

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs**

**2022/23 – 2024/25
SERVICE PLAN**

February 2022



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2022/23 – 2024/25 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Osborne'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable Josie Osborne
Minister of Municipal Affairs
February 4, 2022

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs helps make B.C. communities great places to live by taking leadership in supporting local governments, not-for-profit organizations and residents to build vibrant and healthy communities that are well governed, liveable, safe and diverse as well as economically, socially and environmentally resilient.

The Ministry supports newcomers to settle and integrate into the province, facilitates economic immigration to address B.C.'s labour market needs and attracts international entrepreneurs.

The Ministry also oversees the University Endowment Lands and works with public library partners to sustain the public library system.

The effective delivery of the Ministry's mandate relies on key legislation, including: [the Community Charter](#), [the Vancouver Charter](#), [the Local Government Act](#), [the Municipal Aid Act](#), [the Municipal Finance Authority Act](#), part six of the [Gaming Control Act](#), [the Islands Trust Act](#), [the Provincial Immigration Programs Act](#), [the Ministry of International Business and Immigration Act](#), and [the Library Act](#).

Strategic Direction

In 2022/2023, the Government of British Columbia will continue its whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on protecting the health, social and economic well-being of British Columbians. Building on our economic, environmental, and social strengths while looking to seize opportunities to improve outcomes for all British Columbians will be an important aspect of each ministry's work as we respond to COVID-19 and recover from devastating floods and wildfires. The policies, programs and projects developed over the course of this service plan period will align with the five foundational principles established by Government in 2020: putting people first; working toward lasting and meaningful reconciliation; supporting equity and anti-racism; ensuring a better future through fighting climate change and meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets; and supporting a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

This 2022/23 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Municipal Affairs will support the government's priorities including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the November 2020 [Minister's Mandate Letter](#).

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Strong, sustainable, and well-governed communities

By cultivating strong partnerships and delivering services that support sustainable and well-governed communities, the Ministry enables a local government framework that can support the financial, economic, environmental, social and infrastructure health of communities for all British Columbians.

Objective 1.1: Further a governance system that considers local government and provincial interests and builds strong relationships for the benefit of all people.

Key Strategies

- Work with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and other local government partners, to ensure the annual UBCM Convention provides a comprehensive exchange of ideas and optimizes cooperation and collaboration among the Province, UBCM, individual local governments, and UBCM First Nations members.
- Consistent with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act)* as the Province's framework for reconciliation, support local governments in building respectful relationships and fostering meaningful and lasting reconciliation with First Nations. As part of this, collaborate with UBCM on providing advice to local governments. Under the *Declaration Act*, continue to meet, engage and collaborate with First Nation communities and Indigenous partners and organizations.
- Review and enhance the policy, legislative and education framework for local governments where needed, including working with key partners to support the 2022 general local elections, to implement and further explore responsible conduct measures among locally elected officials and to move forward on other requests that are provincial priorities.
- Provide advice, resolve problems and give targeted support and oversight on a range of local and regional governance matters of local government and provincial interest, both directly and in partnership with others.
- Work with public library partners to sustain a public library system that is effectively governed and accountable, where provincial funding helps extend local services and improve access throughout B.C.

Performance Measure(s)	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
1.1a Actively engage with UBCM local governments and UBCM First Nations members with ongoing meetings between elected officials and staff, including: number of formal meetings held annually between UBCM Executives and the Minister of Municipal Affairs	4	4+	4+	4+
1.1b Actively engage with UBCM local governments and UBCM First Nations members with ongoing meetings between elected official and staff, including: number of meetings held annually between the Ministry, UBCM, individual local governments and UBCM First Nations members during UBCM Convention and throughout the year	100+	100 +	100+	100+

Data source: Meeting schedules (calendar meeting invites) and agendas for Senior staff and Minister’s meeting. Informal meetings with staff are not counted.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

The number of formal interactions between the Minister and UBCM Executive is an important indicator that the relationship between local governments and the provincial government is being actively sustained. UBCM Executive has four scheduled meetings annually and holds time to meet with the Minister to discuss issues of importance to the membership and to Government. Individual meetings with local governments occur significantly at the annual UBCM Convention, and throughout the year as interest and issues arise. These meetings create a reciprocal opportunity to better understand the interests of local governments and UBCM First Nations members and to ensure policy and programs are meeting the needs of communities.

Objective 1.2: Maintain local governments’ financial sustainability so they can meet the service needs of their communities.

Key Strategies

- Support ministries and other partners in reviewing pressures in the local government financial system, including issues related to revenues and property tax impacts.
- Provide advice and statutory approvals on local government finance (revenues and expenditures) to support sound local government financial management practices and stewardship that ensures fiscal viability.
- Deliver stable, predictable and timely grant funding for professional administration to smaller and rural local governments throughout B.C. through the Small Community Grants and Regional District Grants as well as provide targeted funding to municipalities

with over 5,000 people for community safety initiatives, through the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program.

- Support the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) in obtaining a high credit rating and low rates for borrowing through: overseeing the *Municipal Finance Authority Act*; setting local government borrowing limits; reviewing and approving loan authorization bylaws and setting financial reporting requirements; and ensuring local government financial data is available to the MFA and the broader public.
- Work with UBCM to establish a Memorandum of Understanding further to the province’s commitment to collaborate in reviewing UBCM’s [Ensuring Local Government Financial Resiliency: Today’s Recovery and Tomorrow’s New Economy](#) report and its recommendations.

Performance Measure(s)	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
1.2 Municipal Finance Authority’s Credit Rating	AAA	AAA	AAA	AAA

Data source: [Municipal Finance Authority](#) Ratings provided by the Moody’s, Standard & Poor’s, and Fitch rating agencies

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

A strong credit rating of the MFA reflects the sustainability of the local government financial system which gives local governments the freedom to engage in capital projects that touch the lives of people in B.C. every day.

Objective 1.3: Support improvement of community and regional infrastructure and local government planning to further the environmental, economic and social health of communities.

Key Strategies

- Encourage resilient, efficient and effective community planning, fiscal and asset management practices to support the development of sustainable communities, including continued progress on the Development Approvals Process Review to streamline and modernize development permitting and approvals.
- Support local governments to make effective, integrated and collaborative choices, through problem solving, guidance and program support for delivery of local and regional services such as water, recreation and economic development, and integrated sustainable land use, resiliency and infrastructure planning.
- Advance the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 and Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy by collaborating with other ministries and supporting local government land use planning and infrastructure projects through initiatives such as the CleanBC Communities Fund.

- Partner with the federal government and other ministries to develop and implement community capital funding programs for local governments and First Nations that build and upgrade local infrastructure including drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, clean energy, recreation facilities and community centres.
- Support ministries and other partners to develop initiatives related to integrated planning, transit-oriented development, clean transportation, regional growth strategies, energy and the environment, and housing and homelessness.

Performance Measure(s)	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
1.3a Number of approved projects from local governments, Indigenous communities, and non-profits funded under the Northern Healthy Communities Fund.	25	25	20	15
1.3b Number of approved projects from local governments and modern treaty First Nations funded under the Strengthening Communities' Services Program ²	50	20	N/A ¹	N/A

Data source:

1.3a Northern Development Initiative Trust (Deliver Agency) Program Tracking Documentation, Program Budget Allocation and LNG Canada/Coastal Gas Link Construction Schedule.

1.3b Strengthening Communities' Service Program Evaluation Committee approval of funding applications. Some applications are for projects that serve multiple, adjacent communities.

¹The Strengthening Communities' Services Program, funded under the Canada-BC Safe Restart Agreement, is expected to end in 2023.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

The application-based \$25 million Northern Healthy Communities Fund (NHCF), administered by the Northern Development Initiative Trust, supports initiatives that assist communities to remain healthy, sustainable, and resilient in the face of rapid and large-scale economic development and associated need for enhanced social service readiness. Given the immediacy of the current economic development activities, the NHCF is focusing on communities adjacent to the LNG Canada and Coastal GasLink projects.

The application-based \$100 million Strengthening Communities' Services program (SCS), administered by the Union of BC Municipalities, aims to support unsheltered homeless populations and address related community impacts. This program is meant to bridge the period between the COVID-19 outbreak and the post-COVID recovery period.

Discussion

The performance measure has been updated from the previous service plan to reflect the wind down of the Housing Needs Reports program.

The new performance measure acknowledges the varying aspects of community environmental, economic, and social health that fall within the stewardship of local governments and the breadth of infrastructure, planning, and services undertaken by local governments in communities.

Goal 2: Communities in ongoing/continued economic recovery beyond COVID-19

Working with other governments and partner organizations to enable local governments and others to support people through economic recovery beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and other unprecedented events into a stronger and better future for our neighbourhoods and communities.

Objective 2.1: Support the governance, financial, planning and infrastructure resiliency of communities impacted by extraordinary emergencies

Given the broad impacts of the pandemic and natural disasters such as wildfires and floods on communities, focus on monitoring and support as communities work to re-establish services, adjust financial plans, and ensure good governance.

Key Strategies

- Deliver and monitor targeted funding, including with the federal government, to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities and their operations.
- Work with local governments, UBCM and other partners to share information, monitor local government system impacts and respond to issues that arise.
- Provide guidance, advice and problem solving for communities, including initiating actions when required (e.g., Minister's orders; policy and legislative change).
- Ensure infrastructure projects approved through economic recovery funding meet reporting requirements and achieve completion.
- Support specific communities impacted by emergencies, to coordinate governance, infrastructure, operations, finances, and planning activities to bridge from response into recovery and beyond from events with severe environmental and economic impacts.

Performance Measures	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
2.1a Number of approved Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program, Community Economic Resilience stream (CERIP-CER) projects that attain completion of community recovery-targeted infrastructure within program timeframe	23	37	N/A ¹	N/A
2.1b Number of approved Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure projects that attain completion of community recovery-targeted infrastructure within program timeframe	10	67	10 ²	N/A

Data source: Program applications and approvals

¹The Targets for 23/24-24/25 are N/A as this program was designed to respond to COVID-19 pandemic and only run from 2020/21, completed by March 31, 2023.

²COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure stream projects must be substantially completed by December 31, 2023, or by December 31, 2024, for projects in designated remote communities.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

Accelerated funding programs specifically designed to respond to the impacts of the pandemic assists to further community resilience overall, with the short approval and completion timelines that are essential to help communities recover economically from COVID-19 impacts. Each project represents a community that is being supported in recovery. COVID-19 resilience programs deliver funding to local governments, Indigenous governments and not-for-profit organizations. Ministry continues to engage on supports for other emergency circumstances that may arise.

Discussion

While the overall number of CERIP projects remains consistent with the 2021/22-2023/24 Service Plan, targets were adjusted as project progress has been impacted by external factors (supply chain delays; labour issues; unexpected 3rd & 4th waves of pandemic) which have compromised proponents' ability to meet forecasted completion dates.

The program was designed to have adequate time to allow for projects to complete. Projects are still operating within the established program parameters.

The ICIP COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS) funding is focused on building infrastructure that will help British Columbians with the significant health and socio-economic challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic by responding to the specific needs of communities. Once approved projects are completed, the new infrastructure will provide

community members with expanded or improved services, as well as increased public safety. This will be achieved by encouraging outdoor activities through improvements to active transportation networks and recreation sites, and by completing upgrades to local government buildings to increase the ability to provide services while socially distancing during the pandemic.

Goal 3: Communities are vibrant, inclusive, and enriched by the contributions of newcomers

Objective 3.1: International talent helps to address B.C.’s skills needs and support sustainable economic development in communities across the province

Key Strategies

- Align immigration policies and programs to provincial priorities and community needs.
- Work with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training to identify how immigration can best meet the skills needs of B.C.’s economy.
- Use B.C.’s Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) to attract international talent to communities throughout the province, helping fill skills needs, enhance innovation, and drive a sustainable economic future.
- Through B.C.’s PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Regional Pilot, support regional communities to grow their economies and create jobs by attracting international entrepreneurs.
- Employ targeted initiatives to enhance attraction and retention of newcomers in communities throughout B.C.

Performance Measure(s)	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
3.1 Percentage of BC PNP applications processed within service standard commitment	75-85%	80%	80%	80%
3.1a - Skills applications: 3 months				
3.1b - Entrepreneur Regional Pilot applications: 4 months	80%	80%	80%	80%

Data source: Internal Ministry of Municipal Affairs tracking

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

The BC PNP is the province’s only direct immigration selection tool to identify and facilitate the arrival of international workers and entrepreneurs. Expedious processing is critical to the ability of the BC PNP to effectively achieve its intended outcomes of addressing skills needs and attracting entrepreneurs to help grow regional economies.

Discussion

Processing times refer to the provincial role in making a decision (approval or refusal) on a BC PNP file at the application stage; 80 per cent is considered a reasonable target for a service standard commitment given there will always be a certain percentage of files that will take longer to process (e.g., incomplete application, complexity, delays related to international travel).

Objective 3.2: Provide grants and services to help communities thrive and to support newcomers to settle and integrate.

Key Strategies

- Distribute \$140 million in Community Gaming Grants to not-for-profit organizations throughout B.C. to support their delivery of ongoing programs and services that meet the needs of their communities.
- Build upon government’s efforts to streamline and support fair, efficient and transparent foreign credential recognition by occupational regulators, including with continued investments through the Credential Assessment Improvement Fund.
- Help skilled newcomers achieve employment in their field through the Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants program.
- Support newcomers to integrate into communities and workplaces through the BC Settlement and Integration Services Program.

Performance Measure(s)	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
3.2 Percentage of Career Paths Clients employed in their field upon program completion	70%	70%	70%	70%

Data source: Internal Ministry of Municipal Affairs tracking

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

The [Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants](#) program supports the successful integration of newcomers by assisting skilled immigrants and refugees in B.C. find work that utilizes their pre-arrival skills, education and experience. As such, a critical performance measure of the program is the proportion of clients who successfully achieve employment in the field of work that they have pre-arrival experience in.

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the flow of newcomers arriving to B.C. for most of 2020 and 2021. It also impacted the ability of Career Paths clients to access related supports as part of their participation in the program, such as additional skilling training or access to an exam required by an occupational regulator. Additionally, the pandemic has impacted the job opportunities and employment prospects of all British Columbians, including immigrants. These external factors

will continue to impact the Career Paths program outcomes in 2022/23. Current Career Paths contracts with service providers expire in March 2022 and will be replaced with new contracts starting in April 2022 following an open competitive procurement process.

Despite the changing landscape, the program is anticipating outcomes at or near the 70% target and will maintain the target of 70% while continuing to monitor pandemic-related impacts on the program.

Financial Summary

Core Business Area	2021/22 Restated Estimates ¹	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Local Government²	270,950	220,500	221,641	219,804
Immigration Services and Strategic Planning³	19,117	19,128	19,128	19,128
Executive and Support Services	7,603	7,917	7,926	7,926
University Endowment Lands Administration Account	10,668	12,269	13,565	14,579
Total	308,338	259,814	262,260	261,437
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	316	69	2	2
University Endowment Lands Administration Account	2,285	2,285	0	0
Total	2,601	2,354	2	2

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2021/22 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2022/23 Estimates.

² Local Government includes University Endowment Lands (UEL)

³ Immigration Services and Strategic Planning includes Strategic Planning, Immigration programs, Provincial Nominee Program and Community Gaming Grants

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Appendix A: Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals

As of February 4, 2022, the Minister of Municipal Affairs is responsible and accountable for the following:

[Board of Examiners](#)

[Islands Trust Conservancy](#)