

## 2024 AKBLG RESOLUTIONS – For referral to UBCM

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# HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## 1. Mental Health Supports

## Regional District of Kootenay Boundary

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 2. Mental Health Mandate for Health Authorities

## City of Nelson

Whereas the number of people in BC, including in rural and remote communities, experiencing mental health and addictions issues continues to increase and there is a distinct lack of resources and treatment options for such individuals;

And whereas the provincial government has committed to expanding complex care, treatment, and aftercare across the province to provide quality care to British Columbians where and when needed but there appears to be a disconnect in how regional Health Authorities are advancing this commitment in rural areas:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the Province to mandate regional Health Authorities to take a proactive approach to developing and implementing regional plans to address mental health and addiction issues.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

### 3. Augmenting Health Authorities with Regional District Boards of Health

### City of Grand Forks

Whereas health care in British Columbia is inadequate to meet the needs of the population as shown by closures of beds in local hospitals and closures of emergency rooms at times when no qualified staff are available to work;

And whereas since 2001, Health Authorities have governed the provision of health care in their respective areas but are not held accountable for poor policy decisions and the negative impact those decisions have on local communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petition the provincial government to consider augmenting Health Authorities with Regional District Boards of Health responsible for health care where there is a regional hospital;

And be it further resolved that Regional District Boards appoint a Local Board of Directors responsible for health care and that such Board must include representation from doctors, nurses, lab techs, and administration.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **DEFEATED**

### 4. Comprehensive Summary of Actions Taken for Healthcare

### District of Elkford

Whereas the UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions calling for increased funding and improved services within the health care system over the past two decades, including for those in rural, remote and northern communities;

And whereas rural, remote and northern communities face ongoing challenges relating to necessary health care services, such as resourcing and strengthening of primary care as part of the health care system, increasing funding and innovative service and support models for health care delivery, improving physician recruitment and retention and maintaining adequate staffing levels and delivery of service in rural communities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM requests that the Ministry of Health and Health Authorities provide a comprehensive summary of responses and actions taken to address health care issues being experienced in rural, remote and northern communities in British Columbia.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **DEFEATED**

## 5. Reasonable Access to Insured Medical Services

District of Elkford

Whereas one of the five principles of the Canada *Health Act* is portability with the intent that residents who are temporarily absent from their home province or territory, such as on business or vacation, are permitted to receive necessary services in relation to an urgent or emergent need when absent;

And whereas British Columbia residents are restricted from accessing specialized or non-urgent services in Alberta, even when the services are located geographically closer than services in British Columbia:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petitions the Province to work toward a solution to ensure that all residents of British Columbia also have reasonable access to insured specialized or non-urgent medical services in Alberta in cases where the services are geographically closer.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## HOUSING

### 6. Expanding the Rental Protection Fund

Village of New Denver & Village of Nakusp

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

### 7. Funding Model for Emergency Management Responsibilities City of Nelson

Whereas local governments across British Columbia are increasingly being impacted by severe weather events that are creating complex emergency situations;

And whereas local governments are legislated to plan for, respond to, and assist their communities in recovering from these emergencies:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the Province of British Columbia to create an annual funding model for local governments to more adequately prepare for each phase of emergency management.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 8. Victim Services Program Delivery

## Regional District of East Kootenay

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

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

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to develop a standardized approach for the delivery and funding of the Victim Services Program, with oversight from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## ENVIRONMENT

### 9. Re-Naming Natural Gas

### Town of Golden

Whereas fossil fuels are responsible for most of climate change and a vast amount of natural gas is a fossil fuel with the sole exception being the small amount of natural gas known as renewable natural gas or alternately biogas;

And whereas using the name “natural gas” for what is more accurately named “fossil gas” is a form of greenwashing and serves to mislead the true nature of the substance from users or potential users:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM solicit the Province use the name “fossil gas” rather than “natural gas” in all communications and material except only the substance which is known as renewable natural gas.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **DEFEATED**

### 10. Funding for Youth Climate Corps

### City of Nelson

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

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

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urges the provincial government of British Columbia to expand and scale a Youth Climate Corps that will provide good green jobs and training to young adults to work on important climate adaptation and mitigation projects in their communities, such as wildfire mitigation, building retrofits, ecosystem restoration and community engagement.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 11. Provincial Funding Towards Zebra and Quagga Mussel Prevention

City of Nelson

Whereas the presence and proliferation of invasive species, specifically zebra and quagga mussels, pose a significant threat to our province's aquatic ecosystems, biodiversity, and infrastructure;

And whereas the negative impacts of zebra and quagga mussels include the disruption of native ecosystems, damage to water supply infrastructure, and economic implications for industries such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism;

And whereas effective prevention measures require substantial financial resources for research, monitoring, and implementation of strategies to prevent the introduction and spread of zebra and quagga mussels: Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to recognize the urgency of addressing the zebra and quagga mussel issue and commits to allocating additional funding for comprehensive prevention efforts including research and monitoring, prevention measures, public awareness and education, collaboration and partnership and infrastructure protection.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 12. Reducing Regulatory Complexity in Freshwater Sources

City of Nelson

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## REGIONAL DISTRICTS

### 13. Vote Weighting in Regional Districts

City of Fernie

Whereas municipalities within Regional Districts are impacted by rezoning decisions in their adjacent areas, influencing local development and community well-being;

And whereas a more inclusive and equitable decision-making process is desirable to reflect the concerns of municipalities adjacent to the land proposed for rezoning:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province for an overhaul of Regional District rezoning legislation to incorporate a weighted vote system for municipalities that are adjacent to the land under consideration;

And be it further resolved that UBCM collaborate with relevant provincial authorities to develop and implement legislative amendments that establish a fair and representative voting structure, ensuring that municipalities with adjacency to proposed rezoning areas have a proportional and influential voice in the decision-making process.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **DEFEATED**

## FINANCE

### 14. Streamlining of Grant Applications and Reporting

City of Nelson

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 15. Stable Municipal Funding in BC

## City of Fernie

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

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

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 16. Municipal and Regional District Tax Fund Overhaul to Enable Investment in Infrastructure

## City of Fernie

Whereas the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) serves as a vital revenue source for communities in British Columbia, particularly in resort areas, through its application to short-term accommodations;

And whereas recognizing the evolving needs of municipalities, there is a growing demand for flexibility in utilizing MRDT funds to address critical infrastructure projects:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM advocate to the Province for a comprehensive overhaul of the Municipal and Regional District Tax funding framework to expand the allowable usage of funds, including directing a portion towards essential infrastructure projects;

And be it further resolved that UBCM collaborate with relevant provincial authorities to review and amend existing legislation, ensuring that Municipal and Regional District Tax funds can be strategically utilized for infrastructure development, thereby enhancing the resilience and sustainability of communities.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**



## LAND USE

### **17. Keep BC Parks Open Longer**

### **Regional District of Kootenay Boundary**

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## TAXATION

### **18. Volunteer Firefighter and Search and Rescue Members Income Tax Credit**

### **Regional District of Kootenay Boundary**

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

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

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## TRANSPORTATION

### **19. Expanding Transit in Rural Communities**

### **City of Nelson**

Whereas adding more routes between our rural communities and more trips on existing routes will benefit our economy, affordable housing strategy, and community development;

And whereas an expanded rural transit system will deliver significant GHG reduction, by shifting kilometers travelled from costly and polluting single-occupancy vehicles to high-occupancy buses:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the provincial government to provide sufficient additional funding to double services in British Columbia regional rural transit systems.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 20. Enhanced Transit Support

## City of Fernie

Whereas communities across British Columbia are struggling with a housing crisis and a labour shortage;

And whereas communities in rural British Columbia are poorly served by public transit:

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

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

## 21. Collaborative Model of Engagement - Winter Maintenance

## District of Elkford

Whereas the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is responsible for providing safe, well-maintained highways and oversees the privatized service contracts according to terms set out by the Province that define road maintenance standards across British Columbia;

And whereas contract terms and local area specifications included in highway maintenance agreements apply to broadly scoped regions, creating critical gaps in safety and service standards, especially pertaining to communities that face severe winter conditions:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM ask the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to create a collaborative model of engagement with local governments to provide the opportunity for localized input to winter maintenance service standards to be considered in the development of highway maintenance agreements.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **DEFEATED**

## **LEGISLATIVE**

### **22. Extended Health Benefits for Local Government Elected Officials - **Withdrawn****

**City of Fernie**

Whereas as a body of elected officials, we seek to support and represent as broad a demographic of our constituency as possible;

And whereas the Province of BC, UBCM, and each local government provides extended health benefits to each of their employees;

And whereas the remuneration for sitting as an elected politician anywhere but a major urban center does not provide sufficient monetary reward to compensate for the time away from regular full time employment, and wherein such time away can negatively impact the ability to either maintain said job, or maintain eligibility for employer funded health benefits:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM work with its partners to identify a funding stream for providing extended health benefits to local government politicians so as to minimize financial hardship as a reason for any individual from not running for elected office.

**MOTION TO WITHDRAW - endorsed**

### **23. Group Benefits Plan – Firefighters and First Responders - **WITHDRAWN****

**Village of Radium Hot Springs**

Whereas volunteer (or paid-on-call) firefighters and first responders are essential for providing emergency services in small communities;

And whereas small towns increasingly experience difficulty attracting candidates for local government and volunteers for local fire/first response agencies:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request the provincial government to amend the *Local Government Act*, Division 5, Section 82 to allow volunteer (or paid-on-call) firefighters/first responders to hold elected office and continue to be eligible for group benefit plans which are now afforded to many firefighters and first responders in volunteer capacities.

**MOTION TO WITHDRAW – endorsed**

### **24. Uncivil and Unruly Behaviour Impacting Local Governments**

**Village of Silverton & Town of Creston & Village of Nakusp**

Whereas several community, council, board, and hearing disruptions have been caused by uncivil and unprofessional conduct by a small number of elected officials or residents, resulting in police intervention, adjournments of meetings, and a movement toward digital instead of in-person meetings;

And whereas the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* do not adequately provide local governments and the Province with the tools needed to respond effectively to the detrimental and paralyzing conduct of residents and elected officials who bully, harass, and intimidate others despite the long history of local government openness and democratic values:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM urge the provincial government to take all steps necessary to convey the urgent need to create an effective task force to analyze the incivility and unruly behaviour problems and their causes, to consider best practices of other jurisdictions and recommend legislation and enforcement mechanisms to address the crisis of uncivil and paralytic behaviour that is impacting local government before the next local general election.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **DEFEATED**

## **COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **25. Implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure**

**City of Nelson**

Whereas Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), comprising of smart meters, data management systems, and communication networks, is a key tool in providing efficient, reliable and environmentally sustainable utility services;

And whereas the implementation of AMI comes at a significant cost for public utilities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM encourage the Province of British Columbia to begin exploring a funding model to support the implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) across public utilities in the province.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**

### **26. Tourist Information Centres**

**Regional District of Kootenay Boundary**

Whereas museums across British Columbia are providing tourist information services and promoting our province for free to thousands of visitors each year;

And whereas without the designation of "Tourist Information Centre," these museums do not receive funding from the province and must assume the costs involved with providing services to visitors:

Therefore be it resolved that the Province of BC provide funding to museums that act as Tourist Information Centres and simplify and expedite the process for museums to receive Affiliate Information Centre status.

**AKBLG Convention Outcome:** Motion to endorse, **CARRIED**