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BULLETIN

PROVINCE RELEASES DRIPA ACTION PLAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

On March 30, 2022, the Province released its highly-anticipated Action Plan for implementing the *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (“DRIPA”). The overarching purpose of DRIPA is to implement the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the “UNDRIP”), including to facilitate the alignment of provincial laws with UNDRIP. The Action Plan, which was developed in consultation with Indigenous peoples, outlines 89 specific action items that various provincial ministries will be responsible for implementing over the years of 2022 to 2027. As required by section 5 of DRIPA, progress on the Action Plan will be reviewed and reported annually.

The 89 action items are organized into four themes: self-determination and inherent right of self-government; title and rights of Indigenous peoples; ending Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination; and social, cultural and economic well-being.

Local governments should be prepared to participate in the implementation of the following action items, which have a direct impact on the role of local governments in reconciliation:

1.11 Support inclusive regional governance by advancing First Nations participation in regional district boards. (Ministry of Municipal Affairs)

3.1 Develop essential training in partnership with Indigenous organizations, and deliver to the B.C. public service, public institutions and corporations that aims to build foundational understanding and competence about the history and rights of Indigenous Peoples, treaty process, rights and title, the UN Declaration, the B.C. Declaration Act, the dynamics of proper respectful relations, Indigenous-specific racism, and meaningful reconciliation. (Public Service Agency, Ministry of Finance – Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office)

4.27 Review the principles and processes that guide the naming of municipalities and regional districts, and evolve practices to foster reconciliation in local processes. (Ministry of Municipal Affairs) [emphasis added]

Action 4.27, which had not initially been included in the Province’s Draft Action Plan, is particularly noteworthy. In our view, along with embracing the possibility for local governments to change their names, the broad wording of “evolve practices to foster reconciliation in local

practices” will also likely encourage the re-evaluation of an array of other local processes along with naming.

The full Action Plan can be accessed [here](#).

To read further about collaborative governance initiatives between local governments and First Nations, see our [seminar paper](#) on this topic.

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