



Provincial Responses to 2024 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Resolutions

*Collated by the Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat as of
June 2025.*

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SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS (SR)

SR1 **Unsustainable Local Government Contributions to Regional Hospital Districts**

UBCM Executive

Whereas local governments are facing significant financial pressures due to the expansion of services which are being downloaded by the provincial and federal governments on many issues including housing, community safety and climate change;

And whereas local governments must share the capital infrastructure project costs for healthcare facilities with the provincial government through their Regional Hospital Districts with 60 percent contributed by the Province and 40 percent contributed by Regional Hospital Districts;

And whereas local governments must provide the 40 percent 'voluntary' contribution towards the provincial government's health care capital costs, including any cost overruns, or risk losing those projects to other areas of the province:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government work with Regional Hospital Districts and UBCM to review the cost-sharing model for funding health capital projects in BC, and acknowledge that the reliance on property taxes to fund areas of provincial health care responsibility is inconsistent and unsustainable for BC local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Infrastructure

Regional hospital districts are key partners in building and maintaining local health facilities. Health authorities work closely with districts to determine the level of cost sharing that may be possible for specific capital projects within approved capital plans. Regional hospital districts are expected to contribute 40 percent of capital project costs within their region.

The Province recognizes that regional contributions towards health capital projects vary by district and from project to project. When there is an opportunity to review the *Hospital District Act*, a review of the cost-sharing model for funding health capital projects in B.C. could be considered. This could be accompanied by consultations with all stakeholders, including regional hospital and the Union of BC Municipalities.

**SR2 Infrastructure Funding to Support Provincially-Mandated
Housing Growth**

UBCM Executive

Whereas Bills 44 and 47 mandated increased housing density across the province, requiring local governments to expand infrastructure to support the new housing and ensure complete communities;

And whereas an infrastructure deficit already exists with risks of failure that could impact health and safety, and threaten growth of the provincial economy;

And whereas local governments do not have financial tools linked to population and economic growth that could fund the capital renewal, expansion, and ongoing maintenance that will be required;

And whereas local governments are increasingly taking on tasks that have historically been the responsibility of the provincial and federal government including providing lands and other financial supports for non-market and supportive housing, while also bearing costs related to medical emergency response, and managing encampments for growing numbers of unhoused British Columbians:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province invest in a long-term, predictable allocation-based funding program to support expansion and operation of local government infrastructure services to support provincially-mandated housing growth including, but not limited to, water and sewer, transit, police and fire, and recreation;

And further that the Province invest in its own areas of responsibility where there are already service deficits that will be further affected by housing-related population growth, namely health care (family doctors, ambulances, hospitals, etc.) and education (classrooms, teachers, etc.).

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province remains committed to working with communities to address funding needs, considering the diverse spectrum of costs and revenue tools. The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) members endorsed a UBCM report entitled Ensuring Local Government Financial Resiliency – Today's Recovery and Tomorrow's New Economy, aimed at strengthening the municipal and regional district finance system in B.C. This report includes 20 recommendations to address the fiscal concerns of local government, including seeking new revenue sources. In January 2022, the Province signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UBCM to guide the review of local government financial resiliency. A joint working group meets biweekly to address the recommendations and explore ways to strengthen local government fiscal health and cost pressures around attainable housing, community safety, and climate change.

The Province recognizes that new housing supply creates demand for new and expanded infrastructure, amenities, and services, such as sewers, transportation network improvements, community centres, and daycares. In 2023, the *Local Government Act* and *Vancouver Charter* were amended to provide new and updated development finance tools that local governments can use to help fund the costs of infrastructure and amenities to support complete and livable communities.

Changes to legislation included updating the scope of infrastructure eligible to be funded through Development Cost Charges (DCC) to include fire protection facilities, police facilities, solid waste facilities, and a new development finance tool called Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) that allows local governments to collect funds from new developments that increase the number of residents or workers to help pay for amenities like community centres, recreation centres, daycares, and libraries to support this community growth. DCC and ACC Best Practices Guides are available to support local governments as they develop and implement new bylaws.

Additional legislative changes, introduced in the Spring of 2024, created new site-level infrastructure authorities. This includes expanded works and services powers that enable local governments to require a broader range of infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer, drainage, street furniture, parklets, and sustainable design features at the building permit stage. It also expanded road dedication authority to secure space for wider sidewalks, street trees, and traffic calming measures.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Infrastructure

The Province has been taking action to deliver these critical infrastructure projects as quickly as possible. These efforts are starting to produce results with hundreds of projects completed and underway, including 30 hospital projects, 11 long-term care centres, four cancer centres, and one new medical school; 226 new, expanded and seismically upgraded schools for more than 80,000 students; and over 10,700 new student housing beds at post-secondary campuses across B.C.

Over the last eight years, the Province has embarked on the largest, most ambitious capital plan in B.C. history to build the schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure that growing communities need. Budget 2025 invests over \$25 billion dollars over the next three years to develop and maintain the schools, health-care facilities, and other critical infrastructure people need to build good lives in B.C.

SR3 Temporary Shelters for Asylum Seekers

UBCM Executive

Whereas some local governments in British Columbia have experienced a significant increase in the number of asylum seekers using emergency shelters that are not equipped to handle their unique needs (i.e. translation, income and resettlement services), and which reduces the capacity of local shelters to accommodate the growing homeless populations in their communities;

And whereas the federal government maintains responsibility for immigration and refugee services, and provides funding to provincial and local governments, on a cost-sharing basis, for the temporary housing costs for asylum seekers;

And whereas local governments in B.C. are not eligible to directly receive this federal funding as the Province runs the shelter system in British Columbia:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Province to develop, co-ordinate and fund new dedicated temporary shelters and appropriate support services for asylum seekers to relieve the pressure on shelters servicing local homeless populations;

And be it further resolved that UBCM call on the federal government to provide the Province with the funds necessary to support said temporary shelters and support services in accordance with their responsibility for immigration and refugee services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs / Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

The provincial emergency shelter system is an important part of the homelessness response in B.C. and is available to anyone experiencing homelessness. There are three types of emergency shelters in B.C. Permanent shelters are open every night throughout the year and are a permanent resource in communities. Temporary shelters are open every night during winter, and most shelters operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Some temporary shelters are seasonal and are open November 1 to March 31 or April 30, while others will remain open longer. Emergency Weather Response shelters provide additional emergency shelter spaces during periods of extreme winter weather from October 15 until April 15.

In response to increasing claim volumes, B.C. launched a new suite of specialized settlement services in April 2024 to address claimants' unique vulnerabilities and needs. In addition to settlement, language and trauma services, the new BC Safe Haven program provides housing-related services such as assistance in finding rental housing, understanding tenancy rights, and accessing emergency shelter.

The federal government is responsible for managing refugee claims. The Province recognizes the acute pressures faced by B.C. communities and continues to advocate to the federal government for a coordinated, national approach to ensure that any increase in asylum claims in B.C. is resourced appropriately.

ENDORSE BLOCK (EB) RESOLUTIONS

EB1 Mental Health Supports

Kootenay Boundary RD

Whereas social issues in the province such as the opioid crisis, mental health issues, the lack of affordable housing, and a shortage of family physicians has led to increasing pressures on fire departments to respond to first response calls;

And whereas communities need more support and resources to deal with the impacts of the opioid crisis and mental health issues:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to allocate resources to improve access to mental health supports, harm reduction sites, detox and treatment facilities, family doctors, walk-in clinics, community health centres and affordable housing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Government is acting on all fronts to expand access to treatment and fight the toxic drug crisis so we can save lives and get people treatment so they can recover. Significant investments have been made to strengthen mental health and addiction services throughout the province. Since 2017, we have invested more than \$2.6 billion in mental health and substance use support across the entire continuum. This has resulted in opening more than 750 new substance use beds and many new and expanded outpatient services. While expanding services, we are also implementing new provincial models of care, like the Road to Recovery (R2R) and the Opioid Treatment Access Line (OTA Line) that are making accessing care easier and faster.

In 2021, Government opened the Red Fish Healing Centre (RFHC). Through Budget 2024, we are working to expand the RFHC model across the province. In addition, several services have been expanded to support people who are in a mental health or addiction crisis including Community-Led teams trained to de-escalate mental health crisis situations; Mobile integrated Crisis Response (MICR) Teams also known as “Car programs”, while Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams and Intensive Case Management Teams are outreach-based services supported by robust standards and empirical evidence to provide services and support to people with severe mental health and/or substance use challenges in the community.

Work is underway to improve care for people with overlapping mental health and substance use challenges. In June 2024, Dr. Daniel Vigo was appointed to serve as Chief Scientific Advisor on Psychiatry, Toxic Drugs, and Concurrent Disorders with the goal of improving care, including treatment for people with overlapping mental health and substance use issues. Budget 2025 includes \$500 million in new funding over three years for addictions treatment and recovery programs that are underway including the R2R, Foundry, secure care, supports for children and youth and Indigenous-led treatment, recovery and aftercare services.

On September 15, 2024, the Province announced the launch of secure, involuntary care for people with complex mental illness, substance use and acquired brain injury who also exhibit challenging, high risk behaviours including violence. Furthermore, recognizing that everyone in B.C. deserves a safe community to call home and timely access to justice, Budget 2025 is investing \$325 million in new funding over three years to provide housing options for people living outdoors and resolve encampments and to address public safety concerns, strengthen intervention services, and to make sure people have the support and treatment they need.

Through Primary Care Networks (PCNs) patients are supported through a team of health care providers, including family doctors, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, pharmacists, social workers, mental health professionals, and Indigenous and community providers. PCNs work with the community to develop local health care solutions to meet the unique needs of their communities, including mental health and substance use.

A key focus of B.C.'s Primary Care Strategy, and expectations of PCNs, is that they provide comprehensive, team-based primary care, including appropriate and timely care for people when they are struggling. This expectation includes mental health and substance use services delivered through screening, assessment and management of mild to moderate conditions, and ensuring effective transitions of care to the nearest specialized community services program as needed.

More than 90 percent of B.C.'s PCNs are recruiting to deliver these health services across primary care settings, including through family physicians, nurse practitioners, Indigenous health providers, mental health clinicians, clinical counsellors and social workers. Currently, more than 355 care providers have been hired in PCNs to specifically support the mental health and wellness of patients in B.C. communities – this is on top of the family doctors, nurse practitioners and other staff supporting people every day.

The ministry also supports the First Nations Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Service, delivered by the First Nations Health Authority, which provides Indigenous people in B.C. with virtual appointments with specialists in addictions medicine and psychiatry.

Community Health Centers (CHCs) are designed by the community, for the community - every CHC offers unique services based on the needs of people living in the areas they serve. CHCs connect underserved people of the community who do not have a primary care provider with a family doctor or nurse practitioner in a community-centered, culturally safe environment.

As of January 2025, the Province has committed over \$35M in annual funding to support the 15 CHCs funded through the Primary Care Strategy – 11 of those are currently delivering services with four in planning.

Through the primary care strategy, B.C. continues to make substantial progress on connecting people to a family doctor or a nurse practitioner. Year over year, B.C. is attaching more people to a primary care provider in their community. More than 695,000 people have been attached to a family doctor or nurse practitioner in B.C. since the launch of the Primary Care Strategy in 2018. In the 2024 calendar year, 248,000 people were attached to a primary care provider in B.C. The ministry, Doctors of B.C. and Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of B.C. continue to work collaboratively to further increase attachment rates and provider capacity to attach new patients.

Whereas RCMP members continue to respond to a significant number of calls for service for individuals dealing with mental health challenges and mental health liaison officers have proven to be an effective resource for assisting vulnerable citizens requiring support;

And whereas local governments are not provided funding to pay for healthcare and social services and there has been no increase in the Provincial funding model to support these officers responding to chronic/crisis mental health calls:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate for the Province to fund Mental Health Liaison Officers within the RCMP and local police departments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province is committed to working with local governments to better understand the complexities of their social environments and community safety needs. In recognition of the interconnectedness of social issues and corresponding police response, in 2024 a Minister of State for Community Safety and Integrated Services was appointed. Additionally, the Cabinet Committee on Community Safety was established to ensure an integrated government response to community safety issues.

Bill 17 – *Police Amendment Act*, 2024 established a new type of officer under the *Police Act* known as a safety officer. Within the local government context, safety officers are intended to support police and local governments along the law enforcement continuum. Establishing a variety of categories of safety officers may help alleviate the challenges police services experience and enable communities to customize their response in alignment with their specific community safety needs. Amendments related to safety officers are not yet in force but are intended to be implemented in the next two years.

Under the *Police Act*, municipalities over 5,000 population are responsible for the provision of policing and law enforcement services within their municipal boundaries. Should a local government wish to have dedicated RCMP Municipal Police resources assigned to specialized positions or a team, they can work with their local detachment to do so. Municipalities seeking to increase the authorized strength of their Municipal Policing Unit should follow the established process outlined under Article 6.0 of the Municipal Policing Unit Agreement.

**EB3 Amendment to the BC *Mental Health Act* to Relieve
Officers from Attendance at Hospitals**

View Royal

Whereas Section 28 of the British Columbia *Mental Health Act* specifies a police officer should accompany to hospital persons with apparent mental disorders and acting in a manner likely to endanger the safety of themselves or others;

And whereas the opioid and mental health crisis in British Columbia communities has resulted in an increase in the number and length of times police officers are immobilized to the service of the greater community to sit in hospital waiting rooms while accompanying apprehended individuals until they are seen by a physician:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM call on the Provincial government to amend Section 28 of the British Columbia *Mental Health Act* so that trained hospital staff be given special constable status and peace officer status to relieve police officers of the responsibility of attending hospital emergency departments with individuals apprehended under the *Mental Health Act*.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

When a person is detained under section 28 of the *Mental Health Act* (MHA) by a police officer, they are transported to the nearest designated facility under the Act. The officer waits with the person until a physician has completed the psychiatric assessment to determine whether the person meets the criteria for involuntary detainment and treatment under the MHA, and the transfer of responsibility from police to the designated mental health facility can take place.

Under the MHA there is no legal authority for hospital security guards to detain patients who are awaiting examination for involuntary admission under the MHA. The ministry also examined whether security guards could be appointed as “special provincial constables” to take over the apprehension of involuntary patients until the persons is assessed by a physician. Section 9 of the *Police Act* permits the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) to appoint suitable persons as “special provincial constables”. The ministry continues to explore this option with key partners.

Minimizing police wait times of apprehended patients under the MHA in the emergency departments is not an issue unique to B.C. In 2018 the ministry, in partnership with PSSG, developed a provincial toolkit to guide health authorities and police agencies in the development of joint local protocols/agreements at several interface points, including tools to minimize police wait times and ensure smooth transition for persons detained under the MHA from police custody to health care services. The toolkit is available on the Ministry of Health’s website.

EB4 Additional Funding for Overdose Prevention Sites Across Local Governments

New Westminster

Whereas the Province of British Columbia declared a drug toxicity public emergency in 2016, acknowledging the rapid increase in overdose deaths and the need to deploy the necessary harm reduction strategies with urgency to prevent additional deaths;

And whereas over 13,000 people have died of toxic drugs since 2016 in communities across British Columbia, including at least 2,500 people in 2023, about two-thirds of which were from inhalation, yet only about 40% of supervised consumption and overdose prevention sites in British Columbia offer inhalation services:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to increase funding for Health Authorities to augment existing, and to open new, supervised consumption and overdose prevention sites, including related inhalation services, across British Columbia and including local governments which do not currently offer this service to residents.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) and Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) save lives, reduce harm, and promote connections to care and treatment. OPS/SCS establishment is a complex process, typically led by health authorities. Services are stood up based on community needs and available facilities and resourcing.

OPS/SCS have been rapidly scaled up across B.C. since the declaration of a toxic drug public health emergency, with more than 59 services operating in B.C. as of March 2025. Building on previous investments, Budget 2024 allocates \$49 million to support existing harm reduction initiatives at OPS, drug checking, and naloxone kit distribution.

To support quality service delivery, the Province is developing minimum service standards for OPS. Once complete, the standards will be implemented in collaboration with health authorities.

The Province is committed to ensuring that people can access the right supports, at the right time, across the full continuum of care – including OPS/SCS where appropriate.

EB5 Additional Rapid Access to Detox Beds**Abbotsford**

Whereas the Province of BC, through their 2023 Pathway to Hope progress report committed to “eliminating gaps in the mental health care and substance use treatment system,” and to “building an integrated system of care that includes access to a full spectrum of treatment and recovery options” so that “no one falls through the cracks”;

And whereas wait times for detox beds are a known barrier for those seeking the option of treatment for addiction when they are ready:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government in order to provide more funding to open detox centres where they are needed and where accessing existing ones would be difficult for individuals needing the service.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

As of March 2025, there are 3,778 publicly funded substance use beds in B.C.; with 758 having been opened since 2017. Within the overall continuum of publicly funded substance use beds, 270 are detox beds. Detox support is also available through outpatient substance use services including home-based, mobile and virtual treatment options, and medication-based treatments that can be accessed through Rapid Access Addiction Clinics.

The Province is increasing access to detox services across B.C. with new detox beds, outpatient options for people looking for support at home or in community, and through expanded access to Opioid Agonist Therapy through new services like the Opioid Treatment Access Line. In addition, improving access to detox is a key part of Road to Recovery (R2R), a new model of care for addictions being implemented in each health region in B.C.

R2R is a made-in-B.C. model of addictions care that establishes a seamless continuum of care from detox to treatment and aftercare services for clients with moderate to severe substance use disorders. The R2R model was initially piloted in the Vancouver region in fall 2023, and in July 2024, the Province announced that the R2R model would be expanded to every health region. The R2R expansion will include the implementation of same-day clinical assessment and service matching in each health region through a new service called Access Central; this will be available across the Province in the coming months. The expansion will also include up to 100 new substance-use treatment beds, including new detox beds over three years, and new or expanded outpatient services.

In Vancouver, where R2R has been operating since 2023, R2R has been quickly connecting people with the treatment they need. From October 2023 until December 2024, more than 2,500 people were supported to access detox services across three sites in Greater Vancouver through R2R, with a median wait time of one day for those prioritized as urgent. The Province recognizes the importance of offering a full range of substance use services and will continue to work to build a seamless system of substance use care in B.C., through these and other initiatives.

EB6 Investment in Complex Care Beds**Nanaimo City**

Whereas in 2022, the BC Emergency Health Services reported a 75% total increase in annual overdose/poisoning events since the toxic drug crisis was declared a public health emergency in 2016 and the BC Provincial Overdose Cohort reports that brain injury is 15 times more likely among people who had experienced drug poisoning than those who had not;

And whereas the number of supports available for individuals requiring complex care due to health challenges related to substance use disorder has proven grossly inadequate for the ever-increasing demand in communities all across British Columbia:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province to increase investment in complex care beds to address the growing demand from those who have suffered serious health impacts from substance use disorder.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Complex Care Housing (CCH) is designed for people with significant health needs who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Residents may have mental health or addiction challenges, brain injuries, intellectual or developmental disabilities, chronic illnesses, and/or mobility issues.

As of April 1, 2025, CCH services are in place for more than 570 people across the province, and an additional 240 units are in development. Abbotsford, Burnaby, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, New Westminster, Prince George, Sechelt, Surrey, Vancouver, and Victoria have all been selected to receive a portion of 200 new purpose-built units. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs are working closely with BC Housing, regional health authorities, municipal partners, non-profit operators, and other interested and impacted parties to identify and advance development opportunities. The remaining 40 units will be Indigenous-led. The Province is working closely with Indigenous groups to identify partners and priority communities.

EB7 Complex Care Facilities**Okanagan-Similkameen RD, Penticton**

Whereas the toxic drug crisis continues to surge across the province and the lasting effects of overdose can potentially lead to acquired brain injury which can include organ failure, nerve damage, paralysis, memory loss, mental disorientation, diminished motor skills, reduced physical and cognitive functioning, and behavioural changes;

And whereas communities across the province are implementing many initiatives in support of all residents' safety and wellbeing such as Public Safety and Social Development Frameworks;

And whereas the Province has developed a complex care framework that acknowledges the growing number of people in our communities who require housing and have overlapping health, mental health, trauma and acquired brain injuries; yet there are no established timelines and residents continue to suffer in the interim;

And whereas the Province has appointed Health Authorities as the lead for plan implementation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask that the Province provides immediate and clear instruction to Health Authorities, inclusive of timelines and funding, to prioritize implementation of complex care facilities and the integration of complex care supports in existing or new facilities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

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It is important to ensure each CCH building is well-designed to meet the needs of residents and the staff who will be working there. Each project has a unique development timeline depending on the location. More information on target completion dates will be provided throughout each project lifecycle.

Whereas local governments are facing increased pressures to address immediate, emerging and persistent social issues in their local communities that impact the safety, security and well-being of residents;

And whereas the provincial government does not respond as quickly as needs arise, forcing local governments to take increased action to address community mental health and substance misuse/toxicity challenges with limited and often inadequate resources:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to commit to provide adequate, ongoing, and direct funding for mental health and addictions services in order to support local government needs for community safety.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

When people are in mental health crisis, they need quick compassionate support that meets them where they are at. As part of the Province's Safer Communities Action Plan, government has expanded CRCL teams (Crisis Response, Community-Led; formerly known as Peer Assisted Care Teams) and Mobile Integrated Crisis Response (MICR) teams across the province.

CRCLs are mobile mental health crisis response teams that provide an alternative to police-only crisis response for calls that do not involve violence or criminality. These teams help free up police resources to focus on crime. MICRs are staffed with police officers and mental health professionals specifically available to support people experiencing mental health and substance use crisis in the community and connect them with appropriate health care services.

Currently, five CRCLs (North and West Vancouver, New Westminster, Victoria, Prince George, and the Comox Valley) are supporting individuals in crisis, connecting them to services, while diverting calls away from police. In 2024, these teams responded to 5,882 calls and only 1.3 percent needed to be escalated to police.

Eighteen MICR teams (also known locally by various names, including Car Programs) are operating in communities across B.C. (Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam, Fort St. John, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, North Vancouver, Penticton, Prince George, Richmond, Squamish, Surrey, Vancouver, Vernon, Victoria, and the Westshore) to support individuals through de-escalation, clinical assessment, and/or connections to appropriate services.

In July 2024, Dr. Daniel Vigo was appointed Chief Scientific Adviser to provide advice and recommendations on how to support people with severe mental health, addiction and brain injury. In September 2024, Premier Eby and Dr. Vigo announced initiatives to provide compassionate care and ensure safety for this vulnerable population and their communities. Key developments include the establishment of secure, dignified long-term care under the *Mental Health Act* in regional facilities, with the first site opening in Maple Ridge in Spring 2025 and further expansion planned across the province, prioritizing local patients. Additionally, a dedicated mental health unit has been created within a provincial correctional centre. The first one is a 10-bed facility at the Surrey Pretrial Correctional Centre which opened April 24, 2025. It will provide more rapid access to treatment for individuals in custody facing these challenges.

**EB9 Provincial Cost Recovery for Emergency Medical Services
Provided by Fire Departments**

Nanaimo RD

Whereas BC fire rescue service departments, operating under career, composite, or volunteer models, are experiencing increased demands in emergency medical response calls while there is inadequate funding for the BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) system;

And whereas the fire departments that provide these services, authorized under the Emergency Medical Assistant (EMA) first responder program, currently do so on a community-by-community basis creating an inconsistent provincial approach to emergency medical assistance:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM endorse and advocate to the Province for the establishment of a cohesive financial emergency medical assistant framework, with considerations for the cost of personnel, training, province-wide consistency, and the replacement of consumed supplies for fire rescue service departments, as part of advocacy for a modernized financial framework for local governments in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The support provided by First Responders (FRs) during medical emergencies is an essential part of the delivery of emergency health services to the people of British Columbia. BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) and the Province value the role that FRs play in out-of-hospital emergency care. The Ministry of Health appreciates the out-of-hospital support that the fire agencies throughout B.C. continue to provide. Their support during medical emergencies is an essential part of the delivery of emergency health services to people in B.C.

BCEHS and local governments have agreements that define the health emergency events to which community first responder agencies will respond. The agreements are completely voluntary, allowing each municipality to decide the extent of their participation and the types of calls they will respond to.

This approach enables municipalities to directly manage all costs associated with their participation in out-of-hospital care. Under these agreements, BCEHS notifies the first responder agency of an emergency event, and the agency can decide whether to respond. Should a first responder agency find that the agreement they have is no longer a good fit, BCEHS will work collaboratively with them to update their agreement.

The Ministry of Health has worked closely with BCEHS, fire departments and municipalities, on improving out-of-hospital care by way of a renewed First Responder Service Agreement. This document is intended to provide opportunities for BCEHS and first responder agencies to work together, offering flexibility for local governments to determine a level of response by community interest, available resources and standard of care. This document is currently in its final stages of review and approval.

Since 2016/2017, spending on emergency health services has increased by \$530.9 million, from \$424.3 million in 2016/2017 to a final spend of \$955.2 million in 2023/2024. This increased spending has been enabled through targeted provincial investments in increased BCEHS staffing training and mental-health support, as well as investments to improve equitable access to ambulance services across B.C.

Through continued and increased investment, the B.C. government is supporting BCEHS to take targeted action to improve emergency health services throughout the province. Since 2017, BCEHS has added close to 1,900 new full-time and part-time permanent paramedic positions and emergency medical responder positions. BCEHS continues to focus on building paramedic capacity in all communities throughout B.C. and has an active national recruitment campaign underway. These hiring efforts will continue to build paramedic capacity and help further stabilize and strengthen ambulance services in communities throughout the province.

Whereas every year hundreds of British Columbians are diagnosed with chronic conditions and diseases that necessitate specialized medical treatment requiring long term stays near but not in hospital, there are disparities in health outcomes between rural and urban patients;

And whereas residents of rural and remote communities in British Columbia requiring specialized medical treatment for complex care in urban centres face significant challenges including high travel and accommodation costs, the psychosocial impacts of healthcare away from home and community, the loss of income during treatment period, and increasingly limited availability of affordable accommodations, hotel rooms, or short term rentals;

And whereas the Province of British Columbia, reflected in its 2024 mandate, is committed to both improved health care for British Columbians when they need it, and attainable and affordable housing to deliver more homes for people faster:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate for the Provincial Government of British Columbia to alleviate the financial and logistical burdens associated with seeking specialized medical care far from home by developing and implementing comprehensive policies and programs to assist patients needing to travel for healthcare, and ensure that patients have access to affordable, comfortable, and convenient accommodations;

And be it further resolved that UBCM request the Province consider and implement ways to deliver and dedicate subsidized accommodations in and adjacent to large urban health centres specifically purposed for longer term specialized medical treatment.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs / Ministry of Health

The Province is committed to supporting B.C. residents who must travel within the province for specialized medical services, especially those living in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. B.C. residents have access to a variety of medical travel supports through provincial and regional programs. The primary public program for medical travel in B.C. is the Ministry of Health's (HLTH's) Travel Assistance Program (TAP). TAP helps alleviate some of the transportation costs for eligible B.C. residents who must travel within the province for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community upon referral by a physician or nurse practitioner. Meals, accommodation, mileage, fuel, and local transportation expenses are not included in TAP.

In addition to TAP, residents have access to medical travel support through various targeted programs. The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) both offer travel supports. SDPR offers medical transportation supplements to some recipients of income assistance and disability assistance including assistance with transportation, food, or support costs, accommodation, and companion costs as applicable. MCFD's At Home Program provides travel and accommodation assistance for children with disabilities when the child must travel more than 80 kilometres to access specialized medical care related to their disability. Lastly, the BC Family Residence Program provides accommodation assistance to enable families living outside Metro Vancouver to stay together when their child requires medical care at BC Children's Hospital or Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children.

Health Connections is a health authority based regional travel assistance program that offers subsidized transportation options to help defray costs for rural residents who must travel to obtain non-emergency, physician-referred medical care outside their home communities. Health authorities have implemented Health Connections programs to meet the unique needs of selected communities in their regions. B.C. residents may

also qualify for the First Nations Health Authority Medical Transportation Benefit, which helps with costs of meals, accommodation and transportation to assist in travel to medical appointments outside of community of residence.

The Province remains committed to supporting B.C. residents who must travel outside of their home communities for medical care while working to address ongoing pressures to the health care budget. This includes a commitment to review TAP and other medical travel assistance and available funding in B.C. As part of the Homes for People Action Plan, the Province also remains committed to delivering affordable rental homes, and working with homeowners, small-scale landlords, developers, and local governments to support new, long-term rental units that meet a diverse range of community needs.

EB11 Healthcare Worker Shortage - Reducing Barriers to Training

Bulkley-Nechako RD

Whereas there is a shortfall of qualified staff to provide healthcare services, particularly in rural and remote communities, across the province;

And whereas some of the training requirements for healthcare workers pose significant barriers in terms of time, cost, and accessibility, thereby hindering the potential influx of qualified individuals into the healthcare workforce;

And whereas reducing unnecessary barriers and streamlining training opportunities for healthcare workers would promote professional growth, enhance healthcare delivery, and ultimately benefit the residents of our communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province and relevant authorities to put in place the necessary framework, tools and incentives to address the shortfall of qualified healthcare workers and reduce the barriers for healthcare training opportunities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

In 2022, the Ministry of Health (Health) announced a comprehensive Health Human Resource (HHR) Strategy aimed at optimizing the health system, expanding training and improving recruitment and retention. Under Actions 36 and 37 respectively, this strategy includes Return of Service bursary programs aimed at increasing the number of Internationally Educated Nurses and Allied Health Professionals (IEAHPs), into the province, to reduce critical healthcare professional shortages. These bursaries offset the cost of assessment and transitional education in exchange for service commitments to work in qualifying positions after attaining licensure in B.C.

In addition to these bursaries, the Province also issued a series of training bursaries to attract students to priority health education programs, reduce financial barriers to training, and ultimately fill key workforce gaps. These bursaries include:

1. Access to Practical Nursing Bursary of \$10,000 per recipient to support Health Care Assistants (HCAs) to advance their careers and develop new skills by training to become Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).
2. Priority Program Bursary (Action 57 of the HHR Strategy) - Student Recruitment and Retention Bursary of \$2,000 per program year; and
3. Priority Program Bursary (Action 57 of the HHR Strategy) - Indigenous Student Recruitment Bursary of \$5,000 per program year.
4. Nursing Tuition Grant to support minimum Nurse to Patient Ratios:
 - a. Nursing students in Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN), Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing, and Practical Nursing programs receive \$2,000 per program year.
 - b. Indigenous students in BSN programs will receive an additional \$5,000 per program year.
5. Return to Practice Nurse Bursary for nurses who are interested in returning to practice in B.C. covering costs like tuition, assessment fees, and travel.

On March 11, 2025, Health also announced a plan to recruit doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals from the United States highlighting new fast-track credential recognition pathways for nurses and doctors (additional information available through BCHealth Careers).

The BC College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM) has fully implemented their fast-track pathway for US nurses leveraging similarities in education, practice, and registration. The recent changes build upon improvements made in 2023/24 which allowed US nurses to bypass the Inspire application process and apply directly to the BCCNM. In the new fast-track process, BCCNM will use the US' national nurse-licensure and disciplinary database, NURSUS to obtain information about a nursing applicants' education and registration history

directly, without the need for an independent credential review, allowing them to focus on obtaining more details on an applicant's practice history only when necessary. US nurses will now be able to obtain a registration decision even faster than before.

In the case of physicians, Health is working with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC on a direct process to enable US-trained doctors, who hold certification from the American Board of Medical Specialties, to become fully licensed in B.C. without the need for further assessment, examination or training. The proposed bylaw changes are open to public consultation until May 7th.

To address credentialing barriers for IEAHPs, Health provided funding to regulatory colleges, including the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations for an integrated management information system to better prepare applicants for the competency assessment. The Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators also received funding to introduce an expedited credentialing pathway that reduces assessment times from 16 weeks to two weeks. The Pre-Approved Credentialing Pathway simplifies applications from certain jurisdictions including Australia, Hong Kong, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the US.

The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills also offers the B.C. Student Loan Forgiveness Program (BCLFP). Recent graduates in select in-demand occupations can have their B.C. student loans forgiven by agreeing to work at publicly-funded facilities in underserved rural and remote communities in B.C. The Ministry of Health continues to work with Student Aid BC and the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to ensure the BCLFP is responsive to health system priorities and plans.

With regards to provincial medical staff supply, below are some targeted HHR actions aimed at reducing training barriers and increasing supply:

1. New to Practice Incentive Program (Action 43): new contract rate, clinical overhead contribution, one-time signing bonus, and one-time medical education debt relief grant for family physicians.
2. Associate Physician Deployment Expansion (Action 23) enables international medical graduates who are not eligible for independent licensure to practice under the supervision of an attending physician.
3. Undergraduate Medical Education Expansion (Action 63): At UBC, 40 new undergraduate medical education (UGME) seats have been added over two years: 18 in 2023 and 22 in 2024, for a total of 328 seats.
4. New Medical School at SFU (Action 60): The School of Medicine at SFU will welcome its first incoming class of 48 undergraduate medical school students by summer 2026.
5. Postgraduate Medical Education Expansion (Action 64): To address the critical need for more physicians, UBC's Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) programs will increase by over 160 positions between 2022 and 2028.
6. Practice Ready Assessment-BC expansion (Action 41) increases annual seats from 32 to 96 (by 2024), providing a pathway to licensure for internationally trained family physicians in exchange for a practice commitment in a health authority identified community in need in B.C.

Lastly, Health has expanded GoHealth BC (Action 34), a travel staffing program which supports short-term deployments to high-need rural and remote communities to prevent service interruptions and diversions. Currently, GoHealth BC nurses are working in 34 different communities across Interior Health, Northern Health, and Island Health. The program is further expanding to support high priorities sites in rural and remote communities in those areas.

The initiatives noted above highlights the work underway to reduce and offset the costs and barriers associated with training. The broader HHR strategy is built around four cornerstones (retain, redesign, recruit, and train), aiming to support a healthy and productive workforce and a better health care system for everyone in B.C. The initiatives in the HHR Strategy will work towards creating a more equitable system across the province to ensure all B.C. residents have access to health care in their community.

EB12 Internationally Educated, Trained and Experienced Healthcare Workers

Dawson Creek

Whereas the Province is currently experiencing a shortage of healthcare workers, and there are qualified individuals among international residents who despite being internationally trained, educated, and experienced, are encountering certification and financial barriers preventing them from joining the healthcare workforce in the province;

And whereas the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills is responsible for providing leadership and direction for post-secondary education and skills training systems in British Columbia:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to expedite the credential approval process and provide financial assistance for internationally trained, educated and experienced healthcare providers to remove the unnecessary credential and financial barriers to integrate them into the provincial health system to help address the shortage.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

In 2022, the Ministry of Health (Health) announced a comprehensive Health Human Resource (HHR) Strategy aimed at optimizing the health system, expanding training, and improving recruitment and retention. Under Actions 36 and 37 respectively, this strategy includes Return of Service bursary programs aimed at increasing the number of Internationally Educated Nurses and Allied Health Professionals (IEAHPs), into the province, to reduce critical healthcare professional shortages. These bursaries offset the cost of assessment and transitional education in exchange for service commitments to work in qualifying positions after attaining licensure/certification in B.C.

In addition to these bursaries, the Province also issued a series of training bursaries to attract students to priority health education programs, reduce financial barriers to training, and ultimately fill key workforce gaps. These bursaries include:

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details on an applicant's practice history only when necessary. US nurses will now be able to obtain a registration decision even faster than before.

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The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills also offers the B.C. Student Loan Forgiveness Program (BCLFP). Recent graduates in select in-demand occupations can have their B.C. student loans forgiven by agreeing to work at publicly-funded facilities in underserved rural and remote communities in B.C. The Ministry of Health continues to work with Student Aid BC and the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to ensure the BCLFP is responsive to health system priorities and plans.

With regards to provincial medical staff supply, below are some targeted HHR actions aimed at reducing training barriers and increasing supply:

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The initiatives noted above highlight the work underway to reduce and offset the costs and barriers associated with training. The broader HHR strategy is built around four cornerstones (retain, redesign, recruit, and train), aiming to support a healthy and productive workforce and a better health care system for everyone in B.C. The initiatives in the HHR Strategy will work towards creating a more equitable system across the province to ensure all B.C. residents have access to health care in their community.

**EB13 Eliminating Barriers to Publicly Owned and Operated
Home Care Services and Long-Term Care**

New Westminster

Whereas seniors, families and seniors organizations have been advocating to improve access to public home care services and supports to assist seniors to live at home, in their communities, longer and to delay or prevent premature admissions to public long-term care facilities;

And whereas finances can become an impediment to access the required home care services such as housekeeping, more frequent bathing and meal preparation necessary to age in place, and community programs that have been designed to try and meet seniors' needs are unable to fulfil the increasing demand:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to eliminate financial and accessibility barriers by investing in more publicly owned and operated and not-for-profit home care services and social supports required to age in place, and by further investing in publicly owned and operated and not-for-profit long-term care to ensure seniors are well supported in the continuum of care.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Through Budget 2024, government is investing \$227 million over three years to improve publicly funded home health services delivered by health authorities, including home support and professional services (nursing, occupational and physical therapies, social work). Work is underway to improve the quality, responsiveness, and overall accessibility of home health services through the hiring of more front-line service delivery staff; expanding service availability and hours of coverage throughout British Columbia; expanding the scope of home support services to provide more help with everyday living needs for seniors of greatest need; and providing more robust care management, so individuals have more contact and support from the care team. Home health professional services can be accessed at no cost. For other home health services requiring client co-payment, such as home support, the majority of individuals see their co-payment reduced or eliminated entirely. Individuals may also apply for a temporary rate reduction to enable access to services.

Concurrently, increasing investment in Community-Based Seniors' Services (CBSS) is critical to the Province's plan to support seniors to remain physically active, socially connected and engaged, and to be as resilient and independent as possible. Budget 2024 invests \$127 million over three years, to stabilize and expand high-demand services like Better at Home, which complement health authority home health services by providing seniors with non-medical support, such as light housekeeping, grocery shopping, and transportation to medical and other appointments. Better at Home participants pay for services on a sliding scale, based on their income, with many participants fully subsidized. Targeted funding is supporting waitlist reduction for housekeeping services so that more seniors can get the help they need to remain living at home.

The B.C. government has invested in the development of Long-Term Care (LTC) capacity, including renewal and expansion. Since 2017, there have been 37 LTC development projects approved that will yield 2,152 LTC replacement beds and 3,436 new LTC beds in B.C. when all the projects are completed. Since 2021 there have been 13 projects completed, providing 736 replacement beds and 686 new beds. These developments have occurred in urban and rural settings, providing much-needed LTC capacity in Northern Health, Vancouver Coastal Health, Interior Health, Fraser Health, and Island Health.

Through these investments, the Province is continuing the important work to provide high quality health services and supports B.C.'s seniors.

Whereas Statistics Canada reports confirm that both the number and percentage of seniors will grow significantly during the next two decades, both in numbers and overall proportion of the population;

And whereas most serious illnesses requiring either assisted living options and/or hospital care occur later in life and there is a significant shortage of supportive assisted living spaces for seniors, affecting both hospital availability/accessibility and housing options for vulnerable seniors:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to increase the number of supportive assisted living units across British Columbia in a manner aligned with the demographic data to ensure that all seniors can be housed in dignity as they age and to reduce the pressures of the hospital system by so doing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

As of December 31, 2024, there are 200 registered Assisted Living (AL) residences, regulated under *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* (CCALA), providing housing, hospitality and personal care services to seniors and person with disabilities, with over 4,300 publicly funded beds and 3,900 private beds¹.

The Ministry of Health is working with Health Authorities to review Assisted Living policies on eligibility and access. The goal of this work is to improve and standardize the criteria for access to publicly-funded AL units.

There are also initiatives underway to improve home health and community-based services to support the seniors in our province to remain living at home as long as possible. This includes:

- \$227 million over three years as part of Budget 2024, to improve the quality of home health services for seniors by adding more health-care workers to the workforce. This will provide home health clients with more access to comprehensive and responsive care. Seniors will see improved overnight response, more regular contact with their care manager and improved response to care needs that arise unexpectedly.
- \$127 million over three years as part of Budget 2024, to stabilize and expand high-demand community-based services that operate province-wide for seniors. These services provide seniors with non-medical support, including assistance with day-to-day tasks, and deliver programs that help keep seniors physically active, socially engaged and connected to their communities.

¹ Ministry of Health. Report ID: RMS 1228. Home & Community Care Bed/Facility Inventory. Data as of December 31, 2024. Scope excludes standalone ABI and Short Stay facilities but includes Short Stay beds collocated in regular LTC homes. Retrieved from: <https://hspp.hlth.gov.bc.ca/framework/service-delivery/specialized-community-services/home-and-community-care-bedfacility-inventory-report>.

EB15 Implementing *Accessibility BC Act* Recommendations

Parksville

Whereas the *Accessible British Columbia Act* passed by the provincial government in 2021 requires local governments to develop accessibility plans to identify, remove and prevent barriers;

And whereas local governments have limited financial abilities and staff resources to implement accessibility recommendations on an ongoing basis:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province create an annual funding model (accessibility fund) designed to assist local governments to implement accessibility recommendations.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

Thank you for your resolution requesting the Province create an annual funding model (accessibility fund) designed to assist local governments to implement accessibility recommendations.

Parksville is among over 750 public sector organizations listed in the Accessible BC Regulation required by September 1, 2023 to establish: an accessibility committee, an accessibility plan, and a tool to receive feedback on accessibility. The Accessible BC Regulation came into effect September 1, 2022.

The requirements to establish an accessibility plan, committee and feedback mechanism are framed flexibly, and organizations have significant discretion to develop the plans, feedback mechanisms and committees that work for their communities. The regulation allows organizations to evolve their approach to the plan, committee and feedback tool over time and with feedback from people with disabilities.

Government has been working together with trusted partners to help organizations to comply with the regulation. The following projects support local governments with accessibility:

- SPARC BC – Local Community Accessibility Grant Program: In 2023 the Government of British Columbia provided \$5 million over three years to provide up to \$25,000 for all local governments or regional districts to support implementation or projects identified within their accessibility plan or by their accessibility committee. Funding is available for a wide range of accessibility initiatives. We would encourage all local government who have not yet applied for this funding to contact SPARC BC at accessibility@sparc.bc.ca.
- Disability Alliance BC – Accessible Organizations Project: In 2022 the Government of British Columbia provided \$3 million to support the organizations prescribed by the Accessible BC Regulation by developing a variety of resources including toolkits, guides and training.
- Rick Hansen Foundation – BC Accessibility Grants Program: The Government of British Columbia has provided \$7.5 million to fund local governments and Indigenous communities to receive a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ rating for three sites and up to \$82,500 (total) for upgrades along with accessibility awareness training for municipal staff.

Whereas municipalities are increasingly expected to respond to gaps in Canada's social safety net resulting from growing economic, racial and health inequalities;

And whereas a basic income program, in addressing key social determinants of health, such as income and housing, can alleviate pressures on municipalities to address poverty and fill gaps in social supports, such as shelter, housing, food security and mental health;

And whereas evidence from basic income research and pilots shows that when people have a sufficient and secure income their mental and physical health improves, they have the capacity to secure more affordable, suitable, and safe housing, childcare, healthy food, and transportation, and poverty rates decrease;

And whereas the provision of a basic livable income would benefit individuals, families and communities and protect the most vulnerable in society, and support community resilience;

And whereas evidence shows that a federally funded basic income that improves people's financial stability is possible, as successful income transfer programs already exist in Canada for seniors (Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement) and parents (Canada Child Benefit), and to aid in recovery post- COVID (Canada Emergency Response Benefit):

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Governments of British Columbia and Canada to individually and/or collectively implement a Universal Basic Income, ensuring everyone has sufficient income to meet their needs, helping British Columbia and Canada lessen poverty and homelessness, alleviating the pressure on municipalities to use their limited resources to fill gaps in our social safe net.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

In 2018, B.C. convened a Basic Income Expert Panel (the Panel) to:

- Assess the feasibility of a basic income in B.C. and whether B.C. should establish a basic income pilot; and
- Examine how basic income principles could be used to improve B.C.'s existing income and social support system.

The final report from the Panel, *Covering All the Basics: Reforms for a More Just Society*, was released on January 28, 2021. The panel recommended against both implementing a basic income in B.C. and conducting a pilot, citing both complexity and cost, along with concerns about impacts on current supplemental benefits and programs. Their findings also concluded that moving to a system constructed around a basic income for all as its main pillar is not the most just policy option. Instead, the panel made 65 recommendations to update B.C.'s existing social supports.

Since the release of the report, over half of the recommendations have been fully implemented, partially implemented, or have work underway across ministries, including key recommendations like targeting a basic income and supports for youth aging out of care and increasing income assistance and disability assistance rates.

While there is evidence that a federally funded basic income is possible, there remains significant concern that implementing a basic income would reduce or displace the existing social programs and tax credits that many low-income people currently rely on.

EB17 Provincial Funding for Child Care Facilities**Burnaby**

Whereas recent provincial housing legislation, specifically Bills 44 and 47, will mean increased population growth leading to greater need for child care spaces;

And whereas barriers to accessing provincial funding exist for local governments and the private sector:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to review its funding model and work with local governments and the private development sector to streamline its process for the disbursement of provincial funds to facilitate the construction of new public or non-profit owned child care facilities, including facilities within new private development.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education and Child Care

Since the introduction of the ChildCareBC plan in 2018, the Province is building a future where access to affordable, quality, inclusive child care is a core service that families can rely on. We will continue to build on our promise to create more affordable spaces for families while also ensuring we have the child care professionals to staff them.

The ministry uses feedback and insights from each New Spaces Fund intake period to improve the program and update its policies. Additionally, program policies are reviewed against updated Minister mandate commitments to ensure alignment. While the Province is focused on expanding access through public and not-for-profit infrastructure, which is in line with provincial priorities and commitments under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, we continue to support families in having a choice by providing operational funding for all types of child care providers – including private providers.

The Province will continue to leverage opportunities to create new child care spaces when building a new school, hospital or other capital project, through ministries such as Infrastructure, Post-Secondary and Future Skills, Transportation and Transport, and Housing and Municipal Affairs and through partnering with public-sector partners such as health authorities, public post-secondary institutions and housing projects.

The Province will also support the development and expansion of licensed child care facilities focused on community investments that are long-term and run by public and not-for-profit organizations, including supporting organizations with child care planning and design. The Ministry of Education and Child Care will continue to work with school districts to expand before- and after-school care programs throughout the province using cost-effective models for parents and the public that leverage existing school facilities and education workers.

Whereas local governments are seeing the need for increased housing affordability for vulnerable residents, students, families, and seniors;

And whereas there is a need for building a broad spectrum of housing supply and supports in rapidly growing communities such as in the Lower Mainland region:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM advocates that the Province and federal government work with not-for-profits to further incentivize not-for-profit partnerships and the building of non-market housing, such as below market rentals and co-ops, through financial tools like low interest rate loans, long-term 25 year rates and expanded tax credit eligibility.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

To help address the urgent need for more affordable housing in most communities across B.C., the Province recently provided local governments with a new inclusionary zoning tool and an improved density bonus tool to secure affordable housing in their communities. Inclusionary zoning allows local governments to require that new residential developments include a component of affordable housing. Density bonus enables local governments to provide the option to a developer to build to a higher density in exchange for providing amenities or affordable housing.

The Province also continues to implement the Homes for People Plan and work with partners across the housing sector to increase the supply of affordable rental, co-op, and non-market housing. As part of this plan, the Province has committed more than \$3.3 billion through the Community Housing Fund to build over 20,000 affordable rental homes for families and seniors by 2031/32. In addition, the Province has committed \$1.7 billion over ten years to build 3,500 homes on and off reserve through the Indigenous Housing Fund. The Province continues to explore opportunities to expand partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, leaders, and non-profit organizations on non-market housing.

BC Builds was launched in February 2024 to bring together governments, First Nations, non-profit housing providers, and home builders to help more households with middle incomes find a home that fits their needs. This initiative leverages public land, low-cost financing, faster provincial and local government approvals, and innovative tools to develop affordable housing in communities across the province. BC Builds has a target of at least 9,000 homes through Provincial Grants and Provincial and Federal Financing.

The Province has also taken several measures to support renters in B.C. Low to moderate income households are now eligible for up to a \$400 refundable tax credit. In addition, in 2023, the Province launched the \$500 million Rental Protection Fund which provides grants to non-profit housing organizations to buy residential rental buildings and co-ops, protecting thousands of rental units and the tenants who live in them.

Whereas there is a housing crisis throughout B.C. requiring a range of solutions that address housing affordability issues in large and small communities;

And whereas the Province's Homes for People's plan focuses on addressing housing supply issues in larger communities in high growth areas of the province:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to engage with small and northern communities to identify housing solutions outside of high growth areas.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province is committed to supporting local governments in their efforts to bring affordable housing to small, rural, and remote communities and address their long-term housing needs. Rural communities are eligible to apply for support developing new affordable housing units through a range of BC Housing programs, including BC Builds, the Community Housing Fund, and the Indigenous Housing Fund.

As part of the Homes for People plan, the Province passed a suite of legislation in fall 2023 that changed the local government land use planning framework to enable local governments to deliver more homes for people, faster, in every part of B.C. Informed by consultation with a wide range of interested parties, including representatives from rural, small, and northern local governments, the legislation is structured to help address housing supply challenges in communities of all sizes.

For example, the Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing framework requires local governments to allow secondary suites or detached accessory dwelling units in all single-detached and duplex residential zones across B.C., from large cities to small communities. This will help unlock opportunities to add housing in smaller and more remote communities. The accompanying guidance includes specific recommended provincial site standards (recommended zoning bylaw regulations) for lands within regional district electoral areas or small communities (municipalities with populations less than 5,000) that are not within urban containment boundaries.

Recent funding programs, including the Growing Communities Fund and the Local Government Housing Initiatives Capacity Fund, have also supported every local government in B.C. in preparing for increased density and upgrading key infrastructure in their communities.

Additionally, through the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program, the Province is supporting projects in rural communities that promote economic diversification, resilience, clean growth opportunities, and infrastructure development – including workforce housing.

Whereas seniors, in the increasing demographic of those over 65, in rural BC have limited range of options for housing;

And whereas rural BC local municipalities have limited financial resources to support seniors housing options that allow seniors to age in place in their home community due to financial, social, health and housing vulnerabilities experienced by this increasing demographic:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the provincial government to provide BC Housing with additional funding and support to facilitate new affordable seniors' housing in rural areas.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Many seniors in B.C. are challenged to access suitable housing, manage rising costs, and have the supports they need to maintain residence in their homes. Seniors on fixed incomes are especially impacted by rising inflation. To support low- and moderate-income seniors, government, through BC Housing, provides the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER), and the BC Rebate for Accessible Home Adaptation (RAHA), as well as investments in new affordable rentals through the Community Housing Fund and Indigenous Housing Fund (IHF), and Seniors' Supportive Housing Program.

Since 2017, there are over 13,000 units complete or underway through the Community Housing Fund, including many projects in rural communities. In addition, more than 3,220 IHF homes are now open or underway throughout B.C.

SAFER provides support for low- to moderate-income people aged 60+ who rent in the private market. Assistance is calculated based on household size, income, rent amount, and location. Recently, the Province has made significant improvements and provided new funding to this program. Budget 2025 invests an additional \$375 million over the next three years to enhance both the SAFER program and the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), helping low-income families and seniors afford their rent. SAFER program improvements include increasing the household income limit for eligibility from \$37,240 to \$40,000, increasing the maximum monthly rent ceiling from \$931 to \$1,150, and increasing the average monthly supplement by nearly 30 percent from approximately \$260 to \$337. These changes will help an estimated 1,600 more seniors to qualify for the SAFER program.

RAHA provides a rebate of up to \$20,000 (lifetime max) for adaptations that directly address an individual's permanent disability or loss of ability and improve their ability to perform the basic activities of daily living. Recipients can be homeowners or landlords making adaptations for an eligible tenant.

Government also provides supports to enable seniors who own homes to manage rising costs and age in place. This includes B.C.'s Home Owner Grant, property tax deferral, and the Home Renovation Tax Credit.

B.C.'s Home Owner Grant reduces the amount of property taxes paid each year on a principal residence. Seniors aged 65+ that own property assessed at \$2.175 million or less may qualify for a higher grant amount totaling \$845 in the Capital Regional District, Metro Vancouver Regional District, and the Fraser Valley and \$1,045 in other areas of the province.

B.C. residents aged 55+ can also defer annual property taxes on their principal residence, partially or in full, if they have a minimum equity of 25 percent of the property's assessed value.

The Home Renovation Tax Credit is available to seniors aged 65+ or persons with disabilities to assist with the costs of certain renovations that improve accessibility. The maximum credit amount per home is \$1,000 per tax year, calculated at 10 percent of qualifying renovation expenses.

Whereas the Province of British Columbia's Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program is intended to help make rents affordable for B.C. seniors with low to moderate incomes;

And whereas the Office of the Seniors Advocate has identified that the BC Housing Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) and Seniors Subsidized Housing programs are not keeping pace with inflation, the growing seniors population, and changing market conditions, including a notable lack of culturally appropriate supports and inclusive care environments for 2SLGBTQ+ residents:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to increase funding and resources for the SAFER Program and Seniors Subsidized Housing programs, including affordable seniors housing projects, to reflect current market conditions, meet the needs, and improve the quality of life for seniors and older persons across the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province is committed to supporting seniors in a manner that is both responsive to changing market conditions and improves the quality of life for older persons across the province. This commitment is reflected in Budget 2025 which invests an additional \$375 million over the next three years to enhance both the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) and the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, helping low-income families and seniors afford their rent.

The SAFER program provides support for low- to moderate-income people aged 60+ who rent in the private market. Through Budget 2025, improvements to SAFER include increasing the household income limit for eligibility from \$37,240 to \$40,000, increasing the maximum monthly rent ceiling from \$931 to \$1,150, and increasing the average monthly supplement by 30 percent from \$260 to \$337. In addition, a Public Awareness Campaign will take place between April 1 and October 1, 2025, consisting of a mix of print and digital materials to improve program awareness and uptake.

EB22 Expanding the Rental Protection Fund**Nakusp, New Denver**

Whereas the current parameters of the Rental Protection Fund only provides funding for the purchase of rental buildings that have a minimum of 5 units and 4 in rural Fund communities;

And whereas many small rural and remote communities do not have properties that are for sale with a minimum of 4 units;

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM urge the provincial government to expand the Rental Protection Fund to allow for the purchase of individual units in communities that are less than 5,000 in population classified as remote or very remote.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province contributed \$500 million to the Rental Protection Fund in 2023 as part of the Homes for People Action Plan to protect affordable rental housing stock and provide good homes for British Columbians for decades to come. The Fund is independent of the B.C. government, acting at arms-length to facilitate the acquisition of existing, occupied rental buildings. The Rental Protection Fund has facilitated the acquisition of 125 units in communities that are less than 5,000 in population, and nearly 275 in communities less than 25,000 in population.

The Rental Protection Fund is not currently contemplating changes to the minimum unit criterion, but they welcome discussions with local governments about the challenges faced in their communities. Non-profits can apply to the Rental Protection Fund through a three-stage process to acquire affordable rental properties, which they will own and operate as secure, below-market housing. As part of the acquisition process, non-profits secure commercial financing to purchase the properties, which can become challenging for smaller properties in rural and remote areas. In addition, many non-profits benefit from acquisitions of a certain scale to cost-effectively operate and provide support programs to residents. Since early 2024, acquisitions supported through Rental Protection Fund contributions have provided housing security for more than 3,000 people in B.C.

With BC Housing, the Province is working to create more rental homes across the province, including in small communities. Since 2017, the Province has had nearly 92,000 homes delivered or underway, including over 2,800 in communities with populations of less than 5,000.

**EB23 Strengthening Provincial-Local Government Collaboration
for Homelessness Solutions**

NCLGA Executive

Whereas local governments across British Columbia continue to collaborate with provincial authorities in addressing homelessness and housing challenges, recognizing the Province's responsibility for housing, healthcare, and encampments;

And whereas initiatives led by the Province through various programs aim to provide housing solutions and support services for unhoused individuals, requiring close coordination between provincial and local government agencies;

And whereas local governments acknowledge the complexities of responding to homelessness and the critical role of the Province in providing resources and expertise, with a commitment to supporting these efforts and advocating for effective collaboration between all stakeholders:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM emphasize to the provincial government the importance of expediting proposed transitional shelter facilities and supportive housing projects in partnership with relevant provincial agencies to address immediate and long-term housing needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province is committed to ensuring vulnerable people have access to safe and affordable housing. The Province remains committed to working with partners at all levels to coordinate services and housing to address homelessness and recognizes that improved processes can strengthen the outcomes of people experiencing homelessness.

Supportive housing is a critical step towards breaking the cycle of homelessness and towards greater independence, stability, and improved quality of life. Local governments play a key role in the successful planning and implementation of supportive housing and shelter facilities through their leadership in identifying appropriate sites, approving rezoning, and supporting local partnerships.

To support encampment response, the Province and BC Housing work with partners to provide people living outdoors and in encampments with better access to a range of support services and housing options through the Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and the Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) programs. HEART delivers integrated supports and services to people sheltering in encampments in collaboration with multiple ministries and agencies; HEARTH focuses on rapidly deploying shelter and temporary housing options as interim solutions while permanent options are underway. The programs are community-specific and informed by local partners.

System transformation initiatives are also underway in partnership with local communities, the federal government, and BC Housing. To better match individuals with suitable shelter and housing and integrate service delivery and outreach, the Province is working to support a more integrated local governance and broader coordination of services, including work to ensure data driven approaches locally and provincially. The Province will continue to work with ministry, federal, BC Housing, and local communities to respond to the complexities of homelessness.

**EB24 Expansion of Homeless Response and Shelter Support
(Heart and Hearth)**

Langley City

Whereas the BC 2023 Homeless Point-in-Time count recorded the largest measured increase of individuals experiencing homelessness since 2005 (Metro Vancouver Regional District and Fraser Valley Regional District); with individuals experiencing homelessness for longer periods of time, and with more individuals in unsheltered environments due to insufficient permanent, temporary shelter or emergency beds throughout the regions;

And whereas the provincial government, having outlined the strategic plan “Belonging in BC: A collaborative plan to prevent and reduce homelessness”, has invested over 2 billion dollars since 2022 outlining commitments to “prioritized” communities, based on provincial qualifying assessments of local government homeless encampment impacts, to address immediate supports and shelter needs in those selected local governments:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM call on the provincial government to accelerate and expand its commitment beyond the qualifying limitations identified in “Belonging in BC” by including access for every community and expanding permanent, temporary shelters and associated program supports in all BC local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes that encampments and experiences of homelessness continue to increase, despite significant government investment.

In the absence of accessible indoor options people may find shelter or community in encampments, but encampments are not a safe or suitable form of permanent housing for the people sheltering in them, or for the larger community. Encampments are best resolved and prevented by offering people a pathway out of homelessness. The Province is working across ministries, with all levels of government, Indigenous partners, and communities to support people sheltering in encampments to stay safe and connected to supports while options to move indoors are fast-tracked.

The Province continues to implement the Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) initiatives to provide rapid and coordinated frontline responses to homeless encampments and interim shelter options; and the development of an Encampment Resource Guide to support local partners to respond to encampments within a timely, dignified approach.

Budget 2025 includes new and expanded commitments to support housing affordability for B.C. residents and communities, including \$90 million more over three years to expand HEART and HEARTH to more communities. The Cooperation and Responsible Government Accord 2025 between the BC NDP and BC Green Party affirms government’s commitment to expanding HEART and HEARTH.

Whereas the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelter system was developed more than a decade ago to support community organizations in providing life-saving warm, safe places for unhoused community members to sleep in cold and wet weather, the EWR model does not provide any funding for facility rental costs, security, equipment or resource purchases, nor does it provide any funds for these community organizations to plan for, develop, and deliver EWR shelters in their communities;

And whereas since the EWR program was developed the number of community members experiencing homelessness has grown substantially, and the needs of those community members have, often due to addiction and mental health challenges, become increasingly complex, community organizations in many communities have been unable to provide life-saving EWR shelters with the limited resources available:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petition the Province of British Columbia to recognize that the EWR program is insufficient to address current social challenges and community capacity to meet those challenges; and that a provincially driven solution be determined in collaboration with community leaders to ensure that:

1. service delivery by existing provincial agencies that are tasked with providing social service supports, including shelter spaces and wrap-around services, is strengthened; and
2. funds are available to rent facilities, provide security and necessary equipment such that the community organizations that are tasked to deliver this program are appropriately resourced.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes there is a growing and pressing need for shelter spaces throughout B.C., especially during the winter months. In addition to permanent shelters in B.C. communities, the Province also provides temporary winter shelters and the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) program. The EWR program is enabled through the *Assistance to Shelter Act* and administered by BC Housing (BCH), in partnership with participant communities. The EWR program provides additional emergency shelter spaces during periods of extreme winter weather, and EWR shelters are available from October 15 until April 15.

Municipalities determine what weather conditions warrant an extreme weather alert and the number of extreme weather spaces to activate. The Province, through BCH, is funding 6,737 shelter spaces (permanent, temporary, emergency weather response, Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) throughout B.C. This is a 20 percent increase compared to the same time last year. The Province continues to add more temporary shelter and housing spaces through the HEARTH program.

EB26 Large Infrastructure Project Impacts on Housing Crisis**Squamish**

Whereas the Province has acknowledged that there is a housing crisis affecting communities across all of British Columbia and has chosen to take unprecedented action to address this challenge by looking for opportunities and taking action to deliver long-term housing supply;

And whereas large infrastructure projects mandated or approved by the Province put immense pressure on available housing rental and ownership stock, and tourism infrastructure by requiring a significant number of temporary workers without appropriate workforce housing plans as a requirement of project approval;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province require robust and detailed workforce housing plans integral to the approval process for large infrastructure projects, to address and minimize the cumulative impacts of temporary workforce housing on communities and deliver a positive housing legacy.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Infrastructure projects which trigger the environmental assessment process regularly have conditions attached to their approved Environmental Assessment Certificate to mitigate potential negative impacts such as those on local housing supply. In many cases, temporary accommodation in camp environments are used to mitigate local housing impacts. Other mitigation options include investment in local housing supply and use of hotels, campgrounds or other commercial options rather than utilizing local supply.

Even for smaller projects, which may not have socio-economic effects conditions in their environmental assessment certificate or other approvals, the Province encourages project proponents to consider local housing impacts and other social and economic impacts and seek to provide mitigation options.

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs is currently working with the Environmental Assessment Office to analyze the effectiveness of Certificate conditions on approved infrastructure projects with the goal of enhancing conditions for future projects. The Province launched the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program which includes a funding stream to support planning for workforce housing. Through this sub-stream, applicants are eligible for funding for planning activities to support critical economic opportunities or sectors that are unable to fill workforce demands due to a lack of housing. Seven workforce housing projects were funded by the Province in the first two years of this program.

**EB27 Local Government Funding Through Speculation and
Vacancy Tax**

Burnaby

Whereas encouraging unoccupied residential properties to become available for long-term occupancy represents an opportunity to increase the availability of housing in our communities;

And whereas revenue collected from the Speculation and Vacancy Tax is directed into the Housing Priority Initiatives Special Account where BC Housing is the primary recipient of the funds rather than local governments:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to permit local governments to receive a portion of the funds collected through the Housing Priority Initiatives Special Account, with funds to be used by the local government towards affordable housing projects.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The *Speculation and Vacancy Tax Act* and the *Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act* require that the revenue from the Speculation and Vacancy Tax (SVT) be spent in the regional district where it is collected. The Province took a regional approach with respect to SVT revenue spending, as housing affordability does not affect any one municipality in isolation; what occurs in one municipality affects an entire region. Requiring the funds to be spent in the regional district ensures that the money will be spent quickly and efficiently on housing affordability issues affecting the whole region.

Data on SVT revenue and spending were released in December 2024 as part of the SVT annual mayors' consultation. The data show that BC Housing spending in each region far exceeds SVT revenue collected. Local governments are encouraged to work with BC Housing to discuss housing priorities in their communities and identify opportunities for affordable housing projects.

Whereas the BC government implemented a BC Speculation and Vacancy Tax to turn vacant homes into housing for BC residents;

And whereas the BC government continues to expand the BC Speculation and Vacancy Tax program to include new communities:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM advocate to the provincial government that all BC communities, including electoral areas, be given the option to opt-in to the BC Speculation and Vacancy Tax program.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Speculation and Vacancy Tax (SVT) was introduced as part of B.C.'s 30-point housing plan in November 2018. The SVT is designed to prevent housing speculation and help turn vacant and underused properties into homes for people who live and work in B.C.

The Province initially applied the SVT to urban centres with low vacancy rates and affordability challenges, where house prices and rents exceeded local incomes. Rather than providing all B.C. communities with the ability to opt in to the SVT, an independent review released in 2022 recommended a phased and measured approach to expanding the SVT.

B.C. added six new municipalities as SVT specified areas in 2023, and 13 in 2024, for a total of 59 province-wide. To select expansion communities, the Province considered a number of factors, including assessed values of residential property, vacancy rates, population, requests for inclusion, proximity to other SVT specified areas, and whether the community is primarily a vacation area. The Province also considered input from local governments.

Any changes to the SVT at the provincial level must consider taxation at other levels of government, such as the federal government's implementation of the Underused Housing Tax in 2022 and a foreign ownership ban in 2023, effective until January 1, 2027.

The Province is carefully monitoring housing data moving forward to ensure the desired results of the SVT are achieved and will continue to work with local governments to address housing affordability issues in B.C.

Whereas British Columbia is in a housing crisis and the *Residential Tenancy Act* is intended to provide a fair balance between the right of tenants to safe and secure affordable housing and the right of landlords to maintain their property and see a return on their investment;

And whereas the current *Residential Tenancy Act* was enacted in 2004 and the last comprehensive review was completed over 20 years ago (2001-2002), and there is no indication from the Province that a new review will be conducted;

And whereas the Province is investing \$15 million over three years to hire and train more Residential Tenancy Branch staff and the Province reports a growing caseload for adjudicating disputes between renters and landlords;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to conduct a formal review of the *Residential Tenancy Act* that includes meaningful consultation with stakeholders and considers tenancy legislation enacted in other Canadian jurisdictions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

In 2018, the Province appointed the Rental Housing Task Force to advise on how to improve security and fairness for landlords and tenants. In alignment with the Task Force's recommendations, the B.C. Government has been implementing legislative, regulatory, policy, and operational changes.

Examples of changes that have come into effect include: addressing renovictions; enabling local governments to use tenant protection bylaws; strengthening the processes for making, investigating and levying administrative penalty complaints; increasing availability of strata housing by eliminating rental bans; maintaining rent tied to the renter; enforcing short-term rental rules; making the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) more responsive, accessible and proactive; recording RTB hearings to improve fairness and consistency; expanding grounds for appeal to improve procedural fairness; requiring landlords to apply to the RTB for an order of possession; tenant rent reduction if the landlord refuses to make repairs in a timely way; improving timelines for security deposit returns; simplifying regulations relating to landlord obligations to store abandoned property; exempting supportive housing from sections of the *Residential Tenancy Act* that prohibit restrictive guest policies and wellness checks; and limiting frequency and notice of manufactured home park rule changes.

The RTB will continue to monitor tenancy laws in B.C. and consult with stakeholders as needed to ensure tenancy laws meet the needs of both landlords and tenants.

EB30 Development Cost Charges for Fire Protection Facilities

Lantzville

Whereas the provincial government has passed Bill 46 *Housing Statutes (Development Financing) Amendment Act*, 2023 amending Section 559, subsection (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act* to include "fire protection facilities" in the collection of Development Cost Charges (DCCs), but does not specifically define "fire protection facilities";

And whereas many smaller local governments have a limited number of brick-and-mortar fire protection buildings, but a large number of other capital expenses related to fire protection, such as vehicles and equipment:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate with the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs that "fire protection facilities" be specifically defined in the relevant documentation and/or legislation to include the purchase and maintenance of all capital items related to fire protection including, but not limited to, fire trucks, duty vehicles, hoses, breathing apparatuses, communications equipment and all other capital expenditures that may be required to equip and maintain fire protection services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Fire departments play a critical role in emergency management, including disaster response, rescues, hazardous material incidents, medical emergencies, as well as fire prevention.

Local governments may now include capital costs related to providing, constructing, altering, or expanding fire protection facilities in Development Cost Charges (DCC) programs. Eligible capital costs may include the construction of facilities owned by a local government or shared with other municipalities. Examples of eligible projects include fire facilities Master Plans, firehalls, training facilities, and land acquisition related to eligible facilities. Consistent with the other categories of DCCs, non-fixed capital expenses related to vehicles, personal gear and equipment, and vehicle-related gear and equipment are ineligible. More information on the definition of "fire protection services" can be found in the Development Cost Charge Best Practices Guide.

The intent is that developers contribute DCCs for long lasting assets that will, with proper maintenance, support service delivery for a period similar to the life of their development. Other, shorter-lived assets to equip and maintain fire protection services, and other DCC eligible services, should be financed with property taxes, which will include taxes on newly developed properties.

Whereas meeting the need for additional power sources in BC with industrial scale wind and solar installations is expensive, potentially damaging to environmentally sensitive land, and insufficient;

And whereas private solar installations would reduce these negative economic and environmental impacts;

And whereas solar installation is costly and often beyond the financial ability of many property owners:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province create a Provincial Solar Power Rebate Program for homeowners.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Province is committed to ensuring that all British Columbians have access to affordable, clean, and reliable electricity.

In 2024 BC Hydro launched its first Call for Power in over fifteen years, resulting in electricity purchase agreements with nine wind and one solar energy producers. Utility-scale wind and solar generation are currently the most cost-effective clean and renewable energy sources in the province. This Call resulted in an average cost of energy of \$74 per megawatt hour, or 7.4 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) and an 8 percent increase in BC Hydro's electricity supply. In addition, the Site C Dam will also be operating at full capacity this year adding another 8 percent increase to electricity supply. There will be future Calls with regularity, including calls for firm/capacity power, to ensure a clean, affordable, and reliable electricity supply.

The Province is taking action to bring new clean and renewable resources online faster and remains committed to maintaining robust environmental standards during the development of the nine wind farms announced through BC Hydro's Call for Power. While these projects will not undergo environmental assessment processes, each project will still be subject to rigorous permitting requirements through a single-window permitting process for renewable energy projects led by the BC Energy Regulator.

Currently, residential solar power, as measured through net metering, is a higher-cost resource; FortisBC currently providing credits worth 14.96 cents per kWh and BC Hydro credits worth up to 14.08 cents per kWh. BC Hydro also offers rebates up to \$5,000 on eligible grid-connected solar panels and up to an additional \$5,000 for battery storage systems for homeowners who are currently BC Hydro customers, funded through BC Hydro rates and not taxpayer funds.

Whereas the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General has primary responsibility for the Victim Services Program delivered throughout the Province of British Columbia in close collaboration with policing services;

And whereas a variety of agencies and local governments deliver/manage the Program in different communities, with varying degrees of expertise and limited connection to services to be able to provide adequate supervision and support of victim service workers:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to develop a standardized approach for police-based victim services programs in BC that, among other things, includes additional provincial funding and assigns full responsibility for delivery of these programs to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province is committed to ensuring that victims of crime have access to the services and supports they need.

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General provides over \$60 million annually in funding to support over 475 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 responses to crime and trauma, particularly around crisis response services. The ministry is 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.

The ministry contracts and works with provincial associations like Police Victim Services of BC to ensure that their member programs are supported and have access to the required training to effectively support victims of crime across British Columbia.

Whereas the Province of British Columbia does not have a robust policy to assist victims of climate related events whose losses are not covered by insurance or Disaster Financial Assistance;

And whereas the time of decision making on claims to the Province of British Columbia is a significant and life changing hardship to British Columbians and Indigenous communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to take urgent steps to develop a policy to assist victims of climate events with their claims in a timely manner, not exceeding 12-months post- disaster.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

The Province is committed to supporting all British Columbians in their efforts to respond to and recover from disasters, as well as their efforts to reduce the risk of future disasters.

The Province has made significant investments in emergency management in recent years as the frequency and severity of climate-driven emergency events have escalated.

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness continues to make progress toward enhancing emergency preparedness across the province. This includes the recent introduction of the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*, the most comprehensive and forward-looking emergency management legislation in Canada. As part of this new Act, the ministry is updating its associated regulations, including the Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation.

The Recovery Funding Branch continues working to improve program delivery for communities through data-driven solutions. In 2024, a new online portal was launched, allowing private applicants to submit and view their Disaster Financial Assistance applications in real-time online. In March 2025, the public sector portal was launched, which will allow for streamlining and efficiencies in the application process for local governments and First Nations in any events going forward.

Whereas the Province of BC faces the worsening effects of climate change, the disasters resulting from which impact more residents and properties with each year;

And whereas many residents and properties impacted by wildfire and flooding are located within regional districts;

And whereas disasters do not recognize jurisdictional boundaries (as was the case with Lytton Creek wildfire);

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to commit to ensuring that in the case of disasters such as wildfire and flooding, all of those who are impacted—regardless of jurisdictional boundaries— receive the same access to, and level of, support as they rebuild their homes, businesses, and lives.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

The Province is committed to ensuring that people come first in emergency management recovery efforts. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) continues to work closely with local governments and First Nations to ensure that impacted people and communities have the information and resources necessary to move forward with recovery.

EMCR has made significant investments in emergency management in recent years as the frequency and severity of climate-driven emergency events has escalated. The Province recognizes that there is more work to do to address climate-related emergencies and disasters, and we will continue to work together to build a better future.

The new *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* places an increased focus on recovery from disasters to ensure provincial supports toward community recovery work continues after an event has ended. The ministry continues to increase preparedness communications to ensure that communities, businesses and residents are prepared with emergency plans and have adequate insurance coverage. In addition, the Recovery Guide for Local Authorities and First Nations, designed to assist communities in planning for post-disaster recovery, is currently being updated and will be available in late 2025. We thank all communities and First Nations for their engagement and participation in ensuring that this resource guide is a useful, practical tool to guide recovery.

EB35 Flood Protection Funding and Management**Mission**

Whereas the majority of communities, either in whole or in part, within British Columbia are situated on floodplains;

And whereas the cost of mitigating flood risk has increased to levels that are no longer affordable by Local Governments, Regional Districts or Improvement Districts:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the province and federal governments commit to allocate adequate funds to mitigate the flood threat to British Columbia communities and that the Province consider assuming control of, and responsibility for, flood protection and mitigation infrastructure including diking and pump stations.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

The Province works closely with local governments, First Nations and other partners to address flood risks. Together we strive to reduce the social, economic and ecological disruption from flooding.

To support communities with adapting to and mitigating risk from flooding, the Province will continue to explore enhancements to Disaster Risk Reduction funding opportunities for First Nations and local governments and continues to advocate with the federal government to expand mitigation funding programs, such as the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF).

Since 2017, the Province has invested approximately \$498 million in provincial funding for disaster risk reduction projects. These investments include 558 flood hazard related projects led by First Nations and local governments, totaling over \$ 337 million. In addition to the above funding, project approvals will soon be announced for the provincially-funded Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding (DRIF) program.

In alignment with the B.C. Flood Strategy, the Province is also investing in foundational approaches to understand and share information on flood risks in a changing climate. This includes delivery of a provincial Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment and an \$8.69 million investment for flood-hazard mapping, in support of B.C.'s Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy.

This work will support decisions on floodplains and holistic local approaches to flood risk reduction that are stronger when made in the context of relationships and values at the community-level with support and guidelines from the Province. The Province is committed to continue to work collaboratively with local governments, First Nations and other partners to explore and implement a broad range of flood risk reduction options through integrated floodplain management planning.

Whereas the Province of British Columbia has enacted legislation known as the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) that constitutes a significant download of responsibilities and addition of new legislative and regulatory requirements that will significantly and permanently add to the workload of municipalities and regional districts;

And whereas the opportunities for local governments to raise funds required to support these legislative changes are limited, and where the provincial government has provided some proactive capacity funding in specific areas, such as First Nations consultation, but has not provided any guarantee of ongoing capacity funding to support the legacy of these legislative changes:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to commit to providing long-term sustainable capacity funding to municipalities and regional districts to fulfill their emergency management duties, including responsibilities under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

The safety of all British Columbians remains a top priority for the Province. Government is committed to supporting First Nations and local governments in their efforts to enhance emergency preparedness and build resilience to climate-related risks. We recognize the importance of sustained investment in mitigation and capacity-building to ensure communities are equipped to manage and reduce disaster risks.

The Province is actively supporting communities through several dedicated funding programs including:

1. Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program (IERFP):

First announced in December 2023, this program offered funding to support the implementation of the Indigenous engagement requirements within the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA). The IERFP enables First Nations and local authorities to undertake activities that strengthen capacity, build relationships and foster collaboration, as outlined in the program guide.

2. Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding (DRIF) program:

This program offers funding to First Nations and local governments across B.C. to enhance their capacity to withstand and adapt to natural and climate-driven hazards. Funding supports:

- Initiatives that provide foundational data, strengthen partnerships and advance long-term disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation planning; and
- Both structural and non-structural disaster risk reduction projects.

These programs are part of the Province's broader strategy to support communities in their emergency management efforts and to advance climate resilience.

3. Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) program:

The CEPF is a suite of funding streams intended to enhance the resilience of First Nations, local governments and communities in responding to emergencies and to reduce risks from future disasters due to natural hazards and climate-related risks. The CEPF supports capacity building for community preparedness activities.

Whereas ensuring the safety and well-being of our communities is of utmost importance, and recent events in the province highlight the urgent need for proactive measures to tackle emerging social and criminal challenges;

And whereas the Province of BC previously created and did not enact the *Community Safety Act* and *Community Safety Amendment Act*, providing authorities with effective tools to respond to chronic and illegal behaviour from problematic properties;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM actively lobby the provincial government to bring into force the *Community Safety Act* and *Community Safety Amendment Act* to address challenges related to crime and illegal activity and associated threats to public safety.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Government has taken responsive and broad actions to address public safety challenges that have emerged over recent years.

In November of 2022, Premier David Eby announced the Safer Communities Action Plan to address the challenging public safety issues that are facing our communities. The Safer Communities Action Plan strengthens enforcement to keep those who commit repeat violent offences off B.C. streets, and leveraging and integrating services to connect people with the support they need.

Budget 2025 provides funding of \$67 million over three years for community safety programs, including:

- The Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative (ReVOII) program which brings together co-ordinated response teams made up of police, prosecutors and probation officers to respond to repeat, violent offenders. This includes offenders from the Fort St John area who are managed through the Prince George ReVOII hub.
- The Special Investigation and Targeted Enforcement (SITE) Program which provides police operational funding to conduct enforcement actions against repeat violent offenders and enhance community safety.
- The new Community Safety and Targeted Enforcement Program (C-STEP) pilot that will specifically target robbery, shoplifting and other property crimes, providing police with tools to tackle street disorder and support safer downtowns and commercial areas in communities throughout B.C.

In creating safer communities, the Province provided a multi-year investment of approximately \$230 million to the RCMP, as the Provincial Police Service. This funding is addressing existing vacancies and resource pressures, within the Provincial Police Service, including specialized functions such as Major Crime Section, BC Highway Patrol as well as frontline provincial detachment units. While the provincial investment applies to the Provincial Police Service, it is anticipated that the positive impacts will benefit public safety for all of B.C., beyond jurisdictions policed directly by the Provincial Police Service.

Budget 2025 provides an additional \$90 million over three years to expand the Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) programs into new communities.

These programs work with local governments and First Nations, non-profit organizations and health-care providers to connect people living outdoors and in encampments with better access to support services, shelter and housing options so they can move inside and encampments can close.

Whereas the *Community Charter* Bylaw Enforcement Ticket Regulation has been amended to increase maximum Municipal Ticket Information (MTI) fine amounts from \$1,000 to \$3,000, but the maximum fine amount for Bylaw Offence Notices (BON) under the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act* remains at \$500, which is inconsistent with inflation rates and is not enough of a financial disincentive for many bylaw infractions, especially for short-term rentals;

And whereas BONs are more commonly used for bylaw enforcement as they require less evidentiary and administrative work than MTIs and can be disputed through a neutral adjudication process rather than tying up the court system:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the provincial government to increase the maximum penalty for Bylaw Offence Notices and amend the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act* accordingly.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

Bylaw Offence Notices are a fair, efficient and cost-effective way to enforce local bylaws. The ministry is committed to supporting local governments with bylaw enforcement tools, and in particular aims to help local governments enforce against short term rental bylaw infractions to ensure the availability of affordable housing in their communities.

In 2024 ministry staff conducted research and engagement with local governments and other interested parties to obtain input about the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act*, including the maximum fine amount for bylaw offence notices. This work continues into 2025 with further consultation and review to assess the impacts of increasing the amount and to determine an appropriate maximum fine.

**EB39 Allocating Resources Towards Cyber Security Health and
Protection of Privacy**

Logan Lake

Whereas public bodies are responsible for the management and protection of personal information under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA);

And whereas personal information is stored and gathered through many methods including digital technology;

And whereas local governments face major challenges with digital technology including capacity and the lack of knowledge and awareness around cyber security;

And whereas Section 69 (5) of FOIPPA legislation, which states that local governments are required to conduct Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA) on new initiatives for which no PIA has been conducted or before implementing a significant change to an existing initiative, places hardship on local governments to allocate more staff and resources to meet these requirements, along with costs of upgrades to digital technology;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to allocate additional resources to assist local governments with assessing and maintaining cyber security health by collaborating with Information Technology Professionals to produce relevant and effective Privacy Impact Assessments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services

The protection and resiliency of our government data, systems and assets is a top priority especially where it includes personal information of British Columbians. This is a shared responsibility across public sector organizations. As people do more and more online, personally and professionally, cyber awareness and education becomes a shared interest for all of us in B.C.

The Province, through the Office of the Chief Information Officer, offers guidance to local governments and continues to collaborate, promote shared awareness and assist broader public sector organizations with privacy and cybersecurity resources. In 2023, the Province initiated its CyberBC pilot program to promote cyber education, awareness and grow cybersecurity capacity across the B.C. public sector. In 2024, the Province established a Corporate Supply Arrangement to support the broader public sector with their cybersecurity program(s) and procuring cybersecurity advisory services through pre-qualified vendors.

As our work is increasingly digital, we are mindful of best practices for managing government information to mitigate cybersecurity risks. Privacy and cybersecurity are more than just technology and processes. It includes organizational culture that helps promote understanding and awareness of the privacy and security safeguards that are put in place to protect our organizations, ensure business continuity and enable our commitments to delivering reliable and secure services to people in British Columbia. By working together, we can better safeguard information and help reduce the impact of cybersecurity threats throughout the province.

Whereas E-Comm has struggled to provide service levels that meet established standards or the expectations of the communities they serve, while the cost of E-Comm is increasing at an unsustainable rate, creating budget uncertainty for local Police and Fire services;

And whereas the imminent introduction of next-Gen 911 will represent the single largest change in emergency communications delivery since the introduction of 911, with uncertain cost and operational impacts:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to engage local governments in a comprehensive review of the governance structure and delivery model of 911 emergency call taking, related non-emergency call taking, and emergency dispatch services across BC with a goal to assure reliable, affordable, and sustainable services for all communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province understands that the continued levy increases of E-Comm and 911 services can place heavy financial burdens on municipalities. The Province also appreciates the concerns raised about governance of E-Comm service and proper standards throughout British Columbia.

On December 5, 2024, government announced a forthcoming independent review of E-Comm and 911 service to ensure that there is a reliable and sustainable model for 911 services in British Columbia.

As of March 2025, the review is underway and is expected to be complete within the year. The review will assess E-Comm's financial sustainability, operational efficiency and governance structure, and will make recommendations for the future of 911 services in B.C. A final report will be provided to the Director of Police Services.

The Province is committed to engaging with local government on any changes being contemplated to strengthen E-Comm and 911 services in the province.

EB41 Intersection Safety Camera Program Expansion**Dawson Creek**

Whereas due to the high frequency of crashes at intersections in British Columbia, the province implemented an Intersection Safety Camera (ISC) program to save lives and reduce injuries;

And whereas the ISC program consists of 140 red light and speed cameras at high-risk intersections in British Columbia, with only one of the locations being in North Central British Columbia thus limiting the opportunity for remote municipalities to use red-light or speed cameras as a traffic safety feature:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to expand the Intersection Safety Camera program.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Intersection Safety Camera (ISC) program has been in operation since 1999. It is a partnership between the Province, the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

While the program is not operated by or delegated to municipalities, the ISC program works closely with municipal engineers and local police to operate the current speed and redlight enforcement sites.

As part of our commitment to Vision Zero and implementing data-driven and evidence-led road safety interventions, we are currently conducting a review of the ISC program to determine how the program can further enhance safety at B.C.'s most dangerous intersections.

EB42 Management of Fireworks**Mission**

Whereas the misuse and abuse of fireworks causes property damage, personal injury, community disturbance and is a threat to first responders;

And whereas a province-wide approach is needed for the safe manufacturing, transportation, retail, wholesale and use of fireworks:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to regulate the use and sale of fireworks in British Columbia, including public education, enforcement, and transportation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Fireworks are federally regulated for manufacturing, importing and transportation, inclusive of reactive components, under the *Explosives Act* and its regulations. Provincially, the *Fireworks Act* regulates the selling periods and public use of low hazard fireworks (also known as consumer fireworks).

When the *Fire Safety Act* came into force on August 1, 2024, the *Fireworks Act* was also updated removing the requirement to obtain written permission from the Fire Commissioner, or the Local Assistant to the Fire Commissioner, to display fireworks.

The *Fireworks Act* now reflects that fireworks may be sold to and discharged by a person or organization at a public display if the public display is held with the written permission of the local authority that has jurisdiction where the public display is held.

The amendment empowers the local authority to control the public use of fireworks to meet their community needs.

Whereas the environmental assessment review and permitting process for major projects does not adequately identify, consider and proactively address the cumulative social, economic, and infrastructure impacts of these projects on communities;

And whereas the environmental assessment process defers consideration of community issues to the management planning and permitting stage where the issues that arise are inadequately addressed in a reactive manner during project implementation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to ensure that the environmental assessment review process ensures the proactive identification and mitigation of cumulative community impacts in a proactive manner based on an inclusive and collaborative review process with impacted communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) recognizes the importance of proactively identifying and mitigating cumulative community impacts in major project assessments. Environmental assessments must consider environmental, social, economic, health and cultural effects. Local governments play a key role in the environmental assessment process through the Technical Advisory Committee, ensuring community issues are integrated into the assessment as well as assessment reports and mitigation measures.

Management plans are an essential tool to allow projects to adapt to future uncertainties and ensure ongoing community involvement throughout the life of a project. During the environmental assessment process, local governments can request to be consulted on the plans. The EAO also emphasizes the importance of legally binding conditions, particularly for concerns like gender and cultural safety plans for worker accommodations, infrastructure strain, and community well-being, that may affect local communities the most.

The EAO is committed to continued collaboration with UBCM and local governments to enhance local community involvement in environmental assessments. By identifying potential community impacts early, refining the proposed mitigation measures, and strengthening engagement, the EAO aims to mitigate project effects more effectively while maximizing long-term community benefits.

**EB45 Improved Local Government Capacity for Environmental
Assessment Participation**

Squamish

Whereas the provincial and federal environmental assessment processes are not the direct jurisdiction of local governments and therefore not subject to associated service cost recovery fees;

And whereas environmental assessment processes, while of critical importance to communities, are very time-consuming, expensive, and onerous for local government staff, community, and council:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to establish proponent fees to support the participation of local governments in environmental assessment processes, including compensation associated with the research and review of applications, participation in technical and working groups, augmented community engagement, and post-decision regulatory processes should a project Certificate be issued.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) recognizes the significant role that local governments play in the environmental assessment process and is committed to continued collaboration with UBCM and local governments to enhance local community involvement in environmental assessments.

The 2018 *Environmental Assessment Act* (the Act) contains a provision that it be reviewed after five years to make sure it is working well and as intended. As a first step in this Act Review, in 2024 the EAO carried out engagement with UBCM and other groups and organizations to hear what has been working well and not working well. The issue of funding for local governments to support participation in the environmental assessment process, and other matters raised in the submission provided by UBCM, are part of the feedback currently being considered by the EAO as it works to identify the scope and process for the next steps of the Act Review. The Act Review will provide further engagement opportunities, and local governments are encouraged to participate and share any information related to barriers to their full participation in environmental assessments.

EB46 Reducing Regulatory Complexity in Freshwater Sources**Nelson**

Whereas in the face of climate change and a rapidly increasing population; fresh water for human consumption, agriculture, industry, and ecological needs has become a precious commodity across British Columbia;

And whereas securing a new water source involves the navigation of complex provincial regulations:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship to provide leadership and functional involvement in the creation and management of consistent regional water supply strategies and simplify the associated regulatory process, with the aim of ensuring that resilient and sustainable drinking water supplies are in place now and for the future.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship

The Province recognizes the importance of maintaining a sustainable and resilient drinking water program for communities across British Columbia. Ensuring a reliable supply of water for human consumption, agriculture, industry, and ecosystems remains a top priority, especially as population growth and climate change place increasing pressures on water sources.

The Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) was established in 2022 to provide leadership in water stewardship and to coordinate efforts across ministries. WLRS made it a key priority in the 2025 mandate letter to support communities affected by drought and water shortages. By working closely with the ministries of Health, Housing and Municipal Affairs, and Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, WLRS is well positioned to support the work of Health Authorities, regional drinking water officers and water suppliers around the province in ensuring the delivery of safe drinking water during times of water scarcity.

Additionally, WLRS is committed to improving permitting processes while maintaining high environmental standards. To support these efforts, the ministry established a centralized team that is prioritizing decision-making on permits and has significantly reduced processing times for water authorizations, especially in already water-stressed regions.

The Province continues to work on long-term water security and drought resilience for communities by providing leadership on watershed stewardship, collaborating with provincial, local and First Nation partners, and streamlining regulatory processes where possible.

Whereas the Government of Canada, through Health Canada, is responsible for establishing the standards for drinking water quality as codified by the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality;

And whereas the Province of British Columbia has adopted the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality as the standard for drinking water quality under the *Safe Drinking Water Act*, which community water systems are required to meet:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia to provide ongoing, long-term, and stable funding for local governments to upgrade community water distribution and treatment systems to enable compliance with the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality and all subsequent amendments thereto.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province continues to advocate the federal government for bilateral funding programs to support local government infrastructure needs related to meeting regulatory requirements and improving resilience, with programs like the federal-provincial Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - Environmental Quality Program now fully allocated. The Infrastructure Planning Grant Program can provide support in planning for future needs and preparing for future capital programs.

The Province recognizes the value of ongoing, long-term, and stable funding to local governments. The Province is pleased to work with Canada and with the Union of BC Municipalities on the renewed 2024 to 2034 Canada Community-Building Fund, which provides consistency and flexibility that allow local governments to determine their infrastructure priorities within eligible categories, including for drinking water.

Whereas the Province of British Columbia provides powers to local governments to regulate protection of the environment and levy maximum fines for offences:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to provide urgent protection to watercourses from dumping and discharge, including by providing authority to local governments to impose higher fines.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) verifies compliance with the *Environmental Management Act* by conducting inspections to ensure parties are following the regulatory requirements designed to protect the environment and human health. Inspections are conducted through planned inspections of regulated parties or from complaints provided to the ENV, most often through the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line at 1-877-952-7277 or through the Province's online RAPP form.

If ENV identifies a non-compliance, there are a variety of tools available to encourage compliance considering a person's willingness or ability to comply, as well as risks to the environment. These tools include advisories of non-compliance, warnings, pollution orders, referrals for administrative monetary penalty, sanctions, and court prosecutions. Selection is made giving consideration to the most appropriate tool necessary to obtain compliance, and when required, to promote general deterrence.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Local governments have three bylaw enforcement tools with differing maximum penalties depending on the severity of the bylaw contravention. Bylaw notice enforcement currently has a maximum fine of \$500. This tool is governed under the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act* that is the responsibility of the Ministry of Attorney General. The Ministry of Attorney General is currently reviewing whether the maximum fine amount should be changed. Municipal ticketing fine limits were recently increased such that both regional districts and municipalities can now impose tickets for bylaw contraventions up to \$3,000. Multiple tickets may be issued for the same contravention if it continues over a period of time.

Local governments can impose fines for prosecuted offences (through long-form prosecution in court) of up to \$50,000, as well as up to six months of imprisonment with the actual fine amount decided by the Courts. These fines are intended for serious bylaw contraventions. The varying fine amounts support local governments in enforcing their bylaws and providing them with more flexibility to set appropriate fine amounts. They strike a balance between allowing for adequate deterrence from bylaw contraventions while keeping limits to a reasonable amount. Ministry staff are continuing to monitor bylaw enforcement fine amounts to ensure they remain adequate over time.

Whereas in response to persistent drought conditions and other climate change effects that are placing considerable stress on supplies of safe, reliable water, the Province of British Columbia has launched new regulatory and enforcement tools as well as funding programs targeting the agricultural sector;

And whereas efforts by the agricultural sector to develop more efficient water infrastructure, management, supply and storage to maximize available water is being impeded by lengthy, costly, and complex grant application and water licencing processes as well as conflicting guidance from different ministries involved in water management:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to mandate the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to work together in a concerted manner to simplify administrative processes, remove excessive requirements, reduce processing times, ensure consistent policy and enforcement, and provide greater support to farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers in improving water management, supply and storage.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship / Ministry of Agriculture and Food

B.C. is experiencing increasing frequency, severity and areal extent of drought conditions. The Province is committed to supporting communities and the agricultural sector with building resilience to the impacts of climate change and stabilizing water supplies to support local economies and food security.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) are working closely together to support farmers and food producers in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from drought. These efforts include \$100 million allocated to B.C.'s Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program (AWP), which provides a cost-sharing funding source for water infrastructure planning and implementation. Additionally, the Beneficial Management Practices Water Infrastructure program provides funding for smaller projects at a higher cost-sharing ratio for individual farmers.

The Province recognizes that lengthy permitting processing times can be a challenge for producers. WLRS is working with AF and the Investment Agriculture Foundation to prioritize applications related to AWP funding. Additionally, WLRS has established a dedicated and centralized team to process applications from existing groundwater users, with a priority on areas with water scarcity. More broadly, WLRS is working to improve the timing and transparency of all permitting processes. These efforts align with ministerial mandate letters and the whole-of-government response to the evolving tariff environment.

Drought preparedness and response involves collaboration and consideration of impacts on agricultural users. The WLRS minister must give due consideration to the needs of agricultural users when contemplating issuing a fish population protection order under the *Water Sustainability Act* (section 88). WLRS and AF have expanded communication with agricultural producers through efforts such as Decoding Drought sessions with agricultural communities (30 sessions were held in 2024) and targeted community meetings in water-scarce areas. AF offers producer-focused workshops on topics such as irrigation efficiencies and water storage, and both ministries are working to provide regular updates and resources through mailouts, e-bulletins, and online information portals.

EB50 Non-Compliant and Illegal Buoys**Columbia Shuswap RD**

Whereas many BC local governments continue to experience an ongoing significant proliferation of non-compliant and illegal buoys on our lakes, which has led to an untenable enforcement and public safety situation as well as diminished environmental and fisheries values;

And whereas both the Province of BC and Government of Canada have a shared jurisdictional authority and responsibility regarding enforcement and removal of these structures because:

- the buoys are placed on Crown lands (being anchored to the lake bottom),
- the landowners are using Crown lands for exclusive ongoing use without tenure; and
- the buoy float and its placement/adjacency on the water to other buoys and structures is regulated by Transport Canada:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial and federal governments to utilize their enforcement powers and authorities to remove non-compliant and illegal buoys which are in trespass on Crown lands, through a multijurisdictional project between the Province of BC, Government of Canada, and impacted local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water Land and Resource Stewardship

The Province is committed to working in collaboration with the federal government and local governments on the issue of non-compliant and illegal mooring buoys, but at this time, cannot commit to a formal provincial-scaled multijurisdictional project.

Local governments are encouraged to explore the use of bylaws and subsequent enforcement to regulate and manage areas of high conflict or concern. Local governments can also reach out to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship regional offices to discuss areas of particular concern.

The federal government is responsible for the regulation of mooring buoys under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* and the *Canada Shipping Act /Private Buoy Regulations*. If mooring buoys are causing navigational or safety concerns, local governments should contact Transport Canada.

Whereas bodies of water in British Columbia are at very high risk for infestation of invasive mussels, particularly following the discovery of quagga mussels in a tributary of the Columbia River in Idaho;

And whereas an infestation of invasive mussels would cause significant economic and environmental losses, with economic losses alone estimated at \$64 million to \$129 million annually across the Province:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of BC take action based on the Okanagan Basin Water Board's recommendations to the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship for invasive mussel prevention, dated September 25, 2023, including requesting the federal government enhance inspections, increasing funding and staffing for the provincial Invasive Mussel Defence Program, introducing provincial "pull-the-plug" legislation, and updating the provincial Early Detection, Rapid Response plan;

And be it further resolved that UBCM request the Province of BC work with the federal government to increase long-term funding and support to prevent invasive mussels from entering waterways in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water Land and Resource Stewardship

The British Columbia government remains committed to preventing invasive mussels from establishing in B.C. through the ongoing delivery of the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP). The IMDP is delivered by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Parks' Conservation Officer Service, program funding partners, and neighbouring jurisdictions across Canada and the United States (US).

The IMDP funding level is determined each year in response to known and probable funding partners, lessons learned from previous years, and to emerging threats. In direct response to reductions in partner funding in recent years, B.C. has increased support to maintain base operations. For the 2025 season, we are increasing the budget to maintain IMDP operations at existing levels by prioritizing and reallocating resources from other stewardship programs. We understand the importance of providing a stable presence along our provincial borders. We continue to request the federal government resume funding the Program's work at federal ports of entry and support our response preparedness should invasive mussels be detected in B.C. waters.

We recognize the longstanding requests from the Okanagan Basin Water Board, First Nations, local governments and other partners for stronger regulatory tools to address the threat of invasive mussels. In response, a "Pull the Plug" General Order was issued in May 2024 under the *Animal Health Act* as a temporary fix. WLRS is proposing amendments to the *Wildlife Act* for "Pull the Plug" requirement and mandatory stops at open watercraft inspection stations which are targeted for the 2025 boating season. An additional amendment to enable mandatory inspection for watercrafts entering B.C. from another jurisdiction prior to launch into B.C. waters will take effect later.

In June 2024, the Program team (WLRS and B.C. Conservation Officer Service) hosted a rapid response tabletop training exercise with our U.S. counterparts in the Columbia River Basin. The exercise was focused on response actions if invasive mussels were to be detected in a shared waterbody between B.C. and Montana. The lessons learned from this exercise are intended to inform updates of the Zebra and Quagga Mussel Early Detection Rapid Response Plan.

EB52 Wildlife Safety Response Officer Program Funding**Pemberton**

Whereas the Province is responsible for preventing and responding to natural resource law enforcement infractions and human-wildlife conflicts through the BC Conservation Officer Service;

And whereas the Province created the Wildlife Safety Response Officer program, funded by communities, to support BC Conservation Officers and communities in proactively managing human-wildlife interactions:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to fully fund the Wildlife Safety Response Officer program to ensure that all communities have access to the tools they need to protect wildlife and reduce the risks associated with human-wildlife interactions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Conservation Officer Service welcomes discussions with communities interested in implementing a Wildlife Safety Response Officer (WSRO) in their area. In the Sea-to-Sky region, for example, the Resort Municipality of Whistler and the District of Squamish co-fund a WSRO for their communities.

The Province appreciates the desire for a WSRO in every community, however, it is important to clarify the WSRO program is an enhanced service to the community that focuses on an educational approach to help mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.

Conservation Officers will continue to engage with communities and provide public safety and environmental enforcement services to all British Columbians, which includes responding to violations and human-wildlife conflicts.

EB53 Sustainable Funding for Solid Waste Management Compliance

Comox Valley RD

Whereas increasing environmental standards for solid waste management are placing considerable financial strain on local governments and their taxpayers;

And whereas the provincial government should consider the financial implications of such regulatory changes on local governments and provide corresponding and accessible opportunities for local governments to receive financial support:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province of British Columbia for the establishment of an annual funding model to assist local governments in adequately preparing for and responding to new provincial environmental standards for solid waste management.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The ministry recognizes the challenges local governments face in reducing waste, maintaining waste management services, and meeting environmental standards. Collaboration among all levels of government is essential to reduce waste while ensuring it is managed in a way that is protective of the health of people and the environment.

The regional Solid Waste Management Plan, and subsequent Plan review and update processes, offer flexibility for local governments to establish programs that align with regional district capabilities and local opportunities. The prioritizing, scheduling, and budgeting required to ensure solid waste management programs and infrastructure are in compliance with provincial environmental standards should be included as part of the Plan. Local governments who own and operate solid waste facilities, such as landfills or compost facilities, can work with the provincial director to understand the site-specific considerations and financial liabilities under consideration to help inform a timeframe and reasonable implementation approach. It should be noted that required upgrades are contingent on the securing and raising of adequate funding.

Solid waste management funding has been available to local governments through provincial funding programs such as the Growing Communities Fund, and organics infrastructure funding programs. A list of available funding programs can be found on the Province's Local Government Grants and Transfers website. Provisions of the *Environmental Management Act* provide local governments with the option of long-term borrowing for the implementation of an approved solid waste management plan. In addition, the Province provides some exemptions from elector approval in cases where a cost is externally imposed on a municipality through a state of emergency, a court order, or an executive order like an Environmental Protection Order.

EB54 Produce Stickers in Composting Facilities**Summerland**

Whereas the Government of Canada, Province of BC, and 17 regional districts, municipalities and local First Nations have together invested up to \$30 million through the Organics Infrastructure Program (OIP) to keep organic waste out of landfills and to increase organic composting capacity in BC;

And whereas the organic composting process is hindered by the difficulty of screening out non compostable plastic Price Look-Up (PLU) stickers applied to fruit and vegetable items that inevitably end up in curbside collection bins:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petition the governments of British Columbia and Canada to require the use of certified industrially compostable PLU stickers on all fresh produce.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The ministry acknowledges that PLU produce stickers can result in the presence of plastic and other contaminants in finished compost. Companies are not required to use PLU stickers in Canada but voluntarily choose to use them and to follow codes that are administered internationally. The Canadian Produce Marketing Association is encouraging Canada's fresh produce sector to transition to certified industrially compostable PLU stickers.

In 2023, the Government of Canada consulted on a regulatory framework paper on proposed regulations that would set minimum recycled content requirements for certain plastic manufactured items and labelling rules to improve the accuracy of recyclability and compostability information found on plastic packaging and single-use items. This paper included a proposal that all plastic PLU produce stickers would be required to be compostable.

The B.C. Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR) regulates compost facilities and specifies materials that can be composted. The OMRR does not currently allow plastic, including compostable plastic, to be composted. The ministry has proposed amendments to the OMRR to enable a facility to seek authorization to process compostable plastics if the facility can demonstrate that the material can be successfully composted. The ministry intends to recommend updates to the regulation before end of 2025.

Whereas local governments recognize the urgent need to address climate change and the impact that climate change is having on communities through extreme weather such as wildfires, floods, extreme heat, which is causing major infrastructure damage and loss of life to residents;

And whereas there is a need to engage young people by local governments, and train the next generation of low carbon sector workers and leaders:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province of British Columbia for an expanded Youth Climate Corps that will provide green living wage jobs and training to young adults to support important work on climate adaptation and mitigation projects in their own communities, such as wildfire mitigation, building retrofits, ecosystem restoration and community engagement;

And be it further resolved that the Province work with local governments, Indigenous communities and nations, youth groups, industry, union associations and environmental organizations to scaleup, design programming and provide resources for a BC-wide Youth Climate Corps.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions (the Ministry) acknowledges the important role of youth and young adult employment in supporting the climate transition in British Columbia.

The Province of British Columbia provided a three-million-dollar grant in 2024 to the Youth Climate Corps BC (YCCBC) to expand its program to more communities across the province so that more young people in British Columbia can train for careers that will help their communities reduce emissions and adapt to the changing climate. In addition to the funding, the ministry has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with YCCBC to support alignment on climate action priorities and the need to support youth in developing subject matter expertise and capacity in the climate action space and contributing to a low carbon and resilient workforce in B.C. As per the MOU agreement, YCCBC and staff from the Climate Action Secretariat meet quarterly to support alignment, provide CleanBC training to YCCBC cohorts (as needed), and explore opportunities for advancing youth engagement on climate action more broadly. The MOU is in place until the end of the funding agreement, Spring 2027.

The ministry acknowledges the importance of youth engagement in climate action and gaining work experience that can lead to well-paying climate focused work. The ministry will continue to maintain the relationship with YCCBC and provide in-kind support. The ministry will consider further financial support if funding becomes available and once the grant outcomes have been reviewed.

Whereas many local governments in BC have set Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets;

And whereas like other local governments, the District of Central Saanich has made progress in reducing emissions, yet has findings to indicate that heavy-duty truck emissions have increased, while there are few available local government legislative or financial powers to change this trajectory:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Province to use its financial and legislative powers to take further action to reduce the emissions from the heavy-duty trucks, which may include requiring a higher mixture of biodiesel, electrification, or further incentives to decarbonize heavy-duty vehicle fleets.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Province of British Columbia (B.C.) recognizes the importance of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation as well as the need to reduce the energy intensity of goods movement. The transportation sector accounts for the largest source of emissions in B.C. and emissions are increasing each year. Our climate mitigation actions to reduce these emissions have a wide range of benefits and co-benefits, including improvements to air quality and health, creation of clean jobs, and economic development.

To reduce GHG emissions from medium and heavy-duty (MHD) vehicles, the Province is taking the following actions:

- Offering vehicle post-purchase rebates on qualifying zero-emission MHD vehicles through the CleanBC Go Electric Rebates Program.
- Offering charging infrastructure rebates for zero-emission MHD vehicles through the CleanBC Go Electric Fleet Charging Program and the Medium and Heavy-Duty Public Charger Program.
- Working with colleges to develop zero-emission vehicle (ZEV)-training curriculum for MHD mechanics.
- Partnering with the Community Energy Association to reduce knowledge gaps and increase awareness of ZEV adoption in the MHD sector across B.C. by offering digital tools, outreach activities, and in-person technology demonstrations for private and public sector fleets.
- Funding the CleanBC Go Electric Commercial Vehicle Pilots Program (CVP) which supports ZEV deployments and/or infrastructure projects related to the adoption of commercial ZEVs. All projects funded through the CVP Program are required to provide telematics and operational data, which will be analyzed and shared publicly over the next two years (funded by Transport Canada's Zero-Emission Trucking Program).
- Bringing together the B.C. ZEV Advisory Council, established in 2023 and comprised of First Nations, environmental non-governmental organizations, industry, academia, infrastructure providers and local governments to collectively explore solutions to adopting ZEVs across all sectors, including MHD.
- Strengthening the renewable fuel requirements in the B.C. Low Carbon Fuel Standard by increasing the renewable fuel target from 4 to 8 percent in the diesel fuel category, beginning in the 2025 compliance period.
- Increasing low carbon fuel availability in B.C. (e.g., biodiesel and renewable diesel) through increasingly stringent Low Carbon Fuel Standard carbon intensity reduction requirements.

The Province remains committed to driving down GHG emissions, ensuring cleaner air, and building a more sustainable future for all British Columbians.

EB57 Small Scale Commercial Contaminated Sites**Kitimat**

Whereas the contaminated site remediation process is required when an application is made for many types of redevelopment;

And whereas the environmental remediation process is so onerous and costly for small scale commercial development that it can delay development:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to reassess the contaminated sites provincial legislation to alleviate the negative economic impacts for small scale commercial redevelopment and provide more options for economic development opportunities on these properties.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The ministry is mandated to protect our environment and the health and safety of British Columbians, now, and for future generations while supporting economic growth. Contaminated sites legislation is in place to ensure contaminated sites are remediated before redevelopment, so the land, air and water is safe for the new user.

The existing legislation has built in flexibility, such as the removal of restrictions associated with municipal permitting, to allow development to proceed while the remediation process is underway. The ministry supports brownfield redevelopment and is continually looking for ways to improve and streamline remediation processes and to reduce application service times, for example by prioritizing important housing projects.

Beyond the existing legal requirements for investigation and remediation of contaminated sites, and local government authority to take action on nuisance sites provided under section 64 of the *Community Charter*, communities can consider ways to incentivize remediation such as providing tax incentives and working with property owners to find new ways to utilize the property.

EB58 Advancing Local Government Actions Toward the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) and Reconciliation

Courtenay

Whereas the Province of BC is implementing the 10 Principles within the *Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) and local governments and Indigenous organizations are collectively working towards reconciliation actions;

And whereas many local governments and Indigenous organizations do not have the capacity for the extensive work required for effective partnership building in the spirit of reconciliation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of BC provide an ongoing funding stream for local governments and Indigenous partners to advance the *Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and local reconciliation actions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The ministry appreciates that local governments, and First Nations need capacity for engagement and working towards reconciliation. The Community-to-Community (C2C) Forum program includes criteria scope for proponent local governments and First Nations to work on events or projects to advance DRIPA and reconciliation.

Funded by the ministry and Indigenous Services Canada, for over 25 years, the C2C Forum program has played a critical role in funding events so local governments and First Nations can build relationships, support reconciliation efforts, and resolve issues of common interest.

The program has a wide scope so communities can discuss and work on economic, environmental, health, and safety matters. More recently, additional funding has helped to widen the scope of the program to include the advancement of tangible outcomes. These include: the development of agreements (such as protocols, MOUs, and service agreements), joint plans, and/or strategies that advance First Nation/local government reconciliation and relationship building.

To date, the program has funded nearly 700 events across the province. The genesis of the program came from the first province-wide C2C Forum in January 1997.

Whereas local governments are required to meet tight and firm deadlines for submissions to provincial and federal application-based grant programs;

And whereas after submitting a grant application, local governments are left to wait indefinitely due to the absence of established timelines for grant adjudication and approvals, thereby affecting local governments' ability to plan projects with certainty and financial accuracy:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the governments of British Columbia and Canada to establish and adhere to processing timelines and award decision dates for all application-based grant programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes the need for local governments to be able to plan for infrastructure projects and that understanding the timeline for funding decisions can assist with budgeting and resource planning. Under recent funding programs, the ministry identified the future construction seasons that projects submitted to application intakes should target, with programs supporting medium term priorities.

Through the assessment of applications, the Province needs to ensure that program criteria are met, risks are managed, and that projects meet federal as well as provincial criteria, through the application process. This must be balanced with the timeliness of decisions.

The Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program has been the main application-based grant program since 2018. The very high volume of applications and two-phase review with due diligence by both program partners resulted in a longer approval process. Federal administration has increased as compared to past programs. While the Province has worked with federal staff to endeavour to make reviews as efficient as possible, project-specific considerations such as requirements for federal environmental assessment or consultation limits the ability to commit to timelines related to individual applications.

The Province will continue to advocate for more streamlined requirements and processes for future federal-provincial programs.

Whereas local governments in BC are increasingly reliant on a wide variety of grant programs to support the delivery of services, programs and projects in their jurisdictions;

And whereas the administrative burden of managing increasingly complex criteria and requirements, from application to final reporting, can be overwhelming, time consuming and sometimes prohibitive for some local governments:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the governments of British Columbia and Canada to coordinate their efforts across all grant program streams to establish more consistent and flexible application criteria and deadlines, simplified reporting requirements and provide funding for the general administration of grant programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The ministry administers a range of infrastructure grant programs that support local governments in meeting the needs of their communities. While most are application based, we have looked for opportunities to flow funding that can be used within established criteria.

The Growing Communities Fund (GCF) distributed conditional grants to enabled local governments to make their own decisions about which eligible infrastructure projects will help enable community growth. The Province is a signatory, with UBCM, on the Canada Community Building Fund – Community Works Fund which provides an annual transfer for local governments for infrastructure priorities within eligible categories.

Application-based programs are designed to enhance a local government's long-term infrastructure plans, while advancing broader provincial and federal goals, which in some cases are to meet regulatory and legislated requirements. It is not the ministry's intention to make applications and reporting burdensome. Enough information is needed in an application to make decisions. Public money requires accountability, and to ensure the funds are spent correctly, reporting is required from successful applicants.

Capital funding for local government infrastructure has primarily been delivered through bilateral federal-provincial grant programs that require applications to be approved for funds. Federal administration has increased as compared to past programs. The Province will continue to advocate for more streamlined requirements and processes for future federal-provincial programs. We need to ensure that program criteria are met, and risks are managed through the application process.

Project management, including grant reporting, is typically an eligible cost under application-based programs.

Whereas local governments across British Columbia face challenges in securing stable funding for essential services;

And whereas a consistent and reliable source of funding is crucial for the effective functioning of local governments;

And whereas alternative funding mechanisms, such as a municipal sales tax or alternative tax be directly allocated to B.C. local governments, can contribute to financial stability and local autonomy;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province for the exploration and implementation of alternative funding options, including, for example, a municipal sales tax, to ensure stable and predictable funding for local governments in British Columbia, with a specific focus on directing funds directly for local government budgeting;

And be it further resolved that UBCM engage in discussions with relevant provincial authorities to develop and implement a sustainable funding model that addresses the unique needs and challenges faced by local governments, promoting financial resilience and supporting the delivery of essential services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Province understands the challenges of securing stable, sufficient funding for essential services delivered by local governments. In this time of economic uncertainty, working together across levels of government to build a strong, resilient B.C. economy is a high priority for this government.

The Province continues to work with UBCM under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2022 to review the local government finance system, understand the underlying factors and key cost drivers that are creating challenges, and seek solutions that present mutual benefit. The staff-level Working Group for this MOU is committed and engaged in working together with UBCM to develop approaches that increase local government financial resiliency.

Sales taxes are most effective when they have a broad base so they can apply to more goods at a lower rate. A municipal sales tax is not currently being considered, as it would create an unequal playing field across municipalities that implemented it differently, as well as create an additional burden for governments and businesses to collect, remit, and administer. Taxpayers can also avoid regionally-imposed sales taxes, diverting spending to lower- or no-tax jurisdictions. Sales taxes are generally considered regressive, as people with lower incomes end up spending a greater proportion of their resources on taxes compared with people who have higher incomes.

**EB62 Rethinking Local Government Taxation for Equitable and
Effective Crisis Response**

Langford

Whereas local governments, often on the front lines, bear the brunt of addressing shared crises such as climate issues, housing affordability, inequality, public health, and infrastructure challenges;

And whereas the burden on local governments has intensified due to provincial shortcomings in fulfilling their responsibilities, leaving many local governments grappling with insufficient revenue sources, resulting in an over reliance on regressive property taxation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to promptly fulfill its responsibilities in providing health care, including mental health care, as well as social services and the management of criminal rehabilitation through correctional facilities;

And be it further resolved that in the absence of immediate provincial action, UBCM advocate for a comprehensive and immediate review of local government taxation and revenue sources recognizing the pivotal role of local governments, which, despite these being provincial responsibilities, are left to deal with the repercussions without adequate support from the Province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Local governments are essential partners in creating strong, resilient B.C. communities where all can thrive. In *Budget 2025*, the Province made significant investments to strengthen mental health and addictions services throughout B.C.: \$500 million in new funding over three years for addictions treatment and recovery programs that are underway. These include Road to Recovery, Foundry, secure care, supports for children and youth, and Indigenous-led treatment, recovery, and aftercare services.

With Budget 2025, the Province is investing a further \$325 million in new funding over three years to provide housing options for people living outdoors and resolve encampments, to address public safety concerns about robbery, shoplifting and other property crimes, to provide more resources to law enforcement to fight crime, and to build capacity in the legal system to ensure timely access to justice and to continue to support other public safety programs. This includes new funding of \$24 million to help improve timely access to justice, including improved capacity at the B.C. Supreme Court and enhanced security at the Vancouver Provincial Court at 222 Main Street in Vancouver. It will also continue the expansion of virtual bail, improving access to justice and community safety.

This Province also understands that even with these actions, local governments struggle to raise sufficient revenue from property taxes to address the infrastructure and service delivery needs of their communities. A Memorandum of Understanding signed in January 2022 between the Province and UBCM continues to provide for a forum to discuss the fiscal challenges facing local governments and seek solutions that respond to shared priorities.

EB63 Sustainable and Equitable Funding of Library Services**Port Alberni**

Whereas public libraries play a vital role in communities by providing access to resources, promoting literacy, supporting job seekers and small businesses, advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and promoting equity and inclusion;

And whereas public libraries in British Columbia are primarily funded by levies paid by local governments, and provincial funding for libraries has remained stagnant; while the costs to deliver library services and the demand for library services have increased exponentially over time:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM appeal to the Province of British Columbia to provide long-term sustainable funding for public libraries in B.C.;

And be it further resolved that the Province ensures that BC libraries receive regular increases to provincial government funding in subsequent years.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs acknowledges that local and regional libraries are important community services and spaces. While local governments are the primary funders of ongoing library operations, the Province has provided long-term supplemental funding to support the enhancement and extended reach of public libraries, under the direction of local and regional library boards. The Province also provides funding to library partners for shared information technology infrastructure, enabling libraries of all sizes to access essential services.

In addition to annual grants for operational support, the Province has seized opportunities to provide targeted enhancement funding for priority areas, such as technology and accessibility improvements.

Whereas climate change is causing increasingly unpredictable and extended summer droughts throughout Vancouver Island and the Coastal Region;

And whereas water is a shared resource required by all residents, industry sectors, agriculture and the environment to both sustain life and conduct business:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM request the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship conduct a current inventory of surface and groundwater availability, as well as projected future needs, in order to facilitate planning of freshwater storage requirements to supply all residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, Indigenous, emergency and environmental needs to a minimum 50-year threshold.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

It is challenging to plan and manage for water security in perpetuity for a range of evolving needs and values in a changing climate and landscape. That's why we're taking a strengthened approach to drought preparedness: getting started earlier; updating the provincial Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan; and working with our partners and investing in long-term, evidence-based solutions to help British Columbians manage in times of water scarcity. In partnership with regional health authorities over the last years, the Province has also been distributing bi-weekly surveys to drinking water suppliers throughout the drought season to collect information on, and understand, the status and risk of community water supply issues.

The Province has extensive groundwater and surface water monitoring networks, aquifer and watershed science programs, the Drought Information Portal, and several web-based applications (i.e. Groundwater Wells and Aquifers search tool) where the public can access the most current information on water levels, vulnerabilities, and detailed information that can support local governments and others as they undertake water demand and supply analysis and planning. More information can be found on the provincial Water Data Tools webpage.

Several local governments and provincially funded watershed organizations across B.C. are undertaking water supply and demand studies to better inform area-based planning and development constraints and opportunities. Within budget and staff capacity, the Province also conducts water budget studies in areas where water resources are stressed to inform water allocation decisions and support for drought preparedness. Recent examples include water budget studies in Westwold, the Lower Mainland, and the Shawnigan Creek Watershed, which are available in the EcoCat Ecological Reports Catalogue.

Importantly, applications for water use are received on a first come first served basis. It is typically the responsibility of an applicant to demonstrate if water is available to meet their proposed demand without adversely affecting other water uses or environmental needs.

Whereas over one million British Columbians rely on groundwater for daily use and that groundwater presents significant challenges in terms of monitoring, defining (classifying/characterizing), and demonstrating water viability, including water-use budgets/allocations;

And whereas the impacts of climate change, population growth and industrial activity are intensifying, and all three factors can negatively impact groundwater sustainability and sources:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government prioritize the following:

1. Renew the work to identify aquifers at risk in terms of productivity and vulnerability to contamination, climate change, population growth and other criteria;
2. Continue to build in the province's groundwater monitoring capacity, including installation of additional observation wells for high risk aquifers;
3. Develop a regular reporting process on the health and viability of high-risk aquifers; and
4. Develop a funding program for local governments to support local monitoring of groundwater resources.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Protecting our watersheds and aquifers is a shared responsibility. To effectively manage groundwater use and the impacts of land use activities on groundwater availability, quality, and overall health, it is essential to understand the existence and characteristics of B.C.'s aquifers. Provincial mapping of an aquifer within the Groundwater Wells and Aquifers search tool (GWELLS) is often the first step in developing this understanding. Evaluating productivity and vulnerability of aquifers, particularly in complex systems, often requires more detailed studies, modelling and field-based measurements of groundwater levels.

Since 2016, the Province's dedicated Groundwater Science Program has vastly improved our groundwater knowledge. Studies conducted under this program are available through the BC Water Science Series webpage. Projects supported by the Groundwater Science team include characterization of specific aquifers, surface and groundwater interaction studies, drought and groundwater studies, tools and summary factsheets.

This information can be used by local governments and others to undertake aquifer water budgets to assess availability, safe yield estimates and potential vulnerabilities to different development planning scenarios. Where possible, the Province and local water stewardship groups collaborate with local governments to provide professional advice to inform policies, bylaws or other mechanisms to manage land use activities in ways that will ensure protection of water values. If concerns are specific to the protection of the aquifer as a drinking water source, the Province has developed tools and resources to help water suppliers fulfil their responsibilities under the *Drinking Water Protection Act* and Drinking Water Protection Regulation. Information on these tools and drinking water responsibilities can be found on the Drinking Water Quality page of the Province's website.

Established in 1961, the Provincial Groundwater Observation Well Network (PGOWN) is currently comprised of more than 235 monitoring stations actively measuring groundwater levels. Maintenance of the PGOWN is a key focus of the program to ensure ongoing collection of high-quality data. While expansion of monitoring into new aquifers is possible, due to limited program resources, the Province may need to prioritize monitoring locations, meaning that lower priority stations would need to be closed in order to expand the network into different aquifers. Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Specialists and regional Groundwater Technicians can provide guidance to local governments and others who undertake their own groundwater monitoring to inform local land and water use planning and decisions.

Whereas residential development in portions of unincorporated areas designated as suitable for increased dwelling density through regional growth strategies and official community plans will enhance the supply of housing in British Columbia;

And whereas a key constraint in increasing dwelling density in these areas is locating adequately sized green infrastructure such as rain gardens and infiltration swales that protect stream systems and overall watershed health, and reduce risk to downstream property:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of B.C. investigate options to permit green infrastructure and low impact development rainwater management measures for private property and public roads within provincial public highway rights of way in alignment with policy direction set out in the March 2023 Intentions Paper for the Watershed Security Strategy.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) recognizes the benefits of using green infrastructure for stormwater management and has used this methodology on several provincial highway infrastructure projects to manage stormwater in a more controlled fashion over traditional stormwater infrastructure.

Regarding the placement of stormwater management infrastructure on ministry rights of way to manage drainage from private property and infrastructure, it would be difficult to establish a blanket policy to allow such infrastructure as there are numerous variables to consider in designing, constructing and maintaining such infrastructure.

Items such as the volume of water the infrastructure must capture and retain over the life of the infrastructure, the amount it may release onto or through the ministry's infrastructure under certain weather events, the ongoing maintenance of the green infrastructure (replanting, cleaning of swales, repairs after major events etc.) are just some of the items that would have to be considered.

There may be specific scenarios where green stormwater infrastructure could be placed on ministry right of way to manage private stormwater drainage, and the ministry encourages the Comox-Valley Regional District to discuss those scenarios with MOTT's Vancouver Island District Development Services staff.

EB67 Addressing Shoreline Erosion Concerns in Coastal Communities

North Coast RD

Whereas coastal communities in BC are experiencing the detrimental effects of climate change, including rising sea levels, adverse weather events, and eroding shorelines:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM urge the BC government to dedicate more resources toward mitigating the impacts of climate change and shoreline erosion in coastal communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

The Province works closely with local governments, First Nations and other partners to tackle extreme weather, adapt to climate change, and build stronger, more resilient communities. Since 2017, the Province has provided approximately \$400 million for more than 2,150 disaster-mitigation projects through the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness funding programs. Approximately half of the funding has gone to communities since December 2022, demonstrating the Province's commitment to ramping up defenses against climate emergencies in B.C.

The Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding (DRIF) program, announced in 2024, supports First Nation and local government projects that help communities address their climate-risk needs. The fund provided approximately \$15 million in its first year and \$25 million in its second year. Eligible hazards include drought and water scarcity, extreme temperature, floods, sea-level rise and erosion.

Erosion rates are greatly accelerated during large floods, and the new B.C. Flood Strategy will build flood preparation throughout the province. Actions include completion of a province-wide flood risk assessment that will include evaluations of the need for additional flood protection infrastructure. In addition, updated nature-based flood infrastructure guidelines will inform decision-making on nature-based solutions and nature-based infrastructure and bring in decision support tools for assessing site level vulnerabilities and risks related to climate change – including sea level rise.

The B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy, approved in 2024, contains commitments to expand our collective understanding of climate risks to coastal communities, identify and help to address the disparities between coastal communities in their capacity to respond to sea level rise and other climate risks, and improve access to nature-based solutions to climate change.

The Province will continue to explore funding opportunities for local governments and communities, including opportunities to leverage federal government programs to improve climate change resilience in B.C.

Whereas the current forest ecosystem contains significant unnatural old growth forest, excluding Interior Cedar Hemlock and Coastal Rainforest, and experiences damage from devastating wildfires and insect epidemics;

And whereas the biodiversity and sustainability of forests in British Columbia is at risk, impacting human and wildlife health, ecosystem health, and the economy of the forest sector:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of BC, in conjunction with Indigenous Nations, to modernize forest management policies and regulations, update biodiversity targets, and promote environmental stewardship, which are key in creating healthy forests, reducing fire hazards, and protecting community safety and critical infrastructure;

And be it further resolved that UBCM request the Province of B.C. to support education on the value of reintroducing fire plan strategies to responsibly manage fuel sources as a healthy way to maintain the forest, ungulate, bird, and amphibian populations, and protect community safety and infrastructure.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

Between 2021 and 2024, the Ministry of Forests made significant changes to forest and natural resource management in B.C. by increasing transparency of forest operations, expanding the flexibility of decision makers considering First Nations, community and non-timber values, and introducing the new Forest Landscape Planning (FLP) regime. FLP is a comprehensive framework for collaborative, coordinated management of all forest values on a landscape level, with First Nations, stakeholders, local communities and government. Balancing biodiversity, environmental and socio-economic values to create resilient forest ecosystems across the province, are key goals of FLP. Currently four pilot projects are ongoing and nearing completion, with another 11 FLP Tables being formed across the province.

While FLP will enable innovative practices to manage all values on the land base, the ministry has taken additional steps to support the wildfire resilience of our forests. Fire Management Stocking Standards are currently being developed to ensure wildfire resilient reforested areas that support a multitude of values ranging from wildlife habitat through timber production and biodiversity.

To address challenges presented by the recovery of areas burnt by catastrophic wildfires, new efficient mechanisms were created for the development of a coordinated approach to recover and reforest large scale damaged areas, and to allocate the required funding efficiently with minimal administrative effort. Newly created "Areas of Catastrophic Damage" are being established to facilitate this collaborative recovery process in partnership with local governments, First Nations, the forest industry and local stakeholders.

In all those processes, the reintroduction of fire as a management tool plays a key role. The Ministry of Forests is working closely with BC Wildfire Service, and First Nations, to build in expertise and apply prescribed, and cultural burning across the land scape.

These practices form an important tool in ongoing government funded initiatives to conduct wildfire risk reduction treatments for community protection in the Wildland Urban Interface. Funding mechanisms like the Forest Enhancement Society of BC, and the Crownland Wildfire Risk Reduction (CLWRR) initiative are essential in enabling and guiding these targeted operations. Over 110 wildfire risk reduction projects have been carried out through the Forest Enhancement Society alone. In addition, natural resource districts have successfully used CLWRR funding to implement a wide range of wildfire risk reduction treatments, fostering public safety and community protection. The BC Wildfire Service is the lead for public facing information on these programs and has greatly expanded its capacity for outreach to the public on the reintroduction of prescribed and cultural fire in ecosystems that have been historically maintained by fire.

Legislative and regulatory changes implemented over the last six years have enabled government and forest professionals to respond to the vast variety of challenges presented by climate change, and changing socio-economic conditions, in collaboration with First Nations and communities. The Ministry of Forests is committed to active, innovative management of the land base, increasing the resiliency of forest ecosystems, and protection of communities, and will continue to realize its mandate through working with First Nations, municipalities, stake holders and the forest industry.

Whereas the 2023 wildfire season was the most destructive in British Columbia's recorded history, with more than 2.84 million hectares of forest and land burned, and there is limited time to recover value from fire-impacted standing timber before the wood quality deteriorates, and the forest industry in British Columbia is facing significant timber shortage challenges leading to mill closures across the province;

And whereas the fire-impacted standing timber poses a significant threat to public safety through the potential for future wildfires:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to work with the forest industry and relevant agencies to enhance access and utilization of fire-impacted standing timber across the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

Since 2017, the B.C. government has been working closely with industry to identify barriers to salvaging wildfire damaged timber. Changes have been made to how stands are developed or permitted for harvesting and how they are priced through the stumpage system. Much effort and communication has occurred between government and industry experts in both sawmilling and the pulp sector to promote salvage.

In 2024, 1.1 million m³ of wildfire salvage occurred in the Interior of B.C. and an additional 550 thousand m³ is under permit (ready to go). BCTS is putting sales up in wildfire salvage. Overall, the forest sector has responded admirably to wildfire salvage opportunities.

It is important to note the need to strike a balance between harvesting and landscape level stewardship objectives. The B.C. government is striving to strike that balance.

EB70 Registration of Notice of Latecomer Charges on Property Title**Squamish**

Whereas if a local government pays all or part of the costs of excess or extended services (road, water, sanitary or storm drainage systems) it may, under *Local Government Act* (LGA) s. 508(3), recover its costs through latecomer charges against owners of land that is to be subdivided or developed;

And whereas the Land Title and Survey Authority (LTSA) does not currently have authority to register Notices of Excess or Extended Services Agreements against property title and does not accept such notices, creating risk for property developers or purchasers and for local governments:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province amend the *Local Government Act* to give the Land Title and Survey Authority statutory authority to accept Notices of Excessive or Extended Services Agreements (also known as Latecomer Agreements) for registration on property title.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The types of information that may be added to a title are limited in legislation to those which inform of an interest in the property. This means that the registrant has an interest in recovering a debt owed or has some interest in the property itself. It will require policy investigation and consultation before an amendment to legislation to permit notice on title to inform parties of the presence of a latecomer charge is considered. These are charges in respect of the cost of service infrastructure and may be payable only if a property is connected or begins to use the related service and so are not an interest in the property.

Whereas British Columbia currently has no legislation restricting foreign ownership of agricultural land in the province, resulting in concern among British Columbians that unrestricted foreign ownership of agricultural land in British Columbia may cause speculation in land prices and compromise the security and sustainability of food production in British Columbia;

And whereas additional concerns resulting from unrestricted foreign ownership of agricultural land include: pressures on the limited protected agricultural land in BC; unmanaged lands with no local oversight leading to invasive species issues; whether the tax rate on non-resident ALR ownership should be different; and whether foreign ownership of ALR lands is in the long-term interest of the agricultural industry in British Columbia:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM support Recommendation 24 of the Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission Report, December 2018 and lobby the provincial government to adopt policies restricting foreign ownership of ALR land in British Columbia, similar to those of other Canadian jurisdictions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

In Canada, owners of farmland must adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and bylaws set by federal, provincial, local, and First Nations governments, irrespective of their residency.

British Columbia (B.C.) protects farmland for agricultural use through the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), rather than through controlling ownership. In addition, the Province, through the *Property Transfer Tax Act*, imposes an additional property transfer tax of 20 percent (also known as the foreign buyers' tax) on foreign nationals, foreign corporations and taxable trustees who purchase residential properties in specified areas in the province. Taxing foreign owners may help address housing affordability in B.C. by reducing foreign demand and curbing speculation in the residential property market.

In January 2023, the federal government enabled the *Prohibition on the Purchase of Residential Property by Non-Canadians Act* (Foreign Buyer Ban), which banned non-Canadians from purchasing residential property in Canada for two years starting in January 2023. The ban applies to Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations as defined by Statistics Canada. The federal government recently extended the ban to January 1, 2027.

Property transfer tax data from the Ministry of Finance shows that foreign investment has declined steadily from 3 percent of annual transactions in 2017 to 1 percent in 2024 in B.C.'s real estate market since the implementation of the foreign buyers' tax.

Any exploration of policies restricting foreign ownership of ALR land in B.C. would need to be undertaken in collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Attorney General and the Ministry of Finance.

EB72 Keep BC Parks Open Longer**Kootenay Boundary RD**

Whereas provincial parks serve a vital recreational, cultural, social and economic role in the lives of many British Columbians;

And whereas the Province of BC closes many of its parks to campers in September each year, limiting the ability of British Columbians access to those parks at a time of year when they continue to be functionally usable:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to extend the season for all provincial parks, including campgrounds, by keeping them open until the end of October to enable the access to parks for all visitors to enjoy these recreational benefits for a longer period and to encourage healthy and active lifestyles.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The provincial government is interested in supporting local governments in exploring ways to maintain access to B.C. provincial parks and camping opportunities within the province.

Operating dates are determined primarily by peak season demands but are also based on factors including past attendance data, weather/snow melt and park accessibility.

Regular operating seasons for BC Parks – the dates in which parks are open and accessible to the public – are outlined in contractual agreements held with Park Operators who manage campgrounds and day use parks on behalf of BC Parks. These are mandatory dates that the park must be opened unless there is an emergency or extreme event.

Annually, Park Operators may propose to extend the operating season; however, it is often not financially feasible for them to do so as the parks do not generate enough revenue to support their operation. In the current fiscal climate, any decision to extend dates would, of necessity, have to be financially self-sustaining.

While many Park Operators choose to operate additional dates, some are unable due to high costs and lower visitation, facility readiness, weather, and/or access to the park. Some services may be reduced during the shoulder season to offset these costs, however there are several requirements a Park Operator must fulfil to ensure the park is safe for visitors, often resulting in high costs. BC Parks reviews each proposal to ensure these requirements can be met before approving any additional dates.

Where possible, BC Parks offers extended season camping opportunities, which are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Camping opportunities within an extended season may have limited services. For example, BC Parks shuts down some services such as water and sani-stations to preserve the integrity of these facilities during periods of low use and high risk of overnight freezing temperatures.

Currently, there are many sites across the province that offer year-round or extended season access, either for front or back country camping, trails and hiking, marine recreation, and more.

The information provided by UBCM will be shared with the program area responsible and taken into consideration alongside other factors when considering the feasibility of extended seasons in specific parks.

**EB73 Volunteer Firefighter and Search and Rescue Members
Income Tax Credit**

Kootenay Boundary RD

Whereas volunteer firefighters and search and rescue members perform a critical, lifesaving role in the safety of British Columbians while receiving no pay and are increasingly difficult to recruit and retain;

And whereas the Province of BC passed legislation in 2017 that enabled these volunteers to receive a \$3,000 non-refundable tax credit:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to increase the tax credit for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue members to \$10,000 per annum.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Each year, the government reviews provincial taxes and considers changes in preparation of the provincial budget. The government then implements tax changes that it considers appropriate within the context of the Province's fiscal situation and other priorities.

UBCM's call for the Province to increase the existing tax credit will be considered as part of these discussions.

EB74 Improved Road Design for Vulnerable Road Users**Sunshine Coast RD**

Whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure road design standards prioritize the efficient movement of motor vehicles over the safety of vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, transit users, and cyclists;

And whereas narrow road rights-of-way and topographic challenges in rural areas often make it impossible for active transportation infrastructure to be built to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Active Transportation Design Guide of separated paths along road corridors;

And whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure will not approve, fund, or maintain any road improvements that don't meet their Active Transportation Design Guide:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to instruct the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to prioritize the safety of vulnerable road users in their road design standards;

And be it further resolved that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognize the practical challenges of active transportation in rural areas and approve, fund and maintain minor road improvements that increase safety for vulnerable road users, such as paved shoulders and crosswalks.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit shares UBCM's commitment to improving safety for vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. The ministry recognizes that rural areas present unique challenges, including narrow rights-of-way, limited population densities, and difficult topography, which can make it harder to apply standard active transportation designs.

In June 2024, Bill 23 came into force that identified Vulnerable Road Users under the B.C. *Motor Vehicle Act* to include pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters, e-kick scooters, electric wheelchairs and more. This legislation further protects these users by requiring a minimum safe passing distance of 1 metre on roads of 50k km/h or less and a distance of 1.5 metres on highways that have speeds of more than 50 km/h.

The ministry provides funding for Indigenous and local governments through the B.C. Active Transportation Grants Program that is intended to support smaller communities. Applicant projects must have used the B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide or similar, "best practices for safe infrastructure design" through other guidelines such as the Transportation Association of Canada or the American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials.

The Ministry's Active Transportation Design Guide is intended to be adaptable and context-sensitive, offering a range of options that can be tailored to different environments. While fully separated paths may not always be practical in rural settings, the ministry continues to implement safety-focused improvements such as shoulder widening and enhanced crossings where feasible. In 2024/25, the ministry has improved approximately 154 kilometres of shoulder to support safer travel for all road users. In addition, since 2017, The B.C. Active Transportation Grants Program has provided \$127.5 in cost-shared funding to approximately 198 communities.

The ministry is currently updating its Pedestrian Crossing Control Guide to reflect new research, improve consistency in decision-making, and better support crossing safety across the province. As part of this work, the ministry is also exploring new technologies and treatments that may be better suited to rural and low-volume contexts, including solar-powered beacons and visibility enhancements.

**EB75 Active Transportation Within Provincial Highway Rights
of Way**

Langford

Whereas according to CleanBC's Roadmap to 2030, transportation is our largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) which accounts for approximately 40% of our annual total, and to address this the Province has committed to doubling the proportion of trips using active transportation by 2030;

And whereas given the urgency of the climate crises, the fast-approaching 2030 deadline and the fact that safe active transportation infrastructure provides economically accessible transportation for more individuals of all ages and abilities, there is a pressing need for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to provide stronger leadership, accountability, and equitable investment in infrastructure for all modes of transportation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to take on the responsibility for the development, operation and maintenance of all active transportation infrastructure within provincial highway rights of way to align with active transportation planning of Indigenous and local governments, thus ensuring equitable commitment to active transportation infrastructure commensurate with infrastructure focused on motor vehicles.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The ministry works in partnership with Indigenous and local governments to support the development of active transportation infrastructure that reflects local priorities and conditions. Each community has unique needs that require a tailored approach, as such, the ministry works with local governments to find the best solution to their active transportation objectives. Through a variety of programs and resources, the ministry encourages the growth of active transportation networks that are safe, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.

One of the key initiatives is an internal program that identifies opportunities to expand active transportation infrastructure on ministry rights-of-way. Since 2023, the Ministry's Active Transportation (AT) Capital Program is improving safety and connectivity for people walking, cycling, and rolling with projects that connect community active transportation infrastructure over and on ministry rights-of-way. The total budget for the AT Capital Program is \$135 million over three years. In June 2024, the Province announced 11 projects under this program, representing an \$85 million investment to build active transportation infrastructure on ministry-owned rights-of-way across the province.

The B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program provides cost-sharing opportunities for Indigenous and local governments to develop and upgrade their own active transportation infrastructure. In 2022, the Province committed \$60 million over three years to this program, increasing the annual allocation by \$8 million. In 2025, over \$24 million was committed to 62 infrastructure projects and active transportation network plans that align with the B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide.

**EB76 Engagement with Local Governments with Respect to
Road Network Planning**

Sunshine Coast RD

Whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure lacks the funding, staffing and mandate to plan overall road networks in unincorporated areas and to proactively deal with transportation and development planning issues in the "fringe" interface areas of municipalities and regional districts;

And whereas problems with runoff from roads and development are increasingly severe across the province, and are significantly impacted by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure decisions around subdivision approvals and road infrastructure;

And whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure does not proactively engage with local governments on future planning and maintenance of numbered routes that run through local governments and often through downtown cores:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province direct and fund the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to engage with local governments on overall road network planning and subdivision planning in order to improve decision-making to reduce cumulative negative impacts on communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit regularly collaborates with municipalities and regional districts on local planning and development issues, including engaging in proactive planning. For example, ministry staff are often engaged by regional districts to discuss common goals and guiding principles for future planning related to their Official Community Plans (OCP) and to identify opportunities for collaboration and alignment.

The ministry regularly undertakes planning studies for highway corridors and provincial infrastructure to identify, develop, and evaluate strategies and potential short, medium, and long-term improvements to address future needs. These ministry-led planning studies include active engagement with local governments, First Nations, and other key stakeholders and account for shared priorities around safety and mobility, as well as other key considerations such as active transportation, transit, future land use, and development.

While local land use and municipal transportation decisions remain the responsibility of local governments, Section 52 of the *Transportation Act* requires ministerial approval for any zoning bylaw that affects land within a controlled area (defined as the radius of 800 metres around a Controlled Access Highway intersection). In those circumstances, ministry staff review the proposed bylaw, assess potential traffic impacts, and may require the local government—through the developer—to submit a Traffic Impact Assessment. This assessment helps determine whether any developer-driven improvements or mitigation measures are necessary to address traffic concerns.

The rural subdivision process is managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit; however, final subdivision approval rests with the Provincial Approving Officer, who operates in the capacity of statutory decision maker within the ministry. As part of the subdivision process, the ministry's development officers make formal referrals to local land use authorities to ensure compliance with local bylaws. Ministry staff carefully review each subdivision application on its own merits, considering factors such as access (including: review of the approach road(s) intended to be used to serve the proposed subdivision, access to the proposed lots, access to lands beyond, access to water and in the case of subdivisions adjacent to Controlled Access Highways, alternate access to the subdivision from local roads), drainage, and the presence of natural hazards, among other important criteria.

EB77 Culvert Restoration on Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Managed Roads Funding

qathet RD

Whereas the public relies on the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure managed culverts to ensure road safety and mitigate risk;

And whereas many failing and clogged culverts present a future flooding risk:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to provide realistic asset management and funding to restore culverts on Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure managed roads.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit manages an extensive network of culverts and drainage infrastructure, including 770 structure-size culverts and more than 185,000 other culverts, all of which help protect roadways from flooding and erosion. Recognizing the importance of drainage infrastructure for both highway resilience and user safety, the ministry actively invests in maintaining and improving these systems. Properly functioning culverts are essential during severe weather events, ensuring the stability and accessibility of the transportation network.

In 2024, the ministry replaced 100 culverts through its Preservation and Climate Adaptation Programs, while an additional 350 culverts were upgraded under its Maintenance Program. These efforts contribute to long-term infrastructure sustainability and adaptation to climate challenges.

To further strengthen the transportation network, the ministry has launched a Climate Adaptation Program. This initiative focuses on increasing culvert capacity, implementing scour remediation, and enhancing erosion protection. Additionally, the ministry assesses vulnerable culvert infrastructure to prioritize future upgrades and project work.

When infrastructure is impacted by flooding or other extreme events, the ministry follows a "build back better" approach that includes upsizing culverts, reinforcing drainage channels, and ensuring effective armoring to withstand environmental pressures.

The Climate Adaptation Program is set to invest \$100 million over the next three years (2025/26 to 2027/28) to improve the resilience of B.C.'s highways and side roads against climate-related events such as intense rainfall, extreme freshets, flooding, and wildfires. Over the past three years, nearly 150 projects have been funded, with \$64 million allocated through 2024/25.

To ensure ongoing effectiveness, culverts are inspected annually by maintenance contractors throughout the province. These contractors are responsible for clearing debris and blockages, keeping drainage systems flowing efficiently.

EB78 Funding for Rural Road Maintenance**Sunshine Coast RD**

Whereas secondary roads in unincorporated areas of BC are typically maintained on a break/fix basis despite deteriorating conditions and increasing traffic;

And whereas there is no publicly available plan for the upgrade and replacement of rural roads, culverts, and bridges:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to direct and fund the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to establish a capital asset management plan for secondary road networks across the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit is committed to maintaining British Columbia's vast network of rural highways and sideroads, ensuring safe and reliable transportation for communities across the province. These roadways provide a critical lifeline for rural and remote communities, including many B.C. First Nations communities, supporting local economies and access to essential services.

To ensure roads remain in good condition, the ministry conducts road surface condition analyses on main highway corridors annually and side roads bi-annually. This systematic evaluation allows the ministry to prioritize road surface rehabilitation, directing resources where they are most needed.

The Province has made significant investments in secondary road networks, with dedicated annual funding. In 2025/26, an estimated \$198 million will be spent on rural road improvements—an increase of 90 percent since 2019/20. The funding breakdown over recent years reflects the Province's commitment to these critical transportation assets:

2019/20	2020/21	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
\$104M	\$127M	\$178M	\$180M	\$186M	\$198M

This funding supports side road resurfacing projects, road repairs, stabilization, surface gravelling, culvert replacements, ditching, drainage improvements, brushing, shouldering, guardrail replacements, and durable pavement markings—ensuring safer and more reliable transportation networks for communities.

In addition to roadway improvements, the ministry's bridge rehabilitation and replacement program will allocate \$181 million in 2025/26 to support both highway and side road bridges. Projects will be prioritized based on engineering assessments and condition analyses, ensuring long-term structural resilience and safety.

Whereas several communities across the province have single or limited access/egress routes leaving them vulnerable during extreme events such as wildfire, rock slides or flooding;

And whereas some communities are required to use resource roads on an ongoing basis to remain connected;

And whereas resource roads are built for industrial purposes or access to natural resources in remote areas and the Province, or its contractors, do not maintain these to the same standards as paved public roadways:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to define standards of maintenance and construction that supports the economic continuity and connectedness of residents across the province where these resource roads are being used as alternate commuter routes or would be used in the event of an emergency.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

Resource roads fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests, and they are maintained according to standards designed for industrial road use rather than public highways. These roads serve a critical function for forestry, mining, and other resource-based industries, but they are not built to the same specifications as highways meant for regular commuter traffic.

Converting resource roads into publicly maintained highways would come at a significant cost to both the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) and industry. Given the extensive work required to upgrade these roads to meet highway standards, the Province's current focus remains on investing in the reliability and resiliency of existing transportation routes.

In cases where long-duration highway closures occur, MOTT collaborates with the Ministry of Forests to provide temporary maintenance for resource roads when they are needed as alternate commuter routes or emergency access points. This ensures communities continue to have viable travel options during disruptions.

Safety is the ministry's top priority and public safety concerns are always at the forefront when responding to unplanned closures. All efforts are made to restore reliable transportation routes as quickly and effectively as possible.

Whereas on June 6, 2023, Highway 4 was closed at Cameron Lake Bluff, near Koen Road, due to a wildfire, and that a detour route from Port Alberni through Lake Cowichan via Bamfield, using forest- service and privately owned industrial roads was established by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) on Wednesday, July 7, 2023, and was actively maintained until August 31, 2023;

And whereas the highway closure that occurred between June 6, 2023, and August 31, 2023, resulted in significant negative impacts on our residents' health, safety, and well-being, and it had devastating economic impacts resulting in the loss of jobs and permanent closure of local businesses, and that similar communities having only one access road in and out of their community experienced similar negative impacts during emergency activations:

Therefore be it resolved that AVICC and UBCM request the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with communities, that have only one access road in and out of their community, to ensure the permanent establishment and maintenance of alternative or emergency transportation routes for use in the event of an emergency;

And be it further resolved that UBCM request the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, coordinate with the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, and appropriate local governments to conduct an inventory of active forestry roads that could be maintained for emergency evacuation purposes, and that the roads meeting the criteria for emergency evacuation purposes be maintained for these purposes by the Province in perpetuity.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit collaborates with other ministries during emergency events, ensuring coordinated efforts to protect the people of British Columbia from disasters such as wildfires. This inter-ministerial approach strengthens preparedness and response strategies, helping mitigate risks and maintain critical infrastructure.

The ministry actively engages with partner ministries, local governments, Indigenous communities, and stakeholders to plan for possible disruptions. Part of this planning involves assessing alternative access routes, determining the most feasible options for communities in affected regions.

Currently, the ministry is conducting a study to explore alternative routes to Highway 4 in the event of an emergency. This report is expected to be completed by summer, providing valuable insights for future contingency planning.

Safety remains the ministry's top priority and concerns from the public are always at the forefront of decision-making, ensuring that unplanned closures are managed effectively and roadways are restored as quickly and safely as possible.

EB81 Adjustment of Funding Formula for Small Rural Transit Services

Ashcroft

Whereas operational costs for the provisions of rural transit services continue to escalate in this inflationary environment;

And whereas BC Transit budget projections for existing small rural transit services appear to have a higher percentage cost increase for community partners than the Province:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to consider the unique challenges faced by small rural transit services and consider the diverse needs of these communities;

And be it further resolved that the provincial government through BC Transit adjust the funding formula for anticipated annual operational increases to a fair and equal cost-share formula between BC Transit and community partners.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

It is important for people to have safe, affordable and accessible travel choices. The Ministry of Transportation and Transit has been exploring passenger transportation in rural areas and between communities and recognizes the unique transportation challenges faced by rural communities. Public transit is one of many shared mobility options available to communities in B.C., along with services offered by the private or non-profit sector, such as inter-city or community buses and shuttles, taxis and ride hail, car share, school transportation, and health transportation services.

Under the BC Transit model, local governments are responsible for requesting service from BC Transit that meets the needs of their community and that they are willing to cost-share. They are also responsible for setting fares and receiving the fare revenue to contribute to their share of costs. Lower density areas typically have lower ridership on all forms of passenger transportation, which impacts fare-recovery.

The Province cost-shares in all BC Transit services and since 2017 the Province has increased BC Transit's operating funding by more than 70 percent (from \$108 million in 2017/18 to \$184 million in 2025/26) with a further planned increase of four percent by 2027/28.

Whereas communities across British Columbia are struggling with a housing crisis and a labour shortage; And whereas communities in rural British Columbia are poorly served by public transit:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM work with the appropriate British Columbia ministries to enhance transit in and between rural communities to improve citizen mobility and to assist those who may already have housing in and adjacent to rural communities, or who can only afford housing in proximity to rural communities, to access available employment more readily in a sustainable, GHG friendly fashion.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit recognizes the importance of safe, affordable, and accessible travel choices for British Columbians. Efforts to improve passenger transportation in rural areas and between communities are ongoing, as the ministry understands the unique transportation challenges that many rural regions face.

Public transit is just one of many shared mobility options available in British Columbia. Other services include inter-city and community buses, shuttles, taxis, ride-hail options, car shares, school transportation, and health transport services, each of which contributes to the connectivity and accessibility of communities.

To support transportation in northern B.C., the ministry has partnered with the Northern Development Initiative Trust to administer key programs. The Inter-City Passenger Transportation Services for Northern B.C. Program currently funds BC Bus North, a long-haul bus service operating on five routes across Northern B.C., connecting residents to the interior. Additionally, the Northern Community Shuttle Program provides small-scale transport for communities lacking long-haul service. The fall 2024 intake resulted in eight approved shuttles, ensuring continued accessibility for the next two years.

The ministry is also looking at technology-driven solutions to improve mobility across the province. BC Transit has expanded its UMO electronic payment system, making transit more convenient in various communities. Additionally, BC Transit is piloting an OnDemand service, allowing riders to book trips using a smartphone app or phone—this service is currently operating in the Kelowna transit system and may expand to other regions. The ministry has also supported the OneBus trip planning and booking platform, a website, mobile app, and call center that allows travelers to schedule trips with various transportation providers, including BC Bus North.

**EB83 Increasing Reliable Transit Funding to Support Growing
Communities**

Squamish

Whereas access to reliable, frequent public transit is critical to achieving shared local and provincial objectives of supporting community growth in an equitable, healthy, connected, low-carbon way:

And whereas communities serviced by BC Transit haven't been able to realize public transit expansion plans due to lack of matching funds from the Province since 2021:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of B.C. and BC Transit to commit to funding transit service expansions where requested and to move from annual funding agreements to 3-year funding agreements to allow for more certainty.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

By investing in BC Transit services and infrastructure, the Province is providing more people with safe, affordable, and reliable travel options in communities outside Metro Vancouver.

To align with the current provincial budget processes, the Province enters into an annual transit operating agreement with BC Transit, allowing for a yearly review of transit funding and service levels to better meet the needs of each community. Since 2017, the Province has increased BC Transit's operating funding by more than 70 percent (from \$108 million in 2017/18 to \$184 million in 2025/26) with a further planned increase of four percent by 2027/28 - increasing transit services across the province.

In Budget 2024, the Province provided \$28.7 million in operating expansion funding, over three years (2024/25 - 2026/27) and an additional \$298 million in capital funding for BC Transit to expand transit services in communities outside of Metro Vancouver. This additional funding will enable BC Transit to expand transit services in communities outside Metro Vancouver, providing approximately 2.83 million annual service hours by 2027/28. The additional funding will also enable BC Transit to procure more buses needed to support BC Transit's Low Carbon Fleet Program and electrification.

As of April 2024, BC Transit has been implementing service expansions in communities across the province and will continue to do so over the next three years.

Whereas TransLink relies on gasoline taxes to fund their services and those revenues can be expected to decline as the provincial and federal government move towards requiring all new passenger vehicles to be electric by 2035;

And whereas there is a need for more predictable funding and increased investments in transit services; to address traffic congestion and equitable access to transportation in our rapidly growing and increasingly densifying communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocates to the Province to devise a new formula for funding transit services, that does not rely on gasoline taxes and supports the continued improvement of transit services across BC;

And be it further resolved that UBCM advocates to the federal government for earlier and increased permanent transit funding, including for infrastructure projects.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

TransLink is an independent regional transportation authority created under the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act* (SCBCTAA). Its operating funding comes from a variety of sources, outlined in the SCBCTAA, including specific taxes (e.g., fuel, parking and property), transit fares and other levies. The Province has always understood that solving TransLink's financial challenges requires collaboration from all partners, including TransLink, the Mayors' Council and the provincial and federal governments.

Prior to 2020, TransLink's operating costs were funded entirely through regional revenues and TransLink's commercial and investment revenues. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, TransLink's operating revenue has not supported the cost of existing transit service levels or expansion needs, with one factor being a faster-than forecasted decline in one of TransLink's primary revenue sources, the fuel tax.

The Province recognizes the financial challenges TransLink is facing as costs and demand for more service increase and expansion becomes necessary. Since 2017, the Province has committed over \$11.6 billion in combined operating and capital funding commitments to support TransLink.

Most recently, the Province provided over \$312 million in funding over the next three years that will protect services and support priority expansion identified in TransLink's 2025 Investment Plan. Long-term, the Province is actively working with TransLink on identifying a funding solution to help ensure a robust and efficient transit system well into the future.

In addition, the Province will enable the Mayors' Council to increase its parking rights tax—one of TransLink's operating revenue sources—from the current cap at 24 percent up to 29 percent. This is expected to generate up to an additional \$20 million in annual revenue for TransLink, which will be used to fund road and transit operations in the region. This new provincial support that protects and expands the services people need, will allow time for the Province to work with TransLink and the Mayors' Council on a solution to ensure TransLink's long-term sustainability while making progress on TransLink's expansion ambitions.

EB85 Provincial Funding for Electric Vehicle Charger Deployment

Metro Vancouver RD

Whereas Metro Vancouver has identified that by 2035 up to 350,000 existing parking spots in multi-unit residential buildings in the region will be retrofitted to be electric vehicle (EV) charging ready, and 2,200 to 2,900 public direct current fast charging (DCFC) ports and 32,000 to 47,000 public Level 2 ports will be needed to support anticipated demand for EV charging, requiring significant capital investment in both public charging and multi-unit residential buildings retrofits totalling approximately \$1.2 billion in Metro Vancouver alone by 2035;

And whereas the Government of BC has provided funding for the purchase and installation of EV chargers for home and public charging through the Go Electric EV Charger Rebate Program to complement the rapid increase of EV sales required through the BC *Zero-Emissions Vehicle Act* reaching 100% by 2035;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Government of BC to expand and enhance the funding available through the CleanBC Go Electric Rebate Program to offer sufficient rebates for charging in multi-unit residential buildings and public charging to support the expected rapid uptake of EVs in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Government of B.C. introduced programs to support Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) adoption beginning in 2011 and has since committed more than \$650 million in funding to ZEVs and the required infrastructure. The Province is working with other levels of government, utilities, and industry to meet the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 goal to have 10,000 public charging stations across the province by 2030. We are well on the way to achieving this goal with over 6,000 public chargers installed as of the end of 2024.

The Province provides rebates for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in single family homes, Multi-Unit Residential Buildings (MURBs), and workplaces through the CleanBC Go Electric EV Charger Rebate Program. The Program currently offers support for MURBs with rebates for level-2 EV charging stations (up to \$2,000), EV Ready plans (up to \$3,000) and EV Ready electrical infrastructure upgrades (up to \$120,000 per MURB complex). A total of \$52.5 million in funding has been provided to the CleanBC Go Electric EV Charger Rebate Program since fiscal year 2017/18, including an additional \$14 million announced in September 2024.

Through rebates offered in the Go Electric EV Charger Rebate program, the Province has supported the purchase and installation of 4,407 level-2 charging stations in MURBs. Following the integration of EV Ready rebate offers in 2021, the Province has also supported 759 EV Ready plans and has helped electrify 14,484 parking stalls at 92 MURBs across B.C. Several municipalities have also partnered with the Province by providing top-up rebates to further incentivize the EV Ready offers and EV charging station offers in MURBs, including the City of Kamloops, the District of Saanich, the District of Squamish, and the Resort Municipality of Whistler.

The Province is also committed to investing in public charging infrastructure. The CleanBC Go Electric Public Charger Program provides rebates of up to \$80,000 per fast charger (\$130,000 for Indigenous communities), with increased rebates for higher capacity chargers. Applications to this program are reviewed in cycles throughout the year, with the next funding round launching in Spring 2025. As of January 2025, 542 Direct Current Fast Charger (DCFC) ports and 218 level 2 ports have been approved for funding through the Public Charger Program. In total, this program has received \$118.8 million in funding, including an additional \$30 million announced in Budget 2024. The Province also supports public charging projects by providing an additional \$25,000 per charger for B.C. projects that are approved for funding through Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP).

Developing adequate infrastructure to support the rapid uptake of EVs in B.C. continues to be a priority for the Province. In September 2024, the Province announced the completion of the Electric Highway, a public

charging network which ensures that EV drivers can reliably travel through the entire province along all highways and major roadways with fast charging stations located no more than approximately 150 kilometres apart. With 155 strategic charging sites and over 310 fast chargers, the Electric Highway allows EV drivers to reliably access fast chargers where and when they need them. Through the Public Charger Program and ZEVIP top-ups, the Province provided over \$13 million to support the completion of the Electric Highway.

Through these historic investments in private and public charging infrastructure, the Province is continuing to support installation of required infrastructure to ensure continued rapid uptake of EVs in B.C. The Province is constantly monitoring the market and continues to explore policy and program changes that support the transition towards ZEVs in B.C.

EB86 Provincial E-Bike Rebate Program Continued Funding**Saanich**

Whereas the Province of British Columbia has a goal of improving affordability for British Columbians and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), and has set sectoral targets to reach GHG emissions from transportation by 27% to 32% below 2007 levels by 2023, but is so far still seeing an increase in those emissions;

And whereas the 2024 University of British Columbia's Research on Active Transportation (REACH) Lab Study on the Saanich E-Bike Incentive Pilot Program demonstrates that e-bike incentives effectively motivate new bike riders; significantly reduce weekly car travel, GHG emissions and Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (VKTs) from personal transportation; are extremely cost competitive compared to other climate transportation incentive programs in BC; and overcome cost barriers for idle and lower income households:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province commit sufficient funding for the continuation of the successful BC E-Bike Rebate Program for middle and low income households in BC in 2025 and beyond.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

Since the Province launched an income-tested e-bike rebate program on June 1, 2023, approximately 7,000 rebates have been provided to British Columbians with 91 percent of these for those with an annual income of less than \$39,000. The provincial E-bike Rebate program has delivered \$10 million in funding to ensure more British Columbians have better access to e-bikes.

This funding is further leveraged by an additional \$337,000 in funding from municipalities (District of Saanich, City of Kelowna, City of Vernon) who are providing supplementary rebates for their residents.

The Province has been working with researchers at the University of British Columbia to study the impacts of the program on e-bike uptake.

The B.C. E-Bike Rebate Program supports the government's CleanBC emissions reductions commitments and the focus on shifting towards more affordable modes of transportation like active transportation and transit.

Whereas the provincial government establishes the legislative framework under which all local governments derive their operational authority;

And whereas the provincial government has recently enacted significant new, or amended, laws, regulations and/or policies which have had a profound effect on local governments across the province;

And whereas the provincial government has signaled its intent to undertake a significant review of all provincial statutes over the coming years:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government commit to review its consultation processes with/involving local governments, especially as they relate to legislative or regulatory changes that impact local governments, in order to facilitate better engagement practices, increase transparency amongst all interest holders, and, as a result, enable the richer, more timely exchange of information in order to benefit all parties involved in such processes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province is committed to work collaboratively through consultation with local governments, both formally and informally, on matters that specifically affect them. Under the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*, the Province recognizes local governments as an order of government in their respective jurisdiction. This recognition entails a principle of consultation where the Province and local governments work towards cooperative approaches on matters of mutual interest. In addition, there is a statutory requirement for government to consult with the Union of BC Municipalities prior to any changes to core local government legislation, including the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*.

To facilitate good engagement practices, the Province has created a new Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities whose mandate is to serve as the key point of contact to hear concerns, suggestions, or feedback to government. The Minister of State will work with Ministerial colleagues to address issues proactively and ensure that local government advice informs government initiatives, including consultation on the introduction or amendment of legislation.

Whereas the City of Port Moody strongly supports fair and unbiased resources for local governments;

And whereas in support of this principle, the City of Port Moody called upon the Province to establish an “Office of the Local Government Ethics Commissioner”, which would provide fair and unbiased guidance to local governments on issues such as legality, conflict, code of conduct violations, and bullying:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM requests the Province establish an Office of the Local Government Ethics Commissioner and require mandatory ethics training for all new elected officials.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The ministry recognizes that how elected officials conduct themselves in their relationships with elected colleagues, staff, and the public is directly connected to how a community is governed. Since 2016, the ministry, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), and the Local Government Management Association (LGMA) have been working collaboratively through the Working Group on Responsible Conduct to research and develop new responsible conduct tools to support local governments.

Currently, local government legislation neither specifically authorizes nor prohibits the voluntary establishment of an ethics commissioner for individual local governments. The City of Surrey, the City of Vancouver, and the City of New Westminster have established their own ethics commissioners to operate independently for their local governments.

In September 2024, the UBCM and LGMA released a discussion paper exploring the use of mandatory codes of conduct and models for their administration and enforcement. The discussion paper specifically compares three approaches to code administration and enforcement:

1. Status quo.
2. A decentralized model where local governments are required to appoint an ethics commissioner.
3. A centralized province-wide office of integrity.

It is encouraged that all local government elected officials and administrators read the discussion paper to help inform any future conversations on codes of conduct and integrity commissioners. The ministry is currently considering the findings of the discussion paper and examining feedback provided from the LGMA and UBCM membership on the options provided in the paper. The ministry plans to continue engaging with local governments on a path forward to address this issue, which could include future amendments to the legislative framework for responsible conduct.

Whereas current provincial legislation does not adequately protect the parental leave rights of local government elected officials, requiring local governments to adopt their own policies for approving leaves for elected officials who become parents;

And whereas the Province of BC collectively, and through its various ministries, recognizes that parental leave for elected officials is an important issue and that it is important for new parents to have adequate time and energy to spend with their child:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Province of BC to amend all relevant pieces of provincial legislation, such as the *Community Charter*, the *Vancouver Charter*, and the *Local Government Act*, in order to establish common, province-wide minimum entitlements for parental leave for locally elected officials following the birth or adoption of a child, consistent with the *Employment Standards Act* provisions following the birth or adoption of a child, and inclusive of leave provisions that would grant an elected official an exemption from any disqualification from office for absences of sixty consecutive days or four consecutive regularly scheduled council or board meetings.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes that parental leave is an important action to support gender inclusion and diversity in local governments and has been actively monitoring the issue for several years now. There has been an increase in the number of local governments that have adopted their own specific policies to allow elected officials to go on maternity or parental leave making use of the authorities granted under existing legislation.

In previous responses to similar resolutions in 2016 (2016-B99), 2021 (2021-NR1), and 2022 (2022-EB79) the Province set out the complex policy considerations in relation to establishing provincially legislated statutory minimum maternity and parental leave for local elected officials.

Under current legislation, local governments have full authority to grant leave for a wide variety of reasons to elected officials seeking this option. This authority includes the establishment of policies for such leave including handling of appointments (such as to boards and committees), and other duties during the leave and upon return. Furthermore, council members who have received approval for their absence from council attendance will not be at risk of disqualification for non-attendance at council meetings.

The Province continues to favour an approach that allows individual communities to determine policies related to various types of leave under existing local government legislation, just as local governments determine remuneration and other benefits for local elected officials. Local governments are best placed to continue to develop policies that best account for circumstances in their communities.

Whereas there is a housing crisis in British Columbia that affects all local governments in varying degrees;

And whereas there are limited tools to discourage speculation and encourage development of undeveloped property:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to create a new assessment classification for undeveloped residential properties to allow local governments to establish a different tax rate for vacant residential land.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Province has more property classes than most provinces and is not actively considering creating new property classes. For example, Ontario has five and Saskatchewan has four property classes for provincial tax purposes, compared to B.C.'s nine. Government has received many requests for new property classes over the years, including for utility, residential, short-term rental, and commercial properties. Creating new property classes requires additional resources, complicates the tax system, and introduces opportunities for property owners to seek specific classifications to reduce their tax liability. Any new class must be weighed against these downsides. Rather than create a new assessment classification for undeveloped residential properties, the Province has chosen to address the issue of speculation through other tools.

The Speculation and Vacancy Tax (SVT) introduced in February 2018, is designed to prevent housing speculation and help turn vacant and underutilized properties into homes for people who live and work in B.C. The SVT currently applies to 59 specified areas, mostly municipalities, in the province.

An owner of vacant residential land in an SVT specified area, is liable for the tax unless meeting the exemption criteria, e.g., making reasonable steps to develop the property.

A local government interested in the SVT may write to the Minister of Finance to request for inclusion. An independent review report of the SVT released in 2022 recommended a phased and measured approach to expanding the SVT. To select expansion communities, the Province considers a number of factors, including assessed values of residential property, vacancy rates, population, requests for inclusion, proximity to other SVT specified areas, and whether the community is primarily a vacation area. Government is carefully monitoring housing data moving forward to ensure the desired results of the SVT are achieved.

Whereas a dwelling unit that meets the definition of a short-term rental within BC's *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act* can be rented out, but places additional demands on local government infrastructure, such as water and sewer, and should pay extra tax commensurate with the additional demand;

And whereas tourist overnight accommodation uses such as motels, hotels, and resorts are classed and taxed as businesses:

Therefore be it resolved that a dwelling unit offered and used for short term rentals be assigned a tax class created specific to that use, or alternatively that a dwelling unit offered and used for short-term rentals be redefined as Class 6: Business and Other;

And be it further resolved that the Province continue to explore ways to reduce commodification of housing, in consultation with local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

B.C. has more property classes (nine) than most provinces and is not actively considering creating a new class. There would also be challenges with reclassifying short-term rentals from class 1 to class 6:

- Many properties offer a portion of their property as a short-term rental and determining the areas to be classified as class 6 would be a challenge.
- Properties that are used as short-term rentals for only part of the year (or are vacant for part of the year) may need to be split classified based on the time used as a short-term rental, time used by the owner and the time the unit is vacant.
- The rules for classifying multi-unit, purpose-built strata buildings used for short-term accommodation are already complicated and need careful review to ensure compliance with any potential policy.

The Province is aware of the negative impact short-term rentals can have on the long-term housing supply and agrees that short-term rentals should pay their fair share of tax. The Province has taken steps to mitigate those impacts.

In 2018, B.C. reached an arrangement with Airbnb, allowing the online company to collect provincial sales tax on all short-term rentals conducted through its platform.

Effective May 1, 2024, the Province implemented new restrictions on short-term rentals, including Principal Residence Requirement and Business Licence Requirement. These new rules aim to return short-term rental units to the long-term housing market and give local governments stronger tools. Some local governments can request to opt-in or opt-out of the principal residence requirement. As the new short-term rental rules have only been implemented for a year, the Province needs to allow time for these regulations to take full effect and monitor their impacts.

Whereas tourism provides great value to the provincial economy as it is one of the largest employers and largest small business generators;

And whereas the impacts of climate change have created hardship in numerous tourism destinations throughout the province;

And whereas the hardship is prolonged in rural destinations as the economy is slower to renew than in urban destinations:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government provide financial investments to local governments to identify how to diversify tourism in impacted communities throughout British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

Extreme weather events like flooding and wildfires are becoming more prevalent, affecting travel and tourism businesses throughout the province.

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport works closely with the B.C. tourism industry to keep people safe, ensure tourism businesses are prepared and resilient, and maintain the Province's reputation as a safe and welcoming destination.

This includes mitigation and preparedness work before an emergency, coordination of tourism resources supporting response, and assessing needs for recovery. This work helps mitigate the economic impacts of emergencies on tourism as the sector is better prepared and more resilient.

The ministry continues to work with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI) to ensure businesses have tools and guidance to be better prepared to respond and recover. JEDI is the ministry responsible for economic recovery following emergency events in the province, working with the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.

The ministry also supports communities and the economy by continuing to support destination events and festivals that help attract people back to communities throughout B.C. following extreme weather events.

Destination British Columbia (DBC) supports a strong and competitive future for B.C. tourism through global marketing, destination development, industry learning, cooperative community-based programs, and visitor services. When feasible, and often in partnership with other organizations, DBC may also support recovery efforts across the sector, to encourage visitation back to impacted areas once it is safe to do so.

Tourism is an incredibly resilient sector, and it has immense potential for growth. The ministry will continue to engage with tourism partners and explore the sector's evolving needs to support renewal of the industry and help achieve better outcomes for communities and the visitor economy.

Whereas tourism is the primary industry for many rural communities in BC and these communities rely on peak travel periods during the summer months to support their local economies;

And whereas natural disasters such as wildfires and resulting smoke have an impact on travel, and enforced travel restrictions further discourage visitors from traveling to regions with active wildfires;

And whereas tourism is supported by small businesses that breathe life into local economies by creating jobs and employment opportunities, supporting local supply chains, and generating tax revenue for local governments;

And whereas the business cycle for tourism-dependent communities, is limited to a short window during the summer months, and the loss of one summer season can be detrimental to the economic vibrancy of a community:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province to:

1. Develop economic recovery supports for tourism-dependent rural communities, and
2. Consult with local governments, the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce and Destination BC to develop long-term economic supports that focus on building resiliency for tourism-dependent rural communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

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Tourism is an incredibly resilient sector, and it has immense potential for growth. The ministry will continue to engage with tourism partners and explore the sector's evolving needs to support renewal of the industry and help achieve better outcomes for communities and the visitor economy.

Whereas the timber harvest levels across British Columbia have declined to the projected low levels in the mid-term timber supply;

And whereas the need to diversify rural economies and enhance the attractiveness and livability of our communities is more crucial than ever:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Province to significantly increase the funding and mandates for BC Tourism, BC Parks, and Rec Sites and Trails BC to support communities across the province in accelerating economic diversification.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport recognizes that tourism is one of the province's most dynamic industries and a vital engine for economic diversification, growth and opportunity.

The ministry will continue to support communities throughout B.C. in delivering destination events and festivals that bring benefits to people and communities and strengthen the economy.

Destination British Columbia supports a strong and competitive future for B.C. tourism through domestic and international marketing, destination development, industry learning, community-based programs, and visitor services.

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI) is the lead ministry for economic development and recovery, encouraging economic diversification and long-term jobs while working to make life better for people by building an inclusive, sustainable, and innovative economy that works for all British Columbians. JEDI's regional economic development managers, who are specialized in providing free and accessible services, are available to assist communities and regions affected by declining resource sectors. They support local governments, Indigenous communities, businesses, and economic development agencies throughout B.C.

The Ministry of Environment and Parks is responsible for managing and supporting BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails B.C., which develops, maintains and manages a network of recreation sites and recreation trails throughout the province.

The ministry will continue to work across government and with tourism partners on charting the path toward a more prosperous and resilient tourism sector to help achieve better outcomes for communities and the visitor economy.

**EB95 Review of Timber Allocation to Mitigate Economic Impact
on Local Communities**

Fort St. James

Whereas the closure of all timber processing facilities that cause significant economic hardship within the affected community and its surrounding area;

And whereas the sustainability and vitality of local economies are intricately linked to the health and prosperity of timber processing facilities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Ministry of Forests to review the Timber Allocation quota upon the closing of a facility, prioritizing the mitigation of adverse impacts on the economics of the affected community.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

The government is interested in improving the social licence involved with holding forest tenures to ensure sustainable, equitable and lasting benefits to First Nations, communities and workers.

Currently, BC Timber Sales (BCTS) Review is underway to ensure the forestry sector is continually evolving to overcome challenges and create a vision for a stronger and more resilient future. This review will provide recommendations, including but not limited to, how BCTS can:

- create forestry-sector growth, competition and diversification,
- provide predictable market access to fibre,
- diversify access to fibre for secondary manufacturing sector,
- strengthen partnership with First Nations and local communities, and
- more jobs for contractors, workers and communities.

In 2019, the *Forest Act* was amended to introduce a requirement that all transfers of forest tenures must be approved by the ministry. The approval process includes an assessment of the marketing of fibre and the public interest. A substantial amount of tenure has changed hands on a willing-buyer/willing-seller basis.

In the fall of 2021, the government introduced legislation to authorize the ministry to take back forest tenures for redistribution. Supporting regulations are in place, providing the government with additional powers to support communities, First Nations and BC Timber Sales.

Any further changes will be implemented with careful consideration of the declining timber supply and global market volatility.

Whereas the closure of sawmills in the region has caused significant economic distress within local communities that has led to a decline in local employment opportunities which negatively impacts the livelihoods of residents and local businesses;

And whereas recent shutdowns provide a concern that wood harvested in one area will be transported to another for processing, thus jeopardizing the local economic value for communities most impacted:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM requests that the Province considers policy to ensure that timber rights that can reasonably be considered “attached” to a sawmill that is being closed, or that were originally provided to the company (or companies) that owned that sawmill, be transferred to local and/or Indigenous governments upon closure in order to foster economic diversification and community resilience.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

The government is interested in improving the social licence involved with holding forest tenures to ensure sustainable, equitable and lasting benefits to First Nations, communities and workers.

Currently, BC Timber Sales (BCTS) Review is underway to ensure the forestry sector is continually evolving to overcome challenges and create a vision for a stronger and more resilient future. This review will provide recommendations, including but not limited to, how BCTS can:

- create forestry-sector growth, competition and diversification,
- provide predictable market access to fibre,
- diversify access to fibre for the secondary manufacturing sector,
- strengthen partnership with First Nations and local communities, and
- create more jobs for contractors, workers and communities.

In 2019, the *Forest Act* was amended to introduce a requirement that all transfers of forest tenures must be approved by the ministry. The approval process includes an assessment of the marketing of fibre and the public interest. A substantial amount of tenure has changed hands on a willing-buyer/willing-seller basis.

In the fall of 2021, the government introduced legislation to authorize the ministry to take back forest tenures for redistribution. Supporting regulations are in place, providing the government with additional powers to support communities, First Nations and BC Timber Sales.

Any further changes will be implemented with careful consideration of the declining timber supply and global market volatility.

**EB97 Expansion of Community Forests for Increased Access to
Fiber**

Bulkley-Nechako RD

Whereas community forests play a vital role in supporting local economies, fostering community resilience, and promoting sustainable forest management practices;

And whereas mill closures, curtailing operations, and significant job losses have devastated rural communities, resulting in severe economic decline, decreased community stability, and limited opportunities for economic recovery;

And whereas there is an urgent need to expand the size of community forests and increase access to land and fiber around communities to enhance economic opportunities, promote resilience, and support sustainable development, alongside fostering improved collaboration in FireSmart initiatives and the effective implementation of wildfire mitigation measures:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urges the Province of BC to support the expansion of community forests, facilitating increased access to land and fiber resources and streamlining regulatory process to promote sustainable development and economic growth in rural and Indigenous communities across British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests / Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation

The Ministry of Forests is working with the BC Community Forest Association to promote growth of Community Forests by encouraging partnerships (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) for new Community Forest Agreements (CFAs) and expansion of existing tenures. Growth of the program is limited given the lack of available volume in the timber supply areas and government priorities to advance reconciliation with First Nations. Ministry of Forests staff are currently undertaking a review of BC Timber Sales (BCTS) which will evaluate the potential for improved partnerships with communities to support expansion of the program, as committed to by government.

One of the objectives of the BCTS review is to promote partnership with communities to provide more jobs for workers, contractors, and the communities they reside in. BCTS, together with communities working in partnership, can promote sustainable development and economic growth in rural and Indigenous communities across British Columbia.

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI) works with rural and Indigenous communities to support economic development. JEDI has specialized staff on-the-ground throughout B.C. to provide free and accessible economic development services to local governments, Indigenous communities, businesses and economic development agencies. JEDI also ensures supports are in place for workers and communities after a community transition event, such as a mill closure. JEDI staff are available to provide expertise and facilitate resources for advancing economic development projects such as community forests.

Whereas the provincial government does not currently have the obligation to meaningfully consult with municipalities and/or regional districts regarding provincial policy changes or decisions that impact employment for people that live in those municipalities and/or regional districts;

And whereas the recent provincial policy changes and decisions have and will continue to negatively impact resource sector-based employment that disproportionately impacts rural, northern, and remote communities;

And whereas rural, remote and northern communities local tax bases are dependent on a strong resource sector in order to provide services to those that live there:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to engage in meaningful consultation with the municipalities and/or regional districts whose people's employment in the resource sector may be negatively impacted by those provincial policy changes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation

In alignment with the mandate of the Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities, the Province remains committed to ensuring that local government advice inform government initiatives.

Economic development services for rural, northern, and remote communities are provided by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation (JEDI). The ministry has specialized economic development staff on-the-ground throughout B.C. to provide free and accessible economic development services to local governments, Indigenous communities, businesses and economic development agencies.

The Ministry also offers responsive, in-community services when a rural area is experiencing an economic disruption, such as a mill closure. Community Transition (CT) services are effective in supporting workers, businesses, and communities experiencing significant job loss, especially when combined with other government programs (i.e. skills training) designed to offset economic impacts. The Ministry works closely with other ministry partners, such as Post Secondary and Future Skills and Social Development and Poverty Reduction to ensure skills training and career support is available.

EB99 Enhanced Economic Support for Forestry Communities**NCLGA Executive**

Whereas the economic landscape of forestry communities is constantly evolving, requiring proactive measures to ensure their continued growth and prosperity;

And whereas it is imperative to invest in the people and opportunities of the future to foster resilience and sustainability in these communities;

And whereas discussions with provincial counterparts in Victoria have highlighted the importance of addressing the challenges faced by forestry communities, including the need for transitioning local economies towards sustainability;

And whereas the Ministry of Forests has recognized the potential of a decentralized model to revitalize forestry communities, leveraging their expertise and resources to become hubs of value-added products and services;

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM urge the provincial government to provide additional economic assistance and support to forestry communities to facilitate the transition towards a diversified and sustainable economy.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI) works with rural and Indigenous communities to support economic development. The ministry has specialized staff on-the-ground throughout B.C. to provide free and accessible economic development services to local governments, Indigenous communities, businesses and economic development agencies. Ministry staff are available to provide expertise and facilitate resources for advancing economic diversification initiatives.

The ministry delivers the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP), which has offered grant funding to support economic capacity, diversification, and infrastructure projects in rural B.C. for the last three years (FY2022/23 to FY2024/25). REDIP is expected to open an intake later this year.

The ministry also provides Community Transition (CT) services for workers and communities after a community transition event, such as a mill closure. Ministry staff, with support from other areas of government, offer responsive services when an area is experiencing economic disruption, such as the loss of a major employer. CT services are effective in supporting workers, businesses, and communities experiencing significant job loss, especially when combined with other government programs designed to offset economic impacts. Support for impacted workers and families is the priority during a community transition event. Once immediate needs are addressed, ministry staff work with the community on economic planning and diversification to aid in building resilience and prevent future downturns.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

The Forest Sector Transformation team within the Ministry of Forests (FOR) collaborates with the ministries overseeing Community Transition programs to support affected workers. The team also engages with external stakeholders to provide coordinated, comprehensive support for workers, communities, First Nations, and businesses impacted by changes in the forest sector.

To help strengthen the sector, FOR has established the Value-Added Sector Strategies Branch, which supports secondary wood manufacturing across British Columbia. This branch works closely with industry representatives—from traditional producers of windows and siding to innovators in mass timber and emerging wood products—to identify ways the province can enhance competitiveness. Regional Value-Added Specialists, are located in each region of the province and provide direct support to businesses, Indigenous communities, local governments, and economic development agencies, helping to sustain and grow value-added opportunities.

**EB100 Enhancing Communications for Fire Departments
Responding to Motor Vehicle Incidents**

Port Alberni

Whereas fire departments play a crucial role in responding to motor vehicle incidents outside of fire protection boundaries on behalf of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and that both EMCR and the local government have a shared responsibility for the health and safety of responders;

And whereas one of the significant challenges faced by local fire departments is the lack of adequate [or any] communications infrastructure in the areas they respond to, making it difficult for responders to coordinate their efforts, request additional resources, or seek assistance from other agencies and hampering the effectiveness and efficiency of response operations, potentially compromising the safety of both responders and the public:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urgently request the Province of British Columbia to provide modern and reliable communications, such as low-earth orbit satellite internet, to responding agencies that are handling motor vehicle incidents on the Province's behalf to ensure seamless communication and enhance the safety and effectiveness of responders;

And be it further resolved that the Province of British Columbia collaborate with telecommunication providers to improve overall communications infrastructure in areas where motor vehicle incidents occur frequently including expanding coverage, improving network reliability, and exploring innovative solutions to address communication challenges in remote and underserved areas.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services

Cellular connectivity along highways improves public safety and access to emergency services – especially along rural and remote stretches. Since 2017, the government has allocated \$90 million to incentivize expanding cell service across the province. B.C. has about 15,000 kilometres of primary and secondary highways, with approximately 4,200 kilometres lacking cellular coverage. Of the sections with no cellular coverage, only 1,100 kilometres have access to available power which is necessary for cell towers to operate.

Telecommunications are regulated by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. While the Province cannot direct service providers as to where and when to expand their networks, the provincial government has conveyed the need to expand cellular service in B.C. so that emergency services can be accessed anywhere.

The Cellular Expansion Fund, administered by Northern Development Initiative Trust, offers financial support to service providers for installing new towers and expanding cellular services along primary and secondary highways, increasing the ability to reach emergency services along these routes. Northern Development Initiative Trust will continue to accept Cellular Expansion Fund project applications until funding has been fully allocated.

LEO satellites are able to provide high-speed consumer internet satellite services, and in some cases are the only high-speed internet option in remote areas during emergency situations. The B.C. government is using satellite technology options for critical services where no other options are available.

The Province is committed to working with regional, local and First Nation governments, and service providers to increase mobile connectivity and is also closely monitoring emergency communications technologies that will expand mobile connectivity, including satellite to cellular capabilities under development by multiple service providers. For example, newer iPhones are able to call 9-1-1 using satellite SOS technology today.

Whereas the lack of cellular service along many highways throughout British Columbia poses significant safety concerns, impeding the ability of motorists to communicate in emergencies, access navigation services, or contact roadside assistance; and hampers economic development by limiting opportunities for businesses and travelers to stay connected and conduct transactions while on the move;

And whereas advancements in cellular and satellite technology have made it increasingly feasible to extend coverage to previously underserved areas, including highways, through the deployment of new cell towers and signal booster infrastructure:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province of BC to advance the installation of new cellular infrastructure along sections of Highway 16 East from Prince George to the Alberta border, and other British Columbia highways, without adequate cell service, prioritizing the safety, connectivity, and economic well-being of our citizens and travelers, and to work collaboratively with telecommunications companies, government agencies, rail transportation sectors and other stakeholders to identify optimal locations for new cellular infrastructure, ensuring efficient deployment and minimal disruption to surrounding communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services

Cellular connectivity along highways improves public safety and access to emergency services – especially along rural and remote stretches. B.C. has about 15,000 kilometres of primary and secondary highways, with approximately 4,200 kilometres lacking cellular coverage. Of the sections with no cellular coverage, only 1,100 kilometres have access to available power which is necessary for cell towers to operate.

Telecommunications are regulated by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. While the Province cannot direct service providers as to where and when they expand their networks, the provincial government has conveyed the need to expand cellular service in B.C. so that emergency services like 9-1-1 can be accessed anywhere.

Since 2017, the Government of B.C. has allocated \$90 million to incentivize expanding cell service across B.C. The Province is working with telecommunication service providers to identify opportunities for investment, as well as providing support for permitting associated with cellular projects.

The Cellular Expansion Fund, administered by Northern Development Initiative Trust, offers financial support to service providers for installing new towers and expanding cellular services along primary and secondary highways, benefiting communities along these routes. Northern Development Initiative Trust will continue to accept Cellular Expansion Fund project applications until funding has been fully allocated.

The Province is committed to working with regional, local and First Nation governments, and service providers to increase mobile connectivity – and is also closely monitoring emergency communications technologies that will expand mobile connectivity across the province, including satellite to cellular capabilities under development by multiple service providers. Newer iPhones are able to call 9-1-1 using satellite SOS technology today.

Whereas the *Local Government Act* does not support online voting for local government elections;

And whereas local government elections historically have low turnouts, and being that online voting provides a broader audience the ability to vote:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to initiative legislative changes to allow online voting for local government elections.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The last provincial in-depth study into voting by internet, conducted by the Independent Panel on Internet Voting, produced a report that did not recommend use of internet voting until challenges such as issues of security and trust in the electoral process have been resolved. Since that report, data and research have not shown that online voting results in increased voter turnout, nor have cost-effective solutions been found to implement an online voting product that fully addresses concerns about security, privacy, anonymity, and elections integrity.

The Province recognizes the potential benefits of online voting, but based on the work the Province is currently aware of, those benefits must be proven and balanced with the integrity of the electoral process.

Given the complexity of local elections, with over 3,000 candidates running for office in over 250 jurisdictions, there are significant challenges for both local governments and electors associated with a move to online voting. It is our understanding that there are no plans to move toward online voting at the provincial level in the near future. Were the Province to reconsider the matter later, it would be crucial to first ensure that all security, privacy, anonymity, and elections integrity risks are adequately addressed and also consider if there are more effective ways to improve the voter experience and increase turnout.

The ministry is monitoring work undertaken in other jurisdictions regarding online voting and will continue observing to see if online voting can be implemented in a way that increases accessibility and ensures the security of the electoral process.

EB104 Improved Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Major Projects on Communities

Squamish

Whereas major projects cause compounding impacts that are obscured when assessed in isolation from existing and planned projects in a given region;

And whereas current legislation creates significant demands on local governments by allowing for the isolated planning, assessment, and permitting considerations of wholly interdependent projects with interconnected timelines and demands on local services:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask that the Province of BC require the assessment and mitigation of cumulative effects, whether temporary or residual, as part of major project assessments and subsequent permitting processes where impacts arise within regions;

And be it further resolved that interdependent projects are required to undergo combined assessment and permitting processes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship

As per the 2016 Interim Cumulative Effects Framework (CEF) Policy, provincial statutory decision makers are directed to consider cumulative effects on values include the current condition, potential future conditions, impact of proposed activities in the area, and management responses.

Review processes for major projects are subject to this direction. The Province of B.C. is committed to and is working on establishing guidance for major project applicants on how to effectively consider cumulative effects, reflect cumulative effects considerations in the project planning and design, and manage for cumulative effects.

The Province of B.C. conducts and publishes current condition assessments that can be accessed by all parties. Current condition assessments describe the state of a value using the set of indicators.

The Province of B.C. works in partnership with First Nations through the Collaborative Stewardship Framework on regional stewardship initiatives including the generation of cumulative effects information and data.

Under the Framework, work is underway to draft management guidance to support the management of cumulative effects from major projects.

Including in the consideration of cumulative effects for a given project is the consideration of reasonably foreseeable future development thereby requiring decision makers to consider other projects also undergoing permitting.

EB105 Increased Funding for Rural Colleges**Port Alberni**

Whereas colleges in rural British Columbia play a crucial role in providing accessible and high-quality education and training opportunities for students across the province, including a closer to home education for those who otherwise cannot access training or education to provide necessary skills for employability;

And whereas rural colleges face increasing demands and challenges, including rising operating costs, growing student populations, and the need to adapt to changing industry needs;

And whereas adequate funding is essential to ensure that rural colleges can continue to provide quality education, support student success, and meet the evolving needs of students and industries, while being challenged by distance and numbers when trying to meet the same requirements as colleges in more heavily populated areas:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM appeal to the Province of British Columbia to increase funding for rural colleges in British Columbia to support their operations, programs, and services and develop a standard of college funding more closely reflecting the real costs of providing required training and education to the population of rural British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

The Province recognizes the critical role rural colleges play in ensuring accessible education and workforce training across British Columbia. These institutions provide essential learning opportunities for students who might not otherwise have access to higher education, helping to address regional workforce needs and strengthen local economies.

Provincial funding for post-secondary institutions is allocated through a combination of targeted funding for priority programs and annual block funding, which allows institutions flexibility in allocating resources based on their specific needs. While funding is not directly tied to enrolment demand, the ministry remains committed to providing stable financial support.

The Province acknowledges the financial pressures facing rural colleges, including inflation, increasing operational costs, and evolving program demands. Institutions also face challenges in maintaining enrolment due to strong labour market conditions. The government continues to work closely with post-secondary institutions to navigate these difficulties.

Additionally, international student enrolment has fluctuated due to global trends and policy changes made by the federal government, impacting revenue streams. The ministry encourages institutions to explore financial management strategies, including collaboration and shared services, to support long-term viability.

The Province remains committed to working with rural colleges to assess funding needs and develop strategies that maintain accessibility and educational excellence across British Columbia. The ministry stands as a partner in ensuring students across the province continue to receive a high-quality education experience.

NOT ENDORSE BLOCK (NEB) RESOLUTIONS

NEB3 Vacancy Control

Victoria

Whereas communities across the province are unable to find desperately needed workers in the trades, healthcare, education, and childcare because of the unaffordability of housing;

And whereas the loss of affordable rental housing is inextricably linked to the dire social and public health concerns that municipalities across the province are struggling to adequately address;

And whereas the unaffordability of housing limits the ability of renters to contribute to local economies, as noted by Leilani Farha (the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on housing and current Global Director of THE SHIFT, a housing initiative to actualize the housing as a basic human right):

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to implement vacancy control on rental units owned by “financial landlords,” including but not limited to corporate landlords and real estate investment trusts.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

In 2018, the Rental Housing Task Force recommended against imposing vacancy control. During their province-wide consultations, the Task Force heard from landlords who were concerned that over time, rents may not keep up with rising costs to maintain and repair rental stock. Additionally, landlords and developers indicated that implementing vacancy control would cause them to reduce the amount of overall available rental housing supply in a market with already low vacancy rates.

Since then, government has continued to monitor this option. A recent review of economic evidence by the Residential Tenancy Branch confirms that the impact on new development would be significant as vacancy control can jeopardize the quantity and quality of rental housing supply.

Government is not planning to impose vacancy control at this time. Instead, to address affordability and access, government is focusing on actions to increase rental supply.

**NEB5 Updating the Provincial Minimum Standards of
Maintenance**

Port Moody

Whereas climate change is worsening conditions and increasing vulnerabilities in the built environment, especially for low-income renters, and the majority of 2021 heat dome deaths were in low-income and multi-unit residential buildings that lacked access to cooling, and poor building maintenance contributes to poor occupant health;

And whereas the *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA) states in general terms that landlords must comply with health, safety, and housing standards required by law, including heat but not cooling;

And whereas the Province of BC enables local government to enact standards of maintenance to enforce basic levels of maintenance for rental accommodation, but many local governments either do not have bylaws or bylaws that are inadequate in a changing climate:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to make the necessary changes to the Standards of Maintenance Guide to align the BC Building Code regulations for maximum and minimum temperature standards and ensure that considerations of health and climate hazards such as mould, precipitation, extreme heat and cold conditions, are included;

And be it further resolved that the guidance be converted to regulation, with associated regional and/or provincial supports for investigation and enforcement such that communities of every size have protection for renters.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA) states that a landlord must maintain a residential property in a state of decoration and repair that complies with the health, safety, and housing standards required by law. When these rules are not being followed, the dispute resolution process can help resolve the issue. During a dispute resolution hearing, an arbitrator reviews the evidence from both parties to make a legal decision.

The RTA does not set maximum temperatures for rental units, nor does it require that landlords allow AC units in rental units. Starting March 2024, BC Building Code 2024 requires all new residential buildings to provide one living space that is designed to not exceed 26 degrees Celsius. This requirement does not apply to existing residential buildings.

NEB8 Derelict Vehicles in Remote Coastal Communities**North Coast RD**

Whereas remote coastal communities in BC are struggling with the accumulation of numerous derelict vehicles;

And whereas disposal facilities in coastal communities have limited capacity and a lack of infrastructure to internally manage derelict vehicles or ship to end-markets:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province of BC for grant funding to be made available for remote communities to undertake cleanup of derelict vehicles.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The ministry recognizes the challenge of derelict vehicles in remote communities, which requires efforts from multiple parties to address. Since the concern was first raised at UBCM, ministry staff have engaged in discussions with the North Coast Regional District, member municipalities, as well as the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group on the topic.

The ministry regulates end-of-life vehicle waste through the Vehicle Dismantling and Recycling Industry Environmental Planning Regulation (VDR) and through the Recycling Regulation that establishes Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs for prescribed products. The VDR requires vehicle dismantlers (or industry associations acting on behalf of their members) to develop environmental management plans that demonstrate how they will comply with environmental protection standards under the *Environmental Management Act* and VDR.

Under the Recycling Regulation, specific vehicle components, such as tires, batteries, oil and antifreeze, are regulated, which means there are collection programs and drop off locations available for the proper disposal of these products. Once these items are removed by the vehicle dismantler, they are picked up by the agency and recycled. However, the management of the complete vehicle is not included under an EPR program.

Waste management funding has been available to local governments through provincial funding programs such as the Growing Communities Fund. A list of available funding programs can be found on the Province's Local Government Grants and Transfers website.

NEB10 Free Transit for Students**Sunshine Coast RD**

Whereas the BC Government's fare-free transit program for youth aged 12 and under grade 6 saves families money while offering youth low-carbon transportation that helps the province and municipalities reach carbon neutrality targets;

And whereas expanding eligibility to those in grade 12 and under would promote equitable access to transit despite economic disparity amongst youth and families in BC:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province to expand the fare-free transit program for youth in grade 12 and under and provide permanent sustainable funding to do so.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The ministry is committed to continuing to explore ways to deliver safe, accessible and affordable transit service throughout B.C. We recognize that parents are looking for affordable transportation options for their children, which is why in 2021 the Province launched the free public transit for children 12 and under program under all BC Transit and TransLink systems.

BC Transit collaborates with local governments who determine fares, service levels and routes. On the Sunshine Coast, free transit for youth aged 13 to 18 attending secondary school in the transit system is funded by the Sunshine Coast Regional District through the S-Pass Program. Similar programs are also funded by local governments in Kitimat, Whistler, Penticton and Summerland.

NO RECOMMENDATION (NR) RESOLUTIONS

NR1 Addressing the Impact of Provincial Policy on Local Governments, Langford **Taxation Equity, and Interim Policing Cost Support**

Whereas the City of Langford acknowledges the vital role of health care, mental health care, and social services in building a resilient and safe community;

And whereas the Province's failure to meet its commitments in these areas has unfairly burdened local governments, straining local resources and compromising public safety, thus exacerbating social inequity through heightened property taxes:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM strongly urge increased provincial funding and support for health care, mental health care, and comprehensive housing initiatives to alleviate the strain on local government resources and enhance public safety;

And be it further resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to demonstrate good faith by covering the heightened share of policing costs, recognizing the provincial responsibility in shifting these public safety costs to local governments due to inadequate provision of social services and health care.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs / Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes that access to health care, affordable housing, and social services are key components of supporting resilient and safe communities across B.C.

The Province is committed to making communities safer by working with law enforcement and social agencies to address street disorder, crack down on organized crime, and address repeat offenders. To support policing and public safety, options for a fair and equitable police shared funding model are being explored by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, as recommended by the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*. Extensive engagement with local governments was undertaken as part of the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative. Engagement with local governments will continue as policy options related to funding models are explored and as the overall scope and clarity of priorities for the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative are confirmed.

The Province is committed to strengthening health care and mental health care by increasing recruitment and training of health professionals and expanding access to family doctors. This will help ensure that British Columbians can access the care they need, no matter where they live. Increased access to addictions treatment will provide help for people whose struggles require intensive supports.

The Province also acknowledges that access to affordable and appropriate housing is a key part of building resilient and safe communities. The Province will continue to implement its' Homes for People plan, working with partners across the housing sector to increase the supply of affordable rental, co-op and non-market housing.

The Province is also implementing Belonging in BC, a plan to prevent and reduce homelessness. The plan adds thousands of new supportive housing units and 240 complex-care spaces across the province as well as multidisciplinary regional response teams designed to rapidly respond to encampments to better support people sheltering outdoors to move inside.

**NR2 Downloading Costs by the Province to Local Governments for
the Resulting Solutions for Homelessness, Mental Health and
Addictions Support**

Cariboo RD

Whereas local governments are dealing with the results of homelessness without financial supports due to new legislative changes by the Province of BC and funding mechanisms are insufficient to meet the growing demand for services in our communities;

And whereas not enough supports have been put in place by the Province of BC for mental wellness, increased appropriate healthcare workers in communities, and addiction recovery services and supports:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of BC pay for costs incurred by local governments to address the lack of homelessness support, mental health and wellness issues, and addictions recovery services and supports;

And be it further resolved that UBCM mandate their Executives to engage in discussions with the Province of BC to negotiate a fair and equitable reimbursement framework for downloading services related to homelessness and mental health and addictions;

And be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of BC, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and all relevant stakeholders to advocate for immediate action.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

When people are in mental health crisis, they need quick compassionate support that meets them where they are at. As part of the Province's Safer Communities Action Plan, government has expanded CRCL teams (Crisis Response, Community-Led; formerly known as Peer Assisted Care Teams) and Mobile Integrated Crisis Response (MICR) teams across the province.

CRCLs are mobile mental health crisis response teams that provide an alternative to police-only crisis response for calls that do not involve violence or criminality. These teams help free up police resources to focus on crime. MICRs are staffed with police officers and mental health professionals specifically available to support people experiencing mental health and substance use crisis in the community and connect them with appropriate health care services.

Currently, five CRCLs (North and West Vancouver, New Westminster, Victoria, Prince George, and the Comox Valley) are supporting individuals in crisis, connecting them to services, while diverting calls away from police. In 2024, these teams responded to 5,882 calls and only 1.3 percent needed to be escalated to police.

18 MICR teams (also known locally by various names, including Car Programs) are operating in communities across B.C. (Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam, Fort St. John, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, North Vancouver, Penticton, Prince George, Richmond, Squamish, Surrey, Vancouver, Vernon, Victoria, and the Westshore) to support individuals through de-escalation, clinical assessment, and/or connections to appropriate services.

Another provincial initiative, Complex Care Housing (CCH), provides housing with support designed for people with significant health needs who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Residents may have mental health or addiction challenges, brain injuries, intellectual or developmental disabilities, chronic illnesses, and/or mobility issues. As of April 1, 2025, CCH services are in place for more than 570 people across the province, and an additional 240 units are in development.

CCH is just one initiative within the Province's Homelessness Plan, Belonging in BC, to prevent and respond to homelessness, and bring additional support to people who need them. Other components of Belonging in BC include: additional supportive housing units with increased health, social and cultural support; a new rent

supplement program with health and social support; and funding for outreach-based health services to encampment sites.

Urgent Homelessness Response funded services support immediate health, mental health, and substance use needs people unsheltered or living in encampments, temporary shelters, or moving into new housing and shelter sites. The Ministry of Health and health authorities support the coordination of encampment response and ensure outreach health supports are connected to encampment residents. The Supported Rent Supplement Program, currently in implementation in 17 priority communities, pairs a \$600 Canada-BC Housing Benefit with wraparound health supports to enable individuals live independently in private market rentals. Enhanced Health in Supportive Housing offers health services within a Supportive Housing setting to integrate physical, mental health, substance use, and traditional health supports to help individuals maintain tenancy and long-term housing.

The B.C. government has made significant investments to strengthen mental health and addiction services throughout the province. Budget 2025 provides more than \$500 million over the fiscal plan to support and sustain addictions treatment and recovery programs established through previous budgets. This includes Road to Recovery (R2R), Foundry, supports for children and youth and Indigenous-led treatment, recovery and aftercare services.

R2R is a new and innovative model of addictions care that moves people seamlessly through detox, treatment, and recovery services. The model was first launched with Vancouver Coastal Health and Providence Health Care in Vancouver in 2023. In July 2024, the Province announced that they would begin working with health authorities to make the model available to everyone in B.C. The R2R expansion will include up to an additional 100 substance use treatment beds and outpatient services in all health authorities, as well as a single-access line to connect patients to addictions care in each health authority. Once fully implemented, people will be able to call the Access Central phone line in their region to speak with a doctor or nurse to obtain a clinical assessment and be matched with the right level of care to support their recovery journey.

Whereas it has been eight years since the declaration of the toxic drug crisis as a public health emergency;

And whereas local governments need their provincial partners to move from reaction to action by developing and implementing a holistic plan that brings into balance all four pillars: prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery, and enforcement:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province develop and implement a balanced holistic plan, based on these four pillars (prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery, and enforcement) for resolving the toxic drug crisis.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Toxic drug poisonings continue to claim the lives of thousands of people across Canada each year. This includes the 2,271 people who lost their lives due to poisoned drugs in British Columbia in 2024. While this represents a slight decrease from the previous year, each death remains a tragic loss felt deeply in communities across our province. The Government of B.C. remains committed to responding comprehensively to the toxic drug crisis in our province, by ensuring that people in B.C. have access to a range of support and services across the substance use continuum of care.

In 2022, the former Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions released the Adult Substance Use System of Care Framework, a technical policy document developed in partnership with health system partners from across the province. This framework lays out the foundations of a seamless, integrated substance use system of care that meets people where they're at and offers a range of services across the continuum of care to meet people's unique needs in communities across B.C. The *Framework* continues to guide the Ministry of Health in responding to the toxic drug crisis, as we work to implement and expand evidence-based services, ranging from prevention, to treatment, to aftercare.

The Road to Recovery represents one approach to achieving the system of care set out in the Framework. The Road to Recovery is a made-in-B.C. model of addictions care that establishes a seamless continuum of substance use services that includes assessment, withdrawal management (detox), treatment, and aftercare services for clients with moderate to severe substance use disorders. Part of Budget 2025's \$500 million investment in mental health and addictions care will support the expansion of the Road to Recovery model to all health regions in B.C.

**NR4 Impact on Local Government from the Decriminalization of
Drugs in BC**

Merritt

Whereas the Province of BC was granted an exemption under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* for the personal possession of small amounts of certain illegal drugs for a trial period beginning January 31, 2023 until January 31, 2026;

And whereas communities have seen increased pressure on RCMP and first responders since the implementation of the decriminalization pilot program;

And whereas no statistics or reporting dashboard has been provided to support the continuation of the program or demonstrate the decrease in harm associated with decriminalizing the possession of small amounts of illegal substances;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to create a workable dashboard which reports statistics of the impact decriminalization has had on reducing the harm of criminalization and demonstrates whether the continuation of the pilot program is of benefit to communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Health Canada approved the Province of British Columbia's request for an exemption to the federal *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) to decriminalize personal possession of small amounts of illicit substances on May 31, 2022. The exemption was accompanied by a Letter of Requirements outlining the conditions that the Province is required to meet in order to maintain the exemption for the three-year term. Monitoring, Applied Research, and Evaluation is one of the core components of the Letter of Requirements, with the publication of decriminalization quarterly data reports and snapshots of broader mental health and substance use data identified as mandatory activities.

The Province has been publishing data snapshots since September 2023. In addition to data on B.C.'s broader response to the toxic drug crisis, these snapshots contain quantitative data on police interactions, possession offences, drug seizures, and interactions with proactive outreach workers funded as a part of the Province's decriminalization efforts. The March 2025 data snapshot can be accessed [here](#). The Province also publishes the quarterly data reports that it provides to Health Canada. These reports provide more in-depth monitoring of data, context for chosen indicators, and explanations of data collection methodologies. Quarterly data reports can be accessed on the Province's decriminalization website.

The goal of decriminalization has always been to reduce the stigma associated with illegal substance use and encourage people to access life-saving services, while balancing the goals of public safety and other community interests. That is why the Province asked the federal government to change the decriminalization policy to prohibit drug use in all public places including parks, beaches, hospitals, transit, and businesses. As of May 7, 2024, this change is now in effect and gives police the tools to address public safety concerns.

As demonstrated in the Province's publicly reported data, visits to overdose prevention and supervised consumption services and drug checking sites have increased since decriminalization was implemented on January 31, 2023, and the number of people receiving opioid agonist treatment has remained steady. The Province will continue to monitor these indicators closely and update the public on their status in quarterly reports and data snapshots.

NR6 Mental Health Mandate for Health Authorities**Nelson**

Whereas the number of people in BC, including in rural and remote communities, experiencing mental health and addictions issues continues to increase and there is a distinct lack of resources and treatment options for such individuals;

And whereas the provincial government has committed to expanding complex care, treatment, and aftercare across the province to provide quality care to British Columbians where and when needed but there appears to be a disconnect in how regional Health Authorities are advancing this commitment in rural areas:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the Province to mandate regional Health Authorities to take a proactive approach to developing and implementing regional plans to address mental health and addiction issues and provide funding to do so.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The regional Health Authorities receive global funding to deliver programs, including mental health and substance use programs, and each takes a regional perspective in determining priorities for implementing service delivery to meet the needs of people in their region.

The Province is working to further expand outreach services to support people who are in a mental health or addiction crisis in rural or remote communities. As of March 2025, there are 33 Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams and 34 Intensive Case Management (ICM) Teams outreach-based services and recovery-oriented service delivery models. The teams facilitate community living, psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery for persons who have not benefited from traditional models of mental health & substance use care. Rural ICM teams have already been implemented within the Interior Health Authority in Cranbrook, Nelson, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, Kamloops, and Williams Lake.

In rural and remote communities, observation units in hospitals are an important health service for ensuring access to acute psychiatric services. If a patient requires more treatment or rehabilitation, they may be transferred to either a facility designated under the *Mental Health Act* to receive voluntary or involuntary treatment.

Health Authorities also work with the Ministry of Health and other partners to proactively address several shared challenges including encampments, complex care, treatment, and aftercare across the province.

NR7 Standard of Care Discrepancies in Healthcare Services

NCLGA Executive

Whereas there has been a noticeable increase in delays in treatment and testing for all British Columbians, with a particularly significant impact on residents in rural areas;

And whereas there is an expectation of a standard of practice that every individual should be able to rely on, ensuring that test results are promptly reviewed; however, delays in testing and review processes are causing undue stress and potential health risks, especially in rural communities;

And whereas the discrepancy in wait times for test result reviews, such as heart halter monitors, between urban and rural locations can lead to adverse health outcomes, including increased mortality rates:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM jointly lobby the provincial government to compel the Health Authorities to review and address the discrepancies in the standard of care, particularly in wait times for test result reviews, across the province, with a specific focus on addressing the disparities between rural and urban areas;

And be it further resolved that UBCM advocate for shared patient records between health authorities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Laboratory Services:

Laboratory services in British Columbia are delivered through a combination of public providers and publicly funded private organizations. LifeLabs is responsible for delivering approximately two-thirds of outpatient laboratory services, while the Health Authorities account for the remaining share. LifeLabs delivers services under the framework of a tripartite Master Laboratory Services Agreement (MLSA) with the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), which includes specific obligations around performance monitoring and reporting.

A central component of LifeLab's contractual responsibilities involves the ongoing reporting of key standards and performance indicators to ensure equitable access and high-quality laboratory testing across the province, including in many rural and remote communities. This includes detailed tracking and reporting on critical metrics such as patient wait times, which support broader objectives of accountability and continuous improvement in patient outcomes and experience. Furthermore, to ensure system-wide alignment and enhanced service delivery, the MLSA requires LifeLabs to monitor and report its performance against predefined targets and key performance indicators, as well as historical baselines.

In 2018, the Provincial Laboratory Medicine Services (PLMS) within PHSA was established to enable a single clinical and administrative structure with a mandate for operational planning and clinical policy implementation, service monitoring and reporting, and budgeting processes, to ensure patients have timely access to high-quality, appropriate, and cost-effective laboratory services. In accordance with its provincial mandate, PLMS is currently spearheading cross-sector planning initiatives with the Health Authorities aimed at identifying opportunities to expand and harmonize standards of care throughout the province, with the goal of fostering a more consistent and integrated approach to laboratory service delivery.

Diagnostic Imaging:

In British Columbia, patients are referred for medical imaging by a referring practitioner based on their clinical judgement and should be in alignment with clinical guidelines for appropriate and evidence-based use of medical imaging. The requisition for medical imaging is received by a hospital or community imaging clinic and patients are prioritized based on the level of care a patient requires.

The priority levels and recommended wait times in B.C. are based on guidelines from the Canadian Association of Radiologists (CAR). The CAR priority levels were further adopted by B.C. Guidelines to provide clinical decision support in the published MRI Prioritization Guideline. Patients with the most urgent and

immediately life-threatening symptoms are booked for their appointments sooner than those with non-urgent symptoms.

Recognizing the growing demand on medical imaging services, the Ministry of Health, the Provincial Medical Imaging Office (PMIO) in partnership with the health authorities and medical imaging professionals are working together to improve delivery, build a standardized, equitable, and integrated approach to medical imaging across the province to improve access and patient care. Enhanced access to medical imaging is supported by four key strategies including, building further capacity, increasing essential personnel, optimizing business processes and improving waitlist management.

Diagnostics:

Diagnostic services in British Columbia are delivered through a combination of publicly and privately owned facilities.

The Medical Services Commission's (the Commission) Advisory Committee on Diagnostic Facilities (ACDF), under the authority of the *Medicare Protection Act* and the Medical and Health Care Services Regulation (the Regulations), is responsible for reviewing and approving applications from facilities wishing to bill the Medical Services Plan (MSP) for the following restricted outpatient services: ultrasound, radiology, nuclear medicine, polysomnography, pulmonary function, electromyography, and electroencephalography.

The ACDF assesses applications in accordance with the Regulations to ensure there is sufficient medical need, the quality of the proposed diagnostic services is sufficiently high and there is reasonable utilization of existing approved diagnostic facilities which provide the same services.

As a condition of approval, diagnostic facilities wishing to bill MSP for outpatient diagnostic services must obtain accreditation by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia's Diagnostic Accreditation Program.

The Commission has established wait time benchmarks for polysomnography, bone densitometry, echocardiography and urgent, non-emergency ultrasound and is actively monitoring polysomnography wait times to ensure service needs are met.

The Commission has recently made policy changes that have resulted in the accreditation and approval of 145 stand-alone Home Sleep Apnea Testing (HSAT) facilities across the province and permits the provision of remote HSAT in underserved, rural/remote communities.

The ACDF has policy that considers future plans for construction or significant physical expansion of public diagnostic facilities (i.e., new hospital builds, major renovations to a hospital) in the catchment area or any other geographic area defined by the ACDF, when considering an application. However, similar applications will not be considered or approved if there is a firm plan in place to implement a new or substantially expanded public diagnostic facility within the next five years.

The ACDF has implemented policy that may, on a case-by-case basis, recommend the Commission grant approval under exceptional circumstances for applications where outpatient diagnostic services are required in direct support of a Ministry of Health priority initiative(s), i.e. service provision directly related to Primary Care Networks, including Urgent Primary Care Centre's, or Specialized Community Service Programs for target populations.

The Committee has a policy in place to allow both public and privately-owned facilities to apply for Distance-Reading (Diagnostic Ultrasound Telemetry) approval for ultrasound services they are approved to perform. Thus, allowing patients to remain in their communities for ultrasound scans, which are in turn read off-site at another ACDF approved ultrasound facility.

Whereas regional hospital districts are empowered to direct capital funding grants only to hospitals and hospitals facilities named by the Ministry of Health;

And whereas rural, remote and Indigenous communities often rely upon community health clinics for medical care in the absence of any nearby health-authority owned and operated facilities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of BC review the *Hospital District Act* to provide enhanced authority to regional hospital districts to direct capital and operational grants to non- profit community health clinics and centres in rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Infrastructure

Under the *Hospital District Act*, facilities eligible to receive capital funding by regional hospital districts are hospitals designated under the *Hospital District Act*, hospital facilities used or supplied in conjunction with hospitals, or facilities designated as health facilities under section 49 of the *Hospital District Act*.

The *Hospital District Act*, as the legislative framework for the roles and responsibilities of regional hospital districts, enables districts to contribute to capital costs for the Province's hospitals and designated health facilities.

When there is an opportunity to amend the *Hospital District Act*, the review of regional hospital district roles and responsibilities and facilities eligible to receive funding from districts could be considered.

**NR10 Addressing Challenges Faced by Rural Seniors in
British Columbia**

NCLGA Executive

Whereas a recent report by the Office of the Seniors Advocate highlights the significant challenges faced by seniors aged 65 or older living in rural regions of British Columbia (BC), including limited access to healthcare, lower incomes, and inadequate options for long-term care and affordable housing;

And whereas rural seniors constitute a significant portion of BC's population, with projections indicating a further increase in their proportion by 2032;

Whereas the resilience of rural seniors is admirable, but it is evident that they face substantial barriers due to the lack of resources and supports available in their communities:

Therefore be it resolved that the NCLGA and UBCM acknowledge the findings of the Seniors Advocate's report and recognize the urgent need to address the inequities faced by rural seniors in British Columbia;

And be it further resolved that UBCM call upon the provincial government to take immediate action by implementing the following recommendations put forth by the Seniors Advocate:

1. Develop and implement strategies on rural seniors housing, rural health, rural seniors home and community care, and rural transportation including the recommendation of an increase to direct patient care hours.
2. Create and implement a long-term care and assisted living plan and community care based on equity.
3. Improve upon and better promote the Travel Assistance Program and Hope Air to facilitate access to healthcare services for rural seniors.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Community-Based Seniors' Services (CBSS)

Budget 2024 invests \$127M over 3 years to expand and evolve non-medical home support services and health promotion programming for seniors throughout the province. This investment is expected to benefit seniors in rural communities by:

1. Increasing Community Connector positions in B.C. from 19 in 2023/24 to approximately 90 in 2025/26. These positions provide one-on-one support to seniors, ensuring coordinated access to community resources, and facilitating healthcare referrals. Where appropriate, Community Connector split their time across multiple smaller communities to ensure more seniors can access services; and
2. Expanding the Family and Friend Caregiver Support Program and Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors by 6 to 7 program sites annually, starting in 2025/26. Areas of British Columbia that demonstrate highest need and lack of comparable services will be prioritized.

Approximately 23 percent of HLTH-funded CBSS agencies are in Consolidated Local Health Areas (CLHAs) considered rural / remote; 47 percent are in CLHAs considered mixed urban-rural.

The Better at Home (BH) program supports seniors with day-to-day tasks, such as light housekeeping and grocery shopping, helping to maintain independence at home. Currently, 97 BH programs (31percent in rural CLHAs and 44 percent in mixed urban-rural CLHAs) operate across more than 260 communities in B.C.

Transportation and food security are critical challenges for many seniors, especially in rural areas where limited services increase isolation and restrict access to essential support. To bridge this gap, starting in 2024/25, CBSS agencies can apply for funding to expand targeted transportation options and social meal programs. This funding is prioritized in areas identified as transportation or food deserts.

Home Health

Budget 2024 provides \$227M over 3 years to improve the quality, responsiveness, and effectiveness of Home Health (HH) services through optimizations in service delivery.

Workforce shortages are a challenge in rural areas and Health Authorities (HAs) are working to address gaps in service availability across the province. Budget 2024 aims to expand the overall HH workforce to meet growing demand. B.C.'s Health Human Resources Strategy and continued investment in the Health Career Access Program (HCAP) has resulted in 1,990 hires into HS across the province since September 2020¹.

Investments in HH are expected to benefit seniors in rural areas through expansion of service hours for client intake and service availability, improved overnight coverage, and standardized response times.

Policy development is underway to guide HAs in supporting the delivery of culturally safe HH services in First Nations communities, many of which are rural and remote. This work was undertaken with First Nations partners including representation from 92 First Nations communities and is aligned with B.C.'s reconciliation mandate and objectives to address health inequities.

HAs continue to expand the use of virtual health technologies to overcome distance and workforce challenges with the aim of increasing the availability of seniors' care closer to home.

Assisted Living (AL) and Long-Term Care (LTC) Services

The Aging with Dignity federal funding supports actions over five years to help British Columbians age with dignity, closer to home through access to Home and Community Care and increase quality of life in LTC. The ministry is also implementing an LTC Quality Framework focused on improving the quality of care, quality of service and quality of life for residents, creating a more dignified, efficient, sustainable, and culturally appropriate LTC system.

Investment in the renewal and expansion of long-term care (LTC) facilities is a priority for the ministry to meet the needs of the growing senior population. LTC home development projects, include 553 LTC beds (replacement and net new), in rural areas, defined by the OSA report, including Vanderhoof, Vernon, Nelson, Fort St. James, Sechelt, Kitimat, and Smithers. There are also 1049 LTC beds (replacement and net new) near rural centers in Comox, Courtenay, Cranbrook, Campbell River, Prince George, and Quesnel which will further support rural access.

The ministry has completed a strategic review and developed a phased strategy to enhance services and service sustainability, build capacity within publicly funded Assisted Living (AL) and ensure AL services meet the needs of a broader seniors' population. Phase 1 of the AL strategy includes standardization of AL services across the province, and the ministry is currently engaging HAs in reviewing current AL policies on eligibility and access.

Staffing shortages are also being addressed through the HCAP program. As of December 31, 2024, 7,235 HCAP positions have been filled within LTC/AL sites. (3,076 at health authority sites, and 4,159 at private/affiliate locations).

Travel Assistance Program (TAP) and Hope Air

The Province is committed to supporting B.C. residents who must travel within the province for specialized medical services, especially those living in rural, remote and Indigenous communities. B.C. residents, including seniors living in rural communities, have access to a variety of medical travel supports through provincial and regional programs.

¹ HSWBS, Report on HCAP Hires for Long-Term Care & Assisted Living and Home Health Settings, Data range: Sept 9, 2020 - Dec 31, 2024

The primary public program for medical travel in B.C. is TAP. TAP helps alleviate some of the transportation costs for eligible B.C. residents who must travel within the province for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community upon referral by a physician or nurse practitioner. The program is a corporate partnership between HLTH and private transportation carriers (air, rail, bus, and ferry service) who agree to waive or discount their regular fees.

In late 2024, HLTH in collaboration with Ministry of Transportation approved an expansion of TAP to cover seven “unregulated” ferry routes. This expansion benefits those living in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities who must travel by ferry to access specialist services. HLTH advertises its list of TAP transportation partners on the TAP BC website.

In addition to TAP, residents have access to medical travel support through various targeted programs, including, for example, through Health Connections offered by health authorities, and through the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, which offers medical transportation supplements to some recipients of income assistance and disability assistance.

Hope Air is a national charity that provides free flights to people required to travel for medical care that cannot afford the cost. Hope Air receives support from the Province which helps to support B.C. residents with access to air travel but is managed and administered separately.

HLTH remains committed to supporting B.C. residents, including seniors, who must travel outside of their home communities for medical care while working to address ongoing pressures to the health care budget. This includes a commitment to review TAP and other medical travel assistance and available funding in B.C.

Whereas a recent report by the Office of the Seniors Advocate highlights the significant challenges faced by seniors aged 65 or older living in rural regions of British Columbia (BC), including limited access to healthcare, lower incomes, and inadequate options for long-term care and affordable housing;

And whereas rural seniors constitute a significant portion of BC's population, with projections indicating a further increase in their proportion by 2032;

Whereas the resilience of rural seniors is admirable, but it is evident that they face substantial barriers due to the lack of resources and supports available in their communities:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM acknowledge the findings of the Seniors Advocate's report and recognize the urgent need to address the inequities faced by rural seniors in British Columbia;

And be it further resolved that the UBCM call upon the provincial government to take immediate action by implementing the following recommendations put forth by the Seniors Advocate:

- Establish a ministry or minister devoted to addressing the unique needs of rural communities in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province recognizes the unique needs of older adults living in rural communities in accessing the resources and supports they need to age with dignity and independence. Following the October 2024 provincial election when the new B.C. Government formed, the following positions were created to support addressing these needs:

- Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities to work with rural and remote communities, regional districts, municipalities, and First Nations to identify the unique needs and opportunities these smaller communities need to grow and thrive.
- Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development (reporting through the Minister of Finance) to support rural economic development to help ensure that every British Columbian feels the benefit of a growing economy; and
- Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health (reporting through the Minister of Health) to engage with key interest holders, including frontline service providers in rural and Indigenous communities, to seek their advice on how best to deliver accessible, effective care in their unique rural and remote communities.

While these positions have a distinctly rural lens, their work will align and support that of the Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors and Long-Term Care (also reporting through the Minister of Health), whose work engages service providers, advocates, seniors and others to identify opportunities for improving seniors' care across the province.

**NR12 Ensuring the Implementation of the Recommendations
Found in the Seniors Advocate Reports**

Burnaby

Whereas the Ministry of Health set a guideline that residents in senior long-term care facilities should receive, on average, at least 3.36 hours of direct care daily;

And whereas direct care hours include all care provided by registered nurses (RNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), health care assistants (HCAs) and professional and non-professional allied health providers (such as physiotherapists);

And whereas not-for-profit facilities delivered 93,000 more direct care hours than they were funded to deliver, and for-profit facilities failed to deliver 500,000 hours of direct care they were funded to deliver:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to create a standardized funding formula and reporting system to ensure that funding for seniors' care is spent on direct care only.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The ministry monitors the delivery of Hours Per Resident Day (HPRD) in Long-Term Care (LTC) across the province, and LTC home operators are required to report HPRD on a quarterly basis to their respective health authority. Health Authorities continue to work with contracted operators to ensure hours of care requirements are met, and to appropriately address any gaps in the delivery of care and services.

The ministry has begun work with health authorities and long-term care sector partners to develop a funding model for LTC, with the goal of achieving greater transparency, equity, consistency, and sustainability. The initial focus is on direct care, informing the funding approach for staffing in LTC, and incorporating aspects such as HPRD, wage levelling, and policy development.

The ministry implemented an LTC Financial Reporting tool to standardize financial reporting in publicly funded LTC homes (e.g. revenues, expenditures, HPRD), and continues to work with LTC home operators and health authorities to refine the tool. The LTC Financial Reporting tool will provide a rich source of data to inform the development of the funding model and policy development.

The Minister of Health's mandate reflects this commitment to improve the delivery of care for seniors and steward public investments made in seniors' care to improve efficiency and effectiveness given the growing population of seniors in our province.

NR14 Gender Equity: Provisions for Menstrual Supplies**Port Coquitlam, Port Moody**

Whereas the 2024 British Columbia Building Code contains updated accessibility features for universal washrooms and that they must contain full-sized adult changing tables; and no new updates were made to the provincial Building Code and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations to include accessibility features for free menstrual supplies or sanitary disposal bins for those who menstruate;

And whereas equity-based policies around access to menstrual products as a health and human rights imperative will support inclusion, accessibility, mobility, reduce stigma, and promote gender equality for all people;

And whereas in December 2023, the Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations were revised to include free menstrual products in all federally regulated workplace restrooms:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to update the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, and the British Columbia Building Code to include provisions for sanitary disposal bins, and courtesy menstrual supplies as is currently required for toilet paper in restrooms outside the home, thus supporting accessibility and gender equity for people who menstruate.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

The Province recognizes that access to menstrual supplies is critical to the inclusion of women and other people who menstruate in school, workplaces and the community.

In 2022, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction provided a \$750,000 grant to United Way BC to support the Province's goal of ending period poverty in B.C. This funding included the continued delivery of free period products and the establishment of a Period Poverty Task Force (PPTF). A final report, including recommendations for sustainable approaches to end period poverty in B.C. was shared with the ministry in March 2024.

The Province's commitment to addressing period poverty and supporting menstrual equity is captured in B.C.'s updated 2024 Poverty Reduction Strategy. Going forward, the Province will continue to explore options towards a comprehensive, long-term response to period poverty in B.C., informed by the recommendations of the PPTF's final report. This includes looking at key areas such as legislation and policy, distribution of menstrual supplies, menstrual education and menstrual health care.

NR15 Routine Mammogram Screening Program**Harrison Hot Springs**

Whereas access to regular routine mammogram screening is inadequate within the Province of BC;

And whereas an increasing number of women are being diagnosed with more aggressive breast cancer between the ages of thirty to forty;

And whereas early detection of breast cancer is paramount to diagnosis and treatment:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the provincial government to increase the number of mobile mammogram screening units available to rural and remote communities;

And be it further resolved that UBCM call upon the provincial government to lower the age of MSP coverage for routine mammogram screening to the age of thirty and modify the program so that participation in the screening program can occur whether or not the person has a primary care provider.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Early detection of cancer is critical to more effective treatment, as well as better outcomes for the population. Increasing access to cancer screening is a priority action in British Columbia's 10-Year Cancer Action Plan. We are looking into new strategies to make screening more accessible, such as providing mobile mammography services and cervix self-screening.

About 10 percent of all screening mammograms performed in British Columbia are done on mobile units. Three mobile screening coaches visit more than 170 rural and remote communities across British Columbia each year, including over 40 Indigenous communities. The vehicles provide state-of-the-art digital screening mammograms, are wheelchair-accessible, and feature a spacious waiting area and comfortable private examination room.

In 2023/24, BC Cancer started a culturally safe project to expand mobile breast screening to five communities on Vancouver Island. In addition, a toolkit is being developed in collaboration with Indigenous community health centres to deliver screening education and engagement to Indigenous communities.

In British Columbia, provincial cancer screening programs and policies are guided by recommendations from BC Cancer and the best available scientific evidence. BC Cancer regularly reviews research and trends to ensure screening guidelines provide high-quality, effective care. For unattached patients accessing breast screening services, booking clerks at BC Cancer can provide resources such as walk-in, virtual, or Urgent and Primary Care Clinic information in order to obtain a provider for the purposes of screening. In addition, the Ministry of Health and BC Cancer are working on a project to support unattached patients with increased access to the provincial-screening programs.

NR16 Reducing Neurodevelopment Assessment Wait Times

Mackenzie

Whereas the wait time for diagnostic assessment for children and youth who are suspected of having an Autism Spectrum Disorder or other neurodevelopment conditions is unacceptable at 2 years;

And whereas these extended wait times puts delays on youth getting the support they need and deserve and puts pressure on other institutions to fill the gaps while families wait:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to reduce the wait time for diagnostic assessment for children and youth who are suspected of having an Autism Spectrum Disorder or other neurodevelopment conditions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

In British Columbia, publicly funded assessments for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are conducted through the BC Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN). The Complex Developmental Behavioural Conditions (CDBC) program provides publicly funded assessments for a variety of neurodevelopmental disorders, including intellectual disability and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Both provincial programs offer assessments for children and youth up to 19 years old.

BCAAN and CDBC are operated by the Sunny Hill Health Centre at BC Children's Hospital, which falls under the umbrella of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA). While both programs strive to provide timely assessments for children and youth to help ensure they receive early intervention and specialized care, we know there are challenges in meeting current demand. The ongoing demand and issues related to recruitment and retention have made it challenging to minimize assessment wait times.

BCAAN continues to take steps to increase capacity for ASD assessment and has developed several strategies to help mitigate increased wait times. This includes:

- Increasing outreach clinics to the Northern Health and Island Health regions.
- Undertaking a demonstration project with the BC Center for Ability, the Ridge Meadows Child Development Centre, Island Health Authority and Northern Health Authority to enable Speech Language Pathologists to complete standardized assessment tools with the aim of increasing assessment capacity across the province.
- Implementing streamlined assessments for children 3 ½ years of age and younger, to assess those who are non-verbal and showing severe signs of autism typical behaviours.
- Exploring with community pediatricians to assess highly symptomatic preschool children without time-intensive standardized tools.

CDBC is also working diligently to develop strategies to decrease wait times and ensure equitable access throughout B.C. Current provincial wait times are now in line with the CDBC-established wait time goal of six months. However, regional wait times vary. CDBC is taking action to expedite access to neurodevelopmental assessments, including:

- Conducting clinical outreach,
- Holding additional assessment clinics on weekends,
- Hiring additional psychologists and pediatricians, and
- Sourcing contracted agencies.

Whereas a large and growing proportion of our citizens has hearing loss, including three quarters of seniors;

And whereas hearing loss leads to delayed speech and language development in children, as well as affecting social development;

And whereas a significant factor contributing to lack of hearing aid usage is the high cost of hearing aids, with BC lagging behind other provinces and territories when it comes to consistent hearing health coverage:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government for improved access to hearing health care, including funding support for hearing aids for vulnerable populations most adversely affected by hearing loss: children and seniors.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

PharmaCare is the Ministry of Health program that helps British Columbia residents pay for prescription drugs, medical supplies and devices, and pharmacy services.

PharmaCare does not currently cover hearing aids or hearing aid batteries. This lack of program funding is not a comment on the value of these items to improve hearing and overall quality of life but does reflect PharmaCare's ability to cover them within the limits of available resources. PharmaCare has a limited budget to spend on drugs and medical supplies. Given the fiscal pressures affecting PharmaCare and the broader health system, the program has limited capacity to expand coverage for new benefits and does not currently have plans to initiate coverage for hearing aids.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction provides income assistance, hardship assistance, and disability assistance for low-income British Columbians through the BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) Program. The BCEA Program is an income and asset tested program.

Most recipients of income assistance, disability assistance, and hardship assistance transition to the federal government of Canada's public pension programs when they turn 65 years of age, such as the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Old Age Security (OAS), and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS).

Low-income seniors who are not eligible to receive the full amount from federal government of Canada's public pension programs may be eligible to receive a top-up from income assistance, disability assistance under the BCEA Program.

Low-income Seniors Eligible for the BCEA Program:

Health Supplements are available through the BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) Program to assist with specific individual health needs and circumstances, such as hearing instruments. The least expensive, appropriate hearing instruments and associated repairs and supplies are provided to eligible recipients who lack the financial resources to meet the need.

SDPR requires that all other available resources should first be considered when determining eligibility for hearing instruments. For income assistance and disability assistance clients, other resources include (but are not limited to) accessing or funding through:

- Other government programs (e.g., BC's PharmaCare, Health Authorities, ICBC, WorkSafeBC, Veterans Affairs Canada)
- Private insurance

Life-Threatening Health Need Supports:

Other low-income British Columbians, including seniors, who are not in receipt of income assistance or disability assistance and who have a life-threatening health need may also qualify for assistance with specific medical equipment and supplies if they meet the eligibility criteria and there are no other resources available.

Healthy Kids Program:

The Healthy Kids Program provides coverage for basic dental treatment, optical care and hearing assistance to children in low-income families, who are not in receipt of income assistance, disability assistance or hardship assistance.

As of January 1, 2020, eligibility criteria for the Healthy Kids Program is based on eligibility for the Ministry of Health's Medical Services Plan (MSP) Supplementary Benefits.

NR18 Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine**Port Hardy**

Whereas in 2024, the availability of Arexvy, a vaccine approved by Health Canada in August for adults aged 60 and over, marks a significant milestone in protecting older adults against the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV);

And whereas Arexvy has demonstrated nearly 83 per cent efficacy in preventing lower respiratory tract disease caused by RSV and a 94 per cent efficacy in preventing severe RSV-associated illness, according to the FDA's analysis of data;

And whereas the authorization of Arexvy for use in Canada addresses the critical need for preventing RSV in older adults, who may face greater risks of severe outcomes, including hospitalization, and the potential overwhelming of the hospital system, as experienced during the pandemic, underscores the importance of safeguarding the health of older adults by preventing RSV infections:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia to treat the RSV vaccine as an essential preventative measure, similar to other critical vaccines, and work towards subsidizing its cost to eliminate the burden of a \$300 per full dose on individuals seeking protection against RSV.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

New RSV vaccines from GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer, and Moderna have been approved by Health Canada for use in adults aged 60 years and older. In March 2025, Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) updated their guidance on the use of these vaccines.

When a new vaccine is approved for use by Health Canada, we look to NACI and our provincial public health and immunization experts to assess and advise whether it should be added to our publicly funded immunization program in B.C. These groups consider a comprehensive range of factors when developing their recommendations, including (but not limited to) the burden of illness, vaccine efficacy and safety, cost-effectiveness, implementation feasibility, ethics, and equity. The Ministry of Health then reviews these recommendations in the context of all health system priorities. RSV vaccines are not currently part of B.C.'s publicly funded immunization program; however, our publicly funded immunization programs are reviewed regularly to consider changes and additions.

As of October 2022, PharmaCare pays pharmacies a fee of \$11.41 for administering non-publicly funded vaccines, including RSV vaccines. While this does not cover the cost of the vaccine, it reduces out of pocket costs for the patient. Some health insurance plans may also cover the cost of the vaccines.

Whereas one of the five principles of the *Canada Health Act* is portability with the intent that residents who are temporarily absent from their home province or territory, such as on business or vacation, are permitted to receive necessary services in relation to an urgent or emergent need when absent;

And whereas British Columbia residents are restricted from accessing specialized or non-urgent services in Alberta, even when the services are located geographically closer than services in British Columbia:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petitions the Province to work toward a solution to ensure that all residents of British Columbia also have reasonable access to insured specialized or non-urgent medical services in Alberta in cases where the services are geographically closer.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

British Columbians that reside near the B.C./Alberta (AB) border often have significant barriers to accessing specialized medical services in the Province. These barriers often relate to geographical distance between home and the treatment facility, but can also pertain to the need to travel over mountainous terrain. There is a long precedent for border patients receiving the majority of their specialty (and sometimes even primary) care in AB. In many cases, these border patients are referred out-of-province by general practitioners to see AB specialists, who then may refer the patients for surgical care in AB.

For B.C. patients who seek public funding for specialized or non-urgent medical services outside of the Province, the Ministry of Health (the ministry) requires that all clinically appropriate treatment options in B.C. have been exhausted, or that the standard wait time in B.C. is considered medically unacceptable. The above requirement, however, does not apply for B.C./AB border patients, as the ministry recognizes the existing geographical barriers. Additionally, the ministry is also cognizant of the benefits of continuity of care, especially for patients who receive regular medical care (both primary and specialized) in AB. As such, other than the requirement of funding authorization prior to treatment being rendered, the ministry does not place any restrictions on B.C. patients accessing publicly funded medical services rendered in an AB public general hospital. In the event that the patient does not request public health coverage for the specialized or non-urgent treatment, the ministry does not require a pre-authorization of funding.

The ministry is aware of instances of AB medical facilities refusing to accept some B.C. patients for various reasons. Health care is governed by each province and territory independently. While the ministry does not place restrictions on border patients accessing publicly funded medical services in AB, the ministry does not have jurisdiction over the AB facilities, nor can the ministry override their decisions regarding patient admission. Patients are encouraged to continue working with their attending specialists to seek treatment at alternative public health facilities if necessary.

**NR22 Funding to Offset the Cost of Waiving Development Fees
for Attainable Housing**

Pemberton

Whereas local governments are increasingly expected to contribute financially to the development of attainable housing by waiving development application fees, development cost charges, and amenity contributions;

And whereas local governments rely on revenues from development application fees, development cost charges, and amenity contributions to provide the infrastructure, amenities, and services that support housing;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province, as part of their housing initiatives, to provide funding to local governments to offset the revenue losses resulting from the waiving of development application fees, development cost charges, and amenity contributions associated with the development of attainable housing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Local governments have a range of development financing and other tools that can be used to help fund the costs of infrastructure and amenities that are needed to support new development, including Development Cost Charges (DCCs), Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs), Inclusionary Zoning, subdivision servicing bylaws, excess or extended services, latecomer agreements, development works agreements, and density bonusing.

While prescribed classes of affordable housing are exempt from ACCs, local governments may, at their discretion, choose to waive or reduce some of the other charges for certain types of housing as set out in the legislation.

The Province supports local governments in facilitating the development of attainable housing and associated infrastructure, amenities, and services. The Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs are working with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to find ways to strengthen financial resiliency and address costs drivers impacting local governments.

The Province continues to advocate for local governments with the federal government for bilateral funding programs to support local government infrastructure needs. Additionally, in 2023, the Growing Communities Fund provided a one-time total of \$1 billion in grants to all 188 of B.C.'s local governments, to use to address their community's unique infrastructure and amenities demands.

NR23 Incorporating Tree Canopy and Climate Goals into Housing Action

Port Moody

Whereas the Province of BC, along with the rest of the world, is experiencing increasing incidents of extreme weather, including deadly heat waves which are intensified by the urban heat island effect and lack of neighbourhood greenness;

And whereas the Province has committed to addressing climate risk mitigation and adaptation at the same time as providing needed housing but may not be foreseeing potential negative consequences that can be ameliorated:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to revise Bill 44 and Bill 47 to embed tree protection, tree canopy expansion, and climate resilience into the policy and ensure local governments retain clear authority to:

- protect mature trees and tree canopy in residential neighbourhoods; and
- implement locally developed Climate Action Plans.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Local governments retain authority to manage growth in and near environmentally sensitive areas through tools such as development permits and tree protection bylaws. Provincial legislation and regulation – including the *Drinking Water Protection Act*, the *Environmental Management Act*, the *Riparian Areas Protection Act*, the *Water Sustainability Act*, the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation – continue to protect environmentally sensitive areas, agricultural areas, and natural resources from the impacts of development. Minimum density requirements do not override protections for environmentally sensitive areas and riparian areas.

To support the implementation of new housing legislation, the Province provided a range of guidance for local governments. The policy manual for Bill 44 outlines recommended site standards designed to balance viable small-scale multi-unit housing development with the need for permeable surfaces and space which could support mature trees and tree canopies in residential neighbourhoods. The policy manual also encourages local governments to be flexible in terms of permitting the full range of combinations and configurations for Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) buildings. For example, rather than create a zone that permits a duplex, triplex, or fourplex, a zone could permit up to four housing units, without limiting the form those buildings should take. This approach will allow a form that responds to the local needs of the community and creates flexibility, enabling landowners to build in a way that considers factors like builder expertise, as well as important site considerations like topography, tree canopy, heritage, and environmental values.

The policy manual also recommends low or no parking requirements which can significantly increase permeable, open space to support tree retention/planting, reduce impacts on stormwater flows and infrastructure, and improve livability for both new and existing homes.

**NR24 Provincial Funding for Energy Efficient and Zero Emissions
Equipment for Existing Buildings**

Metro Vancouver RD

Whereas energy efficient and zero emissions building equipment provide benefits such as lower annual energy costs and improved resilience to extreme heat events;

And whereas the CleanBC Better Homes and Better Buildings programs provide incentives and rebates to reduce the significant cost barriers to implementing energy efficiency and zero emissions retrofits for existing buildings, yet multi-unit residential buildings including affordable housing have limited access to these incentive programs:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM urge the Government of BC to significantly increase funding for provincial incentive programs to support energy efficient and zero emissions equipment for existing buildings, to ensure that incentives can leverage pre-2030 replacement cycles for residential and commercial building equipment;

And be it further resolved that UBCM urge the Government of BC to ensure that existing and future incentives and support programs are available for all building types, prioritizing multi-unit rental, affordable and non-market housing, and building types that are not covered in current incentives and rebates.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Province recognizes the importance of supporting energy-efficient and zero emissions retrofits in existing buildings to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower energy costs, and enhance climate resilience. Through CleanBC, the Province has delivered programs assisting residential, commercial, and institutional buildings to adopt low-carbon technologies, including high-efficiency heat pumps, electric water-heating systems, and building envelope improvements.

The CleanBC Better Homes and Better Buildings programs provide targeted incentives to a range of building types, including market and non-market housing, multi-unit residential buildings, and Indigenous- and community-owned facilities. Recently, the Province announced \$100 million to support heat pump rebates for low- and moderate-income households. This includes the planned expansion of the Energy Savings Program to provide rebates for individual suites in multi-unit residential buildings, and participation in BC Hydro and FortisBC's Energy Conservation Affordability Program to provide heat pump rebates to the lowest-income households in British Columbia.

The Province acknowledges the need to ensure program accessibility across all building types and the importance of aligning incentives with typical equipment replacement cycles. The Province continues to review and refine program design to support equitable and cost-effective retrofits across British Columbia to support its climate goals.

Whereas non-market housing is in critical need throughout the province, and the provision of such housing is currently severely challenged by supply conditions, lack of adequate funding, and lack of capacity by local governments to support the provision and management of such housing;

And whereas some municipalities and regional districts in British Columbia have created entities, such as housing authorities, which successfully increase the supply of non-market housing by providing and managing such housing, the process of planning and then creating these entities involves significant staff time and other costs:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petition the Province of BC to provide grant funding for municipalities and regional districts to plan and create entities that provide and manage non-market housing in their communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes the important role of local government housing authorities in addressing the housing crisis in B.C. Housing authorities can be a valuable tool for local governments that have assets to invest in affordable housing, as well as a desire and the institutional capacity to develop, own, operate, manage, and maintain affordable housing.

An alternative to a standalone local government housing authority is to partner with BC Housing on subsidized affordable housing. Local governments can do this in a variety of ways. This can include identifying potential sites, providing city-owned land, and waiving development cost charges to support the construction of new housing in the community. It can also include supporting and fast-tracking housing projects through the development and permitting approval process. Communities might also consider reaching out to partners and stakeholders in the community to encourage and support housing projects or connecting with BC Housing to discuss ideas and opportunities.

In 2023, the Province created the BC Builds program. BC Builds works in partnership with local governments, non-profit groups and First Nations to identify available or underused land, provide low-interest repayable loans and funding, and deliver projects that create more homes and help bring costs more in line with what households with middle-incomes earn. While BC Builds does not provide grant funding to establish non-profit housing operators, it does work in partnership with municipalities and regional districts interested in establishing one for a BC Builds project.

All BC Builds units have a target of households with middle-incomes spending no more than approximately 30 percent of their income on rent. In addition, a minimum of 20 percent of all BC Builds homes where grants are provided will have rents at least 20 percent below market rate. Currently, under this program, approximately 1,400 homes are underway, with nearly 2,500 more in various stages of early development and many more planned.

Whereas the number of people experiencing homelessness or housing instability across the Province has been increasing at an unprecedented rate;

And whereas the Province has invested considerable funds in supportive housing, the majority of which operate as low barrier facilities making it challenging for individuals in recovery to secure housing options that support an addiction-free lifestyle;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Province to establish a Provincial Housing Coordinator to work directly with those persons who are experiencing homelessness and who are not in need of supports, to find suitable housing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes that different housing environments are necessary to meet diverse community needs and support resident choice in their housing based on their individual wellness goals. The Province supports a housing first approach which is a proven international evidence-based housing model that recognizes people are better able to improve their wellbeing if they are first housed. Housing is one part of a multifaceted approach to supporting those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

To improve systems coordination by streamlining access to services, the Province is working in partnership with local communities, the Federal government, and BC Housing (BCH) to implement a Coordinated Access system which will better match individuals with suitable housing and help relieve the burden on the individual to navigate services and systems.

The Province, through BCH, funds outreach and support services through the Homeless Outreach Program and Homeless Encampment Action Response Teams. Through these programs, outreach workers meet their clients in both urban and rural regions of B.C. to determine housing needs, connect people to required services, and try to connect them with housing that is appropriate and available.

The Province, through BCH, also provides portable rent supplements aimed at reducing and preventing homelessness for families (Rental Assistance Program), seniors (Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters), and individuals (Homeless Prevention Program, Supported Rent Supplement Program [SRSP] and Canada BC Housing Benefit programs) to access rental housing in the private (non-subsidized) housing market. SRSP provides both a rent supplement as well as support services to help individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness to access health and social supports to improve housing stability.

Whereas the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) reports people at risk of hypothermia include:

- People experiencing homelessness (persons who are unsheltered, unhoused, or living in places not fit for human habitation)
- People who use substances, including alcohol, that modify their ability to feel the effects of cold exposure or to respond or modify their responses to cold conditions
- People who spend long hours outside for work or recreation
- People with disabilities, limited mobility, certain medical conditions such as diabetes, peripheral neuropathy, and diseases affecting blood vessels and people taking certain medications
- Older people (over 60 years of age), infants and young children;

And whereas the BCCDC has established guidelines to open cold weather shelters when temperatures drop below 0° C or enacted at higher degrees when the weather forecast includes wet, snowy, or windy conditions as recommended by the BC Health Effects Anomalous Temperatures (HEAT) Committee's cold-weather response:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to standardize the opening of cold weather shelters throughout the province based on the recommendations from the BC Health Effects Anomalous Temperatures (HEAT) Committee's cold-weather response and provide necessary funding to local governments and NGOs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes there is a growing and pressing need for shelter spaces throughout B.C., especially during the winter months. In addition to permanent shelters in B.C. communities, the Province also provides temporary winter shelters and the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) program. Municipalities determine what weather conditions warrant an extreme weather alert and the number of extreme weather spaces to activate.

The Province, through BC Housing, is funding 6,737 shelter spaces (permanent, temporary, emergency weather response, Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing [HEARTH]) throughout B.C. This is a 20 percent increase compared to the same time last year. The Province continues to add more temporary shelter and housing spaces through the HEARTH program.

Additionally, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness provides guidance and funds for local authorities and First Nations to proactively open warming centers to keep people safe. Communities may be reimbursed by the Province for costs to establish warming centres, including facility rental and fuel costs.

Whereas many communities are experiencing a crisis-level influx of homeless individuals and the existence of emergency shelters is critical to addressing the safety of people experiencing homelessness;

And whereas due to the urgent nature of the need and the lack of suitable building stock in many communities, emergency shelters are frequently operating from buildings that do not meet the major occupancy classification requirements of the BC Building Code, nor the requirements of the BC Fire Code, placing local governments at risk of incurring liability if they do not enforce the codes and risking shutting down emergency shelters if they do enforce the codes:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province work with the Building Safety Standards Branch to establish some reasonable variances to the BC Building Code and BC Fire Code to enable emergency shelters to remain open.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs / Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes there is a growing and pressing need for shelter spaces throughout B.C., especially during the winter months. Shelters play a key role in homelessness prevention and response by providing people experiencing homelessness a safe place to stay overnight and address basic needs. For many, shelters are a key pathway out of homelessness through assessment and connection to housing options that best meet individual needs. Through BC Housing (BCH), the Province continues to work to expand the offering of shelters across the Province so that all people in B.C. have access to these essential services. This includes working with local governments, communities, and operators on appropriate sites and addressing community concerns related to shelters.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner administers and enforces the *Fire Safety Act* and its regulations (BC Fire Code). Development of the BC Fire Code is managed by the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, within the Construction Standards and Digital Solutions Branch.

Fire safety plan requirements, developed in cooperation with the local fire department and other applicable regulatory authorities, must be adhered to in emergency shelters. This can be achieved by either calling on local fire services that provide fire inspections to advise on fire safety planning for the facility, or by requesting the support of the Office of the Fire Commissioner during times of emergency.

The BC Building Code and BC Fire Code regulations provide flexibility to allow for activities like emergency sheltering in non-residential buildings or facilities that were not originally designed for this activity.

The BC Building Code is not intended to be applied unless there is permanent change to the occupancy of a building because the BC Fire Code and *Fire Safety Act* can be used to manage activities in buildings like emergency sheltering.

As not all local government fire departments provide the same response times, service levels, or type of fire suppression service, buildings providing emergency accommodation must be evaluated by the building owner on a site-specific basis to determine if additional safety measures are needed as part of the fire safety plan. For example, if persons are sleeping in a building that was not designed to provide sleeping accommodation, the installation of additional smoke alarms and/or a fire watch by trained staff for the duration of the activity can be considered as part of the fire safety plan.

NR29 BC Secondary Suite Incentive Program**North Coast RD**

Whereas the BC government aims to create more housing in all of BC through the introduction of the pilot Secondary Suite Incentive Program (SSIP);

And whereas eligibility for the Secondary Suite Incentive Program does not include properties within many regional district electoral areas:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM advocate to the BC government to expand the Secondary Suite Incentive Program to include all municipalities and electoral areas thereby reducing inequities and barriers to participation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Secondary Suite Incentive Program (SSIP) pilot opened for applications in May 2024, providing conditional financial assistance to eligible homeowners to build a new secondary suite or accessory dwelling unit for rental at below-market rates. The pilot program closed for new applications on March 30, 2025. Low uptake from the public, along with the federal government's plan to launch a similar program, led to a decision to wind down the pilot early and reprioritize funding.

NR30 Increased Fine for Short-Term Rentals**Burnaby**

Whereas short-term rentals (STRs) are taking away from long-term rental housing stock and in turn contributing to the housing crisis in Burnaby;

And whereas the Province intends to increase the maximum fine a local government may issue to any bylaw non-compliant operator from \$1,000 to \$3,000 per day utilizing the Municipal Ticket Information (MTI) system;

And whereas under the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act* (LGBNEA), the current mechanism to enforce bylaws in Burnaby, a maximum fine of \$500 per day is permitted, with no increase proposed by the Province:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to permit the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act* maximum bylaw violation penalty per day to be increased to \$3,000;

And be it further resolved that local governments have the ability to add unpaid bylaw violation penalties to property taxes, to better allow local governments to regulate short-term rentals.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The ministry is committed to supporting local governments to ensure the availability of affordable housing in their communities by providing tools to enforce against short-term rental bylaw infractions. Local governments have called for an increase in the maximum fine allowed under the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act* (LGBNEA) to act as a stronger deterrent to unlawful short-term rentals, and steps are currently being taken to address this request.

In 2024, ministry staff conducted research and engagement with local governments and other interested parties to obtain input about the LGBNEA, including the maximum fine amount for bylaw offence notices. This work continues into 2025 with further consultation and review to assess the impacts of increasing the maximum fine amount and to determine an appropriate maximum fine. Local governments' requests with respect to collection mechanisms such as recovering fines through property taxes will be duly considered.

NR32 Achieving Complete Streets through Building Permit

Burnaby

Whereas the *Local Government Act* permits municipalities, as part of rezoning and subdivision, to secure land dedication for highway purposes, and the registration of Covenants and Statutory Rights-of-way for works and services, and public access;

And whereas there is a desire on behalf of the Province to reduce rezoning applications by having municipalities permit higher density developments as-of-right as per recent provincial legislation to expedite housing delivery;

And whereas the *Local Government Act* does not currently permit a municipality to obtain dedications for highway purposes, or the registration of Covenants and Statutory Rights-of-way for works and services and public access as conditions of Building Permit issuance:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to amend the *Local Government Act* to allow municipalities to obtain highway dedications, and the registration of Covenants and Statutory Rights-of-way for works and services, and public access through Building Permit issuance without the approval of subdivision or rezoning.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

To support the shift to proactive planning, Bill 16: *Housing Statutes Amendment Act*, 2024 provides local governments with explicit authority to secure many amenities previously achieved through rezonings.

This includes several new and expanded tools to help local governments achieve complete streets.

Municipalities will now have clearer authority to require works and services for infill developments that do not involve a subdivision process by allowing them to use these authorities at the building permit stage. They will also have clearer authority to require land be provided without compensation for roads at the building permit stage in addition to subdivision to allow for a portion of land to be used for new roads or the widening of existing ones of up to 20 metres.

In addition, a new authority will allow municipalities to require up to an additional five metres of land without compensation for sustainable design features and alternative forms of transportation. This can be applied at the building permit stage for municipalities or at subdivision for both regional districts and municipalities.

Local governments will also have new transportation demand management authorities to define and require transportation demand management measures in new developments.

The Province will monitor these new authorities to ensure they are working as intended.

Whereas the Province of British Columbia needs to review its policy for backcountry closures during periods of extreme wildfire risk;

And whereas Regional Districts have no ability to mitigate the considerable risks associated with Crown land hazards nor respond to emergencies on Crown land under the Regional District service area model;

And whereas Regional District electoral area lands have the largest Crown to community exposure to these hazard areas:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province to aggressively pursue strategic proactive messaging strategies about restricting access to vulnerable areas during periods of extreme wildfire risk to mitigate human-caused wildfires on Crown land;

And be it further resolved that UBCM request the Province to update their policy for backcountry closures to ensure proactive closures are a priority during periods of wildfire risk and in advance of conditions reaching unacceptable risk levels and include a process that ensures access by First Nations who use forest service roads to travel to and from their residences and territorial areas, as well as businesses who require access to Crown land.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

Any decision to implement a backcountry restriction is not made lightly. Public safety is the BC Wildfire Service's top priority. If conditions (fire activity level, response resource levels, present and forecasted weather) reach a heightened risk level, a backcountry restriction may be considered. Backcountry closures are also very challenging to enforce and draw on resources that may be better directed toward active fire suppression efforts. The amount of backcountry in B.C. is extensive, and enforcing a widespread closure takes a significant number of resources. The BC Wildfire Service also relies on responsible backcountry users to report fires in these areas that may otherwise not be detected. During this period of heightened fire activity, the BC Wildfire Service continues to prioritize wildfire response. This is why the BC Wildfire Services chooses to strategically prohibit access to areas rather than attempt to enforce a blanket restriction. The BC Wildfire Service is confident in how and where Area Restriction Orders have been implemented.

If implemented, closures can be in a specific area, or over large parts of the province. To protect the well-being of people and communities, specific areas of B.C.'s backcountry may be formally closed to public access due to wildfires and firefighting activity, in accordance with the *Wildfire Act* and Wildfire Regulation. Certain activities (such as using open fire and operating off-road vehicles) may also be restricted. Rather than frequently restricting access to the backcountry, the BC Wildfire Service prohibits the activities that are most likely to start wildfires in the backcountry, such as using open fire and operating off-road vehicles.

The Forest Service Road Use Regulation, enabling the district manager to close a forest service road, is intended to address imminent threats to public safety and/or the environment and is typically applied specific to inherent conditions or uses and sometimes in conjunction with other related orders.

Local seasonal tourism and businesses rely on access to the backcountry, and risks to the public are constantly being evaluated. Backcountry closures and wildfire conditions are constantly monitored by BC Parks and the BC Wildfire Service, including weather forecasts, fire danger ratings, fuel moisture conditions, modelling, observed and forecasted fire behaviour and regional and provincial fire activity. Fire Centres engage in proactive communication throughout the season to inform residents and visitors to B.C. of the current wildfire risk. These communications can be found on social media, the BCWS app and dashboard, Information Bulletins, and partner communications with local governments and the tourism sector.

NR34 Initial Fire Attack Crew Relocation

Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope, Mackenzie, Tumbler Ridge

Whereas the BC Wildfire Initial Attack Crews are a critical component of the wildfire response and rapid wildfire suppression in the Province of British Columbia;

And whereas Initial Fire Attack Crew Base locations are key to providing timely wildfire suppression efforts; especially in remote and rural areas:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to maintain the Initial Fire Attack Crew Bases in their current locations, and not relocate them without significant local stakeholder consultation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

The Chetwynd base remains a forward attack base that can be staffed with wildland firefighters as needed based on wildfire potential in the area. The Dawson Creek Fire Zone, within which Chetwynd is located, assigns staff and resources based on hazard and fire activity levels, and though personnel will not be stationed in Chetwynd full-time, they will be pre-positioned and available when their capabilities are needed.

Forward attack bases are physical BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) infrastructure/buildings in communities across B.C., like Chetwynd, which include equipment caches, trailers and an office for our Initial Attack crews and a storage yard for additional response needs. Resources, inclusive of crews, will be pre-positioned in communities with forward attack bases such as Chetwynd as determined by the fire hazard and probability of ignition. Other resources pre-positioned and readily available will include aircraft, fire suppression equipment and structure protection equipment. Resourcing levels fluctuate through daily assessment using predictive services to support decision making. (E.G. high hazard, forecasted lightning means increased resourcing and readiness posture). This model is used in communities throughout the Province to ensure that appropriate resourcing is positioned in closest proximity to the hazard to not delay response times.

The BCWS has engaged with communities in the Peace region of B.C. through pre-season meetings, engagement over the 2024 wildfire season, and through correspondence on behalf of the Minister of Forests on the topic of Initial Attack and forward attack bases in B.C.

In addition, through the long-standing Interagency Agreement with the Fire Chiefs Association, BCWS works proactively with fire departments in preparedness and response to wildfires. BCWS provides a number of courses to fire departments across B.C. between October and June each year. The BC Wildfire Service utilizes structural fire departments and other response partners, such as forestry industry groups, in wildfire response across the province.

Whereas current fire management practices do not adequately address the unique challenges posed by holdover fires, necessitating a comprehensive and year-round approach to forest fire management;

And whereas a comprehensive and year-round forest fire management program can help reduce the risks associated with holdover fires, protect ecosystems, and enhance the safety and well-being of communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to allocate the appropriate resources and adopt a comprehensive and sustainable year-round forest fire management program to address the threat of holdover fires.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

The BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) continues to steadily increase the number of full-time year-round positions to support a holistic approach across all four pillars of emergency management – prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Since shifting to a year-round, all-hazard response organization in 2022, the BCWS has seen the number of permanent full-time staff increase by more than 56 percent, with further expansions planned. Ahead of the 2025 season, BCWS now has over 600 year-round positions to enhance operational readiness. These positions include fire crew leaders and front-line staff who work in structure protection, prevention and risk reduction, as well as wildfire land-based recovery.

Fires that remain active into the winter are classified as Under Control, based on a combination of suppression activities and local weather conditions. This status indicates that the wildfire is not expected to spread outside of pre-established boundaries. The BCWS monitors these fires for smoke and heat signatures, which could indicate new growth. Over the winter, the BCWS manages overwintering fires by establishing fire guards where needed to protect people and infrastructure, as well as actively monitoring overwintering fires and reporting on these fires publicly.

In the Prince George Fire Centre, the BCWS has been taking advantage of frozen ground conditions this winter to get ahead of overwintering fires in the Fort Nelson Zone. Many of these fires are in areas with a buildup of forest materials and challenging terrain, which becomes even more difficult to work in once the ground thaws.

To reduce the risk of flare-ups later this year, the Prince George Fire Centre has collaborated with local industry, provincial partners, and the BCWS Predictive Services Unit to trial a winter suppression strategy focused on getting equipment into areas that are usually inaccessible during the snow-free season including:

- Starting in February, BCWS deployed over 15 pieces of heavy equipment—including dozers, feller-bunchers, skidders, and excavators—into priority fire areas.
- Crews constructed more than 87 kilometres of access routes, machine guards, helipads, and fuel-free control lines.
- Work was focused on locations with deep organic soils and known hot spots, identified through infrared scans and local assessments.
- Ice bridges and existing features like seismic lines were used to access remote areas while limiting new ground disturbance.
- Rehabilitation work is already underway to restore machine guards and stream crossings where needed.

Whereas BC has experienced unprecedented wildfire activity resulting in significant detrimental and toxic environmental impacts, especially within riparian areas;

And whereas many homeowners who have been impacted by wildfires are unable to afford the expensive assessments due to financial constraints thereby not proceeding with cleanup on their properties;

And whereas the lack of a timely and flexible Riparian Area Protection Regulation (RAPR) permit process has not only hindered legitimate cleanup efforts but has also given rise to an increase in reports of illegal dumping causing additional environmental harm;

And whereas the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship was responsive to developing an expedited and flexible assessment process for wildfire debris cleanup:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship to prioritize the development and implementation of an expedited process for cleaning up wildfire debris in riparian areas and develop clear policy guidelines to support the post-wildfire debris cleanup in riparian areas in preparation for future wildfires.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

The Province acknowledges the concerns raised regarding barriers faced by homeowners during initial clean-up post wildfire and with rebuilding. The Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR) was developed to address incremental development and had unintended consequences of hindering clean-up and rebuilding following natural disaster.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) implemented a two-phased approach with expedited processes for wildfire clean-up and re-building in riparian areas to support 2023 wildfire recovery:

1. Supplemental Riparian Guidance to the *Environmental Management Act* Direction supporting clean-up activities, and
2. Riparian Recovery – 2023 Wildfire Rebuilding Direction supporting rebuilding.

Combined, these processes address delays caused by the current RAPR permitting process, address unintended consequences such as illegal dumping and further ecological degradation, and have expedited riparian related approvals for rebuilding. Financial support was provided to property owners through reimbursements for Qualified Environmental Professional fees related to obtaining a RAPR assessment reports for debris cleanup and rebuilding. Further, WLRS is continuing to provide support to expedite waterfront property riparian recovery through riparian restoration guidance and additional financial support for replanting.

WLRS is currently reviewing the outcomes of these processes and making considerations for RAPR program improvements that will better address riparian redevelopment resulting from natural disaster recovery. The Province is committed to building long-term resilience and ensuring that environmental protection measures remain effective and adaptable.

NR37 Provincial Funding for PFAS-Free Firefighting Gear in BC**Vancouver**

Whereas the health and safety of firefighters across British Columbia are routinely compromised by exposure to Per-and-Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), through the use of PFAS-containing fire retardant foam and through dermal absorption from the water-repellent inner liner of their turnout (bunker) gear, particularly during periods of extreme heat and high physical exertion commonly experienced by firefighters in the line of duty;

And whereas the City of Vancouver recently approved a one-time budget increase of \$2.8 million to procure Per-and-Polyfluoroalkyl free (PFAS-free) bunker gear for all Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS) personnel, thereby becoming the first fire department in North America to transition to PFAS-free turnout gear to significantly reduce the health risks associated with PFAS exposure and the persistent nature and resistance to degradation of these "forever chemicals" in the environment and the human body:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to allocate provincial funds specifically for the procurement of PFAS-free bunker gear for all BC firefighters, to prioritize their health and safety while ensuring their gear meets the highest standards of protection and safety without the use of PFAS and exposure to the harmful effects of these forever chemicals, and work towards the introduction of alternatives to PFAS-containing fire retardant foam.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Government understands the importance of protecting firefighters from Per-and-Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) exposure to mitigate any negative health outcomes. The Province is also aware of the health issues PFAS create for firefighters and is supportive of the work being undertaken by the BC Professional Firefighters Association, the Fire Chiefs' Association of BC and other fire services organizations on this issue.

Funding for fire services fall under the jurisdiction of local government and as such, should be budgeted for at the local government level.

Whereas the current response capability approval process for individual ground search and rescue (SAR) teams is hindering the ability of teams to respond to known hazards and utilize local capabilities and innovative technology;

And whereas while the Province is responsible for administration of the SAR Program, local SAR expertise, community needs, and local authorities and agencies input must be a greater part of the capability approval process;

And whereas capability decisions must not include call volume, as saving one life makes the investment of time and money worthwhile, and strengthens the overall SAR capacity to assist our counterparts across the region and province when called upon:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to change the search and rescue capability approval process from the Emergency Management and Climate Readiness Search and Rescue (EMCR SAR) Unit, to a collaborative process involving the ground search and rescue team, local authorities, and the EMCR SAR Unit.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) volunteers in British Columbia are among the best in the world, and the Province is committed to supporting their invaluable work and dedication to helping keep people safe.

The Province continues to provide predictable and ongoing funding of approximately \$6 million annually to support the Ground Search and Rescue volunteers' provision of service across British Columbia—the only agreement of its kind in Canada. This annual contribution is in addition to approximately \$8 million of funding that the Province provides annually to reimburse GSAR groups' operational costs for search and rescue deployments, training, and equipment.

The Search and Rescue Advisory Committee, and six standing working groups under this Committee, are meeting on a regular basis. The intent of the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee is to provide a forum for collaborating with requesting agencies (RCMP, BC Emergency Health Services, etc.) and volunteers.

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness believes that the wider Search and Rescue community, as represented by the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee, should have more influence on the process around how groups achieve capabilities, and how these capabilities are maintained. These questions will be addressed by the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee and the applicable working groups, with the intent of finding an appropriate path forward for all parties and lifting the pause on capabilities.

**NR39 Search and Rescue Emergency Management and Climate
Readiness Moratorium**

Fort St. James

Whereas the current search and rescue director of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) imposed a moratorium on all of the Province's search and rescue teams, prohibiting those groups from expanding their capabilities until the Province has conducted a needs assessment study;

And whereas Search and Rescue groups provide invaluable services crucial to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, tourist safety, and overall community well-being:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to promptly lift this moratorium and allow Search and Rescue groups to add to their list of capabilities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) volunteers in British Columbia are among the best in the world, and the Province is committed to supporting their invaluable work and dedication to helping keep people safe.

The Province continues to provide predictable and ongoing funding of approximately \$6 million annually to support the Ground Search and Rescue volunteers' provision of service across British Columbia—the only agreement of its kind in Canada. This annual contribution is in addition to approximately \$8 million of funding that the Province provides annually to reimburse GSAR groups' operational costs for search and rescue deployments, training, and equipment.

The Search and Rescue Advisory Committee, and six standing working groups under this Committee, are meeting on a regular basis. The intent of the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee is to provide a forum for collaborating with requesting agencies (RCMP, BC Emergency Health Services, etc.) and volunteers.

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness believes that the wider Search and Rescue community, as represented by the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee, should have more influence on the process around how groups achieve capabilities, and how these capabilities are maintained. These questions will be addressed by the Search and Rescue Advisory Committee and the applicable working groups, with the intent of finding an appropriate path forward for all parties and lifting the pause on capabilities.

NR40 Equitable Funding of Police Services**Port Alberni**

Whereas the City of Port Alberni funds the greatest number of RCMP members and pays significantly higher police costs per capita and per household compared to other local governments in the Alberni Valley, placing a significant burden on its taxpayers under the current Police Services funding model for British Columbia that does not take into account the financial commitment or funding contribution of each jurisdiction;

And whereas systemic social issues outside of a local government's mandate, such as poverty, addiction, and mental health challenges, contribute to increased call volumes and demands on police services, creating high police services costs that are further exacerbated by the need to respond to and manage the impacts of these systemic social issues:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urgently appeal to the Province of British Columbia to develop an equitable Police Services funding program for all BC municipalities and regional districts that takes into account the financial capacity and population size of each jurisdiction, as well as the additional demands placed on police services due to systemic social issues outside of a local government's mandate.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Options for a fair and equitable police shared funding model are being explored by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, as recommended by the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*. Extensive engagement with local governments was undertaken as part of the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative and will continue as policy options related to funding models are explored and as the overall scope and clarity of priorities for the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative are confirmed.

The Province is committed to working with local governments to better understand the complexities of their social environments and community safety needs. In recognition of the interconnectedness of social issues and corresponding police response, the Honourable Terry Yung was appointed Minister of State for Community Safety and Integrated Services in 2024. Additionally, the Cabinet Committee on Community Safety was established to ensure an integrated government response to community safety issues.

NR41 Funding of RCMP Services for Small Municipalities**Pemberton**

Whereas the current funding model for municipal RCMP police services imposes an immense financial burden on small municipalities when their census population reaches 5,000;

And whereas implementation of the Province's Homes for People plan, accelerating housing development and population growth, will push many small municipalities to the 5,000 census population trigger point sooner than previously anticipated:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to immediately increase the population threshold for RCMP contract policing costs payable by local governments from 5,000 to 10,000 and to develop, in partnership with local governments, a more fair and equitable shared funding model between all policing partners in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Options for a fair and equitable police shared funding model, including options to phase-in or incrementally increase the municipal share of policing costs, are being explored by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, as recommended by the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*. Extensive engagement with local governments was undertaken as part of the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative and will continue as policy options related to funding models and population thresholds are explored and as the overall scope and clarity of priorities for the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative are confirmed.

NR42 Modernize the Police Cost Sharing Formulas**[View Royal](#)**

Whereas inflation, officer burnout, rising equipment costs, and rapidly increasing officer salaries have made the existing cost sharing formulas and RCMP policing costs unsustainable for local governments;

And whereas the Province's housing legislation, including Bill 44 and Bill 47, could potentially lead to increased policing costs, while Bill 46 will allow for police facilities to be funded through development cost charges, but will not help address the issue of police capacity:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to work with local governments to develop a new RCMP funding framework that gradually increases the cost-share rate for local governments at the 5,000, 10,000, 20,000 and 40,000 population thresholds.

And be it further resolved that the above amendments be implemented immediately, prior to the 2026 federal census.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Options for a fair and equitable police shared funding model, including options to phase-in or incrementally increase the municipal share of policing costs, are being explored by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, as recommended by the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*. Extensive engagement with local governments was undertaken as part of the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative and will continue as policy options related to funding models and population thresholds are explored and as the overall scope and clarity of priorities for the Policing and Public Safety Modernization initiative are confirmed.

Whereas the Ports Canada Police was disbanded in 1997 and the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority discontinued its financial contribution to the RCMP-led Waterfront Joint Forces Operation in 2015;

And whereas this loss of police resources has weakened the security of Canada's ports and allowed organized crime elements to proliferate, as evidenced by the 2023 Peter German report Policing our Ports;

And whereas the provincial and federal governments have statutory authorities in respect of taxation and fees related to the port and the transportation of shipping containers:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province to work with the Canadian government and port municipalities to develop a shipping container levy as a funding mechanism to re-establish dedicated resources to police ports and waterfronts, including the Port of Vancouver, in order to address the issue of organized crime operating through Canada's ports.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes the federal government has primary jurisdiction over Canadian ports and any decision made about policing the ports or introducing a levy must be made by the federal government.

The Province continues to advocate for adequate investment to the existing bodies responsible for policing the ports and has engaged in frequent correspondence with the Government of Canada regarding federal resourcing. This includes emphasizing the importance of the federal government meeting the staffing commitments of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Federal Serious and Organized Crime unit, the Border Integrity Unit, the Waterfront Joint Forces Operation and the Canadian Border Services Agency as well as providing the resources necessary to adequately equip these agencies to respond to organized crime and other illicit behaviours at the ports.

The Province actively supports the efforts of police to disrupt organized criminals that traffic in illegal drugs and continues to advocate for a multi-jurisdictional, comprehensive approach that recognizes the interdependence of prevention, intervention, intelligence, and enforcement efforts. Government is committed to strengthening capabilities of police of jurisdiction across B.C. to address the use of our ports by organized crime by ensuring that all levels of government are actively engaged on the issue to enhance community safety.

The Province continues to further support these efforts through ongoing funding and oversight over specialized organized crime teams and initiatives, including those within the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit-BC (CFSEU-BC) – B.C.'s anti-gang agency.

NR44 Fail to Appear Charges**Duncan**

Whereas 100% of Fail to Appear charges at provincial courthouses are assigned to the policing statistics of the local government in which the courthouse is located, having a disproportionate impact on the policing costs assigned to small municipalities with courthouses that serve a much broader area outside their jurisdiction;

And whereas this inflates the Criminal Code case load for all local governments with courthouses within their jurisdiction and results in an unfair burden to the taxpayers of those local governments, especially considering that Fail to Appear cases have no effect on the workload of the local detachment:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to direct that Criminal Code Section 145(2)-(5) and 732.1(2b) and 3(a) be excluded from the policing statistics of local governments with courthouses.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Per British Columbia's *Police Act*, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General is responsible for ensuring adequate and effective levels of policing and law enforcement services are maintained across B.C. To inform and support this legislated responsibility, the Province analyzes various police, crime and workload metrics and liaises with police, local governments and other local representatives who provide valuable local contextual information.

The Province recognizes that some policing statistics within a police jurisdiction's boundaries may be attributable to visitors who may travel into and out of these boundaries for various reasons, such as accessing courthouse services. Per the B.C. *Police Act*, municipalities are responsible for provision of all policing and law enforcement within their boundaries, and the Act does not consider provisions related to the impact of visitors. The Province is bound by the current parameters of the Act in its analysis of policing and law enforcement.

Unique local contexts may impact certain crime statistics, such as the impact of a provincial courthouse on administration of justice violations like "failure to appear." While the Province recognizes these impacts, it is not standard practice to exclude one specific violation from analysis, though the impacts of a specific offence may be highlighted on a case-by-case basis.

Exclusion of a specific offence is not expected to result in notable differences in the Province's overall assessment of local policing needs, as crime statistics represent only one type of policing information used in analysis. A recent RCMP resource review of a municipality with a courthouse confirmed that exclusion of "failure to appear" offences from analysis had minimal to no impact on the overall assessment of its police resourcing needs.

Whereas gaps in service within the Provincial Courts continues to deny timely and equitable access to justice services for all British Columbians and will only be exacerbated by rapid population growth; thus, resulting in harms by prolonging closure for individuals awaiting court judgements, inefficient use of police time for travel, and greater challenges for those with limited access to public transit or transportation;

And whereas although recent investments made by the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General (JAG) have increased capacity at specific courthouses, the investments have not facilitated equitable access for all British Columbians or met service level requirements:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM direct the Province of BC to identify and address current gaps in service in the Provincial Courts; and further, release an updated Courthouse Capital Asset Management Plan (CAMP) which reflects new growth projections and future service level needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The Province recognizes the need to continue to improve service gaps in the courts. In 2018, an extensive review was completed on the courthouse facilities across the province to assess the condition of each location and what would be required to ensure they can support demand from the period of 2018 to 2028. Since that review, several initiatives have been completed or are in progress to improve access to justice.

Examples include:

- The new Abbotsford Law Courts was opened in 2020, which significantly increased court capacity in the Fraser Valley, as well as adding Supreme Court functions.
- A new Ahousaht Circuit Court was established in 2024.
- The courthouse Wi-Fi/cabling upgrade project, which aims to increase capacity for court proceedings to be conducted by video conference and provides Courts' participants access to the internet. Since 2021, courtroom cabling was improved in 10 sites, and Wi-Fi expanded in 56 locations.
- Expansion of the bail process to be completely virtual via technology, which allows both video and audio interaction for court users in courthouses, police departments/RCMP detachments and correctional centres. 102 RCMP Detachments and Police Departments and 29 courthouse locations have been upgraded since 2021.
- The Early Resolution Program has been implemented in six court locations, providing additional resources for participants involved in family-related disputes and assists with resolving matters outside of court. Implementation in five additional court locations is planned for later in 2025.
- The creation of a new Indigenous courtroom is in progress at the New Westminster Law Courts, with anticipated completion in early 2026.
- The Port Coquitlam Law Courts renovation will add two new Supreme Court courtrooms, a registry counter and ancillary spaces, with anticipated completion in Winter 2026.

Projection modelling for Court needs is updated regularly, accounting for changes in population, demographics, as well as internal and external justice system measures. The projections are assessed in conjunction with courthouse renovations, expansions, and new builds to fully inform those projects through ensuring they are guided by long-term planning.

Equal access to justice is paramount to fostering trust and confidence in British Columbia's justice system. Ensuring that all British Columbians, regardless of location or circumstance, can engage with a fair and accessible system is a cornerstone of the ministry's mission. While there are numerous opportunities for innovation and areas where we can continually enhance our efforts, the Ministry of Attorney General has made it a priority to expand modern, user-centered services across the province. This reflects Government's commitment to meeting the evolving needs of our communities and strengthening the justice system as a whole.

With the guidance of the CSB Digital Transformation Strategy (most recently updated in 2024), modernized service offerings include the introduction of guided pathways and electronic form submission, which streamline processes for users 24/7, as well as the significant adoption of virtual proceedings to reduce barriers to participation. Additionally, virtual counter service and on-demand access to materials provide greater flexibility and convenience, ensuring that individuals can connect with the resources they need, when they need them. These advances represent just a few of the ways the ministry is working to deliver meaningful, province-wide impact.

NR46 Automated Licence Plate Recognition Funding**Langford**

Whereas the City of Langford recognizes the importance of safety and compliance to the *Motor Vehicle Act* for all road users;

And whereas the discontinuation of vehicle licence plate validation decals in British Columbia has negatively impacted law enforcement officers in their ability to detect and enforce uninsured motor vehicle violations:

Therefore be it resolved that the UBCM petition to the Province and ICBC to provide local governments and police agencies with the required funds to procure Automated Licence Plate Recognition (ALPR) hardware for all law enforcement in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Most Canadian provinces and territories have eliminated vehicle licence plate validation decals including Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon.

Ahead of the implementation of online insurance in May 2022, ICBC and the Province worked with the British Columbia RCMP and municipal police agencies to ensure a smooth and effective transition to decal elimination. ICBC made a one-time investment of approximately \$1 million to enhance and modernize the Automated Licence Plate Recognition program and purchase new hardware.

ICBC estimates that less than one percent of drivers on B.C. roads are uninsured, which has not changed since decals were eliminated in May 2022.

NR47 Noise Camera Pilot Project**Port Moody**

Whereas noise pollution has wide-ranging and well documented negative effects on public health and well-being and social connectedness, and vehicular noise pollution, from such sources as aftermarket exhaust systems are a particularly acute source of noise pollution, and these impacts disproportionately affect residents living near major thoroughfares, which are often more affordable housing types;

And whereas many jurisdictions have sought to address the numerous challenges to the effective monitoring and enforcement of existing vehicular noise regulations through conventional law enforcement approaches by deploying noise cameras:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask that the Province of British Columbia explore the feasibility of using noise cameras to effectively enforce vehicular noise regulations through the creation of a noise camera pilot project for municipalities to opt into.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The *Motor Vehicle Act* and regulations provide for the regulation of excessive vehicle noise in B.C., including the setting of related offences and fines. A motor vehicle, including a motorcycle, is required to have an exhaust system that functions without excessive noise. Furthermore, drivers are prohibited from operating a motor vehicle that has been modified with a muffler or exhaust system that increases exhaust noise.

Peace officers can issue a violation ticket and \$109 fine for contraventions. They also have the authority to direct any vehicle to a designated inspection facility if the vehicle appears mechanically unsafe or non-compliant with the *Motor Vehicle Act*. In addition, municipalities may regulate excessive or unnecessary noise within their municipal boundaries by enacting a bylaw.

Ministry staff are aware of the issue of excessive vehicle noise and are monitoring other jurisdictions where vehicle noise cameras have been tested, such as Calgary and Edmonton. The ministry will continue to monitor this issue to determine the potential effectiveness of this technology for use as an enforcement tool in B.C.

NR48 Metal Theft**Mission**

Whereas the theft of copper wire costs the local taxpayers of British Columbia thousands of dollars each year to repair and can create a danger to public safety through the loss of electricity, lighting and communications;

And whereas the *Metal Dealers and Recyclers Act* is more than 10 years old and metal thefts are an ongoing problem:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province, in collaboration with police agencies in BC, to complete a review of the *Metal Dealers and Recyclers Act* to address metal theft.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The *Metal Dealers and Recyclers Act* (MDRA), enacted in 2011, regulates the purchase of specific metals and establishes registration and reporting requirements for metal dealers in British Columbia. The MDRA does not regulate the theft of metal. Theft is regulated under the Criminal Code of Canada, which is enforced by the police. The MDRA is meant to act as a deterrent to metal dealers and recyclers from accepting items that might be stolen, and to the sellers of stolen items from taking them to regulated metal dealers.

The Province acknowledges that the MDRA is over 10 years old, and that metal theft is an ongoing, multi-faceted problem. Updates to the Metal Dealers and Recyclers Regulation were completed in recent years. The Province continues to review the MDRA as one component in addressing the complex issue of metal theft in B.C., including evaluating the results of a recent public engagement survey on catalytic converter theft.

Whereas radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking amongst Canadians and many British Columbians are exposed to unsafe levels of radon within their own homes every day;

And whereas professionally-installed radon mitigation systems are effective at reducing radon exposure levels in homes but are financially prohibitive for many British Columbians to pursue:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to establish a funding program to help residents with the costs of installing radon mitigation measures in their homes to increase the health and safety of British Columbians from the harmful effects of radon.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health has been actively working on various initiatives with key partners to address radon exposure. In 2011/12, the ministry provided \$1 million to the BC Lung Association to develop RadonAware – an ongoing initiative for radon awareness, training, testing, and mitigation. In March 2015, the ministry provided an additional \$250,000 to BC Lung Association to continue to raise awareness of radon related health effects and build more capacity in B.C. for trained professionals of radon mitigation. Short-term test kits are available for lend at some public libraries in B.C. through the Radon Detector Library Lending Program supported by Health Canada and other partners.

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) developed an interactive map in 2021 to display indoor radon levels recorded in buildings across B.C. It includes approximately 40,000 measurements across the province with 18 partners contributing data.

The Building Code 2024 includes updates to British Columbia's requirements for homes to be built with a rough-in for a subfloor depressurization system; an effective method for protecting houses from elevated indoor levels of radon.

The ministry remains committed to working with other provincial ministries and partners to support residents to protect against radon exposure and take actions to mitigate exposure in their homes. The Interior Health Authority is working to test all schools for indoor radon levels as the mapping by BCCDC has shown highest levels in this health authority.

Health Canada recommends radon mitigation based on the levels of radon measured within the building. According to its guidance, mitigation is required when radon levels exceed 200 Bq/m³.

Whereas diking authorities in British Columbia are currently mandated to design, repair, construct, and maintain dikes to a 200-year event standard, which entails significant financial and logistical burdens;

And whereas a 100-year event standard would provide a sufficient level of protection against flooding and associated risks and allow for the development of more diking infrastructure, while reducing the financial strain on local governments and enabling diking authorities to allocate resources more efficiently, prioritize critical infrastructure projects, and enhance community resilience against natural disasters:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urges the provincial government to engage in meaningful consultation with municipalities, diking authorities, and interested parties to develop and implement revised standards that strike a balance between ensuring public safety and mitigating undue financial burdens on local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

British Columbia continues to experience increasingly extreme flooding events, including the 2021 Atmospheric River floods, the 2018 Grand Forks flood, and the 2017 Okanagan floods. Flooding is the most common and costly disaster in Canada and the Province recognizes it has an important role in coordinating a collaborative approach to reduce flood risk.

The 200-year event standard is the Province's dike design standard and the recommended minimum designated flood for land use management planning in most flood hazard areas. For the Lower Fraser River, this level is more conservative, approximating the 1894 flood (roughly a 500-year event standard).

This 200-year event standard aligns with many national and international best practices, including the approach now being taken by the federal government with modernized Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA) for provinces and territories. As of April 1, 2025, new assets built in high-risk areas, or those with major damage in a DFAA-eligible event, must be "appropriately mitigated" (for flood, to a 200-year event) to remain eligible for future DFAA funding to the Province. The Province's minimum flood standards support communities and individuals toward reducing flood disruption and loss, including eligibility of Provincial claims to the federal government under these new DFAA requirements.

In 2024, the Province released the B.C. Flood Strategy outlining a whole-of-society approach to flood risk reduction. Under Action 1.1, the Province is collaborating on floodplain mapping in many higher-risk areas that include multiple flood event scenarios, including the 200-year event standard. Action 2.6 speaks to reviewing and updating Provincial legislation and regulations to strengthen flood management and preparedness in B.C. The Province will continue to work with First Nations, local governments and other partners to explore approaches to updated legislation and regulations that balance public safety and risk tolerance, all toward the vision of the B.C. Flood Strategy.

**NR51 Addressing Climate Challenges in Agriculture and
Supporting Farmers**

NCLGA Executive

Whereas farmers across British Columbia face escalating challenges due to climate change, including increasingly frequent and severe droughts, highlighting the urgent need for regionally relevant agricultural research to address these issues effectively;

And whereas the government of British Columbia has demonstrated commendable leadership by allocating substantial funding, including an additional \$80 million, to expand the Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program, aimed at enhancing water management practices and resilience in the agricultural sector;

And whereas while investments in infrastructure are crucial, there is also a critical need for targeted funding for regionally relevant agricultural research to develop innovative solutions tailored to the specific challenges faced by farmers in different regions of British Columbia;

And whereas regionally relevant research is essential for identifying sustainable agricultural practices, crop varieties, and water management strategies that are best suited to the unique climatic conditions and agricultural landscapes of each region:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the federal and provincial governments to prioritize funding for regionally tailored agricultural research to develop sustainable solutions for diverse farming challenges across British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food / Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) is delivering a new five-year producer-focused research and extension program that started in April 2023. This extension program builds on past work completed under the Climate Change Adaptation Program (CCAP). Funding for the extension program is provided by the governments of Canada and British Columbia. Funded in part under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Initial planning work in the extension program involved direct engagement with regional producers, to identify their priorities and knowledge gaps. The Extension Program divides the province into seven geographical regions with the North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA)'s area of interest represented by in three extension regions: the Highway 16 and North Cariboo, Peace, and Central South Interior. Through workshops in the fall of 2023, regional producers identified high priority themes to drive applied research in climate mitigation and adaptation practices. Water sustainability and storage, soil health management, nutrient management, management for biodiversity and habitat, grazing management systems, extreme weather management, and crop selection for resilience were common themes identified by regional producers.

The extension themes identified above resulted in seven current contracts for on-ground extension projects within the NCLGA area; \$334,210 was spent in fiscal year (FY) 2024/25, with \$362,560 and \$202,600 projected for 2025/26 and 2026/27 respectively.

In addition, funding delivered through Beneficial Management Practice adoption, the Extreme Weather Program, Knowledge and Tech Transfer events, irrigation field days, drought management workshops, and livestock and farm management workshops, provided additional opportunities to support producers in mitigating and adapting to a changing climate; \$508,467 was spent in fiscal year (FY) 2023/24, \$6,290,126 in 2024/25, and \$385,560 projected for 2025/26.

The success of any extension programs and delivery will depend strongly on collaboration across producers, processors, local and Indigenous governments, industry stakeholders, academia, AF, and other provincial

staff. The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP) multi-year funding commitment provides a crucial foundation for extension programs and specific project planning created in partnership with agriculture producers to ensure strategic deployment of resources.

**NR52 Availability of Replacement Parts for Agricultural
Equipment Leased and Sold in BC**

Fraser-Fort George RD

Whereas the increasing cost of agriculture equipment has lead to agricultural producers having to finance and utilize equipment over longer periods of time, resulting in replacement parts no longer being available even before the lease or loan is paid off;

And whereas there are currently limited legislative standards in only a few provinces that have legislation in place requiring manufacturers of agriculture equipment to have replacement parts available for a 10- year period, and this is placing increased financial hardship and, in many cases, affecting the overall financial viability of producers' operations:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to enact legislation requiring manufacturers of agriculture equipment leased or sold in BC to be required to have replacement parts available for a 20-year period.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

The government knows how important technologies can be to lower costs, increase productivity, and improve overall agricultural quality, competitiveness, and sustainability.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has heard from some businesses that they cannot access replacement parts for their equipment, and that businesses will resort to retaining inoperable equipment for future spare parts as a result. Another issue heard via anecdotal reports is of difficulty accessing mechanics for on-farm work in a timely manner particularly for operations further from large communities and dealerships.

In January 2025, the ministry engaged with the federal government and provincial partners on the topic of right to repair, a topic that can include the availability of equipment parts for a defined period of time as well as other types of initiatives to support consumers.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food will confer again with federal and provincial governments on replacement part availability legislation and initiatives plans and existing outcomes in order to support B.C.'s agricultural sector and businesses.

NR54 Ban on Rodent Glue Traps**View Royal, Saanich**

Whereas glue traps are an ineffective method for controlling rodents as they fail to address the root causes of an infestation, including access to food and shelter, and they cause fear, pain and distress for captured animals, including rodents and non-target animals like birds, bats, small mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and household pets;

And whereas most users are not capable of humanely killing trapped animals, leaving them to suffer for hours, and even days, before dying of suffocation, dehydration, starvation, exhaustion, or exposure:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to implement a province-wide ban on the sale, purchase, and use of glue traps.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

Government supports local government efforts to manage rodent populations in a responsible and humane manner. Government also recognizes glue traps have the potential to affect non-target wildlife, and they can lead to the suffering of animals. When traps are used to manage rodent populations, snap or electronic traps are the best option because they are effective and kill rodents quickly and humanely.

Physical traps are not regulated by the Ministry of Environment and Parks. Pesticides are regulated under the *Integrated Pest Management Act* (IPMA), but the definition of pesticide excludes devices used to control pests such as snap traps, pheromone traps, and glue boards. Therefore, there is no mechanism for restricting their sale or use under the IPMA.

However, ministry staff work to promote responsible pest management using Integrated Pest Management (IPM), and to develop education materials to support this practice. The ministry's focus is on the adoption of IPM, especially prevention and exclusion of pests, which minimizes the need for any control measures to be considered. Government is open to collaborating with Local Government on initiatives to promote humane pest management. Recent collaboration of this nature included development of education materials to support restrictions in the use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides following the 2023 amendments to the IPM Regulation.

Whereas accurate understanding and management of British Columbia's natural resources are essential for informed decision-making;

And whereas there is a need for an updated and objective data on natural resources such as aquifers, lakes, rivers, streams and timber, for various aspects of the Province's natural resource management and for sustainable development and environmental stewardship:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM requests the Province of BC allocate funding to ensure that objective data on natural resources is easily accessible by all stakeholders, ensuring transparency, inclusivity, and ongoing maintenance.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship / Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Province of British Columbia is committed to improving decision-making, increasing transparency, and ensuring equitable access to government data. Central to this is the Open Information and Open Data Policy, which promotes consistent, non-discriminatory access to data across all Ministries. This policy encourages public use, adaptation, and redistribution of government data to foster transparency, innovation, and public engagement.

To support this, the Province has made significant investments in the collection and maintenance of high-quality, objective data—especially in the natural resource sector. Programs such as the Together for Wildlife Strategy, Caribou Recovery Program, and Climate Action Plan reflect a multi-million-dollar commitment to building robust data infrastructure. In 2023, the government also committed to acquiring and publishing lidar data across all of B.C. within six years, with enhanced mapping products made available under the Open Government License (OGL) as they are developed.

The *Geospatial Strategy*, adopted in 2021, furthers these efforts by reducing barriers to access and encouraging the open sharing of foundational spatial data. Hundreds of datasets are available through the British Columbia Data Catalogue and B.C. Government Warehouse, though some data remain restricted due to privacy, ownership, or protection concerns. Clear policies are in place to ensure sensitive data is managed responsibly.

In particular, the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) mandate includes setting environmental data standards and overseeing the collection, storage, and analysis of environmental information. ENV ensures data quality through regulations, training, and Quality Assurance programs, while also leading extensive environmental monitoring networks in partnership with other governments and agencies—including Indigenous governments.

These networks collect data on groundwater, surface water, air quality, snow, and climate. Through platforms such as the BC Environmental Monitoring System, the Real-Time Water Data Tool, and Environmental Reporting BC, ENV makes this information publicly accessible, helping to support climate adaptation, environmental stewardship, and evidence-based decision-making.

**NR56 BC Hydro Projects - Establishment of Funding for Climate
Action Ecosystem Restoration**

Saanich

Whereas the *BC Hydro Power and Authority Act* and associated statutes references other Acts within its scope, including the *Climate Change Accountability Act* and *Environmental Management Act*;

And whereas various communities have experienced that their operations do not fully comply with these Acts or the provincial government's Nature-Based 2030 Climate Change targets to protect land, preserve nature, and reverse diversity loss;

And whereas the Authority does not allocate a budget for adequate eco-restoration in areas where its activities have harmfully impacted biodiversity, and financial support is crucial to the success of hydro projects and the realization of provincial climate change targets;

And whereas to prepare the Province for the impacts of climate change, it is essential that BC Hydro collaborates with local governments, stakeholders, and landowners, and the *Hydro and Power Authority Act* must also prioritize ecosystem retention in its mandate to provide affordable power while minimizing environmental impact, restoring biodiversity and in the process support local governments' Climate Action Plans:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM recommend the provincial government mandate an amendment to the *Hydro Power and Authority Act* to incorporate a budget for Climate Change Ecosystem Restoration as well as technologies that support tree retention and/or re-planting in all its projects, thus demonstrating the provincial government's commitment to its Nature-Based 2030 Climate Change targets.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

BC Hydro continues to prioritize initiatives intended to mitigate environmental impacts in its operations and maintain ecological integrity near its sites and facilities. The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) is a joint initiative between BC Hydro, the Province, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and public stakeholders, with a purpose to conserve and protect species in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams. Through the FWCP, \$8.7 million in funding has been approved for 81 projects in 2024/2025, in comparison to \$5.5 million approved for 43 projects in 2020/2021. The projects approved for 2024/2025 include varied initiatives to support fish habitat restoration, ecological function in watersheds, and enable further work to provide short and long-term benefits to species and habitats in ecologically diverse regions across the province.

BC Hydro also continues to support tree and vegetation planting in municipalities and First Nations communities throughout B.C. The Community ReGreening Program funds small-scale community projects which support ecological improvements through planting and ensures appropriate trees are planted near power lines. The program can improve communities by enabling them to develop more green space, including recreation space, and restoring or enhancing wildlife habitats. It can also support communities in reintroducing and maintaining native vegetation and in the removal of invasive plant species. Concurrently, BC Hydro maintains environmental policies and best practices in infrastructure development, vegetation management, and water use planning, and is prioritizing mitigation of land and water impacts in its integrated resource planning.

NR57 Soil Fill Location Sourcing**Central Saanich**

Whereas in January of 2023, the provincial government implemented Protocol 19 of the *Environmental Management Act* which increased the definition of contaminants in soil and fill provisions;

And whereas since this legislation has come into effect, municipal infrastructure projects and housing projects have seen a 200+% increase to civil costs due to unavailability of placement locations for fill deemed contaminated under the new legislation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of BC source regional contaminated soil fill locations, for the storage of contaminated soil from locations slated for priority infrastructure and priority housing projects.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

Government is interested in supporting communities in determining what to do with contaminated and non-contaminated soil from municipal infrastructure and housing projects. In August 2024, the ministry updated Protocol 19 by providing more opportunities for qualified professional judgement, revising when sampling must be completed and reducing sampling frequencies for metals leaching/acid rock drainage, which is expected to reduce costs and project timelines.

Ministry staff have developed two processes for soil placement in B.C. The first is the waste discharge authorization process, where contaminated soil needs to be placed at an existing permitted landfill or at an alternate location with a new permit. The second is the soil relocation process for non-contaminated soil. Opportunities for placement of non-contaminated soil may include sites where grades are being raised or pits are being reclaimed.

The ministry is supportive of solutions that reuse non-contaminated soil rather than sourcing new regional contaminated soil disposal sites.

**NR58 Restrict Export of Non-Compliant Waste to Foreign Waste
Disposal Sites**

Cache Creek

Whereas the province of British Columbia has stringent regulations governing the disposal of municipal solid waste;

And whereas the transportation of waste containing recyclables to the United States serves as a loophole in these regulations, undermining their effectiveness:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocates to the provincial government that any waste being exported to landfills outside of British Columbia must have the same rules and regulations applied as waste being received at landfills within BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Province promotes effective and responsible solid waste management strategies that minimize the impacts of waste on the environment, human health and communities.

In B.C., the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) requires that all regional districts prepare and submit a solid waste management plan (SWMP) to the ministry for approval. The decisions on how to manage waste disposal in a regional district are developed as part of the solid waste management planning process. Regional districts are required to consult with the public and First Nations before submitting the plan to the ministry.

As part of the SWMP process, regional districts can ask for approval to import or export waste among jurisdictions, or to partner with other jurisdictions to share facilities or programs. Every regional district has unique circumstances that need to be considered as part of the SWMP planning process. The Province expects neighboring districts to consult and cooperate to ensure an efficient and effective municipal solid waste system.

The Province is committed to ensuring all submitted SWMPs include ambitious waste disposal reduction targets and identify new opportunities for waste reduction, recycling and disposal while reducing greenhouse gases and promoting a circular economy.

Whereas there have been barriers to uptake of alternatives to plumbed sewage disposal systems despite their allowance under the Sewerage System Regulation and the 2016 Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice;

And whereas these barriers to uptake may include overly conservative requirements (and their application) for onsite application criteria for residuals in the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Health to review the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice to update the onsite application criteria for residuals based on current scientific knowledge; and provide funding for demonstration projects and for practitioners' professional development on composting toilets and greywater practices.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The goal of best practices for wastewater treatment, including composting toilets and greywater is to ensure the protection of our water systems and reduce risks to human health. Protecting B.C.'s freshwater supplies from potential contamination is of vital importance.

While the use of composting toilets and greywater collection is an important way of conserving fresh water, it must be done in a way that is safe and effective, which is why the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice was developed.

The Ministry of Health (the ministry) recognizes that guidance documents require periodic review to stay current with scientific knowledge and best practices. As such, the ministry will add review of the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice to its ongoing work plan.

**NR60 Boat Launch Fees to Fund Watercraft Inspection Stations
at Boat Launches**

Lumby

Whereas the provincial government has only six permanent and two mobile watercraft inspection stations and these stations are the last point of potential inspection before a watercraft enters a body of water or waterway;

And whereas stopping at watercraft inspection station is the obligation of the individual transporting the watercraft;

And whereas the fine for failing to stop at an inspection station carries a maximum fine of \$345;

And whereas the cost to mitigate invasive zebra and quagga mussels exceeds the cost of the fine by millions of dollars:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the provincial government to establish additional watercraft inspection stations at boat launches to prevent the spread of invasive quagga and zebra mussels.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

The British Columbia government remains committed to preventing invasive mussels from establishing in B.C. through the ongoing delivery of the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP). The IMDP is delivered by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Parks' Conservation Officer Service, program funding partners, and neighbouring jurisdictions across Canada and the United States (US).

Anyone transporting a boat in B.C. must stop at an open watercraft inspection station along their travel route. This applies to all types of watercraft including sailboats, motorboats, car toppers, kayaks, canoes, and paddle boards. B.C. recently increased penalties associated with failing to stop at a watercraft inspection station. Through recent updates to the *Wildlife Act*, the fine has doubled from \$345 to \$690, for failing to stop at a watercraft inspection station and this applies to all types of watercraft.

For the 2025 season, we are increasing the budget to maintain IMDP operations at existing levels. We understand the importance of providing a stable presence along our provincial borders, therefore we've prioritized and reallocated resources from other stewardship programs to support this Program. We continue to request the federal government resume funding the Program's work at federal ports of entry and support our response preparedness should invasive mussels be detected in B.C. waters.

Watercraft inspection stations are located at key entry points into the province along the Alberta and US-Canada Border. Targeting boaters when they enter the province at the borders and prior to launching in any B.C. waters allows the program to maximize available resources. This approach is consistent with neighboring jurisdictions across western Canada and the US running similar watercraft inspection programs. Establishing stations at boat launches is typically done as a containment measure in mussel positive waterbodies. The focus of these stations are to inspect and if necessary decontaminate boats when they exit the waterbody to prevent further spread.

**NR61 Allow Regional Districts to Become Taxing
 Authorities**

Okanagan-Similkameen RD

Whereas regional districts are not taxing authorities and not able to change the tax multipliers, unlike municipalities that are allowed to adjust to swings in assessments between residential and business classes;

And whereas municipalities are able to change the multiplier which creates a consistency in taxes from year to year, while regional districts are not;

And whereas the taxpayers within a regional district are charged by the Province a 5.25% collection fee, which for the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen is over \$900,000:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Ministry to allow regional districts, at their discretion, to become a taxing authority.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

As taxing authorities, municipalities, and the Province have responsibilities that are for more than solely levying taxes. They also have the responsibility of, and incur cost for communicating with property owners about outstanding property taxes and completing tax sales or forfeiture processes to ensure the recovery of property tax revenue. Municipalities must also deliberate and set tax rates and justify their tax policy in the annual financial plan bylaw.

The Province distributes tax notices in rural areas for its own property tax collection. The legislation for regional districts relieves them of this burden for each service that has been established. Note however that a regional district has some authority, with approval of the Inspector, to create a variable rate taxation system for certain classes for specified years and services under section 390 of the *Local Government Act*.

**NR62 Permissive Tax Exemptions for Not-For-Profit or
Community Housing**

qathet RD

Whereas offering permissive tax exemptions to non-profit societies is a valuable tool to support the creation of non-market housing;

And whereas municipalities have the authority to grant permissive tax exemptions to non-profit societies which create non-market housing but regional districts do not;

Therefore be it resolved the UBCM urge the Province to amend the *Local Government Act* to expand regional districts' authority to include granting permissive tax exemptions to not-for-profit societies for non-market housing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Regional districts have tools to support affordable housing including the ability to waive or reduce development finance charges. The types of properties that a regional district board may grant a permissive tax exemption to are those that may provide a regional or provincial benefit to community members, regardless of their location. Regional district service areas can be quite small with a limited tax base. The legislation limits the permissive exemption authority of regional district boards so that the remaining tax base does not end up with an unmanageable tax burden.

Municipal mayors and councils are directly elected by the community they represent and, for the most part, provide services across the entire jurisdiction. They also have the authority to levy taxes on the properties that receive these services. The legislation respects this direct connection between the elected council and the electors by providing them with an expanded authority to permit property tax exemptions for not-for-profits that they judge are beneficial to the community and are willing to increase the tax burden on the remaining community for that benefit.

NR66 Servicing Agricultural Land Reserve Properties**Summerland**

Whereas the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) plays a critical role in protecting and promoting food security for all British Columbians;

And whereas distances between agricultural parcels makes the cost of maintaining infrastructure to those properties disproportionately expensive and cannot be recovered from farm-class property taxes;

And whereas as a result, the cost of servicing farmland for the benefit of all British Columbians falls unfairly on residential taxpayers within agricultural communities and limits the ability of the local governments of those communities to adequately serve their residents:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM work with the government of British Columbia to develop a reliable and consistent revenue source for local governments to adequately service their Agricultural Land Reserve lands.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Given the current financial situation resulting, in no small part, from the recent trade instability with the United States of America, provincial budgets are constrained. At this time, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food is not considering the development of a new funding program for local governments to service Agricultural Land Reserve lands. However, there are numerous existing grant and transfer programs available to local governments through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, such as the Growing Communities Fund and Local Government Infrastructure Grants. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food also currently provides funding for water infrastructure to local governments through the Agricultural Water Program.

Whereas core funding for public libraries in British Columbia has remained unchanged since 2009, limiting their ability to expand and evolve their programming as demand for their services increases;

And whereas the operational requirements of public libraries increasingly require significant and diverse resources to provide front-line community services, including supporting patrons with mental health and addiction issues as well as barriers to housing, providing critical locations of refuge during extreme weather events, providing services to new Canadians, and supporting the process of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to recognize the evolving and challenging situation for public libraries as well as their unique role as community spaces by establishing an Advisory Body per section 52(1) of the *Library Act*, the objectives of which will be to:

1. Undertake a review of core annual provincial funding of public libraries in the Canadian context;
2. Make recommendations to the Minister with respect to core, sustainable funding approaches for BC's public library sector.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The ministry appreciates the desire to discuss – in a roundtable fashion – the ways in which the roles and contexts are changing for public libraries, and to engage with all funders on the resultant resourcing needs. While government is not prepared to establish an Advisory Body under the *Library Act* as requested at this time, a review could be effectively achieved through existing partnerships with library and local government sector stakeholders.

The ministry values the contributions of local governments and library partners, acknowledging their critical role in library support, and that experiences, complexities, and needs of communities and their libraries vary across the province. The ministry will continue to engage in dialogue with the library and local government stakeholders on sustainable funding, focusing on modern, responsive solutions aligned with provincial objectives.

Whereas the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) is the administrative tribunal that adjudicates applications in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the provincial zone in British Columbia that preserves agricultural land;

And whereas the ALC ultimately determines the usage of the ALR land, taking precedence over other legislation and bylaws applying to the land;

And whereas the responsibility for ALC decisions, including rectifying violations and enforcing decisions, often falls to local governments, regardless of whether the local government supports the decision, which transfers provincial responsibilities and costs down to local government:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM lobby the Government of British Columbia to assume responsibility for the enforcement of Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) decisions and any local government costs incurred as a result of ALC decisions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) is an independent administrative tribunal that has responsibility for enforcing decisions that it makes.

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and its regulations provide local governments with the authority to refuse to forward applications to the ALC that relate to lands zoned to permit farming or applications that would require an amendment to the Official Community Plan. Local governments are encouraged to use this authority to ensure that only applications they fully support are sent to the ALC for decision-making.

The ALC and several local governments have active joint enforcement initiatives, such as addressing illegal fill on the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), that are resulting in administrative monetary penalties and remediation orders being issued. The ALC encourages local governments to engage directly with them to explore initiating more joint initiatives to better leverage available resources.

Cooperative enforcement actions between the ALC and local governments is an integral component of effective regulation of land use in the ALR. Both agencies have different enforcement tools that can be used in conjunction to achieve compliance. Through cooperation, the ALC and local governments can work together toward the common goal of protecting the ALR.

Whereas local governments are required to provide drinking water services and most supply irrigation for agriculture to their communities and BC faces real threats to the health, security and supply of water to our rapidly growing communities over the next decade and beyond, and all BC municipalities have high growth targets to achieve;

And whereas the \$100 million announced in the BC 2023 budget to kickstart support for watershed security is insufficient to ensure adequate restoration and long-term security for drinking water, cultural heritage values, and agriculture needs:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM requests the Province of BC build on their initial investment in the BC Watershed Security Fund to create a dedicated, sustainable, annual funding source that provides \$100 million annually for community-driven watershed security initiatives.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Healthy watersheds are foundational to our communities and industries. Water is essential for a strong economy, vibrant and healthy people, agriculture security, to generate clean electricity, and sustain diverse ecosystems. A \$100 million provincial contribution seeded the Watershed Security Fund (the "Fund"). Its generated earnings and dividends provide a dependable flow of annual funding for grants, programs and operational investments to improve outcomes for watersheds. Investment yields from the Fund are expected to amount to \$3 to 5 million per year depending on interest rates. We recognize the need for watershed work across the province exceeds current funding availability. In the first Fund grant intake 133 projects were submitted with a combined ask of \$33 million and 26 projects were approved for just under \$5 million in October 2024. The results of the second grant intake will be announced in Spring 2025 and a similar number of projects are likely to be approved. The Province will continue to work with our partners to leverage the original investment and to grow the Fund.

The Province has committed to several funding initiatives to decrease flood risks in the Lower Mainland and improve B.C.'s ability to manage water resources during times of water scarcity. Initiatives include increased funding for the Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program, water metering, and replacement of the Cowichan Lake weir.

The Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program supports on-farm and community-scale water projects. It was launched in June 2023 with \$20 million in cost-shared funding and expanded with an additional \$80 million in March 2024. The Beneficial Management Practices program also provides cost-share funding for on-farm water infrastructure projects helping producers use water more efficiently. Both the Ministry of Municipal Affairs' Infrastructure Planning Grant Program and the Asset Management Planning Grant Program (administered by Union of British Columbian Municipalities) can assist local governments in strengthening asset management practices and preparing for future capital programs that support drinking water services in their communities.

NR72 Funding Mechanism for Small Community Water Systems**Thompson-Nicola RD**

Whereas BC regional districts, at the direction of the Province, have assumed responsibility for many small community utility systems (water and wastewater);

And whereas small community utility systems are not sustainable if funded by user fees alone:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province to establish an annual funding mechanism for small community utility systems (less than 500 connections) which matches the revenue from user fees charged by the regional district;

And be it further resolved that the Province consider using funding from Property Transfer Tax of the homes connected to the utility systems for this purpose.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Regional districts are encouraged to administer small water systems where these systems serve communities as the preferred model to deliver rural services. The administrative structure provides good governance and financial accountability, integrated planning, and where practical, economies of scale.

The Province recognizes the challenges in managing small water systems and the desire to ensure small water systems are built, operated, and maintained in a safe and sustainable manner. Local services are encouraged to work toward cost recovery from user fees, taxes, and where applicable, development costs. Legislation requires all water systems, regardless of type or size, to be financially self-sufficient, setting water rates appropriately to operate, maintain, upgrade, and replace their infrastructure.

The Province recognizes that for some smaller water systems, depending on the complexity of treatment needed, geography of the system, proportion of residential connections, the level of historic investment in maintenance and upgrades, and other factors, maintaining and upgrading systems is becoming increasingly difficult to fund through user fees. The level of service standards to distribute clean drinking water to households and meet regulatory requirements for treatment are often similar between more urban and smaller rural systems.

The ministry will continue to assess and explore solutions to address the ongoing financial challenges of small water systems, as well as the needs of local governments.

Provincial revenue sources are not typically linked to specific initiatives.

**NR73 Enhanced Stormwater Management Requirements,
Bills 44 and 47**

North Vancouver District

Whereas provincial and municipal stormwater management guidelines were developed and implemented prior to the introduction of Bill 44 and Bill 47, the subsequent rapid increase in density will be accompanied by a dramatic rise in impermeable surfaces on a wide array of landscapes throughout the province;

And whereas urban stream health is directly impacted by stormwater runoff that is both increased in volume and reduced in quality by impermeable surfaces associated with development;

And whereas public education, outreach and environmental protection legislation, bylaws and regulations have not been successful in protecting our streams and environment, current resources available to municipalities to support stormwater management under the implementation of these bills will prove inadequate to ensure protection of these fragile resources:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask that the Province amend current legislation to include enhanced stormwater management through zoning bylaws and development permit requirements to slow, sink and spread stormwater.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Bills 44 and 47 ensure that proactive zoning for growth will occur within urban containment boundaries and close to frequent transit, and mostly as infill and not greenfield development. This shift will enable more homes in existing neighbourhoods and make better use of infrastructure, amenities, roads, and services. Focusing increased housing supply within existing urban areas is critical to making the most efficient use of land and preserving the intact natural ecosystems that surround our communities.

Accordingly, Provincial guidance for small-scale multi-unit housing includes recommendations for lot coverage that are intended to help maintain onsite permeability to reduce impacts to stormwater management and water resources. Additionally, recommended reductions or elimination of parking requirements in Bills 44 and 47 can also significantly increase permeable open space to support more tree retention/planting and reduce impacts on stormwater flows and infrastructure.

Local governments continue to have existing legislated authorities to manage growth in and near hazardous and environmentally sensitive areas, such as development permits. Minimum density requirements do not override development permit areas for environmentally sensitive areas and provincial regulations related to riparian areas and setbacks from watercourses.

In addition, to existing legislated authorities, Bill 16 (*Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2024*) expanded the authority of local governments to secure works and services, road dedications and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures in the absence of a rezoning application. These requirements can collectively support the ability to add more permeable surfaces (e.g. street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, plantings) and reduce the need for paved areas for cars.

Whereas the BC Government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 16% below 2007 levels by 2025, 40% by 2030, and 80% by 2050;

And whereas the *Land Title Act*, RSBC 1996, c 250, permits the registration of a building scheme that imposes restrictions consistent with a general scheme of development;

And whereas these building schemes have been used to prohibit or restrict the installation of roof top solar panels;

And whereas such prohibitions or restrictions are a barrier to the generation of renewable energy and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Ministry of Attorney General to consider amendments to the *Land Title Act* that would prohibit and render void any portion of building schemes that purport to prohibit or restrict the installation of roof top solar panels, or any other renewable energy systems.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

B.C. is transitioning to a low carbon future creating jobs to attract investment and generate economic growth all over the province and advance First Nations participation in the clean energy future. To maximize this opportunity, the Province is working with utilities, First Nations, local governments, and communities to build out the province's supply of clean energy, including through the use of solar panels.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship is aware that the developers of some subdivisions have registered Statutory Building Schemes (SBS) against the titles of properties within the subdivisions which restrict some types of construction including environmentally beneficial elements such as solar panels.

Ministry of Attorney General has initiated review of the full range of restrictive covenants found in provincial legislation, including and beyond the *Land Title Act*, to determine which might be voided by enabling legislation. The ministry understands that the review will include comments regarding whether SBS covenants that prohibit solar panels should be rendered void.

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs has expressed interest in the topic of SBS restrictive covenants and is aware of the issue regarding solar panel installation for residential properties.

NR76 School Tax Exemption**Pitt Meadows**

Whereas the *School Act* exempts 50% of the assessed value of a parcel of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) from school taxation if the land is vacant and unused, or used only for a residential purpose;

And whereas to encourage farming in the ALR to ensure local food security, school tax exemptions should only apply to ALR land that is being used for a farm purpose:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of BC to amend the *School Act* to remove the 50% school tax exemption for vacant and unused land, and residential purpose land in the ALR.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Through its 30-point housing plan, the Province continues work to close tax loopholes on the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The broader tax regime for the farm industry and productive use of the ALR are important elements of ensuring food security at this time of tariff uncertainty.

To ensure B.C.'s food supply and food economy continues to grow in the face of US tariff uncertainty, and to help farmers find new markets, a new Premier's task force on agriculture and food economy was formed in February 2025. The task force will inform the Province of policy options to ensure the growth of the farm economy.

Whereas the purpose of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is to preserve much-needed land for farming to ensure local food security, and not real estate speculation;

And whereas speculation in the ALR can lead to increased land values and the underutilization of ALR land for farming;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of BC to establish a targeted unfarmed land tax, to discourage speculation and encourage farming in the ALR.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

The Speculation and Vacancy Tax (SVT) was introduced as part of Government's 30-point housing plan in February 2018. The SVT is intended for those who are holding their properties vacant, putting pressure on already low vacancy rates and housing supply levels. The SVT is also intended for foreign owners and untaxed worldwide earners who do not pay their share of income taxes in our province but enjoy B.C. services and high quality of life.

The SVT applies to properties designated as Class 1 (residential) in select B.C. communities with exemptions available based on property use and ownership. Class 1 includes vacant land, as well as unused farmland.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food recognizes that there may be merit in exploring a new tax that is similar to, but separate from, the SVT to incentivize agricultural use of farmland. This will require careful planning and collaboration with key partners to identify the most effective approach.

The SVT, as well as property taxes, are the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance (FIN) and any proposed changes would need to be undertaken with FIN.

NR78 Allowing Local Governments to Apply Commercial Rent Controls

New Westminster

Whereas the Province of British Columbia regulates annual allowable residential rent increases through the Residential Tenancy Regulation, BC Reg. 477/2003, to protect lower income renters from housing insecurity;

And whereas there is currently no similar provincial policy to protect small businesses or community- serving commercial tenants from unsustainable, unpredictable, and increasingly significant rent increases:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to provide local governments with the legislative authority to enable special economic zones where commercial rent control and demo/renoviction policies could be applied to ensure predictability in commercial lease costs, so local small businesses and community-serving commercial tenants can continue to serve their communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province does not intend to enable local governments to intervene in commercial leases.

Commercial tenancy agreements are private contracts. They are governed by the *Commercial Tenancy Act* and the *Rent Distress Act*, not the *Residential Tenancy Act*. While commercial and residential tenancies are contracts between landlords and tenants, there is variation in the nature of the agreement between landlords and tenants in both types of tenancies. Commercial tenancies can vary substantially depending on what the landlord and tenant agree to and, as such, there are no set terms for commercial tenancy agreements.

In 2022, the *Community Charter* was amended to add section 198.1 'Development Potential Relief'. Municipal councils may, by bylaw, apply a reduced tax rate to the assessed land value of certain occupied commercial and industrial properties in Class 5 (Light Industry) and/or 6 (Business and Other). The intent is to provide business occupiers of properties with development potential a reduction in property taxes where warranted.

NR79 Traffic Count Systems Improvements**Saanich**

Whereas the provincial government has set a Vehicle Kilometres Traveled reduction target as part of the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030, and local governments are expected to act to help achieve this important climate target;

And whereas many municipalities and regional districts may not have adequate traffic count systems in place to rigorously evaluate Vehicle Kilometres Traveled reduction interventions and measure progress towards achieving this target, and that will be a financial cost to design, create and operate improved traffic count systems:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government support local governments to improve traffic count systems for evaluating Vehicle Kilometre Traveled reduction interventions and measuring progress towards the CleanBC Vehicle Kilometres Traveled reduction targets.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions / Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Province is committed to providing better on-road transportation data at the local government level, including Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (VKT) data. The Province continues to work with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) on enhancing the collection of data that informs measures to promote healthy communities and the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Additionally, the updated Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI) report uses a robust methodology to estimate annual vehicles emissions for every B.C. local government by employing multiple sources of data including vehicle population and VKT estimates.

Consistent with the Province's commitment to increased transparency through open data, ICBC provides vehicle population data on its website that can be sorted by municipality, vehicle type, or area, based on the first three characters of the postal code. The data is public and provided in a customizable, convenient online format: <https://www.icbc.com/about-icbc/newsroom/Pages/Statistics.aspx>. The Climate Action Secretariat receives this vehicle registration data with odometer readings, where collected, and conducts quality assurance/quality control on the data for inclusion in the CEEI.

Since 2019, ICBC has collected odometer readings from customers on a voluntary basis. The data is primarily provided by customers seeking low-kilometre discounts, which currently begin at less than 10,000 kilometres per year, for their automobile insurance. ICBC is expanding the threshold for distance-based discounts to 15,000 kilometres per year on June 1, 2025, which will increase the proportion of customers that voluntarily provide their odometer readings. As a wider subset of vehicles voluntarily report VKT, the dataset will become more representative of the entire vehicle population and fewer methodological adjustments will be needed when estimating overall community vehicle emissions.

The Province has published updated CEEI on-road transportation data back to 2007 to support local governments in meeting their climate action commitments and building more affordable, healthier and connected communities. The Province is committed to continuous improvement of these data sources with data collection and analysis methods that evolve along with community needs, data sources and reporting methodologies, and with a commitment to improve the design and accessibility to provide an increasingly user-friendly experience.

Whereas BC local governments face significant capital funding challenges in delivering new active transportation infrastructure, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide lower-cost transportation options to BC residents, bring economic and health benefits to BC communities, and increase resilience of transportation networks, as demonstrated by similar investments in other jurisdictions;

And whereas the Government of BC has invested over \$40 million since 2014 to fund new active transportation infrastructure, has committed an additional \$30 million to fund active transportation infrastructure in Budget 2022, and has introduced rebates to support BC residents in choosing e-bikes which were quickly over-subscribed, demonstrating that there is significant latent demand by residents across BC for active transportation options, and Transport 2050: 10-Year Priorities for TransLink calls for \$1.5 billion over the next ten years for capital investments for active transportation infrastructure in the Metro Vancouver region:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Government of BC to expand funding for active transportation infrastructure to at least \$300 million annually over the next ten years to support the development of protected, connected, and accessible local cycling and walking infrastructure networks across BC, that are integrated into larger regional active transportation and public transit networks.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit understands the importance of working with local governments to advance active transportation across the province. The ministry is making record investments in active transportation projects in communities and infrastructure. This includes approximately \$500 million in projects like the Surrey-Langley Skytrain, the Patullo Bridge Replacement and the Fraser River Tunnel Replacement project. It also includes \$20 million per year in funding to support Indigenous and local government developing active transportation in their communities as well as \$135 million for active transportation facilities on ministry rights-of-way.

Funding details include:

- The B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant Program continues to provide cost sharing grants to Indigenous and local governments to plan and build high-quality active transportation facilities, with \$60 million allocated over three years. This \$60 million of active transportation grants is matched with First Nations and local government raised funding to deliver an estimated \$270 million towards active transportation infrastructure over three years.
- The ministry's Active Transportation Capital Program supports improved connections between active transportation networks on ministry rights-of-way. Facilities will improve capacity and convenience to increase walking and cycling to help meet CleanBC targets. The budget for this program is now \$135 million over three years. This is in addition to the \$31 million invested in active transportation elements in Highway and Regional Services projects in 2023/24.
- The ministry has \$377 million in planned investments in active transportation as part of major infrastructure projects, such as the Surrey Langley Skytrain, Patullo Bridge, and Fraser River Tunnel projects. The Ministry of Transportation and Transit is also creating tools to work more closely with communities to include active transportation in major infrastructure projects and highway upgrades. These tools include the Integrated Planning Guide, Transit Oriented Development, and regional plans.

NR82 Provincial Funding of Active Transportation Planning and Infrastructure

Pemberton

Whereas the provincial government offers grant funding to support the development of active transportation network planning and infrastructure, based on local governments contributing between 20% and 50% of project costs;

And whereas a local government's required contribution to an active transportation infrastructure project can far exceed a small community's financial capacity:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the provincial government fund 100% of the cost of active transportation network planning and infrastructure projects for communities with a population of less than 15,000.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program (BCAT) is specifically designed to support small, remote, and Indigenous communities in advancing active transportation infrastructure. Recognizing the rising costs of infrastructure, the ministry continues to adapt its programs to remain responsive to these challenges. In the most recent intake, the BCAT program awarded over \$24 million in funding to projects across the province leveraging \$174 million in new active transportation facilities, with the majority (53 percent) of funded projects benefiting small communities.

By providing cost-shared funding, BCAT is better able to support more projects in more communities around the Province including in Indigenous and smaller governments. Under the current structure, local governments between 50 percent and 80 percent of costs covered for Infrastructure projects, up to a maximum of \$500,000 per project. The infrastructure grants operate on a sliding scale based on community profile:

- Indigenous community or local governments working in partnership with an Indigenous community – 80 percent
- Population less than 15,000 – 70 percent
- Population between 15,000 and 25,000 – 60 percent
- Population greater than 25,000 – 50 percent

Local governments may also stack BCAT grants with other external funding sources such as federal programs, which can help reduce the local funding contribution and make projects more financially feasible.

The ministry is reviewing this funding cap to assess whether adjustments are needed for future intakes.

NR83 Provincial Highway Construction and Maintenance**Princeton**

Whereas private highway contractors primarily aim to generate profit, which can lead to compromised safety and quality in highway construction and maintenance;

And whereas the essential goal of highway management should be to prioritize public safety and infrastructure integrity over financial gains;

And whereas recent evidence suggests that highways under private management are experiencing deteriorating conditions, posing risks to public safety and transportation efficiency:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call for the re-establishment of public management of highway contracts to prioritize safety, durability, and public service over private profit;

And be it further resolved that a review and transition plan be developed for existing private highway contracts, ensuring effective public sector oversight and safeguarding the rights and employment of the current workforce.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit takes its commitment to provide a safe and reliable transportation network very seriously, and the performance of our maintenance contractors is an essential part of this commitment.

Maintenance performance specifications are aligned with those of other jurisdictions across North America, and ministry staff closely monitor and audit contractor performance to ensure compliance with these standards. Overall, maintenance contractors meet or exceed maintenance standards more than 90 percent of the time.

At this time, the ministry does not anticipate changes to the existing delivery model for maintenance services. The current model has produced positive results, including a 12 percent reduction in serious collisions since contracts were tendered in 2018/19. Additionally, the condition of provincial highways and bridges remains strong with over 90 percent of highways and more than 99 percent of bridges in fair or better condition.

**NR84 Support for Transit Services Related to Housing Growth
Acceleration**

Pemberton

Whereas implementation of the Province's Homes for People plan, designed to accelerate housing development and population growth, will increase pressures on local governments to provide transit services necessary to develop and support new housing;

And whereas local government transit service deficits may pose barriers to the development of attainable housing;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urges the Province, as part of their housing funding initiatives, to provide funding to local governments for transit services integral to the development of attainable housing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Province has recently adopted legislation and policies to enable and accelerate housing development near transit services and infrastructure including amending the *Transportation Act* to enable the Province to acquire property within 800 metres of transit hubs to advance transit-oriented-developments (Bill 16, 2022); allowing 3 to 4 units on residential lots and up to 6-units near frequent bus service as part of small-scale multi-unit housing reforms (Bill 44, 2023); establishing Transit-Oriented Areas with minimum density requirements within 800 metres of SkyTrain stations and 400 metres of other transit hubs (Bill 47, 2023); and providing new powers to local governments to require transportation demand management as part of new developments (Bill 16, 2024).

The Province has made significant investments in both BC Transit and TransLink to enable service expansion. Since 2017, the Province has increased BC Transit's operating funding by more than 70 percent (from \$108 million in 2017/18 to \$184 million in 2025/26) with a further planned increase in operating funding of 4 percent by 2027/28 - increasing transit services across the province. In Budget 2024, the Province provided \$28.7M in operating expansion funding over 3 years (2024/25 - 2026/27) and an additional \$298 million in capital funding for BC Transit to expand transit services, providing approximately 2.8 million annual service hours by 2027/28. As part of Budget 2025, the Province has committed to investing \$537.3 million in BC Transit's capital projects over the next three years. This leverages \$506.9 million in local government contributions and \$279.7 million in federal funding for a total capital investment of \$1.3 billion in BC Transit's infrastructure. As of April 2024, BC Transit has been implementing service expansions in communities across the province and will continue to do so over the next three years. These investments will ensure increased transit services to support housing development and population growth.

Since 2017, the Province has committed over \$11.6 billion in combined operating and capital funding commitments to support TransLink – the largest investment in TransLink in the Province's history. Most recently, the Province provided more than \$312 million over three years that will protect services and support priority expansion identified in TransLink's 2025 Investment Plan. TransLink's 2025 Investment Plan includes 40 new or improved bus routes to support transit-oriented communities, as well as neighbourhoods with limited or no transit service beginning as early as September 2025.

As Metro Vancouver continues to grow, the Province recognizes transit will continue to play a central role in building a more connected, sustainable and affordable region.

B.C.'s unique approach to partnerships with transit agencies and local governments ensures that transit is available to residents in a broader range of communities than any other province or territory in Canada, and the funding provided by the provincial government is helping keep transit affordable for riders and local governments.

Whereas public wharves and docks are critical transportation links for people, supplies, and emergency services in coastal communities, and there is a lack of coordinated provincial and federal priority setting and funding to support and maintain critical connectivity along BC's 25,000 kilometres of coastline;

And whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is responsible for maintaining the roads leading to public ports and continues to approve subdivision applications for water-only access residential developments;

And whereas evolving transportation technology and climate change requires a complete reconsideration of the design of small ports to meet future needs:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to fund the creation of engineering best practices for building ports to meet future transportation needs and climate resilience and provide financial support for the primary access ports.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit recognizes the vital role that public wharves and docks play in supporting connectivity for coastal communities. These facilities provide essential access for residents, emergency services, and goods movement, and are especially important in unincorporated or remote locations.

Public marine infrastructure in British Columbia primarily falls under the jurisdiction of federal government or local port authority. Transport Canada issues regulations on the operation of marine infrastructure, particularly for docks used for commercial, industrial, and ferry operations. B.C.'s resilient transportation network incorporates coastal and inland ferries, which leverage terminal and other infrastructure as part of their operation. In coastal areas, terminal infrastructure is owned, designed and managed by BC Ferries to support delivery of the Coastal Ferry Services Contract while in inland areas, the BC Transportation Finance Authority owns and maintains the assets as part of the broader road network. When developing or upgrading marine infrastructure under the ministry's responsibility, we rely on industry best practices and qualified professional engineers to deliver context-sensitive, fit-for-purpose solutions tailored to each site.

In response to climate change, the ministry is developing a risk and vulnerability assessment methodology for use across the provincial highway system to identify which roads are most essential to community access, goods movement, and emergency response—including those that connect to marine facilities.

The ministry supports integrated, resilient transportation systems and recognizes the role marine infrastructure plays alongside road, air, and transit systems. The ministry has launched PlanningTogetherBC to help focus investments across all modes of transportation and to align land use planning and transportation in B.C.

Whereas public wharves and docks are critical transportation links for people, supplies, and emergency services in coastal communities, and there is a lack of coordinated provincial and federal priority setting and funding to support and maintain critical connectivity along BC's 25,000 kilometres of coastline;

And whereas the federal government divested government wharves, and the responsibility for maintenance and management of public ports has fallen entirely on local taxpayers and nonprofit groups, and the provincial government does not have a ministry responsible for dealing with for the complex issues involving public ports, especially in unincorporated areas:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial and federal governments to review BC's marine network as a whole and identify ports that are vulnerable to long-term funding concerns as well as extreme weather events for more sustained public support to maintain critical connectivity along BC's 25,000 kilometres of coastline to meet the long term economic, social, and emergency needs of coastal residents.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit recognizes the vital role that public wharves and docks play in supporting connectivity for coastal communities. These facilities are essential for providing access to residents, emergency services, and the movement of goods—particularly in remote or unincorporated areas.

Public marine infrastructure in British Columbia is primarily under the jurisdiction of the federal government or local port authorities. Transport Canada established the National Ports System for marine infrastructure that is economically significant through the *Canada Marine Act* and the Canada Port Authorities system. In B.C., there are four National Ports System ports in Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Prince Rupert, and Metro Vancouver. Port Authorities are financially self-sufficient and can set fair and reasonable fees required for the maintenance of marine infrastructure under their jurisdiction.

British Columbia's resilient transportation network incorporates coastal and inland ferries, which leverage terminal and other infrastructure as part of their operation. In coastal areas, terminal infrastructure is owned, designed and managed by BC Ferries to support delivery of the Coastal Ferry Services Contract, while in inland areas, the BC Transportation Finance Authority owns and maintains the assets as part of the broader road network.

We will continue to collaborate with our federal counterparts, including through federal-provincial-territorial forums, to support improved coordination and investment in marine infrastructure that serves the needs of British Columbians.

Whereas the Alternative Approval Process as a means to obtain approval of the electors as outlined in Section 86 of the *Community Charter* is lacking clarity as it relates to public notice requirements stated in Section 94.2;

And whereas the document "Alternative Approval Process: A Guide for Local Governments in British Columbia" states that "local governments may choose to allow electors to submit response forms by e-mail or by fax" but provides no clear process or guidelines though noting that these electronic response forms are not covered by provincial legislation:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask that the Province of British Columbia amend the legislation in the *Community Charter* pertaining to Alternative Approval Processes to clarify:

1. how Section 94.2 interacts with Section 86 in terms of publication of the first and second notice;
2. the timing as to whether a local government can receive a completed elector response form before the second publication; and
3. clear requirements for accepting elector response forms electronically including:
 - a. acceptable methods of receipt;
 - b. whether electronic elector response forms require an original copy to be submitted with the original signature; and
 - c. if electronic elector response forms are received and an original copy is required if the original copy must also be received before the deadline.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province is not considering amending the Alternative Approval Process (AAP) legislation at this time. An AAP is not a vote and, as such, is not subject to the same legislative rules as required for elections or assent voting. The AAP legislation gives local governments the flexibility to develop their own procedures in a manner that best suits their community, while keeping within an overall legislative framework.

Councils/boards are responsible for determining the method of acceptable elector response forms and can do so in the manner that best balances their capacity and community expectations. It is recommended that local governments adopt an AAP policy so that procedures are consistently applied and understood by staff and electors.

As most of the province now has access to reliable internet and most British Columbians use email and expect to have online options, many local governments are choosing to allow emailed elector response forms.

The ministry has developed resources to support local governments when making decisions related to an AAP, including the Alternative Approval Process webpage, the Alternative Approval Process: A Guide for Local Governments in B.C., and the Public Notice Guidance Materials: For B.C. Local Governments.

Whereas in recent years, there has been an alarming rise in incidents of harassment, intimidation and acts of violence aimed at local elected officials, compounding the already strenuous work conditions faced by many local leaders and hindering their retention;

And whereas severe abuse, both online and in-person, has the potential to discourage candidates for local governments from joining and remaining engaged in local politics, limiting the diversity of opinion needed in healthy democracies:

Therefore be it resolved that the BC government, work with UBCM, to identify and implement measures to protect all elected local government officials from harassment, intimidation, and threats, thereby reinforcing a unified front to safeguard democracy.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes the importance of protecting local government elected officials from harassment and intimidation and the negative impacts of abuse of elected officials on our democracy. There is no place for intimidation or threats to any elected official and we encourage anyone who is experiencing potentially violent or threatening behaviour to report it to the local police.

To help address these concerns, the Province has introduced legislation to better protect the privacy of candidates running for local government office. The ministry consulted with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) prior to enactment of this legislation. The legislation is intended to prevent members of the public from harassing candidates at their private home or phone number. This will help removing barriers that may have previously discouraged individuals, especially women, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and other marginalized people, from running for local government office.

While these legislative measures represent an important step in protecting local government elected officials' privacy, effectively combatting harassment of local government elected officials will require joint efforts from the Province and local governments to collectively make sure that local government elected officials have the tools and resources they need to feel safe while serving their communities as well as when they are running for elected office. The Province is open to working with UBCM to develop further measures to improve the protection of elected local government officials from harassment.

NR90 Bullying and Harassment by Local Elected Officials

Kamloops

Whereas there is currently no legislation in place that effectively safeguards local government staff or elected officials from bullying, harassment, and other inappropriate treatment at the hands of other local elected official;

And whereas Worksafe BC does not include local elected officials as “workers” pursuant to the *Workers Compensation Act*, thus preventing municipal or regional district staff and other members of council or the board from utilizing Worksafe BC policies, procedures, and safeguards against bullying, harassment, and other inappropriate treatment at the hands of a local elected official;

And whereas local government codes of conduct are ineffective against a local elected official who chooses to blatantly ignore and disregard council or board resolutions, including protective measures put in place to safeguard local government staff and elected officials from that local elected official;

And whereas the absence of statutory or common law authority to practically and effectively prevent a local elected official from continuing to bully, harass, and mistreat municipal or regional district staff and other members of council or the board can seriously jeopardize the mental health and safety of staff and other members of council or the board;

And whereas due to the risk of continued and unconstrained bullying and harassment of staff at the hands of local elected officials, local governments and their taxpayers face significant legal exposure arising out of the unsafe workplaces in the form of costly investigations, wrongful termination claims based on constructive dismissal law, and increased legal costs:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Government of British Columbia amend the *Workers Compensation Act* to include local elected officials in the definition of “worker” as defined in section 1 of that Act, thereby affording access to Worksafe BC’s existing policies, procedures, and safeguards against bullying, harassment, and other inappropriate treatment at the hands of a local elected official;

And be it further resolved that the Government of British Columbia adopt statutory provisions to effectively safeguard municipal or regional district staff and other members of council or the board from the ethical misconduct of local elected officials, including, without limitation, repeated bullying, harassment, and inappropriate treatment, up to and including suspension or disqualification from participation in elected office.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Province recognizes that all local elected officials and local government staff have the right to serve in a safe and harassment-free environment.

The legislative framework for local elected officials generally does not support their inclusion as employees in legislation as the rules, expectations, and responsibilities for local elected officials are distinct from employees. The recognition of local elected officials as employees in provincial legislation would expand the scope of provincial involvement in the regulation of employee-related matters for local elected officials.

The Ministry of Labour is responsible for WorkSafeBC, the *Workers Compensation Act* (WCA), and its regulations. Local government elected officials are not considered workers or employers under the WCA and, therefore, the WCA does not apply to them in this capacity. The Ministry of Labour has indicated that it has no plans to amend the WCA on this issue at this time.

A range of tools are available that local governments can use to strengthen responsible conduct, ethical behaviour, and accountability that may support similar desired outcomes to those legislated in the Human Rights Code or the WCA. These include codes of conduct, oaths of office, procedure bylaws, policy creation

(e.g., social media policies), and training opportunities and resources to support good governance and responsible conduct.

The *Community Charter* requires municipal councils to consider adopting a code of conduct that sets out expected behaviours and actions of elected officials as well as the investigative procedures and consequences of breaching the code. Codes of conduct provide local governments with the flexibility and autonomy to investigate and make decisions about how they will remedy breaches among elected officials and encourage more desirable behaviors moving forward.

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs continues to work with our partners at the Union of BC Municipalities and the Local Government Management Association to explore ways to strengthen B.C.'s responsible conduct framework to make sure local governments have the tools and resources to address the complex and multi-faceted issue of responsible conduct.

NR92 Minimum Income Requirements for Farm Classification

Pitt Meadows

Whereas the Classification of Land as a Farm Regulation establishes minimum gross income requirements for farm operations to be classified as Farm under the *Assessment Act*, that were last increased in 1993;

And whereas farm property tax reform that confers tax benefits to farm operations would help to encourage farming and support local food security:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of BC to amend the Classification of Land as a Farm Regulation to increase the income thresholds to achieve Farm classification, to a single minimum gross farm income of \$7,000;

And be it further resolved that UBCM call upon the Province of BC to review the income thresholds at least every five years.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Property owners must meet income thresholds from the sale of designated agriculture products to qualify for farm classification on their land. The threshold is \$10,000 for properties of less than two acres, and a \$2,500 minimum for properties of two acres or more.

The Province reviewed income thresholds in 2009 and made changes, establishing rules for split classifying properties and expanding the list of qualifying uses for farm classification. The Ministry of Finance confers regularly with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to consider farm assessments and taxation. No change to the income thresholds is anticipated at this time.

In February 2025, the Province established the Premier's taskforce on agriculture and the food economy to provide advice on how to protect our food sources and the agricultural sector, particularly in the face of unfair and damaging tariffs.

Task force recommendations will be informed through consultation with the farming sector, food processors and distributors, retailers, local governments, and consumers. The task force will also be informed by reviewing the current farm tax policies, such as the income threshold and their potential for ensuring reliable access to healthy and affordable food for all B.C. residents.

NR93 BC Assessment Property Value Accuracy

Squamish

Whereas assessing and appraising real estate is primarily an information business and the *Assessment Act* requires BC Assessment to value similar properties consistently and equitably recognizing that similar unsold properties are consistently under-assessed, sometimes for consecutive years;

And whereas the *Assessment Act* has no meaningful consequences for withholding information vital to BC Assessment to obtain critical information necessary to properly assess properties and this results in taxation rates based on flawed assessment/valuation data:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to update the *Assessment Act* to significantly reduce the number of drastically under-assessed properties year over year.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

BC Assessment applies a mass appraisal system to assess residential properties which uses sales information for comparable properties in a neighborhood to determine values. Sales information is sourced from Real Estate Boards, the Land Titles and Survey Authority and, in some cases, property consultants. BC Assessment also uses several statistical measures to ensure that assessments are fair and equitable. While the mass appraisal approach may result in values of certain properties being under or overvalued, on average, they accurately reflect the value of properties in the province.

Individuals who believe the circumstances of a property are not reflected in a property value may choose to appeal. The relatively large number of residential sales ensure assessments are accurate and equitable, supported by less than two percent of property assessments being appealed annually.

Assessed land values for vacant non-residential properties are determined using a similar comparable sales approach. Sales values will depend, to a considerable extent, on how much a purchaser is willing to pay for a property, taking into account the zoning, community plan restrictions, the overall real estate market, and the future potential site use.

Non-residential properties which include improvements or are operating businesses are valued using an income approach on the basis of revenues or using a replacement cost approach for the improvements and market value for the land. If necessary, BC Assessment has legislative authority to request financial information from property owners or can refer to the operating results of similar commercial operations to determine value.

If a municipality, or anyone else, has information that would be useful in better determining the value of a specific property, they are encouraged to discuss the situation with BC Assessment.

Whereas BC's broader forest sector (including harvesting, pulp and paper product manufacturing, and wood product manufacturing) continues to make a vital contribution to BC's overall economic and social well-being, supporting some 44,000 direct jobs and close to 100,000 more jobs in total, generating billions of dollars in wages, exports, and government revenues, and forming the economic foundation of dozens of rural and remote communities;

And whereas in the last two decades, BC's forest industries have experienced a perfect storm of repeated and interesting crises, and a combination of economic, environmental, and global challenges continues to destabilize the broader forestry sector:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government be lobbied to enact measures for stronger BC forestry sector, including:

- creating a permanent province-wide Forestry Sector Council;
- developing a province-wide plan for stable, sustainable, economic fibre supply;
- creating a Forest Adjustment Bureau to redesign and integrate worker and community adjustment supports; and
- developing a strategy to maximize value-added jobs from stable fibre harvesting.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

B.C.'s forest sector is in the midst of a transition. Harvest levels are declining for a variety of reasons, including record wildfires, market conditions, additional conservation measures and the end of the beetle kill harvest. Our government's vision is to build a stronger, more diverse, inclusive and resilient forestry industry through more value-added manufacturing, built on the foundation of a strong primary sector.

There is a comprehensive suite of initiatives to address some of the pressing challenges faced by workers and the forest sector.

Creating a permanent province-wide Forestry Sector Council:

The Provincial Forestry Forum (PFF) is an assembly where Government, Indigenous Advocacy, Labour, Harvesting, Value-Added, Woodlots, Community Forest, Major Licensees, and other forest sector representatives meet and work together to engage in significant forest and resource sector policy initiatives. The primary focus is to provide the engagement point on policies affecting the forest sector. It is a key point of engagement with senior-level representatives that span the entire forest sector.

Developing a province-wide plan for stable, sustainable, economic fibre supply:

The B.C. government has launched a review of B.C. Timber Sales to ensure B.C.'s forestry sector is continually evolving to overcome challenges and create a guideline for a stronger, more resilient future. The review is being led by the Ministry of Forests with support from an expert task force consisting of George Abbott, Lennard Joe, and Brian Frenkel.

Forest landscape plans establish clear outcomes for the management of forest resource values within defined areas. Forest landscape plans are intended to be completed in partnership with First Nations and in collaboration with forest licensees. The new forest landscape planning process will provide stability and greater land base predictability, which will improve the ability to quickly issue cutting permits.

We have been working to ensure timelier access to wildfire salvage and increasing utilization of residual fibre, which can provide additional fibre sources to the market. By shifting operations to focus on salvage, we protect our future forests and timber supply by getting stands back into production, avoiding post-fire forest health issues and reducing the fuel on the ground and the risk of future wildfires.

Creating a Forest Adjustment Bureau to redesign and integrate worker and community adjustment supports:

Government has heard that the scale and scope of transition facing the forest sector, if not mitigated or managed, will have immediate impacts on the province's rural communities and workers across British Columbia. A new Forestry Support Bureau has been set up within the Ministry of Forests to undertake the analysis needed to provide support services for viable small to medium sized forestry firms that experience financial challenges arising from U.S. trade actions. The mandate of the Forestry Support Bureau is to maintain manufacturing capacity in support of governments 45 million m3/year harvest goal. Additionally, the Community Transition Tables, led by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation, are driving comprehensive adjustments and community transitions through their Community Transition program.

Developing a strategy to maximize value-added jobs from stable fibre harvesting:

The Ministry of Forests have taken action to ensure innovative, secondary manufacturers have access to the fibre and capital they need to invest and grow their operations.

The Ministry of Forests launched the Value-added Accelerator Initiative in partnership with the First Nations Forestry Council, the Value-added Wood Coalition and Council of Forest Industries to engage with First Nations and stakeholders on ways to improve fibre flow for value-added manufacturers.

In early 2024, the Ministry of Forests established a Value-Added Sector Strategies Branch to support and grow the Value-Added sector in B.C. The Value-added Sector Strategies Branch is accountable for strategic leadership through the ongoing forest sector transition and is responsible for developing strategies and policy ideas to support communities, First Nations and a diverse forest industry.

The Ministry of Forests has grown the B.C. Timber Sales Value-Added program through the expansion of volume available through the Category 4 program. In 2025, the B.C. Timber Sales Category 4 program volume was doubled from 10 to 20 percent. The criteria for the Value-Added Manufacturing Program was changed to enable groups of Category 4 registrants to jointly meet performance obligations.

The Manufacturing Jobs Fund is successfully supporting innovation and job creation in the forestry sector and has resulted in leveraging over \$180 million to retool mills and expand production for in demand B.C. wood products.

The Ministry of Forests will continue to work with communities to move forward on solutions to the challenges currently facing the timber harvest, pulp and paper production, and wood-product manufacturing sectors.

NR95 Equitable Stumpage Rates to Support Local Economies**NCLGA Executive**

Whereas stumpage rates play a significant role in shaping the dynamics of the timber industry and local economies;

And whereas while increases in stumpage rates may generate additional revenue for the Provincial Government, there is a risk of unintended consequences, including economic hardship and reduced revenue for local businesses and governments:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the provincial government for equitable stumpage rates that balance the need for provincial government revenue generation with the economic sustainability of forestry-dependent communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests

The Ministry of Forests is legislated to “assert the financial interest of the government in its forest and range resources in a systematic and equitable manner” (Section 4(e) of the *Ministry of Forests and Range Act*). This is why the stumpage system is market based.

Stumpage is the fee government charges when it sells trees, similarly to how a private landowner would. Licensees pay cash (stumpage) and provide services (obligations) for the trees they purchase.

B.C. uses the Market Pricing System (MPS) to determine the stumpage rate. The MPS equation includes a lumber variable and is sensitive to changes in lumber prices and uses BCTS auctions as the cornerstone system for the pricing non-auctioned timber.

Using the MPS is how the B.C. government generally ensures equitable stumpage rate and return to the citizens of B.C. and economic stability for the forestry-dependant communities.

Whereas museums across British Columbia are providing tourist information services and promoting our province for free to thousands of visitors each year;

And whereas without the designation of “Tourist Information Centre,” these museums do not receive funding from the province and must assume the costs involved with providing services to visitors:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of BC to provide funding to museums that act as Tourist Information Centres and simplify and expedite the process for museums to receive Affiliate Information Centre status.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport (the ministry) recognizes that communities may have multiple entities providing visitor services beyond those in Destination British Columbia’s (DBC) formal Visitor Services Network Program.

DBC’s provides funding to over 100 visitor services centres throughout B.C. The budget for visitor services base funding is fixed and fully subscribed. Any new community visitor centres may be considered as Affiliate members, with no funding provided, although there are other benefits to Affiliate members including training, sharing of best practices and networking opportunities.

The Province, through the B.C. Arts Council provides operating funding and project funding programs to support museums, however, this does not functioning as tourist information centres.

Tourism, arts and culture are essential to vibrant communities and the overall well-being of the province. The Province continues to work to support a creative, resilient, and sustainable economy that benefits all British Columbians.

NR98 Provincial Employee Support**Zeballos**

Whereas the Province of British Columbia implements changes to legislation in anticipation of providing benefit to all British Columbians;

And whereas not all rural, remote communities are provided with capacity to fulfill new legislative requirements:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province provide subject specific provincial employees on a regional level to support local governments with the increased legislative changes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs is committed to supporting local governments in the implementation of legislative changes and requirements.

The ministry's governance services team supports local governments and helps foster local government capacity-building by providing a range of advice and education about a variety of topics such as local elections, approval processes, and governance. Ministry staff are regionally assigned to local governments and improvement districts throughout B.C. and can be directly contacted through the online Local Government Division Staff Finder. The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs also offers small community grants to municipalities with populations up to approximately 19,000. These are unconditional grants for municipalities and can be used to support local government capacity building.

The Province has also created a new Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities with the mandate to serve as the key point of contact for local governments bringing concerns, suggestions, or feedback to government. The Minister of State will work with Ministerial colleagues to address issues proactively and ensure that local government advice informs government initiatives.

Local governments are encouraged to utilize these provincial supports to assist in the implementation of legislative changes.

NR99 Provincial Service Level Expectations to Prioritize Customer Service

Fraser Valley RD

Whereas the Province of British Columbia does not have reliable modernized call for service systems or channels for the Ministry of Environment (Report All Poacher and Polluters (RAPP) Line), the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Agricultural Land Commission, or the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure;

And whereas the lack of a reliable call for service system or channels creates public confusion, frustration, and safety concerns over service level expectations due to a lack of communication regarding queue status, outcome of reporting feedback, or additional follow-up:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to modernize call for service systems by implementing a variety of contact channels, including digital interfaces, and establish service level expectations amongst the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Agricultural Land Commission, and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to support customer service.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Parks

The Province is committed to supporting local governments and citizens in accessing provincial supports and services. The following information from the Ministry of Environment and Parks, the Ministry of Transportation and Transit, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship outlines existing systems and channels, as well as planned initiatives and improvements.

Conservation Officer Service:

The Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) program is a 24/7 hotline and online reporting service. The public can report, either by phone or via an online form, known or suspected violations of fisheries, wildlife, or environmental protection laws.

The RAPP line also receives reports of bear, cougar, coyote, and wolf attacks against people that result in injury or death, and other human-wildlife conflicts where public safety may be at risk and also provides call intake for the Ministry of Forests Natural Resource Officers, who protect B.C.'s land, forests, water and cultural resource values.

Averaging approximately 50,000 calls per year, the RAPP line is the main call intake line for the Conservation Officer Service, a law enforcement agency. Calls are handled by dispatchers and triaged with public safety as the highest priority.

Not every RAPP report receives a return call from a Conservation Officer, but that does not mean it has not been reviewed and actioned as appropriate. For example, a report of an animal sighting may only be logged, while most violation reports receive callbacks from an officer to explain the next steps, if appropriate. Other reports may trigger different types of responses which may not include direct follow-up with callers. Due to the high volume of calls, individualized follow-up with each call would not be efficient regarding costs and resources.

A monthly snapshot of human-wildlife conflict calls received via the RAPP line can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/56kx8tej>

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Transit

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit maintains and continues to invest in digital interfaces and call for service systems on behalf of the travelling public and commercial industry.

[DriveBC.ca](https://drivebc.ca), the provincial highway traveler information website, includes an [email for general public feedback](#) which is monitored during regular business hours. The public can subscribe to receive updates via emails, tweets or RSS feeds from the main page of the DriveBC link.

The DriveBC website also hosts the [Report a Highway Problem feature](#), which is a 24/7 service portal to help the travelling public identify a highway problem and connect directly with the maintenance contractor responsible for that area.

DriveBC also uses X to communicate current highway events and closures directly with the travelling public.

Additionally, the ministry operates a Facebook page and an X account to communicate with the public on more general ministry work. These social platforms are monitored during regular business hours, with an option to use direct message for specific concerns requiring response.

The ministry's Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement (CVSE) website includes a Report Commercial Vehicle Safety Violations hotline number, located at the top of the CVSE.ca homepage, to provide a direct line of contact with CVSE regarding commercial vehicle safety concerns province wide.

The ministry is also actively investing in modernizing the electronic Development Approvals System which will improve the efficiency and speed of processing development related applications under MOTT's jurisdiction, with anticipated rollout in April 2026.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food operates a series of service lines and information hubs.

Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)	
ALC	Local 604-660-7000 Long distance through Enquiry BC 1-800-663-7867 ALCBurnaby@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca
Office hours and direct phone # and email contacts	Contact - Provincial Agricultural Land Commission
Information on how to report a violation in the ALR	Report an ALR Violation or Contravention - Provincial Agricultural Land Commission
Plant and Animal Health Branch (PAHB)	
Animal Health Centre	Animal Health Centre - Province of British Columbia
Plant Health Laboratory	Plant Health Laboratory - Province of British Columbia
PAHB; including lab services, fee guide, submission forms, Q&A	Local 604-556-3003 Toll-free 1-800-661-9903 PAHB@gov.bc.ca
The Animal Health Monitor newsletter	The newsletter includes articles about animal diseases occurring in the province, current issues in animal health, case reports, updates on the scope of diagnostic services, expertise, programs, support available at the Animal Health Centre and more.
Planned implementation of a new Laboratory Information System	(e.g., client portal, online submission forms) Aimed at improving accessibility, offering a user-friendly interface, and streamlining access to reports, invoicing, submissions, and more.
Office of the Chief Veterinarian (OCV)	
AgriService BC	1-888-221-7141 AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca AgriService BC website AgriService BC Facebook
OCV	Local 604-556-3003 Toll-free 1-800-661-9903

	Chief.Veterinarian@gov.bc.ca Reportable and notifiable diseases – online form includes contact numbers
Apiary	Inspectors names and contact numbers
OCV licence and inspection (dairy, fur, vet drug)	Staff phone and email can be found on gov.bc.ca OCV webpages
Veterinarians	Internal mailing lists and through SBCV social channels via contact info for the OCV.
Food Safety Inspection Branch (FSIB)	
AgriService BC	1-888-221-7141 AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca AgriService BC website
BC Meat Inspection	bcmeatinspection@gov.bc.ca
Staff contacts	BC gov directory link from gov.bc.ca website
Other relevant agencies	Links to Canadian Food Inspection Agency, DFO, health authorities, and other relevant agencies
Business Risk Management Branch (BRM)	
AgriService BC	1-888-221-7141 AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca AgriService BC website
Insurance Programs	For each insurance program offered, there is a toll-free phone number, fax and email posted on the gov.bc.ca internet
Regional Offices	Regional office phone numbers and information available on website

Extension Support Services Branch (ESSB):

The [AgriService BC website](#) completed interim updates for accessibility and useability utilizing a service design approach. Both internal and external clients were consulted. [AgriService BC - Province of British Columbia](#)

- The updated website now encompasses an online events calendar that informs clients of knowledge transfer events taking place in their regions among other improvements.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food website is currently completing a full redesign utilizing a service blueprint with the goal of providing a stronger self-service client experience.

The AgriService BC Facebook page was launched in July 2023 and now has 1,900 followers and continues to grow, sharing information about Ministry programs, resources and regional events.

In May 2024, the provincial AgriService BC e-Bulletin shifted its focus to a regional approach. There are now nine regional e-Bulletins providing regionally relevant, monthly information to 2,665 readers and this number continues to grow each month.

In May 2023, the AgriService BC video series was launched. Videos provide clients with B.C. applicable information that are accessible, support adult learning styles, and foster an agriculture producer and food processor community within the province.

The above initiatives combined with the existing 1-800 number provide a robust communications strategy for providing relevant information in a timely and accessible way to empower clients to take control of their own learning and improve their operation's productivity.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

FrontCounter BC:

FrontCounter BC is a single point of contact service to help people learn about and apply for licences, permits, registrations and other authorizations required to utilize the Province's natural resources. FrontCounter BC

sits within the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) and delivers service on behalf of 8 partner agencies for 160+ authorization types.

FrontCounter BC delivers services to people across multiple service channels:

- [Natural Resource Online Services website](#)
- Toll-free Contact Centre (phone, email, and instant messaging)
- 30 in-person office locations

FrontCounter BC is continually striving to modernize services and improve the client experience. A few current examples are:

- Replacing the Natural Resource Online Services website which will improve the client experience by ensuring easier navigation, searchability and accessibility – to be launched summer 2025.
- Exploring the use of an AI chatbot to assist clients.
- Working on adopting the BC Services Card Authentication Service (BCSC) log in to replace Personal BCeID's which are being retired this summer. BCeID does not require users to verify their identity before accessing a service. The BCSC is recommended for services requiring high identity assurance.

NR101 Implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure**Nelson**

Whereas Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), comprising of smart meters, data management systems, and communication networks, is a key tool in providing efficient, reliable and environmentally sustainable utility services;

And whereas the implementation of AMI comes at a significant cost for public utilities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the Province of British Columbia to begin exploring a funding model to support the implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) across public utilities in the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is already in place for BC Hydro and for FortisBC, which serve the majority of electricity customers in the Province. Both utilities determined that the benefits of AMI to their operations justified the cost of the investment needed, and both utilities recover those costs through their rates.

Overall, AMI investments can benefit utilities and their ratepayers without the need for outside funding. BC Hydro's internal analysis, published in its Smart Metering and Infrastructure Program Business Case, projected that its Smart Metering Program would provide net savings of nearly \$3 billion between Fiscal 2006 and Fiscal 2033. Similarly, in its application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for its AMI project, FortisBC Electric projected that the savings from the investments would reduce rates overall over a 25 year period.

It is therefore the responsibility of utilities considering these investments to determine whether those investments make sense in their context and for the ratepayers they are serving.

**NR102 Legislative Changes to Permit Alkaline Hydrolysis
Funerals**

Cariboo RD, Williams Lake

Whereas Alkaline Hydrolysis Process funeral services present an opportunity to reduce the environmental impact of preparing and interring human remains by significantly reducing the amount of carbon dioxide emitted from burials and land use requirements for storing human remains;

And whereas the *Cremation, Interment, and Funeral Services Act* does not permit Alkaline Hydrolysis as an acceptable process for preparing a deceased person's remains:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Deputy Premier to prepare and introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly of BC to amend the *Cemetery, Interment, and Funeral Services Act* to allow the alkaline hydrolysis process as a permitted funeral service.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The *Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act* governs the handling and disposition of human remains and currently permits disposition only by burial of human remains or cremated remains, entombment of human remains, or inurnment of cremated remains. The Act would need to be amended to allow for other methods of disposition in the province.

The Province is aware that there is increasing interest from the public to allow for alternatives to traditional burial and cremation, including alkaline hydrolysis, as well as natural organic reduction. We are considering these alternative approaches that reduce our environmental footprint and provide British Columbians with more options.

Ministry staff have initiated research and consultation on this topic to solicit feedback on the full range of implications associated with enabling these methods of disposition in B.C. As part of this work, Ministry staff will be engaging prior to any legislative change, through the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, with local governments to ensure that consideration is given to the disposal of effluent from alkaline hydrolysis into wastewater.

Whereas investing in arts, culture, and heritage has proven social, economic, and educational benefits for communities small and large across the province;

And whereas the arts, culture, and heritage sector has been chronically underfunded in BC compared to other regions in Canada:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of BC increase the BC Arts Council's annual budget—in alignment with the BC NDP's 2017 campaign pledge of a \$48 million annual BC Arts Council budget by 2021—indexed for inflation, to a minimum of \$58 million in the 2025/26 budget.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

Arts and culture and the not-for-profit sector are critical to the well-being of society and support vibrant, resilient, innovative, and engaged communities. A strong arts and culture sector contributes to a sustainable economy by encouraging creativity and innovation across sectors and in our workforce; the sector attracts business investment, increases exports, and directly impacts employment and tourism.

The Province supports arts and cultural activity and participation through significant investments distributed through the BC Arts Council. The BC Arts Council supports the arts and culture sector and provides grants to organizations and individuals, with funding provided to over 155 B.C. communities in 2023/24. The total annual BC Arts Council budget is \$40.08 million.

In 2017, the provincial government included a mandate commitment to double the investment in the BC Arts Council over four years. BC Arts Council's total budget in fiscal 2016/17 was \$24 million. Since then, the BC Arts Council budget has increased by \$16.076 million as a result of base budget lifts, the Shared Recovery Mandate funding, and increased endowment earnings through special accounts.

In addition, the Province provided three years of resilience and supplemental funding totaling \$82 million through the BC Arts Council between 2020/21 and 2022/23.

REFERRED RESOLUTIONS (RR)

RR40.3 Addressing the Needs of Rural Seniors in British Columbia

Port Alberni

Whereas rural BC has a proportionately larger and faster growing seniors' population than urban BC, yet has less infrastructure and resources to support its aging population;

And whereas a greater and more focused provincial response to ongoing concerns about inequities in services and supports for seniors in rural BC is required to address the inadequacies of current approaches to such issues:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government establish a rural seniors caucus made up, but not limited to, of a combination of elected officials and government staff to serve as a platform for collaboration, advocacy, and policy development to address the specific challenges faced by rural seniors in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province is committed to ensuring that all people living in British Columbia have the health-care services they need, including patients and seniors in rural and remote communities. We understand the challenges rural seniors face in accessing health care while wanting to age in their communities, close to their loved ones and families. The Ministry of Health (the ministry) values the perspectives and voice of rural seniors and their caregivers and recognizes the importance of the lived experience of those residing in rural areas of the province. The ministry ensures the engagement of rural representation in consultation groups and the organized structures established to provide feedback to the government.

Recent budgets have focused on both community-based seniors' services and home health services in all geographic regions of B.C., including rural areas. Budget 2024 included \$354 million over three years to support seniors across the province to age comfortably and safely in their own homes and maximize their quality of life, including \$227 million over three years to improve the quality, responsiveness, and effectiveness of home health services, and \$127 million over three years to stabilize and expand community-based seniors' services. This includes the Better at Home program, which supports seniors with day-to-day tasks, helping them to live at home for as long as possible.

Work is also underway to guide health authorities in supporting the delivery of culturally safe home health services in First Nations communities, many of which are rural or remote. Investments in home health through Budget 2024 and the continued expansion of virtual health technologies will also help rural seniors receive the care they need in their communities and their homes.

B.C.'s Health Human Resource (HHR) Strategy and targeted investments in the home health workforce, Health Career Access Program (HCAP), and GoHealthBC are aimed at increasing the recruitment and retention of health care workers, with specific strategies in place to meet HHR needs in rural B.C.

The Ministry of Health has taken steps to increase support for Resident and Family Councils (RFCs) in all licensed long-term care (LTC) homes, as announced by the Minister on November 3, 2022. These Councils are made up of residents and family members, and provide an opportunity for the voice of seniors to be heard at local RFCs in each long-term care home, regional RFCs in each Health Authority, and at a provincial RFC held at least twice annually. Council members from LTC RFCs in rural communities have made valuable contributions in these meetings.

The ministry also receives feedback on rural issues in discussion with the Seniors Advocate. The Office of the Seniors' Advocate has a robust Council of Advisors (COA), who provides valuable insight into seniors' issues in B.C., including seniors residing in rural areas. This group of engaged and connected seniors represents each of the province's five health authority regions and come from a wide range of educational, professional, and

socio-economic backgrounds. The COA serves as both a sounding board for the Seniors Advocate as well as a conduit to the Advocate for information and concerns from all regions of the province, including rural areas. The Office of the Seniors Advocate has published a recent report entitled “Resourceful and Resilient: Challenges Facing B.C.’s Rural Seniors” (February 2024) which can be found on The Office of the Seniors Advocate’s website.

Finally, the appointment of Debra Toporowski as Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health and Susie Chant as Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors’ Services and Long-Term Care signals a focused commitment on the health of older British Columbians in rural and remote communities.

OFF THE FLOOR (OF) RESOLUTIONS

OF1 **Modernize Carbon Pricing to Support Local Government Climate Action**

Nelson

Whereas the Premier announced on September 12 that the Province would remove the individual portion of the carbon tax if given the opportunity;

And whereas this poses a threat to the effectiveness of the Province's climate strategy as an essential tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition the province to a low-carbon economy;

And whereas local governments face significant financial challenges in addressing the costs of transportation, increasing energy efficiency in homes, adapting new and existing infrastructure and adapting to the impacts of climate change from wildfires, floods, and shifting ecosystems:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to immediately engage with local government to develop a modernized carbon pricing framework;

And be it further resolved that UBCM request a significant portion of carbon pricing revenue be directed to local governments to support climate action initiatives such as transit, energy efficiency programs for homes, and adaptation of critical infrastructure, thereby directly helping local communities and their residents prepare for the impacts of catastrophic climate change.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

The Province has removed the consumer carbon tax in B.C. and there is considerable work taking place to determine how the Province moves forward.

The Ministry of Finance is currently focused on the issue of affordability for consumers and is also moving forward with reviewing programs, including those that were supported by carbon tax revenue. Additionally, the 2025 Cooperation and Responsible Government Accord commits to completing a review CleanBC in 2025. Large industrial emitters will continue to pay carbon tax under the Output-Based Pricing System which is not affected by the removal of the carbon tax.

Local climate action in B.C. is funded through a variety of sources. For example, the Local Government Climate Action Program continues to operate and is funding climate action investments across local governments and Modern Treaty Nations. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness continues to disburse funds through the Disaster, Resilience and Innovation Fund for Indigenous communities and local governments to enhance their resilience to climate events.

The CleanBC Better Homes and Better Buildings programs provide targeted incentives to a range of building types, including market and non-market housing, multi-unit residential buildings, and Indigenous- and community-owned facilities. Recently, the Province announced \$100 million to support as many as 8,300 heat pump rebates for low- and moderate-income households. This includes the planned expansion of the Energy Savings Program to provide rebates for individual suites in multi-unit residential buildings, and participation in BC Hydro and FortisBC's Energy Conservation Affordability Program to provide heat pump rebates to the lowest-income households in British Columbia.

The Province is actively engaged in the Electric Vehicle Peer Network, a B.C.-based group that brings together local governments, First Nations, BC Hydro, and the Community Energy Association to share information and accelerate the transition to electric mobility. The current focus of the group is promoting access to charging infrastructure and supporting the transition of municipal government fleets to electric vehicles.