



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** General Purposes Committee **Date:** February 26, 2015  
**From:** Amarjeet S. Rattan **File:** 01-0150-01/2015-Vol  
 Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit 01  
**Re:** **Resolution for LMLGA and UBCM: Environmental Bill of Rights**

### Staff Recommendation

That Council approve the following resolution to be forwarded to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) for consideration:

#### Environmental Bill of Rights

WHEREAS municipalities and regional districts are the government 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 regional district purpose under section 2(d) of the Local Government Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) request that the Province of British Columbia enact a Provincial environmental bill of rights that:

- a) Recognizes the right of every resident to live in a healthy environment, including the right to clean air, clean water, clean food and vibrant ecosystems;
- b) Provides for public participation in decision-making respecting the environment and access to environmental information;
- c) Provides access to justice when environmental rights are infringed; and
- d) Has whistleblower protection

Amarjeet S. Rattan  
Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit  
(604-247-4686)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b> Sustainability	<b>CONCURRENCE</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b> 
<b>REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b> 	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> 

## Staff Report

### Origin

On February 24, 2015, the Parks and Recreation Committee referred the creation of a resolution requesting that the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) request that the Province of British Columbia enact a Provincial Environmental Bill of Rights to staff. Attached is the proposed resolution for approval.

This report supports Council's Term Goal #8 Sustainability:

*To demonstrate leadership in sustainability through continued implementation of the City's Sustainability Framework.*

### Findings of Fact

Ontario's *Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR)* is a ground-breaking law that was passed in 1993. In the *EBR*, the provincial government has a responsibility to consult the public on environmental decisions, and the public has the right to have a say.

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO) is charged with monitoring and reporting on how well the government complies with the *EBR*. Under the *EBR*, you have rights to participate in ministry decisions about the environment and hold the government accountable for those decisions. (The *EBR* applies to environmentally significant decisions and proposals made by certain Ontario ministries or under certain Acts.)

Bill C-634, The Canadian Environmental Bill of Rights, was introduced as a private members Bill in Fall 2014 but only received first reading. The Bill would introduce a legal duty for the federal government to protect Canadians' right to a healthy environment. The David Suzuki Foundation is currently wrapping up its cross Canada Blue Dot tour calling for the right to a healthy environment to be included in Canadian law.

### Analysis

It is proposed that the following resolution be sent to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to request that the Province create an Environmental Bill of Rights for British Columbia.

WHEREAS municipalities and regional districts are the government 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 regional district purpose under section 2(d) of the Local Government Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) request that the Province of British Columbia enact a Provincial environmental bill of rights that:

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### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact to this resolution.

### **Conclusion**

Staff recommend that Council approve the above resolution and that it be forwarded to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to request that the Province of British Columbia enact a Provincial environmental bill of rights.



Denise Tambellini  
Manager, Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit  
(604-276-4349)

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