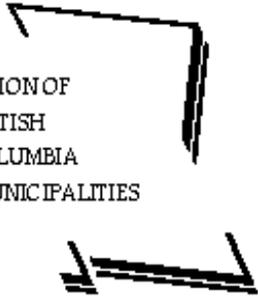


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UBCM UNVEILS BC COMMUNITIES AGENDA FOR 2001

UBCM President Jim Abram launched the 2001 BC Communities Agenda at the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities convention this past weekend.

The two-part Agenda addresses:

- **Community building** – communities that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; that are safe and secure, accessible and healthy.
- **Governing communities** – communities that are financially sustainable, have respectful local-provincial government relationships and where there is a fair balancing of community interests.

The Agenda is the product of a UBCM Executive planning process that reflected on where local governments want to go in the next decade. The BC Communities Agenda sets out some short-term objectives, based largely on existing UBCM policy positions.

There are 27 specific actions under the six community building themes. Consistent with UBCM's intergovernmental relations role, many of these, which call for action, are directed at the provincial or federal government. A sample of the range of interests includes:

- Completing land and resource management plans that include a secure working forest for resource communities and implementation of accepted forest certification programs.
- Establishing a permanent infrastructure funding program.
- Developing policies that will provide affordable, secure and reliable energy sources.
- Providing affordable housing.
- Legislation that protects the quantity and quality of drinking water, both surface and groundwater.
- Support for community-based policing and crime prevention.
- Providing community-based justice alternatives through bylaw and drug courts.
- Equitable and accountable financing of policing.
- Repatriation of a share of federal fuel tax to support transit and transportation.
- Ensuring ferry services meet the diverse needs of BC communities and are considered part of the highway system.
- Working in partnership with our provincial and federal counterparts to address various health care challenges. (i.e. nursing shortages, recruitment of health professionals).

There are 3 parts to governing communities:

- Financing sustainable communities,
- Respectful governance relationships, and;
- Fair balancing of community interests.

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Many of the actions in this part of the Agenda address longstanding UBCM issues and concerns:

- Providing adequate, stable and predictable fiscal capacity.
- No downloading of provincial responsibilities without appropriate funding.
- Ensuring Crown corporations pay the full equivalent of property taxes.
- Respect for, and adherence to, local bylaws.
- Respect for local views regarding provincial policy; including the requirement for notice and consultation provisions.
- Maintaining a legislative framework that recognizes and reflects local government as an independent, accountable and responsible order of government across all statutes.
- Local governments need to be responsible for their actions but not those of others (i.e. building regulation liability).
- One size does not fit all – local election and open meeting legislation.

Full copies of the BC Communities Agenda are available on our website at: www.civicnet.gov.bc.ca

The BC Communities Agenda is a focused set of priorities that draws on established UBCM policies and resolutions.

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