

HOUSING CHALLENGES ON AGENDA AT UBCM CONVENTION



Ellie Sercombe
President, VRBA

The Union of BC Municipalities' annual convention is in Vancouver Sept 18 - 22.

Elected officials from municipalities throughout BC will gather to pass resolutions and discuss issues with provincial representatives, including Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing. The BC government's initiative to boost housing supply will be a big topic of discussion.

This year, UBCM is holding a housing seminar called *Building Homes, Building Communities* with reference to the province's Homes for People Action Plan.

The seminar "will explore what it will take to deliver housing while balancing broader community objectives in a rapidly evolving policy context."

A convention resolution calls for the upcoming draft legislation to be "developed with input from local governments."

I trust the building industry will receive the same consideration.

The Victoria Residential Builders Association will have a booth at UBCM's Trade Show to offer input to municipal and provincial representatives.

This will include CMHC's Municipal Land Use and Regulation Survey shedding light on how approval delays and land use regulations add costs to housing.

CMHC already published a study revealing government fees and taxes add to high housing prices.

Their latest study with Statistics Canada shows that greater land use regulation and long approval times contribute to less housing affordability.

Based on these criteria, CMHC reports Greater Vancouver has the most unaffordable housing price-to-income ratio of 14.18, while Greater Victoria is second at 10.04.

They are the only regions in Canada scoring above 10 based on high land use regulations and slow housing approvals.

It is in everyone's interest to address these issues to create more housing affordability.

Our own survey of builders revealed even simple building permits without rezonings can take months for approvals in some local municipalities.

Municipal, provincial and federal representatives are invited for a coffee and chat about these and other challenges at VRBA booth 409 during the UBCM convention.

We are always available to discuss opportunities for more housing affordability.



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