

## NEWS RELEASE

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### City Council advocates for Nanaimo at UBCM

Last week, local government leaders from across BC came together at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention in Vancouver, BC. The annual convention provides elected officials with the opportunity to meet with provincial cabinet ministers and their staff to discuss a range of topics that are a priority for their communities.

During this year's convention, members of Nanaimo City Council met with the Minister of Health, Minister of Housing, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. These meetings at UBCM provide an opportunity for local governments to highlight some of the topics that matter most to their constituents and advocate for provincial support. A range of topics were discussed including the need for a cath lab and new patient tower at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital; the need for more complex care, detox and recovery spaces; and the need for provincial support in responding to RCMP resource challenges and increased costs.

Local governments come together during a series of sessions at the convention to debate and vote on resolutions which were previously endorsed by Councils or Regional Boards. The resolutions sessions provide an opportunity for local governments from across the province to express concerns, share their experiences and take a united position. This year, five of the resolutions submitted by Nanaimo City Council were endorsed, calling for UBCM to take the following actions:

- Advocate for the Province to fund RCMP Mental Health Liaison Officers within the RCMP and local detachments.
- Lobby the Province to increase investment in complex care beds to address the growing demand from those who have suffered serious health impacts from substance use disorder.
- Lobby the Province to establish a Provincial Housing Coordinator to work directly with those persons who are experiencing homelessness and who are not in need of supports to find suitable housing.
- Request the Province work with the Building Safety Standards Branch to establish some reasonable variances to the BC Building Code and BC Fire Code to enable emergency shelters to remain open.
- Call on the provincial government to recognize the evolving and challenging situation for public libraries as well as their unique role as community spaces by establishing an Advisory Body to undertake a review of core annual provincial funding of public libraries in the Canadian context and make recommendations to the Minister with respect to core, sustainable funding approaches for BC's public library sector.

A resolution calling for the Province to strengthen the legislation for Alternative Approval Processes was referred to the UBCM Executive.

The City of Nanaimo was also presented with two awards for its leadership in sustainability at the convention. Nanaimo was awarded UBCM's Community Excellence Award for Excellence in Sustainability for Nanaimo's City Plan, Integrated Action Plan and Monitoring Strategy as well as the Community Energy Association's 2024 Climate & Energy Action Award for its BC Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code Implementation Strategy.

"During this year's UBCM convention, Council had the opportunity to meet with six ministries on a wide range of critical issues, from housing and healthcare to protecting biodiversity and public safety. We were pleased to receive majority support for our UBCM resolutions, as we work to advocate for the needs of our community and address challenges shared by municipalities across BC," said Hilary Eastmure, Acting Mayor/Councillor, "The awards presented to Nanaimo are a credit to our community and residents for the vision shown throughout the Nanaimo Reimagined public engagement and consultation process that led to our City Plan, to our excellent staff who worked hard on these projects, and lastly to Council for supporting progressive sustainability policies."

To learn more about Council's advocacy efforts visit the [Advocacy page on the City website](#).

Continued... City Council advocates for Nanaimo at UBCM

-30-

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