

Date: March 20, 2026

To: **Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs**

Name and title: Councillor Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

Subject: 2026 UBCM Resolutions

Attachment(s):

1. 2026 NCLGA Resolutions
2. Proposed Prince George Chamber Resolutions

Recommendation(s):

That the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs **RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION** the report dated March 20, 2026 from the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs titled “2026 UBCM Resolutions”.

Purpose:

This report supports committee conversation on draft Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) resolution submissions. The deadline for submission of resolutions is June 15, 2026.

Background:

The 2026 UBCM Convention will take place from September 14 - 18, 2026, in Vancouver.

At the regular council meetings held on February 23, 2026, and March 9, 2026, Council endorsed five resolutions for submission to the North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA), which if approved at the NCLGA Convention May 20-22, 2026, will automatically be forward to UBCM for consideration if they meet the submission requirements. The five resolutions are attached to this report for reference.

As well proposed resolutions forwarded by the Prince George Chamber of Commerce are attached and summarized below:

1. Restricting the access of children to social media and AI tools
2. Strengthening Northern British Columbia’s transportation corridors to drive major projects
3. Keeping BC Forestry competitive: Improving access to wood, jobs and investment

Restricting the access of children to social media and AI tools resolution background

Resolution Background: Social media platforms and publicly accessible generative AI tools remain widely available to minors in Canada with minimal age verification, weak safety guardrails, and inconsistent reporting requirements, as most platforms nominally set a minimum age of 13 but rarely enforce it. This unrestricted access is increasingly linked to youth mental-health harms and elevated risks such as cyberbullying, harmful content, grooming, and radicalization.

WHEREAS enacting legislation prohibiting Canadians under 16 from accessing social media platforms and generative AI tools, and requiring technology companies to implement secure, privacy-compliant age-verification systems to enforce these minimum age restrictions would help protect youth, and;

WHEREAS requiring platforms to report to appropriate Canadian law-enforcement authorities any credible threats of violence, criminal activity, exploitation, or other dangerous conduct involving users over 16 that result in suspension or removal, and establishing meaningful, proportionate financial penalties or operational restrictions for companies that fail to comply with these reporting and age-verification requirements and investing in education programs that help youth, parents, educators, employers, and employees understand the safe use of online technology, would be a benefit;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM advocate to the Government of Canada to prohibit access to social media platforms and generative AI tools for Canadians under 16; require technology companies to implement secure, privacy-compliant age-verification systems; mandate reporting of credible threats or dangerous conduct to law-enforcement; establish proportionate penalties for non-compliance; and invest in education programs that promote safe online technology use.

Strengthening Northern British Columbia's transportation corridors to drive major projects

Resolution Background: Prince George is the largest city in Northern BC and the gateway to northern transportation trade routes. Northern British Columbia is essential to the provincial and national economy, supplying key sectors such as energy, forestry, mining, agriculture, and tourism. Yet the region relies on aging two-lane highways, vulnerable river crossings, and limited rail capacity. A modern transportation strategy must treat northern and rural trade corridors as critical infrastructure, prioritizing safety, reliability, and economic impact through coordinated investment in highways, bridges, rail, and port connections. Without such investment, infrastructure constraints will continue to increase costs, reduce safety, limit economic growth, delay major project decisions, and weaken access to global markets.

WHEREAS recognizing Northern British Columbia's transportation corridors as nationally significant trade routes that support Canada's access to Asia-Pacific markets, and adopting a regional corridor strategy that identifies and prioritizes necessary highway, bridge, and rail investments would be a benefit, and;

WHEREAS developing cost-shared funding for Northern British Columbia transportation infrastructure, prioritizing projects that shift heavy truck volumes to strengthened rail and intermodal alternatives, and providing dedicated funding to Indigenous Nations and communities to support meaningful participation in consultation, planning, and monitoring of these projects, would also be a benefit.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Government of Canada to recognize the Prince George centered northern transportation corridors, including Highway 16, Highway 97, and key rail and bridge infrastructure, as nationally significant trade routes essential to Canada's Asia-Pacific access, and to adopt a regional corridor strategy that identifies and prioritizes the highway, bridge, and rail investments required to ensure safe, reliable, and competitive transportation networks in Northern British Columbia.

Keeping BC Forestry competitive: Improving access to wood, jobs and investment

Resolution Background: Forestry remains one of B.C.'s largest export industries, contributing \$17.4B to provincial GDP, supporting about 100,000 jobs, and generating \$9.1B in annual wages and \$6.6B in government revenues, while employing 4,800 Indigenous workers provincially; in the Prince George–anchored Cariboo Region, the sector generates \$3.6B in GDP and supports 19,600 jobs, underscoring its regional importance. However, the sector faces severe pressures, including a 60% decline in provincial softwood lumber production since 2016 and more than 60 mill curtailments or closures since 2023, driven by unpredictable wood access, high operating costs that outpace competing jurisdictions, and inconsistent BC Timber Sales volumes, with 2025 harvest levels falling 40% below planned apportionment.

WHEREAS Prince George's forest sector requires timely, predictable access to economic fibre, improved cost structures, and a reliable log supply—including more efficient permitting, reduced administrative and regulatory burdens, transparent and competitive BC Timber Sales volumes, and strengthened support for First Nations through capacity, tools, and revenue-sharing mechanisms to participate fully in stewardship, consultation, tenure, and manufacturing opportunities and;

WHEREAS proactive, science-based forest management is essential to climate adaptation and wildfire mitigation, and tools such as fuel reduction, salvage, thinning, and prescribed burning are necessary to maintain resilient working forests that store carbon, reduce emissions, and sustain the long-term economic viability of mills, contractors, workers, and forest-dependent communities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urges the Province to strengthen the forest sector by expediting access to economic fibre, reducing regulatory and cost barriers, ensuring a reliable BC Timber Sales log supply, supporting meaningful First Nations participation, and

integrating active forest management practices into provincial climate adaptation and wildfire-mitigation strategies.

Strategic Priorities:

Active participation in UBCM may have a link to each of the Council strategic priorities depending on topic.

Summary and conclusion:

This report provides draft content to aid in conversation on possible 2026 UBCM resolutions.

Respectfully submitted:

Councillor Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

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Approved:

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Meeting date: 2026/04/07