

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

2023/24 Annual Service Plan Report

August 2024



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2023/24 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2023/24 - 2025/26 Service Plan published in 2023. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Kang". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honourable Anne Kang
Minister of Municipal Affairs
August 9, 2024

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Letter from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Municipal Affairs Annual Service Plan Report.

Over the past year, my ministry has advanced our government's key priorities of increasing the supply of affordable housing, strengthening access to local, timely health care and a sustainable, clean secure and fair economy by putting the needs of people in B.C. first and foremost. I am proud of our continued commitments to supporting local governments, welcoming newcomers, creating clearer pathways for international workers, supporting climate change and working with our partners on the timely delivery of housing. We remain committed to equity and anti-racism initiatives as we work towards lasting and meaningful reconciliation. These combined efforts will continue to support a strong and sustainable economy for British Columbians for many years to come.

B.C. is an incredible place to call home. Earlier this year, a BC Stats report confirmed that we are experiencing our highest population growth rate in 50 years. We recognize that this unprecedented growth puts heavy demands on infrastructure and community amenities, and that's why we provided the historic one-billion-dollar Growing Communities Fund boost to all 188 local governments across B.C. Local governments asked for our support, and my ministry took action. In 2023/24, due to inflation, a decrease in donations and volunteers, and the increase demand for some programs and services, many organizations requested a funding increase. In response to this, we increased the amount of Community Gaming Grants funding that individual organizations could request from \$100,000 to a new maximum of \$125,000 for local-level organizations, and an increase from \$225,000 to \$250,000 for regional level organizations. Through cross-government cooperation, we can address the unique needs in each community to ensure they can thrive into the future. These funds will support the unique projects that each community needs the most, like new affordable housing and child care facilities, road improvements, or recreation centres. It's been great to hear about how these grants are already benefiting communities.

We know that climate change continues to be a challenge, not only in B.C., but across the globe. Over the past year, we joined federal and local government partners through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program to support infrastructure projects in communities provincewide – in particular, drinking water and wastewater projects that helped make our towns and cities people healthier and greener. These projects help prepare for climate change, lessen greenhouse gases and use more renewable energy to grow the economy.

My Ministry continues to work with local governments, the development sector, and is collaborating closely with the Ministry of Housing and other provincial ministries to increase the supply of affordable housing. The Province brought in legislative amendments to improve planning and public hearing processes and deliver more housing, faster for people in Vancouver. Thirty-eight local governments will also soon receive a grant to create more efficient development approvals processes, thanks to the Local Government Development Approvals Program.

To support our growing communities, we've prioritized bringing in qualified workers through the Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP). Recently, we expanded the program's selection criteria to better set people up for career success in B.C. We continue working to attract the talent we need to fill vacancies for in-demand jobs and keep our provincial economy growing.

As the Minister responsible for immigration, I hear every day how British Columbians are welcoming of those who are new to the province. Newcomers are a key part of our past, present and future. As an immigrant myself, I know how important it is to have access to services and services to help newcomers thrive. This year, the Province quadrupled funding for newcomer services, from \$6 million to \$25.6 million per year, partnering with 30 organizations throughout the province. And newcomers also have more help getting started in their new communities with expanded services and a new online multi-language information hub.

I am very proud of the strong relationships that we have built with local governments and partners. We will continue to encourage and support local leaders in developing new perspectives and skills as we work together to manage and lead B.C. communities.

The achievements outlined in this Annual Service Plan Report demonstrate this Ministry's many efforts to meet key priorities and our commitments to supporting the people of British Columbia.

Sincerely,



Honourable Anne Kang
Minister of Municipal Affairs
August 9, 2024

Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2020 and [Minister Kang's 2022 Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2023/24 - 2025/26 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

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, public libraries, 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](#), [Vancouver Charter](#), [Local Government Act](#), [Municipal Aid Act](#), [Municipal Finance Authority Act](#), [part six of the Gaming Control Act](#), [Islands Trust Act](#), [Provincial Immigration Programs Act](#), [Ministry of International Business and Immigration Act](#), [University Endowment Lands Act](#) and [Library Act](#).

Operating Environment

Immigration-driven population growth continued in the province in 2023, with the population of B.C. increasing by over 178,000, an annual growth rate of 3.3 per cent. This is the highest annual population growth since 1971 in terms of population counts and annual growth rate. The federal government has set national immigration targets for permanent residents at 500,000 by 2025. British Columbia also continues to welcome large numbers of temporary residents – by early 2024 there were over 475,000 temporary residents in the province, representing 8.5 per cent of B.C.'s population. The province continues to experience growth in refugee claims and other humanitarian arrivals, mirroring national and international trends. Between March 2022 and March 2024, B.C. welcomed over 20,000 displaced Ukrainians and their family members under special federal immigration measures. In addition, in 2023, 5,900 refugees were resettled to B.C. from overseas, including 2,300 Afghans. During 2022 to 2023, the number of refugee claims filed in B.C. increased by 94.9 per cent, reaching 7,700 claims. The BC Provincial Nominee Program continued to use 100 per cent of federally allocated nominations in 2023. While federal allocations had been steadily growing in recent years, for 2024 federal allocation remained unchanged from 2023.

Local governments continue to be challenged by inflation, with labour and supply chain markets impacting affordability as labour markets and material shortages escalate costs. These pressures are expected to continue driving up capital project costs. Climate-driven events like wildfires, atmospheric rivers and drought conditions continue to prioritize the need for resources to restore and rebuild local and provincial infrastructure. Housing supply and affordability continues to be a priority in every community around the province.

The urgency of this issue is reflected in local government housing initiatives legislation introduced by the Ministry of Housing in 2023 and 2024, which will require local governments to update specific land use policies and regulations to support more opportunities for housing to be built in urban and rural communities. The scope and timelines of changes to the local government land use planning framework highlighted the variety of zoning, community development and development finance approaches taken by local governments across B.C. As communities grow, infrastructure supporting communities needs to accommodate higher populations and varied needs, bringing forward the need for local government investment in renewing or building new infrastructure.

The not-for-profit sector is a key economic sector which contributes \$28 billion to the province's GDP, employing approximately 335,000 people. Non-profits help the province deliver on priorities and further the social health of communities. The Ministry's Community Gaming Grants program supports a diverse range of not-for-profit organizations in areas such as arts, culture, health, sports, social services, environment, and public safety. Many not-for-profits continue to be impacted by increasing demands for services and programming, and loss of volunteers. At the same time, inflation and rising staffing costs have added pressure while revenues, including government funding, fundraising and donations have plateaued.

The Ministry will approach these challenges by strengthening relationships with partners across the province, including local governments individually and collectively through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), by continuing its work to deepen understanding of the needs and realities of Indigenous communities, by renewing partnerships with provincial agencies involved in the development of urban and rural communities, and by seeking opportunities for increased partnerships with the federal government.

Economic Statement

Following two years of strong recovery from the pandemic, economic growth in British Columbia moderated in 2023. After expanding by 3.9 per cent in 2022, B.C.'s real GDP increased by 1.6 per cent in 2023, the second highest growth rate among provinces (tied with Saskatchewan and Ontario) and outperforming the national average. Growth in B.C.'s real GDP was supported by service-producing industries such as real estate, rental and leasing; professional, scientific and technical services; transportation and warehousing; and healthcare. Despite steady growth in the construction and mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction sectors, output for goods-producing industries decreased in 2023, partly due to lower manufacturing activity. While B.C.'s economy continued to expand in 2023, some sectors such as transportation and warehousing and accommodation and food services have yet to fully return to pre-pandemic levels.

B.C.'s labour market continued to grow in 2023, with employment growth of 1.6 per cent and wages and salaries increasing by 6.9 per cent. However, B.C.'s unemployment rate rose to 5.2 per cent in 2023 from 4.6 per cent in the previous year as the labour force, supported by record high immigration, grew faster than employment. High interest rates tempered consumer spending on goods in 2023 and nominal retail sales edged down 0.1 per cent. In 2023, price pressures in B.C. moderated among a broad number of goods and services but remained elevated. B.C.'s inflation rate averaged 3.9 per cent in 2023, down from 6.9 per cent in 2022. B.C. home construction activity strengthened in 2023. Housing starts totaled 50,490 units in 2023, the highest annual pace on record and up 8.1 per cent compared to the previous year. High interest rates continued to weigh on home sales activity last year. B.C. MLS home sales decreased by 9.2 per cent in 2023, while the MLS average home sale price was 2.6 per cent lower than 2022. On the external front, B.C.'s international merchandise exports declined by 13.5 per cent in 2023, due to weaker global demand and lower commodity prices compared to 2022.

Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

The following goals, objectives and performance measures have been restated from the 2023/24 – 2025/26 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2024/25 – 2026/27, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

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

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

Provincial and local governments have responsibilities that often overlap, interact and intersect. Governments at both levels are, therefore, most effective when policies and services are coordinated to meet the needs of communities, regions, and the province.

Key results

- Supported the annual planning and participation of provincial elected officials and senior staff at the September 2023 UBCM Convention. The 2023 Convention provided an opportunity for a comprehensive exchange of ideas, cooperation, and collaboration between local governments, UBCM member First Nations, and the provincial government in advance of introduction of legislation affecting the local government frameworks for land use planning and emergency management.
- Worked with Ministries of Housing, and Transportation and Infrastructure to support priority legislative changes to land use authorities to increase allowable density across communities in support of delivering more housing. In parallel, the Ministry delivered specific legislative authorities for the City of Vancouver to support its housing initiatives.
- Worked with key stakeholders and partners to move forward on provincial priorities within the policy, legislative and education framework for local governments.
- Provided support directly to communities by funding five municipal advisors and through Local Government Management Association’s Responsible Conduct Resource Administration Committee to provide municipalities with acute governance challenges (due to a range of responsible conduct issues) to stabilize operations and decision making in those communities. Continued to work with the Union of BC Municipalities and Local Government Management Association for future enhancements needed for responsible conduct education and legislative tools.
- Funded communities to explore and understand their residents’ interest and needs on changing the form of their local governance through study requests (for example, the Saanich/Victoria Citizens assembly, and the Okanagan Falls incorporation study).

- Delivered \$45 million in one-time library funding to help extend local public library services, increase province-wide access to collections, and give libraries more flexibility in addressing their individual community and regional needs.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

During 2023, the Ministry continued to foster strong relationships with local governments by providing advice and support during governance challenges, reviewing and approving bylaws requiring provincial approval in a timely manner, and supporting communities exploring governance and structure changes.

A significant infusion of provincial funding in March 2023 helped communities and libraries address the changing demands for local services, collections and improved access to public space throughout 2023/24. In this period the Ministry worked with library partners to meet provincial objectives by enhancing and strengthening the cooperative services upon which libraries rely, such as technical infrastructure and digital collections. This provincial funding also helped communities and libraries address the changing demands for local services and access to public space throughout 2023/24.

The Ministry made further progress in supporting local government-Indigenous relations. Through guidance and project funding, the Ministry helped local governments and First Nations advance relationships. The CivicInfo BC online library, tracking positive local government and Indigenous initiatives, now contains almost 400 searchable stories. The Ministry also maintained a significant increase in its annual funding to the Community-to-Community regional forum program managed by the Union of BC Municipalities. Since 1999 close to 700 events have been held province wide. This increase in funding has enabled local governments and First Nations to advance relationships through discussions about shared projects, protocols and agreements.

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

The Ministry supports local governments with their legislated financial responsibilities to promote the long-term sustainability of the local government system. This includes support for a system of collective borrowing by local governments through the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA), resulting in significant savings on interest costs, benefiting local governments of all sizes. The Ministry also recognizes the need to examine economic issues currently impacting local governments, and to consider the financial system in light of these issues.

Key results

- Supported ministries and other partners in reviewing the local government financial system through the Local Government Financial Review Working Group, including pressures related to costs, revenues, and property tax impacts.
- Provided advice on local government finance and for statutory approvals by the Inspector of Municipalities to support sound financial management practices and stewardship, ensuring ongoing local government fiscal viability.

- Delivered \$110.92 million in grant funding through the Small Community Grants, Regional District Grants, and the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program. These grants support professional administration in smaller and rural local governments throughout B.C. and provide targeted funding to municipalities with populations over 5,000 for community safety initiatives.
- Supported the MFA in obtaining a high credit rating, and low rates for borrowing. Support includes 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. In 2024, ministry staff worked with the MFA to improve their governing legislation by adjusting the timing for reporting and also clarifying descriptions of dates, which resulted in updated legislation.
- Supported development of two legislative items led by the Minister of Housing in Bill 46. These legislative items expand categories for which development cost charges can be collected and enable a new legislative framework for the collection of amenity cost charges. This work also included the development of interim guidance materials for local governments to take up these new charges.
- Collaborated with Ministry of Finance on a Memorandum of Understanding with the 21 local governments of the Northwest Resource Benefit Alliance to establish a shared understanding of cost-drivers resulting from supporting major industrial projects in the region. This work resulted in Budget 2024 direction to establish a five-year funding agreement.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

This fiscal year saw continued progress on projects that support local government financial sustainability and service provision. In addition, improvements to investing options for local governments will enable increased revenue from unused funds, which will improve cash flow to local governments over the long term, and with a new option to invest in a fossil fuel free fund.

Similarly, a working group with UBCM and the Ministry of Finance has resulted in better understanding of the revenue and cost pressures facing local governments with discussion on potential approaches for moving forward considering these pressures.

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

Local government responsibilities for community planning, building and maintaining community infrastructure and approving developments influence the shape of communities for decades and shape the environmental, social, and economic context for future growth and health.

Key results

- Encouraged resilient, efficient and effective community planning and fiscal and asset management practices to support the development of sustainable communities through the support of infrastructure planning grants, the requirements of capital grant programs such as the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, and other initiatives.
- Supported the development of Bill 44 legislation to enable small scale multi-unit housing throughout the province, to ensure it aligns with existing policies to allow for stronger social and economic benefits through increased housing options while developing in a way that continues to consider environmental and public health. This included supporting guidelines and process for community implementation of Bill 44.
- Supported the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on development of Bill 47 legislation to establish transit-oriented areas in urban communities that promotes the creation of complete, liveable, and sustainable communities by building more homes near transit and services.
- Supported the development of housing in accordance with the University Endowment Lands (UEL) Official Community Plan, promoting the inclusion of affordable housing and community amenities.
- Supported the economic and social health of local governments and First Nations impacted by the LNG Canada and Coastal Gas Link projects by monitoring company performance of social and economic effects conditions outlined within the Environmental Assessment Certificate through community engagement, participation in quarterly Social Management Round Table discussions in community, direct observation of community effects, mitigation and adaptive management.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

Throughout 2023/24 the Ministry continued to support local governments to make effective, integrated and collaborative choices through problem solving, guidance and program support for delivery of local and regional services. These areas of support ranged from water, recreation and economic development services to integrated sustainable land use, resiliency and infrastructure planning.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
1.1 Minister of Municipal Affairs meetings with UBCM Executive, and UBCM member local governments and First Nations, and regional meetings with local government leaders. ¹	327	155+	379

Data source: Meeting schedules (calendar meeting invites) and agendas for senior staff and Minister's meeting. Meetings with Ministry staff that occur at UBCM Convention are included, but other meetings are not counted.

¹PM 1.1 targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 155+ and 155+, respectively.

The 2023 UBCM Convention showcased the importance to communities of meeting with the province on their issues. Over 970 meetings were held between UBCM local governments, First Nation members and the Premier, Cabinet Ministers, and provincial staff at the 2023 UBCM Convention, providing an important forum for dialogue, exchange of ideas and relationship-building ahead of the full provincial legislative session.

The Ministry exceeded its communications targets for fiscal 2023/24; the Minister met with several local governments in their communities and held 66 meetings at the 2023 UBCM Convention. Throughout the year, there were nine meetings held between UBCM Executives and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. These included four quarterly UBCM Executive meetings and five meetings with the UBCM President. Meetings between the Ministry, UBCM, and local governments and UBCM First Nations during UBCM Convention and throughout the year totaled 370. The number of meetings varies each year resulting from changing conference agendas, rotating hosting locations, and emergent issues.

Meetings with both the Minister and senior staff have increased over the past three years with the ability to meet either online or in person depending on the issue or circumstances and the increase noted above reflects this trend.

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
1.2 Municipal Finance Authority's Credit Rating ¹	AAA	AAA	AAA

Data source: [Municipal Finance Authority](#) Ratings provided by the Moody's, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch rating agencies
¹PM 1.2 targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as AAA and AAA, respectively.

The MFA maintained their AAA credit rating in 2023. A strong credit rating of the MFA reduces the cost of borrowing by local governments for infrastructure and reflects sustainability in the local government financial system. This gives local governments the ability to build for services that touch the lives of people in B.C. every day. This measure reflects both the effectiveness of provincial financial oversight and the design of the financing model that ensures regional and provincial-scale support to make payments in the unlikely event that an individual local government is unable to raise sufficient revenues to service its debt.

Goal 2: Communities and regions are resilient, with economies that work for British Columbians

Objective 2.1: Local governments are implementing strategies to improve community sustainability and affordability

Communities and regions in British Columbia are in the midst of cultural, social, environmental and economic shifts. Changing contexts for community and regional governance require both near-term adaptation and long-term thinking about a desirable future state.

Key results

- Continued to encourage local governments to innovate and prioritize projects that deliver environmental, economic and/or social benefits through ministry infrastructure funding programs by continuing to work with local governments on approved projects under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, and by implementing the administration of Critical Community Infrastructure grants that were approved in March 2023.
- In partnership with the federal government and the Union of BC Municipalities, continued to implement the Canada Community Building Fund that came into effect in April 2014, and initiated negotiations to establish the next agreement for renewal of the Fund for the next 10 years from 2024 onward.
- Contributed \$250,000 in funding to support development of three new Regional Growth Strategies in Cowichan Valley, Central Kootenay, and Peace River to support those regions in launching inaugural regional planning processes.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

This fiscal year saw the ongoing monitoring through budget and progress reports of projects being implemented through the infrastructure funding programs. This included in-person site visits to projects under construction and nearing completion.

The Ministry, in partnership with the Union of BC Municipalities, is nearing completion of a successful negotiation of an agreement with the federal government for a 10-year renewal of the Canada Community Building Fund that will result in over \$300 million in federal funding being provided on an annual basis to local governments for core public infrastructure works.

In addition, the work of the joint Provincial-UBCM Green Communities Committee to support local governments in achieving local and provincial climate objectives has been renewed with new representatives from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Climate Action Secretariat and additional staff from the UBCM.

Objective 2.2: Communities have the water and waste management infrastructure to thrive

Local and regional economies rely on homes and businesses having access to clean, safe drinking water and adequate waste management. This critical infrastructure provides a basis for affordable communities, public health and environmental protection, and is a priority for creating effective recovery conditions in the wake of natural disasters.

Key results

- Administered funding for local governments to help them achieve provincial and federal water and waste management objectives through the joint federal/provincial Environmental Quality Program and Critical Community Infrastructure Grants that help communities fund essential infrastructure improvements. Funding requirements promoted effective life-cycle cost approaches to support local government land use and infrastructure planning and sustainable service delivery.

- Monitored approved projects and advised on strategies for successful project completion.
- Provided tools, resources and early notification of potential 2024 drought conditions to local governments to assist them in further conserving and protecting water resources.
- Managed potable water systems in the UEL, delivering water to UEL residents and the UBC campus and community.
- Reflected the experience of local governments and First Nations communities grappling with drought impacts to drinking water systems through the summer of 2023 in a program proposal to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of universal water metering to assist communities in addressing drought impacts, which secured \$50 million to deliver a water meter pilot project through [Budget 2024](#).

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

The construction and commissioning phases of drinking water and wastewater projects span multiple fiscal years due to their size and complexity. The Ministry continued to work with local governments on their active drinking water and wastewater projects, with federal-provincial program funding, as they progressed in 2023/24.

The Ministry also advanced the initiation of projects that received Critical Community Infrastructure Grants in March 2023. Funding is monitored through regular progress and financial reporting, reviewing and processing claims, and site visits to ensure conditions associated with the funding agreement are met.

Objective 2.3: Communities impacted by extraordinary emergencies are resilient and their governance, financial, planning and infrastructure are supported to recover

Given the broad impacts of the pandemic and natural disasters such as extreme heat, atmospheric rivers and wildfires on communities in British Columbia, this area of focus is on monitoring and supporting communities as they work to re-establish services, adjust financial plans, and ensure good governance.

Key results

- Continued to monitor targeted funding, including with the federal government, to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities and their operations, with the completion of several community infrastructure projects that received grant funding.
- Worked with local governments, UBCM and other partners to share information, monitor local government system impacts, and respond to issues that arose.
- Provided guidance, advice and problem solving for communities, including initiating actions when required (e.g., Minister's orders; policy and legislative change), and collaborated with the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness in the development of modernized emergency management legislation.
- Ensured infrastructure projects approved through economic recovery funding met reporting requirements and provided advice to assist with their successful completion.

- Provided over \$3 million to 47 not-for-profit organizations through Community Gaming Grants that delivered emergency response programming to help communities respond to and recover from wildfires and other natural disasters.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

This fiscal year saw the wrap up of projects that helped communities to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, its implications, and similar events. Several challenges remain for communities in the changed environmental, economic and social environment. Continued disaster events in B.C., including droughts, wildfire, atmospheric river events and the inflationary environment have had multi-year impacts that challenged communities in 2023/24. Program staff continued to monitor, support and provide advice relating to infrastructure grants that helped construct projects that provide essential infrastructure services to communities. Across the Ministry, various programs also continued to support specific communities impacted by emergencies with advice on governance, infrastructure, operations, finances, and planning activities in the move into recovery and beyond.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
2.1a Funded water and wastewater projects reaching completion. ^{1,2}	4	29	5
2.1b Funded community, culture, or recreation projects reaching completion. ^{3,4}	17	47	13
2.1c Funded energy efficiency projects reaching completion. ^{5,6}	2	11	3
2.1d Funded community recovery infrastructure projects reaching completion. ^{7,8}	18	82	42

Data source: Program applications and approvals.

¹Water and wastewater infrastructure may be funded under the ICIP Green Infrastructure (Environmental Quality program) or Rural and Northern Communities streams.

²PM 2.1a targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 28 and 31, respectively.

³Community, culture and recreation infrastructure may be funded under the ICIP Community, Culture and Recreation, or Rural and Northern Communities streams.

⁴PM 2.1b targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 26 and 5, respectively.

⁵Community infrastructure that reduces greenhouse gas emissions using clean or renewable energy or that improve energy efficiency may be funded under the ICIP Green Infrastructure (CleanBC Communities Fund) stream.

⁶PM 2.1c targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 20 and 12, respectively.

⁷ICIP COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure stream projects must be substantially completed by December 31, 2023, or by December 31, 2024, for projects in designated remote communities. Project scope may include retrofits/repairs/upgrades to local government and Indigenous buildings, health or educational infrastructure, COVID-19 resilience infrastructure, active transportation, and disaster mitigation and adaptation infrastructure projects.

⁸PM 2.1d targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 1 and 0, respectively.

While the Ministry supports the projects through infrastructure grant funding, these are multi-year capital projects owned and carried out by proponents such as local governments, not-for-profits, and First Nations. The final project completion timing is constrained by funding timelines set out in the terms of grant funding agreements; other factors that are outside of the Ministry's influence can also impact the forecasted completion timelines. Construction of infrastructure projects includes a cycle which involves funding approvals, consultation and financing, planning and design, seeking necessary permits, procurement, physical construction around any necessary constraints or weather windows, and commissioning and final reporting.

The number of funded projects reaching completion in 2023/24 was lower than originally forecast due to a variety of factors including: federal application approvals occurring later than anticipated and proponents subsequently needing to target a later construction season as well as permitting, procurement, and/or construction processes taking longer than anticipated due to environmental factors (weather and natural disasters), archaeological factors, consultation or project financing and/or refinement in an inflationary cost environment.

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
2.2 Funded projects from local governments, indigenous communities, and non-profits funded under the Northern Healthy Communities Fund. ¹	38	28	34

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

¹PM 2.2 targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 24 and 20, respectively.

The Northern Healthy Communities Fund was established in 2021 with a \$25 million contribution to the Northern Development Initiative Trust. The fund provides funding of up to \$300,000 and \$500,000 for capacity building and capital projects in communities adjacent to the LNG Canada and Coastal Gas Link projects in northern British Columbia. The number of approved projects in a given year has fluctuated based on community capacity and specific community needs.

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
2.3 Funded Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program, Community Economic Resilience stream (CERIP-CER) projects that attain completion of community recovery-targeted infrastructure within program timeframe ¹	32	10	18

Data source: Program applications and approvals

¹The targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as N/A as the program was designed to respond to COVID-19 pandemic and only run from 2020/21, completed by March 31, 2024.

While several projects previously required extension to successfully complete due to the challenges of construction during the pandemic, eight projects completed earlier than anticipated in 2023/24, with just one project under the CERIP-CER remaining to complete in 2024/25. The CERIP-CER program parameters defined the projects as small scale with a localized, not regional scope. Located in each Economic Development Region, all regions benefited from the program.

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 need and support sustainable economic development in communities across the province.

The BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) is progressively increasing the proportion of its nominees who are settling outside of Metro Vancouver, so that all regions of the province can benefit from international talent.

Key results

- The BC PNP nominated 33 entrepreneurs and 8,975 skilled workers to help meet B.C.'s labour market needs in FY 23/24
- The Immigration Programs Branch worked with the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills as it developed and announced BC PNP program changes to be implemented in January 2025 that will better meet the skills needs of B.C.'s economy by creating clearer pathways and better outcomes for international students graduating from the province's post-secondary institutions.
- The BC PNP supplemented the workforce in key strategic occupations that the domestic workforce cannot fully supply by itself, including healthcare workers, early childhood educators, veterinarians, and construction workers. Of the workers who were nominated:
 - 992 were working in healthcare
 - 1,199 were working in childcare
 - 115 were in a construction/trade occupation
 - 46 were working as veterinarians or veterinary technicians
 - 2,606 workers were employed in the technology sector
- Thirty-seven (37) per cent of BC PNP nominees contributed to regional development by settling in communities outside of major urban centers, up from 28 per cent in the previous fiscal year.
- The Entrepreneur Immigration Regional Pilot, which helps regional communities grow their economies and create jobs by attracting international entrepreneurs, began transition into being an indefinite and ongoing part of the BC PNP at the end of the fiscal year.

- By rewarding regional candidates with additional points in the Skills Immigration registration system, the BC PNP enhanced attraction and retention of newcomers in communities throughout B.C.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

In 2023/24, the BC Provincial Nominee Program worked on a variety of initiatives relevant to regional nominations, on both the Skills Immigration and Entrepreneur Immigration sides of the program. This work, which ranged from additional points for regional Skills Immigration candidates to a decision to make the Entrepreneur Regional Pilot into an indeterminate stream, are important early components of the broader regional strategy currently in development.

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

This objective focuses on delivering supports and offering resources that build community capacity while helping newcomers to successfully transition to life in British Columbia.

Key results

- Community Gaming Grants provided over \$1 million to 13 not-for-profit organizations that deliver programming to help communities thrive and to support newcomers to settle and integrate.
- Supported more than 1,400 immigrants in 2023/24 to achieve employment in their field through the Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants program.
- Launched new and expanded programs to support newcomers to settle and integrate into their community.

Summary of progress made in 2023/24

To address the increased needs and volumes of newcomers in B.C., the Ministry expanded funding for newcomer services from \$6 million to \$25.6 million per year, delivered in partnership with over 30 organizations across the province. This includes \$13.4 million annually for the new BC Newcomer Services program, and \$12.2 million through the Safe Haven program. Procurement took place over the fall of 2023 with new contracts in place for April 1st, 2024. The new and expanded BC Newcomer Services program will increase support for people to settle into their new communities, practice their English and find work. The new Safe Haven program will offer refugee claimants and others in vulnerable situations specialized services, such as trauma counselling, help finding housing and English-language instruction.

Ongoing coordination and support also took place across government in support of humanitarian arrivals with a key focus on supporting people arriving from Ukraine. Funding via the Refugee Readiness Fund supported ongoing work with cultural and community organizations to support new arrivals at the community level.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Baseline	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
3.1 Percentage of BC Provincial Nominee Program nominees living and working in regional communities outside Metro Vancouver ¹	24%	28%	26%	37%

Data source: Internal Ministry of Municipal Affairs tracking

¹PM 3.1 targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 28% and 30%, respectively.

In 2023/24, the BC Provincial Nominee Program made program criteria changes in November to increase the portion of the nominations that went to newcomers living and working in regional communities. The program increased its regional nominees from 2,033 (27.5 per cent of all nominees) in FY 2022-23 to 3,372 (37.4 per cent of all nominees) in FY 2023-24.

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
3.2 Percentage of Career Paths Clients employed in their field upon program completion ¹	74%	70%	76%

Data source: Internal Ministry of Municipal Affairs tracking

¹PM 3.2 targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 70% and 70%, respectively.

The Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants program continued to play a vital role in supporting skilled immigrants to use their skills, training, and qualifications to work in B.C. With the expansion of program eligibility in late 2022/23, a wider range of clients were served. Outcomes of the program continue to improve, with 76 per cent of clients served last year able to find work in their desired fields, representing the highest percentage of clients achieving these employment outcomes to date for the program. The program’s strong emphasis on priority occupations such as healthcare, technology, construction and business is helping match sectors facing labour market shortages with experienced newcomers in the right jobs.

Financial Report

Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations ¹ (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Operating Expenses					
Local Government	220,673	31,901	252,574	254,874	2,300
Immigration Services and Strategic Planning	25,717	9,160	34,877	33,477	-1,400
Executive and Support Services	9,321	639	9,960	9,060	-900
Ministry Sub-total	255,711	41,700	297,411	297,411	0
Special Account					
University Endowment Lands Administration Account	13,565	0	13,565	12,657	-908
Special Account Sub-total	13,565	0	13,565	12,657	-908
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual ²	0	0	0	-481	-481
Total	269,276	41,700	310,976	309,587	-1,389
Ministry Capital Expenditures					
Executive and Support Services	2	0	2	1	-1
University Endowment Lands Capital	833	0	833	0	-833
Total	835	0	835	1	-834

¹ "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the "estimated amount" under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act* for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

² The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$0.481 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of August 9th, the Minister of Municipal Affairs is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

Islands Trust Conservancy

The Islands Trust is a federated body established in 1974 under the *Islands Trust Act*. The Trust is responsible for planning and regulating land use and protecting special places throughout the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust Conservancy Board consists of three Islands Trust trustees and up to three members of the public appointed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Board of Examiners

The principal goal of the provincial Board of Examiners is to improve the professional skills of local government employees throughout British Columbia. The Board is responsible for awarding scholarships and certificates to local government employees who meet the standards of qualification in local government administration. The Board is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of the Minister, based on the nomination of one member by each of the Union of BC Municipalities, the Local Government Management Association and the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in [Minister Anne Kang’s 2022 Mandate Letter](#).

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Support municipalities to partner with the federal government to maximize benefits for our province’s communities from federal government programming, including through coordination with provincial programs.</p>	<p>Status: Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the federal government and the Union of BC Municipalities, continuing to implement the Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) that came into effect on April 1, 2014. • Continuing effective negotiations with federal counterparts on establishing the next agreements to ensure continuity of the CCBF from 2024 onward. • Engaged in discussion with federal government on next iteration of bilateral funding programs.
<p>Explore options to support fast growing municipalities with funding for infrastructure and community amenities.</p>	<p>Status: Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Growing Communities Fund, announced on February 10, 2023, provided \$1 billion in direct grants to municipalities and regional districts which they can use to address their community’s unique infrastructure and amenities demands. Eligible infrastructure projects will be built over five years and include recreation facilities, parks and water-treatment plants, as well as other community infrastructure.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Continue providing strong supports for newcomers to British Columbia with WelcomeBC programs, including the Provincial Nominee Program and settlement services.</p>	<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Provincial Nominee Program nominated 8,200 people in 2023. Program policy changes in 2021 and 2022 enhanced program alignment with key government priorities (caring economy and regional communities). In Fall 2023, construction was added as a priority sector to support B.C.'s home-building efforts. • The Ministry worked with Government Communications and Public Engagement on developing multilingual content for people who are new to B.C. connecting with government services. The new website went live January 31, 2023. • Budget 2023 included substantial increases in provincial settlement programming (from \$6 million/year to \$25.6 million/year). The BC Settlement and Integration Services program was replaced with two new and expanded settlement programs starting April 1, 2024, following a competitive procurement process.
<p>With support from the Minister of Education and Child Care, work with local governments to identify opportunities to increase child care spaces on municipal property.</p>	<p>Status: Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Growing Communities Fund includes childcare as an eligible use of the funds as a needed amenity in growing communities.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>With support from the Minister of Finance, continue to work with UBCM to strengthen local government finance systems to ensure local governments and regional districts have the tools they need to remain resilient in the face of economic change.</p>	<p>Status: Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministers of Finance and Municipal Affairs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UBCM to review the <i>Ensuring Local Government Financial Resiliency: Today's Recovery and Tomorrow's New Economy</i> report and recommendations in January 2022. The Working Group required under the MOU has been established, is comprised of provincial and UBCM staff, and involves a 3-year workplan approved by the UBCM Presidents Committee and the Ministers of Finance and Municipal Affairs. • The Working Group meets monthly and provides progress updates biannually to the UBCM Presidents Committee and the Ministers of Finance and Municipal Affairs.
<p>Continue working with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to build important infrastructure projects, including through StrongerBC and the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.</p>	<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>Completed: Intakes and full allocation for Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for the following streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community, Culture & Recreation ○ Rural and Northern Communities ○ COVID-19 Infrastructure Resilience ○ Environmental Quality ○ CleanBC Communities Fund <p>ICIP was fully allocated by March 31, 2023. Final approvals of all projects were completed as of March 2024. The Ministry is now monitoring approved projects.</p>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Work with the Parliamentary Secretary for the Sustainable Economy and with local governments on district energy proposals, including work to seek federal Net Zero Accelerator Initiative funding.</p>	<p>Status: Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The federal government does not have a current program for local governments to submit district energy proposals. The Net Zero Accelerator Initiative did not include local governments as eligible applicants.
<p>Support work led by the Minister of Housing to assist municipalities to accelerate development approvals and ensure sufficient housing for provincial growth through continued implementation of the Development Approvals Process Review and implementation of the <i>Housing Supply Act</i>.</p>	<p>Status: Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership of Development Approvals Process Review (now Local Government Density Initiatives) was transferred to Ministry of Housing in December 2022. Ministry staff continue to support work led by the Ministry of Housing. Specific support has been delivered on Bills 16, 35, 44, 46 and 47. The Ministry continues to support additional legislative proposals led by Ministry of Housing as well as related Ministry led changes for the <i>Vancouver Charter</i>.
<p>Support the work of the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness to co-develop and introduce modernized emergency management legislation.</p>	<p>Status: Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Emergency and Disaster Management Act</i> was enacted in November 2023, and Ministry staff continue to support work to develop regulations and effectively implement the new legislation.
<p>Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure and work with the Minister of Housing to implement transit-oriented development to advance sustainable communities along transit corridors to help achieve our housing and affordability goals.</p>	<p>Status: Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2023, Bill 47's (Amendments to <i>Local Government Act/Vancouver Charter</i>), Housing Statutes Amendment for Transit Oriented Areas supports increased housing supply through the creation of denser, more complete communities around transit hubs.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Support the Minister of State for Workforce Development to help ensure B.C. quickly removes barriers so new international arrivals can find employment sooner in their field of training.</p>	<p>Status: Complete/Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2023 the Ministry expanded client eligibility for the Career Paths program and undertook marketing to raise awareness of the program. Client intake is robust and client outcomes remain strong. • Ongoing collaboration is occurring with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to improve pre-arrival information and better align immigration selection criteria with professional regulation requirements.