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*Ministry of
Community Services*

2007/08 – 2009/10 SERVICE PLAN

February 2007



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

It is my pleasure to deliver the service plan for the Ministry of Community Services.

Our mandate is to promote sustainable and liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. This plan outlines what the Ministry will achieve in the coming year to move further toward our vision of ensuring British Columbia's communities are great places in which to live. In addition, this plan supports efforts to achieving the Government of British Columbia's Five Great Goals and our Pacific Leadership Agenda which includes creating vibrant, connected communities that are both socially responsive and environmentally sustainable.

We continue to assist British Columbia communities to strengthen their infrastructure and improve services they provide to their citizens. Our commitment includes a doubling of our small community and regional district grant programs; our support of cost-sharing opportunities, such as our Canada/B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund so communities have clean drinking water and improved wastewater treatment; and our work with the Union of B.C. Municipalities to implement the Federal Gas Tax Transfer and Public Transit Agreements supporting a range of environmental objectives. Through a new LocalMotion initiative that supports cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, we are improving physical fitness and air quality and building healthier communities. Through our new Green City Awards, we are recognizing innovative communities that are leading the way in encouraging smart growth, physical fitness and energy conservation. The new B.C. Spirit Squares initiative will help create new public spaces in the province's communities. And, we are making new investments in B.C.'s smallest municipalities through the Towns for Tomorrow program and in tourism-based communities through revenue sharing with resort municipalities.

The Ministry also works with local governments and the federal government to put in place urban development agreements, and continues to support implementation of the tri-partite Vancouver Agreement. We have a key role in the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitments, working with relevant partner ministries and signatories to the 2010 Winter Games Bid to bring benefits to Vancouver's inner-city neighbourhoods.

An issue common to all British Columbia communities is the need to adapt to an aging population. The Ministry will lead and coordinate government's response to the recommendations of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues, to ensure that British Columbia is prepared for the coming demographic change, and able to support opportunities for seniors to remain independent and engaged in their communities.

The Ministry continues to support violence prevention and intervention services for women, and their children, who have experienced abuse including transition house services, safe houses, second stage housing, counselling and many new outreach services to connect vulnerable women with the services they may need. Last year, over 70 British Columbia communities developed and initiated new or enhanced violence prevention initiatives for women under the Community Action for Women's Safety grants. These grants focused on improving the safety of Aboriginal, immigrant and visible minority women, as well as older women and women with disabilities. We continue to provide a variety of supports for women at risk and with this year's Partners in Prevention grants we are supporting projects that prevent violence against women and girls by focusing on attitudes that lead to violence.

To enhance women's opportunities to build brighter futures, the Ministry will examine and strengthen options for supporting women's participation in the economy, beginning with the review of four pilot projects through Empowered to Work, a mentoring program for women entering, re-entering or transitioning in the workforce.

I am committed to each of these initiatives, working to ensure British Columbia communities are, now and in the future, great places in which to live.

The Ministry of Community Service 2007/08 – 2009/10 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*.

I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of February 12, 2007 have been considered in preparing the plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.



Honourable Ida Chong FCGA
Minister of Community Services
and Minister Responsible for
Seniors' and Women's Issues

February 12, 2007

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Ministry Overview

Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Community Services' mandate is to promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. The Ministry implements this mandate through the following core activities:

- providing the legislative, policy, and governance framework for local governments;
- providing advice and resources to local governments so that they can better meet the needs of their citizens through planning for sustainable development and addressing issues related to communities' social, economic and environmental well-being;
- providing leadership and coordinating resources to address issues facing inner-cities and assist communities in transition as a result of significant economic change;
- ensuring that the unique needs of women and seniors are addressed and integrated into public policy, legislation, programs, and services;
- contracting third-party service providers to deliver intervention and prevention services to women, and their children, who are leaving, or are affected by, abusive relationships; and
- building relationships and developing partnerships with other ministries, local and federal governments, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and stakeholders.

The Ministry administers all or parts of 19 pieces of legislation (see Appendix I), and has responsibility for appointing persons to the Islands Trust Fund Board (see Appendix II). The Ministry also appoints Provincial representatives to the Municipal Insurance Association of British Columbia.

The Ministry has three core business areas: local government; women's, seniors' and community services; and executive and support services (see Appendix II for the Ministry organizational chart). It is also responsible for providing municipal services in the University Endowment Lands.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

British Columbia's communities are great places in which to live.

Mission

To promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians.

Values

The Ministry is guided by the following values in conducting its work:

Cooperation — promoting teamwork and building relationships and partnerships of mutual trust, confidence, and respect.

Professionalism and Integrity — conducting respectful, honest, and ethical behaviour in all its communications and actions.

Citizen-Centred Service — providing high levels of service to Ministry clients and the public in a timely and effective manner.

Accountability — providing services efficiently with sound financial management; being accountable to government and the public for the results identified in the Ministry Service Plan.

Innovation and Creativity — championing a culture of learning, innovation, and creativity within all levels of the organization.

Strategic Context

In Canada, responsibility for local matters is assigned to the provinces under the *Constitution Act*. All provinces discharge this responsibility by providing a legislative framework within which local governments operate. In British Columbia, local governments consist of 157 municipalities and 27 regional districts, which collectively serve diverse communities whose populations range from under 250 in the Village of Silverton to over two million in the Greater Vancouver Regional District.¹ Local governments provide a wide range of services to their citizens, including fire protection, policing, land-use planning, parks, recreation, local streets, water, sewer as well as garbage collection and disposal. Local governments also support important objectives such as literacy, health and wellness, environmental sustainability and economic opportunity for British Columbians.

Challenges and opportunities facing B.C. communities, and their local governments, include:

- Eighty-seven per cent of British Columbia's population lives in a municipality, while thirteen per cent of the population lives in non-municipal territory. Most of British Columbia's urban population lives in an area covering less than three per cent of the entire province, putting increased demand on infrastructure and resources.²
- British Columbia's metropolitan regions are experiencing high growth. Continuing population growth (an additional 1.3 million people expected by 2031) increases pressure on housing prices and puts an additional strain on the existing urban infrastructure.³
- The problems facing British Columbia's inner-cities can be particularly challenging as: in most cases they have taken decades to become established; responses must be coordinated across a variety of agencies; and effective participation in solutions is often hindered by capacity among inner-city residents.
- Many rural communities that have traditionally depended on natural resource industries have been dramatically impacted in recent years by issues such as the softwood lumber dispute, the mountain pine beetle infestation, and the challenges of resource renewal.
- Rural communities face challenges in meeting the infrastructure needs of their communities. The Ministry explores opportunities to cost-share the development or improvement of infrastructure for urban and rural communities with federal and local governments.
- Tourism provides an opportunity to British Columbian communities to diversify, and local governments have a key role in realizing these opportunities through their decision-making.

¹ BC Stats, *BC Regional Districts and Municipal Population Estimates, 1996–2005*, Dec. 2005.

² BC Stats, *BC Municipal Population Estimates, 1996–2005*, Dec. 2005.

³ Ministry of Community Services, *Local Government Statistics and Facts*, March 2006.

Women in British Columbia represent 47 per cent of the paid labour force⁴ and just under 36 per cent of the self-employed.⁵ Despite the gains achieved in recent decades, many women still face socio-economic challenges. Women's hourly wage rate is on average 84.5 per cent of men's hourly wage rate (full-time).⁶ Women's labour force activity and incomes are more likely than men's to be affected by family and care-giving responsibilities, resulting in working part-time, taking time off, and/or retiring early.⁷ Women rely more heavily on government transfer payments, programs and services than do men.⁸ Women are still more likely to be victims of a sexual or physical crime committed by someone they know. For example, in 2004, 76 per cent of spousal assault incidents reported to police in B.C. involved a male offender.⁹

Seniors in British Columbia comprise 13.8 per cent of the population.¹⁰ That proportion is expected to rise to nearly 25 per cent by 2031.¹¹ In many respects, the majority of British Columbia's seniors are enjoying a high quality of life with two-thirds rating their health as either good or very good, and 69.7 per cent reporting that they have a high level of social support.¹² Given opportunities, seniors can continue to fully participate and contribute to society. The fastest growing segment of the seniors' population in Canada is those over 80 years of age.¹³ As the proportion of seniors in the provincial population goes up, and there is a disproportionate rise in seniors over 80, demands on health and community services will increase dramatically.

The Ministry of Community Services is well positioned to address its challenges and take advantage of its opportunities. The Ministry's staff are skilled and experienced. The Ministry has excellent client relationships and experience working cooperatively with federal and local governments and communities to develop innovative strategies to address issues of mutual interest. These strengths are complemented by a proactive Ministry Human Resource Management Plan aimed at addressing workforce and workplace issues to ensure that the Ministry has the capacity to meet its human resource needs in the future and that it continues to be an employer of choice.

⁴ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey (2005). Extract from file Cd1T01an.ivt.

⁵ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey (2005). Extract from file Cd1T01an.ivt.

⁶ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey (2005). Extract from file Cd3T01an.ivt.

⁷ Statistics Canada. Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division (2006). *Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report*. Ottawa: Minister of Industry.

⁸ See Footnote 7.

⁹ Police Services, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. *Police and Crime Summary Statistics, 1995–2004*.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada. n.d. *Table 051-0001 Population by Age and Sex*. CANSIM (database).

¹¹ BC Stats. *Population Aged 65 and Over by Health Service Delivery Areas, Seniors Scan, 2005*.

¹² Ministry of Health Services (2004). *A Profile of Seniors in British Columbia*. Children's, Women's and Seniors' Health: Population Health and Wellness.

¹³ Statistics Canada. 2001 Census. Analysis Series. *Profile of the Canadian population by age and sex: Canada ages*.

Core Business Areas

1. Local Government

The local government core business area is resourced by the Local Government Department and is composed of four program areas: Governance and Structure; Infrastructure and Finance; Intergovernmental Relations and Planning; and Local Government Policy and Research.

Through this core business area, the Ministry:

- provides the provincial legislative, regulatory, and policy frameworks that enable local governments to address community needs;
- manages water and sewer infrastructure capital funding and infrastructure planning;
- works with local governments to develop forward-looking regional strategies;
- makes strategic investments to support community health and sustainability;
- assists local governments with incorporations, amalgamations, and boundary extensions;
- fosters collaboration among federal, provincial, and local governments;
- builds and fosters partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including federal and local governments, provincial ministries, community agencies and the private sector; and
- facilitates productive relationships among local governments, provincial agencies, and First Nations.

The Local Government Department is also responsible for municipal services in the University Endowment Lands. The Local Government Department has a budget of \$196.6 million for 2007/08, with a staff of 96 full-time equivalents.

2. Women's, Seniors' and Community Services

The Women's, Seniors' and Community Services core business area is resourced by the Women's, Seniors' and Community Services Division. The Division comprises three policy/program areas: Seniors' and Women's Partnerships and Information Branch; Community Programs Branch; and Community Partnerships Branch. Under this core business area, the Ministry is responsible for leadership on issues related to seniors, women, inner-cities and communities in transition.

The Ministry contributes to community health and safety by contracting third-party service providers to deliver citizen-centred intervention and prevention services to women, and their children, who are leaving, or are affected by, abusive relationships. The Ministry also provides policy analysis, research, and information to government and the public on women's and seniors' issues, and funds mentoring programs for women entering, re-entering or transitioning in the workforce.

Through this core business area, the Ministry supports revitalization in inner-city communities through public, private and community partnerships. Responsibilities include: funding the BladeRunners youth employment program; coordinating resources and providing leadership to create economic and social development opportunities in inner-cities; and supporting the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement. This initiative arose from the 2010 Bid Corporation and its Member Partners' mutual vision to create legacies for all British Columbians. The guarantee section of the 2010 Bid Book contains 37 commitments (the Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement) that centre on employment, economic development, housing, recreation, and culture to ensure the interests of those living in Vancouver's inner-city neighbourhoods are addressed. This core business area also leads and coordinates the Provincial Government's work to address issues faced by communities in transition dealing with significant economic change. The Women's, Seniors' and Community Services core business area has a budget of \$55.8 million for 2007/08, with a staff of 37 full-time equivalents.

3. Executive and Support Services

The Executive and Support Services core business area is composed of the Management Services Division and the Offices of the Minister and Deputy Minister. The Management Services Division supports programs in the Ministry of Community Services and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts by supplying services such as:

- corporate policy and planning;
- legislation, regulation, and regulatory reform;
- facilities and administrative services;
- financial services;
- freedom of information services, privacy, records management, and the intranet;
- information technology services; and
- strategic human resources.

The Executive and Support Services core business area has a budget of \$9.1 million for 2007/08, with a staff of 70 full-time equivalents.

The Ministry Information Resource Management Plan overview is available on the Ministry website at: <http://www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/serviceplan/irmp.pdf>.

New Relationship

The Government of British Columbia is leading the nation in developing a New Relationship with First Nations and Aboriginal people. Guided by principles of trust, and by recognition and respect of First Nations' rights and title, we are building a stronger and healthier relationship between government and Aboriginal people. By working together, we will bring tangible social and economic benefits to Aboriginal people across the province and narrow the gap between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians.

The Ministry is committed to supporting and facilitating the development of constructive relationships between local governments and First Nations. The Ministry maintains close relationships with the Union of BC Municipalities and its First Nations Relations Committee, and participates on related working groups. The Ministry provides resources to local governments and other ministries to support an understanding of key treaty and non-treaty issues and concerns for local governments. The Ministry undertakes a variety of specific initiatives aimed at enhancing First Nations-local government relations. These include:

- providing annual funding (\$50,000) to the Union of BC Municipalities and the First Nations Summit to administer the Local Government-First Nations Community to Community Forum Program, which supports 30 to 50 regional forums per year, and a province-wide technical workshop or forum in alternating years;
- participating in treaty table discussions and workshops with provincial and federal negotiators and First Nations to raise awareness about the local government system and local government interests in treaties; and
- funding, leading and/or participating in research studies on issues affecting local government-First Nations relations. *Treaty Settlement Land: The Fiscal Impacts on Local Government* is a key example of this.

With regard to programs for Aboriginal people, the Ministry supports violence prevention and intervention initiatives for Aboriginal women. In addition, the BladeRunners program assists at-risk youth to enter the construction trades. In 2005/06, 71 per cent of youth participating in the program were of Aboriginal ancestry.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results

Overview

The following section describes the Ministry's goals, objectives, strategies and intended results for 2007/08–2009/10. The goals and objectives are substantially the same as outlined in last year's Service Plan with one exception; the third goal of "Communities effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens" has been merged into the first and second goals below.

The Ministry supports the achievement of the Five Great Goals of the Province's strategic plan and contributes to a number of the key cross ministry priorities and action plans.

Ministry Goals

To achieve its vision that "British Columbia's communities are great places in which to live", the Ministry has five goals:

1. Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens.
2. British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities.
3. Women are safe from domestic violence.
4. Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential.
5. Seniors have improved social and economic well-being.

Linkage to the Five Great Goals

The Provincial Government's Five Great Goals for a Golden Decade are:

1. Make British Columbia the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
2. Lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
3. Build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors.
4. Lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none.
5. Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

The Ministry of Community Services contributes significantly to Government's Great Goal to lead the world in sustainable environmental management. The Ministry works with the Union of BC Municipalities to implement the Federal Gas Tax Transfer Agreement and the Transit Agreement in support of environmental objectives through infrastructure investments which support cleaner drinking water, cleaner air, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The Ministry also supports urban planning and development by facilitating regional growth

strategies and by providing infrastructure grants for water and sewers through jointly-funded infrastructure programs, such as the BC Community Water Improvement Program and the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund. These resources contribute to the capacity of communities to grow in ways that are environmentally sustainable.

The Ministry has a number of programs and initiatives that contribute to Government's Great Goal of building the best system of support for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors. These include domestic violence prevention and intervention services, such as transition houses and safe homes, community-based prevention projects, and counselling programs for women, and their children, who have experienced abuse. The Ministry is also leading and coordinating Government's response to the report and recommendations of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues.

The Ministry contributes to Government's Great Goal of creating more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada. At the community level, the Ministry works to coordinate the work of the federal, provincial, and local governments to create healthy, safe, and sustainable inner-cities; develops strategies to support communities in transition; and supports economic development in resort communities through revenue sharing opportunities. At the individual level, the Ministry funds the BladeRunners program to give at-risk youth the opportunity to enter the construction industry, and Empowered to Work, a mentoring program for women to enter, re-enter or transition in the workforce.

Cross Ministry Initiatives

The Ministry of Community Services plays a supporting role with regard to the following cross ministry priorities and action plans:

2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

All provincial ministries, agencies and Crowns have been working together to ensure every available opportunity to develop sustainable economic legacies are explored and pursued so that businesses and communities in British Columbia receive benefit from the Games.

The Ministry has a key role in the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement, working with relevant partner ministries and the signatories to the Olympic Bid. These commitments are intended to maximize opportunities associated with the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in the areas of employment, economic development, housing, recreation, and culture, and to mitigate potential adverse effects of hosting the event. The BladeRunners program is an example of a program that is consistent with the Inner-City Inclusive Commitments as it takes advantage of growing opportunities in the construction industry. In 2005/06, over 160 participants successfully moved into employment as a result of participating in the program.

ActNow BC

ActNow BC, led by the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, combines cross government and community-based approaches to promote healthy living choices for British Columbians. The programs and initiatives champion healthy eating, physical activity, ending tobacco use, and healthy choices during pregnancy.

Local governments play a key role in supporting an active, healthy population. Local government decisions regarding land use and development, such as building or expanding recreational facilities or creating green spaces, affect the health of communities and their citizens. The Ministry is leading the new LocalMotion Fund, which will support the creation of bike paths, walkways, greenways, and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. In coordinating Government's response to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues, the Ministry will ensure consideration is given to opportunities for seniors to remain healthy and active in their communities.

Asia Pacific Initiative

The British Columbia Asia Pacific Initiative ensures the province has a coordinated and targeted strategic plan in place that takes full advantage of B.C.'s Pacific Gateway advantages and Asian cultural and language base. The Asia Pacific Initiative defines B.C.'s future role in the Asia Pacific economy and identifies the immediate priority actions that must be taken to further integrate the province into Asian markets.

The Ministry has been working closely with the Ministry of Economic Development, which has led sister city research this year, focusing mainly on how the tool could be used to facilitate B.C.'s relationships with China. Most recently, the China/Hong Kong Market Advisory Group submitted its report on enhancing the B.C. - China/Hong Kong commercial relationship, including how the Province could promote sister city arrangements.¹⁴ Two of the initiatives recommended in the report link to the Ministry's role in communities:

- create and Maintain a Database of Sister City Arrangements; and
- develop a "Best Practices Guide" to Sister City Arrangements.

A number of existing sister city arrangements already exist, such as Victoria and Suzhou, China (1980); Vancouver and Guangzhou, China (1985); and Prince Rupert and Cangzhou, China (1992).

Crystal Meth Strategy

Government's Crystal Meth Strategy, led by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, targets the use and production of Crystal Meth through an integrated framework that strengthens partnerships amongst communities, service providers and law enforcement agencies. The Crystal Meth Secretariat was established in 2005 to support new and continuing initiatives based on prevention, treatment and enforcement.

¹⁴ The China/Hong Kong Market Advisory Group was established in November 2005 under the auspices of the Asia Pacific Trade Council.

The Ministry has provided \$2 million to the Union of BC Municipalities to establish the Community Methamphetamine Response Funding Program, designed to promote community-based initiatives that discourage the use and/or production of Crystal Meth. As of June 30th, 2006, the program was fully subscribed, with 111 local government and 88 First Nations organizations participating. The Ministry also participates on the inter-ministry committee on Crystal Meth.

Mountain Pine Beetle

Projections indicate the mountain pine beetle infestation could kill 80 per cent of the pine forest in British Columbia by 2013. Pine forests dominate the interior of B.C., and their loss has significant implications for the forest environment, economy and the communities that depend on those forests for sustainability. The B.C. Government, through coordination by the Ministry of Forests and Range and the Provincial Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan, is working across a number of ministries to minimize and mitigate negative environmental and socio-economic impacts of the infestation, while recovering the greatest value and protecting public health, safety and infrastructure.

The Ministry of Community Services provides supports to communities in transition on a case-by-case basis, and support to regional beetle action coalitions. The Ministry's Community Transition framework will respond to communities facing significant economic and social adjustment, resulting in considerable impact on their municipal tax base. This Framework will be linked to, and support, the Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan.

Regulatory Reform

British Columbia continues to make regulatory reform a priority across government, making it easier for businesses to operate and succeed in British Columbia, while still preserving regulations that protect public health, safety and the environment. A citizen-centred approach to regulatory reform will reduce the number of steps it takes to comply with government requirements or access government programs and services.

The Ministry is supporting Government's Regulatory Reform Initiative through its commitment to maintain a zero net increase in regulatory requirements through 2008/09 and by improving regulatory quality. The Ministry will do this by ensuring that any proposed regulatory requirements are assessed against the government-wide goal. Current opportunities include:

- continuing work on the review and streamlining of regulations under the *Local Government Act*;
- making elector-friendly refinements to local government election processes, stemming from the Ministry's review of the 2005 general local election; and
- targeting provincial approvals of regional district bylaws that are more directly linked to provincial interests, thereby streamlining decision-making and allowing local governments to be more responsive to citizen's needs.

Citizen-Centred Service Delivery Initiative

Citizen-centred service delivery is a government-wide initiative to coordinate information, programs, and services so that they can be presented to citizens in a way that takes their needs into account from beginning to end. The vision is to make it possible for citizens to access the government information and services they need in a simple and timely manner with a phone call, a mouse click or a visit to a service centre, no matter how many programs or ministries are involved in their request.

The Ministry is committed to providing responsive, quality service to British Columbians. To this end, it provides information, advice, and support to local governments, women and seniors — and to other partners in government on their behalf. The Ministry's commitment to citizen-centred service is also affirmed in its values.

The Ministry's success in providing citizen-centred service is reflected in its excellent, long-standing relationships with local governments. It has worked in collaboration with the Union of BC Municipalities to make major legislative changes over the past several years. It also works in partnership with the Union of BC Municipalities and other local government organizations in developing information and best practices, such as the Regulatory Best Practices Guide. In 2006, the Ministry undertook a comprehensive survey of its local government clients to determine how municipalities are taking advantage of the *Community Charter*, and to assess their degree of satisfaction with the Ministry's support. The results of this survey will be analyzed to determine where the Ministry could improve its services to local governments. The Ministry also undertook an elections survey to identify improvements that can be made to the local government election process. The Ministry recently revamped the local government website to increase citizen accessibility to local government information.

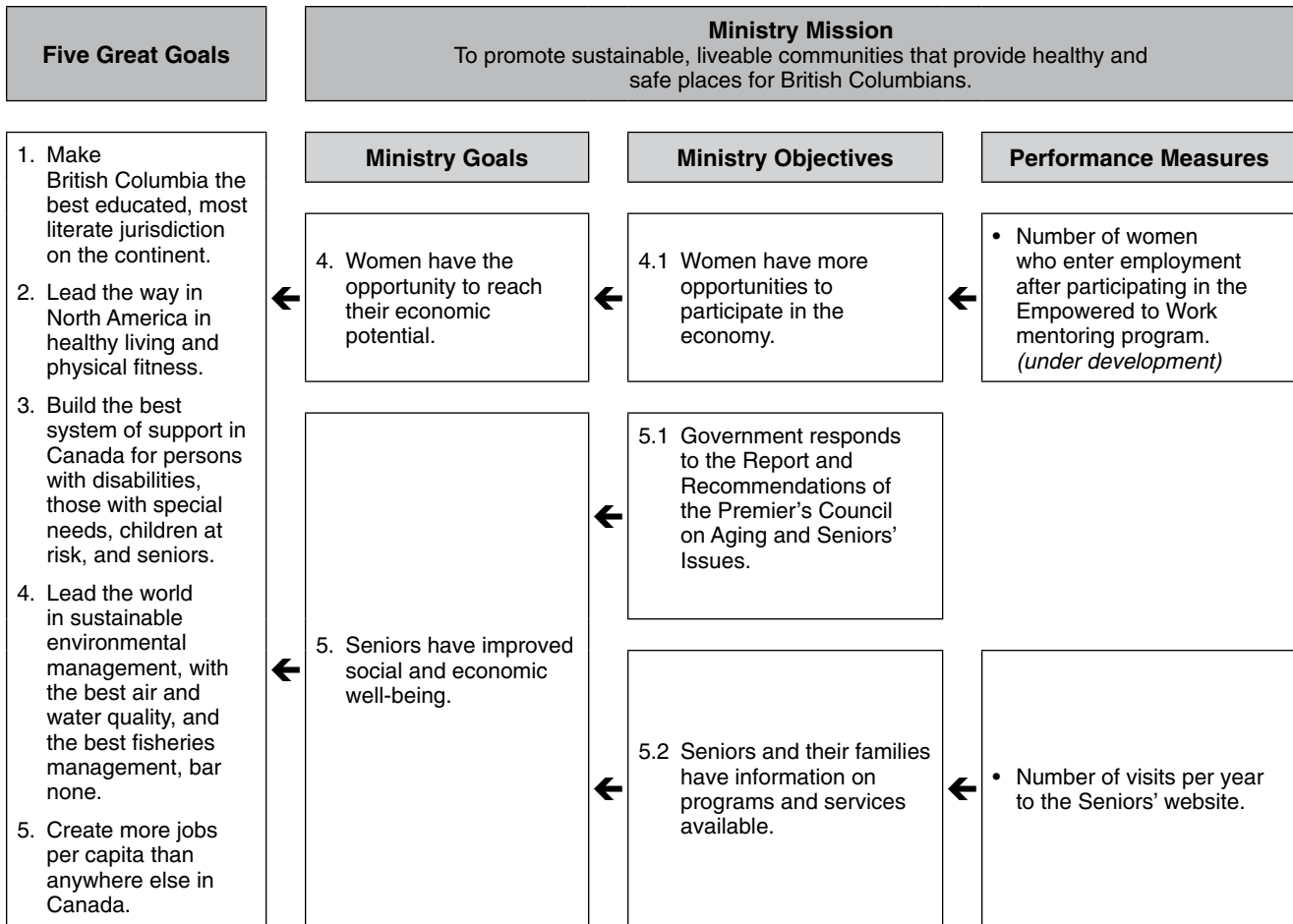
With regard to services to women and children, the Ministry's domestic violence prevention and intervention services for women and children are founded on citizen-centred service principles. Two years ago, the Government responded to community needs by significantly increasing funding for services to ensure greater access to counselling, residential and outreach programs. Existing services were enhanced and new services were implemented in 103 communities across the province.

The Ministry provides information to women and seniors, including an online Women's Services Directory, the BC Seniors Online website, the Seniors Guide, and the Seniors' Information Line.

Performance Plan

Performance Plan Summary Table

Five Great Goals	Ministry Mission To promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians.		
	Ministry Goals	Ministry Objectives	Performance Measures
1. Make British Columbia the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. 2. Lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness. 3. Build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors. 4. Lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management, bar none. 5. Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.	1. Community governance is open, effective, and accountable to its citizens.	1.1 Local governments are open, representative and responsive. 1.2 Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit.
	2. British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities.	2.1 Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability. 2.2 Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change. 2.3 The capacity of urban communities to respond to socio-economic issues is strengthened. 2.4 British Columbia has economically strong regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality. Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes. Percentage of BladeRunners participants moving into employment.
	3. Women are safe from domestic violence.	3.1 Communities have the capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services. Number of outreach services used by women and their children.



Goal 1: Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens.

Local government is the order of government closest to communities and citizens. It delivers basic services that people rely on every day, including: water and sewer infrastructure, policing, fire protection, local roads, recreation, business licensing, and community planning. The Ministry supports local governments to serve their citizens effectively by providing broadly empowering local government legislation. The *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* include checks and balances to ensure that local decision-making is open and effective, as well as requiring that there be appropriate opportunities for ongoing citizen involvement.

Core Business Area: *Local Government*

Objective 1: *Local governments are open, representative and responsive.*

A local government system in which citizens choose their form of governance, their elected officials and the services they receive is consistent with fundamental democratic principles. Citizens expect their local government to provide the community environment and services they need and desire. Elected officials need to be accountable to the electorate and government processes must be open and responsive to citizens and their interests.

Strategies

1. Provide a modern, empowering legislative, regulatory and policy framework:

The *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* provide local governments in B.C. with broad, enabling powers that allow them to be innovative in meeting the needs of their communities.

2. Promote citizens' access to local governments and build their capacity to participate in local decision-making: Communities benefit when their citizens are informed and actively participate in the local government system. Local democracy is enhanced and citizens are more likely to receive the services, and create the type of community, they need and desire for a price they are willing to pay. The Ministry provides the legislative, regulatory and policy environment that provides opportunities for citizens to engage in local decision-making. It also informs citizens of their rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis their local government.

3. Assist local governments with incorporations, amalgamations and boundary extensions: Municipal incorporations, restructures and boundary extensions can improve local governance for citizens who previously lived in unincorporated areas. Specifically, they provide access to services, local control, and more focused citizen representation within the broader community. Appropriate local government structures help them to achieve self-sufficiency, act effectively, and build strong alliances. When local governments are structured appropriately, they are better able to work together, and with the Province, to achieve their separate and mutual objectives.

Objective 2: *Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers.*

To meet the changing needs of their communities, local governments in British Columbia require a modern policy, legislative and regulatory framework that strikes an appropriate balance between broad powers and accountability to citizens. In 2004, the Province produced such a framework with the enactment of the *Community Charter*. With the Charter's implementation, British Columbia's relationship with local governments changed. Rather than focusing on provincial oversight and prescriptive regulation, it is now based on local accountability and local solutions to local issues — with the Province acting in

an advisory and facilitative capacity. This flexibility plus collaboration among partners in the local government system — the Union of BC Municipalities and the Local Government Management Association, in particular, and between orders of government — increases local government capacity to respond innovatively to citizens' changing needs and desires.

Strategies

1. **Support innovation and the effective use of legislative and regulatory powers:**

The Ministry works with the Union of BC Municipalities and the Local Government Managers' Association to provide local governments with quality advice, problem-solving expertise, and best practice tools to guide them in exercising their broad authority under the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*.

2. **Facilitate constructive relationships:** Strong, positive, long-term relationships among local governments, and between local governments and First Nations, enhance the ability of local governments to respond to their communities' needs. The facilitation of productive relationships between the Province, local governments, First Nations, the Union of BC Municipalities, the federal government, and other relevant parties helps the Province achieve its objectives in a way that is also respectful of local governments' interests. Where necessary, the Ministry is available to supply dispute prevention and dispute resolution expertise to areas of inter-governmental interaction to maintain or improve good working relationships.

3. **Develop strong, mutually beneficial partnerships:** Strong, mutually beneficial partnerships among local governments, the federal government, the Union of BC Municipalities, and the Province of British Columbia ensure an inclusive and coordinated approach to local, regional, and provincial issues. British Columbians are better served when orders of government work together collaboratively, maximizing their resources, to ensure communities receive the full benefits of such funding partnerships as the \$635.6 million Federal Gas Tax Transfer Agreement, the \$52.5 million Transit Agreement, and the \$102 million Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund.

Performance Measure

A measure of local government accountability and effectiveness is whether it is operating within its liability servicing limit. For example, local governments that use their legislative and regulatory powers effectively and develop strong partnerships are better prepared to fund infrastructure projects. Local governments in British Columbia borrow money for infrastructure investments through the Municipal Finance Authority. The Ministry approves all local government borrowing bylaws on the basis of their fiscal capacity and ability to repay the debt. This financial oversight role ensures local governments are generally within their borrowing limits, which in turn mitigates the risk to the Municipal Finance Authority AAA credit rating, thereby enabling local governments in B.C. to borrow at lower than industry rates.

The liability servicing limit sets out the maximum amount municipalities can spend to service their long term financial obligations for the year. Measuring the percentage of municipalities operating within this limit demonstrates how well local governments financially plan for their capital requirements, and how well they utilize the different financing options available to them.

Local governments provide the data supporting this measure to the Ministry through the annual Local Government Data Entry electronic reporting process at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry conducts a review of these submissions and checks them against the local government audited financial statements.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit. ¹	97.4%	99.4%	>97%	>97%	>97%	>97%

¹ Liability servicing limit is equal to 25 per cent of annual own-source municipal revenue. Own-source revenue primarily includes taxes, fees, charges, penalties, fines and investment income.

Targets

The 97 per cent or greater target is based on historical trend data and the risk tolerances of the Municipal Finance Authority and local government bond rating agencies.

Goal 2: *British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities.*

Resilient, sustainable communities are places where citizens can lead healthy, fulfilling, economically secure lives without compromising the social, economic, and environmental needs of future generations. The capacity of local governments to foster sustainable communities varies greatly across the province. The Ministry assists communities to develop their capacity on a variety of levels: it provides funding for sewer and water infrastructure; provides expertise and resources for planning for future growth; responds to issues related to economic change for small, rural communities; and works to address social and economic issues in B.C.'s inner-cities.

Achievement of this goal falls primarily within the responsibility of the Local Government core business area, and is complemented by work of the Women's, Seniors' and Community Services core business area.

Core Business Area: *Local Government*

Objective 1: *Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability.*

Citizens in communities expect their local governments to provide them with safe drinking water and appropriate levels of waste water treatment. Communities must prepare for the current and future needs of their citizens, particularly in terms of infrastructure renewal. Major infrastructure projects are expensive and often challenge the financial capacity of both large and small local governments. Funding from the provincial and federal governments supports local government initiatives to improve drinking water quality and waste water treatment, and enhances protection of the environment for the benefit of all British Columbians. Local governments must also have appropriate forward-looking plans to address the needs stemming from future population growth.

Strategies

- 1. Negotiate federal/provincial/local government infrastructure capital grant programs:** Working with federal, provincial, and local government partners ensures that future capital grant programs reflect provincial and local government priorities and objectives, are efficient and effective, and benefit British Columbians. In particular, citizens in British Columbia's smaller rural communities will benefit directly from improved drinking water safety as more of the aging local government infrastructure is renewed. The Ministry is preparing to negotiate a new infrastructure cost-sharing agreement with the federal government in 2007.
- 2. Develop, implement and manage water and sewer infrastructure capital funding and infrastructure planning programs:** The Canada/BC Infrastructure Program and BC Community Water Improvement Program form the basis of the Ministry's water and sewer infrastructure funding program. The Canada/BC Infrastructure Program expires at the end of March 2008, when all projects are to be completed. A new Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund will provide for the continuation of the former Canada/BC Infrastructure Program. These programs fund two-thirds of local government capital costs to improve drinking water and waste water management. The Infrastructure Planning Grant Program provides planning grants to support local government planning projects directed at the development of sustainable community infrastructure.
- 3. Implement the Federal Gas Tax Transfer and Transit Agreements, with the Union of BC Municipalities:** Over the next five years, the Federal Gas Tax Transfer Agreement will see \$635.6 million transferred from the federal government to local governments in British Columbia for projects that will lead to cleaner air, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and cleaner water. The Transit Agreement provides an additional investment of \$52.5 million in British Columbia to: refurbish, replace and rehabilitate fleets, terminals, garages, tunnels, stations and other structures; invest in rapid transit systems; and utilize

new intelligent transportation systems designed to improve services for passengers and operators.

4. Implement four new initiatives: LocalMotion, Spirit Squares, Towns for Tomorrow and Green City Awards:

- LocalMotion will result in more bike paths, walkways, and greenways, improved accessibility for people with disabilities, and programs for children to play in communities and parks;
- Spirit Squares will create and enhance public outdoor space where citizens can celebrate their community pride and spirit;
- Towns for Tomorrow will result in capital infrastructure improvements for small communities and towns with populations under 5,000 people; and
- Green City Awards will provide monetary awards to local governments that demonstrate leadership in creating greener, healthier communities, and develop best practices that can be shared with all British Columbians.

5. Work with local governments to develop forward-looking regional strategies:

Coordination among municipalities and regional districts on inter-jurisdictional issues promotes integrated approaches to addressing the changing social, economic, environmental, and demographic conditions within British Columbia's communities. The Ministry works collaboratively with local governments to ensure that planning policies are in place to accommodate significant population growth. Currently, more than 80 per cent of British Columbians live in an area covered by a regional growth strategy.

Performance Measure

The Ministry provides funded support to communities for new and improved water treatment facilities through a number of grant programs, including the Canada/BC Infrastructure Program, the BC Community Water Improvement Program, and the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund.

The following measure provides an indication of those populations served by new water treatment facilities that meet emerging standards. It provides evidence that communities are building the infrastructure using current North American regulatory standards for the treatment of surface water. Note that the measure does not include groundwater, nor does it capture the percentage of the provincial population using privately-owned infrastructure.

Completion status of these projects is tracked by contractual requirements between the province and grant recipients. Those populations to be served by new facilities are calculated using BC Stats population data for the service area identified in the local government grant application.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Number and percentage of British Columbians ¹ served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards ² for the protection of drinking water quality.	16.67% of total population served. Additional 577,770 people with new system.	17.8% of total population served. Additional 57,474 people with new system.	18.3% of total population served. Additional 20,207 people with new system.	20.3% of total population served. Additional 85,400 people with new system.	71.8% of total population served. Additional 2,191,328 people with new system. ³	75.6% of total population served. Additional 162,000 people with new system.

¹ British Columbia population based on BC Statistics 2005 population average of 4,254,500.

² Current regulatory standards within North America.

³ The significant increase in population served is due to the completion of the Greater Vancouver Regional District water treatment plant, which will serve approximately 50 per cent of the provincial population.

Targets

The targets were chosen based on the anticipated completion of projects funded under the Canada/BC Infrastructure Program, the BC Community Water Improvement Program, and Phase One of the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, and an estimate of the population to be served by the facility when it becomes functional. The ultimate responsibility for completion of infrastructure projects rests with local governments, and completion is affected by a range of factors.

Core Business Area: *Local Government and Women's, Seniors' and Community Services*

Objective 2: *Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change.*

Regional and local socio-economic conditions in British Columbia are constantly changing. The Ministry contributes its expertise and targeted funding initiatives to build local government resiliency and capacity to adapt to these ever-changing economic, social, and environmental conditions.

Strategies

- 1. Collaborate with local governments and provincial agencies to provide expertise and other supports to rural and resource communities in transition:** Changes in the resource economy, due to market shifts, technological advances, and resource depletion, have significant implications for communities and their citizens. Successful adaptation requires collaboration between the federal, provincial, local and First Nations

governments, the resource industry and non-governmental organizations. Such collaboration is evident in the cross ministry initiative to address the Mountain Pine Beetle.

- 2. Provide the tools and resources to ensure local governments have the fiscal capacity needed for self-government:** Through the Small Community and Regional District Grant programs, the Ministry supports smaller municipalities and regional districts to provide basic services to citizens. Decisions regarding the best use of these funds are left to the local governments that receive them.
- 3. Provide resort-based municipalities in B.C. with the tools to assist them in financing new or improved resort amenities and services in their communities:** The Ministry is exploring options to encourage private investment, attract visitors and contribute to the overall economic development of resort-based communities. One new initiative is to use hotel room tax revenue sharing as an incentive for resort-based municipalities to have a constructive role in expanding the resort sector.
- 4. Promote targeted support for policing, crime prevention, and community safety:** Protective services, which encompass police, fire, emergency preparedness and bylaw enforcement, accounted for almost 30 per cent of municipal operating expenditures in 2005, despite the fact that only half of all municipalities are directly responsible for police costs. The Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program returns traffic ticket proceeds collected province-wide to those municipalities that pay for policing in proportion to their share of total local police costs. Municipalities demonstrate that they have invested in policing and broader community safety initiatives that make sense for the local community.

Performance Measure

Taxes comprise the majority of municipalities' annual revenue. They provide the financial capacity and independence local governments need to operate effectively, and to respond to unforeseen socio-economic events as they arise. Tracking the number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current taxes measures the robustness of local tax bases and generally serves as an early indicator of broader economic challenges, since non-payment of a substantial amount (i.e., 10 per cent or more) of local taxes may indicate economic weakness within the community. Those communities at risk of collecting less than 90 per cent of their taxes are generally single-resource communities affected by larger external market forces. Local governments provide the Ministry with the tax data supporting this measure through the annual Local Government Data Entry electronic reporting process.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90% of their current year taxes. ¹	141	137	141	143	145	145

¹ B.C. has 157 municipalities; the 2007/08 target of 143 represents over 90% of municipalities.

Targets

The targets are based on anticipated future financial improvements resulting from the Ministry's concerted efforts to assist communities with financial management and in assessing and modifying their tax base and/or in the restructuring of their boundary in such a way as to provide additional revenue for services.

Core Business Area: *Women's, Seniors' and Community Services*

Objective 3: *The capacity of urban communities to respond to socio-economic issues is strengthened.*

The need for inner-city revitalization challenges communities to respond effectively to complex socio-economic issues. Creating cooperative and productive partnerships among federal, provincial, and local governments, businesses, and community organizations helps communities to identify and leverage resources and expertise necessary to improve social and economic outcomes. The Ministry's role in responding to socio-economic issues is facilitative, rather than directive.

Strategies

- 1. Work with partners to address inner-city issues:** Effective inner-city revitalization requires local, provincial and federal governments, the community and the private sector to work together. These partners contribute knowledge, expertise, networks and resources necessary to develop and implement strategies that will help make British Columbia's urban communities resilient and sustainable. The Ministry is the provincial lead on implementation of the tri-partite Vancouver Agreement. The Ministry also works with local and federal governments to coordinate resources in other urban communities to respond to inner-city issues.
- 2. Support the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement:** Part of the Bid for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is based on ensuring that the Games are accessible to all and that they create lasting benefits locally. The Inner-City Inclusive Commitments will ensure Vancouver inner-city residents, community organizations and businesses have access to potential

benefits that flow from the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, while minimizing any adverse effects on inner-city communities.

- 3. Provide training for at-risk youth to enter employment:** The BladeRunners program recruits and trains at-risk youth for jobs in the construction industry. In 2005/06, 71 per cent of participants were of Aboriginal ancestry with many living in inner-city communities. This strategy increases economic benefits for at-risk youth, contributes to the province’s human resources in the construction sector, and contributes to social and economic development in inner-cities. The program is jointly funded by the Province, federal government, private sector and community organizations.

Performance Measure

Percentage of BladeRunners participants moving into employment: This measure reports on the success of BladeRunners participants in securing employment. The program’s community-based provincial administrator collects recruitment and participation-in-employment data from all sites on a quarterly basis and provides the data to the Province. The federal government, the program’s other key funder, also monitors program implementation.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual ²	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Percentage of BladeRunners participants moving into employment.	76% ¹	74% ³	74%	75%	76%	77%

¹ Represents 78 participants out of a total of 103.

² The results in 2005/06 were slightly lower than in previous years because new program delivery sites were established in Tofino, Port Alberni, Ucluelet, and Ahousat.

³ Represents 168 participants out of a total of 227.

Targets

The targets are selected based on past program performance. Outcomes are expected to improve as programs become more established in new locations.

Core Business Area: *Local Government*

Objective 4: *British Columbia has economically strong regions.*

British Columbia’s communities are part of larger economic regions. These regions are diverse in size, geography, demographics, and socio-economic status. Community resiliency and sustainability are increased if the region of which the community is a part is economically strong — regions in turn will prosper when their individual communities

are strong. Economic development is enhanced through collaboration between local, provincial and federal governments and key economic sectors including business, education (universities and colleges), health institutions and airport and port authorities.

The Ministry has a key role in designing governance frameworks, tools, and incentives for municipal and regional governments to act both independently and collaboratively in order to strengthen regional economies.

Strategies

- 1. Identify strategies to strengthen regional governance:** The Task Force on Community Opportunities, which was struck in 2004 at the Union of BC Municipalities' convention, reported back at the convention in October 2006. Key recommendations centred on local governments working more effectively together to achieve better results for citizens and a stronger regional economy. Local governments are expected to consider how they will respond to the recommendations of the Task Force, following which the Ministry will work with the Union of BC Municipalities to determine next steps.
- 2. Promote harmonization of regulatory requirements:** The business sector in British Columbia depends on a stable and predictable regulatory environment to prosper and contribute to the strength of British Columbia's economy. Harmonizing local, regional and provincial approval processes will contribute substantially to improving the competitive nature of British Columbia's economy.

Goal 3: *Women are safe from domestic violence.*

Ensuring women are safe from domestic violence aligns with Government's Great Goal to build the best system of support for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors. Supporting communities to prevent and respond to domestic violence is critical to making communities safer for women and is consistent with the Ministry's mission to promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. For 2007/08, \$49.9 million has been allocated to prevention and intervention services to address violence against women, delivered by third-party service providers. This represents a 46 per cent increase over 2004/05 funding levels. Ninety-five per cent of women in B.C. have access to some violence-related prevention or intervention service within an hour's drive of their homes.

Core Business Area: *Women's, Seniors' and Community Services*

Objective 1: *Communities have the capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence.*

Building capacity at the community level is an effective way to address violence against women because communities are aware of local needs and resources. This includes providing safe places for women who have experienced abuse, as well as working with communities to provide information and develop prevention strategies on domestic violence.

Strategies

- 1. Provide shelter to women, and their children, leaving abusive relationships:**
The Ministry funds community-based shelter services through third-party contracts for women, and their children, leaving abusive relationships. These include transition houses, safe homes, and second-stage housing.¹⁵ Transition houses also provide crisis intervention, referral to other services and programs, and emergency counselling.
- 2. Provide counselling to women, and their children, who have experienced abuse:**
The Ministry funds contractors to provide community-based counselling services to women who have experienced abuse and to children who have witnessed abuse. The counselling is intended to help them rebuild their lives and reach their full potential, thereby assisting to break the cycle of abuse.
- 3. Provide outreach services to women at risk:** The Ministry funds community-based outreach workers to support women at risk of, or recovering from, abuse. These workers connect women to the programs and services they need to live safely in their homes and communities.
- 4. Enhance community violence prevention initiatives:** The Ministry supports violence prevention initiatives through community grant programs. In 2006/07, the Ministry announced a \$1.2 million Partners in Prevention program, which provides one-time grants up to \$150,000 for projects that raise awareness and change attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence against women and girls. Priority was given to projects that focus on collaborating with men and boys to be partners in prevention. All projects are expected to be completed by March 31, 2008.

Performance Measure

Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services:

The number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services indicates service utilization, and, therefore, service demand. Over time, the measure establishes a trend that assists the Ministry in determining how best to assist communities

¹⁵ Transition houses provide temporary accommodation for women, and their children, who have experienced abuse. The program provides clients with shelter, food, crisis intervention, referrals, outreach and multicultural services. Safe homes provide temporary housing in communities where transition houses do not exist. The safe home may be a private home, hotel unit or rental apartment. Second-stage housing provides longer-term housing, following a stay in a transition house or safe home, for up to 18 months.

to ensure that appropriate services are provided, to achieve its objective of strengthening community capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services.	11,318	12,446	12,450	12,450	12,450	12,450

Targets

The targets are selected based on demand levels from 2005/06 and data collected during the second quarter of 2006/07. The targets assume a consistent rate of utilization. The increase from 2004/05 is due to an increase in funding in 2005/06 to improve access to services.

Performance Measure

Number of outreach services used by women and their children: The Ministry funds outreach workers to assist women at risk of abuse, or recovering from abuse, to access services that connect them to longer term supports, such as employment, housing, and treatment. Outreach services include referral, accompaniment, and individual support.

Service utilization is responsive to demand, which can increase as a result of enhancing the profile of services, generated through community education and presentations. Service providers collect data that are submitted online, on a monthly basis.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Number of outreach services used by women and their children.	N/A ¹	16,819	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000

¹ This is a new measure; therefore data are not available for 2004/05.

Targets

Due to increased funding in 2005/06, the number of outreach services provided increased, with full implementation to be achieved in 2006/07. The target for 2007/08 represents estimated annualized data based upon the Data Collection Report for Second Quarter, 2006/07. The forecast assumes a consistent rate of utilization.

Goal 4: Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential.

Providing women with access to opportunities to reach their highest economic potential benefits women and contributes to sustainable, liveable communities that are healthy and safe. To achieve this goal, the Ministry works with other ministries and agencies, federal and local governments, community organizations, the private sector and citizens, as success depends on many partners and factors.

Core Business Area: *Women's, Seniors' and Community Services*

Objective 1: *Women have more opportunities to participate in the economy.*

The Ministry is committed to promoting and supporting women's participation in the economy. Women continue to face challenges to realizing their economic potential. Some of these are due to care-giving responsibilities, absences from the workforce and/or work choices, such as choosing traditional versus non-traditional job streams. Working with other ministries, agencies, provinces, the federal government, non-governmental organizations, and communities, the Ministry strives to ensure the unique needs of women are considered in public policy, legislation, programs, and services that affect women's participation in the economy.

Strategies

- 1. Implement a mentoring program for women entering or re-entering the paid labour force:** Mentoring is an effective tool to transfer knowledge and support job seekers, leading to increased participation in the paid economy. The Ministry will continue to support the Empowered to Work program to address challenges faced by women starting or changing careers, particularly due to lack of experience and training, an absence from the labour market, or being new to Canada. These programs are being delivered by community-based organizations. Some key variables that can impact program success include: regional variations in demand for specific skills; factors influencing the sustainability of small businesses, which will affect women seeking to become self-employed; and provincial, national and international trends that may impact the diverse sectors in which women are seeking employment.

Performance Measure *(under development)*

Number of women who enter employment after participating in the Empowered to Work mentoring program: The measure will capture how many women are moving from the Empowered to Work program into employment. Agencies that deliver the program collect client data in the form of exit and follow-up surveys on an ongoing basis as participants complete and leave the program. This information is then provided to the Ministry. The Ministry is currently developing a baseline and setting targets for this measure. These were not available at the time of publication.

Goal 5: *Improved social and economic well-being for seniors.*

One of the Government's Five Great Goals includes building the best system of support in Canada for seniors. The Ministry provides leadership, builds relationships, and collaborates with and informs other ministries, local, provincial, and federal governments, private sector stakeholders, and community groups about issues affecting seniors. Most of the programs and services delivered to seniors are delivered by other ministries and orders of government.

Core Business Area: *Women's, Seniors' and Community Services*

Objective 1: *Government responds to the Report and Recommendations of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues, Aging Well in B.C.*

The Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues (Council) was formed in the Fall of 2005 to examine the needs of British Columbia's growing seniors' population, and make recommendations on how to support seniors' independence, health and continuing contributions to society. The Council reviewed demographic and socio-economic changes, and heard from individuals, organizations and experts on a range of issues. As a result of its deliberations, the Council, in its final report, *Aging Well in B.C.*, has identified 16 recommendations and the following five key recommendations: protect human rights and end mandatory retirement; live healthier; help people stay independent; improve health care quality; and provide leadership on aging issues. Responding to these issues effectively depends on the efforts of partners, including other ministries, local, provincial and federal governments, private sector stakeholders, and community groups.

Strategies

- 1. Lead and coordinate Government's response to the report and recommendations of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues:** The Ministry will lead and support collaboration and coordination among government ministries, and promote effective, timely responses to the recommendations of the Council.

Objective 2: *Seniors and their families have information on programs and services available.*

The Ministry has a lead role in ensuring that seniors, and their families and caregivers, have access to the information they need about government programs and services as required.

Strategies

- 1. Provide information about relevant services and programs for seniors:** Greater access to information enhances seniors' opportunities to connect with the programs and services they need to continue being active, healthy participants in society. The Province has implemented a 1-800 information line, and the Ministry produces a Seniors' Guide

and maintains a Seniors' website to provide information to seniors and their families. These resources ensure seniors and their caregivers have access to relevant provincial and federal programs and services.

Performance Measure

Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website: The number of visits to the Seniors' website is tracked electronically. The number of people visiting the website demonstrates that community members are using the resource. The data is available on a monthly basis.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website.	N/A ¹	82,000	90,000	>90,000	>90,000	>90,000

¹ The website was launched September 2004.

Targets

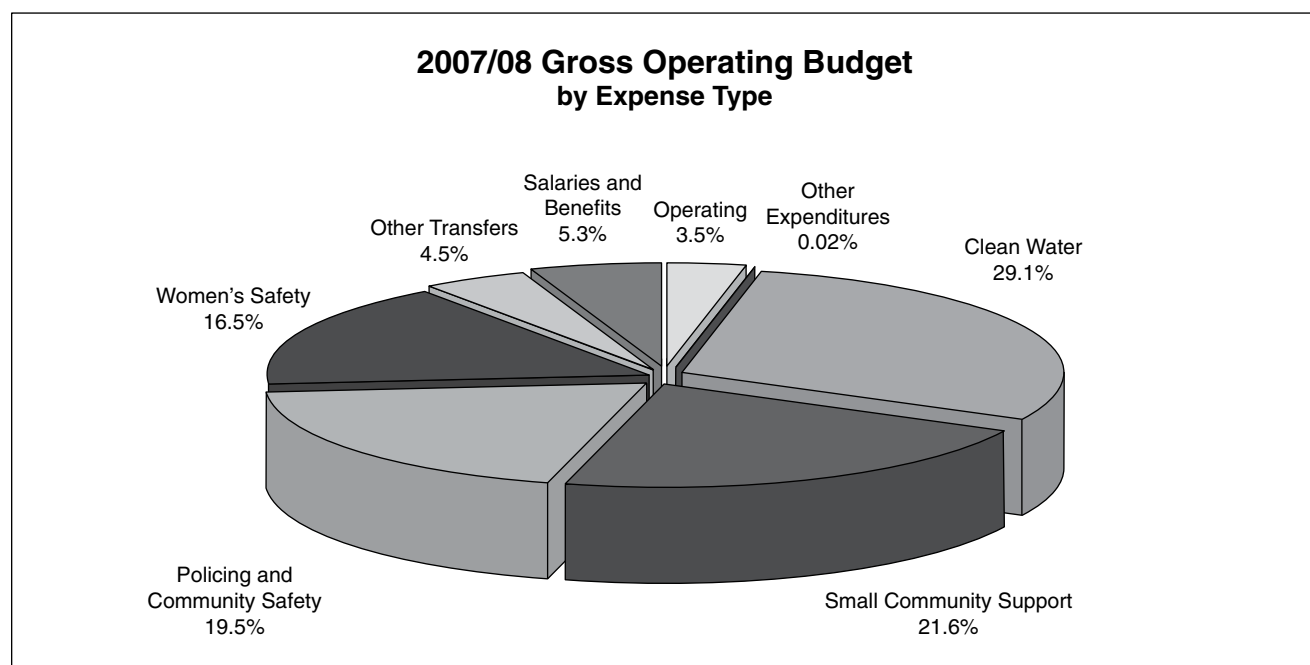
The target is based on the number of visits in 2005, and the trend of increased visits during the second quarter of 2006. The Ministry cannot predict demand in the future; however, given past performance, expects the same or greater number of visits to the website.

Resource Summary

Core Businesses	2006/07 Restated Estimates ¹	2007/08 Estimates	2008/09 Plan	2009/10 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Local Government	181,376	196,650	214,990	213,314
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	52,913	55,838	56,713	57,592
Executive and Support Services	8,803	9,087	9,166	9,264
Totals	243,092	261,575	280,869	280,170
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)				
Local Government.....	91	96	96	96
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services.....	37	37	37	37
Executive and Support Services	70	70	70	70
Totals	198	203	203	203
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Local Government.....	700	725	300	250
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	700	375	150	55
Executive and Support Services	580	880	1,530	1,675
Totals	1,980	1,980	1,980	1,980

¹ Amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2007/08 *Estimates*.

Explanation and Comments



Operating Budget

The Ministry's 2007/08 operating budget¹⁶ (in \$thousands) is comprised as follows:

Gross Operating Expense	\$301,694
Less: External Recoveries	<u>40,119</u>
Net Operating Expense	\$261,575

Government transfers to service partners accounts for 91.2 per cent of gross expenses before internal and external recoveries. These transfers support local governments' objectives for clean water, community safety and small community sustainability; Ministry transfers also provide for support of women's safety and other community initiatives.

Employee salary and benefit costs account for 5.3 per cent of ministry gross expenses, while other operating costs account for the balance (3.5 per cent).

Prior Year Comparison

The Ministry's 2006/07 net restated operating budget (in \$thousands) is \$243,092, resulting in a current year increase (in \$thousands) of \$18,483, or 17.6 per cent.

Relative to 2006/07, current year budgets for all expense categories have remained substantively constant.

¹⁶ Gross expense and recovery budgets exclude the Ministry's statutory appropriation, *University Endowment Lands Administration Special Account*. Impact to reported Net Operating Expense is nil.

The Government Transfers category has increased by two per cent (or 1.7 per cent of ministry gross budget). The increase is due to program enhancements including: funding for the new programs announced at the 2006 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention; funding to enhance prevention and intervention services to improve women's safety; and, increases to fulfill the Government's commitments to double small community grants by March 2010, and share traffic fine revenues with eligible local governments.

The Salary and Benefit category has increased by 10 per cent (or 0.4 per cent of Ministry gross budget), due to incremental public sector negotiated wage increases and additional staffing to support the new programs announced at the 2006 UBCM convention. Funding for additional staffing was provided within the Ministry's existing operating budget.

The Operating Expense category has increased by 24 per cent (or 0.6 per cent of Ministry gross budget). This increase is due to incremental increases in central services costs, and increased public works utility costs for the University Endowment Lands (UEL). All UEL utilities costs are fully recovered from local ratepayers.

The Other Expenditures category is substantively unchanged.

Capital Budget

The Ministry's 2007/08 capital budget (in \$thousands) is \$1,980, which is unchanged from the prior year.

Approximately 95 per cent of this funding envelope is earmarked for information technology assets to maintain client-centred service delivery, make the most effective use of resources, and expand operational efficiencies. Remaining capital funding is comprised of tenant improvements and cyclical furniture and equipment acquisitions.

Relative to 2006/07, current year budgets for all capital categories remain materially unchanged.

Staffing Complement

The Ministry's 2007/08 full time equivalent (FTE) complement is 203, compared to a prior year complement of 198. The increase of 5 FTEs relates to staffing initiatives within the Ministry's Local Government Core Business area.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Key Legislation

The Ministry is responsible for a number of public Acts, including the following legislation:

Capital Region Water Supply and Sooke Hills Protection Act

Community Charter Act

Community Charter Council Act

Islands Trust Act

Land Title Act — section 219, except sub sections (3) (c), (11) (b) and (10) as it relates to the Ministry

Local Government Act — except ss. 916-919 and 692-693

Local Government Grants Act

Local Services Act

Manufactured Home Tax Act

Ministry of Municipal Affairs Act

Mountain Resort Associations Act

Municipal Aid Act

Municipal Finance Authority Act

Nanaimo and Southwest Water Supply Act

Ports Property Tax Act — s. 5

Resort Municipality of Whistler Act

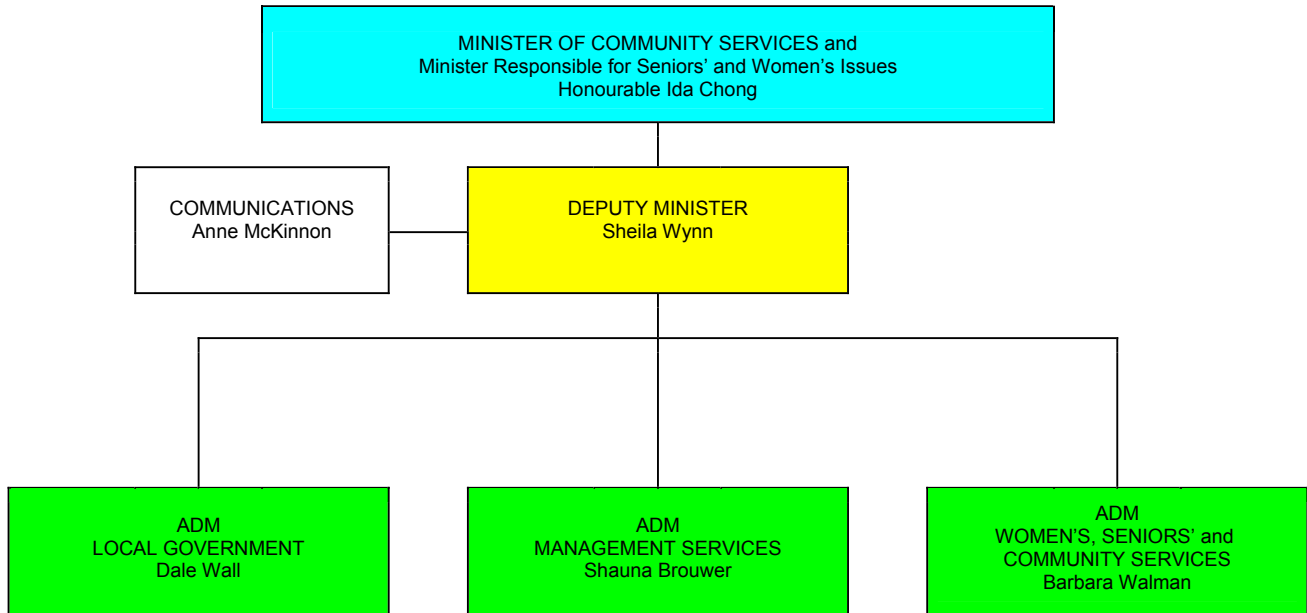
Sechelt Indian Government District Enabling Act — s. 4

University Endowment Land Act except — ss. 2 (1) (a) and (d) and 3 (b)

Vancouver Charter

Appendix 2: Organizational Chart

Ministry of Community Services



- Local Government Policy and Research Branch
- Governance and Structure Division
 - Local Government Structure Branch
 - Local Government First Nations Relations Section
 - Advisory Services Branch
- University Endowment Lands
- Intergovernmental Relations and Planning Division
 - Facilitation Services
 - Planning Programs
 - Intergovernmental Relations
- Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Division
 - Municipal Engineering Service Branch

Agencies, Boards and Commissions

- Islands Trust

- Corporate Policy and Planning Branch
 - Finance and Administrative Services Branch
 - Strategic Human Resources Branch
 - Information Systems Branch
 - Information, Privacy and Records Branch
- The Division also provides services to the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

- Seniors' and Women's Partnerships and Information Branch
- Community Programs Branch
- Community Partnerships Branch