

#OurAssetsMatter

AMBC NEWSLETTER



Sharing information, transferring knowledge, and building capacity for sustainable service delivery.

FORTY FIFTH EDITION – WINTER 2025

May you live in interesting times

Arnold Schwabe, Executive Director, Asset Management BC

Editor's Note: In the fall edition we introduced our new full time Executive Director, Arnold Schwabe. It is appropriate for this edition to share his vision for AMBC moving forward.

Whether you believe that is an English expression or that it is claimed to be a translation of an old Chinese curse, the implied message remains the same.

Sir Austen Chamberlain (son of Joseph Chamberlain) wrote the following in a letter to Frederic Rene Coudert Jr.:



"Many years ago, I learned from one of our diplomats in China that one of the principal Chinese curses heaped upon an enemy is, "May you live in an interesting age. Surely", he said, "no age has been more fraught with insecurity than our own present time."

If you've never heard of these two people, it's no surprise. That quote is from 1936, almost 90 years ago, but it could have easily been written yesterday. Significant wars are taking place, governments are toppling, new Provincial governments have been voted in Canada, and we are seeing a general feeling of unrest in our local governments as well. You don't have to look very hard to find news stories about the public and elected official incivility towards people and process, anxiety levels seem to be at an all-time high.

This is where my story begins.

I started in my new role as Executive Director of **Asset Management BC** about a month before the annual AMBC conference, so the bulk of my time was spent on conference preparations. The yearly conference is a few months behind us now and we're preparing for the next one, but I finally have the time to take a breath and write this article. I've spent the last 35 years working in private organizations, working for and with Provincial and Federal government branches, and in a municipality and regional district.

I am now taking on the full-time role in Asset Management BC (AMBC) and will step into the shoes of Wally Wells, a legend in the asset management community. AMBC is changing and the next few years will involve a review of the organization, the "5 W's" of the services (Who, What, Where, When, and Why) we provide. We'll also be looking at the "How" in an effort to increase awareness and identify problems in an effort to change, to adapt to what is happening in local government. I prefer to call it a reset.

I believe the current situation at AMBC is a reflection of what is happening in local government. We've seen rapid increase in inflation, downloading of services from other governments, a focus on housing, a focus on tackling climate change, integration of natural assets, and a continuing demand for social services. I would like to say taxpayers are unhappy but that would be an understatement, they are angry. They are angry over tax increases that are two-to-three times current CPI. Now, I realize CPI is not a good indicator of cost increases in municipalities, and that elections are won on the promise of keeping taxes low, but I don't think we've done a good job of explaining those details, or people no longer care. They want change.

So, what do we do? We reset. It is clearly a time of change. I think it's an appropriate time for local governments to evaluate the "5 W's" of the services they provide and how they provide them. Services that have been expanded by the constant influx of new complications like housing and climate change. But the flavour of the month can't be allowed to distract us from our purpose. If you need a reminder, here is Section 185 from the "Local Government Act" (LGA) and Section 7 from the "Community Charter" (CC) on the "purposes" of local governments in BC:

- a) providing good government for its community, (LGA and CC)
- b) providing the services and other things that the board considers are necessary or desirable for all or part of its community, (LGA)
- c) providing for services, laws and other matters for community benefit, (CC)
- d) providing for stewardship of the public assets of its community, and (LGA and CC)
- e) fostering the current and future economic, social and environmental well-being of its community. (LGA and CC)

I may be biased but I would consider parts 'b' and 'c' to be the most important of these. I don't believe a community can provide services or guarantee the well-being of residents without a sound foundation of infrastructure upon which to live and grow.

We have no more excuses. The concept of Asset Management has been around long enough for staff and elected officials to have an awareness of the issues. We need to move past our anxiety and confront the problems. A large part of that involves re-evaluating services and better informing taxpayers on costs and resulting decisions. Governing bodies must have the courage to make that change, before the decision is made for us. This generation may be on the brink of financially and environmentally bankrupting future generations.

If you follow Kim Stephens' articles in the "Waterbucket eNews", you will see these same sentiments. It is not a coincidence that our articles have a similar theme, we've already discussed these issues. We are at the end of three decades of evolution and appear to be at a standstill. Kim has identified nine factors that must be in alignment for change to happen. Many of them require the willingness for change and the courage of staff and elected officials to confront the problems and bring about lasting, meaningful change.

While I was writing this, I ran across a book by Fred Hanna on "The 7 Precursors of Change", qualities that must be at least partially present in a client for change: a sense of necessity, a willingness or readiness to experience anxiety, awareness, confronting the problem, effort of will towards change, hope for change, social support for change. I want to believe all of those things are in place for change to occur, for a reset to take place. I'm looking forward to my years as Executive Director of AMBC, there are interesting times ahead.

(Note: See the Article in this issue by Kim Stephens of Water Sustainability to pick up on this dialogue)

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#OurAssetsMatter



Nine cascading factors must be in alignment to implement a course correction. Will 2025 be the year of the re-set?

*Kim Stephens, Executive Director
Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC*

Deep knowledge is rapidly being lost. Organizational amnesia is the consequence, and this creates risks and liabilities for communities.

In our current "interesting" times, deep knowledge is needed more than ever to chart the way forward through mine fields.

Kim Stephens
Partnership for Water Sustainability



What we have learned

For over two years, I have been writing a sweeping narrative titled the *Chronicle of Green Infrastructure Innovation in Metro Vancouver from 1994 through 2024*. What did you learn along the way, current local government staff would ask me; and where did that lead each time, they would add.

Their questions prompted me to dig deeper and deeper. So, I expanded my "story behind the story" interviews to delve into motivating factors. Through the power of storytelling, my hope and belief is that a new generation of decision makers would grasp the intergenerational baton and then build on deep knowledge that comes from lived experience.



The passage of time does provide perspective. Themes emerged. With each interview, I gained more and more insight into my own lived experience - for example, my conversational interview with former premier Mike Harcourt yielded "context for my context".

Who will step up?

In a perfect world, governments would maintain and manage engineered and natural assets as ... interconnected components within a system that includes

the people who live there! But systems thinking is an aspiration; it is not current reality.

Given what is at stake in the world of local government infrastructure, however, the moment is right to proactively brand 2025 as **YEAR OF THE RE-SET**. The Partnership defines **re-set** in terms of implementing a course correction.

An emphasis on the re-set theme would focus minds on creating the groundswell for a self-fulfilling prophecy. We have achieved this in the recent past, but memories are short, and history is quickly forgotten. It is a cycle, unfortunately.

Can lightning strike twice? Of course it can! The key is that influencers and decision makers be inspired as well as willing to learn to look back to see ahead and then act on this knowledge. Who will step up?

For change to happen...

While writing the Green Infrastructure Chronicle, I realized that I must find a way to distil and communicate three decades of history into an easy-to-tell story of how the Metro Vancouver region arrived where it is today. So, I boiled 700 pages down to a table. Four distinct eras define the past three decades, with the period of time for each varying between 6 and 9 years. My lived experience

Cascading factors that must be in alignment for change to happen	1997 - 2005	2006 - 2011	2012 - 2017	2018-2024	2025 and beyond
	Crucible Period	Golden Period	Unfulfilled Promise	Memory Loss	Overcome Amnesia
Shared Vision	✓	✓	✓	✗	what if
Political Commitment	✓	✓	✓	✗	what if
Champions	✓	✓	dropping out	✗	what if
Forums	✓	✓	infrequent	✗	what if
Credibility, Respect and Trust	✓	✓	✓	✗	what if
Collaborative Leadership	✓	✓	lacking	✗	what if
Learn by doing	✓	✓	declining	✗	what if
Funding	✓	✓	inconsistent	✗	what if
Roundtable for action	✓	✓	missing in action	✗	what if

While the table distills Metro Vancouver experience, it has provincial relevance and application because the Metro Vancouver history is nested within a provincial context, in particular that for the *Georgia Basin Initiative*.



is that nine cascading factors must be in alignment to implement a course correction:

All it takes is one factor to be out of alignment and that can be enough to derail a process and progress. Yet it may be years before that consequence becomes apparent.

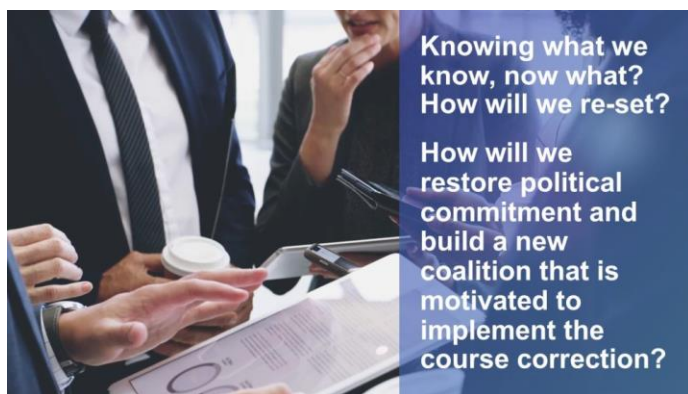
In the image below, I distil the chronicle of the past three decades into a set of defining statements to describe each of the five sub-periods. An understanding of the first four provides the springboard for a re-set and course correction beginning in 2025.



1997 - 2005	Crucible Period	When the region was a beacon of inspiration and it felt like a movement
2006 - 2011	Golden Period	When everything is in alignment, anything is possible
2012 - 2017	Unfulfilled Promise	When the gap between knowing what needs to be done versus doing it widens
2018 - 2024	Memory Loss	When the intergenerational baton is dropped and knowledge, experience and wisdom are not passed on
Next 5 Years	Overcome Amnesia	By embracing the intergenerational baton and learning to look back to see ahead

Restore political commitment and build a new coalition

The *Table of Cascading Factors* is a communication tool, has value as a conversation starter, and is resonating with audiences. Because it is a conversation starter, the table allows us to pivot from the past to the future, and pose question such as:



At the top of the list of cascading factors is political leadership and commitment to the shared vision. Leadership boils down to a willingness to act and bring together other champions willing to provide energy and organizational drive that overcome inertia.

It always comes down to whether the right people are in the room at the right time, and whether and how they can learn from and build on past experience. A local government reality is that staff can only carry things so far. When an elected leader who is respected is THE CHAMPION, my observation is that momentum can quickly accelerate.

Avoid the solution becoming the problem

The takeaway message from this article is **EMBRACE THE INTERGENERATIONAL BATON AND LEARN TO LOOK BACK TO SEE AHEAD**. It is about nudging changes in policy and practice. To avoid a situation where the solution becomes the problem, I offer readers this cautionary note about the essential need to build a coalition.

"Before one can fix a problem, others who are able to make a difference must also believe that there is a problem, as well as understand the reasons why this is the case and that there are affordable and effective solutions."

Kim Stephens



Turning, Rather than Reinventing, the Wheel: Communities of Practice

Gracelyn MA, Co-Chair
Asset Management BC Community of Practice

Kim Stephens has seen industries deteriorate from "Golden Periods" into "Memory Loss". Overcoming amnesia was the topic of an article he recently wrote in the Water Bucket Newsletter, titled *Lessons in the Past Inform the Future*. In the article, Kim advocates for helping practitioners "turn rather than reinvent the wheel."



The phrase stood out to me.

Have you ever been working on something, wondering if you're reinventing the wheel? I have. How do we protect ourselves and our colleagues from reinventing the wheel?

By engaging in ongoing conversations.

Where do we have these conversations?

I haven't found a better way than our Communities of Practice.

Communities of Practice are the informal "by-us-for-us" meetings where asset management practitioners learn together, exchange ideas, and support one another's growth. The conversations, relationships, and knowledge sharing have had a significant impact on my career and effectiveness as an asset management professional.

Arnold Schwabe and Michael Wall held the first regional Community of Practice in 2016, and I was lucky enough to attend. I was 22 years old, an Asset Management Coordinator, and new to local governments. Arnold and Michael created a space where we could all speak frankly about asset management practice in our respective communities. It was such a positive experience that I excitedly offered to host the next meeting.

Over time, regional Communities of Practice grew in BC. Southern Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland hosted meetings. I was lucky to attend meetings for various areas, learning from the different approaches as I went. These experiences showed me how much these "by-us-for-us" matter, in whichever form it takes for the local practitioners.

I met people who were passionate about their work. People with different strengths than I had, who I could call with questions or for advice. I met Wally Wells, who was instrumental in my professional and academic career.

- How could engaging in ongoing conversations with other practitioners change your journey?
- How do you know when you're turning a wheel, and not reinventing it?
- What are you working on right now that others could learn from?

If you're ready to engage in your local ongoing conversations, reach out to Arnold Schwabe (ed@assetmanagementbc.ca) or myself (gracelyn@abbotsford.ca) to be connected with your local Community of Practice, or get advice on how to start one!



Hit and Miss with Missing Middle Housing Legislation

Kim Fowler, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Long Range Planning, Sustainability and Energy, Regional District of Nanaimo



World Town Planning Day provides an annual day to celebrate how planning improves the lives of people and all our communities across the world. It's about promoting sustainable places to work, live, and play. A global challenge continues to be providing affordable and diverse housing for our

communities. The new "missing middle" housing legislation passed by the BC provincial government is an attempt to address this challenge.

The province has mandated land use planning amendments to increase housing density in single-detached zones and transportation-oriented developments. Some major changes required in single-detached residential zones are to permit secondary suites or laneway homes, and small-scale, multi-unit housing such as triplexes and townhomes in municipalities with a population over 5,000 and within urban containment boundaries by June 30, 2024. Local governments must update their housing needs reports using a standardized methodology to estimate housing needs over a 20-year time horizon and then correspondingly update OCPs and zoning bylaws every 5 years to pre-zone for the 20-year total projections.

As an early assessment, let's look at some "hits" and "misses" of this new legislation.

"Hits"

1. Modernizing OCPs and zoning bylaws – gone are the days when local governments can spend 3-5 years updating their OCPs and prepare bylaws hundreds of pages long, with many more hundreds of pages in attachments. Often containing 20-30 years of work program priorities and many lofty policies and inspired visions, the reality is local governments have neither the legal obligation nor adequate resources to implement them. Public engagement for these massive bylaws often misleads the public into believing most of it can be done in the next 5-10 years. Moreover, with time and budget resources often exhausted, the much more difficult task of updating often very old zoning bylaws is not undertaken,

leaving much of the OCP never implemented. With required 5-year reviews to update housing needs assessments, OCPs will likely be much shorter and hopefully will contain priorities for growth management instead of bloated wish lists. Zoning bylaws will have to be modernized – a very big task for those local governments who have just been consolidating zoning amendments for decades. A more detailed analysis of housing demand should drive updates of asset management plans; after all, OCPs are the “master asset management plan,” setting the locations and standards for future growth in our communities, and the resulting core infrastructure needs and costs.

2. More housing diversity – Single-family dwelling (SFD) neighbourhoods take up most of the land area in our communities. More diverse housing types are needed due to prohibitive purchase costs, an aging population wanting smaller homes in their neighbourhood (to age in place), and to make better use of existing infrastructure and related services. Resolving the impasse between the “Not in My Back Yards” (NIMBYs), developers, and 4-year term local governments removes a significant impediment to the diversification of single-detached neighbourhoods.

3. DC to AC (not AC/DC!) – Development cost charges have been replaced with amenity cost charges that expand the services for which local governments can recover to include solid waste and recycling facilities, fire protection services, and police facilities. This will improve the cost recovery of new development, which otherwise is funded by existing taxpayers.

“Misses”

1. Feasibility for development – High inflation and financing rates combined with continuing labour force and supply shortages mean many small-scale projects, such as the “missing middle,” are not financially feasible for private developers to undertake. This issue has been raised in Ontario, where legislative changes have been made earlier than in BC to build more housing. Housing targets are not being met by 38 of 50 local governments (76%) being tracked by the Ontario government. This leaves those local governments ineligible to access the billion-dollar infrastructure fund, in addition to having their development costs slashed. These local governments have pointed out the private sector is required to build most of the housing under this new scheme, and current market conditions have resulted in the housing not being built to meet provincially imposed targets. As market conditions are similar in BC, the outcome is likely to be the same. The missing middle legislative changes may be deemed a success in perhaps 10-15 years, but not in the

short term, where they are expected to address the current housing crisis.

2. Missing rental not missing middle – To supply affordable housing in the short-term, rental units need to be constructed in the tens to hundreds of thousands. Both the federal and provincial governments have existing housing corporations that are already constructing housing. When partnered with private sector developers (the ones who can't afford to build the missing middle under current market conditions), rental supply can be significantly ramped up in the short term. Using federal and provincial lands is exempt from local government zoning authority, so rental housing can also be supplied even faster.

3. Mind the (glaring) gap – The lack of good asset management practices in local government has been well documented and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has estimated the funding gap between what is needed to replace basic infrastructure – such as roads, water and sewer lines – to be at least \$150 billion². Given poor practices that don't accurately account for asset condition or replacement costs, that gap is likely much higher. While provincial and federal government asset management practices aren't any better, local government funds 60% of core infrastructure on 8 cents on the tax dollar in Canada (the provincial government gets 42 cents and the federal government gets 50 cents). This funding structure is not sustainable and a major limitation to servicing new development, particularly with infill development which is usually supplied by older infrastructure. A billion-dollar infrastructure fund is “a drop in the bucket” of what is needed even to maintain and replace existing infrastructure, let alone expanded or new infrastructure. FCM has estimated the cost to build infrastructure to support housing-construction targets to be \$600 billion for the 5.8 million homes needed by 2030 across Canada.³

The BC provincial government has taken back some of its land use planning authority delegated to local governments and is trying to significantly increase the housing supply in the short term. Land use planning had become incremental, stuck in the self-interests of many proponents, poor design, and inefficient approval processes. It's time for the planning profession to up its lobbying game – big time. With all the competing interests and increasing risks in growth management in our communities, professional planners must raise our concerns. We've all thought of them, usually late at night after a nasty public hearing! Incrementalism is the worst status for planners and doesn't achieve the goals of World Town Planning Day. To plan is to lead. Your voices are now

needed. The diversity of thoughts, fears, ideas, and frustrations of our profession need to be raised to address the quality of life in our communities. And we have a new committee to review exactly these issues funded by the provincial government.

PIBC has partnered with the BC Ministry of Housing to develop and implement a new Peer Learning Network (PLN) to support local government staff with their counterparts across the province so that they can share existing best practices and innovative approaches to streamlining development approvals and advancing housing supply. The need for a Peer Learning Network was identified during consultation by the Province with local governments, housing providers, builders, planners, and other stakeholders as part of the Province's Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR). The Province has provided PIBC with \$500,000 in funding over 3 years to support the PLN's development and implementation with an expected launch beginning in winter 2024⁴.

This article is intended to help start the conversation. Please participate!

Kim Fowler RPP, MCIP is a professional planner and sustainability expert with over 30 years of experience working with local governments in Canada. She received the Award for Individual Achievement for Leadership in Advocacy and Innovation from PIBC in 2022.

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1. <https://burlingtongazette.ca/burlington-will-miss-out-on-provincial-funding-not-enough-con-crete-being-poured/>
2. <https://www.pemac.org/members/pemac-ac-knowledges-international-volunteer-day>
3. <https://www.link2build.ca/news/articles/2023/november/fcm-study-finds-that-the-cost-to-build-infrastructure-to-support-new-housing-could-be-as-high-as-600b/>
4. Visit the PIBC Peer Learning Network webpage for current PLN development updates and resources. <https://www.pibc.bc.ca/pln>.

Building Housing, Protecting Nature: CHIF Program Supports Multi-Solution Approach

Emily Sharma, Communications and Engagement Advisor, Natural Assets Initiative

For too long, communities have faced a difficult choice: protect natural areas for climate adaptation or develop them to meet housing needs. On one hand, BC needs an estimated 602,000 new homes between 2021 and 2031¹; on the other, the increasing impacts of climate change are outpacing BC communities' abilities to respond to them.

The Canadian Housing Infrastructure Fund (CHIF) is a way that we can — and should — pursue both. By explicitly recognizing natural and hybrid infrastructure as eligible capital projects, CHIF supports an approach to development that works with nature rather than against it, helping communities meet housing needs while enhancing their natural assets.

The program, accepting applications until March 31, 2025, provides a maximum \$100 million in total eligible costs. For BC communities, this is a unique opportunity to advance natural asset management (NAM) while addressing pressing housing needs.

Here's what you need to know:

Projects eligible under CHIF

CHIF's purpose is to help communities meet infrastructure needs to support housing creation and improve densification through the rehabilitation and expansion of housing-enabling drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste infrastructure —services that NAI's partner communities are increasingly looking to natural asset management to support.

Applications can be for capital infrastructure or planning projects. A highlight of the funding is that it encourages projects to have hybrid and natural infrastructure to delivery ecosystem services. Projects could include:

- Naturalized stormwater retention ponds
- Floodplain restoration to mitigate flooding
- Wetland restoration or constructed wetlands to help manage stormwater and filter pollutants for improved water quality
- Urban parks with integrated water management functions

While not a hard requirement, including natural or hybrid infrastructure components could increase your chances of a securing funding.

That's because CHIF's merit criteria strongly favours projects that demonstrate environmental and community benefits — solutions natural infrastructure can provide. Projects incorporating natural assets can score higher by addressing multiple federal priorities, including greenhouse gas emission reduction and climate resilience.

Take, for example, the approach to stormwater management — rather than relying solely on traditional grey infrastructure, communities can propose naturalized retention ponds and constructed wetlands that not only manage water flow but also create recreational spaces and enhance biodiversity. This approach could increase

both scoring potential and the long-term value of surrounding housing developments.

Also worth noting: land acquisition costs are only eligible for natural infrastructure expenses, helping communities overcome a known barrier to implementation of nature-related initiatives.

Time to Act on Housing *and* Climate

CHIF represents the latest in a growing pool of funding available for natural infrastructure projects and an understanding that nature-based solutions aren't obstacles to development, but rather a key component of resilient, livable communities. BC's Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding program is another resource to support NAM work; their 2025 funding deadline is to be announced early this year.

For communities just beginning their NAM journey, these programs provide an opportunity to integrate natural infrastructure considerations into housing-enabling infrastructure from the outset.

For those already engaged in NAM, programs like CHIF can be a pathway to scale up existing initiatives while meeting critical housing demands.

With the application deadline approaching, we encourage local governments (and others) to evaluate their infrastructure needs with a natural asset lens and take advantage of this funding to invest in long-term solutions.

Details on the CHIF program are available at: <https://housing-infrastructure.canada.ca/housing-logement/chif-fcil/index-eng.html>

Looking for guidance on NAM? Check out NAI's Natural Asset Management Roadmap Program, now accepting applications: <https://naturalassetsinitiative.ca/roadmap-program/>

1. *Smart Prosperity Institute. (2024.) Canada's need for 3.5 million more homes.*

<https://institute.smartprosperity.ca/Canadas-Need-for-3.5-Million-More-Homes>

published in Planning West Journal, Winter 2024

PROFILE: Young Professionals

Shane Castle P. Eng., City of Kimberley

1. *You are an engineer. What made you decide to pursue a career in engineering? Where did you go to school and graduate from?*

I was raised in a Kimberley BC, a small resort municipality in the Southern Rockies. Math and science were my strongest subjects through secondary school. I was unsure of a career path, so I continued my studies close to home at the College of the Rockies where I was introduced to Engineering.

While working in the construction industry, I found an interest in Civil Engineering. I transferred to the University of Victoria where I completed my undergraduate in Civil Engineering.

2. *What was your initial career and what were your aspirations?*

After university, I began working for the City of Prince George in their Project Delivery Department. This position exposed me to a variety of projects including underground utilities, earthworks, and building maintenance/retrofits. I had the opportunity to work closely with construction contractors and the operations staff for commissioning and utility maintenance. My main goal was to work closely with these staff to design infrastructure that was intuitive to operate and maintain while meeting the current and future needs of the City.

3. *How did you learn about asset management? What interested you in the subject? What caught your attention? Once you had some sense of what asset management did, how did you pursue the subject and opportunity toward deciding there was a career choice there?*

I really began working with asset management when I started working on long term capital planning for the City of Kimberley. What most interested me was the idea of informed decision making. With the runaway construction inflation we have seen over the recent years, municipalities are needing to prioritize their infrastructure replacement, focusing efforts on high risk, high consequence-of-failure infrastructure. I had the opportunity to attend the AMBC conference back in 2022, which provided insight into how other municipalities are progressing their asset management. Since then, I have worked closely with our engineering and operations teams to build out our Asset Management Strategy and streamline the updates and maintenance to our asset inventory.



4. *What attracted you to the position at the City of Kimberley?*

Working for the City of Kimberley gave me an opportunity to return to my hometown, be close to friends and family, and continue to progress my career while supporting the community. It was an opportunity to expand on my previous work experience and build out an engineering department to support City operations. I was most excited about the team of professionals the City had on staff and the opportunity to learn and grow with them. It's also been a perk to be able to ski and bike from my house.

5. *What is your current position and what are your responsibilities?*

I am currently the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant Project Manager. The role focuses on delivering a new treatment plant that meets the Province's discharge requirements while ensuring we build a resilient plant that can be operated, maintained, repaired, and expanded upon in an effective and sustainable manner for our community.

6. *What are your career aspirations?*

I want to continue expanding my understanding of asset management and exploring ways to effectively integrate best practices into the maintenance and renewal of infrastructure. My goal is to be able to explain these concepts to our staff, City Council, and the public to support the understanding of our decision-making processes.

Planning Institute of BC launches Peer Learning Network

In response to the rapidly evolving context of planning legislation in BC, PIBC launched the Peer Learning Network (PLN) to foster connections between built environment professionals across British Columbia. Whether you work in planning, asset management, public works, development, or an allied profession, the PLN provides a space to engage in valuable discussions, exchange experiences, and tap into the collective knowledge of your peers.

In 2024, the PLN offered a diverse series of webinars exploring housing affordability, servicing and infrastructure, housing needs reports, and legislative requirements.



PLN was also present at the 2024 Asset Management BC conference, "Today's Decisions – Tomorrow's Future," which took place in-person from November 6 - 7, 2024, where Eric Aderneck RPP, MCIP, presented his research about the relationship between Infrastructure Servicing Costs and Residential Development Forms.

What's Coming in 2025

As the focus of local government activities begins to shift from compliance to implementation, the PLN has started to broaden the scope of its planned offerings.

So far, three webinars have been confirmed for 2025, including:

- **January 15, 2025: Ask a Lawyer #2:** For the second year in a row, a panel of lawyers will address the implementation of the provincial housing legislation. Topics include proactive planning requirements (OCP and zoning updates), inclusionary zoning, density bonusing, SSMUH and covenant considerations, and ACC/DCC considerations.
- **February 26, 2025: Proactive Planning for Big Needs in Small and Medium-Size Communities:** Practitioners from Delta, Maple Ridge, North Cowichan, and Prince George will share insights on proactive planning for housing and infrastructure in their communities. A 'Lawyer-in-Residence' will provide legal perspectives.
- **April 30, 2025: The Cold Hard Truths about Housing Development and the Art of the Possible:** Three practitioners will discuss the economics of housing development, including challenges and opportunities. A 'Lawyer-in-Residence' will provide legal perspectives.

Registration for the January webinar will open on January 2, 2025. Additional webinars will be added for 2025, depending on feedback from network participants.

The PIBC Peer Learning Network is more than just a learning platform—it is a community of professionals who are dedicated to improving the built environment. Whether it's exploring innovative housing solutions or finding ways to improve planning processes, the PLN offers a chance to be part of a vibrant, supportive community dedicated to ongoing learning and professional growth.

For more information or to access recordings of past events, please visit the PLN webpage at pibc.bc.ca/pln.

Asset Management in the Yukon: How AMBC helps us move forward

Jenna Rooney, Community Advisor, Community Affairs Branch, Department of Community Services, Yukon Government



When Wally Wells invited me to contribute to the AMBC newsletter, I was apprehensive! I don't live or work in BC and I have limited experience in the field of Asset Management. So, what could I possibly contribute to the Asset Management BC newsletter?

This feels like a good moment to introduce myself! Hi, I am Jenna from the Yukon, and I have been participating in AMBC Community of Practice meetings and attending the Annual Conferences for the past two years. I am a Community Advisor with the Community Affairs Branch at Yukon Government. In the Yukon, there are 8 municipalities, 14 First Nations, several unincorporated communities, and a total population of 46,000 people living on 482,443km² of land. We are a tiny population spread across a massive, remote, and rugged territory! For context, the largest municipality in the territory is the City of Whitehorse which is home to approximately 34,000 people. The remaining seven municipalities range in size from approximately 450 to 2,400 residents.

My very first introduction to AMBC was a Community of Practice call. I'll admit – I didn't know what "asset management" was when I joined that call. By the end, I had learned a little bit about natural assets from Roy Brooke. I was interested in the topic and took on a more active role within my branch.

Based on the size of Yukon's communities, I have been particularly interested in presentations from the smaller communities in BC. Due to sparse populations, remote communities, harsh conditions, and funding realities, Community Affairs has prioritized investing in a community of practice that focuses on climate adaptation and asset management across the Yukon. In late 2023, we held our inaugural "Sustainable Communities Forum" that brought together staff from municipal and First Nation governments to share information, build capacity and create networks within the territory. The forum is akin to the AMBC annual conference in that technical experts are invited to share expertise, and we are hoping to create

more space for municipal and First Nation governments to share their own stories about climate adaptation and sustainable service delivery. For me, learning directly from communities across BC (especially the First Nation or small/remote communities) has been the most impactful component of the AMBC forum and a format we hope to borrow here in the north.

The Yukon has been able to pull from the topics and themes covered at the AMBC CoPs and conferences to continue to build our own CoP. Some of the topics that have resonated strongly with Yukon's communities include; the management of natural assets, Indigenous Services Canada's asset management funding (several of Yukon's First Nations have now secured this funding!), creating an approachable asset management culture, and of course, all things municipal finance (long term financial planning, municipal financial health indicators, and the City of Castlegar's' development of a municipal inflationary factor, etc.).

In 2024, the 2nd annual Sustainable Communities Forum as well as territory-wide municipal elections were held in late fall. This presented a unique opportunity to deliver a consistent message to both staff and elected officials, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing asset management and the sustainable delivery of local services. Christina Benty provided dynamic and exciting presentations to both staff and elected officials that focused on establishing an asset management culture and identifying roles and responsibilities. Community Affairs is looking forward to supporting municipalities and our new councils on their asset management journeys over their 4-year terms.



Dawson City, Yukon

Moving into 2025, Community Affairs is looking to work with communities to advance integrated asset management plans. This work seeks to integrate asset management, climate adaptation, and land use planning

to support long-term sustainability of Yukon's communities. Designed to serve as practical tools for years to come, they will also help position communities to access federal and other funding opportunities.

As an unlikely contributor to your newsletter, I thank you for reading and I thank the AMBC community for all the information, tools, and resources. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to learn from you all and to bring the knowledge back to the small communities of the Yukon!

Updates to the Provincial Asset Management Data Collection Requirements for Local Governments

*BC Ministry Staff
Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Branch*

2025 marks a year of change for the Local Government Data Entry and aligns with the renewed Canada Community Building Fund.

The Local Government Data Entry (LGDE) forms, an annual requirement, provide a standardized record of local government financial activities over the past fiscal year and form the basis for the Province's Local Government Statistics tables.

In 2020, the Province added a new category to the LGDE forms (C2 – Tangible Capital Assets & Asset Management) to commence the collection of Asset Management (AM) data for local governments. The sections within C2 require all local governments to report on Historical Cost, Asset Management Plans and Risk Register Status, and Asset Additions with optional reporting for Asset Age and Replacement Value, and Asset Condition. The LGDE collects AM data in the form of totals by asset class, which are the outputs from local governments' AM tracking and planning systems.

More information about what AM data fields were added in 2020 can be found [here](#).

What is changing?

Beginning in 2025, reporting on the 2024 fiscal year end, the previously optional sections on Asset Age and Replacement Value, and Asset Condition will become required AM reporting. These fields include:

Asset Age and Replacement Value

- Current replacement value
- Annual replacement value amortization
- Average expected life
- Average age

- Average remaining useful life (calculated)

Asset condition

- Physical condition (% breakdown by value)
- Capacity vs. demand utilization (% breakdown by value)
- Functionality (% breakdown by value)

What is new?

New mandatory fields are being added to report on where each local government currently stands in their AM process. These fields include:

Organization Asset Management

- Asset management strategy in place? (Y/N)
- Asset management policy in place? (Y/N)
- Risk assessment completed? (Y/N)
- Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) linked to AM plan(s)? (Y/N)
- Current LTFP horizon (years)?
- LTFP available online? (Y/N)
- Asset inventory completed? (Y/N)
- Natural assets inventory completed? (Y/N)

Asset Management Progress by Asset Class

- Asset Inventory (Y/N)
- Long-Term Financial Plan (Y/N).

Why AM reporting requirements are being expanded?

Changing AM fields from optional to mandatory is a staged progression to improve data quality and to start consistently gathering AM data. The newly collected AM data will help encourage better long term financial and asset management plans and measure the progress of sustainable service delivery.

Asset Management is a core commitment in the Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF). The CCBF is a tripartite Agreement between Canada, British Columbia, and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), administered by UBCM, which provides predictable, long-term and stable funding to local governments for investment in infrastructure and capacity-building projects over 10 years.

The renewed agreement (2024 – 2034) continues to support strengthening the capacity to develop and implement AM best practices as integral to delivering community services in a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable manner and recognizes that the measures contained in the prior agreement (2014-2024) were effective in increasing the capacity of local governments to enhance their community's sustainability.

In the new agreement there are four key Asset Management Commitments:

- Reporting on continuous improvement of Asset Management practices over the duration of the Agreement, including reporting through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs Local Government Data Entry (LGDE) System,
- Development and implementation of Long-term Financial Plans
- Ongoing Asset Management education and training, and
- Implementing asset management performance measurement

The AM data collected through the LGDE provides a unified collection of data to help satisfy AM reporting requirements noted in CCBF, reducing additional reporting needs, such as the past surveys, for local governments.

How the data will be used.

The expanded AM data will provide the Province with a more accurate measure of the state of local government infrastructure, the progress of asset management, and monitor the overall financial health of the local government system.

More specifically, the Province will use the data to:

- Calculate and monitor key sustainability ratios;
- Identify trends, gaps, needs, and concerns;
- Produce an annual “Statement of Tangible Capital Assets” report for each local government; and
- Inform future infrastructure grant programs and support resources
- Share data with UBCM to meet CCBF reporting requirements.

The annual submission deadline for LGDE forms for all local governments is **May 15th of each year**.

Resources and support

Updated versions of the LGDE help manuals will be posted in March when the revised LGDE forms are released for 2024 fiscal year data input. The LGDE help manuals include additional definitions and guidance to cover the new AM sections.

Please share your questions and suggestions with the **Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Branch** through email at LGDE@gov.bc.ca.

CNAM News: Annual Conference in Laval, May 2025

Bernadette O'Connor, CNAM Immediate Past Chair



Hold the dates to join CNAM in **Laval, Quebec, May 12th to May 15th** with the option to extend for a beautiful long weekend in la belle province! The venue is confirmed at the Sheraton Laval, and we look forward to welcoming you at our first national conference in the province of Quebec. [Secure your Early Bird tickets until March 3, 2025!](#)

Call for Abstracts for Conference is still open! You can learn more and submit an abstract [here](#).

Nominations are also open for the 2025 CNAM Awards!

Other Upcoming Events

January 30 @ 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm ET [CNAM Webinar: Operationalizing Levels of Service in your Organization](#).

Kelowna Celebrates UBCM Community Award for Excellence in Asset Management

Joel Shaw, P.Eng., Manager, Capital Planning & Asset Management, Corporate Services, City of Kelowna

The City of Kelowna was the recipient of the 2024 **UBCM Community Award for Excellence in Asset Management** for their implementation of a **Computerized Maintenance Management System**, Cityworks (CMMS).



The CMMS project was 5 years in the making and was part of a larger corporate asset management program that was initiated 12 years ago. The City of Kelowna has advanced its asset management program with the development of an asset management policy, plans and strategy, and most recently, the implementation of a CMMS. This work was guided by the AMBC Framework that Kelowna adopted from the beginning.

The CMMS oversees and maintains Kelowna's diverse and valuable municipal assets, such as water, wastewater, drainage, transportation, recreation, and community infrastructure.

This asset management platform based on GIS technology manages assets, field data, work activities, business processes and supports the City's vision of enhancing digital transformations and asset management practices.

The CMMS supports Kelowna's asset management objective of sustainable service delivery by improving maintenance efficiency, extending asset life and lowering lifecycle costs. This translates to big financial benefit when managing Kelowna's large asset portfolio estimated at \$7 billion.

The CMMS helps keep staff focused on their core business objectives and provides the right information to the right person at the right time. Having digital data in almost near-time means staff can see trends, historical information and current work status at a glance, again supporting data-driven decision-making.

Kelowna introduced service-based budgeting for the first time in 2024 (see AMBC Newsletter, Summer 2024). The CMMS is now being used to collect and present costs of service for business areas. This allows business area managers to demonstrate the cost of service and the connection between community service levels. This transformative process enhances financial planning and better serves Council and staff as they make the decisions that shape Kelowna.

"Kelowna's leadership in strong asset management and our ability to accelerate infrastructure delivery received some well-deserved recognition at this year's UBCM Excellence Awards," said Mayor Tom Dyas. "By effectively managing taxation through a balanced approach, we continue to invest in preserving, maintaining, renewing and delivering new assets to respond to our community needs, now and into the future. These initiatives are leading the way provincially and this award is evident of that success."



UBCM Award Excellence in Asset Management presentation to Kelowna City Council. Pictured left – right: Axelle Bazett, Councillor Mohini Singh, Eric Boakye-Danquah, Sam Mitchell, Glenn Anger, Councillor Loyal Wooldridge, Greg Maier, Joel Shaw, Councillor Gord Lovegrove, Mayor Tom Dyas, Hamid Butt, Councillor Rick Webber, Councillor Maxine Dehart, Councillor Ron Cannon, and Councillor Luke Stack.

The CMMS is only a tool, and, to create buy-in and boost return on investment, the team made sure the 700+ operational staff were an integral part of the customization process. Asset management is an integrated business approach and change management is a huge and ongoing part of the asset management program. By integrating planning, finance, operations and engineering, Kelowna created a line of sight between community expectations and infrastructure and services.

"Overwhelming" is a word that comes up often in the context of asset management, especially in municipalities that are just getting started. Kelowna deliberately chose an approach that was both pragmatic and systematic, making sure it was geared to the city's available resources and capabilities.

Ongoing staff engagement and timely user training are vital. In the end, it's people who do asset management, and success comes with helping them understand the process and recognize the value of asset management.

The CMMS is a tool to create efficiency, accountability and build capacity for staff to deliver better service through strong asset management for the community.



Asset Management BC

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2025 AMBC Conference - November 5 and 6, 2025

The AMBC conference was a great success because of you. We called for presentations for the conference, and you responded with a wide array of subjects relevant to progressing asset management. The response we received in the post conference questionnaire was highly positive with respect to content, format and information. All our commercial sponsors, that provided feedback, were thrilled with the conference and the networking opportunities.

Come back this year for AMBC Conference 2025. Watch for the call for presentations and bring your work forward as a presenter at the conference. Watch the AMBC website and social media for updates. We will keep you informed. The conference will be again at The Raddison Vancouver Airport hotel in Richmond, the first week of November on Wednesday and Thursday November 5 and 6, 2025, with the day prior reserved for in-person training sessions and the day after for additional group meetings, training sessions or extension of the conference.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR and ensure you have funds in your budget. Come and enjoy a great learning experience, knowledge transfer, and networking and education opportunities. I will be there. Will you?

#OurAssetsMatter

Tips and Tactics: How much pain is your Asset Management Program causing you?

*Bernadette O'Connor, PMP, IAM Dip, CAMA, NZCE(Civil),
Technical Director, Asset Management, WSP*



Asset Management practices have a focus on providing good information to the appropriate people (on issues and options), so they can make practical decisions that are in the best interest of the community.

Asset management should support staff at all levels of the organization and make their jobs easier. **So why is it hard to get buy-in, assign funding, and find the time to do it?**

A key factor in my opinion, is that when we communicate asset management to others there is a tendency to skip quickly over the purpose and focus on the to-do list detail. And I think this is where and why we lose buy-in for many.

It is extremely important to spend sufficient time communicating the purpose. You need to create believers. So, make your communication on purpose relevant to your organization - don't provide a generic or theoretical blurb! Really think through what asset management will do for the staff, the organization, and the community. How will it be a game changer?

The degree to which you create believers will probably align with the degree of buy-in you get. When people are convinced of the need and value of asset management, they will prioritize relevant items on the asset management to-do list.

We frequently hear the cry of we want to do asset management, and we think its valuable, but we have no resources and no budget, so our hands are tied. However, our actions and choices are saying very loudly that we do not value asset management as something more important than what we, and our staff, are currently spending our time on. **People will always make time for the things they truly believe are important!**

Another by-product of creating believers is the generation of a common vision and goal which will encourage a desire among teams to cooperate, collaborate, and help each other.

So, if you're finding it painful to get action going on asset management, perhaps you should have a conversation to review and re-establish the purpose. **Why are we doing this? What is the local relevance for it?**

Upcoming Events

Asset Management BC

Beginning February 27, 2025

Online Training

- Long Term Financial Planning

Info: assetmanagementbc.ca/training/training-long-term-financial-planning/

Asset Management BC

November 5-6, 2025

Annual Asset Management Conference

Radisson Vancouver Airport Hotel

Richmond BC

assetmanagementbc.ca

Registration: coming soon to civinfo.bc.ca



MIABC

April 23 – 24, 2025
 Annual Risk Management Conference
 Sheraton Wall Centre
 Vancouver BC
miabc.org/contact-us/register-event/risk-management-conference

MFABC

April 23 – 24, 2025
 Annual General Meeting
 Hotel Grand Pacific
 Victoria BC
civicinfo.bc.ca/event/2025/MFA

BCWWA

April 27-29, 2025
 Annual Conference and Trade Show
 Theme: One Water, One future
 Victoria, BC
bcwwaconference.org/

Canadian Network of Asset Managers (CNAM)

May 12 – 15, 2025
 Annual Conference and Trade Show
 Sheraton Laval,
 Laval QC
cnam.ca/cnamevent/cnam-2025-conference/

Government Finance Officers Association, BC (GFOA - BC)

May 27-29, 2025
 Annual Conference
Theme: Building Resilient Communities
 Sheraton Wall Centre
 Vancouver, BC
gfoabc.ca/events/annual-conference/

LGMA

June 10-12, 2025
 Annual Conference
Theme: The Time is Now: All Systems Go!
 Delta Hotels Grand Okanagan Resort
 Kelowna BC
<https://www.lgma.ca/annualconference>

PIBC

June 10-15, 2025
 25th Annual Conference 2024 - Next Chapter
 Sheraton Wall Centre
 Vancouver BC
piibc.ca/annual-conference

UBCM

September 22 – 26, 2025
 Annual conference
 Victoria Conference Centre
 Victoria, BC
ubcm.ca/convention-resolutions/2025-convention

PWABC & BCMSA

October 6-8, 2025
 Joint Annual Conference
 Whistler Conference Centre
 Whistler, BC
site.pheedloop.com/event/EVELZAEHYMRUY/conferencepage2025

PEMAC Asset management Association of Canada

October 27-29, 2025
 Annual Conference
 Westin Downtown Calgary
 Calgary, AB
pemac.org/conference/2025

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