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 and 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.

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.