



Mayor's Office
Town of View Royal

November 7, 2023

Auditor General of British Columbia
Office of the Auditor General
623 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1G1

Dear Mr. Pickup,

This evening the duly elected Council of the Town of View Royal voted unanimously to endorse the following request for audit. I have included the Leaders of the Opposition and all Mayors and Councilors in the Province with the opportunity to reinforce this request by way of a letter to you if their respective Parties and Councils support the request.

I am writing to request a comprehensive value-for-money audit on the Government's Bill 44, known as the Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act. The legislation's implications, particularly concerning the absence of public and municipal engagement, warrant a thorough investigation to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with governmental priorities. A similar request was made to the Auditor General of Ontario recently.

Our community in View Royal is deeply concerned about the lack of public and municipal engagement in the formulation of Bill 44. It's crucial to understand who was consulted during the development of this legislation and why there was an apparent omission of wider public and municipal input.

The absence of broad engagement raises questions about the foundational basis of Bill 44. It is essential to investigate whether the formulation of this bill aligns with evidence-based practices and is consistent with the government's stated priorities, especially in areas such as climate action and other policies. Furthermore, it is crucial to assess if these regulations are harmonious with the smooth functioning of municipal and provincial planning and approval processes. In addition to scrutinizing the bill's alignment with governmental priorities, I request an investigation into the decision-making process. This should focus on ensuring that the standards of conduct expected in positions of public trust are adhered to. Specifically, the audit should inquire into whether there were any breaches regarding conflicts of interest and the possibility of preferential treatment in the formulation of Bill 44.

Moreover, it's imperative to evaluate the potential burden placed on municipalities to create the necessary infrastructure to support this legislation. Understanding the financial and operational impact on local governments is essential. This investigation should include a comprehensive

analysis of whether these infrastructure requirements are in the public interest and economically feasible for municipalities as a recognized third order of Government.

The residents of View Royal and I strongly believe that the government's legislative decisions must be made in collaboration with and for the benefit of the communities they serve. Your audit will serve as an essential mechanism to ensure accountability, transparency, and the protection of public interest. I would ask that subject legislation be tabled until such time that your work can be completed.

Your urgent attention to this matter is greatly appreciated, and I look forward to the Auditor General's insights and recommendations following this investigation.

Thank you for your prompt consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sid Tobias', with a stylized, cursive script.

Sid Tobias MSM, CD
Mayor
View Royal

Cc: Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia
Premier of British Columbia
Leader of the Opposition
Leader of the Conservative Party
Leader of the Green Party
MLA Esquimalt-Metchosin
All Mayors and Councilors of British Columbia
Minister of Housing