

2023 RESOLUTIONS

PART SR – SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

We do not anticipate any Special Resolutions as defined under the Societies Act

PART ER – EXECUTIVE RESOLUTIONS

We do not anticipate resolutions from the AVICC Executive at this time

PART 1 – REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS

The following are the resolutions received by the February 9, 2023 resolutions deadline, that are regional in nature. Should any of these regionally focused resolutions be endorsed, they will not be forwarded to UBCM for consideration at their Annual Convention. Rather these resolutions will remain with AVICC where they may be actioned.

Part 1 - Section “A”

This section contains regional resolutions that offer the recommendation of No Recommendation or Not Endorse

HOUSING

R1 Vancouver Island Housing Plan - Responding to the Homelessness Crisis City of Courtenay

ENVIRONMENT

R2 Provision of Energy for Commercial Agriculture City of Parksville

Part 1 - Section “B”

This section contains regional resolutions that support existing policy and are recommended Endorse.

ENVIRONMENT

R3 Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Village of Cumberland

LAND USE

R4 E&N Land Grant Biodiversity and Restoration Regional District of Nanaimo

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R5 Recapitalization of Island Coastal Economic Trust Capital Regional District

PART 2 – RESOLUTIONS

The following are the resolutions received by the February 9, 2023 resolutions deadline. Should any of these resolutions be endorsed, they will be forwarded to UBCM for consideration at their Annual Convention.

Part 2 - Section “A”

This section contains resolutions that offer the recommendation of No Recommendation or Not Endorse, and resolutions that offer the recommendation of Endorse with Proposed Amendment

HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

R6 BC Emergency Health Services/Demands on Local Governments City of Port Alberni

R7 BC Health Attraction and Retention Village of Zeballos

HOUSING

R8 Annual Adjustment of Provincial Home Owner Grant City of Parksville

R9 Review of the Homeowner Protection Act District of Port Hardy

R10 Extreme Weather Response City of Nanaimo

R11 Planning Tools for Habitat Protection City of Parksville

ENVIRONMENT

- R12 New Contribution Model to Finance Local Governments in the Climate Transition
Comox Valley Regional District
- R13 Managed Forest Council Representation
Village of Cumberland
- R14 Control of Scotch Broom
Town of Qualicum Beach
- R15 Protection of Old-Growth Forests
District of Metchosin
- R16 Call for Improvements for Provincial Water Licencing Approvals
District of Sechelt

LAND USE

- R17 Flexibility for Agriculture Land Reserve Housing Rules
City of Nanaimo

TAXATION

- R18 Deferment Program for Local Government Parcel Taxes and Utility Fees
District of Sechelt

LEGISLATIVE

- R19 Long-Term Vacant Buildings
District of Port Hardy

SELECTED ISSUES

- R20 Fossil Fuel Corporate Sponsorship of UBCM and AVICC
City of Courtenay
- R21 Enable Electronic Attendance at Conventions
Town of View Royal

Part 2 - Section "B"

This section contains resolutions that support existing policy and are recommended Endorse

HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- R22 Safe Drug Supply
City of Victoria
- R23 Rural, Remote Paramedic Sustainability
Village of Zeballos

COMMUNITY SAFETY

- R24 Empowering Local Governments to use Traffic Enforcement Cameras
District of Saanich

ENVIRONMENT

- R25 Enhanced Access to Extended Producer Responsibility Programs
Comox Valley Regional District
- R26 Expansion of the Recycling Regulation to Include Industrial, Commercial,
and Institutional Packaging and Printed Paper Recyclables
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
- R27 Moving the Property Assessed Clean Energy Program Forward
City of Courtenay
- R28 New Legislation for Protection of Biodiversity, Ecosystem Health and Species at Risk
Islands Trust
- R29 Regional Water Supply Strategies
Regional District of Nanaimo
- R30 Reducing Anchorages Outside the Port of Vancouver
District of Metchosin

TRANSPORTATION

- R31 Parking on Ministry of Transportation Rights-of-Way
Regional District of Nanaimo
- R32 Public Safety and Speed Limits
Cowichan Valley Regional District
- R33 Economic Investments and Rural Roads State of Infrastructure
Cowichan Valley Regional District

FINANCE

- R34 Downtown Revitalization Grant Program
District of Port Hardy
- R35 Restoring Provincial Support for Public Libraries
City of Powell River and qathet Regional District
- R36 Property Transfer Tax Sharing for Local Governments
District of Sechelt

LAND USE

- R37 Removal of Racist and Discriminatory Clauses from BC Land Titles
City of Courtenay
- R38 Call for Support to Meet Provincial Archeological Requirements
District of Sechelt

LEGISLATIVE

- R39 Modernization of the Local Government Act
Sunshine Coast Regional District



MEMORANDUM

To: Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities **File No.:** 0390-20
From: City of Courtenay **Date:** February 13, 2023
Subject: Vancouver Island Action Plan – Responding to the Homelessness Crisis

Resolution:

WHEREAS the historical gap between the supply and demand for social and supportive housing in Vancouver Island communities has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in a homelessness crisis; and,

WHEREAS in the absence of an overall provincial housing strategy, clear funding guidelines, accessible application processes, and adequate funding, the homelessness crisis continues to increase illness and death amongst our vulnerable homeless population and social disorder throughout Vancouver Island Communities.

THEREFORE be it resolved that the AVICC and UBCM executive facilitate a meeting between Vancouver Island Mayors and the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and BC Housing officials to demand an immediate action plan to address the homelessness crisis and its impacts on Vancouver Island communities.

Background:

The homelessness crisis is a growing concern for all local governments, and increasingly so for those located on Vancouver Island and in coastal communities. In the past year, the number of homeless people living on the island and coastal communities has increased dramatically¹, creating an urgent need for immediate action by both local governments and the province to develop and provide social and supportive housing across all communities. Contributors to homelessness, exacerbated by the Covi-19 pandemic include: increased cost of accommodation, falling incomes, rampant inflation, mental health and addiction. These pressures have increased the demand for supportive and social housing to a level that in the absence of significant intervention are unattainable.

Homelessness has a wide range of impacts, from physical health concerns to social and economic issues.

- **Health:** Across Vancouver Island, in 2021, communities saw the highest ever rates of illicit drug toxicity deaths. While BC recorded a 26% increase in fatalities in 2021, Vancouver Island

¹ The estimated number of homeless individuals in the City of Courtenay increased 132% between 2018 and 2021

increases were even greater with some communities as high as 150% increase in suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths over 2020.

- **Health:** As of June 30th, 2021 North Vancouver Island has the fourth highest death rates at 47.5 per 100,000 (following Vancouver, Northeast, and Thompson Cariboo Health Service Delivery Areas)
- **Health:** Coroners Service reported that in May 2022, 195 deaths from suspected drug poisonings were recorded - the highest number ever recorded in the month of May. This represents a 13% increase over 2021 (172) and a 20% increase in deaths from April 2022 (162). This represents approximately 6.3 deaths per day in BC.

In addition to the human cost of homelessness, the economic impact on businesses and the financial burden on local governments is significant and without effective and collaborative partnership with the provincial government long-term sustainable solutions will continue to be out of reach.

- **Businesses:** Increased operating costs for businesses include: additional security, negative impacts on local business and tourism, increased cleaning costs, increased insurance costs, loss of revenue, increased taxes etc.²
- **Local Governments:** are currently incurring significant costs related to bylaw enforcement, support and outreach services (e.g. shower programs, increased community grant contributions, lease grants to shelters etc.), encampment clean up, temporary housing projects, environmental site remediation, and RCMP.

Vancouver Island Action Plan

Historically in BC, a coordinated effort combined with strategic investments have proven effective in addressing complex and challenging problems. Most recently demonstrated by the Provinces' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, provincial agencies, experts and municipalities work closely together to analyse, plan for, and coordinate short, medium and long-term collaborative response and mitigation efforts. The systems thinking applied in response to the COVID-10 pandemic is needed to effectively respond to the homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis.

A Vancouver Island action plan will outline and coordinate strategies and mechanisms to ensure the provision of housing options for individuals and families who are homeless, are at risk of becoming homeless, and for those with complex support needs. The plan would identify and prioritize resources, allocate funding, and develop innovative strategies to meet the diverse needs of our island communities – from small rural towns to large metropolitan centres. It can also provide guidance on how to best utilize existing housing resources and create new housing opportunities. Lastly, a plan with clear objectives and definite timelines would have the added advantage of providing planning certainty to local communities, rather than the current process of competing for limited grants.

² BC Chamber of Commerce, *Keeping Communities and Their Economies Safe in an Era of Drug Addiction, Mental Health Issues, and Homelessness* (2020) <https://bcchamber.org/policy/keeping-bc-communities-and-their-economies-safe-in-an-era-of-drug-addiction-mental-health-issues-and-homelessness-2020/>

Background for Proposed AVICC Resolution

Provision of Energy for Commercial Agriculture

On Vancouver Island, it is estimated only approximately 10% of the food consumed locally is also grown locally¹. Consequently, food security on Vancouver Island is highly at risk in the event of an emergency that disrupts the transportation system and it is therefore desirable to significantly increase local food production.

Furthermore, many rural and First Nations communities are dependent on seasonal or market-reliant industries such as tourism and forestry and would derive immense economic benefit from investment in commercial greenhouse agriculture, including year-round agri-tourism opportunities, a diversified economy; job creation; and backhaul trucking opportunities.

By establishing infrastructure that could supply sufficient natural gas for commercial greenhouse growing, the Province could assist AVICC member communities in fostering year-round commercial agricultural opportunities, thus providing a multitude of economic benefits as well as increased food security for Vancouver Island.

¹ <https://via.ca/lack-security-vancouver-island-food-production-decline/>

January 24, 2023

2023 AVICC Resolution

Watershed Security Strategy and Fund

Background

Healthy watersheds are at the forefront of climate resiliency and are the foundation of all social, environmental and economic systems. Today, many watersheds in B.C. are facing challenges that will require new management approaches to help ensure they remain sustainable for future generations. Watershed security requires sustainable and independent funding for communities to build the capacity and resilience required to secure the health of their local watersheds, including the fish, wildlife and nature that depend on them. Failing to act now and into the future will make these watersheds more vulnerable to impacts of climate change.

Achieving watershed security on eastern Vancouver Island is made even more complex by the historic land ownership context resulting from the 1884 Settlement Act which saw over 2 million acres of unceded land on south eastern Vancouver Island granted by the crown to private owners. The legacy of this historic land grant means that rapidly growing communities on eastern Vancouver Island are responsible for providing safe, sustainable drinking water for our communities from privately owned lands, where active forestry is taking place, and over which we have no authority.

On November 26th, 2020, the BC government committed to creating a Watershed Security Strategy and Fund in their current mandate. Then in April 2022, the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship was established with a mandate focused on reconciliation, economic recovery and environmental sustainability. This includes a mandate letter commitment for the ministry to establish a Watershed Security Strategy and a Watershed Security Fund. In addition, the 2022 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act) Action Plan commits the Province to co-development of the Watershed Security Strategy with First Nations

On January 25th, 2022, the Province of BC released a [Watershed Security Strategy and Fund discussion paper](#) and launched a public engagement process. The Village of Cumberland was among many Vancouver Island communities who provided formal feedback during the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Discussion Paper Engagement Process. This feedback included the need to:

- ***Consider the unique private land land ownership context of eastern Vancouver Island in the development and implementation of the Strategy.***
- *Support communities to manage jurisdictional overlap*

- *Recognize, support and fund local processes underway in order to gain efficiencies and leverage watershed governance activities already underway between watershed knowledge holders, stakeholder, land owners and indigenous government.*
- *Support and fund local government for restoration and remediation to address significant legacy infrastructure issues (logging and mining) in our watershed.*
- *Support and fund collaborative data collection and monitoring at the local level to better understand how our watersheds function and how we can support their resilience.*
- *Support and fund watershed land securement projects, and long term community watershed management obligations.*
- *Support and funding to build community climate resilience through education, risk assessment and adaptation including the protection of natural climate solutions.*

In November 2022 the province released their ['What We Heard Report'](#) from the engagement on the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund. The engagement process uncovered the following key themes emphasizing the importance of:

- *Reconciliation, climate change and governance*
- *Creating a culture of one water: Encompassing cultural, social, economic and environmental systems*
- *Understanding water and watersheds, including watershed assessment and risk, adaptive management and knowledge systems*
- *Working together on watershed governance: The need for local approaches, integration across sectors, policy and legislation, and compliance and enforcement*
- *Stewarding watersheds: The importance of source water protection, land water links, water for agriculture, water conservation, watershed restoration, fish and healthy aquatic ecosystems*
- *Building capacity and funding watersheds: Developing internal and external resourcing capacity and providing funding for watersheds*

While the key themes in the What We Heard Report responded to many of the issues expressed by Island communities, it did not reference the unique context and specific challenges facing communities managing drinking water on privately owned lands including the legislative and regulatory content (PMFLA) and new resources for land protection and land acquisition.

The next step for the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund is the release of an **Intentions Paper**, which will be informed by the public engagement to date and will include proposed actions for the Watershed Security Strategy. These actions will be developed in collaboration with the B.C.- First Nations Water Table and Treaty Nations, as committed to in the Declaration Act Action Plan. Public engagement on the Intentions Paper will take place in early 2023, and work on the Watershed Security Fund will follow the development of the strategy

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****E&N Land Grant Biodiversity Protection and Restoration**

A condition of British Columbia joining the Canadian confederation in 1871 was for the Dominion to build a connecting railway from the seaboard of BC to the Canadian rail system (“Pacific to the Rocky Mountains”). Subsequently, the Esquimalt Nanaimo Railway (E&N Railway) was constructed to connect the provincial capitals to Victoria.

In 1883, Robert Dunsmuir, a minister in the provincial government, was awarded \$750,000 and 8,000 square kilometers of crown land on the southeast coast of Vancouver Island in exchange for building the E&N Railway. This land grant, known as the E&N Land Grant, privatized twenty percent of Vancouver Island.

The E&N Land Grant ignored existing pre-confederation treaties including the Snuneymuxw treaty of 1854, making it difficult for First Nations on the southeast coast of Vancouver Island to negotiate modern day treaties because there is very little crown land to negotiate with. For this reason, the E&N Land Grant was the focus of a petition by the Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2007.

The E&N Land Grant affected more than just Indigenous rights and title to traditional territories. It also affected other communities within and adjacent to the lands. The Capital Regional District purchased lands within the E&N Land Grant area for the whole Sooke Lake watershed catchment area. Other municipalities and regional districts own only portions of their community drinking watersheds. For example, the City of Nanaimo owns the footprint of two dams to the high water mark of the reservoirs and a small buffer. However, the majority of the E&N Land Grant lands are not protected. As a result, the watersheds that we rely on for potable drinking water are being managed under private forest management plans that could impact the quality and quantity of water supply for many Vancouver Island communities. In addition to providing critical water supply, these watersheds also contain sensitive ecological systems and geological features including karst formations.

The Government of Canada has signed on to the goals of the United Nations Fifteenth Biodiversity Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15) which targets the conservation of 30 percent of the lands and 30 percent of the oceans by 2030. The Government of Canada recognizes that:

Halting and reversing biodiversity loss requires real collaboration and partnership, including with Indigenous Peoples, the original guardians of the land. It also requires real transformative change, innovation, and a proper accounting for the true value of nature in decision-making across all sectors.

The Government of Canada has created a program entitled “Canada’s Nature Legacy: Protecting our Nature”. As stated on the Government of Canada website:

In the face of population growth, urbanization, industrial development, and global climate change, Canada has established domestic and international biodiversity goals. These goals include conserving a quarter of Canada’s lands and a quarter of its oceans by 2025, and working toward conserving 30% by 2030. To support these goals, the Government of Canada invested an

additional \$2.3 billion over five years in Budget 2021. This Funding will support work with other governments, Indigenous groups, non-profit organizations, and others. Taken together with funding provided for the Nature Legacy Initiative announced in 2018, this represents the largest investment in nature conservation in Canada's history."

As part of Canada's Nature Legacy program, the Canada Nature Fund supports the protection of Canada's biodiversity through the creation of protected and conserved areas and through initiatives that help to recover species at risk. The Fund is available to not-for-profit and Indigenous organizations, provinces and territories, and others.

The Spaces stream of the Canada Nature Fund currently consists of two core components:

- 1. The Pathway to Canada Target 1 Challenge, which supports the creation of protected areas on provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous lands.*
- 2. The Natural Heritage Conservation Program, which supports the creation of protected areas on private lands.*

Funding for community-nominated priority places is helping to protect species at risk across Canada by developing partnerships and implementing multi-species and ecosystem-based conservation actions. Community-nominated priority places are found outside of the 11 priority places currently identified under the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada.

Indigenous-Led Area-Based Conservation (ILABC) provides funding to Indigenous Peoples to lead or co-lead the establishment and recognition of protected areas or other effective area-based conservation mechanisms (OECMs) across Canada. This program acknowledges the importance of culture, language, socio-economic factors, and traditional land use as part of conservation efforts.

The Government of British Columbia has also made a commitment to the goal of protecting 30% of the province's land base by 2030. The mandate letter to the Honourable Nathan Cullen, Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship states:

Partnering with the federal government, industry, and communities, and working with Indigenous Peoples, lead the work to achieve the Nature Agreement's goals of 30% protection of BC's land base by 2030, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.

There are important and unique ecological and geological features within the E&N Land Grant area. There are red listed and blue listed species, including threatened salmon runs, endangered Vancouver Island marmots and other threatened species. Loss of habitat and loss of biodiversity are major contributors to this list of threatened and endangered species.

Some large areas within the E&N Land Grant are far below the previous BC Government target of 15% protection for conservation and park land. For example, the Nanaimo River watershed, one of the largest watersheds on Vancouver Island, is 750 square kilometers in size. Less than 2 square kilometers of this watershed are designated as parkland and less than 11 square kilometres are designated as protected conservation areas. These parks and protected areas represent less than 2% of this whole watershed.

The need to protect this land is urgent to ensure the long-term preservation of our water supply and all of the interconnected ecosystems and species. We request your support of this resolution that AVICC urge the provincial and federal governments to act to implement their promised targets for conservation and protection of biodiversity.

References

Crown Land Grants A History of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Land Grants, The Railway Belt and the Peace River Block <https://itsa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Crown-Land-Grants-A-History-of-the-E-and-N.pdf>

International Human Rights Commission Admits Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Case
http://www.hulquminum.bc.ca/pubs/media_release_HTG_IACHR_01Dec09.pdf

The Great Land Grab in Hul'qumi'num Territory
<http://www.hulquminum.bc.ca/pubs/HTGRailwayBookSpreads.pdf?lbisphpreg=>

Canada's Nature Legacy
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/nature-legacy.html>

Canada's Nature Fund
<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/fund.html>

Indigenous-Led Area-Based Conservation (ILABC)
<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/indigenous-leadership-funding.html>

The mandate letter to the Honourable Nathan Cullen, Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/ministries-organizations/premier-cabinet-mlas/minister-letter/wlrs - cullen - w_ps.pdf



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R5

Recapitalization of Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) Background Information

Since its inception, ICET has invested over \$55 million to the Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast regions of British Columbia through partnerships with community-led initiatives. These investments have led to the creation of significant permanent jobs, supported local small businesses and entrepreneurs, and developed infrastructure and services that have helped to attract new investment and visitors, continuing to build economic resiliency.

The unincorporated Electoral Areas of the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI EA), Juan de Fuca (JDF EA), and Salt Spring Island (SSI EA) are within the CRD, but contain communities that are rural by character, geography, population size, and capacity to sustain services. These rural electoral areas of the CRD were historically excluded from participating in funding programs of the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) as a result of being a part of the CRD, which is otherwise characterized by urban municipalities with large population centres. The decision to exclude these rural areas from rural programs and funding was contested as it did not reflect the electoral areas rural character, geography, land use or capacity to sustain services.

In 2016, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities passed a resolution asking the Province to officially recognize and classify the three CRD electoral areas as rural communities. The CRD Board continued to advocate for our rural electoral areas and, in 2018, passed a resolution requesting the Province of BC classify the electoral areas as “rural,” so that they may qualify and receive the benefits from Provincial and Federal Government programs that are directed at rural communities. In 2021, the three CRD electoral areas were finally included within the boundaries of the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

In this short time, there has been some investment on Salt Spring and Pender Islands but additional funding is vital to supporting sustainability and resiliency in our rural coastal communities. Given the ongoing economic challenges facing our region, it is more important than ever that we continue to support ICET's vital work.

CRD's call for a generational investment of \$150 million into the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) is to enable our Electoral Areas to benefit from the only economic trust serving the island-coastal region. The CRD Board believes that a significant investment from the province would enable ICET to continue to make a real difference in our communities, and we request AVICC and UBCM's support to call on the Province to recapitalize investment in ICET.



Date: January 25, 2023
File No: 0390-20-AVICC

**RESOLUTION for Consideration by Delegates at the AVICC 2023 AGM & Convention
BC Emergency Health Services | Demands on Local Governments**

In alignment with Council's *2019-2023 Corporate Strategic Plan* and the goal of "fostering a complete community that is safe, healthy and inclusive", Council for the City of Port Alberni is submitting the attached resolution for consideration.

Medical first responder call volume data taken locally and provincially reflects an upward trajectory year over year. These medical first responder calls have increased at a disproportionately higher rate for municipal emergency responders than those reported by British Columbia Emergency Health Services [BCEHS]. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, opioid crisis and increased occurrence of severe weather events, combined with staff shortages, local government fire departments are consistently being overtasked to provide emergency health services.

BCEHS is responsible for the delivery, co-ordination and governance of emergency health services. BCEHS is the only organization in the province authorized by legislation to provide emergency health services; however, BCEHS can, and does, consent to other organizations, primarily fire departments, providing these services as part of a co-ordinated response.

While BCEHS works with fire departments through a number of avenues, challenges are present in achieving a coordinated approach to the access and provision of emergency health services. The varying capacity across the province for fire departments to provide first responder services, as well as the involvement of different levels of government in the coordination of emergency health services are two significant challenges. Support from the provincial government is required to both improve co-ordination and ensure the provincial responsibilities of emergency health care services are not being continually downloaded onto local governments.

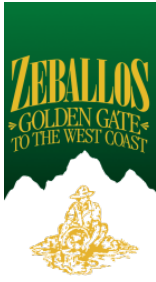
Therefore, we call on the Ministry of Health to work with local governments and BCEHS to ensure that BCEHS can implement a coordinated approach to emergency health services that results in adequate funding and staffing levels so as to not overburden local governments, particularly municipal first responders.

Yours truly,
CITY OF PORT ALBERNI



Sharie Minions
Mayor

c: City Council
T. Pley, CAO
D. Leurebourg, Director of Corporate Services



VILLAGE OF ZEBALLOS

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Vancouver Island Health Attraction and Retention

WHEREAS the Ministry of Health has overall responsibility for ensuring that quality, appropriate, cost-effective, and timely health services are available for *all* British Columbians;

AND WHEREAS rural, remote communities are subject to a loss of services due to position vacancies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC & UBCM request that the Province of BC continue to support Vancouver Island Health by increasing the health budget for nursing and physicians attraction and retention, as well as including opportunities for all other emerging health care providers, such as physician assistants.

Zeballos Council Resolution: **015/2023**

Background:

The Village of Zeballos is home to an Island Health clinic that provides healthcare services to the residents of Zeballos, and the neighbouring first nation communities of Ehatis and Oclucje; however, the closest emergency medical care is provided by the hospitals on the North Island, located in Port Hardy and Port McNeill.

Like many rural and remote areas in the province, these hospitals have been experiencing a significant disruption of emergency services, sometimes for days at a time, due to a shortage of healthcare professionals. The number of service disruptions has increased significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Residents of rural and remote communities in the province already face greater healthcare disparities than many more populous areas. Whether that's accessing primary care services through a family doctor, specialist services, or timely emergency healthcare services, those inequities exist in the healthcare system.

Healthcare can not be provided without health professionals, and health professionals will not be attracted to working in these communities without appropriate support or a quality reason to stay. Historically, this support has been lacking which contributes to negative consequences for health-related outcomes, including challenges with the recruitment, retention, and burnout of health professionals working in these areas.

- [Temporary service interruption at Port McNeill Hospital Emergency Department | Island Health](#)
- [Extension of temporary overnight service interruption at Port Hardy Hospital emergency department | Island Health](#)

Sent from the territory of the Ehattesaht Chinehkint First Nation.

Background for Proposed AVICC Resolution

Annual Adjustment of Provincial Homeowner Grant

The Province of British Columbia offers the Homeowner Grant, which uses provincial funds to offset municipal property taxes for individual homeowners.

Recent economic conditions, including increasing inflation, interest rates, insurance, and property taxes, has caused many homeowners to struggle with the cost of living. These same homeowners are the source from which municipalities draw much of their revenue.

Conversely, some provincial revenue sources such as Provincial Sales Tax and Property Transfer Tax are actually increasing under these same economic conditions.

Meanwhile, the Homeowner Grant offered by the province remains fixed.

An automatic annual adjustment of the Homeowner Grant in line with inflation would have minimal impact on the provincial budget, but significant benefit to struggling homeowners and municipalities.

BACKGROUND

Since 1999, every new home in British Columbia must be built by a licensed residential builder (with some exceptions), registered with the Homeowner Protection Office (HPO) and enrolled for home warranty insurance. A residential builder must obtain a licence from BC Housing before starting construction on a new project.

The *Homeowner Protection Act* defines a residential builder as a person who engages in, arranges for or manages, all, or substantially all, of the construction of a new home. **A "new home" is defined as a building, or portion of a building, that is newly constructed or being constructed and is intended for residential occupancy.** The *Act* further states that a local government must not issue a building permit for a proposed new home unless the applicant provides evidence that the proposed new home will be built by a licensed residential builder. Even in areas where building permits are not required, a licensed residential builder is responsible for construction. There is a similar set of regulations for people that wish to build their own home as an "owner-builder".

Communities across British Columbia are acutely aware of the challenges associated with both affordable housing and housing supply. This has resulted in myriad responses from local governments and the Province in a scramble to find solutions. While some communities are impacted by housing affordability or available housing supply, others are impacted by both. There has been some modest improvement in some communities while other communities have seen little to no change in these circumstances. After facilitating early interventions, many communities, particularly small communities, are wondering what, if anything, can be done next.

RATIONALE

A key issue that is exacerbating the problem of the housing crisis is the lack of new housing starts. This is felt most acutely in smaller, rural BC communities. Such communities have typically fewer resources in the building trades, and in particular, licensed builders. Prior to the requirement for builders to be licensed, builders would need to rely on qualified building inspectors to ensure construction met the BC Building Code regulations – in a "checks and balances" sort of system. While the notion of ensuring higher quality and warranted building construction, as contemplated by the *Homeowner Protection Act*, was laudable, it would seem that there has been unintended negative impacts. This refers to a sharp reduction in residential builders in smaller rural communities due to licensing requirements. In many small BC communities, there are no

licensed builders. This means that houses are not being built and new residential building additions are not being built in these communities. In other communities, there is simply an insufficient number of licensed builders to meet the demand for housing.

This scenario results in structural problems for these communities where supply is scarce and key workers, such as teachers or health care workers, for example, cannot find accommodation and do not choose to work in the community. The ripple effects are considerable. The intent of the proposed Resolution is to have the Province of BC reexamine the approach to builder licensing in an effort to facilitate more residential housing starts in smaller rural communities. At the core would be an amendment to the *Homeowner Protection Act* to facilitate a return to the reliance on appropriately qualified municipal building inspectors together with appropriate oversight (for small rural communities). Whether such an initiative is for a specific duration or permanent, it would lead to increased capacity translating into more housing starts. This would be a powerful step forward in the efforts to address the housing crisis.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Extreme Weather Response

For the Resolution proposed regarding “Extreme Weather Response”, for the 2022 and 2023 winter and summer season the City is providing funding to community organizations, the 7-10 Club Society and Risebridge, for daytime warming centres for people experiencing homelessness, and to the Nanaimo Unitarian Shelter to assist overnight guests with daytime warming services as needed. The 2022-2023 funding comes from a successful Union of BC Municipalities ‘Strengthening Communities’ Services program grant to the City to support daytime cold and hot extreme weather services. These services were enhanced in anticipation of a shortfall of available daytime and overnight services including shelters provided through provincial and non-profit resources.

On December 19, 2022, during a period of extreme cold conditions, the City of Nanaimo was directed by the Medical Health Officer to set up a temporary warming centre for vulnerable populations. This proved to be very challenging, due to the availability of staff on call to work outside of regular hours, finding a suitable facility accessible to those in need of warming services, and managing the safety of all given the very limited provision of health professionals with experience working with people with mental health and substance use disorders to assist City staff with operation of the centre.

Local governments need more support from partners to be able to continue to respond to the health and shelter needs of vulnerable populations in extreme weather events.

STATEMENT

Distributed December 21, 2022

Beban social centre opens as warming space tonight

The Vancouver Island Chief Medical Officer has identified that limited capacity in existing shelters in Nanaimo during the current cold weather constitutes a hazard to human health and has called upon the City to assist.

In response, the City of Nanaimo is creating a warming place at Beban social centre tonight from 6 pm to 8 am to help meet the need for shelter during the current cold weather.

The City would like to thank the staff, Boards and volunteers of existing shelters and warming centres for their efforts to help those in need.

Current shelter and warming services in Nanaimo include:

Risebridge is open 24 hours to offer warming centre services during extreme cold. With the current staffing model they can assist 50 individuals at a time, seven days per week. (Regular warming hours are 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm).

7-10 Club Society (at St. Paul's Anglican Church) operates from 7 am to 7 pm during extreme cold and can assist 30 to 40 people at one time. Open Monday to Friday. Regular warming hours are 10 am to 7 pm.

Unitarian Shelter offers 27 overnight shelter beds and during extreme cold offers daytime warming centre services to their shelter guests only.

Salvation Army has 35 overnight shelter beds and daytime access only for existing shelter guests.

Samaritan Place has added five additional beds during extreme cold in addition to their existing 14 beds.

St Peter's Winter Shelter now has 34 beds open 8 pm to 7:30 am.

A full list of drop in and indoor meal services can be found on the Services and Supports page at www.nanaimo.ca/goto/supports.

Continued... Beban social centre opens as warming space tonight

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed January 29, 2023

City funds additional warming services during cold weather

Summary

With temperatures dropping due to arctic outflow beginning Saturday night, the City of Nanaimo is assisting people in need of warming services. The City will provide funds for existing organizations to extend their hours of service. City staff and RCMP members will be on the street increasing coverage of wellness checks and providing warming supplies.

Additional service hours are as follows: 7-10 Club Society (at St. Paul's Anglican Church on Chapel Street) will be open from 7 am to 7 pm during cold on Monday, Jan. 30 and Tuesday, Jan. 31, and can assist 30 to 40 people at one time. Open Monday to Friday. Regular warming hours are 10 am to 7 pm.

Unitarian Shelter offers 27 overnight shelter beds and during extreme cold, offers daytime warming centre services to their shelter guests only.

Risebridge, in response to the cold, will operate from 7:30 am to 7:30 pm on Sunday, Jan. 29 and Monday, Jan. 30. Regular warming hours are 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm every day.

The City of Nanaimo provides funding to 7-10 Club and Risebridge for daytime warming centres for people experiencing homelessness, and to the Nanaimo Unitarian Shelter to assist overnight guests with daytime service as needed. Funding comes from a Union of BC Municipalities 'Strengthening Communities' Services program grant to the City to support daytime cold and hot extreme weather service.

The following services are also available:

Salvation Army has 35 overnight shelter beds and daytime access only for existing shelter guests. Samaritan Place has added five additional beds during extreme cold in addition to its existing 14 beds. St Peter's Winter Shelter now has 34 beds open 8 pm to 7:30 am.

In addition, the City's Community Safety Officers (CSO) will be working extended hours. A team of CSOs will be on and performing wellness checks until 2:30 am, with the next shift starting at 4 am. CSO's have been handing out warming supplies, cold weather clothing and hot drinks as needed. RCMP members are also performing wellness checks, offering assistance and coordinating response with CSO's.

Visit www.nanajmo.ca/goto/supports for a full list of drop-in and indoor meal services.
Strategic Link: Providing warming opportunities contributes to a livable community for all.

Key Points

- With temperatures dipping due to arctic outflow beginning Saturday night, the City of Nanaimo will provide funds for existing organizations to extend their hours of service.
- Risebridge will operate from 7:30 am to 7:30 pm on Sunday, Jan. 29 and Monday, Jan. 30. Regular warming hours are 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm every day.
- 7-10 Club Society (at St. Paul's Anglican Church on Chapel Street) will be open from 7 am to 7 pm during extreme cold on Monday, Jan. 30 and Tuesday, Jan. 31, and can assist 30 to 40 people at one time. Open Monday to Friday. Regular warming hours are 10 am to 7 pm.

Continued... City funds additional warming services during cold weather.

Background for Proposed AVICC Resolution

Planning Tools for Habitat Protection

Vancouver Island is home to ecologically valuable habitat that is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna. These delicate eco-systems are at serious risk from climate change and from infringement by human development.

As a regulator of development and urban planning at the local level, local government can play a key role in protecting environmental habitat from the impacts of human activity.

At the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2022, the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” (GBF) was adopted, including four goals and 23 targets for achievement by 2030.

The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities has a unique opportunity to develop templates for urban planning tools such as Official Community Plan bylaws, zoning bylaws (including development permit areas) and building bylaws that would assist AVICC member communities in guiding development in a sustainable manner that aligns with the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The development of this set of tools could be beneficial to communities undertaking review of their OCP or zoning bylaws by providing a road map to sustainable development regulations. Furthermore, if all AVICC members ultimately adopted this set of tools, it would help standardize development regulations across the geographical region, making the process simpler for local governments and developers and thus providing economic benefit from streamlined and standardized processes.

Resolution Summary

For decades, it has been recognized that climate change investment to move BC communities into a low carbon era has been inadequate to meet established targets. Local governments receive under 10% of total public tax dollars yet are responsible for 60% of public infrastructure. As a result, the climate transition requires new financial supports to ensure that climate targets are met.

This resolution recognizes the launch of the Local Government Climate Action program in 2022 by the Province of BC, and asks the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Cabinet to work with UBCM to plan and grow the level of investment in this program by five-fold, and to consider a ten years agreement for local governments, modeled after the Canada Community Building Fund.

Policy Context

Over the past 20 years, all orders of government in British Columbia have wrestled with how to plan for, implement, and fund climate actions that will help us meet GHG reduction targets and adapt to new climate impacts. In 2007 the BC Climate Action Charter established a long-term collaborative framework for local governments to step up to the climate challenge in collaboration with the Province. Funding through the 2010 decade helped local communities better understand community emissions, but generally real climate investment in low carbon infrastructure was grant-based and on a volunteer basis.

In part, the lack of local government investment can be explained by the limited financial resources available to them. As Property Taxes and Grants are the primary financing tools available to local government, it is difficult to face the additional financial pressures born out of the climate crisis. While other jurisdictions in

the world, including many states in the US and Europe, apportion a more steady source of income tax to local governments, and/or grant them the right to establish or participate in sales tax collection, in Canada the share of direct, reliable transfers to local governments remains minimal.

In 2022, in consultation with UBCM the Province of BC recognized this and launched the [Local Government Climate Action](#) (LGCA) program, which will help fund GHG reduction initiatives at local government and in local communities. This positive step is designed as a flexible direct transfer to local governments that have signed the BC Climate Charter, and allows local government to utilize the funding to invest in their climate action strategies. So far, the Province of BC has committed about \$100 million/year for 3 years to this initiative, to 2025.

As a local government that has signed the BC Climate Action Charter, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) was pleased to receive a first contribution from the LGCA for 2022, in the order of \$120,000 for the year. As the CVRD recently completed its Corporate GHG Emissions Reduction Plan in 2022, which calls for a 50% reduction in corporate emissions by 2030, we are already at work in allocating these contributions towards our climate priorities.

The process for allocating and utilizing these funds is similar to the CVRD's experience with the Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF), which is a direct federal transfer from general revenue to all local governments across Canada and managed through UBCM. General criteria is established, but the municipalities are empowered to make decisions on best use of resources.

Policy Request

With recognition that the LGCA program is new, the purpose of this resolution is to call for UBCM

and the Province to plan a major scale up of the program both in terms of the length of the commitment, and in the level of funding. We propose that the agreement grows to a 10 years term, and that the level of yearly allocation be grown by five-fold, to \$500 million/year, and hence similar in size and structure to the CCBF. The following points provide the background for this request:

- **Climate action investment at local government is best done with a medium-long time scale rather than a short term time scale.**

The CVRD and many local governments have completed long-term climate action plans, and the timing of expenditures is often spread over a medium to long-term horizon (5-20 years), which allows to the leveraging in of other tools such as asset management plans. Longer term security in receiving LGCA funding would simply allow for better financial planning around allocations, and prevent short term allocations to smaller projects that may not necessarily be the best to address deep GHG reductions.

- **A five-fold level of investment would better drive transformative climate action and influence local government strategic planning and investment.**

One of the reasons why the CCBF was doubled in recent years, and funds local governments in BC in the order of \$500 million/year, is both because the program proved to be a great way for different orders of governments to work together, but also because there is a recognition that the level of contribution should be enough to register in local government budgets. At the current level of funding, the LGCA will represent a contribution of less than 0.1% of the total CVRD budget. While the CCBF does influence discussions at the board around priorities and investment, the lower level of funding of the

LGCA is not as likely to drive discussions and consideration.

- **A five-fold level of investment would significantly help the CVRD to achieve its 2030 GHG Reduction target of 50%**

The CVRD is in the early stages of costing out its 2030 GHG plan, and the financial demands will be significant. A substantive increase to the LGCA would help cement our local government's commitment to the path, and secure and legitimize our own financial commitments.

- **A five-fold level of investment would be aligned with the expected increased revenue in the BC Carbon Tax, and help maintain the share of local government participation in tax revenue**

Local government are responsible for 60% of public infrastructure, but obtain less than 10% of taxes collected. As BC continues to invest in the climate transition, the LGCA could prove a key vehicle to drive our response to the climate crisis over the next decade

January 24, 2023

2023 AVICC Resolution

Managed Forest council Representation

Background

Managed Forest Land is a classification of property under BC Assessment (class 7) established in 1988 to encourage private landowners to manage their lands for long-term timber production¹. In 2022 there were 281 Managed Forests in BC comprising 805,000 hectares of private land. From this area, 4.5 million cubic meters of timber were harvested in 2022, representing 8% of the provincial harvest in that year²

Property included in the Private Managed Forest Land Reserve must comply with the *Private Managed Forest Land Act (2003)*³ (the Act) and the *Private Managed Forest Land Council Regulation (2007)*⁴ (the Regulation). Forest harvesting on property included in the Private Managed Forest Land Reserve is unrestricted by local government bylaws¹.

The Managed Forest Council regulates forest management activity on Private Managed Forest Lands. Part 2 of the Act establishes the Private Managed Forest Land Council (now known as the Managed Forest Council) and specifies that, “The object of the council is to encourage forest management practices on private managed forest land, taking into account the social, environmental and economic benefits of those practices.”³.

The Managed Forest Council is comprised of 5 council members. Two of the council members are appointed by the Minister of Forests, two are appointed by owners of private managed forest land, and the fifth (the Chair) is appointed by the four other council members. According to the Act, council members appointed by the Minister and the owners must be knowledgeable in matters pertaining to either forest management or local government³.

Many managed forests include or could affect downstream points of diversion associated with individual water licenses or licensed waterworks intakes associated with community drinking water supply systems operated by local governments. While the protection of drinking water quality is an “objective” of the Act, water licensees (including local government) have no authority to influence forest management practices taking place in watersheds that are associated with drinking water supply. In some instances, managed forest owners are obligated

¹ Managed Forest Council. 2023. <https://www.mfcouncil.ca/landowners/what-is-managed-forest-land/>. Accessed on January 3, 2023.

² Managed Forest Council. 2022. MFC 2021-2022 Annual Report. <https://www.mfcouncil.ca/mfc-2021-2022-annual-report/>. Accessed on January 3, 2023.

³ Private Managed Forest Land Act. SBC 2003. https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/03080_01. Accessed on January 03, 2023

⁴ Private Managed Forest Land Council Regulation. BC Reg. 182/2007. https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/11_182_2007. Accessed on January 03, 2023.

to inform water purveyors of forest management activities, but there is no requirement for the owners to incorporate any feedback that may be provided.

In 2016 the council published a document titled *Results of a Survey of Managed Forest Operations Protecting Drinking Water Quality*⁵. The document highlights that the protection of water quality for domestic consumption is a key management objective under the legislation. The Managed Forest Council undertook a survey of both managed forest owners and water licensees to determine “whether harvesting practices on managed forests are undertaken in a manner that protects drinking water quality for licensed water intakes, and to determine if owners are aware of their regulatory responsibilities related to their protection.”

While the survey indicated that approximately 25% of the water licensees reported a decrease in water quality which they attributed to forest management activities taking place in the Managed Forests upstream of their intakes, the report concluded that “...water quality planning assessments and operational practices conducted by private managed forest land owners are consistent with industry standards and the scale of their operations.”

Water licensees responded that riparian tree retention alongside streams that contribute to domestic water systems should be enhanced and that harvesting should be reduced in the relevant watersheds. No recommendations were included in the survey and no subsequent amendments to the Regulation have been made to address those concerns.

The Managed Forest Council has the duty to create, update and enforce the regulations affecting forest management on private managed forest lands, thus it is ultimately the responsibility of the Council to ensure that drinking water quality is in fact adequately protected. Given the significance of forest management activities to the drinking water services provided by local governments to hundreds of thousands of British Columbians, at least one of the Council members appointed by the Minister should specifically represent the interests of local governments that depend on water sources impacted by Managed Forest interest, and not just be “knowledgeable in matters relating to local government”.

⁵ Managed Forest Council. 2016. Results of a Survey of Managed Forest Operations Protecting Drinking Water Quality. <https://mfcouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/MFC-Water-License-Survey-web.pdf>. Accessed on January 03, 2023.

**RESOLUTION from the Town of Qualicum Beach for AVICC 2023
Control of Scotch Broom (Cytisus Scoparius)**

WHEREAS Climate Change brings us longer periods of drought and hotter temperatures in which Scotch broom, a highly flammable invasive species with high oil content and dry branches, will thrive and act as a volatile flash fuel, increasing the risk of wildfires and specifically Urban Interface Fires; and

WHEREAS Scotch broom spreads densely and rapidly, inhibiting forests regrowth, and negatively impacting agricultural production and native species, with a 2021 study for the Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC) designating Scotch broom as the Top Worse Offender - the invasive species doing the greatest harm to species at risk in BC;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that AVICC and UBCM work with the Province to establish and implement actionable steps to control the aggressive spread of Scotch broom all across BC, including implementing broom-free fire breaks along long stretches of broom; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that local governments are encouraged to use bylaws and policies to control and manage Scotch broom near and within urban boundaries.

BACKGROUND

Scotch broom was first brought to Vancouver Island in 1850 and has been spreading intentionally and unintentionally since then. To say that Scotch broom is now “naturalized” implies that it has found a niche in the ecosystem. But Scotch broom is an aggressive colonizer that can and will spread into *any* open area, as it did on whole mountain sides in New Zealand. Scotch broom has just gotten started! We could still get it under control (not eliminated), but time is running out. With invasive plants, *every year lost is land lost*.

AVICC passed a resolution in 2017 regarding Scotch broom.**2017 Town of Qualicum Beach MOTION, was ENDORSED and PASSED**

WHEREAS invasive Scotch broom has spread from an initial infestation in Sooke to become ubiquitous across Vancouver Island, creating a significant fire hazard and choking out native species;

AND WHEREAS cooperative effort by local government and a local volunteer community group— Broombusters Invasive Plant Society—in the Qualicum Beach area has shown that concerted action can prove effective against invasive Scotch broom; AND WHEREAS increased resources are needed to expand this project Island-wide:

THEREFORE be it resolved that the AVICC call on the Province to work with Vancouver Island local governments and community groups to effectively clear Scotch broom from highways, rail lines and power line rights-of-way over the next three years.

Unfortunately, little action has been taken. There is justified hesitation for passing BC-wide legislation regarding Scotch broom because the plant is already so widespread and out of control. But ignoring the severity of this problem is clearly negligent of our responsibility to the land, current residents, and future generations.

What's the Problem? Scotch broom:

Colonizes aggressively, matures quickly
Grows densely, crowding out native species
Threatens biodiversity
Highly Flammable – a volatile flash fuel
Negatively impacts forestry, agriculture, and tourist industries
Limits and prevents forest regrowth
Toxic to grazing animals, wild and domestic
Changes soil chemistry making it less suitable to native species
Takes over environmentally sensitive and favourite community wild spaces
Impacts medicinal plants on First Nation land

• Scotch broom increases FIRE DANGER

Climate change is bringing longer, hotter, drier summers and drought to BC, increasing fire danger. Mature Scotch broom is extremely flammable, with high oil content and naturally occurring dry branches, and it increases the likelihood of wildfires and Urban Interface Fires.

"Fire Smart initiatives are an important part for any community's survivability. The presence of Scotch broom will increase a wildfire's fuel potential and escalate its intensity. Test burns of this invasive noxious weed have proven to be highly flammable in large concentrations making a wildfire more volatile and difficult to extinguish."

Terry Peters, Fire Chief & Emergency Services Powell River

Broom under TRANSMISSION LINES: Dense, mature broom currently grows extensively under transmission lines creating long interconnected corridors of a highly flammable fuel.

• Scotch broom and BIODIVERSITY

Among all invasive species in BC, this aggressive colonizer is the biggest threat to biodiversity. A 2021 assessment study for Invasive Species Council of BC¹ designated Scotch broom as the "Top Offender", the invasive species doing the greatest harm to species at risk in BC.

• Scotch broom negatively affects AGRICULTURE - Land, Livestock, and Food Security

Scotch broom is called "the Scourge of Pastureland." It makes agricultural land unmanageable as seeds survive for 30+ years and sprout whenever soil is turned or disturbed. Scotch broom is toxic to cattle and all grazing animals (wild and domestic) and crowds out native plants and grasses upon which these animals depend for food. In addition, Scotch broom releases toxins into the soil and changes soil chemistry, making the soil less suitable for native plants.

• Scotch broom negatively impacts FORESTRY through Lost Timber Sales

Scotch broom inhibits and prevents forest regrowth. This is verified by statistics from Oregon and Washington: in 2014, Oregon reported \$47 million in lost timber sales because of Scotch broom² and in 2017, western Washington reported that widespread Scotch broom has the potential to cause \$142.7 million in lost timber sales.³

- **SCOTCH broom invades PRIVATE LAND.**

It has become too common for private land to be purchased for resale or development, then cleared of forest and ignored as Scotch broom takes over. This is happening all over. Local governments have the ability to stop this practice.

- **PEOPLE CARE about the spread of Scotch broom and they want to see action.**

There are many dedicated environmental groups cutting broom. Broombusters alone has between 600-700 volunteers cutting broom 6-7000 hours each spring.

Many AVICC municipalities actively support Broombuster volunteers: Qualicum Beach, Parksville, Nanaimo, Lantzville, Cumberland, Comox, Courtenay, Campbell River, North Cowichan, Ladysmith, Powell River, Sooke and Coquitlam. There were also volunteers working in the RDN, ACRD, CVRD, Ucluelet, Gabriola Island, Lake Cowichan, District of Highlands, Youbou and others. MOTI has supported Broombusters since 2003. **But this problem is bigger than volunteers. Much bigger.**

A Few Suggestions of What a Local Government Can Do:

This Resolution was deliberated non-specific, as situations vary dramatically across the Islands and BC Mainland. Solving this problem will require creativity, cooperation, commitment, and communication among all parties.

- Many municipalities have passed **bylaws about broom**, and when enforced, are highly effective. Bylaws will be necessary in regional districts.
- Eliminate Scotch broom from gravel pits. Make it EASY for residents to dispose of broom cut from private and public land. Engage city workers. Hire small teams to cut broom in the spring. Support volunteers so that their efforts are successful. Require that any Scotch broom infestation that is spreading seeds be kept broom-bloom free.
- *Early Detection-Rapid Response* (EDRR) practice is highly effective strategy targeting new invasive species. It does not apply to Scotch broom as it has spread extensively. But broom isn't everywhere. Broadly across the islands and within local area, *declare broom free zones and keep them clear*. Broom could be stopped from spreading extensively into the mainland now, but soon it will be too late.

THE GOOD NEWS

Qualicum Beach had huge broom lining its roads in 2006. The town is now mostly free of broom, except under the transmission lines. With recognized exceptions, when Scotch broom is cut at ground level or below before the drought of summer, the plant will die. "Cut Broom in Bloom" works. Where volunteers are at work, Scotch broom is disappearing. Everywhere else, it is spreading – like wildfire.

Scotch broom can be controlled but action must be taken now.

References:

- 1 <https://bcinvasives.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/A-Systematic-Assessment-of-Invasive-Species-Impacts-to-Species-at-Risk-in-BC-2021.pdf>
- 2 <https://www.oregon.gov/oda/shared/Documents/Publications/Weeds/ScotchbroomProfile.pdf>
- 3 <https://kingcountyweeds.com/2017/03/23/learn-the-latest-on-scotch-broom-at-symposium-in-snoqualmie-on-may-23/>

BACKGROUND – PROTECTION OF OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

The Province of BC released its Old Growth Strategic Review report on September 11, 2020. The report makes clear recommendations to keep at-risk old-growth forests standing and overhaul forest stewardship within three years. However, progress has been slow.

In the meantime, clearcutting of irreplaceable, endangered old-growth continues, even in the most-at-risk stands. This is not good news for the climate and ecosystems at threat.

In April 2022, Forest Minister Katrine Conroy announced that a little over one million hectares of these deferrals had been finalized — leaving more than half of the most at-risk old-growth forests open for logging — but was unclear about which deferrals would actually stop permitted logging.

Field assessments and satellite analysis show clear cutting continues in stands recommended for deferral resulting in the loss of tens of thousands of hectares of the most ecologically valuable forests.

While the Province has been consulting First Nations with regard to ending old-growth logging, greater financial support likely will be required for First Nations to ensure logging is deferred in all at-risk old-growth forests.

February 9, 2023

File No. 0230

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities
525 Government Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8
By email: avicc@ubcm.ca

RESOLUTION: Call for Improvements for Provincial Water Licencing Approvals

At its meeting of February 1, 2023, the following resolution was endorsed by the District of Sechelt Council:

That the following resolution be forwarded to the 2023 Association of Vancouver Island and Coast Communities (AVICC) Annual General Meeting for consideration:

Whereas the changing climate conditions are creating prolonged water restrictions that impact businesses, limit or stop food production and create other issues for many communities;

And whereas licencing for community drinking water systems may take the Province of British Columbia over two years to approve, even when a state of local emergency is in effect for the applicant;

Therefore, be it resolved that AVICC and the Union of BC Municipalities advocate to the Provincial Government to:

1. Substantially increase the resources allocated for the processing of water licence applications; and
2. Prioritize water licence applications to give urgency based on health and safety, particularly in light of the current climate conditions.

BACKGROUND: Call for Improvements for Provincial Water Licencing Approvals

With the population substantially growing in smaller communities through the pandemic-led exodus from major urban centres, in addition to the effects of climate change, access to drinking water has become a challenge for many communities. Regional growth planning is an important requirement for all communities, however keeping up with the provision of essential services during unexpected spikes in community growth requires support for local governments from the Province.

Although a community may have a regional plan to increase the water supply over time, extreme conditions may require expedited approvals for licensing and permits in order to maintain health and safety.

On the Sunshine Coast well sites were identified and proven, however despite being given “high priority”, licensing delays contributed significantly to prolonged severe water restrictions that impacted farmers and residents over the last two and half years. This resulted in reduction in food security, economic development and monetary losses for the community.

The approval process for water licences should be resourced and staffed appropriately to significantly reduce the time it takes to process applications. In addition to this, urgent large community water projects should be prioritized over small personal wells due to the risk of extreme water shortages for entire communities.

On behalf of the District of Sechelt, we thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Kerianne Poulsen

Deputy Corporate Officer

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Can We Solve the Farm Housing Problem?

August 22, 2022 [EconomyALR](#), [farm housing](#), [farmland](#), [food](#), [young farmers](#)

First Published in [Planning West](#) (PIBC), Summer 2022

By Guy Dauncey PIBC (Hon); Rob Buchan Ph.D., FCIP, RPP; Jack Anderson MCIP, RPP; Heather Pritchard; Kent Mullinix Ph.D. August 2022

There's a global food catastrophe coming our way, and we're not ready for it. It's being caused by a disastrous combination of climate-induced deluges, droughts and heat waves; the war in Ukraine; supply-chain disruptions; and food export bans by leaders who are worried about popular insurrections if they can't feed their people. Meanwhile, farmers' profit margins are being squeezed by the rising cost of fuel, fertilizer and animal feed.

How should we respond? Food price inflation is running at 8%. A report on food security in Sooke found that nearly 15% of residents have difficulty putting food on the table, and 28% are unable to afford nutritious food. Tellers at the checkouts are reporting customers saying "Anything over \$40, put it back on the shelf."

As a province, BC has a good supply of fertile farmland that is well protected by the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), but many farms grow no food. In the Alberni Regional District, the 2011-2031 Agricultural Plan reported that of the 7,700 hectares in the ALR, 59% (4,500 hectares) was not being farmed at all. The Agricultural Land Commission protects farmland by not allowing the development of more than two homes on a farm, plus temporary dwellings for seasonal workers, but there is no requirement that the occupants engage in farming. In consequence, we import more than half our food. On Vancouver Island we import 95%. It arrives on the ferry.

The average farmer is approaching 60, but most don't want to leave their homes on the farm, and the ALR rules do not allow subdivision. Many young people want to farm, but they can't afford to buy a farm, and if they do find farm work they are not legally allowed to live there long-term. On Salt Spring Island, which has a near zero rental vacancy rate, many farm workers sleep in tents or cars. Elsewhere, farmers skirt the rules, hiding trailers and tiny homes and hoping they will not be reported.

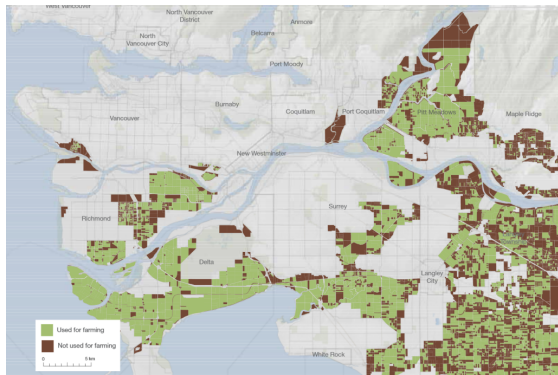
Ecological Polyculture

At [La Ferme des Quatre-Temps](#), in Quebec, Jean-Martin Fortier and his twelve workers operate an eight-acre market garden, where they generate gross annual sales of \$73,000 per acre and a profit of \$29,000 per acre using ecological polyculture. That's 1.6 workers per acre.

In France, Perrine and Charles Hervé-Gruyer use similar methods of permacultural, bio-intensive, organic farming at [La Ferme du Bec Hellouin](#), near Rouen, northwest of Paris. The average French farm of 120 hectares employs one person. Perrine and Charles employ 22 people on 17 acres. That's 1.3 workers per acre. Both these examples show farming that produces a high, eco-friendly yield and creates jobs.

The ALR Land Sits Unused

In Surrey, where 6,000 acres of ALR land sit unused (27% of Surrey's ALR), [research](#) found that if 3,300 hectares that could still be farmed were used for small-scale, human-intensive, direct market production, they could supply 100% of Surrey's seasonal consumption of 29 crop and animal products, and create 1,500 jobs.^[1]



Surrey ALR Lands, 2014

For 49 years, the ALR has done an admirable job of protecting BC's farmland, but it has not succeeded in its second goal, which is to encourage more farming. Farm workers don't want to live in poor quality seasonal workers' accommodation. They want to build a proper livelihood, which requires living on the farm and being able to steward its health year-round, ideally having a share in ownership of the land so that they can put their hearts into it.

A Possible Solution

The authors of this article have come up with a possible solution that will allow farm workers to live year-round on the land, while still protecting BC's farmland. It requires a slight shift in the Agricultural Land Commission's rules. Rather than restricting the number of permitted dwellings, our proposal restricts the amount of land that can be developed, enabling more homes to be built within the same footprint.

The current rule is that on up to 40 hectares, a farm is allowed one residence with a floor area up to 500 m² (5,381 sq ft), and a secondary residence with a floor area up to 90 m² (969 sq. ft.). On more than 40 hectares, it's one residence of the size permitted when it was built, and a secondary residence with a floor area up to 186 m². (2,000 sq. ft.). In none of these dwellings is the occupant required to farm.

To put this in perspective, on a five-acre farm the permitted floor area of both residential units, if they were single story, would cover 2.9% of the land. On 40 hectares, they would cover 0.15% of the land.

For the five acre farm, with its total allowed 6,350 sq. ft. of floor area, our proposed rules would allow five homes each with a floor area of 1,270 sq. ft, or ten small homes each with a floor area of 635 sq. ft..

On 40 hectares, if dwellings were permitted on 2% of the land (instead of 0.15%), this would allow 30 homes, each with a floor area of 1,000 sq. ft. In every case, the housing would need to be closely clustered to reduce servicing costs and land-loss.

How Could This Work?

How could this work? First, a farm owner would learn about new ways to increase food production and the overall sustainability of the farm. Then he, she or they would develop a detailed phased Farm Plan

for increased food production and accommodation. The Plan would identify where clustered housing could be developed close to existing roads and servicing, and least disruptive of productive farmland.

A Sustainable Farm Zone Bylaw would be needed to lay out the rules for clustering, housing, affordability, roads, sewage, water, storm drains, and so on. Any necessary bylaw amendments would be sought, initiating a process of community input. The requested housing could be temporary (small homes that could be relocated) or permanent, as long as the permitted housing footprint remains.

But what's to stop a farmer from going through the hoops, building new homes and renting them out, using the income to cease farming and become a landlord instead? Without a clear constraint, our solution could cause even less food to be produced.

One possible answer is a rent charge written into a Section 219 Covenant attached to the land. This would allow a charge to the owner if the conditions of the Farm Plan, including farming and occupancy, were not met reflecting the Farm Plan. This charge would be payable to the ALC or a similar body, and high enough to remove any incentive to develop the land for housing only.

On April 18th 2023 the ALR will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. It has been successful in meeting its first goal, which is to protect farmland, but not its second goal, which is to encourage more farming. We invite all rural and agricultural planners to put your thinking caps on and help us come up with a solution that will allow farmworkers to live legally on the land year-round, so that they can get on with growing more food while continuing to protect BC's all-important farmland.

Guy Dauncey is an author, futurist, and co-chair of the West Coast Climate Action Network.

Dr. Rob Buchan is the City Manager for Prince Rupert, CEO at iPlan Planning and Development Services Ltd., and an Adjunct Professor at Simon Fraser University.

Jack Anderson is the President of Greenplan.

Heather Pritchard is Coordinator of the Foodlands Cooperative of BC.

Kent Mullinix is the Director of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security at Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

To contact us, please email guydauncey@earthfuture.com

^[1] Mullinix, K., Dorward, C., Shutzbank, M., Krishnan, P., Ageson, K., & Fallick, A. (2013). *Beyond protection: Delineating the economic and food production potential of underutilized, small-parcel farmland in metropolitan Surrey, British Columbia*. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 4(1), 33–50. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2013.041.005>

February 9, 2023

File No. 0230

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities
525 Government Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8
By email: avicc@ubcm.ca

RESOLUTION: Deferment Program for Local Government Parcel Taxes and Utility Fees

At its meeting of February 1, 2023, the following resolution was endorsed by the District of Sechelt Council:

That the following resolution be forwarded to the 2023 Association of Vancouver Island and Coast Communities (AVICC) Annual General Meeting for consideration:

Whereas parcel taxes and utility fees have risen substantially in recent years, adding to the increased cost of living for British Columbians;

And whereas eligible property owners can defer their property taxes under a provincial deferment program;

Therefore, be it resolved that AVICC and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities advocate to the Provincial Government to expand the existing property tax deferment program to include local government parcel taxes and utility bills.

BACKGROUND: Deferment Program for Parcel Tax and Local Government Utility Fees

Tax deferment is a provincial low interest loan program that helps qualified homeowners in British Columbia pay their annual property taxes on their principal residence. Taxes can be deferred for any year the homeowner lives in the home and continues to qualify for the program.

Tax deferment helps seniors stay in their homes longer and allows families to focus on providing for their children. Federal and provincial governments are currently encouraging seniors to “age in place” by providing tax credits for home modifications to adapt to their needs.

With the ever-increasing rates for parcel taxes and local government utility fees, and the stagnant low-income for seniors and families, we ask that the province extend its tax deferral program to include parcel tax and local government utility fees.

On behalf of the District of Sechelt, we thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Kerianne Poulsen

Deputy Corporate Officer

BACKGROUND

Many communities face issues associated with problem long term vacant buildings. These are buildings that simply sit vacant for many years, not because the site is involved in a development process, but because the owner is simply disinclined to cause the utilization of the building. These can be considered holding properties where it is more cost effective for an owner to perform minimal maintenance than to demolish the building. Such “dark” buildings are frequently located in areas of high visibility and create a sense of urban decay and neglect. This can be expected to generate negative impacts on adjacent property values, residents and businesses and can result in decreased neighbourhood pride.

There is a difference between buildings that are left vacant for years and receive just enough maintenance to avoid a bylaw infraction and those that do not. In the case of the former, such buildings convey a feeling of urban decay but do not constitute a bylaw infraction. In the case of the latter, the legislation enables local governments to enact bylaws for the protection and enhancement of the well-being of the community in relation to various nuisances, disturbances and objectionable situations. The Community Charter also provides authorities that can be used as incentives for property owners to develop their vacant properties. However, while this broad scope of powers can ensure maintenance to a basic level, or incentivize redevelopment, it does not resolve the problem of urban blight generated by long-term dark buildings.

It is acknowledged that local government authority to impose requirements on property owners must be exercised in a balanced way so that any solution is not out of proportion to the scope of the issue. However, this identified gap in authority leaves local government without the ability to address the deleterious problems associated with long term, dark, vacant holding properties.

RATIONALE

Local governments have been provided with authorities to address problem properties in relation to a defined scope of nuisances, disturbances and objectionable situations, and to incentivize redevelopment of property. The legislative gap in the middle, left unaddressed, causes local government to be unable to intervene in the problem caused by long-term vacant holding properties. A legislative amendment that would provide tools to incentivize the *utilization* of otherwise vacant buildings would be a very valuable

addition to the suite of existing authorities. Closing the existing legislative gap would ensure that local government has the authority to address vacant building issues across the entire continuum of maintenance, utilization, and redevelopment.



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

MEMORANDUM

To: Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities **File No.:** 0390-20
From: City of Courtenay **Date:** February 13, 2023
Subject: Fossil Fuel Corporate Sponsorship of UBCM and AVICC

Resolution:

WHEREAS the operations of Fossil Fuel producers have a direct impact on, and significantly contribute to the ongoing Climate Crisis; and,

WHEREAS climate change is creating local effects that are having negative impacts on our infrastructure, buildings, crops, health, and ecosystems increasingly effecting our community's stability.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM not solicit/accept support or corporate sponsorship from Fossil Fuel producers in acknowledgement of the inherent contradiction between fossil fuel sponsorship of local government associations and the role local governments play responding to and combating climate change.

Background:

Oil and gas companies sponsoring government events in British Columbia (BC) has become a contentious issue, with many individuals and organizations advocating against it. The reasons for this are numerous and include concerns about environmental impacts, public health outcomes, the influence of corporate interests on government decision-making, and the alignment of government actions with public values and priorities.

One of the key concerns is the environmental impact of the oil and gas industry. The extraction and use of fossil fuels is a significant contributor to climate change and associated environmental problems, such as air and water pollution, land degradation, and loss of biodiversity. Climate change has been directly linked to significant and concerning health outcomes include deaths from extreme heat events, worsening of asthma and other lung conditions from wildfire events, and expansion of zoonotic diseases such as Lyme disease. Air pollution (most of it caused by the burning of fossil fuels) is the 11th highest cause of premature death in Canada. As well, air pollution causes increased illness and hospitalizations from heart and respiratory disease and increased pediatric asthma. (Health Canada, 2021).

By accepting sponsorship from oil and gas companies, governments are seen as endorsing these practices and sending a message that they are not taking the environmental impacts of the industry seriously.

Another concern is the potential for corporate interests to unduly influence government decision-making. When companies sponsor government events, they often expect to receive exposure and recognition for their contributions. This can lead to a perception that the government is beholden to these companies, which can compromise the independence of government decision-making and undermine public trust in the political process.

Finally, accepting sponsorship from oil and gas companies does not align with the values and priorities of majority. Many individuals and organizations view the continued extraction and use of fossil fuels as incompatible with efforts to transition to a sustainable and low-carbon future. By accepting sponsorship from these companies, governments are seen as supporting practices that are out of step with public opinion and the broader public interest.

There are several reasons why oil and gas companies should not sponsor government events in BC. These include concerns about environmental impacts and corresponding public health outcomes, the influence of corporate interests on government decision-making, and the alignment of government actions with public values and priorities. To maintain public trust and ensure that government decisions are in the public interest, it is important to avoid any perceived conflicts of interest and to take a careful and measured approach to accepting sponsorships from corporations.



2023 AVICC RESOLUTION BACKGOUNDER

ENABLE ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE AT CONVENTIONS

Town of View Royal

Conference/Convention Attendance is Important:

Attendance of elected officials at conferences, conventions, and any other type of seminar, workshop, or training can be a useful experience for learning, information sharing, and networking.

Virtual Attendance During COVID-19 Lockdown was Provided:

During the lockdown phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations, including the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) held virtual conferences. This electronic attendance format facilitated attendance when it would not have otherwise been possible, allowing for the ongoing interaction and communication that elected officials have come to appreciate from AVICC and UBCM.

Virtual Attendance is Embraced by Local Government:

As British Columbia began to move through its COVID-19 4-step “BC Restart Plan” and layers of pandemic-related protection were reviewed and considered for removal by the Province, *Bill 10 - Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 2021* received Royal Assent on June 17, 2021. This Bill introduced changes to existing legislation that saw some beneficial pandemic-related measures retained once the provincial state of emergency, the “Ministerial Orders”, and the *COVID-19 Related Measures Act* came to an end. Specifically, Bill 10 provided for a continuation of electronic regular and committee meetings and public hearings that had occurred during the pandemic. Local governments embraced these legislative provisions, amending their procedure bylaws to facilitate electronic meetings and participation.

Analysis – Benefits of a Hybrid Conference Format:

While there are costs to hosting a hybrid conference/convention and technological challenges that can happen, the format has many benefits, including, but not limited to:

- information sharing can still occur;
- potential for increased attendance; and for those that attend virtually:
 - o reduced travel costs (mileage/air fare, hotel expenses, food and beverage costs);
 - o no travel time for individual participants;
 - o reduced environmental impact; and
 - o convenience for those with access or mobility challenges.

- [Physician shortage leads to service disruption at Port McNeill Hospital, Island Health says \(cheknews.ca\)](#)
- [Port McNeill Hospital emergency department to once again close over weekend \(cheknews.ca\)](#)
- [Temporary service interruption at Port Hardy Hospital emergency department | Island Health](#)
- [Port Hardy Hospital's emergency department closed temporarily, Island Health says - BC | Globalnews.ca](#)

Background: Safe Drug Supply

British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared opioid-related deaths a public health emergency on April 14, 2016. Rates of death subsequently declined, but this trend reversed when COVID-19 pandemic restrictions began. Between April 2016 and Dec 31st, 2022 over 11,390 B.C. residents died preventable deaths due to accidental overdose linked back to the still-unregulated drug market. Contrary to common narratives, these deaths are less about opioids than they are drug contamination: since 2019, the BC Coroners Service has documented sharp increases in the variance of fentanyl and carfentanyl concentrations in the illegal drug supply. Synthetic benzodiazepines have also made it more difficult to detect and reverse overdose. Moreover, now most drugs, including cocaine, methamphetamine, and other stimulants, are adulterated with unknown substances.

As part of a continuum of responses to drug toxicity, the federal government expanded legal pathways for accessing pharmaceutical-grade alternatives to the illegal drug supply (referred to henceforth as "safe supply") at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. Since then, an emergent body of research demonstrates that safe supply has positive impacts for people who use drugs (PWUD) and the broader public. Specifically, it reduces the risk of fatal and non-fatal overdose by ensuring consumers are protected by a system of quality control and oversight throughout the supply chain. It is also linked to improved mental and physical health and social stability, in part because it connects consumers to low-barrier supports and minimizes engagement with criminal and legal systems. Regions where safe supply is available have reported reductions in crime and social disorder near dispensing sites as well as reduced economic burden related to emergency response.

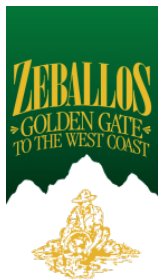
However, despite its promises, the reach of existing prescriber-driven safe supply programs in B.C. remains limited. Access to safe supply has predominantly occurred by enrolling in precariously-funded pilot studies that are impermanent, unsustainable, and mired in capacity constraints. Locating a prescriber and dispensing pharmacy may also be costly and time-consuming for those outside of the major urban centres. People who use drugs (PWUD) in remote and rural areas, including on-reserve, report having to travel significant distances for appointments with medical personnel who are familiar with the process of safe supply initiation. Many cannot do so.

The options available for the type of drug and dosing consumers are entitled to on safe supply are also highly restrictive. They often do not accommodate the unique range of consumer tolerances and preferences. For example, approved pharmacotherapies for cocaine and methamphetamine are scant despite stimulant-involved deaths increasing at an alarming rate. Similarly, prescriptions for fentanyl, benzodiazepines, and tranquilizers are challenging to secure even though some PWUD have unintentionally acquired a high tolerance for them after purchasing drugs from the unregulated illegal market. The limited formulary for safe supply does not align with common drug use patterns, which often entails alternating between stimulant and opioid use or mixing drugs together, and leads to many consumers being prescribed drugs that do not meet their dosing requirements. Others still report feeling pressured to initiate injection drug use because safe supply options are not conducive to inhalation.

Further, the current requirement that one be labeled with a severe, treatment-resistance substance use disorder (SUD) to acquire a prescription for safe supply excludes those for whom drug use is episodic or recreational. Recent data from the provincial Coroner's Service reveals that the majority of people dying of accidental overdose in B.C. are young

and middle-aged men who are stably housed and employed in the trades. Paradoxically, it is precisely this stability that heightens their risk of death. Moreover, studies show that SUD diagnoses increase drug-related stigma and fuel discrimination in medical, employment, legal, and housing contexts. Access to this life-saving intervention should not be contingent on a diagnosis.

The cumulative impact of the barriers to safe supply described above is pronounced: It is estimated that only a small fraction of the hundreds of thousands who would benefit from access to a pharmaceutical-grade supply of legal drugs can presently get them. In addition to scaling up prescriber driven safe supply, this problem would be mitigated by introducing the community-led models of safe supply (e.g. user-operated “buyers’ clubs” or “compassion clubs”) that have already generated substantial support from relevant stakeholders. For example, a Concept Mapping Exercise released by the Canadian Institution for Substance Use Research (CISUR) in collaboration with PWUD organized recommendations for safe supply into six themes, all of them pointing to flexibility and personal autonomy as core desires. These findings are echoed in the Canadian Drug Policy Coalition’s Imagine Safe Supply research program, a multi-year, interprovincial project whose contributors (PWUD and frontline workers) emphasized the need for safe supply that inspires belonging, kinship, and long-term stability, none of which are possible under existing prescriber-based frameworks. Ultimately, a combination of prescriber driven and user-led models of safe supply would meet the broadest spectrum of needs, allowing PWUD to choose appropriate paths forward while protected from toxic illegal drug supplies.



VILLAGE OF ZEBALLOS

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Rural, Remote Paramedic Sustainability

WHEREAS the Ministry of Health has overall responsibility for ensuring that quality, appropriate, cost-effective, and timely health services are available for *all* British Columbians;

AND WHEREAS not all rural, remote communities are provided with budgetary means to sustain full-time paramedic positions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC & UBCM request the Ministry of Health invest in full-time paid paramedic positions for small, rural, remote communities across British Columbia to enhance these communities' ability to sustain permanent employment for their skilled residents.

Zeballos Council Resolution: **014/2023**

Background:

The Village of Zeballos and neighbouring first nation communities of Ehatis and Oclucje have an overall population of approximately 250 people. The communities are located along an unpaved forest service road about an hour's drive off Highway 19 North and 1.5 hours from the nearest community. The region has an increased population of vulnerable persons with lower or fixed incomes.

Zeballos has a BC Ambulance station that strives to provide full-time ambulance coverage to the communities in the area; however, deployment of the ambulance from the Zeballos station is not always possible due to staffing shortages. During these shortages, an ambulance must travel from Port McNeill or Port Hardy, which can take upward of 2 hours to arrive. This adds a significant length of time to a call which can have a major impact when lives are at risk.

The recruitment and retention of paramedic staffing across the province is an identified issue. Here, we are seeing local, fully trained BC Ambulance paramedics leaving the Zeballos station for full-time salaried positions at larger centers in the province. To attract and retain paramedics, these full-time salaried positions are needed in rural and remote communities, as well. Our community is losing qualified paramedics, and as a consequence, our residents are not receiving the reliable ambulance service they need.

[Microsoft Word - Dix BC Ambulance Service sustainability May 10, 2021.docx \(strathconard.ca\)](#)

1410-04
Report -
Council

NOTICE OF MOTION – EMPOWERING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO USE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT CAMERAS

Notice of Motion from Councillor Phelps Bondaroff from the Council meeting of January 9, 2023 that Council submit a resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) that requests the AVICC and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) lobby the Provincial Government to permit local governments to independently implement traffic enforcement cameras on local roads at the local governments' request and expense.

MOVED by Councillor Phelps Bondaroff and Seconded by Councillor Harper: "That Council submit a resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) that requests the AVICC and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities lobby the Provincial Government to permit local governments to independently implement traffic enforcement cameras, with the focus on changing driver behaviour, on local roads at the local governments' request and expense."

Council discussion ensued with the following comments:

- Council has committed to Vision Zero and working towards improving road safety.
- Road side stops are resource intensive and can be dangerous for law enforcement.
- Traffic cameras are being used effectively throughout the world.
- They serve as a deterrent and change behaviour.
- The resolution will ask the Provincial Government to give municipalities the power to use traffic cameras if they so choose.
- Road safety is important for the public.
- Saanich has looked at alternatives in making roads safer.

**The Motion was then Put and CARRIED
with Councillors Brice, Chambers and Brownoff OPPOSED**

Resolution

Enhanced Access to Extended Producer Responsibility Programs

WHEREAS reasonable and free consumer access to recycling collection facilities or collection services is the cornerstone of British Columbia's recycling framework;

AND WHEREAS the 2021 Accessibility Framework within the Stewardship Agencies of British Columbia's Guidance on Accessibility of Stewardship Programs will not provide for the service levels expected within many remote communities in British Columbia, as Extended Producer Responsibility programs are only provided "where practical" which excludes many island and west coast based communities within the Comox Strathcona Waste Management service area;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities and the Union of BC Municipalities advocate for improved access to recycling for remote communities with tiered and funded solutions based on the remoteness index and developed in collaboration with local governments.

Background

BC's Recycling Regulation for Extended Producer Responsibility Programs Key Requirements

- One of the key requirements of BC's Recycling Regulation is for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs to provide for "reasonable and free consumer access to collection facilities or collection services".
- The Stewardship Agencies of British Columbia (SABC) is an informal alliance of industry product stewardship organizations representing over 20 EPR programs which are typically funded through the collection of fees on the purchase of products or packaging, and are run by not-for-profit organizations that manage the programs as directed by a Board made up of companies which manufacture and sell the products, with a focus on the cost effectiveness of the delivery of their programs while meeting their regulatory requirements.
- SABC's Guidance on Accessibility of Stewardship Programs (Guidance on Accessibility) offers a series of principles which outlines the positions of stewardship agencies as it relates to accepted materials based on accessibility. Unfortunately, what is considered "reasonable" is not clearly defined and this causes challenges when residents and local governments advocate for expanded services for EPR programs, such as depots, collection events, curbside programs or direct pick-up. These services cost money for EPR programs and the cost is much higher for rural and remote collection services, often with very small amounts of materials collected.
- While the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service recognizes the Guidance on Accessibility is not a standard, nor a regulatory requirement under the Recycling Regulation, and therefore does not hold regulatory standing, nor is it subject to Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (Ministry) approval, the CSWM does take this document quite seriously, as in our experience Stewardship Agencies will refer to these "standards" in their Program Plans and have a propensity for citing this "standard" for accessibility when evaluating service levels for our residents.
- As a local government, the CSWM sees the benefit to having well defined expectations for service from SABC programs, it is imperative for clear communication to manage expectations from residents, and well as from a budgeting perspective.
- Reasonable and free consumer access is key to meeting the Ministry's municipal solid waste disposal rate target of 350 kg/capita/year.

- Not having reasonable and free consumer access to collection facilities or collection services is a huge barrier for most residents, resulting in residents resorting to disposing of their recyclables in the garbage stream, defeating the goals of our recycling mandate. Where there is no opportunity for diversion of EPR products, there is no diversion of EPR products.
- Per definition by the *Environmental Management Act*, regional districts plan for the management of municipal solid waste and recyclable materials under the Solid Waste Management Plan process; however, it is not a regional district's obligation to manage any part of the end-of-life of EPR products as that responsibility lies with the EPRs.
- Improving accessibility framework to provide "reasonable and free" access to EPR programs by providing a level of service expected within our communities and by our residents is critical to the success of our waste management strategy.

British Columbia and CSWM Context

- At a high level, regional districts should be able to determine through their Solid Waste Management Plans (SWMP) and their understanding of communities and consumer behaviors in their service areas where depots or collection events are needed to meet their targets in their plans.
- EPR programs should then be required to meet that criteria, which will best serve the public interest and can be defended by local governments by the robust consultation required for a SWMP approval.
- The Guidance on Accessibility by The Stewardship Agencies of British Columbia (SABC) proposes definitions for urban, non-urban and remote communities in BC.
 - For Urban communities, collection within 15 kilometres
 - "Urban" is proposed to consist of Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) as defined by Statistics Canada, which within BC only includes four communities:
 - Vancouver, Victoria, Kelowna and Abbotsford-Mission.
 - For Non-Urban communities, collection within 60 kilometres
 - For the CSWM service, this equates to our entire population along the east coast of Vancouver Island of around 100,000 people
 - This would include Campbell River, Strathcona Electoral Area D, Comox Valley Electoral Areas A (excluding islands), B and C, Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland
 - For Remote communities, collections service where practical
 - "Remote" communities are defined as "situated far from main centers of population; without reliable infrastructure (roads); or those that need to be accessed using alternate mechanisms".
 - With "Remote" not well defined we cannot say for sure which areas within the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service would be considered "Remote" but we are assuming it is all ferry accessible communities, and those with populations isolated greater than 60 kilometres from another populated centre.
 - Sayward, Gold River, Tahsis, Zeballos, Strathcona Electoral Areas A, B and C, Denman and Hornby Islands comprising approximately 8,300 residents
 - An additional 700 residents of First Nations communities within the CSWM

- The CSWM service is very familiar with the challenges of providing waste services to urban, non urban, rural and remote populations. The level of service and solutions for each community is not the same across the board, but in all of these communities we work with our local government partners to provide for the collection, transport and or disposal of municipal solid waste and to provide opportunities for recycling. The CSWM Board does not believe that the 2021 Accessibility Framework within the Guidance on Accessibility is reasonable to provide for the service levels expected within our communities and by our residents.
- For remote communities in particular, the most significant costs for waste management from remote communities is the labour for facilities with fixed hours, and the transport of materials. Many EPR programs fund the collection of their materials based on the tonnage or amount accepted. In small communities of a few hundred people, this is an insignificant amount of money they are effectively not funding the labour portion of EPR collection for remote communities. Commitment to co-locating EPR programs with garbage facilities and matching recycling services with garbage services in remote communities would be a more acceptable proposal for accessibility.
- CSWM recognizes that for smaller communities service levels will not match those in more urban communities, but we would like to see more commitment for remote communities with tiered and funded solutions based on the remoteness index developed in collaboration with local governments.

Proposed Solution

- In Canada, population centres and statistical area classifications are widely used to distinguish urban and rural communities and have been referred to within the SABC proposal. However, neither of these classifications precisely classify Canadian communities into urban, rural and remote areas.
- Recognizing the limitations of working with CMAs and Census Agglomerations in understanding the need for services in communities, a group of researchers at Statistics Canada developed an alternative tool called the “remoteness index” (RI) to measure the relative remoteness of Canadian census subdivisions (CSD).
- The remoteness index is a more effective tool in determining levels of service required to meet a communities needs as it takes into consideration the proximity to centres of economic activity, the challenges of non-road access, and reflects the use of urban facilities and resources by nearby rural residents. It provides a value for each CSD between zero and one; the higher the RI the more remote the community. This range can be used to determine levels of recycling service required, depending on the program considerations at end-of-life. The remoteness index was also compared to selected retail services within the economic and retail context of small communities for correlation: Motor vehicle and parts dealers; Electronics and appliance stores; Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers; Gasoline stations; and General merchandise stores. The RI was found to have a high correlation with this group of selected retail services which in the context of EPR, is particularly relevant. The use of the RI instead of the proposed urban, non-urban and remote community definitions proposed would more closely match recycling services with the communities where the original products are purchased.

**2022 LR2 Expansion of the Recycling Regulation to Include
Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Packaging
and Printed Paper Recyclables**

Alberni-Clayoquot RD

Whereas the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's (BCMOECCS) Recycling Regulation regulates the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for residential packaging and printed paper (PPP), which is managed by Recycle BC;

And whereas PPP recyclables from Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) sources, is not currently part of the Recycling Regulation, which is allowing the financial burden of diverting this recycling stream from landfilling onto the ICI sector and local governments;

And whereas the Provincial Government has instituted a phased study of ICI PPP recyclables as part of the EPR 5-year Action Plan which will not be completed until 2025:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province expedite the inclusion of ICI PPP recyclables into the Recycling Regulations much sooner than 2025.

Convention Decision: Not Admitted for Debate

Resolutions Committee Comments

The Resolutions Committee notes that the UBCM membership has endorsed several resolutions seeking to include the ICI sectors in the Packaging and Paper Products Extended Producer Responsibility programs (2021-EB33, 2020-EB54, 2020-NR57, 2019-B146, 2018-B68).

This resolution addresses a matter that arose before the June 30th submission deadline and therefore does not meet the criteria for admission as an emergency resolution.



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

MEMORANDUM

To: Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities **File No.:** 0390-20
From: City of Courtenay **Date:** February 13, 2023
Subject: Moving the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program Forward

Resolution:

WHEREAS in 2021, 37 local governments from across BC, as well as UBCM, passed resolutions supporting Help Cities Lead, a campaign advocating for the implementation of a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program for residential and commercial buildings; and,

WHEREAS the Province has not met its commitment to move forward with next steps on a PACE program in the Roadmap to 2030 climate strategy, which is a form of financing for energy retrofits designed to help building owners save on energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and has yet to advance the program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM call upon the provincial government to immediately introduce legislation to support a province-wide PACE program for residential and commercial buildings.

Background:

Extreme heat, forest fires, massive floods and mudslides.

In the past year or so, British Columbia's cities, towns and critical infrastructure have suffered devastating and long-lasting impacts as a result of our changing climate. Communities were cut off from essential food and supplies due to washed-out highways and rail lines. Families watched their homes burn or get swept away. Hundreds of people lost their lives and thousands lost their livelihoods.

Local governments have influence over at least 50 per cent of emissions in Canada.¹ This is because where people live, what kind of buildings they live in and how they get around are the jurisdiction of local governments. To address the challenge of climate change many local governments across British Columbia, including the City of Courtenay, have set targets for reducing their greenhouse

¹ <https://fcm.ca/en/programs/municipalities-climate-innovation-program>

gas emissions. These commitments are aligned with the target set by the province of British Columbia, 40 below 2007 levels by 2030. Every step that local governments take to reduce their emissions brings the province closer to meeting its own GHG targets.

The government of BC has also set a particularly ambitious emission reduction target for buildings – while the province-wide goal is a 40% reduction in emissions, the target for the buildings sector is 59-64% by 2030.² However heat pumps and other deep retrofits that improve the resilience of existing buildings and reduce emissions have high up-front costs. Without good options for financing and funding, they are out of reach for those most vulnerable to the effects of extreme weather: low-income, elderly and vulnerable communities. Local governments need support from the province as they work to address emissions from existing buildings. These emissions are substantial, constituting about half of all emissions in villages, towns and cities across BC.³

Local governments have, for many years, identified Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs as a key tool for meeting emission reduction goals. PACE programs allow local governments to lend money for retrofits to property owners, who then pay back the loan over time with the money generated by the savings from their energy bills, eliminating the up-front cost.

In 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2019 UBCM passed resolutions in support of legislation that would support PACE programs across BC. Then in 2021, Help Cities Lead worked to gather local government endorsements of its campaign to persuade the province to introduce the legislation needed for a province-wide PACE program (and for four other measures that would increase local government's ability to tackle emissions from buildings). Help Cities Lead gained resolutions of support from 37 local governments large and small, ranging from Kitimat to Metro Vancouver. It also gained yet another resolution of support from UBCM, marking the 5th time in less than 10 years that UBCM has spoken in favour of a PACE program.

The province responded to these calls for action by investing \$2 million in a PACE Roadmap in 2021. Also in 2021, the province committed to developing a PACE program as outlined in its foundational climate action document, the *CleanBC Roadmap to 2030* stating:

“We will proceed with the next steps on a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, which is a form of financing for energy retrofits designed to help building owners save on energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. PACE programs link an energy improvement loan to a specific property through a municipal tax lien. The annual payments

² <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/planning-and-action/legislation>

³ <https://bcclimateleaders.ca/playbook/the-big-moves/where-we-live-and-work/retrofit-existing-buildings/>

for the improvements are tied to the property, not an individual, and paid through local government property taxes. This allows for longer terms, helping to reduce upfront loan repayment costs for building improvements.”⁴

While other provinces across the country have provided local governments with the authority and funding to implement PACE programs, BC has yet to action this commitment. Provincial support for PACE has allowed both Edmonton and Rocky Mountain House to implement PACE pilot programs in Alberta. Toronto and Halifax have had pilot programs for some time. Saskatoon is already reviewing the learnings from their pilot program. Atlantic Canada’s program already has five cities and more than 1,200 registered participants in its first year. All these pilots have had robust uptake; rapidly becoming fully subscribed - some within a matter of days.

Meeting the government of BC’s ambitious goal of a 59-64% reduction in emissions from buildings by 2030 will be an enormous multi-year challenge, one that needs to be acted upon without delay. Local governments are ready and willing to play their part – we just need the right tools.

We ask that the Province take the ‘next steps’ that it committed to in 2021’s *Roadmap to 2030*, and introduce the legislation needed to support a province-wide PACE program for commercial and residential buildings.

For a more comprehensive backgrounder on PACE, see Help Cities Lead briefing note: https://www.helpcitieslead.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HCL_BRIEFING_PACE-1.pdf

⁴ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/climate-change/action/cleanbc/cleanbc_roadmap_2030.pdf

BACKGROUNDER:

Legislated legal and financial mechanisms for the protection of biodiversity, ecosystem health, and species at risk in British Columbia are urgently needed.

In 2022, UBCM endorsed resolutions NR 38, NR 39, NR40 and NR41 which are consistent with the proposed resolution.

According to the 2020 Wild Species Report¹, British Columbia is home to more than 24,540 species, the second most biologically diverse province in Canada. Conversely, B.C. has the highest number of species under threat of extinction. More than 3,000 species were identified in the report as being at risk in B.C. and the report documented an increased risk of extinction for 700 species in British Columbia in the last five years.

B.C. current laws do not require species recovery planning and implementation. The continued push for legislation comes as scientists around the world warn we are witnessing the sixth mass extinction event in the planet's four-billion-year history. Scientists estimate as many as half of all species may be headed toward extinction in the next 30 years, in large part due to habitat destruction.

In 2020, an Old Growth Strategic Review report commissioned by the Province of British Columbia identified several actions needed to foster a paradigm shift in the way forests are managed in B.C. One of the report's key recommendations was to declare conservation of ecosystem health and biodiversity in British Columbia as an overarching priority and enact legislation that legally established this priority for all sectors. In September 2021, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs-in-Assembly (UBCIC) called on the Province to explicitly and publicly commit to the enactment of new, overarching legislation for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem health, to be developed in cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, aligning with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and upholding Title and Rights to strengthen biodiversity conservation and management.

In the face of a climate emergency, the ecosystems that Indigenous Peoples and B.C. communities depend on for their spiritual, cultural, economic, and health needs are increasingly under threat. It is urgently important for the Province of B.C. to enact legislation to better protect ecosystem health, biodiversity and species at risk without further delay. Doing so in collaboration with First Nations and Indigenous people will be critical to the Province's reconciliation commitments and to the creation of inclusive and effective legislation. It will also be critical for the Province to involve local governments, civil society groups, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, scientists, and members of the public in the development of this legislation, to ensure that their unique vulnerabilities, perspectives, and interests are considered.

¹ https://wildlife-species.canada.ca/species-risk-registry/virtual_sara/files/reports/Wild%20Species%202020.pdf

BACKGROUNDER

Regional Water Supply Strategies

Recent work underway at the RDN, under the auspices of the RDN's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection (DWWP) Program, Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC), and Sea Level Rise and Climate Adaptation Program along with the severe weather events experienced by the province over the last few years have brought renewed focus on the management of water for human consumption, environmental needs, and overland flooding. Some specific examples within the RDN have highlighted the lack of and need for a regional water supply strategy; further investigation indicates that the situation is the same in much of the rest of the province.

CATAC is poised to release a report entitled *Climate-Informed Water Supply Planning and Communication Approaches in the Regional District of Nanaimo*. This report will highlight not only that there are many water purveyors operating side by side in a small geographical area without any apparent coordination on a watershed scale, but also that some purveyors, particularly the smaller ones, do not have a plan in place or the resources available to address supply challenges as the local climate changes.

DWWP will soon release the *French Creek Water Region Phase 3 Water Budget*, which includes a numerical model of water supply and demand in that water region and has used that model to build scenarios portraying water supply and demand in the future with projected population growth and forecast climate change. Apart from highlighting the fact that the groundwater resources in that area are already under significant pressure and describing the connections between groundwater and surface water, the study illustrates the number of water purveyors involved in managing the drinking water resource without any apparent coordination at the watershed scale.

The previous two examples are primarily concerned with drinking water. The Sea Level Rise and Adaptation Program has recently released floodplain mapping that portrays the effects of sea level rise and riverine flooding scenarios both currently and in the future with a changed climate. The analysis considers the region's extensive coastline and three major rivers. It can be seen from these maps that not only are a considerable number of existing dwellings vulnerable to damage from sea level rise and riverine flooding, but that many more properties will be affected in the future as the normal sea level increases and overland flooding from rain events happens more frequently. While governments have no opportunity to reduce the driving force of Sea Level Rise, they do have some, albeit limited, opportunity to influence the driving force of riverine flooding. By proactively managing the watersheds as part of regional water supply strategies, policies such as improved rainwater management guidelines and more extensive hydrometric and meteorologic monitoring networks could be required which not only have the potential to reduce the severity of flooding events, but also enhance groundwater recharge potential and enhance the water purveyor's ability to manage the surface water resource.

Satisfying ecological water demand is the primary requirement of all water purveyor's drinking water supply plans. Within the RDN, the Englishman River Water Service (ERWS) / Arrowsmith Water Service (AWS) and the City of Nanaimo are two examples of how ecological flow requirements can be satisfied and enhanced by integration into a drinking water supply plan. The advent of a regional water supply strategy would expand this type of planning to other rivers and major creeks in the watershed and build on the opportunities to better mitigate flooding and enhance the resiliency of drinking water supplies across the region.

Lastly and perhaps most importantly, the creation of regional water supply strategies would greatly increase awareness of the efforts being made to manage this precious resource. For example, the number of parties

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

involved in the management of the water resources in French Creek Water Region makes interaction with the public on water supply and management issues extremely difficult. While not an exhaustive list of all stakeholders, the following entities are involved:

Major Water Purveyors

- Town of Qualicum Beach (TQB)
- City of Parksville (CoP)
- Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)
- EPCOR Water West (EPCOR)
- Improvement districts

Land Owners

- MOSAIC Forest Management
- TQB, CoP, RDN
- Crown - BC and Canada
- Island Corridor Foundation (ex E&N Railway)

Regulatory Bodies

- TQB, CoP, RDN Planning
- BC Ministry of Environment
- BC Ministry of Forests
- BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Island Health

Bringing these diverse groups together to discuss water supply strategy is a daunting task for regional government. Leadership, functional participation, and resources from the province to gather the stakeholders in the pursuit of a regional water supply strategy is the only way this will be accomplished. While the examples quoted here are from the RDN, other regions in the province all face similar challenges in drinking water purveyance, agricultural water supply, flood management, and natural environment preservation.

BACKGROUND - REDUCING ANCHORAGES OUTSIDE THE PORT OF VANCOUVER

There are 28 Anchorages within the Port of Vancouver, 33 in the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI), 6 at Nanaimo Port, 5 at Royal Roads and 5 at Constance Bank. Transport Canada has authorized the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (VFPA) to assign ships to the SGI Anchorages as well as the anchorages within the limits of the Port of Vancouver itself. The Harbour Master or Port Authority for Esquimalt Harbour (part of the Department of National Defence) manages the Royal Roads anchorages for commercial cargo vessels. The Pacific Pilotage Authority manages the Constance Bank anchorages.

Anchorages outside the Port of Vancouver are primarily used by bulk carriers (freighters), that are waiting empty until they can proceed to the Vancouver to load bulk commodities – primarily coal, grain, fertilizers and wood products. There is a much more efficient system in place for processing container ships and they are rarely sent to anchor outside of the Port of Vancouver.

Anchorage use associated with the Port of Vancouver has grown exponentially over the last decade although there has only been around 10% growth in the volume of bulk carrier arrivals at the Port of Vancouver.ⁱ The mismatch between the dramatic increase in demand for freighter anchorage and the relatively moderate growth of freighter traffic appears to be due to inefficiencies at the Port of Vancouver.ⁱⁱ No substantial progress has been made toward increasing the efficiency in matching vessel arrivals to loading capacity, which would reduce port congestion and vessel line-ups.ⁱⁱⁱ

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Seabed scouring: anchoring is a major global cause of seabed and benthic habitat degradation.^{iv} According to the Clear Seas Centre, “Ship anchors can weigh up to 30 tonnes and are designed to hold vessels in place. The anchor chain can be hundreds of metres long, and the excess chain lies on the seafloor to stabilize the vessel in waves, wind, and currents. When the vessel swings around due to changes in wind or tides, the anchor chain can drag across the seabed and cause damage to the seafloor as well as to flora and fauna.”^v Displaced sediment creates plumes that smother life well outside the anchor radius, and seabed carbon storage is disrupted.

Greenhouse gasses: Freighters at anchor run huge diesel generators to provide electrical power needed to maintain lighting, instrumentation, and ships operations. A typical bulk carrier at anchor emits about 10 tonnes of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases per day.^{vi}

Underwater noise: Underwater noise from generators/auxiliary power while at anchor, which is known to have serious adverse impact on a wide range of marine life in the Salish Sea, can be 40% as loud as a ship in transit.^{vii}

Discharge from exhaust gas scrubbers contains heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) that accumulate in marine life; discharge of bilge water and sewage introduce further contaminants into our waters.

Risks: in the report of investigation into the March 2020 collision that occurred when a freighter dragged anchor in Plumper Sound, the Transportation Safety Board of Canada states that “Between January 2015 and March 2020, a total of 102 dragging anchor occurrences along the BC coastline were reported to MCTS. When a vessel drags anchor, it can result in a collision, a grounding, or other emergency situations.”^{viii} Any of these emergencies pose the risk of a catastrophic fuel spill.

ALTERNATIVES

Ports around the world have reduced or eliminated the need for freighter anchorages by implementing systems that synchronize arrival of ships with supply chains and real-time capacity for processing in port. Marine traffic management systems/port call optimisation platforms provide for more accurate vessel arrival times (“just-in-time arrivals”) by coordinating and exchanging essential information with inbound vessels still at sea, allowing them to reduce speed when ports are experiencing congestion.

For example: the Port of Newcastle Australia requires that vessels report and enter the system 15 days before arrival. Vessels obtain their positions in a lineup without requiring an actual arrival at port. During periods of port congestion, vessels slow-steam at sea, conserving fuel and reducing emissions without increasing transit times, since time at anchor is reduced if not eliminated. This can be contrasted with Vancouver which operates on a first come-first served system. Vessels receive their position in the line-up upon arrival, so there is an incentive to arrive earlier than required, after which they are sent to an anchorage for what can be a lengthy stay.

Computer simulations indicate that increased efficiency and implementation of a port call optimisation platform at the Port of Vancouver could reduce ship congestion and anchorage demand to such an extent that the anchorages within the Port of Vancouver would be sufficient to meet average anchorage demand.^{ix}

ⁱ *Ship Congestion at the Port of Vancouver and Southern Gulf Islands: Green Solutions for Better Management of Vessel Arrivals and Anchorage Demand*. Rohner, Christoph, and Ted Fullerton, Centre for Marine Affairs, Southern Gulf Islands. 2020. marineaffairs.ca/reports/anchorage-ship-congestion-rohner-fullerton-2020.pdf

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Update March 2022: Ship Congestion at the Port of Vancouver and Southern Gulf Islands*. Rohner, Christoph, and Ted Fullerton, Centre for Marine Affairs, Southern Gulf Islands. 2022. <https://marineaffairs.ca/reports/update-anchorage-ship-congestion-rohner-fullerton.pdf>

^{iv} *The footprint of ship anchoring on the seafloor*. Watson, S.J., Ribó, M., Seabrook, S. et al. Scientific Reports 12, 2022 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-11627-5#citeas>

^v *Anchors Away: Understanding the Issues about Ships at Anchor*. <https://clearseas.org/en/blog/anchors-away-understanding-the-issues-about-ships-at-anchor/>

^{vi} *Daily Fuel Consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Bulk Carriers Anchoring in the Southern Gulf Islands*. Rohner, Christoph, Centre for Marine Affairs, Southern Gulf Islands. 2020. <https://protect-the-islands-sea.org/daily-fuel-consumption-emissions-bulk-carriers.pdf>

^{vii} [Anchored commercial vessels still have significant impact on marine soundscape: UVic study](#)

^{viii} Investigation report: March 2020 collision between two bulk carriers in the Plumper Sound, Southern Gulf Islands, British Columbia, Transportation Safety Board of Canada <https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/medias-media/communiques/marine/2021/m20p0092-20210208.html>

^{ix} *Ship Congestion at the Port of Vancouver and Southern Gulf Islands: Green Solutions for Better Management of Vessel Arrivals and Anchorage Demand*. Rohner, Christoph, and Ted Fullerton, Centre for Marine Affairs, Southern Gulf Islands. 2020. marineaffairs.ca/reports/anchorage-ship-congestion-rohner-fullerton-2020.pdf

Parking on Ministry of Transportation Rights-of-Way

The Regional District of Nanaimo, like other regional districts across BC, receives numerous requests from the public to address vehicles illegally parked on roads and rights-of-way, particularly in proximity to regional parks, trails, beach access, and boat launches. Recreational areas are extremely popular and attract high volumes of users from the region and other areas of the Province. There is often insufficient dedicated parking resulting in illegal parking.

These factors combine and impact area residents and others by blocking access to private properties, impeding the free flow of traffic, creating unsafe conditions for pedestrian traffic, and blocking access for emergency first responders. In some areas, vehicle owners are parking or leaving their vehicles for extended periods of time, at boat launching areas, causing congestion and unsafe conditions.

Parking enforcement is outside the jurisdiction of regional districts, as provincial/rural roads fall under the authority of the Province of BC. Complaints about parking are often made to a regional district and then referred to the RCMP or Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI). The RCMP has jurisdiction to enforce the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) relating to parking. However, this is not a high priority for the police, given other priorities and pressures. MOTI staff have limited ability to deal with illegally parked vehicles or to otherwise regulate parking in or near recreational areas that are managed by the RDN.

Currently, the BC MVA provides municipalities with authority to enforce parking regulations within their boundaries. The same authority is not provided to regional districts. Extending authority to regional districts to enforce parking regulations will address gaps in legislation that create unnecessary problems for rural communities.

**BACKGROUNDER:*****PUBLIC SAFETY (SPEED LIMITS) - COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT***

WHEREAS, rural community roads are managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, who oversee the maintenance, service and safety standards, including the setting and adjustment of speed limits;

AND WHEREAS, rural areas are experiencing traffic management issues including increasing speeding as development and populations increase in areas shared by vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians; this requires a greater attention to community public safety concerns and necessary safety improvements;

THEREFORE, it be resolved that AVICC and UBCM request that the Ministry of Transportation review rural speed limits in developing residential areas and commercial or village centers, and direct design improvements to make highways safer in these environments, including speed limit reduction.

Background

In 2013 the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) conducted a Rural Highway Safety and Speed Review, reviewing aspects of safety including speed limits and other highway hazards on rural highways. Stemming from this review, some speed limits were rolled back, roadway delineation was enhanced, signing was upgraded and educational messaging was installed. This review focused on higher speed zones, not community village centers or residential areas (MOTI, 2018).

In 2019, the Regional District of Nanaimo put forwards a resolution that was endorsed by the Union of BC Municipalities expressing serious concern for lack of sufficient policing resources to enforce traffic regulations (specifically speed) on rural roads – a serious public safety concern. The Provincial response at that time recognized the public safety pressures in rural areas (UBCM, 2019). The RDN is adjacent to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), where our elected officials, staff and community members are seeing similar challenges pertaining to rural road safety.

In the Cowichan Valley Regional District there are growing population pressures, particularly in busy commercial areas and village cores and speed limits are set too high for multi-use roads. While some attention has been paid to improvements, the approach has not been consistent or sufficient enough to address public safety concerns. A good example of safety enhancements is in Cowichan Bay Village where 30 km maximum speed signs have been posted along Cowichan Bay Road and through the village to Gateway Park, with active speed reader boards to show vehicle speeds and encourage speed reduction. These improvements have been welcomed by the community and enhance public safety for road users, cyclists and those walking pathways around the waterfront.

CVRD supports Community Policing in certain areas of the regional district and plan to work with local RCMP and Community Policing to further document speed issues.

References:

MOTI. (2018). Rural Highway and Speed Review, available at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/driving-and-transportation/reports-and-reference/reports-and-studies/planning-strategy-economy/speed-review/rural-safety-and-speed-review-post-implementation-update-2018.pdf>

UBCM. (2019). Traffic Control and Enforcement on Rural Roads (B116), available at:

[Traffic Control and Enforcement on Rural Roads | Union of BC Municipalities \(ubcm.ca\)](#)

**BACKGROUNDER:*****ECONOMIC INVESTMENTS AND RURAL ROADS STATE OF INFRASTRUCTURE - COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT***

WHEREAS, rural community roads are managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, who oversee the maintenance, service and safety standards and there is continued concern regarding the state of roads in rural communities including poor road surfaces and drainage;

AND WHEREAS, the Provincial government periodically makes economic investment announcements and it is understood that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure may require assessment of impacts to transportation infrastructure resulting from proposed development, and which may direct improvements to transportation infrastructure resulting from proposed development;

THEREFORE, it be resolved that, AVICC and UBCM request that the Province direct enhanced investment into rural road network improvements in areas where Provincial economic investments are made.

Background

The Province divides maintenance contracts for rural highways into service areas and the state of many side roads, off of main and arterial highways is as a result, inconsistent and at times, poor – both in terms of road surface condition and drainage. There is a recognition of the need for road improvements, highlighted by requirements to upgrade road infrastructure in Regional District Electoral Areas when local utilities are upgraded, which include improvements to the pavement surface (increased thickness) and drainage that come at a cost to local governments (MOTI, n.d).

Due to the impacts of climate change, communities are also experiencing increasing drainage issues related to inadequate ditching and culvert maintenance. In the Cowichan Valley Regional District, extreme ditch flows have undermined local government infrastructure with a recent example in 2022 resulting in a sewage line breakage and spill in Cowichan Bay that was reported to the Ministry of Environment. Operational staff are also often deployed to assist neighborhoods with flooding issues, stemming from MOTI managed drainage systems in the electoral areas, an activity which we are not funded to support.

Lastly, the Provincial government is recognizing the need for economic investments such as was recently announced through the BC Manufacturing Jobs Fund. These announcements and investments are welcomed and much needed to create diverse and resilient local economies, but can place increasing pressure on already challenged local road and drainage infrastructure (BC Government, 2023).

References:

BC Government. (2023). Crofton mill gets workers back on the job with provincial, federal funding. Available at: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023JEDI0005-000059>

MOTI. (n.d). Standard Specifications for Highway Construction. Available at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/transportation-infrastructure/engineering-standards-guidelines/standard-specifications-for-highway-construction>

BACKGROUND

Historically, the Province of BC delivered a downtown revitalization program and the Spirit Square Program. This was a capital program that provided local governments with grant funding to undertake strategic public investments in public infrastructure within a community's downtown. Such projects were seen to stimulate private sector investment and create a healthy and economically vibrant area for businesses, residents and tourists.

Rural resource communities in BC continue to be impacted by economic shifts in the forestry, fishing and mining sectors. This continues to generate significant financial challenges in these communities for residents, business, and local government. Accordingly, this causes added financial strain on communities with relatively small tax bases to sustainably maintain the investment in the replacement and/ or significant upgrade of tangible capital assets such as fire halls, firefighting equipment, sewage facilities and recreation facilities, for example. These things being core to the basic operation and social wellbeing of communities.

The Province of British Columbia has provided various grant programs and facilitated the ability for local governments to access to short and long-term capital financing at competitive interest rates. While such options are of great value, the challenge for local government is in securing grants of an appropriate amount or otherwise, to afford financing repayment.

RATIONALE

Given the increasing financial constraints impacting small rural communities, major capital infrastructure projects are consuming, if not overwhelming, the capacity of many communities to keep up. Commonly, this is resulting an increase in poorly maintained and run-down commercial areas/ main streets. This diminishes the positive image and ability for a community to revitalize its downtown to stimulate investment and tourism. It impacts a community's sense of pride as the key social gathering place. The Province has provided various financial programs and authorities to promote revitalization in the private sector. However, these do not address aging urban public infrastructure. The establishment of a financially effective revitalization program for resource-based communities, would be of significant value to communities struggling to maintain its infrastructure, private sector investment viability, and general quality of life for all residents. Reinstatement of such a funding program would provide one time funding to facilitate otherwise unachievable critical upgrades to downtown central business districts while creating sustained, long-term benefits.



**Restoring Provincial Support for Public Libraries
2023 AVICC Resolution
Background Information**

It is urgent that we bring to your immediate attention the importance of provincial support for public libraries. Public libraries are the only public institutions that are truly equitable in providing services for all community members so that they may participate in, and benefit from the social and economic development of their communities. Public libraries are also the only freely accessible public spaces for all British Columbians to connect with, learn about, and experience, the advantages of living in this province.

Currently local governments are primarily responsible for funding library services, their capacities vary across communities. Restoration of Provincial funding will improve the equitable delivery of library services across the Province and support local governments as they work to rebuild following the pandemic. The current funding for public libraries stands at \$14M. This amount has not only been static for more than ten years, but follows a 25% reduction in funding in fiscal year 2009/2010.

Public libraries significantly contribute to the government's goals for building a stronger economy and society as well as enabling a stronger environment for a resilient future for all British Columbians. The important role of public libraries has been acknowledged at UBCM in resolutions regarding provincial public library funding.

The broader recognition of the issue has been seen in both previous UBCM resolutions and Provincial Responses.

- In 2022 the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services reported that ... "libraries must be supported with adequate funding as they serve as equalizers-providing services, resources, connectivity, and entertainment to those who may not have access otherwise, especially in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities."
- In 2020 the provincial government, in response to the UBCM Resolution EB41, acknowledged that libraries have played an important role in helping families and people stay connected, informed and entertained during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was one-time funding allocated to libraries to support digital initiatives.
- In 2019 many resolutions were endorsed at UBCM, all speaking to the need for increased and ongoing funding from the Province for public library service.

- In 2017 the provincial government, in response to the UBCM Resolution B60, acknowledged that the cost of delivering public library services has increased with changing technology and other demands.

It is heartening to see the understanding of the need for adequate and reliable provincial funding for public libraries.

Across the 247 public library service points serving BC, library staff and Boards are making a difference to community social and economic development and individual well-being.

February 9, 2023

File No. 0230

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities
525 Government Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8
By email: avicc@ubcm.ca

RESOLUTION: Property Transfer Tax Sharing for Local Governments

At its meeting of February 1, 2023, the following resolution was endorsed by the District of Sechelt Council:

That the following resolution be submitted to the 2023 Association of Vancouver Island and Coast Communities (AVICC) Annual General Meeting for consideration:

Whereas the cost of infrastructure renewal is increasing in British Columbia due to the prevalence of aging municipal assets, inflation and increased community growth in many areas;

And whereas the revenue from property transfer tax is due in large part to the attractiveness of the local community to homebuyers which is in part of the result of the of local government efforts, as such local governments should benefit from this tax;

Therefore, be it resolved that AVICC and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities advocate to the Provincial Government to share property transfer tax revenue with local governments in British Columbia for expansion and renewal of community infrastructure.

BACKGROUND: Property Transfer Tax Sharing for Local Governments in BC

On March 7, 1987, Premier Bill Vander Zalm introduced the property purchase tax (later named property transfer tax) as a wealth tax to discourage housing speculation within British Columbia.

The property transfer tax is calculated from the fair market value of a purchased property (land and improvements) on the day it is registered with the Land Title Office unless the purchaser qualifies for an exemption.

Since the property transfer tax was implemented, it has become a substantial general revenue resource for the Province of British Columbia that is not shared with local governments, who provide infrastructure and amenities to properties.

Considering the tax is directly sourced from property, we ask that a portion of the revenue generated from the property transfer tax be shared with local governments to renew or increase infrastructure.

On behalf of the District of Sechelt, we thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Kerianne Poulsen

Deputy Corporate Officer



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

MEMORANDUM

To: Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities **File No.:** 0390-20
From: City of Courtenay **Date:** February 13, 2023
Subject: Removal of Racist and Discriminating Clauses from BC Land Titles

Resolution:

WHEREAS there are documents and covenants attached to parcels of land throughout the province that are rooted in racism and discrimination; and

WHEREAS the cost to remove racist documents and covenants from land titles is born by the property owners;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the AVICC and UBCM request that the Province instruct the Land Titles Office to eliminate any charges to landowners wishing to remove these offensive clauses and restrictions from their titles, and further request the Land Titles Office conduct an audit of land titles and systematically remove racist and discriminatory covenants and documents.

Background:

Land owners in BC should not have to pay to have documents or covenants that contain discriminatory or racism language removed from their land title. These documents and covenants are the result of long-standing systemic discrimination and the responsibility for rectifying this should lie with the provincial government. The BC Government should take immediate action to ensure that all discriminatory and racist language is removed from land titles across the province, including waiving the associated costs to land owners.

Historically, the government of British Columbia has issued land title documents that contain racist language against black and persons of colour, and excluded Indigenous peoples from access to their traditional lands. For example, in 1872, the provincial government passed the “Crown Land Act” which denied Indigenous peoples access to unoccupied Crown land and restricted their right to sell or lease their own land. This law established a system of land title documents that specifically excluded Indigenous peoples from access to their traditional lands. In addition, the government of British Columbia has also issued land title documents that contain racist language and exclusionary policies.

These documents were used to delegitimize Indigenous peoples' rights and deny them access to their traditional lands. For example, in 1876, the government issued a land title document that stated that "Indians shall not be allowed to enter upon or occupy such lands without the permission of the Lieutenant-Governor or the person authorized by him". The removal of racist land title documents by the government of British Columbia is an important step in addressing the lasting legacy of colonialism and systemic racism in Canada.

Racist documents still exist in the provincial land title registry, including documents that use language that is derogatory and dehumanizing. These documents are a painful reminder of the injustice Indigenous, black and persons of colour have endured and continue to endure. Removing these documents demonstrates that the provincial government is serious about addressing systemic racism and discrimination and is committed to reconciliation.

Moreover, proactively removing racist documents from the provincial land title registry is important in ensuring that the land title registry is a reliable source of information. If these documents are allowed to remain, they can create confusion and uncertainty, and could lead to disputes over land ownership and title. Proactively removing racist documents from the land title registry in British Columbia is an important step in recognizing the wrongs of the past, in expressing respect for Indigenous peoples, black and persons of colour and in ensuring the reliability of the provincial land title registry.

BACKGROUND: Call for Support to meet Provincial Archaeological Requirements

Cost of Protecting our Heritage

British Columbia's archaeological resources are protected under the Heritage Conservation Act. The provisions of the Act apply whether archaeological sites are located on public or private land. Archaeological sites are protected through designation as "Provincial heritage sites" or through automatic protection by virtue of being of particular historic or archaeological value. Protected archaeological sites may not be altered without a permit issued by the Minister or designate.

The permitting process involves multiple formal reviews that are conducted throughout the lifecycle of the project, including:

- Examination of the proponent's application for a Project Approval Certificate to determine whether further involvement in the archaeological resource assessment process is required.
- If further assessment is required, an archaeological impact assessment and Project Report are required.
- The results of the Project Report are then used to develop an impact management plan and subsequent assessments (if required).

Each of these stages requires the property owner, at their own expense, to engage an archaeologist to investigate, analyze and recommend future actions. For local governments, these costs represent significant operational increases and are borne by tax payers.

In 2019, a successful site alteration permit application took an average of 93 days to issue. By 2022, the average length of time to process a site alteration permit had increased to 240 days. Local governments struggle when faced with these prolonged processing times and are exposed to increased construction costs and substantial risk of infrastructure failure when renewal projects are delayed. In addition to this, with the current status of inflation, smaller communities may be forced to abandon infrastructure entirely due to rising costs while waiting for permits.

Provision for Resources

The *Community Charter* (2) (2) (b) requires that "the Provincial government must not assign responsibilities to municipalities unless there is provision for resources required to fulfilled the responsibilities."

We ask that resources within the Archeology Branch be increased to reduce the processing time of site alteration permits and that funding be provided to local governments to offset the additional costs incurred while waiting for approval.

On behalf of the District of Sechelt, we thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Kerianne Poulsen

Deputy Corporate Officer



SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AVICC BACKGROUNDER FOR MODERNIZATION OF *LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT*

I. BACKGROUND:

At the Sunshine Coast Regional District Regular Board meeting of January 26, 2023, the following resolution was adopted:

016/23 **Recommendation No. 3** *Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Resolution - Modernization of Local Government Act*

THAT the report titled Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Resolution – Modernization of the *Local Government Act* be received for information;

AND THAT the following resolution be approved and submitted to AVICC prior to the February 9, 2023, deadline:

WHEREAS a comprehensive review of the legislation governing regional districts has not been done; however, the social, political and economic environments in which local governments operate has dramatically evolved in areas including increased populations living in unincorporated areas, response to climate change, and First Nations' participation in regional governance;

AND WHEREAS the accountabilities of regional districts continue to increase, most recently with updates to Emergency Management legislation, but regional districts lack the tools and authority needed to meet these expanded responsibilities;

AND WHEREAS UBCM has endorsed multiple resolutions asking for a review of the *Local Government Act* as it relates to the legislative authority of regional districts; most recently in 2015, 2018, and 2022, and the province has been promising these urgently needed legislative updates for over twenty years;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT UBCM work with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and regional districts to ensure that a comprehensive review and modernization of the *Local Government Act* is prioritized during the current municipal term of office.

II. Discussion:

The SCRD is advocating for UBCM to work with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and regional districts to conduct a comprehensive review of the *Local Government Act* to ensure it meets modern needs and addresses inequities between municipalities and regional districts such as scope of regulatory authority, requirements for service establishment, and other statutory requirements as necessary. The SCRD is advocating that this be prioritized during the current municipal term of office. Electoral areas of a regional district are likely to be most impacted by changes in the *Local Government Act* and therefore, it is important that electoral area participation be included in the review process.