



## **Council Member Motion for the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting of February 12, 2015**

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**Date:** February 5, 2015      **From:** Councillors Loveday and Isitt  
**Subject:** AVICC / UBCM motion: Environmental Bill of Rights

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### **BACKGROUND**

Council adopted the Declaration of the Right to a Healthy Environment in December 2014, an initiative supported by many Canadians and the David Suzuki Foundation's Blue Dot initiative with a goal of enshrining environmental rights into municipal, provincial and federal law.

The following resolution has been prepared by supporters of the Blue Dot initiative for consideration at the Union of BC Municipalities 2015 Convention and area association conventions, to give effect to environmental rights in British Columbia, consistent with the principles embodied in the City's of Victoria's Declaration of the Right to a Healthy Environment.

### **MOTION**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council forward the following resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities and Union of BC Municipalities for consideration at the annual conventions of these associations:

#### **Environmental Bill of Rights**

WHEREAS municipalities and regional districts are the governments nearest to people and the natural environment, and therefore share a deep concern for the welfare of the natural environment and understand that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the health of individuals, families, future generations and communities;

AND WHEREAS fostering the environmental well-being of the community is a municipal purpose under section 7(d) of the Community Charter and a regional district purpose under section 2(d) of the Local Government Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia enact a provincial environmental bill of rights to fulfill the right of every resident to live in a healthy environment by ensuring access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to effective remedies, and without limitation to allow a resident to:

- comment on environmentally significant government proposals,
- ask a ministry or local government to review an existing law, policy, or program,
- ask a ministry, crown agency, or local government to investigate harm to the natural environment,

- appeal, or ask a ministry or local government to review, a decision under an enactment,
- propose a new law, regulation, policy, or program to protect the natural environment,
- use courts or tribunals to protect the environment, and
- have whistleblower protection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to forward this resolution to AVICC and UBCM member local governments requesting favourable consideration and adoption of resolutions of support in advance of local area association conventions and the UBCM convention.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Jeremy Loveday



Councillor Ben Isitt