

2025 AVICC RESOLUTIONS BACKGROUNDBERS

PART 1 – SPECIAL & EXTRAORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

SR – Special Resolutions

Special Resolutions address priority issues of the membership and are typically sponsored by the AVICC Executive.

ER – Extraordinary Resolutions

Extraordinary resolutions are resolutions sponsored by the AVICC Executive and are seeking membership approval to amend AVICC Bylaws.

There are no Special or Extraordinary Resolutions to consider for 2025.

PART 2 – REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS

The following are the resolutions received by the February 6, 2025 resolutions deadline, where the issue addressed is specific to the AVICC Region and/or the enactment clause directs only the AVICC area association (and not UBCM) to consider taking action. Endorsed AVICC Region-specific Resolutions will not be forwarded to UBCM for consideration by the UBCM membership but will instead remain with AVICC where they may be actioned.

Part 2 - Section “A” – This section would contain **AVICC Region-specific** resolutions that support existing policy and are recommended Endorse or Endorse with Proposed Amendment.

There are no Regional Resolutions with a recommendation of Endorse or Endorse with Proposed Amendment.

Part 2 - Section “B” – This section contains **AVICC Region-specific** resolutions that offer the recommendation of No Recommendation or Not Endorse.

LAND USE

R1 Addressing Local Community Concerns with Private Managed Forest Lands Cowichan Valley RD

TRANSPORTATION

R2 Island Rail Corridor Alberni Clayoquot RD

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R3 Power Supply Investment North Island District of Port Hardy

PART 3 – RESOLUTIONS

The following are the resolutions received by the February 6, 2025 resolutions deadline. Should any of these resolutions be endorsed, they will be forwarded to UBCM for consideration at their Annual Convention.

Part 3 - Section “A” – This section contains resolutions that support existing policy and are recommended Endorse or Endorse with Proposed Amendment (to be considered as a block).

HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

R4	Mental Health and Addictions Resources	City of Parksville
R5	Volunteer Fire Department Funding Model	Sunshine Coast RD

COMMUNITY SAFETY

R6	Fire Inspections and Investigations	Comox Valley RD
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ENVIRONMENT

R7	Non-migratory Resident Canada Geese	District of Metchosin
R8	Financial Incentives for Residential Rainwater Catchment Systems	District of Tofino
R9	Conserving BC Landfill Capacity	RD Nanaimo
R10	Sustainable Funding for Landfill Gas Regulation Compliance	Comox Valley RD
R11	Legislating the BC Coastal Marine Strategy	City of Langford & District of Saanich
R12	Provincial Circular Economy Strategy	RD Nanaimo
R13	Sustainable Funding for Small Water Systems	Comox Valley RD

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION

R14	Funding Indigenous Governments' Engagement in Local Government Planning Activities	Cowichan Valley RD
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FINANCE

R15	Sustainable Growing Communities Fund	City of Parksville & RD Nanaimo
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TAXATION

R16	BC Port Tax Cap	North Coast RD
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TRANSPORTATION

R17	EV Charging Strategy for Remote Communities	qathet RD
R18	Support and Resourcing for Active Transportation Projects	Cowichan Valley RD
R19	BC Ferry Advisory Committees	North Coast RD
R20	Emergency Road Network Planning	Sunshine Coast RD

LEGISLATIVE

R21	Provincially Funded WorkSafe BC	Village of Daajing Giids
R22	Provincial Consultation on Legislative Changes	City of Parksville

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R23	Forestry Industry and Fibre Decline	City of Port Alberni
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Part 3 - Section "B" – This section contains resolutions that offer the recommendation of No Recommendation or Not Endorse

HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

R24	Mental Health Support for Elected Officials	Islands Trust
R25	Free Pelvic Floor Physiotherapy as part of Postpartum Care in British Columbia	City of Langford
R26	Child Care Licensing Regulations	District of Oak Bay

HOUSING

R27	Tiny Homes and RVs	RD Nanaimo
R28	Mandatory Good Neighbour Agreement	District of Sechelt

COMMUNITY SAFETY

R29	Province-Wide Ban on Fireworks	District of Metchosin
R30	Fire Resilient Forest Practices	RD Nanaimo
R31	Sharing Fentanyl Precursors Information with Law Enforcement	Town of Qualicum Beach
R32	Provincial Disaster Debris Plan	RD Nanaimo
R33	Major Planned Events Advocacy	Comox Valley RD

ENVIRONMENT

R34	Hybrid Wolfdogs	RD Nanaimo
R35	Provincial Support for Addressing Feral Rabbits	District of Saanich
R36	Provincial Waste Hauler Licensing	RD Nanaimo
R37	Solid Waste Management Approvals	RD Nanaimo

FINANCE

R38	Infrastructure and Capital Projects Requiring Elector Approval	City of Nanaimo
R39	Improvement Districts Policy Revision	qathet RD

LAND USE

R40	Private Managed Forest Lands	Nanaimo RD
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TRANSPORTATION

R41	Transit Fees for Seniors	District of Oak Bay
R42	Traffic Controls at Inactive Railroad Crossings	Town of Qualicum Beach

LEGISLATIVE

R43	Payment In Lieu of Works and Services for Land Development	City of Nanaimo
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COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R44	Forestry Industry - Sustainable Fibre	City of Port Alberni
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SELECTED ISSUES

R45	BC Human Rights Tribunal	District of Sooke
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ADDRESSING LOCAL COMMUNITY CONCERNS WITH PRIVATE MANAGED FOREST LANDS

Background

While the Cowichan Valley Regional District spans Vancouver Island, the majority of the region's population is concentrated in a narrow band along the eastern coast of the region. The District of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Cowichan Indian Reserve No. 1, and the unincorporated communities of Shawnigan and Mill Bay all generally lie within the fertile valley bottoms of several major watersheds, including the Cowichan, Koksilah, Chemainus and Shawnigan watersheds. The upper portions of these watersheds are largely undeveloped and are essential for providing clean water to support the downstream communities, along with an array of other important ecosystem services. They are also an important source of jobs and economic benefits including both forestry and recreation.

Jurisdiction over land use in the upper watersheds is complex. The entirety of the CVRD lies within the unceded traditional territories of the Quw'utsun, Malahat, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Halalt, Penelakut, Stz'uminus, Lyackson, Pauquachin, Ditidaht & Pacheedaht Peoples; however, over half the land within the region, including almost all the land within the upper watersheds, is Private Managed Forest Lands (PMFL), a legacy of the 1884 Esquimalt & Nanaimo (E&N) land grant. While local governments can influence the subdivision of these lands through zoning, municipalities and regional districts have no control over forest management or other resource extraction on these lands.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, approximately 8,000 km² of land on the southeast coast of Vancouver Island was granted to Robert Dunsmuir to encourage the construction of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway. These lands, commonly referred to as the E&N Land Grant have been consolidated over the years and are now mostly owned by two forestry companies, TimberWest and Island Timberlands. Mosaic Forest Management manages all of these lands on behalf of TimberWest and Island Timberlands, effectively giving Mosaic control over a vast swath of lands adjacent to communities on southeastern Vancouver Island. In the case of the CVRD, Mosaic controls forest harvesting as well as public access to nearly half the land within the regional district. Forest harvesting within the PMFL is governed by the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and administered by the Private Managed Forest Land Council. The *Forest and Range Practices Act*, which governs forest harvesting on Crown Lands and provides for a greater degree of government oversight and public input to forest harvesting, does not apply to the PMFL.

In 2019, the provincial government initiated a review of the Private Managed Forest Land Program as part of the Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative. This review began with an invitation for input from the public and from specific stakeholders through either an online survey or via a formal written submission. In total, 1,225 survey responses and

283 written submissions were received. Locally, written submissions were made by the CVRD, Municipality of North Cowichan, the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, and the Cowichan Watershed Board, along with many other local and regional governments on Vancouver Island. Issues and solutions identified by the CVRD included:

- Accountability and transparency - The PMFL program needs to have complete, comprehensive and enforceable management objectives to protect public environmental values. Open and regular communication between PMFL landowners and local governments and communities including sharing information, data and reports needs to be enhanced.
- Climate change and forest function - Management should reflect current and future climate reality and recognize healthy forests' role as a buffer for climate change impacts such as drought, fire and floods.
- Compliance - Formalized collaborative management agreements with local governments and water purveyors that include regular third-party environmental audits, hydrological assessments and mechanisms for adaptive management would build trust and enhance durability of positive working relationships.
- Interface between community and private forests - Resource lands play an important role in our region and should be maintained for resource purposes, consistent with community planning processes. Buffers for burning, logging and chemical use next to residential areas should preserve visual quality, safety and minimize environmental risk. Access for recreation and infrastructure maintenance should be preserved.
- Reconciliation - Opportunities for reconciliation with an economic benefit for First Nations where their traditional territory overlaps with private forestry land.

The public engagement to the PMFL was summarized in an extensive “What We Heard Summary Report” (<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/121/2019/11/PMFLPR-WWH-Report-Final-1.pdf>); however, in the five years since this report was produced, there has been no further action on addressing the issues identified.

In the five years since the initiation of the PFML review, the CVRD has been dramatically affected by the impacts of climate change, many of which are exacerbated by forest harvesting in the upper watersheds. Climate projections are for wetter winters with more intense rainstorms, along with hotter and drier summers. Healthy forests slow the runoff from winter storms, allowing more water to be absorbed into the soils. When these forests are removed, the result is higher, more rapid flooding in the winter months and less water available to maintain summer flows. Within the Cowichan region, examples include:

- Summer river flows in the Cowichan River are no longer sustainable. Low flows combined with warm temperatures resulted in the death of over 84,000 salmon in 2023. Winter flooding has had devastating effects on the community, particularly after the atmospheric river in November, 2021.
- Drought in the Koksilah watershed has led to Fish Protection Orders, banning local farmers from irrigating forage crops. Lack of water in the river and aquifers is preventing new farmers from obtaining water licenses.

- The Chemainus River has experienced severe flooding in both 2020 and 2021, resulting in evacuations and damage to property, especially to the Halalt First Nation

The watersheds within the CVRD have, for millennia, been relied upon to provide sustainable flows of clean water to support healthy ecosystems and thriving communities. The combined impacts of climate change and decades of forest harvesting mean that these watersheds can no longer be counted on to provide these ecological services.

The CVRD is calling upon the province to complete the PMFL program review with a focus on revising to the Private Managed Forest Lands Act to prioritize:

- Protection of the quality and quantity of both surface water and groundwater
- Limiting forest harvesting to an ecologically-sustainable level to maintain ecological values including hydrologic cycles and biodiversity,
- Creation of a mechanism for local governments to have input to resource harvesting activities within the watersheds which support their communities.

Background:

The Island Rail Corridor (formerly the E&N Corridor) is located on Vancouver Island, B.C., with the majority being acquired and managed by the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) and operated under contract by the Southern Railway of Vancouver Island (SVI). The corridor is approximately 289 km running from Victoria to Courtenay with connections between Port Alberni and Parksville and to Nanaimo waterfront.

The ICF was incorporated in 2004 and is a federally registered charity that represents the interests of several Vancouver Island communities, local governments, First Nations, businesses and other stakeholders to advance the strategic direction for the corridor. In addition to being a vital transportation system for the island, the corridor has the potential to be a regional economic, social and cultural connection across many communities. Due to the current conditions of the corridor, operations are limited to freight, with no passenger services being feasible at this time. Funding and investment continue to be a primary challenge for the corridor, limiting the necessary resources available for maintenance and required upgrades.

The Island Rail Corridor is a significant part of Vancouver Island's transportation history and future potential. Through continued collaborative efforts amongst governments, First Nations partners, communities and industry stakeholders the corridor could provide increased economic, environmental, and emergency preparedness potential. Understanding that there are many historic and current impacts of the rail corridor on First Nations communities that need to be reconciled, the above noted AVICC resolution speaks to a segment of the corridor that does not have the same level of outstanding impacts and, thus, could be subject to immediate investment for emergency purposes.

Reports:

The [Island Rail Corridor Condition Assessment](#) was completed in 2020 by WSP Canada Group Limited. on behalf of the British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. This assessment provides a detailed evaluation of the base asset condition of the rail corridor in its entirety. The assessment examines infrastructure, grade crossings, bridges and rockfall activity and provides cost estimates for repairs and upgrades. Upgrades estimates include passenger use at higher speeds thus resulting in a higher level of required investment. This assessment builds upon previous work completed through the 2009 [Evaluation of the E&N Rail Corridor: Baseline Report \(HMM Report\)](#) by Hatch Mott MacDonald.

At the 2019 Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Convention a resolution was endorsed to '[Revitalize Island Rail](#)'. This resolution called upon the Province of British Columbia to take immediate actions to provide sufficient funding to restore the railway infrastructure. Another [Island Rail Corridor](#) resolution was endorsed at the 2022 UBCM Convention to call on the provincial and federal governments to commit to making the necessary investments to preserve the Island Corridor. Following the endorsement of these resolutions funding was committed from the province for First Nations and regional districts to plan for the future of the corridor but no funding has yet to be committed to provide the required upgrades.

BACKGROUND

The North Island region of British Columbia has been grappling with significant power supply challenges that impact the reliability of electricity for residents and the potential for economic growth. Over the years, the area has experienced notable power outages, underscoring the need for infrastructure improvements.

Capacity Constraints and Economic Growth

The existing power infrastructure in the North Island faces challenges in meeting the region's growing energy demands. As industries such as aquaculture transition to more sustainable practices and mining exploration activities expand, the demand for reliable and increased power supply becomes critical. However, the region may struggle to support these economic developments without significant investments to upgrade and expand the electricity grid.

In July 2024, BC Hydro announced plans to invest over \$3 billion in capital projects on Vancouver Island over the next decade to upgrade and expand the electricity grid.

[BC Gov News](#)

While this investment is a positive step, the specific allocation of funds and the timeline for improvements in the North Island region remain concerns.

Green Energy Initiatives

To address both the reliability of the power supply and environmental considerations, the provincial government has selected nine wind energy projects. These projects are expected to provide nearly 5,000 gigawatt hours per year of electricity by 2031, boosting BC Hydro's supply by 8%.

[BC Gov News](#)

Integrating such green energy projects is essential for the North Island to diversify its energy sources and reduce dependence on traditional power infrastructure.

Conclusion

The North Island's power supply challenges are multifaceted, involving the need for immediate infrastructure improvements to prevent outages and strategic investments to support future economic growth. Emphasizing green energy projects will enhance reliability and align with broader environmental goals, allowing the region to diversify and thrive in a changing financial landscape.

Background for Proposed AVICC Resolution:

Mental Health and Addictions Resources

For many years, local governments have been advocating for direct and specific action to support the increasing number of people who are negatively impacted by the toxic drug crises; recently, an alarming number of young people are being affected and this requires a targeted and tailored approach. All levels of government agree this is a crisis and it must be addressed, yet the challenges seem to be worsening.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association¹, approximately 14% of young people in BC will experience mental illness. According to a 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey², about 16% of high school students in BC said they had tried using a substance other than alcohol, marijuana or tobacco, while 44% had tried alcohol and 25% who had tried marijuana. Furthermore, a May 2024 report from the BC Coroners Service³ notes that "from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2023, there were 126 unregulated drug toxicity death in BC of persons younger than 19 years of age" and "unregulated drug toxicity is the leading cause of unnatural death among youth during this period." In addition, the report notes that "67% of decedents had a mental health diagnosis or anecdotal evidence of a mental health disorder." Further complicating these issues are other challenges facing youth, including housing affordability and cost of living pressures.

Youth are clearly at risk for co-occurring mental health challenges and addictions. Specialized recruitment efforts are necessary to identify people with the passion, drive and appropriate skills to actually make a difference for youth before it's too late. Early intervention and recovery programs provide the best long-term benefit for society, to prevent or remove youth from an addiction cycle before permanent damaging effects occur.

As local government leaders, we need accountability, as well as an understanding of what is being done and assessment of its effectiveness. It is crucial that the Province address the impact of mental health and addictions challenges on youth and provide an analysis of all implemented measures.

¹ - Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division. 2014, <https://bc.cmha.ca/documents/mental-illnesses-in-children-and-youth-2/>. Accessed February 5, 2025.

² - *Balance and Connection in BC: The Health and Well-Being of our Youth*. McCreary Centre Society, 2019. https://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/balance_and_connection.pdf. Accessed February 5, 2025.

³ - *Youth Unregulated Drug Toxicity Deaths in British Columbia: January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2023*. Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. May 29, 2024. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/statistical/youth_unregulated_drug_toxicity_deaths_in_bc_2019-2023.pdf. Accessed February 5, 2025.



SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AVICC BACKGROUNDER FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FUNDING MODEL

I. **BACKGROUND:**

At the Sunshine Coast Regional District Regular Board meeting of January 23, 2025, the following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS volunteer fire departments in rural and remote areas are burdened with longer and more frequent call outs to attend downed powerlines, motor vehicle incidents and other emergency calls until BC Hydro or BC Ambulance arrives on scene;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province to review the funding model for volunteer fire departments to include reasonable and proportional funding from BC Hydro, BC Ambulance, and ICBC to reduce the burden on local tax payers.

II. **Discussion:**

Fire protection remains the responsibility of local governments, yet volunteer firefighters are being asked to respond to incidents that do not fall within the local government's areas of responsibility.

More and more frequently, local and regional fire services are responding to medical calls (BC Ambulance Service) wires down (BC Hydro) and motor vehicle incidents (ICBC). These incidents are demanding on the local volunteer fire services and come at a cost to local taxpayers.

The SCRD is advocating for UBCM to work with the appropriate provincial and responsible agencies to properly fund local fire departments for their participation in such events.

Resolution

WHEREAS the Fire Safety Act came into effect on August 1, 2024 and now requires local governments to appoint fire investigators / inspectors across their jurisdictions but in particular for those areas that may not have fire protection or are challenging to access (due to remoteness);

AND WHEREAS local governments, particularly in rural and remote areas, face significant logistical and resource challenges and do not have staff or funding in place to do inspections/investigations;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request the provincial government, as stated in the recently released Fire Safety Act, have the Local Fire Service Advisors perform fire inspections and investigations for regional districts and have it be continued in perpetuity.

Backgrounder

On August 1, 2024, the Fire Safety Act came into effect replacing the Fire Services Act. The new act required local governments to appoint fire investigators / inspectors by October 28, 2024. As the previous Fire Services Act had Local Assistants to the Fire Commissioners responsible for doing inspections / investigations, regional districts were not required to do so.

Regional Districts have many areas that are not within a fire protection area therefore there is no system in place to either do the inspection / investigation or collect fees to cover the cost of them. The Fire Safety Act recognized these issues for regional districts and has a system in place for the regional districts to request the Local Fire Service Advisor to complete any inspections / investigations that would be needed.

The previous Fire Services Act had Local Assistants to the Fire Commissioner (LAFs) responsible for inspections / investigations in regional districts. The local government would appoint LAFs (usually chief officers), but they would be working for the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) with powers granted to them in the Act. The new act removed the program and placed the responsibility on the local authority to appoint inspectors and investigators. This appointment had to be done by October 28, 2024. It can be a single person or a class of people. The appointed persons will need to complete a prior learning assessment or take the training (free) that will be provided by the OFC to ensure they meet the requirements of the act.

Under the act all public buildings must be inspected. These inspections can either be compliance monitoring (proactive) or complaint driven, owner requested (reactive). In Part Six of the act a monitoring entity is described as the council of a municipality that are responsible for doing compliance-based monitoring. Regional Districts are not defined as a monitoring entity in the act therefore, they only have to do reactive inspections. The OFC has committed to provide support to the Regional Districts and do any requested inspections through a request process.

As with inspections, all loss due to fires within a regional district must be inspected regardless of whether they occur within a fire protection area or not. Currently LAFCs inspect and report all fires within their fire protection areas to the OFC.

Within regional districts there are vast areas that aren't within a fire protection area and the cost of doing inspections/investigations in these remote areas of the province would be very costly. As these areas aren't within a fire protection area there is no mechanism in place to recoup the substantial costs associated with completing the required inspections/investigations.

Backgrounder – Resolution for 2025 AVICC Convention

District of Metchosin

February 3, 2025

The sound of Canada geese flying overhead is familiar to Metchosin residents, but it means different things to different people. To farmers, it is the sound of frustration and failure - the failure of leadership to support farmers and the slow failure of our local food system.

Historically, Canada geese migrated through Vancouver Island in small numbers but never stayed long. In the 1960s and 70s, resident Canada geese were introduced to our region for wildlife viewing and game. In the 1990s environmentalists started noticing the threat to salmon habitat and estuary health caused by overgrazing of eel grasses by Canada geese.

The Capital Regional District (CRD)¹ has been doing studies over the past 10 years and they have found the population of geese to be growing exponentially despite coordinated efforts at egg addling, hazing and selective harvesting which have demonstrated to be insufficient, leading to an ever-growing population of geese.²

The Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission (PAAC) first sounded the alarm about the threat to agriculture from Canada geese in 1997. They asked for immediate action from the CRD (Capital Regional District) to help prevent crop losses. Now, almost 30 years later, the increasing pressure from Canada geese is severely impacting farmer livelihoods in all sectors. The following is a summary, sector by sector, about how farmers are being impacted:

Hay Farmers

Hay farmers are seeing the introduction of what they are calling "goose grass" into their hay fields. Goose grass is a feathery grass that gets brought in with the geese. Its early maturing so it adds undesirable dry matter to the bales. It gums up the mowers with its feathery texture, and it dies early, which leaves large dead spots in the field, which then make it easy to spread. Hay farmers used to get seven years from a freshly seeded grass field. Now they get three or four before they must reseed. It was years 3-5 that really made the process profitable because of the peak yield in the grasses. Because of geese pressure, hay farming is little more than a break-even enterprise. Yet more farmers are turning to hay from more diverse sectors like grain and specialty crops because the low yields are more certain than no yield.

Grain Farmers

For the past two years, grain farmers on Vancouver Island and the lower mainland have struggled to get a crop in because of goose pressure. The geese come off their molt in late summer, right when wheat, barley and oats are maturing. Massive flocks land and are resistant to hazing because of the rich feeding opportunity. Geese lodge the grains, making harvest of remaining crops difficult. Geese remain on fields after the harvest which makes re-seeding difficult to impossible. Fall seeded grains like winter wheat and rye are mainstay for many grain farmers. These crops get decimated while germinating in the fall, and graze to the point where they cannot mature for mid-summer harvests.

¹ Web Search, Capital Regional District, Canada Geese in the Capital Region [Regional Goose Management | CRD](#)

² Web Search, Estuaryguardians.org, 2015 [Canada Goose Management | Mysite](#)

Chicken Farmers

Poultry farms live under the threat of uncertainty caused by Canada geese. The geese can carry Avian Influenza (AI) and can easily transmit the disease to their chickens. Flocks of over 500 birds are regularly landing in their fields and ponds. These farmers stand to lose up to a million dollars if AI were to strike at certain points in their growing cycle. The fear of looming geese prevents them from properly stewarding their surrounding fields with fall cover crops over fear of attracting geese.

Fruit and Vegetable Farmers

Vegetable farmers live in fear of E. Coli contamination that is introduced from Canada geese infestations, as well as from the active predation of crops. Vegetable producers in British Columbia have experienced the loss of winter cabbages this past season that were being levelled by geese. Farmers have witnessed hundreds of geese landing on their irrigation ponds, contaminating the water supply that they need to use for fresh crops. Despite using cannons, and physical hazing, the geese will not be deterred and return after a brief fly-over. With Canada Food Safety Standards (Canada Gap), fields of certain crops for fresh eating, notably strawberries, have signs of significant predation must be abandoned. There is no crop insurance that covers wildlife damage. Vegetable farmers can be out hundreds of thousands of dollars because of these geese. They cannot sustain this year after year.

Time for a Cull

Farmers on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland are bearing the devastating costs of uncontrolled Canada geese predation, jeopardizing their livelihoods and the future of local agriculture. Many of these farmers are aging and working to pass their farms to the next generation, yet the relentless damage caused by surging geese populations threatens this transition. Without effective intervention, agriculture is at risk.

Current management strategies including hazing, egg addling, and field stringing have failed. The only proven solution is targeted culling³ during the geese summer molting period, when they are flightless. This approach, combined with expert-led population management, is essential to restoring balance and ensuring sustainable food production.

Investing in sustainable management strategies is critical to preserving and growing agriculture for future generations. Without intervention, unchecked geese populations will continue to destroy crops, drive farmers out of business, and threaten food security. We must act now to protect our farmers, our land, and our future.

³ Web Search, Government of Canada, Canada Geese; frequently asked questions [Canada Geese: frequently asked questions - Canada.ca](https://www24.international.gc.ca/geese-geese/faq-faq.aspx)

DISTRICT OF TOFINO

Backgrounder

29/01/2025

AVICC RESOLUTION

Financial Incentives for Residential Rainwater Catchment systems

Water Security and Drought in British Columbia

Water security, drought, and climate change are significant issues impacting communities throughout British Columbia. Many communities are dealing with aging water infrastructure, prolonged and more severe drought, and increasing demand, making it difficult to maintain reliable water supplies. To address these challenges, providing incentives for the installation of residential rainwater catchment systems offers a potential solution to help ease the pressure on water supplies.

The proposed resolution calls on the Province of British Columbia to provide financial incentives or rebates for the adoption of these systems.

Tofino's Water Supply Situation

Tofino's water is collected with gratitude from the rainforests protected by Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks in the Hahuulthii of the Tla-o-qui-aht Ha'wiih (chiefs). The community's water is drawn from five creeks on Meares Island, operating as a flow-through system.

In early 2024, the District received the Water Master Plan (WMP), which identified a deficit in Tofino's current raw water supply during the busy and dry months. A water deficit occurs when the community's Maximum Day Demand (MDD) exceeds the flow rate from the source creeks on Meares Island. Projections indicate that climate change, coupled with population growth, will heighten this supply shortfall, potentially leading to more days of heightened water restrictions in summer, impacting residents and visitors.

Based on recommendations from the WMP, the District is actively seeking to secure an alternative water source and additional treatment capacity by 2043. Until a secure alternative water source is established, interim measures are required to mitigate community impacts.

One of the key goals outlined in the WMP is to identify strategies, policies and programs for promoting water conservation (District of Tofino Water Master Plan, p.8).

Given the water supply challenges the District of Tofino is facing, this report proposes a resolution to advocate for provincial incentives to alleviate pressure on municipal systems through the promotion of residential rainwater catchment systems. Such systems can allow households to collect and store rainwater, reducing their reliance on municipal water supplies, particularly during the longer and drier summer months. This initiative aligns with the WMP's goals of managing water sustainably and addressing the District's long-term water needs.

This resolution is not just about addressing Tofino’s water supply issues; it has wider relevance for other local governments within AVICC. Water security is a concern across many communities in BC, making this resolution something that could benefit a broader range of local governments in the region. By focusing on rainwater catchment systems, it provides a practical solution to a challenge that is shared by many communities, making it a topic relevant to both AVICC and UBCM.

Benefits of Residential Rainwater Catchment Systems

By encouraging households to install these systems, communities can:

- **Reduce Strain on Municipal Systems:** By using stored rainwater, households can decrease their reliance on municipal water, easing pressure on existing supply systems.
- **Support Water Conservation:** Rainwater catchment promotes sustainable water use and reduces overall consumption.
- **Provide Cost Savings:** Households can save money by using rainwater for non-drinking purposes.
- **Increase Resilience to Drought:** These systems can help communities adapt to climate change by diversifying their water sources.

Financial incentives or rebates can help make these systems more affordable and encourage widespread adoption.

The Need for Provincial Support

The province has previously introduced financial incentives for other climate adaptation measures, such as electric vehicles, heat pumps, and fire-smart initiatives. A similar rebate program for rainwater catchment systems can help address water shortages in drought-prone regions by making these systems more accessible to homeowners.

By offering financial support for rainwater catchment systems, the province can help increase water supply for households and promote long-term sustainability. This initiative aligns with water conservation goals, climate resilience, and efficient resource management.

Previous UBCM Resolutions on Water Conservation

While few UBCM resolutions have directly addressed water conservation, there have been some related proposals:

- A resolution asking for new builds to include waterless urinals (not endorsed).
- A resolution asking for municipalities to require the use of gray water in new builds and retrofits (not endorsed).
- A resolution seeking funding for agricultural rainwater harvesting, which was endorsed ([Funding for Agricultural Rainwater Harvesting Systems | Union of BC Municipalities](#)).

The proposed resolution builds on the endorsement of agricultural rainwater harvesting by proposing a similar initiative for residential systems, broadening the approach to encourage water conservation in residential contexts.

Conclusion

Water supply challenges are a growing concern for many communities across British Columbia. The District of Tofino’s water supply issues are a clear example of how climate change and population growth can strain existing infrastructure. By incentivizing residential rainwater

catchment systems, the province can help reduce pressure on municipal systems, promote water conservation, and enhance community resilience.

The proposed resolution urges the Province to introduce financial incentives or rebates to encourage the installation of rainwater catchment systems. Such an initiative would address water supply challenges in a sustainable way, benefiting both individual homeowners and communities at large.

Resources:

1. District of Tofino Water Master Plan: tofino.civicweb.net/document/152233/
2. Endorsed Resolution regarding Funding for Agricultural Rainwater Harvesting Systems / Union of BC Municipalities: [Funding for Agricultural Rainwater Harvesting Systems | Union of BC Municipalities](#)

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****CONSERVING BC LANDFILL CAPACITY**

Landfill airspace in the province of BC is rapidly being consumed due to increased population and strong economic growth within communities. The dwindling airspace in BC's landfills has a direct impact on future waste management initiatives and solutions, as well as management of and recovery from disaster events.

Regional districts are mandated to plan for solid waste in their regions, including the use of landfills. However, with the rapid decline in landfill space, the cost of and opposition to siting new landfills, and the unknown costs and environmental impacts of shipping waste out of region, regional districts are left with limited options for long-term solid waste planning in their regions.

Without a province-wide strategy, landfilling alternatives, such as incineration and waste export, become the most likely solution. Such alternatives remove resources from waste diversion solutions such as recycling and composting, thereby decreasing the efficacy of regional waste diversion strategies and negatively impacting circular solutions. Further, the export of waste increases negative consequences on not only regional society, economy, and natural environment, but also the region where the waste is being received.

Resolution

Sustainable Funding for Landfill Gas Regulation Compliance

WHEREAS the new provincial landfill gas regulations present disproportionate financial challenges for smaller local governments, exacerbating existing disparities in service delivery capacity;

AND WHEREAS compliance costs, including infrastructure upgrades, specialized training, ongoing monitoring, and maintenance, represent a significant financial strain for communities with limited revenue streams;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Union of BC Municipalities call upon the Province of British Columbia to develop a sustainable funding model that recognizes the diverse financial capacities of local governments and provides targeted financial assistance to ensure equitable implementation of the landfill gas regulations across British Columbia.

Background

- New federal landfill gas regulations, aimed at reducing methane emissions from landfills by 50% by 2030, will require new investments to enhance monitoring, repair, reporting, and methane capture.
- The regulations directly impact specific landfills, requiring increased monitoring frequency (including drone-based surface emission monitoring), enhanced leak detection and repair protocols, and potential upgrades to existing gas collection and flaring systems.
- Many local governments have already invested millions in waste management infrastructure to meet existing provincial standards, often with significant increases in local taxes and tipping fees.
- The resolution advocates for dedicated and predictable provincial funding to mitigate the financial impact of these new regulatory requirements on taxpayers and ensure the continued delivery of essential waste management services.

2025 AVICC Resolution Background

Title: Legislating the BC Coastal Marine Strategy Resolution

The coast is a global treasure and is vital to the identity, culture, and economy of BC. It is facing increasing pressures, including the effects of climate change, declining fish populations and development. The provincial government exercises considerable jurisdiction in the marine and coastal realm, yet historically, was one of the only North American coastal jurisdictions to not have a cohesive policy in place to manage coastal and marine issues and guide decision-making in these spheres. The current array of provincial policy and laws that address marine and coastal issues was simply not designed to deal with today's pressures.

The Province recently took a huge step last to address this shortcoming. In July 2024, the province released its first-ever [Coastal Marine Strategy](#),¹ aimed at holistically managing the coast for generations to come. This was achieved in collaboration with many First Nations, and after extensive consultation with coastal communities, other governments, stakeholders and concerned citizens. This included commercial fishers, recreational fishers, tourism operators, the conservation sector, and the shipping industry, among others. The Strategy's vision is "***a diverse, productive and resilient coastal marine environment that is valued in its own right and that supports the prosperity, health and well-being of coastal communities now and into the future.***"²

The Strategy includes both existing and new policies, programs and projects; these aim to protect and restore coastal ecosystems; assess and manage cumulative impacts; promote sustainable blue economies; and support the implementation of marine plans to ensure the most sustainable use of coastal regions. A selection of the Strategy's activities that are most relevant to coastal communities are listed below.

The Need for Legislation:

This monumental accomplishment must now be followed up with a legislative framework to support the Strategy's goals. This is the critical next step to ensure the Strategy fulfills its 20-year vision and is resistant to political changes and has strong monitoring and enforcement provisions.

The B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy committed, in the first activity under action 19 "Modernize policies and procedures", to: "*Assess the information needed and develop a proposal for coastal marine legislation, in partnership with First Nations. As appropriate, proceed through the legislative stages*" (see p 54 of the Strategy). However, passing legislation takes time, and with the recent provincial election resulting in a bare minority government, there is no time to waste. Pressure from local governments, through UBCM, will help push the Province to move forward on this commitment.

¹ B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy, online: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/water/coastal-marine-strategy/coastal_marine_strategy.pdf

² For more information on the Strategy, see West Coast Environmental Law's blog post: "A Blueprint for the Coast: BC's first ever Coastal Marine Strategy is here!" (11 July 2024), online: <https://www.wcel.org/blog/blueprint-coast-bcs-first-ever-coastal-marine-strategy-here>

The B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy's relevance to coastal communities

The B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy has nine goals that are operationalized with 116 activities. Coastal communities are familiar with the challenges facing the B.C. Coast, and many of the Strategy's activities will benefit coastal communities. Fifteen of these activities are:

Monitor Coastal Health

- Establish water quality objectives and monitoring programs in coastal areas of concern and use monitoring results to:
 - link in with coastal watershed planning and protection and other strategic planning processes (such as estuary management plans and storm water management plans);
 - maintain and expand partnerships with other governments;
 - expand efforts for preventing, detecting, monitoring and managing invasive aquatic plant species;

Protect and restore nearshore ecosystems

- Protect nearshore habitats from the impacts of small vessel anchoring and mooring buoys, in collaboration with First Nations, federal and local governments;
- Explore establishing innovative protected area models for the coastal marine environment in collaboration with interested First Nations and the federal government, including the use of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas;
- Assist in the collation of information on the location and status of intertidal spawning habitat for forage fish (sand lance and surf smelt), support additional forage fish habitat spawning surveys and help to encourage citizen involvement in habitat conservation;

Prevent marine pollution

- Prohibit the use of polystyrene in future marine infrastructure construction and collaborate with the federal government to promote replacing existing polystyrene marine floats with environmentally friendly alternatives;

Clean up marine pollution

- Support additional coastal cleanups of plastics and debris, including actions to address abandoned and derelict trespass structures and derelict vessels in the intertidal zone;

Improve understanding of climate change

- Expand our collective understanding of climate risks to coastal communities, ecosystems and economies through monitoring, research, data acquisition, modelling and vulnerability studies. Work with government partners to enhance and support the climate resilience of coastal communities;
- Help provide the information needed to develop or update regional climate action plans;

Incorporate nature-based solutions

- Investigate and consider incentives to homeowners and developers to maintain or restore natural shorelines (such as through grants and rebates, tax relief and permitting efficiencies);
- Improve access to [Green Shores](#) training, education and technical support to help homeowners, developers and local governments implement nature-based solutions to a high standard;

- Expand the implementation of B.C.'s expedited permit process for nature-based shoreline projects;

Help restore First Nations traditional (sea)food systems

- Support the development and implementation of community-level, climate-informed food sovereignty visions/plans focused on reclaiming ancestral seafoods and building food resiliency;

Advance collaborative stewardship

- Establish new, integrated participatory structures and processes that improve collaboration and co-ordination across governments;

Modernize policies and procedures

- Update, as required, provincial policies, best management practices and authorization requirements for tenures tied to activities in the coastal marine environment;

Update and refresh spatial data

- Identify a pilot area to develop and implement an integrated plan across the land-sea interface that brings together watershed and coastal marine planning.

Enshrining the B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy into law will improve coastal decision-making and co-management; ensure healthy and resilient marine ecosystems; and support sustainable and vibrant coastal communities and economies.

Previous UBCM resolution related to the Coastal Marine Strategy:

2020 – Sponsored by Port Moody, Automatically referred to Executive NR45 Support for a British Columbia Coastal Protection Strategy

WHEREAS unlike all the Atlantic provinces, BC has no comprehensive coastal and marine strategy, a BC Coastal Protection Strategy will clearly articulate provincial jurisdiction and enable the Province to better engage with other governments and communities;

AND WHEREAS no marine counterpart to the BC Land Act exists, and piecemeal legislation and policy govern numerous coastal marine activities;

AND WHEREAS a BC Coastal Protection Strategy will provide a vision and objectives to guide actions in the increasingly crowded coastal zone and highlight the importance the government places on these vital areas such as sensitive marine ecosystems, and vulnerable species, as well as their importance to protecting our coastal communities and economies:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT UBCM request the BC government to develop and enact a Coastal Protection Strategy and law to leverage and coordinate the work of provincial ministries, First Nations, local communities, and stakeholder groups to preserve coastal and ocean health, halt coastal habitat loss, accelerate the completion of a UBCM 2020 Resolutions Book 135 network of marine protected areas to benefit fisheries, biodiversity and the economy, set marine environmental quality objectives from upland activities, and help communities adopt ecosystem-based approaches to manage risks from flooding due to extreme weather events, sea level rise, climate change, and ocean acidification.

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY STRATEGY**

The circular economy is an approach to economic and environmental sustainability. Instead of the traditional linear model, where products are made, used, and then discarded, the circular economy focuses on keeping resources in use for as long as possible.

In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like redesign, maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting. The circular economy also deals with climate change and other global challenges, such as biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution, by decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources.

Products are designed to be more durable, and when they reach the end of their life, their materials are recovered and regenerated to create new products. This helps reduce environmental impact and fosters more sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Circular economic solutions have been highlighted by the province of BC as a solution in ending humanity's dependency on a high throughput of natural resources, thereby reducing the negative impacts of social and economic growth on the natural environment.

The development of a provincial circular economic strategy is critical in providing guidance on the establishment and reinforcement of circular solutions within the province.

Resolution

WHEREAS the small water systems in rural British Columbia, which are administered by local governments, provide essential services to rural residents and communities, yet they face unsustainable financial burdens due to the high costs of water treatment systems, ongoing maintenance, and replacing aging infrastructure, which can amount to millions of dollars;

AND WHEREAS it is not possible for rural residents and communities to finance these systems through local taxation alone, threatening the viability of these water systems and the communities they serve, while also posing a significant risk to local food security;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request the provincial and federal governments to establish long-term sustainable funding programs specifically for small water systems to address high cost and regulatory compliance requirements and to safeguard local food security, and for a collaborative approach to funding and support, including cost-sharing models, grant programs and capacity-building initiatives, to enable small rural water systems to remain viable and resilient amidst growing environmental and economic pressures.

Backgrounder

These systems are vital to the sustainability of the communities they serve, providing safe and reliable drinking water for residents, supporting food security and self sufficiency, and supporting the maintenance of local ecosystems. These water systems, which are administered by local governments, serve a limited number of homes but face extraordinary costs for upgrades, maintenance and meeting regulatory compliance. These expenses often total millions of dollars, far exceeding the financial capacity of a small group of rural taxpayers to support. This is especially true for very small water systems of less than 100 connections, such as the Graham Lake Water System.

Challenges Faced by Small Water Systems • High Filtration and Treatment Costs: Provincial and federal regulations mandate water quality standards that require advanced treatment systems to ensure water quality, placing additional financial strain on small systems. • Aging Infrastructure: Many small water systems were constructed decades ago and require significant upgrades or replacement to meet current standards and ensure reliability. • Maintenance and Operational Costs: Ongoing operational and

maintenance costs are disproportionately high for small systems due to their limited user base and economies of scale. • Lack of Sustainable Funding: Current funding mechanisms do not provide long-term or predictable support, leaving small water system vulnerable to financial instability and service disruption. • Food Security and Self Sufficiency: The CVRD's small water systems support local food security at the home providing water for the growing of food and enabling self sufficiency. While the UBCM membership has endorsed similar resolutions in the past, the financial challenges for small water systems continue to escalate, underscoring the need for a stronger commitment to long-term sustainable funding. This resolution calls for: • Dedicated Long-Term Funding: Establishment of predictable, sustainable funding programs to support capital upgrades, compliance with regulatory standards and ongoing operational costs. • Collaborative Approaches: Cost-sharing models and grant programs that involve provincial and federal governments to alleviate the financial burden on rural residents and communities. Staff Report – Sustainable Funding for Small Water Systems Page 3 Comox Valley Regional District • Capacity-Building Support: Programs to assist regional districts with technical expertise, planning and resource management.

FUNDING INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENTS' ENGAGEMENT in LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Backgrounder

With the adoption of DRIPA in 2019, the Province of BC committed to recognize and uphold Indigenous self-determination and the right to good-faith engagement and participation in decision making. Through DRIPA, the Province has adopted a distinctions-based approach to advancing reconciliation. A distinctions-based approach is based in a legal foundation in the *Constitution Act*, 1982, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, DRIPA and treaties.

In BC, where few historic treaties were settled, local governments are responsible for land use planning over lands that are often First Nations unceded territory. First Nations interest in local government land use planning are vast and often overlapping, including interests in the use and management of traditional territory, to lands acquired through treaty settlement processes, as well as decision making for lands adjacent to reserves.

The *Local Government Act* s. 475 requires local governments to consider consultation with First Nations in the development of an Official Community Plan, while in s. 434, early and ongoing consultation with First Nations is required in the development of a Regional Growth Strategy. The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) s. 41 requires consultation and cooperation with First Nations in the preparation, review or revision of comprehensive Emergency Management Plans. Local governments are committed to consulting and engaging with First Nations in regional and community planning activities, but recognize challenges facing First Nations' meaningful participation.

Within *EDMA*, adopted in 2023, Indigenous engagement is designed to enhance cooperation with Indigenous Peoples and support Indigenous input into emergency management. The Provincial funding provided in support of Indigenous government bodies is inconsistent with other sectors such as community and regional planning, which are also central to local government and First Nations potential collaboration and shared well-being. Funding programs such as Community to Community forums provide inadequate levels of funding, particularly in contrast with *EDMA* funding, to reach alignment of regional planning with DRIPA principles.

In many ways, the nexus of First Nations and non-First Nations relations is at the regional scale. This is apparent in *LGA* s. 250, which provides for modern treaty Nations representation on a regional district board. An appreciation of the diversity of First Nations languages, cultures, and governance structures is best understood at a regional scale, as is the ability to collaboratively identify community planning issues and opportunities. However, First Nations governments' all too frequent response to local government outreach is a shortage of resources or capacity to engage. Key supports from the province which would help overcome these resource and capacity challenges include:

- Establishment of sustainable funding to support Indigenous governments' participation in local government community and regional planning activities.
- Allocation of resources to support focussed Government to Government dialogue with each First Nation to understand their unique perspectives, challenges, and contexts for co-creation and/or leadership in community and regional planning activities.
- Dedication of resources to support coordination and information sharing across regional districts and municipalities in BC as it relates to First Nations' current involvement in community and regional planning activities.
- Development of platforms, tools and resources to support the building of awareness and respect for each First Nation's historical, cultural and legal contexts in BC.

The provision of sustainable funding from the Province would be a key initial support.

The jurisdictional landscape is changing, as First Nations are increasingly realizing self-governance and self-determination over their lands, including through modern treaty settlement and the *First Nations Land Management Act*. With this evolving landscape, in addition to statutory requirements, DRIPA highlights the imperative to strengthen First Nations and local government collaboration. While many First Nations in BC have yet to ratify treaty, more focus on relationship building today may restore trust, improve treaty discussions and also facilitate Indigenous-led research, education and policy to support community and regional planning and assisting Indigenous communities to share in the benefits of co-developed plans.

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****SUSTAINABLE GROWING COMMUNITIES FUND**

Local governments in British Columbia are grappling with escalating financial pressures due to rapid population growth and rising costs in essential services. As of April 1, 2024, the province’s population reached 5,646,467, marking an annual growth rate of 3.3%—the highest since 1971¹. This surge has intensified demands on infrastructure, public safety, and emergency services.

Infrastructure costs are rising faster than general consumer inflation, straining local government finances. The cost of materials, labor, and maintenance for infrastructure has surged, driven by global supply chain issues and increased demand for construction in high-growth areas. This financial mismatch means that, even with efforts to economize, local governments are increasingly unable to meet their communities’ needs without substantial tax hikes or cuts to essential services².

Another significant challenge is the increasing cost of policing and first responder services. For instance, the Vancouver Police Department reported a budget overrun of \$10 million in the first half of 2024 and projects a year-end deficit of \$17 million³. Similarly, local governments across the province face substantial financial burdens due to retroactive RCMP pay increases, with projected costs between \$138 million and \$145 million⁴. These unforeseen expenses are stretching local budgets, often leading to difficult decisions regarding service levels and funding allocations.

Compounding these challenges is the reliance on property taxes as the primary revenue source for local governments. Property taxes are considered regressive because they do not scale with income, placing a disproportionate burden on lower-income households. In contrast, the provincial government has access to progressive taxation mechanisms, such as income and corporate taxes, which align more closely with taxpayers’ ability to pay, offering a more equitable revenue model.

Given these challenges, there is a pressing need for a sustainable, recurring “Growing Communities Fund.” Such a fund, generating \$1 billion annually through progressive taxation, would provide stable financial support to local governments. This approach would enable local governments to meet the growing demands of their communities without over-reliance on regressive property taxes, ensuring equitable and sustainable service delivery across British Columbia.

¹ Government of British Columbia, Quarterly Population Highlights, Second Quarter, 2024, BC Stats, April 1, 2024, p. 1.

² British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Highway Construction Inflation Indexes 2023, April 2023, p. 1.

³ City of Vancouver, Vancouver Police Department Mid-Year Budget Report, July 2024, p. 2.

⁴ Government of British Columbia, RCMP Retroactive Pay Cost Implications for Municipalities, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, April 2023, p. 3.

TOPIC:

Removal of the B.C. Port Tax Cap

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS a number of communities in B.C. host federal port facilities within their jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS many of these communities struggle with raising taxation revenue to support infrastructure deficits and service provision;

AND WHEREAS the B.C. government has restricted municipal taxation on ports under the Ports Property Tax Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE AVICC and UBCM advocate to the B.C. government to remove or increase the port tax cap thereby ensuring that port industries pay a fair share of taxes in the local communities in which they operate.

BACKGROUNDER:

The B.C. government introduced a temporary Ports Property Tax Act (PPTA) in 2004 and it was made permanent in 2014. The PPTA provides a cap on municipal tax rates for existing marine port facilities of \$27.5 per \$1,000 and a lower cap on new port investments or improvements of \$22.5 per \$1,000.

Communities that host federal port facilities in B.C. struggle with raising taxation revenue to support infrastructure deficits and service provision. The City of Prince Rupert is home to the third largest port in Canada, the Port of Prince Rupert (PRPA). Since 2004, more than \$1 billion of port terminal-specific investment has been realized at the PRPA. Since 2004, the community of Prince Rupert has seen its infrastructure deficit increase and the City now struggles with an infrastructure deficit of over \$600 million.

While we are fully supportive of growing ports across B.C. and Canada to benefit our economies and to create jobs, it is important to ensure that foreign companies that invest in Canadian port infrastructure, including American companies, are paying their fair share in taxes to local governments. It is imperative that these companies re-invest in local communities instead of taking advantage of local communities, especially in light of the risks associated with automation and its potential for loss in employment in local communities.

We strongly urge the B.C. government to consider a removal or increase of the PPTA, which will ensure that port industries pay a fair share of taxes in the local communities in which they operate.



BACKGROUND

At the September 4, 2024 qathet Regional District (qRD) Regular Regional Board Meeting Ted Olynyk, Manager, Community Relations, BC Hydro Vancouver Island - Sunshine Coast appeared as a delegation and spoke to the Board about several topics including Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations on Islands. At the November 6, 2024 qathet Regional District (qRD) Regular Regional Board Meeting, the Board directed staff to apply to B.C. Hydro for installation of fast EV chargers on Texada Island.

As a result of the Board directive from November 6, 2024, staff reached out to BC Hydro to investigate the process of applying for funding and support to establish an EV charging station on Texada Island. Staff were informed that BC Hydro had a change of direction and priorities shortly after their September 4, 2024 presentation to the Board. Without their support, installation of public EV charging stations on Texada Island is not possible. Therefore, the Board is requesting the AVICC consider a resolution to request BC Hydro to establish a separate strategy for the installation of Public EV Chargers in remote and rural areas, including island communities.

The transition to electric vehicles (EVs) is a critical component of British Columbia's strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainable transportation. While BC Hydro has made significant progress in developing an EV charging network along key travel corridors, including Powell River, remote communities, including island and rural areas such as Texada Island, remain underserved. A targeted EV charger installation strategy for remote areas is essential to support tourism, advance climate action, and stimulate economic development. Therefore, the qathet Regional District Board requests that BC Hydro develop a comprehensive strategy for communities that may never meet the existing EV installation requirements of higher populated areas.

Tourism is a vital economic driver for many remote communities in British Columbia. Travelers increasingly rely on EVs to explore the province, and the availability of charging infrastructure directly influences their route choices. In areas such as Texada Island, where BC Hydro has deferred EV charging expansion, the absence of fast chargers may deter visitors, limiting local economic opportunities for businesses. In addition, these smaller, more remote communities are becoming increasingly popular destinations, and many require visitors to come with their own transportation due to lack of public transportation services.

A well-distributed EV charging network ensures that tourists can confidently travel to remote destinations without range anxiety. Investments in public charging stations will encourage longer stays, benefiting local accommodations, restaurants, and attractions. Furthermore, with the growing popularity of eco-tourism, sustainable travel options align with British Columbia's broader efforts to position itself as a leader in environmentally responsible tourism and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



The transportation sector is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Expanding BC Hydro's EV charging network to remote areas supports British Columbia's CleanBC climate action goals by accelerating the shift away from fossil fuels. Without access to reliable charging, residents of remote communities may be discouraged from purchasing EVs, leading to prolonged reliance on internal combustion engine vehicles.

The integration of renewable energy sources with EV infrastructure in remote locations can further enhance sustainability. Solar-powered charging stations, for example, could reduce dependence on the provincial grid and provide resilient, off-grid energy solutions. BC Hydro's role as the primary electricity provider makes it well-positioned to support these initiatives, ensuring that all regions, regardless of geographic or lack of population challenges, can participate in British Columbia's clean energy transition.

Investing in EV charging infrastructure in remote areas fosters economic development by creating new business opportunities and attracting investment. Businesses that host charging stations can generate additional revenue while drawing in customers who may spend time shopping or dining while their vehicles charge. Additionally, job creation in the installation and maintenance of EV infrastructure contributes to local employment.

A well-developed EV charging network also strengthens community resilience by reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels. Remote communities often face higher fuel costs due to transportation challenges. Expanding access to electric transportation can alleviate these financial burdens, providing long-term cost savings for residents and businesses.

BC Hydro's current strategy prioritizes high-usage urban areas and major travel corridors, but an expansion plan for remote communities is necessary to achieve equitable EV adoption across the province. The delayed installation of charging stations on Texada Island exemplifies the challenges that smaller communities face in accessing clean transportation infrastructure.

To address these gaps, BC Hydro should create a distinct remote-area EV charging strategy to prioritize underserved regions, collaborate with local governments and key partners to identify high-impact locations for EV chargers, explore funding models that incorporate provincial and federal clean energy grants, and support renewable-powered EV charging solutions in rural, remote, and island communities.

Additional Reports

<https://qathetrd.civicweb.net/document/171427/>

SUPPORT AND RESOURCING FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS BY THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT

Backgrounder

The Province of British Columbia is committed to doubling the percentage of trips taken using active transportation by the year 2030, which is inclusive of municipalities, rural areas and First Nation communities across the province.

As highlighted by the Province, *“We are striving to reach this target by supporting the adoption of active transportation as a safe and accessible way of getting to work, school or community activities. This commitment will only be accomplished by working with our partners and integrating active transport with other modes of transportation.”*

A key outcome of the Provincial Active Transportation Strategy – General Population Survey 2019 noted: *“Ease of access impacts overall Active Transportation Usage: Availability and ease of access to different modes of transportation appear to have a substantial influence on regular AT use to work and community destinations.”*

In support of advancing active transportation, the Provincial Active Transportation Program provides local governments with access to provincial funding which supports active transportation planning, as well as the development of active transportation infrastructure. For municipalities, active transportation route planning and development can be integrated with municipal road network infrastructure; however, for rural areas within regional districts, the local public road infrastructure is under the jurisdiction and responsibility of the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (Ministry). While active transportation priorities and route planning within rural areas is certainly within the capacity of regional districts to undertake, the jurisdictional ownership of road infrastructure and lack of mandates poses its challenges.

An integrated approach between the Ministry and regional districts should, therefore, be developed to support the timely and efficient advancement of engineering designs, integration and construction of active transportation infrastructure as a component of provincial roadways. Although the Ministry has the ability to issue limited authority to regional districts through tools such as licenses of occupation to develop and maintain improvements within provincial road rights-of-way, this does not fundamentally provide for a wholistic approach to active transportation integration development within provincial road networks.

The Province’s commitment to support increased active transportation uptake, inclusive of integrating active transportation infrastructure as part of current and future provincial highway improvement projects, should be systematically applied to all provincially-managed public roadways in rural communities. This approach aligns with supporting identified active transportation priorities for rural areas through application of dedicated provincial resources to assess, approve, design and construct integrated active transportation infrastructure with provincial roadways.

The application of consistent active transportation design and engineering practices by the Province will make it achievable for rural communities to have access to sustainable and accessible modes of transportation on provincial roadways. Partnerships between rural communities (regional districts) and the Ministry is imperative to identify active transportation needs, priorities and funding support (i.e. sponsoring grant funding applications by regional districts) to implement such projects as supported by rural communities.

TOPIC:

BC Ferry Advisory Committees

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS Ferry Advisory Committees provide route-specific input and advocacy and exist as part of BC Ferries' strategic goal to be customer and community centred;

AND WHEREAS BC Ferries has dissolved the Ferry Advisory Committees;

AND WHEREAS the B.C. Government's Coastal Ferry Services Contract, last amended on March 31, 2024, states that it is committed to "ongoing engagement in support of provincial reconciliation efforts;"

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE AVICC AND UBCM advocate to the B.C. government to amend the Coastal Ferry Services Contract and include a provision for BC Ferries to develop an engagement framework that meaningfully considers input from local governments and Indigenous communities that rely on the BC Ferry System.

BACKGROUND:

B.C. Ferries recently dissolved its Ferry Advisory Committees (FAC). Prior to this decision, B.C. Ferries met with FAC's to discuss day-to-day operations, planned improvements, fares, service changes, and new projects. FAC's have provided route-specific input and advocacy, supporting B.C. Ferries strategic goal to be customer and community centred.

The B.C. Government's Coastal Ferry Service Contract, last amended on March 31, 2024, states that it is committed to "ongoing engagement in support of provincial reconciliation efforts." While local communities are supportive of provincial reconciliation efforts with Indigenous communities, we want to ensure that local community priorities are also being captured as part of B.C. Ferries new engagement efforts. Local communities have distinct needs that were accounted for under the FAC system.

We strongly urge the B.C. government to amend the Coastal Ferry Services Contract and include a provision for BC Ferries to develop an engagement framework that meaningfully considers input from both local governments and Indigenous communities that rely on the BC Ferry System.



SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AVICC BACKGROUNDER FOR EMERGENCY ROAD NETWORK PLANNING

I. BACKGROUND:

At the Sunshine Coast Regional District Regular Board meeting of January 23, 2025, the following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS rural communities cannot meet the challenges of climate change without a climate change and emergency management strategy for critical transportation networks;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Transportation and Transit is not required to participate in local government planning processes;

AND WHEREAS planning for growth in our communities is not feasible in the absence of any road network planning by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province instruct the Ministry of Transportation and Transit to collaborate with local governments on emergency access road plans for rural and unincorporated areas, upon request.

II. Discussion:

In rural and unincorporated communities where the responsibility for maintaining roads is with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MoTT), collaboration is required with local governments to ensure the identification and mitigation of risk, incorporates local emergency management planning and strategy development. Challenges such as undersized culverts running under main roadways, traffic calming measures, and multi-modal interests, all compete with the need to establish safe and direct community evacuation routes.

The interdependence between MoTT's route planning and road maintenance with local authorities' requirement to plan and write emergency evacuation plans requires a collaborative approach to ensure that limited resources and capacities are utilized in the most efficient use. The collaboration of MoTT and local governments will ensure awareness of individual needs.

Year: 2025

Sponsor: Village of Daajing Giids

RESOLUTION: Provincially Funded WorkSafe BC Coverage for elected officials

BACKGROUNDER

The Ministry of Labour Ministry is responsible for WorkSafeBC, the Workers Compensation Act, and regulations under that Act. The Act provides the legal authority and framework for WorkSafeBC activities, including occupational health and safety activities.

Previous resolutions have been brought forward to UBCM regarding Coverage for Elected Officials:

1. Elected Officials Coverage Under Workers Compensation Act
Year 2014
Number B98
Sponsor(s) Sechelt District

<https://www.ubcm.ca/convention-resolutions/resolutions/resolutions-database/elected-officials-coverage-under-workers>

2. WorkSafe BC Coverage for Local Elected Officials
Year 2021
Number EB2
Sponsor(s) NCLGA Executive

<https://www.ubcm.ca/convention-resolutions/resolutions/resolutions-database/worksafe-bc-coverage-local-elected>

With the Provincial response being that it has no plans at this time to amend the Workers Compensation Act to provide worker coverage to elected officials. The Province has directed the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and/or individual local governments to approach WorkSafeBC to explore whether existing legislation allows options for coverage. Alternatively, UBCM or local governments individually may inquire with private sector insurance carriers for rates or group options.

However, local government elected officials are increasingly being exposed to harassment, incivility and altercations within Council Meetings and in the general public sphere. Additionally, 2021 changes to the Community Charter and impelled more Councils into adopting a Code of Conduct that regulates the activities of its council members with respect to each other, municipal staff, and the general public.

The Village of Daajing Giids is seeking support to compel the Province of BC to re-evaluate these previous decisions and do more to protect those willing to stand as representatives of their communities large or small. The Village of Daajing Giids would like to see the Workers Compensation Act amended to include elected officials and provincially funded WorkSafeBC coverage for all government elected officials.

RESOLUTION: Provincially Funded WorkSafeBC Coverage for elected officials

***WHEREAS** WorkSafe BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation does not cover elected officials, as currently elected officials e.g., provincial municipal and regional district government, school or library boards, etc. are not considered workers or employers under the Act and, therefore, the Act does not apply to them in this capacity.*

***AND WHEREAS** in the course of serving their constituents', elected officials are increasingly being subjected to escalating incivility such as harassment, intimidation and altercations, and as the Province, the Ministry of Labour, and WorkSafeBC take the safety of all workers in British Columbia seriously and recognize the importance of the health and safety of all British Columbians who are active in both the private and public sectors of the economy.*

***Therefore, be it resolved** that the Province and the Ministry of Labour amend the Workers Compensation Act to include, and provincially fund, WorkSafe BC coverage for all elected officials doing this necessary work on behalf of British Columbians.*

Background for Proposed AVICC Resolution:

Provincial Consultation on Legislative Changes Impacting Local Governments

The province has amended or adopted new provisions in more than 20 statutes with relevance to local governments; a summary table of examples is included in Attachment 1. At the low end, this requires staff time to keep apprised of changes and review the amendments to determine what, if any, implications exist for the City. At the more extreme end, the changes mandate local governments to undertake actions and in several cases, these have been extensive. The provincial government has adopted legislation at a rapid pace, leaving local governments scrambling to keep up and maintain compliance with the requirements. For many local governments, Council's strategic priorities may have been deferred as staff are redeployed to provincial mandates.

Many new provincial requirements have been enacted across several topic areas, including accessibility, emergency planning, freedom of information, building codes, fire safety, climate change reporting and accounting, residential land use, public hearing procedures, safe work requirements, employee statistics reporting, riparian areas and environmental management, drinking water requirements and local government roles in cannabis/ liquor licensing.

These changes were mandated with aggressive timelines and efficient implementation was hampered by delayed release of associated regulations and extensive policy manuals discussing intent, requiring many hours to review, understand and analyze necessary responses at the local level, necessitating redeployment of fixed staff resources away from Council identified strategic priorities to provincially mandated tasks.

Many of these changes have ongoing impacts on staff capacity and there is no core funding from the Province provided to support achievement of its provincial objectives. Changes to a myriad of regulations are placing a burden on staff resources across all departments in local governments. The high volume of changes across all divisions, all at once, makes it challenging to hire staff as the required expertise is diverse and would require new hires in several departments, with significant tax implications.

Attachment No. 1
Examples of Provincial Statute Amendments affecting local governments

(not an exhaustive list, and does not include accompanying regulations and policies)

Name of Act/ Bill	Summary of changes and impacts for Parksville
1. Building Act (Bill 205)	Building Code changes for enhanced accessibility – Building inspectors must fully understand changes and adapt inspection processes
2. Cannabis Licensing Regulation	Local Government recommendations - need a consultation process, staff must facilitate a public process, write reports to Council and solicit feedback from the community.
3. Clean Air Act (Bill 211)	Installation of CO ² monitors in work places and monitoring of Health Canada index thresholds for workers, Safe work procedures must be developed, implemented and monitored.
4. Climate Change Accountability Act	Climate Action reporting requirements for Cities – this is a significant change, mostly affecting Finance and Operations. Ongoing reporting is required and contractors must comply too, which is expected to increase costs
5. Community Charter (Bill 16)	Definitions and provisions for tenants during development – staff must be aware of the provisions and advise applicants of the requirements
6. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act	Awareness and implementation of an action plan to recognize rights of indigenous governing bodies - affects the City as an applicant for provincial permits/ licences/ grants. Understanding of UNDRIP is required, staff have attended legal webinars on the topic
7. Drinking Water Protection Act	Drinking Water Advisory committees established – RDN is lead, but city staff must participate
8. Emergency Disaster Management Act (Bill 224)	Timelines on eligibility for disaster financial assistance – staff must be aware of the changes, eligibility requirements and timelines to assist the public and seek reimbursement of costs for City's response
9. Emergency Program Act - EDMA	Largescale changes to the act, definitions of all stages of an emergency, new consultation requirements for indigenous governing bodies, new provisions on what municipalities must respond to and requirement to prepare numerous critical infrastructure, contingency plans and business continuity plans.
10. Ending Decriminalization Act (Bill 215)	Sought an end to decriminalization of public illicit drug use – this has had a significant impact on all communities and in Parksville mostly affects bylaw and RCMP in their operational tasks. There has been an increase in calls for service for people concerned about open drug use and impaired individuals exhibiting antisocial behaviour in public parks and open spaces.
11. Environmental Management Act (Bill 3)	Relocation and removal of contaminated soil – affects the City's development processes, we cannot issue certain permits until the province has authorized the proposal

12. Equal Pay Reporting Act	Report out on different pay rates for male and female employees – this will be a requirement in 2026 and the City will have to develop a reporting structure on pay, gender and an analysis of pay gap calculations. This will be a permanent additional requirement for all employers with more than 50 staff.
13. Fire Safety Act	New requirements for inspection, investigations, need to prepare and adopt new bylaws and new policies with an expected ongoing increase in operational demand to implement the changes/ frequency of inspections.
14. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act	Requirements on charging fees for FOI requests – staff must be aware and ensure local procedures are in compliance with provincial legislation.
15. Housing Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 16)	Tenancy changes – staff must be aware to advise applicants, but also as a landlord
16. Housing Supply Act (Bill 43)	Housing targets, annual reports – research and develop housing targets for all types of housing and update OCP every five years to implement new targets
17. Liquor Control and Licensing Amendment Act (Bill 209)	Changes in licence types - food and liquor primary and LG notice/ consultation requirements. Staff must facilitate processes for provincial applications, prepare staff reports and submit recommendations to Council
18. Local Government Act	Electronic meetings, disqualification of Councillors for indictable offences; Housing and Land use changes – staff must be aware of all rules pertaining to Council
19. Local Government Act - Bill 16	Tenants; affordable housing, special needs housing, density bonus, annual reporting, works and services requirements, subdivision and building permit conditions, highway provisions and transportation management
20. Municipal Affairs Statutes	Mandatory leave for Councillors charged with Criminal Code offences
21. Short term rental Accommodations Amendment Act (Bill 203)	Exempt land - areas where STRs are allowed to be outside of a principal residence
22. Water Sustainability Act	Significant changes to definition of a watercourse and requirements for works near these expanded areas – increase permit requirements for city staff, increased cost to maintain and do work on city property near any watercourse, including culverted and piped storm drains, ditches and wetted areas.
23. Wildlife Act	Adding bear den protection – staff must be aware and advise applicants of changes and look for provisions in QEP reports, where applicable
24. Workers Compensation Act	Return to work provisions; asbestos abatement



Date: January 31, 2025
File No: 0390-20-AVICC

RESOLUTION for Consideration by Delegates at the AVICC 2025 AGM & Convention Forestry Industry | Fibre Decline

In alignment with Council's *2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan* and the goals of "Planning and encouraging development to ensure a thriving economy and strong diverse tax base" and "responding to demographic change," Council for the City of Port Alberni is submitting the attached resolution for consideration.

The forestry industry is a cornerstone of British Columbia's economy, historically providing thousands of jobs, contributing significantly to local and provincial revenues, and serving as a vital source of raw materials for a variety of sectors. However, in 2025 the industry is facing an unprecedented crisis characterized by substantial job losses, a decline in fibre availability, and rising operational costs. This backgrounder outlines the current challenges, implications for communities, and the necessity for proactive measures from the provincial government.

Reports indicate that hundreds of jobs have already been lost in the forestry sector in British Columbia in 2024, with many more positions at risk. This trend is attributed to a combination of factors, including reduced access to fibre, rising operational costs, and increased competition from alternative materials and industries.

The availability of timber and fibre has become increasingly limited due to various factors including regulatory changes, environmental considerations, and competition with other industries for land use. According to COFI, "access to economic fibre has fallen from 60 million cubic metres in 2018 to 35 million cubic metres of actual harvest in 2024...42% below the allowable annual cut." As a result of wildfires and pine beetle infestations there is additional pressure placed on the already tightened supply.

In 2024, the closure of Western Forest Products' Alberni Pacific Division sawmill and the San Group request for creditor protection for its assets has impacted hundreds of jobs in Port Alberni. As jobs are lost, local businesses suffer from decreased spending leading to a ripple effect throughout the economy. The potential decline in industrial property tax revenues could result in reduced funding for essential services impacting public infrastructure, education, and healthcare.

The job losses and economic instability may lead to population declines in rural and resource-dependent communities as families move elsewhere in search of employment opportunities. This demographic shift can create long-term challenges for community sustainability and vitality.

Accelerating efforts to ensure the availability of fibre is critical for the survival of mills at risk. By collaborating with the forestry industry and other stakeholders, the provincial government can identify and implement strategies to increase fibre supply and stabilize operations.

The forestry industry in British Columbia is at a critical juncture, facing significant challenges that threaten its viability and the livelihoods of countless individuals. The proposed motion seeks to urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action to address the decline in fibre availability and support the sustainability of the industry. Through collaborative efforts, it is possible to revitalize the forestry sector, preserve jobs, and ensure the long-term prosperity of communities throughout British Columbia.

The decline in available or cost-effective fibre affects not only Port Alberni but many other communities across Vancouver Island and British Columbia as well.

Yours truly,
CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sharie Minions', written over a faint, light blue circular stamp or watermark.

Sharie Minions
Mayor

c: City Council
M. Fox, CAO
S. Darling, Director of Corporate Services
UBCM Member Municipalities



2025 RESOLUTION SUBMISSION TO UBCM

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the stresses faced by local elected officials are increasing due to a degradation in the tone of civil discourse;

AND WHEREAS additional mental health supports for local elected officials would be beneficial beyond what is provided by Medical Services Plan and extended health plans;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to implement initiatives that offer mental health supports tailored to the needs of local elected leaders in British Columbia.

Backgrounder:

Elected officials face considerable stress due to the nature of their roles, which involve making difficult decisions, managing diverse interests, and being under constant public scrutiny. The rise in vitriol and personal attacks in public dialogue exacerbates the mental health strain on elected officials and can lead to significant mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and burnout.

The mental well-being of elected officials is directly tied to their capacity for effective leadership. Leaders who are mentally healthy are more likely to make sound decisions, communicate clearly, and engage constructively with their constituents. Proactively addressing mental health challenges helps prevent burnout, enabling officials to serve their communities effectively throughout their term.

Local governments, especially in smaller communities, frequently lack the resources to provide adequate mental health support for their officials. Provincial initiatives could fill this gap by offering specialized resources and support tailored to the unique challenges local elected officials encounter.

In addition to addressing resource gaps, provincial initiatives could play a crucial role in reducing the stigma surrounding mental health. By promoting open discussions about mental well-being, it would encourage elected officials to seek help without fear of judgment. This cultural shift within local government could set a powerful example for the broader community, emphasizing the importance of mental health and normalizing the pursuit of support.

Offering a province-wide mental health initiatives for local elected officials could significantly encourage a more diverse range of individuals to run for public office. Many potential candidates from underrepresented groups may be deterred by the perceived mental health challenges associated with public service, such as stress, public scrutiny, and the increasingly hostile tone of civil discourse. The existence of initiatives that offer mental health supports tailored to the needs of local elected leaders in

British Columbia could help mitigate these concerns, making public office a more viable and appealing option for people from diverse backgrounds.

2025 AVICC Resolution Background

Title: Free Pelvic Floor Physiotherapy as part of Postpartum Care in British Columbia

Section: Health and Social Development

Introduction:

Pelvic floor dysfunction, including incontinence, pain, and prolapse, is a common health issue experienced by postpartum individuals which significantly affects quality of life, mental health, and long-term physical well-being. Despite this, pelvic floor dysfunction is often not talked about openly due to feelings of shame, embarrassment, and an assumption that symptoms are a natural and permanent consequence of childbirth. Access to pelvic floor physiotherapy can aid in the recovery of pelvic health, prevent chronic conditions, and support postpartum recovery which can extend to weeks, months and sometimes years after giving birth, yet these services are often cost-prohibitive for many women.

Background:

The pelvic floor consists of hammock-like muscles that support the bladder, uterus, and rectum. These muscles have a significant impact on day-to-day life and can have negative impacts when they cannot contract, relax or engage as they are meant to. Pelvic floor dysfunction can present as individual or combined symptoms including but not limited to heaviness in pelvic area, constipation, prolapse or dropped pelvic organs, frequent urge to urinate, incontinence, back pain and pain during intercourse.

A 2024 survey of 612 women prepared by Origin in partnership with Ipsos, it was found that pelvic floor symptoms often start or worsen after giving birth. 1 in 3 who had a baby within 5 years experienced pain with sex within the past year and 7 in 10 women who had a baby within 5 years experienced bladder leaks within the past year. These symptoms can later worsen in perimenopause and menopause.

The Canadian Physiotherapy Association recognizes pelvic floor physiotherapy as an evidence-based, non-invasive treatment option that improves postpartum recovery of quality of life. Pregnancy and childbirth places an enormous strain on the pelvic floor, leading to dysfunction such as incontinence, pain, sexual dysfunction and prolapse. This can have a profoundly negative effect on both mental and physical health.

In a Research Letter by the Canadian Society for Pelvic Medicine it was stated that,

“Implementing accessible models of care for pelvic health physiotherapy services will ease the demands for specialist medical and surgical consultation and intervention. Improved access to pelvic health physiotherapy services will also reduce the economic and personal

burdens of these disorders through reducing lost work time and helping Canadians remain healthy and active across their lifespan.”

Currently, in British Columbia free or subsidized physiotherapy for pelvic floor dysfunction is only available to women with third-party insurance coverage or those who qualify for MSP Supplementary Benefits, which requires recipients to be eligible for income assistance, disability assistance and hardship assistance. This policy excludes the majority of postpartum women, leaving them to bear the financial burden of essential care or forgo treatment entirely, thereby exacerbating health inequities.

Rationale:

Lack of equitable access to pelvic floor physiotherapy contributes to long-term healthcare costs associated with untreated pelvic floor dysfunction, such as surgeries, chronic conditions and the expense of personal hygiene products. Gaps in equitable access to postpartum pelvic floor health exist both through education and through fiscal barriers. Thus, bridging these gaps involves a provincial commitment to both education on pelvic floor health and providing free pelvic floor physiotherapy treatments as part of standard postpartum care. This also provides a commitment to the dignity and general well being of childbearing individuals postpartum.

References:

CSPM Position Statement: The Landscape of Pelvic Health Physiotherapy in Canada

McLean, Linda et al.

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UBCM RESOLUTION – CHILD CARE LICENSING REGULATIONS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

June 27, 2024

Childcare is an essential service that supports families, communities, and the economy by ensuring that children receive the care and early education they need to thrive. In British Columbia, however, there is a significant shortage of childcare providers, which has created substantial challenges for families seeking reliable and affordable care for their children. One effective way to address this shortage is to modify the childcare licensing regulations to lower the age limit for childcare providers, particularly for those working in after-school care programs.

Addressing the Worker Shortage

The shortage of childcare providers in British Columbia has reached a critical point, leading to long waitlists, increased costs, and limited access to quality care. According to Statistics Canada, the percentage of families finding it difficult to secure childcare was 58.8 percent in 2022, up from 46.5 percent in 2019. Despite the introduction of the Provincial ChildCareBC Program in 2018, which aims to provide affordable, quality, and inclusive childcare, the demand still outstrips supply. By modifying the childcare licensing regulations to lower the age limit for providers, we can expand the pool of eligible candidates, making it easier to fill these essential positions. Young adults who are passionate about working with children and are looking for meaningful employment opportunities would have the chance to enter the workforce earlier, helping to alleviate the staffing crisis.

Enhancing Workforce Diversity

Lowering the age limit would also contribute to a more diverse and dynamic workforce. Young adults often bring fresh perspectives, energy, and enthusiasm to their roles, which can enrich the childcare environment and enhance the overall quality of care. A diverse workforce can better reflect the communities they serve, fostering a more inclusive and supportive atmosphere for children and their families.

Supporting Economic Growth

When families have access to affordable and reliable childcare, they are better able to participate in the workforce, pursue education, and contribute to the economy. Addressing the childcare provider shortage by modifying the licensing regulations to lower the age limit would help ensure that more families can access the care they need, thereby supporting broader economic growth and stability.

Providing Career Opportunities for Young Adults

Lowering the age limit for childcare providers offers young adults valuable career opportunities. Many young people are interested in working with children and contributing to their development. By enabling them to start their careers earlier, we can provide them with the training, experience, and skills necessary to build fulfilling and impactful careers in the childcare sector.

Focus on After-School Care Programs

Modifying the childcare licensing regulations to lower the age limit specifically for after-school care programs can have an immediate and significant impact. After-school care is a critical need for many families, providing a safe and engaging environment for children while parents finish their workday. By allowing younger adults to work in these programs, we can quickly increase the availability of after-school care, addressing a key area of demand.

Aligning with Provincial Initiatives

Since the introduction of the Provincial ChildCareBC Program in 2018, the province has been working towards providing access to affordable, quality, inclusive childcare that families can depend on. The program includes initiatives such as the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement, aimed at building a strong workforce. Despite these efforts, the demand for childcare continues to rise, highlighting the need for additional measures, such as modifying the childcare licensing regulations to lower the age limit for providers, to meet the growing needs of families.

Conclusion

Modifying the childcare licensing regulations to lower the age limit for childcare providers in British Columbia is a practical and necessary step towards addressing the current shortage of workers in the sector. By expanding the pool of eligible candidates, particularly for after-school care programs, we can alleviate the staffing crisis, enhance workforce diversity, support economic growth, and provide valuable career opportunities for young adults. With proper training and support, young childcare providers can play a vital role in delivering high-quality care and education to the children and families of British Columbia.

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****TINY HOMES AND RVs**

The use of recreational vehicles (RVs) and tiny homes as permanent dwellings has become a matter of significant community interest at a time when the province is in the midst of a housing crisis. Despite the level of interest and community need for alternative forms of housing, the use of RVs and tiny homes continues to be a challenge as these types of units are typically not intended for use as a permanent dwelling. In 2021, the BC Housing Research Centre prepared a paper titled “Tiny Homes – An Alternative to Conventional Housing” (Available online: <https://www.bchousing.org/publications/Tiny-Homes-Alternative-to-Conventional-Housing.pdf>) provides a technical overview of tiny homes and a summary of the challenges of using tiny homes on a permanent basis.

The paper identifies that while there are opportunities to build tiny homes that satisfy the BC Building Code or A277 Standard, most tiny homes do not meet the BC Building Code or CSA standard for use as a permanent dwelling. Further, the paper indicates that there are some components and design features within tiny homes that do not comply with all municipal, provincial, and federal codes or industry standards.

The paper indicates that “currently, it is possible to build a tiny house on a permanent foundation and meet the BCBC and/or CSA A277 requirements. However, its restrictive design and smaller footprint requirements are challenged by various conditions that can ultimately lead to increased square footage. Amending the National Building Code is the preferred option to address this issue. As for moveable tiny homes, there are no existing guidelines in place to regulate their design and construction for permanent living. To address this, the construction industry can adopt a new standard specific to tiny houses on wheels via an industry-standard certifying body such as the CSA. This standard would differentiate the unit from recreational vehicles and park models, and ensure the structure is designated as a permitted dwelling unit for full-time living.”

Recognizing tiny homes as an allowable dwelling unit would be a lengthy process which would require changes to both the national and provincial building codes. Some of this work has been initiated by Canadian Home Builders Association, who in May 2017 submitted a request for 14 code change requests to the national building code. The status of this work is unknown at this time; however, it does not appear that this work has progressed.

In an attempt to advance this issue, five resolutions related to living in RV’s and Tiny Homes have been submitted for debate to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). It is noted that the resolution submitted by Squamish makes reference to the Canadian Home Builders Association request made in 2017. The following provides a summary of the five resolutions and the corresponding UBCM and BC government response.

Year	Sponsor	Summary of Resolution	UBCM/Provincial Response Summary
2022	Vancouver	Request the BC government to work with local governments to develop and fund an incentive to repurpose vacant land (publicly owned or owned by a non-profit) for temporary supportive housing, to support the creation of emergency or ad-hoc housing with on-site supports including the use of tiny homes, navigation centres, portables, and/or modular housing.	Endorsed by UBCM. Province focused on the Homes for BC 30-point housing plan, which lays out the actions taken to meet that commitment. No further actions were supported.
2022	Regional District of Nanaimo	Request that the BC government create a specific tiny home building code or descriptive building standard that is distinct from the current BC Building Code. Further that the changes be incorporated into Part 9 of the BC Building Code establishing separate standards for tiny homes as allowable permanent dwellings.	This resolution was not admitted for debate.
2022	Oliver	Request that the BC government review the BC Building Code to address barriers such as egress, headroom and window and door size and to provide building requirements for tiny homes as allowable permanent dwellings.	Endorsed by UBCM. Provincial response states that the BC Building Code establishes minimum life-safety measures such as structural integrity, smoke alarms, means of egress, ventilation, and health measures like plumbing. Reducing or removing these measures compromises the health and safety of building occupants. The government stated that the Building Code has no limit on how small a house can be built, provided it meets the minimum code standards. The provincial response identified that tiny homes on wheels have unique considerations, but did not offer any specific response.

Year	Sponsor	Summary of Resolution	UBCM/Provincial Response Summary
2022	Sunshine Coast Regional District	Request that the BC government recognize that RVs are used for year-round living and that the government develop guidelines for best practices for ensuring health and safety for the use of RVs for year-round living, and for their inclusion within the BC Housing Action Plan.	Endorsed by UBCM. Provincial response states that the province recognizes the use of RVs as housing for people at risk and experiencing homelessness. The response states that further analysis must be conducted to determine if RVs are safe for permanent dwelling or provide an appropriate level of performance.
2020	Squamish	Request that the BC government work with the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee to review the BC Building Code with respect to definitions, combination rooms, ceiling heights, doorways, stairs, guards, smoke detectors, escape windows and lateral loads to plumbing fixtures made at the federal building code level in support of mobile tiny homes in March 2017 by the Canadian Home Builders Association. Further that the BC government incorporate these changes into Part 9 of the BC Building Code, that would define tiny houses as allowable permanent dwellings.	This resolution was not considered and was referred to the UBCM Executive, but not endorsed by the Executive.

Backgrounder – Mandatory Good Neighbour Agreement

Local governments across British Columbia are encountering challenges related to supportive housing and shelter facilities, particularly concerning community safety, property maintenance, and local accountability. In some instances, supportive housing and shelter operators have not consistently engaged with local governments or community stakeholders to address these concerns, leading to negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

To address these issues, the implementation of mandatory Good Neighbour Agreements (GNAs) has been proposed. A GNA is a collaborative framework that outlines the expectations and responsibilities of supportive housing operators, local governments, and community members to ensure clear communication and proactive management of community impacts. These agreements aim to mitigate potential negative effects by establishing guidelines for security measures, property upkeep, and ongoing engagement with local stakeholders.

For example, the City of Nanaimo has utilized a [GNA](#) to foster cooperation between supportive housing providers and the community, emphasizing mutual respect and shared responsibility in maintaining neighborhood well-being.

Similarly, Our Place Society in Victoria has implemented a [GNA](#) to facilitate regular communication among neighbors, address concerns promptly, and uphold a respectful environment for all community members.

The adoption of GNAs across British Columbia could standardize expectations and enhance accountability for supportive housing and shelter operators, thereby improving relationships between these facilities and their surrounding communities. By urging the Province of British Columbia and BC Housing to require all supportive housing and shelter operators to enter into GNAs with local governments, it is anticipated that clearer expectations regarding community impact mitigation, security measures, and ongoing engagement with local government and residents will be established.

This approach seeks to balance the essential need for supportive housing with the interests and safety of the broader community, fostering a collaborative environment where all parties work together to address challenges and promote neighborhood harmony.



Province-Wide Ban on Fireworks Resolution – Background Document

Although fireworks are often seen as a harmless way to celebrate special events and holidays, they can have devastating consequences for people, animals and the environment.

Many community fireworks displays are put on by professionals; however, consumer fireworks are readily available for purchase and used in many areas of British Columbia without any safety training, conditions, permits or restrictions, adding to the danger.

Some B.C. local governments have enacted bylaws regulating or prohibiting the purchase, use and sale of consumer fireworks. This patchwork approach is inconsistent and purchase in unregulated areas can result in fireworks being denotated elsewhere despite local prohibitions. A provincial ban on consumer fireworks, as recommended by this resolution, would provide consistent rules and enforcement across the province, while allowing displays to be conducted by trained and licensed professionals.

Harms to People:

People are unintentionally injured by fireworks every year in B.C. Young adults and teenagers are the most commonly injured. Burns and eye injuries are most frequently reported. The President of the Canadian Ophthalmological Society has [noted](#) that almost 20% of injuries caused by fireworks involve the eyes and some result in severe damage to the eyes, including permanent vision loss. Tragically, sometimes the injuries can be fatal. This New Year's Eve, a young man from Metchosin, just 21 years old, died when handling fireworks that exploded in his face.

Fireworks have also been known to cause serious and even fatal structure fires, like the blaze that [destroyed a home in Vernon](#) in 2023. The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs identified at least 689 instances in 2022 and 531 instances in 2023 where a fire department responded to fireworks-related incidentsⁱ. In the five years before banning fireworks in 2021, the City of Vancouver [reported](#) fireworks caused 19 fires annually, with \$5.6 million in damage and 32 fires in 2020, the final year before the ban.

Fireworks can also be a significant stressor for people living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) The U.S. National Centre for PTSD [points out](#) that fireworks can be a reminder, or trigger, of trauma for those who served in combat or lived through war, fire, explosions or gun violence. The loud noises and bright flashes can be overwhelming and even [physically painful](#) for those with sensory sensitivities, such as people with autismⁱⁱ.

Harms to Animals:

Many animals, including domestic animals, livestock and wildlife, experience serious and even fatal distress from fireworks. In 2023, a panicked [horse in Delta](#) had to be euthanized after breaking its leg. Veterinarians and animal welfare organizations frequently provide advice for managing pets' distress before holidays when fireworks are commonly used. In addition to running away and potentially being injured or killed, frightened pets can also behave out of character, placing their families and members of the public, including children, at risk of being bitten or scratched during fireworks.

Wild animals can also panic and be disoriented and disturbed by fireworks, causing them to alter natural feeding and breeding behaviours (even abandoning their young), and run or fly into busy streets or buildings.

Harms to the Environment:

Fireworks [contain](#) gunpowder and a mixture of chemicals and minerals, including strontium, sodium, barium, copper, sulphur, aluminum, iron and manganese, as fuel, stabilizers, and oxidizers to add colour to their explosions. Exploding fireworks release sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and particulate matter into the air, and deposit harmful perchlorate, microplastics and heavy metals in the soil and waterⁱⁱⁱ. Fireworks can also ignite wildfires like the 2024 Nanaimo brushfire [started by fireworks](#) in Piper's Lagoon Park that damaged a sensitive ecological area. The provincial [Wildfire Regulation](#) defines fireworks and pyrotechnics as a "high-risk activity".

Support for the Resolution:

The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs adopted a [resolution](#) at their 2022 Annual General Meeting calling for a complete ban on the sale and use of consumer fireworks in Canada. Many B.C. local governments have adopted bylaws to prohibit the purchase, possession, sale and use of fireworks without conditions including a permit, liability insurance and a valid Fireworks Supervisor's Certificate from Natural Resources Canada. However, continued calls for the provincial government to implement consistent, province-wide regulations demonstrate that this patchwork approach of local bylaws is not sufficient or sustainable.

B.C.'s local governments, through the Union of BC Municipalities, have called for the provincial government to regulate the use of fireworks multiple times, including through [three separate resolutions](#) in 2024:

- Resolution EB42, brought forward by the City of Mission, called for the provincial government to regulate the use and sale of fireworks in British Columbia, including public education, enforcement and transportation,
- Resolution RR19, brought forward by the City of Delta, asked the Province to work with local governments to amend the *Fireworks Act* and concurrently work with the federal government to address the online sale of fireworks, to establish a consistent approach with respect to the sales and permitting of fireworks with an objective to reduce the unauthorized and unsafe use of fireworks within the province, and
- Resolution RR20, brought forward by the Cariboo Regional District, urged the provincial government to prohibit the sale of fireworks in any area for which an open burning ban has been issued.

Without the provincial regulation of fireworks, local governments will continue to struggle to manage and respond to the dangerous use of consumer fireworks, particularly in rural and remote areas or where enforcement capacity is limited.

Provincial regulation would ensure the entire province benefits from the same level of protection, regardless of local enforcement capacity, and could prevent countless harms to people, animals, property and the natural environment.

ⁱ Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (2022). *Fireworks (Explosives Act Regulations) Consultation*. <https://cafc.ca/page/fireworks-consultation>

ⁱⁱ Da Costa, K.T.L., Giacchini, V., Cáceres-Assenço, A.M., & Araújo, E.S. (2022). Parents' perception of auditory hypersensitivity in children with clinical signs of risk for Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional*, 30, e3038. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2526-8910.ctoAO23033038>

ⁱⁱⁱ Bateman, P.W., Bradshaw, P. & Gilson, L.N. (January 31, 2023). Not just a flash in the pan: short and long term impacts of fireworks on the environment. *Pacific Conservation Biology*, 29(5), 396-401. <https://www.publish.csiro.au/PC/PC22040>

BACKGROUND

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

FIRE RESILIENT FOREST PRACTICES

In June 2023, the British Columbia Forest Practices Board (BCFPB) published *Forest and Fire Management in BC: Toward Landscape Resilience*, a special report that opens with this statement: “The way forests and fire have been managed in BC over the last 100 years has increased the scale and intensity of current wildfires and decreased landscape resilience. In 2017, 2018, and 2021, BC experienced its three largest wildfire seasons in 102 years of recorded fire, climate, and weather history, affecting 3.4 million hectares of land. If the way forests and fire are managed doesn’t change, BC will face many more catastrophic wildfire seasons.”

According to the report, the 2021 wildfire season had direct suppression costs of \$800 million, with indirect costs potentially as high as \$24 billion. Reducing wildfire risk also comes with a price tag. Since 2018, the Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction program and the Forest Enhancement Society of BC have spent an estimated [1] \$72 million to carry out fuel reduction treatments on approximately 26 000 hectares within the wildland urban interface (WUI).[2] Currently, over 39 million hectares of public land in BC are at high or extreme threat of wildfire.

Further the report states: *The ultimate goal of Landscape Forest Management is to restore and maintain a wildfire-resilient mosaic of forest and non-forest conditions across a landscape, which can provide the values important to society today, habitat for native species, and resilient forests for future generations. Without healthy, resilient ecosystems, our landscapes will continue to experience catastrophic wildfires and the negative impacts associated with them.*

Forest management approaches have also influenced the pattern and distribution of forest fuels. A tendency for clearcut silviculture systems and reforestation to well-stocked, even-aged conifer plantations, the suppression of deciduous species, extensive salvage harvesting, and the elimination of post-harvest broadcast burning have all contributed to increased homogeneity of the landscape and continuity of forest fuels. The patterns of forest succession and fuel conditions are what drive the patterns of future fire behaviour and severity. Large homogeneous patches of forest are more likely to lead to large and severe wildfires.

The following are excerpts from a CBC News investigative report entitled: 'It blows my mind': How B.C. destroys a key natural wildfire defence every year. Provincial rules require spraying of fire-resistant aspen trees to make way for valuable conifers.

The province's Forest Planning and Practices Regulation states that when a block of forest is regrowing after a wildfire or logging, broadleaves can't make up more than five per cent of trees, or two hectares — whichever total is smaller. The concern is that fire resistant broadleaf trees like aspen will out-compete conifer species, which are the lifeblood of the timber industry.

If there's too many broadleaf trees the block must be sprayed with glyphosate, a chemical known more familiarly as the active ingredient in Roundup. Between 2015 and 2018, 42,531 hectares of B.C. forest have been treated with the herbicide.

When aspen are allowed to flourish, they form "natural fuel breaks" if their leaves are out, according to Lori Daniels, a professor of forest ecology at the University of B.C. That's why aspen stands are often

referred to as "asbestos forests" in wildfire science circles. Other broadleaf trees such as alder and maple create a similar effect.

Trees like aspen naturally have a higher water content and don't usually contain the volatile chemical compounds that can make trees like pine so flammable. They also provide more shade, which creates a cooler, more humid environment in the understory.

A 2010 study conducted by a fire behaviour specialist with the federal government tested the fire-resistance of aspen by doing experimental burns of a forest that was split between conifers and trembling aspen. Even when there was a "high-intensity flame front" in the conifers — with flames leaping into the crowns of the trees — the fire "failed to sustain itself upon entering the leafed-out hardwood portion of the plot," the study says.

On the coast the situation is much the same with the broadleaf deciduous trees found there. Anyone who has tried to burn green, fresh cut alder and maple in a campfire knows that it doesn't make good firewood and is difficult to burn compared to conifers which are filled with flammable pitch.

The forest practices utilized in the crown tree farm licenses and private managed forests surrounding communities in British Columbia represent a serious wildfire and interface fire threat to those communities. Those practices need to change as part of a strategy to protect communities and reduce the destruction and costs related to wildfires in BC.

<https://www.bcfpb.ca/release-publications/releases/forest-and-fire-management-in-bc-toward-landscape-resilience/>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/it-blows-my-mind-how-b-c-destroys-a-key-natural-wildfire-defence-every-year-1.4907358>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S235198941830088X>



Sharing Fentanyl Precursors Information with Law Enforcement

Sponsor: Town of Qualicum Beach

WHEREAS the opioid crisis claimed the lives of more than 2,500 citizens in British Columbia in 2023;

AND WHEREAS not all information regarding the distribution of fentanyl precursors is currently being shared by relevant Provincial and Federal agencies with law enforcement:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM lobby the Province to work with the relevant authorities to ensure pertinent information relating to the distribution of precursors for fentanyl is shared by relevant Provincial and Federal agencies with law enforcement in a timely manner.

Background

Precursors are chemicals that are used in the production of substances that are controlled under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)* and subject to *Precursor Control Regulations*. Illegal precursors are identified as essential compounds that are used in the production of fentanyl opioids that are not controlled or regulated under the CDSA.

While attempts are made by the Canada Border Services Agency to intercept these illegal compounds at Canadian borders and ports of entry, there are times where these chemicals remain undetected and untraceable until such time law enforcement agencies discover their uses resulting from seized samples from illegal drug laboratories that are identified through forensic analysis.¹ The impact of delays from discovering these illegal precursors contributes to drug-related deaths of growing concern in British Columbia.

Statistics published by the BC Coroners Service indicate “toxic, unregulated drugs claimed the lives of at least 2,511 people in British Columbia in 2023, the largest number of drug-related deaths ever reported to the agency.”² AVICC and UBCM request the Province work with relevant Provincial and Federal agencies to provide information surrounding the distribution of fentanyl precursors to the RCMP and law enforcement agencies in a more expeditious manner. The receipt of accurate and timely information from relevant authorities could enable law enforcement to better respond to the distribution, thereby collectively working to reduce the overall drug death rate in British Columbia.³

The Town of Qualicum Beach respectfully requests that AVICC and UBCM lobby the Province to work with the relevant authorities to ensure pertinent information relating to the distribution of precursors for fentanyl is shared with law enforcement in a timely manner.

¹[Canada Gazette – Regulations Amending the Precursor Control Regulations \(Fentanyl Precursors\)](#)

²[Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General New Release: More than 2,500 lives lost to toxic drugs in 2023](#)

³[Island Health 2024 Coroner's Report](#)

*Note – 2024 data is unavailable at this time

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****PROVINCIAL DISASTER DEBRIS PLAN**

Emergency and disaster debris management is a critical function in the restoration of services, the recovery of people, and the protection of the natural environment post-emergency or disaster event.

In cases such as the Lytton and Wood Buffalo fires and the atmospheric rivers that impacted the Fraser Valley, multiple years' volumes of waste arrived at solid waste facilities in the months after the disasters. These materials, at times hazardous to human and environmental health, needed to be managed in an approved manner to ensure the continued efficient and effective recovery of society, the economy, and the natural environment.

The creation of a province-wide disaster and debris management plan would help to ensure the efficient recovery post-event while also reducing the negative impacts of disaster events on the residents of the province of British Columbia.

Further, the creation of a province-wide emergency and disaster debris management plan would assist in the restoration of economic activities within the affected area, and the province of British Columbia, further improving economic recovery.

Resolution

WHEREAS local governments, particularly in rural and remote areas, face significant logistical and resource challenges when major planned events occur within or near their jurisdiction, even when these events are outside of local government jurisdictional control and/or enforcement areas;

AND WHEREAS such events often require substantial public safety planning and emergency response efforts, yet local governments typically lack the authority to require or enforce event organizers to submit comprehensive emergency response plans, leaving local governments to bear the burden of increased public safety demands and resource strain as a result of these events without the ability to mitigate or control the associated costs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request the provincial government to establish province-wide regulations to address gaps in Local Government Act bylaws and event permitting powers, ensuring local governments can recover costs for public safety and emergency services related to major planned events beyond their control, and that adequate support, coordination, and reimbursement be provided for resources used in the management and planning of these events.

Backgrounder

Local governments, especially in rural and remote areas, face significant challenges when a major planned event (MPE) occurs within or near their jurisdictions. While these events are often outside of local government control, they still place considerable demands on public safety services and emergency resources needed to effectively and safely support these events.

Local governments often lack the authority to require event organizers to submit or enforce comprehensive emergency response plans. Despite this, they remain responsible for ensuring public safety during these events, leaving them to bear the financial burden of increased public safety demands without the ability to control or mitigate the associated costs.

Increased responsibilities under EDMA across the four pillars of EM without dedicated funding, combined with increasing frequency and severity of climate-related events, such as extreme weather and large-scale evacuations, which add strain to already stretched local resources. These events, regardless of jurisdiction, require significant planning and response efforts, further exacerbating the fiscal strain on local governments.

To address these challenges, it is crucial for the provincial government to establish clear, comprehensive regulations under EDMA that address gaps in the Local Government Act bylaws and event permitting powers. These regulations should ensure that local governments can require emergency response plans from MPE organizers, ensure recovery of the costs of public

safety services, and improve coordination between local Emergency Management Organizations and other agencies to ensure effective public safety during MPEs.

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****HYBRID WOLFDOGS**

As provided by the SPCA, who advise:

“...as they (wolfdogs) retain their wild instincts, wild-domestic animal hybrids require special consideration for handling, housing and veterinary care beyond the general care given to their domestic breeds (Eckermann-Ross, 2014). Prospective hybrid guardians may overlook or neglect the needs of the wild species, resulting in behavioural problems including aggression, health issues and escapes, overwhelming guardians (ASPCA, 2022; Bussière et al., 2022; Eckermann-Ross, 2014; UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, 2022). While these issues may be manageable when animals are younger and smaller, guardians may struggle with behavioural changes associated with reaching sexual maturity at the same time the animal is growing larger and stronger. The BC SPCA is opposed to non-therapeutic procedures (e.g., declawing, removal of canine teeth) for behavioural reasons that are often used to make wild-domestic animal hybrids more manageable.

Hybrid animals vary in their ‘wildness’ depending on their genetic composition. While it may be possible for some fourth-generation (F4) animals to be housed and homed following standard protocols, first, second and third-generation (F1-F3) hybrids are especially difficult given their wild nature, behaviour and health issues (The Wildcat Sanctuary, 2022). Animal shelters and other animal care organizations are faced with the difficult task of determining if animals are a wild hybrid. Animals who can be confirmed 100 per cent wild animals as defined in the *BC Wildlife Act* are subject to existing legislation for possession... Wild-domestic animal hybrids are often difficult to contain in an average home or enclosure setting, and pose a risk to their keepers and the public, as well as native wildlife and pets if they escape (Dickman et al., 2019). Escaped animals may also be at risk of being involved in vehicle collisions, resulting in injury or death for the animal and/or people involved in the collision.”

The keeping of most wild animals as pets in B.C. is illegal under the provincial *Wildlife Act*; however, hybrid animals are not protected by this legislation or the provincial *Controlled Alien Species Regulation*. Similarly, hybrid animals are largely not addressed in protections set out for domesticated companion animals. When a hybrid wolf-dog is abandoned, it poses a risk to public safety as noted above and is challenging to capture by local government animal control officers who lack the expertise to deal with these animals. This task is better suited to conservation officers that understand the behaviours of a *canis lupus* (wolf) and are able to capture the animal in a safe and effective manner.

Background

Five species of rabbits and hares can be found in British Columbia. These include Eastern and Nuttall's cottontails, snowshoe hares, white tailed jackrabbits, and European rabbits. European rabbits are the same species as domestic pet rabbits and are considered a feral and invasive species. European rabbits are distinguishable by their heavier build and diverse coat colours, such as black, tan, grey, white, orange, or patchy patterns. Unfortunately, many European rabbits encountered outdoors are pets that have been abandoned by their owners.¹ These feral animals can have a significant and negative impact on ecosystems, native wildlife, urban infrastructure and greenspaces, and public health and safety.

It is a criminal act under the *Criminal Code of Canada*,² and an offence under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (BC)*,³ to abandon domestic rabbits in the wild. Despite this, European rabbits, can often be encountered in city parks, near highways, in parking lots, around shopping centers, businesses, and residential backyards.⁴

Currently, the responsibility for addressing these feral populations falls on the shoulders of municipalities and a handful of charities and rescue organizations. Municipalities often lack the resources and expertise to effectively and humanely address this problem. As a result, much of the work falls to small, poorly funded, not-for-profit organizations, who engage in advocacy and education, as well as rescues, when resources allow.

Only a handful of municipalities have passed by-laws regulating the sale of rabbits (for example Vancouver,⁵ Kelowna,⁶ and Nanaimo⁷), however, most do not and the issue of overpopulation of feral rabbits is largely unaddressed.

Issue

Unsterilized European rabbit species are commonly dumped or released into the wild, and due to their prolific breeding, their populations can quickly expand and become established. This can have numerous negative effects on animal welfare, ecosystems and wildlife, public safety, and infrastructure.

Animal welfare

European rabbit species are listed under Schedule C of the *Wildlife Act in British Columbia*. Schedule C animals are typically invasive that can be hunted or captured without a license and are

¹ BC SPCA (n.d.). "Rabbits and hares." Available at <https://spca.bc.ca/ways-to-help/take-action/urban-wildlife/rabbits-and-hares/>

² Government of Canada, 1985, *Cruelty to Animals. Criminal Code of Canada, Section 446.1b*

³ Government of British Columbia, 1996, *Offences. Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, Section 24(1)*.

⁴ Abandoned Rabbits. (n.d.). Available at <https://map.abandonedrabbits.com/>

⁵ City of Vancouver. (2017 December 12). "A By-law to Amend License By-law No. 4450 Regarding the Sale of Dogs, Cats and Rabbits by Pet Stores." Available at <https://bylaws.vancouver.ca/consolidated/12000.pdf>

⁶ City of Kelowna. (2022 October 3). "Bylaw No. 5421-82 – Animal and poultry regulation and animal pound bylaw." Available at

<https://apps.kelowna.ca/CityPage/Docs/PDFs/Bylaws/Animal%20and%20Poultry%20Regulation%20and%20Animal%20Pound%20Bylaw%20No.%205421-82.pdf>

⁷ City of Nanaimo. (2021 September 21). "Bylaw No. 7316 – Animal responsibility bylaw." Available at <https://www.nanaimo.ca/bylaws/ViewBylaw/7316.pdf>

not subject to seasonal restrictions.⁸ These rabbits are classified as a Regional Containment/Control species on the *BC Provincial Priority Invasive Species List*.⁹ As a result, a lack of oversight and regulation could lead to the inhumane treatment of these animals.

Environment

European rabbit species compete with native wildlife for resources like food, water, and shelter. This can lead to significant negative impacts on native species, including at-risk and endangered animals, insects, and plants. Population explosions can change predator-prey dynamics. Burrowing and other activities can also lead to the degradation of ecosystems, including overgrazing, increased erosion, and soil deterioration.

Public safety

Rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD) is a virus that affects lagomorphs (rabbits and hares). A novel variety from Europe has been found in Canada.¹⁰ While this illness poses no direct risk to humans, this highly contagious virus that can be spread to native species. This virus is best managed through biosecurity protocols and direct vaccinations – neither of which are tenable in large, European-based populations or with native species.¹¹

Infrastructure Damage

European rabbits graze extensively, which can have a significant impact on municipal properties like community parks, activity areas, and other greenspaces, leading to increased costs to municipalities. Unlike native species, European rabbits burrow and tunnel and this behaviour can lead to soil erosion, collapsing or cracking of sidewalks, roads, and foundations over time, and damage to utilities and utility corridors. The uneven ground caused by all these activities can lead to trip hazards and other safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists, and other outdoor recreational activities.

Rationale for UBCM Resolution

As it stands, the responsibility for addressing feral rabbit populations falls largely on the shoulders of individual municipalities with the support of small, under funded not-for-profits. This is an expensive proposition, and actors often lack the resources to effectively address the problem. As an example, when the University of Victoria worked to remove feral rabbit populations from campus in 2010, it cost as much as \$348 per rabbit.¹²

⁸ Government of BC. (2022 July 1). *Wildlife Act - Designation and Exemption Regulation - Schedule C*, B.C. Reg. 253/2000, App. 2, s. 9; am. B.C. Regs. 32/2014, ss. 9 and 10; 143/2022, s. 10. Available at https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/13_168_90#ScheduleC

⁹ Invasive Species Council of BC. (n.d.). “European rabbit.” Available at <https://bcinvasives.ca/invasives/european-rabbit/>

¹⁰ Rich, G. (2021). “Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV).” *VCA Canada*. Available at <https://vcacanada.com/your-pet/rabbit-hemorrhagic-disease-virus-rhdv>

¹¹ Government of BC. (n.d.). “Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease.” Available at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/animal-and-crops/animal-disease/rhd_updated_20240311.pdf

¹² Moneo, S. (2010 March 30). “UVic’s rabbit population facing cull.” *The Globe and Mail*. Available at <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/uvics-rabbit-population-facing-cull/article1366424/>

The challenge is that these actors are not able to address the root causes of this problem. These include a lack of regulations that facilitates the widespread sale of unsterilized rabbits, inadequate education for (prospective) pet owners, and the provincial support for management programs. This resolution calls on the province to explore ways of addressing the root causes that lead to the proliferation of feral rabbits across the BC.

Past UBCM Trapping Related Resolutions

Year	Number	Resolution Title	Convention Decision	Sponsor(s)
2010	B134	Prohibition of the Sale of Rabbits in Pet Stores	Not endorsed	Richmond
2012	B123	Regulating the Sale of Unsterilized Rabbits	Endorsed	Delta

Provincial response to 2012 - B123

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development Under the Community Charter s. 83k, municipalities have the authority to adopt bylaws to regulate, prohibit and impose requirements in relation to animals, subject to any provincial regulations. B.C. Regulation 1442004 Community Charter Spheres of Concurrent Jurisdiction - Environment and Wildlife Regulation identifies rabbits as alien invasive species. Therefore, municipalities are authorized to control and eradicate those alien invasive species, except in cases where the species is part of a farm operation as defined under the Farm Practices Protection Right to Farm Act. Additionally, Community Charter s. 86 authorizes municipalities to regulate in relation to businesses. In relation to a bylaw banning the sale of puppies and dogs from pet stores, the British Columbia Supreme Court in *International Bio Research v. Richmond City*, 2011 BCSC 471 found that this authority could be used to prohibit such sales provided there is a valid municipal purpose for doing so and the bylaw is not unreasonable or otherwise impermissibly discriminatory. Given the potential scope of municipal regulatory authority, the Provincial Government does not intend to pursue legislation to regulate the sale of unsterilized rabbits at this time.

APPENDIX

Media coverage about roaming rabbits, rescue attempts, and related issues in recent years:

- Victoria News (August 18, 2024) [Island rabbit rescue having to turn away people bringing in bunnies](#)
- Peace Arch News (April 3, 2024) [Surrendered, abandoned rabbits on the rise in South Surrey, White Rock](#)
- CBC News (March 29, 2024) [Shelter space dwindling as feral rabbit colonies multiple](#)
- CBC News (December 19, 2023) [Animal rescue removes rabbits at risk of being put down from Vancouver's Granville Island](#)
- CBC News (October 2, 2023) [Group protests cull of Granville Island rabbits](#)
- CTV News (September 27, 2023) [Rabbits on Granville Island being trapped, euthanized amid coyote concerns](#)
- The Abbotsford News (June 9, 2023) [SPCA seizes 162 rabbits from Abbotsford property](#)
- Canadaland (April 10, 2023) [Down the Rabbit Hole: The Story of the UVic Bunnies](#)
- CBC News (April 10, 2023) [Rescues struggle to house rejected rabbits as feral bunny boom spreads across Metro Vancouver](#)
- Richmond News (March 31, 2023) ['Please don't buy one': Rabbit rescue society encourages people to adopt](#)
- Victoria News (March 30, 2023) [Rabbit family dumped in Esquimalt sparks concerns area will be overrun once again](#)
- CTV News (March 29, 2023) [Rabbit rescue society warns Vancouver's feral population is about to boom, unless the city steps in](#)
- Richmond News (March 11, 2023) ['They were frozen': Abandoned pet bunnies found inside box along B.C. street](#)
- Richmond News (January 31, 2023) [BC SPCA investigating baby bunny dump at Richmond shelter](#)
- The Tyee (January 27, 2023) [Overrun with buns](#)
- CityNews Vancouver (January 4, 2023) [B.C. rescue organization struggling to keep up with abandoned bunnies](#)
- Vancouver Is Awesome (August 15, 2022) [BC SPCA seizes 32 rabbits being bred for profit in downtown Vancouver](#)
- Richmond News (June 23, 2022) [B.C. amends legislation to help control feral rabbits; rescue group says changes, 'Too little, too late.'](#)
- CBC News (April 17, 2022) [As bunnies take over Vancouver park, humans warned against getting too close](#)
- CTV News (April 17, 2022) [Stop releasing pet rabbits at Jericho Beach, invasive species council says](#)
- Comox Valley Record (April 13, 2022) [Abundance of bunnies sparks B.C. shelter appeal for foster homes](#)
- CTV News (June 23, 2021) [Vancouver airport has hired someone to shoot and kill its unwanted rabbit population](#)
- Vancouver Island Free Daily (June 18, 2021) [Wild rabbits persist at the University of Victoria](#)
- CTV News (April 28, 2021) [Rabbits with snares around necks rescued in Richmond](#)

- Parksville Qualicum Beach News (July 10, 2019) [Feral rabbits in your yard? You're on your own in Parksville](#)
- Goldstream News gazette (July 10, 2019) [Rascally rabbits destroy Vancouver Island lawns](#)
- Sooke News Mirror (November 23, 2018) [Herds of feral rabbits at threat in Greater Victoria](#)
- CBC News (May 25, 2018) [Richmond rabbit shelter at max capacity as problem bunnies run amok](#)
- Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows News (February 28, 2018) [A dozen dead rabbits found near B.C. sports facility](#)
- Maclean's (September 30, 2016) [Free the bunnies: Why B.C. rabbits are being airlifted to Texas](#)
- Global News (August 16, 2016) [B.C. government ratcheting up war against abandoned bunnies in Victoria interchange](#)
- CBC News (August 16, 2016) [B.C. government steps up highway bunny battle in Victoria](#)
- CBC News (April 4, 2015) [Nanaimo overrun with feral rabbits](#)
- Agassiz-Harrison Observer (September 28, 2012) [Rabbit rampage sparks call for pet store ban](#)
- CBC News (April 8, 2012) [Feral rabbit problem growing at Richmond Auto Mall](#)
- CBC News (January 20, 2011) [Bunny cull returning to UVic](#)
- The Georgia Straight (January 17, 2011) [Lesley Fox: In Year of the Rabbit, over-population crisis looms across B.C.](#)
- CBC News (April 18, 2009) [Bunny battle goes ballistic at UVic campus](#)
- CBC News (September 29, 2008) [Culling of rabbits in Kelowna sparks police probe](#)
- CBC News (May 13, 2008) [Feral rabbits to be culled in Kelowna](#)
- CBC News (December 7, 2007) [Interior B.C. cities on brink of bunny boom](#)

BACKGROUND**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****PROVINCIAL WASTE HAULER LICENSING**

Local governments are facing challenges in the development and growth of waste diversion systems, including circular economic solutions, because the flow of waste into and out of regions is primarily based on the lowest financial cost to waste haulers, which can circumvent policy goals. This can include shipping waste out of region to avoid penalties for loads with banned materials, thus circumventing important policy goals.

This is not the fault of waste haulers, as they must compete on a region-by-region basis with other waste haulers in the current economic climate. However, this practice of waste import and export undermines, at both a social and economic level, local government's ability to accurately assess their region's waste generation and to create programs that support increased waste diversion based on this information. It also hinders local government's ability to accurately recover costs for solid waste management plans, while also negatively impacting the natural environment.

Since the pandemic, many regions in the province have seen an increase in waste volumes at waste disposal facilities. This is due in part to economic growth within the province as well as social shift in the way goods and services are procured. In some cases, this increase in material volumes has been greater than 30%.

By developing a provincial waste hauler licensing program, the province can assist waste haulers in adopting regional recycling and disposal options, while also creating those options in regions where solutions are lacking. Further, developing a provincial waste hauler licensing program could economically incentivize waste diversion practices over waste disposal through the application of a tipping fee differential.

The creation of a provincial waste hauler licensing system would therefore promote the highest and best waste diversion options, while supporting the growth of the circular economy to achieve a future of zero waste.

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT APPROVALS**

The Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) process includes significant, meaningful, mandatory public consultation, as well as significant and meaningful community collaboration. Upon completion of the planning phase, Solid Waste Management Plans must then be approved by the Board of the area in question, further solidifying that community's commitment to the Solid Waste Management Plan and its intent.

Subsequently, Solid Waste Management Plans are then forwarded to the Ministry of Environment and Parks for review and approval, a process that can then take several years.

Often an approval from the Ministry of Environment and Parks will come with additional requirements for approvals for specific programs outlined in the SWMP. The process to receive these proposals can take an additional several years. Solid Waste Management Plans are only approved for a span of 10 years, with a recommendation that regional districts start planning for their next plan 2 years before the current one expires, leaving regional districts with 8 years. A regional district timeline would be as follows:

- Receive Minister of Environment and Parks approval
- Plan out details of new program (approximately 1-2 years) and submit for approval
- Receive approval 1-2 years later
- Implement new program, 1-2 years

From SWMP approval to implementation will take from 3-6 years, leaving the regional district only 2-5 years to prove the efficacy of the program before going into SWMP renewals.

While a regional district is waiting for Minister approval, it may continue to work on the program in preparation for implementation, but there will be limited time and budget allocated as there is a chance the new programs will not be approved.

The resolution seeks to eliminate any additional approvals from the Ministry of Environment and Parks once the initial approval for the SWMP has been achieved. Any applicable approvals from other provincial ministries, as needed, would still be required.

Title: Infrastructure and Capital Projects Requiring Elector Approval

Sponsor: City of Nanaimo

WHEREAS the current funding model in Canada is outdated and unsustainable, as outlined in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' report *Making Canada's Growth a Success: The case for a municipal growth framework*, leaving municipalities with limited options to pay for growth-related infrastructure which is critical for municipalities to meet their housing needs;

AND WHEREAS British Columbia is the only province in Canada requiring elector approval to allow local governments to borrow money for necessary infrastructure-related projects;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC call on the provincial government to amend the *Community Charter* to expand the criteria for the type of infrastructure and capital projects that utilize borrowing without the requirement of electoral approval, to better assist local governments in securing adequate funding for projects that are necessary for the delivery of municipal services.

Background Information

The current municipal funding model in Canada, and British Columbia, has been flagged as problematic and unsustainable by local governments through their representative organizations, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), for a number of years. In the absence of an equitable funding model that recognizes the challenges of keeping up with growth-related infrastructure, municipalities are faced with very few options to ensure they have the resources required to respond to growing demands.

In other provinces and territories across Canada, there are mechanisms in place that allow for long-term borrowing for capital project purposes without the requirement of elector approval. Approval at the Provincial level is still required, as is a range of other checks-and-balances to ensure proper oversight.

Section 180(2) of the *Community Charter* outlines the limited circumstances under BC legislation where elector approval is not required for a loan authorization bylaw to be adopted. This resolution calls on the Province to consider best practices of other Canadian provinces and territories where funding is permitted to be borrowed for undertaking necessary capital projects related to infrastructure and the delivery of essential municipal services, expanding the criteria for permitting borrowing without the requirement of elector approval.

With the steadily increasing rate of population growth across the Province, and the introduction of housing targets being set by the Provincial government, allowing municipalities to prioritize appropriate growth-related infrastructure projects in a timely matter would serve to reduce administrative barriers, timelines and overall costs, which in turn could ensure that projects which meet the criteria of delivering necessary municipal services are prioritized.

Allowing for local governments to undertake essential capital projects within their Liability Servicing Limit, and with approval from the Inspector of Municipalities would still maintain adequate oversight and accountability in the borrowing process. Reducing the need for elector approval in appropriate circumstances would reduce costs associated with rising inflation when projects are delayed, which has had a significant impact to budget drivers since the COVID-19 pandemic.

When considering an expansion to the provisions outlined in Section 180(2) of the *Community Charter*, it is expected that a thorough review would take place with consultation conducted on a broad range. The intent of this resolution is to highlight the challenges related to the current borrowing framework and to urge the Province to work with local governments to reduce barriers, allowing municipalities to better respond to the demands of growth-related infrastructure which is critical for meeting their housing needs.

The 2021 UBCM report *Local Government Finance Resiliency—Today’s Recovery and Tomorrow’s New Economy* recommends a number of actions, including the following: “BC local governments, with the support of the Province and UBCM, continue to develop and implement asset management best practices in order to deliver services, and manage infrastructure, in a sustainable, cost-effective way.” Reducing barriers for managing and undertaking infrastructure and capital projects that are necessary for the delivery of municipal services would aid in achieving this goal. Limiting the barriers related to the implementation of asset management best practices would help to ensure that local governments can respond to the infrastructure demands of a growing population in a timely manner, reducing overall costs and ensuring that necessary projects can be achieved in a way that is generationally equitable and financially sustainable.



BACKGROUND

Improvement Districts are created and governed by the province. Their current challenges stem from minimal provincial oversight and lack of provincial strategic prioritization. The Improvement District Governance: Policy Statement 2006 quotes policy dating back to 1989. The primary operative force prohibits Improvement Districts from accessing sewer and water infrastructure grant opportunities, which significantly hinders their ability to thrive.

Instead of fostering a supportive environment through a comprehensive, well-funded, and strategically executed long-term plan for transition, the Province's approach places Improvement Districts at a significant financial disadvantage. This often leads to the Improvement District's slow deterioration.

The Province's commitment to its stated strategy for managing Improvement Districts raises concerns. Questions arise concerning their adherence to objectives, principles, policies, and oversight as outlined in the Improvement District Governance: Policy Statement 2006:

- It is the ministry's objective to minimize risks of failure in the improvement district system which could have serious financial implications for the province, improvement districts and residents.
- Appropriate provincial involvement: provincial government involvement in improvement district affairs should be limited to protecting critical provincial interests.
- Financial accountability: improvement districts should manage their financial affairs consistent with good local government practice in areas like budgets, financing, audits and accountability to the citizens.
- Efficient and effective administration: improvement districts should manage their affairs consistent with good local government practice in terms of having professional staff support and fair and effective administrative procedures.
- The ministry will take a pro-active approach to restructure improvement districts which:
 - are experiencing problems with their infrastructure;
 - have serious management problems;
 - are facing irreconcilable conflicts with municipalities or regional districts; or
 - are not complying with legislative requirements.



-
- Consider information received through communications with improvement districts, including bylaws, financial statements and other submissions to enable early and effective identification of potential issues and concerns.
 - Take a pro-active approach to assisting improvement districts with administrative or financial problems and facilitate the settlement of disputes between competing interests.

The Province has often abdicated their obligations in the above regards.

Any initial potential for a pause button and then pragmatic action has now fallen to time and inflation. The void of required repair, maintenance and upgrades and ultimate dilapidation places undue hardship and a burden on society. Attrition will come at the hands of assimilation through starving Improvement Districts from the funding that feeds their needs and enables any local government to afford and sustain capital infrastructure such as grant opportunities as well as the ability to play on the same financial field for debt borrowing.

The objective of eventual conversion is inconsistent with the reality of the current situation, as the service is seldom absorbed into an existing local government service, whether that be a regional district or a municipality. The service boundary ultimately ends up containing the same users of the service now in complete decay and the amount of taxes required to bring them back to life is too onerous. No efficiencies or synergies gained. The argument that the local government has more resources is token verbiage and to suggest that they have more grant funding opportunities is only by provincial design. As well, gas tax funding related grants are now subject to increased competing priorities.

Additional Reports

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/local-governments/governance-powers/improvement_district_governance_policy.pdf

BACKGROUNDER**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO****PRIVATE MANAGED FOREST LANDS**

Since 2006, 16 resolutions related to Privately Managed Forest Lands have been submitted to UBCM. In 2018, UBCM membership endorsed a resolution requesting *“UBCM call on the Province to amend the Private Managed Forest Land Act and Regulations to provide local government more authority to regulate activities on PMFL; require the owners of PMFL to undertake annual consultation and sharing of management commitments, operations maps, harvesting plans and supporting assessments and long-term disposition or development intentions for land within municipal boundaries; and amend the Private Managed Forest Land Act and Regulations to standards that are equivalent to Crown forest land regulations.”*

All private landowners, regardless of property class, are subject to the *Water Sustainability Act, Drinking Water Protection Act, Environmental Management Act, Wildlife Act, Wildfire Act, Assessment Act, Heritage Conservation Act*, and federal acts such as the *Fisheries Act, Migratory Birds Convention Act and Species at Risk Act*.

In August 2019, the Province released the *Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Act Program Review Report*. The review’s purpose was to gather input on the PMFL Program, which encourages private landowners to voluntarily manage their lands for long-term forest production and sustainable practices. PMFL landowners commit to long-term, sustainable management practices and agree to be regulated for additional public environmental values, including soil conservation, critical wildlife habitat, fish habitat, drinking water quality and reforestation. In exchange for these commitments, PMFL property owners receive assessed values for land that are generally lower than residential rates, which can result in lower property taxes.

The PMFL Program review in 2019 was reported to be in its second phase, which involves developing issue summaries and policy recommendations for government consideration. However, the provincial government has not yet released policy recommendations that balance the requirements of the voluntary PMFL Program with the broad legal requirements that apply universally to all landowners under other enactments.

Key issues and recommendations that arose from the 2019 report include:

- Environmental protection: recommendations for better protection of watersheds, wildlife habitats, and old-growth forests; emphasis on sustainable forest management practices to preserve biodiversity and ecosystem health.
- Regulatory framework and enforcement: calls for more stringent and better-enforced regulations to ensure compliance with sustainable practices; need for improved oversight and accountability mechanisms.
- Community and Indigenous values: recommendations highlight the need for respectful and meaningful engagement with Indigenous Nations; importance of incorporating community and Indigenous values into forest management practices.
- Communication and transparency: recommendations for better information-sharing and public reporting; need for improved communication and transparency among PMFL owners, the Managed Forest Council, and the public.



THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF OAK BAY
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UBCM RESOLUTION - TRANSIT FEES FOR SENIORS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

June 26, 2024

Addressing Social Isolation and Loneliness

Social isolation and loneliness are growing problems in Canada, with significant mental and physical health consequences. These include an increased risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, dementia, depression, addiction, and suicide. Seniors are especially vulnerable to these issues.

Statistics and Current Challenges

Recent reports from Stats Canada indicate that 19-24% of Canadians over the age of 65 feel isolated and wish they could participate more in social activities. Many seniors face challenges in mobility and often rely on family members for rides. This dependency makes leaving the house difficult and places additional pressure on their families.

Building Connected Communities

Experts and numerous studies suggest that building connected communities—those with infrastructure that enables freedom and ease of movement—is key to combating social isolation. Accessible public transit is a core component of this approach.

Benefits for Seniors

Providing free bus travel for seniors ensures they can participate more fully in community life. It allows them to attend social events, visit friends and family, and access essential services without the financial burden. This increased mobility helps reduce feelings of isolation and enhances their overall well-being.

Enhancing Community Engagement

Everyone should have the ability to connect, socialize, and engage with others. Eliminating cost barriers to public transit benefits not only seniors but the community as a whole. By providing free fare for seniors, we foster a more inclusive and connected society, where all members can enjoy a better quality of life.



Traffic Controls at Inactive Railroad Crossings

Sponsor: Town of Qualicum Beach

WHEREAS there are many railways across British Columbia that are inactive (where the average daily railway movement is zero), except for rail maintenance traffic, and there are no active trains on the Southern Railway of BC rail North of Nanaimo;

AND WHEREAS the *Federal Canada Transportation Act*, the *Railway Safety Act*, and the *Grade Crossings Regulations* require vehicular traffic to stop at railway crossings, except in limited circumstances, even when the railway is inactive:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM lobby Transport Canada for the amendment of the legislation, including the *Grade Crossings Regulation* to permit the reconfiguration of railway crossing traffic controls to stop railway maintenance traffic on the rail at roadway intersections of inactive railway crossings and to remove stop signs for vehicular traffic at these locations.

Brief Overview of the Legislation

Railways are classified as either provincial or federal. Federal railways are those that cross provincial boundaries, where provincial railways are those that operate strictly within the boundaries of the province.¹ A Grade Crossing is an intersection where a road, sidewalk, path or trail crosses railway tracks. Grade crossings are also known as level crossings, railway crossings or train crossings.² Under the regulations, railway companies, public authorities, and private authorities share responsibility for managing the safety at federally-regulated grade crossings.

BC's regulatory framework for railways has adopted the *Federal Grade Crossing Regulations* and standards thereby harmonizing BC's rail legislation with federal legislation. The *Grade Crossing Regulations* apply to all public grade crossings where the average daily railway movements are greater than three.

The issue

Many Grade Crossings are assessed as having an average daily train crossing of three or more, where there have been no active railways for several years. Thus, the *Grade Crossing Regulations* continue to apply, despite the inactivity of the railway. In some instances, such as on the Southern Railway of BC rail North of Nanaimo, scheduled passenger service has been indefinitely on hold since 2011.³ There may be railway maintenance traffic that utilizes the railway a few times in an entire year, or not at all. The *Grade Crossing Regulations* require



railway traffic control signage, such as stop signs, for all Grade Crossings with an average annual daily railway movement of three or more.

The accurate assessment of the average annual daily railway movements, and timely update of these figures, is a separate issue that should be considered. Precise counts will enable certain railways, which are presently incorrectly classified with an average annual daily railway movement threshold of 3 or more, to qualify for the non-application provisions outlined in Section 3 of the *Grade Crossings Regulation*.

At these long dormant Grade Crossings, there is frequent disregard by vehicular traffic for the traffic control devices in place, as there is no expectation of railway traffic utilizing the railway. When drivers ignore stop signs that they rationalize are not warranted, such as at the rail crossings when the railway is not operational, they apparently then use that same judgement to ignore other stop signs such as four-way stops, thereby decreasing safety. ICBC, and the Institute of Transportation Engineers incorporate this fact in design and assessments for warranting stop signs.

The Town of Qualicum Beach respectfully requests that AVICC and UBCM lobby senior levels of government to consider re-orienting the stop signs at Grade Crossings at railway intersections of inactive railways to stop maintenance vehicles on the railway tracks, rather than vehicular traffic on the roads. It is anticipated that this approach would not pose an additional cost or encumbrance to the railway. This will however improve safety and greatly reduce GHG's by eliminating unnecessary stopping of vehicles on the roadway.

¹ [Railways | TSBC](#)

² [Grade Crossings Regulations: what you need to know](#)

³ [Island's E&N rail repairs on hold during provincial review - Island Corridor Foundation](#)

Title: Payment In Lieu of Works and Services for Land Development

Sponsor: City of Nanaimo

WHEREAS Section 506 and Section 506.03 of the *Local Government Act* enable a local government to regulate and require the provision of works and services in respect to the development of land;

AND WHEREAS there is no mechanism currently in the *Local Government Act* to allow for local governments to accept payment of money in lieu of the provision of works and services, unlike in other circumstances in the *Local Government Act*;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC advocate for the provincial government to amend the *Local Government Act* to allow for the payment of money in lieu of works and services in respect to the development of land being established through subdivisions and building permits, enabling local governments to pool funding for more impactful projects which could benefit a broader area and better assist in achieving community goals for safety, connectivity or transportation management.

Background Information

Local governments play a crucial role in managing land development, ensuring that new subdivisions and building projects meet the needs of the community while maintaining safety, accessibility, and environmental standards.

Sections 506 and 506.03 of the *Local Government Act* (LGA) provide local governments with the authority to regulate and require the provision of works and services associated with land development, including improvements like road construction and utility installations. However, unlike other areas in the LGA where payments in lieu of requirements are allowed (such as parkland dedication or off-street parking), there is no provision for payments in lieu of works and services required for land development through subdivisions or building permits.

This resolution proposes that the provincial government amend the LGA to allow local governments to accept payment in lieu of some or all works and services required in respect to land development, enabling more flexibility and the pooling of funds for larger, more impactful community projects.

The LGA already allows for payments in lieu of certain requirements, providing flexibility to local governments to achieve broader community benefits. In these instances, payments are used to fund alternative solutions for larger, more impactful projects. Some examples include:

- Section 482 (2.4) – permits payment in lieu of providing amenities required to support a density benefits zoning bylaw.
- Sections 482.7(1)(d) and 482.91 – permits payment in lieu of providing the minimum number of affordable and special needs housing units required in a zoning bylaw.

- Section 510(1)(b) and (2)(b) – provides for payment in lieu of park land dedication required through subdivision.
- Section 525(1)(d) – permits payment for the provision of off-street parking and loading spaces required by bylaw.
- Section 527.1(2)(c) – permits payment in lieu of providing transportation demand management measures.

Since local governments do not currently have the option to accept payment in lieu of works and services required for subdivisions and building permits, developers are often required to provide specific works and services directly on or adjacent to the site, even when doing so may not be the most efficient or impactful solution for the broader community.

For example, requiring a developer to build a small local road or sidewalk may meet the immediate needs of a project, but pooling funds from multiple developments could allow the local government to invest in more comprehensive infrastructure improvements, such as a larger road or sidewalk network, safer transportation corridors, or connectivity improvements that benefit a larger area. These projects could improve safety, connectivity, or transportation management, aligning more closely with the community's long-term goals.

Some potential benefits of permitting payment in lieu of the provision of works and services include:

1. **Enhanced Flexibility:** Local governments would have greater flexibility to allocate funds for larger-scale infrastructure projects that align with broader community needs and priorities.
2. **Cost Efficiency:** Local governments could pool funds from multiple developments to fund projects that have greater impact, instead of requiring each developer to make individual, piecemeal, and often small-scale contributions.
3. **Improved Timelines:** By delaying works and services at the time of land development, the timelines for those projects entering the market could be vastly reduced.
4. **Improved Community Outcomes:** Larger, more strategic projects such as the development of community-wide transportation corridors or road safety improvements could be funded and managed more effectively, benefiting a wider portion of the community.

In conclusion, amending the *Local Government Act* to allow payments in lieu of works and services related to land development would provide local governments with a valuable tool to enhance infrastructure and community development. By providing the flexibility to pool funds from multiple developments, municipalities could create more impactful projects that meet broader community goals, such as improved safety and transportation connectivity. This change would help local governments manage growth more effectively while ensuring that developments contribute to the long-term well-being of the community as a whole.



Date: January 31, 2025

File No: 0390-20-AVICC

RESOLUTION for Consideration by Delegates at the AVICC 2025 AGM & Convention Forestry Industry | Sustainable Fibre

In alignment with Council's *2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan* and the goals of "Planning and encouraging development to ensure a thriving economy and strong diverse tax base", Council for the City of Port Alberni is submitting the attached resolution for consideration.

The forestry industry is a cornerstone of British Columbia's economy, historically providing thousands of jobs, contributing significantly to local and provincial revenues, and serving as a vital source of raw materials for a variety of sectors. However, in 2025 the industry is facing an unprecedented crisis characterized by substantial job losses, a decline in fibre availability, and rising operational costs. This backgrounder outlines the current challenges, implications for communities, and the necessity for proactive measures from the provincial government.

In 2024, the forestry sector has seen hundreds of jobs lost with many more at risk. The decline has had a cascading effect on local economies, impacting businesses that rely on forestry operations and leading to reduced consumer spending. The potential loss of population in rural areas can further exacerbate economic challenges, diminishing the tax base that supports community services.

The escalating costs associated with accessing fibre have created significant hurdles for the forestry industry. These challenges stem from regulatory complexities, environmental considerations, and competition for land use.

The need for investment in appropriate technologies is paramount to maximize the value of available fibre. There are a number of different approaches to addressing the shortage. Quesnel has established their Future of Forestry Think Tank. The Ministry of Forests is developing a Forest Landscape Plan. Advances in processing methods, waste utilization, and product innovation can help the industry transform challenges into opportunities. However, without financial support and targeted investment many mills may struggle to adapt.

As the industry evolves towards a more sustainable model, retraining and upskilling existing workers will be essential. A workforce equipped with the necessary skills to engage with new technologies and sustainable practices will be critical to the industry's resilience and growth.

The forestry industry in British Columbia is at a critical juncture, facing significant challenges that threaten its sustainability and the livelihoods of those who depend on it. The proposed motion emphasizes the need for a collaborative approach involving the provincial government and local stakeholders to assess sustainable fibre availability, invest in technology, and retrain workers. By taking these steps, we can revitalize the forestry sector, secure jobs, and build resilient communities for the future.

Yours truly,
CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sharie Minions', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sharie Minions
Mayor

c: City Council
M. Fox, CAO
S., Director of Corporate Services
UBCM Member Municipalities

Background

Delays in the adjudication of cases filed with the BC Human Rights Tribunal, some exceeding two years, continue to leave British Columbians faced with what they perceive to be human rights abuses without timely support or closure.

According to its [2023/24 Annual Report](#) released on Sept. 3, 2024, the Tribunal closed its most recent fiscal year (ending March 31) with 5,930 active cases. The Province of BC through the Attorney General's office did [increase funding to the Tribunal in January, 2023](#) in an attempt to significantly reduce the backlog. This funding boost, however, is proving insufficient and must be supplemented with additional funding.

Writes Emily Ohler in her Report from the Chair on pg. 3 of the annual report: "As demand again outstripped capacity this fiscal, the Tribunal faced continued challenges from its doubled annual case volume and the backlogs that accumulated from receiving roughly 8 years' worth of complaints over a 3-year period with a fraction of its current budget."

Chair Ohler continues: "This year did mark a positive shift as increased funding allowed the Tribunal to take steps toward right sizing its resources to meet its service demands. **However, the funding increase was not enough to reduce delays or halt growth of the backlog.** As the Tribunal works to tackle the still-growing backlog, moving older cases through its process, more cases continue to build behind. As a result, delays will persist across nearly every stage."

The [2023/24 annual report](#) under [Government Support and Increased Resources](#) further states on page 5: "The (BC) Government provided the Tribunal with its largest ever budget lift in the 2023/24 fiscal year in response to the Tribunal's consistent, transparent messaging about the volume-associated delays. The funding increase is welcome. **While it addresses the Tribunal's doubled baseline case volume, it does not address the backlog accumulated over the 2020-2023 period where the Tribunal received 8,472 new cases.**"

Conclusion

Further reducing delays in adjudications by the BC Human Rights Tribunal through additional provincial funding is necessary to curtail suffering by complainants and address the sources of their perceived abuse.

As [cited](#) by the federal government's [Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise](#), "a human rights abuse is anything that harms someone's human rights. These include harm to people, communities and the environment ... Discrimination divides people and leads to conflict. Some people and groups of people withdraw from their community or become isolated ... Survivors of human rights abuse have anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder."

"Nobody should be forced to live with intolerance and bigotry – that's why our government has prioritized supporting people and communities in fighting racism and other forms of discrimination. I'm glad that more people than ever before are standing up against discrimination and hate, including through the BC Human Rights Tribunal. By supporting faster access to justice at the

tribunal, we're helping people get the justice they deserve in every community of the province." –
Premier David Eby, Jan. 4, 2023