



Backgrounder 2: Energy Certainty to Support Long-Term Economic Development and Resource Sector Modernization

Purpose

This resolution highlights growing energy supply constraints on Vancouver Island and in coastal communities that are limiting economic development, industrial modernization, electrification efforts, and the ability of communities to attract and retain investment.

Energy Dependence and Infrastructure Risk

Vancouver Island and coastal communities rely heavily on electricity generated outside the region and delivered through long-distance transmission systems and subsea infrastructure. This structural dependence limits local energy resilience and increases vulnerability to outages, transmission constraints, and capacity limitations during peak demand periods.

The pending expiry of BC Hydro's electricity purchase agreement with Capital Power's Island Generation facility introduces near-term reliability uncertainty at a time when electricity demand is accelerating. Reliable, dispatchable, and redundant generation capacity plays a critical role in maintaining grid stability, meeting peak demand, and supporting energy-intensive industries during periods when variable renewable generation alone cannot meet system needs.

Accelerating Demand Growth

Provincial electrification policy, industrial decarbonization initiatives, transportation electrification, building conversions, and population growth are rapidly increasing electricity demand across Vancouver Island and the coast. While new renewable generation projects are advancing, they typically require multi-year planning, permitting, and construction timelines, creating a near- to medium-term supply gap.

Communities are already reporting delayed or cancelled investment decisions due to insufficient available power. Resource sector modernization, value-added processing, and new industrial proposals depend on access to reliable and affordable electricity. Without timely interim solutions, communities face increasing risks to competitiveness, job retention, and long-term economic sustainability.

Why Coordinated Planning Is Essential

Ensuring long-term energy certainty requires coordinated planning among the Province of British Columbia, BC Hydro, FortisBC, the British Columbia Utilities Commission, local governments, First Nations, and industry. Energy planning and contracting decisions must explicitly consider regional economic development needs, grid reliability, and the timing mismatch between electrification policy objectives and infrastructure readiness.

Interim energy solutions are needed to support existing industries and new investments while Indigenous-led renewable projects advance through development and into operation. A coordinated and regionally informed approach is essential to prevent further loss of investment and to support economic resilience in Vancouver Island and coastal communities.

References

[Capital Power – Island Generation](#)
[BC Hydro Integrated Resource Plan](#)



BACKGROUNDER

Supportive Housing *Residential Tenancy Act* Amendments

REQUEST

The City of Duncan respectfully requests delegates' support for our resolution:

WHEREAS supportive housing plays a critical role in providing safe and stable housing and supports for vulnerable people;

AND WHEREAS supportive housing currently falls under the *Residential Tenancy Act*, amendments are required for clarity on the role and enforceability of Good Neighbour Agreements to ensure supportive housing providers have the appropriate tools to address urgent safety concerns while continuing to uphold tenant rights, procedural fairness, and human-rights obligations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and/or UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to amend the *Residential Tenancy Act* to ensure supportive housing operators have clear, proportionate, and transparent authority to enforce Good Neighbour Agreements in a manner focused on safety of residents and staff, early intervention, housing stability, and positive relationships with neighbouring communities.

BACKGROUND

Supportive housing currently falls under the *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA), with exceptions for Section 28 (quiet enjoyment), Section 29 (landlord entry), and Section 30(1)(b) (guests) to allow providers to enforce guest management policies and conduct wellness checks crucial for safety.

In August 2025, the Province of BC struck a time-limited working group to review a request from housing providers for more authority to respond to urgent safety issues, problematic individuals taking advantage of vulnerable people, criminal activity within or nearby supportive housing sites, and to explore the potential to remove supportive housing from the RTA. The working group recommendations have not yet been made public.

DISCUSSION

Supportive housing is a distinct service model, which provides a hybrid of housing and care often for people who have been previously unhoused, and requires a tailored framework that balances the rights of the individual with the unique needs of the tenants and staff. Some tenants engage in problematic behaviours, which can be negatively impactful on the quiet enjoyment and safety of the neighbourhoods in which the supportive housing is located. Good Neighbour Agreements establish shared expectations between tenants and the housing provider about behaviour, supports, and program operations; however, they are not independently enforceable under the RTA.

KEY BENEFIT

Providing supportive housing operators with clear, proportionate, and transparent authority to implement and rely on Good Neighbour Agreements will help to better address problematic and dangerous individual, as well as assist with the successful integration of supportive housing facilities into the immediate neighbourhoods.

Contact: Mayor Michelle Staples | Phone: 250-466-9412 | Email: mayorstaples@duncan.ca



BACKGROUND

REQUEST

The City of Duncan respectfully requests delegates' support for our resolution:

WHEREAS existing bail, sentencing, and justice system responses have not deterred repeat property crime and public disorder offences, leading to ongoing negative impacts to residents, businesses, and perceptions of safety and business stability;

AND WHEREAS cross-sector intervention programs that combine accountability with timely access to health, housing, and social supports that address the underlying drivers including mental health, substance use, trauma, and housing insecurity, may be more effective in reducing recidivism and improving community safety;

THEREFORE be it resolved that AVICC and/or UBCM call on the Province of British Columbia to implement the Chronic Property and Public Disorder Intervention Initiative province-wide.

BACKGROUND

There has been a lack of investment for many years in court services (e.g. number of prosecutors) to expeditiously prosecute offenders. Furthermore, people who repeatedly perpetrate property crimes are too often given light sentencing, and the inconsistent consequences and lack of support services to address the underlying drivers of repeat offences have been ineffective in reducing recidivism.

The Province of BC's existing Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative (ReVOII) Program which began in 2023, has resulted in fewer violent incidents and more time in custody for high-risk offenders.

In December 2025, the Province announced a similar initiative being piloted in Kelowna, Nanaimo, and Nelson to address property crime and public disorder. The Chronic Property and Public Disorder Intervention Initiative's (C-POII) coordinated model will provide enhanced monitoring, enforcement, and support to address public safety concerns that are impacting communities.

DISCUSSION

Under this pilot program, each community has identified five individuals whose persistent disorder, theft and vandalism have affected public spaces and local businesses. Offenders are put under increased supervision along with connection to mental health, substance use, housing, and other supports. Police and probation officers share information to help prosecutors speed up charges, request longer detention, and plan safe releases.

KEY BENEFIT

Unabated property crime has had significant ongoing negative impacts to residents and businesses. Providing additional oversight and support services to address the underlying drivers through the C-POII in every community province-wide would improve the perceptions of safety and business stability.

Contact: Mayor Michelle Staples | Phone: 250-466-9412 | Email: mayorstaples@duncan.ca

Background:

Provincial Volunteer Firefighter Training Fund

Volunteer and composite fire departments play a vital role in providing emergency services across British Columbia, particularly in rural, remote, and smaller communities that do not have the tax base to support a full-time fire service. These departments respond to structure fires, medical first-response incidents, motor-vehicle collisions, interface wildfires, and a wide range of technical rescues. Their role is increasingly important as climate-related emergencies, population growth, and regional interdependence place greater demands on local emergency response systems.

The Province of British Columbia requires that all fire departments meet specific training standards to ensure responder and community safety. While necessary for public and firefighter safety, these standards require significant investments in equipment, instructional hours, training materials, certification processes, and instructor capacity. For volunteer and composite departments whose members often balance firefighting with full-time employment elsewhere, meeting these expectations can be especially challenging.

Most volunteer departments rely heavily on local government budgets to meet provincially mandated training requirements. For small, rural, and remote communities, these costs can represent a disproportionately large share of annual operating budgets. As community expectations and legislative requirements grow, the ability of local governments to sustainably fund training at mandated levels is increasingly strained.

Volunteer and composite departments frequently serve as training grounds for individuals pursuing full-time firefighting careers with larger municipal departments or provincial agencies. This mobility benefits the provincial emergency response system by supplying skilled firefighters, but it places the cost of initial training disproportionately on small local governments and their taxpayers. Communities often invest thousands of dollars to train a volunteer firefighter to operational levels, only to see that member transition into full-time employment elsewhere once fully certified. This recurring cycle creates ongoing recruitment, training, and retention pressures within volunteer departments.

A provincially supported training fund would provide consistent, equitable support to volunteer and composite departments regardless of local tax base; enhance public safety province-wide by ensuring firefighters in all regions receive high-quality, standardized training; recognize the provincial benefit that results from the mobility of trained volunteers moving into full-time firefighting roles; strengthen recruitment and retention by reducing the financial barriers faced by smaller communities and support local governments in meeting mandated training requirements without shifting disproportionate costs to rural taxpayers.

A cost-shared model in which the Province provides a baseline funding level and local governments contribute a predictable matching amount would offer stability and fairness while acknowledging shared responsibility for public safety.

STRENGTHENING THE ADMINISTRATION OF BC'S PRIVATE MANAGED FOREST LAND (PMFL) PROGRAM TO PROTECT WATER, FISH HABITAT, AND COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE

Whereas British Columbia's Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Program is intended to balance long-term forest production with the protection of water quality, fish habitat, streamside vegetation, and critical habitat; however, experience in the Cowichan Valley indicates that these environmental protections are not being realized in practice, accountability and transparency are limited, and jurisdictional gaps impede timely enforcement and remediation, undermining public confidence in the program.

And whereas local governments have documented activities on PMFL parcels—including stream and wetland alterations, culvert and pipe installations, deposit of gravel/fill, extensive land clearing of sensitive ecosystems, and delays in reforestation—while provincial enforcement has been limited, investigation records have not been shared, and the Managed Forest Council (MFC) has interpreted a wide range of activities as “Schedule A” forest management activities that are exempt from local regulation, effectively restricting local governments from addressing impacts to water and habitat.

Therefore be it resolved that AVICC urge the Province of British Columbia to implement legislative, regulatory, and administrative reforms to the Private Managed Forest Lands Program that:

1. **Strengthen protection of water, fish habitat, and streamside vegetation**, including clearer standards and timely reforestation requirements;
2. **Clarify jurisdiction and improve coordination** among provincial agencies and the MFC for compliance, enforcement, and restoration under the Water Sustainability Act and related statutes; and
3. **Enhance accountability and transparency**, including requirements for the MFC and relevant ministries to share inspection reports and compliance outcomes with affected local governments and the public, subject to FOIPPA.

And be it further resolved that AVICC request the Province to close regulatory loopholes that allow non-forestry land uses to proceed under the guise of “Schedule A” forest management activities, to require the MFC to promptly report suspected Water Sustainability Act contraventions to the appropriate ministry, and to enable appropriate local government input where PMFL activities materially affect community water security, habitat, and infrastructure.

STRENGTHENING THE ADMINISTRATION OF BC'S PRIVATE MANAGED FOREST LAND (PMFL) PROGRAM TO PROTECT WATER, FISH HABITAT, AND COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE

Background

The Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) Program—established to support long-term forest production while safeguarding environmental values—is not achieving its stated objectives in key areas of practice. On-the-ground activities on PMFL parcels, which constitute a significant portion of the lands within some regional districts, have raised persistent concerns about water quality, fish habitat, streamside vegetation retention, critical habitat protection, and climate resilience. Local governments report limited enforcement, restricted access to inspection records, and jurisdictional gaps that leave communities without effective tools to protect shared environmental values.

Why this matters now

- **Environmental protections not realized in practice:** Reforestation timelines, stream protections, and habitat safeguards are inconsistently applied or deferred, eroding long-term sustainability and public trust.
- **Accountability and transparency limits:** The Managed Forest Council (MFC) and provincial ministries have withheld inspection records, even when requested through FOIPPA, hindering local oversight and public understanding of compliance actions
- **Regulatory gaps & jurisdictional uncertainty:** Local governments are largely precluded from regulating PMFL activities where they are deemed “Schedule A” forest management, yet provincial enforcement has been limited, creating a governance vacuum.

Previous engagement

In 2019, the province undertook a PMFL Program review and received 5,363 written comments and 283 submissions, including detailed recommendations from local governments. The province has indicated the review is considered complete, yet reforms have not been implemented, leaving systemic issues unresolved.

What success looks like

- **Clear, enforceable standards** that consistently protect water and habitat on PMFL lands;
- **Coordinated compliance and enforcement** (Province + MFC), including restoration where harm occurs;
- **Routine sharing** of inspection findings and compliance outcomes with local governments;
- **Guardrails** that prevent non-forestry uses from proceeding under “Schedule A.”

Evidence & Local Impacts (Cowichan Valley context)

Documented Activities & Compliance Concerns

- **Works in and about a stream:** to illustrate the issue with the program administration and oversight, the CVRD is aware of an example of a PMFL parcel issued a Violation Ticket under the Water Sustainability Act, with no subsequent restoration orders documented despite confirmed wetland impacts by a Natural Resource Officer.
- Additional unpermitted works in 2025 include in-stream works, culvert and pipe installations, and fill in wetlands; the province's response to a Natural Resource Violation Report does not indicate action.
- Gravel deposition, stream/wetland infilling, and sensitive ecosystem clearing (e.g., western toad habitat) have been observed, with limited enforcement and no required environmental restoration measures reported.

Transparency & Information Access

- The MFC inspected relevant parcels but declined to share inspection records with the local government, advising FOIPPA requests; the province likewise did not disclose the MFC report upon FOI request, leaving uncertainty whether records exist or are withheld.

Interpretation of "Schedule A" Activities

- The MFC has interpreted a broad set of activities—composting vegetative material (as soil improvement), fencing (as crop protection/wildlife management), use of recreational vehicle (as forest management administration), and deposit of gravel (as road/trail construction/maintenance)—as forest management activities exempt from local bylaws, even when these activities appear to facilitate non-forestry land uses.

Reforestation & Long-Term Forest Production

- No current reforestation strategy in effect at the parcel referenced; replanting not required until the end of 2028, raising concerns about deferred reforestation and whether PMFL lands are being maintained for long-term forest production as intended.

Cost of Inaction

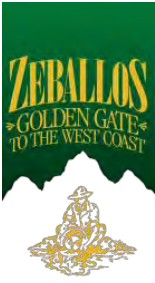
- Continued degradation of streams and wetlands, erosion of fish and amphibian habitat, and loss of mature riparian vegetation;
- Public distrust in the PMFL framework and institutions;
- Increased local government risk regarding water security and infrastructure if impacts are not prevented or remediated.

Priority Requested Actions

1. **Codify clearer environmental standards** for PMFL parcels (water quality, fish habitat, riparian retention) with timely, enforceable reforestation timelines aligned to long-term forest production objectives.
2. **Amend PMFL regulations and guidance to narrow “Schedule A” interpretations**, preventing non-forestry land uses from proceeding as exempt activities.
3. **Mandate reporting by the MFC** to the appropriate ministries of any suspected Water Sustainability Act contraventions, and require restoration orders where harm to streams/wetlands is verified.
4. **Provide clear guidance** to local governments on when and how bylaws and development permits **do apply** to PMFL lands (e.g., upon withdrawal from the program or where activities are **not** bona fide forestry).

Additional actions for consideration

- Establish a **formal information-sharing protocol** requiring the **MFC and provincial agencies to provide inspection reports, findings, and enforcement outcomes** to affected local governments, subject to FOIPPA.
- Create a **coordinated compliance unit or protocol** (Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship; Ministry of Forests; Ministry of Environment and Parks; EMCR as needed) to **resolve jurisdictional overlaps**, ensure **timely investigation**, and **track restoration**.
- **Publish annual PMFL compliance and enforcement summaries**, including complaint volumes, inspection counts, outcomes (warnings, tickets, restoration orders), and timelines.
- **Enable appropriate local government input** on PMFL activities with **material impacts on community water, habitat, or infrastructure**, while maintaining the program’s core forestry objectives.



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Ministry of Forests Binding Materials

WHEREAS many rural and remote communities rely on Forest Service Roads (FSRs) as their primary or only access routes for residents, emergency services, commercial deliveries, and essential travel;

AND WHEREAS current Ministry of Forests major maintenance programs typically exclude funding for topping materials, binding fines, and full surface stabilization necessary to maintain safe, all-weather passenger-vehicle conditions, while industrial users are not uniformly required to reinstate surfaces to that standard following haul activity;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC & UBCM request that the Ministry of Forests include funding for topping materials, binding fines, and full surface stabilization as required components of all Forest Service Road major maintenance projects and industrial user maintenance requirements.

Zeballos Council Resolution: **184/2025**

Background:

Many rural and remote communities depend on Forest Service Roads as everyday public corridors and for emergency mobility, yet current major maintenance practices often omit the surfacing materials and binding fines needed to stabilize the travelled surface beyond short intervals. When industrial hauling resumes, rapid surface degradation—wash boarding, rutting, potholing, and dust—creates safety risks, lengthens emergency response times, and undermines reliable access for residents, Indigenous communities, and service providers. Including proper topping and binding materials in Ministry-funded major maintenance, and requiring industrial users to reinstate surfaces to passenger-vehicle standards, will improve safety outcomes, extend maintenance life cycles, and ensure equitable access for communities that rely on FSRs for daily living and emergency preparedness.

Sent from the territory of the Ehattesaht Chinehkint First Nation.



Title: Raw Log Exports

Sponsor: City of Nanaimo

WHEREAS the lack of adequate and affordable fiber supply has been identified as a key factor in the continued curtailment or permanent closure of BC's sawmills and pulp mills, causing loss of employment and tax income for resource-based and resource-dependent communities;

AND WHEREAS from 2.8 to 3.5 million cubic meters of raw logs have been exported from BC annually over the last five years, in addition to lumber cant exports not included in those statistics:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM call on the provincial government and federal governments to ban the export of raw logs and lumber cants from BC to ensure that forests harvested in BC from crown land and private managed forest lands are processed in BC, encouraging value-added manufacturing in BC and supporting employment in BC's forest industry, and that BC mills are supported in a transition to utilize a full spectrum of marketable tree species.

Background Information

Historically, companies such as MacMillan Bloedel and Crown Zellerbach were vertically integrated and included forestry, logging, pulp, paper and lumber operations in systems that ensured that feedstock was shared across these different operations. When these companies were sold and their assets dispersed, the independent companies and operations that took over various assets did not have the same commitment to support all aspects of the BC value-added chain.

BC pulp mills such as Harmac Pacific in Nanaimo and Domtar in Crofton have struggled to access adequate affordable fiber supply on Vancouver Island, requiring them to bring in fibre from as far away as the interior of BC. Domtar's December 2, 2025 media release highlights "the lack of access to affordable fiber in BC" as a deciding factor in the closure of their pulp mill in Crofton.[1]

These same companies watch log ships loaded for export from port facilities beside their mills on a weekly basis. According to BC Government statistics, over the last five years (2020-2024), raw log exports from BC ranged from 2.8 to 3.5 million cubic meters annually. The vast majority of these raw logs are exported from the coastal forest region, predominantly from Vancouver Island. The export of raw logs from the coastal region ranges from 2.2 to 3 million cubic meters per year.[2] It should be noted as well that these statistics do not include the export of lumber cants—essentially raw logs with their rounded edges removed—because they are considered to be partially processed.

The forest industry in BC is in crisis. As noted in a December 12, 2025, Times Colonist opinion piece, "While mills are shutting down, raw logs are leaving B.C. on giant ships every week." [3] Prohibiting the export of raw logs and lumber cants, as called for in the resolution, would ensure that forests harvested in BC are processed in BC, encouraging value-added manufacturing in BC and supporting employment in BC's forest industry.

[1] <https://media.domtar.com/Domtar-to-permanently-close-Crofton-Mill>

[2] https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/log-exports/bc_log_export_permit_report_2020-2024.pdf

[3] <https://www.timescolonist.com/opinion/comment-bcs-forest-industry-needs-massive-overhaul-11609073>

Backgrounder

Scaling Building Code Requirements

Regional District of Nanaimo

As is well known, there is a housing affordability crisis across BC and Canada. In many rural areas of BC the most affordable and accessible housing options are small single-storey residential homes. The updated 2024 BC Building Code includes various revisions such as seismic and adaptability updates in addition to the existing BC Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code¹. The cost impacts of the Code are disproportionately higher when building small residential homes due to fixed costs and lack of economies of scale and are exacerbated by higher building costs in more northern, rural, and remote communities. In addition, the Code requirements and performance metrics for residential homes are currently not scaled based on the size or complexity of the residence (although note there is a draft Code revision under review regarding Step Code implementation³). Notably, small homes by their nature consume less energy, produce fewer emissions, tend to have a simpler building structure, and have inherently lower seismic risk, but the Code requirements do not reflect that. Where the Code does offer flexibility it requires that homeowners engage professional engineers to sign off on a design; for those trying to build an affordable small home these added costs are disproportionately high and make small homes less affordable for those who could benefit from them.

This resolution is not requesting that small house construction be held to lower safety or environmental standards; rather, it focuses on the importance of scaling building code requirements, which add significant costs, to the actual risk and performance goals for the changes. A potential solution could be a simplified rural building standard/alternative compliance pathway for small homes that meets safety, climate, and seismic resilience requirements in a less complex and therefore more affordable way, while still ensuring safety.

Step Code implementation adds disproportionate costs to small homes without same benefit

The BC Energy Step Code has been developed to promote energy efficiency in new buildings with a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a potential longer-term benefit of lower energy costs. However, for small homes, the costs of implementing the step code are higher without a commensurate benefit in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

BC Housing's 2017 ² report on step code implementation recognized the same benefit did not appear in small homes: "[w]e recommend that government adjust or moderate the implementation of the Step Code for smaller homes. Given that smaller homes consume less energy than larger homes in absolute terms, a local government that excluded small homes from compliance with the regulation would not significantly impact emissions reductions" (p. 13).

The process to implement the Step Code involves several fixed costs (e.g., door blower tests) which do not scale based on size of dwelling and require a certified professional who may not be as available in rural and remote communities. Because these are fixed costs, they form a proportionately higher cost when building small residential houses. The BC Housing report recognized that the relative costs for small single-family homes were disproportionately higher than for larger or multi-dwelling homes (p. 11) and that the

¹ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/construction-industry/building-codes-standards/bc-codes/2024-bc-codes>

² <https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BC-Energy-Step-Code-2017-Metrics-Summary.pdf>

costs exceeded any potential savings over a 20-year horizon. The analysis also indicated costs escalated significantly in colder climates which adds to the overall additional expense of implementing the building code in northern, remote, and rural communities.

Because smaller homes consume less energy than larger homes and produce fewer emissions, requiring them to meet the same performance-based energy metrics results in an inefficient cost-benefit ratio and unintentionally creates disproportionate added costs for those seeking to build an affordable small home. This impact was recently recognized by the province (December 2025) with proposed Code changes³, indicating that “[w]ith these proposed adjustments, the %ICC [incremental capital cost] for smaller homes approaches the %ICC for medium sized homes, reducing both cost and level of effort to achieve Step Code requirements”. While these proposed changes are a good start, the relative cost for small homes is still disproportionately higher and will have the largest impact on the smallest most affordable housing options, making small homes less affordable without a commensurate benefit in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Seismic requirements are not scaled to reflect risk of the structure

The updated BC Building Code includes new seismic requirements based on updated scientific analysis on predicted locations and severity of earthquakes. However, the Province recently extended the original March 2025 effective date to March 2027 for in-stream projects⁴, partially in recognition of the additional costs the changes require. The most affected areas of the province based on the new seismic modelling are Vancouver Island and the Greater Vancouver Regional District; however, other changes such as lateral load design requirements will affect other areas of the province.

Although the updated Code does reflect site-specific risk factors around the province such as soil condition, active faults, and ground motion models, the Code still treats residential home seismic hazards fairly uniformly rather than based on relative vulnerability scaled to size of dwelling type. Small woodframe homes are considered less vulnerable to seismic risk because they have light loads and the spans are small⁵, and the risk of fatalities associated with earthquakes is expected to be lower for those in lighter structures⁶. A recent study⁷ for the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs on the space and cost impacts of the new seismic and adaptability Code requirements was focused on larger multi-family dwellings. Notably, the study excluded townhouses from consideration because “[t]ownhouses, as smaller and lighter buildings, are not as strongly affected by seismic forces as larger buildings”. In a study of damage to buildings after a 1994 earthquake in Northridge, California, which measured 6.4 on the Richter scale⁸, small single-family homes “suffered minimal structural damage to elements that are critical to the safety of occupants” compared to the larger home types surveyed.

³ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/bcbc-2024-fall-amendments-pcfs/smaller_homes_in_colder_climates.pdf

⁴ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/bulletins/2024-code/b24-02-r_seismic_design_delay_period_final.pdf

⁵ https://council.vancouver.ca/000502/documents/DelcanStudy_Phase1_AppendixB.PDF

⁶ https://vpfo-facilities.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2020/03/UBC-Seismic-Risk-Assessment-and-Resilience-Strategy-Issue-2_Aug2017.pdf

⁷ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/reports/space_and_cost_impact_study.pdf

⁸ <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/destech/damage.html>

A new requirement of the updated Code is that accessory buildings must also be included in a seismic analysis. This means that all projects must include either a geotechnical engineer to determine the site class of the property or potential homeowners must assume the worst-case site class and design (potentially overdesign) to that highest standard. Both these options add significant costs to projects that are disproportionately higher for smaller homes, which are the structures at least risk.

Altogether, past research suggests that smaller homes have inherently lower seismic risk. While the Code for small homes does allow for the owner to work with an engineer to sign off on a simplified design, the added costs incurred by that are significant (and higher in more rural and remote communities), adding a disproportionate cost to a small home. Requiring small, single-storey homes and accessory buildings to meet the same standards as for larger and/or multi-family dwellings does not reflect the inherently lower risk of the smaller structures and unintentionally creates added costs for those seeking to build an affordable small home.

Summary

While the overall goals of keeping residents safe and protecting the environment are important, the benefits attained by holding small (under 1000 ft²/93 m²) single-storey homes to the same building standard as larger and/or multi-family dwellings are much less and the costs are disproportionately higher. Requiring builders who are trying to build an affordable small home to hire engineers to certify simpler designs that recognize their inherently lower seismic risk or production of greenhouse gases is very expensive and disproportionately affects those who can least afford it. A potential solution could be a simplified rural building standard/alternative compliance pathway for small homes that meets safety, climate, and seismic resilience requirements in a less complex and therefore more affordable way.

Report to Police Board

Detention Facilities and Jail Guards

December 24, 2025

Purpose

To inform the Police Board how increasing detention responsibilities are affecting Central Saanich Police Service resources and operations, and to identify solutions to address these impacts.

Background

Police detention occurs for a range of lawful purposes, including the execution of warrants, continuation of investigations, holding individuals for court, intoxication, or preventing a breach of the peace, pursuant to authorities under the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

Police detention is intended to be temporary in nature, generally not exceeding 24 hours, after which an individual must be released or brought before a justice.

Once an individual enters the court system (first appearance, bail hearing, or arrest on a court-issued warrant), custody should transfer to the BC Sheriff Service, whose mandate includes:

- Prisoner transport to and from court,
- Court security,
- Custody of accused persons while attending court proceedings, and
- Execution of court-related custodial duties.

When a person is remanded into custody, responsibility transfers to BC Corrections, whose mandate under the *Correction Act* includes:

- Custody and supervision of remanded and sentenced inmates,
- Ensuring conditions of confinement meet legislated standards, and
- Providing access to basic health care, nutrition, hygiene, and exercise.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in police assuming additional court-related functions, including court appearances conducted remotely from police detention facilities (Virtual Bail). This shift has persisted and expanded well beyond the pandemic period.

The Province has increasingly relied on police detention facilities as part of the justice system continuum. This reliance will be further consolidated with the introduction of a permanent virtual bail system to be installed directly within police detention facilities, enabling remote video court hearings (currently conducted by telephone).

Unlike BC Corrections, which operates under clear provincial standards established in the *Correction Act*, there is currently no provincial standard governing police detention facilities or jail guards. Both matters are under active provincial review, with Central Saanich Police Service (CSPS) represented in the consultation process.

Current Situation

CSPS operates a detention facility consisting of two cells, supported by a team of auxiliary jail guards who are called in as required. Jail guards are “observe-and-report” only and have no physical contact with prisoners.

The detention facility, including each cell, is equipped with video and audio recording and monitoring. The sole exception is the counsel phone room, which has video but no audio recording. Each cell contains a wash basin and toilet. There are no shower facilities and no secure exterior space for detainees to access fresh air.

Outside of the summer months (June, July, and August), patrol minimum staffing is two officers. Most cell block procedures require two members to be present to meet officer safety requirements, creating operational strain when detainees are held for extended periods.

Prior to COVID-19, prisoners—particularly those arrested on court-issued warrants—could often be transported directly to court during normal operating hours. This practice is no longer available.

The Virtual Bail system continues to expand to the extent that prisoners are now only transported to court by BC Sheriffs if the arrest (including arrest warrants) occurs between 14:00 and 06:00 on weekdays. In these cases, prisoners are held by police until approximately 10:00, when BC Sheriffs will transport, if available. At all other times, prisoners are held in police custody for evening virtual bail.

For remand prisoners, BC Corrections will only accept male prisoners between 07:00 and 20:00 hours, with reduced hours on weekends. For female prisoners, the only South Island remand facility is located in Nanaimo. Even when transport is feasible, intake may be declined due to staffing shortages, requiring CSPS to retain custody. As a result, CSPS has held female remand prisoners for up to 56 hours on behalf of BC Corrections.

Effective September 1, 2025, amendments to the *Police Act* resulted in the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) asserting jurisdiction over jail guards where actions, both on and off duty, may have contributed to serious harm or death. This development led to several jail guard resignations and has required sworn members to assume jail guard duties at double-time overtime rates.

Implications

Detention of prisoners is inherently high-risk and carries significant legal and reputational liability. The increasing downloading of responsibility from Justice, BC Sheriffs, and BC Corrections has materially extended the length of time prisoners are held in CSPS facilities.

Extended detention periods:

- Increase exposure to legal and Charter-related liability,
- Divert sworn members from frontline policing due to increased documentation, supervision, and facilitation of virtual bail hearings, and

- Increase staffing costs and reliance on overtime.

While CSPA is able to recover certain costs when holding remand prisoners on behalf of BC Corrections, these recoveries do not fully offset the operational impact.

As part of the ongoing provincial review, it is anticipated that jail guards may be required to hold Special Municipal Constable (SMC) status. This would necessitate:

- Additional training,
- Uniforms and equipment, and
- Increased wages.

Although there is currently no provincial standard for police detention facilities, standards do exist for correctional facilities. Given that CSPA facilities cannot meet those standards, there is a credible risk that prolonged detention could give rise to a section 12 *Charter* challenge related to cruel or unusual treatment.

Solutions and Mitigation Measures

Short Term (Completed)

Mindful of correctional facility standards, the following instructions have been issued to members and jail guards when detaining remand prisoners:

- Provision of at least one substantial meal per day, beyond standard snack foods,
- Where practicable, brief supervised periods outside of the cell,
- Access to reading material,
- Issuance of personal hygiene kits, and
- Provision of hospital gowns for female prisoners when using in-cell toilets monitored by CCTV.

In addition:

- An in-person meeting was held with an Executive Director of Police Services on August 13, 2025, to formally communicate the concerns outlined in this report.
- Four new jail guards have been hired, bringing the total number of auxiliaries to nine. This increase should improve coverage and reduce the operational, and financial, burden on frontline officers performing jail guard functions.
- Due to IIO oversight and to support retention, a \$3.00 per hour wage increase Letter of Understanding (LOU) has been prepared and is awaiting Police Board approval.

Medium Term

- Coordinated and sustained advocacy by Area Chiefs and Police Boards with Police Services, BC Sheriffs, BC Corrections, and Justice to highlight systemic issues and reinforce accountability for respective mandates.

Long Term

The development of a centralized police detention facility for the South Island would provide the following key advantages:

- **Improved Detainee Safety**
Dedicated detention staff and standardized procedures enhance medical monitoring, risk management, and care of vulnerable detainees, reducing in-custody incidents and liability.
- **Increased Frontline Capacity**
Arresting officers can transfer detainees quickly and return to patrol, improving response times and reducing operational strain caused by jail guard shortages.
- **Staffing Stability**
A professional regional detention workforce reduces reliance on ad hoc staffing, overtime, and redeployment of sworn members, and aligns with emerging provincial jail guard standards.
- **Consistency and Legal Compliance**
Standardized detention practices strengthen compliance with the *Charter, Police Act*, and applicable case law, reducing complaints and legal risk.
- **Stronger Oversight**
Centralized operations improve supervision, documentation, reporting, and accountability.
- **Surge Capacity**
A regional facility can scale staffing and operations during major events or enforcement initiatives, improving overall system resilience.

Conclusion

The increasing reliance on police detention facilities to fulfil correctional and court-related functions presents significant and growing risk to Central Saanich Police Service. While short-term mitigations are in place, sustainable solutions will require system-level change and consideration of a regional detention model.

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DISTRICT OF LANTZVILLE

A RESOLUTION TO IMPROVE CONSISTENCY, FEASIBILITY, AND EQUITY IN POLICING COSTS BASED ON POPULATION



In 2007, the Province of British Columbia amended the Police Act to require municipalities that reach a population of 5,000 in an official census to assume a significantly greater share of policing costs.

According to BC Stats, British Columbia's population was estimated at 4,290,987 people in 2007. In 2007, the 5,000-person policing threshold represented 0.116% of the provincial population. In 2024 by comparison, BC Stats estimates the provincial population has increased by over 32%, reaching 5,698,430 people.

If the original 0.116% ratio had been maintained, the policing cost threshold today would be approximately 6,600 people.

Due to substantial provincial population growth from 2007 to 2024, and the stagnant policing threshold of 5,000 people from 2007, small municipalities are reaching the 5,000-population threshold at an accelerated pace, with significantly less time to accumulate reserves or plan for the associated tax burden. This has resulted in sudden, substantial increases to local property taxes which has shifted financial pressure directly onto residents amid a persistent affordability and housing crises. These impacts disproportionately affect individuals and families on fixed or low incomes, including seniors and socioeconomically vulnerable populations.

Adjusting the threshold retroactively to reflect provincial population growth and maintaining it thereafter as a consistent percentage linked to each official census, would provide a fair, transparent, and predictable approach to policing cost allocations for small municipalities and their taxpayers.

References:

Quarterly Population Highlights, BC Stats

Police Act – Municipal Policing Financing Model

Province of British Columbia: "Financing – New Model Adjustments"



2026 AVICC Resolution

Soil Relocation Regulations

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the regulatory framework governing soil relocation under the Environmental Management Act and Contaminated Sites Regulation is designed and implemented to ensure protection of both human and environmental health, the required soil testing, storing, and relocation results in significant increased costs of soil management for local governments;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Environment requires soil relocation to meet provincial remediation standards at a receiving site location that includes a threshold for chloride ion of 100 ppm to qualify as “Residential Low Density” which does not account for the natural presence of chlorides in soils, from the deposition of salt spray;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the provincial government to review the thresholds for chloride ions in soil to qualify as “Residential Low Density” with consideration of the naturally occurring chloride elements that are higher in municipalities close to the Pacific Ocean.

BACKGROUND

The Contaminated Sites Regulation under the Environmental Management Act establishes numerical remediation standards that relocated soil must meet at a receiving site, including a chloride ion threshold of 100 ppm for the “Residential Low Density” land-use category. This chloride standard is applied uniformly across the province and does not distinguish between chloride associated with contamination and chloride that is naturally present in soils in coastal environments as a result of marine salt spray deposition. In municipalities located close to the Pacific Ocean, background chloride concentrations in otherwise clean soil can therefore exceed the current 100 ppm threshold solely due to natural coastal influences, rather than any anthropogenic source.

Because the existing “Residential Low Density” chloride standard does not account for these elevated natural background conditions, local governments in coastal communities can face unnecessary constraints and higher costs when relocating soil that is environmentally benign but technically out of compliance with the provincial numerical limit. This can limit the availability of suitable receiving sites, complicate project planning, and increase hauling and disposal expenses for routine municipal works, despite there being no incremental risk to human health or the environment from the naturally occurring chlorides.

The request proposes that the Province review the chloride ion thresholds used to define “Residential Low Density” standards for soil relocation. The intent of this review would be to ensure that the regulatory framework better reflects naturally occurring chloride levels in coastal municipalities influenced by Pacific Ocean salt spray, while maintaining appropriate protection of groundwater, surface water, and human health. By calibrating the chloride criteria to account for regional background conditions, the Province could reduce unnecessary regulatory and financial burdens on coastal local governments, without compromising environmental safeguards.

BACKGROUND: Create Enabling Authorities Allowing Local Governments to Regulate Carbon Pollution from Existing Buildings

In 2023, the Province created the Zero Carbon Step Code (ZCSC), which enables local governments to opt in to provisions of the BC Building Code that regulate the GHG emissions from new buildings. Within months, most of the large local governments across BC had made use of this enabling authority, and as a result, most new buildings across the Province are now operating on clean electricity.

Emissions from the built environment remain high in BC and account for a sizeable percentage of total emissions. In Victoria, 53% of total emissions come from buildings, and cities across the Province face similar numbers. With the implementation of the ZCSC, all new buildings in Victoria now run their core systems on clean electricity. But emissions from existing buildings remain high and local governments have virtually no authority to phase-in cleaner operating systems via regulation. The one exception to this rule is the City of Vancouver, which does possess such an authority via its Charter, and which now has Building Performance Standards (BPS) for certain classes of buildings, with the aim of reducing buildings emissions to net zero by 2050.

In order for cities across BC to meet their climate targets, action must be taken to reduce emissions from existing buildings. Enabling authorities from the Province are needed for cities to obtain the ability to reduce emissions from existing buildings, to keep pace with the regulations for new buildings. Such enabling authorities could allow cities to phase in performance standards over the long term, in an effort to support both affordability and the imperatives of GHG mitigation.

There is also an equity piece here, as lower-income households are overrepresented in older housing stock, and often have poorer insulation, old furnaces, higher energy bills, and higher upgrade costs than newer buildings. These households are less likely to have access to capital, credit, or savings for major retrofits. In theory, the Province should pair GHG mitigation regulations for existing buildings with rebates for heat pumps, improved insulation and glazing, and other technologies that reduce emissions and support energy efficiency.



Title: Streamlining the MRDT Renewal Process

Sponsor: City of Nanaimo

WHEREAS the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) Program was created to assist municipalities, regional districts and eligible entities in funding local tourism marketing, programs and projects to grow visitation and provide economic benefits for communities;

AND WHEREAS in order for an application to be renewed under the current MRDT program, demonstrated support from the accommodation sector is required, despite the fact that the program is already established in the community and the funding collected benefits many sectors of the tourism industry:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM advocate for the Province to amend the MRDT program requirements to remove the requirement for an Accommodation Sector in Support of MRDT Form when applications are being renewed, given the impact that MRDT funding has across numerous sectors in a community and the increased risk to established programs and projects should accommodation sector support not be obtained during the renewal process.

Background Information

The requirements for the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) program are outlined in the document prepared by the provincial government titled “Municipal and Regional District Tax Program Requirements” (link: <https://www.destinationbc.ca/content/uploads/2022/12/MRDT-Program-Requirements-September-2021-1.pdf>). Once the MRDT has been established in a community, it is implemented for a period of five years. To renew the MRDT for an additional five-year period, the designated recipient must re-apply. There is no restriction on the number of times an application can be renewed.

The Province expanded the program in 2018 to allow revenue received from online accommodation platforms to be used to fund affordable housing initiatives, helping to address local housing needs. In terms of general MRDT revenues, which this resolution speaks to, the funding received through the MRDT program may be used for tourism marketing, programs and projects with the intended purpose of increasing local tourism revenue, visitation and economic benefits. This provides a positive benefit across all tourism sectors.

As part of the application process, applicants must provide evidence that there is sufficient support from accommodation providers. At least 51% of the number of establishments that would collect the tax within the municipality/region representing at least 51% of the total number of rooms must complete and return an Accommodation Sector in Support of MRDT Form. Under the MRDT program, application requirements are the same for new applications, rate changes and renewal applications. The proposed resolution advocates that once a MRDT program is established in a community (which requires approval from accommodation providers), renewal applications should be streamlined to remove the requirement for reconfirming support from the accommodation sector.

MRDT funding serves to provide economic benefit to all tourism sectors. By requiring approval from accommodation providers each time an application is renewed, established programs and projects that serve to benefit all tourism sectors are at an increased risk should approval from the accommodation sector not be obtained.



qathet Regional District Proposed AVICC Resolution #2: Improvement District Governance: Policy Statement 2006 Resolution Backgrounder

Improvement districts are created under provincial statute and operate within a governance and financial framework established by the Province of British Columbia. The Province's Improvement District Governance: Policy Statement (2006) outlines an objective of encouraging the eventual transition of improvement districts to municipal or regional district jurisdiction, while limiting provincial involvement primarily to protecting critical provincial interests. Consistent with this approach, the policy framework restricts improvement districts from directly accessing provincial sewer and water infrastructure grant programs, which constrains their ability to independently finance capital infrastructure.

Under the current policy framework, improvement districts face significant structural financial constraints. In particular, most improvement districts are not eligible to access provincial sewer and water infrastructure grant programs and do not have access to long-term borrowing through the Municipal Finance Authority of British Columbia. These limitations restrict their ability to finance infrastructure renewal, address regulatory compliance requirements, and plan for long-term asset sustainability, particularly for aging systems.

The Province's policy articulates objectives and principles intended to guide the management of improvement districts, including minimizing the risk of system failure, promoting financial accountability, supporting effective administration, and taking a proactive role in identifying and addressing administrative or financial challenges. The policy also anticipates that provincial oversight and early intervention will help mitigate risks to residents, improvement districts, and local governments.

However, the policy framework does not include updated financial mechanisms that reflect current infrastructure costs, regulatory standards, or asset management expectations. In the absence of access to long-term borrowing and direct capital grant programs, improvement districts may experience increasing infrastructure deficits over time, which can complicate both continued independent operation and any future transition to municipal or regional district service delivery.

These conditions create challenges not only for improvement districts and their residents, but also for regional districts and municipalities that may ultimately assume responsibility for aging infrastructure without sufficient transition funding or financial support mechanisms. Modernizing the Improvement District Governance: Policy Statement would help align provincial objectives with contemporary infrastructure realities, support sustainable service delivery, and reduce long-term financial risk to residents, local governments, and the Province.



Additional Reports

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



qathet Regional District Proposed AVICC Resolution #3: Agricultural Land Reserve Residential Flexibility Backgrounder

The purpose of British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is to preserve valuable agricultural land for present and future food production.

Prior to Bill 52, in 2019, there were two land use policies governing residential uses on ALR. These allowed a property owner to have the following, without having to make an application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

Policy L-08 allowed

1 primary residence, with a secondary suite fully contained within the dwelling structure.

And either

1 double wide manufactured home, only occupied by immediate family

OR 1 single level dwelling constructed above an existing farm building.

Policy L-09 allowed

No limit on the number of dwellings on the condition that they were “necessary” for “farm use”.

After Bill 52, the Policies for the number of Dwelling Units became

1 Dwelling Unit to a maximum floor area of 500 m²

A temporary reprieve of a double wide would also be allowed

In July, 2021 new rules were introduced:

https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/oic/arc_oic/0438_2021

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agricultureand-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/agriculture-land-reserve/guidance_document_-_residential_flexibility_oic.pdf

Those amendments meant that as of December 31, 2021, if also permitted in local government bylaws, ALR landowners will be permitted two residences per parcel in specific circumstances. If the parcel has only one residence, a second residence may be built under certain circumstances.

“• If the parcel is 40 hectares or less, there will be permission for two residences: one that is 500 m² or less in total floor area, and one that is 90 m² or less in total floor area.”



In 2023, Bill 44 introduced Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act, i.e. Small Scale, Multi-Unit Housing (“SSMUH”). However, a Local Government cannot permit more housing on an ALR parcel than what is permitted by the ALCA and ALR Use Regulation regardless of the SSMUH legislation.

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/763/2024/07/Housing-Legislation-in-the-ALR.pdf>

Clarification was provided for the ALCA and ALR Use Regulation as:

- a principal residence up to 500 m² total floor area,
- a secondary suite within that principal residence, and
- an additional residence up to 90 m² total floor area for parcels 40 ha or less, or up to 186 m² for parcels larger than 40 ha.”

There is an increasing demand for Smaller Scale housing alternatives, particularly on farmland. Additionally, farm family sizes have decreased, and communal/co-op farming has increased in demand.

There are also a growing number of instances where an old farm house is larger than 90m². However, the new farm house and the old farm house are less than the maximum allowed 590m² (primary + secondary), and thus an older modestly sized house has to be removed. This also results in new primary houses on farmland being constructed larger than the occupants’ needs are, because the floor area is non transferable to any other dwelling unit on the property.

We are requesting that the AVICC and the UBCM request the Provincial Government amend their ALCA and ALR Use Regulation to allow for greater flexibility of inclusion for small scale housing as intended by Bill 44, while also maintaining a reasonable and flexible limit on the total floor area of all accumulated residential developments on a parcel of ALR.

Backgrounder – Resolution for 2026 AVICC Convention

District of Metchosin

February 6, 2026

CSA Incentive Program to Strengthen British Columbia’s Island and Coastal Communities

Overview

This backgrounder supports the resolution submitted by the District of Metchosin to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC), requesting that the Province of British Columbia develop a provincially administered Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Incentive Program, modeled on the Nova Scotia Loyal CSA Incentive Pilot Program.

A CSA Incentive Program would encourage residents to purchase food directly from local farms through CSA subscriptions, while reimbursing participating producers for the incentive offered. This approach aligns with local government interests related to economic resilience, emergency preparedness, climate adaptation, and continuity of essential services. The program would deliver local benefits without downloading costs or administrative responsibilities to local governments.

What is a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program?

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a direct farm-to-consumer model in which residents purchase a seasonal subscription or “share” from a local farm, typically receiving regular boxes of fresh produce or other farm products throughout the growing season. Customers pay in advance, which provides farmers with predictable early-season income, while consumers gain reliable access to fresh, locally grown food and a stronger connection to regional agriculture.

Nova Scotia Loyal CSA Incentive Pilot Program (Policy Precedent)

In January 2026, the Government of Nova Scotia announced the Nova Scotia Loyal Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Incentive Pilot Program, which supports local farmers and improves consumer access to local food through a targeted incentive.

Key features include:

- A 10% consumer discount on CSA subscriptions purchased directly from participating farms.
- Full reimbursement to producers, ensuring farms do not absorb the cost.
- Improved early-season cash flow and revenue stability for farms.
- Provincial delivery in partnership with the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture.

Program details:

<https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2026/01/08/nova-scotia-loyal-supports-buying-direct-local-farmers>
<https://nsfa-fane.ca/csaincentive/>

This model demonstrates a practical, low-burden way for a province to strengthen farm viability and regional food systems through direct producer–consumer relationships.

Why This Matters Now for British Columbia

British Columbia is facing increasing pressures that make strengthening regional food systems both timely and necessary. Climate-related events such as floods, wildfires, drought, and extreme weather have repeatedly disrupted transportation networks and food supply chains, with island and coastal communities often among the most affected.

At the same time, global economic volatility, trade uncertainty, and rising input costs are increasing risk for both producers and consumers. These conditions highlight the vulnerability of communities that rely heavily on long-distance food supply chains.

A provincial CSA Incentive Program would provide a near-term, practical response by:

- Strengthening **regional food self-reliance**.
- Supporting farm viability and **local economic stability**.
- Complementing existing **emergency preparedness and climate adaptation strategies**.

Research Evidence Supporting CSA and Local Food Systems

A growing body of research supports CSA models and localized food systems as effective tools for resilience and sustainability:

- A systematic review of CSA programs found strong environmental and social sustainability outcomes, including efficient resource use and strengthened producer–consumer relationships
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsufs.2023.1136866/full>
- Research shows CSA participation is associated with higher fruit and vegetable consumption and positive mental health outcomes, highlighting public health co-benefits
<https://agrifoodecon.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40100-024-00343-5>
- Studies of regional food systems demonstrate that localized food networks are more resilient to shocks such as pandemics and extreme weather than globalized supply chains
<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/3/1325>

BC-Specific Evidence and Practical Experience

British Columbia has strong applied research and on-the-ground experience demonstrating the value of CSA and direct-from-farm food systems:

- **BC Farmers' Market Economic Impact Study (2023)**
Demonstrates that direct farm sales are important economic drivers and help retain food dollars locally
<https://bcfarmersmarket.org/for-markets-vendors/2023-bc-farmers-market-economic-impact-study/>
- **Institute for Sustainable Food Systems – Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU)**
Research shows that increased regional food production supports food security, rural employment, and local economic resilience
[Institute for Sustainable Food Systems | KPU.ca - Kwantlen Polytechnic University](https://www.kpu.ca/institute-for-sustainable-food-systems)
- **Southwest BC Bioregion Food System Design Project (KPU)**
Demonstrates that greater regional food self-reliance is achievable when supported by appropriate policy and market incentives
<https://www.kpu.ca/southwest-bc-bioregion-food-system-design-project>
- **Public Health Association of BC – Community Food Systems Development**
Highlights how strong local food systems improve resilience, equity, and emergency preparedness
<https://phabc.org/cfsd/>
- **Local Food Futures for BC (Provincial Dialogues)**
Identifies direct producer support and local markets as shared provincial priorities
<https://www.kpu.ca/science/isfs/local-food-futures-bc-findings-regional-dialogues>

Implications for Local Governments

From a local government perspective, a provincially administered CSA Incentive Program would:

- Strengthen community resilience and emergency preparedness by diversifying food supply networks.
- Support rural and coastal economic development and small farm businesses.
- Align with climate adaptation and sustainability goals in local and regional plans.
- Avoid downloading costs or administrative responsibilities to local governments.

Conclusion

Experience from Nova Scotia, supported by a growing body of research and BC-specific evidence, demonstrates that a CSA Incentive Program can strengthen farm viability, improve food system resilience, and support local economies.

A CSA-focused approach provides a clear, targeted policy tool for British Columbia that complements existing initiatives, while delivering tangible benefits to island and coastal communities.

TOPIC:

Prince Rupert-Alaska Ferry Terminal Reinstatement

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the closure of the Prince Rupert-Alaska Ferry Terminal in 2019 significantly reduced economic activity and cross-border connectivity for the community and region;

AND WHEREAS reinstatement of the Prince Rupert-Alaska Ferry Terminal has been delayed due to unresolved intergovernmental and administrative processes between Canada and the United States, contributing to the ongoing deterioration of the facility;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities and the Union of B.C. Municipalities advocate to the Province of B.C. to collaborate with the Government of Canada to support the reinstatement of the Prince Rupert-Alaska Ferry Terminal.

BACKGROUND:

The Prince Rupert-Alaska Ferry Terminal has been closed since 2019 due to aging infrastructure of the terminal and service vessels coupled with protectionist policy disputes regarding the procurement of materials and labour between Canada and America.

In 2013, Alaska signed a 50-year nonexclusive prepaid lease on the use of the Prince Rupert ramp, dock, terminal, and staging area in 2013, at a cost of \$3.3 million plus ongoing costs for electricity, taxes, and maintenance.

In 2014, the Alaska Department of Transportation prepared a Prince Rupert Terminal project that primarily used U.S. federal funding to rebuild the dock. The project was estimated at between \$10 million and \$20 million, and U.S. and Canadian companies could have bid on the job. However, the Buy American Act of 1993 requires projects funded by the Federal Highway Administration to use only U.S.-produced steel, iron and manufactured products. Those provisions at the time were deemed by Canada as not suitable, and that no Buy American restrictions should be placed upon a project on Canadian soil.

To date, reinstating the terminal for the Alaska state ferry service to Prince Rupert is dependent on the state receiving a long-sought federal waiver for renovations to the leased terminal at Prince Rupert unless another agreement with Canada can be made.



Title: Updates to the BC Motor Vehicle Act

Sponsor: City of Nanaimo

WHEREAS communities across the Province are tasked with designing and implementing transportation options which support more affordable, accessible and sustainable forms of transportation;

AND WHEREAS the BC Active Transportation Design Guidelines issued by the Province, as well as other emerging industry best practices, establish new expectations and recommendations, some of which are not supported by the BC Motor Vehicle Act:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM advocate for the provincial government to update the BC Motor Vehicle Act and associated regulations and design guidelines to include design standards and regulation which align with the BC Active Transportation Design Guide and best practices;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government consult with municipalities as part of the update process, providing the opportunity to bring forward suggestions for additional improvements based on current challenges, community needs and public input.

Background Information

Communities across the Province invest significantly in road safety and active transportation to ensure that transportation options which are affordable, safe, accessible and sustainable are available to meet their needs. Updates to the BC Motor Vehicle Act (BC MVA) would assist in addressing some of the challenges municipalities face in realizing these goals.

Municipalities and industry are working to establish design guidelines and best practices to support the prioritization of active transportation and transit use; however, the development of these practices at a municipal level has resulted in inconsistencies which can cause confusion among road users. Additionally, increased risk of municipal liability may dissuade the implementation of active transportation infrastructure in small to medium-sized municipalities.

The BC Active Transportation Design Guide (BC ATDG) provides guidance and recommendations on the use of many new and emerging design practices; however, the BC ATDG identifies that some of these recommendations are not consistent with the BC MVA. Section A.1 of the BC ATDG discusses that these discrepancies can be resolved through the use of local bylaws; however, the challenge with this approach is that it:

- a) downloads additional responsibility onto municipalities to draft and enforce the new practices,
- b) downloads additional liability onto municipalities if an incident occurs related to a non-BC MVA design,
- c) creates potential discrepancy and unenforceability if a local bylaw is in conflict with the BC MVA,

- d) does not resolve the issue of inter-jurisdictional inconsistency if local municipalities develop their bylaws differently from one another, and,
- e) actively creates inconsistencies between municipal roads and MoTT roads which is particularly a problem for municipalities with multiple MoTT roads running through their municipal boundaries.

The resolution being brought forward advocates for guidance and recommendations in the BC ATDG, and other industry best practices, to be reflected in an updated BC MVA. Updating the BC MVA would provide consistency between jurisdictions, clarity for road users and serve to reduce the risk of liability for municipalities.

Examples of specific discrepancies and challenges to be addressed in the BC MVA include:

- School zones: Section 147 of the BC MVA specifies the contexts in which school zone signage can be applied by municipalities. The language limits where school zone signage is applicable, which can create challenging situations, such as where a frequently used route to a school does not pass directly along the school's frontage. Having the ability to respond to community needs and implement school zones in a broader range of contexts other than "while approaching or passing the school building and school grounds" will allow municipalities to increase safety along school routes without unduly impacting drivers outside of school hours.
- Bicycle signal heads: Section G.2 of the BC ATDG provides guidance on the design and implementation of bicycle signal heads at signalized intersections; however, the BC ATDG acknowledges that these devices are not in the BC MVA and are therefore not legally enforceable. Where bicycle signal heads have been implemented at intersections to improve cyclist safety and priority, it is not clear what the liability implications are if an incident occurs.
- Cross-rides and combined crossings: The BC ATDG provides guidance on the design and implementation of combined pedestrian and cyclist crossings at roadways with either zebra stripes or parallel lines flanked by "elephant's feet" markings to indicate that cyclists can ride their bike through the same crossing as pedestrians. Section G.5 of the BC ATDG is focused on Off-Road Pathway Crossings. However, the use of combined crossings at intersections is increasingly common, particularly where space is limited due to existing property lines or where municipalities are looking to implement a lower cost solution than a full intersection rebuild. Because these features are not defined in the MVA, road authorities must either adopt a bylaw defining them or install signage at each location to tell users how they are to navigate the situation.

These are just a few examples illustrating the need for an update to the BC Motor Vehicle Act. Ensuring that municipalities are consulted as part of the update process would provide the opportunity for a more fulsome review and an opportunity to address other areas of concern that may arise based on feedback received.

BACKGROUND: Wheelchairs and Mobility Scooters in Bike-and-Roll Mobility Lanes and Routes

Some seniors and people with disabilities find it safer to use their wheelchairs and mobility scooters in bike-and-roll mobility lanes and routes. However, BC's Motor Vehicle Act and associated regulations currently prohibit this, A BC Government webpage states that "you can use your electric wheelchair or mobility scooter on the sidewalk or in a crosswalk, but not in places where pedestrians are not allowed, such as bike lanes."¹

Removing this prohibition would enhance the ability of some seniors and people with disabilities to be active, independent, and engaged. Travel training programs for seniors and people with disabilities would benefit, in teaching how to safely use this affordable, convenient, and sustainable form of transportation.

Wheelchairs and 3 & 4 wheel mobility scooters have been used on bike and roll routes legally and safely for decades in other jurisdictions.² Quebec's regulations allowing wheelchairs and mobility scooters on bike and roll routes and low-speed streets are already in place and can provide a potential model for BC to follow.³

The Council of Senior Citizens Organisations of BC, the BC Cycling Coalition, Capital Bike, and many other organizations support this change to allow more people to safely use the active transportation infrastructure that municipalities have invested in.⁴

In 2024 Victoria City Council voted to send an advocacy letter requesting that the Province permit the use of electric wheelchairs and mobility devices on local streets and in the bike and roll lane network via the Motor Vehicle Act and associated regulations and the Capital Regional District sent a similar letter.⁵ The response from Minister Fleming was supportive but noncommittal.

¹ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/driving-and-cycling/cycling/electric-mobility> ICBC's website uses similar language: <https://www.icbc.com/vehicle-registration/specialty-vehicles/Low-powered-vehicles/Motorized-wheelchairs>

² <https://ecoplanning.ca/want-better-bike-lanes/>

³ https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/transports/transports/circulation_securite_routiere/Regles_et_conseils_par_mode_de_transports/fauteuils-electriques-quadriporteurs-triporteurs/guide-amm-en.pdf

⁴ <https://coscobic.org/letter-to-minister-mike-farnworth-re-bike-lanes-for-electric-wheelchairs-and-34-wheel-mobility-scooters/> ; https://wiki.bikehub.ca/images/8/8f/25_Action_MVA_-_Recommendations%2C_Round_2.pdf ; <https://ecoplanning.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BC-CEC-Open-Ltr-re-Clean-BC-Review-Transportation-2025-07-15-final.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.gvat.ca/blog/win-victoria-votes-wheelchairs>



Backgrounder for 2026 AVICC Resolution: Split Tax Classification for Short-Term Rentals Based on Floor Area

Housing Affordability and Availability Challenges

British Columbians face a severe and challenging housing environment, marked by affordability pressures, supply shortages, limited rental availability, rising homelessness, and regional disparities. Many communities are experiencing housing shortages, a problem that is no longer limited to tourism-dependent areas. To address these challenges, introducing a financial lever that taxes short-term rental properties based on their actual use would provide a targeted solution – creating dedicated revenue streams that can be reinvested into attainable housing initiatives and community development, thereby supporting the province’s housing priorities.

The proposed resolution calls on the Province of British Columbia to amend legislation to allow municipalities to apply split tax classification for short-term rental spaces based on actual floor area.

Tofino’s Short-Term Rental Situation

Tofino has a long history of regulating short-term rentals due to its small size, geographical constraints, seasonal tourism pressures, and longstanding housing shortages. Short-term rentals were first formally governed through Zoning Bylaw No. 770 (1996), which established zones where temporary accommodation units were permitted and set conditions for operations such as bed and breakfasts, guests houses, and early forms of short-term rentals.

Between 2016-2018, the District of Tofino initiated a major regulatory shift and moved from largely complaint-based short-term rental enforcement to a proactive, regulatory approach. A key component of that change was through amendments to the Business Licence Regulation Bylaw that required any legally operating short-term rental must have a long-term dwelling on site and a permanent resident living on the property. These regulations created a made-in-Tofino approach to responsible short-term rental management, housing protection, and neighbourhood livability in a period of rising housing pressures due in part to increased tourism and short-term rentals.

In 2022 the District enacted another major business licensing update through adoption of Business License Regulation Bylaw No. 1239 (2022), modernizing the short-term rental licensing regulations by introducing limits on bedrooms and guests, refining the permanent resident requirements, and mandating guest information to strengthen operational standards and support residential neighbourhoods by setting expectations for visitor behaviour.

Even with decades of extensive short-term rental regulations, including zoning limits, licensing rules, caretaker requirements, occupancy limits, and mandatory guest education – the District of Tofino continues to face severe housing shortages, high costs, and regional disparities.

These pressures are widespread – and not limited to resort municipalities like Tofino. Local governments within AVICC and across the province are grappling with similar challenges and ensuring that housing remains available and attainable for residents is critical for meeting the province’s housing priorities.

Current BC Assessment Classification



Even with the introduction of the *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act*, which received Royal Assent on October 26, 2023, a significant structural gap remains in how British Columbia taxes short-term rentals. This gap exists because the provincial regulatory short-term rental framework and the provincial property tax classification system operate independently, and BC Assessment's current approach doesn't capture the commercial activity or scale of short-term rental operations in residential properties. There are three key issues that create this gap:

1. BC Assessment's current split-tax classification regulations apply only to large strata properties with twenty or more units, excluding most short-term rental properties.

Most short-term rentals in small communities, like Tofino, are not eligible to be taxed based on actual commercial use. Strata plans with fewer than twenty units do not qualify for split-tax classification and remain entirely Class 1 (Residential), even if they operate as a full-scale commercial short-term rental business.

2. The *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act* (STRAA) regulates use, not taxation, and does not account for the commercial use of residential housing.

The STRAA does not address the commercial value generated from residential housing and does not alter how short-term rental properties are valued or classified for property-tax purposes.

3. BC Assessment's current system allocates commercial value based on days of rental use, not unit size, creating an inequity between small homes and high-capacity tourist accommodation.

Municipalities already use floor area as a basis for determining density, utility consumption, and building impacts. Extending this to short-term rental taxation would align tax burden with the actual scale of short-term rental operations and ensure revenue from commercial short-term rental activity is proportionate to its impact on local housing and infrastructure.

Financial Considerations

Some of the financial impacts resulting from introducing such a change would be:

Municipal Revenue Implications

Introducing a short-term rental property taxation model based on floor area would result in an accurate reflection of the assessment values and can have the ability to increase tax revenue for the municipality. Council may choose to more fairly apportion taxes between the Residential and Business Classes instead of increasing revenues.

Administrative Costs

Implementing a floor-area-based short-term rental tax might require additional administrative capacity, coming from possible further reporting requirements and staff resources required to monitor the implementation, as well as the enforcement of such changes.

Impact on Short-Term Rental Operators

A change in split tax classification based on actual floor area would likely result in higher assessment values and a higher property tax bill for short-term rental operators

The Need for Provincial Support

In recent years, the province has enacted legislative and regulatory changes that require short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb to collect and remit provincial sales taxes, with revenues supporting provincial housing initiatives. The *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act* strengthened provincial legislation, but it did not modernize the property-tax framework. By building on these measures, a municipal tool that taxes short-term rentals based on their floor area would help ensure that homes being used as commercial accommodation contribute fairly to housing affordability efforts.

Conclusion

Taxing short-term rental properties based on floor area would create a more proportional and transparent approach to valuing commercial visitor accommodation activity within residential buildings. This framework recognizes that the commercial use of a dwelling unit places demands on municipal services and contributes to market conditions that influence housing availability and affordability. A floor-area-based approach ensures that owners operating larger or more intensive short-term rental spaces contribute more appropriately to the municipal tax base, while also helping to reduce incentives for the conversion of housing into short-term accommodations, thereby supporting broader housing stability goals across the Province of British Columbia.

References:

1. District of Tofino Business Licence Regulation Bylaw No. 1239, 2022:
<https://tofino.civicweb.net/document/163656/>
2. UBCM Split Classification for Short Term Commercial Accommodation, 2017:
<https://www.ubcm.ca/convention-resolutions/resolutions/resolutions-database/split-classification-short-term-commercial>

Backgrounder for Proposed AVICC Resolution: Fair Property Taxation through Accurate BC Assessment Classifications

Purpose of the Backgrounder

This backgrounder provides context for the proposed AVICC resolution requesting that the Province of British Columbia give municipalities stronger authority and practical tools to ensure property assessments reflect actual use. Accurate classifications promote fair taxation, equitable distribution of municipal tax burdens, and predictable municipal revenue.

Current Context

BC Assessment assigns property classifications (residential, commercial, business, etc.) that determine tax rates for municipal purposes. Accurate classification is critical to ensure all property owners pay their fair share of municipal taxes.

In Ucluelet, some properties appear to operate in ways that differ from their assessment classification. Examples include:

- Residentially assessed properties functioning as nightly rental units.
- Properties used for commercial purposes but taxed as residential.

Such discrepancies shift municipal tax burdens onto compliant property owners, creating inequities in funding for local services such as roads, emergency services, parks, and utilities.

Municipal Tools and Limitations

Currently, municipalities can:

- Flag discrepancies to BC Assessment.
- Request reviews or audits of individual properties.
- Provide evidence supporting reclassification.

Limitations include:

- Delays in BC Assessment responses, sometimes exceeding a full assessment year.
- Limited municipal authority to enforce reclassification independently.
- Reactive rather than proactive ability to correct inequities.

These limitations reduce the ability of municipalities to ensure fair taxation for all property owners.

Rationale for Modernization

Providing municipalities with stronger authority would:

1. Ensure property taxation reflects actual property use.
2. Promote equitable distribution of the tax burden.
3. Improve predictability and fairness of municipal revenue.
4. Support municipalities in budgeting and funding essential local services sustainably.
5. Reduce administrative delays and increase transparency for taxpayers.

Stronger tools could include:

- Authority to request accelerated reviews of potentially misclassified properties.
- Ability to challenge classifications with municipal-submitted evidence.
- Greater municipal input into BC Assessment appeals processes.

Conclusion

Modernizing municipal authority over property classification ensures that taxation is fair, predictable, and reflective of actual property use. Endorsing this resolution at AVICC provides the Province with a clear signal from local governments that municipalities need practical tools to review, challenge, and correct property classifications, ensuring equitable taxation for all British Columbians.



Backgrounder 1: Immediate Action Required to Prevent Irreversible Economic Harm to Island and Coastal Communities

Purpose

This resolution responds to increasing economic instability across Vancouver Island and coastal communities resulting from prolonged regulatory uncertainty, inconsistent provincial and federal policy direction, and delayed permitting processes affecting foundational resource industries.

Regional Economic Context

Forestry, aquaculture, mining, energy, and related sectors underpin employment, Indigenous economic participation, municipal tax bases, port activity, transportation networks, contractors, and small and medium-sized enterprises throughout Island and coastal communities. In many municipalities, resource activity represents a significant share of industrial assessment and supports essential local services and infrastructure.

Recent mill curtailments and closures, aquaculture licence uncertainty, and delayed project approvals have created cascading economic impacts. Direct job losses are followed by contractor layoffs, reduced marine and transportation activity, lower commercial occupancy, housing instability, and declining municipal revenues. These cumulative effects are placing some communities at or near a point of no return.

Regulatory and Investment Uncertainty

Extended approval timelines, duplication between provincial and federal regulatory requirements, and shifting policy signals have deferred or redirected private capital investment. Communities are experiencing stalled modernization projects and lost economic diversification opportunities, despite strong interest in sustainable resource development and Indigenous-led and Indigenous-owned partnerships.

Without predictable and time-bound regulatory processes, project proponents face challenges in planning capital expenditures, securing financing, and maintaining workforce stability. This uncertainty undermines Indigenous economic participation and weakens regional competitiveness.

Why Immediate Action Is Required

Island and coastal communities require coordinated provincial and federal action to restore certainty and predictability to the regulatory environment affecting resource industries. This includes reducing regulatory duplication, assessing cumulative and downstream economic consequences before decisions are finalized, and formally engaging local governments when policy or regulatory changes may materially affect community stability, infrastructure, or long-term economic sustainability.

Immediate intervention is necessary to prevent further erosion of employment, municipal revenues, and long-term economic resilience in Island and coastal communities.

References

[Council of Forest Industries \(COFI\) – Statements on Mill Closures in British Columbia](#)

[BC Chamber of Commerce – Streamlining Permitting for Large Natural Resource Development Projects](#)

BACKGROUNDER:

At the 2025 UBCM annual convention in Victoria, an extraordinary resolution was proposed and endorsed that included enabling discretionary powers to the UBCM Resolutions Committee to select resolutions to be included for consideration by the membership at the Convention under the following criteria:

- Resolution is existing UBCM policy (as set by the membership endorsing or not endorsing a previous resolution or policy paper);
- Resolution is outside of the scope of BC local governments and member First Nations;
- Resolution is within the scope of BC local governments and member First Nations, but does not meet UBCM criteria for format or clarity; or
- Resolution is regional in focus.

Concerns have arisen regarding the effect of removing proposed resolutions that are already existing UBCM policy due to the diminishing level of advocacy exerted for resolutions submitted in years prior. At this time the Resolutions Committee is proposing that resolutions already endorsed or not endorsed by the membership should be received rather than put forward for further consideration by the membership for a five-year window. Further concerns have been raised regarding the entirety of the extraordinary resolution given the uncertainty of the effect of the resolution on future resolution sessions and the direction of UBCM resolution advocacy moving forward.



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Access to Affordable Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (EpiPens)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- **Public Health Necessity:** Anaphylaxis can occur suddenly and without warning, often due to food allergies, insect stings, or medication reactions. Immediate administration of epinephrine is the only effective treatment to prevent fatal outcomes.
- **Financial Barrier:** The current retail cost of EpiPens (\$100–\$150 per device) is prohibitive for many individuals, especially those who require multiple devices (e.g., for home, school, and work) or lack private insurance coverage.
- **Equity and Accessibility:** Access to life-saving medication should not depend on financial means. Providing EpiPens at low or no cost aligns with provincial health equity goals and ensures all residents can respond to anaphylactic emergencies.
- **Precedent and Best Practice:** Other jurisdictions have implemented programs to subsidize or cover the cost of epinephrine auto-injectors, recognizing their critical role in emergency care. British Columbia can lead by adopting similar measures.
- **Cost-Benefit:** The cost of providing EpiPens is minimal compared to the potential healthcare costs and loss of life associated with untreated anaphylaxis. Early intervention reduces emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

RECOMMENDATION

That AVICC advocate to the Province of British Columbia for a publicly funded program to ensure affordable access to epinephrine auto-injectors for all residents.



City of Powell River

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File No. 0230-20-0001

February 11, 2026

Via email: info@avicc.ca

Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities
525 Government Street
Victoria, BC
V8V 0A8

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

Re: Resolution for 2026 Annual General Meeting and Convention – Public Library Funding

At the February 5, 2026 regular Council meeting, City Council adopted the attached resolution and background information regarding *Public Library Funding* for consideration at the 2026 Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities (AVICC) AGM and Convention.

Please note, an incorrect date was inadvertently inserted into the resolution and not realized until after the Council meeting. Please feel free to correct the date if, and when the resolution is forwarded to the Union of BC Municipalities.

Please let me know if you require anything further.

Yours truly,
CITY OF POWELL RIVER

Peter DeJong
Corporate Officer

PD/hk

Encl: Resolution on Public Library Funding
Background Information re Resolution on Public Library Funding

Title: Public Library Funding

Sponsor: City of Powell River

WHEREAS Public Libraries in British Columbia are primarily funded by local governments, the Provincial Government's financial contribution is also critical to ongoing library operations and the Province's \$14 Million in core funding for BC's 71 library systems has not increased since 2021 [sic 2010], even as the population has grown by nearly 30 percent and inflation by more than 35 percent and libraries continue to shoulder growing expectations without the necessary provincial support;

AND WHEREAS libraries have taken on an ever-expanding role in advancing provincial objectives for community well-being: helping job seekers and small businesses, providing safe spaces during emergencies and extreme weather, supporting residents facing mental health, substance use, and housing challenges, and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples;

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to:

- a. immediately increase the annual core funding for public libraries to \$30 million, and
- b. index that amount to cost-of-living and inflationary pressures in future years, both recommended by the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and repeatedly requested by the BC Public Library Partners, and
- c. establish both:
 - i. a dedicated capital funding program to assist local governments in upgrading expanding, and constructing library facilities, and
 - ii. an advisory body under Section 52(1) of the *Library Act* to review the provincial library funding model in consultation with local governments and First Nations.

Background Information: Resolution on Public Library Funding

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

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

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

Broader recognition of the issue has been seen in both previous UBCM resolutions and Provincial Responses:

- In 2025 the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services recommended that the Province “Provide increased stable annual funding for libraries to address capital and operational issues, including infrastructure, technology, and staffing.”
- In 2022 the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services ... “libraries must be supported with adequate funding as they serve as equalizers — providing services, resources, connectivity, and entertainment to those who may not have access otherwise, especially in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.”
- In 2020 the provincial government, in response to the UBCM Resolution EB41, acknowledged that libraries have played an important role in helping families and people stay connected, informed and entertained during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was one-time funding allocated to libraries to support digital initiatives.

Across the 247 public library service points serving BC, library staff and Boards are making a difference to community social and economic development and individual well-being. It is heartening to see the understanding of the need for adequate and reliable provincial funding for public libraries.



Exemptions, Income Thresholds & Compliance Support | ALR

Sponsor: Town of Qualicum Beach

WHEREAS only 5% (approximately 4.6 million hectares) of the Province's land base is dedicated to agriculture through the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), and the Farming Income Thresholds (the minimum gross income a farm must generate from qualifying agricultural products to be eligible for Farm Class status) are low and outdated, and further, property within the ALR is partially exempt from school tax, hospital, regional district, Transit Authority, BC Assessment and municipal financial authority fees, regardless of Farm Class status; AND WHEREAS the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) employs only six Compliance and Enforcement Officers for the entire province for the purpose of investigating complaints and enforcing land use regulations to protect agricultural land;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT properties within the ALR that are not actively farmed should not benefit from exemptions from taxes and fees such as school tax, hospital, regional district, Transit Authority, BC Assessment and municipal financial authority fees;

AND FURTHER THAT the Farming Income Thresholds be reviewed and revised to require higher levels of productive farming to achieve Farm Class status;

AND FURTHER THAT the ALC receive adequate funding from the provincial government to support the resources required to support hiring of additional Compliance and Enforcement Officers to protect agricultural land.

Brief Overview of the Legislation

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* establishes the Agricultural Land Commission, the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the provincial mandate to preserve agricultural land.¹ In addition, supporting regulations and policies include ALR General Regulation, ALR Use Regulation as well as ALC Policies and Bulletins. The *Assessment Act*² (section 23) and Classification of Land as a Farm Regulation addresses Farm Classification, Farm Class status and sets the farming income thresholds.

Premier's Task Force

The Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy, was formed in 2025. The Task Force focuses on providing external policy advice to government in five key areas: water, competitiveness, labour, land and investment.³ The 16 member Task Force has since identified 32 recommendations aimed to help strengthen B.C.'s agriculture and food economy.

The Town of Qualicum Beach is aware that past resolutions address portions of this request. However, those resolutions have not resulted in any relevant change, nor do they address the request in full, as outlined in this resolution.

The Issues

1. Preferential tax treatment and reduced fees for ALR land that is not actively farmed
2. Low and outdated Farming Income Thresholds
3. Insufficient enforcement capacity

The current tax framework allows for tax exemptions and reduction of fees regardless of whether or not properties in the ALR are actively farmed. Removing exemptions for those properties that are not actively farmed would better align the benefit of tax exemptions for those owners/operators who do use their land for agricultural purposes and encourage farming overall.

The Farming Income Thresholds have not been increased for decades. Although the Province reviewed Income Thresholds in 2009, this review resulted in changes to split classifying properties and expanding the list of qualifying uses only. The income thresholds were unchanged. With the establishment of the Premier's Task Force in 2025, one of its 32 recommendations support the review and updating of the Farming Income Thresholds [see excerpt below]

- *Review and update the Farm Classification Regulation to realign it with the goal of preserving and increasing food production with focus on strengthening the application process (e.g., require CRA reporting), increasing the income threshold and reviewing the qualifying agricultural uses (QAUs).*

The ALC is responsible for monitoring ALR land use, investigating complaints and enforcing compliance. The ALC currently employs only six Compliance and Enforcement Officers, with limited authority, province-wide, emphasizing a gap between statutory responsibilities and available resources.



Summary

ALR lands within B.C. that are not actively farmed continue to benefit from tax exemptions and fee reductions, minimum income thresholds to obtain Farm Class status have not been updated in years and based on the number of compliance officers, the ALC lacks the resources to allow for the effective protection of agricultural lands within B.C. A focus on amending applicable legislation and its related regulations and policies is imperative to ensure our province's food sources and the agricultural sector is used as intended, productive and secure.

The Town of Qualicum Beach is requesting that the province amend legislation and regulations with the removal of tax exemptions for non-farmed ALR land; modernize Farming Income Thresholds to better reflect today's economic realities, inflation and agricultural costs; and increase funding to retain additional compliance officers to ensure agricultural land protection and overall food security.

1 [Agricultural Land Commission Act](#)

2 [Assessment Act \(Section 23\)](#)

3 [Premier's Task Force | Agriculture & Food Economy](#)

Backgrounder for Proposed AVICC Resolution: Modernizing Section 644 of the Local Government Act

Purpose of the Backgrounder

This backgrounder provides context for the proposed AVICC resolution requesting modernization of Section 644 of the Local Government Act. It explains the historical and current revenue situation, the rationale for including modern communications services, and potential revenue impacts for municipalities.

Overview of Section 644

Section 644 of the Local Government Act allows municipalities to collect up to 1% of gross revenues from certain utility services. When drafted, this primarily included land-line telephone and cable television. Municipalities use these revenues to support infrastructure, including roads, poles, conduits, and rights-of-way that utility services rely upon.

Since its enactment, the types of services that rely on municipal infrastructure have evolved dramatically, with cellular, broadband internet, fiber-optic, satellite, and other data-based services now predominating. Despite this evolution, Section 644 has not been updated to reflect these new services or account for inflation and rising infrastructure costs.

Historical Revenue Context – District of Ucluelet

The 1% revenue received from land-line telephone and cable television has decreased by 39.05% since 2010 and is declining rapidly. The decreases in 2024 and 2025 alone were 10.34% and 12.12% respectively, if these substantial decreases continue it will not be long before this revenue source ceases to exist.

In a time where expenses are drastically increasing, it is becoming increasingly important to have all parties contribute equitably to funding Municipal services. Every dollar that is lost from the 1% utility revenue is an additional burden that Ucluelet residents must incur.

Rationale for Modernization

1. **Outdated Legislation:** Section 644 was designed for a pre-digital era and excludes the majority of current communications services.
2. **Municipal Costs:** Municipalities are bearing increasing costs for infrastructure, rights-of-way, poles, conduits, roadwork, and climate-resilient assets that support modern utility networks.
3. **Revenue Erosion:** Inflation and the decline of legacy utilities have reduced the real value of Section 644 revenue.
4. **Fair Compensation:** Updating Section 644 ensures municipalities are fairly compensated for the use of their infrastructure by modern communication providers.
5. **Predictable and Sustainable Funding:** Modernized Section 644 would provide municipalities with a stable and predictable revenue stream to plan and maintain essential infrastructure.

District of Ucluelet . *Life on the Edge*®

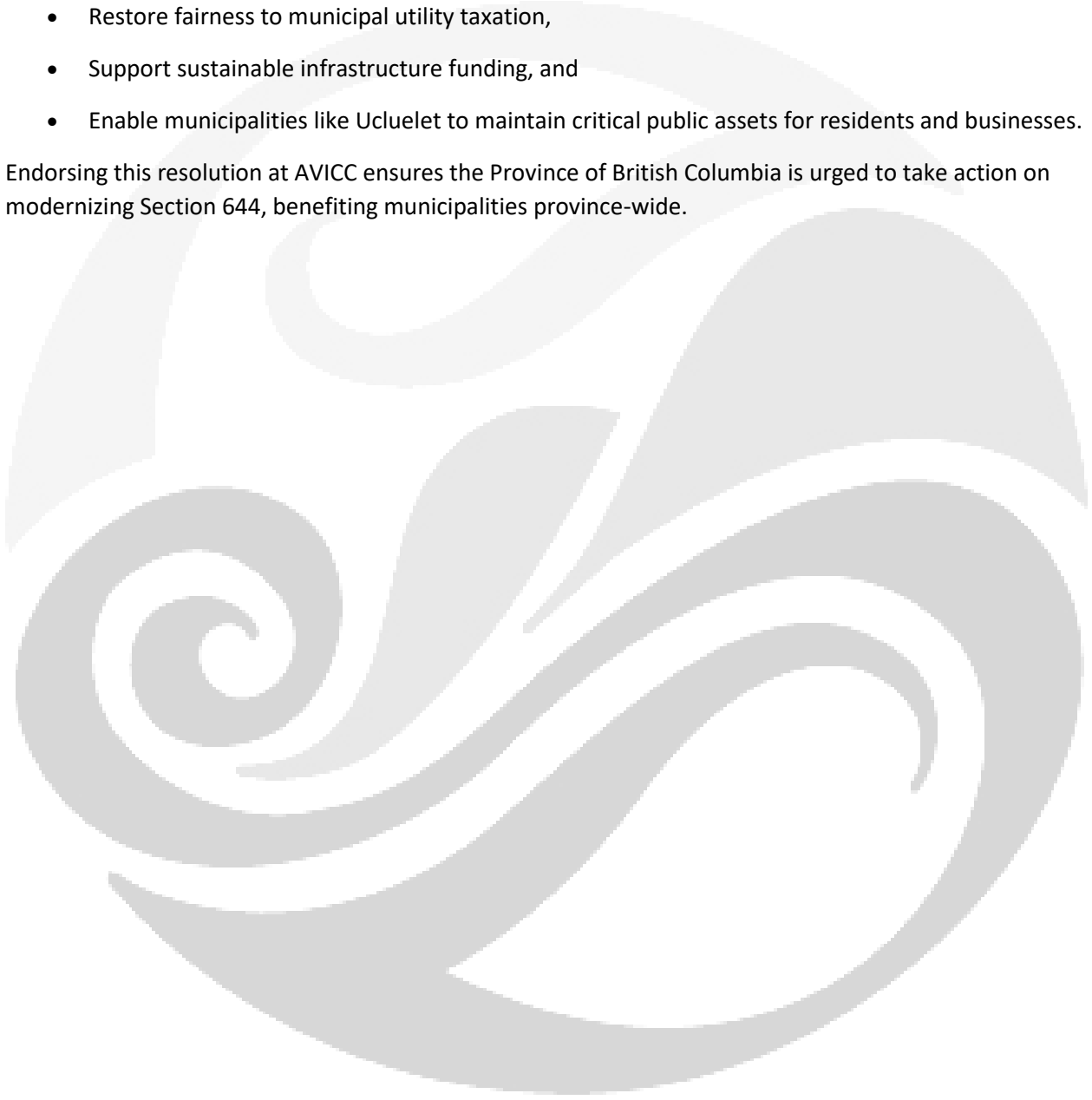
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Conclusion

Modernizing Section 644 of the Local Government Act is a practical step to align municipal revenue tools with 21st-century utility networks. Including cellular, broadband, fiber-optic, satellite, and other data-based services, and adjusting the revenue cap to reflect true infrastructure costs, will:

- Restore fairness to municipal utility taxation,
- Support sustainable infrastructure funding, and
- Enable municipalities like Ucluelet to maintain critical public assets for residents and businesses.

Endorsing this resolution at AVICC ensures the Province of British Columbia is urged to take action on modernizing Section 644, benefiting municipalities province-wide.



Resolution

WHEREAS Active Transportation has not been included as a priority in the most recent Mandate Letter for the Minister of Transportation and Transit;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry is falling behind BC municipalities in creating safe pedestrian and cycling supportive policies and amenities on Ministry-owned roads in electoral areas across BC, often leaving critical gaps and connections to and between nearby municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AVICC and/or UBCM advocate to the Premier and Minister of Transportation and Transit to:

- Explicitly include Active Transportation as a core Ministry priority in the Ministry of Transportation and Transit mandate letter, with direction that this priority applies to rural and semi-rural contexts outside of and between municipalities as well as urban areas;
- Review and amend provincial Active Transportation policies, guidelines, and standards to explicitly address rural and semi-rural road conditions outside of municipalities, including constrained rights-of-way and safety considerations, and to amend the BC Supplement to Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Geometric Design Guide where it does not adequately support active transportation infrastructure in rural and semi-rural areas outside of municipalities, in order to address the current disconnect between road operations and active transportation objectives;
- Develop and implement a formalized, cross-departmental/organizational framework for collaboration between the Ministry of Transportation and Transit and Regional Districts to align Ministry capital projects with Regional District active transportation priorities, leverage funding and delivery opportunities, and ensure accountability and consistency in advancing shared rural active transportation, safety, and community connectivity objectives.

Backgrounder

The Province of British Columbia has established strong policy commitments related to active transportation, climate action, road safety, and community well-being. Programs such as the Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program (formerly BikeBC) and

The Comox Valley Regional District respectfully acknowledges the land on which it operates is on the unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

CleanBC initiatives signal provincial recognition of the importance of non-motorized travel.

However, within rural and semi-rural communities, roads fall under provincial jurisdiction and are planned, designed, and maintained by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MoTT). These roadways often function as both regional connectors and local community streets, serving residents who walk, cycle, roll, and access transit in addition to vehicular traffic.

Current provincial standards, including the BC Supplement to the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads, are largely oriented toward vehicle mobility and highway operations. While they allow for active transportation facilities, they do not consistently provide clear or flexible direction for retrofitting rural and semi-rural corridors with constrained rights-of-way, steep ditches, narrow bridges, or high-speed design profiles.

As a result:

- Active transportation infrastructure is frequently deferred or excluded from capital upgrades due to geometric or right-of-way constraints;
- Safety improvements are considered secondary to vehicle level-of-service objectives;
- Opportunities to incorporate walking and cycling facilities during road rehabilitation projects are missed; and
- Regional District and municipal active transportation plans may not be systematically integrated into provincial capital planning processes.

Active Transportation needs to be made a Ministry priority with policies, guidelines, and standards to support its implementation across the province. By doing so, we can collectively and consistently improve safety for vulnerable road users, enhance connectivity, support the achievement of provincial climate and emissions reduction targets, increase return on investment by integrating active transportation infrastructure into planned capital works and provide greater consistency across jurisdictional boundaries.

Resolution

WHEREAS BC Transit operates regional bus services in partnership with municipal and Regional Districts across BC;

AND WHEREAS affordable private interregional bus services have been greatly reduced since the withdrawal of Greyhound and similar private bus lines;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT BC Transit and the Ministry of Transportation and Transit prioritize their efforts to bring forward actionable policies and programs, based on the commitment by the Provincial Government to support interregional transit, and that includes equitable funding provisions for interregional connections that provide reasonable, affordable travel for the general public in both municipal and electoral areas of the province.

Backgrounder

Public transit in British Columbia operates under a shared governance model involving local governments, BC Transit, TransLink (in Metro Vancouver), and the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Transportation and Transit.

BC Transit provides transit services to more than 130 communities outside of Metro Vancouver. However, service delivery is typically structured around individual local transit systems, with funding, planning, and cost-sharing primarily focused on services within municipal or regional district boundaries.

Although some interregional routes exist, they are often:

- Limited in frequency or operating hours;
- Not aligned with work, medical, or educational schedules;
- Challenged with serving low-density corridors; and
- Dependent on local cost-sharing models that can be prohibitive for smaller communities.

Private carriers have historically filled some interregional transportation gaps. However, service reductions and market withdrawals, particularly in rural areas, have left many

The Comox Valley Regional District respectfully acknowledges the land on which it operates is on the unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

communities with limited or no transportation alternatives. This absence of reliable interregional transit has had significant economic and social consequences.

The Province has made investments in public transit expansion, climate action, and accessibility improvements. Expanding and stabilizing interregional transit aligns with provincial priorities related to greenhouse gas reduction, equitable access to services, reconciliation, and rural economic development. For these reasons, the Ministry of Transportation and Transit is being requested to prioritize their efforts to bring forward actionable policies and programs to support interregional transit, including equitable funding provisions for interregional connections that provide reasonable, affordable travel for the general public in both municipal and electoral areas.

TOPIC:

Small Craft Harbour Management and Divesture

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is mandated to divest non-core small craft harbours to local governments or other interested parties, or alternatively to decommission them;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Fisheries and Oceans retains responsibility for ensuring public safety at all federal harbours, including non-core small craft harbours;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities and the Union of B.C. Municipalities urge the Province of B.C. to oppose the divesture of non-core small craft harbours without adequate funding and to call upon the Government of Canada to commit sufficient, long-term funding for the maintenance and public safety of non-core small craft harbours.

BACKGROUNDER:

In July of 2025, the North Coast Regional District (NCRD) was approached by the Small Craft Harbours (SCH) Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to gauge the interest of pursuing divestiture of the Hunts Inlet Harbour from DFO to the NCRD due to a lack of funding for non-core small craft harbours.

Small Craft Harbours are owned by DFO with core fishing harbours managed by Harbour Authorities that oversee the property, set fee structures, and determine the level of service and maintenance provided by the Harbour Authority based upon size, economic potential and level of staffing in collaboration with DFO. Less trafficked SCH's may not have Harbour Authorities and are designated as non-core fishing, and recreational harbours.

Given budgetary constraints and the DFO's SCH mandate to effectively manage it's inventory by divesting and transferring or removing non-core harbours with primarily recreational activity to local governments or interested parties to reduce operational and maintenance costs of SCH management, 50 non-core SCH in British Columbia are intended to be divested onto local governments or interested parties without funding to accompany the downloading of responsibility.



2026 RESOLUTION SUBMISSION TO AVICC/UBCM

CEASE DIVESTMENT EFFORTS OF REMOTE PORT FACILITIES

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS “remote port facilities” are essential services, defined by Transport Canada as serving isolated communities where marine transportation is the primary mode of transportation;

AND WHEREAS Transport Canada has ongoing efforts to divest remote port facilities despite the remaining remote port facilities in BC not being conducive to transfer according to Transport Canada’s 2020 evaluation of its Port Asset Transfer Program:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM request Transport Canada and the Federal Government to cease further efforts to divest remote port facilities, to continue the National Marine Strategy commitment to ongoing maintenance of remote port facilities, and to provide transition funding for divested facilities that provide critical access to remote communities without the capacity to maintain the infrastructure.

Backgrounder:

Transport Canada owns and manages a number of wharf and port facilities across Canada, and defines some as “*remote port facilities*” if they provide the primary access point to communities (including ferry-dependent communities). Seven such facilities in Coastal BC are included in Transport Canada’s list of remote port facilities, including one in the qathet Regional District/Islands Trust Area (False Bay Wharf on Lasqueti Island).

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/ports-harbours-anchorage/list-ports-owned-transport-canada>

Transport Canada has made ongoing efforts to divest many federal wharves, and in some cases to close or demolish facilities. The Port Divestiture Program (PDP) transferred or removed 499 out of the inventory of 549 at the start of the program (over 90%). The Port Asset Transfer Program (PATP) started in 2015 as a successor to the PDP, and included more incentives to divest the remaining 50 ports “*that were inherently more challenging to transfer*”. By 2020, the PATP transferred or sold 12 ports, and demolished 3 ports (leaving 35 in the inventory).

According to a 2020 Evaluation of the PATP by Transport Canada:

- “*Given these ports’ attributes made it challenging to attract interested stakeholders*”;
- “*Many of the ports that the PATP inherited faced decades-old issues that were not conducive to transfer.*”; and
- “*Given the challenges associated with the remaining ports, there is also recognition that a number of them will continue to remain in TC’s inventory for the foreseeable future.*”

However, the 2020 PATP Evaluation also states:

- *“Under the PATP, there is no explicit differentiation between remote ports and regional/local ports; the program allows for closures and demolitions of any remaining facility where there was no acquisition interest and there was no strategic value to ongoing port operations.”*

Further, the divestment efforts of Transport Canada continue despite the Port Asset Transfer Program apparently being renewed until 2022 with a focus on three ports only.

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/corporate-services/transparency/corporate-management-reporting/evaluation-ports-asset-transfer-program>

The 1996 National Marine Policy included an objective to *“Continue the Government of Canada's commitment to safe transportation, a clean environment, service to designated remote communities...”* and *“Remote ports were to remain under Transport Canada unless local groups expressed an interest in acquiring them.”*

<https://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/T22-120-2003E.pdf>

Although Transport Canada has indicated a commitment to maintain remote port facilities, continued efforts to divest remote port facilities causes uncertainty in remote communities.

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/programs/funding-programs/ports-asset-transfer-program/list-ports-under-patp>

The ongoing efforts by Transport Canada to divest remote port facilities causes unnecessary uncertainty on affected communities. The lack of divestment of the remaining remote ports indicates a low likelihood of a viable transfer for the reasons articulated in the 2020 PATP Evaluation by Transport Canada. Given the high cost of such facilities (which should be considered as part of the public highway system), transfers to parties that do not have taxation authority may lead those parties to seek divestment after only a few years. This may lead to regional districts becoming the *“owner of last resort”*, effectively downloading costs onto small communities that cannot afford it.

Divestment of remote ports has resulted in negative impacts for some affected communities. For example, the New Brighton Dock on Gambier Island was divested in 2013. After the 5-year federal contract ended, the current owner expressed interest in divesting. The current owner does not have the ability to requisition property taxes from the community served by the port, posing challenges to sufficiently fund ongoing maintenance, and to date, no level of government has agreed to assume responsibility. Since many residents depend on this port as their only all-season access for groceries, school and emergency response via BC Ferries Route 13 water taxi service, the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) recently completed a feasibility study to explore solutions. Without significant funds from provincial or federal sources, there isn't a clear path forward.

Transport Canada should consider its efforts to divest remote ports a success, and end any further efforts (except in cases where a remote port facility no longer meets the definition).

Backgrounder

Resolution: **Expansion of Fare Free Youth Transit**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia's Get on Board! program provides fare-free transit for children aged 12 and under, and youth older than 12 face cost barriers that limit access to education, employment, and community services and to establish lifelong, sustainable travel habits;

AND WHEREAS the immediate expansion of fare-free transit to all youth aged 13 to 18 may present fiscal challenges for the Province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the Province of British Columbia implement a phased expansion of the fare-free youth transit program by increasing eligibility by one year at a time until fare-free transit is available to youth aged 13 through 18.

Capital Regional District | February 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this backgrounder is to request that the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) request that the Province of British Columbia implement a phased expansion of the fare-free youth transit program by increasing eligibility by one year at a time until fare-free transit is available to youth aged 13 through 18.

Issue

The Province of British Columbia currently funds the Get on Board! program which allows children aged 12 and under to ride BC Transit and TransLink services free of charge. While this program has reduced transportation costs for families and improved access to transit for younger children, fare-free eligibility ends at age 12. This creates a cost barrier for teenagers who increasingly rely on transit to access school, employment, recreation, and social opportunities.

Youth aged 13 to 18 often have limited independent transportation options and may not have access to a household vehicle. Transit fares can present a financial barrier for families, particularly those with multiple children or lower incomes. As a result, some youth reduce or avoid transit use during their teenage years, despite increasing mobility needs.

The loss of fare-free access at age 13 also interrupts the opportunity to reinforce regular transit use during a formative period when long-term travel behaviours are being established.

Benefits Expanding Fare Free Transit for Youth

Research indicates that fare-free transit for youth significantly improves access to education, employment, extra-curricular activities, health care, and social participation, particularly for

families where costs had previously limited mobility¹. Parents also reported improved access to mental health and community supports, as well as improved confidence and well-being among youth. Encouraging transit use during the teenage years supports the development of lifelong, sustainable travel habits, contributing over time to reduced vehicle dependence, lower congestion and emissions, and greater social inclusion. Local experience in the Capital Region demonstrates that youth respond positively when fare barriers are removed. In the City of Victoria, approximately 75% of eligible youth participated in the ages 13-18 U-PASS program in 2024, averaging 17 transit rides per month. This level of uptake indicates that expanded fare-free access would generate meaningful and sustained ridership benefits.

A Phased Expansion

While evidence demonstrates clear benefits of fare-free transit for youth aged 13–18, an immediate province-wide expansion may present fiscal challenges for the Province, and service capacity challenges to transit providers. A phased approach, adding one additional year of eligibility at a time, would reduce immediate financial impacts, allow for annual monitoring of ridership and cost impacts, and provide predictability for local governments, transit agencies, and families

Rationale

Expanding fare-free transit for youth supports improving transportation affordability and access. It advances equitable mobility and reduces barriers to essential services, education, and employment.

This resolution complements transportation goals which emphasize sustainable, accessible transportation options. It also supports commitments to increase transit ridership and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

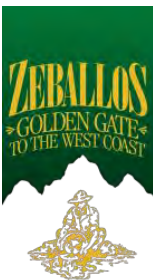
Fare-free access encourages youth to use transit during formative years which fosters long-term sustainable travel habits and a mode shift away from single-occupancy vehicles. This serves to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time.

Greater transit use among youth helps reduce vehicle traffic and associated impacts such as air pollution and road congestion.

Fare-free transit for youth addresses financial barriers that disproportionately affect low-income families and marginalized communities. Expanding eligibility promotes equitable access to education, employment, and social opportunities, ensuring that transportation is not a barrier to participation.

Improved transit access enhances youth independence, social inclusion, and participation in community life. Removing fare barriers strengthens connections to education, recreation, and health services, contributing to overall well-being and reducing isolation among teens.

¹ “Transit for Teens: Parental Perspectives on the Impact of Free Transit for Youth 13–18 in BC” (2023, Single Mothers’ Alliance)



VILLAGE OF ZEBALLOS

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Legislative Changes Consultation Process

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia implements changes to legislation in anticipation of providing benefit to *all* British Columbians;

AND WHEREAS not all rural, remote communities are provided with capacity to fulfil new legislative requirements;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC & UBCM request that the Province provide a more fulsome consultation process with municipalities of all sizes prior to making sweeping legislative changes.

Zeballos Council Resolution: **183/2025**

Background:

The Village of Zeballos submitted a similar resolution in 2024, which was advanced to UBCM that same year, which was not admitted for debate. Despite comparable resolutions from other municipalities—many of which addressed specific policy concerns—the Province continues to introduce significant legislative and regulatory changes that have substantial impacts on local governments.

While these initiatives may be well-intentioned, they are not always applicable across all communities. It has not been evident that the Province has fully assessed the potential ripple effects of these changes or how they may conflict with existing local or provincial policies. Although financial incentives accompanying some initiatives are appreciated, they do not consistently address the capacity challenges faced by many municipalities—particularly small and rural ones. In several cases, the proposed changes may also diminish local autonomy, which is central to the distinct character and effective governance of municipalities throughout British Columbia.

Recent proposed changes—beyond the numerous adjustments introduced over the past five years—include amendments related to the Heritage Conservation Act, Bill M216 (Professional Reliance Act), and the Emergency and Disaster Management Act, Housing, among others.

Sent from the territory of the Ehattesaht Chinehkint First Nation.



Backgrounder for 2026 AVICC Resolution: Expansion of Strata Accommodation Property Definition to Include Strata Plans with Less Than Twenty Units

Housing and Affordability Challenges in British Columbia

Across British Columbia, residents are experiencing significant challenges in a housing environment marked by high costs, limited supply, increased homelessness, and a lack of safe, stable housing options. These challenges are no longer limited to tourism-dependent areas and are felt by communities across the province. Expanding the BC Assessment classification so that small strata accommodation properties operating as short-term rentals are taxed in the appropriate business class would introduce an important financial lever that aligns taxation with actual commercial use. This would reduce the incentive to convert potential homes and long-term rental units into visitor accommodations and would generate additional municipal revenue that could support communities through expanded attainable housing development and strengthened community services.

The proposed resolution calls on the Province of British Columbia to amend legislation to expand the definition of strata accommodation property to include strata plans with fewer than twenty units.

Tofino's Short-Term Rental Situation

Tofino has a long history of regulating short-term rentals due to its small size, geographical constraints, seasonal tourism pressures, and longstanding housing shortages. Short-term rentals were first formally governed through Zoning Bylaw No. 770 (1996), which established zones where temporary accommodation units were permitted and set conditions for operations such as bed and breakfasts, guests houses, and early forms of short-term rentals.

Between 2016-2018, the District of Tofino initiated a major regulatory shift and moved from largely complaint-based short-term rental enforcement to a proactive, regulatory approach. A key component of that change was through amendments to the Business Licence Regulation Bylaw that required any legally operating short-term rental must have a long-term dwelling on site and a permanent resident living on the property. These regulations created a made-in-Tofino approach to responsible short-term rental management, housing protection, and neighbourhood livability in a period of rising housing pressures due in part to increased tourism and short-term rentals.

In 2022 the District enacted another major business licensing update through adoption of Business License Regulation Bylaw No. 1239 (2022), modernizing the short-term rental licensing regulations by introducing limits on bedrooms and guests, refining the permanent resident requirements, and mandating guest information to strengthen operational standards and support residential neighbourhoods by setting expectations for visitor behaviour.

Even with decades of extensive short-term rental regulations, including zoning limits, licensing rules, caretaker requirements, occupancy limits, and mandatory guest education – the District of Tofino continues to face severe housing shortages, high costs, and regional disparities.

These pressures are widespread – and not limited to resort municipalities like Tofino. Local governments within AVICC and across the province are grappling with similar challenges and

ensuring that housing remains available and attainable for residents is a critical for meeting the province's housing priorities.

Current BC Assessment Classification

Since 2007, BC Assessment has allowed split classification for strata properties used as short-term overnight accommodation only if the strata plan contains twenty or more units. In Tofino, several strata properties have fewer than twenty units but operate as short-term rental businesses or hotel-equivalent units. Despite their commercial use, these properties are fully assessed as Class 1 (Residential), preventing the District from levying appropriate Class 6 (Business/Other) taxes associated with commercial activity.

Although the *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act* significantly reformed how short-term rentals are regulated across the province, it did not address the longstanding structural limitations to BC Assessment's property-tax classification system. Under the Assessment Act, a "strata accommodation property" is defined as a strata lot only if it is part of a strata plan with twenty or more units. Any strata plan with fewer than twenty units, including properties used intensively for commercial short-term rental activity, cannot receive split classification and are assessed entirely as Class 1 (Residential). Most short-term rental properties in Tofino and other resort-municipalities fall below the twenty-unit threshold, including:

- **Small strata developments;**
- **Duplexes or triplexes;**
- **Converted houses;**
- **Cottage style strata; and**
- **Mixed-use residential tourist properties.**

The current BC Assessment classification structure results in reduced fairness in taxation, as commercially operated units are taxed at residential rates that are significantly lower than business rates, creating inequity between small strata short-term rental operations and larger hotel, resort, or strata-hotel developments with twenty or more units that receive appropriate commercial assessment. This misalignment also leads to a loss of municipal revenue, as the District must levy and collect residential taxes for properties operating as businesses, limiting funds available for core services, visitor infrastructure, and community supports at a time when Tofino, and communities across the province, face acute housing and affordability challenges. Comparable communities that rely on tourism economies across the province experience similar gaps in actual property use and tax classification due to the high prevalence of mixed-use and small-scale strata-based short term rental units and an already limited housing stock.

Financial Considerations

Some of the financial impacts resulting from introducing such a change would be:

1. Municipal Revenue Impacts

If smaller strata plans, under 20 units, become eligible for strata accommodation property classification, a portion of their assessed value would shift from Class 1 (Residential) to Class 6 (Business). The latter would carry significantly higher municipal tax rates than Class 1, resulting in an increase in tax revenue for the municipality. Another outcome to be considered would be the accurate reflection of the assessment values in each class based on actual use.

2. Impact on Short-Term Rental Operators

A change in the strata accommodation property definition to include strata plans with fewer than twenty units would likely result in higher assessment values and a higher property tax bill for short-term rental operators.

The Need for Provincial Support

The province has already taken steps, such as enabling platforms like Airbnb to collect and remit provincial sales taxes, to ensure the short-term rental sector contributes to housing affordability and community needs. Building on this foundation, expanding the strata accommodation property definition would allow the tax system to better reflect today's short-term rental landscape, where small-scale strata units now play a significant commercial role. The current twenty-unit threshold, created in 2007 when short-term rentals were largely limited to hotel-style complexes, no longer aligns with the modern market. Updating the definition to include strata plans with fewer than twenty units would modernize provincial assessment practices and recognize the commercial use occurring in smaller developments.

Conclusion

Including smaller strata plans within the strata accommodation property definition is essential for fair and accurate taxation of units operating as commercial visitor accommodations. Under current rules, these properties remain fully residential for tax purposes despite functioning like businesses, creating inequities across accommodation types. Expanding eligibility for split classification would align taxation with actual use, support communities like Tofino in managing tourism impacts, and strengthen municipal revenue stability for core services.

Resources:

1. District of Tofino Business Licence Regulation Bylaw No. 1239, 2022:
<https://tofino.civicweb.net/document/163656/>
2. UBCM Split Classification for Short Term Commercial Accommodation, 2017:
<https://www.ubcm.ca/convention-resolutions/resolutions/resolutions-database/split-classification-short-term-commercial>



SHORT TERM RENTALS ON ALR LAND

Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

WHEREAS many farmers are diversifying their operations into agri-tourism accommodation in order to remain financially solvent and there are financial and temporal costs associated with registering with the province's Short Term Rental Accommodation Registry that further stress agricultural producers with agri-tourism accommodations;

AND WHEREAS short-term rentals on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land are already regulated by the Agricultural Land Commission through the *ALC Act and Regulations*, as well as local government bylaws and planning processes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM request an exemption to the *Short Term Rental Accommodations Act* for ALR properties that are in compliance with the *ALC Act and Regulations* and local government bylaws for agri-tourism accommodation.

Background

Financial strain in the agricultural industry has long been documented and is well-known to constrain further expansion of family farm operations. In an effort to promote diversification of income on ALR land for farm operations that have farm tax status, the Agricultural Land Commission introduced agri-tourism accommodation as a permitted use under the *Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation* in 2019. So long as a farming operation maintains agriculture as the primary function of the land, maintains farm tax status and keeps agri-tourism accommodation within prescribed limits, they are allowed to operate short-term rentals (STRs) on their property as a permitted use so long as they are in compliance with local government bylaws.

In an attempt to boost housing availability and ensure only legitimate STRs are operating in BC, the provincial government enacted the *Short Term Rental Accommodations Act* in 2024, which requires every STR to provide a business license number or other applicable proof that they are properly registered with their local government, as well as pay an annual fee of up to \$450 to join the province's Short Term Rental Registry (STRR).



ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT

In regional districts who do not have business licensing, short term rentals may be regulated through the Temporary Use Permit(TUP) process, which allows a property owner to lawfully operate outside of their prescribed zoning for a limited amount of time. This process is required by any agri-tourism accommodation operator whose parcel zoning does not allow agri-tourism accommodation as a permitted use, including the payment of all associated fees to the local government, and is overseen by the regional district planning department.

Having agri-tourism accommodation operators under the purview of the Agricultural Land Commission, the provincial STRR and local zoning bylaws represents a bureaucratic and financial barrier to farmers who have farm status on ALR land trying to remain financially viable. If an agri-tourism accommodation operator is confirmed by local government staff to be operating lawfully under the *ALR Use Regulation* and local government TUP or business license requirements, then they should be fully exempt from the provincial STRR and listed as such under the powers granted by Section 38(2)c(ii) of the [Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act](#).



2026 AVICC Resolution

Student Food Security Grant

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS since 2020 an approximately 20 percent inflation rate has contributed to a cost-of-living crisis that has particularly impacted students, and post-secondary food banks are seeing dramatically increased use, including a ten fold increase in visits to the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) food bank from Spring 2020 to Spring 2024;

AND WHEREAS local businesses and the broader community regularly support campus food banks with donations, but student societies require stable funding for student part-time staff positions in order to operate and expand food bank programs to meet the increased needs on their campuses;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT AVICC and UBCM advocate to the Honourable Minister Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, to provide funding support to BC post-secondary student unions, by establishing a food security grant, equivalent to \$1.50 per student, to address student food insecurity as evidenced by the increased use of post secondary campus food banks.

BACKGROUND

The impacts of inflation have created significant cost-of-living pressures across British Columbia. These pressures have deeply affected post-secondary students, who often face high tuition fees, housing shortages, and limited income opportunities. One visible result of this crisis has been a dramatic increase in demand for campus food banks.

Local businesses and community members have generously supported student food banks with monetary and in-kind donations. However, student societies require sustainable funding to employ part-time student staff and to maintain and expand food bank operations. These positions are essential for coordinating donations, managing inventory, and delivering outreach and support programs efficiently and consistently.

Establishing a Food Security Grant of \$1.50 per enrolled student would provide ongoing financial stability for these programs. This initiative would align with the Province's broader Poverty Reduction Strategy, support equity in post-secondary

education, and strengthen local food security systems connected to campuses and communities.

Increasing Usage of Food Banks

With the rising cost of living, food bank usage has increased across BC, with students being one of the most affected demographics. According to Food Banks BC,¹ since 2019, the number of individuals accessing food banks in British Columbia has risen by 32%, with the number of visits by households increasing by 81% from 2019 to 2024.

Student union food banks have been disproportionately impacted by this rise in food insecurity, as students with less access to financial resources increasingly turn to these food banks for support. For example, BC's largest student union food bank, the AMS Food Bank, has seen a 1,800% increase in usage between 2019 and 2025, clearly showing that students are one of the groups most impacted by rising food insecurity. At the UVSS, food bank usage increased by 1,090.5% from spring 2020 to spring 2024.²

Additionally, many universities and colleges in BC have little to no support for students facing food insecurity. SFU, the province's second largest postsecondary institution, and a research university with thousands of graduate students, has no food bank. Instead, students must rely on a food pantry overseen by the Student Society that is almost completely sustained through grants acquired externally with no stable reserve fund, as well as a program where students can apply for \$50 worth of food certificates to Nesters Market and T&T Supermarket once per semester.

Many other smaller universities and colleges have community pantries or cupboards, but no consistent, reliable food bank service. Students who attend colleges without existing food bank infrastructure in smaller communities, such as North Island College or Northern Lights College, are especially at risk, as their communities at-large may lack consistent food bank services. For instance, Port Hardy³ and Fort Nelson's⁴ food banks only give out food every two weeks, Campbell River's only once a month,⁵ and the main food bank in Dawson Creek⁶ is scrambling to keep up with increasing demand, seeing 800 visits in September 2025, double its average.

¹ Food Banks BC. (2025). "Food Banks BC: Hunger Report 2024." Available at https://www.foodbanksbc.com/files/ugd/535e9e_b59a33aaf9964993a5ef9433b12fc030.pdf

² UVSS. (2025). "Food bank statistics." Available at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1awhljKHruVr-ggG5NPvVmdeNm88zGV6v5nQmCnOWXjY/edit?usp=sharing>

³ Loaves and Fishes, Community Food Bank. (n.d.). "Port Hardy Free Food Market." Available at <https://www.vifoodbank.org/port-hardy-individuals>

⁴ Fort Nelson Food Bank. (n.d.). Available at <https://www.facebook.com/p/Fort-Nelson-Food-Bank-100083455536150/>

⁵ Campbell River Food Bank. (n.d.). Available at <https://crfoodbank.ca/>

⁶ Abel, N. (2025 September). "Dawson Creek food bank struggles to keep up as visits almost double." *CJDC TV*. Available at <https://www.cjdctv.com/news/article/dawson-creek-food-bank-struggles-to-keep-up-as-visits-almost-double/>

Student Food Security Grant Program

With increasing food bank demand, student unions, which operate as non-profit organizations with tight budgets, are put under financial pressure to hire and pay enough workers (on top of volunteers) to maintain smooth operations, in addition to bearing the costs of transportation and equipment. According to data from the AMS, as well as the UVSS, a student union spends on average \$1.50 on labour costs for their food bank per every student at their institution.

Thus, for example, if a college had 10,000 students, their student union can expect to pay about \$15,000 annually in labour costs to operate a food bank that adequately meets student needs. Student union food banks typically hire a few part-time students who work 10-20 hours a week for around \$20 an hour.

The significant increase in food bank usage has put student unions in a difficult financial state, as student unions largely operate on student fees and have a low budgetary ceiling, while having to keep up with food bank demand. This is why this draft AVICC/UBCM resolution asks that the government help student unions combat food insecurity by creating the Student Food Security Grant, committing an annual grant worth \$1.50 per student enrolled in a public BC post-secondary institution to the student union representing from that institution.

According to calculations by student advocacy organization, using provincial enrollment numbers, such a program would likely cost just under \$650,000.⁷ In the case of post-secondary institutions where the student union does not have the capacity to organize a food bank, this money could be transferred to the student union to their institution. For example, at UFV, the university administration manages the operation of the on-campus foodbank. This funding would be used to fund student jobs, creating good, on-campus work where students have the opportunity to help their peers.

This money would be proportionately allocated to each student union based on their enrolment. For established food banks, like those at UBC and UVic, this funding would help ease financial strain caused by increased use. For smaller food banks and student unions without food banks, the funds could help hire a student or two who could build/ expand their food bank service, which is especially important for colleges in non-urban environments where alternative food banks could be difficult to access or low capacity.

⁷ See UVSS. (2025). "Student issues backgrounder 2025." Available at <https://uvss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Provincial-Lobby-Briefs.pdf>

Summary

Establishing a Food Security Grant Program can provide essential financial support to post secondary students, ensuring their well-being and contributing to a healthier and more productive future workforce, while creating good, high-impact job opportunities for students. By proactively addressing this issue, the province can play a vital role in ensuring that no university student must make the choice between paying for tuition or food.

BACKGROUND: Post-Secondary Affordability

“Students have been some of the hardest hit by our cost-of-living crisis. Limited availability of student housing and long commutes to campus on overcrowded buses have worsened our housing crisis and transportation services. Excessive demand for under-resourced student foodbanks has worsened our food security crisis. Limited protections for campus tenants, reduced revenues from a university funding model that’s over-reliant on international students, and limited workers’ rights for Graduate Research Assistants have only made these problems worse.”

The above is from the Student Issues Backgrounder 2025¹, a thoughtful advocacy brief prepared by a coalition of British Columbia’s largest student organizations, including the University of Victoria Student Society. The Backgrounder presents a series of legislative and budgetary recommendations for the 2026 Provincial Budget, aiming to secure affordable education and ensuring students are not forced to choose between their studies and basic survival needs. The Backgrounder calls for provincial government action to:

- combat the affordability crisis
- enshrine on-campus student rights
- protect affordable education
- prioritize student safety
- invest in fast and efficient public transportation.

The Backgrounder provides a data-driven blueprint for stabilizing the post-secondary sector and supporting the future workforce of British Columbia. By highlighting that provincial funding for institutions has dropped to less than half of operating revenues, the brief illustrates how costs have shifted to students, threatening the accessibility of higher education. Implementing these recommendations would not only mitigate immediate student poverty and food insecurity but also foster a safer, more equitable learning environment. In the end, safeguarding student well-being is essential for the long-term economic stability and competitiveness of the province.

¹ <https://uvss.ca/campaigns/#toggle-id-1> (Student Issues Backgrounder 2025)



CC-130H Hercules Fleet

Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

WHEREAS escalating wildfires and climate change are increasing in intensity and cost across British Columbia and Canada threatening the unceded territories of many First Nations and impairing the ability of Indigenous peoples across Canada to exercise their rights protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, including rights related to land, culture, and traditional practices and resulting in mounting economic costs and greater risk to life and critical infrastructure, demanding bold and timely action;

WHEREAS larger fires emit greenhouse gases and black carbon smoke that intensify warning and harm air quality and converting Canada's retired CC-130H Hercules fleet into modern air tankers would protect communities, critical infrastructure, and help reduce catastrophic carbon emissions from wildfires;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia collaborate with the Government of Canada to:

1. Partner with First Nations and the private sector to retrofit a portion of Canada's retired CC-130H Hercules fleet into large air tankers for wildfire suppression in Canada.
2. Deploy these aircraft as part of a strengthened national wildfire response capacity, to be shared with provinces and territories and, where appropriate, used for international humanitarian and emergency missions. Consider that the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre assist in managing deployment under a transparent cost-sharing framework, with initial operating capability by the 2027 wildfire season.
3. Prioritize this made-in-Canada solution that leverages Canadian engineering, protects lives and communities, upholds Indigenous rights, and contributes to environmental sustainability.

Background:

The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District has been impacted by three significant wildfires since 2023. Currently, our Emergency Operations Centre continues to work with BC Wildfire Services and others to respond to the Mount Underwood wildfire which started on August 11, 2025, and is classified as being held at 3,518 hectares. The Cameron Lake Bluff wildfire of 2023, although significantly smaller in size, had devastating and long-lasting impacts on communities of the regional district, and the Wesley Ridge fire of 2025 caused similar negative economic impacts. Two of these wildfires resulted in road closures, not only causing significant impacts on residents' health, safety, and well-being but also devastating economic impacts for many throughout the region. Further, these wildfires continue to adversely affect the ability of Indigenous peoples to exercise their constitutionally protected rights.

As of September 12, 2025, the BC Wildfire Service website lists 144 wildfires classified as out of control, being held or under control. Without a national air tanker fleet, provinces must shoulder the costs of aviation resources with the risk that they may not be available when needed. More and more countries are beginning to retrofit retired military aircrafts for aerial firefighting, which has proven to provide a more rapid-response capability and increased national resilience. Converting Canada's retired CC-130H Hercules fleet into modern airtankers would allow British Columbia and provinces across the country to respond to wildfires more rapidly. This investment would help to keep our communities and residents safe, protect critical infrastructure and decrease the risks from catastrophic carbon emissions.



2026 AVICC Resolution

Student Ferry Fares

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS post-secondary students currently pay full adult BC Ferries fares, despite facing significant cost-of-living pressures and limited incomes, and this creates affordability barriers to travel to co-op employment, internships, conferences, networking opportunities, and travelling home to visit family, particularly for students who must regularly travel between Vancouver Island and the mainland;

AND WHEREAS indigenous students and students from rural communities are more likely to rely on ferry services, post-secondary students paying a full adult fare reinforces barriers to being able to travel home with ease, increasing inequities in mobility:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT AVICC and UBCM advocate to the Honourable Minister Mike Farnworth, Minister of Transportation and Transit, for a \$10/day flat rate ferry fare pilot program, during non-peak hours, for post-secondary students.

BACKGROUND

Post-secondary students across British Columbia face increasing cost-of-living pressures, including housing shortages, rising food and transportation costs, and limited access to affordable travel. Students who rely on ferry transportation due to studying or working between Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, BC Ferries fares represent a substantial financial burden. Currently, post-secondary students are not eligible for discounted fares and are charged the full passenger adult rate, despite often having lower incomes and fewer resources than the general adult population.

Student Mobility and Equity Considerations

Many students depend on ferry travel for co-op placements, practicums, internships, and academic conferences that are integral to completing their programs and building early-career networks. This is especially true for programs requiring inter-regional travel, such as education, healthcare, and environmental science. The cost of multiple round trips each semester can exceed several hundred dollars, which can deter participation in valuable academic and professional opportunities.

Indigenous students and those from rural and coastal communities are disproportionately affected. For many, ferry routes serve as essential connections to family and cultural ties, yet the full adult fare reinforces financial inequities and creates barriers to maintaining these vital connections.

Evidence from similar implemented programs also suggests that a student discount would induce new demand and ridership for ferries. The introduction of the Transit U-Pass program at UBC and SFU resulted in a 48% increase in ridership.¹ The introduction of free travel for youth by Washington State Ferries similarly produced 16.5 million youth trips in 2023.² Hullo Ferries, a key competitor to BC Ferries, drove ridership to 400,000 in their first year,³ in part due to a 50% youth discount. Ebus and VIA Rail already use student discounts to create brand loyalty and help fill empty seats during off-peak times. By running the program as a one-year pilot during off-peak hours, BC Ferries would also be able to collect data on ridership, revenue impacts, and social outcomes, which could inform future decision-making.

Having the pilot project be off-peak will also help fill empty sailings, attracting new riders rather than displacing full-fare riders, and help offset reduced per-ticket revenues in low-demand periods. With over \$1.11 billion in annual revenues, and a record 22.6M passengers in fiscal year 2024, BC Ferries is well positioned to test a limited, low-cost pilot program.

Precedents and Policy Context

Transportation affordability initiatives are consistent with the Province's broader commitments to accessibility, reconciliation, and economic inclusion. Current student fare discounts exist across many other transportation networks, including BC Transit, and TransLink, but not for BC Ferries. Introducing a flat-rate ferry fare program for post-secondary students during non-peak hours would align ferry travel accessibility with other provincial transit systems.

Summary

BC Ferries can play a pivotal role in making regional transportation more accessible to students by instating a \$10 flat-rate ferry fare for post-secondary students travelling as foot passengers, taking shape as a one-year trial during off-peak periods. A \$10 flat-rate student ferry fare is both economically feasible and socially beneficial. Students are a key part of BC's future, and an investment in students is

¹ p. 15, U-Pass at the University of British Columbia: Lessons for Effective Demand Management in the Campus Context. Graham Senft, SFU Urban Studies. (<http://conf.tac-atc.ca/english/resourcecentre/readingroom/conference/conf2005/docs/s9/Senft.pdf>).

² Fare-free transit programs boost youth ridership on public transportation statewide. Washington State Department of Transportation. (<https://wsdot.wa.gov/about/news/2024/fare-free-transit-programs-boost-youth-ridership-public-transportation-statewide>).

³ Hullo Ferries Celebrates One Year of Sailings. Hullo Ferries. (<https://hullo.com/media/hullo-ferries-celebrates-one-year-of-sailings/>).

an investment in the best interests of our province. Building on the provincial government's commitment to youth empowerment, accessibility, sustainability, and education, we hope that our proposal will be implemented so that all students can learn, explore, and thrive in communities across our great province.