



AGENDA

Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council

Village of Ashcroft Council Chambers, 601 Bancroft Street
Monday June 8, 2026, at 5:00 pm

1. CALL TO ORDER

"Mayor and Council wish to acknowledge that the meeting today is held within the traditional territory of the Nlaka'pamux people."

2. ADDITIONS TO OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

3. MINUTES

All COTW Minutes are adopted at a Regular Meeting of Council.

4. DELEGATIONS

3.1	NONE	
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5. BYLAWS FOR DISCUSSION

3.1	NONE	
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6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1	<p>COUNCIL DISCUSSION - UBCM MINISTER MEETIGN REQUESTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CAO Memo - Potential UBCM Advocacy Topic – Rural Capacity and Shared Accountability 2. CAO Memo - Potential UBCM Advocacy Topic – Long-Term FireSmart Funding 3. COUNCIL - Potential UBCM Advocacy Topics 	

4. CLOSED MEETING

Motion to move to a closed meeting to discuss an item under the Community Charter Section 90.1

7.1	NONE	
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5. TERMINATION

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 8, 2025
FROM: Daniela Dyck, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: **Potential UBCM Advocacy Topic – Rural Capacity and Shared Accountability**

As Council begins considering potential topics for Minister meetings at the 2026 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention, I would like to introduce a broader discussion regarding the increasing expectations being placed on local governments, particularly small rural communities like Ashcroft.

Over the past several years, I have noticed a significant increase in the number of responsibilities being assigned to local governments. Many of these initiatives are important and support worthwhile provincial objectives such as housing, emergency management, reconciliation, climate adaptation, accessibility, cybersecurity, and infrastructure planning. The challenge is not whether these initiatives are worthwhile. The challenge is finding the capacity to deliver them.

The Province has provided funding for many of these initiatives, which is appreciated. However, funding does not necessarily create capacity. Projects still require staff time to coordinate consultants, engage stakeholders, prepare reports, administer grants, meet reporting requirements, and implement recommendations.

For communities the size of Ashcroft, there are only so many hours in the day. When I look at local government today compared to even ten years ago, the list of responsibilities has changed significantly.

Then and Now

Traditional Responsibilities	Additional Responsibilities Today
Roads and Infrastructure	Housing Needs Assessments
Water and Sewer Services	OCP and Zoning Updates
Parks and Recreation	Indigenous Engagement
Fire Protection	Emergency Management Modernization
Land Use Planning	EOC Planning and Training
Financial Management	Climate Adaptation Planning
Bylaw Enforcement	Asset Management Requirements
Council Administration	Accessibility Planning
Public Works Operations	Grant Administration and Reporting
	Public Engagement Requirements
	Cybersecurity and Information Management
	Provincial Compliance and Reporting Requirements
	Economic Development and Investment Attraction
	Regional Collaboration and Service Agreements

In larger municipalities, many of these responsibilities are assigned to dedicated departments and specialized staff. In small communities, they are often absorbed by the same people who are already responsible for day-to-day operations.

One area where this challenge is becoming increasingly apparent is Indigenous engagement. The Village values opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring First Nations and recognizes the importance of building strong relationships. However, communities our size do not have dedicated Indigenous relations staff. Engagement responsibilities are often added to existing workloads alongside planning, emergency management, project management, grant administration, and daily municipal operations.

The challenge is not a lack of willingness to engage. The challenge is determining how small communities can effectively build and maintain meaningful relationships while also meeting growing legislative and administrative expectations. This issue extends beyond Indigenous engagement and applies equally to housing legislation, emergency management, climate initiatives, grant reporting, accessibility planning, and many other provincial requirements.

I also recognize that the Province is facing significant fiscal pressures. This discussion is not intended to advocate for additional funding programs or increased spending. Rather, it is intended to explore practical solutions that help small communities meet expectations more efficiently.

Some discussion questions for Council may include:

- How can the Province better align expectations with the realities faced by small communities?
- Are there opportunities for shared regional resources or service delivery models?
- Could provincial agencies provide more practical tools, templates, and guidance?
- Are there opportunities to reduce administrative burden and reporting requirements?
- How can small communities be better supported in areas such as Indigenous engagement, emergency management, housing, and regulatory compliance?

I believe this topic may resonate with many small communities across British Columbia. Rather than asking for more money, it asks a broader question:

How can the Province help small local governments successfully deliver provincial priorities when expectations continue to grow but administrative capacity remains largely unchanged?

Should Council wish to pursue this topic further, I would suggest to request meetings with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. While the discussion touches on a number of provincial initiatives, the underlying issue relates to the growing expectations being placed on small local governments and the need to better align responsibilities, resources, and administrative capacity.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs may be the most appropriate primary contact for this discussion, with opportunities to further discuss specific components of the issue with the Ministers of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.

Council is invited to discuss whether this topic should form part of the Village's advocacy agenda for discussions with Ministers at the 2026 UBCM Convention.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Daniela Dyck,
Chief Administrative Officer

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 8, 2025
FROM: Daniela Dyck, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: **Potential UBCM Advocacy Topic – Long-Term FireSmart Funding**

As a second potential topic for Minister meetings at the 2026 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention, I would like to introduce a discussion regarding the future of FireSmart funding in British Columbia.

Wildfire risk continues to be one of the most significant threats facing communities throughout the Interior. Climate change, prolonged drought conditions, and increasingly severe wildfire seasons have made community preparedness and risk reduction more important than ever.

The Village of Ashcroft recently completed its first season operating as a FireSmart community and the results have been encouraging. Residents have shown a strong interest in FireSmart principles, participation has been growing, and there appears to be genuine momentum building within the community.

One of the concerns I have moving forward is the long-term sustainability of the program. Like many communities, Ashcroft has benefited from provincial FireSmart funding. However, recent changes to the UBCM FireSmart program and discussions regarding future funding have raised questions about what long-term support may look like.

While I fully recognize that the Province is facing significant fiscal pressures and difficult decisions regarding spending priorities, I would suggest that FireSmart funding may be one area where continued investment makes sense. The cost of prevention is often significantly lower than the cost of emergency response, evacuation, infrastructure damage, and recovery following a major wildfire event.

From a local government perspective, FireSmart funding has allowed communities to educate residents, reduce wildfire risk, and build local capacity. In Ashcroft's case, it has also helped create momentum and community buy-in that could take years to rebuild if funding were significantly reduced or eliminated.

For communities the size of Ashcroft, the municipal tax base is not sufficient to independently sustain a dedicated FireSmart program and staffing position without a substantial increase in taxation. While Council may ultimately decide that such an investment is warranted, it would create additional pressure on taxpayers at a time when affordability remains a concern for many residents.

One potential option for future consideration may be a shared funding model. While local governments may be able to absorb some program delivery costs over time, the staffing component presents the greatest challenge for many small communities. Council may wish to discuss whether there is an

opportunity for the Province to continue funding FireSmart Coordinator positions while local governments contribute toward education initiatives, community events, and other program activities. Such an approach could significantly reduce the financial burden on municipalities while preserving local expertise, program continuity, and the momentum that many communities have worked hard to establish.

I understand that the Province may not be in a position to maintain every program at current funding levels. However, if funding reductions become necessary, I believe there is value in ensuring that available funding continues to be directed toward communities facing the highest levels of wildfire risk.

Current FireSmart funding already recognizes wildfire risk as a factor in program delivery, and Council may wish to discuss whether continued risk-based prioritization should remain a key component of future funding decisions.

Some discussion questions for Council may include:

- Should the Province establish a more predictable long-term funding model for FireSmart programs?
- Should FireSmart continue to be recognized as a core public safety and climate resilience initiative?
- How can successful FireSmart programs be sustained once initial grant funding ends?
- Should wildfire risk continue to play a significant role in determining funding priorities?
- What role should local governments be expected to play in sustaining FireSmart programs over the long term?
- Would a shared funding model, where the Province continues to fund FireSmart Coordinator positions and local governments support program delivery activities, provide a sustainable long-term solution?

I believe this topic may resonate with many Interior communities and could lead to a productive discussion with Ministers regarding the role of wildfire prevention and community resilience in British Columbia.

Should Council wish to request Minister meetings for this topic, I would suggest submitting meeting request with the Minister of Forests and the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. FireSmart funding plays an important role in wildfire prevention, community resilience, and public safety, and these ministries are directly involved in the development and delivery of provincial wildfire preparedness and mitigation programs.

Council is invited to discuss whether this topic should form part of the Village's advocacy agenda for discussions with Ministers at the 2026 UBCM Convention.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Daniela Dyck,
Chief Administrative Officer