



# LOWER MAINLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

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## ADVOCACY WORK AT THE UBCM CONVENTION

The Executive of the Lower Mainland LGA met with six BC Government Ministries on eight different topics during the UBCM Convention as part of our ongoing mission to advocate on behalf of our membership.

The following meetings were held:

### Flood Risk Mitigation Through Green Infrastructure and Natural Assets

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive with support from the City of Port Coquitlam put forward a resolution entitled "Flood Risk Mitigation Through Green Infrastructure and Natural Assets". Unfortunately, due to time restraints it was not debated or voted upon during the UBCM Convention and will instead go directly to the UBCM Executive for consideration.

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Mike Farnworth and Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Awareness, Jennifer Rice.

Side channels, tributaries and sloughs of the Fraser and other large rivers have deep value to First Nations as historic transportation corridors, sites of food cultivation and harvest refuge and gathering places; many of these same waterways are or were valuable recreational fishing, boating and swimming sites but are no longer safe and accessible for these activities.

These waterways also provide moderating effects for localized and riverine flooding and valuable habitat for wild salmon and other important species. There is no current requirement or standard practice for treating these waterways as valuable natural assets for their provision of the ecosystem's services.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province remove constraints and implement requirements for incorporating green infrastructure and nature-based solutions in flood management to ensure effective flood risk mitigation while maintaining or restoring social, cultural, and ecological co-benefits for these systems

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province promote natural assets as a viable emergency planning solution and provide appropriate funding through Emergency Management BC and the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund.

The Minister was very receptive to our requests and stated that the Province is modernizing the Emergency Management Act and criteria will be expanded to include green infrastructure and natural solutions.

### COVID-19 Tourism Recovery

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Lisa Beare and the Minister of Finance, Carol James to discuss COVID-19 Tourism Recovery.

With limited to zero global travel within the short term and with global travel patterns likely to look much different coming out of the pandemic, BC municipalities that rely on tourism are trying to figure out their futures.

Inbound travel to BC is down by 98%. Adding to this pressure is the phasing out of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy by year end. Without government investment and support, the tourism industry can expect continued massive job losses and business closures before the end of the year.

Destination Canada predicts a 3-4-year recovery time to get back to 2019 levels. This impact results in a 43% to 61% decrease in tourism revenues across Canada.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province and Feds continue wage subsidies

A discussion was held with the Ministers on how visitors are putting stress on several Lower Mainland LGA communities and how can we ensure that these communities feel safe?

The Ministers discussed Destination BC's launch of "How to be a tourist in your own community" and how the Province will also be focusing on destination development.

### Continued Expansion of Trans Canada Highway #1

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with the Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure to discuss the Continued Expansion of Trans Canada Highway #1.

Thank you to the City of Abbotsford for partnering with the Lower Mainland LGA Executive on this resolution.

Critical congestion and safety challenges along the Trans Canada Highway #1 through the Fraser Valley towards Hope continue to impact the provincial movement of goods and services and access to the Asia-Pacific gateway, undercut the economic viability of the region and the province's highest population growth, undermine public safety and quality of life for residents and travelers, and creates significant environmental and greenhouse gas emission impacts for BC.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province prioritize funding toward the continued expansion of the Trans Canada Highway through the Fraser Valley towards Hope to support HOV, Electric Vehicles, Autonomous Vehicles, Rapid Transit and Truck Transportation(HEARTT)

The Minister discussed that the Province is looking at what can be done on both sides of the Fraser and are looking at the region as a whole to ensure ease of transportation and a study is currently underway.



Innovation in Local Government

### CIVX Event Re-Imagine Local Government

The Lower Mainland Local Government Association and CivicInfo BC will host the 2020 CivX Event online over three days from November 23-25, 2020 from 11:45 am to 2:15 pm each day. This year's theme is Re-Imagine Local Government ~ Resilience, Revolution, Recovery: The Road Ahead.

Speaker details and registration information to come soon!

This will be a free event due to generosity of our sponsors



## Clean Vehicle Initiatives

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with the Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure to discuss Clean Vehicle Initiatives.

Thank you to the City of New Westminster for submitting a resolution on the subject.

The member communities of the Lower Mainland LGA strongly support the Active Transportation Strategy "Move, Commute, Connect", part of the Clean BC program to which an active transportation strategy with the goal to make it easier for people to commute to work or school using active transportation methods in order to cut down on carbon pollution.

Currently, Clean BC has a program that provides generous rebates towards the purchase of a new electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle. There have been recent advances in new technology resulting in a new generation of electric assist cycles (ebikes) that make cycling more accessible to more people for their commutes and other trips, yet there is little to incentivize the purchase of these vehicles when there are clear public policy and community benefits to the adoption of this alternative transportation mode.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province expand the Clean Energy Vehicle Program to include financial incentives for the purchase of electric assist cycles in scale to the incentives provided for the purchase of electric vehicles.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province remove PST from the purchase of electric assist cycles.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province implement initiatives to further protect vulnerable road users through changes in the Motor Vehicle Act in support of the Active Transportation Strategy.

The Minister responded that they are implementing a program whereby cars can be traded in to get a \$1500 rebate on an ebike and that the Province is working with UBCM and that communities can apply for a grant up to \$10,000 on Active Transportation Initiatives. The Province is also working on removing the PST from ebike sales.

## Strata Insurance

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to discuss strata insurance.

Thank you to the City of White Rock and the City of Burnaby for submitting resolutions on the subject.

Strata Insurance premiums have risen on average over 40% across the province over the past year, while deductibles have increased to triple digits over the same period. Rising insurance costs create substantial cost pressures for strata's and non-profit housing providers, and risk further exacerbating the ongoing affordability crisis.

The Lower Mainland LGA and its membership appreciate the recent steps that the province has taken to address rising strata insurance costs. While the new legislation addressed some short-term issues from the insurer side and may reduce issues related to poorly run strata's, it fails to address some of the root causes of the current crisis.

Fewer insurers are willing to take on the risks associated with aging buildings that have not, in some cases been well maintained. Costs tied to catastrophe, construction, claims and reinsurance has pushed premiums up.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That amendments be made to the Building Code to address problem areas (floor drains near water systems) or legislation to limit the risks that strata's incur.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That water safety measures be redesigned as many claims are related to water damage (detection sensors, flow meters and automatic shut off valves)

The Minister outlined some of the recent initiatives that the province has taken to date such as removing referral fees and mandating strata's to undertake depreciation reports to point towards potential future problems. A final report will be released this fall and future action will be taken including setting clear guidelines on what a strata corporation is required to insure and limiting allowable increases.

## Stable Funding For Regional Public Transit

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to discuss Stable Funding for Regional Public Transit.

Thanks to the District of Squamish for their resolution on this topic.

Many Lower Mainland Local Government communities have made significant investments in transit over the past number of years. Stable funding for transit needs to be ensured. In recent years, reserves have been spent which undermines future capital planning. There have been challenges in recent years due to long term regional transit priorities outside of the TransLink and BC Transit system that have reduced stable funding.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province work with TransLink, BC Transit, UBCM and local governments to deliver a Provincial Transit Recovery Strategy to address the 2020 and 2021 financial impact that TransLink and BC Transit have already incurred and will continue to incur due to the COVID-19 crisis so that both can continue delivering the services and mobility that the province needs to rebuild and prosper in the coming months and years

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Develop a Provincial Rebuilding Strategy for BC Transit and the Transportation Sector for 2021 that will strengthen BC Transit's and TransLink's funding models by expanding transit revenue tools to reduce reliance on transit fees.

## Increase Zero-Emission Vehicle Act Interim Targets & Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate For Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicles

The Lower Mainland LGA Executive met with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to discuss an Increase to Zero-Emission Vehicle Act Interim Targets and Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate for Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicles.

Thanks to the Township of Langley for submitting resolutions on these two issues.

The BC Zero-Emission Vehicle Act 2025 target for light-duty vehicle sales is 10% and actual sales reached in 2019 are already at 9%. The purpose of the Act is to require industry to make zero-emission vehicles more affordable and available yet there is still significant unmet demand for zero-emission vehicles throughout BC.

Many Lower Mainland LGA communities have committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 which requires drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles starting today.

Medium and heavy-duty vehicles produce over 30% of greenhouse gas emissions from road transportation in BC.

There is no current legislation or targets in place to increase the adoption of zero-emission medium and heavy-duty vehicles in BC.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province amend the Zero-Emission Vehicle Act interim sales targets above the currently stated 10% in 2025 and 30% in 2030, to targets that accelerate the availability of zero-emission vehicles in BC and beyond the current rate of adoption.

**REQUESTED ACTION:** That the Province enact zero-emission vehicle sales requirements for medium and heavy-duty vehicles.

The Minister discussed the challenges with the fact that we do not manufacture any vehicles in BC and because our market is small, it makes it a challenge to dictate any targets. There is also a lot of debate on how medium and heavy-duty vehicles will be powered. The Province gave money towards research on heavy-duty vehicles being powered by hydrogen. The Minister also mentioned that there is an annual review process for targets.

## LIDSTONE & COMPANY

Thank you to Lidstone & Company for sponsoring this newsletter

## New Floodwise Website

FloodWise is a new website hosted by the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) to raise public awareness about coastal and Fraser River flood hazards in the Lower Mainland, the changing face of flood under climate change, and opportunities to reduce flood risk in the region.

The site supports the work of flood authorities and others participating in the Lower Mainland Flood Management Strategy initiative through videos, maps, and information updates. The site also offers tips for homeowners, a flood history story map and learning resources.

Look! [floodwise.ca](https://www.floodwise.ca)

### PLEASE SHARE THE SITE

Please share FloodWise with people in your organizations, networks and programs who have an interest in flood risk reduction. We welcome and appreciate:

- A listing of FloodWise on your website
- A mention in your e-news outreach
- A social media post (see sample text and images attached) - or feel free to share one of our posts.