

Date: March 27, 2024
File No: 0390-20-AVICC

RESOLUTION for Consideration by Delegates at the AVICC 2024 AGM & Convention

Addressing the Needs of Rural Seniors in British Columbia

City of Port Alberni

WHEREAS rural B.C. has a proportionately larger and faster growing seniors' population than urban B.C., yet has less infrastructure and resources to support its aging population;

AND WHEREAS a greater and more focused provincial response to ongoing concerns about inequities in services and supports for seniors in rural B.C. is required to address the inadequacies of current approaches to such issues;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC & UBCM endorse the recommendations of the Office of the Seniors Advocate's report titled "Challenges Facing B.C.'s Rural Seniors" and dated February 2024, and calls on the Provincial Government to implement said recommendations beginning with establishing a ministry or minister of state for rural B.C. in recognition of the geographic imbalance of regional representation in the Legislative Assembly;

AND FURTHER that the AVICC request the creation of a rural seniors caucus within the UBCM membership.

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In alignment with Council's *2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan* and the goals of "fostering a complete community that is safe, healthy and inclusive" and ensuring the "provision and maintenance of quality services" Council for the City of Port Alberni is submitting the attached resolution for consideration.

The aging population in rural British Columbia (B.C.) is growing at a faster rate than in urban areas, leading to challenges in providing adequate infrastructure and resources to support seniors in these regions. The disparities in services and support for rural seniors have raised concerns about the effectiveness of current approaches. To address these issues, a more targeted and comprehensive provincial response is essential to ensure the well-being of rural seniors in B.C.

Growing Senior Population: Rural B.C. is experiencing a significant increase in the proportion of seniors compared to urban areas. This demographic shift emphasizes the need for tailored services and support to meet the unique needs of rural seniors.

Infrastructure and Resource Challenges: Despite the growing senior population, rural B.C. faces limitations in infrastructure and resources to provide adequate care and services for aging residents. This disparity highlights the urgent need for intervention and support.

Challenges and Inequities:

Inequities in Services: Rural seniors in B.C. often face challenges accessing healthcare, social services, and other essential resources due to geographic isolation and limited infrastructure.

Inadequate Support: The current approaches to addressing the needs of rural seniors are deemed insufficient to address the complexities and nuances of the issues they face. There is a pressing need for a more focused and responsive strategy to ensure equitable access to services and support.

The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) are called upon to endorse the recommendations outlined in the Office of the Seniors Advocate's report titled "Challenges Facing B.C.'s Rural Seniors" dated February 2024.

The resolution urges the Provincial Government to implement the report's recommendations, starting with the establishment of a ministry or minister of state for rural B.C. This initiative aims to address the geographic imbalance of regional representation in the Legislative Assembly and prioritize the needs of rural seniors.

AVICC is further requested to advocate for the creation of a rural seniors caucus within the UBCM membership. This caucus will serve as a platform for collaboration, advocacy, and policy development to address the specific challenges faced by rural seniors at the local government level.

The resolution acknowledges the growing concerns and challenges faced by rural seniors in British Columbia and proposes concrete steps to address these issues. By endorsing the recommendations of the Seniors Advocate's report and advocating for targeted provincial and local initiatives, AVICC and UBCM are demonstrating their commitment to improving the quality of life and support systems for rural seniors. This collaborative effort aims to create a more equitable and sustainable framework for addressing the needs of aging populations in rural communities across B.C.

Yours truly,
CITY OF PORT ALBERNI



Sharie Minions
Mayor

c: City Council
M. Fox, CAO
D. Monteith, Director of Corporate Services
UBCM Member Municipalities