

UBCM focus remains on public safety, housing solutions

(Penticton, BC – September 19, 2023) – After successfully lobbying for the introduction of a Car 40 program at last year’s Union of B.C. Municipalities annual general meeting, Council is focused on getting Penticton more resources to deal with public safety and partnerships to build housing.

“The Car 40 is a good first step towards but it is not a silver bullet to solving the challenges we see in our community,” says Mayor Julius Bloomfield. “We know it will allow people in mental health crisis to be treated with a greater level of care and concern. The question we will be asking ministers is where the assistance is after that initial contact is made. It’s imperative that services match the needs and that will be one of our key focuses over the week.”

Council had a one-on-one meeting with Premier David Eby yesterday and meetings Public Safety Minister Mike Farnworth, Mental Health and Addictions Minister Jennifer Whiteside and Municipal Affairs Minister Anne Kang are scheduled during the week.

“The one-on-one meetings provide us the opportunity to make the case directly to the decision-makers and inform them of how Penticton is doing it parts through initiatives like the Safe Public Spaces Bylaw and the review of the Official Community Plan as it relates to housing,” says Bloomfield. “Our goal is to find ways to work together with senior levels of government to deal with the issues impacting our residents.”

The City of Penticton also has a resolution that would see the provincial government match or exceed any donation of municipal land for affordable housing projects up for debate.

Council members are also attending workshops and forums on decriminalization, economic resiliency and UNDRIP.

Council will be attending UBCM from September 18 to 22, with a total of six councillors and two staff in attendance. Estimated cost is \$25,000.

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