



GPC Report

Date: July 18, 2014 **From:** Councillors Alto and Isitt
Subject: A Social Policy Framework for British Columbia

MOTION

WHEREAS the Board Voice Society of B.C. is a provincial organization of volunteer governors of community social service organizations dedicated to advocating for better services for people, bringing community leaders together to improve the health and wellness of their communities and improving governance;

WHEREAS in 2013 the Board Voice Society initiated a campaign to develop a comprehensive Social Policy Framework for British Columbia, modeled on the success of a social policy framework developed by the community and adopted by the Alberta Provincial Government (<http://socialpolicy.alberta.ca/>);

WHEREAS the importance of a comprehensive social policy framework to Victorians is demonstrated by the City's adoption, after extensive community consultation, of an Official Community Plan which highlights our commitment to Community Well-Being, including Social Equity, Physical Accessibility, Multigenerational Neighbourhoods, Community Development, Community Safety, adequate and affordable Housing, and other social policy priorities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Victoria City Council forward the following motion to BC Premier Christy Clark, Minister of Social Development Don McRae, Health Minister Terry Lake, Justice Minister Suzanne Anton, and Education Minister Peter Fassbender, with a copy sent to the 2014 Union of BC Municipalities Annual General Meeting:

WHEREAS every British Columbian depends on social services, health care, justice and education services;

AND WHEREAS our communities, who are partners in the delivery of many of these services, are facing increasingly complex social challenges requiring coordination between multiple social ministries of government, municipalities and the community agencies and organizations that deliver services to the public;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Victoria calls upon the Premier to begin a consultation with British Columbians to initiate the development of a Social Policy Framework that will set out key policy directions, values, priorities, roles and expectations, and guide the creation of public policy to meet our social needs now and into the future.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Alto'.

Councillor Marianne Alto

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ben Isitt'.

Councillor Ben Isitt

BACKGROUND

Social Policy Framework Questions & Answers

(Alberta Model – from Social Policy Framework Province of Alberta)

Q: What is social policy?

A: Social policy is about how we meet human needs - needs like housing, employment, nurturing, safety and security, and childcare. Social policy can be expressed in how we care for one another and how individuals, communities, and government come together to address social issues. Social policy includes actions, guidelines, principles, laws, and regulations. It involves creating the conditions to maintain a minimum standard of well-being for Albertans, ensuring the fair treatment of individuals, and providing services to people in need. By stating and communicating our approach, we can better organize ourselves around shared outcomes and make more strategic use of our resources.

Q: What is a social policy framework?

A: Alberta's Social Policy Framework is a living document that provides broad, overall direction for social policy in Alberta. It is intended to guide collective efforts to meet the growing and diverse needs of Albertans. The framework provides decision-making tools to address social challenges. It enables a common foundation to evaluate, measure, and report progress on achieving the desired outcomes. The framework is part of the ongoing dialogue between individuals, agencies, community organizations, and the non-profit sector to ensure that Albertans who need help have access to it. While most social supports are intended to help people in times of need, the framework is not just about people in need. It is intended to benefit all Albertans.

Q: What are the key components of the framework?

A: The framework includes:

- A clear, shared vision for the future
- Principles to guide decision making
- Desired outcomes for both Albertans and our support systems
- Key actions that enable the achievement of results
- Clear roles and responsibilities

Albertans identified four key goals for social policy and community in the province: reduce inequality; protect vulnerable people; enable collaboration and partnerships; and create a person-centred system of high quality services. Albertans highlighted safety, inclusion, health, education, training, recreation, and cultural opportunities as the most important outcomes for their families and communities. They also recommended a number of policy shifts, including a focus on prevention and awareness; treating people with dignity; and creating a system of supports that puts people first.

Q: Why do we need a social policy framework in Alberta?

A: Alberta has not had a social policy framework since the 1970s. Alberta's Social Policy Framework is a current, forward-looking framework to address our present-day needs and challenges, and to plan for those in our future. Alberta faces a number of challenges in areas like poverty, family violence, and the over-representation of Aboriginal peoples in our child intervention and justice systems. This framework will ensure that our actions are having their intended outcomes. We will continue to build on what is working, and fix what is not. Alberta's Social Policy Framework will help communities, the non-profit and voluntary sector, government industry, and individual Albertans work together to provide Albertans with the opportunity to participate fully in Alberta's economy, communities, and cultural life. Alberta's Social Policy Framework will

help to better co-ordinate our resources and actions to ensure that we are all working together towards shared goals.

Q: How will the social policy framework help create better outcomes for Albertans?

A: Communities, non-profit organizations, government, and businesses will use the framework to target supports and services on achieving results Albertans want. The framework's goals will inform decision-making for priority actions including poverty reduction and early childhood development, as well as challenges such as addictions and family violence. All partners (government, communities, business, non-profits, families, and individuals) will be encouraged to use the framework as a lens to evaluate people, programs, and services. The Framework will have:

- an influencing role to guide policy alignment—it will reach beyond Human Services to other areas of government
- a coordinating role to support the redesign of policy and practice—it will coordinate activities within and between government departments, and between government and other stakeholders, to ensure consistency; and
- a clarifying role to produce better outcomes for Albertans—it will be clear about what we are trying to achieve, how we are going to get there, and who is going to do what.

Eight transformational initiatives have been identified to demonstrate to social policy partners and the public the Government of Alberta, in collaboration with partners, will execute the Social Policy Framework through concrete and measurable actions.

- Early Childhood Development
- Results-Based Budgeting
- Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Partner with First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities
- Common Service Access
- Safe Communities
- Family Care Clinics
- Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

Q: What is the difference between a social policy framework and a poverty reduction strategy?

A: Social policy is broader than poverty. The social policy framework will guide social policy in Alberta – this includes, but is not limited to, poverty. The social policy framework will be the overarching structure that will guide action on Government's commitment to eliminate child poverty and reduce overall poverty in Alberta.

Q: Who is involved in implementing Alberta's social policy framework?

A: Implementation will involve alignment and collaboration with partners across ministries and sectors. While Human Services will continue to provide overall strategic leadership for the framework, individual ministries retain lead responsibility for transformational initiatives such as Results-Based Budgeting, Safe Communities, and Poverty Reduction. Government, communities, business, and non-profits will be encouraged to use the framework as a lens to evaluate people, programs, and services. Alberta's Social Policy Framework belongs to all of us. All Albertans are invited to share their opinions, experiences, and ideas throughout the implementation of the social policy framework. Ongoing, meaningful public dialogue, which includes diverse viewpoints, is necessary for successful implementation.