

# Electoral Area Directors Forum



Fraser-Fort George  
**REGIONAL HOSPITAL  
DISTRICT**



**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District

UBCM 2024 – Electoral Area DIRECTORS' FORUM

# Regional Hospital District Funding Challenges

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Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> – 9am



Fraser-Fort George  
**REGIONAL HOSPITAL  
DISTRICT**



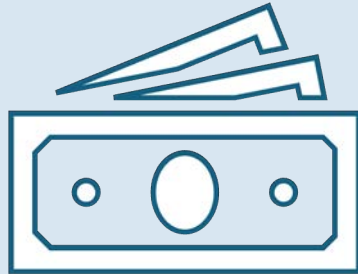
**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District

## AGENDA

- **Purpose and background**
- **Current state of affordability**
- **Provincial comparability**
- **FFGRHD and SNRHD stories**
- **Challenges and opportunities**
- **Key takeaways**
- **Questions**

## PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

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Funding and affordability concerns



Legislative reform needed

## Special Resolution 1

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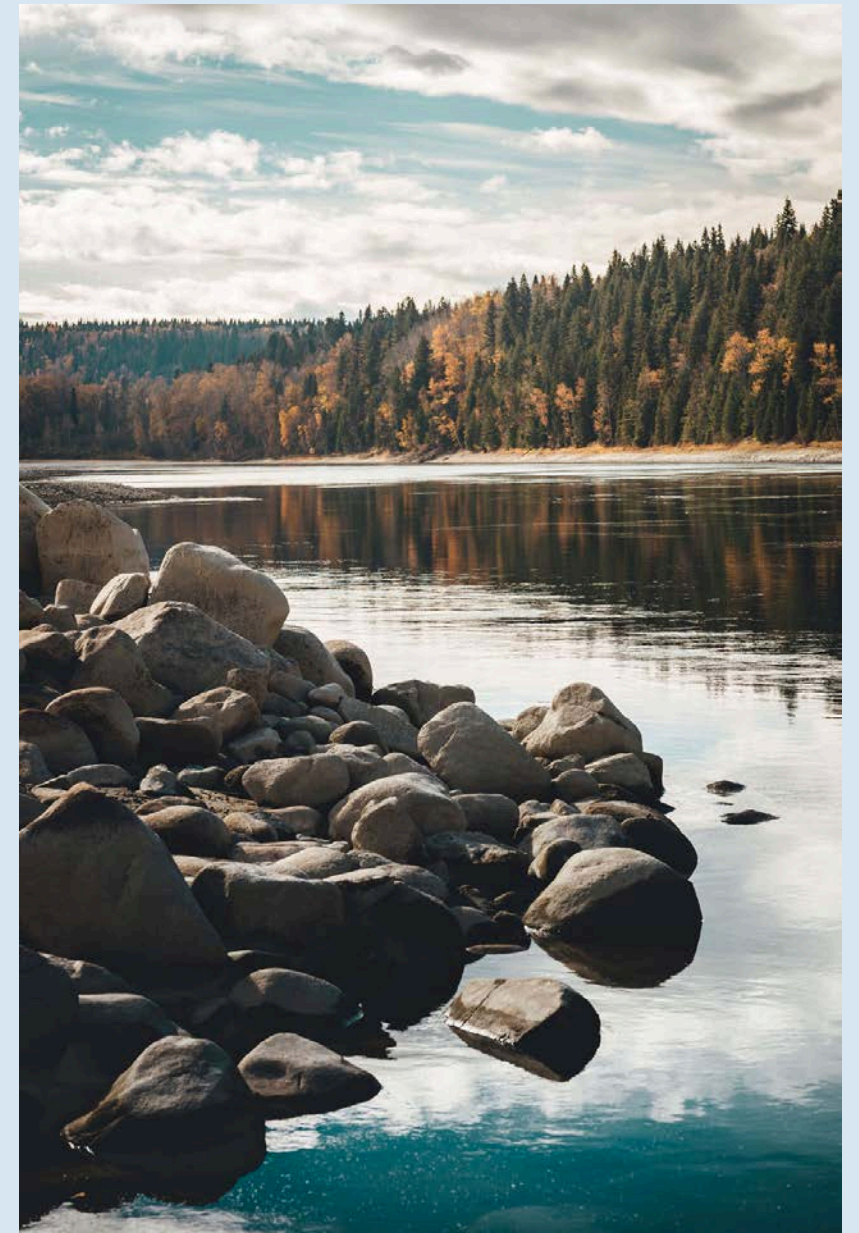
### Unsustainable Local Government Contributions to Regional Hospital Districts

Whereas local governments are facing significant financial pressures due to the expansion of services which are being downloaded by the provincial and federal governments on many issues including housing, community safety and climate change;

And whereas local governments must share the capital infrastructure project costs for healthcare facilities with the provincial government through their Regional Hospital Districts with 60 percent contributed by the Province and 40 percent contributed by Regional Hospital Districts;

And whereas local governments must provide the 40 percent 'voluntary' contribution towards the provincial government's health care capital costs, including any cost overruns, or risk losing those projects to other areas of the province:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government work with Regional Hospital Districts and UBCM to review the cost-sharing model for funding health capital projects in BC, and acknowledge that the reliance on property taxes to fund areas of provincial health care responsibility is inconsistent and unsustainable for BC local governments.



## REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT PURPOSE

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### *Hospital District Act*

The primary purpose of regional hospital districts (RHDs) is to raise revenue from the local property tax base to assist with the funding of capital investment in health care facilities.

This can include:

- acquisition of property
- renovations
- new construction
- medical equipment

Typically, the contribution from RHDs is set at 40% of the total capital expenditure when a project benefits residents within the RHD's service area or boundary.



**RHDs**

Regional Hospital  
Districts

## CURRENT STATE OF AFFORDABILITY

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Healthcare capital costs have escalated significantly and continue to do so



Province is in a spending wave on healthcare



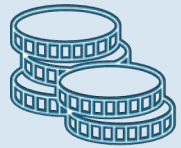
Affordability for RHD taxpayers is a significant challenge



Fairness across the Province is in question

# PROVINCIAL COMPARABILITY

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Total requisition



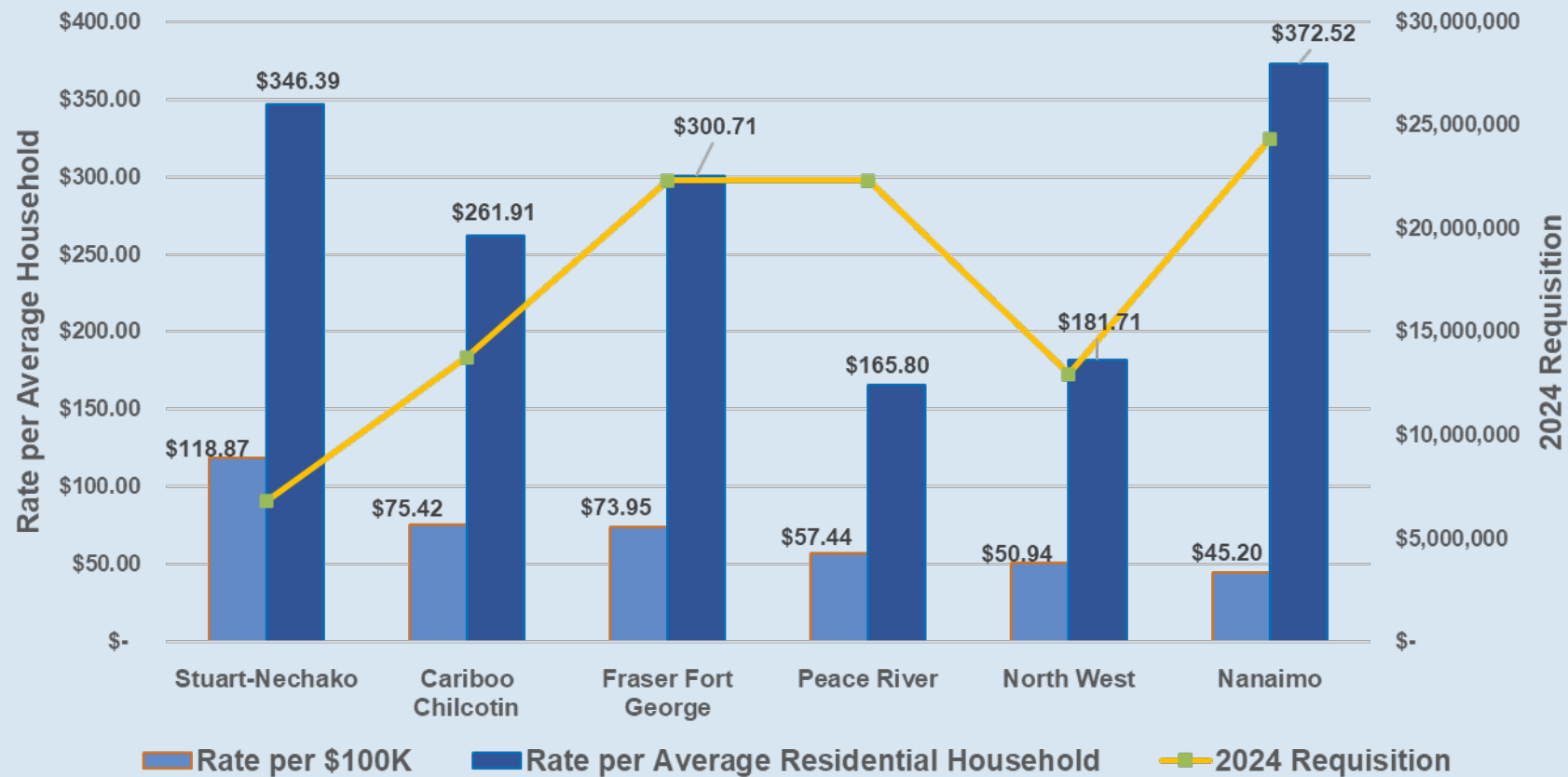
Residential requisition rates



Requisition per average household

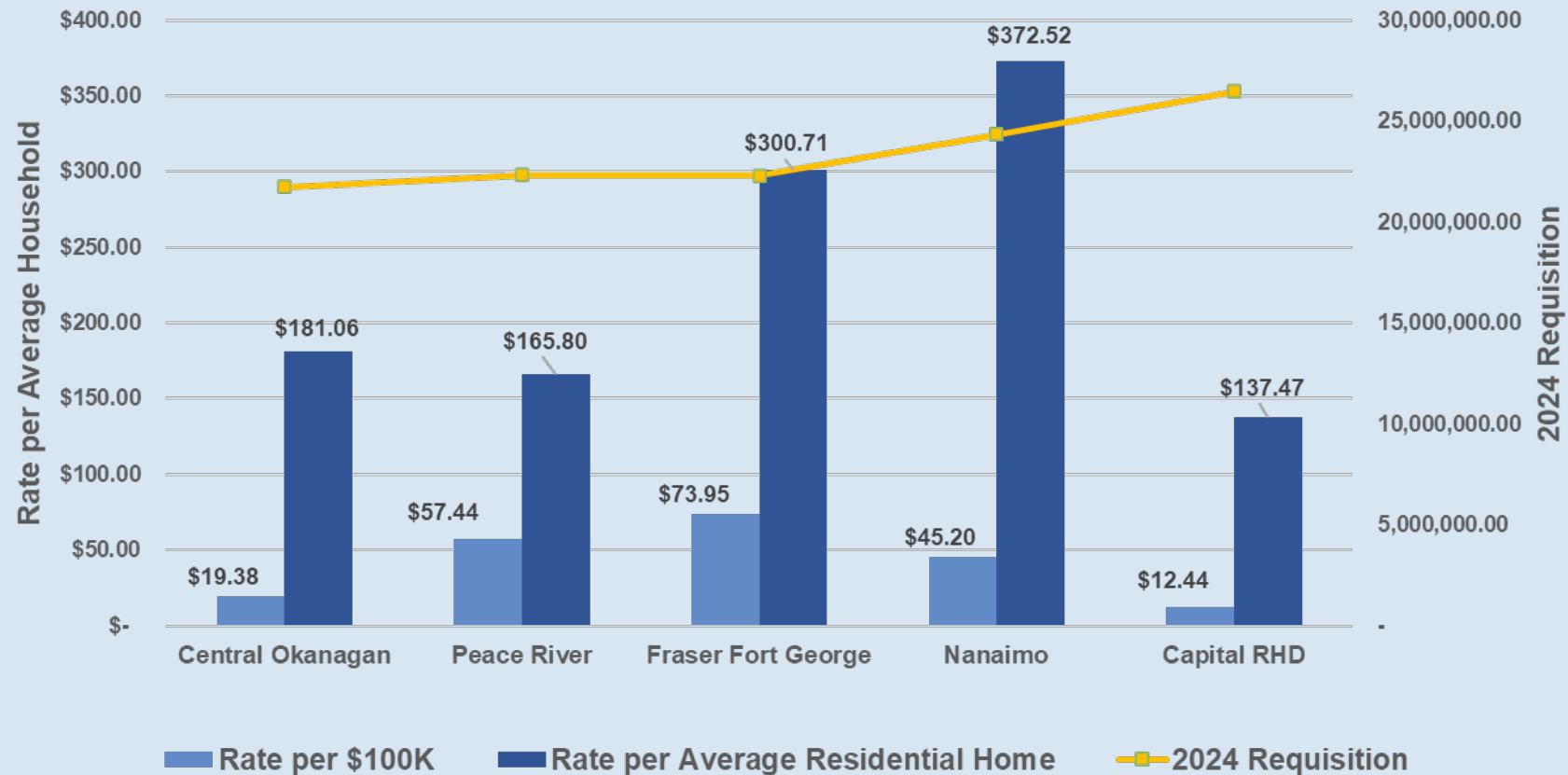


# PROVINCIAL COMPARABILITY



Comparison of the Top 6 highest rate per \$100K with rates per household and 2024 Requisition Totals

# PROVINCIAL COMPARABILITY



Comparison of the Top 5 highest 2024 Requisition Amounts with rates per \$100K and per household

# FRASER-FORT GEORGE REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT PATH

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- UHNBC Acute Care Tower Project
- Long term financial planning
- Affordability work
- Funding Negotiations



**FFGRHD**

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UHNBC Acute Care  
Tower

# FINANCIAL PLANNING HISTORY

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2015

FFGRHD Board was informed of the planned redevelopment of the UHNBC campus.

2016

FFGRHD Board approved a ten-cent \$0.10 increase to the residential tax requisition mill rate.

2017, 2019, 2021 and 2023

15 Year Financial Plans were prepared and approved in 2017, 2019 and 2021.

FFGRHD approved \$0.05 increases to the residential tax requisition mill rates for 2017 through 2023.

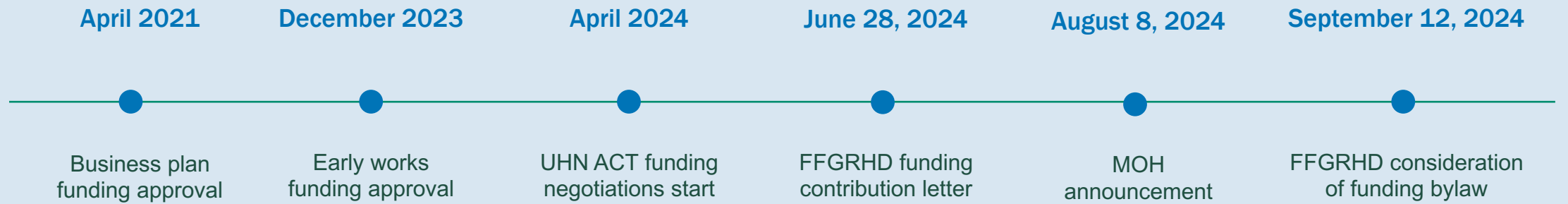
2024

2024 Financial Plan was approved by FFGRHD Board.

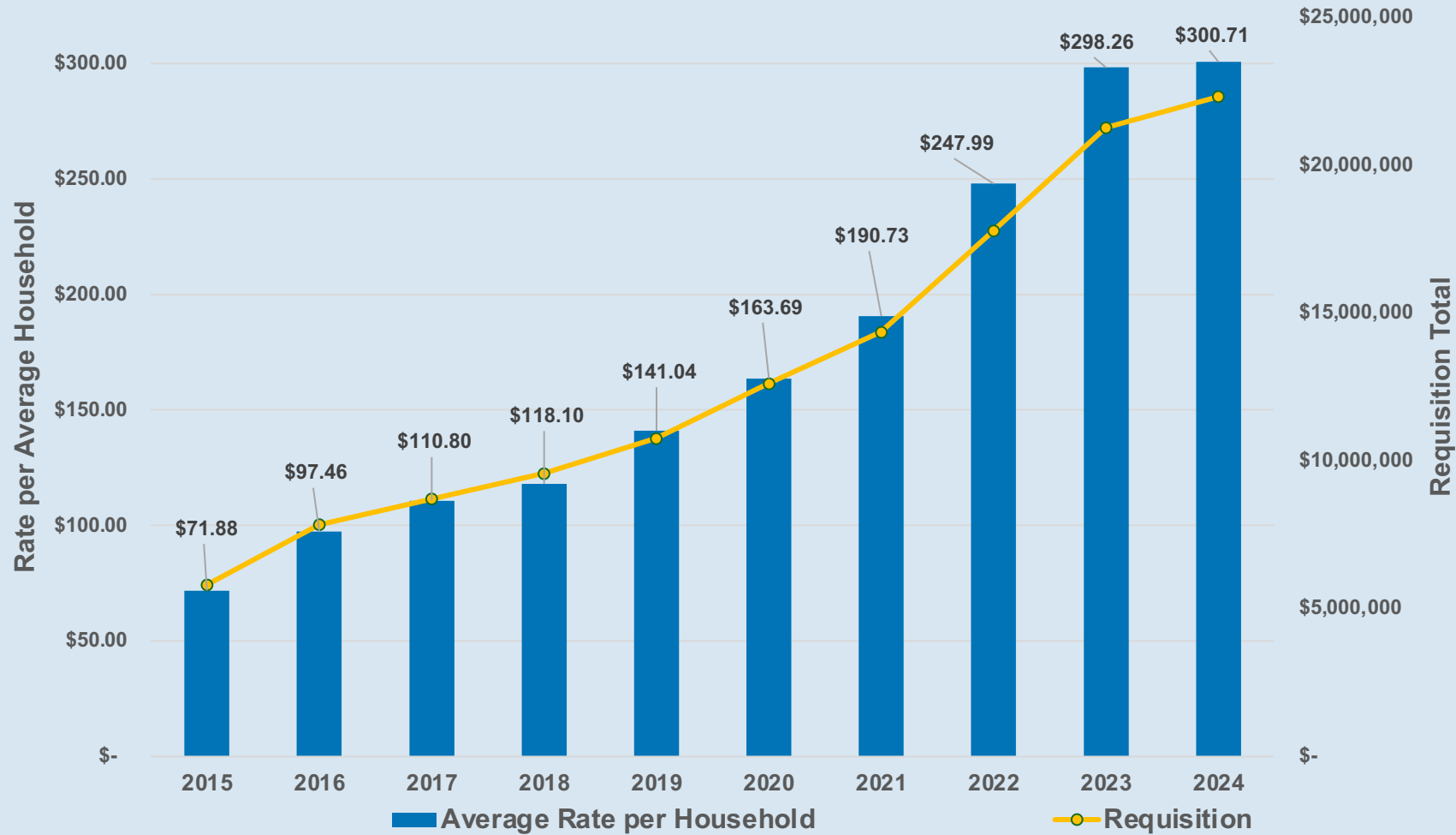
FFGRHD approved a 4.90% increase to total requisition for 2024 and 2025.

# UHNBC ACUTE CARE TOWER PROJECT TIMELINE

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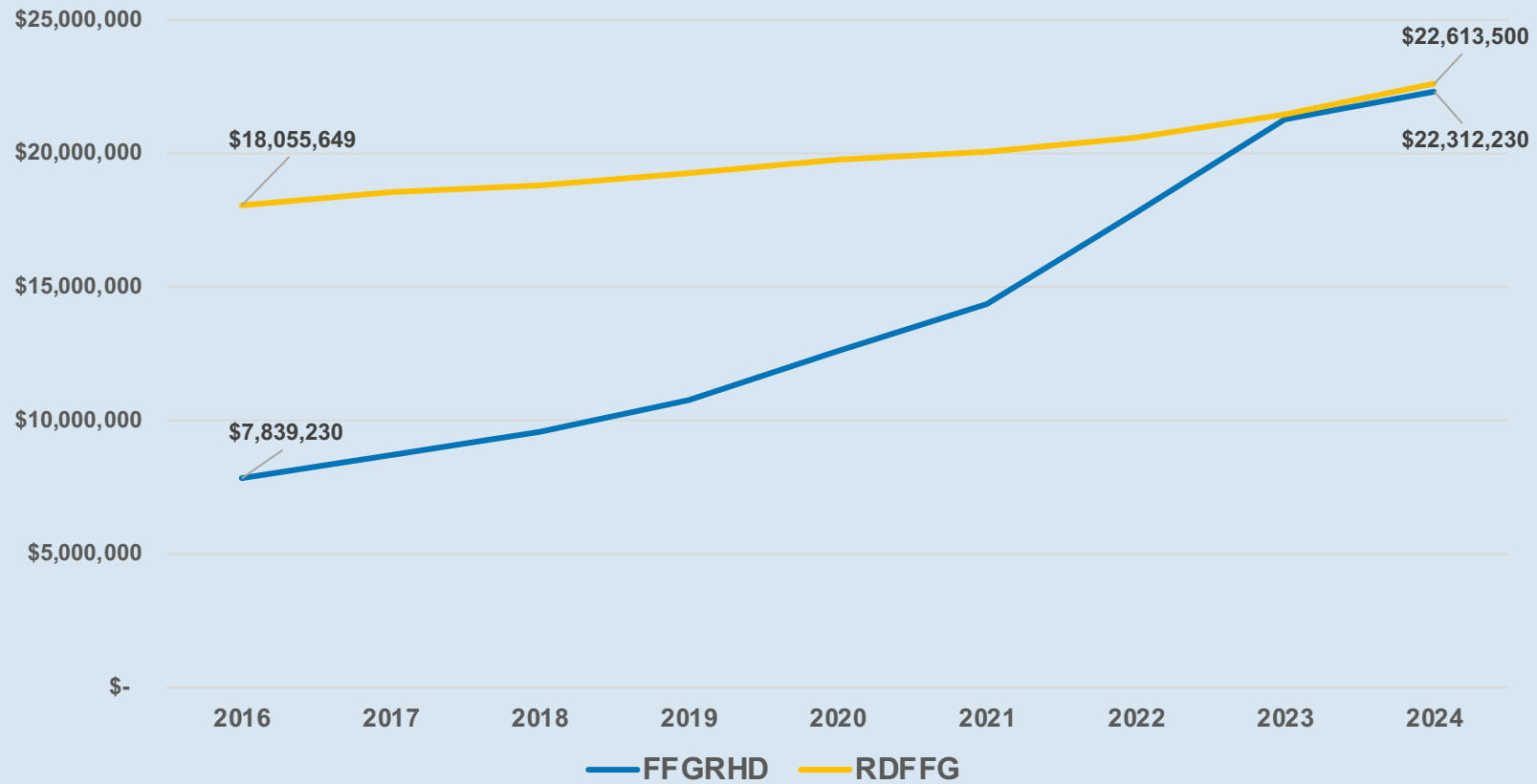


# HISTORICAL REQUISITION INCREASES



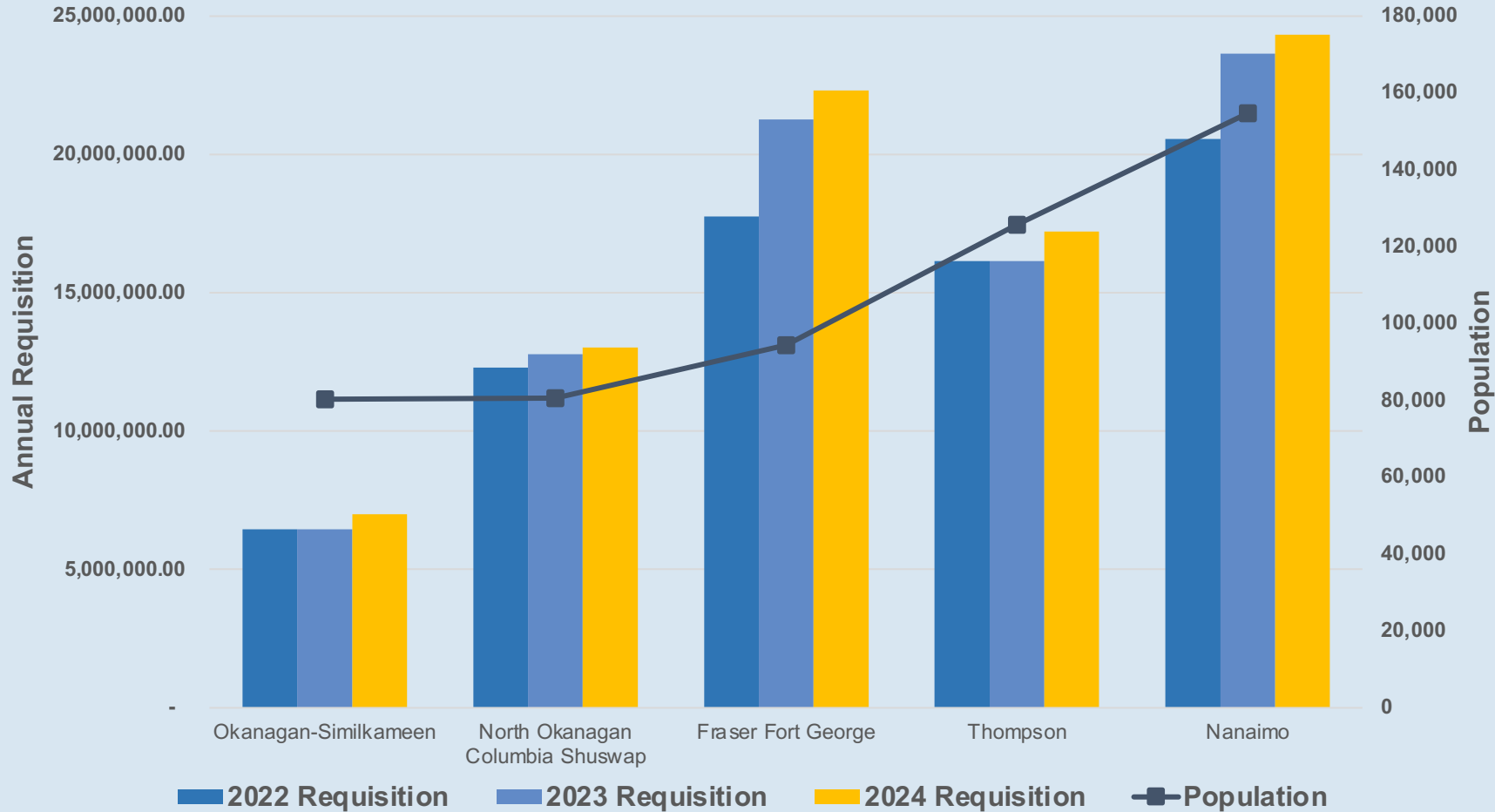
Requisition amounts with rates per average household

# COMPARING ANNUAL REQUISITION TOTALS



2016 to 2024 comparison of Regional District and Regional Hospital District requisition totals

# COMPARING WITHIN BC



Requisition values for Regional Districts with comparable populations



## COMPARING WITHIN BC

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### Summary

Based on 2024 requisition amounts, FFGRHD has:

- 3rd highest rate per average residential home
- 2nd highest requisition per capita
- 3rd highest residential requisition rate
- 4th highest annual requisition



FFGRHD

near the top of most  
key metrics

## COMPARING WITHIN BC

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Project	Total Project Cost	RHD Contribution (\$ / %)	
Mills Memorial Hospital replacement	\$633 Million	\$120 Million	19%
Dawson Creek and District Hospital replacement	\$590 Million	\$177 Million	30%
Cowichan District Hospital replacement	\$1,446 Million	\$283 Million	20%
Nanaimo Regional General Hospital ICU and High Acuity Unit Redevelopment	\$60 Million	\$20 Million	33%

Other significant hospital construction projects within the province

# UHNBC PATIENT CARE TOWER NEGOTIATIONS

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## Objectives

- ✓ See project announcement occur prior to 2024 election
- ✓ Negotiate an affordable contribution for FFGRHD taxpayers
- ✓ Cap the funding contribution to protect from future inflation and cost escalation
- ✓ Timing of FFGRHD funding draws to the end of the project timeline
- ✓ Ensure negotiated contribution is in line with provincial comparables



## UHNBC PATIENT CARE TOWER NEGOTIATION

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### Final Outcome

**FFGRHD Board approved \$365 Million global contribution to project with total estimated cost of \$1.687 Billion**

**Represents 21.63% global contribution to Project**



## STUART NECHAKO REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT – OUR STORY

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- *Hospital District Act*
- SNRHD
- Challenges
- Rates and Taxes
- SNRHD Project Examples



**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District

## SNRHD – HOSPITAL DISTRICT ACT

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1967

Established

1998

Regional Hospital Districts  
rejigged

2003

Ministry of Health Services –  
RHD Cost Sharing Review

2008

Strengthening the capital planning  
and cost sharing process –  
emerging directions for change

## SNRHD – HOSPITAL DISTRICT ACT – CONT'D

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**“RHD’s are expected to contribute 40% ..... When there is an opportunity to amend ....”**

## STUART NECHAKO REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT – HISTORY

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- 1967 – Bulkley-Nechako RHD = RD of Bulkley-Nechako
- 1998 – Stuart-Nechako RHD & Northwest RHD
  - Granisle, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, and Areas B, C, D, E, F = SNRHD
  - Smithers, Telkwa, Houston, and Areas A & G = NWRHD
- Also in 1998 – Metro Vancouver & TransLink



**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District



## SNRHD CHALLENGES

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- Definition of Capital
- Funding the Bricks and Mortar and Other, while...
  - Operational (Staffing) Issues
  - Emergency Room Closures
  - Travel for Health Services
- Tax Rate Sustainability & Funding Competition



**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District

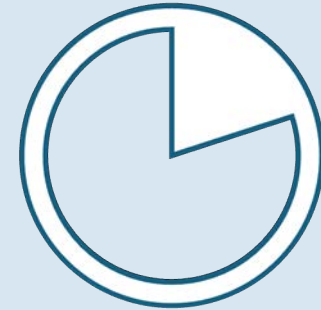
## SNRHD CHALLENGES

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**40%**  
**OFF**

**VS**



**20%**  
**OFF**

## RATES AND TAXES (2023)

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Municipality	Avg. House Value	RD Tax	Hospital Tax
Burns Lake	\$242,635	\$378	\$300
Fort St. James	\$209,615	\$236	\$258
Fraser Lake	\$197,366	\$165	\$243
Granisle	\$76,019	\$57	\$94
Vanderhoof	\$323,958	\$247	\$399
Smithers	\$482,760	\$600	\$244
Provincial Average	\$804,549	\$349	\$130

- Highest Mill Rate in the province (\$1.24/\$1,000)
- Taxation revenue \$6 million per year

## RATES AND TAXES – CONT'D

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- *Hospital District Act Regulation*
  - Bulkley-Nechako RHD Maximum = \$0.34/\$1,000
  - 2024 – SNRHD = \$1.19/\$1,000
  - 2024 – SNRHD = \$6.8 Million
  - Tax at Max = \$1.9 Million



**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District

## SNRHD PROJECT EXAMPLES

Project	Total Project Cost	40%	SNRDH Contribution	SNRHD %
Stuart Lake Hospital	\$150 million	\$60 million	\$20 million	13.3%
Vanderhoof Primary Care	\$14.5 million	\$5.8 million	\$5.8 million	40.0%
St. John Hospital	\$750 million	\$300 million	\$150 million	20.0%
Max Tax ???		158 years	79 years	
Current Tax		44 years	22 years	

## CHALLENGES

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Funding 40% is  
unaffordable

Healthcare spending  
is rising significantly

*Hospital District Act*  
legislation is outdated

Directors feel they  
cannot say no to  
funding requests

## OPPORTUNITIES

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Work together to  
advocate for change

- Affordability
- Legislative reform

Help shape  
healthcare in your  
area

Negotiate fixed  
contribution levels for  
major projects

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- Major projects require significant long-term financial planning to ensure affordability
- Provincial comparability is an important consideration
- Build your case for negotiations
- Work collaboratively with your Health Authority and Ministry of Health

**EA Directors and RHDs can work together to tackle major issues of affordability and legislative reform**





Fraser-Fort George  
**REGIONAL HOSPITAL  
DISTRICT**



**Stuart-Nechako**  
Regional Hospital District

THANK YOU

**Questions?**

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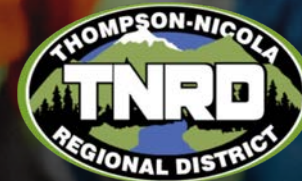
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THE  
WAVE**  
UBCM 2024





# Cooperative Community Wildfire Response

UBCM Electoral Area Directors' Forum  
Sept 17, 2024



BC Wildfire  
Service

# Cooperative Community Wildfire Response CCWR



**Kaitlin Baskerville**  
Provincial Operations  
Manager of  
Preparedness  
BC Wildfire Service



**Scott Hildebrand**  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Thompson Nicola Regional  
District



**Jamie Vieira**  
General Manager of  
Operations  
Thompson Nicola Regional  
District



**Terry Jessup**  
Vice President  
Knutsford Community  
Response Society

# Agenda

- Background
- Unpacking CCWR from different Perspectives:
  - Premiers Expert Task Force
  - Provincial/BC Wildfire Service
  - Regional District
  - Community Group
- The Path Forward
- Q&A



# Supporting wildfire response capacity building in rural and remote communities in B.C.



# Wildfire is considered the **number one risk** to small, remote communities in B.C.

*“Wildfires disproportionately affect remote and forested Indigenous communities in Canada and Indigenous peoples are 33% more likely to evacuate from a wildfire.”*

- Tara K. McGee, 2021

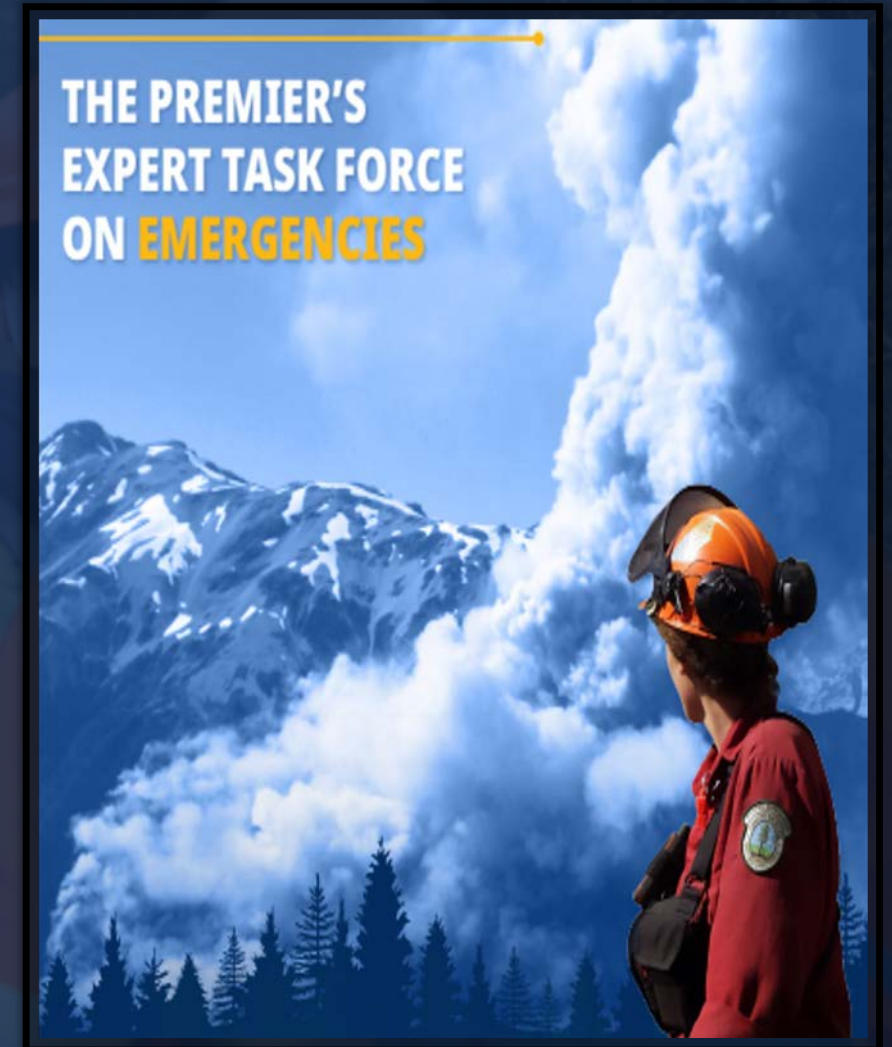
# Pathways to cooperative community wildfire response

- Expanding First Nations bootcamps.
- Continuous improvement of contract opportunities with First Nations, working towards more holistic operational plans.
- Improving firefighter recruitment: Extending the hiring period for new recruits and encouraging applicants to indicate work location preference.
- Adding cultural awareness training for operational staff.
- Incorporating more community relations specialists (Liaison Officers) into operations
- Increasing community pre-organization through BCWS Zones.
- Funding training for identified community response societies
- Continue to grow the model for long-term cooperative response with rural and remote communities and local governments.



# Premiers Expert Task Force on Emergencies

- Task Force Announced fall 2023.
- Members comprise leadership from First Nations, FNESS, local government, Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, Office of the Premier and CalFire.
- Prioritizing tangible changes that will be felt at the front lines.
- Implementation before and during the 2024 fire season.



# Expert Task Force Recommendation:

## Incorporation of local resources in wildfire response

**PATHWAYS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** Local people with working knowledge of the land can play a role in partnership-based wildfire response. Safety is paramount and the work begins well before the season with organizing, training, and preparing, based on a foundation of communication, co-operation and trust.

Some of the most important roles local people can play to help protect their communities do not involve high-risk work on the fire line; local leadership is critical to promoting FireSmart, gathering local knowledge, supporting evacuation readiness, and making sure community members receive accurate and timely information.



# What We Heard from Rural and Remote Communities in B.C.'s Interior

**80+**

Community emergency groups identified through word of mouth and FBC engagements

**35/37**

Electoral Area Directors who responded to the survey have communities outside of structural fire protection

**24/35**

Have some kind of organized community group

**11/35**

Have an unorganized community group

# 2024 Fire Season CCWR Recap

# 430+

Community Members  
were trained and  
ready to respond



# 4

Community Groups  
engaged in response  
in 2024



# 21

Community Groups  
trained and ready to  
respond



# CCWR Groups Responsibilities:

Activities carried out under the supervision and guidance of BCWS such as:

- ✓ Expediting resources, like personnel, equipment and supplies
- ✓ Mopping-up. For example, cooling ash pits
- ✓ Patrolling areas to prevent potential flare-ups

Not authorized to take action without explicit direction from BCWS, rural and remote firefighters are not permitted to

- ✗ Suppress wildfire
- ✗ Conduct Initial attack
- ✗ Enter or remain in an area that's under an evacuation order
- ✗ Move or re-deploy BCWS resources
- ✗ Conduct structural firefighting
- ✗ Conduct Structural protection



# Regional District Perspective

## TNRD is large

- Size of Switzerland (45,000 km<sup>2</sup>)
- 5 hours to drive across it
- 11 Municipalities & 10 Electoral areas
- TNRD Board is second largest

## TNRD has disasters

- EOC activated every year
- Prone to wildfires, river flooding, and landslides



# Regional District Perspective

## Structure Fire Protection

- 9 TNRD administered departments
- 10 Municipal fire departments
- 3 improvement district departments
- First Nation fire departments

... but many still left out





# Regional District Perspective

## Most areas do not have fire protection

- 30% of TNRD properties have fire protection
- Only 1.6% of TNRD geography covered by fire protection service



# Residents want to be involved in protecting their homes & communities



A group of people, likely a community response team, wearing hard hats and safety vests, standing in a line outdoors. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent filter.

# Community Perspective

**Knutsford Community Response Society**



# Path forward for TNRD

## 1. Regional EOC involvement

- Maintain contact list
- Initial liaison between BCWS and community groups
- Confirm training records, personnel, equipment, etc.
- Partner in other non-wildfire related emergencies (i.e. flooding)



# Path forward for TNRD

1. Regional EOC involvement
- 2. Devoted staff resources**
- 3. Amend TNRD policies**
- 4. Administration of grant funding**
- 5. Grant-in-aid program - funded through regional taxation (Municipal & EA taxation)**



# The Path Forward

## Fire Season 2025



**2025 FireSmart™ Pilot  
Program for Regional District  
Cooperative Community  
Wildfire Response  
Organizations**

**Training**

**Personal  
Protective  
Equipment**

# 2025 FireSmart™ Pilot Program for Regional District Cooperative Community Wildfire Response Organizations

Open intake October 1, 2024 – May 30, 2025

## Eligibility:

- all regional districts in BC
- no limit to the number of applications that a regional district can submit
- each CCWR organization can only be funded once per intake to a maximum of \$10,000 per CCWR Org.
- No more than the Regional District Funding maximum which is correlated to the number of Electoral Areas.
- CCWR Org must be:
  - an incorporated business entity, such as a non-profit society or fire brigade, that is able to receive funding and has an accountable leadership structure.
  - Be outside of structural fire protection jurisdiction.
  - Demonstrate a genuine desire to participate.
  - Be willing to follow the command and direction of BC Wildfire Service.



THANK YOU.

# Questions?

Kaitlin Baskerville	BCWS Manager of Provincial Operations	<a href="mailto:Kaitlin.Baskerville@gov.bc.ca">Kaitlin.Baskerville@gov.bc.ca</a>
Jamie Vieira	TNRD Manager of Operations	<a href="mailto:jvieira@tnrd.ca">jvieira@tnrd.ca</a>
Scott Hildebrand	TNRD CAO	<a href="mailto:shildebrand@tnrd.ca">shildebrand@tnrd.ca</a>
Terry Jessup	VP Knutsford Community Response Society	<a href="mailto:chief@kcrs.ca">chief@kcrs.ca</a>



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# UBCM 2024


## Housing in Rural Areas

**Amy Wong**, Director Regional Development – North

**Tyler Baker**, Director Regional Development - Interior

**Rod Hill**, Director, Indigenous Relations

September 2024

A photograph of a modern, multi-story residential building with balconies and a covered walkway. The building has a mix of light-colored siding and dark wood accents. The sky is blue with some clouds. A large teal triangle is overlaid on the top left of the image.

Ambrosia, Keremeos

# *Land Acknowledgement*

*We gratefully acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional and unceded territory of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlililwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.*



# Agenda

1. Who is BC Housing
2. Housing Ecosystem
3. Common Challenges in Rural Housing
4. Projects
5. Indigenous Relations at BC Housing

# Who is BC Housing?

BC Housing is a crown corporation. We work across the housing sector (and with related sectors) to address gaps in the housing spectrum.

## Who we serve:

- Individuals who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness
- Individuals with disabilities
- Indigenous individuals and families
- Women and children at risk of violence
- Low-income seniors and families
- Buyers of new homes



The Osprey, New Denver

# The Housing Ecosystem



Supportive Housing Fund  
Women's Transition Housing Program

Community Housing Fund  
Indigenous Housing Fund



Addressing Homelessness	Housing with Support Services	Social Housing	Rental Assistance Private Market	Affordable Rental Housing	Affordable Homeownership
VERY LOW-INCOME	SOCIAL HOUSING OR SUBSIDIZED RENTS	AFFORDABLE MARKET		MIDDLE-INCOME	
		LOW- TO MODERATE- INCOME			

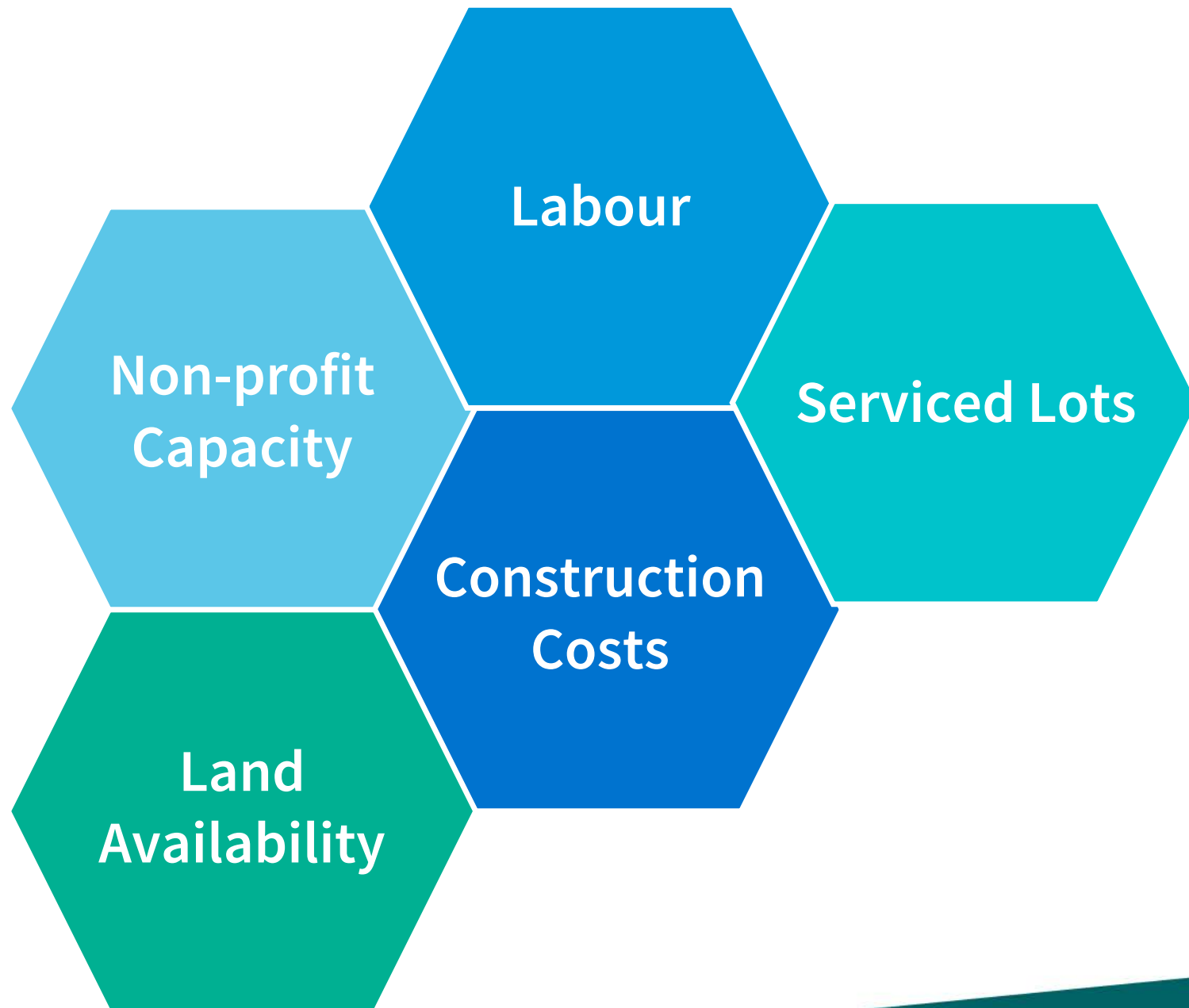
# How We Work Together

BC Housing works in partnership with the private and non-profit sectors, provincial health authorities and ministries, other levels of government and community groups to develop a range of housing options.





# Common Challenges in Rural Housing



# Rossland Yards – Non-profit led affordable housing

- Regional District of Kootenay Boundary.
- 37-unit project led by Lower Columbia Affordable Housing Society.
- BC Housing involvement started in 2018, and the project was completed in December 2023.
- Includes new City of Rossland town hall and funding from all levels of government.
- City of Rossland provided land in the form of a long-term lease to the project.



## Neghuni Ghunli-un – Fort St. James - Non-profit led affordable housing

- Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
- 36-unit seniors project led by Connexus Community Services Society
- Community Housing Fund intake 2 allocation June 2021 and completed June 2024
- Includes partnership funding from all levels of government (including Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation, BC Housing and City).
- City grant and land equity from the Village of Fort St James who transferred the land to the non-profit to develop the affordable housing project.



# Questions?

# BC Housing Funding Streams

Funding Program	Clients Served	Who Can Apply?
Community Housing Fund (CHF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital funding</li> <li>• Operational funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families</li> <li>• Seniors</li> <li>• Persons with a Disability</li> <li>• Low/moderate income households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit and Indigenous housing providers, First Nations based groups, housing co-operatives, and municipalities.</li> <li>• Opportunities also exist for private developers by collaborating with a non-profit housing provider.</li> </ul>
Indigenous Housing Fund (IHF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital funding</li> <li>• Operational funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-income Indigenous households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous non-profit housing providers</li> <li>• First Nations</li> <li>• Metis Nation BC</li> <li>• Developers who want to partner with Indigenous organizations and First Nations to create new affordable rental housing for Indigenous persons.</li> </ul>
Supportive Housing Fund (SHF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital funding</li> <li>• Operational funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness</li> <li>• Support services offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interested municipalities</li> <li>Interested operators</li> <li>Currently accepting submissions to pre-qualify Supportive Housing operators.</li> </ul>
Womens Transition Housing Fund (WTHF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital funding</li> <li>• Operational funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women (and their children) leaving violence</li> <li>• Support services offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interested municipalities</li> <li>• Interested operators</li> </ul>

# How BC Builds Works



**Identifying low-cost land  
for development**



**Bringing together  
landowners, residential  
developers and speeding up  
project development  
timelines**



**Providing low-interest  
financing and grants**





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# BC Transit – Serving the Diverse Needs of Rural Communities

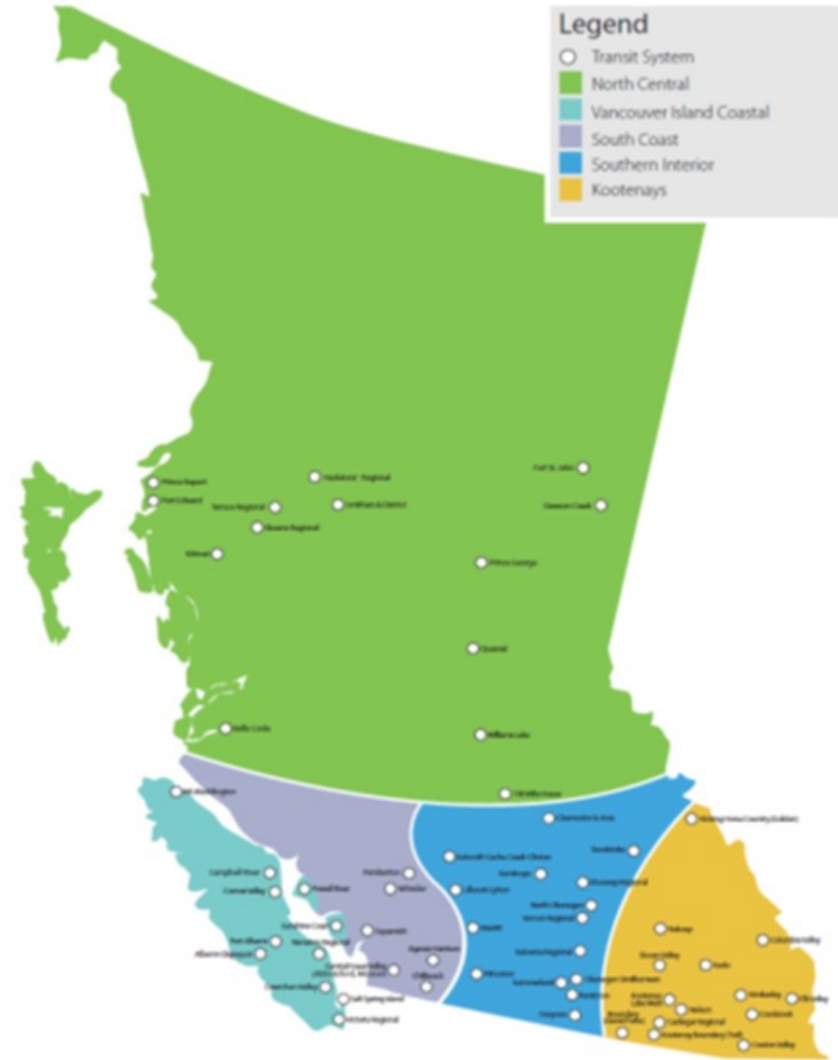
Union of BC Municipalities  
Electoral Area Directors Forum  
September 17, 2024



# BC Transit

- BC Transit is the provincial Crown agency charged with coordinating the delivery of public transportation across British Columbia, except for those areas serviced by TransLink (Metro Vancouver).
- More than 1.8 million British Columbians in over 130 communities across the province have access to BC Transit local and regional transit services.

Map of BC Transit Systems



# BC Transit Strategic Plan

- Communities across BC are facing some big challenges, and BC Transit can be part of the solution.
- Key Objective - *Thriving Communities*
  - Build responsive transit systems that support livable communities
- Focus Area - *Access to Transit*
  - Work with Indigenous communities and rural areas to improve access to transit



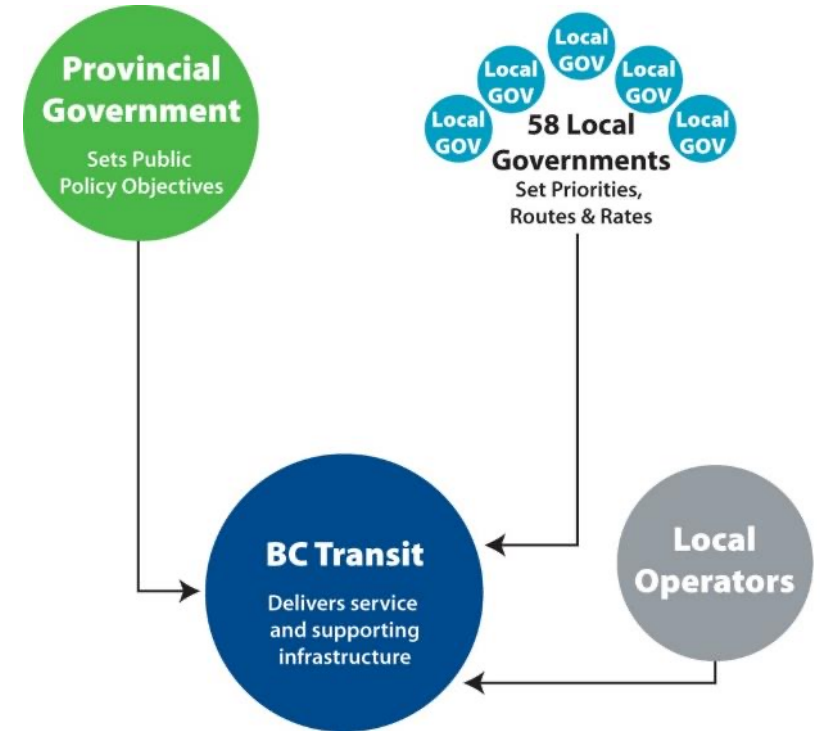
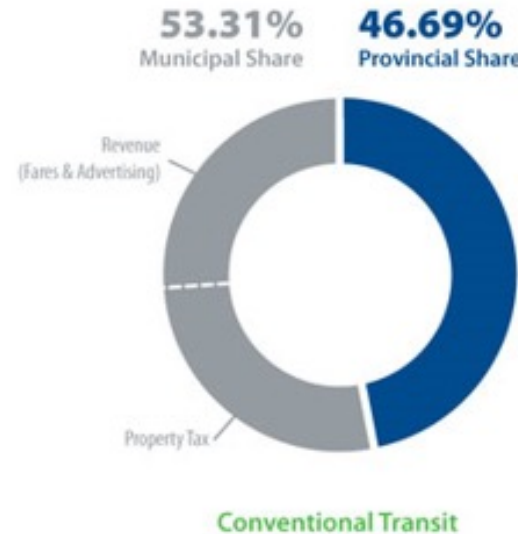
# Diverse Range of Service Types

- Conventional Transit
- Custom Transit
- Paratransit
- Interregional Transit
- On Demand Transit



# Funding and Governance

- Local share of costs determined by legislated funding formula
- Service levels and budgets are approved each year by local government, who also set fares and local property taxes
- Local cost sharing measures can vary from one system to another



# Rural Transportation Options

- Many providers involved in local, regional and inter-regional service provision
  - Community shuttle programs
  - Taxi services
  - Health connections services
  - Volunteer and non-profit operated services
  - Privately operated transportation services



# Coordination of Service Delivery

- Collaboration with other transportation providers (ie. long-haul)
- Alignment of schedules and routing
- Improved communication and promotion of service options



# Rural Transit - Challenges

## Operational

- Operating conditions
- Service provision and vehicle maintenance

## Customers

- Comfort & safety
- Prioritizing key markets

## Funding

- Sustainability and competing needs



# Service Design Considerations

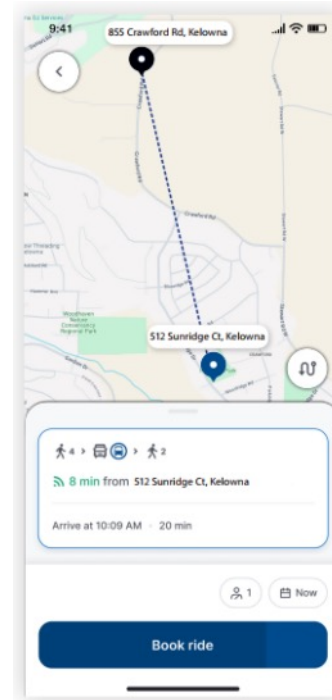
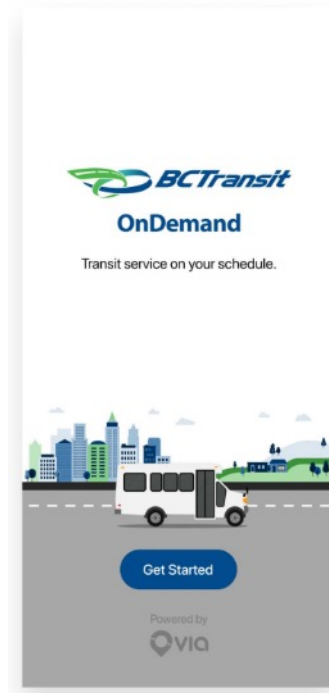
- What are the key travel needs not currently being met?
- Key considerations
  - Travel distance
  - Operational effectiveness
  - Matching service to demand





# On Demand

- On Demand transit uses technology to dynamically dispatch a bus, van or fleet of vehicles to locations dictated by customers
- It can be used to replace routes with low-ridership, increase accessibility and decrease trip length by providing a more direct route.



# Health Connections

- Started in 2005-06 to provide affordable public transportation that connects patients in rural and remote communities with health care services
- Service is provided to a number of communities in partnership with 11 local governments
- 5 Regional Hospital Networks provide transportation links to rural communities



70 Health Connections							
Tuesday							
Rock Creek	Midway	Greenwood	Grand Forks	Grand Forks	Greenwood	Midway	Rock Creek
8:30	8:50	9:10	10:00	1:00	1:35	1:55	2:23

Health Connections  
 Call to book these trips  
 1-855-993-3100 EXT 1

# Custom Transit (handyDART)

- Each community has varying operational and customer requirements, resulting in varying levels of ridership
- A one-size-fits-all solution is not effectively responsive for these regions.
- How best to efficiently deliver trips that can't be easily grouped



# Service to Indigenous Communities

- Approximately 26% of First Nation communities have either direct or limited access to transit in BC
- Remoteness of communities can be a significant barrier, but there are sometimes turn-key solutions available
- Community Transit Partnership Agreements (CTPA) with local governments



# Thank you.

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**BC Transit**

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# The Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation

In appreciation of our speakers today and with thanks for your contribution, UBCM has made a donation to The Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation. The Foundation works collaboratively with its Donors, Healthcare Partners and has been instrumental in contributing over \$40 million towards essential equipment, enhancing facilities, and supporting the ongoing education of healthcare professionals and medical staff.