



Ministry of Municipal Affairs and  
Housing

# PROVINCIAL RESPONSE

to the Resolutions of the 2019  
Union of British Columbia Municipalities  
**Convention**

ADDENDUM

June 2020

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#### **B64 EHS Services**

Whereas the residents of rural communities require access to timely and professional emergency health care services to ensure their health and safety;

And whereas many rural communities lack after hour access to medical clinics or hospitals in their communities;

And whereas BC Emergency Health Services teams are relied upon to provide consistent and timely response to emergency health events, yet many rural BC Emergency Health Services teams are understaffed:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia and BC Emergency Health Services to increase budgets, develop policies and evaluate hiring practices to ensure residents of rural communities have timely and reliable emergency health care services.

#### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) is committed to developing a sustainable employment model, including:

- An expanded role for paramedics within the rural health system and with local health teams (i.e., community paramedicine);
- Combining regular hours of employment with an on-call component to increase emergency coverage for a community;
- Regular rotation of paramedics between different communities and/or working environments to help develop and maintain clinical skills; and,
- Combining work over larger geographical areas to create more predictable and sustainable workload where volumes are usually low (e.g., co-ordinating inter-facility transfers across multiple communities).

The Community Paramedicine Initiative includes expanded roles for paramedics in rural and small urban communities. The program aims to help stabilize paramedic staffing in these communities and bridge health service delivery gaps to improve patient care. There are now over 100 community paramedics serving 99 rural and remote communities.

BCEHS has also introduced six rural advanced care paramedics as a joint research project with the University of Northern BC. To test this enhanced service, the project launched in Valemount, Fort St. John, Prince Rupert, Campbell River, Cranbrook and Saltspring Island.

## **B75 Ministry of Agriculture Moratorium on Legislative Changes**

Whereas the Ministry of Agriculture has made legislation changes in regards to Bill 15 and Bill 52 that impact the Agricultural Land Commission authority with regards to land use applications;

And whereas these changes are impacting local governments and how they review and potentially refer their residents' applications that are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve to the Agricultural Land Commission:

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Agriculture undertake fulsome consultation with local governments on the development of regulations, so that local governments can fully understand the implications on their residents and have an opportunity to provide input prior to the adoption of these new regulations.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture**

Over the past two years, the (Ministry) has worked to revitalize the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) with input from local governments and stakeholders including: farmers, ranchers, and the general public.

The MoA and the ALC held public engagement sessions from September 19, 2019 to November 15, 2019. The Ministry heard from people in communities across British Columbia (B.C.) and discussed what can be done to: create new economic opportunities; help new entrants get into farming; and provide more flexibility for residences on the ALR. The MoA is seeing a common interest in protecting agricultural land and an increased need to provide greater clarity, and some flexibility, around economic opportunities and residences.

At the end of the public engagement period, the Ministry produced a [What We Heard report](#) that was made publicly available on January 27, 2020.

The Ministry has started policy work on small secondary residence options in the ALR, while continuing to prioritize preserving the land to be used for farming or ranching. The Policy Intentions Paper was available for people to provide feedback starting on January 27, 2020 to May 17, 2020.

- [Read the Policy Intentions Paper \(PDF\)](#)

A targeted outreach was made to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) to provide opportunity to comment on the Policy Intentions Paper, and an invitation to participate in policy discussions was sent to all local governments and regional districts.

The Ministry is committed to providing local governments with information on the recent regulations that brought the Bill 15 changes to the Agricultural Land Commission Act into effect, and providing opportunities for local governments to provide feedback and understand these and other legislative and regulatory changes before they are made into law.

## **B77 Fire Centre Funding**

Whereas the provincial government provides funding for support staff at fire centres throughout the province of British Columbia;

And whereas the Cariboo Fire Centre experienced record-breaking wildfires in 2017, and more wildfires are predicted in this area:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to increase funding to those fire centres that are experiencing substantial increased wildfire activity in their areas.

## **RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

In the wake of the unprecedented 2017 and 2018 wildfire seasons, the B.C. Government invested heavily in wildfire prevention and preparedness initiatives to help keep British Columbians safe and protect the province's natural resources and infrastructure.

The B.C. Government allocated \$101 million for Direct Fire costs in the 2019-20 wildfire season, representing a 58 percent increase over the previous year's firefighting budget. This is helping the B.C. Wildfire Service (BCWS) improve its fire response capabilities by adding more crews, enhancing aircraft capacity and spending more on fire prevention activities.

More than 1,700 firefighters and support staff are in place for the 2020 wildfire season. The BCWS allocates firefighting resources to all six fire centres and relocates those highly mobile resources as needed throughout the fire season to respond to varying levels of fire risk and fire activity throughout the province. This year, BCWS is hiring an additional two initial attack crews in the McKenzie Zone, three initial attack crews and one Crew Supervisor Cariboo Fire Centre, one initial attack crew in the North Island Mid Coast Zone and one initial attack crew in the Pemberton Zone. We are also hiring three para-attack crews. All these crews consist of three firefighters each.

Volunteer and composite fire departments throughout B.C. have received a \$5-million boost for equipment and training through the Province's Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, distributed through the Union of B.C. Municipalities. This money is part of a newly established funding stream to help eligible applicants in local government and First Nations communities build resiliency with firefighter training and new or replacement firefighting equipment.

The use of the industry equipment task force model continues to be expanded throughout the province to support initial attack efforts. These task forces are a combination of heavy equipment, operators and line locator personnel that can be quickly deployed in response situations. BCWS held joint training workshops with forest industry licensees in spring 2019 and spring 2020 to enhance wildfire response throughout the province.

### **B91 Enhancing Wildfire Forest Landscape Resiliency**

Whereas the Province, in response to the 2018 Abbott/Chapman Report, is exploring a number of means to mitigate wildland fire frequency and severity and it is widely understood that one significant strategy is to develop a more wildfire resilient forest landscape that includes promoting the use of indigenous broadleaf species that typically reduce fire behaviour;

And whereas current provincial forest management regulations and policies create barriers towards the development of a more wildfire resilient forest landscape:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province review its forest management regulations and policies with an objective to expand, promote and enforce fire, insect and disease based stocking standards post-harvest, and post-wildfire, post-insect and post-disease events throughout the Province resulting in a more wildfire, insect and disease resilient provincial forest landscape.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development**

On October 31, 2019, Government released information on further updates that address recommendations made in the Abbott/Chapman Report. Below are the updates that speak to enhancing wildfire forest landscape resiliency.

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) is reviewing the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) and regulations to assess and consider an alternative forest planning framework to improve the Province's ability to manage landscape-scale disturbances such as wildfire. FLNRORD intends to propose amendments to the FRPA in fall 2020 to establish a new planning regime better equipped to manage large-scale disturbance such as wildfire.

It is hoped that further amendments to the FRPA will enable interim improvements including establishing the authority to create a new wildfire objective and new rules in the forest-community interface to reduce fire hazard and prioritize community safety.

The updated Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation provides additional flexibility to allow for community wildfire risk reduction activities in both the high and medium smoke sensitivity zones.

The Chief Forester released the Fire Management Stocking Standard Guidance in 2016 to encourage reduced stocking within the Wildland-Urban Interface. Work has continued on the Climate Change Informed Species Selection (CCISS) decision aid to model the 'ecological suitability' of tree species and enable users to apply different management lenses as a separate step in tree species selection and the development of climate adapted stocking standards. Guidance is available that describes a process for development of fire management stocking standards. In addition, stocking standards that utilize deciduous species have been developed for some parts of the province as has guidance around the use of fire resilient species as western larch.

In 2019/20, funding was increased to provide for the development of a multi-year prescribed fire program. FLNRORD is developing a comprehensive prescribed fire program, including a curriculum and training component to build capacity and increase knowledge regarding prescribed fire. Development of the new prescribed fire program will continue through 2020.

Post fire season research and adaptive management now targets recovery of fire damaged ecosystems. FLNRORD, with partners, is engaged in and funding research into appropriate treatments for such areas, including appropriate species selection.

### **B171 Safer Drug Supply to Save Lives**

Whereas It has been two years since BC declared a public-health emergency due to increased overdoses, yet the death toll for those consuming substances continues to rise due to an unpredictable and highly-toxic drug supply;

And whereas people with opioid use disorder, a chronic relapsing medical condition, are at high risk of overdose-related harms including death and an estimated 42,200 people inject toxic substances in British Columbia, it is not possible for the treatment system to rapidly increase services fast enough to manage this number of people as “patients” within a medical treatment model given the many challenges in achieving and retaining the people on opioid use disorder treatment, people at risk of overdose in British Columbia do not have access to a safer alternative to the unpredictable, highly-toxic drug supply:

Therefore be it resolved that in an effort to save lives and reduce harm due to an unpredictable and highly-toxic drug supply, and as part of a holistic response to the public-health emergency, including prevention, treatment, and recovery, that the Province of British Columbia work with local communities, Health Authorities across the Province, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, and the Ministry of Health ensure that people at risk of overdose harm have access to safer alternatives.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions**

Government is working diligently to support the healthcare needs of all British Columbians as the province finds itself in the midst of two public health emergencies – the overdose crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 26, 2020 the Province released interim clinical guidelines created by the BC Centre on Substance Use for healthcare professionals to help reduce the risks - withdrawal, overdose, infection, and other harms – to people who use drugs, a vulnerable and often-immune compromised population. The guidance supports people who are at risk of COVID-19 infection, people who have a confirmed infection or a suspected case pending diagnosis, and people who have a history of substance use, including opioids, stimulants, alcohol, benzodiazepines, or tobacco.

Ministry staff are working with the BC Centre on Substance Use, health authorities, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC, the College of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC, the College of Pharmacists of BC, as well as supportive housing providers, community agencies and peers to ensure implementation of the guidelines so that people at risk of increased harm due to the overdose crisis and COVID-19 pandemic have access to pharmaceutical alternatives to the unpredictable and highly toxic drug supply.



### **B172 Observed Inhalation Sites for Overdose Prevention**

Whereas British Columbia is currently experiencing an unprecedented public health emergency due to an unpredictable and highly-toxic drug supply, and smoking or inhalation is the second most common mode of consumption among all people who have died from a suspected illicit drug overdose and the most common mode of consumption among men and those between the ages of 15 and 29;

And whereas observed consumption services (i.e. supervised consumption services and overdose prevention services) are evidence-based harm reduction approaches shown to reduce overdose-related harm, and there is not adequate access to observed consumption services that provide space for inhalation where communities are facing crisis:

Therefore be it resolved that to ensure that people at risk of overdose across BC have access to observed consumption services that provide space for inhalation, that the Province of British Columbia fund and work through local communities, Health Authorities across the Province, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the Ministry of Health to provide these services as part of a holistic response to the public-health emergency, including prevention, treatment, and recovery.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions**

Government is working diligently to support the healthcare needs of all British Columbians as the province finds itself in the midst of two public health emergencies – the overdose crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic -- and is committed to doing everything in its power to stem the tide of the overdose crisis including addressing harms associated with inhalation. The Ministry's Overdose Emergency Response Centre is responsible for spearheading urgent action through the implementation of a comprehensive package of interventions which includes the following essential health sector interventions: naloxone; overdose prevention and supervised consumption services; acute overdose risk case management; and treatment and recovery. The package also includes the following essential strategies for a supportive environment: social stabilization; peer empowerment and employment; cultural safety and humility; and addressing stigma, discrimination, and human rights.

There are 31 overdose prevention and supervised consumption service locations across the province, including several observed/supervised inhalation service locations offered in outdoor tents.

It is acknowledged that some modifications to overdose prevention and supervised consumption services have occurred to ensure service delivery is consistent with provincial health officer direction. However, ministry staff are working closely with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, Ministry of Health, BC Centre for Disease Control, regional health authorities, and people with lived and living experience to identify best practices for addressing the gaps in observed consumption services, including inhalation during COVID-19 and the pandemic recovery process.

### **B173 Limiting the Access and Appeal of Vape Products to Youth**

Whereas Health Canada has stated that they share the concerns of parents, educators, youth and public stakeholders regarding the increase of youth vaping in Canada;

And whereas Health Canada is currently undergoing a public consultation process to gather comments on additional regulatory measures that would aim to reduce youth use of vaping products;

And whereas the local governments have limited powers and jurisdiction to protect youth from access, sale and appeal of vape products, including no resources for enforcement;

Therefore be it resolved that FCM and UBCM be asked to call upon Health Canada and the provincial and territorial governments to move quickly to coordinate additional public policy and regulations to address access, sale and appeal of vape products to youth, and offer additional enforcement resources, to halt the growing usage of vape products among our youth as a matter of concern to local government and their communities.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

It is a priority of Government to work collaboratively to address the many activities that entice youth to vape. Vaping is a complex and rapidly evolving public health problem that requires collaboration from all levels of government, youth, public health officials, educators, parents, industry and regulators. The solution must effectively address the various avenues that youth are gaining access and are exposed to vapour products.

On November 14, 2019, the Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, on behalf of the Province of British Columbia (the Province), announced a comprehensive 10-point Action Plan to address the rising incidence of youth vaping. Through regulatory amendments, the Province will be restricting vapour product access, flavours, nicotine content, packaging and advertising. Regulatory changes will be supported by a youth-led anti-vaping social media campaign, designed to de-normalize vaping. The Province has already increased taxes on vapour products to protect youth from the harms and risks associated with vaping.

From December 17, 2019 to January 24, 2020, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) engaged with stakeholders and the general public on the proposed regulations through the Vapour Products Intentions Paper (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/vaping/laws>). The Ministry is currently considering stakeholder and public feedback in the finalization of the proposed regulatory measures.

The Provincial Government continues to collaborate with the Federal Government to identify additional measures that will address this issue.

**B181 Proposed Vacancy Tax**

Where as the City of Vancouver has authority through the Vancouver Charter to implement an Annual Vacancy Tax;

And whereas the City of White Rock is governed through the Community Charter where there is no current authority to implement a Vacancy Tax and it is believed that there are a number of vacant residential and commercial properties in the City of White Rock:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM work with the Province of British Columbia to amend the authority given to Local Governments through the Community Charter permitting municipalities the authority to impose, by bylaw, an annual vacancy tax on taxable residential properties, and that the criteria and administrative requirements be similar to those of the Vancouver Charter.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

One of the Province's top priorities is supporting our local governments to address housing affordability for British Columbians. The Province is committed to implementing policies to support this goal for both renters and buyers.

In 2016, the Empty Homes Tax authority was specifically developed for the City of Vancouver to apply to residential properties only. The design of the tax reflects Vancouver's unique legislation, needs, and resources, and the purposes for which it was seeking to impose a tax. A new tax authority must be usable by all local governments in B.C. This means that the Empty Homes Tax cannot easily be applied to the diversity of communities across B.C., with their differing needs and capacity.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is focused on observing Vancouver's experience with the Empty Homes Tax; that includes understanding adjustments they make to their rules and the outcome of legal challenges underway to that tax.

While the Province is not currently considering amendments enabling other local governments to tax vacant properties, whether residential or commercial, there are other tools that address housing affordability concerns. This includes the provincial speculation and vacancy tax on vacant residential properties in certain areas of B.C., such as White Rock. The provincial speculation and vacancy tax supports a similar goal as the Empty Homes Tax by encouraging owners of vacant properties to either rent or release those properties for sale. This revenue supports affordable housing initiatives across B.C.

### **B183 Rural Homelessness – Crown Land Encampments**

Whereas homelessness is a challenge facing both urban and rural communities;

And whereas electoral areas have the least ability to address homelessness, in that they are by their very nature remote from health, social, police and other services and the minimal tax bases cannot support the hard and soft infrastructure required to address homelessness;

And whereas the province's response to homeless encampments on Crown land has been inconsistent or ad-hoc in nature, sometimes relocating encampments without taking into account impacts on rural communities and regional district resources:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province work with local governments to develop policy to address rural homelessness, which is currently a gap in the Province's response to homelessness.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction**

Government is committed to supporting and addressing the needs of people experiencing homelessness - a shared responsibility of all orders of government. Effective actions to address homelessness require a coordinated effort in order to be successful.

Under TogetherBC, the Province's poverty reduction strategy, Government has established an ongoing monitoring and cross-ministry coordination role (including BC Housing) that assists in responding to encampments in both rural and urban areas. Government is committed to continue to address rural homelessness throughout the province.

Government has developed the Encampment Response Guidelines for Ministries to provide consistent information and best practices when encountering encampments, including those on Crown land.

To better support local governments and community partners, Government has also developed the draft Local Government Homeless Encampment Response Resource that provides guidance, best practices and key contacts and information on resources for people in encampments.

**B184 Creation of Office of the Renters Advocate**

Whereas the retention of residential tenancy is having a critical impact on the security and stability of residents, seniors and families throughout the province of British Columbia;

And whereas the retention of workers in all sectors of our local economy is visibly linked to shelter affordability;

And whereas previous provincial government policies or lack thereof are clearly a contributing factor to the current situation of rental sustainability and home ownership affordability;

And whereas many local governments struggling to address this crisis have limited resources or powers to be able to adequately develop sustainable solutions to this problem:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM seek support of the Provincial Government to create an Office of The Renters Advocate, to monitor and analyzes renters' services and issues in BC, and make recommendations to government and service providers to address systemic issues caused by rental shortages, renovictions, demovictions and housing affordability.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

The Province is committed to engaging with renters on issues of rental housing supply, evictions due to renovations or demolitions and housing affordability. In the spring of 2018, the Province established The Rental Housing Task Force to give British Columbians the opportunity to provide feedback, and to implement changes at the provincial level. The Task Force led a province-wide engagement throughout the spring and summer that involved 24 stakeholder meetings, 11 community meetings, and 1,431 comments received through the online forum. The Task Force final recommendations were approved by government and the full implementation of these initiatives is well underway.

The Province is committed to ongoing consultations with stakeholders and has recently engaged the Task Force chair to create and announce a COVID-19 action plan to support renters and rental housing providers during these unprecedented times. The Ministry is committed to ensuring renters have safe, and secure housing and will continue to monitor and improve renter services in B.C. The Province is not considering the establishment of an Office of The Renters Advocate at this time.

**B185 BC Housing Accountability**

Whereas the City of Grand Forks has been devastated by a recent flood and is challenged to protect and to rebuild its downtown core as a vibrant commercial area;

And whereas the basic principle of Community Charter is that municipalities and the Provincial government should foster cooperative approaches to matters of mutual interest;

And whereas BC Housing failed to consult Council about the location or size of supportive housing facilities before land was purchased and designs chosen:

Therefore be it resolved that BC Housing seek local government's approval before land is purchased for supportive housing initiatives.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

BC Housing is committed to work in a transparent and collaborative manner with all its partners including local governments. It is standard practice for BC Housing to work directly with local government staff and to be available to attend any in-camera meetings with the council (at their invitation) when discussing potential supportive housing projects in the community.

### **B186 Building Act – Innovation Commitment**

Whereas the Building Act includes a provincial commitment to innovation that supports local governments and other local authorities through the implementation of a provincial review process to evaluate innovative building proposals;

And whereas the continued complexity of building design, new products and expansion of the Codes have made it difficult for some communities to provide a level of consistency, interpretation and alternate solution reviews:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province outline and explain the review process to accept and evaluate innovative building proposals.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

Government is interested in supporting local authorities to effectively manage the evaluation and implementation of innovative building designs, materials, systems, and construction techniques. A key component of that support is the application process under section 7 of the *Building Act* which allows local authorities to submit a proposal for a variation from provincial building regulations, such as an innovative building design.

Local authorities interested in making an application for a provincial review can visit the Ministry's [Local Authority Variations](#) page to review related resources. Particularly, the [Guide to Requesting a Local Authority Variation](#) which explains the application and review process, along with the application form itself and contact information for any inquiries can be found there. The Ministry will continue to seek opportunities to add to and improve these online resources and profile their availability.

Government also continues to pursue and explore partnerships with developers and local authorities to implement innovative solutions. Examples include the Wood Innovation and Design Centre in Prince George and the 18-storey UBC Tall Wood Building in the Lower Mainland, both of which achieved the necessary level of performance outside of the normal scope of the BC Building Code. To allow this and other new characteristics, the Province developed special site-specific building regulations under the Building Act to permit construction.

### **B187 Proactive Development of Building Officials**

Whereas the Government of British Columbia passed the new Building Act in 2015 and mandatory certification requirements for Building Officials come into effect in March 2021;

And whereas the Act requires that a Level 3 certification will be required for Building Officials for the review and permitting of all complex projects;

And whereas the Building Officials Association of British Columbia (BOABC) certification exams have an average 41 per cent failure rate due to the complexity of all certification exams and Level 3 takes a minimum of 4 years to obtain;

And whereas there is already a shortage of qualified Building Officials:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province be requested to work with Building Officials Association of British Columbia (BOABC) to ensure that enough Building Officials are certified and more candidates are attracted to the profession to meet the requirements of the Building Act, effective March 2021.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

Government is actively supporting the transition towards mandatory qualification for building officials by February 28, 2021.

Ministry staff are continuing to work with BOABC and other partners to communicate the new requirements, develop and deliver accessible training modules to support exam readiness, and create new classes of building officials in recognition of the need for greater flexibility, particularly in smaller communities.

Work to date has included creating a formal learn-on-the-job program and supplementary training opportunities to improve onboarding and skills progression for new and existing building officials as they advance their qualifications. BOABC has also begun to move training courses and qualification exams online to improve access for all members. Further, two new classes have been introduced to add flexibility for local governments in terms of who can do the more complex projects. For example, instead of using Level 3 Building Officials or registered architects or engineers, members of the new 'Level 2 - Professional Reliance' Building Officials class will be able to permit complex projects by accepting Letters of Assurance. These new classes have been advertised publicly through the Ministry website, through the BOABC mailing list and website, and at numerous conferences for local government representatives.

The Ministry notes that BOABC in their 2018-19 Annual Report that of all of those who took the qualification examinations during that reporting period, 67 percent of them passed (averaged for all exams).



**B189 Inspection of Rooming Houses By Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction**

Whereas landlords may open rooming houses and accommodate low income individuals; And whereas landlords may take advantage of the vulnerable individuals they house:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province work with local governments to create policy and an inspection process to ensure the integrity of the rooming houses.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

The Ministry is committed to preserving safe and secure low-income housing for vulnerable British Columbians and recognizes the importance of maintaining legal health and safety standards in these dwellings.

The Ministry supports the efforts of municipal governments in B.C. to establish and enforce standards of maintenance by-laws in their respective jurisdictions. Under the Community Charter, municipalities may establish and enforce the inspections of existing rental housing units and establish fines where appropriate. The Provincial Residential Tenancy Act and the BC Building Code complement this work by establishing legal obligations of landlords and tenants to maintain rental properties and establishing health and safety standards for newly constructed buildings.

The Ministry is supportive of working with the Ministries of Health and Social Development and Poverty Reduction to work in partnership with local governments to complement their existing work with respect to maintaining the integrity of rooming houses in the province.

**B191 Effects of New Ammonia Regulations**

Whereas new regulations introduced for ammonia safety have resulted in significant operating cost increases, and increased staff certifications required for operating arenas;

And whereas communities in the Central and Northern regions of the province have limited financial and human resources, and difficulty accessing the costly training required to meet these new staffing regulations:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of BC work with post-secondary institutions and other providers to increase the availability of technical certificates and programs to address this critical trade shortage, and that additional funding for, or creation of new programs, such as apprenticeship programs in affected communities, be funded to allow arena staff to access training that is currently cost prohibitive and mostly only available in the Lower Mainland.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training**

The Provincial Government supports local governments in their goal of ensuring winter recreational facilities, such as ice rinks and curling rinks, are safe for public use. This includes increasing certification requirements for any person operating an ammonia refrigeration system and the implementation of an equipment integrity management program to ensure ammonia refrigeration plant equipment will function properly throughout its lifespan.

Technical certification for any person operating an ammonia refrigeration system is administered through Technical Safety British Columbia (TSBC). Currently, regulations do not require a worker to have refrigeration and mechanical certification administered through the ITA. Training to prepare for the TSBC certification exam is available at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), through a distance learning course. Certification exams can be written at TSBC offices across the province, including locations in Prince George and Fort St. John.

Through consultations with Industry, the Provincial Government may determine that additional training programs are required to address labour shortages in this area. For additional information, please contact TSBC.

### **B193.1 Request for First Nations Participation on Commissions**

Whereas the Village of Pemberton, in partnership with the regional district, other local governments, and First Nations in the Sea to Sky area are working collaboratively to develop a regional transit commission to establish a regional transit system to connect Mt. Currie to Metro Vancouver;

And whereas the current provincial transit commission model does not allow for representation from First Nations which does not allow for an equal representation or an equitable decision making platform process:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of British Columbia work with First Nations and local governments to amend the legislation respecting representation on transit commissions to enable inclusion of First Nations.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

The Province agrees that it is important that First Nations are involved in decisions affecting transportation to and from their communities. In the current letter of expectation to BC Transit, the Ministry has directed BC Transit to work with Indigenous communities to identify transit service needs and opportunities. In addition, Ministry staff are exploring this matter from a policy and legislative perspective.

The role of a regional transit commission is to represent the regional transit service area in transit planning and budgeting and to raise revenue to cover its share of the transit costs. One of the reasons that a region may wish to form a regional transit commission is to levy a regional property tax (and set the property tax rates) specifically to fund transit service.

The current regional transit commission model is set out under the *British Columbia Transit Act*. Members of a regional transit commission are appointed by Cabinet from among persons holding elected office on a municipal council or regional district board.

Under current legislation, regional transit commissions can only raise their share of funding, net of transit system revenue, through property taxes, motor fuel taxes or both. Any change to the commission model would have implications for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission and potential future transit commissions.

Several First Nations in the BC Transit service area are currently participating in transit decisions and funding through Community Partnership Agreements, such as between Witset First Nation and the Town of Smithers, or Village of Pemberton and Lil'wat Nation. There are also a number of First Nations in the Fraser Valley that work with the Regional District.

## **B195 Implementation Funding for Federal Task Force on School Bus Safety Requirements**

Whereas Transport Canada has amended the Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations by:

- Telling manufacturers how to properly install lap-shoulder seat belts on school buses, if an operator request that they do so;
- Not allowing manufacturers to install lap-only seat belts; and
- Improving compartmentalization for larger students by raising the minimum seat back height

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure be asked to fully fund the implementation of these and any changes proposed by the Federal Minister of Transportation's Task Force on School Bus Safety so that school districts can fully comply with the requirements.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Education**

Three-point seatbelt installation on school buses is not mandatory at any level (Federal, Provincial, Territorial). It is an option that school bus owners and operators (school districts) can add to new buses if they wish. Any such installation must comply with Transport Canada's technical standard for school bus seatbelt installation "Guidelines for the Use of Seatbelts on School Buses" (published July 2018).

The Ministry of Education's Bus Acquisition Program provides a \$10K options allowance per bus when providing bus funding to school districts, which they can use for things like seatbelts, snow chains for tires, air-conditioning, GPS systems, etc.

There are two school districts in the Province (SD68 and SD78) that have begun adding three-point seatbelts to their new buses over the past couple of years. Retrofitting existing buses with seatbelts nullifies the manufacturers warranty because most existing buses do not have the structural integrity to have this type of retrofitting completed.

Transport Canada is also partnering with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Education in launching a pilot project introducing seatbelts in some school buses in the Province. The pilot project involves a limited number of new school buses equipped with three-point seatbelts that follow the latest federal standards. The safety of Canada's road users is priority for all levels of government, and that starts with the safe transportation of school children.

**B198 More Small Aircraft Pilot Training Needed**

Whereas small aircraft flights serve rural and northern airports in areas that depend on the economic and socio-economic benefits that air travel provides;

And whereas a significant percentage of trained pilots are retiring, and many small aircraft pilots are now being hired to fly bigger aircraft serving large urban areas;

And whereas flights into small rural and northern airports are at risk of being discontinued due to a lack of trained small aircraft pilots:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to lobby for more small aircraft training opportunities in rural and northern post secondary institutions.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

Aviation falls under Federal jurisdiction. The Ministry has brought the issues of pilot shortages and the lack of pilot training schools and access to Federal Student Loans to the attention of the Federal government on numerous occasions.

The Ministry also chairs a Cross-Ministry Aviation Working Group which includes staff from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training (AEST) which would have the provincial lead on skills training. AEST is also aware of these issues and has communicated them to the Federal government.

AEST has previously funded two projects with the Aerospace Industry Association of Canada related to these issues:

- 2016 – An engagement project to establish a steering committee to address labour market issues in BC's aviation sector.
- 2017/18 – A labour market research project to collect data on labour market conditions, and identified challenges faced by the sector in BC including the high cost and limited availability of pilot training.

The Ministry will work with our colleagues at the Ministry of Education and AEST to encourage more small aircraft training opportunities in rural and northern post-secondary institutions. Pilot training hours are regulated under strict legislation that ensures pilots acquire both the knowledge and experience necessary to fly the public in a safe manner – while the Ministry is aware of pilot shortages, limiting training hours is not something we would be comfortable with recommending to the Federal government.

### **B199 Environmental Education Curriculum**

Whereas the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) SPECIAL REPORT: GLOBAL WARMING OF 1.5 °C states that heating of the planet must be contained to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels to avoid catastrophic weather events, mass species extinction and irreparable damage to global economies;

And whereas many local governments in BC, across Canada and around the world have declared a Climate Emergency in part due to students striking from classes to raise awareness about the seriousness of the issue and the threat to their future;

And whereas students in K-12 have the right to be taught about the current science, changing impacts of the global climate heating up and the ecological breakdown of the planet to better prepare themselves for their future:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the BC Provincial Ministry of Education to implement environmental education with the most current scientific data and projections on global climate heating and carbon emissions in the atmosphere as well as the ecological breakdown of the planet into the curriculum of K-12 in all BC schools.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Education**

The Ministry of Education concurs that B.C. students in the K-12 education system should learn about all aspects of global climate change, and this is reflected in the B.C. curriculum.

The B.C. science curriculum has a strong emphasis on environmental science and includes topics related to the environment from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Examples include:

- Experience and interpret the local environment (K-10)
- Consider some environmental consequences of their actions (Grades 1-2)
- Identify some simple environmental implications of their and others' actions (Grades 3-4)
- Explore the nature of sustainable practices around BC's resources (Grade 5)
- Identify some of the social, ethical, and environmental implications of the findings from their own and others' investigations (Grades 5-6)
- Investigate evidence of climate change over geological time and the recent impacts of humans (Grade 7)
- Consider social, ethical, and environmental implications of the findings from a student's own investigations and those of others (Grades 7-10)
- Explore the sustainability of different natural systems (Grade 9)
- Assess risks and address ethical, cultural, and/or environmental issues associated with proposed experimental methods (Grades 9-10)

Specific courses related to climate change are also available in Grades 11 and 12. Environmental Science 11 focuses on concepts like "diversity of ecosystems," "sustainability of ecosystems," and "stewardship and restoration of ecosystems." Environmental Science 12 focuses on topics including "changes in the global climate system," "sustainable land use," and "living sustainably."

In addition, Core Competencies, such as social responsibility, are at the center of B.C.'s curriculum and involve concepts such as "contributing to community and caring for the environment." Students learn to analyze complex social or environmental issues from multiple perspectives and take

thoughtful actions to influence positive change. Information regarding the Core Competencies can be found online at <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies>.

**B200 Increase Investment in BC Parks Boat Launches**

Whereas outdoor recreation on rivers and lakes is important to the lifestyles of residents in the North; And whereas boat launches operated by BC Parks are vitally important outdoor recreation amenities;

And whereas the Province of British Columbia spends roughly \$2.80 per hectare on BC Parks, while the Province of Alberta spends approximately \$36 per hectare, making it difficult to adequately repair and maintain BC Parks boat launches:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of British Columbia increase their investment into the repair and maintenance of BC Parks' boat launches in the province.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy**

The Province is interested in supporting local governments seeking to improve their local communities. BC Parks strives to provide an excellent user experience across the province and recognizes the value of outdoor recreation in Northern B.C., including marine recreation.

All facility investment decisions, including those involving boat launches, must be assessed against the critical needs of all parks throughout the province.

Work to date includes investment of over \$1 million in capital expenditures on boat launches in Northern B.C. (Omineca, Peace and Skeena areas). This amount is in addition to routine operational maintenance spending. BC Parks manages five times more area than Alberta Parks and therefore a comparison of investment per hectare may not be appropriate.



**B201 Health Authority Asset Management Plans**

Whereas accurate planning for our future healthcare needs is critical and the Ministry of Health is fiscally responsible to all British Columbians:

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Health undertake asset management plans for all of the health authorities in the province.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

Capital asset management planning is the process of identifying current and future capital needs and developing strategies and projects to address those needs. The Province of B.C. uses a consolidated capital planning process where public-sector agencies' (provincial ministries, health authorities, school districts, post-secondary institutions, Crown corporations) capital plans are consolidated into a single plan to support effective financial and risk management.

As part of this process, health authorities develop multi-year capital asset management plans (also referred to as capital plans) that flow from their health service plans.

The Ministry reviews proposed capital plans and priorities from each health authority to verify their consistency with government's strategic direction and key capital principles. The Ministry consolidates capital plans submitted by health authorities and incorporates their priorities and strategies into a provincial health sector capital plan considering provincial budget instructions and available funding.

The ultimate purpose of health capital planning and all capital projects is to meet and support health service delivery needs on an ongoing and proactive basis.

## **B205 Gas Prices**

Whereas the Province of British Columbia has the highest retail fuel prices in Canada;

And whereas the entire Okanagan and Shuswap region depends on the tourism industry to support our businesses and local economies;

And whereas the District of Sicamous has researched the cost of fuel across Canada, finding when combined, the excise taxes (\$0.10 per litre), the provincial taxes (\$0.13-\$0.15 per litre), and the carbon taxes (\$0.0778 per litre and \$0.0673 per litre respectively), the difference between BC and Alberta is ONLY approx. \$0.025/litre;

And whereas at the pump the average retail fuel cost in BC is \$1.24/litre. The average retail fuel cost in Alberta is \$0.94/litre. That's a difference of \$0.30/litre:

Therefore be it resolved that in the interests of full transparency UBCM petition the Province to require public disclosure of all taxes included in fuel costs on a regular basis, including Vancouver and Victoria.

### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance**

Government publicly discloses fuel taxes in a variety of formats.

The statutes that impose fuel taxes—the Carbon Tax Act and the Motor Fuel Tax Act—provide the fuel tax rates and are publicly available at [bclaws.ca](http://bclaws.ca).

A simple-to-understand tax bulletin called Tax Rates on Fuels is available from the Ministry of Finance website at [gov.bc.ca/salestaxes](http://gov.bc.ca/salestaxes). This bulletin shows how taxes apply to different types of fuels and how taxes differ between locations in B.C.

The Budget and Fiscal Plan, available at [bcbudget.gov.bc.ca](http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca), provides analysis of B.C.'s fuel taxes. Table A2 includes comparison of B.C.'s gasoline and diesel tax rates with those of the other provinces. Table A3 provides an interprovincial analysis of taxes, including fuel taxes paid by individuals and families at different income levels. Table A4.1 shows that since Budget 2016, net fuel taxes have remained constant for families at all income levels.

## **B207 Support of Indigenous Court System**

Whereas the rate of Indigenous men and women in the Canadian federal and provincial criminal incarceration systems is disproportionately high;

And whereas 3 per cent of the population identify as Indigenous and the Indigenous population in our prison system is 27 per cent men and an alarming 38 per cent women;

And whereas cultural and spiritual reconnection is facilitated through the guidance of Indigenous Elders and families and the Indigenous Court:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM and FCM lobby the Canadian federal and provincial governments to fund and expand the Indigenous Court System.

## **RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General**

Government is interested in supporting the implementation and expansion of Indigenous Courts, which are problem solving courts within the British Columbia court system. Their overarching goal is ensuring a holistic, culturally appropriate approach to Indigenous offenders and finding solutions, other than incarceration, to the underlying criminal behaviour.

Each Indigenous Court is developed to meet the unique needs of the host community. They are developed in consultation with local service providers, prosecution, the judiciary and the Province.

These specialized sentencing courts recognize the unique circumstance of Indigenous offenders. They balance the rigor and legal requirements of the traditional court system with Indigenous ways. In Indigenous Court, the offender, judge, lawyers, Elders (Knowledge Keepers) and others may be observed sitting in a circle around the table. Participants hear about the unique circumstances and background of that offender. Participants discuss the offending behaviour and its impacts, while working collaboratively to develop a Healing Plan. This assists in offender rehabilitation and seeks to acknowledge and repair the harm done to victims and the community.

A Healing Plan can include both traditional and non-traditional, culturally relevant, elements of sentencing, such as attending sweat lodges, meetings with Elders, or reconnecting with the community. A Healing Plan can be incorporated in the Judge's sentence as part of the probation order.

In some instances, Indigenous Courts also create space for victim participation in the process. Indigenous Courts generally adopt a restorative justice approach to sentencing, preferring a non-adversarial and non-retributive approach to justice that focuses on healing, holding the offender accountable, reducing recidivism, and reintegrating the offender into the community to achieve better justice outcomes.

Indigenous Courts currently operate in six British Columbia communities – New Westminster, Duncan, Kamloops, North Vancouver, Merritt and Prince George. Williams Lake will be the host of British Columbia's seventh Indigenous Court.

#### **LR4 Implementation of Recommendations from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

Whereas there is a responsibility by all to redress the systemic racism and to eliminate the gendered colonial violence perpetrated against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual (2SLGBTQIA) people within Canada;

And whereas the June 3, 2019 final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (the National Inquiry) found that Indigenous women are twelve times more likely to be murdered or to go missing than members of any other demographic group in Canada, and included 231 Calls for Justice, which “represent important ways to end the genocide and to transform systemic and societal values that have worked to maintain colonial violence.”:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on all local governments to bring the recommendations (Calls for Justice) from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls back to their respective councils or boards for review, prioritization and consideration of endorsement in collaboration with local Indigenous communities;

And be it further resolved that UBCM support the call upon federal, provincial, regional, municipal, and Indigenous governments in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to develop and implement a National Action Plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people.

#### **RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General**

The Province of B.C. is committed to responding to the Calls for Justice in the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

We know that addressing the systemic causes of violence will require meaningful collaboration across all jurisdictions and orders of government and appreciate UBCM’s commitment to work with all partners to implement the Calls for Justice, including the development of a National Action Plan.

The Province is currently reviewing a number of priorities identified through Indigenous-led, community-based engagement with family members, survivors and those with lived experience. We look forward to sharing this information with local governments and collaborating on a meaningful response.