



Item.....
Meeting..... 2021 February 22

COUNCIL REPORT

TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2021 February 16

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 2125 20
Reference: UBCM Resolutions

SUBJECT: 2021 UBCM RESOLUTIONS

PURPOSE: To present resolutions for submission to the 2021 Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) Annual General Meeting and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council endorse the new resolutions outlined in *Section 3.0* of this report for submission to the 2021 LMLGA AGM and the 2021 UBCM Convention.
2. **THAT** staff be authorized to forward a copy of this report, accompanied by any applicable background reports and information, to the UBCM, located at Suite 60 – 10551 Shellbridge Way, Richmond, BC V6X 2W9.
3. **THAT** copies of this report be forwarded for information to Burnaby MLAs.

REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Each year, resolutions are considered for submission to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) Annual General Meeting and the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) Convention. These resolutions are a means to request amendments to the *Community Charter*, *Local Government Act* and other Provincial or Federal legislation and policies to address issues of significance to local government.

This report presents a new resolution for Council’s consideration as a submission to the 2021 LMLGA AGM and the 2021 UBCM Convention. The UBCM Convention will take place from 2021 September 13-17, in Vancouver B.C. The deadline for any further resolution submissions made directly to the UBCM is 2021 June 30.

For the convenience of Council, this report also details senior government response to resolutions previously approved by Council and submitted to the UBCM Convention in 2019 and 2020.

2.0 POLICY

The proposed 2021 resolutions are aligned with the City of Burnaby's *Corporate Strategic Plan* by supporting the following goals and sub-goals:

- ***A Connected Community***
 - Partnership – Work collaboratively with businesses, educational institutions, associations, other communities and governments
- ***A Dynamic Community***
 - Economic opportunity – Foster an environment that attracts new and supports existing jobs, businesses and industries
 - Community development – Manage change by balancing economic development with environmental protection and maintaining a sense of belonging

3.0 2021 UBCM RESOLUTIONS

This section provides background information on a new resolution that have been developed for Council's consideration and possible submission to the 2021 LMLGA AGM and UBCM Convention.

3.1 ***Resolution: Transfer of a Portion of Speculation and Vacancy Tax Revenue to Local Governments***

The Speculation and Vacancy Tax is an annual tax paid by some owners who do not meet the exemption requirements in designated regions of the province. The introduction of the Speculation and Vacancy Tax has generated new revenue for the Provincial government to put toward affordable housing initiatives within the regions that are taxed. Currently all revenue collected from the Speculation and Vacancy Tax is directed into the Housing Priority Initiatives Special Account for use in funding affordable housing initiatives. The primary recipient of the funds is BC Housing. Municipalities currently do not receive any of this funding directly even though they are increasingly taking on a greater role in undertaking affordable housing initiatives and contributing resources to these projects. Achieving affordable housing is a shared objective and as such, in the absence of the ability of most B.C. municipalities to require their own vacancy tax, sharing the funding accrued from the Speculation and Vacancy Tax would allow for successful achievement of the combined efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing.

As such, the following resolution has been prepared for Council's consideration:

WHEREAS the Speculation and Vacancy Tax generated an estimated \$81 million in revenue for the Province during the 2019/2020 fiscal year to be directed towards affordable housing initiatives;

AND WHEREAS local governments are taking on a greater role in addressing affordable housing needs in their communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request the Provincial government to distribute directly back to each municipality a portion of the revenue collected, up

to the amount collected from each municipality, under the *Speculation and Vacancy Tax* to further affordable housing initiatives within those jurisdictions.

3.2 Next Steps

Pending approval by Council, the proposed new resolution will be forwarded to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) AGM (deadline 2021 March 26) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) annual Convention (2021 September 13-17) for discussion and endorsement consideration. The UBCM deadline for any further resolutions desired by Council is 2021 June 30.

4.0 2020 UBCM RESOLUTION

4.1 *Resolution: Increase Effectiveness of Tenant Assistance*

The British Columbia *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA) establishes the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants. While the provisions of the *RTA* establish a landlord's obligations to tenants, many municipalities have adopted policies to secure supplementary assistance for tenants facing displacement due to redevelopment. Local governments are both limited in their ability to require tenant assistance and to enforce the satisfactory completion of tenant assistance plans. Additionally, tenants receiving income and disability assistance could become ineligible for that income if the assistance they receive through tenant assistance programs is assessed as income. Local governments and property owners would also benefit from guidance on the collection of personal information for the purposes of providing tenant assistance. Given these challenges, Council adopted a resolution requesting review of relevant legislation that would increase the effectiveness of tenant assistance programs. The resolution was endorsed at the 2020 UBCM Convention. A response from the provincial government has not yet been received. Staff will update Council on the provincial response should one be received.

4.2 *Resolution: Addressing Increases to Condominium Insurance*

At its meeting on 2020 February 24, Council approved a resolution urging the Provincial government to take action to curb the significant increases to insurance rates experienced by residential condominium strata corporations. This resolution was not admitted for debate at the 2020 UBCM Convention. However, a similar resolution that was expanded to include all multi-residential buildings was submitted by UBCM Executive and was endorsed at the Convention.

In 2020 September, the Provincial government unveiled changes to the *Financial Institutions Act*. Starting on 2020 November 1, insurers and agents are now required to provide 30-days notice directly to strata corporations of intentions to not renew or materially change an insurance policy. This provides the owners with advance warning of impending increases and enables them to seek out other insurers before their current policy expires. Additionally, insurance agents are now required to disclose their commission amount and financial penalties are in place for non-compliance. The changes also included the prohibition of referral fees to strata property managers from strata insurance transactions. These changes were made in an effort to increase transparency

and to provide strata corporations with the information needed to make informed decisions about insurance for their properties.

4.3 Resolution: Benefits of Public Car Insurance

At its meeting on 2020 February 24, Council also approved a resolution requesting the Provincial government to preserve public car insurance. At the Convention there was no recommendation made and the resolution was referred to UBCM Executive Committee. The Committee commented that UBCM had not previously considered a resolution regarding the preservation of public car insurance. They noted, however, that a 2019 resolution was submitted that urged the Provincial government to open the basic car insurance market to the private sector. That resolution was not debated at the 2019 Convention due to time constraints and upon consideration, the UBCM Executive Committee did not endorse that resolution. They further noted that a 1998 resolution was endorsed that asked the Province to deregulate motor vehicle insurance in BC, but that this resolution is a dated reference. The UBCM Executive Committee has yet to make a decision on Burnaby's resolution. Staff will update Council if further information becomes available.

4.4 Resolution: Provision of Free Prescription Contraception in BC

At the same meeting, Council approved a resolution requesting the provision of free prescription contraception in BC. This resolution was endorsed at the 2020 UBCM convention. The UBCM Resolutions Committee noted that the UBCM membership endorsed a related resolution in 2015 which asked the Province to investigate a model of publicly funded birth control similar to those offered in European countries. No response from the Provincial government has been received yet, however, during the Provincial election, free contraception was an election promise of the BC NDP. Staff will update Council should a response be received.

5.0 2019 UBCM RESOLUTIONS

5.1 Resolution: Elected Local Government Officials Participation in the Municipal Pension Plan

At its meeting on 2019 March 25, Council approved a resolution urging the Province to enable elected local government officials to participate in the provincially administered pension plans in place in these jurisdictions. This resolution was endorsed at the 2019 UBCM Convention. The Ministry of Finance and the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat responded to this resolution in 2020 February. They recognized the important role of elected local officials in helping communities grow and the commitments that often last many years. They stated that a first step in considering the inclusion of local government officials in the Municipal Pension Plan is to identify any barriers, including legal barriers. Ministry of Finance staff have initiated stakeholder engagement such as with the BC Pension Corporation on potential challenges that exist before considering amendments to the *Public Sector Pension Plans Act*. No further updates have been received at this time. Staff will update Council should there be further announcements as a result of this stakeholder engagement.

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5.2 Resolution: BC Building Code Alignment with National Building Code of Canada – Secondary Suites

Council also adopted a resolution urging the provincial government to align the provisions for secondary suites in the British Columbia Building Code with those of the National Building Code. Variations between the two codes can sometimes cause unnecessary confusion and limit the possibilities for creation of rental housing, particularly secondary suites. Updates to the BC Building Code that became effective in 2019 December, now allow the construction of secondary suites in more types of houses, such as duplexes and row housing. Size restrictions for secondary suites have also been removed from the Code. These changes provide local governments with more options for enabling affordable rental housing options.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report proposes a new resolution for submission to the 2021 LMLGA AGM and UBCM Convention. For the convenience of Council, the report also provides an update on resolutions submitted in 2019 and 2020.

It is recommended that Council endorse the new resolution, as outlined in *Section 3.0* of this report, for submission to the LMLGA AGM and 2021 UBCM Convention. It is also recommended that staff be authorized to forward a copy of this report, accompanied by any supporting background reports and information, to the LMLGA and UBCM. Finally, it is recommended that a copy of this report be circulated to Burnaby MLAs for information.

Any additional resolutions which may come forward subsequent to this report, and prior to the 2021 June 30 UBCM deadline, may be submitted directly to the UBCM for possible consideration at the 2021 UBCM Convention.



E. W. Kozak, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

CS:sa

cc: Director Corporate Services
Director Engineering
Director Finance
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Director Public Safety and Community Services
City Clerk

Fire Chief
Chief Building Inspector
Chief Librarian
City Solicitor
OIC – RCMP