



# LOWER MAINLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

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## Lower Mainland Local Government Association

### ADVOCACY WORK AT THE UBCM CONVENTION

The Executive of the Lower Mainland LGA met with five BC Government Ministries during the UBCM Convention as part of our ongoing mission to advocate on behalf of our membership. Four of our Minister Meetings were to lobby for resolutions that were endorsed at the annual Lower Mainland LGA Annual Conference and AGM held this past May and that went forward to the UBCM Convention.

The following meetings were held:

#### Call To Action on Global Climate Emergency

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive put forward a resolution on a "Call to Action on Global Climate Emergency" which was endorsed by our membership at our annual convention and at the UBCM Convention. The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with Mark Zacharias, Assistant Deputy Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to discuss the resolution which calls for all levels of government to adopt climate emergency motions and take dramatic steps toward the protection of biodiversity and to accelerate the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, which are a primary cause of the climate emergency. The Assistant Deputy Minister discussed the newly formed UBCM Special Committee on Climate Action. The Committee has been struck to generate new ideas, explore opportunities and barriers to local government action and identify avenues for further partnership work in mitigating and adapting the effects of climate change. The Clean BC Plan that was announced last year was also discussed and targets were debated. The Executive offered assistance in working with our membership to help the BC government in meeting their targets.

A reminder to our membership to go to [cleanbc.gov.bc.ca](http://cleanbc.gov.bc.ca) to learn more about funding and capital incentives to encourage energy efficient design, construction and renovation of commercial buildings as well as rebates for home energy retrofits.

**ACTION:** Follow the progress of the UBCM Special Committee on Climate Action and report back to our membership.

**ACTION:** Continue to encourage our membership to bring forward resolutions calling for climate change action.

**ACTION:** Continue to use our Annual Convention to hold progressive conversations on climate change solutions including innovative ideas for local government.

#### Support of Indigenous Court System

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with Attorney General David Eby to advocate on behalf of our membership for Support of the Indigenous Court System. This originated from a resolution put forward by New Westminster which was endorsed by our membership at our May Convention. Our request is that the Province of BC fund and expand the Indigenous Court System to make it accessible in every region where the court system is active.

Only 3% of the population identify as Indigenous yet the Indigenous population in our prison system is 27% men and 38% women. Studies have shown that the Indigenous Court System makes a real difference in how Indigenous people feel that they are being treated by the legal system. There are now six Indigenous Court Systems in BC at the provincial court level (New Westminster, North Vancouver, Kamloops, Duncan, Prince George and the Nicola Valley). Indigenous Court Systems use a holistic healing approach used to reduce criminal behavior for adults and include recognition of the unique circumstances of First Nations offenders with the framework of the existing laws. The Attorney General's response was very positive. He outlined a number of initiatives that are underway to support the creation, expansion and support of Indigenous Courts including that a Provincial Advisory Committee has been set up to help build Indigenous Courts and that a new Indigenous Court will be opening in Williams Lake in January 2020.

**ACTION:** Monitor actions of the Provincial Advisory Committee and advocate if necessary.



The Lower Mainland Local Government Association will be launching a new and improved website soon. The website will include more content and functionality. Thanks to all of our members that sent us photos of your beautiful communities to use on the new site.

## First Nations Participation on Commissions and Reduction of Speed Limits Within Municipal Boundaries

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to discuss First Nations Participation on Commissions. A resolution on this subject was put forward by the Village of Pemberton and endorsed at our May convention.

The Village of Pemberton, in partnership with the Squamish Lillooet Regional District, the Resort Municipality of Whistler, the District of Squamish and Lil'wat and Squamish Nation are working collaboratively to develop a regional transit commission to establish a transit system to connect Mr. Currie (just north of Pemberton) to Metro Vancouver. The current provincial transit model does not allow for representation from First Nations as they are not a taxing authority which does not allow for an equal representation or an equitable decision-making platform process.

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive outlined the issue with the Minister and requested that she look into amending the legislation to make it more inclusive.

At the meeting, the Executive also discussed reducing speed limits within municipal boundaries and asked that the legislation be amended to make this easier for local governments by granting additional powers under the Act.

**ACTION:** At the UBCM Convention this resolution was referred to the UBCM Executive. Work with UBCM to try and move this resolution forward.

## Extension of Vacancy Taxation Authority to Local Government

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with Carol James, Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier to discuss extending the authority to introduce a surtax on vacant residential properties to local governments across British Columbia. Port Moody had brought forward a resolution to that affect that was endorsed at our annual convention. Our membership has expressed interest in having the ability to introduce a surtax along the lines of what was introduced in Vancouver in 2016. Many of our member communities face housing affordability pressures while a portion of the housing supply in the community remains vacant. The meeting with the Minister was very positive with her stating that four municipalities have written to her requesting a Vancouver style tax and that the BC government will be considering it and making a decision this fall. She stated that they now have excellent data showing the success of the speculation tax in Vancouver.

The Executive also brought up brownfield remediation with the Minister and discussed how there are currently no incentives in place to remediate them.

**ACTION:** Monitor the Legislature for progress on this topic and continue to advocate on behalf of our membership as needed.

## BC To Implement The United Nations Declaration on The Rights of Indigenous Peoples

As a result of an invitation from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, the Executive of the Lower Mainland LGA met with Minister Scott Fraser. The Minister outlined that British Columbia will be the first province in Canada to introduce legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The provincial government will be working with First Nations across the province to ensure that they are full participants in decision-making that affect their rights and lands. The new legislation will be introduced in the Legislature this fall. The process will include an implementation plan and a reporting process each year.

**ACTION:** Assist the Ministry with getting the implementation plan out to our membership.



The Lower Mainland Local Government Association and CivicInfo BC proudly present CivX 2019: Civil Ideas for Less Civil Times, Thursday November 28, 2019 at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, 580 W. Hastings Street, Vancouver.

At this one-day seminar (8:30am – 4:30pm) delegates will hear practical ideas for making our towns and cities more inclusive for our citizens, regardless of age, gender, culture, or socio-economic background. Our exciting line-up of guest speakers includes:

**DIANE KALEN-SUKRA**, Author, "Save Your City: How Toxic Culture Kills Community & What to Do about It".

**TASHA HENDERSON**, Director, Women Transforming Communities

**CHRIS FRIESEN**, Director of Settlement Services, Immigrant Services Society of BC.

**DR. ATIYA MAHMOOD**, Associate Professor, Department of Gerontology, Simon Fraser University

**DR. BEN MORTENSON**, Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, UBC

**DR. EAMONN O'LAOCHA**, Instructor, Douglas College & Douglas Applied Research, Teaching and Consultancy

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FRASER BASIN YOUTH COUNCIL**  
(Co-Creating a Sustainable BC)

The day will wrap with a facilitated session, where local government delegates can share ideas and practices with one another, with a written summary being provided to all in attendance. A full agenda, with detailed session descriptions, will be available shortly.

**REGISTER TODAY AT:**

[www.civicinfo.bc.ca/event/2019/CivX](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/event/2019/CivX)

Who should attend? Like past CivX events, this event will be of particular interest to local government elected officials, local government staff, staff from local government agencies, academics, and post-secondary students. For those requiring overnight accommodation, a block rate is available at the Delta Hotel by Marriott Vancouver Downtown Suites, which is attached to the event centre. Click here to get the group rate until October 15.

Our sincere thanks to our sponsors, whose generous support helps to make this event possible!



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