

To support local governments in their efforts to improve asset management practices and capacity, UBCM has continued to work with, and support, the activities of **Asset Management BC** (AM BC). AM BC has been providing B.C. local governments with tools, training and other resources. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Development of the Asset Management for Sustainable Service Delivery: A B.C. Framework;
- Development of four complementary Primers to support the Framework: **“Climate Change and Asset Management”**, **“Integrating Natural Assets into Asset Management”**, **“The Role of Operations & Maintenance in Asset Management”**, and **“Land Use Planning and Asset Management”**;
- A resource rich website (assetmanagementbc.ca);
- Quarterly newsletters with case studies;
- Education and training through conferences, webinars and workshops; and
- Direct outreach to local governments.

Recently, AM BC has secured funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities ‘Municipal Asset Management Program’ (MAMP) and is delivering free workshops on:

- Building Awareness for Elected Officials - Presentations to your Council or Board to increase awareness and support for your asset management practices, and how this is key to sustainable service delivery.
- Working with Levels of Service - A series of custom webinars to help you identify your levels of service including processes, tool kits, and coaching to develop and implement a plan for your community.
- Operationalizing Asset Management - A unique cohort-based learning experience to help you identify and overcome the barriers to asset management in the areas of organizational culture, structure, and capacity.

More information can be found on the Asset Management BC website: assetmanagementbc.ca

In addition, UBCM is supporting asset management planning funding through strategic partnerships with the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Additional information on current funding opportunities can be found at:

- UBCM’s Asset Management Planning Program: www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/asset-management-planning.html
- BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs’ Infrastructure Planning Grant Program: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/local-governments/grants-transfers/grants/infrastructure-planning-grant-program
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities Municipal Asset Management Program: www.fcm.ca/en/funding/mamp/asset-management-grants-municipalities
- Gas Tax Fund – Community Works Program: www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/renewed-gas-tax-agreement/community-works-fund.html

Through the work of **Asset Management BC** and the financial support of the various funding programs, B.C. local governments have been very active in strengthening their respective asset management practices and capacity. While UBCM will wait for the asset management outcome report anticipated in 2022/23 to confirm, it is clear that B.C. local governments are showing leadership in asset management within their own communities, as well within the province and nationally.

Elephant in the Room: Drainage and the Unfunded Infrastructure Liability

Kim A Stephens, P.Eng., Executive Director, Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC, and Tim Pringle, Chair, Ecological Accounting Process Initiative



It is All About the Service!

Over the past five years, the Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC has contributed a series of articles to the Asset Management BC Newsletter. We do this to keep the readership informed about our ongoing initiative for

testing, refining and mainstreaming the Ecological Accounting Process (EAP). Implementation is in collaboration with our local government and community partners in five regions of BC.

For those who are learning about EAP for the first time, the program context is **Asset Management for Sustainable Service Delivery: A BC Framework**. The program driver is the “unfunded infrastructure liability” typically associated with drainage, in particular the financial consequences over time when stream channels are degraded, and riparian integrity is compromised.

A central idea of the EAP methodology is that a stream system has a “package of ecological services”. This concept refers to the combined range of uses desired by the community. Three key words capture the essence of what the phrase “range of uses” means, namely: **drainage, recreation** and **habitat**. This is plain language that elected councils and boards understand.

Maintenance and Management (M&M) of Natural Assets

EAP supports local governments to operationalize ‘maintenance and management’ (M&M) of stream corridor systems under the umbrella of their Asset Management Plans. EAP provides the methodology and metrics necessary to achieve this goal.

Maintenance is defined as actions that prevent or avoid degradation of ecological assets that constitute the stream corridor system. **Management** is defined as actions that improve the condition of the ecological system and the services it provides.

A critical consideration in moving EAP forward is an understanding of how local government make decisions. The EAP methodology has evolved as we have learned from, and adapted, each successive case study application. Each situation is unique, but the approach is universally applicable.

The EAP program is now entering year two of Stage 3 mainstreaming, comprised of six demonstration applications. These cover a range of land use situations. Five spots have been filled. The Partnership is considering expressions of interest for the sixth spot.

If you the reader are intrigued by what you may have heard about EAP, especially if you viewed the recent Watershed Moments video (<https://youtu.be/WdDOBSt9Kjk>) on YouTube, featuring Tim Pringle and Emanuel Machado, then is this the moment you have been waiting for to reach out to kstephens@watersustainabilitybc.ca to learn more?

Sustainable Creekshed Systems and the Asset Management Continuum

EAP focuses on drainage and the condition and/or integrity of stream corridors. Both natural and constructed assets need to be addressed in the drainage context. Both are systems and therefore require similar M&M strategies. Drainage infrastructure, or lack thereof, is typically an unfunded liability that grows over time. It is the elephant in the room.

EAP supports local governments intending to adopt a life-cycle approach to M&M of natural assets much as it would apply to constructed assets. Effective M&M of natural assets requires commitment backed up by line items in an annual report.

The Partnership’s desired outcome is that local governments would apply the EAP methodology and metrics to determine real numbers for budget planning purposes. Then inter-departmental conversations would have a starting point for operationalizing M&M of natural assets within Asset Management Plans.

Figure A conceptualizes the asset management context for EAP under the BC Framework. It uses BC Assessment Authority data (parcel values) to value the land (that is, the setback zone occupied by a stream channel and corridor).

Figure A

Sustainable Creekshed Systems and the Asset Management Continuum



Branding logo for Asset Management for Sustainable Service Delivery: A BC Framework, 2014

- GROUND ZERO:** There is no **Asset Management Plan**. There is an ‘unfunded infrastructure liability’.
- STEP ONE:** Embrace **BC Framework**. Focus first on constructed assets (pipes & buildings). Implement Asset Management Strategy / Plan / Program.
- STEP TWO:** Life-cycle approach and **Sustainable Service Delivery** is standard practice for maintenance and management of constructed assets.
- STEP THREE:** Apply the **Ecological Accounting Process** to determine Natural Commons Asset values and establish budgets for stream corridor maintenance and management. Account for Water Balance services. Integrate climate adaptation.

As understanding grows, local governments progress incrementally along the **Continuum**.