

Ministry of Municipal Affairs Estimates Debate 2022/23

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1. Local Government Transfers

Question: There is a \$10M reduction in 2022/23 and outyears due to a fiscal adjustment from *Budget 2020*. Can you please identify why that reduction is occurring and which programs it will impact?

Response:

- Government continues to protect and grow funding for core programs and services while maintaining fiscal balance. In *Budget 2020*, Government redirected a modest amount of previously planned ministry budget allocations to core programs and services. These adjustments represent less than 1 per cent of government's annual operating expenses and enabled new Budget 2020 investments towards the growing demand for the essential services that British Columbians depend on, such as health care, education, social and family support services, and community safety and justice services.
- Within this context, the Province has made the decision to retire the 10-year old Climate Action Revenue Incentive rebate program (CARIP) commencing in 2022/23 and is working with UBCM to determine how best to support local governments through new initiatives the Province is investing in to tackle the challenge of climate change.
- The Province remains committed to tackling climate change and building resilience and that's why we launched the CleanBC strategy to cut air pollution, boost the economy and make life better for people.

2. Auditor General for Local Government (AGLG)

Question: Why are you getting rid of the Office of the AGLG?

Response:

- Government took a second look at the review done on the AGLG in 2018, and how the Office is supporting local governments to deliver for the public.
- While the review showed that some local governments found value in AGLG services, the Office was imposed on local governments when it was created and UBCM – on behalf of all B.C. local governments – continues to not be in support of the Office.
- While we have made the decision to dissolve the Office, I know the information gained during its time will help us and UBCM as we support local governments.

We want to thank the AGLG Mike Furey and the Audit Council members for their contributions to the Office.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

2022/23 Estimates Summary

MINISTRY ESTIMATES BUDGET OVERVIEW

Ministry Operations Vote 38

2022/23 Estimate Budget: \$259.814M (a net decrease of \$48.524M or 15.7% from the Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$308.338M)

The \$48.524 M decrease is primarily due to the following:

- \$10.884M increase due to the following Local Government transfers:
 - \$3.3M increase for Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing
 - \$4.9M increase for Small Community and Regional Districts Program
 - \$0.88M increase for Bulkley Nechako / Kitimat Stikine Regional Districts
 - \$0.161M increase for First Nations Rail Tax Agreement
 - \$0.603M increase for University Endowment Lands Fire Contract
 - \$1.04M increase due to the additional funding of the Peace River Agreement
- \$1.548M increase due to general ministry staffing resourcing for the Local Government and Corporate Management Services divisions
- \$1.601M increase to the University Endowment Lands special account for administration expenses and offsetting recovery due to an increase in revenues in the UEL
- \$0.036M increase to Legal Services due to increased rates
- \$0.009M increase to the Minister's Office resources

The above increases are offset by:

- \$62M decrease due to the completion of the Capital Regional District Wastewater Treatment Project
- \$0.602M decrease due to winding down of Office of the Auditor General for Local Government

CORE BUSINESS SUMMARY

Local Government Division \$270.950M

- \$220.500M (\$50.450M decrease from Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$270.950M)
 - \$3.3M increase for Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing
 - \$4.9M increase for Small Community and Regional Districts Program
 - \$0.88M increase for Bulkley Nechako / Kitimat Stikine Regional Districts
 - \$0.161M increase for First Nations Rail Tax Agreement
 - \$0.603M increase for University Endowment Lands Fire Contract
 - \$1.040M increase due to the additional funding of the Peace River Agreement
 - \$0.645M increase due to budget lift for General Ministry Resourcing
 - \$0.021M increase to Legal Services due to rate increases
 - \$62M decrease due to the completion of the Capital Regional District Wastewater Treatment Project

Immigration Services and Strategic Planning \$19.128M

- \$19.128M (\$0.011M increase from Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$19.117M)
 - \$0.011M increase to Legal Services due to rate increases

Executive and Support Services \$7.917M

- Minister's Office
\$629K (\$9k increase from Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$620k)
 - \$9K increase to support Minister's Office resources
- Corporate Services
\$7.288M (\$0.305M increase from Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$6.983M)
 - \$0.903M increase due to budget lift for General Ministry Resourcing
 - \$0.004M increase to Legal Services due to rate increases
 - \$0.602M decrease due to winding down of the Office of the Auditor General for Local Government

Special Accounts \$12.269M

- University Endowment Lands Administration Account
\$12.269M (\$1.601M increase from Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$10.668M)
 - \$1.601M increase to the University Endowment Special Account for administration expenses and offsetting recovery due to an increase to revenues in the UEL

Ministry Capital Budget

- \$2.354M (\$0.247M decrease from Restated Estimates 2021/22 of \$2.601M)
 - \$247K decrease for the Local Government Information System



February 25, 2022

Honourable Nathan Cullen
Minister of Municipal Affairs
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Cullen:

Thank you for agreeing to serve British Columbians as Minister of Municipal Affairs.

In this past year, as a member of Cabinet, your work has contributed to this government's efforts to support British Columbians as they face the impacts of COVID-19. People throughout the province continue to work together to stay safe and rebuild their lives and communities from the effects of the pandemic. Our government remains committed to getting through the pandemic and its after effects by building on this resilience and focusing on what matters most to people.

British Columbians voted for a government focused on their priorities: providing better health care for people and families, delivering affordability and security in our communities, and investing in good jobs and livelihoods in a clean-energy future.

I expect you –with support of your ministry – to focus on the commitments detailed in our platform, *Working for You*, along with the following foundational principles:

- **Putting people first:** Since 2017, our government has focused on making decisions to meet people's needs. That focus drove our work in our first term and will continue to be our priority. British Columbians are counting on the government to keep them safe and to build an economic recovery that works for everyone, not just those at the top. Keeping people at the centre of everything we do means protecting and enhancing the public services people rely on and working to make life more affordable for everyone.

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**Office of the
Premier**

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Victoria

- **Lasting and meaningful reconciliation:** Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility for us all. The unanimous passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* was a significant step forward in this journey. True reconciliation will take time and ongoing commitment to work with Indigenous peoples as they move toward self-determination. Our government – and every ministry – must remain focused on creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to be full partners in our economy and providing a clear and sustainable path for everyone to work toward lasting reconciliation.
- **Equity and anti-racism:** Our province's history, identity and strength are rooted in its diverse population. Yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government, and their lives. Our government has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms – and every ministry has a role in this work. While our caucus elected a record number of women, more work remains to address gender equity. Delivering on our commitments to address racial discrimination will require a commitment by all of government to ensure increased IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) representation within the public service, including in government appointments. Our efforts to address systemic discrimination must also inform policy and budget decisions by reviewing all decisions through a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens.
- **A better future through fighting climate change:** In 2018, our government launched our CleanBC climate action plan. CleanBC puts British Columbia on the path to a cleaner, better future by building a low-carbon economy with new clean-energy jobs and opportunities, protecting our air, land and water and supporting communities to prepare for climate impacts. It is every Minister's responsibility to ensure your ministry's work continues to achieve CleanBC's goals.
- **A strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone:** We will continue our work to support British Columbians through the pandemic and the economic recovery by investing in health care, getting people back to work, helping businesses and communities, and building the clean, innovative economy of the future. Our plan will train the workforce of tomorrow, help businesses hire and grow and invest in the infrastructure needed to build our province.

The pandemic has reminded us that we're strongest when we work together. Delivering on our commitments to people will require a coordinated effort with your cabinet and caucus colleagues, supported by the skilled professionals in the public service. You will also support your cabinet colleagues to do their work, particularly where commitments cross ministry lines.

.../3

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the broader public good despite their partisan perspectives. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas, regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships through public and stakeholder engagement plans that connect with people to incorporate their perspectives early in the policy development process. These plans must include measurable outcomes and ensure active dialogue and ongoing outreach in your ministry's actions and priorities.

Over the course of our mandate, I expect you will make progress on the following items:

- Work with UBCM and local government elected leaders to support their communities through the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery.
- Improve local communities' ability to respond to the COVID-19 crisis by launching the new Strengthening Community Fund to enable local governments to apply for funding to help them tackle street disorder, cleanliness, and public safety, and improve their ability to respond to challenges posed to businesses and neighbourhoods by homelessness.
- Work with cabinet colleagues to redouble our government's efforts to streamline foreign credential assessments processed by various regulatory bodies and health-related colleges to make sure immigrants can more easily strengthen their language skills and access job opportunities in their field of training.
- With support from the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing, work to bring down the cost of housing for people by streamlining and modernizing development permitting and approvals.
- Work with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to support economic recovery in communities across BC by continuing to build important infrastructure projects, including through StrongerBC and the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- Work with the Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship and Minister responsible for Fisheries, to support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, on the Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy to ensure greater alignment between transportation and land-use planning.
- Support the work of the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing and the Minister of Finance to continue work to provide relief for commercial tenants with triple-net leases who are paying high property taxes.

- Support the work of the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness, including those living in encampments.
- Support the work of the Minister of Finance to establish Property Assessed Clean Energy financing.

Our work as a government must continually evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated in this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual cabinet and Treasury Board oversight. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by cabinet.

All cabinet members are expected to review, understand and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act* and conduct themselves with the highest level of integrity. As a minister of the Crown, your conduct will reflect not only on you, but on cabinet and our government.

You are responsible for providing strong, professional, and ethical leadership within cabinet and your ministry. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your deputy minister and the public servants under their direction who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. You must ensure your minister's office meets the highest standards for integrity and provides a respectful and rewarding environment for all staff.

My commitment to all British Columbians is to do my level best to make sure people's lives are better, safer, and more affordable. I believe the challenges we face can and will be overcome by working together. By way of this letter, I am expressing my faith that people can expect the same commitment from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Horgan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Horgan
Premier

Mandate Commitment Tracker

The Mandate Commitment Tracker will be included in the Estimates Binder. The purpose is to provide a brief (100 words max) snapshot of the project's status. Estimates Notes will provide additional information.

Please note whether the commitment is completed or underway. In the Status Description include any results to date, upcoming milestones and linkages to provincial strategies, action plans etc. that the commitment supports (e.g., CleanBC, Economic Plan, Homes for B.C.).

Minister Nathan Cullen - Mandate Letter Commitments 2022	Division Lead	Completed or Underway	Status Description (100 words max)
<p>1. Work with UBCM and local government elected leaders to support their communities through the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery.</p>	<p>Local Government Division</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Completed 40 Ministerial Orders to provide legislative exemptions that allowed individual local governments to run safer elections for voters and election staff.</p> <p>Completed a Ministerial Regulation (under new Bill 10 amendments), to enable over 6 local governments to conduct safer by-elections or assent votes (expires March 31, 2022).</p> <p>Provided advice and published guidance materials on best practices during COVID, including: Open Meetings and Electronic Meetings; Electronic Meetings and Public Hearings; Conducting By-Elections and Assent Voting; Compliance and Enforcement Support under Order M314; Improvement Districts (Holding AGMs, Elections, and Electronic Meetings); and Adapting to the New Electronic Meetings Framework.</p>
<p>2. Improve local communities' ability to respond to the COVID-19 crisis by launching the new Strengthening Community Fund to enable local governments to apply for funding to help them tackle street disorder, cleanliness, and public safety, and improve their ability to respond to challenges posed to</p>	<p>Local Government Division</p>	<p>Underway</p>	<p>On the Province's behalf, UBCM is administering the \$100M Strengthening Communities' Services funding program to help B.C. communities address the impacts of homelessness and strengthen community health and safety.</p> <p>The program's first intake saw more than \$76M invested in 64 communities. This funding supports initiatives such as outreach, mental health supports, and expanded temporary shelters.</p>

Municipal Affairs Mandate Letter Commitments - Tracker

Minister Nathan Cullen - Mandate Letter Commitments 2022	Division Lead	Completed or Underway	Status Description (100 words max)
businesses and neighbourhoods by homelessness.			The program's second intake is open for applications from February to April 2022, with successful applicants planned to be announced in the summer.
3. Work with cabinet colleagues to redouble our government's efforts to streamline foreign credential assessments processed by various regulatory bodies and health related colleges to make sure immigrants can more easily strengthen their language skills and access job opportunities in their field of training.	Immigration Services and Strategic Planning Division	Underway	Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations
4. With support from the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing, work to bring down the cost of housing for people by streamlining and modernizing development permitting and approvals.	Local Government Division	Underway	Substantive policy and program work underway in four key streams: s.13 Early actions include: funding of 43 local government initiatives to increase development approval efficiencies through the \$15M Local Government Development Approvals Program; Fall 2021 legislation to (1) remove requirements for public hearings for zoning bylaws that are consistent with the OCP, and (2) delegate some land-use decision-making authority to staff.
5. Work with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to support economic recovery in communities across BC by continuing to build important infrastructure projects, including through StrongerBC and the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.	Local Government Division	Underway	Advice/Recommendations: Intakes and full allocation for Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for the following streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community, Culture & Recreation • Rural and Northern Communities • COVID-19 Infrastructure Resilience ICIP Environmental Quality – two intakes completed; final intake review under way. ICIP CleanBC Communities Fund - two intakes completed; final intake open for application until May 2022.

Municipal Affairs Mandate Letter Commitments - Tracker

Minister Nathan Cullen - Mandate Letter Commitments 2022	Division Lead	Completed or Underway	Status Description (100 words max)
6. Work with the Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship and Minister responsible for Fisheries, to support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, on the Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy to ensure greater alignment between transportation and land-use planning.	Immigration Services and Strategic Planning Division	Underway	Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations
7. Support the work of the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing and the Minister of Finance to continue work to provide relief for commercial tenants with triple-net leases who are paying high property taxes.	Local Government Division	Underway	MUNI is supporting the work of the Ministry of Finance as it undertakes consultation and develops options for approaches to address the issue of high taxes for commercial tenants under triple net leases. MUNI participates on the Executive Committee with ADM attendance and on the Deputy Minister Oversight Committee. The Executive Committee provides direction to the Finance project lead and vets policy options for DM oversight for ministerial and Cabinet approval.
8. Support the work of the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness, including those living in encampments.	Local Government Division	Underway	LGD staff are participating in regular Cross-Ministry homelessness initiatives (including Cross-Ministry Encampment Coordination Calls, the Homelessness Strategy Coordinating Committee, and the Vulnerable Population Working Group).
9. Support the work of the Minister of Finance to establish Property Assessed Clean Energy financing.	Local Government Division	Underway – Cabinet Confidences	Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations

Ministry Response to Reconciliation

ISSUE

- Ministry's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) Commitments

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- **We're working with Indigenous peoples to put the principles of The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act into action.**
- **Continuing to encourage strong relationship between Indigenous Nations and local governments is a fundamental aspect of the Declaration Act and achieving lasting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.**
- **Through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan, my Ministry has committed to supporting inclusive regional governance and reviewing local processes that guide the naming of local governments.**
- **This will take time – examining the opportunities for increasing Indigenous participation on regional district boards and evolving naming processes will require additional engagement, collaboration and assessment.**
- **We are learning from the many successful collaborations between Indigenous Nations and local governments, partnering to build stronger, more resilient communities.**
- **I encourage all local governments to collaborate with their neighbours, especially around decisions that affect people and communities.**

If asked about what the province is doing to support the re-naming of local governments:

- **My ministry is committed to working with Indigenous peoples to put the principles of the Declaration Act into action.**

Honourable Nathan Cullen

March 2022

- **Local government names that are associated with Canada's colonial past can be a devastating reminder of the mistreatment of Indigenous peoples.**
- **In cases where local governments and Indigenous neighbours want to pursue re-naming, Ministry staff will be providing guidance and support to help adapt naming processes to emphasize collaboration between local governments and Indigenous Nations, as well as fulsome engagement with area residents.**
- **We are supporting local governments to develop even stronger relationships with Indigenous Nations to create a B.C. where everyone feels comfortable in their communities.**

If asked about the options the ministry is exploring to include Indigenous representation on regional boards:

- **We know there is a strong and growing interest from regional districts and Indigenous Nations for Indigenous representation to sit as a voting member on regional district boards, and we are looking into this.**
- **We encourage communities to learn from successful collaborations between Indigenous Nations and regional districts currently underway, in places like Capital Regional District and Central Okanagan Regional District to name a few.**
- **Opportunities may also exist for Indigenous Nations' representatives to:**
 - **Participate on boards and committees in an advisory role.**
 - **Enter into agreements and protocols on matters such as land use, reconciliation, or economic development.**
 - **Hold regional forums and other events to encourage collaborative discussion, such as Community to Community Forums.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- The Ministry of Municipal Affairs has two commitments in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) Action Plan, to review the principles and processes that guide the naming of local governments and evolve practices to foster reconciliation and to support inclusive regional governance by advancing non-treaty First Nation participation on regional district boards. Ministry staff are working on actions to support both commitments, including researching existing governance systems of regional and Indigenous governments, engaging with Indigenous peoples and other interested parties, initiating pilot projects, and sharing lessons learned to decide if legislative changes are needed, as well as providing funding to some local governments (Powell River and Queen Charlotte) who are considering name changes to support reconciliation and collaboration with Indigenous Nations and engagement with area residents.
- In 2019, the Province passed legislation to bring provincial laws into alignment with the DRIPA. The Declaration Act establishes a clear framework for moving reconciliation forward, including exploring new ways to strengthen government-to-government relationships and work together on good governance at the community level.

Re-Naming Local Governments

- The idea of changing a municipal name can be divisive within the community. Ministry staff are working to support local governments and Indigenous Nations to find new practices for community collaboration and engagement to create greater social cohesion for all residents. Ministry staff are working with the City of Powell River and the Village of Queen Charlotte to encourage collaboration between the local governments and the Indigenous Nations of Tla'amin Nation and Haida Nation, and engagement with area residents to build support for the naming change prior to the local governments seeking a decision from the province.
- The Province has provided both communities funding (\$25,000 to Powell River and \$15,000 to Queen Charlotte) to support engagement with residents regarding possible name changes. Powell River and Tla'amin Nation have offered to be a pilot to demonstrate a collaborative and inclusive local approach the Ministry can then encourage in other communities to support the DRIPA commitment.

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March 2022

Indigenous Representation on Regional Boards

- The ministry is working with a provincial working group including staff from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) and the Ministry of Finance to prepare a work plan to determine the next steps for Indigenous participation on regional government boards.

Below are the Indigenous Nations that have access to representation on regional district boards:

- shíshálh Nation – The Sechelt Indian Government District operates as a municipality and is a full member of the Sunshine Coast Regional District based on federal and provincial legislation passed in 1986 and 1987 respectively.
 - Nisga'a Lisims Government and Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine – Nisga'a lands and communities are located in Electoral Area A of the Regional District. As a modern treaty First Nation, Nisga'a have an elected representative sitting on the Board.
 - Tsawwassen First Nation and Metro Vancouver – as a modern treaty First Nation, Tsawwassen is a member of the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board.
 - The Huu-ay-aht, Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, and Yuułu íł'áth First Nations, as modern treaty First Nations joined the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, all four First Nations are individually represented on the Board.
 - Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' (KY-OO-KIT / CHECK-LE-SET) First Nations (KCFN), as modern treaty First Nations joined the Strathcona Regional District.
 - Under the provisions in the Tla'amin Final Agreement, Tla'amin Nation, may become a member of the qathet Regional District without time restriction or obligation, by giving notice to the province.
- Without a treaty providing for direct representation, unless Indigenous Nation members are elected as an electoral area director or elected to a municipal council and then appointed as a regional district board [director] member, the Indigenous Nation may not have a [direct] voice in decision-making in their communities. And even in those instances, they are not directly representing an Indigenous Nation but all the residents within a defined geographical boundary.
 - Municipalities and regional districts are working with Indigenous Nations at the local level to build relationships, and in some cases Indigenous Nations can participate on boards and committees in an advisory role. For example, the Capital Regional District's standing committee includes representation from elected members of Indigenous Nations on a rotating basis. Also, Westbank First Nation participates on the Central Okanagan Regional District board as a non-voting member. However,

Honourable Nathan Cullen

March 2022

these positions do not provide Indigenous Nations with the authority to make decisions at a board level.

- The Union of BC Municipalities' policy on Indigenous Nations relations focuses on building stronger relationships between Indigenous Nations and local governments. A Memorandum of Understanding between UBCM and the Province on engagement was renewed at the 2021 UBCM Convention. One component of the Memorandum of Understanding includes engaging on matters of mutual interest including those matters that will impact local government jurisdictions.
- There are many examples of collaborative relationships between Indigenous and local governments. A collection of resources related to initiatives, agreements, arrangements, partnerships, and the provision of services (such as sewer, water, and fire services) between Indigenous governments and organizations, and local governments in British Columbia is available at: <https://civicinfo.bc.ca/first-nation-relationship-resources>
- A Community-to-Community Forum program is in place to facilitate exploratory discussion between Indigenous Nations and local governments. The program also provides funding for events between the two governments to encourage relationship-building. The Ministry contributes \$50,000 annually towards the program that is administered by UBCM in partnership with the BC First Nations Summit. Further information is available on the Union of British Columbia Municipalities website: <https://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/community-to-community-forum.html>
- After the 2019 UBCM convention, the ministries of Municipal Affairs and Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation established an external working group with UBCM, the Central Coast Regional District and the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District to explore 'beyond' treaty First Nations representation on a regional district board. The Central Coast Regional District and the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District have both expressed interest in being part of a Ministry pilot project to include Indigenous participants on their regional district boards if that is feasible.

CONTACT: Alanah Connie, Senior Public Affairs Officer GCPE, 250 880-4935

Honourable Nathan Cullen

January 2022

COMMUNITY GAMING GRANTS – REGULAR

ISSUE

- More than 5,000 not-for-profit organizations, representing communities throughout B.C. benefit from \$140 million in Community Gaming Grants (CGG) every year to directly deliver approved programs in their communities.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- In 2022/23, Community Gaming Grants will continue to be awarded to a diverse range of not-for-profit organizations representing six sectors: arts and culture, sport, environment, public safety, human and social services and parent and district parent advisory councils. The Capital Projects Sector will return for its sixth year in 2022.
- In 2017/18, the program budget increased from \$135 million to \$140 million to accommodate the inclusion of a new Capital Projects Sector grant (\$5 million).
- A gaming revenue-sharing agreement between B.C. and First Nations communities was announced in *Budget 2019*.
- This revenue-sharing arrangement does not change the amount of funding that currently goes to B.C.'s not-for-profit sector through the CGG program.
- In light of the pandemic and resulting pressures on not -for-profit organizations, the Branch made changes to the program in 2020/21, such as:
 - Allowing organizations to redirect program funds for cancelled or postponed programming to any other approved program;
 - Extending the permissible timeframe to spend gaming funds from 12 to 24 months, allowing organizations to retain funding for future program delivery;
 - Relaxing financial eligibility criteria for returning applicants to ensure organizations can continue to access grants; and

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January 2022

- **Opening the Human and Social Services sector two months earlier to support organizations that were facing an increased demand for services due to the pandemic.**
- **For 2021/22 and 2022/23 grant years many of these COVID-19 response measures have continued. Other changes have been introduced to assist with re-start and recovery:**
 - **Allowing CGG funding to be used for the creation of new paid positions, which supports organizations to increase staff capacity to replace lost volunteers (introduced 2021/22);**
 - **Funding for programs that have been delivered for less than 12 months (introduced 2022/23); and,**
 - **Allowing organizations to use up to 15 per cent of their grant amount toward organization operational costs (introduced 2022/23).**
- **The Province is committed to considering input from all stakeholders regarding the program, including ongoing consultation with the British Columbia Association for Charitable Gaming (BCACG).**
- **The Branch has also incorporated stakeholder feedback from the 2018 BC Stats survey, which was sent to all applicant organizations plus a sample of non-applicant not-for-profits. 3,656 survey responses were received.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **CGG funding level history:**
 - **2008/09 pre-economic recession funding was \$156 million.**
 - **2009/10, CGG funding was reduced to \$112.5 million.**
 - **In March 2011, the funding level was increased to \$135 million.**
 - **In 2017/18 – CGG program funding increased to \$140 million. The \$5 million increase remains dedicated to funding Capital Projects.**



2022/23 Estimates Note

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January 2022

- In 2019/20 there was a \$3 million year-end program surplus in the \$135 million regular program that was provided to Food Banks British Columbia to reallocate to food banks throughout B.C. during the provincial state of emergency.
- The primary reason for the surplus was fewer applications in the Human and Social Services sector due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the non-profit sector.
- The Branch also implemented changes to the CGG \$5 million 'Capital Projects' program in 2020/21, including: amendments to the program assessment criteria to give priority consideration to projects that are required as a direct result of COVID-19, and a reduction in the 'matching funds' requirements for COVID-19 related applications from 50 per cent to 20 per cent of project costs, in recognition of the financial challenges many not-for-profits face.

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Honourable Nathan Cullen

April 2022

COMMUNITY GAMING GRANTS – CAPITAL PROJECTS SECTOR

ISSUE

- As part of Budget 2017, Treasury Board approved a \$5 million base budget lift starting in 2017/18 to support a new capital component of the Community Gaming Grants (CGG) program.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- **The Ministry has successfully delivered the Capital Project Grant Program for five years, from 2017/18 to 2021/22. 2022/23 will be the sixth year of the program.**
- **Applications are competitively assessed against the published eligibility criteria by professional public servants in the CGG Branch.**
- **In 2021/22, 96 projects totalling \$8.9 million were funded representing all regions of B.C. and all six CGG sectors.**
- **Two Indigenous projects were supported, including construction of a post-treatment recovery home for a Friendship Centre in Lillooet and purchase of a van to improve community access for a wellness society's programs and services in Salmon Arm.**
- **In 2017/18, 2018/19, 2020/21 and 2021/22, additional capital projects were funded with money that was not fully spent in the regular \$135 million program; the Branch did not fund additional projects in 2019/2020.**
- **In consideration of the financial challenges faced by non-profit organizations as a result of the pandemic, in 2021/22, the Branch continued to allow a reduction in the 'matching funds' requirements for COVID-19 related applications for a second year. The matching funds requirement was reduced from 50 per cent to 20 per cent of project costs.**

2022/23 Estimates Note

Honourable Nathan Cullen

April 2022

- **As many not-for-profits had already implemented necessary changes needed to modify the delivery of programs and services during the COVID-19 pandemic, these requests were considered alongside regular applications in 2021/22.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- In February 2017, government announced that an additional \$5 million in funding for capital projects was allocated to the CGG program.
- Staff developed detailed assessment criteria with input from other areas of government and key stakeholders such as the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres and the British Columbia Association for Charitable Gaming.
- The Capital Projects Sector Guide is updated each year, providing information on eligibility, the application process, the assessment criteria, and the appropriate use of funds.
- The Manager of Policy and Community Outreach attended 14 virtual information sessions to share information on the Community Gaming Grant and Capital Project Grant in 2021/22, reaching nearly 1,400 people.
- Eligible not-for-profit organizations can be approved for between 20 to 50 per cent of the total cost of a project, to a maximum of \$250,000. Applicants are required to have matching funds. Projects require a total cost between \$20,000 and \$1,250,000.
- The project categories include the construction of new facilities and renovation of existing facilities, development of public amenities, and purchase of fixed capital assets. All projects are primarily for community benefit and accessible to the public.
- Additional considerations are made to include regional distribution, sector distribution, project size and Indigenous inclusion.
- The Branch received 196 applications in 2021/22, representing a total ask of \$21 million.
- Recent funding history is as follows:

2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
107 projects	\$9.2M	88 projects	\$8.3M	63 projects	\$4.9M	81 projects	\$7.7M	96 projects	\$8.9M

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COMMUNITY GAMING GRANTS – 2022/23 POLICY CHANGES

ISSUE

- Every year, the Community Gaming Grant (CGG) Branch updates the Program Guidelines to incorporate major policy changes, address stakeholder feedback, improve administration and increase clarity.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- **The Program Guidelines were released in early January 2022 and took effect on February 1, 2022.**
- **As a result of the 2016 Office of the Auditor General Report, the Branch committed to a continuous improvement approach where the Guidelines are updated and improved annually.**
- **The Branch continued several temporary policy changes to the 2022 Guidelines to support COVID-19 re-start and recovery:**
 - **The Human and Social Services sector will open two months earlier, in June, to support organizations that are facing an increased demand for services due to the pandemic;**
 - **Financial eligibility criteria for return applicants are temporarily relaxed to ensure organizations can continue to access Community Gaming Grants;**
 - **The requirement for existing programming to have been delivered for 12 months will not be enforced for returning applicants impacted by COVID-19; and,**
 - **CGG funding may be used for the creation of new paid positions, supporting organizations to retain staff and increase capacity.**
- **The Branch adopted two new policy changes for 2022 to ensure not-for-profits have greater flexibility in spending the grant funds and to respond to emerging needs:**

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- **Grant recipients may use up to 15 per cent of funds toward core operating costs; and,**
- **Programs which have been delivered for less than 12 months may be considered for funding (this new policy change will be offered for a three-year pilot period at which time analysis will be done of the impacts of the change to the sector).**
- **In addition to the COVID-19 changes and new policy changes, the Branch also made minor changes and clarification to existing policy to better assist applicants.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Each year, Guideline development work begins in May and is finalized by November 30th to allow for the release of online and print materials by mid-January.
- Engagement from key stakeholders, including the BC Association for Charitable Gaming, is sought for material changes to the Guidelines prior to their finalization.
- The Branch made changes to the CGG \$135 million 'Regular' program in response to the pandemic in spring of 2020. Many of these changes have again been written into the 2022 Guidelines as temporary policy changes to support COVID-19 re-start and recovery.
- The Branch also carried forward a change to the CGG \$5 million 'Capital Projects' program from 2020/21, consisting of a reduction in the 'matching funds' requirements for COVID-19 related applications from 50 per cent to 20 per cent of project costs, in recognition of the financial challenges many not-for-profits face.

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DISSOLUTION OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ISSUE

- The Office of the Auditor General for Local Government (AGLG) has closed.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- **While the results of the 2018 independent review showed that many local governments found value in AGLG services, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) continued to oppose the Office.**
- **I want to thank both the AGLG and the Audit Council members for their hard work assisting local governments.**
- **The 32 performance audits and 10 good practices booklets produced by the AGLG will continue to be available through the ministry's website.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- In 2015, UBCM endorsed a resolution calling on government to eliminate the AGLG. The resolution stated that the AGLG's work is already being met under existing local government legislation and regulations. The UBCM opposed the Office, saying it was imposed upon them without consultation and insinuated that local governments were poor fiscal managers.
- In February 2020, the previous Minister decided to close the Office. Her reasons for closing the office included UBCM's continued opposition and the high costs of audits. The five-year review of the AGLG office found that each audit costs on average approximately \$400,000 to \$500,000.
- The mandated activities of the AGLG Office were completed by March 31, 2021 and the office closed. Final administrative tasks related to closing the office were managed by the Ministry.
- The *Auditor General for Local Government Act* is scheduled to be repealed in 2022.

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INTEGRATED TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY MANDATE COMMITMENT ISSUE

- Development of an Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- **Through the Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy (ITDS), the province is introducing an integrated planning approach to ensure greater alignment between transportation and land-use.**

Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

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- Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

- **This province-wide initiative will enhance current planning processes to help focus government policy, coordinate with municipal and regional economic development and land-use planning initiatives and seek to work with local governments and other partners in a collaborative way.**
- **We are already applying these ITDS principles to projects like the Surrey Langley SkyTrain and the Central Okanagan Integrated Transportation Strategy.**
- **We will be engaging with partners to better understand opportunities and challenges in advancing integrated planning.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- The November 2020 mandate letter states that the Minister, “Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to work on the Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy to ensure greater alignment between transportation and land-use planning.”
- An integrated systems approach to planning is required to focus government policy, coordinate with economic development and land use planning initiatives, and prioritize transportation investments that contribute to an efficient and accessible multi-modal

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transportation network that moves people and goods while connecting communities, regions and global markets.

- This Province-wide initiative will align transportation/land use decisions and investments with broader government objectives such as affordable housing, climate action targets, resiliency, equity and reconciliation.

- Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

- Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

- Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

- Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications

- While the work on the province-wide initiative progresses, the ministry is already applying these goals and objectives in partnership with local governments and others on region specific projects.
- Central Okanagan Integrated Transportation Strategy is an example of a ministry initiative that is developing a multi-modal strategy to that connects and aligns with plans of the region and local governments. Findings and recommendations will enable all parties to coordinate transportation, land use and housing decisions, and investments that would best serve the communities and Central Okanagan region.

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CREENTIAL RECOGNITION AND LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION

ISSUE

- Government programs and initiatives to improve credential recognition and labour market outcomes of immigrants in B.C.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- **My ministry is actively working to improve foreign credential recognition for all newcomers, including those with nursing and other health care experience.**
- **Through the Credential Assessment Improvement Fund, B.C. has invested \$2.2 million since 2019 toward projects that reduce or remove unnecessary barriers in regulated occupations.**
- **Systemic changes like these take time. That's why B.C. also increased its investment in the Career Paths program to help newcomers find employment in their field.**
- **Part of my mandate commitment is to redouble efforts to improve foreign credential recognition and I can tell you that we are actively exploring options.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Many immigrants arrive to B.C. with valuable education, skills and experience gained outside of Canada. However, they may experience barriers to professional recognition that can create challenges for employment success. There are over 60 regulators in B.C. responsible for assessing and certifying professionals in more than 250 regulated professions.
- Municipal Affairs provides information and expertise to ministries and regulators on foreign credential recognition and has programs to help newcomers find employment and to support regulator process improvement.
- The Province spends \$5.8 million annually on the Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants program to help approximately 1,600 people new to B.C. each year find employment in occupations that match their pre-arrival skills, education and experience. 70% of clients find employment in their field and the average wage of clients increases by \$15.80/hour.



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- Another \$1 million annually is allocated for the Credential Assessment Improvement Fund, which supports projects to improve regulator processes and information for immigrants - levelling the playing field for newcomers.
- Approximately 40% of CAIF project funding (\$890,000) has gone towards 12 projects related to health care occupations, including a project to help the BC College of Nurses and Midwives develop a “triple track” assessment process expected to launch later this year.
- Municipal Affairs has no legal authority to direct regulators to improve credential recognition, as responsibility for regulator oversight resides with the applicable subject matter ministry. Questions specific to a particular regulator’s entry-to-practice standards should be redirected to the applicable ministry.
- Cabinet Confidences; Advice/Recommendations

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