



Ministry of
Community Services

2008/09 – 2010/11
Service Plan

February 2008



National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data

British Columbia. Ministry of Community Services.

Service Plan. — 2006/07/2008/09 —

Annual.

Title from cover.

Continues in part: British Columbia. Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. Service Plan. ISSN 1705-3757.

ISSN 1718-1631 = Annual service plan. British Columbia. Ministry of Community Services.

1. British Columbia. Ministry of Community Services – Periodicals.
 2. Municipal government – British Columbia – Periodicals.
 3. Community development - British Columbia - Periodicals.
 4. Women – Services for – British Columbia – Periodicals.
 5. Older people – Services for – British Columbia – Periodicals.
- I. Title. II. Title: British Columbia Ministry of Community Services ... service plan.

HV109.B7B74

352.14'09711'05

C2005-960234-1

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Published by the Ministry of Community Services



Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

It is an honour to present the Ministry of Community Services 2008/09–2010/11 Service Plan. Our Government is supporting BC’s communities to be greener, healthier more inclusive places to live for all British Columbians, and this service plan outlines the strategies we are using to achieve that vision over the coming three years.

The Ministry is committed to building awareness of climate change and encouraging action at the community level. We have launched a number of programs that support government’s goal to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. LocalMotion grants are assisting communities throughout British Columbia in building the infrastructure that will get people out of their cars and onto walking and cycling paths in their communities. The inaugural Green City Awards — presented at the Union of BC Municipalities annual meeting in September 2007 — honoured seven leading-edge local governments. In addition, through the Towns for Tomorrow initiative, we are investing in infrastructure for British Columbia’s smaller municipalities, supporting a range of projects that address climate change, including enhancements to water and sewer systems.

The Ministry continues to invest in B.C. Spirit Squares, supporting the development of unique gathering spaces in our communities, a legacy of British Columbia’s 150th anniversary. Through the Canada B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Program, we are also working with the federal and local governments to invest in projects that benefit British Columbians. At least 60 per cent of this funding supports green local infrastructure, such as water and waste-water systems. As well, our gas tax and public transit agreements with the federal government aim to significantly improve local infrastructure and support greener communities.

In response to the Premier’s challenge to double tourism revenues by 2015, the Ministry has signed agreements with seven of thirteen eligible resort municipalities under the Resort Municipality Tax Transfer Program. These agreements transfer a portion of the Hotel Room Tax back to the municipalities to finance a wide range of tourism-based projects.

We continue to promote twinning opportunities with communities in the Asia Pacific. I was pleased to undertake a 10-day mission to the People’s Republic of China this past year, focused on forging new relationships between British Columbia communities and those in China and building on those we already have towards a new level of economic strength.

That trip produced a formal agreement between our Province of British Columbia and the People's Government of Guangdong Province to encourage our respective local governments to establish such twinning arrangements.

Our BC Asia Twinning Tool Kit supports these innovative partnerships by providing local governments in this province with the information they need to establish international twinning arrangements, or enhance existing ones, to get the most out of the economic opportunities that these partnerships offer.

The Ministry of Community Services continues to support women and children who are fleeing abuse, helping them to rebuild their lives through access to transition houses, safe homes and second-stage housing. At the same time, we continue to focus on changing the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence, through such programs as Partners in Prevention, which funds projects that engage men and boys as partners in working to prevent violence against women and girls.

In working towards achieving government's great goal of building the best system of support for seniors in Canada, the Ministry has led a comprehensive review of the recommendations contained in the report of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors Issues, "Aging Well in BC," released in December 2006. Working with 13 other ministries, we are now developing a government action plan to support older people in British Columbia in living healthy, active and independent lives.

The Ministry of Community Services 2008/09–2010/11 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 19, 2008, have been considered in preparing the plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.



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

February 19, 2008

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of [Community Services](#) envisions British Columbia's communities as great places in which to live. The Ministry pursues this vision by promoting liveable, sustainable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians.

Through the Local Government and the Women's, Seniors' and Community Services Departments, the Ministry works with a wide range of stakeholders to create communities that are economically resilient, and provide all British Columbians with quality services. The Ministry accomplishes this by:

- providing expert advice and continually improving the local government legislative, policy, and governance framework to enable local governments to build strong partnerships, make effective use of their regulatory powers, be held accountable by their citizens and contribute to the social, economic and physical well-being of their communities;
- taking collaborative climate change actions in partnership with local governments, implementing a legislative framework that provides the appropriate tools to support local government climate change actions, ensuring infrastructure and capital grant funding programs target local government projects that maximize greenhouse gas reduction;
- building local government economic resiliency and fiscal capacity for self-government by providing financial support for policing, crime prevention and community safety, developing legislative and financial tools to create economic opportunities for British Columbia's resort communities, assisting local governments in effectively planning for community and regional growth and encouraging local leaders to look beyond their individual boundaries for innovative regional solutions that will provide the best possible services to their citizens;
- providing leadership and co-ordinating resources to address issues facing inner-cities and assisting communities that are in transition resulting from significant economic change;
- working with other ministries, the federal government, and other sectors to address women's and seniors' issues through public policy, legislation, programs, and services; and
- providing leadership and resources to intervention and prevention services for women who have experienced abuse, and for children who have witnessed abuse, through contracted third-party service delivery agencies.

The Ministry administers all or parts of 18 pieces of [legislation](#), including the *Local Government Act* and the *Community Charter*, and has responsibility for appointing persons to the Islands Trust Fund Board.

Strategic Context

British Columbia continues to enjoy a strong and growing economy. The Ministry of Community Services works to bring the benefits of this vitality to British Columbia's communities. Key factors that shape the Ministry's efforts are urban population growth, healthy lifestyles, climate change, communities in transition, women in the workforce, domestic violence, an aging population, and the new relationship with First Nations.

Currently, most of British Columbia's urban population lives in an area covering less than three per cent of the entire province, with an additional 1.3 million people anticipated in urban areas by 2031.¹ Through the *Community Charter*, implemented in 2004, local governments now have greater authority to create liveable, sustainable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. They also have the increased financial capacity to fund these developments through provincial traffic fine revenue sharing, the federal gas tax transfer and a range of new initiatives that support sustainable infrastructure development.

A key government priority continues to be promoting healthy living for British Columbians. ActNow BC is working with partners who are developing and implementing programs to increase physical activity, to encourage healthy food choices in school, at work and in the community, to live tobacco-free, and to make healthy choices in pregnancy. Involvement at the local level is essential to realizing the full benefits of this program and local governments can play an important role in encouraging ActNow BC participation in communities around the province.

British Columbia is taking a leadership role in addressing climate change by developing innovative strategies and advancing research into new technologies. The Ministry is supporting local governments across the province in taking action on climate change at the community level. The *British Columbia Climate Action Charter* reflects the commitment of local governments, the Province and the Union of BC Municipalities to become carbon neutral by 2012 and to create compact and more energy efficient communities.

Communities throughout British Columbia have long benefited from British Columbia's forestry sector. Many of these communities will be affected by the Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic, and other pressures facing the province's forest industry. The Ministry provides support for resource-dependent municipalities to manage the effects of significant financial impacts resulting from the permanent or pending closure of industrial operations. The Ministry encourages communities to work together through regional networks and partnerships and assists them in engaging in collaborative economic and social planning.

¹ Ministry of Community Services. (March 2006) Local Government Statistics and Facts

More women are working in British Columbia today than ever before, with 72.4 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 64 participating in the workforce.² More than 18,900 women were employed in the construction sector in 2006, indicating that women are beginning to take advantage of the critical trade shortages currently being experienced in the province.³ The Ministry supports the growing need for a strong and skilled labour force by developing and implementing policies and programs that encourage women to enter the workforce or re-enter the workforce after a prolonged absence.

Domestic violence has a significant impact on women and their children. Supporting communities in addressing domestic violence is a key priority for the Ministry, which funds programs for violence prevention, transition houses, counselling, and outreach and multicultural outreach services across the province.

British Columbia is experiencing a significant demographic shift as a result of longer life expectancies, low fertility rates, and the aging of the baby boom generation. Within 10 years there will be more seniors than school-aged children, and in 2031, almost one in four British Columbians will be over age 65.⁴ Using the “Aging Well in British Columbia” report from the Premier’s Council on Aging and Seniors’ Issues as a guide, the Ministry is developing a government action plan to support the health and wellness, independence and community participation of our older population — now and in the future.

British Columbia is developing a new relationship with First Nations guided by trust, and by recognition of and respect for First Nations’ rights and title. The Ministry is committed to supporting treaty negotiations through a variety of initiatives aimed at enhancing local government and First Nations relations.

The Ministry of Community Services is strategically addressing the factors facing British Columbia’s communities, providing support through a variety of programs and services in order to achieve its mission of promoting liveable, sustainable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians.

² Statistics Canada 2006 Labour Force Survey, extract from Cd1T01an.ivt

³ Statistics Canada 2006 Labour Force Survey, extract from Cd1T06an.ivt

⁴ BC Stats, Population Estimates (from Statistics Canada, Demography Division)

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

This section describes the Ministry's goals, objectives, strategies and intended results for 2008/09–2010/11. The goals and objectives are substantially the same as outlined in last year's Service Plan, with the exception of two new objectives.

Goal 2 has an additional objective: "Local governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take other climate change actions." A new performance measure has also been developed to reflect this new objective.

As well, Goal 5 has a new objective that replaces the two previous objectives. The new objective is "Government develops a long-term plan to adapt to an aging population."

Ministry Goals

To achieve its vision, "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.

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

Objective 1.1: A governance system that is open, representative and responsive

A local government system in which citizens choose their elected officials, allows fundamental democratic principles to be applied to decision-making that affects those citizens.

British Columbians expect their local government to provide a sense of community, a sustainable physical and built environment, and the day-to-day services they need and desire. The local government system in British Columbia must be open and transparent, and local governments must be responsive to citizens and their interests.

Strategies

- Provide a modern, empowering legislative, regulatory and policy framework.
- Promote citizens' access to local governments and build their capacity to participate in local decision-making.
- Assist local governments with incorporations, amalgamations and boundary extensions.

Objective 1.2: Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers

Local governments in British Columbia require a modern legislative, regulatory and financing framework that strikes an appropriate balance between broad powers and accountability to citizens in order to meet the changing needs of their communities. With the enactment of the *Community Charter* in 2004, and the most recent amendments to the *Local Government Act* in 2007, the Province's relationship with local governments is fundamentally changed.

Rather than focusing on provincial oversight and prescriptive regulation, the relationship between the two orders of government is based on local accountability (local issues being resolved locally), with the Province acting in an advisory and facilitative capacity. This increased flexibility within the governance framework, combined with effective dialogue and collaboration with the Union of BC Municipalities and the Local Government Management Association (LGMA), have generally increased local government capacity to create and finance innovative responses to citizens' changing needs and desires.

Strategies

- Support innovation and the effective use of legislative and regulatory powers.
- Facilitate constructive relationships.
- Develop strong, mutually beneficial partnerships.

Performance Measure 1: Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Forecast	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit. ¹	99%	>97%	>97%	>97%	>97%

Data Source: Local governments provide their financial data to the Ministry through the annual Local Government Data Entry electronic reporting process at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry’s reporting requirements are comprehensive and the data received are highly accurate.

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.

Discussion

Within the current enabling legislative framework, municipalities are able to choose from a variety of financial vehicles through which to fund the services citizens desire. The Ministry’s role in monitoring the borrowing of local governments ensures the ongoing health and financial viability of the broader local government system in British Columbia. Measuring the percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit demonstrates how well local governments utilize the different financing options available to them.

The target has been established based on historical information and the knowledge that the financial data provided by local governments during the annual reporting cycle may contain “overstatements” of debt servicing costs due to large repayments by individual local governments.

Local governments in British Columbia borrow money for infrastructure through the Municipal Finance Authority with the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities. These borrowings must generally fall within the individual liability servicing limits of each local government. Inspector approval of local government borrowing bylaws is based on their fiscal capacity and ability to repay the debt. This financial oversight role ensures that local governments are generally within their borrowing limits, which in turn maintains the Municipal Finance Authority’s AAA credit rating, thereby enabling local governments in the province to borrow at lower than industry rates.

Goal 2: British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities

Objective 2.1: Local governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take other climate change actions

Tackling the critical issue of global warming and making tangible progress on halting and reversing the growth of greenhouse gas emissions will require concerted and collaborative climate change actions by both the provincial and local governments in British Columbia.

In order for local governments to contribute to this joint undertaking, they require adequate targeted funding and a modern legislative, regulatory and policy framework to implement climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies within their individual communities. Ministry funding programs, such as [Infrastructure Planning Grants](#), [LocalMotion](#), [Towns for Tomorrow](#), [Smart Development Partnerships](#) and the [Green City Awards](#), enable local governments to plan and invest in infrastructure and develop strategies to address climate change at the community level. Many local governments have already taken action on climate change, including planning for liveable, sustainable communities, encouraging green developments and transit-oriented developments, and implementing innovative infrastructure technologies, including landfill gas recapture and production of clean energy.

Strategies

- Encourage local governments to sign the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*, which includes committing to the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2012 and working to create compact, more energy-efficient communities.
- Develop a legislative, regulatory and policy framework that provides the right mix of tools to support local government climate change actions.
- Ensure that infrastructure funding programs target those local governments undertaking climate action activities focused on achieving “green” results that maximize greenhouse gas reduction.
- Provide local governments implementing climate change initiatives with tools, best practices material and advice.
- Ensure that infrastructure capital grant programs contain goals, outcomes, and evaluation criteria that target those infrastructure projects which integrate sustainability and climate change principles.
- Actively support cross ministry climate change initiatives.

Performance Measure 2: Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*

Performance Measure	2007/08 Forecast	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
Percentage of British Columbians living in communities that have signed the <i>British Columbia Climate Action Charter</i> . ¹	58.9%	70%	80%	90%

Data Source: The Union of BC Municipalities will record and track, in a database, those local governments who sign the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*. The Ministry will further determine, through BC Stats, what percentage of British Columbians this represents.

¹ “Communities” are defined as those municipalities and regional districts who have signed the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter*. Population percentages have been calculated using BC Stats 2006 P.E.O.P.L.E. projections — electoral area populations were used to represent persons living within the regional district outside of municipal jurisdictions.

Discussion

The *British Columbia Climate Action Charter* reflects the shared commitment of the Province, the Union of BC Municipalities, and signatory local governments to take action on climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Local governments that sign onto the Charter commit to developing strategies and taking concrete actions to achieve agreed-upon climate change goals.

The signing of the *British Columbia Climate Action Charter* by local governments demonstrates their leadership on climate change and their commitment to partner with the provincial government on making real progress towards creating compact communities and on measuring and reporting on greenhouse gas reductions. Future Service Plans may include targets for local government greenhouse gas reductions; however, a consistent methodology for measuring community-wide emissions has yet to be determined and will in part depend on the outcomes of the Ministry’s Green Communities Project and the Ministry of Environment’s Community Energy and Emissions Indicators pilot project, which are currently underway.

The *British Columbia Climate Action Charter* is not a legally binding instrument and local governments are not obligated to sign it. It is anticipated that some local governments will choose to exercise local choice in determining how to affect climate change rather than adopting the particular climate change strategies and tools reflected in the Charter.

Objective 2.2: Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability

Citizens in communities throughout the province expect their local governments to provide safe drinking water and appropriate levels of waste water treatment through economically sustainable practices or means. Local governments are challenged, more than ever, with the need to renew aging infrastructure, while at the same time preparing for the future needs of their citizens.

A competitive labour market in British Columbia, along with rising labour and material costs, can result in major infrastructure projects challenging the financial capacity of both large and small local governments. Provincial and federal government funding programs, such as [Towns for Tomorrow](#), the [Federal Gas Tax Transfer](#) and Transit Agreements, and the [Canada/B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund](#), support local government projects aimed at improving drinking water quality and waste water treatment, contributing to greenhouse gas reductions, and generally enhancing protection of the environment. Targeted funding initiatives such as [LocalMotion](#) and [B.C. Spirit Squares](#) enable local governments to improve the physical and built environment of their communities, which in turn contributes to creating sustainable and liveable communities for all British Columbians.

Strategies

- Develop, implement and manage water and sewer infrastructure capital funding and infrastructure planning programs. This includes monitoring the percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality. In the Ministry's 2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report, the percentage of British Columbians served under these standards was 18.3 per cent. With the completion of the Greater Vancouver Regional District water treatment plant, which is currently scheduled to be operational by February 2009, this figure is expected to rise to over 65 per cent.
- Negotiate federal/provincial/local government infrastructure capital grant programs.
- Implement the Federal Gas Tax Transfer and Transit Agreements, with the Union of BC Municipalities.
- Implement four initiatives: LocalMotion, Spirit Squares, Towns for Tomorrow and Green City Awards.

Objective 2.3: Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change

Regional and local socio-economic conditions within British Columbian communities are constantly changing. The Ministry contributes its expertise and targeted funding, such as the [Small Community Grants](#) and [Traffic Fine Revenue-Sharing Program](#), to better equip local governments to adapt to these ever-changing economic, social and environmental conditions. Provincial initiatives are being implemented in order to collectively increase local government capacity to respond to changing economic conditions and embrace new economic opportunities. Some examples are additional hotel room tax transfers, permissive tax exemptions, and new capacity-building best practice material, such as the BC [Asia Twinning](#) and [Resort Municipality Tax Transfer](#) Program tool kits.

Strategies

- Provide the tools and resources to ensure that local governments have the fiscal capacity needed for self-government.
- Provide resort-based municipalities in British Columbia with the tools to assist them in financing new or improved resort amenities and services in their communities.
- Promote targeted support for policing, crime prevention and community safety.

Performance Measure 3: Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Forecast	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90% of their current year taxes.	143	146 ¹	148	148	150

Data Source: Local governments provide the Ministry with their financial data at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry's reporting requirements are comprehensive and the data received are highly accurate.

¹ In 2007/08 B.C. had 160 municipalities; the 2007/08 target of 146 represents over 90 per cent of municipalities.

Discussion

Taxes account for approximately half of municipalities' annual revenue. They provide the financial resiliency and independence that local governments require 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 each local tax base. Generally, payment of a substantial amount (i.e., 90 per cent or more) of local taxes is an

indicator of the economic strength within a community. Having a strong and robust financial position is one of the underlying keys to a municipality's ability to respond to ever changing regional socio-economic and environmental conditions.

Local governments provide the Ministry with the tax data supporting this measure through the annual Local Government Data Entry electronic reporting process. In 2007/08, British Columbia had 160 municipalities; thus the 2008/09 target of 148 municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes represents over 90 per cent of municipalities.

Objective 2.4: Local governments work together to advance regional interests and build British Columbia's regions

British Columbia's communities are part of larger regions. These regions are diverse in size, geography, demographics and socio-economic status. Community resilience is increased when neighbouring communities work together to strategically advance regional interests. These interests include sustainable regional growth, efficient regional services provision, and shared water management, air quality planning and emergency preparedness.

Strategies

- Strengthen regional governance in ways that are appropriate to particular regions.
- Work with local governments to develop forward-looking regional strategies.
- Promote harmonization of regulatory requirements.

Objective 2.5: The capacity of rural and urban communities to respond to socio-economic issues is strengthened

Effective support for community socio-economic well-being is key in the development of vibrant, sustainable communities. The level of facilitation and support provided is based on community and regional circumstances and assessments of their needs.

Strategies

- Collaborate with the Ministry of Forests and Range, the Ministry of Economic Development, and the Mountain Pine Beetle Emergency Response Team as well as beetle-impacted communities to develop strategies to increase socio-economic resilience.
- Partner with natural resource ministries and social development provincial and federal agencies to help mitigate impacts to forest sector communities.

- Provide community transition services for resource-dependent communities and regions facing significant industry downsizing.
- Partner with local and federal governments, the community and the private sector to address inner-city issues.
- Support the [BladeRunners program](#) that provides training for at-risk youth to enter employment.

Performance Measure 4: Percentage of BladeRunners participants moving into employment

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Forecast	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
Percentage of BladeRunners participants moving into employment.	70% ¹	75%	76%	TBD ²	TBD

Data Source: The program's community-based provincial administrator collects recruitment and participation-in-employment data from all sites on a quarterly basis and provides the Province with the data through Bladestat.

¹ This figure has been updated since the 2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report was published, due to a late year-end submission of data.

² Program funding to be determined.

Discussion

The measure demonstrates the program's success in supporting the entry of unemployed at-risk youth into employment. The targets are set against the most recent three years of performance and feedback from delivery agents.

Goal 3: Women are safe from domestic violence

Objective 3.1: Communities have the capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence

The Ministry's Community Programs Branch contracts with community agencies to deliver intervention programs and services to address violence against women. Women and children fleeing domestic violence have access to services 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week in provincial transition houses. 95 per cent of women in British Columbia have access to services within an hour of their home. The Branch implements and evaluates policies, programs and initiatives which prevent violence against women and girls.

Strategies

- Provide women and their children who are leaving abusive relationships, with temporary shelter through transition house and safe house services.
- Provide women and their children who have experienced violence, with counselling services.
- Provide women who have experienced violence or, who are at risk of domestic violence, with outreach services (including multicultural outreach).
- Implement violence prevention initiatives, including projects that engage men and boys to help change attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence against women and girls.

Performance Measure 5: Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services

Performance Measure	2007/08 Forecast ¹	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services.	12,700	12,700	12,700	12,700

Data Source: Third-party service providers collect data and are required by contract to submit statistical reports (monthly or quarterly) to the Ministry. An information management system shows online data entry by service providers.

¹ Service utilization is responsive to demand.

Discussion

The Ministry funds transition houses to provide women and their children who have experienced abuse with shelter, food, crisis intervention and referrals. With 24/7 staffing in transition houses, women and their children have increased access to safe and secure services, regardless of the time of day. While residing at a transition house, women and their children are safe from domestic violence. Thus, the performance measure is an indicator of safety for those women and their children in need.

The number of women and children receiving transition house shelter has been relatively constant over the last two years, i.e., 12,466 in 2005/06 and 12,243 in 2006/07.

The performance target for this measure reflects the fact that the Ministry anticipates that this number will increase moderately and is based on data collected during the second quarter of 2007/08.

Performance Measure 6: Number of outreach services used by women and their children

Performance Measure	2007/08 Forecast ¹	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
Number of outreach services used by women and their children.	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000

Data Source: Third-party service providers collect data and are required by contract to submit statistical reports (monthly) to the Ministry. An information management system shows online data entry by service providers.

¹ Service utilization is responsive to service demand.

Discussion

The number of outreach services used by women and their children indicates the level of use of support, referral and accompaniment/advocacy services and public education regarding violence against women. The forecast selected is based on data collected during the second quarter of 2007/08. The Ministry funds outreach workers to identify women in crisis and connect them with the supports they need, including counselling programs, transition houses, safe homes, social agencies, other outreach services and alcohol and drug services. In addition to those services, multicultural outreach services are provided in 20 different languages and in ten communities. Multicultural outreach services respond to the diverse cultural needs of women in British Columbia.

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

Objective 4.1: 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 in realizing their economic potential. Some of these challenges are due to caregiving responsibilities, absences from the workforce and/or careers in 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 that the unique needs of women are considered in public policy, legislation, programs, and services that affect women’s participation in the economy.

Strategies

- Implement a mentoring initiative for women entering or re-entering the paid labour force.
- Increase women's participation in BladeRunners.

Goal 5: Seniors have improved social and economic well-being

Objective 5.1: Government develops a long-term plan to adapt to an aging population

British Columbia is currently experiencing a massive demographic shift as a result of longer life expectancies, low fertility rates, and the aging of the “baby boomer” generation. Over the next 25 years, the province's population of seniors will more than double to 1.4 million, almost one-quarter of the population. The Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues explored the implications of these demographic changes in its report, “Aging Well in British Columbia”, which made 16 recommendations on how to support the health, independence and continuing contributions of older people. The provincial government is considering these recommendations in the development and implementation of a government action plan to adapt to an aging population.

Strategies:

- Develop and implement a government action plan to adapt to an aging population.

Resource Summary Table

Core Business	2007/08 Restated Estimates ¹	2008/09 Estimates	2009/10 Plan	2010/11 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Local Government	196,654	220,965	218,368	248,472
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	55,919	61,712	65,094	67,594
Executive and Support Services	8,974	9,453	9,621	9,623
Total	261,547	292,130	293,083	325,689
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)				
Local Government	96	98	98	98
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	37	37	37	37
Executive and Support Services	70	70	70	70
Total	203	205	205	205
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Local Government	725	725	725	725
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	375	375	375	375
Executive and Support Services	880	880	880	880
Total	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 2008/09 *Estimates*.

Ministry Contact Information

Local Government:

www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/lgd/index.htm

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Community Programs Branch

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Fax: 250 356-0542

**Seniors' and Women's Partnerships
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Victoria BC V8W 9W4
Telephone: 250 953-4504
Fax: 250 356-0542

Seniors

www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/seniors

Women's Services

www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/women

Hyperlinks to Additional Information

Ministry of Community Services website

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[Key Legislation](#)

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