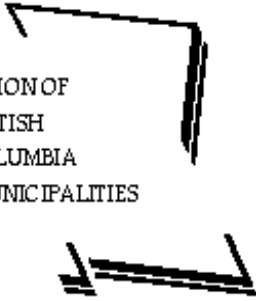


# MEDIA RELEASE

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## UBCM Has Mixed Emotions About Provincial Budget

### ***Cuts equivalent to eliminating thirty police officers from municipal forces***

“Perplexed, disappointed, confused and relieved sum up our feelings about the provincial budget’s effects on local governments,” said UBCM President Jim Abram. “We are perplexed as to why the government has once again reduced our fair share; disappointed about the amount they have left us, and confused as to how the cuts to Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing were determined. We were, however, relieved that the Small Community Protection Grants were maintained. We were also relieved that Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing wasn’t eliminated in its entirety.”

The traffic fine revenue sharing program was introduced two years ago and has been funded at a level of \$13.2 million for the past two years. The overall funding is based on a share of projected fine revenues collected by the provincial treasury on tickets issued by local police enforcement officers. The amount the province decides to share is distributed to municipalities on the basis of their share of total traffic enforcement policing costs in the province.

“It wasn’t until this past fall that government ever confirmed that there actually was a formula in place to determine the amount of overall funding. We never agreed to the formula that was used,” commented Abram. “Early this year we were told that traffic fine revenues were decreasing and the formula wouldn’t produce any grants this year. We urged the Minister of Municipal Affairs to fight to maintain the grants at the previous year’s levels until the formula could be fixed, and we understand that he presented our cause vigorously to Treasury Board. Instead of imposing a new method of “sharing” on us we hoped that the government would maintain the funding and work toward

“What government did was cut the fine revenue sharing by just over \$3 million or **25%**, without an explanation as to how the figure was arrived at. It is hard to understand why the province would do this given that the government is projecting a \$1.3 billion surplus and has built into the budget a \$300 million contingency. **The cuts we are talking about are one quarter of 1% of the surplus and 1% of the contingency!**

We are perplexed as to the rationale for making this change when there seems to be no need. The 25% decrease in municipal traffic fine revenue sharing would have cost government “nothing” in the bigger scheme of their budget. However, to us, it is the **equivalent of cutting 30 police officers from traffic enforcement.**

The Attorney General states that traffic enforcement is a priority, but then the provincial government cuts funding to support this priority. What is wrong with this picture?” concluded Abram.

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