



2022 RESOLUTION SUBMISSION TO AVICC

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPORT FOR RURAL AREAS

ISLANDS TRUST

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has implemented the “Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia”;

AND WHEREAS the Plan largely benefits urban areas that have better access to both resources and support services than rural areas;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC & UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to provide funding and support to local governments to facilitate affordable housing projects in rural areas in British Columbia.

BACKGROUND:

British Columbia is facing an acute shortage of affordable housing options needed to support the long-term sustainability and resilience of local communities. The Province of British Columbia has instituted “Homes for BC, a 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia” in order to address some of these challenges. However, the plan largely caters to high-density urban areas that have good access to the resources and support services needed to access BC Housing funding mechanisms. It is vital that the Province also provide capacity building support to rural communities in British Columbia to address their unique housing affordability challenges.

Amidst a heated real estate market and a global pandemic that has encouraged people to migrate to rural areas where they can work from home or have ‘staycations’ in second homes, rural areas are facing unprecedented housing demands and lack adequate affordable housing to support the basic needs of local seniors, working class families, tradespeople, and other key members of diverse and healthy rural communities. The dramatic deficit of affordable housing in rural areas has led to significant challenges for local governments, Islands Trust, and non-profits working in this field. Local rural governments are often required to expend significant resources putting in place supportive zoning, water, and personnel to support proposed housing projects before even being considered for BC Housing funding. These are resources that rural communities, in comparison to their urban counterparts, do not have. Rural BC needs more resources to be able to get projects to the point of being “shovel-ready” so that they are able to access the bulk of affordable housing funding intended for construction.

Provincial funding and support could help local governments and Islands Trust respond to the urgent and rapidly-increasing need to support affordable housing projects in their local jurisdictions, thus supporting the Province’s broader strategy for housing affordability in British Columbia.