



PROVINCIAL RESPONSE

**to the Resolutions of the 2020
Union of British Columbia Municipalities**

March 2021

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SR1 New Emergency Management Legislation

Whereas the provincial government is in the process of modernizing its emergency management legislation, with many proposed changes-such as new mitigation and recovery duties-are likely to create financial and resource pressures for local governments;

And whereas Emergency Management BC has acknowledged the need to support local governments in responding to these proposed changes, but has yet to outline any specific support mechanisms:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government, as part of the process to modernize BC's emergency management legislation, implement the following measures:

- Develop an ongoing sustainable funding framework for local governments to address emergency management responsibilities;
- Confirm adequate provincial support services for local governments to address emergency management capacity issues; and
- Consult with UBCM and local governments in the development of these and other necessary measures to address challenges resulting from new emergency management legislation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) has been working closely with the UBCM Flood and Wildfire Advisory Committee since mid-2019 on modernization of the Emergency Program Act (EPA). UBCM and several individual local governments provided responses to the October 2019 Discussion Paper on Modernizing B.C.'s Emergency Management Legislation. EMBC recognizes that while UBCM and individual local governments support the need to modernize B.C.'s emergency management legislation, their top concern is sufficient funding and capacity to meet the new obligations that will be created under the new legislation.

The Province is committed to addressing these challenges in a measured and thoughtful way that respects the fiscal framework.

The Province has committed that the new legislation will be implemented in phases. This is partly to ensure that regulated entities, including local governments, are able to meet the new requirements imposed on them by the new Act.

The Province is committed to ongoing engagement with partners and stakeholders, including UBCM and local governments, as the legislative development process continues and throughout implementation.

SR2 Cannabis Taxation Revenue Sharing

Whereas BC local governments have yet to receive a share of provincial cannabis taxation revenue, despite the federal government's decision to increase the provincial share of cannabis excise tax revenue by 25 per cent in recognition of the costs and responsibilities assumed by local governments;

And whereas the provincial government continues to decline UBCM's requests to negotiate a cannabis taxation revenue sharing agreement, notwithstanding the growing body of evidence and local government support for an agreement, including but not limited to:

- consistent requests for revenue sharing, with UBCM members endorsing resolutions on this topic each year for the past four years;
- development of short- and long-term options for revenue sharing, as endorsed by the UBCM membership and presented to the Minister of Finance on multiple occasions; and
- findings from UBCM's 2019 cannabis cost survey, indicating substantial one-time and ongoing incremental costs incurred by local governments, associated with the legalization of non-medical cannabis:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government commit to negotiating a cannabis taxation revenue sharing agreement with local governments that honours the intent of the federal excise tax revenue sharing scheme and addresses local government short- and long-term costs associated with the legalization of non-medical cannabis.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Province values its partnerships with UBCM and local governments. While cannabis revenue is growing modestly, initial targets for sales have yet to be realized while the costs of establishing the provincial regulation framework remain. The Province will continue to work with and listen to local governments about the cost pressures of legalization and will continue to be transparent with the public and our local government partners, as the industry grows and more legal stores open. Ministry staff are continuing discussions with the UBCM about revenue sharing and issues related to cannabis legalization.

SR3 Local Government Election Financing

Whereas the Local Elections Campaign Financing Act (LECFA) only applies to elector organizations and candidates during an election year for the specific purpose of campaigning;

And whereas, third-party advertising sponsors are only required to include sponsorship information on election advertising in the last 28 days leading up to General Voting Day;

And whereas in order to ensure fairness in the local government election process:

- all financial transactions, both during a campaign and outside of campaign periods, should be reported; and
- there should be full and transparent reporting of financial contributions to elector organizations and candidates, including reporting by third party entities that engage in significant campaign activities in support of candidates or endorsed candidates:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province amend LECFA to:

- require all elector organizations, as defined under the Local Government Act to register with Elections BC, similar to how provincial political parties are registered with Elections BC;
- require real time disclosure of in-kind support and financial contributions made to local government election candidates in election years, as well as to sitting elected officials in non-election years;
- apply contributor and contribution limits to operating accounts of elector organizations and candidates for operational purposes at all times, and to require that annual disclosure reports of contributions received in operating bank accounts, in election years and non-election years; and
- establish a pre-campaign period during which time all election advertising must include sponsorship information.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The 2018 general local elections were the first elections in which the full suite of campaign financing rules applied under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* (LECFA). Amendments in 2016 and 2017 established expense limits for candidates and elector organizations and spending limits for third party advertising sponsors, a ban on out-of-province contributions and contributions made by organizations, and limits for campaign contributions provided to candidates and elector organizations.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs monitored the 2018 general local elections to observe any issues or concerns with the application of the campaign financing laws in LECFA.

In addition to these observations, there were numerous other inputs, including: the changes requested through this resolution; the experiences of local governments; and the observations of partner organizations such as Elections BC -- which is responsible for administering the campaign financing rules under LECFA and completed a report on its experiences with the 2018 general local elections.

All of these inputs were considered in preparing the amendments to LECFA in Bill 9, Local Elections Statutes Amendment Act, 2021, that passed third reading on March 11, 2021.

The amendments in Bill 9 address most of the changes requested in this resolution. Elector organizations will be required to register with Elections BC and file annual financial reports. Registration is required before an elector organization can accept campaign contributions, incur election expenses, enter into a campaign financing arrangement or endorse a candidate. Registration and reporting requirements for elector organizations will be similar to those for political parties under the Election Act.

Further to the registration and reporting requirements, elector organizations will be prohibited from accepting contributions for operational or administrative expenses. These expenses will now need to be paid from a campaign account of an elector organization, with campaign contributions. This will remove the ability of organizations, such as corporations and unions, from contributing to elector organizations to pay for expenses in non-election years.

The amendments will also establish a 60-day pre-campaign period during which time election advertising must include information identifying the sponsor of the advertising. This change will align LECFA with the Election Act and ensure the transparency and accountability of any advertising done during the 60 days before the start of the campaign period.

The addition of these new rules is accompanied by new investigative tools for Elections BC and administrative monetary penalties for contraventions of LECFA. The new investigative tools will support Elections BC in investigating potential non-compliance with LECFA and the new monetary penalties will provide Elections BC with more options when taking compliance actions under LECFA.

With the diverse nature of local elections in B.C., campaign financing rules need to be established that could apply universally across all local governments in the province. Real-time disclosure of campaign contributions made to sitting elected officials, as well as candidates for local elections, is not contained in the package of amendments in Bill 9. There are many practical and administrative challenges with implementing real-time disclosure in local elections due to the number of candidates who participate and the diversity of the local bodies and communities where local elections are held. However, all contributions and expenses from non-election years must be reported alongside campaign contribution and expense reports.

The amendments to LECFA in Bill 9 reflect the Province's commitment to continue to seek to balance the key principles of the local elections campaign financing framework, as identified by the Local Elections Task Force in their 2010 report. These include ensuring that the campaign financing framework continues to support, among other things, the transparency, accountability, and accessibility of local elections in B.C. We look forward to continuing to work with Elections BC, UBCM and all partners in strengthening the local elections campaign financing framework.

SR5 Recovery Through Infrastructure Stimulus Funding

Whereas communities have incurred, and continue to incur, significant losses due to the costs of responding to the pandemic including lost revenue and job losses;

And whereas the provincial government is shifting its focus from restarting the province to recovery from the pandemic, including an allocation of \$1.5 billion for an Economic Recovery Fund;

And whereas infrastructure funding has historically generated significant economic returns for local communities, through increased employment, the flow through of dollars to local businesses, and the creation of community assets:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call for an infrastructure stimulus framework from the Province which maximizes local government choice and flexibility in ensuring funds are invested in the areas with the greatest need and economic return;

And be it further resolved that such an infrastructure stimulus framework includes:

- Flexibility on project category, eligible costs, procurement and timelines;
- Provides 100 percent funding for any recovery program and/or current infrastructure program;
- Supports shovel worthy projects over shovel ready projects and removes existing federal stacking rules; and
- Employs the current Gas Tax funding model.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

As part of the Province's StrongerBC Economic Recovery the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (Ministry) has developed a number of recovery mechanisms for local governments.

The Canada BC COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments is providing \$270 million from the Province towards a federal/provincial combined total of \$540 million. The funding will be delivered in three streams:

- \$425 million for Local Governments (direct formula-based funding);
- \$100 million for Strengthening Communities by addressing needs of vulnerable populations and community safety; and,
- \$15 million for Development Services.

The objective of this federal/provincial funding is to inject liquidity into the local government system to help them address operational cost pressures caused by COVID-19 impacts. Formula-based funding was distributed to local governments in November 2020 and the application-based funding launched in early 2021.

Throughout the recovery period, the Ministry will continue to support local government infrastructure projects through the existing funding streams available under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). ICIP, as a 10-year agreement, will provide continued infrastructure funding that will support projects through medium- and long-term economic recovery windows.

In addition, two new short-term infrastructure programs have been delivered to support recovery-focused projects. First there is the multi-Ministry program, Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP), that will support \$90 million in community infrastructure grants. Secondly, there is the joint federal-provincial ICIP – COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream with a combined \$136 million in funding. These programs will offer 100% infrastructure grants for projects over a wide range of categories including tourism and heritage infrastructure, community resilience, retrofits, repairs and upgrades to public buildings, active transportation and disaster mitigation.

The Ministry will continue to stay engaged with UBCM on the available infrastructure funding programs and local government infrastructure needs.

SR6 Broadband Internet

Whereas the 2019 BC Connectivity Report - produced by KPMG for the Northern Development Initiative Trust to assess broadband Internet connectivity available to rural and Indigenous communities in BC - identified significant challenges with both access and affordability, challenges which have become glaring in the current pandemic and economic recovery environment;

And whereas existing provincial funding focuses on completion of last-mile local network infrastructure or new, upgraded, or expanded backbone infrastructure; and federal government funding programs in development seem to focus on backbone infrastructure without requiring the completion of last-mile local networks; while none of the funding programs address the issue of existing, dormant backbone and last-mile infrastructure that either lacks an Internet service provider to make use of it, or is owned by an existing Internet service provider that declines to activate and use it:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial and federal governments, in their efforts to make broadband Internet access universally available, to implement measures to address access and affordability challenges particularly in rural and remote areas;

And be it further resolved that provincial and federal government funding programs for universal broadband Internet should - in addition to requiring Internet service providers to complete installation, upgrading, or expansion of both backbone and last-mile network infrastructure - require Internet service providers or the owners of network infrastructure to activate and make use of existing, dormant network infrastructure to help achieve universal broadband Internet access.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services

Working to connect all people in British Columbia is a priority for the provincial government. People depend on high-speed internet access to learn, do business, access services and stay in touch with loved ones; it can also help to diversify and grow local economies. That is why the provincial government is working with all orders of government and internet service providers to advance reliable connectivity to more communities and business than ever before.

Telecommunications is federally regulated by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). In December 2019, the CRTC issued a Call for comments regarding potential barriers to the deployment of broadband-capable networks in underserved areas in Canada inviting interested parties to identify potential barriers and/or regulatory solutions to extend networks into underserved areas. Pursuant to the Telecommunications Act, the CRTC is requesting information from owners of dark fibre (i.e., dormant fibre) and its availability for the purpose of providing universal internet access. Additionally, the CRTC is also asking owners of dark fibre to indicate the terms under which dark fibre could be made available for third-party access. Municipalities and regional districts are encouraged to monitor this proceeding and to write to the CRTC and express their views.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented situation and highlighted the critical need for connectivity for all British Columbians to help connect them to work, school, government resources and stay in touch with family and friends. As part of StrongerBC, BC's Economic Recovery Plan, the BC government has provided \$90-million to the Connecting British Columbia program for connectivity

expansion throughout the province. The funding is in addition to the \$50-million 2019 expansion of the Connecting British Columbia program. The provincial government also monitors and participates as an intervenor in various proceedings issued by the national regulator, the CRTC.

SR7 Local Economic Recovery in Response to the Pandemic

Whereas recovery from COVID-19 will require international, federal, provincial, local and First Nations governments to work collaboratively to address the devastating health, safety, social and economic impacts;

And whereas UBCM serves as the collective voice and advocacy body for BC local governments, which are:

- recognized as orders of government under s. 1 of the Community Charter;
- continuing to incur significant revenue losses as a result of deferred property taxes, reduced tourism, lost transit fares, casinos revenues, as well as recreation and other user fees; and
- closest to the citizens of BC and best able to determine the needs of their residents, small businesses and non-profit organizations:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province work collaboratively with UBCM to identify the health, safety, social and economic challenges facing BC communities and provide corresponding financial support that will aid local governments in the Province's overall COVID-19 recovery effort.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Ministry of Finance

COVID-19 continues to cause significant and unprecedented challenges to all orders of government and to First Nation communities across the country. The Province recognizes the unique impacts that the pandemic has had on sources of revenue upon which local governments rely in order to provide essential services to their residents and to maintain healthy and vibrant communities. Continued cooperation and collaboration between the Province and local governments will be critical to addressing the health, safety, social and economic challenges facing communities created by the pandemic.

The Province has taken a number of steps to begin addressing these challenges. In the early stages of the pandemic, the Province responded with a suite of short-term financial measures to address cash flow needs of local governments. Then, on September 17, 2020, the Premier and the Minister of Finance announced BC's Economic Recovery Plan. The plan includes nearly \$2 billion in joint Federal/Provincial spending to support strong communities by investing over \$400 million to revitalize community infrastructure and to ensure local governments can continue to provide essential services, providing \$540 million in combined federal/provincial funding to B.C. communities as well as over \$1 billion in provincial and federal investments for transit, TransLink and ferries.

The \$540 million in support for local governments has been divided into three funding streams, the largest of which, the "Covid-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments" has already provided \$425 million for local operations impacted by COVID-19. The direct grants to local governments will assist with things such as facility reopening and operating costs, emergency planning and response costs, bylaw enforcement and protective costs and services for vulnerable persons. The adjusted per-capita formula used to directly allocate the funding ensures that funding will support local governments of all sizes across BC. Additionally, programs have been launched for the \$15 million for Development Services, to

ensure development approval processes continue smoothly in the COVID-19 pandemic, and for the \$100 million for Strengthening Communities so that local governments can better address the needs of vulnerable populations and community safety. Engagement and cooperation with local governments has been critical in developing and administering these funding streams.

The Province has an ongoing commitment to consult with local governments, both formally and informally, on matters that specifically affect them. Consultation is enshrined as a legislative principle as part of the Province recognizing local governments as an order of government. The challenges presented by the pandemic have highlighted the importance of this principle. Cooperation among all orders of government has been critical in supporting local governments to date throughout the pandemic. The Province remains committed to the important principle of consultation and will continue to act on it appropriately as we continue our recovery efforts to help build a stronger, more resilient economy for everyone.

SR9 Multi-Residential Insurance Rates

Whereas over the past year stratas and non-profit housing providers have experienced substantial increases to insurance premiums and/or found it difficult to secure an insurer for their buildings;

And whereas multi-residential housing constitutes a large portion of British Columbia's housing stock;

And whereas the BC Financial Services Authority's "BC Strata Property Insurance Market - Interim Findings" report identifies several "fundamental issues" straining the strata insurance market that are not addressed in the Province's proposed amendments to the Strata Property Act and Financial Institutions Act, including a lack of capacity in the strata insurance market to support future expected demand:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province to take further evidence-based actions to address rapidly increasing insurance costs for multi-residential housing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The *Strata Property Act* (SPA) requires strata property corporations to have and maintain insurance on common property, common assets and buildings shown on the strata plan. The Ministry of Attorney General and Ministry Responsible for Housing is responsible for the SPA. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the *Financial Institutions Act* (FIA), which provides the regulatory framework for insurance companies.

The regulation of the insurance sector largely focuses on prudential regulation of insurance companies and market conduct of insurance companies and insurance agents and brokers.

Insurance companies themselves determine the availability and cost of insurance, based on careful analysis to anticipate the expected frequency and severity of future claims. Insurers must price insurance at a level that allows for the sustainability of their businesses.

There are a number of factors that are contributing to the current market conditions for strata insurance, including a high number of claims, aging infrastructure, the departure of an insurer from the B.C. market, as well as global issues such as climate change.

Large scale disasters have also led to greater claims worldwide, causing reinsurance rates to increase, which is ultimately passed down to consumers.

In August 2020, the Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2), 2020 (Bill 14) received Royal Assent, making a number of changes to the FIA and the SPA in order to begin to address the issue. Legislative amendments were largely related to reducing risk and increasing capacity for insurers.

Further changes to the regulations under the FIA were also made, to ensure strata property owners are provided better disclosure from insurance companies and brokers.

As well, in early 2020 government directed the BC Financial Services Authority (BCFSA) to conduct an in-depth review of the issue. An interim report issued in June 2020 concluded that the causes of price increases were complex and that the strata insurance market was unhealthy. The BCFSA has released their final report to help determine if there are other measures that can be taken to improve the situation for strata owners and strata corporations. The final report can be found online at: <https://www.bcfsa.ca/pdf/publications/StrataInsuranceMediaRelease.pdf>.

The BCFSA also recently announced that insurers have agreed to eliminate the practice of best terms pricing in the strata insurance market which may help to curb rising strata insurance costs. Additional information can be found online at: <https://www.bcfsa.ca/pdf/news/MediaRelease20200112.pdf>.

Ministry of Finance staff, along with staff from the Ministry of Attorney General and Ministry Responsible for Housing, are looking to the BCFSA's final report to determine whether additional legislative/regulatory options or other types of policy options are appropriate, as part of an evidence-based approach to addressing this complex issue.

SR10 Minimal Barrier Shelter Standards

Whereas in 2017 service providers were mandated by BC Housing to operate all shelters as minimal barrier (aka low barrier);

And whereas this is a deterrent to accessing shelters for those individuals who are trying to maintain a clean and sober lifestyle, or for women and children fleeing violence, as they are forced to share shelter space with individuals dealing with active addictions under this policy:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to direct BC Housing to ensure that its policies support adequate shelter space throughout the province for those individuals needing to be sheltered in a safe, clean and sober environment.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

The Province takes a Housing First approach to preventing and responding to homelessness, which means providing people with safe and secure shelter first so they can then access the supports and services they need to move forward in their lives. This approach includes providing the necessary range of immediate shelter and housing supports to protect the most-vulnerable people in communities across the Province – including people with substance use and mental health issues and women and children fleeing violence.

Minimal and low-barrier shelters are a key provision to protecting the most-vulnerable people in the spectrum of housing and shelter need – namely in communities where only one shelter might exist or the complex needs of people experiencing homelessness are significant.

BC Housing is the crown agency under the Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing responsible for the Emergency Shelter Program, which provides: emergency accommodation – a safe, secure place to sleep; facilities for hygiene; the provision of nutritious food; office and meeting spaces to enable case planning and programming for clients; where possible, space for primary health provision; and provision of accommodation with as few barriers as possible to allow more people access to services.

BC Housing also provides design considerations to make shelters more inclusive and accessible for distinct needs groups, such as women-only spaces, specified areas where women and children are accommodated, accessibility for people with physical disabilities and impairments, inclusive signage and spaces for LGBTQ2S and welcoming spaces for Indigenous people.

BC Housing's operating agreements for shelter providers require that all shelters need to meet the minimal shelter standards, including the provision of harm reduction supports and providing shelter services to clients experiencing substance use. There is an established need in the Province for shelters and supportive housing that address the needs of key groups of people in a restriction-free environment. The exclusion of people with substance use or mental health issues could lead to deteriorating health and harm. BC Housing has found abstinence-based facilities create barriers for those using substances and are counterproductive to addressing the problem of homelessness. BC Housing encourages all

shelters and supportive housing to be fully accessible to ensure the most vulnerable people are brought inside.

SR11 Police Act Review

Whereas the Province has convened a special committee to review the *Police Act*, which outlines the delivery of policing services in British Columbia;

And whereas the current structure excludes local representation on the special committee, despite local governments collectively spending more per year on policing services in British Columbia than any other order of government:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government commit to thorough consultation with local governments prior to the implementation of any changes to the *Police Act*, including recommendations made by the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Ministry remains committed to responding to recent events involving police use of force against Black and Indigenous peoples and growing calls to address systemic racism in policing by taking meaningful actions to modernize policing and public safety in British Columbia.

The Ministry believes the province requires an equitable, efficient, and accountable model of public safety and policing in British Columbia, with a commitment for renewed reconciliation with Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Colour and marginalized communities. It is essential that policing and public safety services in British Columbia are responsive to community needs while ensuring effective oversight and maximizing efficiencies in service delivery resulting in strengthened public trust and accountability.

The Province has an ongoing commitment to consult with local government, both formally and informally, on matters that specifically affect them, and we greatly value our relationship with UBCM. We are committed to consult with local government through UBCM to solicit input on legislative and policy changes being contemplated, including any legislative amendments or reforms to the Police Act.

EB1 Regulation of Soft Plastics and Other Packaging Materials

Whereas the Supreme Court of Canada has refused to hear the appeal of a BC Court of Appeal decision in *Canadian Plastic Bag Association v. Victoria (City)*, a decision which effectively limits the ability of local governments to regulate the use of soft plastics and other plastic packaging within their geographic jurisdictions;

And whereas some local governments see the need for such regulation:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM request that the Government of British Columbia amend Section 9 of the Community Charter to expressly allow local government regulation of plastics and other packaging substances that may be considered environmentally deleterious.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs continues to recognize plastics and waste reduction as a priority. The Province, under the lead of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, is laying the groundwork to ban certain types of plastic products by proposing to draft a new regulation under the Community Charter to allow local governments to ban single-use plastics, such as checkout bags, plastic straws and polystyrene foam take-out containers, without requiring provincial approval. Until this regulation is in place, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy will continue to review local government bylaws banning single-use plastics submitted to the Minister on an individual basis, enabling those communities to move forward with plastics bans.

In addition, the Province has committed to developing a provincial ban on single-use plastics and is planning to consult with stakeholders to make sure the proposed framework is manageable and takes into consideration economic recovery. The provincial ban will align with federal government initiatives that occur within the same timeframe.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs is not considering amending the Community Charter to expressly allow local governments to regulate plastics and other packaging materials that may be considered a threat to the environment, as this can be permitted by regulation as outlined above.

EB2 Police Based Victim Services

Whereas the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General has primary responsibility for funding Police Based Victim Services programs and local governments are being requested to cost-share funding programs in communities that contribute to policing costs;

And whereas the existing funding structure may create instability and capacity challenges for Police Based Victim Services programs reliant on a level of funding certainty in order to adequately plan, deliver and sustain programs that support the safety needs of victims and communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General fully fund Police Based Victim Services programs to ensure they are adequately funded on an ongoing basis to support and sustain the need for victim services in communities throughout BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

This government recognizes that service providers for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and other violent crimes have experienced challenges meeting service demands in communities throughout B.C.

Budget 2018 increased annual funding for victim service (including police-based victim service programs) and violence against women programs by \$5 million starting in 2018/19 with an additional increase of \$3 million in 2020/21, for a total increase of \$8 million annually to better meet the ongoing demand for programs and services such as counselling, outreach and crisis support for women and children who experience domestic violence, sexual assault and other crimes.

This funding increase enables programs to enhance frontline service delivery, decrease waitlists and address long-standing operational pressures. In total, the ministry now provides over \$40 million annually in funding to support over 400 victim service and violence against women programs across the province.

Police-based victim service programs are cost shared with local governments in communities that contribute to their policing costs. This cost-sharing approach recognizes the critical role that police-based victim service programs play in police and community response to crime and trauma, particularly around crisis response services. We are aware that some service providers and programs continue to face financial pressures and ministry staff continue to work with those service providers on these issues.

Funding for victim service (including police based victim service programs) and violence against women programs is provided by the ministry via annual contracts with existing service providers.

EB3 Restorative Justice Funding

Whereas between the years of 1999 and 2018, there have been 15 resolutions to UBCM from 11 local governments throughout BC, with 12 resolutions having been endorsed;

And whereas Public Safety and Solicitor General's community consultation process in 2018-2019 identified core and stable funding as the primary requirement for the success of restorative justice:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request core, stable provincial government funding of at least \$50,000 per year to each provincially-recognized restorative justice program operating in BC for long-term professional administrative staff support.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

This government is committed to enhancing the use of restorative justice (RJ) and we have been exploring opportunities to enhance its use across B.C. using a strategic, integrated, cross-sector approach. This work has included engaging with a broad range of stakeholders to promote greater collaboration and dialogue about RJ across the province.

Based on feedback heard during these consultation sessions with key stakeholders, including community-based RJ programs, the ministry has revised the funding criteria for the Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Remediation Grant Program's RJ stream so that it better meets the needs of RJ programs in B.C. The ministry also increased to \$30,000 the amount of one-time funding that RJ programs can apply for through the grant program.

Through this program, the ministry provided over \$950,000 to 33 RJ related projects in fiscal 2019/2020 including funding to support the Restorative Justice Association of BC's work to build its membership base and provide support and advocacy for RJ programs and services across the province.

The ministry also currently supports community-based, volunteer-driven RJ programs through the Community Accountability Program (CAP). There are currently 52 CAPs which accept approximately 1,061 referrals annually, primarily police-referred cases dealing with less serious crimes such as mischief and theft.

EB4 Costs of Keeping Prisoners

Whereas Corrections BC has a fixed quarterly budget to reimburse RCMP detachments for all provincial prisoners kept in local government owned RCMP buildings;

And whereas this funding allocation per prisoner fluctuates in accordance with the number of prisoners kept each quarter, but does not reflect the true operating cost to the local government for keeping these prisoners:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of BC to fully fund the costs to keep prisoners in locally owned RCMP buildings.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Currently municipalities are reimbursed an average of \$250 per person/day for housing provincial prisoners in municipal lockups.

BC Corrections has met with municipal leaders and police detachments at their request to discuss the Keep of Prisoners (KOP) funding model and will continue to review any options brought forward by municipalities and police.

While the overall KOP budget and municipal funding formula is fixed, BC Corrections has indicated it would be open to discussing proposals to revise the current model that has been endorsed by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). Though municipalities have previously requested an increase in the KOP reimbursement rate, UBCM has not made any proposals of how to revise the current model. Funding decisions are ultimately the responsibility of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

BC Corrections, Court Services Branch and the RCMP will continue to engage in discussions to identify opportunities for efficiency in prisoner holding and transport within the current funding model.

EBS Police Services Model of Funding

Whereas for local governments under the 5,000 population threshold, approximately 33 percent of local government policing costs are recovered by the Province via police taxes, and as soon as the population hits 5,000, the local government is required to fund 70 percent of the total cost for policing as described in the policing agreements;

And whereas this can create sudden, large increases in the amount of funding required to address policing costs which can be an incredible, sudden and immediate financial shock for small local governments that are already struggling:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the provincial government to review the current model of funding police services for local governments reaching 5,000 population with consideration to establishing a graduated annual increase, once the 5,000 population has been reached, in policing costs from the 33 percent Police Tax to 70 percent of policing costs over a five-year period.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Government is aware of and addressing concerns from municipalities with respect to the significant cost difference for residents moving from the Police Tax to full municipal responsibility for policing costs. For municipalities which emerged above 5,000 population as a result of the 2016 Canada Census, the Ministry assisted by agreeing to phase-in resources for their respective new RCMP Municipal Police Units. This resulted in a cost-savings to the municipalities over a two-year period. We are pleased to share that this policy will remain in effect for any emerging municipalities resultant from the 2021 Census. The Ministry's Policing and Security Branch has also added improvements to internal processes to better assist potential emerging municipalities, including earlier engagement with municipal staff and increased engagement to provide information to interested municipalities.

The Police Tax will be further examined through the Policing and Public Safety Modernization project that is currently underway in the Policing and Security Branch, and consideration will be given to establishing a graduated annual increase. Extensive consultation with stakeholders, including municipalities through UBCM, will be essential when contemplating any policy or legislative change in relation to the project, such as the Police Tax.

EB6 Funding for Rural Community Policing Resources

Whereas the RCMP are overworked and understaffed when it comes to rural and remote areas of the Province:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government and the Solicitor General provide more resources to allow the RCMP to increase staffing resources in rural British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Ministry has heard the concerns from local governments and is aware of the pressures facing front-line Provincial Police Service resources. In 2019, the provincial government provided new additional funds to the British Columbia RCMP to increase front-line resources at highest need, highest risk provincial detachment Units. This initiative also saw the creation of the Provincial Support Team (PST) which provides mobile, short-term relief to provincial detachment Units experiencing temporary resourcing pressures such as those resulting from vacancies, emergent incidents or events.

The Ministry also continues to work with the RCMP, and internally to government, to address resources pressures across all areas of provincial policing responsibility in the province. This work includes addressing equity and accountability issues across municipal and provincial policing responsibilities (at integrated RCMP municipal/provincial detachments in particular), adequately accounting for Provincial Police Service resources that provide services to multiple jurisdictions and ensuring that provincial resource levels are commensurate to the workload generated by provincial areas.

EB9 Sustainable Funding for Highway Rescue Services

Whereas many small community volunteer fire departments and societies provide vital highway rescue services for vehicle crashes that occur on provincial highways;

And whereas while Emergency Management BC reimburses highway rescue service providers for some of the costs incurred, most small local governments and societies are contributing approximately 66 percent of the costs associated with the provision of this valuable service by providing training, personnel and vehicles;

And whereas other emergency services attending vehicle crashes on Provincial Highways such as RCMP, BCEHS (Ambulance) and Coroner's service are fully funded by provincial and federal funding agreements:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of BC to commit additional annual funding for highway rescue services, to provide a fairer funding model that will ensure the continuation of these services that are vital for people travelling on provincial highways.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes and appreciates the invaluable life-saving service that communities provide to motorists throughout British Columbia and is committed to developing a sustainable funding model. We are fortunate in British Columbia to have dedicated and skilled emergency responders who support public safety by responding to incidents on our highways.

As well, the Province recognizes and appreciates the challenges that small municipalities and rural communities within regional districts face in delivering fire and rescue services.

In 2017 the Province provided funding to the Fire Chiefs Association of BC (FCABC) to develop a funding and governance model for Road Rescue and a consultation process with service providers to address equipment, training, and service provision needs; this also included a one-time \$1 million opportunity for an application-based program to provide up to \$50,000 for equipment purchase or training expenses. This funding program was launched by the FCABC on November 24, 2020. The FCABC works through the requests and notifies the successful applicants prior to February 26, 2021. Following notification, the FCABC will be working with the Road Rescue providers with disbursements and purchasing of equipment.

EB10 Abandoned Vehicles

Whereas the RCMP and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure have authority for enforcing parking regulations outside of municipal boundaries, including the removal of abandoned or unlicensed vehicles that may be illegally parked on rural roads, which is time consuming, costly, and takes away resources from other important community priorities;

And whereas regional districts have no authority for parking enforcement or removal of abandoned vehicles from rural roads but, as the representative local government with a direct connection to the community, must address resident concerns about abandoned vehicles that may be illegally parked or impacting the safe movement of pedestrians, traffic, or emergency vehicles in areas such as accesses to docks, boat launches, roads near waterfront parks, or areas where parking is limited:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to provide additional funding resources to support rural RCMP detachments or the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in responding to time consuming and costly removal and disposal of abandoned vehicles from rural roads, and to ensure that community safety concerns are prioritized and adequately attended to.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry is focused on public safety and making sure that all provincial highways and roads are safe for people to travel on. If an abandoned vehicle is in a lane, blocking traffic or in the way of snow removal equipment, it is a hazard and it will be towed immediately.

In order for the RCMP to ticket vehicle owners for illegal parking, there must be a sign restricting parking in the area. The ministry works with local governments and the RCMP in determining locations for No Parking signs.

Currently the B.C. Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) provides municipalities with the authority to enforce parking regulations within their boundaries. The same authority is not provided to regional districts. Research is required to understand the basis for the difference and determine whether there were any specific reasons for excluding the regional districts when the original legislation was enacted.

Ministry staff are reviewing the intent of the original legislation as well as identifying the types of operational and safety impacts. Once the information is gathered, the ministry will be in a position to give this matter further consideration.

EB13 Regional Geo-Hazards

Whereas the landscape of many rugged outdoor areas of BC face exposure to multiple hazards with potential for natural disaster, such as forest fires, landslides and flooding which impact residents as well as the traveling public;

And whereas the majority of provincial funding that is available is for response-related activities after an event has occurred:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province allocate funding to support more proactive measures for risk management of regional geo-hazards through the establishment of consistent and regular monitoring.

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

The Province does undertake broad-scale proactive monitoring to address several geohazards, including through the provincial forest fire and river forecasting programs. For example, the River Forecast Centre monitors and forecasts flooding based on data from over 300 sites in B.C. to inform flood advisories at regional scales.

The Province has funded the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF), which includes a Structural Flood Mitigation component with eligibility for installation of hydrometric stations to improve river forecasting and flood response (e.g., monitoring equipment).

The Province will continue to work with the federal government to develop new and expanded application-based mitigation funding programs that can fund the installation of hazard monitoring networks, particularly where this is identified as the most effective approach to reducing disaster risk for a community.

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) encourages local authorities and First Nations to work collaboratively in a regional approach to shared installation, operations and maintenance of monitoring networks.

Leveraging partnerships with educational institutions and private resource companies may also help reduce operating costs for regional hazard monitoring systems. The province has generally supported authorizations, where required, to enable monitoring installations.

The Province may also carry out more local monitoring for specific research purposes, or to help protect provincially-owned infrastructure (e.g., highways) from landslides, erosion, or other geohazards.

Geological, hydrological and other natural hazard monitoring that may be required at a local level to supplement existing provincial programs falls within local government jurisdiction and

responsibility, for the purpose of local emergency preparedness and response. Funding support for these initiatives may be available through EMBC and other programs.

FLNRORD, EMBC and other agencies within the province are willing to work with local governments to advise and address matters of local importance where feasible.

EB14 Provincial Funding for Dike Upgrades

Whereas diking infrastructure is crucial to flood mitigation for the protection of residents and the general public;

And whereas the provincial government will only allocate funding for dike upgrades which meet high-cost seismic standards;

And whereas neglecting dike upgrades while trying to facilitate designs that are to seismic standards could leave residents vulnerable to flooding disasters and exposed to massive and inevitable response costs in the interim:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government consider applications for funding for dike upgrades which may not meet seismic standards but would allow for essential and cost-effective minor upgrades.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province remains committed to investing in disaster risk reduction, including flood protection infrastructure in partnership with local authorities and First Nations.

Mitigation funding programs require applicants to meet applicable provincial legislation, regulations and guidelines (such as the Dike Maintenance Act) to reduce unintended consequences to public safety, environmental, cultural, and other values. This commitment is core to current and future funding programs. Seismic Design Guidelines help to ensure continued flood protection in the Lower Mainland, even after a damaging earthquake. Emergency Management BC has no authority through its funding programs to alter the requirements of, or influence, a Dike Maintenance Act approval decision.

It should be noted that the Seismic Design Guidelines apply to new and major upgrades to high consequence dikes. As such, some minor upgrades may be funded without triggering Seismic Design Guideline requirements.

Emergency Management BC encourages communities to work with qualified professionals and regulatory staff at the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to incorporate permitting requirements early in the mitigation funding application process.

EB15 Dike Improvement District

Whereas the Province had previously established Dike Improvement Districts and has now designated local government as a diking authority, removing these powers from Improvement Districts who are unable to access funding for repair and maintenance of dikes, without adequate consultation with both Improvement Districts and local governments;

And whereas the Province has not provided an overall assessment of the dikes or identified sustainable funding associated with the full capital cost of repair and on-going maintenance of dikes under the jurisdiction of Improvement Districts, and dikes with no local authority, of which 20 percent in the Province are located within the Regional District of Central Kootenay:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM encourage the Province to engage in further consultation with Improvement Districts and local government to discuss the overall impact of the decision to designate local governments as diking authority on rural BC communities with populations under 20,000.

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

The Province (a) has proactively empowered local governments as diking authorities, and (b) given direction that, going forward, new dikes can only be built by local governments (e.g. no new improvement district dikes). The extension of diking authority alone does not impose anything on local governments.

Local governments have a key role to play in the management of risk when making decisions on changes in land use. In addition, local governments have strong fiscal management frameworks and the potential for economies of scale in the acquisition of expertise. Local governments are responsible for financing the works to protect new or more intensive developments, which encourages adequate prevention and mitigation measures.

The Ministry acknowledges that there are considerable challenges that face diking authorities (e.g. Dike Improvement Districts), particularly around access to funding. The Ministry acknowledges that the Regional District of Central Kootenay has a unique challenge due to the local physiography, which has led to numerous flood structures of varying design, maintenance and ownership (no local authority/orphan structures).

The Ministry has not decided to, nor is it currently considering requiring local governments to take over Dike Improvement Districts. However, the Ministry has suggested that Dike Improvement Districts work with local governments or First Nations in order to access the funding available. The mutual interests include emergency management, regulation (floodplain bylaws), land development bylaws (e.g. setbacks), taxation (local services bylaw) and access to funding. These interests support conversion of Diking Improvement Districts to local governments, but it is not a requirement.

There currently are no plans to engage in further consultation with Dike Improvement Districts and local government to discuss the overall impact of the decision to designate local governments as diking authority. However, the Provincial Flood Safety Section (Victoria, BC) is in the process of leading several province-wide studies which are intended to provide the first steps in assessing existing dikes both under the ownership of a diking authority and those that are orphan (no authority). These include a Dike Consequence Classification Study, a Provincial Dike Crest survey and an Orphan Dike Assessment. The intention of these studies is to provide stakeholders (primarily local governments) with baseline information for decision making and potential governance of dikes and assist in determining the most appropriate and cost-effective delivery of flood protection.

EB18 Secondary Rural Road Maintenance

Whereas there is growing concern about the state of secondary roads in rural communities that are in need of safety improvements such as more frequent refreshment of pavement lane markings which are essential to ensuring the safe flow of vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic, especially in more remote areas where street lighting may be minimal or non-existent;

And whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, as the responsible authority for the public road network in rural areas, oversees rural road maintenance through highway maintenance service contracts according to terms set out by the Province that define levels for maintenance standards and a budget for each specific service area:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to review service level standards and increase funding for the upkeep of secondary roads in the provincial road network to ensure safe and accessible transportation options for rural communities who depend on them for day-to-day personal and business transportation needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Secondary roads are an important component of the transportation network as they connect rural and remote communities to essential services such as Schools and Hospitals and facilitate the movement of goods across the Province. Over the next three years, the Ministry plans to invest \$335M on secondary roads. The budget for secondary roads increased from \$90M per year to \$110M per year in 2018/19 and as per the latest service plan it will increase to \$115M in 2022/23.

Regarding pavement markings, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure works closely with contractors to continually test new paint formulations and products to ensure that high-performing, environmentally friendly paint is used in B.C.

The ministry invests more than \$20M annually on pavement markings across the province; this includes secondary rural roads.

This funding provides for:

- 20% more lines painted annually throughout the province;
- Use of larger glass beads for increased reflectivity and visibility at night, and thicker paint for longer-lasting pavement marking in coastal areas;
- Second coat application in areas that experience premature wear;
- Enhanced contractor monitoring and auditing, to maintain consistent performance.

EB20 Practical Measures for Resource Roads

Whereas the changing role of natural resource roads for communities (due to population growth, diversified commercial and recreational uses) and various emerging issues (safety, search and rescue, evacuation planning) are not being adequately addressed by the current management framework;

And whereas opportunity for stakeholders including the local public and local government to participate in collaborative road use planning and decision making can be frustrated by lack of information exchange and confusing or inadequate protocols, classifications and definitions:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM ask the BC government to implement certain immediate practical measures to facilitate integrated resource road use management and planning including, as recommended in the 2010 UBCM/Province of BC Joint Resource Roads and Communities Committee report:

- To explore by policy the ways and means and criteria to distinguish resource road classes defined as high community or public use resource roads, along with flexible, result-oriented definitions for their maintenance (including deactivation); and
- To initiate, through collaboration, local platforms for information exchange and dialogue on road management matters between public, commercial and resource industry parties with an interest in resource roads.

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

We appreciate UBCM's Resolution EB20 as feedback on the ministry's resource road management framework. Resource road management is a dynamic process and we regularly review Forest Service Road (FSR) policies associated with maintenance and deactivation practices. This is to ensure we're accounting for the changing roles and emerging issues identified, in addition to other variables such as First Nations reconciliation, climate change and available resources to manage this complex resource road network.

In terms of scope, in 2015 the Forest Practices Board estimated there was approximately 620,000km of resource roads in British Columbia, of which approximately 58,000km are FSRs. By comparison, there are about 47,000km of provincial highways and rural side roads. About 12,000km of this network are financially capitalized to ensure safe, secure and ongoing access to communities, rural residences and high value recreation (in priority order).

It's important to note that FSRs are not built or maintained to the same standards as paved public roadways. Most FSRs have gravel surfaces and are narrow (often one lane) and many are not maintained for public vehicular access. There may be roadside brush limiting visibility, soft shoulders, more and tighter curves with road grades that are much steeper than encountered on public highways. Users are obligated to drive FSRs commensurate with existing road conditions under the *Occupiers Liability Act*.

Overall, the ministry Engineering program and the forest industry undertake considerable effort to collectively and effectively manage the FSR network to mitigate risk and facilitate user safety and

environmental protection commensurate with legislation, regulation, policy, road data systems and available resources. However, as pointed out, the nature of FSR use has changed considerably in the last several years and we have taken steps to adapt to aspects of this change.

The ministry relies upon the Engineering program policies to help inform FSR maintenance priorities, which are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant to the needs of rural communities. Through the local land managers, the ministry tracks which FSRs are critical for the public's access/ egress which guides the Resource District's annual service planning exercise. The service plan quantifies and allocates the limited operational maintenance funding in the order identified above. Accordingly, Resource Districts with the highest use/ highest risk FSRs serving rural communities receive an increased share of the limited operational maintenance funding.

In response to the recent Office of the Auditor General report, this ministry has committed to reviewing its road policies with a view to determining the appropriate resources to dedicate to our provincial FSR infrastructure.

We always welcome feedback directly from the public, and local government, to help inform our efforts. Functionally, local District Managers and their staff are frontline and critical to this process as they prepare annual needs assessments on FSRs that eventually result in maintenance plans. The Ministry encourages local governments to help inform this process. Our policies are living documents and we are always looking for ways to improve.

EB21 Access to Provincial Parks

Whereas the British Columbia provincial parks system represents an invaluable public asset to remote and rural communities, supports the integrity of our economic and social structure, promotes the physical well-being of our citizens, and presents a healthy and diverse natural environment;

And whereas the diminishing road access to our communities' provincial parks is currently disabled by abandoned, closed, or un-maintained logging and forest service roads:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to enable access to provincial parks and that access roads be designated as public roads and maintained as such.

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

The province recognizes that resource roads accessing BC Parks are important for the well-being of rural residents, and that back-country recreational users are important to local economies.

Many of these old roads and trails were built in challenging locations and are subject to frequent natural events. Our decision to reactivate a damaged road takes into consideration environmental risk and public safety, as well as the cost of repairs and long-term maintenance.

Although the FLNRORD engineering budget does not include the repair and maintenance of roads accessing BC Parks, staff look for opportunities to co-ordinate with licensees and other agencies to keep as many roads open as possible.

Road maintenance must be in accordance with the legislation and standards of the responsible agency. Ministry staff are working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), as well as BC Parks, to determine which resource roads we can maintain. FLNRORD is also working to assign responsibility for roads to the most logical Ministry, allowing the roads to be maintained to the appropriate standard.

EB22 Maintenance of Forest Service Roads

Whereas for years the provincial government has approved the establishment of private land parcels that are only accessed by way of forest service roads, which are maintained by and at the discretion of the forest companies that use them;

And whereas the current and expected to worsen downturn in logging activities in BC is resulting in forest companies withdrawing their activities from the bush and ceasing maintenance of those forest service roads, which leaves residents stranded with no access to their properties:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to undertake a review of the province's many forest service roads to determine which ones are critical for the public's access/egress and develop a plan to maintain them as public roads.

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

Forest Service Roads (FSR) are not built or maintained to the same standards as paved public roadways. Most FSRs have gravel surfaces and are narrow (often one lane wide) and many are not maintained for public vehicular access. There may be roadside brush limiting visibility, soft shoulders, more and tighter curves, with road grades that are much steeper than are encountered on public highways. Users are obligated to drive FSRs commensurate with existing road conditions under the *Occupiers Liability Act*.

The provincial government may approve the establishment of private land parcels that are only accessed by way of FSRs, and these approvals are not accompanied by a commitment or resources to provide for an increased level of FSR maintenance to serve these new residences.

Section 79(6) of the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation, outlines FSR maintenance obligations:

A person required to maintain a road must ensure all of the following:

- (a) the structural integrity of the road prism and clearing width are protected;
- (b) the drainage systems of the road are functional;
- (c) the road can be used safely by industrial users.

The Ministry understands the limited nature of this regulation as it relates to safe access to communities and rural residences, and their business model is responsive to serving rural residences. The Ministry tracks which FSRs are critical for the public's access/egress and allocates the limited operational maintenance funding primarily to FSRs accessing communities and rural residences. Accordingly, Resource Districts with the highest use/highest risk FSRs serving rural communities receive an increased share of the limited operational maintenance funding.

Overall, the Ministry Engineering Program and the forest industry undertake considerable effort to collectively and effectively manage the FSR network to mitigate risk and facilitate user safety and

environmental protection commensurate with legislation, regulation, policy, road data systems and available resources.

The Ministry is seeking renewed guidance from government to help confirm resource priorities moving forward. At this time, the Ministry will continue to rely upon existing legislation, regulations and policy guidance and our dedicated professional and technical Engineering Program experts on the ground to ensure our FSRs are safe for all users while being mindful of the environment commensurate with existing resources.

EB23 Funding for Local Government Upgrades as a Result of Highway Construction

Whereas local government infrastructure must often be upgraded when highway construction projects occur adjacent to communities;

And whereas many small local governments cannot fund expensive infrastructure upgrades that must be done when highway improvements are constructed:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure that funding is provided for local government infrastructure improvements that are required to be constructed as a result of highway upgrades.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

When planning and designing infrastructure improvements on provincial highways, the ministry works with the local municipalities to understand how improvements will impact the local area and to identify opportunities to mitigate the impacts. In situations where proposed improvements to a provincial highway create a direct need for improvements to municipal or indigenous roads or lands, the ministry works with the local community to define these situations and includes the work in the scope and budget of the project.

There are instances where a highway improvement project presents an opportunity for a municipality to include a municipal project in the highway improvement project scope. This can reduce the cost to the municipality by capitalizing on economies of scale. In this example, the ministry partners with the municipality by including the scope of work in the contract and the municipality pays the cost for the work to the ministry.

Municipalities seeking to improve infrastructure in their communities can apply to grant funding programs. The grant opportunities fund projects to help communities expand, maintain and upgrade infrastructure and promote employment and economic growth. Examples include Infrastructure Grants Program, Small Communities Fund and Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. More information can be found on the ministry's website [Funding & Grants - Province of British Columbia](#).

EB24 Active Transportation Infrastructure – Highways Projects

Whereas the Province of BC as part of Clean BC has developed an Active Transportation Strategy under the leadership of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to improve active transportation networks that connect British Columbians from the places they live to the facilities they use;

And whereas BC Healthy Communities provides funding to local governments to develop local Active Transportation Plans supported by the BC Physical Activity Strategy;
And whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure constructs highway improvements that connect to and integrate with local government infrastructure and residential developments in communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to include the construction of Active Transportation infrastructure such as safe, separate walking pathways, bicycle lanes, and safe connections to existing and future trail network infrastructure, into highway upgrade projects adjacent to populated areas.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure will continue making investments in active transportation through our made-in-B.C. strategy for cleaner, more active transportation, Move.Commute.Connect.

In 2019/20, the ministry invested over \$45M toward projects that support active transportation through municipal infrastructure grants, highways projects such as shoulder widening, and improving transit infrastructure to better support active transportation. The ministry is investing in active transportation improvements as part of current and future provincial highway improvement projects to ensure that roads, bridges and interchanges are designed and built with the safety and convenience of people walking, cycling and wheeling in mind.

The ministry continues to work with communities to identify priority active transportation projects. These projects can be part of new or rehabilitation highway projects or funded through programs like the Community Safety Enhancement Program. For the 2020-21 fiscal year of the Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program, nearly \$9-million dollars of investment for communities was committed to build stronger active transportation networks.

Through Move.Commute.Connect., the ministry is also committed to updating the cycling policy to become an active transportation policy, to further support the inclusion of active transportation in highways and infrastructure projects and supporting municipal planning to connect local active transportation infrastructure to provincial infrastructure.

EB25 Continued Expansion of Trans-Canada Highway #1

Whereas the Province of BC has identified the Fraser Valley as a growth and innovation corridor as part of a framework for improving British Columbians' standard of living to restore the British Columbia Dream;

And whereas the critical congestion and safety challenges along the Trans-Canada Highway through the Fraser Valley and toward Hope continue to impact the provincial movement of goods and services and access to the Asia– Pacific gateway, undercut the economic viability of a region with the province's highest population growth, undermine public safety and quality of life for residents and travelers, and create significant environmental and greenhouse gas emission impacts for BC:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province prioritize funding toward the continued expansion of the Trans-Canada Highway through the Fraser Valley and toward Hope in order to support HOV, Electric Vehicles, Autonomous Vehicles, Rapid Transit and Truck transportation (HEARTT); And be it further resolved that this funding be made a high priority of the government of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Minister of State for Infrastructure mandate letter includes a commitment to widen Highway 1 through the Fraser Valley to ease congestion, with a goal of completing the widening of the highway as far as Whatcom Road by 2026.

The ministry recognizes the importance of Highway 1 as a fundamental corridor for the movement of goods, services and people and acknowledges issues around safety and congestion affecting its users. Over the past decade, the ministry has consistently invested in the future performance and safety of Highway 1 starting with significant investment between the Cassiar Tunnel and 216th St., in six-laning Highway 1 and replacing the Port Mann Bridge.

More recently, the ministry contributed \$27.3M in partnership with the Federal Government and the Township of Langley to widen the highway from 202nd St. to 216th St., including construction of a new interchange at 216th St.; that project was completed in 2020. Another \$82.3M is secured in partnership with federal and municipal stakeholders to expand the HOV/EV lanes in both directions between 216th St. and 264th St., as well as reconfiguration of the 232nd St. interchange and replacement of the CP Rail overhead and Glover Underpass; design and engineering are currently underway. These upgrades will improve traffic flow and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging people to carpool or take transit for a faster, greener commute.

The ministry's continued dedication to improving Highway 1 further east is also exemplified by committing \$200,000 for a planning exercise from 264th St. interchange to Mt. Lehman Road. The scope of work assesses the feasibility of extending the HOV/EV lanes further east in both directions, extending the truck climbing lane in the eastbound direction, and improvements to the 264th St. interchange.

The ministry remains committed to delivering a safe and reliable road network and working with community partners to achieve these goals.

EB26 Increase Zero-Emission Vehicle Act Interim Targets

Whereas the BC *Zero-Emission Vehicle Act* 2025 target for light-duty vehicle sales is 10 percent and actual sales reached 9 percent in 2019, yet there is still significant unmet demand for zero-emission vehicles across BC, and the purpose of the *Zero-Emission Vehicle Act* is to require industry to make zero-emission vehicles more affordable and available to British Columbians;

And whereas the Township of Langley, Metro Vancouver and many local governments across BC have committed to achieving carbon neutral communities by 2050, requiring drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles starting today:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to amend the *Zero-Emission Vehicle Act* interim sales targets above the currently stated 10 percent in 2025 and 30 percent in 2030, to targets that accelerate the availability of zero-emission vehicles in BC beyond the current rate of adoption.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

The Zero-Emission Vehicles Act (ZEV Act) fulfills a commitment under CleanBC to ensure all new light-duty vehicle sales will be 100% EVs by the year 2040.

The ZEV Act is one part of the market transformation approach Government is taking toward ensuring that all new light-duty cars and trucks sold in B.C. will run on clean electricity from batteries or hydrogen fuel cells in just under 20 years from now, and will improve the availability and affordability of EVs for British Columbians by ensuring automakers increase the number and type of EVs that they sell in B.C.

Some local governments, EV owner associations and environmental non-governmental organizations have expressed that they want to see higher targets than the current ones. We have committed to holding technical review of the ZEV regulation at regular intervals to review market trends, receive input from stakeholders and allow for any necessary adjustments.

A ZEV advisory council will be established to provide input into the ministry's EV programming and policies including the ZEV regulation. The advisory council will be comprised of industry, ENGOs, local governments, First Nations, infrastructure providers and academics.

CleanBC puts our province on a path that powers our future with clean, renewable energy and reduces air pollution.

EB27 Zero-Emission Vehicle Mandate for Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicles

Whereas medium- and heavy-duty vehicles produce over 30 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions from road transportation in BC and the Province of BC has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050 and Metro Vancouver has committed to becoming a carbon neutral region by 2050;

And whereas the Province has enacted the Zero-Emission Vehicle Act which recognizes the importance of zero- emission vehicle sales requirements as a critical action to accelerate greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the transportation sector; yet there is currently no legislation or targets in place to increase the adoption of zero emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in BC:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to enact zero-emission vehicle sales requirements for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

As more and more British Columbians make the switch to clean energy, the B.C. auto market is transitioning to electric vehicles (EVs).

The targets of the Zero-Emission Vehicle Act (ZEV Act) and the compliance requirements in the regulation increase over time allowing lead time for automakers to offer a broader range of EVs, and for government's expanded EV investments to further build a robust market for EVs, as well as charging infrastructure in rural and northern regions.

As a result of government's investments to date, EV sales in B.C. in 2019 and 2020 were 9% of light-duty vehicle sales. The annual compliance ratios set in the regulation were selected to meet both the CleanBC EV targets and the emissions reduction targets.

The government has been providing rebates for zero-emission medium and heavy-duty vehicles since 2017 to stimulate the demand for these vehicles, and to date has invested over \$46 million in supporting their adoption.

Through the course of the consultations on the ZEV Act and Regulation, the Province heard stakeholders' express interest in a ZEV mandate for medium and heavy-duty vehicles. The ZEV Act has been written in such a way that it provides the ability to implement a medium and heavy-duty ZEV mandate via regulation.

Both the ZEV Advisory Council (to be formed later this year) and the regular, formal reviews of the ZEV Act will provide a venue for considering the state of the ZEV medium and heavy-duty market and the feasibility of a ZEV medium and heavy-duty mandate.

Some local governments, EV owner associations and environmental non-governmental organizations have expressed that they want us to set higher targets than what we have done. We welcome the opportunity to exchange data and analysis to help inform our reviews.

EB28 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Whereas the Province has, through the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure , established an initiative to build out an electric vehicle (EV) fast charging station network that includes expanding the network north of Prince George along the Highway 97 corridor and into the Peace region and directed BC Hydro to build out this network;

And whereas communities along the Highway 97 corridor, including the District of Mackenzie, and into the Peace Region, and across the province will benefit from increased tourism in providing travellers with electric vehicles the knowledge that there is an established level 3 EV fast charging stations network:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to continue to work with BC Hydro to ensure that level 3 electric vehicle charging stations be established across the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

The Province is investing in the infrastructure needed to support electric vehicles through an expanding network of public fast-charging stations to make EVs and EV travel more accessible to British Columbians.

The demand for EVs and the development of the supporting infrastructure go hand in hand – which is why the federal and provincial governments are offering rebates for both electric vehicles and charging stations.

The rebates provide strong incentives for local governments, Crown corporations (such as BC Hydro), and private companies to install the infrastructure to support their communities.

To inform planning, the Province has [published a study](#) outlining approximately where fast charging stations are needed to enable EV travel throughout the province, based on a computer model. This includes stations along the Highway 97 corridor and Peace Region. The study is posted online and an update to this study is underway.

There are currently over 70 BC Hydro fast charging stations across the province from Tofino to the Alberta border, and BC Hydro is currently working on its next phase, which will connect drivers to Prince George and communities north, as well as Prince Rupert. Other entities, including Fortis BC, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and others, are also planning additional EV fast charging station deployments across the province.

In central and northern B.C., the following fast charging sites are currently under construction, with more in the planning stages. The [website](#) shows up-to-date locations of public charging stations (direct current fast charging and Level 2) in operation and under construction.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure:

1. East Pine rest area (Hwy 97 north of Prince George, 70 km west of Dawson Creek)
2. Cluculz rest area (Hwy 16 west of Prince George, east of Vanderhoof)
3. Savory rest area (Hwy 16 west of Prince George, between Fraser Lake and Burns Lake)
4. Red Hill rest area (Hwy 1 south of Prince George, between Spences Bridge and Cache Creek)

BC Hydro:

1. Prince George (Hwy 16 and 97)
2. McLeod Lake (Hwy 97 north of Prince George)
3. Fraser Lake (Hwy 16)
4. Burns Lake (Hwy 16)
5. Houston (Hwy 16)
6. New Hazelton (Hwy 16)
7. Prince Rupert (Hwy 16)

EB29 Clean Vehicle Initiatives

Whereas a key part of the CleanBC program is "Move. Commute. Connect.", an active transportation strategy with the goal to make it easier for people to commute to work or school using active transportation methods in order to cut down on carbon pollution and help improve the liability of our communities;

And whereas the CleanBC program also includes the "CEVforBC" program that provides rebates of up to \$8,000 for the purchase of a new electric or plug-in hybrid automobile, recognizing that incentives to alternatives to gasoline vehicles reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and makes our communities cleaner, safer, and more livable;

And whereas recent advances in technology have resulted in a new generation of electric-assist cycles that make cycling more accessible to more people for their daily commutes and shopping and recreation trips, allowing people to make more efficient, GHG-free and healthy transportation choices;

And whereas there is no public policy or community benefit to incentivizing the purchase of electric automobiles that is not achieved in a greater extent by incentivizing the purchase of electric-assist cycles:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to expand the clean energy vehicle program to include financial incentives for the purchase of electric-assist cycles in scale with the incentives provided for the purchase of electric automobiles.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

Through CleanBC, we are helping British Columbians to make the switch to cleaner transportation options.

In July 2020, the province provided additional funds to increase e-bike rebates up to \$1,050 for people who scrap a vehicle through the Scrap-It transportation options program – an increase of \$200 from the previous year. Scrap-It rebates have been offered through the Ministry since 2017.

By accessing rebates on e-bikes through scrapped vehicles, British Columbians are helping us ensure that we meet our emissions reductions targets. By requiring that a vehicle is scrapped in order to receive the e-bike rebate, the resulting emission reductions are definite.

In addition, under the CleanBC Go Electric Specialty Use Vehicle Incentive program, we have introduced a pilot project that enables a rebate of up to \$1,700 for business owners toward the purchase of a cargo e-bike, which are particularly efficient in delivering materials and goods in a way that reduces operation costs and emissions for businesses.

The cargo e-bike rebate was introduced to help support business who are transitioning their product delivery and distribution away from large polluting delivery vehicles. This rebate helps to offset the higher cost of commercial grade e-cargo bikes and reduces the use of fossil fuels in B.C.

The e-bike rebate expansions are in pilot phase and we welcome input from local governments on these rebates.

EB30 Emission Reduction for Ride-Hailing Fleets

Whereas Clean BC states that the Province will prioritize reducing climate pollution by shifting vehicles, homes, industry and business off burning fossil fuels and toward greater use of clean BC electricity and other renewable energies, with a target of a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over 2007 levels by 2030;

And whereas approximately 40 per cent of GHG emissions in BC are due to vehicles, and shifting to zero-emission vehicles will not only help the provincial and local governments meet GHG emission-reduction targets, but also strengthen the economy, improve air quality and public health, and reduce fuel costs for drivers:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government consult with local government, ride hailing fleets (transportation network services), and taxi fleets (passenger directed vehicles) and implement requirements for these fleets to meet the emissions targets set in Clean BC and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report recognizing there may be differences in regional requirements based on availability of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The ministry supports the BC government's CleanBC strategy and is committed to significantly lowering greenhouse gas emissions. As such, the Passenger Transportation Act was amended in September 2019, requiring ride hail vehicles to be less than 10 years old. This change is intended to ensure that ride hail vehicles have the most current vehicle safety and fuel efficiency features. Additionally, the Passenger Transportation Board (Board) has established policies to promote the use of eco-friendly vehicles as taxicabs, limousines and shuttle vans. As of May 22, 2020, licensees approved by the Board to expand their taxi fleet in Metro Vancouver or Greater Victoria can only add eco-friendly taxis. The Board may also apply this policy when it approves applications to add taxis in other parts of the province.

Further, a special committee will be appointed on or before January 1, 2022 to conduct a review of all passenger directed vehicle services, including ride hail. The committee will also look at the impacts on public transportation, traffic congestion and the environment.

EB31 Accessibility Guarantee for Passenger Directed Vehicles

Whereas Bill 55, the BC Passenger Transportation Amendment Act which took effect September 16, 2019, imposes a \$0.30 fee for each non-accessible vehicle trip, but otherwise does not oblige passenger directed vehicles (PDVs) to a timeline or otherwise mandate a percentage of all fleet vehicles be accessible;

And whereas according to statistics from the Passenger Transportation Board, about 14 per cent of taxis in the province and about 19 per cent in Metro Vancouver are accessible and in other jurisdictions transportation network services (app-based ride hailing services) have demonstrated an ability to provide accessible vehicles as part of their fleet and business model:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to work in consultation with the passenger directed vehicle industry, disability community, and local government representatives in order to design and implement a wheelchair accessibility guarantee for all PDV fleets that support a minimum percent of all fleets are guaranteed to be wheelchair accessible, sufficient to ensure that transportation options for persons with disabilities are equal to those provided to non-disabled persons in all PDV fleets.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The ministry is committed to working with the accessibility community to improve and expand transportation options. Consultation with advocates of the accessibility community has been ongoing over the years and involves many areas of government. Leading up to the introduction of ride-hailing to B.C., the government consulted with several groups including the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Disability Alliance of BC and the Seniors Advocate. Amendments to the Passenger Transportation Act in September 2019 are a result of these consultations, which include the collection of the \$0.30 per trip fee and the allowance of side-entry accessible vehicles in addition to rear-entry.

The Passenger Transportation Board is collecting data on the number of trips taken in accessible vehicles to support evidence-based decision making. Accessibility is a top priority for the government, and ministry staff are working to determine the use of the per trip fee. While other jurisdictions have taken two years or longer to fund accessibility programs with trip fee revenue, the ministry is currently exploring options to determine how to leverage these fees to enhance accessibility and service quality.

EB33 Speculation and Vacancy Tax

Whereas housing affordability is a key challenge in many communities facing high median home prices, including a number of homes that are vacant;

And whereas the Province reported that in 2018, \$58 million was collected under the Speculation and Vacancy Tax program;

And whereas the Province gave the City of Vancouver the power to impose its own vacancy tax, which has provided Vancouver with approximately \$40 million in additional revenue:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government provide local governments with the power to levy their own Speculation and Vacancy Tax, so that they too can address housing affordability and other community effects of vacant homes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Ministry of Finance

The Province is committed to working with our local government partners to address affordable housing issues in B.C. The Province has taken a number of tangible steps, including implementing the 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability and working with the federal government to develop a National Housing Strategy. One part of the 30-point housing plan was the introduction of the speculation and vacancy tax.

This tax is contributing to the ongoing moderation of B.C.'s housing market and applies in large urban centres where affordability is most acute. The tax is designed to turn empty homes into housing for British Columbians. All revenue generated by the speculation and vacancy tax is required to go into the Housing Priority Initiatives Special Account, which supports affordable housing initiatives in the areas where the tax is collected. The government has committed to an investment of \$7 billion in housing affordability over 10 years. The speculation and vacancy tax is just one of the funding components to support these significant housing investments.

Designing an authority for a vacancy tax for local governments would require amendments to the Community Charter. As local governments vary greatly in resources and needs, further discussion is required before considering legislation beyond what was granted to the City of Vancouver in 2016. While enabling legislation would not necessarily be used by every community, it would have to be useable – and under the Community Charter, that means useable across a diverse range of communities throughout the province.

The Province will continue to monitor the impacts of the provincial speculation and vacancy tax, the Vancouver Empty Homes Tax, and the recently announced commitment by the federal government to impose a property tax on foreign owners before considering providing all local governments in B.C. the authority to impose their own similar taxes.

EB34 Request to the Government of BC for Dedication of One percent of PST to Local Governments

Whereas due to downloading of responsibilities, local governments are increasingly reliant on granting systems that are not reliable in the long term and unequitable due to staff resources for small local governments compared to larger local governments;

And whereas increased predictable revenue sharing arrangement reflects shared interests between local governments and the Province, including policing, recreation, transit, and the environment:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the BC government to allocate an amount equivalent to 1 percent of BC's Provincial Sales Tax (PST) to local governments across British Columbia as part of ongoing cost-sharing agreements.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The financial viability of local governments is of great importance to the Provincial Government, especially the viability of smaller local governments. To achieve this, the Province provides local governments with broad revenue tools, including: property value tax, parcel tax, user-fees, Development Cost Charges, agreements, and others. Additionally, through the pooled and Triple-A borrowing authority of the Municipal Finance Authority of British Columbia, even the smallest municipalities have access to inexpensive long-term borrowing.

These financial tools are further complemented by provincial and federal grants for planning, services, and infrastructure. In particular, the Province provides over \$100 million annually in unconditional grant funding to local governments across British Columbia. Unconditional grants are highly flexible as there are few or no constraints on how the money is spent. They are primarily operating grants for good governance and service provision.

The Provincial Sales Tax (PST), like all provincial taxes, is paid into the consolidated revenue fund. Putting 100 per cent of provincial tax dollars directly into the consolidated revenue fund ensures that the government is best positioned to respond to constantly changing needs across B.C., whether those have to do with the current COVID-19 crisis, wildfires or flooding, overdoses, housing, local infrastructure and services, increasing pressures on the healthcare and education systems, climate change, or other priorities.

UBCM is currently in the process of reviewing and updating its 2013 report entitled "Strong Fiscal Futures: A Blueprint for Strengthening BC Local Governments' Finance System". The Province is willing to engage and collaborate with UBCM as it develops its report and recommendations.

EB36 Gas Tax Funds

Whereas the federal government distributes gas tax funds to municipalities and electoral areas throughout Canada based on population;

And whereas the provincial government allows gas tax funds to be used as a municipal or electoral area contribution towards some provincial grant applications:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate with the provincial and federal governments that gas tax funds should not be considered stacking under all federal and provincial grant programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Province is aware of the issues local governments have raised with the current infrastructure grant funding model, including the stacking of federal gas tax funds under federal and provincial grant programs. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs (Ministry) appreciates the value that the federal gas tax revenues provide to local government infrastructure sustainability and services. The Ministry notes that the policy for the federal stacking rules resides with the bilateral funding programs and not within the Federal Gas Tax Fund.

The Ministry welcomes feedback on the current infrastructure grant funding model. Program staff analyse the feedback and advance applicable proposals during the appropriate periods (negotiations and reviews). The Ministry is currently managing a diverse portfolio of grant funding programs and is operating under bilateral agreement with the federal government for the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. The Province will continue to work with UBCM to identify future opportunities with the federal government to continue providing valuable funding support to local governments.

EB38 Ongoing Sustainable Grant Funding Model

Whereas the Provincial government has an interest in local governments actively participating in, or delivering, many of its initiatives, priorities, and programs, and has developed a broad range of grant programs to provide funding assistance to local governments to facilitate such work;

And whereas, grants provide a valuable source of revenue for capital projects and other major one-time expenditures, but discretionary grant programs constitute an insecure funding stream for ongoing program work undertaken by local governments, such as emergency management and fire protection programs, requiring a significant administrative commitment relating to application submissions and financial reporting;

And whereas, both local and the Provincial governments benefit from having more secure, less administratively onerous Provincial funding streams available to facilitate local government participation in Provincially supported programs, such as the existing, ongoing funding that is provided through annual operating agreements for BC Transit partnerships and Victim Services partnerships;

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM ask the Provincial government to review its funding model to local governments to consider moving away from one-time, grant-based funding models for ongoing local government programs, such as emergency management and fire protection, to a more secure on-going and sustainable funding model based upon annual operating agreements in support of Provincial initiatives, priorities, and programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Province of British Columbia is committed to providing local governments with reasonable funding flexibility and sustainability to ensure grant programs can be efficiently administered for the good of all British Columbians. The Province annually provides over \$100 million annually in unconditional grant funding to local governments across British Columbia. Unconditional grants are highly flexible as there are few or no constraints on how the money is spent. They are primarily operating grants for good governance and service provision.

The Province places more restrictions on grants that are earmarked for specific high-priority infrastructure projects. Many of these projects are expensive, publicly scrutinized and relate to issues of public health and environmental quality. Thus, these projects require a high level of oversight to ensure they are planned and constructed in a timely and appropriate manner in accordance with the conditions of a specific grant agreement. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs is open to discussing more flexibility in grant programs. However, this must be done in the context of addressing competing concerns such as project transparency, accountability and cost efficiency.

EB39 Access to Infrastructure Grant Funding for Improvement Districts

Whereas the United Nations have declared that access to clean drinking water is a Human Right and in British Columbia, some Rural and Remote Communities served by Improvement Districts are still not able to provide clean potable water to its residents;

And whereas the current BC Government Policy restricts Improvement Districts access to water Infrastructure Grant funding by recommending the financially prohibitive and challenging process of conversion to a Regional District Service as the only solution;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM work with the Province and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to establish a process for Improvement Districts to have access to Provincial and Federal Infrastructure Grant funds, and still maintain their autonomy.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs' expectation is that efficient and effective governance is in place for the delivery of critical infrastructure services. Municipalities and regional districts can align servicing and land use policies to contribute to livable communities that are able to accommodate growth, illustrating the value of a service provider that can not only provide infrastructure services but also engage in long-term planning.

Improvement districts are currently eligible for capital funding where the improvement district is undergoing conversion to a regional district service area or municipal service. The infrastructure funding is used to defray the capital cost required to bring the service up to current standards. This policy is based on voluntary conversions. Thus, improvement districts that have the resources to operate and meet regulations can continue to operate those services.

Although improvement districts cannot apply directly to obtain capital grants to fund their projects, an application can be submitted by a regional district or municipality on behalf of the organization. This policy encourages improvement districts to convert to a municipal or regional district service area. The Ministry is available to discuss the conversion process and any perceived financial or process barriers, with regional districts and improvement districts in their areas, as well as the prospect of regional strategies for resourcing and sequencing multiple conversions.

Improvement districts are currently eligible for the Infrastructure Planning Grant Program (IPGP) if sponsored by the regional district or municipality for planning activities that result in outcomes to inform a potential conversion to a local government service. In this program, a commitment to conversion is not a requirement. An improvement districts can use the planning activities as a basis for an alternative strategy if it is determined that autonomy is valued more than access to senior government grant funding.

EB40 Recreation Infrastructure Funding

Whereas all communities in British Columbia directly provide, or provide financial support for some level of, recreation services to their residents;

And whereas many communities in British Columbia have aging recreation infrastructure built by volunteers or through borrowed funds;

And whereas recreation services are an essential component of all vibrant communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to reinstate funding programs that assist local governments in rehabilitating or rebuilding existing aging recreation infrastructure to ensure small community sustainability and promote physical activity for all residents.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs (Ministry) recognizes the multifaceted value that recreation infrastructure provides residents of communities across BC. The Ministry also appreciates the challenges some communities face with the responsibility of maintaining sustainable infrastructure.

The Ministry continues to offer opportunities to support local government capital projects that support recreation services. Over the last 15 years, the Ministry has administered, or partnered on, several infrastructure programs that included recreation as an eligible project category. Current examples of this include the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) Community, Culture and Recreation stream and the Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP). The Ministry will continue to work with UBCM to identify future opportunities with other provincial Ministries and the federal government to continue providing valuable funding support to local governments.

EB41 Restoring Sustainable Provincial Library Funding Levels

Whereas libraries in British Columbia are largely financed by levies paid by local government, and where Provincial library funding has remained virtually stagnant for the past 30 years;

And whereas libraries in British Columbia provide open and equal public access to vital resources, including the internet, public computers, digital library tools and in-person service from expert staff to provide opportunities for all British Columbians to access knowledge and information and increase literacy in our communities and present informative programs, including First Nations programs and material which advance public understanding and reconciliation;

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM strongly encourage the Government of British Columbia to give urgent attention to funding for BC public libraries by adding \$20 million to the BC Provincial Budget for 2021 for allocation to public libraries throughout BC;

And be it further resolved that the Province be requested to ensure that BC Libraries will henceforth receive Provincial Government financial support at a sustainable level in subsequent years following the 2021 Budget.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Libraries have played an important role in helping families and people stay connected, informed and entertained during the COVID-19 pandemic. They are a vital part of BC's Restart Plan.

In spring 2020, the Province released a new strategic plan for public libraries that focuses on ensuring that public library services are engaging, accessible and responsive to people's needs. In support of the plan's release, an additional \$3 million of one-time funding was distributed to enhance electronic collections, public computing and connectivity.

The strategic plan also identified the need to address challenges with the current funding distribution framework. Under the strategy of "Enhancing Governance", one of the actions is: "Work with library stakeholders to revise the grant system so provincial library funding is more transparent, flexible, sustainable and equitable".

EB43 Grant-in-Lieu of Taxes Revision

Whereas senior governments are exempt from property taxation under s. 125 of the Constitution Act;

And whereas provincial grant-in-lieu amounts are determined under the Municipal Aid Act and federal payment-in-lieu amounts are determined under the Payment In Lieu of Taxes Act;

And whereas grant-in-lieu revenues from exempted provincial and federal government properties are significantly lower than those revenues that would be collected through property taxation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial and federal governments to review, support and implement changes to the determination of grant-in-lieu and payment-in-lieu of property tax amounts under the Municipal Aid Act and Payment In Lieu of Taxes Act.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Section 2(1) of the Municipal Aid Act clearly states that the amount of the grant-in-lieu (GIL) of taxes is “equal to the product obtained by multiplying the assessed value of Provincial land and improvements on it in the municipality by the rate, including debt, fixed by the municipality in that year for general municipal and regional district taxation purposes.” Thus, any property that is subject to a GIL under the Municipal Aid Act would pay a grant equivalent to taxes if the property were taxable.

Note, that some Provincial properties pay GILs not under the Municipal Aid Act but under separate legislation, like BC Hydro and universities. Because of their unique and complex operational circumstances, these organizations pay GILs that may vary from taxes if the properties were taxable. For example, BC Hydro deals with complex operations of generation, transmission and distribution that do not easily lend themselves to a GIL comparable to taxes.

The Province is happy to discuss any concerns with GILs that are covered by the Municipal Aid Act.

EB44 Tax Land and Improvements Separately

Whereas unaffordable housing generally reflects high land values that are driven up by speculation, which makes ownership very expensive to buy, but profitable for sellers and developers, and puts rental housing at a disadvantage when competing for buildable sites;

And whereas a lower property tax rate on improvements and a higher rate on land value could be made to keep taxes the same or lower for most properties, but would reduce the speculative gain from ownership and make rental housing developments more competitive:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province amend the Community Charter to grant municipalities the option of setting different property tax rates for land and improvements.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The municipal variable tax rate system does not allow for separate tax rates between land and improvements because such a system could be used to levy unfairly high rates on undeveloped or underdeveloped land. Different tax rates for land and improvements may provide an incentive to develop so that property taxes are reduced but will not improve the affordability of land. Land is assessed at its highest and best potential use based on zoning and market conditions.

The Province provides municipalities with other tax mechanisms to incentivize property development such as the revitalization tax exemption under S.226 of the *Community Charter*, which may be used to provide a tax reduction in order to encourage economic, social or environmental revitalization in targeted areas or properties, such as new development on vacant and under-utilized land.

A municipality may also reduce the costs of affordable rental housing development by waiving or reducing development cost charges using section 563 of the *Local Government Act*.

In addition, vacant land is often assigned to Class 6 (Business and Other) until the potential use of the property can be refined through the municipal planning and zoning process. The Class 6 tax rate is much higher than the residential tax rate, meaning there is already a significant tax burden on vacant land.

EB45 Reassignment of Residential Based Short-Term Rentals to Class 6: Business and Other

Whereas a dwelling unit (or secondary dwelling unit located on the same property) that is used as a commercial enterprise for short term rentals and does not serve as the primary residence for the owner, or other person.

And whereas tourist overnight accommodation uses such as motels, hotels, B&B's with four sleeping units or greater, and resorts are classed and taxed as businesses;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to assign a dwelling unit (or secondary dwelling unit located on the same property), offered and used as a whole for short term rentals for 50 percent or more in the calendar year, to the appropriate tax class and be redefined as "Class 6: Business and Other";

And be it further resolved that where the dwelling unit or secondary dwelling unit located on the same property is also used for a residential purpose, that this assignment be in respect to the total percentage of the property used for commercial "Class 6: Business and Other" purposes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

The Ministries understand that short-term rentals (STRs) may have a negative impact on long-term rental accommodation in some communities, and note that split-classification of STRs has been the subject of several UBCM resolutions in recent years. While the proposal to classify STRs as Class 6 (Business and Other) has some merit from a tax fairness perspective, it could have some undesirable effects and would be very costly to implement. Therefore, while this proposal has been considered, at this point there are no plans to implement split classification of STRs.

It would be very costly and time-consuming for BC Assessment (BCA) to develop a process to identify and classify STRs as commercial units, which would require inspection or self-declaration or a combination of the two. Government would also need to select the criteria for applying the split classification to units that are only rented occasionally, amend the Assessment Act and its regulations, and work out the property tax implications on a provincial basis.

The Province has taken other steps to ensure owners and operators of STRs are paying their fair share of taxes. The Ministry of Finance negotiated with Airbnb for the platform to collect and remit provincial taxes on behalf of hosts. Additionally, strata corporations can now fine owners or residents who are not complying with a strata's STR bylaw up to \$1,000 a day.

In 2019, the Province and UBCM established a Short-Term Rentals Advisory Group with local government and provincial representatives to facilitate discussion about the impacts of STRs and tools for addressing them. Meetings of the Advisory Group were paused due to the pandemic but are expected to resume in the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the demand for short-term rentals in some B.C. communities. It is anticipated that the province will gradually re-open to tourism and the demand for accommodation will

return, raising the question for some local governments of how to regulate STRs to mitigate impacts on their communities.

The Province will continue to work with local governments and BCA to address concerns regarding the assessment and taxation of STRs.

EB46 Brownfield Taxation

Whereas brownfields littered in prime locations create loss of economic value in affected communities and draw unattractive attention to visitors and prospective investors;

And whereas brownfields' owners settle with paying the cheap cost of annual property taxes rather than remediation of the property for the economic development and revitalization of the community:

Therefore, it be resolved that UBCM lobby the Province of BC to empower local governments by amending the BC Assessment Act to tax brownfields in a separate property class in order to encourage revitalization of brownfields for the economic benefits and commercial development of the community.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The issue of contaminated sites/brownfields is a province-wide concern, for both rural and urban communities, and one that the Province takes seriously. The cost of remediation for these properties is often prohibitive and can even exceed the market value of the property. As a result, increasing the rate of taxation and/or creating a new property class for these properties may have unintended consequences and challenges from the outset such that the property could remain unprofitable and unused which likely is not the outcome communities are needing. The Ministry believes a separate property class for brownfield sites may not be the best solution.

BC Assessment is required to assess properties at their market value. Valuing contaminated sites at their market value takes into account the current state of the property, as well as the remediation required to achieve the intended use of the site and the time frame for any redevelopment. The assessed value must reflect the likely cost of remediation and the time frame required for that remediation, as the market will take those factors into consideration in determining market value. A separate property class and tax rates therefore would likely not result in the financial incentive suggested. Ministry staff will continue to consider this issue and work with UBCM staff on options including those from an environmental/climate lens.

EB48 Private Managed Forest Land Program Environment Values

Whereas the Province reviewed the Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Program in 2019 to inform the government's consideration of future policy options;

And whereas local governments strongly indicated that key public environmental values in the Private Managed Forest Land Act are insufficient:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia proceed with amendments to the management objectives and regulatory framework for Private Managed Forest Lands to better protect drinking water quality and riparian areas, and to require alternatives to slash pile burning where feasible to protect air quality.

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

The intent of the Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Program is to encourage sound forest management practices on private forested land. Membership in the program is voluntary and requires commitments to manage for key public environmental values in exchange for a lower property assessment.

The PMFL Program review, which began in May 2019, is currently in its second phase which will be the development of issue summaries and policy recommendations for government's consideration.

With respect to considering amendments to the legislative framework for the PMFL Program, government appreciates the significant contribution from local governments through the submissions that have been received. These have been comprehensively considered in the development of all summary materials.

Despite the provisions under the PMFL Act to allow for forestry activities under the program on private land, all landowners are still subject to most Regional District and municipal bylaws, as well as provincial and federal legislation, related to pollution of the environment, fire hazard abatement, safety, water quality, and wildlife habitat. A key part to the development of policy recommendations will be for government to find a balance between requirements established under the voluntary PMFL Program, and the broad legal requirements that apply universally to all landowners under other enactments.

The ministry looks forward to completing the delivery of policy recommendations to Minister Katrine Conroy and further engagement with UBCM regarding possible amendments to the PMFL Program.

EB49 Invasive Species Funding

Whereas the spread of invasive species on provincial public lands results in the adverse effect on the economic wellbeing of municipalities and regional districts;

And whereas effective management of invasive species requires long-term stable funding before the invasion is irreversible:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to budget for long-term, stable funding for invasive species management.

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

The risks and impacts of invasive species are well recognized by the Government of British Columbia. Invasive species do not obey boundaries, so their management requires coordination across all jurisdictions.

Over the past three years, the provincial government has committed close to \$12M per year in staff and operational funding to address invasive species.

Under the BC Economic Recovery Plan announced September 17, 2020, an additional \$12M will provide training in invasive species identification, detection and control and up to 350 jobs across British Columbia over 12-17 months.

Increasing annual resources dedicated to invasive species management must be considered against all other government fiscal pressures. Working collaboratively with partners has enabled leveraging of additional external funding and facilitated more land managers engaging at the local level to help address new invaders and reduce the impacts caused by existing invasive species populations.

The introduction of new invasive species and spread of those already in B.C. is increasing and the Province is examining potential opportunities under CleanBC and the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy to increase resources dedicated to invasive species prevention and control.

EB50 Protection of British Columbia Watercourses from Invasive Aquatic Species

Whereas currently the very dangerous Zebra and Quagga mussels have not yet been identified as having invaded watercourses (lakes, rivers, streams) in British Columbia;

And whereas these invasive aquatic species are devastating to all aspects of watercourses by altering the eco- system of the watercourses, negatively affecting spawning areas which harm the survival of fish eggs, seriously reducing the availability of food for native aquatic species, damaging essential infrastructure and negatively affecting recreational activities;

And whereas all these negative effects of the Zebra and Quagga mussels if invasion occurs in British Columbia watercourses will cost the taxpayers of British Columbia millions, if not billions of dollars in lost tourism, loss of economic development opportunities, damage to critical infrastructure, and other unknown costs:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the BC provincial government to lobby the federal government to provide more financial, educational and enforcement support for the protection of British Columbia watercourses from aquatic invasive mussels.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

Since 2015, B.C. has been implementing the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) in collaboration with numerous partners including the program funders (BC Hydro, Columbia Basin Trust, Fortis BC and Columbia Power Corp.), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), and neighbouring provinces and territories (AB, SK, MB, YK) and US states (WA, OR, MT, ID).

The prevention and the control of aquatic invasive species (AIS) is a shared priority and responsibility across federal, provincial and territorial governments. AIS, including zebra and quagga mussels, are regulated under the federal Aquatic Invasive Species Regulation under the *Fisheries Act* and under the Provincial Controlled Alien Species Regulation under the *Wildlife Act*. The Province actively works with federal counterparts and other provincial and territorial partners to protect against the threat of aquatic invasive species in B.C. waterways, including prevention, early detection and rapid response.

The IMDP continues to work with the CBSA to receive notifications of watercraft at the southern border crossings. This includes 24hr coverage along several of the southern border crossings and the program receives notification for all types of watercraft including canoes, kayaks, and river rafts.

In addition, Ministry of Environment and Climate Strategy staff have been meeting regularly with DFO AIS program staff to identify priorities for areas of collaboration and to ensure AIS Program outcomes are harmonized across the respective jurisdictions. The Province of B.C. is also a member of the *National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (NAISC)* which focuses on coordination across federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions to identify shared AIS priorities.

The Province will continue to work closely with federal partners to improve financial, educational and enforcement support for the protection of British Columbia watercourses from aquatic invasive mussels. For further questions regarding the federal Aquatic Invasive Species Regulation or the National AIS core program please contact DFO.

EB51 Sustainable Funding for Watershed Stewardship

Whereas effective stewardship of watersheds is critical for the sustenance, health, and wellbeing of current and future generations of British Columbians;

And whereas the lack of water-use plans hinders the feasibility of maintaining healthy aquifers, stable riverbanks, and the prevention of ice dams for the safety and security of neighbouring communities:

Therefore it be resolved that UBCM request that the Province of BC fund the cost of hydrologists to determine an accurate measurement of beds in major rivers across BC, as well as provide stable funding to groups with projects relating to advancing watershed sustainability.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

The Province is committed to the sustainable management of land and water in B.C.

New management tools within the *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA) have the potential to address land-based activities that may contribute to sediment runoff and downstream impacts on river systems.

Provincial and regional hydrologists play a significant role in water management across B.C. through a broad range of programs and activities, including WSA implementation, watershed restoration and conservation activities, and flood and drought management.

WSA s.43 enables water objectives to be established for a watershed, stream, aquifer, or other specified area, feature, or matter to help sustain water quality, water quantity, and/or aquatic ecosystems. Once objectives are in place, public sector decision makers can be required to consider them in decisions and local government decision makers in planning. The WSA also enables the development of water sustainability plans which may include consideration of uses of land or resources that affect water. Such plans, once accepted by the Province, may establish requirements on provincial government, local government and other public sector decision makers.

As part of its COVID-19 economic recovery plan, the Province allocated \$27M in stimulus funding to help restore critical watersheds and habitat across B.C. This funding will help improve the condition of watersheds while putting British Columbians back to work.

The Province provides ongoing financial support to stewardship groups directly through the [Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program](#), and indirectly through financial support to the BC Lake Stewardship Society, which supports local stewardship groups. The Province supports water stewardship by making [federal and provincial water data](#) available and accessible. It also makes third party data accessible through [data sharing agreements](#) that improve the geographic coverage of water quality, groundwater, hydrometric, and snow data.

With respect to active riverbeds where erosion and deposition is affecting flood risks, the [Community Emergency Preparedness Fund](#) (CEPF) is currently available to local authorities and First Nations. The fund supports work to update existing river profiles, flood maps and flood mitigation plans. For active rivers with frequently changing geomorphology and adjacent communities at risk of flooding, such updates should ideally be reviewed once every 10 years (using LiDAR and hydraulic modelling tools), or more frequently if major events result in changes to channel geometry. For smaller communities, the level of effort and cost to complete such detailed studies on a regular basis can be a challenge. The province is also currently developing a Flood Risk Strategy to help set directions for continuous improvements in building flood resilience across B.C. along with other orders of government.

EB52 Timely Review and Approvals – Section 11 Water Sustainability Act

Whereas works within and adjacent to watercourses are often necessary and prescribed to mitigate risks to life, businesses and properties associated with riparian protection, flooding and debris flows;

And whereas the waiting time for necessary Section 11 approvals under the *Water Sustainability Act* to undertake such improvement works is significant and approaching several years, thus contributing to these risks:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Ministry of Forests, Land, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to allocate greater resources to the processing of these Section 11 approvals under the *Water Sustainability Act*,

And be it further resolved that the Ministry initiate a process in order to provide more rapid and timely approvals in cases of urgent situations.

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

FLNRORD's *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA) implementation includes a role in outreach with local governments to educate elected officials, administration and staff on the processes for instream works. As explained below, FLNRORD has several processes in place to provide rapid and timely approvals if required. While in some regions of the Province long-term delays have been a problem, resources allocated in late 2019 have resulted in significant completion of delayed application reviews. In South Coast Region, for example, the backlog in file review from 2014-2019 declined by 70% from January to mid-October 2020. When applications are complex, it is typically due to past development decisions by local government that allowed infrastructure or housing to be placed within the flood plain and/or in areas subject to erosion.

Where an emergency has been declared under the Emergency Program Act involving flooding, municipalities and regional districts (Local Government) have the right to undertake immediate emergency works without prior approval of the Province as per Section 39 (1) (o & p) of the BC Water Sustainability Regulation. Local government simply must notify the Provincial Habitat Officer within 72 hours of undertaking the works.

For non-emergency works when imminent threat is not present, local government may have the ability to undertake instream works as an 'authorized change', as per Section 39(1) (a, b, h, k, l, q, & r) of the Water Sustainability Regulation. These authorized changes can often be undertaken in 45 days or less, depending on the response of the Provincial Habitat Officer. This regulation essentially allows for the 'fast-tracking' of certain projects.

Instream works that do not fit within the constraints of the clauses referenced above in Section 39(1) of the Water Sustainability Regulation are subject to a WSA Section 11 Change Approval, and FLNRORD targets making a decision within 140 days from receipt of a complete application, which includes an appropriately engineered design and valid environmental management plan. FLNRORD

staff work with local government to prioritize change approval requests related to repair of flood damage or when additional damage may result if the repair is not authorized quickly. Similarly, FLNRORD staff are sympathetic to projects with a deadline for spending of grant funding. Local government are always encouraged to call local FLNRORD Authorizations staff and discuss prioritization of projects and encourage early engagement.

Often, other statutes must be met such as the Federal Fisheries Act, or the Provincial Heritage Conservation Act. It is the responsibility of Local Government to be aware of and meet Federal or other Provincial statutes. Change Approval applications require First Nations consultation, and this can be more easily undertaken if local governments involve their First Nations neighbors early in their plans around water, prior to submitting the application.

Private citizens or stratas, while not afforded as much leeway as local governments when it comes to using the fast-track authorized change procedures, can still install, maintain or remove a culvert; construct, maintain or remove a clear span bridge; repair or maintain existing dikes or erosion protection; or remove a beaver dam (Section 39(1), (a, b, k, u, respectively) with 45 days notice, subject to the conditions in the Regulation.

FLNRORD does also attempt to triage and prioritize emergency works by private citizens if risk to homes is imminent. This can be achieved almost immediately by issuing an Engineer's Order, if required.

However, FLNRORD also acknowledges that stream channel migration and erosion are natural occurrences and does not encourage human constraint of the stream channel for unnecessary reasons. Where life, property, or infrastructure is not threatened, it is often necessary to allow the stream to move naturally and allow the loss of some pasture or lawn for the greater ecological health of the stream.

In some instances, risk experienced by those living in the flood plain is directly a result of a prior unauthorized act by themselves. These situations may require investigation by Compliance and Enforcement staff and thus do not always lend themselves to emergency repairs. For example, a developer may divert a stream unlawfully and trigger a landslide on their own lands. Because they developed over the former stream channel, there may not be a clear path forward without harming innocent neighbors. These situations are unfortunate but are all too common and are dealt with on a case by case basis.

EB53 Harmonize BC Plastics Action Plan and Strategy on Zero-Plastic Waste

Whereas the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's Plastics Action Plan Policy Consultation Paper requested feedback regarding bans on single-use packaging, reducing and recycling more plastics, and higher returns of plastic bottles;

And whereas harmonization of the BC Plastics Action Plan and Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic waste regulations regarding reduction of single-use plastics shifts the costs and responsibility of restricting single-use plastics from local governments to producers:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to collaborate with the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment to ensure consistent regulations across Canada to reduce single-use products and increase producers' responsibility for end-of-life management of single-use products.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

The Ministry has been an active member of the Canadian Council of Ministers for the Environment (CCME) since its inception. Most recently, B.C. has played an active role in engaging with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts in the development of the Canada-Wide Strategy for Zero Plastic Waste to seek common goals while ensuring approaches meet the needs of British Columbians.

In 2019, the Province undertook public engagement on the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan. Over 35,000 British Columbians responded between July 25 – September 30, 2019. Through this and subsequent engagement, the Province has heard that citizens, Indigenous communities, local governments, non-government organizations and many businesses want action on plastics. Alignment, where possible, with national approaches to bans of single use plastics and development of recycled content standards was recognized as part of the engagement.

On September 12, 2020, the Province announced actions that support introduction of bans by municipalities on certain single-use items and that work is underway on a provincial approach, in addition to improving and expanding extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs in B.C. This includes the streamlining of EPR to include milk and milk alternative containers to the deposit-refund system and the introduction of a \$0.10 minimum refund, in turn enhancing national consistency.

The Province also published a [Recycling Regulation Policy Intentions Paper](#) (IP). The IP outlined the proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation through the priority products identified as gaps in the current regulation from the 2019 service gap analysis and the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan. The ministry received substantive feedback from key partners and stakeholders by the November 20, 2020 submission deadline for the IP. This feedback will be summarized and made publicly available by Spring 2021. This will help to inform and develop proposed priorities as part of a five-year plan for amending the Recycling Regulation.

EB54 ICI Packaging and Paper Products Recycling Regulation Amendment

Whereas resolution 2018-868 'Packaging and Printed Paper Recycling Regulation Amendment' was previously endorsed by the UBCM membership;

And whereas the Province responded it would consider expanding BC's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs for future inclusion of Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) packaging and paper products as part of their commitment to the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment Canada-Wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility;

And whereas BC's EPR programs have yet to be expanded to include ICI packaging and paper products which is having a disproportionate impact on remote and rural communities where access to private or commercial services is limited and often unavailable:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to take action on amending the Recycling Regulation to expand BC's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs to include product categories for Industrial, Commercial and Institutional packaging and paper products.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

The Province acknowledges that proper management of packaging and paper products (PPP) from the ICI sector is a challenge for local governments and is working to explore new regulatory or policy approaches to manage these materials.

The CleanBC [Plastics Action Plan](#), released in 2019, sought feedback on new policy opportunities and proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation, including the expansion of EPR programs. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (the ministry) received over 35,000 responses from all sectors of B.C. including the public, local governments, Indigenous groups and a range of stakeholders. The feedback received highlighted the need to address ICI generated waste and recyclables and is helping to inform the appropriate policy or regulatory response(s). The What We Heard report on the plan's engagement is available [online](#).

On September 12, 2020 the ministry announced new [provincial actions on plastics](#) as part of the provincial Plastics Action Plan.

This announcement included the expansion of the Recycling Regulation to allow for more single-use items and packaging-like products to be recycled effective January 1, 2023, and the release of a [Recycling Regulation Policy Intentions Paper](#). The IP outlined the proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation through the priority products identified from the 2019 service gap analysis and the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, which included PPP beyond residential sources. The ministry received substantive feedback from key partners and stakeholders by the November 20, 2020 submission deadline for the IP. This feedback will be summarized and made publicly available by Spring 2021. This will help to inform and develop proposed priorities as part of a five-year plan for amending the Recycling Regulation.

EB55 Amend Recycling Regulation to Include Mattresses and Bulky Furniture

Whereas the inclusion of mattresses and bulky furniture in an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Program ensures the costs associated with recycling and disposal are borne by manufacturers;

And whereas an EPR program for mattresses would create jobs, divert materials that are difficult to manage at disposal facilities, save landfill space, reduce GHG emissions and save energy through recycling:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to include mattresses and bulky furniture in an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program to shift the cost and responsibility of recycling and disposing of these materials from local governments to manufacturers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

The Province has heard that both stakeholders and the public want Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs to collect more materials. Based on the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's (the ministry) recent 2019 review of potential products for inclusion under EPR programs (which included a product and services gap analysis to identify opportunities for EPR expansion), the ministry has finalized a priority listing of products/categories to be addressed going forward.

A [Recycling Regulation Policy Intentions Paper](#) (IP) has been developed and was released on September 12, 2020. Through the priority products identified from the 2019 service gap analysis and the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan released in 2019, the IP has outlined the proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation. The What We Heard report on the plan's engagement is available [online](#). Upholstered furniture was not brought forth as a priority by local or Indigenous governments or from a range of stakeholders during our analysis. However, mattresses were identified and are included as part of the proposed amendments.

The ministry received substantive feedback from key partners and stakeholders by the November 20, 2020 submission deadline for the IP. This feedback will be summarized and made publicly available by Spring 2021. This will help to inform and develop proposed priorities as part of a five-year plan for amending the Recycling Regulation.

EB56 Extended Producer Responsibility

Whereas the Province has adopted recycling regulation of the Environmental Management Act;

And whereas BC's Industry-led product stewardship programs require producers of designated products to take extended producer responsibility for the life cycle management of their products;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province include a regulation for producers of child car seats, mattresses and upholstered furniture ensuring the producers' responsibility for the life of the product and reducing local government waste disposal costs, the amount of garbage in landfills and a reduction in illegal dumping.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

The Province has heard that both stakeholders and the public want Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs to collect more materials. Based on the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's (the ministry) recent 2019 review of potential products for inclusion under EPR programs (which included a product and services gap analysis to identify opportunities for EPR expansion), the ministry has finalized a priority listing of products/categories to be addressed going forward.

A [Recycling Regulation Policy Intentions Paper](#) (IP) has been developed and was released on September 12, 2020. Through the priority products identified from the 2019 service gap analysis and the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan released in 2019, the IP has outlined the proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation. The What We Heard report on the plan's engagement is available [online](#). Upholstered furniture and child car seats were not brought forth as a priority by local or Indigenous governments or from a range of stakeholders during our analysis. However, mattresses were identified and are included as part of the proposed amendments.

The ministry received substantive feedback from key partners and stakeholders by the November 20, 2020 submission deadline for the IP. This feedback will be summarized and made publicly available by Spring 2021. This will help to inform and develop proposed priorities as part of a five-year plan for amending the Recycling Regulation.

EB57 Expand Extended Producer Responsibility Programs

Whereas eighteen Regional Districts met with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy at the 2019 UBCM Convention to petition the Ministry to amend the Recycling Regulation to include packaging and printed paper from the ICI sector;

And whereas Minister Heyman issued a letter December 18, 2019 responding to the request and noting that the Province recently undertook research and focused engagement concerning additional products that might prove suitable to manage under the Recycling Regulation, and that any work to explore regulatory amendments involving ICI materials would be accompanied by further consultation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province commit to further consultation on the issue of amending the Recycling Regulation to include packaging and printed paper from the ICI sector.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change

The Province acknowledges that proper management of packaging and paper products (PPP) from the ICI sector is a challenge for local governments and is working to explore new regulatory or policy approaches to manage these materials.

The CleanBC [Plastics Action Plan](#), released in 2019, sought feedback on new policy opportunities and proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation, including the expansion of EPR programs. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (the ministry) received over 35,000 responses from all sectors of B.C. including the public, local governments, Indigenous groups and a range of stakeholders. The feedback received highlighted the need to address ICI generated waste and recyclables and is helping to inform the appropriate policy or regulatory response(s). The What We Heard report on the plan's engagement is available [online](#).

On September 12, 2020 the ministry announced new [provincial actions on plastics](#) as part of the provincial Plastics Action Plan. This announcement included the expansion of the Recycling Regulation to allow for more single-use items and packaging-like products to be recycled effective January 1, 2023, and the release of a [Recycling Regulation Policy Intentions Paper](#). The IP outlined the proposed amendments to the Recycling Regulation through the priority products identified from the 2019 service gap analysis and the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, which included packaging and paper products beyond residential sources. The ministry received substantive feedback from key partners and stakeholders by the November 20, 2020 submission deadline for the IP. This feedback will be summarized and made publicly available by Spring 2021. This will help to inform and develop proposed priorities as part of a five-year plan for amending the Recycling Regulation.

EB58 Provincial Tools for Building Energy Benchmarking

Whereas the Province of BC has communicated support for a 2017 UBCM motion requesting that the Province develop an energy benchmarking program requiring that buildings above a size threshold benchmark their energy performance and report this information to the province annually and that the resulting data be available to local governments to inform their climate policy and programs, but not yet acted on that motion-leaving room for additional direction;

And whereas the urgency to implement measures to help reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the building sector has grown since the October 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report verified that drastic reductions in GHG emissions are needed by 2030 in order to avert catastrophic climate change impacts, and increasing numbers of local governments in BC (numbering 31 as of January 31, 2020) declare a global climate emergency and develop bolder plans to mitigate accelerating climate change:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province act on the 2017 UBCM motion for a building energy benchmark program and that the program include appropriate industry support tools to facilitate easy compliance, a benchmark data management system accessible by local governments to help inform their industry engagement and policy development, and plans and timelines for expanding the program to include other building types.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

Through CleanBC, the Province has introduced a wide range of incentives and supports to help businesses and households reduce climate pollution and save energy. This includes the Province's CleanBC Better Buildings program, which provides clean fuel-switching incentives for residential and commercial buildings, and support for building energy benchmarking tools such as Energy Star Portfolio Manager. The Province recognizes the importance of benchmarking tools to foster improved energy management and to better understand the energy performance of the overall building stock. The Province continues to explore energy rating policies for homes and buildings that will support these objectives.

EB59 ICBC Data for GHG Reduction Efforts

Whereas BC's transportation sector accounts for about 37 percent of the Province's total greenhouse gas emissions;

And whereas local governments are struggling to find accurate data that quantifies the transportation emissions in their municipality or region so that they can develop local action plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from this sector;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the BC government require ICBC to collect mileage data when drivers renew their vehicle insurance and then share the data of kilometres driven and fuel and vehicle type annually with local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (ICBC)

The Province and ICBC support measures that protect a healthy environment and promote GHG reduction.

ICBC does not require customers to disclose their odometer reading when renewing their insurance; however, ICBC provides an incentive for customers by offering a low kilometre discount (Distance Factor in ICBC's Basic Tariff) to those who drive less than 5,000 kilometres.

The data provided by customers for this discount is on a volunteer basis, and the quantity of data is limited; however, the proportion of vehicles in a geographic area that qualify for the reduced rating from the Distance Factor may be useful data, with an increasing proportion indicating progress around reducing GHGs.

ICBC recently launched a new website that includes vehicle population data which can be sorted by municipality, vehicle type or area based on the first three characters of the postal code. This data is now public in a customizable, convenient format that will make data available in a timelier manner and is in keeping with the Province's commitment to transparency.

EB60 Mandatory Signage for Bear Traps

Whereas dogs are accidentally killed yearly across British Columbia when they are unintentionally lured into a baited bear trap often resulting in a gruesome death;

And whereas people are unable to avoid bear traps because there is no requirement for signage to be posted warning of said traps:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to impose a mandatory requirement for trappers to post signage warning of active bear traps in the area to prevent accidental harm to those in the area.

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

The provincial government recognizes that domestic animals are sometimes inadvertently injured or killed in traps. The Province regulates trapping activities in order to maintain healthy wildlife populations, protect public safety and ensure the humane treatment of animals. Provincial regulations aim to achieve these objectives while providing opportunities for the sustainable use of wildlife, as well as for the control of wildlife populations where necessary. BC trappers are trained and certified to trap in a safe and humane manner through the Trappers Education Program, which is required for licensing in BC.

The provincial government remains committed to working to continue to reduce risk to dogs from traps. The Ministry is considering several measures to reduce this risk, including the use of trap signage. The Ministry intends to engage with First Nations and stakeholders on the proposed measures.

EB61 Cumulative Effects of Land Use Decisions

Whereas communities of British Columbia are dependent on healthy, ecologically diverse, functioning ecosystems upstream from Official Community Plan areas for services such as drinking water, stormwater management, erosion control, pollinator protection for food systems, infrastructure / asset management and climate resilience;

And whereas provincial ministries often consider applications to make private or industrial use of provincial public land independently of each other and do not have or apply sufficient regulatory frameworks for ensuring long term ecological resilience such as integrated multidisciplinary land use planning or cumulative effects analysis before authorizing applications for use:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to develop and implement integrated, multidisciplinary/ multi-ministry land use planning and cumulative effects analysis tools to be applied to long term planning at the watershed scale and to individual applications to make private use of provincial public lands, with the goal of restoring and mitigating further damage to ecological resilience and protecting public infrastructure assets for the long term.

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

The Province of BC established a Cumulative Effects Framework (CEF) in 2014 to assess and manage cumulative effects across natural resource activities and support the integration of assessment results in decision-making across the different natural resource ministries. Updated reports and information on the CEF can be found [online](#).

The Ministry leads the development and implementation of the CEF and is actively working on assessments and reporting for several key values across the province (Grizzly Bear, Aquatic Ecosystems, Moose, Forest Biodiversity and Old Growth) as well as additional values at a regional scale (e.g. Marbled Murrelet on Vancouver Island and the South Coast). Additionally, the Ministry is working on guidance to help decision-makers apply these assessments in decision-making at both the operational level (e.g. land use authorizations) and strategic level. Online tools to support decision-making and communication of assessment results are being developed provincially and regionally. As an example, the South Coast Region has developed an online [Stewardship Baseline Objectives tool](#) (SBOT) that communicates baseline information and stewardship objectives for priority resource values in the region.

Since 2018, the Ministry has also led the development of Modernized Land Use Planning projects across BC in partnership with Indigenous governments and engaging with communities, local government, industry and other stakeholders. Local governments are recognized as having a unique role and perspective in land use planning and decision-making processes related to provincial public lands within, and bordering, their jurisdictional boundaries. As such, direct engagement is occurring with local governments early in the planning process to help determine the appropriate level of involvement in land use plan development.

Land use plans set the strategic direction to guide sustainable resource stewardship and management of provincial public land and waters to meet economic, environmental, social, and cultural objectives. These plans set high-level direction and help define ‘what’ can occur on the land base in consideration of all sectors and activities proposed, planned and approved.

Key drivers of land use planning include:

- **Reconciliation** with Indigenous communities and the BC government’s commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- **Ensuring communities and stakeholders** are engaged in land and resource planning.
- **A growing economy** and increased demand on natural resources and the need to balance economic, environmental, social, and cultural objectives.
- **Increasing complexity** as a result of climate change and factors that affect the land base, including species-at-risk management, wildfires, flooding, and drought.
- **Addressing cumulative effects** on natural resource values.

Land use planning focuses on priority areas in the province to resolve current land use and resource management challenges including:

- Mitigating and managing cumulative effects;
- Coordinating development activities across multiple sectors;
- Identification and protection of cultural resources;
- Coordination and collaboration in land use zoning; and
- Forecasted scenarios and impacts from climate change on ecosystems.

Land use planning builds on past planning efforts, supports ongoing stewardship initiatives, and capitalizes on new opportunities in response to emerging challenges in the management of BC’s public lands and natural resources. Cumulative effects assessments will be a key input into land use planning processes by providing information on the current state of important values, such as where core security habitat for grizzly bear may be lacking, or where there are risks to properly functioning aquatic habitat due to human disturbance.

For more detailed information on the current Land Use Plans, please go to the LUP Engagement Platform at <https://landuseplanning.gov.bc.ca/>.

EB62 Stormwater Management

Whereas stormwater run-off and drainage related problems such as flooding, erosion, and slope instability are becoming increasingly prevalent in rural areas due to development pressures and are being exacerbated by the effects of climate change which results in more variable, intense, and frequent storm events;

And whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, as the subdivision approving authority, is primarily responsible for the design and maintenance of drainage works related to public roads in rural areas, and does not enforce or regulate stormwater and drainage related problems from one property to the next once development has been approved:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate for increased collaboration between the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, regional districts, and municipalities to develop and implement management strategies that:

- recognize the need for an integrated stormwater management approach that plans at the watershed level as well as at the individual development level;
- are responsive to ongoing development pressures and challenges associated with climate change;
- increase provincial oversight of the implementation of stormwater related components of subdivision approvals on an ongoing basis;
- increase the Province's ability to address concerns from residents on an ongoing basis about property damage and safety issues that arise from stormwater and drainage related problems; and
- incorporate the impacts of planned upstream forestry activities in their drainage assessments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes the importance of an integrated approach to manage storm water drainage and works collaboratively with our maintenance contractors and local governments to target improvements to our infrastructure network on a fiscal year-by-year basis.

The ministry will continue to prioritize stormwater management works on its infrastructure network and provide strategic improvements elsewhere on a case-by-case basis determined by available resources. Currently the ministry's position is that improvements on the individual development level is the responsibility of the landowner/developer, under engineering policy designed to see a net-zero impact on existing ministry infrastructure (roadside ditches primarily). The ministry will continue to enforce this policy for new construction and development being proposed through subdivision applications.

The ministry authority over private property is limited to the Transportation Act. When considering private land use, substantial changes such as removing vegetation cover or soils can be completed by property owners with no ministry consultation or approvals. The ministry therefore can only request

improvements to properties which have made subdivision/development applications which leaves the ministry out of decision making on all other properties. These authorities currently rest with local government and would require significant legislative changes to the Transportation Act which the ministry has no plans of pursuing at this time.

Current rural subdivision processes, overseen by Provincial Approving Officers under the Land Title Act, and ministry Development Services staff, allow for local governments and other agencies to comment on applications through a referral process. Any concerns about storm water drainage on the subject property, or surrounding properties, are welcomed to be included in these referral responses for ministry review. Additionally, the ministry encourages meetings in local ministry district offices between local government and Development Services staff to discuss current and proposed subdivision applications and other developments.

EB63 Accretions

Whereas creation of the Kootenay Lake Stewardship Partnership was designed to coordinate a common approach among First Nation, federal, provincial and local governments as a means to ensure protection of riparian habitat and various fisheries;

80 UBCM 2020 Resolutions Book And whereas actions and decisions of the office of Land Title Survey Authority in granting controversial accretions being seen as undermining that common approach and can lead to a further destruction of riparian habitat by a minority of property owners:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Attorney General to review the actions and decisions of the Land Title Survey Authority to ensure that granting of accretions meets legislation, prior court decisions and does not result in destruction of riparian habitat and damage to spawning areas and fish populations.

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

The Land Title Survey Authority (LTSA) is the statutory decision maker in this area and, as such, the Regional District could engage in conversation with LTSA.

EB67 Forestry Economic Downturn

Whereas curtailments of local sawmills in BC have exhibited the potential of creating a significant economic downturn to the residents of BC, the local government's tax base, and extending to the province;

And whereas limited access of local forestry industries to timber continues to incite more aggravated downturn on the wellbeing of BC rural communities:

Therefore, it be resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial and federal government to provide significant support to rural British Columbians by reviewing the selling of Timber Licenses and requiring that timbers be kept within the designated Timber Supply Area in order to maintain economic stability and forestry longevity in BC rural communities.

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

We recognize the pressure communities are faced with as a result of mill closures, reduced harvest levels and rationalization of operations in the wake of the mountain pine beetle outbreak and several record-breaking fire years.

In response Government launched the Interior Forest Renewal Initiative, a regionally driven process with the objectives to develop a globally competitive, sustainable forest sector that supports communities and workers and advances reconciliation with Indigenous communities. This initiative recognizes the challenges being faced by communities vary across the province and there is no one solution that would.

The Ministry conducted extensive engagement through the summer and fall of 2019, seeking input on how to realize these objectives. The response was wide-ranging resulting in thousands of ideas from across the Interior of B.C. A "What We Heard" report was released in July 2020 and shared the feedback and key themes that emerged. Release was delayed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, however, we continue to review the input to help inform policy and/or program reform to advance both the immediate COVID recovery and the longer-term renewal transition for the interior forest sector.

Recognizing the need for consideration of the public interest in forest tenures, the Ministry introduced amendments to the Forest Act (via Bill 22) that allow the Minister to deny a tenure transfer if not in the public interest. In some instances, this can assist in maintaining local forest sector employment or provide a mechanism to support communities through a transition.

Moving back to an "appurtenancy" model would be very challenging and not necessarily lead to better forest management. For example, the ability to freely trade and move timber to various processing facilities has become integrated into the forest sector. Logs sometimes move great distances in order to get the right log to the best suited processing facility.

Any potential changes related to increased appurtenancy will have to consider the needs of the forest sector while excess milling capacity is rationalized with the significant decline in available timber supplies.

Through the Interior Forest Renewal Initiative, we will continue to work with local communities, First Nations and industry to build a stronger, more resilient forest economy.

EB68 Ranching Concerns

Whereas Range Tenure holders are concerned with the lack of service that is offered by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, including a lack of staff with experience or training in ranching related issues, high turnover, and unreasonable delays in communications and approvals;

And whereas ranchers are faced with numerous delays in approvals for fence installation due to the removal of natural boundaries by third party operators;

And whereas ranchers are facing hardships and are unable to properly manage their tenures due to a lack of qualified staff who can assist ranchers with range burning applications:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM petition the Province to bring up staffing levels in the range department so that grazing tenures or license issues are dealt with more timely and efficiently to prevent entire grazing seasons being lost.

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

The livestock industry is a key component of B.C.'s economy and integral to contributing to a stable food supply within the province and it is recognized that the Crown Range Program administered by the Ministry is integral to the success of this industry in the Province.

The Peace Natural Resource District range program has undergone significant turnover during the past number of years. This turnover has led to occasions when the program was not fully staffed, or staff were being trained. This has created administrative challenges which the Peace Natural Resource District is addressing by reviewing and updating existing processes and introducing new tracking measures for applications and pending decisions.

First Nations continue to express an increased interest in authorizations related to range tenures. A key priority of the Ministry is reconciliation with First Nations and ensuring that First Nations have more involvement in decisions on the landbase that may affect them. Ensuring full participation in Consultation, and ensuring concerns related to Treaty and aboriginal rights are addressed will likely result in instances where standard permitting timelines take longer than they have historically. Range program staff are also continuing to support other priority work related to First Nations such as Treaty Land Entitlement land transfers where selected areas overlap with active range tenures.

The Peace Natural Resource District is continuing to work with Range tenure holders, forestry companies, and the Oil & Gas Commission on increasing the awareness of potential impacts to range tenure holders from overlapping activities, and working with those industries to implement measures to mitigate the impacts of those activities on range tenure holders.

The Peace Natural Resource District is implementing changes in application requirements for Range Use Plans and application packages for prescribed fire activities that are Provincial in nature. These changes are intended to increase stewardship of these activities on the landbase and to be consistent with the scope of practice of resource professionals regulated under the *Foresters Act*

and the *Agrologists Act*. Peace Natural Resource District Staff are continuing to work with Range tenure holders to increase their understanding of these requirements in order to submit complete and adequate applications.

The Ministry remains committed to engaging with the livestock industry to explore their interests and concerns.

EB69 Funding for High Speed Internet Services in Small Communities

Whereas many communities under 10,000 population in British Columbia are critically underserved for connectivity;

And whereas in 2020, there are so many opportunities for economic development in small and remote communities if connectivity were provided to a suitable level;

And whereas the federal government launched a connectivity strategy called, "High-Speed Access for All", with the goal to achieve universal 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload speeds for 90 per cent of Canadians by 2021, 95 per cent of Canadians by 2026, and the hardest to reach Canadians by 2030, such download and upload speeds considered to be adequate for the average Canadian, which does not take into consideration the needs of businesses and entrepreneurship :

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to seriously commit to funding and lobbying the federal government to fund the installation of connectivity with download and upload speeds that encourages economic development for communities under 10,000 population in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services

Working to connect all people in British Columbia is a priority for the provincial government. People depend on high-speed internet access to learn, do business, access services and stay in touch with loved ones; it can also help to diversify and grow local economies. That is why the provincial government is working with all orders of government and internet service providers to advance reliable connectivity to more communities and business than ever before.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented situation and highlighted the critical need for connectivity for all British Columbians to help connect them to work, school, government resources and stay in touch with family and friends. As part of StrongerBC, BC's Economic Recovery Plan, the BC government has provided \$90-million to the Connecting British Columbia program for connectivity expansion throughout the province. Applications for the Economic Recovery Intake opened on October 1, 2020 and approved projects are to be completed before October 31, 2021.

The funding for the Economic Recovery Intake is in addition to the \$50-million 2019 expansion of the Connecting British Columbia program. During the early stages of the pandemic, the program responded with a short-term opening for funding applications that could be implemented immediately to upgrade networks and expand rural connectivity bandwidth. The work resulted in 47 projects being completed as of June 30, 2020 -- projects that have positively impacted internet speeds and reliability in many communities throughout BC.

The Connecting British Columbia program also works closely with the new federal Universal Broadband Fund announced on November 9, 2020, to support a range of projects, from small internet service providers, municipal-led projects, Indigenous projects, as well as projects from the larger internet service providers.

EB70 Internet and Cell Phone Service

Whereas access to fast, affordable broadband internet and cell phone service is essential in today's digital world;

And whereas broadband internet and cell phone service in many rural and remote communities across British Columbia is either non-existent or too slow and unreliable to access many services necessary for economic and social well-being;

And whereas during an emergency where social interaction is limited or traditional communications infrastructure is compromised, it is imperative that citizens have reliable broadband internet and cell phone service to access health care, education, online meeting platforms, emergency information, and other programs relating to health and wellness;

And whereas while fees charged for broadband internet and cell phone service in rural and remote communities are among the highest in Canada and the world, the quality of service has in many instances declined in recent months:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of B.C. to establish an infrastructure framework to ensure that equal access to internet and cell phone service is available to all British Columbians.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services

The ministry acknowledges that equitable access to fast, affordable broadband and cell phone services is critical in today's digital world. Access to the internet is crucial to spur innovation and empower British Columbians not just in major urban cities but also in villages and towns, including Indigenous communities across the province.

Working together, both the federal and provincial governments have recently announced measures to spark connectivity in rural and remote communities. The Universal Broadband Fund is part of Canada's [High-speed Access for All: Canada's Connectivity Strategy](#), a collaborative infrastructure framework coordinated with the provinces and territories. In terms of affordability, recipients benefitting from program funding must provide broadband services at a price that is no higher than the broadband services provided by service providers in major urban areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented situation and highlighted the critical need for connectivity for all British Columbians to help connect them to work, school, government resources and stay in touch with family and friends. As part of StrongerBC, B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan, the B.C. government has provided \$90-million to the Connecting British Columbia program for connectivity expansion throughout the province. The funding is in addition to the \$50-million expansion of the Connecting British Columbia program announced in 2019. The provincial government also monitors and participates as an intervenor in various proceedings issued by the national regulator, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Telecommunications is federally regulated by the CRTC and the Commission is committed to working with service providers to provide people with access to affordable, high-quality telecommunications

services. For example, the CRTC issued a Call for comments regarding potential barriers to the deployment of broadband-capable networks in underserved areas in Canada inviting interested parties to identify regulatory steps to help reduce the costs associated with extending broadband and cellular networks. Local government and regional districts are encouraged to monitor this proceeding and to write to the CRTC to express their views.

EB71 BC Hydro Service Provisions

Whereas BC Hydro is responsible for connecting newly constructed infrastructure to its power lines;

And whereas there are lengthy wait times for BC Hydro to install services for projects that result in an excessive delay in service provision, additional expenses and/or a loss of revenue for local governments:

Therefore be it resolved UBCM lobby the provincial government to address lengthy wait times for BC Hydro connections so that projects can be connected in a timely fashion.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

BC Hydro is committed to providing clean, reliable power to its customers.

BC Hydro understands the importance of an electrical connection in meeting a project's timelines.

The timeframe for connections depends on the availability of BC Hydro resources, as well as the customer meeting all of the requirements to ensure a safe connection.

BC Hydro continues to build on the good relationships with local government and is always prepared to meet, discuss and work closely with them to manage complicated electrical connection projects. We have implemented a MyHydro customer portal for tracking and managing customer distribution projects to improve customer service and enable customers to have more visibility and control of their projects.

As part of the Phase 2 Review of BC Hydro, government and BC Hydro are exploring ways to make connections to the grid easier and faster and connection costs more predictable for customers.

EB72 Geothermal Exploratory Drilling Regulations

Whereas in alignment with section 2 of British Columbia's *Clean Energy Act*, geothermal energy is capable of providing British Columbian municipalities, Indigenous Peoples, residents, and businesses with emissions-free, renewable, and baseload heat and electricity, for the health and socio-economic benefit of the Province;

And whereas shallow exploratory drilling to determine temperature, stratigraphic, or hydrologic information - a fundamental tool in the exploration for geothermal resources, is now regulated by the Oil and Gas Commission under the *Oil and Gas Activities Act* as per the 2017 amendment of the *Geothermal Resources Act*, which unnecessarily increases shallow exploratory drilling costs by as much as ten (10) times as compared to the previous versions of the *Geothermal Resources Act*:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government and its relevant ministry- the Ministry of Energy, Mines & Petroleum Resources, to amend the *Geothermal Resources Act* and/or direct the Oil and Gas Commission to allow for the cost-effective use of shallow exploratory drilling for geothermal energy development in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

The B.C. Oil and Gas Commission is committed to ensuring public and environmental safety, and that applies in its role as regulator of geothermal resource development.

BC's established regulatory requirements for geothermal resource development are designed to enable cost effective geothermal development and operation, while mitigating potential environmental and safety risks, impacts to the environment, and impacts to natural resources.

The Commission and the Province are working with the geothermal sector to address issues and work through any concerns they may have.

EB73 Business Licensing Authority for Regional Districts

Whereas the *Community Charter* provides municipalities the authority to regulate businesses through a business licensing structure, while regional districts have not been granted business licensing authority and must undertake a lengthy legislative application process in order to be granted that authority through provincial regulation;

And whereas municipalities may utilize business licensing as a tool to assist with the enforcement and compliance of local bylaws such as the regulation of cannabis and short-term rentals, while regional districts with similar bylaw enforcement challenges do not have that option readily available to them:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to explore options to amend the *Local Government Act* to provide regional districts legislative authority for business licensing similar to the authority provided to municipalities in order to ensure fair and equal access for all local governments wishing to utilize business licensing as a tool to support compliance with local bylaws.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Provincial Government remains committed to supporting regional districts seeking business licensing on a case by case basis.

Given the diversity of regional districts, and the implications and complexity of developing a business licensing scheme that addresses a regional district's diverse interests, Ministry staff continue to be interested in working in partnership with regional districts.

Such a partnership would provide a more thorough and complete understanding of regional district business licensing authority and would provide an opportunity to work through the possible implications and considerations of broader legislative changes. These implications and considerations include but are not limited to: administrative fairness (the Board would receive the general power to regulate all business, not specific to any particular type of business); enforcement capacity; and an analysis of the regional challenges the proposed scheme is intended to address.

EB74 Ambulance Services

Whereas ongoing labour shortages are prevalent in most small rural communities in ambulance halls throughout British Columbia, leading to increased response times and reducing patients' access to possibly lifesaving treatment;

And whereas BC Emergency Health Service (BCEHS)'s ambulance service is a vital component of life safety and access to healthcare for those who live and work in small rural communities, which are often a significant distance from fully-equipped hospitals:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to provide more resources along with a commitment to finding a long-term solution to staff shortages for small rural community ambulance services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

On April 20, 2020, the Province announced 55 additional ground ambulances and 5 additional aircraft to help support the response to COVID-19. A surge plan was co-developed with regional health authorities and the First Nations Health Authority, and the resources were staged, ready to be deployed as and when needed. By November 15, 2020, all resources have been staffed and positioned in 35 communities across the province in order to well prepare the system for surges of COVID-19. With respect to Northern Health, an additional six ambulances have been deployed, including one ambulance in Dawson Creek, two in Prince George, one in Smithers and two in Terrace. The units are focused primarily on inter-facility transfers but can be deployed as 911 response units where required. Increased focus on inter-facility transfers allows for much-needed capacity on the 911 side. This interim strategy is flexible and allows these resources to be deployed where the needs exist.

BCEHS has created a major incident rapid response team (MIRRT) of specialized paramedics that can be, and has been, deployed to provide support to local paramedics and regional health authorities, if requested, in communities experiencing significant surges in COVID-19 cases.

EB75 Increased Funding for Health Connections Patient Transport

Whereas the Province of British Columbia introduced the Health Connections Patient Transport Program in 2004/05 for Interior Health Authority to connect patients to enhanced services at Regional Hospitals with annual targeted funding of One Million Dollars, with no additional targeted funding since the program began;

And whereas location to access tertiary (i.e. Cancer, Cardiac) services is changing for Kootenay residents from Alberta to Kelowna:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to increase targeted funding for the Health Connections Patient Transport Program within the Interior Health Authority, to provide a patient transportation option for those requiring enhanced services.

And be it further resolved that the provincial government to allocate funding to BC Transit to explore options to provide Health Connections Services on an integrated province wide system.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) provides base funding of \$6 million annually to regional health authorities to support their Health Connections programs in providing transportation options for patients for necessary, non-emergency medical services.

Interior Health Authority (IHA) funds its Health Connections program to improve linkages between small communities within the regional/tertiary hospitals in all four IHA health service areas. IHA partners with regional districts and BC Transit to increase access to medical services with BC Transit buses within IHA's health service areas. No current BC Transit route crosses health service area boundaries.

IHA has reviewed patient referral patterns to ensure that high acuity cases get timely, decisive care while balancing the need to provide health care services to the population it serves.

The Ministry's Travel Assistance Program helps alleviate some of the transportation costs for eligible BC residents who must travel within the province for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community.

Hope Air is a national charity service that may be of benefit to some patients who cannot afford the flight cost to travel to Kelowna or Vancouver to access non-emergency medical specialist services.

The Ministry will continue to address the health-care access challenges in rural and remote communities through collaborative and considered approaches.

EB76 Provide Universal No-Cost Coverage of Prescription Contraception

Whereas cost is a significant barrier to people accessing contraception, particularly to people with low incomes, youth, and people from marginalized communities;

And whereas providing free prescription contraception has been shown to improve health outcomes for parents and infants by reducing the risks associated with unintended pregnancy, and is likely to reduce direct medical costs on the provincial health system:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to make all prescription contraception in BC available at no cost under the Medical Services Plan.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) recognizes the right of all BC residents to make and implement informed choices about their own sexual and reproductive health. In recognition of this right, the Ministry is committed to removing cost as a barrier to BC residents' timely, effective, and equitable access to contraception.

The Ministry is reviewing options to provide contraception at no cost through the BC Pharmacare program. During this review period, the Ministry and the Province of British Columbia (the Province) will continue to provide BC residents coverage for select contraceptives.

Many BC residents have pharmaceutical coverage under the universal, income based Fair PharmaCare plan. Fair PharmaCare provides families with coverage for eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies based on their net income. The lower their income, the more help they receive. British Columbians with the lowest incomes do not need to meet a deductible and receive immediate assistance. Currently, the Province has several programs in place to provide access to no cost pharmaceuticals, including contraception for people living with low income.

In January 2019, BC announced a \$105 million investment to reduce or eliminate deductibles or co-payments for 240,000 lower-income families in our province. This included access to contraceptives in the BC formulary, such as oral contraceptive pills, hormonal injectables and some intrauterine devices (IUDs) – either as a Regular Benefit (e.g., one type of hormonal IUD) or for other IUDs requested by physicians through the Special Authority Program.

In addition, select PharmaCare plans provide coverage for contraceptives without the need to meet a deductible. The Recipients of BC Income Assistance Plan (PharmaCare Plan C) provides 100 percent coverage of eligible prescription costs for women receiving medical benefits and income assistance through the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. The First Nations Health Benefits Plan (Plan W) provides 100 percent coverage of eligible prescription costs and certain medical supplies and devices, including contraceptives, for clients of the First Nations Health Authority.

Additionally, [Options for Sexual Health](#) is an organization with more than 60 clinics across BC staffed by nurses, doctors and trained volunteers. They offer birth control counselling, low-cost contraceptives and

supplies, sexually transmitted infection and PAP testing, pregnancy testing and pro-choice options counselling, and general sexual health information (including comprehensive sexual health education workshops) and referrals. Some youth clinics in Fraser Health, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Vancouver Island Sexual Health Authority, provide access to free contraception; please note ages and contraceptives covered vary.

EB77 Provision of Free Prescription Contraception in BC

Whereas cost is a significant barrier to people accessing contraception, particularly to people with low incomes, youth, and people from marginalized communities;

And whereas providing free prescription contraception has been shown to improve health outcomes for parents and infants by reducing the risks associated with unintended pregnancy, and is likely to reduce direct medical costs on the provincial health system;

And whereas contraceptive methods targeted at men and those with penises (i.e., condoms or vasectomies) are available at low cost, no cost, or are covered by BC's Medical Services Plan;

And whereas contraceptive methods for people with uteruses (i.e. birth control pills, intra-uterine devices, or hormone injections) have high up-front costs, making access to contraception unequal and gendered:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to make all prescription contraception in BC available at no cost under the Medical Services Plan.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) recognizes the right of all BC residents to make and implement informed choices about their own sexual and reproductive health. In recognition of this right, the Ministry is committed to removing cost as a barrier to BC residents' timely, effective, and equitable access to contraception.

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Additionally, [Options for Sexual Health](#) is an organization with more than 60 clinics across BC staffed by nurses, doctors and trained volunteers. They offer birth control counselling, low-cost contraceptives and supplies, sexually transmitted infection and PAP testing, pregnancy testing and pro-choice options counselling, and general sexual health information (including comprehensive sexual health education workshops) and referrals. Some youth clinics in Fraser Health, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Vancouver Island Sexual Health Authority, provide access to free contraception; please note ages and contraceptives covered vary.

EB78 Provincial Action to Enhance Food Security During Emergencies

Whereas food security and food supply issues are essential to all emergency response and recovery efforts;

And whereas the status and consideration of food security and supply issues are not adequately addressed within the provincial emergency management system and structures:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province provide greater consideration of food security and supply, including localized knowledge, within the provincial emergency management structure and provide guidance and resources to local governments and their emergency operations centres for this purpose.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Ministry of Health

The Province is committed to addressing food security and supply issues for emergency response and ongoing COVID-19 recovery efforts. During the onset of the pandemic, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General through Emergency Management BC coordinated emerging food supply and food access issues within the provincial emergency management system across government, industry and community stakeholders to understand and respond to issues affecting communities across B.C. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries supported these food supply coordination efforts through agriculture and food sector engagement.

Extensive community-based work was activated across provincial ministries to address pressures on B.C. food systems, such as supply chain disruptions in remote and rural communities and demand on emergency food programs to respond to food insecurity and barriers to access for vulnerable populations. For example, a series of rapid action resources (web articles) to support local government food security planning were produced by the Ministry of Health and BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC).

The Province remains committed to ensuring consideration of food security and supply within the emergency management structure and to providing guidance on food security and supply to support communities and local governments across B.C. The Ministries of Social Development and Poverty Reduction; Health; Agriculture, Food and Fisheries; and Emergency Management BC are leading continued cross-government coordination on and consideration of food security and supply issues with support from other key ministries including Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Municipal Affairs , Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Children and Family Development, and Labour.

EB79 Mental Healthcare Services

Whereas mentally vulnerable children, youth and adults in BC rural communities are left to face many life-threatening obstacles during a mental health crisis as they wait to obtain services in larger communities due to its absence in their localities;

And whereas very few rural communities were declared eligible for Community Action Team through the recently disbursed \$3.5 million provincially received by the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction:

Therefore it be resolved that UBCM request the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction to provide funding for additional beds and facility expansion in major mental health and addiction service centres particularly in rural areas of BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

The Province recognizes the ongoing need to enhance mental health and substance use supports for British Columbians, particularly those in rural and remote areas. We are committed to providing access to a continuum of quality options – with residential, or bed-based services, being one part of a comprehensive continuum of care.

Community Action Teams (CATs) have been established to lead and coordinate on-the ground planning and strategies as part of the escalated response to the overdose emergency, in order to save lives and connect people to treatment and recovery services as soon as possible. Of the 35 existing teams, several are in rural communities or small population centres with limited service access, including: Dawson Creek, Grand Forks, Hope, Nelson/Castlegar, Powell River, Terrace and Williams Lake. The choice of communities where CATs are established is driven by local area need, as evidenced via epidemiological overdose data.

Additionally, substantial investments have been made to enhance treatment and recovery across the province, with significant attention paid towards geographic equity where possible. Being able to first access lower intensity out-patient services in community can help prevent people from needing residential bed-based care. To that end, some key investments to increase access to mental health and addictions services across the lifespan include:

- Budget 2019 provided \$74 million to improve child and youth mental health, including enhancing quality mental health and substance use supports in schools, at home, through primary care, and in communities throughout the province. This also included eight new Foundry locations announced on June 15, 2020, including Williams Lake and Burns Lake, for a total of 19 centres province wide once complete.

- In light of COVID-19, \$5 million to expand mental health supports across BC, including virtual supports to better support people in rural communities, and \$2.5 million to support existing bed-based services negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Recognizing there is need to increase access to bed-based care, the province has additionally committed to opening almost 200 new beds for youth, young adults, and adults. Specifically, this includes:

- \$36 million to open 123 youth beds – which will more than double the number of youth treatment beds throughout the province. Ongoing work is being conducted with Ministry of Health and health authorities to determine where these beds will be located.
- \$13.5 million to add 50 to 70 new adult treatment and recovery beds across the province, with a focus on rural communities and small population centres. A competitive granting process for these beds closed on October 7, 2020, and CMHA, who is administering the funding, is now overseeing the adjudication process.
- \$20.0 million to build, repair, renovate and expand First Nations-operated treatment centres and ensure First Nations can access effective, culturally safe mental health and substance use services and supports.

We recognize that residents, particularly those in rural areas, continue to report higher barriers in accessing care in their community. We are working with stakeholders to determine the most appropriate service mix for each region in BC and will continue to look at further options for investment across the continuum of care.

EB80 Supportive Housing for Complex Needs

Whereas existing provincial and regional health providers and housing programs and associated funding models aren't in alignment to meet the complex mental health and housing needs of our communities.

And whereas the local governments have acknowledged the need for specialized housing resources allocated to clients with complex and unique needs as the current programming model for housing units is not equipped to house those individuals with these types of challenges.

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to invest in a new supportive housing model, along with an integrated approach to housing supports and regional health services, to address the needs of individuals with the most complex and unique needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

The Province has an ongoing commitment to provide supportive housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. People in need of supportive housing are often some of the community's most vulnerable. Many require a range of health care, mental health and addictions services.

As part of Budget 2018, the Building BC: Supportive Housing Fund was established to invest \$1.2 billion over ten years to deliver up to 2,500 new homes with 24/7 support services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. With Budget 2019 and 2020 commitments, the province has committed to developing a total of 4,900 units of supportive housing. BC Housing leads the creation of these new projects in partnership with non-profit housing providers, government authorities and community groups.

Non-profit housing providers operate supportive units that are a mix of single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels and self-contained units. They provide a range of on-site, non-clinical supports such as life-skills training and connections to health care and substance use services. Additional clinical supports are offered through health authorities.

When it comes to meeting complex needs, it is important to recognize that individuals' needs will vary and change over time. Responses to these needs may look different depending on circumstances. Factors may include the types of supports that are required, the configuration of housing and services, and the community resources that are available to deliver the necessary services.

The Ministry acknowledges that meeting the complex health and housing needs of people in BC requires a coordinated approach between the Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, BC Housing and all Health Authorities. Ministry staff are working in collaboration with these ministries and partners to ensure the supportive housing model promotes an integrated approach to housing and health services.

EB82 Provincial Government Funding Increase for BC Housing

Whereas adult supportive housing funded by BC Housing provides accommodation for people with a history of severe trauma, often resulting in difficult behaviours that can have significant impact on surrounding neighbourhoods and requiring skilled caregivers to manage;

And whereas government funding for BC Housing does not include adequate levels to either provide neighbourhood outreach services or assure skilled staff and minimal turnover:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to increase funding levels to BC Housing in order to mandate and assure that community outreach services and the stability of an adequately skilled staff are components of supportive housing developments that are vital in local communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

BC Housing Management Commission (BC Housing) is a crown agency under the Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing. BC Housing implements a range of programs that deliver on provincial investments for the creation and management of supportive housing for people, including seniors, youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and women and children fleeing violence.

The Ministry acknowledges that support services are an integral component of supportive housing and contribute to the success for residents and the integration of supportive housing into the community. That is why supportive housing sites are staffed 24/7 and offer on-site supports, including access to addiction and mental health referrals and other social supports. Additionally, there is increased collaboration between BC Housing and health authorities to create a regular health care presence in buildings to assist with health needs such as primary care.

As with all new supportive housing buildings, it takes some time for residents to settle into the building and new environment, however based on BC Housing's experience and a recent study, after a few months residents stabilize, and public disturbances decrease dramatically.

BC Housing is committed to being a good neighbour and reaches out to local governments, stakeholders, neighbours, and local businesses to engage around housing projects and respective community roles. In addition, BC Housing establishes Community Advisory Committees for some supportive housing sites in order to be responsive to neighbours and the community. Community Advisory Committees ensure supportive housing integrates well into neighbourhoods, and they have been effective at helping communities work together to address concerns and maintain positive connections between neighbours.

While these efforts have helped many people, the Ministry and BC Housing understand there are lessons to be learned in each community that can be incorporated into future successes. Working with partners, including local governments and communities, the Province remains committed to providing long-term housing that creates positive impacts for everyone involved.

EB83 Coordinated Strategy to Address Liveaboards

Whereas affordable housing pressures are leading to a growing population of liveaboards along the British Columbia coastline;

And whereas there are cumulative impacts on the marine environment and inadequate access to public services for liveboard communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Province of British Columbia to work with First Nations, and federal, provincial, and local government stakeholders, to develop a coordinated strategy to study and address the environmental and social impacts associated with liveaboards on the British Columbia coastline.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The liveaboard lifestyle provides British Columbians with a unique housing option but can sometimes result in environmental and social impacts along the British Columbia coastline. The Province recognizes that all orders of government play a role in addressing these impacts.

Depending on the needs of the community, the Province recommends that local governments work with the applicable provincial and federal agencies with jurisdiction to resolve specific issues. This approach has previously been taken by individual local governments in British Columbia.

EB84 Supporting Tenants and Local Governments in the Delivery of Tenant Assistance

Whereas local governments have limited authority to require enhanced protections for tenants, except in limited instances, such as rezoning applications;

And whereas the benefits provided to tenants under local government tenant assistance policies often help vulnerable individuals and families in the community, including those receiving income assistance from senior levels of government;

And whereas even when local government tenant assistance policies may apply, implementation and enforcement of local government tenant assistance plans are challenging due to overarching provincial mandates, jurisdiction, and processes:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to review the Residential Tenancy Act and other provincial legislation to:

- Allow local governments the ability to require tenant assistance, such as financial compensation and supports to tenants above those required in the Residential Tenancy Act, for additional types of permits and applications,
- and provide local governments greater enforcement powers to ensure compliance and delivery of tenant assistance benefits secured by local governments;
- Ensure monthly rental supplement payments received during displacement as benefits under local government tenant assistance policies are not considered income, which may inadvertently affect an individual's ability to qualify for income and disability assistance programs and other financial assistance; and
- Have the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia create guidance documents for local governments and landlords on the collection of personal information for the purpose of tenant assistance policies.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

The Ministry is listening to local governments with concerns about tenant displacement and continues to strive to meet the needs in those communities with a province-wide perspective. Some new strategies in use by local governments are pending legal challenges, which the Ministry is observing with interest. The Compliance and Enforcement Unit of RTB is available to support local governments that are concerned about illegal or problematic landlord or tenant behaviour under the Residential Tenancy Act.

Local governments have the authority to regulate the development of lands and the construction of buildings within their respective areas. This includes the issuing of development and building permits. Building permits applications are assessed by qualified building officials, guided by the Building Act and a suite of building codes that set minimum technical requirements for health and safety. Evaluating the socio-economic impacts of tenant displacement is outside the scope of expertise required of building officials. Allowing local governments to attach conditions relating to tenant supports to a building permit would require a significant change to that legislative and regulatory framework which would affect all building permits, not just rental properties. Based on these impacts, the Ministry is not presently

considering amendments to allow tenant protection conditions to be attached to building permits at this time.

The Ministry has been working with planning officials in local governments throughout the province to evaluate what impacts might be associated with enabling local governments to attach tenant protection conditions to development permits. We have heard that replacement of rental housing under a development permit without rezoning is extremely rare and focused in only a small handful of jurisdictions where existing allowable densities provide economically viable opportunities to redevelop a site containing rental housing. Changes to development permits will affect all local governments and may introduce unintended costs or complexities. The Ministry is currently looking at other approaches to supporting tenant protections that could more directly address this issue. The Province is committed to continue work with local governments, landlords and tenants to prevent evictions due to renovations and demolitions and make the rental market more secure.

EB85 Expanded Authority to Notify Renters Impacted by Renovations

Whereas renters are facing the risk of displacement and housing insecurity as a result of renovations to existing rental buildings;

And whereas the Residential Tenancy Act does not currently require landlords to provide proof of permits or a description of the scope of work for renovations where tenancies are likely to be terminated, and local governments have limited authority to require notification related to tenancy issues as a condition of issuance of certain permits;

And whereas existing renters facing evictions due to renovations could benefit from information on the type and extent of renovations being undertaken to their buildings in order to support potential cases with the Residential Tenancy Branch:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province to amend the Local Government Act to clarify and broaden the conditions that can be imposed on building or development permit applications submitted for renovations or redevelopment of an existing building that contains rental housing units including, but not limited to, requiring applicants to provide information on existing tenancies and communicating the proposed work related to the requested permit.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

The Province of British Columbia recognizes that evictions for renovation or demolition are a serious issue, and we have taken significant steps to address the Rental Housing Task Force's recommendations on renovations. In 2018, Government made several changes to the Residential Tenancy Act pertaining to the ending of tenancies for renovation, development, or conversion. These changes include:

- Landlords must give four months' notice to end tenancy for demolition, renovation or repair, or conversion (previously two months' notice).
- Tenants have 30 days to dispute the notice (previously 15 days).
- A tenant has a right of first refusal to enter into a new tenancy agreement at a rent determined by the landlord if the landlord ends their tenancy to renovate or repair the rental unit. This right of first refusal applies only to a rental unit in a residential property containing 5 or more units. There are specific requirements for tenants and landlord regarding notifying each other.
- A landlord must compensate a tenant the equivalent of 12 month's rent if the landlord does not take steps to accomplish the purpose for ending the tenancy within a reasonable time after the tenancy ends.
- A landlord must compensate a tenant 12 months' rent if the tenant exercises a right of first refusal and the landlord does not fulfil their obligations in this regard.

The Residential Tenancy Branch has also issued a new policy guideline to clarify a landlord's responsibilities when ending a tenancy to demolish, renovate, or convert a rental unit. The onus is on the landlord to demonstrate that the planned renovations or repairs require vacant possession, and that they have no

other ulterior motive. The Four Month Notice to End Tenancy form has been revised to provide space for landlords to explain the type of work they intend to do and show how it requires vacancy. In cases where the landlord needs to have vacancy for a brief period to do renovations or repairs, the BC Supreme Court has stated that a landlord may not end the tenancy if the tenant is willing to accommodate the work by moving out temporarily.

Residential Tenancy Branch staff have been working with local governments to develop guidance for renters, landlords, and RTB dispute resolution officers about what types of renovations or repairs require the vacant possession of the rental unit. The Residential Tenancy Branch's Compliance and Enforcement Unit (CEU) has created a local government liaison position and is working with local governments and landlords to identify buildings where there is a risk of renovictions and make sure the landlord is informed of their responsibilities and limitations before they issue any evictions.

Local governments have the authority to regulate the development of lands and the construction of buildings within their respective municipalities. This includes the issuing of development and building permits. Building permits applications are assessed by qualified building officials, guided by the Building Act and a suite of building codes that set minimum technical requirements for health and safety. Evaluating the socio-economic impacts of tenant displacement is outside the scope of expertise required of building officials. Allowing local governments to attach conditions relating to tenant supports to a building permit would require a significant change to that legislative and regulatory framework which would affect all building permits, not just rental properties. Based on these impacts, the Ministry is not presently considering amendments to allow tenant protection conditions to be attached to building permits at this time.

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Most recently, new amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act were introduced in March 2021 to further tighten the criteria for ending a tenancy for renovation. These changes will also require landlords to apply to the Residential Tenancy Branch with evidence of permits, scope of work and the need to end the tenancy. The Branch will review the application and ensure that the criteria is fully met before allowing the landlord to issue a notice to end tenancy to the tenant. These further changes will go a long way in eliminating cosmetic renovations, intended entirely as a reason to evict tenants and increase rents.

EB86 Home Owner Grant Program in Electoral Areas

Whereas the British Columbia Home Owner Grant related to property tax is larger if a person(s) lives in a rural area;

And whereas the five Southern Gulf Islands of Salt Spring, Galiano, Mayne, Saturna, North and South Pender Islands and the Juan de Fuca do not receive the 'rural' grant because the Capital Regional District (CRD) is excluded from the rural grant. This is unfair and inequitable for the taxpayers of the Southern Gulf Islands whose living conditions are no different than those in neighbouring jurisdictions such as the electoral areas of the Cowichan Valley and Nanaimo Regional Districts who are eligible for the rural grant:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM request the province officially designate the Capital Regional District electoral areas as 'rural' for the purposes of the British Columbia Home Owner Grant.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Northern and Rural Area Home Owner Benefit can increase a home owner grant by up to \$200 for homeowners who reside outside the Capital, Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley regional districts. The program was added in 2011 as part of carbon tax revenue recycling to recognize the challenges which residents in some parts of the province face in minimizing their carbon footprint. More information on the program can be found [online](#).

The current boundaries for the benefit continue to be a reasonable approximation for the policy goal. The government does not plan to add or remove certain areas from the program at this time.

EB87 Assistance with Step Code Implementation

Whereas the Building Code is being changed to include higher energy standards in accordance with the Energy Step Code, and successful implementation of the Energy Step Code requires:

- Preparedness of the building community;
- Energy advisors that are readily accessible;
- Availability and affordability of required materials;
- Staff capacity within local governments;

And whereas discussion with local governments and the building community in rural, remote and northern regions have identified the following barriers to successful implementation:

- Lack of local training opportunities for the building community;
- Lack of qualified Energy Advisors, and the possibility that some small and remote communities will not have an adequate workload to entice an Energy Advisor to do business in the area;
- Lower availability of materials and higher material costs in rural communities leading to concerns of affordability among residents;
- Lower capacity within small local governments;

And whereas local governments want to be a part of the solution in implementing the Energy Step Code, but often lack required resources, leading some jurisdictions to consider seeking exemptions from the Step Code:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to assist communities with Energy Step Code implementation in an equitable way by working with communities to address barriers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing

Ministry staff continue to work with industry and local government partners to understand and consider the unique needs and capacity constraints of rural, remote and northern communities as part of policy development and implementation activities. The BC Energy Step Code came into force through a collaborative process with many organizations, including UBCM. The members of that multi-sector collaboration now form the Energy Step Code Council which guides the implementation of the BC Energy Step Code.

The Ministry is committed to finding ways to support the successful implementation of the BC Energy Step Code across the province. Keeping in mind the collaborative nature of the BC Energy Step Code, one of the ways the Ministry supports rural, remote and northern communities is by actively working with our Energy Step Code Council partners. Together with BC Hydro and FortisBC, the Province offers the CleanBC Better Homes and Home Renovation Rebate Programs which provide rebates and loans for space heating, water heating and building envelopes. BC Hydro and FortisBC also provide financial assistance so organizations such as the Community Energy Association can provide on-the-ground

training and support. The Community Energy Association chairs the Local Government Step Code Peer Network which is available to local governments at no cost. The Network is designed to support local government staff with BC Energy Step Code implementation through the exchange of ideas, issues, expertise and resources. Through these and other activities, ministry staff will continue to work with local governments to identify and address barriers to the successful implementation of the BC Energy Step Code.

LR2 Regulation of Anticoagulant Rodenticide

Whereas anticoagulant rodenticides are highly toxic, persistent and bioaccumulative compounds used to eliminate rodent populations that pose serious threats to B.C. wildlife (including raptors, songbirds, coyotes, snakes, raccoons, owls) and the environment (including aquatic ecosystems) through primary and secondary poisoning of non-target species placing owls and raptors are at a particularly high risk of secondary poisoning because of their dependence on rodents as a food source;

And whereas anticoagulant rodenticides are an ineffective and counterproductive means of controlling rodent populations long-term because they fail to address the root of the infestation problems (ie access to food, shelter and other attractants) and kill predators that serve as natural and chemical-free methods of pest control (eg. a single owl eats around 1,000 rats per year);

And whereas local governments have passed motions to ban the use of anticoagulant rodenticides on city- owned property and have petitioned the B.C. government to implement a province-wide ban because existing risk mitigation measures implemented by federal and provincial governments are inadequately addressing the threats that anticoagulant rodenticides pose to the environment, wildlife and human health:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province implement a province-wide ban on the sale, purchase and use of anticoagulant rodenticides, and call for the Minister of Health to initiate a special review of the regulation of anticoagulant rodenticides.

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

The Province jointly regulates pesticide use with Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to ensure pesticides pose minimal risks to people and the environment. The PMRA evaluates pesticides for their potential impacts, establishes restrictions to mitigate unreasonable risks, and approves their sale for use in Canada. The PMRA periodically re-evaluates their assessment and ensures recent scientific findings are considered. The PMRA also chairs a Federal, Provincial, Territorial Committee on Pest Management where B.C. can ensure environmental and public health concerns are considered.

In addition to the regular re-evaluations, the PMRA can also initiate a Special Review of a pesticide if there is enough new scientific evidence to suggest that an approved pesticide presents a significant health or environmental risk. The Province is able to participate in these re-evaluations.

The Province further regulates pesticide use through the *Integrated Pest Management Act and Regulation (IPMR)* which aims to protect human health and the environment. The IPMR is administered by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV), and defines which pesticide uses require an authorization, establishes additional environmental and human health protection standards, and sets minimum training requirements for pesticide users.

The ENV understands that managing rodent populations is important for several reasons, including public health and safety (e.g., disease transmission, electrical hazards) and environmental protection. The IPMR currently requires all authorization holders to use pesticides only within an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. A key principle of rodent IPM is the focus on long-term solutions with an emphasis on prevention methods such as removal of rodent attractants. If these measures are not sufficient to reduce pest populations, control measures, including rodenticides and alternatives to pesticides, may be warranted.

ENV maintains a commitment to protect wildlife from adverse impacts resulting from pesticide use. ENV staff are aware of recent reports of wildlife poisoning and are currently taking action to address risks associated with the use of these products. This includes increasing compliance verification of current IPMR requirements; raising awareness with rodenticide users on the impacts of misusing rodenticides; coordinating with provincial wildlife experts and Canadian Wildlife Service staff to share information and collaborate on joint solutions; and developing education materials for the public and pest control operators to better manage rodents within an IPM system. ENV staff are also investigating whether the increased incidence of wildlife poisoning is being caused by the misuse of these products or if the use is compliant with the federally approved label. Next steps will also include the identification of improvements to how rodenticides may be regulated in B.C, with a particular consideration of targeted or general ban.

NR1 Predominant Purpose of Bylaw

Whereas the original intent of section 9(2) of the *Community Charter* was to give a council unfettered discretion to elect to adopt a bylaw under a head of power determined by the council such that a bylaw will be upheld if it is attacked on the basis that the predominant purpose in fact (versus the legitimate purpose elected by the council) is one requiring ministerial approval;

And whereas the original intent and effect of section 9(2) was that a municipality need only determine one proper purpose for a bylaw to be valid, "even if members of Council may have had other motivations": *International Bio Research v. Richmond (City)*, 2011 BCSC 471 at para. 43:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province amend section 9(2) of the *Community Charter* to provide that (a) a bylaw is presumed to be enacted validly, in good faith and for a proper purpose if the council elects to determine in the bylaw the predominant purpose, and (b) that the council may adopt a bylaw under more than one head of power under the *Community Charter*, whether this is a matter of concurrent jurisdiction under section 9(1).

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Sections 8 and 9 of the *Community Charter* set out the spheres of authority for municipalities to regulate, prohibit and impose requirements by bylaw. Section 8 sets out areas of fundamental authority while section 9 sets out areas of concurrent authority between the Province and municipalities, including the requirement for provincial approval in areas of concurrent authority. Provincial approval of municipal bylaws can take the form of specific approval by the responsible minister, through agreement, or under a regulation made by the responsible minister specifying any limits on how a municipality may exercise powers in that sphere. Section 9(2) of the *Community Charter* further provides guidance as to the intended relationship between bylaws under sections 8 and 9.

The Province recognizes that the recent BC Court of Appeal decision in *Canadian Plastic Bag Association v. Victoria (City)*, 2019 BCCA 254 and its interpretation of the intent and application of section 9(2) of the *Community Charter* has created uncertainty in relation to the meaning and application of this provision. Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff are reviewing the implications of the Court of Appeal decision to determine if a change to section 9(2) of the *Community Charter* should be put forward for government's consideration to clarify its intent.

NR2 Amend Section 8(6) of the Community Charter to Include “Prohibit” in Relation to Business

Whereas the current statute limits the authority to only "regulating" in relation to "business" and the original white paper on the Community Charter contained the proposed authority to "prohibit" as well as "regulate", as in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Toronto, Winnipeg and Yukon;

And whereas in order to proceed with several climate change best practices, it will be necessary to prohibit certain business practices, such as selling fossil fuel heating systems after a certain date:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province amend section 8(6) of the Community Charter to enable a council by bylaw to regulate or prohibit in relation to businesses, business activities and persons engaged in business.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes that the current provision in the Community Charter with respect to businesses limits municipalities' authority to “regulate” and does not include the bare authority to “prohibit”. When the Community Charter was drafted, the Province needed to consider all interests that would be affected by the legislation, including the potentially significant impact on the business community and economic activity of broad authority to affect the fundamental nature of a business (e.g. prohibit a particular type of business/business activity).

Local government legislation does provide municipalities various powers that can significantly affect business activities. Within the authority to “regulate” businesses under the Community Charter, a municipality may establish limitations and restrictions, including rules respecting what must or must not be done. Additionally, the Community Charter authorizes requiring a business license for businesses to operate and municipalities may prohibit any business activity until a license has been granted and establish terms and conditions. As well, municipal zoning authority under the Local Government Act includes the power to prohibit any land use or uses in a zone. Municipal authority under the Community Charter also includes the power to regulate, prohibit and impose requirements in relation to the protection of the natural environment, subject to provincial involvement through concurrent authority. The precise scope of legislative authority in a particular circumstance is ultimately determined by the courts.

Any review of legislative change to the Community Charter in regard to business would need to understand and consider the full range of implications and interests affected by such a change, including court decisions, climate change considerations, impacts on economic prosperity, and business practices across BC. It would need to consider how such a change would affect the provincial role in regulating matters such as consumer protection and the protection of the natural environment. It would also require consultations with a broad range of interests in addition to local governments, including a wide range of business representatives, to gather the views of all who would be affected by any such proposed changes. The ministry will have to consider sufficient time for the necessary policy work, stakeholder consultations, and availability on the legislative agenda before committing to proceeding.

NR5 Criminal Record Checks for Local Government Elected Officials

Whereas individuals holding office in a local government are elected into a position of trust and power where they have access to sensitive data and are expected to "conduct themselves in an open, transparent and accountable manner" according to the Candidate's Guide To Local Government Elections in BC;

And whereas there is no requirement for elected officials to submit criminal record checks despite being privy to highly sensitive information and allowed to participate in activities that other employers would require criminal record checks for, such as volunteering:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to amend Section 87 of the Local Government Act to include criminal record checks as part of the nomination documents submitted by candidates thereby creating a high standard of transparency that will improve public trust in locally elected officials.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Locally elected officials are elected to make decisions that affect the daily lives of citizens, families, and the business community. The local elections process enables residents and property owners to choose those individuals who will make decisions and govern on their behalf. The nomination and subsequent campaign period of a local election provide an opportunity for transparent civic engagement between candidates and electors.

A person must meet all eligibility requirements to be qualified to be nominated for, and to be elected to and hold office on a local government. An individual must be a Canadian citizen who is 18 years of age or older on general voting day and a resident of British Columbia for at least six months prior to filing nomination documents. A person must not be disqualified under the Local Government Act or any other enactment from being nominated for, being elected to or holding office, or be otherwise disqualified by law.

An individual seeking election to hold office in a local government must be nominated by eligible electors and declared a candidate by the local Chief Election Officer. The information required in nomination documents serves to identify prospective candidates and the office for which they are being nominated. It is an opportunity for candidates to solemnly declare: they are qualified to be nominated for office; the information in their nomination documents is true; their intention to comply with campaign requirements; and their intention to accept office if elected. The requested amendment would involve not just adding a process requirement but actually changing the nature of qualifications for office – as such, it would be a substantive policy change requiring much deeper consideration of implications, as well as consultations with all affected.

Once elected, officials are required to make an oath or solemn affirmation of office and they are required to conduct themselves ethically while carrying out their responsibilities and to follow the legislated duty to respect confidentiality. If elected officials are found to have contravened certain requirements, they

may be disqualified from holding office.

The Province encourages transparency and debate throughout the nomination and campaign periods for local elections. Currently, the Province is not considering changes to the required nomination documents.