CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION BRITISH COLUMBIA

ADVOCACY UPDATE

An update on CHBA BC's government relations activities

September 2018 | Issue 26

Events and Meetings

CHBA BC attends UBCM 2018

The Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention (UBCM), hosted this year from September 10-14 in Whistler, brings together local government officials, MLAs, and Cabinet Ministers for policy resolution debates and meetings. A highlight of this year's UBCM was an announcement that the provincial government will take on a review of the development approvals process in B.C. CHBA BC is very supportive of this initiative.

CHBA BC Fall Provincial Meetings

CHBA BC was pleased to host Minister Selina Robinson an BC Housing CEO Shayne Ramsay at the Fall Provincial Meetings. Minister Robinson provided an update to members on recent initiatives and led a roundtable discussion on housing supply. This is one of many further discussions to take place on this important topic.



Image: Minister Robinson and Shayne Ramsay at the roundtable.

Provincial Consultations

Land Owner Transparency Act

CHBA BC submitted to the Land Owner Transparency Act White Paper consultation, which closed on September 19. A copy of the submission can be accessed here.

Budget 2019

The provincial government is collecting feedback on Budget 2019 before October 15, 2018. CHBA BC will be presenting on October 11 to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. This consultation is also open to the public. Any feedback can be submitted here.

National Updates

CHBA National CEO Kevin Lee testified before the federal Finance Committee during its pre-Budget consultations and answered questions relating to affordability, mortgage rules, lack of supply in larger urban centres, and the impacts of code changes. View the video here.

Provincial Issues

Speculation Tax

At UBCM, several Mayors indicated their concerns with the tax during a press conference. This took place after a UBCM policy resolution was passed calling on the provincial government to allow municipalities to opt in or out, and keep the revenues generated in their regions.

The B.C. Legislature resumed on October 1 and the speculation tax is expected to be introduced early in the session. The outcome of the tax is uncertain at this point, with many proposals on the table and a minority Legislature. This includes the approach supported at UBCM 2018.

CHBA BC has been running Facebook ads, launched a website (StopTheTax.ca) and infographic outlining the facts. CHBA BC is also collecting video highlights from those affected using this link.

Changes to the rent increase formula

The 2019 maximum rent increase was announced in September at 4.5% (2% + 2.5% inflation). However, in late September, following significant public pressure, the provincial government accepted its Rental Housing Task Force recommendation to change the formula and keep the maximum increase rate at solely inflation (2.5% in 2019). Landlords will be able to apply for additional increases if unit maintenance expenses are higher than inflation, but such details are not available yet.

It will be more difficult to encourage purpose-built rental construction with a decreased rate. An insightful blogpost on this challenge can be accessed here.

Prompt payment

CHBA BC has written a formal letter to Attorney General David Eby outlining its direct concerns with prompt payment legislation in B.C. While this legislation is not in place at this time, CHBA BC continues to track this issue and its status. A review of CHBA BC's position on prompt payment can be accessed using this link.

Legislature Day

CHBA BC is hosting its first Legislature Day this November! Approximately 30 members from across the province will be coming to Victoria for this event. It includes a full day of government relations training, a day of meetings to speak with MLAs and a reception for MLAs of all parties and their staff members.

This is an exciting opportunity for CHBA BC to raise its profile at the Legislature in Victoria.