



Key Request:

The City of Delta calls on the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship to urgently reform water lot tenure policies, establishing a framework that fosters sustainable waterfront development and drives community revitalization.

Background:

The process of acquiring or renewing water lot tenures in British Columbia is fraught with challenges that significantly impact the well-being and economic stability of those involved. Among the most pressing issues are the considerable delays in the processing of applications, restrictive limitations on permitted uses, and tenure durations that fail to provide the long-term certainty necessary for investment. These challenges have not only stifled waterfront development but have also placed undue strain on local governments' efforts to revitalize communities.

For individuals and businesses looking to invest in waterfront properties, the uncertainty surrounding water lot tenures poses a substantial barrier. The lengthy and unpredictable processing times for applications can delay or even derail projects, discouraging investment in key areas that could otherwise drive economic growth and community development. Moreover, the restrictive nature of permitted uses under current tenure agreements limits the potential

for innovative or multi-use developments that could enhance the economic and social vitality of waterfront areas.

The situation is particularly dire for the float home community, where the lack of extended water lot leases creates significant financial insecurity. Without the assurance of long-term leases, homeowners are often unable to secure financing with sufficient amortization periods, making it difficult to achieve affordability and stability. This dilemma not only threatens the livelihoods of float home residents but also undermines broader efforts to maintain diverse and vibrant waterfront communities.

The current limitations on water lot tenures are impeding the ability of local governments, like the City of Delta, to pursue meaningful community revitalization initiatives. Revitalizing waterfront areas requires stable, long-term investments that are only possible when tenure holders have the confidence that their leases will be secure over extended periods. The existing system, with its short-term tenures and restrictive conditions, does not provide the necessary foundation for such investments.

To address these challenges, there is a clear need for reforms that streamline the application process including, increasing staff with technical knowledge on permitting, review and define First Nations consultation and timelines, expand permitted uses, and extend tenure durations of 20+ years for residential uses and 50+ commercial development uses. These changes would provide the stability required for investment, encouraging the development of vibrant waterfronts that can serve as hubs of economic activity and community life. Additionally, ensuring that float home owners have access to long-term leases would enable them to secure financing that supports affordability, fostering a more resilient and stable community.

By addressing these challenges, the Province can help unlock the economic potential of waterfront areas while ensuring that all residents, including those in the float home community, can enjoy the security and stability they need to thrive.