



# Council Report

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**Date:** February 11, 2025  
**To:** Anthony Haddad, City Manager  
**From:** Cheryl Hardisty, Council & Executive Operations Manager  
**Subject:** 2025 SILGA Resolution

## Recommendation

THAT Council submit the following resolution regarding increasing the equitable distribution of supportive housing and shelter services across the Province to the Southern Interior Local Government Association;

AND THAT the resolution be forwarded to the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen for consideration.

**WHEREAS** the Province of British Columbia, through BC Housing, has made significant investments in supportive housing and shelter services, yet many smaller and rural communities continue to face challenges in accessing these resources; ;

**AND WHEREAS** ensuring that individuals experiencing homelessness can access housing and supports within their home communities promotes stability and well-being;

**AND WHEREAS** a more equitable distribution of supportive housing and shelter services would ensure that all communities – urban, rural and regional – have access to supportive housing and shelter services;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) urge the Province of British Columbia to implement a regionally balanced approach to supportive housing by:

- Increasing dedicated funding streams for smaller and rural communities;
- Ensuring supportive housing projects are proportionally distributed based on local needs assessments;
- Providing targeted incentives for non-profits and service providers to operate outside major urban centers and regional hubs.

## Background

This resolution is being suggested by Councillor Helena Konanz for Council consideration. Staff have worked with Councillor Konanz to understand the intent and ensure the motion was drafted to effectively convey the issue and align with SILGA's resolution process.

The Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) considers resolutions from member local governments at its annual convention. Resolutions passed at the SILGA convention are submitted to the Union

of BC Municipalities (UBCM) for consideration for its annual convention, and resolutions passed through UBCM are directed to the Province for response and form UBCM's policy decision-making.

Submitting a resolution to SILGA is one avenue for advancing Council's advocacy efforts, but it is not the only opportunity. Council continues to engage in advocacy on several key issues, including securing sustainable solutions for PIB water infrastructure, ensuring a balanced composition of the BC Housing Skaha development, advancing care solutions that support both individuals struggling with addiction and overall community safety, and advocating for provincial support of Forest Service Road 201 improvements for accessibility and emergency preparedness.

### **SILGA Resolution Background**

Shelter and supportive housing is essential for providing stable accommodations and services to individuals that are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. While the Province of British Columbia has committed substantial resources to the supportive housing program over the past 3 years, the distribution of supportive housing remains uneven, with smaller and rural communities often lacking sufficient access.

The centralization of services, while aiming to streamline operations, has benefited larger urban centres and regional hubs - inadvertently posing challenges for smaller and rural communities including access for residents, capacity building. This limits access for residents of smaller communities and diminishes local capacity over time.

The intention of this motion is not to reduce urban or regional investments, but seeks a more equitable and balanced approach across the Province. Implementing this approach to supportive housing and shelter services will:

- Allow individuals to remain within their home communities, fostering social connections and support networks;
- Enhance the capacity of smaller and rural communities to address local housing needs effectively;

Additionally, while the Province requires local governments to complete Housing Needs Reports to assess and plan for housing demand, the current methodology does not specifically account for different types of housing needed to address homelessness. Instead, it broadly references the need for "units to reduce homelessness" without differentiating between:

- Emergency shelter beds (short-term crisis accommodation)
- Transitional housing units (temporary housing with supportive services)
- Supportive housing unit (long-term housing with on-site support services).

This lack of specificity limits the ability of smaller and rural communities to accurately quantify and advocate for their needs on an apples-to-apples basis, leading to less investment in smaller communities and more rural areas, which also have a need for supportive housing investment.

These challenges highlight some unintended consequences of a centralized model. By adopting this approach, the Province can ensure that all British Columbians, regardless of their location, have access to the supportive housing and services they need, within their home communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Hardisty  
Council & Executive Operations Manager

Concurrence

City Manager

AH