVINCIAL RESPONSES

**to the
Resolutions of the 2008
Union of British Columbia Municipalities
Convention**

**Ministry of Community Development
February 2009**



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A1 - CARE OF “DUALY DIAGNOSED” MENTALLY ILL

WHEREAS it is well-documented that the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill and the emergence of a large number of “dually diagnosed” (mentally ill and drug addicted) people have resulted in thousands of mentally ill people living extremely marginalized and tragic lives in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, as well as in other communities in BC;

AND WHEREAS it has been demonstrated that approximately one third of police-attended incidents in the City of Vancouver involve a person whose mental health was a contributing factor to police attendance, that equates to approximately \$9 million per year in police resources consumed because of the lack of capacity in the mental health system:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the provincial government of BC take all necessary steps to expedite the provision of resources to ensure the mentally ill – particularly those who are dually diagnosed – are provided adequate care in the health system to allow for proper treatment and dignified living circumstances, and to reduce the draw on municipally funded police resources.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health Services

The Ministry of Health Services has invested in a better-integrated, community-based program of Mental Health and Addictions treatment options.

In July 2008, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority opened the first 30 beds of the Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addiction to provide assessment and treatment for persons with both addiction and mental health challenges who are unable to function in community based mental health and addiction facilities. The centre will provide approximately 100 treatment beds and the remaining 70 beds are anticipated to be ready by the end of the year.

The Province has increased by 150 percent the number of community addiction beds since 2003, for a total of almost 2,200 today.

The Province added almost 3,000 new community mental health beds since 2001, for a total complement of more than 7,700 beds.

Mental health and addictions sector expenditures for 2007/08 were approximately \$1.2 billion, an increase of more than 35 per cent since 2000/01.

Additional efforts to guide them to healthier lives will be immediately launched, as an updated 10-year mental health plan is also completed.

As well, the Government of BC has introduced the Community Court in Vancouver, which will work with about 1,500 offenders each year. It will have health and social services work together in an integrated approach to manage offenders and address the underlying health and social problems that lead to crime.

A2 - AMENDMENT TO MEAT INSPECTION REGULATION TO ENCOURAGE REGIONAL FOOD PROCESSING FACILITIES/ABATTOIRS

WHEREAS the Government of British Columbia has enacted a new Meat Inspection Regulation as of September 30, 2007 stating that anyone who slaughters animals to produce meat for human consumption must have either a Provincial or Federal Licence, which has made it increasingly difficult for small farmers to maintain their herd or flocks;

AND WHEREAS in response to the growing trend to embrace the “One Hundred Mile Diet” throughout all parts of British Columbia for environmental, health and business purposes, there is an immediate need to accommodate the needs of small farms and ranches with regionalized food processing facilities and abattoirs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be called upon to:

- a) amend the Meat Inspection Regulations to actively encourage regional abattoirs throughout British Columbia;
- b) address the need for regionalized Specified Risk Material (SRM) plants in British Columbia;
- c) support the “One Hundred Mile Diet” throughout the Province of BC with marketing programs designed to encourage this important trend;
- d) encourage farmers and ranchers to produce and process food in British Columbia for British Columbians.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM explore with the Province a mechanism for exemptions to the Meat Inspection Regulations for isolated communities such as those with water access only.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport & Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Amend the Meat Inspection Regulation to actively encourage regional abattoirs throughout British Columbia

The Province is actively encouraging the development of regional meat processing abattoirs through the province-wide application of the Meat Inspection Regulation. All abattoirs are now required to be licensed and to move towards meeting the construction, operating and inspection standards. When they meet those standards, abattoir operators can sell their product anywhere in the province, creating additional business opportunities and increasing their viability.

The Meat Inspection Regulation is outcome-based to allow flexibility in how the standards are met, enabling abattoirs of all sizes to become licensed and inspected; (e.g., one small poultry abattoir on Vancouver Island operates only twice a year). Class C transitional licenses have been available to meat producers working toward becoming fully licensed, with submission of a construction plan. The license allows meat producers to continue offering limited, direct sales (such as farm gate sales) to consumers. Meats produced under a Class C license are not inspected, cannot be resold or used in any commercial operation such as a restaurant, and must be labelled as uninspected.

The Province has provided \$8.8 million for the Meat Transition Assistance Program to assist meat processors across BC to meet the construction and operating standards and become fully

licensed. Phase 2 of this program is particularly directed towards developing licensed slaughter capacity in underserved areas of the province.

Address the need for regionalized Specified Risk Material (SRM) plants in British Columbia

The Province recognizes the need for regionalized solutions for Specified Risk Materials (SRM) and is currently working with industry and local governments on a number of options that include, but are not limited to composting, land fill, incineration and gasification. Funding is currently available to local governments to evaluate various options and to implement appropriate regional solutions.

In parallel to the process above, the province is working with an application driven process where SRM producers and/or other private ventures can propose regional solutions for appropriate SRM management. Funding decisions are contingent on environmental impact assessments, compliance with existing regulations and by-laws as well as economic feasibility.

The province would also like UBCM assistance to help locate appropriate sites for regional solutions and to possibly assist in the public engagement process that is required prior to a solution and site being approved.

Support the “One Hundred Mile Diet” throughout the Province of BC with marketing programs designed to encourage this important trend

The Province is actively supporting the trend towards a BC Diet through two Programs announced in the 2008 BC Agriculture Plan. Under the Branding Program, BC products will be identified to consumers under a unified BC Brand.

Encourage farmers and ranchers to produce and process food in British Columbia for British Columbians

As part of its recently released B.C. Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for BC Families, the Province has made support for farmers’ markets a priority because the markets provide an opportunity to buy local and promote a sustainable agriculture industry.

On August 23, 2008 \$219,000 was provided to the BC Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program, which is delivered in BC through the Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) of BC.

Farmers' markets in BC contribute significantly to farm incomes and to the economy of communities in which it operates. A 2006 study by the University of Northern British Columbia found that BC farmers' markets contributed \$118.5 million annually to the provincial economy, with \$65.3 million per year spent at the markets and another \$53.2 million at neighbouring businesses

In March 2008, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands invested \$36K towards a 2010 Opportunities Pavilion at Grocery Showcase West in order to stimulate relationships between BC food processors and retailers and showcase products processed from fruits, vegetables and animals raised on BC farms and ranches. The project continues with the ongoing delivery of 2010 opportunity workshops throughout the province designed to promote BC agri-food products.

Industry's proposed Agri-food and Bioproducts Innovation Centre, also a priority within the BC Agriculture Plan, will assist with the development and commercialization of new food products for British Columbians made from the harvests of BC's farms and ranches.

A3 - CALLING FOR A NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL HOUSING STRATEGY

WHEREAS the 2008 Federal Budget does not provide for funding to sustain existing housing programs or the establishment of a National Housing Strategy;

AND WHEREAS the lack of affordable housing and the incidence of homelessness is a growing and complex problem affecting all British Columbia communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge federal and provincial governments which are responsible for providing affordable housing to:

- urgently work together to prepare a National Housing Strategy, along with a complementary Provincial Housing Strategy, to provide a comprehensive plan to address housing and homelessness issues over the long term through the provision of an adequate continuum of housing, income and support.
- allocate sustained funding, including the use of surpluses and property transfer tax revenue, to support the development and maintenance of affordable housing for those in need, including nonmarket housing units.
- work together to establish incentives for the private sector construction of new rental housing including low income tax credits, GST exemptions, and capital cost depreciation allowances.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for Housing continue to discuss changes to the tax system to promote rental housing; how best to support Canada's existing stock of social housing; the housing issues facing First Nations, Métis and Inuit people; and the need for partnerships with local governments, non-profit groups and the private sector. It has been three years since the last formal Federal/Provincial/Territorial meeting was held. Ministers raised these issues when they met briefly on April 2, 2008 in Ottawa with then Minister Monte Solberg, Federal Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Minister Solberg did not provide a firm response to any of the issues raised.

At their July 18, 2008 Council of the Federation meeting, Premiers invited the federal government to engage with provinces and territories with respect to housing policies in Canada. Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for Housing met October 9, 2008 in Ottawa to continue discussing these issues.

Tax Policy:

Although the government does not directly allocate property transfer tax revenue to housing and homeownership programs, Budget 2008 builds on the successes of Budget 2007 with an additional \$104 million over four years to implement new and expanded measures to help break the cycle of homelessness.

Housing Matters BC – A Housing Strategy for British Columbia (October 2006):

Pre-development Costs:

\$10 million in one-time funding for pre-development costs of city-owned sites to fast-track the construction of supportive housing units. The Province has reached agreements to expedite the approval process with the City of Vancouver (12 sites), Victoria (3 sites), Kelowna (3 sites) and

Surrey (2 sites). In total, about 1,600 new social and supportive housing units and shelter beds will be created, with construction beginning on about half of them by the end of 2008.

Single Room Occupancy and Affordable Housing Purchases:

The Province purchased 19 Single Room Occupancy hotels in Vancouver, New Westminster and Victoria totalling 1,122 rooms, helping to preserve this important affordable housing stock for those who need it most, with funding of approximately \$69 million.

The Province is spending approximately \$30 million to begin renovating them this year, and non-profit operators will provide support services to help people break the cycle of homelessness.

The Province has also preserved additional affordable housing stock with purchases of apartment buildings and townhouses in Kamloops, Burnaby, Victoria, Surrey, Quesnel and Port Alberni totalling nearly \$27 million for 306 housing units.

In total, the Province invested nearly \$97 million to purchase 30 buildings, protecting and upgrading 1,428 units of existing affordable housing, most of which faced conversion into more expensive forms of housing.

Emergency Shelter Program:

\$78 million over four years to allow emergency shelters to stay open 24 hours a day / 7 days a week and to link people to services, including more permanent types of housing. There are now more than 1,500 shelter beds across the province, compared to 850 in 2001.

Homeless Outreach Program:

\$4.2 million per year over 4 years to expand homeless outreach services to 47 communities to connect homeless people to housing and support services.

More than 2,500 people have obtained housing as a result of the outreach services. A Vancouver pilot project showed 80 per cent of people housed were able to maintain their housing.

The Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program has been established in eight communities, to better connect homeless Aboriginal people with appropriate housing, supports and services.

Private Market Rent Supplements:

Three million dollars over 4 years to provide an additional 750 rent supplements to help homeless people;

The Rental Assistance Program helps more than 6,000 low-income working families with direct monthly cash assistance to help pay the rent, with an average payment of about \$350 per family each month. In April 2008, the maximum income eligibility threshold was raised from \$28,000 to \$35,000.

Seniors receive rent assistance through the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program. More than 15,700 seniors' households receive an average monthly payment of about \$150. That's 3,700 more households since 2001.

Subsidized Housing:

Since 2001, the Province committed to create more than 13,500 new units of subsidized housing; this includes a commitment to more than 4,000 new and upgraded supportive housing units and shelter beds under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, through the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions.

Through the Aboriginal Housing Initiative the Province has committed more than \$50 million to create 292 housing units for youth, women, elders, and people with alcohol and drug addictions.

Seniors have more opportunities to live independently, as a result of the Seniors' Supportive Housing program. \$45 million is being provided to upgrade and convert about 900 social housing units to enhance accessibility and improve safety systems. It also introduces support services such as 24-hour response, light housekeeping, meals, and social and recreational activities.

To help seniors who need help to continue to live independently, the Province has committed to create more than 4,000 assisted living apartments through the Independent Living BC program.

Local Government:

Bill 27 (2008), the Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act, among other things, gives local governments the ability to waive or reduce development cost charges for for-profit affordable rental housing, saving thousands of dollars per unit and encouraging the construction of new affordable housing. This ability was previously available only for non-profit rental housing developments.

SR1 - SEWERAGE SYSTEM REGULATION

WHEREAS the implementation of the Sewerage System Regulation (SSR) which regulates onsite sewage disposal systems has caused implementation challenges for local governments since the SSR came into effect on May 31, 2005;

AND WHEREAS these challenges include increased costs to homeowners, a lack of flexibility in system installations, an inadequate number of practitioners and professionals, a lack of communication and liability concerns;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM membership endorsed a seventeen (17) point action plan in the 2007 UBCM Environment Action Plan which identified a series of policy and regulatory actions that would address local government concerns with the SSR;

AND WHEREAS several key policy and regulatory deliverables contained in the action plan have yet to be completed:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM call upon the Province to make the policy and regulatory changes identified in the SSR action plan in order to address outstanding local government concerns with the Regulation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

At the 2008 UBCM Annual Convention, the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport (MHLS), the Ministry of Community Development, and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding "Sewerage System Regulation Implementation Challenges For Local Governments".

This MOU represents a commitment by the Parties to work in partnership to complete the action plan and, if necessary, take additional measures to address local government implementation concerns. This partnership is taken in the interests of improving the management of onsite wastewater in British Columbia.

SR2 - GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION INITIATIVES

WHEREAS the Province has implemented the British Columbia Revenue Neutral Carbon Tax on fossil fuels as part of its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions throughout BC;

AND WHEREAS local governments have raised concerns that the Carbon Tax is not revenue neutral for local governments, thereby acting as a barrier to funding greenhouse gas reduction initiatives within their communities;

AND WHEREAS local governments have identified concerns over the application of the tax, citing its inequitable impact on some parts of the province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia examine the application of the BC Carbon Tax with the intent of mitigating impacts and creating incentives for local governments and residents to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

A key element of the tax is that it be revenue neutral, meaning that all revenues collected from the carbon tax will be returned to taxpayers and businesses through tax reductions.

Under the three-year Revenue Neutral Carbon Tax Plan laid out in Budget 2008, the government has introduced a personal income tax cut on the first \$70,000 in income of two percent in 2008, rising to five percent in 2009, with further cuts planned. Tax cuts since 2001 have resulted in British Columbians generally enjoying the second lowest overall tax burden in the country and, by 2009, individuals earning up to \$111,000 in this province will pay the lowest income taxes in Canada.

The general corporate income tax rate was reduced from 12 percent to 11 percent effective July 1, 2008, and over the next three years it is expected to fall to 10 percent, which is on par with the lowest rates in the country. The government also reduced the small business tax rate from 4.5 percent to 3.5 percent effective July 1, 2008, and it is expected to fall to 2.5 percent by 2011. These tax cuts, combined with all the previous tax cuts brought in by government since 2001 and the other tax cuts introduced in Budget 2008, provide British Columbia with an extremely competitive tax system for business.

As well, the government provides a number of programs and tax incentives to help make greener choices easier, more accessible and more affordable for British Columbians, including local governments. There are provincial sales tax (PST) reductions for hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles, and a new tax reduction for fuel efficient vehicles. There are also PST exemptions for a number of energy conservation materials such as insulation, weather stripping and alternative energy systems.

Overall, the impact of the carbon tax will depend more on the personal circumstances of British Columbians than where they live in the province, although geographic location is a factor. With respect to home fuel consumption, data on natural gas use by residential customers shows that while residents in some northern regions have higher average consumption than the Lower Mainland, residents in the Lower Mainland use more gas per household than residents in most other regions of the province. In addition, after taking into account the carbon tax, customer

usage, and the different rates across the regions, the average total cost for those using natural gas is higher in the Lower Mainland than all other regions of the province, with the exception of Fort Nelson which is slightly higher.

Similarly, while some living in remote areas may drive further distances on average than those living in cities and small towns, Statistics Canada 2006 Census Journey to Work data show that, on average, commuting distances to and from work for residents of municipalities in the Lower Mainland are among the highest in the province. In addition, compared to other regions of the province, a larger percentage of commuters in municipalities in the Lower Mainland have to travel 15 km or more to get to work. Drivers in the Lower Mainland will also generally use more fuel per kilometre because of idling and traffic congestion.

In addition to the tax cuts made possible by the revenue neutral carbon tax, the government will continue to carefully monitor the impact of the carbon tax and will consider other tax reductions where necessary and tax incentives where effective within the context of the government's overall fiscal situation and other priorities such as health care and education.

Beyond the tax reductions made possible by the revenue neutral carbon tax, the government has introduced a number of measures and programs to encourage and assist local governments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. For example:

\$136 million to support local government infrastructure projects in communities with populations of less than 100,000;

\$100 million to support public transit infrastructure investment;

\$20 million to help switch remote communities, mainly First Nations, from diesel-generated power plants to sources of clean electricity, and to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and businesses;

\$21 million for Towns for Tomorrow that provides infrastructure funding for smaller communities;

\$40 million for LocalMotion to build bike paths, develop accessible trails and walkways to encourage alternative transportation;

\$2.5 million for Green City Awards which provide cash awards to local government achieving integrated design and management that encourages physical activity, energy conservation and environmental benefits;

The Community Action on Energy Emissions program which provides funding research assistance towards studies, policy work and implementation related to energy conservation and emissions reductions.

As well, the Smart Planning Initiative empowers communities to undertake planning that is longer-term, incorporates sustainability principles and leads to more compact, complete and energy efficient communities with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. As part of this initiative sustainability facilitators will be available to local government to help them undertake integrated sustainability planning and action.

B1 - GAS FRANCHISE FEES

WHEREAS section 22 of the Community Charter provides that a council may, by bylaw adopted with the approval of the electors, enter into an agreement that grants an exclusive or limited franchise for the provision of a public transportation system, water through a water supply system, sewage disposal through a sewage system, or gas, electrical or other energy supply system;

AND WHEREAS such agreements traditionally include a service fee with utility companies to compensate for the costly disruption and repair of roads, water, sewer, storm drains and other municipal infrastructure caused by installation of the utility system works;

AND WHEREAS section 7(5) of the Vancouver Island Natural Gas Pipeline Act revoked the ability for municipalities and regional districts on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast to set such rates or charge fees by means of section 22 of the Community Charter, thereby passing the infrastructure repair costs onto local taxpayers (including those who will never be connected to natural gas):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) urge the provincial government to amend the Vancouver Island Natural Gas Pipeline Act immediately in order to restore equal rights on this matter and provide fair and equal treatment for all local government taxpayers in British Columbia;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM appeal to the Auditor General to undertake a review to determine if the pipeline has been paid for.

RESONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

The Province is paying substantial amounts, pursuant to the Vancouver Island Natural Gas Pipeline (VIGAS) Agreement, to fund natural gas service to Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast municipalities. Any further funding would not be appropriate.

The VIGAS Agreement has a mechanism, the Revenue Deficiency Deferral Account (RDDA), to monitor Terasen Gas (Vancouver Island) Ltd.'s (TGVI) accumulated revenue deficiency associated with the VIGAS Agreement. As of December 31, 2007 the RDDA balance was approximately \$29 million.

Section 10.04 of the VIGAS Agreement provides that if the Special Direction to the BC Utilities Commission is cancelled or amended such that franchise fees are permitted to be levied by municipalities prior to the RDDA being reduced to zero, the Province would reimburse TGVI for the amount of the fees. This would in effect be a transfer from the Province to the municipal governments involved. However, the payments to TGVI are for the purpose of supporting natural gas service, not to fund municipal services in general.

While TGVI does not pay franchise fees to Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast communities, TGVI does make payments in lieu of taxes, which are typically one percent of the revenues generated by TGVI from natural gas sales in each of these municipalities.

B2 - LIABILITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

WHEREAS the Provincial Government's Modernization Strategy – Building Regulatory System is advocating:

- clearly defined authorities and accountabilities for the oversight of building construction and
- managing the distribution of liability and risk effectively;

AND WHEREAS the concept of joint and several liability is inconsistent with these principles:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities appeal to the provincial government to amend the Negligence Act to exclude local government from joint and several liability.

RESONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The Ministry of the Attorney General (Ministry) is aware that municipalities have concerns over the increased litigation costs and liabilities that arise from municipal oversight of building construction. The Ministry is continuously evaluating British Columbia's civil liability regime to ensure that it is fair and efficient, but favors incremental changes to the regime. For example, the Ministry completed a consultation on a reduction of the ultimate limitation period in 2006 and is awaiting direction on when and if any changes will proceed.

The Ministry will continue to monitor the Modernization Strategy and explore options to more effectively manage the distribution of liability in the construction industry. The Ministry will engage UBCM and other stakeholders on proposed changes to the industry's liability and risk framework as the Modernization Strategy progresses.

B3 - POLICE RECORDS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENT (PRIME-BC)

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has legislated that all police forces in British Columbia use the same occurrence records management system, which has resulted in the implementation of a common system called the Police Records Information Management Environment (PRIME-BC);

AND WHEREAS the operation of the PRIME-BC system, throughout British Columbia, has resulted in the need for more support resources than anticipated:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities urge the Province of British Columbia to provide additional support resources to police forces in British Columbia for the operation of the PRIME-BC system.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province of British Columbia is the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt a province-wide real-time police records management system (RMS). The movement to a single, common RMS is the most significant policing program to be introduced in BC in at least 50 years. The system has contributed to the rapid arrests of suspects wanted on charges ranging from theft to criminal negligence causing death. Searches are successful based on as little information as a nickname or the description of a suspect's tattoo.

Funding for the system is provided by all levels of government. The Province has provided over \$40-million for infrastructure and covered the majority of the implementation costs. In addition, the Province has picked up at least one year's operating costs for PRIME-BC to give municipalities and cities financial relief in order to cover any overtime for training or computer upgrades.

In the future, each detachment or department will share operating costs, which for a detachment or department of 100 officers will probably be less than the previous records management system.

As of January 1, 2008, police detachments/departments using PRIME-BC pay a \$500 per officer user fee. Eventually they will pay a fee based on the actual cost of operating the system. This future fee is yet to be determined.

B4 - FUNDING FOR VICTIM SERVICES AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS

WHEREAS Victim Services and Restorative Justice programs provide support to victims of crime and provide counselling and alternative resolution services to many young and first time offenders;

AND WHEREAS these programs save dollars by reducing the need for trained police personnel to attend in court and/or respond to the needs of victims of crime;

AND WHEREAS there is no specific funding for Restorative Justice programs and very limited Provincial funding for Victim Services programs;

AND WHEREAS all communities contribute significant local resources to policing services despite growing surpluses at both the Provincial and Federal levels:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC and Government of Canada provide additional and adequate funding to fully support Restorative Justice and Victim Services programs in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province has increased funding for victim service programs. The 2008 Budget included an increase of \$17.1 million from the Victim Surcharge Special Account for Victim Services in BC. This additional funding provides an opportunity to expand and enhance programs, services and strategies to victims and their affected family members in BC.

In May 2008, an additional \$2.7 million was provided through the introduction of an updated interim funding formula to strengthen police and community based victim service programs in BC; an average funding increase of 22 percent. The Province provides full funding for community based Victim Services programs in eligible communities with a population of greater than 20,000. Currently, the Province is conducting a comprehensive review of the delivery of victim services including funding levels and community and victims' needs.

The Province continues to support restorative justice programs through the Community Accountability Program. These programs are also eligible to apply for project funding under the Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Crime Remediation Grant Funding Program. In March 2008, restorative justice projects in eight communities benefited from a total of \$125,000 in grant funding.

B5 - NON-RETURNABLE WARRANTS

WHEREAS it is recognized that police officers throughout the Lower Mainland often come into contact with persons wanted on warrants, where the radius of the warrant is outside of their jurisdiction, and unless the jurisdiction issuing the warrant agrees to provide for transportation, these individuals will likely not ever be held accountable for the offence;

AND WHEREAS it is further recognized that police officers are rarely successful in returning these persons to the issuing jurisdiction because the legal procedures for doing so are excessively cumbersome, time-consuming, and expensive:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities call upon British Columbia's Attorney General and Solicitor General and the Federal Minister of Justice and the Minister of Public Safety to implement a program to assume responsibility for the return of persons wanted on warrants, where the radius of the warrant is outside of their jurisdiction, thereby enabling an operationally practical and cost-effective transportation policy and ensuring these individuals cannot bring the administration of justice into disrepute by simply fleeing to another jurisdiction.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province of British Columbia considers it a travesty that serious criminals can flout justice and move to commit crimes in British Columbia because other provinces will not cooperate to enforce out-of-province warrants. The Province has been aggressively pursuing serious action to address this problem and at the federal/provincial justice tables has led the development of a proposed change to the Criminal Code that would make it an offence to flee a warrant. The Province is also actively considering the cost-benefit of a province-wide program to transport serious offenders back to face justice.

B6 - SUMMONS BY MAIL

WHEREAS personal service of summonses is time consuming, expensive and often ineffective because many defendants actively evade service or move;

AND WHEREAS it is critical that an alleged offender be properly notified of the offence with which he or he is being charged:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to amend provincial legislation to allow service by summons by registered mail to the registered owner of a motor vehicle, the owner of real property and the registered office of a business corporation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The comments of the UBCM Resolutions Committee on Resolution B6 referred to the similar 1992 Resolution to request allowing service of summons by registered mail. It also noted that the Provincial response at that time raised concerns based on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the specific legal requirements that the Charter imposed with respect to the service of summons to start the process of laying a charge. Those concerns continue to exist. Before the requested amendments could be introduced by the Government in the Legislative Assembly, it would have to be satisfied that those concerns have been overcome in relation to all of the offences and contraventions that would be included in the proposed amendments.

B7 - REGIONAL DISTRICT CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE BYLAWS

WHEREAS regional districts are not immune to the problems associated with buildings that have been used for the manufacturing or growing of controlled substances;

AND WHEREAS through the Local Government Act, regional districts do not possess the same legislative authority as municipalities to enact Controlled Substance Property Remediation Bylaws and that in order for the municipal legislation to be fully effective, regional districts require the authority to create bylaws that will compliment the municipal partners' legislation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM lobby the provincial government to enable regional districts to enact controlled substance property remediation bylaws.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

Regional districts generally do not have the same scope of bylaw powers that municipalities have, especially in regulatory matters. This has been based on the premise that rural areas do not typically have the same need to regulate on the range of issues that more densely populated municipalities must deal with. Another issue has been whether regional districts have the infrastructure in place to give effect to such bylaws, such as enforcement mechanisms.

The Government of British Columbia recognizes that there may be situations that require special attention. This is usually done by way of a pilot project which can be evaluated. If a regional district wishes to enact a controlled substance property remediation bylaw comparable to those in municipalities and considers that it can demonstrate the real need and capacity for special authority, the regional district should contact the Ministry of Community Development to discuss the possibility of custom designed regulatory authority to address the particular needs of the regional district.

B9 - EQUITABLE POLICE FUNDING

WHEREAS for more than 50 years, a serious and unjustifiable inequity has existed in many British Columbia communities related to the funding of police resources; and changes in social safety nets and senior government funding have placed an ever growing strain on police forces throughout British Columbia to deal with issues related to gangs, organized crime, addiction, mental health and domestic violence;

AND WHEREAS the existing Federal-Provincial Agreement provides federal contributions for policing costs of 10-30 percent to those municipalities currently served by RCMP services; and 11 municipalities in the province, which collectively are home to over 1.2 million British Columbia residents, to which local policing is provided by a municipal police force instead of RCMP, resulting in the entire cost of policing falling to the local taxpayer with no Federal-Provincial funding subsidy; and for these communities, policing costs are without exception the single largest annual cost to the local tax payer:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the federal and provincial governments to address the issue of equitable police funding by developing an equitable funding program for all British Columbia municipalities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The federal contribution to policing in RCMP jurisdictions is not a subsidy. The basis of the contract policing cost sharing arrangement is that there is a benefit to the federal government in that the RCMP can pull up to 10 per cent of the policing resources from a contract community to deal with national emergencies or major events. In addition, the federal government does not need to deploy and house federal officers in contract jurisdictions because RCMP officers are able to perform both federal and local policing roles. This is particularly beneficial in rural areas.

B10 - FUNDING FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAMS

WHEREAS Search and Rescue programs consist of teams of volunteers that provide essential support to the First Responder Agencies to assist with the search and rescue of British Columbia's visitors and residents, both on land and in the water;

AND WHEREAS Search and Rescue programs receive funding from private funding events, grant-in-aid contributions from local governments and other grants, to assist with their operating and capital needs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities be requested to seek annual funding from the provincial government that is adequate and predictable to support Search and Rescue organizations throughout the province, with their operating and capital needs, to ensure that the organizations continue to function effectively.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General provides operational expense reimbursement of over \$1.7 million to alleviate the costs of responding by volunteer search and rescue personnel. In 2007/08, through the Province's gaming grants, additional funding of \$1.9 million was provided to assist with equipment acquisition, training and other costs. Through the Provincial Emergency Program, the Ministry provides \$250,000 in funding to the Justice Institute of BC for the coordination and delivery of Search and Rescue (SAR) training programs.

The Ministry also is assisting volunteer SAR groups with accessing Federal Funding through the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program and the New Initiatives Fund. In 2007/08, BC was awarded over \$1.3 million in New Initiatives funding over three years. In 2007/08 the Ministry provided an additional \$750,000 through grants to volunteer SAR organizations to assist with preparations for response to potential flooding that existed throughout the province. Within the province many volunteer search and rescue organizations are entering into service agreements, some of which include the establishment of a regional SAR function to ensure a secure source of funding is available.

The Ministry is researching a number of strategies to address ongoing funding concerns around volunteer Search and Rescue organizations. With the advent of satellite distress alerting technologies combined with the increased availability of wilderness recreation insurance and its high profile in the media, cost recovery options continue to be explored.

B11 - RECOVERY OF HIT AND RUN COLLISION COSTS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

WHEREAS it is desirable for motorists to bear the full cost of travel, including the cost of damage to private and public property caused by collisions through insurance premiums;

AND WHEREAS the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia is required by law to compensate private property owners for hit and run damage to private property, but not local governments for hit and run damage to public infrastructure:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the regulations to the Motor Vehicle Act, and specifically Section 107 (2)(b) of BC Regulation 447/83, be amended so that hit and run damage costs incurred by local governments are recoverable from ICBC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

ICBC's basic insurance premiums are calculated on the basis that certain types of claims are exempt. Including claims for public infrastructure that are currently exempt would result in new costs to ICBC. These new costs would eventually result in increases to basic insurance premiums for all BC motorists.

Municipalities obtain most of their funding from property taxes and use these monies to pay for common services for the community, including maintaining municipal property.

Recovering hit and run damage costs incurred by local governments through ICBC insurance premiums would effectively transfer costs from one rate payer group to another. Ultimately, this proposal would be less efficient and result in a greater increase in total insurance premiums than a corresponding reduction in municipal taxes.

B12 - FUNDING FOR FRASER RIVER DREDGING

WHEREAS dredging of the Fraser River and secondary channels was conducted by Public Works Canada until the late 1990's;

AND WHEREAS the secondary channels of the Fraser River are being filled with sediment, affecting safe access for marine traffic, fish boats and float home safety:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that senior governments provide adequate long term funding to reinstate the secondary channel dredging program and that the new amalgamated Vancouver Fraser Port Authority be responsible for secondary channel dredging.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The dredging of the Fraser River Delta is an ongoing process to counteract and mitigate the impacts of natural infilling and maintain the depth of the River channel to accommodate deep sea vessels with a draft up to 11.5 metres. The continued dredging of sediment build up is very crucial to international and local trade and the livelihood of the waterfront communities. Imports and exports in the River Delta include containers, pulp, steel and automobiles which could easily be impacted with any reduced dredging activities or be lost to US West Coast Ports or result in additional costs to consumers by using alternative methods of delivery.

The channel dredging maintenance activities are done by Fraser River Pile and Dredge and current funding is provided by the Port Metro Vancouver (PMV). PMV has allocated \$14 million for dredging for the fiscal year 2008-2009. For prior fiscal years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, the Asian-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative (APGCI) contributed a sum of \$ 4 million towards the dredging process.

Neither PMV nor the Province intend at this time to establish long term funding for dredging.

B13 - FIRE INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX

WHEREAS the cost of providing Fire Services has increased substantially over the past few years with the insurance industry receiving benefit from Fire Services in the form of decreased risk of property damage by fire;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government collects 4% premium annually on all property insurance policies issued under the Insurance Premium Tax Act and pays it into the Consolidated Revenue Fund:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 4% Insurance Premium Tax that was originally imposed to cover the costs of administering the Fire Services Act, less costs directly incurred by the Office of the Fire Commissioner, be redirected to offset the costs of providing Fire Services, including the mandatory fire inspections and investigations imposed by the provincial government on local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The fire insurance premium tax imposed under the Fire Services Act was repealed in Budget 98.

The tax revenue generated from the 4.4 per cent tax paid by insurance companies on property insurance premiums is intended to be a general revenue source and it is the provincial government's view that this is the appropriate use of the revenue.

Any proposed transfer of tax revenue to local governments must be evaluated in the context of a provincial balanced budget and the need to fund critical provincial programs.

B14 - APPLICATION PROCESS FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

WHEREAS the incidence of potential and real states of emergency within local government jurisdictions caused by natural events such as flooding, wildfires, landslides and earthquakes is increasing throughout the province;

AND WHEREAS the importance for rural communities to be able to fairly access the means to set in place plans to address preparing for, and dealing with these events is critical to the emergency preparedness of each community:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities appeal to the Province to direct Emergency Management BC to develop and implement an application based process for communities to obtain funds for emergency preparedness and mitigation works planning.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Emergency Management BC (EMBC), through the Provincial Emergency Program, supports two grant programs available to local governments for the enhancement of community disaster resiliency.

The federally funded Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) is a cost-sharing arrangement which supports initiatives such as emergency plans, training, and equipment. JEPP is open to municipal governments, regional districts, and First Nations and is administered by the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP). BC was allocated \$410,000 in JEPP funding for 2008.

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Emergency Planning Grant program has received \$3 million in funding since 2004 from both the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Ministry for Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. This program is specifically targeted to the activities of local governments for the planning and exercising of their emergency programs, including mitigation and preparedness activities. In 2008, \$250,000 was available for uptake by local governments.

The Province has also committed \$10 million per year for ten years (\$100 million) to address flood hazards in BC. The Federal government has committed to match funding on eligible projects over the next six years through the Build Canada Plan. An application process has been developed to rank the projects against criteria and distribute the funds.

Additionally, UBCM in conjunction with the Ministry of Forests and Range administer the Community Operational Fuel Treatment Program Application Guidelines to assist communities in the treatment of forest fuels identified during the planning process, in order to mitigate the potential impacts of wildfire in the interface.

B15 – TRANSPORTATION

WHEREAS the North Coast Ferry Advisory Committee passed a motion at their regular meeting on April 3, 2008, recognizing the critical importance of BC Ferries obtaining an additional 'Blue Water' capable vessel as an essential component of their business continuity plan;

AND WHEREAS a replacement vessel for the Queen of Chilliwack that currently provides BC Ferries Route 40 'Discovery Coast' service is required by new Transport Canada regulations effective in 2012, and current industry timelines for the construction or procurement of an appropriate vessel for Route 40 dictate that an immediate purchase order is required to meet the 2012 deadline;

AND WHEREAS it is recognized that the social and economic benefits derived from BC Ferries Route 40 extend beyond the Central Coast region to include all tourism providers in British Columbia:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM lobby all applicable BC ministries to immediately provide BC Ferries with the resources necessary to procure an appropriate replacement vessel in order to ensure the continued provision of Route 40 Ferry Service to the Central Coast region.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province's commitment to ferry service for central coast communities remains substantial. Presently, the Province and BC Ferries are finalizing the Northern Services Strategy which will see even more funding provided for ferry service to central coast communities.

B16 - CN LEVEL OF SERVICE

WHEREAS the service provided by CN Rail has a significant impact on the viability of sawmills and other companies who use rail as a shipping method;

AND WHEREAS communities are dependent upon CN Rail in promoting growth and economic development opportunities;

AND WHEREAS sawmills and shipping companies are experiencing unsatisfactory levels of service from CN Rail wherein freight cannot be shipped threatening the operations of existing sawmills and other customers moving their goods on the rails, as well as restricting economic development opportunities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the provincial and federal governments to conduct a review of the level of transportation services presently provided by CN Rail to ensure that the level of service meets customer demands.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The matter of railway service level in Canada has attracted national attention, with the federal government announcing a review of rail freight services in early 2008. The final terms of reference for the review were released August 2008. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure will be undertaking consultations with economic sector stakeholders groups and preparing a provincial submission to the rail freight service review. Information on the review can be found at <http://www.tc.gc.ca/pol/en/acg/acgb/freight/terms-final.htm>.

B17 - FUNDING FOR RURAL ROADS

WHEREAS roads and supporting infrastructure in rural British Columbia have not received adequate funding for many years:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the provincial government to make funding of rural roads and supporting infrastructure a priority.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes the importance of investment in the transportation infrastructure as a means of securing economic growth and prosperity for rural British Columbia.

The Ministry makes significant investments in rural British Columbia in all of its program areas whether it is ongoing maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement of existing infrastructure or capital expansion. In 2003/04 fiscal year and up to and including the present, the Ministry has allocated funds specifically to address rural road concerns under its Heartland Program.

Programs have also been developed to deal with specific problems that have developed in rural British Columbia such as funding to assist in dealing with the mountain Pine Beetle infestation or to assist in allowing mineral or petroleum exploration as is evidenced in the North East of the province.

Funding of rural transportation infrastructure will remain a priority for the Ministry for the foreseeable future.

B18 - VARYING TAX RATES

WHEREAS the Community Charter allows for the establishment of different tax rates for raising municipal revenue from each property class;

AND WHEREAS there is no legislative provision to allow municipalities to impose separate tax rates for each of land and improvements;

AND WHEREAS the current system of property taxation provides little or no incentive for property owners to make significant improvements to their property or provide municipalities the opportunity to reduce the impact of sudden fluctuations in property values by adjusting the tax rates for either land or improvements;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province amend Section 197 of the Community Charter to allow municipalities to have the flexibility of levying separate tax rates for each of land and improvements for each property class.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

While the variable tax rate system does not currently allow municipalities to set differing property tax rates for Land and Improvements, there are other mechanisms available through the Community Charter and Regulations. Section 216 of the Community Charter, Local Service Taxes, allows costs to be recovered through taxes imposed on land, on improvements, or on both.

Municipalities may also use tools such as the revitalization tax exemption provisions found in section 226 of the Community Charter, or assessment averaging and phasing as described in the Assessment Averaging and Phasing Regulation, B.C. Reg. 370/2003, to encourage property owners to make significant improvements to their property.

B20 - PROVINCIAL GRANT PROGRAM

WHEREAS a significant number of local governments have signed the British Columbia Climate Action Charter and support the Province of British Columbia in a desire to address the negative impacts of climate change;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia provides financial assistance to local governments to implement initiatives to address the negative impacts of climate change primarily through grant programs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to amend grant programs to: standardize the application process; expedite approval times; reduce paperwork; reduce staff time; and provide longer lead times; so that municipalities can better plan their finances around future opportunities, and minimize staff resources to the grant application process in favour of maximizing resources on the related projects.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

The Ministry of Community Development recognized that local governments face capacity and resource challenges, when dealing with infrastructure grant applications. The Province, with its federal partners continue to work to improve administration and implementation of the funding programs, aware that resources within local governments are limited and that funding program timelines, such as intake period and approval/announcement delays have significant impact on project implementation and ultimately, meeting provincial priorities and program goals/objectives.

There are key initiatives in place which are designed to improve administration of funding programs, such as developing a central database, which will serve as a single point of information input (applications), storage and management for Ministry funding programs. In addition, work has been done to limit the paper requirements for programs.

Further, program staff maintains expert knowledge of all infrastructure programs they manage, and can act as an additional resource by providing support, guidance and advice. All local governments are encouraged to utilize this resource to support their project development and implementation. Planning Grants are also available to assist municipalities to better plan their finances around future projects.

It is important to recognize that both the federal and provincial governments are mandated to deliver these programs, meeting identified goals and objectives. There are mandatory information and minimum data requirements that must be met in order to evaluate applications and allocate the funding in a fair and equitable fashion. Applications are designed to thoroughly assess potential projects with limited resources and determine the extent to which the applications meet program goals and provincial strategies, and the Province works to improve the tools available to Local Governments to assist in the application process.

It is understood that a balance must be achieved, meeting the challenges faced by local governments, both with respect to applying to funding programs and project implementation, and meeting the federal and provincial program requirements.

B21 - FUNDING INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET WATER QUALITY

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request the provincial government to match any federal Community Works Fund infrastructure grants that communities use to meet standards set by health authorities for water quality.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

Under the federal Gas Tax Agreement, the Community Works Fund (CWF) disburses funding directly to Local Governments based on a percentage of the per capita allocation, as set out in the Agreement, for local spending priorities. Under the CWF, there is no requirement to supplement project work with a local government contribution. As such, local government can utilize the CWF to support 100% of an eligible project.

The Provincial government, through the various infrastructure funding programs such as the Canada/BC Municipal Infrastructure Fund, the Canada/BC Building Canada Fund – Communities Component and the Towns for Tomorrow program, have identified that projects designed to address public and environmental health issues are considered as a funding priority.

Further, the federal and provincial governments, through the administration of various capital grant programs such as the Canada/BC Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, Canada/BC Building Canada Fund – Communities Component and Towns for Tomorrow, allow local governments to utilize CWF as part or all of the local government contribution required under these programs and thus, does provide the opportunity to match Community Works Fund infrastructure grants.

If a project designed to meet health authority standards is identified as a community priority, opportunities already exist for matching provincial funding. It also should be noted that the provision of potable water is a shared responsibility, from senior government to the individual consumer. As such, it is important to first, educate and identify the 'true' costs of providing safe potable water, and secondly, share in the fiscal responsibility of providing safe, potable water. In most cases, this should involve those receiving the service (safe, potable water) paying an appropriate share of that service, whether that be capital improvements or ongoing operation and maintenance costs.

B22 - PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING IN NORTHERN BC

WHEREAS the current provincial funding formulas do not treat northern school districts fairly;

AND WHEREAS this inadequate funding has led to cutbacks in services to children in northern school districts;

AND WHEREAS the situation is so severe that northern public school children now receive an inferior education compared to other children in the province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM make strong representation to the provincial government to ensure the funding formula is changed to recognize the unique needs of the North and to ensure northern public school children receive public education equivalent to students in other parts of the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

The current education funding formula was developed to give boards of education stable, predictable, multi-year funding envelopes that allow them the flexibility to manage their districts and improve long-term education planning and budgeting. The formula recognizes unique enrolment and geographic characteristics to ensure that funding is provided equitably for all students, in all districts.

The Ministry of Education is providing close to \$145 million in Unique Geographic Factors funding in 2008/09 to assist rural, remote and northern districts with the additional costs of acquiring goods and services, including travel, resulting from the greater distances and increased isolation of some of these communities.

Since 2001/02 the Province has increased funding to BC's public schools by close to \$1.2 billion. Despite overall declining enrolment, funding to boards has increased to a record \$4.467 billion.

The Ministry of Education continues to convene a Technical Review Committee. This committee, comprised of a mix of school district officials representing both rural and urban districts, and Ministry staff, meets throughout the fall of each year to review the funding formula and provide recommendations for changes based on their deliberations.

The Ministry has taken a number of actions to ensure students in rural communities have the education they need to build a successful future. For example, a Rural Strategy Committee has been put in place to develop networks and structures that will enable small districts to meet the recommendations of the Rural Education Task Force (full report and recommendations: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/mintask/rural.htm>). Conferences for rural educators, parents and trustees have been held, and the Rural Education Network and online training sessions have been established to support rural educators.

B23 - FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY PARKS

WHEREAS the Local Government Act and Community Charter require that funds received at the time of subdivision in lieu of parkland dedication must be used for the acquisition of parklands and for no other purpose;

AND WHEREAS the making of capital improvements to parks and other community properties is often a higher priority than the acquisition of additional parklands;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM petition the Province to allow funds collected in lieu of parkland dedication to be used for capital improvements to parks and other community property.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

The current approach requires that funds received at the time of subdivision in lieu of parkland dedication must be used for the acquisition of parklands and for no other purpose. This approach is used to ensure that as communities grow at least 5 per cent of the settled area can be maintained in park and green space without impacting local property tax. Allowing the use of these funds for other purposes, including making capital improvements to parks and other community properties, reduces the focus on parkland acquisition. The capacity to plan for and acquire parkland is critical to maintain a sustainable community.

Development Cost Charges (DCC's) can be used to fund park improvements including: fencing, landscaping, drainage and irrigation, trails, restrooms, changing rooms, playground and playing equipment. The Ministry of Community Development's Parkland Acquisition Best Practices recommends that a local government consider clear guidelines when using DCC's and parkland acquisition. The best practices guide is available on the Ministry's website:
http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/intergov_relations/library/Parkland_Acquisition_BPG.pdf.

B24 - REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS FOR KEEPING OF PROVINCIAL

WHEREAS federal and provincial prisoners are housed in municipal lockups on a routine basis at a significant cost to the municipal taxpayers;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial reimbursement for the costs of keeping such prisoners does not reflect the actual costs;

AND WHEREAS discussions between the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, initiated by the endorsement of previous resolutions on this matter, has not resulted in changes to the level of reimbursements:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities continue discussions with the Province to ensure that municipalities housing federal and provincial prisoners are reimbursed at a level that reflects actual costs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province reimburses municipalities for keeping provincial prisoners in municipal lock-ups.

The government is committed to ensuring services are delivered in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. To ensure that municipalities are equitably compensated, Keep of Prisoners agreements provide an hourly prisoner rate determined by dividing the total number of provincial prisoner hours into the annual Keep of Prisoner budget.

In addition to working to reduce the number of provincial prisoners in lock-ups through the use of video court appearances, revised prisoner transport schedules and increased hours of admission at regional correctional centres, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is working toward securing additional funding that will increase the Keep of Prisoner budget, thus increasing reimbursements to municipalities.

B25 - COST RECOVERY FOR PROCESSING FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY REQUESTS

WHEREAS the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act allows for only limited recovery for request processing costs;

AND WHEREAS many local governments continue to bear unreasonable costs for processing Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requests;

AND WHEREAS the lack of cost recovery for local government resources required to process these requests impacts their budgets and reduces service levels in respect of other areas of local government service to the public:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province be requested to consider amending the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to provide for the option for recovery of actual request processing costs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act makes public bodies accountable by giving the public a right of access to records. In certain circumstances public bodies may charge applicants fees for records in response to access requests but this is limited by a schedule of maximum fees set by Regulation.

The Province of British Columbia is committed to a fee structure in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act that strikes an appropriate balance between the public's right of access and the interests of public bodies in recovering costs associated with processing requests.

The existing fee structure supports the important policy objectives of giving the public a right of access to records while ensuring that high access costs do not become a barrier to access.

B26 - BUSINESS CLASS EXEMPTION

WHEREAS the statutory property exemption for business Class 6 assessments is \$10,000, regardless of the property value;

AND WHEREAS the business Class 6 exemption has remained unchanged since implementation in 1984 despite increasing assessments:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government review the business class exemption for Class 6 assessments and consider an increase to \$50,000 for the statutory property exemption, in order to provide small businesses, in the Province of British Columbia, a fair exemption for their increased assessed property value.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

Amendments enacted to Section 226 of the Community Charter (CC) provide municipalities with the opportunity to provide for revitalization tax exemptions for any revitalization objectives, including economic revitalization. These provisions will allow a municipality to target the kinds of economic activities and investment which will be in the best interests of the community.

B27 - PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES AND WATERSHEDS

WHEREAS the requirements respecting the protection of water resources and the treatment of water are becoming more stringent at a time when climate change is affecting hydrological conditions;

AND WHEREAS the development of residential and commercial recreational uses adjacent to drinking water sources reduces water quality and would be a risk to future flooding:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia abandon its initiative to sell crown land adjacent to watershed lakes in the Okanagan Valley in order to protect domestic water sources used by thousands of residents.

RESPONSE: Integrated Land Management Bureau

The Province has put considerable effort over the past two years into working with stakeholders, examining their concerns and exploring various options to address the issues raised. The Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) has heard the concerns of local government and water purveyors and has put the project on hold for approximately two years. This delay will allow communities to complete the necessary hydrology studies that will help to determine future reservoir storage needs and capacities.

ILMB will not be making a decision on whether to proceed with the sale of the reservoir lakes lease lots until they have fully consulted with local elected officials as well as First Nations. The Province is committed to making an informed, balanced decision and will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure any new information about the potential impacts that these sales might have on water quality, and the ability to expand the reservoirs, is reviewed.

During this delay, critical information that is necessary for making a fully informed decision will be compiled on the state of the water sources in the Okanagan.

B28 - SALE OF LEASED LOTS ON RESERVOIR LAKES

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia (Ministry of Agriculture and Lands) is considering the sale of Crown owned recreational lease lots located on reservoir lakes;

AND WHEREAS the sale of recreational lease lots creates concerns about community water quality and security, contravention of current land use and building bylaws, compliance with sewage regulations and contravention of riparian area regulations:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM lobby the provincial government to maintain ownership of recreational lease lots located on reservoir lakes and to ensure compliance with land use and building bylaws and codes, sewage regulations and to ensure that water quality is maintained.

RESPONSE: Integrated Land Management Bureau

The Province has put considerable effort over the past two years into working with stakeholders, examining their concerns and exploring various options to address the issues raised. The Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) has heard the concerns of local government and water purveyors and has put the project on hold for approximately two years. This delay will allow communities to complete the necessary hydrology studies that will help to determine future reservoir storage needs and capacities.

ILMB will not be making a decision on whether to proceed with the sale of the reservoir lakes lease lots until they have fully consulted with local elected officials as well as First Nations. The Province is committed to making an informed, balanced decision and will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure any new information about the potential impacts that these sales might have on water quality, and the ability to expand the reservoirs, is reviewed.

During this delay, critical information that is necessary for making a fully informed decision will be compiled on the state of the water sources in the Okanagan.

The ILMB responds to complaints involving Crown land issues on a priority basis, and only on issues that are within our mandate. Local governments are best suited to enforcing their bylaws and zoning regulations.

B29 - ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

WHEREAS the province has implemented several “product stewardship” programs for specific waste materials as part of its commitment to the “Three R’s” of reduce, reuse and recycle;

AND WHEREAS the toxicity of household batteries creates a significant environmental risk in landfills and is a concern for local governments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM urge the Ministry of Environment to require producers to take responsibility for their product by setting up a comprehensive product stewardship program that includes all household batteries and services all communities of the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Province of British Columbia regulates industry-led product stewardship under the Recycling Regulation (2004), which makes producers responsible for the lifecycle management of their products. The Ministry of Environment has a service plan commitment to add two new product categories to the Regulation every three years. The Ministry notified stakeholders of a list of the next possible products in the summer of 2007.

In April 2008, government announced its intention to amend the Recycling Regulation in the autumn of 2008 to include mercury-containing light bulbs and thermostats, and expand the existing electronics product category, which currently includes televisions, computers, monitors and desktop printers. The expansion of this category would mean adding electrical equipment, which would include batteries that are used in electronic and small household/consumer electrical equipment. It would also include mercury-containing light bulbs as peripherals for lighting equipment.

Producers of batteries and mercury containing products have expressed their support for the initiative and consultations with affected stakeholders have been underway since spring 2008. We anticipate roll-out of a province-wide recycling system for batteries and mercury containing light bulbs in late 2009.

B30 – BATTERY RECYCLING

WHEREAS batteries are identified as Household Hazardous Waste by British Columbia's Environment Act, as they contain heavy metals that can leach out into the receiving environment;

AND WHEREAS Environment Canada estimates that by 2010, if the current rate of recycling is not increased, landfills in Canada will hold over 495 million used batteries potentially contaminating groundwater through landfill leachate:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the provincial government to implement an accessible and convenient means for the public to recycle batteries.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Province of British Columbia regulates industry-led product stewardship under the Recycling Regulation (2004), which makes producers responsible for the lifecycle management of their products. The Ministry of Environment has a service plan commitment to add two new product categories to the Regulation every three years. The Ministry notified stakeholders of a list of the next possible products in the summer of 2007.

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Producers of batteries and mercury containing products have expressed their support for the initiative and consultations with affected stakeholders have been underway since spring 2008. We anticipate roll-out of a province-wide recycling system for batteries and mercury containing light bulbs in late 2009.

B31 – UNNECESSARY PRODUCT PACKAGING

WHEREAS the provincial government is showing a commitment to sustainability and the environments;

AND WHEREAS packaging of products needs to be addressed, including development methods for recycling Styrofoam and dealing with small plastic beverage bottle – nothing that glass bottle have a proven longer usage lifecycle:

THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED that the UBCM request and work with the British Columbia government to develop strategies to reduce unnecessary packaging of all products in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Province of British Columbia regulates industry-led product stewardship under the Recycling Regulation (2004), which makes producers responsible for the lifecycle management of their products. The Ministry of Environment has a service plan commitment to add two new product categories to the Regulation every three years. The Ministry of Environment notified stakeholders of a list of the next possible products in the summer of 2007. Packaging was one product category included within the circulated list.

Packaging represents a significant fraction of municipal waste in the province. Over the past months the Ministry has been consulting with industry and the BC Product Stewardship Council, which draws its membership from municipalities across the province, to collaborate and consider solutions to packaging reduction and recycling.

The Recycling Regulation makes producers and consumers responsible for the lifecycle management of end-of-life products.

Government is considering expanding the scope of products regulated under the Recycling Regulation to include packaging, and is currently consulting with industry and local governments on this issue.

We recognize the importance of working with all stakeholders, including local governments, and anticipate collaborating with both industry and local governments over the coming months to develop options to address unnecessary packaging waste.

Any decisions on a provincial recycling system for packaging would be made in collaboration with industry and local governments. Government will likely be moving ahead with a provincial packaging recycling system; roll-out is anticipated to begin in late 2009 or early 2010.

B32 - WILDLIFE RESCUE AND ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY COST ACCOUNTABILITY

WHEREAS financial accountability for wildlife rescue and ecosystem recovery during and subsequent to oil spill response procedures is not currently part of the required cost liability for standard spill response costs undertaken by the responsible party in Canadian waters;

AND WHEREAS the recovery and rehabilitation of the detrimental impacts to wildlife and ecosystems following oil spill events require adequate resources;

AND WHEREAS wildlife rescue and ecosystem recovery are not currently a requirement of the emergency spill response process;

AND WHEREAS government agency responsibilities for the management of oil spill events and their effects are fragmented;

AND WHEREAS the inclusion of financial accountability for wildlife rescue and ecosystem recovery along the US west coast would be familiar both in concept and in business practice to industry;

AND WHEREAS the US Environmental Protection Agency has an Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund which supplies adequate funding for wildlife rescue and ecosystem recovery costs in the event that a responsible party is either not identifiable or not able to be held accountable:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial and federal governments be requested to:

1. enact legislation to require wildlife rescue and ecosystem recovery be part of standard oil spill response activities either on land or in water;
2. explore appropriate measures to streamline governmental responsibilities in spill events;
3. enact legislation to require payment of those costs attributable to wildlife rescue and ecosystem recovery caused by spill events to be borne by the Responsible Party;
4. explore the feasibility of a Liability Trust Fund to provide funding for spill event remediation when the Responsible Party cannot be identified or held accountable.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Amendments were made to the Environmental Management Act in May, 2008 which clarify and strengthen the responsibility of spillers to fund oiled wildlife response. The Environmental Emergencies Program is looking at potential changes to the existing environmental emergency legislation. These include the approach to oiled wildlife response and the creation of a Contingency Fund as a source of funds for spill response when the spiller is either unwilling or unable to carry out response in a timely manner, or is unknown.

The Ministry of Environment is in the process of developing an oiled wildlife response plan to provide clear direction to spillers. Ministry staff has met with the Canadian Wildlife Service and other stakeholders to discuss the draft plan.

The Province will continue to advocate that Transport Canada (as the responsible federal agency) require the existing marine response cooperative to develop an appropriate oiled wildlife response capacity and capability.

B33 - CONTAMINATED AND VACANT SITES

WHEREAS UBCM Resolutions 2007-B29 and 2007-B70 were passed at the 2007 Convention and no concrete action has been taken:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM strongly urge the provincial government to take immediate steps to implement the previously adopted resolutions 2007-B29 and 2007-B70 in response to contaminated and vacated sites.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands & Ministry of Environment

The B.C. Brownfield Renewal Strategy (BRS), announced in February 2008 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, is a multi-ministry initiative designed to address the barriers to brownfield and contaminated site redevelopment in the province. The BRS was developed partly in response to 2007 UBCM requests regarding the remediation and management of contaminated and vacant sites.

In support of implementation of the BRS, the Ministry of Environment is leading several initiatives including (i) reviewing options for increasing flexibility in the transfer of liability between vendors and purchasers of contaminated sites, and (ii) streamlining of the province's contaminated sites regulatory framework to facilitate site clean up and redevelopment. These initiatives, together with those led by other provincial agencies, are designed to reduce many of the barriers that exist today and which can discourage brownfield and contaminated site remediation and redevelopment.

Our priorities are to minimize risks to public health and the environment as opposed to matters of attracting redevelopment opportunities. Concerns regarding remediation liability and the regulatory processes of contaminated site remediation have been identified as barriers to brownfield redevelopment in many jurisdictions across Canada including B.C.

Any future legislative amendments will depend on a number of factors, some of which are currently under consideration as part of the BRS. These factors include, but are not limited to, the economic climate, corporate portfolios and priorities, resourcing, land values, available funding options and incentives, new or enhanced reporting requirements, such as having responsible parties provide us with an anticipated schedule for investigation and remediation of sites, and a clear understanding of the advantages of undertaking remediation that coincides with redevelopment.

B34 - LOGGING PRACTICES ON PRIVATE FOREST LANDS AND WATERSHED PROTECTION

WHEREAS the rate of logging on private forest lands within the E & N Land Grant on Vancouver Island have been dramatically accelerated:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities petition the Province of British Columbia to enact legislation requiring private managed forest lands to be regulated and managed to the same standards as Crown managed forest lands.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

The Private Managed Forest Land Act (the Act) establishes government's management objectives for key environmental values on private land where owners request to have their land classified as managed forest land. These objectives relate to soil conservation, water quality, fish habitat, reforestation and critical wildlife habitat.

The Private Managed Forest Land Council (the Council) is empowered under the Act to establish regulations respecting the first four of these management objectives. The Minister of Environment is responsible for establishing objectives that address management of critical wildlife habitat where there is insufficient Crown land to meet these needs.

In 2007, the Council undertook a review of the regulations to assess their adequacy in meeting the spirit and intent of government's stated management objectives. As a result, the new Private Managed Forest Land Council Regulation 2007 came into force September 1, 2008. This regulation significantly increases the protection for water quality and fish habitat, including constraints on timber harvesting in riparian areas.

There are no objectives in the Act that relate specifically to rate-of-cut. However, rate-of-cut is only one factor affecting watershed behaviour. Reforestation, riparian reserves, soil disturbance and other management activities also affect watersheds. The Council has reacted to improve management activities in these areas. Other legislation also regulates activities in watersheds and affects water quality (e.g., Drinking Water Protection Act, Water Act, Fish Protection Act and the federal Fisheries Act). This web of regulation offers significant protection and requires careful forest management by private land owners.

We find no evidence for a dramatic increase in rate-of-cut. The Ministry of Forests and Range statistics show that private land harvest levels within the E & N Land Grant have been relatively stable since the late 1990's, and the Timber Forest License removals have not dramatically affected harvest levels in this area.

When done responsibly, with due care to key public environmental values, increased timber harvesting represents a sustainable way to increase economic activity, jobs and taxation revenues.

There is no new legislation proposed in addition to the current statutes available to manage harvesting on private land.

B35 - WATERSHED CONTROL

WHEREAS a number of resolutions have been endorsed by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities over the years requesting that the Province acknowledge and correct the anomaly that regional districts have an obligation to provide potable water and yet do not have the authority to determine what activities can take place within their watersheds;

AND WHEREAS no action has been taken by the Province to provide regional districts with such authority:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Province to provide regional districts with greater authority to determine what activities take place in their watersheds.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

The Province has made a commitment to ensure potable and secure water supplies, for both human consumption and ecosystem sustainability. This strategic direction is reflected in the Action Plan for Safe Drinking Water (2002); the Speech from the Throne (September, 2005); and, most recently, the Living WaterSmart Plan (2008). Legislative support for this direction can be found in the Drinking Water Protection Act and the Water Act. At this time, the Province has a general policy of integrated resource management in its watersheds and while regional districts do not have direct control over all activities in their watersheds, Provincial legislation and programs include a number of provisions that could enable local governments to exercise more control over those areas. They are as follows:

The Drinking Water Protection Act enables the establishment of drinking water protection plans. These plans are intended for only those situations where there is no other process by which a threat to drinking water, which may result in a drinking water health hazard, can be addressed, i.e., parties cannot come to an agreement. Discussions are underway for initiating such a plan in the Comox Valley Regional District.

The Water Act enables the establishment of a water management plan, which is intended to address conflicts between water users, water quality issues, and/or groundwater issues. A water management plan is underway in Langley. Both the drinking water protection plan and water management plan and legislated planning processes which may have an impact on permits, authorizations and decisions at both the provincial and local levels. However, while a drinking water protection plan may supersede the Forest and Range Practices Act, a water management plan may not.

An alternative to a legislated drinking water protection plan is a form of water management plan that includes affected parties, including industry, and addresses issues that have the potential to affect community drinking water supplies. A number of such plans have been initiated by local government in cooperation with the provincial government around the province, e.g., the Trepanier Water Management Plan.

A draft Provincial Memorandum of Understanding has also been prepared that specifies the development of regional protocols to ensure that different agencies, including local government, communicate with one another concerning decisions that may affect community water supplies. The Vancouver Island Watershed Protection Steering Committee, comprising representatives

from government agencies and local government, is consistent with the intent of the regional protocols, and is an example of parties working in an integrated and collaborative manner to address activities inside and outside local government jurisdiction that may affect drinking water.

Community forests are another option for local governments to consider. This form of tenure is intended to provide opportunities for community management of Crown forest land. They are opportunity for communities, supporting management options for recreation, wildlife and watersheds. Harvesting operations can also provide a source of revenue, supporting local priorities, while harvest rates and exact locations within the tenure can be set to meet locally determined objectives and interests.

Finally, while source water protection has received a great deal of attention in the past, it is only one element in the multi-barrier approach. All aspects of the multi-barrier approach, including treatment, should be considered when examining the best options for ensuring potable water for communities.

B36 - COMMUNITY FORESTS

WHEREAS the Province has eliminated Community Forest License extensions in favour of Community Forest Agreements;

AND WHEREAS the Community Forest Licenses have served the communities (where they are in place) effectively:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province work with existing Community Forest License holders on renewal in a manner that meets the needs of the affected communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests and Range

The Province remains committed to providing communities with viable tenures that help create economic, recreational and environmental benefits where an allowable annual cut exists to support that tenure. It is incumbent upon the community to express their interest through an application.

B37 - FOREST TENURE LICENCES

WHEREAS, traditionally, timber that has been harvested in a Timber Supply Area has been required to be processed in that area;

AND WHEREAS many communities affected by the recent downturn in the forest industry are facing dire economic challenges;

AND WHEREAS recent mergers and shutdowns provide a threat that wood harvested in one area will be transferred to another for processing, thus jeopardizing local operations and communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be lobbied to ensure that sufficient harvested timber remain to be utilized in local processing facilities within the Timber Supply Area.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests and Range

There is no real community stability if the local mill cannot remain competitive. Appurtenancy and timber processing rules never prevented the closure of an uneconomic mill. In fact, they made forestry operations less competitive, which is why these rules were removed in 2003.

By removing appurtenancy and timber processing requirements, the Province enabled timber to flow to its highest and best use in B.C., creating jobs where the economics support it. This addressed a long-standing complaint about a lack of access to timber.

The Province has increased community control of local timber by issuing new community forest agreements and First Nations agreements. To date, 28 new community forests have been offered or issued, with another 24 involved in earlier phases of the process. As well, forestry agreements have been signed with 160 First Nations, providing access to over 33 million cubic metres of timber.

Whenever a forest licence is transferred, the Province reviews it to ensure there is no undue restriction in competition for standing timber, logs and chips.

B38 - TRANSMISSION LINES ASSOCIATED WITH IPP'S

WHEREAS private interests are proposing an inordinate number of run-of-river Independent Power Projects (IPP's) throughout the Province, with each project requiring a corridor for its transmission line;

AND WHEREAS collectively, these transmission lines have the potential to reduce the forestry value of a large expanse of crown land and to negatively impact recreation and tourism values in their vicinity:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities strongly urge the provincial government, together with the BC Transmission Corporation and BC Hydro, to initiate a process which will require the pre-planning and coordination of IPP transmission line routes and capacities with the objective of having companies share this infrastructure in order to reduce its extent and to minimize its impact on other crown land resources and users.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

BC Transmission Corporation (BCTC) is an independent electric transmission company, ensuring fair and open access to the grid and creating value and new opportunities for their customers and stakeholders by providing safe, reliable and cost-effective transmission services. As the Province grows, so does the demand for electricity. BCTC is mandated to ensuring the Province has electricity today and into the future.

In order for us to meet our electricity demand challenges, BC Hydro has been given the opportunity to tap into independent power production. In order to do that however, independent power producers must have access to the electrical grid through BCTC.

B.C.'s electrical transmission system is one all British Columbians can be proud of.

B39 - PRIVATE POWER PROJECTS

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Powell River supports the benefits of green power and recognizes the significant employment and economic benefits that Plutonic Power Corporation and Catalyst Paper Corporation bring to the Powell River area with regard to their green energy projects - including the partnership between Plutonic, School District 47 and their First Nations partners - and in particular, Council recognizes Plutonic's and Catalyst's efforts in addressing community concerns and needs with regard to their Powell River area projects;

AND WHEREAS the Government of British Columbia has granted numerous water licenses, environmental permits and land tenures to private power developers without addressing environmental impacts, community land use planning and First Nation territorial concerns:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of British Columbia be urged to take a leadership role when granting environmental permits and land tenures within British Columbia relating to the development of private power projects by conducting a comprehensive regulatory, environment and community review process, to examine the cumulative impacts of proposed private power projects.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

BC Hydro estimates demand for electricity to grow by 45 per cent in the next 20 years and the Province needs to be electricity self-sufficient by 2016, but it will require innovative solutions to get there. Independent power production (IPP) is just one part of the mix in order to meet that demand.

Provincial land and water resources used for IPPs are not being sold, and must meet strict environmental standards. Other provincial and federal permits and approvals may also be required.

B40 - SURFACE LAND OWNERS AND SALES REQUESTS FOR SUB-SURFACE PARCELS

WHEREAS UBCM resolution 2007-B46 called on the provincial government to notify and provide surface land owners the opportunity to comment at the time of the provincial government's receipt of an industry request for sub-surface parcels to be posted for sale, but the provincial Pilot Surface Owner Notification Project notifies surface land owners only after the government has decided to post relevant sub-surface parcels for sale, and information about surface land owners' activities and concerns is made available only after the sale, to the successful bidder;

AND WHEREAS the notification and opportunity for surface land owners to comment on industry requests to post sub-surface parcels for sale would allow surface land owners to provide prospective bidders with information about current surface activities that might affect access to sub-surface resources, and early exchange of such information would support improved relations between surface land owners and industry:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province amend the Pilot Surface Owner Notification Project to notify and provide surface land owners the opportunity to comment at the time of an industry request for sub-surface parcels to be posted for sale, in order to facilitate early exchange of information and allow surface owners to inform prospective sub-surface bidders of surface activities that might affect access to sub-surface resources.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resource

At the time industry requests the sale of petroleum and natural gas tenure for a large land parcel (usually private and Crown land), it is premature to consult registered surface landowners on site specific issues. There are several potential outcomes from the sale of petroleum and natural gas tenure, including delayed or no development activity. In other words, the auction of petroleum and natural gas tenure may or may not affect surface landowners. The tenure may not receive an acceptable bid. If it does, acquiring petroleum and natural gas tenure is a preliminary step in the oil and gas development process. Industry must then apply to the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission - demonstrating how they have addressed any tenure caveats, consulted with affected stakeholders, and met regulations that govern oil and gas development.

Prior to the sale of petroleum and natural gas tenure, a "referral process" solicits local and regional planning knowledge on a large land parcel, including input from local municipalities and First Nations. Based on the feedback received, specific tenure caveats may be placed on the land parcel. Where local governments and First Nations need more time to assess potential issues, the Ministry may grant a temporary deferral, or delay, in posting the parcel. Ministry staff also reviews each proposed land parcel for conflict with existing land uses based on a review of cultural, biophysical and planning data stored in the Integrated Land Management Bureau's Land and Resource Data Warehouse.

Prior to oil and gas development on private property, registered surface landowners have the opportunity to provide feedback on site specific issues when negotiating a surface lease agreement with industry. In addition, a registered landowner, as part of the Landowner Notification program, can submit a "checklist" to identify any special property features and land use activities. The Ministry forwards the "checklist" to industry as a tool to aid in planning for exploration activity.

Through the above processes and programs, the Ministry strives to ensure that surface landowners, local governments and First Nations have significant input that helps to guide oil and gas development, thereby, advancing effective working relations between stakeholders and industry.

B41 - OCEAN ENERGY STRATEGY

WHEREAS British Columbia seeks to diversify electricity generation in order to meet self-sufficiency goals and zero-net greenhouse gas emissions by 2016 in cooperation with provincial and local governments;

AND WHEREAS the coast of British Columbia has been identified as having significant opportunity for ocean energy created through conversion of wave and in-stream tidal current for the clean creation of electricity that meets the goals of the BC Energy Plan:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities work with the provincial government on a strategy for wave and in-stream tidal current technologies with the objective to encourage the development and implementation of projects that will enable economic and viable power generation so that British Columbia will become a global leader in this emerging sector.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

The Province has significant potential for ocean energy development, including tidal, current and wave energy.

Development of the ocean energy sector will help achieve the BC Energy Plan goals to diversify our renewable clean energy mix.

The Province has been moving forward to help facilitate ocean energy research and development. As well, the Province established the Innovative Clean Energy (ICE) Fund to help clean power technology projects succeed.

B42 - COALBED METHANE DEVELOPMENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S SACRED HEADWATERS

WHEREAS to date there has been no commercial extraction of coalbed methane gas in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS coalbed methane extraction in other North American jurisdictions has caused significant harm to water, wildlife and rural economies;

AND WHEREAS the Skeena, Nass and Stikine rivers support three of North America's richest wild salmon fisheries, which in turn contribute to Northwest British Columbia's vibrant cultures and economy;

AND WHEREAS the headwaters of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine rivers is home to robust populations of large mammals including stone sheep, grizzly bears, and Osborne caribou, which have been shown to be sensitive to landscape fragmentation caused by linear developments such as roads and pipelines;

AND WHEREAS Shell Canada Energy, a wholly owned subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, is planning to drill exploratory coalbed methane wells at the headwaters of the Skeena and Stikine rivers, for the purpose of determining the extent and feasibility of the resource:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the British Columbia government

- (1) Immediately suspend coalbed methane exploration in the Klappan-Groundhog tenure area;
- (2) Engage in comprehensive consultations with all residents of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine watersheds and estuaries; and
- (3) Not proceed with coalbed methane development in the Klappan-Groundhog area until there is compelling evidence of environmental safety, such that the majority of residents in the region are satisfied such development does not jeopardize their values and existing economic activities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

The Energy Plan encourages coalbed gas (CBG) development with the intent of demonstrating that B.C. is leading socially and environmentally-responsible CBG exploration and development. Proponents wanting to develop CBG will not be allowed to surface discharge any produced water. Any re-injected produced water must be injected well below domestic water aquifers. Shell Canada Ltd. (Shell) has agreed to suspend all oil and gas exploration activity in the Klappan. Government has facilitated this by specifying in an amendment to Shell's tenure agreement that there be no activity for two years. The Province of British Columbia commits through the amended tenure agreement to ensuring that First Nations have sufficient information about the development process in order to assess any impacts on their traditional territory. The tenure amendment additionally commits government to ensuring that sufficient baseline regional water quality data is available prior to development proceeding. Coalbed gas development in the province has now reached commercial production. Projects reaching commercial production demonstrate that coalbed gas development can proceed in a

socially and environmentally responsible manner to the benefit of communities and the people of British Columbia.

B43 - AGRICULTURAL LAND REVIEW

WHEREAS the BC Government has instituted the Agricultural Land Reserve in 1973 to protect the most valuable agricultural lands in the province from development;

AND WHEREAS municipalities and regional districts are continuing to grow and are having difficulties with smart development because of the agricultural land restrictions;

AND WHEREAS the Province has jurisdiction over regional districts and municipalities with regards to land in the Agricultural Land Reserve:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the provincial government for a review (with consultation from local government) of the Agricultural Land Reserve boundaries to ensure they accurately capture agricultural land.

RESPONSE: Agricultural Land Commission

The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial land use zone in favour of agriculture administered by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). The ALR is primarily intended to preserve BC's limited agricultural land base for food production and to provide land use certainty to encourage agricultural businesses. The purposes of the ALC are to preserve agricultural land, to encourage farming and to work with local governments and First Nations at a planning level to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land.

In a recent service plan the ALC recognized that the ALR should be based on agricultural land capability and suitability for a diverse range of agricultural products. In certain areas of the province the ALC believes it would be a useful exercise to work with local governments in reviewing the ALR boundary to ensure it reflects lands that are both capable and suitable for agriculture. The ALC is particularly interested in several northern and eastern communities.

The ALC is currently engaged in a joint ALR review of the Elk Valley with the Regional District of East Kootenay.

B44 - SUPPORT FOR BILL M202 BRITISH COLUMBIA RAIL CORRIDOR SAFETY ACT, 2008

WHEREAS the safety and security of livestock owners in B.C. whose grazing lands run adjacent to publicly owned rail corridors is of utmost importance;

AND WHEREAS that safety and security is at risk from factors including inadequate fencing and rail crossings, inadequate invasive plant management, and inadequate notification and compensation for livestock that have been struck by trains:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities encourage the provincial government to support Bill M202 British Columbia Rail Corridor Safety Act, 2008.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Private Members' Bill M202 is intended to apply to all "publicly owned rail corridors" in BC. This would preclude corridors owned by CP, CN, BNSF, shortlines, the Island Corridor Foundation, and privately operated industrial trackage.

CN, which operates the BC Rail-owned line, is a federal railway. Federal railways are subject to federal jurisdiction (the Canada Transportation Act and the Railway Safety Act), are inspected by federal inspectors and are not subject to any provincial laws or regulations with the exception of taxation-related legislation (e.g., property taxes, fuel taxes, sales taxes, capital taxes) where the provinces have a federally-granted jurisdiction.

The Province agrees that B.C. ranchers, their families and their communities deserve a prompt response to concerns about the safety of livestock near railways, and Minister Falcon has written to the federal Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, about the pressing need for federal regulations. The matter was also brought to the attention of the Railway Safety Act Review Panel through the ministry's submission to the Panel.

It's very clear, however, that the federal government has jurisdiction here. Unlike provincial highways, which fall under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, the operation and maintenance of the railway right-of-way covered by the BC Rail Investment Partnership falls under federal jurisdiction. CN falls under federal jurisdiction; therefore, federal fencing regulations will apply to them, even though the Province owns the land on which they operate the railway.

The Ministry has strongly encouraged the federal government to give this important safety and economic issue the consideration and priority it requires.

B45 - HIGHWAY 37 ELECTRIFICATION

WHEREAS electrification of the Highway 37 corridor is critical to the economy of all northwest communities in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS a portion of this electrification cost is to be borne by the Galore Creek project (currently in review), however there are other projects proceeding that require this power transmission line, e.g. Imperial Metals, "Red Chris" project, the large Copper Fox (Schaff Creek) project now in environmental review as well as the Forest Kerr Hydro project:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the provincial government and the BC Transmission Corporation, urging the continuance of the proposed environmental programs and projects, with a focus on the Northwest Transmission Line, namely the Terrace to Bob Quinn portion of the 287 kV line.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

The Province remains as committed as we were last year to building this transmission line.

We have \$250 million on the table and are inviting industry to join us, and put a plan and financing forward to make the Northwest Transmission Line a reality.

B46 - RETRAINING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS the provincial community colleges have a vital role to play in supporting regional economic, social and human resource development;

AND WHEREAS B.C. is experiencing significant economic change as a result of the decline in the forest products industry, couple with the need to support growth and diversification of other economic sectors (e.g. mining, oil and gas, renewable energy, transportation and logistics, tourism, etc.):

THEREORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the provincial government make increased investments (capital and operating funding) in educational institutions and facilities, in order that they will be able to provide the retraining programs and services needed to enable individuals to make labour force transitions, as well as provide access to the skilled workers employers will need to work in new and emerging sectors;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the provincial government to establish a new funding framework to ensure the ongoing long-term sustainability of the community college system in B.C.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development

The BC Government through the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development has invested more than \$1.5 billion since 2001 in new and better campuses all around BC which is unprecedented in our province's history – approx 650 capital projects in all.

B47 - SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL INITIATIVES

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia ranks tenth of all the provinces in its financial support of agriculture, measured as a percentage of Agriculture and Agri-Food GDP's;

AND WHEREAS amid growing public interest in the ability to feed ourselves locally and provincially, the agricultural industry is experiencing increasing challenges;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia increase its funding of agricultural initiatives that will help to increase the productivity and efficiency of our diverse agricultural sectors.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

The Province of British Columbia is providing considerable funding to the agri-food sector to increase productivity and self-sufficiency of the agri-food sector. The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has concentrated its funding options on targeted programs (such as those related to business risk and crop insurance) for our producers rather than generic support programs, and this business model appears to be working.

Additionally, our British Columbia Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for Farm Families released February 15, 2008 dedicates an additional \$5.6M a year for the next three years to agriculture in BC (totalling \$16.8M from existing funding). This plan is designed to support the agriculture industry by helping industry members become more self-sustaining and is supporting those programs with the following funding:

\$1M per year to promote local agricultural products and develop a BC brand.

Fund with \$1M per year to implement a "Food Miles" project to reduce GHG emissions associated with food purchases.

Complete a \$14.5M containment level 3 laboratory in Abbotsford.

Increase adoption of Environmental Farm Planning program with investment of \$2-3M.

Provide \$4M per year, starting in 2008/09, to match federal funds of \$6M per year to implement the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. The 2008 interim program under the Continuity Agreement will compensate qualifying cattle and forage producers whose unharvested forage crop intended for livestock feed has been damaged by wildlife and this program will continue for the ensuing years.

Provide \$500,000 per year to increase extension staff for the Summer Extension Assistance Program and Greenhouse positions.

Expand crop trials and demonstrations by \$200,000.

Enhance funding by \$100,000 to the BC Provincial 4H council for delivery of 4H programs in BC.

Increase funding by \$100,000 for agriculture in the classroom programs.

In addition, funding has been made available under other programs:

The Ministry has invested \$8.8M in the Meat Transition Assistance Program, which started in 2006/07 which helps producers comply with the Meat Inspection Regulations through upgrades to operations and facilities.

The Province provided \$3.3M in 2008/09 to the BC Cattlemen's Association to support the implementation of the beef industry strategic plan by assisting in further development of domestic, national and international markets and continuing the Farmland Riparian Interface Stewardship Program.

The Ministry is funding the development of a "Food Miles" project, with \$3M over 3 years, starting in 2008/09, to inform consumers about the distance their food has travelled to market.

Additionally, the government has recently announced a Farm Assessment Review Panel on December 17, 2007 which will be holding public meetings throughout the Province to ensure the assessment and taxation of agricultural land is fair and equitable.

B49 - TRAINING SPACES FOR DOCTORS AND OTHER MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

WHEREAS there is a nation-wide shortage of doctors and other medical professionals and this shortage is particularly acute in rural areas, which comprise much of this province;

AND WHEREAS this shortage has resulted in large part, from the lack of training opportunities available at our post-secondary institution:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the Minister of Health to substantially increase funding provided to universities and other medical training facilities so they can supply the larger number of graduates who will be required to rectify the increasingly critical shortage of medical personnel available to attend to the health care needs of BC residents.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health Services

New education seats are continually being allocated across health programs and distributed regionally throughout the province based on identified health human resource needs, student demand, and institutional ability to accommodate new seats. The Ministry of Health Services (MoHS) works closely with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD) on priorities for expanding health education spaces.

The following table identifies the education seats being added in 2008/09 and the total number of health education seats created since 2001.

	New Seats - 2008/09	New Seats Since 2001/02
Graduate Nurse	30	204
Nurse Practitioner	-	90
Registered Nurse*	279	2,991
Licensed Practical Nurse	130	501
Residential Care Aide	111	499
Allied Health	137	990
Physicians	-	128
Total	687	5,403

*Includes Registered Psychiatric Nurses

In addition to the above, 28 additional seats are being funded in health programs (home support/resident care attendant, Licensed Practical Nurse Access and a health bridging program) under a separate initiative of targeted growth spaces for Aboriginal students.

Since 2001, some of BC's MoHS and ALMD education-related initiatives have included: Doubling of the number of spaces for first year undergraduate medical students to 256 in September 2007, from 128 in September 2003, through distribution of UBC's medical school to UVic and UNBC.

A further expansion of the medical school is expected to open in the southern interior at UBC Okanagan by 2012. In the meantime, there will be more postgraduate residents undertaking

their training in the Okanagan by 2009, when there will be 16 residents in family medicine and 12-16 residents in specialty training, at any one time.

Expansion in nursing education by 3,786 spaces or 93 percent, and the creation of 23 new nursing education programs at public post-secondary institutions around the province.

Development and implementation of the Nurse Practitioner role, which includes establishing Nurse Practitioner education programs at the University of British Columbia (UBC), the University of Victoria (UVic) and the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC).

Expansion of postgraduate medical education (residencies) to keep pace with the undergraduate program growth and, since July 2003, approving funding for 96 new entry-level residency positions for Canadian medical graduates and 12 new positions for international medical graduates for a total of 242 entry-level positions in 2007/08.

B50 - SMALL COMMUNITY WATER AND SEWER SYSTEMS

WHEREAS the regulatory requirements for water distribution and sewage disposal systems are the responsibility of local government;

AND WHEREAS the training and development of water distribution and sewage disposal system operators has become a financial and logistical burden to small communities;

AND WHEREAS the ability to meet the standards for local operators may put the community at risk in maintaining water quality and safety of treated sewage on the environment in small communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the Province develop and fund a program to educate and certify water and sewer system operators in small communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

The Province of British Columbia is currently facing the challenge of a skilled labour shortage, which includes Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners (ROWPs), who design and install onsite sewage disposal systems. Remote rural communities are the most severely impacted by this shortage -- in some areas there are few to no ROWPs available to provide service to meet the public demand. Therefore, in addition to the need for a greater number of ROWPs to be practicing provincially, an incentive package needs to be developed which will encourage practitioners to service small, remote communities.

The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport both oversees and participates in the Sewage System Leadership Council (SSLC), which includes stakeholders from government, industry, and professional associations interested in improving both the function of the Sewerage System Regulation, and the protocol of sewage disposal in BC. This committee is currently developing a plan which will facilitate improved RWP coverage of remote areas of the province. Possible solution options suggested in the plan include:

Grants to aspiring ROWPs in rural areas to complete courses and training programs.
Grants to rural property owners in under-serviced areas to pay for travel/associated expenses of ROWPs commissioned to complete their system.

In addition, the committee is considering creating provisions which will allow homeowners to construct their own system, subject to 'third party' oversight and approval upon completion.

The Province of British Columbia recognizes the need for trained and skilled water operators. Pursuant to the challenges faced by rural and remote communities to access training, the ministry has worked with its educational partners, the BC Water and Waste Association and Thompson Rivers University to create online courses to deliver some water system training; and has also supported the development of an operator assistance program by the Sustainable Infrastructure Society. These new educational opportunities serve to provide water supply systems with convenient and affordable access to the services of experienced operators who work under contract. The ministry is also currently investigating other options such as the development of mobile training units to help deliver more cost-effective training to small rural and remote communities.

B51 - COMMUNITY BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

WHEREAS the Capital Regional District Family Court and Youth Justice Committee has developed an integrated identification, diagnosis and mental health management service Pilot Projects to be delivered to children and youth at Rock Heights Middle School (S.D. #63) and Belmont Secondary (S.D. #62);

AND WHEREAS the Union of British Columbia Municipalities passed resolution B153 in 2006 to encourage the development of mental health services along the lines of the Pilot Projects proposed by the Capital Regional District Family Court and Youth Justice Committee:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM request the Ministries of Education, Health and Children and Family Development work together to fund the Community Based Mental Health Pilot Projects developed by the Capital Regional District Family Court and Youth Justice Committee.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Services

The Province continues to be committed to improving outcomes for children and youth. The Strong, Safe and Supported Operational Plan for the Ministry of Children and Family Development speaks of our commitment to provide services within communities, and the Ministry will continue to work with school districts to provide our services for children and youth in schools wherever feasible.

B52 - MANUFACTURED HOME PARK TENANCY ACT

WHEREAS the province, through the BC Housing and Policy Branch commissioned a study on the redevelopment of manufactured home parks and the displacement of tenants who lived in these parks;

AND WHEREAS the study recommended that the Province amend the Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act in order to increase the base level of compensation for displaced manufactured home tenants from a 12-month pad rental, which is currently required:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Province to amend the Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act in order to increase the compensation for displaced manufactured home park tenants.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

The Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act (MHPTA) was enacted in 2004 and is designed to balance the rights and responsibilities of both manufactured home park landlords and tenants. The MHPTA and the accompanying Regulation support manufactured home park tenants in the following ways:

- Landlords who decide to convert their property to another land use must provide displaced tenants with 12 months' notice to vacate.
- Landlords who are changing the use of their land must have all the necessary permits and approvals in place (usually issued by a municipal government) before giving tenants notice to vacate.
- Landlords must also compensate displaced tenants by paying each of them a sum equal to 12 months' pad rental.

Government is currently exploring the feasibility of the creation of a manufactured home park cooperative or bare land strata, to be purchased and owned by the park's residents.

B53 - ELECTORAL SEATS IN THE NORTH ELECTORAL DISTRICT

WHEREAS currently eight members of the B.C. Legislative Assembly represent more than 50% of the provincial land base;

AND WHEREAS the Electoral Boundaries Commission was clear that the present statutory requirement of representation by population will continue to produce fewer rural Members of the Legislature:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the B.C. Legislature pass a statutory amendment to provide an appropriate basis for rural representation in the B.C. Legislature.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General Response

On March 13, 2008 the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia unanimously endorsed a motion to create new electoral boundaries for British Columbia based on an 85-seat alternative scenario provided by the Electoral Boundaries Commission. Amendments were subsequently made to the Electoral Districts Act to implement this 85-seat electoral map, which will be in place for the May 2009 provincial election.

Under this map, no region of the province will have fewer members than under the existing map. There will remain eight seats in the North region, five in the Cariboo-Thompson, and four in the Kootenays.

B54 - CELLULAR PHONE COVERAGE

WHEREAS there are numerous areas throughout the Province where members of the public travelling on major transportation corridors are unable to access cellular phone service for emergency and safety purposes for more than 30 minutes of driving time;

AND WHEREAS cellular phone service is an immediate and effective communication safety tool used by the public as a means to alert and access emergency services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province be requested to undertake a provincial mandate to work collaboratively with major cellular phone providers to improve cellular communications and connectivity along all major transportation corridors in British Columbia, to ensure that there are no cellular service gaps of more than 30 minutes of driving time.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services

Telecommunications services are important for the economic, health and social well-being of rural and remote communities. As a result, the Province has extended high-speed broadband connectivity to 366 communities in B.C. as part of bridging the digital divide for rural and remote areas.

Cellular service, however, is federally regulated such that it is more of a challenge for the Province to directly promote expansion in the same way it can for broadband.

Industry experts suggest investment and improvement of cellular services should result from increased competition within the industry. Many industry business experts suggest a recent radio spectrum auction by the federal government will result in several new network operators, and those operators will provide increased competition in the Canadian cellular communications industry.

The Province continues to take every opportunity to represent the interests of rural British Columbians by participating in federal telecommunications policy reviews. The Province advocates for principles to increase service in rural areas and urges the federal government to consult with provinces and municipalities before it makes reforms to existing telecommunications policy.

B55 - YOUTH CENTRES AND YOUTH SERVICES

WHEREAS it is desirable to recognize the positive role that youth in British Columbia can make in their communities;

AND WHEREAS it is acknowledged that this positive contribution needs to be cultivated, encouraged and fostered through activities in facilities provided in each community:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Union of British Columbia Municipalities petition the Province of British Columbia to create incentives and funding opportunities that will allow small communities to create youth centres that can better deliver and coordinate youth services;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities be requested to research and catalogue proven strategies used by small British Columbia municipalities to support and encourage youth.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) provides a range of services to youth in their home communities, such as outreach and facilities-based services and programming, emergency shelters/safe homes, youth care workers, youth centres, employment and educational projects and treatment/rehabilitation.

MCFD values partnerships and collaboration regarding supports and services to youth at all levels of communities and government.

Although this year's budget expenditures have been allocated, there is considerable merit in the suggestion of coordinating youth services within smaller communities.

Municipalities would be best served by collaborating on a regional level with MCFD and other youth-serving ministries and agencies, due to the differing geographical challenges each area experiences.

MCFD is committed to partnerships with small communities at a local and regional level, first and foremost.

B56 - NEGOTIATIONS ON TRADE AND PROSPERITY AGREEMENTS

WHEREAS negotiations on trade and prosperity agreements between provinces or countries are not being conducted in an open, public forum;

AND WHEREAS privately negotiated trade and prosperity agreements between provinces or countries have the potential to impact negatively on local government objectives:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities petition the provincial and federal governments to conduct an open and accountable public debate of any proposed trade and prosperity agreements being negotiated.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

The government of British Columbia believes in consultation with stakeholders before entering into any trade agreement. For example, in the three years leading up to the Trade Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA), consultations were held with ministries, business groups, self-regulatory bodies, local governments, small business groups, industry associations and academics. In fact, the Province had a formal consultation agreement on TILMA with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, which represented all 189 local governments in BC.

Trade agreements are treaties which elected officials have the mandate to sign. In fact, only when introducing new legislation or amending existing legislation is open debate required in the legislature. For instance, B.C.'s TILMA Implementation Act was ratified and given Royal Assent in May, 2008. As the bill proceeded through the legislature, assembly members were given the opportunity to debate this legislation in an open and fair manner.

B57 - PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING

WHEREAS public libraries are a very important resource to help improve the day-to-day lives of people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds;

AND WHEREAS public libraries are essential in educating our children and increasing literacy to give British Columbians the tools to pursue their goals and achieve their dreams no matter where they live in our province;

AND WHEREAS public libraries are a critical resource for people wanting to start small businesses, thereby helping to diversify our economy;

AND WHEREAS eight of the nine other provincial governments provide vastly more financial support to public libraries as a percentage of library operating costs than the Government of British Columbia:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the provincial government to increase its operating grants for public libraries to at least the average level of the other provinces.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

Libraries in British Columbia are generally a locally funded and controlled resource, with the B.C. government funding providing approximately 10% of overall revenues. Individual library boards may have budget increases or decreases, depending on local priorities.

In addition to the population-based libraries operating grant, provincial funding is generally targeted in areas where central coordination and partnership is most effective, such as the development of modern computer systems that can provide cross-jurisdictional library services, or services such as the AskAway virtual reference. Provincial partnership with local libraries has been guided by the Libraries Without Walls Strategic Plan, based on consultations with library boards and professionals across the province.

As other provinces fund libraries in different ways, a cross-jurisdictional comparison is difficult. The most recent cross-jurisdictional comparison is from 2005, when B.C.'s approximately \$12 million in total provincial funding for libraries rated as the 4th highest in the country. Since then, the provincial library budget has increased to over \$17 million (2007/08).

In 2005, B.C.'s libraries were second only to Ontario in total per capita annual funding (approximately \$37.00 per person per year, compared to Ontario's \$41.00 and \$29.00 in Alberta). With similar funding systems, Alberta and Ontario best compare to British Columbia.

B58 - PROVINCE-WIDE CRIME STOPPERS PROGRAM

WHEREAS the administration of Crime Stoppers Programs has historically been funded by local governments;

AND WHEREAS Crime Stoppers Programs have proven to contribute significantly to the success of police investigations, benefit all residents of British Columbia and have full support of the RCMP:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM lobby the provincial government to fund the administration of the Crime Stoppers Program on a province-wide basis.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province continues to financially support Crime Stoppers Programs through an annual service agreement with the BC Crime Stoppers Advisory Board Society. As a result of this funding, the Society provides a number of services to local Crime Stoppers member programs including: an annual training conference; distribution of a quarterly newsletter; maintenance of a secure website where members can communicate; and setting standards and policies. The agreement also provides support to local Crime Stoppers member programs that may be experiencing financial and other challenges.

The Province also administers funding to the Society for the provision of a twenty-four hour, seven days per week, and 365 days per year toll-free telephone service for the receipt of Crime Stoppers tips in BC.

B59 - WILDFIRE FUEL MODIFICATIONS ON CROWN LAND

WHEREAS the provincial government has provided positive revenue programs to support the local governments with their efforts in undertaking urban interface fuel modification projects;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government would become even more effective in resolving wildfire threat in British Columbia by accelerating its involvement in the protection of homes, businesses and communities throughout the Province by expanding the use of Forestry Protection and Initial Attack Fire Suppression Crews to provide pre fire season and post fire season fuel modification projects on Crown Lands located adjacent to rural and urban developments within British Columbia:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to initiate a major emphasis and to target a significant portion of Provincial funding to have Forestry Protection and Initial Attack Fire Suppression Crews deployed to undertake major wildland forest fuel modification projects on Crown Lands located adjacent to or in close proximity of developed rural and urban areas throughout British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests and Range

The Province's wildfire management branch is able to assist local governments with fuel management activities by offering employment extensions to fire fighters, subject to available funding, where the local government has legal authority to conduct fuel management treatments on Crown land (generally through a forestry licence to cut).

During the last two years the province has extended crews in many areas of the province to reduce the build-up of forest fuels near communities by harvesting, thinning, pruning, brushing and pile burning. The Province is planning to do the similar work this year, is also providing technical expertise via fuel management specialists working one-on-one with communities to provide specialist knowledge.

Communities are encouraged to not rely solely on Ministry crews that are in limited supply to perform fuel treatments in their communities. They should also pursue local contractors or unemployed forestry workers to undertake some of these activities and can access funding through UBCM or the Mountain Pine Beetle community development grants now available.

It has taken decades to create the interface fuel management challenges we now face provincially. It will take cooperation, planning and funding over a long time period to correct and effectively treat the broad area affected.

B60 – FIRE UNDERWRITERS SURVEY

WHEREAS the Fire Underwriters Survey conducts field reviews and prepares Fire Protection Assessment Reports for local governments for the purpose of fire insurance grading that is then utilized by insurance underwriters when determining the level of risk assumed in any given community;

AND WHEREAS a Fire Protection Assessment Report prepared may not accurately reflect the conditions in the subject community with respect to fire protection delivery, water supplies for public fire protection, fire prevention and fire safety control, and/or emergency communications:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities advocate for an appeal process to be implemented as part of the Fire Underwriters Assessment reporting procedure, with the appeal process to be adjudicated by an independent authority.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Fire Underwriters Survey is a national organization directed by SCM Adjusters Canada Ltd., an independent private company.

Local Government may choose to improve the protective services in their communities based on the Public Fire Protection Classification given by the Fire Underwriters Survey to their community.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner has no responsibility or influence on the content of the Fire Underwriters Survey, nor the determinations made with respect to the use of those determinations by the member companies of the Insurance Bureau of Canada who subscribe to this service.

B61 - TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has recognized the significant economic impact that is to be achieved by developing the Port of Prince Rupert into a container port;

AND WHEREAS the container port will increase truck traffic through communities along Highway 16 and beyond:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to work with senior levels of government to ensure that where increased truck traffic poses a risk to citizens' safety, that the provincial government provide the necessary leadership and support to facilitate alternate goods routes or other appropriate measures.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The safe and efficient movement of people and goods is critical to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The Ministry is committed to public safety throughout this highway corridor and has commissioned a Corridor Study to determine factors that may be affecting how this section of Highway 16 addresses the safety requirements of all stakeholders. This study will include an operational analysis of the existing route, a corridor study with options, cost estimates, recommendations and the preparation of a business case. The Corridor Study will include stakeholder representation from the Village of Burns Lake, Regional District of Bulkley Nechako and local First Nations.

The Corridor Study has been initiated, and the first meeting with stakeholders occurred in Burns Lake on August 12, 2008. Data collection is scheduled for 2008 and 2009 with a target completion date of Summer 2009. The data collection will include extensive consultation with all stakeholders including local government, economic sector stakeholders, industrial users and the general public.

It should be noted that the ministry has previously undertaken work in 2007 to address safety through this corridor. This work included the signalization of the Highway 16 and Highway 35 Intersection combined with measures to improve traffic flow through the community.

B62 - BC HYDRO AND TELUS GRAFFITI REMOVAL

WHEREAS the current level of response by British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro) and TELUS to the increasing and unsightly graffiti on their utility kiosks is unacceptable;

AND WHEREAS research shows that the most effective method of deterring graffiti is quick and consistent removal:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities recommend the provincial government encourage BC Hydro and TELUS to accept their corporate social responsibility and establish province-wide graffiti clean up programs in consultation with local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

Graffiti is a crime, and BC Hydro is interested in participating or supporting community education on the harm that graffiti causes. BC Hydro would be willing to contribute to any community-based graffiti removal programs in line with what other communities are successfully doing.

In view of the expense, BC Hydro cannot remove all graffiti. BC Hydro's annual budget for graffiti removal across the province is \$100,000. It is estimated that BC Hydro does not have the budget to support the hiring of a commercial contractor to remove graffiti on an on-going basis. To get this budget requires the inclusion of this cost into BC Hydro rates and approval of the BC Utilities Commission. However, BC Hydro removes graffiti that is socially offensive, such as obscenities and religious or racial slurs. BC Hydro also removes graffiti that is in a sensitive location, such as schools, community centers or churches.

BC Hydro is testing a new product called Graffiti Block. Graffiti Block promotes itself as "extremely" durable water based anti graffiti product that will permanently eliminate unwanted graffiti without sacrificing the integrity of the surface." Graffiti washes off the treated surface with water. The product is environmentally safe. BC Hydro began testing Graffiti Block in May 2008 on existing BC Hydro structures around the Edmonds area of Burnaby and in the downtown Vancouver core.

Graffiti does not affect the reliability or safety of the electrical system and is removed as part of BC Hydro's efforts to ensure BC Hydro is responsive to customer and community concerns.

B63 - BREACH OF RECOGNIZANCE OFFENCE

WHEREAS the consequence of a breach of a recognizance imposed when someone is unable to pay a fine is imposition of the original fine;

AND WHEREAS the consequences of a breach are not sufficient to promote widespread compliance with recognizance orders:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to amend the Offence Act to create an offence for breaching a recognizance.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The difficulty enforcing recognisances imposed pursuant to the Offence Act has been identified by the Criminal Justice Branch. Work has commenced on the best method of addressing this problem.

B64 - EVIDENCE BY CERTIFICATE

WHEREAS it is difficult to schedule witnesses for court and considerable court and officers time is required to give evidence in court;

AND WHEREAS the Offence Act already permits the use of evidence by Certificate in the prosecution of Provincial Violation Tickets as long as the fairness trial is not jeopardized:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to amend provincial legislation to allow evidence by Certificate in municipal bylaw prosecutions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

In 2003/2004, the use of a certificate to replace the evidence of the enforcement officer was piloted for 6 speeding offences where the speed of the vehicle was established with a speed measuring device. The speeding offences were chosen because the prosecution evidence, and the charges, appeared to be relatively simple and straightforward and the case could be proved by certificate alone.

The results were mixed and resources were required for processing, document production, copying and sending the certificate to the accused. The provisions have not been extended to any other offences.

Whether the use of a certificate instead of the officer's evidence is feasible depends on the offence and the kind of evidence required to prove that offence. If specific offences are proposed for this procedure, the Ministry of Attorney General will review the proposals on that basis.

B65 - AUTHORITY TO ISSUE APPEARANCE NOTICES

WHEREAS requiring that a summons be personally served in order to get a bylaw offender to court for bylaw infractions prosecuted under the Offence Act is expensive and time consuming for the Province, police and municipalities;

AND WHEREAS police officers have the power to issue appearance notices for a variety of provincial offences:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to amend the Offence Act to allow police to issue appearance notices for bylaw offences.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The Ministry of Attorney General does not oppose police officers being given the authority to issue appearance notices for by-law offences. The City of Vancouver is also pursuing an initiative to provide such authority to enforce their bylaws. Without knowing the extent of the process being proposed it is difficult to comment on the appropriate statute under which such authority should be provided. It may be preferable that the amendment be contained in the statutes governing municipal authority to enact and enforce bylaws (for example, the Vancouver Charter), rather than the Offence Act.

B66 – DRUG, PARTY AND CRACK HOUSES

WHEREAS small communities face impacts of properties in neighbourhoods which generate activities involving parties and illegal substance exchange;

AND WHEREAS these activities tend to diminish the quality of life in these neighbourhoods and in these small communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities petition the Province of British Columbia to develop a model for small communities to deal with the negative effects of illegal substance exchange and offensive parties in neighbourhoods.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Drug houses and the problems associated with them are a concern in many communities in British Columbia.

The Government has been examining ways to support local residents in their efforts to increase the security of their neighbourhoods by giving them an opportunity to act on safety concerns. This includes looking to other jurisdictions and their responses to disruptive drug, party and crack houses.

Presently there are a number of supports for communities including a new Community Crime Prevention Guide (www.criminaljusticereform.gov.bc.ca) developed by the Criminal Justice Reform Secretariat that can assist communities in responding.

There are a number of communities that have utilized provisions under the Community Charter Act to enact nuisance bylaws where public health and safety risks related to drug or party houses are an issue. These Controlled Substance Property bylaws, including those in Surrey, Port Coquitlam and the Town of Gibsons, can serve as a model for other municipalities experiencing similar problems with these houses.

Police remain the primary responders for situations where risks to public safety require immediate action.

B67 – FUNDING FOR MUNICIPAL FORCES’ BEAT OFFICERS

WHEREAS the federal government has committed to putting more police on the beat of municipalities across Canada;

AND WHEREAS \$53 million over 5 years has been allocated to British Columbia for more police on the beat;

AND WHEREAS in 2007 and 2008 the City of North Vancouver has provided additional funding to the North Shore RCMP detachment to provide for a City Core Response Unit;

AND WHEREAS the function of the City Core Response Unit is essentially to provide foot patrol in the Lower Lonsdale area of the City;

AND WHEREAS the city does not have sufficient and permanent financial resources to provide for the constant presence of the City Core Response Unit but rather can only fund the unit during a few months of the year;

AND WHEREAS the city crime statistics demonstrate that the presence of beat officers through the City Core Response Unit has had a good impact on crime prevention:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province make the new funding provided in the 2008 Federal Budget specifically to increase the number of beat officers in municipal police forces available to all municipalities in British Columbia who have or wish to have such a program.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Organized crime and violence associated with gangs affects all British Columbians. These problems call on new approaches to tackle crime that spans municipal jurisdictions.

The Province has made significant investments to strengthen policing in all B.C. communities. Since 2001, we have increased the annual policing budget by \$128 million a year and returned \$250 million of traffic fine revenues to local governments to support their crime-fighting efforts.

Also, the Province has stated it will commit all \$53 million in new federal police recruitment funding to expand integrated policing efforts to address organized crime and gang violence. These specialized integrated teams provide extra support to community policing on serious crimes.

According to the 2007 Integrated Threat Assessment on Organized Crime prepared by the Criminal Intelligence Service BC, there were 129 known criminal organizations in British Columbia in 2007, including 42 newly identified since 2006. The number of groups associated with organized crime has doubled in four years.

The problem is significant and growing, presenting a serious public safety threat to communities throughout the province. British Columbia’s proven integrated policing strategy has demonstrated success in combating organized crime and gang violence, but bolstering those resources remains a priority. It is imperative that the Province look at utilizing the federal funding to both improve coordination between the policing agencies currently dedicated to the

fight against organized crime, as well as increase capacity in those same organizations to deal with the problem province wide.

B70 - ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES

WHEREAS energy efficiency rebates offered by BC Hydro are applied based on the product manufacturer rather than the product specification, resulting in only certain manufacturers' products being eligible for rebates despite the fact that competitors' products meet the same energy efficiency standards;

AND WHEREAS consumers are being strongly urged to purchase energy efficient appliances and products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions only to find out that doing so restricts their choice of manufacturers or discovering after the fact that they are ineligible for the rebates despite the fact that the materials used met the energy efficiency standards:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the provincial and federal governments to ensure that they and their Crown corporations offer energy efficiency rebates based on products' specifications, rather than on select manufacturers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources agrees that it is preferable to offer rebates based on the energy efficiency performance of the product itself.

The provincial LiveSmartBC: Efficiency Incentive Program (www.livesmartbc.ca) provides funding for home energy audits and retrofit incentives using this approach. All products that meet the energy efficiency standard specified by the program receive the applicable provincial, utility and federal rebate in full, regardless of the manufacturer.

BC Hydro rebates under the Product Incentive Program do not specify a manufacturer. They are offered for all products that meet an energy efficiency standard.

There are a number of energy efficiency rebates for windows that are offered by manufacturers and promoted by BC Hydro. Neither BC Hydro nor the provincial government have any control over those offers.

B71 - SALE OF INVASIVE PLANT SEEDS

WHEREAS local governments have instituted programs to control invasive plants and a Provincial Invasive Plant Management Strategy has been developed to prevent the spread of invasive plants;

AND WHEREAS private companies grow invasive plants and harvest seeds for retail distribution to gardeners and commercial producers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM urge the federal and provincial governments to prevent the cultivation and sale of invasive plants.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

The provincial government, in partnership with the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia, has undertaken an initiative in 2007 to develop and implement a comprehensive approach to prevent the sale and trade of invasive plants. The goal of this initiative is to establish best management practices for the industry that both protects the economic viability of the industry as well as prevents the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive plants. Collaboration with local weed committees, the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia, federal agencies, the landscape and nursery industry, and gardening groups is key to this approach. This initiative will establish a partnership with the horticultural and nursery industries to educate the industries about the impacts of invasive plants in the province. Information brochures are available to raise awareness of the impacts of invasive plants and to provide gardeners with non-invasive planting alternatives.

Provincial funding for invasive plant management was approximately \$4.2M in 2007/2008. In 2008/2009, the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands provided annual grants totalling \$960K to local governments, community invasive plant committees, and the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia towards the prevention and control of invasive plants. Most local weed committees seek to inform local nurseries and garden centres about the potential threats to certain plant species, and educate landowners and gardeners.

About 25% of the noxious weeds and invasive plants (both terrestrial and aquatic) in British Columbia are plants that were originally cultivated as ornamentals. Many plants and seeds sold in retail nurseries and garden centres, and promoted by gardeners, landscape architects, and others are known to be invasive. Existing provincial legislation enables provincial government, communities and local governments to regulate and enforce control of certain existing noxious weeds and other invasive plants. Only regulation under the Community Charter Act allows for prohibition of the sale of "wildflowers" (though this is weakly defined).

B72 – UNREGULATED WOOD BURNING EMISSIONS

WHEREAS certain types of wood-burning appliances such as outdoor boilers and wood-burning furnaces that produce harmful smoke and pollutants are not required to meet Canadian standard for emissions;

AND WHEREAS recent events such as increasing cost of fossil fuels and the availability of bug killed timber for use as fuel in these unapproved units is making their use more attractive for many British Columbians;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend the Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation or other regulations to require outdoor boilers and wood-burning furnaces to comply with CAN/CSA-B415.1 “Performance Testing of Solid Fuel Burning Stoves, Inserts and Low Burn Rate Factory Built Fireplaces”, being the Canadian Standard for wood stove emissions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Fine particulate matter (PM2.5) is widely considered to be the cause of serious respiratory problems. According to the Ministry of Environment’s Emissions Inventory of Criteria Air Contaminants, residential fuel wood combustion accounts for 15 per cent of PM2.5 emissions in British Columbia. To reduce the health and environmental impact of these emissions, the Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation (SFB DAR) mandates that retailers must ensure that all solid fuel burning appliances (wood stoves, pellet stoves, fire place inserts, factory built fire places, etc.) sold after November 1, 1994, meet emission testing and certification guidelines established by the Canadian Standards Association or the US Environmental Protection Agency. Other appliances—cookstoves, central heating systems (outdoor wood boilers), masonry heaters, and site built fire places—are currently exempt from the regulation.

There are several limitations that require SFB DAR to be updated:

Limited scope: The exemption for central heating systems includes outdoor wood boilers, which are a significant source of PM2.5. In addition, the regulation only focuses on appliances that use biomass fuels, which exempts coal burning appliances.

Limited restrictions: The regulation only restricts B.C. retailers from selling uncertified appliances, but does not prevent someone from purchasing an uncertified wood stove in Alberta and using this appliance in B.C.

Limited provisions: The regulation does not include fuel requirements, opacity limits, nuisance provisions, or other strategies to limit emissions from solid fuel burning appliances.

As stated in the BC Air Action Plan, the Ministry is committed to strengthening the Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation. Work is currently underway, and it is anticipated the new regulation will be reviewed in 2008-2009, expanding its scope to include a wider range of appliances.

The Ministry is aware of local air quality concerns caused by the use of outdoor wood boilers, and we’re exploring a variety of options to address this, including introducing new regulatory measures, improving compliance with existing legislation, and raising public awareness about the emissions produced by these appliances, especially when improper fuels are used.

B73 - EMISSIONS TRADING

WHEREAS the BC Government has not disclosed plans for a regional system to trade greenhouse gas emissions with the States of New Mexico, California, Oregon and Washington;

AND WHEREAS the trading system has implications for the economies of our communities, and the public and businesses, for the most part, have been excluded from consultation and submissions to the cabinet committee on climate change:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, urge the Cabinet Committee On Climate Change to enter into consultations on the direction taken by the Province on emissions trading and its implications to the economies of the communities affected.

RESPONSE: Climate Action Secretariat, Office of the Premier

Throughout the Western Climate Initiative (WCI) cap and trade design process, there have been many opportunities and methods for stakeholder input on a regional level, including B.C. communities. The recommendations reached throughout the process have benefited greatly from stakeholder input.

The regional stakeholder process includes a number of important avenues for the sharing of information and input. Among them:

The Website: The WCI website has served as a repository for information on the design effort. The website includes information on upcoming stakeholder calls and workshops, and also provides a way to submit comments to the WCI Partner jurisdictions.

Stakeholder Teleconference and Webinars: Over the course of the design effort, the WCI Partner jurisdictions have held eighteen regional stakeholder conference calls to update stakeholders on progress toward a cap-and-trade design and to answer stakeholder questions since August 2007.

Stakeholder Workshops: To date, three regional stakeholder workshops have been held to allow face-to-face interaction between stakeholders and WCI Partner jurisdictions and staff. These workshops included subcommittee-specific sessions to explore the subject areas within each subcommittee's purview. The workshops are noted in the table below. There was also a regional stakeholder meeting for offsets in Vancouver. All workshops used webinar technology to allow those unable to physically attend to participate via teleconference and internet.

Stakeholder Workshop in Portland, Oregon to discuss major options under consideration (January 10, 2008)

Offsets Workshop in Vancouver, B.C. (March 26, 2008)

Stakeholder Workshop in Salt Lake City to discuss draft subcommittee recommendations (May 21, 2008)

Stakeholder Workshop in San Diego to Discuss Draft Design Recommendations (July 29, 2008)

Review and Comment in Writing: At regular intervals throughout the process, the WCI Partner jurisdictions and the subcommittees have released written work for review and comment by stakeholders.

Subcommittee Options Papers released for public review and comment Early (January 2008)

Initial Draft Scope Recommendations and Electricity Point of Regulation Recommendations released for public review and comment (February 3, 2008)

Scope of Work for Economic Analysis released for public review and comment (March 3, 2008)

Scope and Electricity initial Draft Design Recommendations released for public review and comment (March 5, 2008)

Offsets, Allocations, and Reporting initial Draft Design Recommendations released for public review and comment for (April 3, 2008)

Consolidated WCI Draft Recommendations released for public review and comment (May 16, 2008)

Draft Program Design Recommendations released for public review and comment (July 23, 2008)

Final Design Recommendations delivered to Governors and Premiers (September, 2008), available on the WCI website: <http://westernclimateinitiative.org/>

Future Opportunities for Input: As part of an ongoing stakeholder involvement process, the WCI released its recommendations for the Regional Cap and Trade Program in late September 2008. The design recommendations will then be revised and updated based on public feedback, economic modeling, and additional design development by the Partners.

All WCI Partners will also be developing their own regulatory framework to enable the cap and trade system. B.C. will implement the cap and trade system through regulations under the Cap and Trade Act, for which thorough public consultation will take place.

We support and encourage British Columbia communities to participate in both the WCI stakeholder process as well as regulatory consultation for the Cap and Trade Act.

B74 - REPORTING OF GREEN HOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

WHEREAS all industrial undertakings are required to obtain emissions permits from the Ministry of Environment;

AND WHEREAS these permits outline the maximum output of contaminants into the environment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, request the Province of British Columbia to require the reporting of Green House Gas Emissions for all point source emitters.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Ministry of Environment agrees with spirit of the resolution, and is currently working with Western Climate Initiative partners to design the Essential Requirements for greenhouse gas reporting for the regional cap and trade program. Under current proposals, facilities emitting more than 10,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in a year would be required to report those emissions (administrative feasibility prevents requiring all point sources to report). In some instances the threshold may be set at a similar level or lower, using parameters such as throughput or capacity. The reporting regulation would be brought in by the Ministry of Environment under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Cap and Trade) Act, likely during the 2009 calendar year. Environment Canada currently has reporting regulations for emitters greater than 100,000 tonnes and, under Section 71 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, has recently received emissions reports to lower thresholds for a select group of industrial facilities.

B76 - GAS-FIRED ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITY EMISSIONS

WHEREAS the BC Energy Plan states that:

- Achieving electricity self-sufficiency is fundamental to our future energy security and that BC shall achieve electricity self-sufficiency by 2016; and that;
- As part of its commitment to ensure that BC's electricity sector remains one of the cleanest in the world, the province will require zero greenhouse gas emissions from any coal thermal electricity facilities to be met through capture and sequestration technology; but that;
- For existing and new electricity plants the government policy will provide for reaching zero net emissions through carbon offsets from other activities in British Columbia.

AND WHEREAS WestPac LNG is soliciting interest to build an LNG import facility and an associated 600 MW gas-fired electricity generating plant on Texada Island, which are inconsistent with the Province's goals of energy self-sufficiency and clean power and are potentially harmful to the health of citizens throughout the surrounding regions:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM urge the provincial government, as part of achieving the BC Energy Plan, to require zero greenhouse gas emissions from new gas fired electricity generation stations.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

In the BC Energy Plan, the Government commits that all new natural gas - or oil - fired electricity generation projects developed in British Columbia and connected to the integrated grid will have zero net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This means that the proponents of these generation projects would have to invest in other initiatives that would completely offset the GHG emissions generated by these projects.

To ensure consistent treatment between new and existing generation projects, while allowing time to plan for this change, the BC Energy Plan commits that by 2016, all existing natural gas - and oil - fired electricity generating facilities in the integrated grid will need to completely offset their GHG emissions.

The 2008 changes to the Environmental Management Act include changes that put into law the net zero GHG emissions policy.

B77 - CONTINUED OPERATION OF BURRARD THERMAL GENERATING STATION

WHEREAS the Burrard Thermal Generating Plant (BTGP) in Port Moody has the capacity to generate approximately 10 percent of the total electricity demand supplied by BC Hydro, is a firm source located within the region that consumes approximately 50 percent of BC Hydro's capacity and thus is strategically located to supply electricity during emergency conditions such as ice storms which could affect transmission lines;

AND WHEREAS pollution from the plant is not a reason to close the plant given that a number of improvements in recent years have significantly reduced emissions of smog producing pollutants, there is no significant negative impact from the plant on water quality in Burrard Inlet, BTGP releases only a small fraction of the green house gases (GHG) emitted from vehicles in Metro Vancouver, has been well maintained and thus continues to have a reasonable life span well beyond 2014 and particularly given that BTGP operates primarily during the winter months to meet peak energy demand when the generation of smog-producing chemicals is of least concern;

AND WHEREAS using Burrard Thermal rather than purchasing electricity from coal-fired sources outside British Columbia is consistent with provincial energy policies to promote self-sufficiency and reduce GHG production and thus could avoid anticipated electricity shortages that will occur in the absence of a continued reliance on BTGP:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the BC provincial government not close the Burrard Thermal Generating Plant in 2014 which, according to the Provincial Energy Plan would result in an electricity shortage, but rather keep BTGP in operation and fully maintained as a firm, reliable and relatively clean energy source to help meet the Province's electricity needs during high demand periods, such as the winter months, or emergency conditions as well as providing ongoing voltage regulation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

In its 2008 Long Term Acquisition Plan (2008 LTAP), BC Hydro has asked the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) to endorse BC Hydro's proposal to rely on Burrard for planning purposes for 900 megawatt of dependable capacity and 3,000 gigawatt-hours of firm energy per year until at least 2019.

The Government recognizes that the value of the capacity, energy and voltage support provided by Burrard may warrant continuing to keep the plant available if needed for peaks in demand (for example, resulting from cold winter weather, Christmas lighting, and to deal with other resources being unexpectedly unavailable). These may continue to be appropriate longer term roles for Burrard if the plant remains cost effective.

The BCUC will continue to oversee the resource plans of utilities, and will review BC Hydro's 2008 LTAP, including BC Hydro's plans for Burrard, and will approve the projects and plans it deems to be cost effective and in the public interest.

B78 - GROUNDWATER

WHEREAS there appears to be a direction from the Provincial Government to protect groundwater resources for the long-term benefit of all users; and there are provisions in the Water Act to protect and guide the use of surface water;

AND WHEREAS there is not protection for existing or future groundwater users from the potential impacts of groundwater extraction for commercial purposes, or for high volume single-point extraction facilities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC Government be requested to develop regulations and programs that would identify, gauge, document and monitor a groundwater resource data base in populated areas of the Province;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the BC Government create a development review process and regulations for the analysis of proposed, and existing commercial water extraction operations or other high volume extractors for the purpose of measuring, delineating and protecting the groundwater resources of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment is finalizing Phase 2 of the Ground Water Protection Regulation. In the consultation process for the Regulation, all local governments were invited to provide comments on key concepts. Phase 2 will improve one of the two ministry databases on ground water. The WELLS database currently relies on voluntary submission of private well records by drillers. The new provisions will make submission mandatory and will improve the quality and consistency of information relating to reliance on ground water and aquifer location and yield. This information will, in turn, improve the Province's aquifer mapping capabilities. The second database includes information on ground water levels from the provincial observation well network. The network is currently being reviewed to assess its geographic coverage and its adequacy for monitoring impacts on ground water due to climate change and to increased demand arising from population growth, economic development, etc.

With regards to high volume extractors, the government currently evaluates the impact of major withdrawals in the Environmental Assessment permitting process and in the CPCN processes for private utilities. Further, the Province has committed to doing business differently, preparing communities for change and choosing to be "water smart" in its recently announced "Living Water Smart, British Columbia's Water Plan". That document outlines government's commitment to develop various measures to assist in addressing ground water extraction including:

By 2012, government will regulate ground water use in priority areas and large ground water withdrawals.

By 2012, government will require all large water users to measure and report their water use.

B79 - INTEGRATED RECOVERY OF RESOURCES IN MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL WASTE SYSTEMS

WHEREAS the BC Government has established a priority on climate change and has set an aggressive target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to at least 33 percent below current levels by 2020;

AND WHEREAS local governments have opportunities through the development process to seek innovative opportunities to capture onsite sewage, create new sources of energy and the reuse of water, all off the grid of municipal systems; AND WHEREAS sewage and organic waste can be turned into biofuels, and integrated resource recovery can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle the challenge of climate change:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities ask the Provincial Government to provide financial assistance and legislative tools that will help communities integrate recovery of resources, in municipal and regional waste systems as part of local and regional plans.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

The Province of British Columbia is committed to encouraging and supporting lifecycle valuation for infrastructure projects, resource recovery and re-use, and integrated waste management by providing legislative tools and funding support for local governments.

Existing legislation, under the Community Charter and Local Government Act, allows local governments to take the initiative on sustainable development, reduction of green house gas emissions, and local energy projects. Provincial and federal grant programs support such initiatives and are designed to favour projects demonstrating an integrated and innovative approach towards sustainable communities. Provincial planning grants are available to support activities such as development of integrated resource management solutions.

B80 - SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF BEETLE KILLED TIMBER

WHEREAS large scale disposal of beetle killed timber by open burning may result in air quality deterioration;

AND WHEREAS the extent of the beetle kill and air quality impacts reach beyond the boundaries of individual municipalities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial and federal governments to fund the purchase of air curtain burners or other technologies on a regional basis that will enable the sustainable management of beetle kill timber.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

Through the Bioenergy Strategy the Province is encouraging the development of new business operations that can convert forest waste products into electricity generation. The vast majority of current burning of waste from Mountain Pine Beetle killed trees is from the burning of slash piles from industrial pine beetle salvage and harvesting operations. The development of Bioenergy related operations is the best opportunity to convert these large volumes of waste into a useful commodity.

Curtain burners would typically only be used for the relatively small volumes of waste coming from private and municipally owned lands. Some Regional Districts, like Central Okanagan, have already purchased curtain burners for use in their regional districts. There may be opportunities for Regional Districts and municipalities to cost share and/or rent the use of curtain burners.

Once new Bioenergy related operations are established, they may well accept waste from private and municipally owned lands. Therefore the Ministry currently has no plans to establish any programs to publicly fund the purchase of curtain burners.

B81 - PROVINCE-WIDE BAN OF COSMETIC PESTICIDES

WHEREAS residents of the Province of British Columbia are increasingly requesting their local governments to ban the use of cosmetic pesticides within their boundaries in order to mitigate concerns that these pesticides present a threat to the environment, children, pets and personal health. As these bylaws are being implemented in some municipalities, it has been found that community bans have little effect on overall pesticide sales. This is in sharp contrast to the Province of Quebec which has seen a fifty percent drop in pesticide use since their legislated ban in 1994;

AND WHEREAS the Community Charter does not give communities the legislative authority to ban the sale of pesticides, only to regulate their use:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia enact provincial legislation that will ban the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides province-wide.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Pesticides can only be used in Canada if they have been evaluated and registered by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency of Health Canada (PMRA). A new federal Pest Control Products Act was enacted in June 2006 which gives more authority to Health Canada to require pesticide evaluations to address the protection of children. Health Canada has been re-evaluating the acceptability of all active ingredients that were registered prior to 1995, including those used on lawn and landscapes. British Columbia looks to this agency for determining what pesticide uses are acceptable.

The Ministry of Environment is not aware of any data specific to B.C. that demonstrate that municipal pesticide bans have been ineffective in controlling pesticide sales and use.

Many pesticides may be used for both cosmetic and non-cosmetic purposes. The Ministry has received comments of concern from key sectors that pesticides must remain available for non-cosmetic purposes including control of invasive plants, noxious weeds, and pests that may impact structures or food crops. The Ministry promotes and, in some cases, requires the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) when making decisions about pest management. IPM includes the use of pest prevention techniques and the use of alternatives to pesticides where possible.

Ontario has recently passed legislation that bans the sale and use of pesticides used for cosmetic purposes. The proposed regulation prohibits the sale and use of many landscape pesticides. Quebec has only banned the use of a few active ingredients. Herbicide fertilizer mixtures have been prohibited for use and sale in other provinces.

British Columbia is currently studying the regulatory initiatives of other jurisdictions with a view to understanding their effectiveness. Because of its impact, any initiative to restrict the sale or use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes would need to be developed with broad public consultation.

B82 - CONTROL OF PESTICIDE USE

WHEREAS the application of pesticides contributes to the cumulative chemical load absorbed by the natural environment;

AND WHEREAS pesticides cannot be necessarily confined to a single location, but move through the environment in the air, land and water and may have an impact on non-target organisms and plants;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be urged to control pesticide use by mandating sales and retail display restrictions across BC;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government be urged to amend the Spheres of Concurrent Jurisdictions – Environmental and Wildlife Regulation to allow local governments to regulate, prohibit and impose requirements in relation to the use of cosmetic pesticides on all private lands.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Pesticides can only be used in Canada if they have been evaluated and registered by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency of Health Canada (PMRA). Any user of a registered pesticide must follow the label directions under federal regulation. A new federal Pest Control Products Act was enacted in June, 2006 which gives more authority to Health Canada to require pesticide evaluations. Health Canada has been re-evaluating the acceptability of all active ingredients that were registered prior to 1995, including those used on lawn and landscapes. British Columbia looks to this agency for determining what pesticide uses are acceptable.

Under provincial law, pesticides may only be sold by a licensed vendor with a certified dispenser on site. While retail display restrictions for domestic pesticides might help to reduce overall pesticide sales it would also adversely impact vendors who would be required to modify the layout of their stores. The benefit to be gained from such restrictions is questionable when dealing with domestic pesticide products which have been assessed and judged safe for human health and the environment by the PMRA.

The provincial government further regulates pesticide applications that are most likely to impact the public or the environment. The Ministry regulates pesticide use on private land when the application is: provided as a service; is conducted on a multi-residence property; is conducted on railways, rights of ways or industrial sites; or is conducted on private forest land. People licensed to use pesticides on public land, use pesticides in or around multi-residence properties or provide pesticide application as a service are required to use the principles of Integrated Pest Management which include pest prevention, choosing alternative management techniques where possible, and monitoring for impacts to non-target organisms. Notification is required when pesticides are used on private lands intended for public access or when an application of pesticides to private land is provided as a service. This allows bystanders to avoid treated areas should they choose to do so.

Local governments have the authority to regulate use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes on private lands. Further expansion of this authority under the Community Charter Spheres of Concurrent Jurisdictions – Environmental and Wildlife Regulation is not warranted and may

impact industrial uses required to maintain safe work sites or to control the spread of invasive plants or noxious weeds.

B83 - NON-REFILLABLE 15L PET CONTAINERS

WHEREAS the Province has made a commitment to the 'Three R's' of reduce, reuse and recycle;

AND WHEREAS the introduction of 15 litre non-refillable PET containers will increase the amount of waste entering landfills:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Environment be urged to ban 15 litre nonrefillable water containers from use in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment has a Service Plan commitment to add two products to industry product stewardship every three years and packaging is one candidate product under consideration for a provincial stewardship program. Should packaging be added as a regulated product category within the Recycling Regulation, non-refillable 15 litre bottles will likely be included within the scope of the eventual program that industry would be required to develop and operate.

It has not been the policy of the Ministry of Environment to ban products in order to achieve environmental objectives but rather to require producers of products to assume life cycle responsibility for products they produce and sell. Furthermore, careful consideration must be given to understanding potential consequences of any proposed product ban as well as how those consequences could be managed. In this respect, the optimal solution to managing waste from 15 litre non-refillable bottles that are not captured within the province's deposit-refund system is likely within an industry product stewardship program under the Recycling Regulation.

B84 - TWINE AND AGRICULTURAL PLASTICS RECYCLING

WHEREAS agricultural plastics and twine are recyclable materials generated by the agriculture industry and often sent to municipal solid waste landfills for disposal;

AND WHEREAS diverting agricultural plastics and twine to recycling facilities will reduce the volume of non-biodegradable materials at the landfill;

AND WHEREAS the BC Agricultural Council's Agriculture Environmental Partnership has a pilot to encourage farms and agri-businesses in BC to look to industry funded, environmentally sound and sustainable options for managing and recycling twine and agricultural plastic:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities provide information on the Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative pilot and the issue of agricultural plastic and twine disposal to its member municipalities and regional districts;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities ask the provincial government to consider adding agricultural plastics and twine to the slate of product stewardship initiatives developed by the Ministry of Environment.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment has a Service Plan commitment to add two products to industry product stewardship every three years and packaging is one candidate product under consideration for a provincial stewardship program. Because of similarities with other plastic film packaging types consideration is being given to including agricultural plastics within the scope of this potential packaging collection and recycling system.

Pilot projects in 2007 in the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen and on Vancouver Island were undertaken by local governments and community volunteers. These pilot projects demonstrated the technical feasibility and support among agricultural producers for an agricultural plastic recycling program. Any recycling initiative for agricultural plastics and twine led by the Ministry of Environment would need to be developed in close consultation with agricultural industry stakeholders.

B86 - AMERICAN BULLFROG MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS the American Bullfrog is an invasive non native species that poses a serious threat to British Columbia's aquatic ecosystems and native species, including the provincially blue-list Redlegged frog and the nationally endangered Pacific Coast population of the Western Painted Turtle;

AND WHEREAS American Bullfrog populations have invaded multiple jurisdictions on Vancouver Island, in the Lower Mainland, and in the Okanagan Valley and are rapidly increasing their range, and may compromise water quality in community water supply watersheds:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the provincial Ministry of Environment take a lead role in coordinating American Bullfrog management efforts throughout the Province and provide funding to assist municipalities and regional districts to protect native species and aquatic ecosystems from American Bullfrogs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment recognizes the threats imposed by aquatic invasive species such as Green Frogs, Sliders, Smallmouth Bass and American Bullfrogs. However, research at the University of Victoria and evaluation by Ministry of Environment staff indicates Bullfrog impacts are often exaggerated in the media and non-scientific literature. To date, there is no scientific evidence to suggest that Bullfrogs pose a threat to water quality in community watersheds. Additionally, recent scientific research shows that ecological impacts thought to result from Bullfrog invasions are more often caused by concomitant habitat modification by human development. In BC, there are instances of long-term co-existence between introduced Bullfrogs and native Red-legged Frogs, especially in areas where the wetlands have not been modified, the riparian habitats are intact and there have been no non-native fish introductions. However, the threat posed by an introduced generalist predator such as the Bullfrog should not be ignored and needs to be monitored closely.

The Ministry of Environment has played a strong role in developing a management response to the Bullfrog range expansion in BC, and has directly supported Bullfrog control projects in priority areas such as the isolated Bullfrog population in the Okanagan. Evaluation by ministry staff indicates that a province-wide Bullfrog eradication effort would be cost-prohibitive and likely unsuccessful based on the results of numerous Bullfrog eradication efforts around the world. The Ministry will work on containing the Bullfrog range and preventing further spread, and will continue to develop an adaptive management response to conserve native biodiversity even with the continued presence of Bullfrogs. Municipal staff are strongly encouraged to contact the provincial herpetologist or the aquatic invasive species coordinator for advice on developing strategies to manage Bullfrogs and other aquatic invasive species within local areas.

B87 – SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION

WHEREAS the province of British Columbia has the richest biodiversity of all the Canadian provinces, with 76 per cent of Canada's bird species, 70 per cent of its freshwater fish species, 66 per cent of its butterfly species and 60 per cent of its conifer species;

AND WHEREAS B.C. is one of only two provinces in Canada that lack stand-alone endangered species legislation, the province choosing instead to rely on a fragmented legislative and policy framework that provides insufficient protection for biodiversity, proven by the fact that 87 per cent of know threatened and endangered species in B.C. are unprotected and more than 1,300 species are currently at risk in B.C.;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to enact a strong Species and Ecosystem Protection Act to safeguard British Columbia's exceptional biological richness – in particular, against the threats posed by habitat loss and climate change – recognizing the critical importance of conserving biodiversity to maintaining ecosystem integrity and human well-being.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

In addition to current legislation and policies that address the conservation of species and ecosystems in the province, the B.C. government recently unveiled a new Conservation Framework – a science-based, province wide approach that prioritizes and selects conservation actions for species and ecosystems of concern, shifting from a reactive to a proactive approach. Designed, tested and reviewed by scientists and wildlife experts from universities, conservation organizations, industry and government, the Framework promotes the efficient and strategic use of resources among all partners. It has been developed collaboratively with the support of Biodiversity BC and its member organizations and major scientists including Fred Bunnell of UBC, who co-authored the scientific methods underpinning the Conservation Framework. The Framework aims to contribute to global efforts for species and ecosystems conservation, prevent species and ecosystems from becoming at risk, and maintain the full diversity of native species and ecosystems.

The B.C. government is also examining options for a Species at Risk Regulation under the Wildlife Amendment Act, 2004, which would provide additional protection for species at risk in B.C.

The Conservation Framework and the Wildlife Amendment Act, 2004 augment existing provincial and federal legislation and policies that protect species at risk (e.g. Forest and Range Practices Act, Parks Act, Wildlife Act, Fish Protection Act, Environmental Management Act, Water Act, federal Fisheries Act, and Species At Risk Act).

These measures complement the more than 14 per cent of British Columbia's land base in parks and protected areas, and help to ensure British Columbia continues to meet its biodiversity conservation obligations internationally, nationally, and provincially.

B88 - BAN ON THIN FILM SHOPPING BAGS

WHEREAS the proliferation of free thin plastic bags has created negative impacts such as the need for expensive and inefficient waste management, the pollution of natural and human environments, the release of greenhouse gasses that increase our society's carbon footprint and an overall encouragement of inefficient single use consumption:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the provincial government ban thin film plastic grocery bags.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The policy of the B.C. government respecting waste management and recycling is to shift responsibility for managing products at their end of life from local governments and the general taxpayer to industry and consumers under the province's Recycling Regulation. Packaging, including disposable shopping bags, is one product category under consideration for a new provincial stewardship program.

In September 2008 leading retail organisations in B.C. voluntarily committed to reduce the use of disposable shopping bags by half over the coming five years as well as to develop reuse and recycling options to address immediate concerns regarding disposable shopping bags.

Given the commitment of the retail industry to take voluntary action the Ministry of Environment is not considering a provincial ban on disposable shopping bags at this time, but instead will monitor the success of this industry initiative.

B89 - NET ZERO BUILDING POLICY DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS British Columbia municipalities are determined to advance solutions of sustainable community design and development in order to meet the challenges associated with climate change, rising costs of energy and infrastructure and to meet the goals set out in the BC Energy Plan;

AND WHEREAS homebuilders in Canada are demonstrating leadership in advanced energy efficient building design and construction leading to near net-zero energy and net-zero energy homes, defined as homes that generate sufficient energy to offset their annual energy use:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities encourage the research, development and deployment of community scale net-zero energy housing, to urge federal and provincial governments to provide financial support for the projects and to incorporate a net-zero energy home standard into the provincial building code.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

The British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) establishes minimum requirements for a variety of code objectives, including energy efficiency for buildings.

Net zero homes are being built in BC today. Industry is leading the process. The BCBC enables a net zero approach to houses but does not require that houses be constructed to meet net zero energy use.

B90 - CARBON CALCULATOR

WHEREAS many local governments have an interest in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in their communities, and citizens are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their activities on their community;

AND WHEREAS the creation of a single carbon calculator available to all local governments would save money and confusion and result in an increased confidence level among users of the information:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to provide free-of-charge a carbon calculator for both lifestyle-based and travel-related carbon footprint calculations, that municipalities could host and promote on their own websites.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

The Province of British Columbia is currently developing a LiveSmart BC Carbon Calculator. The Calculator will be a lifestyle and travel calculator using British Columbia specific emission factors to give British Columbians a more accurate calculation of their individual carbon footprint.

Local governments will be able to add a LiveSmart BC Carbon Calculator link to their websites at no charge to the local government or the public.

B91 - LAWN MOWER REPLACEMENT INCENTIVE

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has enacted the Climate Action Charter and is committed to drastically reduce the Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and thrive for carbon neutrality;

AND WHEREAS individual British Columbians are responsible for 30% of GHG emissions in British Columbia and gas powered lawn mowers have been identified as a significant contributor of GHG emissions and other pollutants:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the government of British Columbia provide financial assistance for a rebate program that would serve as an incentive to trade in old gas powered lawn mowers for nonmotorized (push reel) lawn mowers, electric or battery driven mowers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The federal government regulates the emission standards for spark-ignition engines, such as used for many lawn mowers, chippers, chainsaws and other applications where reducing weight is a primary objective. These types of gas engines are relatively high polluting compared to four stroke engines and, of course, zero emission alternatives. Although older gas powered mowers are much less fuel efficient than newer mowers, their relative contribution to provincial GHG emissions is small.

The Ministry of Environment is not contemplating a provincial rebate program at this time. However, since the primary emissions of concern from these older mowers are local air quality pollutants, the ministry may explore, in consultation with stakeholders, future actions to reduce environmental impacts of these types of engines.

B92 - FUNDING FOR FILM COMMISSIONS

WHEREAS film and television production are growing economic sectors on Vancouver Island and in other regions throughout British Columbia, offering a high economic return, low environmental impact industry, consistent with British Columbia's increasing attention to sustainable economic initiatives;

AND WHEREAS promotion through qualified regional film commissions, key to growth and development in this sector, requires consistent, stable and adequate funding to maintain professional international standards for film commissions and commissioners, yet provincial requirements to qualify for and receive core operating funding are beyond the scope of current funding provided by the Province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to provide annual core operating funding matching funds granted from municipal and regional governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Regional Film Commissions are valuable partners in the BC Film Commission's ongoing efforts to showcase the entire province to its best competitive advantage in the global marketplace. Through the BC Film Commission, the provincial government provides \$275,000 to Regional Film Commissions with a Regional Film Commission Assistance Program. In fiscal 2006/07 the program funding was increased for three years by \$75,000 above the 2005/06 funding levels. The Regional Film Commission Assistance funding is used to assist regional film commissions in their efforts to build and showcase BC's inventory of locations and to provide local expertise and support to assist visiting productions.

The current funding agreement expires on March 31st 2009. The BC Film Commission will be conducting a review of the Regional Film Commission Assistance Program before the end of the 2008/09 fiscal year. In order to ensure that provincial funding continues to encourage and support film production in communities around the province, the BC Film Commission will engage in consultation with regional film commissions, local governments and industry stakeholders.

In addition to providing funding for regional film commissions, in fiscal 2008/09, the Province enhanced the existing basic Regional Tax Credits (12.5% and 6%) with an additional Distant Location Regional Tax Credit of 6%. This was done to further stimulate production in areas of the province outside the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley, Whistler/Sea to Sky, and Greater Victoria geographic areas.

B96 - SNOWMOBILE PARKING ACCESS

WHEREAS the need to diversify northern communities to ensure economic sustainability and growth has never been as evident as it is at this present time in our history;

AND WHEREAS the snowmobile industry offers a viable economic enhancement by attracting snowmobiling enthusiasts to our areas and promotes our importance as preferred snowmobile destinations:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the Ministry of Transportation to identify and prioritize the cleaning of snowmobile parking and staging areas along the highway corridors.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation recognizes the recreational and economic benefits of snowmobiling. Ministry staff meet with local snowmobile clubs, the maintenance contractor, and other agencies, such as MoFR, to discuss parking options for the public while snowmobiling. Many of the existing parking lots are located not on provincial highways but off of MoFR roads. The Ministry has assisted snowmobile clubs by providing directional signage to these lots.

The priority areas for the Ministry during and immediately following a snow fall are the main routes - this is typically when recreational snowmobilers want access to parking area. Currently the Ministry is not funded for maintaining snowmobile parking areas. The type of snow removal equipment for clearing these types of parking areas is very different than the type used for in-stream highway type applications. Some snowmobile parking lots can exceed 10 acres in size and require additional maintenance, such as surfacing, grading, litter cleanup and washroom facilities.

The snowmobiling associations often collect trail fees on designated trails. The Valemount snowmobile association collected over \$85,000 in a single year through these fees and have hired a private contractor to maintain their parking sites.

The Ministry currently does not provide parking areas for the snowmobiling industry. However, the Ministry would consider any application from business for them to develop parking facilities. The Ministry does work locally with snowmobiling groups and may assist with snow removal after all highway priorities are met.

B98 - ADDITIONAL HOME OWNER GRANT

WHEREAS many senior residents of British Columbia have owned and lived in their home for more than twenty years, paid property taxes and intend to continue to live in their home;

AND WHEREAS senior residents have experienced an extraordinary rise in their property assessments over the past twenty years;

AND WHEREAS due to the high assessed value of their property, some senior property owners do not meet the requirements for additional Home Owner Grant and it is a hardship for them to pay their property taxes without the grant:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Provincial Government to amend the Home Owner Grant Act to allow all senior property owners to claim the full additional Home Owner Grant.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

In Budget 2008 the province raised the home owner grant (HOG) threshold for the fifth consecutive year, to \$1,050,000 in assessed property value. More than 95 percent of homeowners continue to be eligible for the full HOG. For recipients of the additional grant (i.e. seniors, veterans and the disabled) a partial grant is available for those whose homes are valued at more than \$1,050,000 but less than \$1,219,000 in assessed value.

In addition, Budget 2007 extended the eligibility requirements for the HOG to ensure that low income seniors who would qualify for the additional HOG but for the assessed value of their homes will receive the additional grant. This measure ensures low income seniors and other qualified individuals who own and reside on properties that have increased in value beyond the threshold, but who may face financial hardship, receive some or all of the HOG. The income levels to qualify for this benefit are based on the income levels for premium assistance under the Medical Services Plan.

Budget 2007 also reduced the age at which homeowners may begin deferring their property taxes from 60 to 55. The Property Tax Deferral Program allows qualifying individuals to defer payment of their property taxes at a low rate of interest until they sell or transfer their home (other than to a surviving spouse).

While not all homeowners qualify for the HOG, the government continues to believe that the some restrictions on eligibility are appropriate. Further, the government believes that extending the eligibility requirements for the HOG to ensure low income seniors and other qualified individuals receive the additional grant, and expanding eligibility for the Property Tax Deferral Program, will go a long way towards addressing the housing challenges faced by seniors.

B99 - PROVINCIAL HOME OWNER GRANT ELIGIBILITY

WHEREAS the provincial Home Owner Grant Program is in place to provide tax relief for individuals at their principle residence;

AND WHEREAS the eligibility criteria includes an administrative policy to claim a grant for only one tax year after a home is destroyed by fire or other natural disaster;

AND WHEREAS the property at 1200 Pacific Street in Coquitlam is under permit to be remediated following a fire on July 20, 2006;

AND WHEREAS it is highly unlikely that a remediation project for 40 apartment units would be completed within the next tax year;

AND WHEREAS the construction market in British Columbia puts further strain on property owners' ability to complete major remediation projects within the next tax year:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial Home Owner Grant Program be amended to include criteria for the next two tax years following a fire or natural disaster.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

In Budget 2008, the government extended the eligibility requirements for the Home Owner Grant to ensure that a person who ceases to occupy their residence because of damage or destruction from fire, flood or other natural disasters during reconstruction or repair may claim the grant or the low-income grant supplement for up to two taxation years, provided the following criteria are met:

The person occupied the residence as their principal residence before it was damaged or destroyed and intends to reoccupy it as their principal residence once it has been reconstructed or repaired;

The residence is unoccupied and is not rented or for sale during the absence; and

The person would have been eligible for a grant or a low-income grant supplement had the damaged or destroyed residence continued to be their principal residence during the absence.

B100 - UTILITY COMPANIES GRANT IN LIEU OF TAXES

WHEREAS municipalities provide critical services such as policing, fire protection, roads, water, sewer, garbage and recycling, parks and recreation services and consistently receive demands for increased service;

AND WHEREAS section 353 of the Local Government Act was intended to require utility companies to pay the tax rate on all revenues generated within the municipality:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to pass legislation enabling municipalities or regional districts to levy a tax of up to 5% on the gross operating revenues earned by a utility from all sources of their operation within the municipality or regional district.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

Under Section 353 of the Local Government Act, within municipalities, utility companies pay a tax of 1% of revenues received from customers within the municipality in lieu of a property value tax on certain "specified improvements" such as telephone lines, cable, pipe lines, poles, and transformers, used solely within the municipality for local generation and distribution.

The Ministry of Community Development has studied proposals to increase the 1% tax on the revenues derived by utility companies within municipal boundaries, and determined that amending the legislation to increase the tax is not appropriate. Municipalities have benefited significantly over the years from increasing revenues collected under Section 353 of the Local Government Act as markets expanded and prices increased.

A tax increase beyond 1% of utility revenues has the effect of imposing a tax on utility customers in lieu of the property tax that would be imposed on the utility itself. We would thus be taxing utility users on the basis of the property owned by another. The proposed tax of up to 5% is equivalent to a commodity-specific sales tax on utilities, in addition to the provincial and federal sales taxes.

In unincorporated areas, BC Hydro makes annual grants based on 1% of revenues received, payable to the Surveyor of Taxes pursuant to Order-in-council no.1218, 1968. Other utility companies pay property value taxes on the "specified improvements". Such improvements are taxed as Class 2 (Utilities) properties which are subject to the highest provincial class multiple.

B104 - UNIVERSITY PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS

WHEREAS in 1996 the University Act, RSBC 1979, c.419 was amended to add the following paragraph:

(t. 1) to pay to a municipality incorporated by or under an Act a grant in a year not exceeding the lesser of (i) the amount that would be payable as general municipal taxes in the year on the property of the university within the municipality if the property were not exempt from these taxes; and (ii) the amount specified by the minister or calculated in the manner specified by the minister.

AND WHEREAS British Columbia municipalities are suffering considerable loss of municipal taxation due to amounts levied under section (ii) above:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities be requested to appeal to the Province of British Columbia to amend the University Act, RSBC 1979, c. 419 to apply a more equitable method of municipal taxation as follows:

To pay to a municipality incorporated by or under an act a grant in a year equal to general municipal taxes in the year on property of the university within the municipality if the property were not exempt from these taxes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The resolution will be reviewed during preparation of the 2009 Provincial Budget in the context of the benefits (economic, social and other) that accrue to communities in which universities are located and the incremental costs to communities of servicing these facilities.

B106 - REDUCING EMPLOYEE TAXES FOR HYBRID VEHICLE CARPOOLING PROGRAMS

WHEREAS the threat of climate change has prompted municipalities to undertake action to reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions;

AND WHEREAS to reduce emissions some municipalities have created carpooling programs which allow municipal employees to commute to and from work in municipal fleet vehicles provided that they pay a taxable benefit based largely on the vehicle purchase price;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have been encouraged to purchase hybrid electric vehicles which may cost up to twice as much as conventional fuel vehicles:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request senior government to restructure the municipal vehicle taxable benefit policy so that municipal carpoolers using hybrid vehicles are not charged any more tax than users in a comparable conventional fuel vehicle.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The tax treatment of employee benefits is an area of federal responsibility. This is the case because BC is party to the federal-provincial tax collection agreement which gives responsibility for determining taxable income to the federal government. The benefits of this agreement are a savings in tax collection costs and the fact that taxpayers need only file one tax return each year.

The government provides a provincial sales tax (PST) reduction of up to \$2,000 for purchases of new hybrid vehicles, directly benefiting consumers. As many hybrid models are not that much more expensive than conventional models, this initiative can significantly reduce the incremental cost of purchasing a hybrid. In addition, consumers will benefit over time from the cost savings associated with increased fuel efficiency.

B107 - RESPONSIBLE TRANSPORTATION OF GOODS AND COMMODITIES

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has demonstrated leadership in making a significant difference in reducing our carbon foot print;

AND WHEREAS the majority of local community consumer goods are transported and delivered by highway tractor trailer units;

AND WHEREAS the Province of BC has a significant interconnected railway infrastructure operated primarily by two national freight companies:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the provincial government, CN Rail and CP Rail to design and develop a 'community rail freight delivery system' that would encourage the use of long-haul rail.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

While a large proportion of B.C. communities are located in close proximity to CN or CP rail lines, it would be challenging for the railways to provide a community rail freight delivery system using only rail infrastructure given the well-developed highway system in B.C. Rail is most efficient in providing intermediate/long distance hauling of bulk commodities, whereas truck hauling is most efficient for smaller distances, and with door-to-door and small shipment capability.

Inland ports and container facilities are the optimal means to facilitate the best use of rail and truck. CN recently opened a \$20m transload and intermodal rail terminal in Prince George, and several local governments and private interests are determining the feasibility of inland port development to facilitate rail-truck movements.

B108 - SAFER CYCLING CONDITIONS

WHEREAS getting people out of their cars and onto bicycles reduces global warming, decreases air pollution and creates a healthier population;

AND WHEREAS unsafe cycling conditions are a major deterrent to getting people onto their bicycles:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Transportation provide additional resources for year round, regular sweeping of road shoulders and cycle lanes in order to remove gravel and debris and thus create safer cycling.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes the health, environmental, social and economic benefits of cycling. Through its maintenance contractors the Ministry provides many maintenance services that benefit cyclists (e.g., shoulder sweeping, debris removal, line painting, pavement rehabilitation etc.). Ministry staff regularly meet with the maintenance contractor to discuss the needs of all road users.

The sweeping of highway shoulders is provided, as part of the maintenance contract, on a regular frequency, with additional service being provided if debris accumulates and creates a dangerous environment for highway users. Debris will begin to accumulate on a highway shoulder as soon as sweeping has occurred. This is especially true on highways with high traffic volumes and speeds as the wind created by the vehicles pushes the debris to the shoulder. The Ministry monitors the performance of the maintenance contractors and can audit their records to determine if the minimum sweeping frequencies are being met, and if additional services are being provided when warranted (i.e., the amount or size of the debris is dangerous to cyclists).

B109 - POORLY PERFORMING INTERSECTIONS

WHEREAS many municipalities are facing increased traffic pressures as populations increase and some intersections are performing at a Level of Service (LOS) of E or F which represents a failing intersection;

AND WHEREAS municipalities are often unable to finance improvements that would relieve the congestion at failing intersections:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Province of British Columbia to work with local governments to identify key intersections that are at major regional intersections of E or F and provide funding for improvements to these failing intersections.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure does consider operational performance as a factor when making decisions with respect to future projects.

As part of the North Fraser Perimeter Road project we are working with municipalities and Translink to identify challenges and potential solutions.

The Ministry also continues to work with all parties on the long term transportation planning in the area.

The Ministry would be looking to other major stakeholders such as developers and other levels of government to participate in funding once solutions have been developed and agreed to.

B110 - HEARTLAND CONNECTOR

WHEREAS the British Columbia Transit Plan is focused primarily on the Lower Mainland with some benefit allocated to Kelowna and no indication of any consideration given for a proposed Heartland Connector commitment;

AND WHEREAS any British Columbia Transit Plan should consider the importance of Highway 97 as the major thoroughfare between the residents and resources of Northern British Columbia and the Lower Mainland, as well as a vital economic link in the Asia Pacific Corridor joining the Prince Rupert and Vancouver ports:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Provincial Government to take immediate steps to fulfil its commitment to the completion of the Heartland Connector to ensure the efficient and safe movement of people and goods and to solidify the economic opportunities of the Asia Pacific Gateway and Corridor.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

In April 2005 the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure committed to starting work on \$200 million worth of projects by 2010 as the first phase of a long-term strategy to four-lane Highway 97 between Cache Creek and Prince George.

To date, work has been completed on four-laning projects at Fletchers Road and Plett Road and on intersection improvements at the Williams Lake IR. Work is well underway on the Simon Fraser Bridge project and the Prince George South Scale Relocation and Four Laning.

Contracts have been tendered and awarded for:
Wright Station Curves – Four Laning (Lac La Hache)
Dale Lake Road to Dragon Lake Road Four Laning (Quesnel)
Horse Lake Road Pedestrian Underpass Extension (100 Mile House)
Sintich Road to Fraser River Four Laning (Prince George)

Work will begin on these projects this fall with most construction activity in 2009.

Day Labour construction began early Fall 2008 on the Likely Road to Williams Lake IR project.

Tender is expected on replacement of Hixon Bridge early in 2009.

To date, construction has been completed or has been approved to proceed on 11 projects totalling \$156 million.

Engineering work is underway on an additional suite of projects, anticipated to be tendered in the next two years, to meet or exceed the \$200 million commitment.

Work is also ongoing to develop options for future phases of the Cariboo Connector Program including the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure working with the City of Quesnel as the municipality develops a business case for bypass options.

B112 - FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

WHEREAS local input from Coastal Communities to the operations of BC Ferries is essential to the Ferry Authority's ability to respond to local needs and the system of local government appointments to the Ferry Advisory Committees has worked well for coastal communities;

AND WHEREAS the ability of local governments to appoint representatives to Ferry Advisory Committees has been removed and replaced with appointments by the BC Ferry Authority:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government and the BC Ferry Authority to adhere to the democratic system of local government appointments to Ferry Advisory Committees.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ferry Advisory Committees (FACs) are part of the British Columbia Ferry Services Inc. public consultation process. As an independent company, BC Ferries and the BC Ferry Authority are not required to involve the provincial government in this process.

BC Ferries have indicated that they continue to see great value in having local government as part of the Ferry Advisory Committee process. However, in order to ensure broad representation of interests, they reserve the right to ask other community interest groups to provide them with lists of candidates for consideration as FAC members.

B113 - ENHANCED MONITORING AND REPORTING OF HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

WHEREAS the quality of highways road and bridge maintenance services provided by the Ministry of Transportation has a significant impact on the safety of our publicly owned highways;

AND WHEREAS the provision of quality highways road and bridge maintenance services not only ensures safe road conditions for those travelling our highways but also ensures that the maximum life span of our highways infrastructure can be realized, and the Ministry of Transportation has introduced a self-regulatory model by contracted services providers to assess compliance with required work standards:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Transportation be called upon to ensure that contracted highways road and bridge maintenance providers fulfil their contractual obligations through enhanced monitoring and audits of work performance of contractors conducted by the Ministry of Transportation;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Ministry of Transportation provide regular accident reports for the service area, conduct comprehensive contractor performance assessments and report any findings semi-annually to key community stakeholders such as local governments, school boards, emergency services, chambers of commerce and other relevant stakeholders in the service area.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

For the 2003-2004 round of maintenance contracts the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure transferred the responsibility for Quality Assurance to the maintenance contracting industry.

As part of the contracting process, and movement towards a performance based contracting model, the maintenance contractors were required to deliver a comprehensive Quality Management System that fully demonstrates how they will ensure both Quality control and Quality Assurance functions are to be carried out including how such functions are to be staffed. This will allow contractors more opportunity to show innovation as well as become more effective and efficient in delivering services to the public.

The changes noted above however do not mean that maintenance contractors operate independent of government as the Ministry conducts District audits, Regional Assessments, Stakeholder assessments and direct work monitoring activities in it's role as owner and contract administrator. There are 117 ministry staff, including area managers, district operations technicians, and district operations managers involved in this process.

Ministry staff work with municipalities, regional districts and other stakeholders to obtain important feedback on important transportation issues affecting them including highway maintenance. Specifically this includes a minimum twice annual meetings, one just prior to winter to discuss emergent issues and one post winter to review actual accomplishments.

Public concerns regarding highway maintenance should be addressed first with the local highways contractor as they are most able to respond to issues that are raised and in those circumstances do not necessarily result in involvement by Ministry staff, although there may well be follow-up or discussion with staff depending on the issue.

The Ministry has posted the highway maintenance specifications on its website as well as its quality plan and comprehensive contractor assessment program.

Local Ministry staff are available to meet with municipalities and regional districts to explain our contract monitoring process and to address any local concerns.

B114 - HIGHWAYS, ROAD AND BRIDGE MAINTENANCE JOINT AWARENESS INITIATIVE

WHEREAS the quality of highways, road and bridge maintenance services provided by the Ministry of Transportation has a significant impact on the safety of our publicly owned highways;

AND WHEREAS the provision of quality highways, road and bridge maintenance services not only ensures safe road conditions for those travelling our highways but also ensures that the maximum life span of our highways infrastructure can be realized:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Transportation, BCGEU and the province's road maintenance contractors undertake a joint initiative to prepare educational materials that promote public safety and awareness.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Safety is always the first priority for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure both during the design and construction of new facilities as well as during the ongoing operations and maintenance of the highway system. As part of the ongoing operations and maintenance of the highway system the Ministry takes every opportunity to promote public safety and awareness both as an individual agency and in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders such as our maintenance contractors, community organizations, policing agencies, ICBC and the BC Trucking Association.

Educational and awareness campaigns range from pre and post winter meetings to discuss actual operational maintenance concerns in local communities to winter driving tips and techniques that all drivers can employ in their day to day commutes.

The Ministry has also implemented our DRIVE BC system that provides travellers with improved access to road condition information allowing travellers to make decisions about their trip routing and timing and provide advance information that will also ensure a safer and more pleasurable trip, particularly in challenging winter conditions.

The Ministry will continue to take advantage of all possible opportunities to promote public safety and awareness of with all of our stakeholder groups at both the provincial and local levels.

B115 - DOCKS

WHEREAS Mara and Shuswap Lakes, adjacent to and within the District of Sicamous, have been inundated with a proliferation of private buoys and docks over the summer seasons of 2006 and 2007, absent of Provincial and/or Federal authority or approvals;

AND WHEREAS, given the potential life saving impacts of such activity, the District has requested enforcement and intervention by the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Integrated Land Management Bureau representatives, to no avail;

AND WHEREAS, effective October 2007 municipalities and regional district were advised by the Ministry of Agriculture of Lands (Land Program Services Branch) that the Ministry proposes changes to the Crown Land Private Moorage Program to eliminate Provincial requirements (license of occupation) for placement of privately owned small and seasonal lake docks up to 20m sq. in size:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urges the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands to retain administration of water leases and licenses for all docks, to ensure control and management of its waterways and public life safety; and provide adequate funding for increased staffing resources to appropriately administer enforcement and compliance, except where local government may enter into a cooperative arrangement with the Province of BC to do otherwise.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

The private moorage program was revised in consultation with local governments and First Nations to create greater harmony with all applicable legislation, local bylaws, and Best Management Practices.

Areas identified by agencies and local government as having sensitive values or potential for user conflicts can be designated to require an application, regardless of dock size.

Local governments have the option to address cumulative impacts through submission of community moorage proposals for shared use by area residents.

The private moorage program does not affect local government's ability to manage private moorage through zoning and bylaw or head lease.

The program does not affect the established procedures for review and referral of applications.

Private buoys are regulated by the federal government.

B116 - RETAINING RIVERVIEW LANDS

WHEREAS the Riverview Lands are significant to British Columbia's heritage and history, in that the Lands were set aside over 100 years ago to be a sanctuary and residential treatment facility for the mentally ill and to be the site for a provincial botanical garden;

AND WHEREAS the Riverview Lands are valued throughout the province as the home to British Columbia's primary mental health care facility, as an important heritage site, as a treasured botanical garden/arboretum and as a sanctuary for all;

AND WHEREAS they represent an unique opportunity for economic development, that will benefit all citizens, through undertaking initiatives which are congruent with the original long-term vision for the property – e.g., a campus focussed on research and development concerning physical and mental health and welfare;

AND WHEREAS by working together, there are tremendous opportunities to create a future plan for Riverview that reflects the goals and priorities of local residents, the region, and numerous interest groups from across the province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the provincial government to retain the Riverview Lands in public ownership, that its ongoing use as a mental health facility be respected, that they be managed in a manner that is consistent with the original long-term vision for the property – and not as a site for market housing, and that the heritage buildings, landscapes, and arboretum be protected and preserved for the benefit of all British Columbians.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

BC Housing has been designated to lead the planning process for the redevelopment of the Riverview lands, with support from Accommodation and Real Estate Services (ARES) and other relevant Ministries and agencies. BC Housing requires time to assess government interest in the lands, and intends to ensure that all interests are considered and assessed for compatibility with available space and existing programs. Careful consideration will be given to developing an inclusive and collaborative public consultation process. Local government and other Riverview lands stakeholders will be informed when a consultation timeline and associated steps are established.

B117 –INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR FIRE HALLS

WHEREAS all local governments are legislated to prepare and maintain active emergency plans for their communities;

AND WHEREAS communities expect fire departments to play a key role in responding to emergency events;

AND WHEREAS fire halls in many communities are aging and many would suffer long term damage in the event of an earthquake;

AND WHEREAS fire departments contribute to the safety of all persons and property in the Province of BC;

AND WHEREAS there are no designated categories in current provincial or federal infrastructure programs to assist with constructing fire halls or to address seismic upgrades:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC and Government of Canada include seismic upgrading and construction of fire halls as eligible for funding in both current and future infrastructure grant programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes the importance of fire halls during times of local emergencies. The importance of having a fire hall available to respond to community needs during a seismic event is important to the well-being of the community it serves.

In communities of 15,000 residents or less, the Towns for Tomorrow Grant Program administered by the Ministry of Community Development would consider a fire hall as eligible for relevant projects. More information can be found at <http://www.townsfortomorrow.gov.bc.ca/>.

The Province supports the criteria that any upgrade project, including those designed for fire halls, should include energy efficiency and WorkSafeBC compliance as key components of the project.

B118 - MANUFACTURED HOME PARKS

WHEREAS Manufactured Home Parks are a unique form of affordable housing that offer a lifestyle for residents who enjoy a community atmosphere, yet the infrastructure in many of the older Manufactured Home Parks is failing and in need of significant upgrades to meet present day environmental standards;

AND WHEREAS there are various restrictions placed on Manufactured Home Park owners with respect to raising funds to pay for upgrades to infrastructure:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province provide incentives to new and existing manufactured home park owners so that this form of affordable housing will attract new investment dollars and permit the upgrading of existing manufactured home park infrastructure.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

The Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act (MHPTA) was enacted in 2004 and is designed to balance the rights and responsibilities of both manufactured home park landlords and tenants.

Government recognizes that manufactured home park owners are in business and rent their land to people who choose to own a manufactured home.

The MHPTA and the accompanying Regulation support manufactured home park landlords in the following ways:

Landlords may increase the rent paid by park tenants on an annual basis.

Landlords who have completed significant repairs or renovations to a manufactured home park may apply for an additional rent increase.

As of July 2007, landlords may recover increases in local government levies and utility fees, by passing a proportional amount of these increases through to tenants in the annual rent increase amount. This is one way in which Government has taken action to make manufactured home parks more economically viable.

Manufactured home park landlords may wish to consider, as an initial step, applying to the provincial Housing Endowment Fund for funding to study the scope of the problem of infrastructure upgrades across the province.

B119 - LOTTERY CORPORATION REVENUE SHARING

WHEREAS municipalities provide critical services such as policing, fire protection, roads, water, sewer, garbage and recycling, parks and recreation services and consistently receive demands for increased service;

AND WHEREAS all residents of the province contribute to the profit of the British Columbia Lottery Corporation and the provincial government is forecasting a profit of \$1.0 billion from the British Columbia Lottery Corporation for their 2007/08 year:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to establish an equitable formula without affecting casino revenue currently allocated to share the profits from British Columbia Lottery Corporation with all BC local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

As with all revenue it receives, the Government of British Columbia uses gaming revenue to support the delivery of social and other programs to all citizens of British Columbia.

In 2007/08, almost 100% of net gaming revenue was distributed to, or used to support, the citizens of British Columbia.

Almost 1 in every 4 dollar was returned directly to communities, including:

- \$101.8 million to local governments hosting casino gaming and for local economic development;
- \$148.1 million to non-profit community organizations; and
- \$5.7 million to help stabilize and revitalize BC's horse racing industry.

Further:

- \$147.3 million was directed to the Health Special Account to support health care services and programs; and
- \$658.4 million was added to the Consolidated Revenue Fund to support other government programs, primarily health care and education.

The current revenue sharing being undertaken with local governments hosting casino gaming was originally established to help those communities offset the infrastructure, social service and other costs related to hosting a gaming venue. By all accounts, most communities have experienced minimal, if any, negative financial consequences as a result of hosting such a facility and are using the revenue they receive for other, locally determined priorities.

B125 - NEW ASSESSMENT CATEGORY FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

WHEREAS the BC Ministry of Small Business and Revenue, as part of Bill 11-2008, is proposing to create a new assessment category for supportive housing under Section 19 of the Assessment Act. Under this new assessment category, land and improvements would be assessed at a nominal rate, which would essentially mean that they would have no value, and therefore the properties in question would pay no property taxes;

AND WHEREAS the City of New Westminster is concerned about the property tax implications associated with this legislation. It is also concerned that this legislation may act as a major disincentive to the creation of new supportive housing targeting vulnerable populations, including the homeless:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested not to enact the new assessment category for supportive housing targeting vulnerable populations under Section 19 of the Assessment Act.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

The intention of Government was clearly articulated in the 2007 Throne Speech where it was announced that “a new assessment class and new tax exemptions for small-unit supportive housing will be developed over the next year for this legislature’s consideration”. Support for non-profit societies that provide housing and support services for the most vulnerable British Columbians is a priority of government.

By classifying properties that meet a set of criteria and designating them in a property class, government ensures that the designated properties will not be impacted by property taxation costs which divert much needed funding away from those who require the housing and support services. The new assessment class and tax relief replaces an approach where individual properties were required to request tax relief from their local taxing jurisdiction, some of which granted relief and many who did not provide relief.

Government took into consideration the input received from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and other local governments and factored that input into its decision-making. A number of options and approaches were considered by government and the creation of a new assessment class for supportive housing was determined to be the appropriate mechanism in which to support those in need and create a consistent approach to these types of properties.

B127 - TRAINING FOR AMBULANCE ATTENDANTS – PARAMEDICS

WHEREAS there have been recent changes to training opportunities for paramedics, and there has been a loss of sufficient trained personnel to maintain staff at certain remote stations;

AND WHEREAS attendants on call in a remote ambulance station receive only \$2 per hour, and it is unrealistic to expect persons to put forward \$5000 in training money for a position that is in effect, a volunteer position:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM request the provincial government to provide training for paramedics at a minimal cost to the trainee, such personal cost to be sufficient only to indicate commitment to service.

RESPONSE: BC Ambulance Service, Ministry of Health Services

BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) recognizes that training paramedics, particularly in rural and remote areas of the province, is a challenge and training costs can be an obstacle to recruiting new paramedics.

To help address this issue BCAS has partnered with municipal councils and community organizations on recruitment and have hosted and paid for Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) training for new hires in targeted rural and remote areas. In 2006/07, 120 new BCAS employees were trained to the EMR level as part of the recruitment and retention strategy and we continued this strategy in 2007/08. BCAS has had success in rural and remote communities by concentrating recruitment efforts on residents who want to stay in their communities and work as a part-time paramedic as a form of community service.

With regards to Primary Care Paramedic (PCP) level training, the Government contributed \$5 million to establish the Vancouver Foundation's Emergency Medical Assistants Education Fund to help defray training costs for paramedic license upgrades. The fund will help upgrade EMRs to the PCP level of practice and help upgrade PCPs to the Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP) level. This fund will annually support a minimum of 48 awards for PCPs at \$5,000 each and ten awards for ACPs at \$15,000 each to help pay for tuition, books and offset some living expenses. Preference to successful applicants is given to those working in the rural and remote areas of the province.

As part of the November 2004 Memorandum of Agreement with the CUPE 873 Union, BCAS provided \$1.5 million of one-time funding for PCP training for 156 paramedics. BCAS also fully funded 38 paramedics to take the ACP course from 2005-2008 at an approximate cost of \$3.5 million.

As a result of these and other initiatives BCAS has more 'qualified' PCP and ACP level paramedics than previous, and is committed to continuing to provide on-going support to current and future paramedics. The BCAS recognizes that quality patient care requires that paramedics participate in medically directed education throughout their career.

BCAS invests approximately \$6.9 million annually to support continuing education for paramedics and first responders across the province.

BCAS employs over 3,400 full and part time paramedics across the province.

B135 - MUNICIPAL SOIL REMOVAL FEES INCREASE

WHEREAS Municipal Soil Removal Bylaws approved by the Province of British Columbia have set fees that have remained largely unchanged over the past two decades;

AND WHEREAS the costs associated with addressing the impacts of aggregate related truck traffic has increased over that period of time:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government consider approving an increase to soil removal fees to reflect the true cost of the impacts of aggregate removal on municipalities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

There is currently a legal provision and process in place for a municipality to adjust soil removal fees. Subject to the approval of the Minister of Community Development, Section 195 of the Community Charter provides for a municipality to impose rates or levels of fees related to soil removal and deposit. Normally, individual municipalities submit Soil Removal and Deposit bylaws to the Minister of Community Development for review and approval.

Additionally, if the UBCM chooses to make a general recommendation that fees be increased, a key factor in this issue is the endorsement of the aggregate industry. As of August 25, 2008, according to Mr. Paul Allard, Executive Director of the Aggregate Producers Association of British Columbia (AGPABC), the association has not been contacted in regards to the proposed fee increase. UBCM is dealing with this provincially, rather than at the individual municipal level, therefore, the AGPABC should be advised of the proposed increase.

B136 - UNBUNDLED PARKING REQUIREMENT

WHEREAS the Provincial Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Targets Act requires a GHG emission reduction of 33% from 2007 levels by 2020 and a reduction of 80% from 2007 levels by 2050 with legislated targets for 2012 and 2016 to be put in place by December 31, 2008;

AND WHEREAS sixty British Columbia (BC) local governments signed a Climate Action Charter with the Province and with the Union of BC Municipalities in 2007 to develop strategies to become carbon-neutral by 2012 and to create compact energy efficient communities by making environmentally responsible choices; AND WHEREAS BC municipalities have jurisdiction over land use and parking regulations to achieve community goals such as GHG emission reductions; AND WHEREAS BC municipalities do not currently have the authority to require developers to provide unbundled parking (i.e. the separation of the sale price for a parking space from the sale price for a freehold or leasehold property or strata lot) in new developments, which would provide home-buyers with purchasing flexibility and greater transparency regarding the cost of parking and would lead to more informed decision making about vehicle ownership and usage;

AND WHEREAS if the authority is provided to BC municipalities to require developers to provide unbundled parking they have the option to exercise that authority as they deem appropriate:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities requests the Province to make the necessary legislative changes to provide BC municipalities the authority to have the option to require unbundled parking in new developments, in support of sustainability commitments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Development

In the spring of 2008 the Government of British Columbia passed the Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act. This Act introduced amendments to the Local Government Act, Community Charter, and Vancouver Charter which give local governments expanded authority to aid them in achieving significant greenhouse gas emission reductions in their communities.

Included in the legislative amendments was a change to enable local governments to collect cash-in-lieu of off-street parking and to use the cash-in-lieu to further develop alternative transportation infrastructure. In establishing a cash value for parking there is greater transparency regarding the cost of parking which could also lead to more informed decision making about vehicle ownership and usage while also generating funds for local alternative transportation infrastructure.

The potential implications of unbundling parking are not known and would need to be explored. The Ministry of Community Development will review the proposal and refer the issue to the Development Finance Review Committee for discussion.

B138 - PROVINCIAL SANCTIONING BODY FOR PROFESSIONAL COMBAT SPORTS
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WHEREAS combat sports has been growing in popularity and now includes ultimate fighting and mixed martial arts contests and there is no provincial regulation authority to regulate those sports;

AND WHEREAS there are concerns about unregulated fight cards taking place without proper supervision, medical checks, referring or judging which places participants in serious jeopardy:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the Province of British Columbia establish a provincial body for the purpose of regulating and supervising professional boxing, kick-boxing, wrestling, ultimate fighting and mixed martial arts contests and exhibitions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and Ministry of Attorney General

BC has supported reform to the section of the Criminal Code that governs combative sports (s. 83). Events such as ultimate fighting are prohibited under this section, but because the section is outdated it also prohibits a wide range of sports that are generally considered acceptable to the community (for example judo, karate and taekwondo) and that are endorsed at events such as the Olympics, the PanAm and the Commonwealth Games. Clarity to this section would assist police in enforcing offences committed in bloodsports such as ultimate fighting, without raising questions about why similar enforcement isn't being directed at sports that Canada has supported at the national and international levels.

In 2005, all Deputy Ministers Responsible for Justice endorsed a recommendation to clarify s. 83 of the Criminal Code. This change has not yet been introduced by the federal government.

The Province has maintained a clear and consistent position over the past 20+ years that it does not regulate sports of any kind. It would also be inconsistent to regulate extreme sports such as 'ultimate fighting' when these activities are prohibited by the Criminal Code.

The Provincial position is that regulation of legal sports is better managed at the local level. Provisions have therefore been made in the Community Charter and the Vancouver Charter allowing for the establishment of municipal Athletic Commissions to oversee and regulate such activities and contests.

B141 - VISUAL FIRE ALARMS

WHEREAS hearing impaired people may not be able to respond to audio fire alarm systems:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government require visual alarm systems be installed in all places where audio alarm systems are currently required.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

The British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) establishes minimum requirements for the installation of fire alarm systems in B.C., including the areas of a building where persons with hearing impairments are to be visually notified of a fire alarm.

Buildings or portions of a building, used primarily by persons with a hearing impairment, are required by the BCBC to be equipped with visual signal devices.

If the installation of a visual signal device is to be required in addition to and in all places where audible signal devices are currently required, changes to the BCBC would be needed.

The BCBC is adopted from the National Building Code of Canada (NBC). This is an issue of national interest and not regional specificity. Therefore, consideration of this issue should be through the NBC code change process.

B144 - KIDNEY DIALYSIS

WHEREAS kidney dialysis treatment for the entire northwestern area of British Columbia is currently conducted out of the cities of Prince George and Terrace;

AND WHEREAS those who are in need of dialysis must move from their communities in order to be treated, causing disruption within the family and disruption in the lifestyle:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby Northern Health as well as the Ministry of Health to ensure that services for kidney dialysis are available in local communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health Services Response

The British Columbia Provincial Renal Agency (BCPRA), an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), ensures that quality, cost efficient care is being provided in a comprehensive, province-wide care model of dialysis delivery and pre-dialysis care. The BCPRA coordinates these services in collaboration with each health authority.

To increase treatment capacity and access, the Government of B.C. recently invested \$4.3 million in capital equipment. This includes 13 new dialysis machines, 61 replacement reverse osmosis and dialysis machines and 49 new machines for independent dialysis, allowing 49 patients to receive care at home. Since 2001, BC has increased the number of hospital, clinic and home-based dialysis stations by 66 percent in 18 communities across the province.

Having a dialysis unit in every community is not feasible or sustainable, given the significant human resources and support services required. A range of criteria (developed in partnership with all health authorities and the renal community), including sufficient patient volumes, availability of human resource, availability of physical space and access to support services, must be met for a dialysis unit to be developed in a small community. For the communities which do not meet the criteria, including Smithers, home-based dialysis (provided province-wide since 2004) is an excellent option that can provide improved health outcomes.

B145 – BASIC DENTAL HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS access to basic dental health care in the Province of British Columbia and government funding for basic dental health care is inadequate for low income individuals and families;

AND WHEREAS there is a discrepancy between the coverage provided by existing government dental programs and the actual costs charged by dentists:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to take immediate steps to remove access barriers to dental health care, allocate more funding for basic dental health care insurance for low income individuals and families in the Province, and work with the BC Dental Association to resolve the discrepancy between the BC Dental Fee guide and the actual fees charged by dentists.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Social Development

Ministry of Housing and Social Development is committed to building the best system of support for those most in need. The health and well-being of British Columbia's children, and most vulnerable is a top concern. The provincial government spends about \$44 million each year to provide dental services for about 130,000 income assistance clients, persons with disabilities, and children in lower income families who are enrolled in the BC Healthy Kids Program. Since 2006, the Ministry has provided \$1.2 million to enable community dental clinics throughout the province to provide dental care for low-income British Columbians.

The BCDA publishes a fee guide which is used by dentists to assess fees for dental services provided to British Columbians. The BCDA fee guide is reviewed annually and over the past 10 years there has been a fee increase of approximately 3 percent, per year. Currently, the fee for each dental service set by the Ministry's schedule of fee allowances is, on average, 72 percent of the fee set by the BCDA fee guide.

The Ministry has a positive working relationship with the BCDA. In the past few years the Ministry has provided grants to the BCDA in support of community dental day which provides free dental care for low-income individuals. The Ministry has also provided \$300,000 to the BCDA for a community dental clinic in the northeast part of the province.

B146 - WARNING LABELS ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

WHEREAS warning labels on alcoholic beverages may assist in preventing health problems and reduce the risk to the public:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Provincial Government require the following warning labels on all alcoholic beverages sold in British Columbia:

1. Women should avoid alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects;
2. The consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to operate machinery and over consumption may cause health problems.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the warning labels contain graphic information similar to that shown on cigarette packages.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport is committed to reducing harms from alcohol using evidence-based strategies. The proposal to require mandatory labels on alcohol beverage containers warning consumers about the risks of drinking while pregnant or while operating a motor vehicle has some evidence of effectiveness, especially when such initiatives are undertaken in the context of broader social marketing campaigns.

In the Canadian context, this would require cooperation of other provinces and territories, and more importantly, the federal government, within whose jurisdiction such an initiative as mandatory warning labels falls. It is for this reason that Health Canada is identified as the principal body to implement the recommendation “for alcohol beverage containers, regulate standardized, easily visible labels that convey the number of standard drinks in each container” (p. 9) in *Reducing Alcohol-Related Harm in Canada: Toward a Culture of Moderation*, a report detailing recommendations for a national alcohol strategy.

The Province of British Columbia will work with the federal government, other provinces and territories, and other stakeholders to explore the feasibility of implementing the various recommendations for a national alcohol strategy, including warning labels on beverage alcohol containers.

B147 - INTEGRATED OCEANS MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

WHEREAS the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding respecting the implementation of Canada's Oceans Strategy on the Pacific Coast of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the process of integrated planning for the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management area (PNCIMA) appears to have stalled due to lack of commitment and adequate funding:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia to immediately commit to increased engagement and collaboration in the integrated Oceans Management Planning Process for the Pacific Coast of Canada.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Province has been engaged in detailed discussions with the Federal representatives and Turning Point First Nations to provide input to the design, governance framework, deliverables, and sequencing of the PNCIMA process.

The Province remains engaged in these discussions, and will be evaluating how best to support or provide input to the process to assure that provincial interests are adequately addressed.

The Provincial government is already active in coastal planning, and has completed a number of coastal plans wholly or partially within the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA), such as Johnstone Butte, Quatsino and North Island Straits. The province intends to continue to engage with First Nations, the federal government and local communities to develop or update coastal plans where a clear business case exists. In addition the Provincial government has and continues to develop considerable coastal information which will inform any integrated planning processes in the PNCIMA area.

B148 - ENCOURAGEMENT OF FUEL-EFFICIENT SMALL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING

WHEREAS the Provincial Government has encouraged municipalities to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions generated through the delivery of municipal operations including those emissions produced through the use of small and large equipment; AND WHEREAS municipalities are encouraged to purchase energy efficient small and large equipment;

AND WHEREAS the selection of energy efficient equipment is limited, and the cost still prohibitively high for many municipalities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request the Federal and Provincial governments to encourage industry, through the use of financial incentives, to develop and manufacture more affordable energy efficient small and large equipment so that municipalities can have more choice with regard to green purchasing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The environment is a priority for the government and the government is committed to addressing climate change. As evidence of this commitment, BC's Budget 2008 put \$1 billion toward climate change initiatives. The Government also introduced a carbon tax that is intended to put a price on carbon emissions to encourage individuals, businesses, industry and others to use less fossil fuel and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The Government supports the development of new energy efficient equipment through the Scientific Research and Experimental Development tax credit program. In 2007/08 the province spent \$150 million on this program. In addition, the government believes that market forces will, over time, result in reduced prices for energy efficient products. The carbon tax and other market forces will increase the demand for more energy efficient products and equipment. Industry will respond to this with increased production which, in turn, will result in reduced unit prices, making energy efficient equipment more affordable for municipalities.

The British Columbia government maintains its commitment to the environment and to fostering a strong, vibrant and competitive economy that promotes investment, innovation and job creation. The government will continue to consider tax changes, such as providing incentives for industry to develop and manufacture more affordable energy efficient equipment, within the context of its fiscal situation and other priorities such as health care and education.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

The Government's overarching objective is to create a culture of energy efficiency and conservation in British Columbia. Achieving this goal is essential to meeting our climate change objectives as well as the ambitious 50% conservation target for BC Hydro set out in the BC Energy Plan: A Vision for Clean Energy Leadership.

Provincial, utility and federal financial incentives for residential energy assessments and energy efficiency retrofits are available through the LiveSmartBC: Efficiency Incentive Program (www.livesmartbc.ca). This program provides incentives for fuel-efficient furnaces and boilers, energy efficient windows and other products that could be used in local government operations.

Improving energy efficiency standards for products manufactured and sold in British Columbia is a key component of our approach to market transformation. The desired outcome is greater supply of energy efficient products at an affordable price.

Under the provincial Energy Efficiency Act, higher efficiency standards have been implemented for a number of products in recent years, including commercial boilers, residential gas furnaces; windows, doors and skylights, thermostats and fluorescent ballasts. In most cases, these new regulatory standards have stimulated increased market penetration and diversity of suppliers for the more efficient product lines.

Further improvements to energy efficiency standards under the Act are planned for 2008/2009. If you would like more information, please visit <http://www.energyplan.gov.bc.ca/efficiency/> or contact the Energy Efficiency Branch at 250-356-1507.

B151 - INCLUSION OF BC FERRIES IN OMBUDSMAN'S MANDATE

Whereas the Provincial Government has exempted BC Ferry Services from the oversight provisions of the Ombudsman Act; AND WHEREAS the Ombudsman Act provides British Columbians an important avenue by which to register complaints of administrative unfairness by a public agency and BC Ferry Services receives substantial public funds:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province be urged to include BC Ferry Services in the oversight provisions of the Ombudsman Act to allow an avenue for impartial investigations of complaints about the administrative actions of the agency.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Through the Coastal Ferry Act, the office of the British Columbia Ferry Commission was established as the independent regulator of the ferry operator (BC Ferries).

While the Ferry Commissioner is not an ombudsperson, his independent and impartial office may launch a probe regarding the performance, service quality, efficiency or how the productivity of BC Ferries could be improved. This could be in the form of a question of clarification formally put to BC Ferries by the Commission, possibly leading to a corrective order. Several probes have been conducted, including some which address questions from the public.

B157 - ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

WHEREAS the Measuring up the North project has identified that a lack of adequate transportation for people with disabilities and seniors is an issue throughout the NCMA Region, and it has been identified through research that this issue is province wide;

AND WHEREAS accessible transportation is key to quality of life, inclusion, participation, and community engagement of people with disabilities and seniors:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to increase the level of funding for accessible transportation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

With the further commitment of \$9.5 million in provincial operating funds over the 2007/2008 – 2010/2011 period, plus the provincial share of capital costs for purchase of additional buses, BC Transit will be working with local government partners in 18 communities, including northern communities, to implement new or expanded services. With this new provincial funding and with commitments from other levels of government, public agencies and major employers, BC Transit will have the ability to add 120,000 hours of service, a 7% increase, and put an additional 53 buses on the road that are fully capable of serving mobility challenged persons and seniors.

Overall, service hours in the conventional, paratransit and custom transit programs will increase by 37% in the year 2010/11 compared to 2007/08 levels.

B159 - INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR ACCESSIBILITY

WHEREAS the Measuring Up The North project has identified that many small businesses are located in leased or owned buildings that are not accessible to persons with disabilities or seniors, and many small businesses do not have the financial means to renovate their premises to become accessible;

AND WHEREAS making small businesses accessible will benefit customers, clients, and employers, and also result in increased revenue to business owners:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) lobby the provincial government to develop an incentive program to encourage owners of small businesses to make their premises accessible.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

The Province currently provides some assistance for workplace modifications under the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD). However, this funding is specific to the employee with disabilities and is not available for small businesses to make general accessibility improvements.

Funds for improving the accessibility of small businesses may be available through the Enabling Accessibility Fund, which is offered federally through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. This fund provides grants and contributions to projects that improve accessibility and enable Canadians, regardless of physical ability, to participate in and contribute to their communities and the economy. Small projects enabling accessibility may be eligible for grants of up to \$50,000 to renovate buildings, modify vehicles and/or make information and communication more accessible.

B160 - PRIMARY CARE

WHEREAS primary care is key to the sustainability of the health care system;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM members endorse their support for all initiatives which support primary care similar to the initiative known as Care North.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health Services

The Ministry of Health Services (MoHS) clearly recognizes that primary health care is key to the sustainability of our public health system.

In May 2007, the MoHS launched the Primary Health Care Charter (PHC Charter) which identified primary health care challenges facing the province, specified priorities, and established outcome measures to assess changes in service provision and patient health outcomes. The PHC Charter is being used by the MoHS in setting its strategic direction with regional health authorities, and developing its long term integrated strategic plan for B.C.'s health care system.

The Care North initiative, along with other primary health care initiatives in B.C.'s health authorities, use the PHC Charter as a guide in establishing initiatives that align with the strategic direction set out in the PHC Charter.

A PHC Charter achievements report for 2008/09 and re-statement of the provincial strategic direction for 2008-10 is currently under development. The Charter re-statement identifies Divisions of Family Practice and Integrated Health Networks as new service structures that are key to achieving integrated, patient-centred care; these service structures are being implemented in every health authority including under the Care North initiative.

The Ministry of Health Services recognizes that sustainability of communities is often linked to sustainability of primary health care. MoHS is working closely with municipal governments, the regional health authorities and the British Columbia Medical Association to create new models and give communities confidence that care will be available when and where they need it.

B 163 - WATER WASTEWATER CERTIFICATION

WHEREAS the UBCM endorsed a resolution in 2006 for a provincial government review of the operator experience requirement for water and wastewater treatment operators to shift the primary requirement to “training” as opposed to “experience” so that the capabilities of employees can be acknowledged over a shorter time period to minimize the instances of local government non-compliance;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government response to this resolution was for the Ministry of Health to refer the issue to the Environmental Operators Program (as the original drafters of the 2000 hrs “experience” requirement), which has not solicited a response;

AND WHEREAS an appeal to the Ministry of Health for an independent review of the issue did not receive a response:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call for an independent review of the water and wastewater operator certification requirements for the expressed purpose of ensuring a blend of “training” and “experience” that protects public interest while recognizing the unique circumstances that small system providers face.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

Under the Drinking Water Protection Regulation, a person is qualified to operate, maintain or repair a water supply system if they are certified by the Environmental Operator Certification Program (EOCP) at the same level as the system has been classified by EOCP.

The MHLS relies on the expertise of the Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP) in assessing and evaluating the competency of operators of water supply systems. The Ministry of Health Living and Sport (MHLS) does not have the in-house expertise to judge core competencies of system staff and there are few other alternatives to EOCP.

EOCP’s existing certification scheme does allow for some flexibility, enabling persons to substitute work experience for training/education and vice versa, and EOCP has been asked to consider a more flexible approach to certification. However, some work experience is still necessary and this allowance will only be granted by the EOCP board upon request by the applicant and with sufficient explanation of special circumstances.

MHLS has been working with EOCP to address a number of issues. This includes issues related to training of operators, levels of training required to operate systems, as well as recommendations of the Ombudsman to ensure training and certification processes interface effectively. We anticipate a strategy to reduce instances of non-compliance with the regulation due to certification challenges will be completed in the near future.