Dear Premier and Ministers,

On April 28, 2020, at a Special Council Meeting, Port Moody City Council passed the following resolution:

THAT the following resolution regarding Support for a British Columbia Coastal Protection Strategy be endorsed by the City of Port Moody and forwarded for consideration at the 2020 UBCM convention as recommended in the report dated March 5, 2020 from Councillor Amy Lubik regarding Support for a British Columbia Coastal Protection Strategy:

WHEREAS, unlike all the Atlantic provinces, BC has no comprehensive coastal and marine strategy, a BC Coastal Strategy will clearly articulate provincial jurisdiction and enable the province to better engage with other governments and communities; no marine counterpart to the BC Land Act exists, and piecemeal legislation and policy govern numerous coastal marine activities;

AND WHEREAS a BC Coastal Strategy will provide a vision and objectives to guide actions in the increasingly crowded coastal zone and highlight the importance the government places on these vital areas such as sensitive marine ecosystems, and vulnerable species, as well as their importance to protecting our coastal communities and economies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT UBCM request the BC government to develop and enact a Coastal Strategy and law to leverage and coordinate the work of provincial ministries, First Nations, local communities, and stakeholder groups to preserve coastal and ocean health, halt coastal habitat loss, accelerate the completion of a network of marine protected areas to benefit fisheries, biodiversity and the economy, set marine environmental quality objectives from upland activities,
and help communities adopt ecosystem-based approaches to manage risks from flooding due to extreme weather events, sea level rise, climate change, and ocean acidification;

AND THAT Port Moody write a letter of support to the BC Minister of Environment, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, and the Premier of British Columbia in support of a Coastal Protection Strategy.

The City of Port Moody is requesting that the Government of British Columbia support the request and be bold with the enactment of a coast protection strategy, with laws that provide a strategy and enforcement that can be acted upon and impactful. The Government of British Columbia should take a holistic approach when addressing the many issues facing coastal communities, which include but are not limited to sea-level rise, flooding, and loss of coastal lands due to climate change, but also protecting key coastal habitat for birds and forage fish. This could be a vital part of climate action and adaptation in British Columbia.

British Columbia’s iconic coast extends for tens of thousands of kilometers and is relied upon by millions of people. It is one of the largest coastal jurisdictions in the world; however, the future of the coast is in peril - declining biodiversity, intensifying climate change impacts, and increasing conflicts over resources are a few challenges BC is currently facing. Yet, despite the importance of the coast to British Columbia’s culture and economy, many are surprised to learn that we don’t have a comprehensive provincial coastal strategy or law to care for the coast. In British Columbia, no provincial law requires collaborative planning along the coast. As a result, some of the province’s busiest coastal and ocean areas have no guiding plan whatsoever. Nonetheless, British Columbia has made considerable progress in developing coastal and marine plans; the attached report provides examples of some of BC’s leadership, as well as more comprehensive examples from other jurisdictions.

Effective coastal management requires coordination among several provincial ministries, as well as Indigenous, federal and municipal governments. A coastal management law can clarify the responsibilities of the provincial and local governments and ensure improved cooperation and coordination among all orders of government. Without coordinated governance, gaps and overlaps in jurisdiction arise resulting in piecemeal and patchwork management of the coast and inefficient decision-making. The lack of clarity also creates confusion and conflict between users and governing bodies, and results in cumulative impacts that are not adequately measured or addressed. Therefore the City of Port Moody is requesting your support to create a British Columbia Coastal Protection Strategy and law to safeguard communities, habitats, industries and ecosystems.

Sincerely,

Mayor Rob Vagramov

Attachment:
1. City of Port Moody Council report dated March 5, 2020 from Councillor Amy Lubik titled Support for a British Columbia Coastal Protection Strategy