



SOS AND MUNICIPALITIES URGE PROVINCE TO ACT NOW ON ISSUES RELATED TO PUBLIC DISORDER

Event at B.C. legislature draws dozens of BC mayors and councillors seeking action from Eby government

VICTORIA, B.C. (Sept. 24, 2025) – Mayors and councillors from small and large communities across B.C. joined Save Our Streets (SOS) on the steps of the BC legislature today to call on Premier David Eby’s provincial government to address the widespread public disorder that has gotten dramatically worse in recent years.

The municipal officials are gathered in Victoria for the Union of B.C. Municipalities annual convention, where issues related to public disorder are taking centre stage in the 2025 program. On Monday, UBCM held a study session called *Disordered Downtown: Rethinking Care for Those in Need*, which noted, “Over the past decade, communities across B.C. have seen a dramatic increase in the number of unhoused residents with significant mental health and addiction issues. In addition to the personal suffering of those who struggle with these challenges, downtown businesses and residents also struggle with a corresponding increase in vandalism, random acts of violence and theft. As local governments respond to this complex social issue, they find themselves on the front lines trying to fix a problem that is multi-faceted and in many cases beyond their capacity and mandate.”

This year, 14 UBCM convention resolutions are focused directly on public safety issues such as homelessness, poverty reduction, repeat offenders, addiction and mental illnesses.

Today’s SOS event was an opportunity for B.C. mayors and councillors to bring their concerns in person to the very steps of the legislature and the provincial government which is being urged to take bold action to achieve the transformational change needed to address crime, violence, vandalism, addictions and mental illnesses.

Among the dozens of mayors and councillors at today’s event, speakers included Mayor Marianne Alto of Victoria, Mayor Leonard Krog of Nanaimo, Mayor Brad West of Port Coquitlam, Mayor John Henderson of Sechelt, Mayor Tom Dyas of Kelowna, and Prince George City Councillor Cori Ramsay, the new President of UBCM.

“Addressing these issues in a meaningful way requires the cooperation of all levels of government,” says Jess Ketchum, Co-founder, SOS. “As we heard from our speakers today, and as respondents in our province-wide survey have told us, municipalities are eager to work with the Province and the public is ready for new, bold approaches to the issues their communities are facing. Municipalities cannot address these issues on their own and it is not sustainable for them to shelve services and projects in order to reallocate funding to address health and housing issues which fall under the provincial government’s mandate. Urgency is required.”

“The growth of our membership and the excellent turnout of mayors and councillors today should send a message to the Province that communities of every size in every region have reached a tipping point,” adds Ketchum. “British Columbia is perceived as a global epicenter for these issues. Shouldn’t our goal as a community be to be perceived as the epicenter for the solutions? We have the real-life experience. We have the expertise. We have launched so many pilot projects. We now need the political will of our governments.

“On Friday, Premier Eby will address the delegates at the UBCM convention. Our hope is that his words will make it clear he heard what our mayors said here today and that his government’s actions reflect the desires of British Columbians who have been pleading for safety to return to the streets in their communities for far too long.”

QUOTES:

"As a city, Victoria is committed to bringing partners together, reallocating resources, and addressing street level challenges like disorder, homelessness, poverty, housing, addictions, and healthcare. Recently, we've made some bold actions to address these concerns with urgency, to bring intentional community safety and wellbeing to our streets. Victoria is proud to be one of the best small cities in the world, but we must act now to support our residents, businesses, and visitors, and we cannot do this work alone. We urge the Provincial government to take action and respond with the same level of urgency, to help bring necessary and lasting change to cities across BC."

- **Marianne Alto, Mayor, City of Victoria**

"Street disorder has become too common a feature in downtowns across our province," said Councillor Cori Ramsay, 1st vice president of the Union of B.C. Municipalities. "Resolutions from 16 different communities that will be considered at this meeting underscore the need to address the underlying causes of street disorder and strengthen laws to limit repeat offenders. I am glad to join with other local government leaders today to encourage greater attention to this critical issue."

- **Cori Ramsay, Councillor, City of Prince George, and President, UBCM**

"We are all here speaking for our citizens who are tired of the street disorder and want solutions not promises. We can only fix this collectively with the Provincial Government leading."

- **Leonard Krog, Mayor, City of Nanaimo**

"In Sechelt, a shelter, supportive housing and tents are located within one block of each other and adjacent to residences and businesses. The neighbours are entitled to peaceful quiet enjoyment in their homes, but they don't have this and that's simply unacceptable. Also, small towns across the province may well be impacted more per capita than larger communities. Perhaps we are at the point where new solutions that protect our residents can be trialled first in a smaller community before rolling them out across the country. What we can all agree on is what we've been doing is not working. It's time to implement some bold and innovative ideas that bring back the important concepts of accountability and consequences."

- **John Henderson, Mayor, District of Sechelt**

"Municipalities are on the front lines of public safety, managing the day-to-day impacts of repeat crime, untreated mental health and addictions, and a justice system stretched thin, but we cannot make the systemic changes that are needed. From the federal government, we need bail reform. From the Province, we need more Crown prosecutors and mandatory compassionate care. Municipalities are united and ready to work with senior levels of government — but we need urgent action to make our communities safer."

- **Tom Dyas, Mayor, City of Kelowna**

"The public is desperate for the provincial and federal politicians to stop talking about doing something - and to start doing it. Follow through and make the changes required to keep the public safe."

- **Brad West, Mayor, City of Port Coquitlam**

About Save Our Streets

Save Our Streets is a coalition of 120-plus community and business organizations representing every corner of British Columbia. SOS members are committed to seeing governments bring order and public safety back to communities across British Columbia. Concerned citizen groups, and B.C. businesses interested in joining or supporting SOS are invited to submit online at [SaveOurStreets.ca](https://saveourstreets.ca) or contact info@saveourstreets.ca.

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