

For Immediate Release

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Property Owners Not Protected By the Province — Private Property to Become Treaty Settlement Lands

Burnaby, B.C. ...The *Lower Mainland Treaty Advisory Committee* (LMTAC) is warning Lower Mainland municipalities that the Province's approach at the *Tsawwassen Treaty Table* regarding additions to *Treaty Settlement Lands* (TSL) does not protect BC property owners. This comes after years of the Province re-assuring British Columbians that privately owned fee-simple property would not be part of treaty settlements.

Mayor Ralph Drew, LMTAC Chair, emphasized: "Additions to TSL must require the consent of the Local Government before the land can be converted to *Treaty Settlement Lands*. In the case of the *Tsawwassen Treaty Table*, unlike all other *Agreements-in-Principle* in British Columbia, municipal consent is not a prerequisite for the post-treaty conversion of fee-simple land to Treaty Settlement Land.

Drew further stated: "In addition, the explicit designation of fee-simple lands that can be converted to *Treaty Settlement Lands* is problematic. The very act of explicitly designating lands is a form of *pseudo* land-use zoning that will distort the market and have a negative impact on all properties within the designated area."

"This is not a 'willing buyer, willing seller' scenario, and is definitely not in the interest of property-owners in British Columbia's communities," said Mayor Drew.

The *Union of British Columbia Municipalities* (UBCM) has lobbied for a consistent approach throughout British Columbia regarding additions to *Treaty Settlement Lands*, including the *Tsawwassen Treaty Table*.

LMTAC has also expressed serious concerns to Minister Plant regarding the compressed timeline being pursued at the *Tsawwassen Treaty Table* that will preclude proper and adequate consultation on many significant issues that are critically important for local government. With the Province targeting for a "hand-shake agreement" by mid-December, LMTAC has written Minister Plant requesting that the timeline for finalizing the *Final Agreement* be extended to ensure that local government is properly consulted.

"The negative impact of a hasty agreement at the *Tsawwassen Treaty Table* will be long-lasting and far-reaching, and the Provincial government must give serious consideration to the concerns of local government and ensure that all due diligence is undertaken before concluding a Final Agreement," said Drew.

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For further information: Contact Mayor Ralph Drew, LMTAC Chair, at (604) 451-6160 or visit www.lmtac.bc.ca.