

AKBLG Resolutions 2017:

Including UBCM comments & AKBLG endorsement.

Complete. May 25, 2017

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Resolutions proposed for endorsement and direction for UBCM.

1. CENTRAL KOOTENAY RD: Support for BC Fire Departments

WHEREAS the Office of the Fire Commissioner has, over the past two years, put more requirements in place for fire departments in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the cost and time commitment of these increased training, risk management, and records management requirements has negatively impacted fire fighter recruitment and has resulted in increased local government taxation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM be directed to work with the Office of the Fire Commissioner to explore provincial funding options to help support British Columbia fire departments in meeting the standards now required by that Office.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions calling on the provincial government to provide funding, training, and resources to support fire departments throughout the province (2016-B4, 2015-B3, 2012-B10, 2009-B27, 2009-B63, 2006-B68, 2003-B34, 2003-B48, 2002-B28, 2001-B46, 1996-A2). Most recently, members endorsed resolution 2016-B4, which asked the Office of the Fire Commissioner to establish "Fire Training and Evaluation Teams" to provide ongoing training opportunities, evaluation and records management training for all fire departments in British Columbia.

In response to resolution 2016-B4, the provincial government highlighted the training curriculum for interior and exterior firefighting developed and made available by the Office of the Fire Commissioner, as well as provincial funding for "train-the-trainer" team leader courses through the Fire Chiefs Association of BC. The Province also referenced on-going regional workshops offered in partnership with the Local Government Management Association "to provide training to Chief Administrative Officers and Fire Chiefs including the provision of information management, record keeping and training tools."

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed; with high priority.

2. CENTRAL KOOTENAY RD: Recycle BC

WHEREAS the Regional District of Central Kootenay and other regional districts have demonstrated over a long term our ability to manage an effective, efficient recycling program, which achieves significant waste diversion and meets the needs of residents;

AND WHEREAS Recycle BC, since its inception, has unilaterally attempted to dictate service levels, operational constraints and financial reimbursements (including penalty clauses) which conflict with local needs and proven practices when regional districts have entered into discussions to enter the program:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Minister of Environment direct Recycle BC to negotiate a cash transfer to regional districts (without operational constraints) to support existing programs which manage the recovery of printed and packaging materials and that if agreement cannot be reached by 31 March 2018 then the Ministry begin a mediation process to resolve the level of payments by December 31, 2018.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution asking the Province to direct Multi-Material BC to negotiate a cash transfer to regional districts to support existing recovery programs for packaging and printed materials.

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed; with high priority.

3. CENTRAL KOOTENAY RD: Rural Schools

WHEREAS public education funding increases in British Columbia (BC) have not kept up with increases in basic costs and inflation, and BC is still below the national average in per student funding in Canada even after settlement of its Supreme Court of Canada case;

AND WHEREAS the Government of BC has not followed the recommendations of its own Legislative Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, for the government to adequately invest in public education:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that to ensure our constituents do not face rural discrimination, the boards of education in rural BC receive adequate funding to maintain busing for rural area students; stop more closures of rural schools; increase levels of services to all students; adequately fund public education; and stop any further erosion of the same.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions calling on the provincial government to provide funding to support high quality education in all parts of the province, including rural areas (2013-B50, 2013-B51, 2007-B162, 2006-B165, 2005-B157, 2004-B94, 2003-B36, 2002-LR2, 2000-B109, 1999-B96).

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed.

4. CENTRAL KOOTENAY RD: Interface Wildfire Risk

WHEREAS the process of reduction of interface wildfire risk is placing a growing burden on local governments in terms of staff time and cash contributions;

AND WHEREAS the current pace of progress will not result in meeting risk reduction targets for several decades:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM work with the Province of BC to prepare a summary of approaches being taken across the province to address interface wildfire risks, including identifications of

all organizations (local governments, BC Timber Sales, provincial ministries, or non-governmental organizations) involved in preparing prescriptions and implementing treatments along with funding sources available to each organization.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution asking UBCM and the provincial government to compile:

- *an inventory of all wildfire mitigation activities in BC;*
- *a list of all organizations undertaking such activities; and*
- *a list of the funding sources available to each organization.*

However, UBCM members have consistently endorsed resolutions calling on the provincial government to fund and engage in wildfire management planning, especially on Crown land (2016-B6, 2015-B5, 2014-A1, 2013-B116, 2012-B109, 2012-B112, 2012-B113, 2012-B114, 2011-B80, 2010-B59, 2010-B68, 2010-B91, 2009-B131, 2008-B59, 2007-B74).

UBCM understands that in March 2017, changes to the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative were announced. Eligible applicants may now apply for joint funding for operational treatments with the Forest Enhancement Society of BC. Funding permitting, joint funding for operational fuel treatments will be available to:

- *allow applicants to access funding in excess of the annual SWPI funding maximums;*
- *enable operationally logical treatments with areas inside the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and outside of the WUI; and*
- *support treatments in regional district unincorporated areas that did not previously meet the requirements regarding service area and a community contribution of 10%—which may result in 100% funding for selected eligible projects in unincorporated areas.*

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed; with high priority.

5. EAST KOOTENAY RD: Interface Wildfire Prevention Responsibility

WHEREAS wildfire is identified as a significant risk to many communities in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the current Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative places the responsibility for both wildfire prevention and forest management on Crown land onto local governments and First Nations, who do not have jurisdiction on Crown lands or staff with forestry expertise, resulting in a program that demands excessive staff time to administer and creates unnecessary liability for the local government or First Nation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC be requested to develop a more efficient and effective model to address the interface wildfire risk reduction needs of BC communities under the supervision of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions calling on the provincial government to fund and engage in wildfire management planning, especially on Crown land (2016-B6, 2015-B5, 2014-A1, 2013-B116, 2012-B109, 2012-B112, 2012-B113, 2012-B114, 2011-B80, 2010-B59, 2010-B68, 2010-B91, 2009-B131, 2008-B59, 2007-B74).

Since 2011, the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI) has allowed staff and consultant costs as eligible expenditures for operational fuel treatments. In part, the intent of these eligible expenditures is to allow eligible applicants to access the forestry expertise they require to oversee fuel treatments.

UBCM understands that in March 2017, changes to the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative were announced. Eligible applicants may now apply for joint funding for operational treatments with the Forest Enhancement Society of BC. Funding permitting, joint funding for operational fuel treatments will be available to:

- allow applicants to access funding in excess of the annual SWPI funding maximums;*
- enable operationally logical treatments with areas inside the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and outside of the WUI; and*
- support treatments in regional district unincorporated areas that did not previously meet the requirements regarding service area and a community contribution of 10%—which may result in 100% funding for selected eligible projects in unincorporated areas.*

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed; with high priority.

6. EAST KOOTENAY RD: Exemption from Assistance to Business Requirements – Broadband

WHEREAS the *Local Government Act* provides an exemption from the assistance to business prohibition for the provision of capital financing for services provided by a telephone, natural gas or electric power utility;

AND WHEREAS the availability of high speed broadband service has become as critical to economic development, education, and communication as those services listed, and has recently been declared a ‘basic’ service by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend Section 275 of the *Local Government Act* by adding broadband as a service for which capital financing can be provided.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership endorsed resolution 2010-B72 from the same sponsor, which called on the provincial government to amend the Local Government Act by adding broadband as a service for which

capital financing can be provided. In response to the resolution, the Province expressed willingness to engage with regional district chairs and CAOs on the topic.

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed.

7. GRAND FORKS: Abolition of Daylight Savings Time

WHEREAS research has shown the practice of changing to Pacific Daylight Savings Time each spring can have a negative impact on people's health and cognitive awareness;

AND WHEREAS there have been petitions and calls for the abolition of Daylight Savings Time:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to consult with the people of BC with a view to abolishing Daylight Savings Time.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership considered but did not endorse resolution 2016-B140, which asked the provincial government to discontinue the annual time change in BC. Further, UBCM members considered but did not endorse resolutions 1999-B98 and 1993-A23, both of which requested that the Province adopt daylight savings time year-round for areas of BC within the Pacific time zone.

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed.

8. GRAND FORKS: Microcell Transmitter Placement Consultation

WHEREAS public consultation on the placement of cell towers is mandated;

AND WHEREAS new technology is moving away from these large towers to microcell transmitters which do not require local government or public consultation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition relevant provincial and federal governments to mandate consultation with the land use authorities and the public regarding microcell transmitter siting within 100 meters of residences, schools and hospitals.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution asking the provincial and federal governments to implement a requirement for consultation with the public regarding placement of microcell transmitters specifically.

UBCM would point out that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been working for some time on behalf of local governments to address the issue of antenna siting, and in 2014, the federal government introduced new regulations for companies wishing to install radio communication antenna towers. The Joint Protocol on Antenna Siting, between FCM and the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA), reflects the 2014 regulations:

http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/FCM/Antenna_System_Siting_Protocol_Template_EN.pdf

FCM confirms that Industry Canada has officially removed the exemption that had permitted antenna towers under 15 meters to be built without notification or consultation with local governments and the public. To be clear, companies must share towers where possible, consult with local governments and the public, and adhere to existing local antenna siting protocols.

It would appear that mechanisms are already in place to address the concern raised by the sponsor regarding placement of microcell transmitters. Rather than moving forward with a resolution on this issue, UBCM would encourage the sponsor to contact UBCM and FCM for assistance developing and implementing a local protocol for antenna siting.

In the context of resolutions, UBCM members endorsed resolution 2002-A6, which requested that the federal government “develop a workable, fair and meaningful process to adjudicate disputes relating to the location and siting of telecommunications towers, including effective dispute resolution mechanisms and enforceable penalty provisions.” More recently, the membership endorsed amended resolution 2012-B141, which called on the federal government to:

- institute a requirement for consultation with local governments prior to approval and installation of telecommunications towers or antennae;*
- develop and adopt best practices for minimizing the impacts of towers in communities; and*
- work cooperatively with local governments to resolve issues that may arise.*

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed.

9. GREENWOOD: WorkSafeBC Regulations on Asbestos

WHEREAS the recent WorkSafeBC regulation, “Safe Work Practises for Handling Asbestos,” will financially impact local governments in British Columbia since the majority of buildings are constructed pre-1990;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government downloading the costs of inspections and asbestos abatement to the owners will cause a decline in house sales pre-1990, heritage homes will be destroyed, and this will also will encourage illegal construction and increase illegal dumping on Crown Land:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WorkSafeBC regulation, “Safe Work Practises for Handling Asbestos,” be postponed until a financial plan is in place to assist the owners of pre-1990 buildings.

UBCM comments:

Due to time constraints at the 2016 Annual Convention, resolution 2016-B143 was not considered and was referred automatically to the UBCM Executive. Upon consideration, the UBCM Executive endorsed the resolution, which called on the provincial government to institute “mandatory licensing, certification and enforceable compliance in safely handling asbestos and other hazardous material for all demolition, renovation and environmental remediation contractors.”

**AKBLG comments:
Endorsed.**

10. KOOTENAY BOUNDARY RD: Access to Used Oil Recycling Facilities in Rural BC

WHEREAS access to used oil, used oil filters and used oil container recycling services in BC is very inadequate particularly in rural areas;

AND WHEREAS the British Columbia Used Oil Management Association (BCUOMA) is required by provincial statute to provide used oil, used oil filters and used oil container recycling services to all citizens of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the British Columbia Used Oil Management Association must submit a Stewardship Plan to the provincial Ministry of Environment for approval:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial Ministry of Environment require that the British Columbia Used Oil Manufacturing Association (BCUOMA) Stewardship Plan include minimum requirements for public drop-off depots that will insure that there is access to public recycling facilities no more than 10 kilometres from where BCUOMA recycling program materials are sold.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership endorsed a similar resolution, 2016-B29, from the same sponsor, calling on the provincial government to require the BC Used Oil Management Association to provide collection of used motor oil, used oil filters, and used oil bottles in all communities where new oil is sold.

In response to the resolution, the provincial government suggested that implementing collection of used oil, filters and bottles in all communities where new oil is sold would be quite challenging and costly for the BC Used Oil Management Association and for the public. The Province pointed out that used oil collection facilities must meet the requirements of the Hazardous Waste Regulation. According to the Province, the Ministry of Environment and the BC Used Oil Management Association are aware of underserved areas of BC, and are in the process of reviewing revisions to the Stewardship Plan. The provincial government suggested contacting Ministry of Environment staff for updates on the status of the review.

**AKBLG comments:
Endorsed; with high priority.**

11. KOOTENAY BOUNDARY RD and CENTRAL KOOTENAY RD: Review of and Amendments to the *Hospital District Act*

WHEREAS the enabling legislation of regional hospital districts in British Columbia, the *Hospital District Act*, prescribes the purpose of hospital districts which hospital district boards struggle to interpret;

AND WHEREAS in 2003 the Ministry of Health recommended that the Act be updated and in 2014 the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health stated that a review of the Act was in progress:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to review and update the *Hospital District Act* expeditiously and invite input from the regional hospital districts in British Columbia in order to clarify the mandate and role of hospital districts.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution requesting that the provincial government review and update the Hospital District Act to clarify the mandate and role of hospital districts.

AKBLG comments:
Endorsed.

12. NELSON: Asphalt and Concrete Pricing

WHEREAS in certain areas of British Columbia local paving and concrete companies have been purchased by one multi-national company resulting in the costs of asphalt and concrete materials and services being artificially inflated or even doubled compared with prices charged in other areas of the province;

AND WHEREAS as a result of the aforementioned monopoly of asphalt and concrete prices, no real competition for asphalt and concrete products and services exists in certain areas of British Columbia, which negatively impacts many local governments in the province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Minister of Finance to complete a comprehensive review of asphalt and concrete pricing in British Columbia to ensure that competition and competitive pricing exists equitably throughout the province.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution asking the provincial government to review asphalt and concrete pricing in British Columbia, in order to ensure that the marketplace remains competitive.

AKBLG comments:
NOT Endorsed.

13. NELSON: Tax on Vacant and Derelict Homes in British Columbia

WHEREAS the Government of British Columbia and Legislative Assembly responded to a housing affordability crisis by proceeding with legislation that empowered the City of Vancouver to introduce a surtax on vacant residential properties;

AND WHEREAS communities across British Columbia face housing affordability pressures while a portion of the housing supply in all communities remains vacant, including properties that have remained derelict for years and, these derelict vacant buildings pose substantial risks in terms of public safety as well as liveability and desirability for adjoining/nearby neighbourhoods and properties:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to extend the authority to introduce a surtax on vacant and derelict residential properties to local governments across British Columbia and encourage the occupancy, maintenance and improvement of buildings to address housing affordability and public safety.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution asking the provincial government to enact legislation that would grant local governments the authority to levy a surtax on vacant and derelict residential properties.

AKBLG comments:

Endorsed; with high priority.

14. NELSON: Contaminated Sites

WHEREAS large tracts of industrial lands situated in strategic locations within British Columbian municipalities are assessed as brownfields and lie dormant and undeveloped having been contaminated from industrial use;

AND WHEREAS the provincial taxation system in British Columbia does not encourage owners of brownfield properties to clean up their contaminated sites and effectively allows those who polluted these lands to enjoy a ‘tax holiday’:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development review the way contaminated sites (brownfields) are assessed to create a system where sites that are sitting dormant are taxed as green (remediated) sites, and that local governments be permitted to provide a permissive tax exemption as an incentive to clean up these sites.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership endorsed resolution 2016-B104, which asked the provincial government to create a new tax class for brownfield sites, to enable local governments to use property tax rates to provide an economic incentive for property owners to remediate brownfield sites.

In response to the resolution, the provincial government stated that it is not considering a separate property class for brownfield sites. The Province indicated that it was reviewing the 2008-2014 Brownfield Renewal Strategy to “develop potential options for encouraging remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites in the future.”

**AKBLG comments:
Endorsed.**

15. NELSON: Regional Hospital District Capital Funding

WHEREAS regional hospital districts were created by provincial legislation to raise a ‘local share’ of capital costs for hospital equipment and building through property taxation with the ‘local share’ historically held at 40% for regional hospital capital projects and the Province contributing 60%;

AND WHEREAS local governments have limited ways to generate funding to pay for local services and infrastructure since property taxes are the primary source of revenue and are being stretched to meet the diverse demands local governments already face which cannot sustain the increased load in meeting hospital board expenditures:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to acknowledge that property tax revenue is an unsuitable avenue to fund hospital infrastructure renewal projects and prioritize the urgent review of the historic cost sharing ratio with a recommendation, in consultation with Regional Hospital Districts, to amend current policy accordingly.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership endorsed the same resolution in 2016 from the same sponsor.

In response to the 2016 resolution, the provincial government expressed general openness to a review of the historic cost sharing ratio, with the caveat that it can only undertake a review when the legislative agenda permits. The Province indicated that it would consult with regional hospital districts as part of such a review.

**AKBLG comments:
Endorsed.**

16. NELSON: Civic Salary Legislation

WHEREAS salary settlements of local government employees and emergency service workers are rising unchecked and beyond the rate of inflation of regional average family incomes throughout British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the continued escalation of civic salaries is unsustainable since in order to meet the demands of funding these salary settlements, taxpayers are over-burdened with tax increases beyond inflationary increases to provide civic salaries above the average salaries of the communities they live in:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to create legislation that ties civic sector wage compensation increases to the average family income of British Columbian communities in which they are employed.

UBCM comments:

The UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution requesting that the provincial government enact legislation to tie the wage increases of local government employees and emergency service workers to the average family income in the region.

UBCM members have agreed upon the foundational principle that local governments should have the authority and autonomy to make local decisions for the benefit of their communities. This resolution is inconsistent with this principle in that it asks the Province to legislate a statutory requirement for all local governments in BC to use average local family income as the specific determinant of wage increases in their employment and bargaining practices. If pursued, the statutory requirement would remove a local government's ability to make its own choices and force all local governments to implement this on a province-wide basis.

UBCM would note that local governments already have the discretion and ability to make final wage decisions for non-unionized and most unionized employees at a local level. The notable exceptions to this are fire and police services. When agreement on wages cannot be reached for fire and police services through collective bargaining, the wages of essential services employees are determined by an arbitrator appointed under the Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act.

The UBCM membership has expressed dissatisfaction with the arbitration process and resultant decisions regarding arbitrated settlements for fire and police services. Members have consistently endorsed resolutions that emphasize the importance of considering local conditions and the ability of a local government to pay, when arbitrating agreements for fire and police services (2016-B16, 2014-B13, 2013-B24, 2011-B3, 2005-B150).

AKBLG comments:

NOT Endorsed.