

Input and Concerns Regarding shíshálh-B.C. Land Use Planning Engagement

The Waterfront Protection Coalition (WPC), its coalition members and members at large are closely monitoring the land use planning process, with a specific focus on private, commercial and public docks, zoning, marine parks and any future access restrictions that may be applied to them or to Crown land.

We have identified some areas of concern and are asking for clarification on the following:

1. Goals & Desired Outcome

What is the intended goal and desired outcome of this process? What is the province trying to accomplish, and where does the public's voice fit in? The answers to these questions do not appear anywhere on the province's website, nor have they been effectively communicated to the public.

2. Engagement

To what extent can a lengthy survey heavily focused on select ecological themes provide meaningful space for public input on land use decisions? While it offers valuable background, the format appears more geared toward educating participants and confirming predetermined priorities than gathering open, community-driven feedback. Key issues such as access, recreational use, zoning, and mapping of Crown lands are largely absent, raising concerns about the adequacy and neutrality of this process.

3. Public Access Concerns

Will this process affect future mapping and zoning decisions of existing Crown land and Crown waters, established public access points, cherished trails, anchorages, parks, tourist and commercial businesses and vital hiking and marine areas currently enjoyed by the public? Could the outcome of this process restrict or impede access to any of the above?

Safeguarding future public access to these natural spaces is not merely desirable, but paramount for fostering recreational opportunities, promoting well-being, and maintaining a vital connection to the natural environment for all citizens. Such efforts should parallel the fostering of reconciliation within the community. Any measures that

diminish this access would be a significant detriment to public benefit and likely harm overall reconciliation efforts.

4. Public Recreational Areas

The map shown to the WPC and coalition members in the Land Use Planning meeting on May 5, 2025 did not appear to include recreational areas currently open to the public, including, but not limited to: marine parks, boat launches, beaches, government docks or other recreational areas open to the public or access to them. The mapping also appeared to lack any future plans to include these types of areas and access to them. Why were these features not included in the map? Is the province considering these public areas and perpetual access to them when creating this plan?

5. Dock Classifications

We are concerned that the Land Use Plan, as currently framed, risks undermining the significant progress made with regard to the grandfathering policy, under the Dock Management Plan (DMP), which secured tenure for existing private docks and boathouses. It is essential that the Land Use Plan explicitly support and align with existing government commitments to ensure continued public trust. Labeling these structures as 'anthropogenic constraints' rather than 'access points or moorage' may suggest they are problematic or obstructive, rather than recognizing them as authorized features on public land, governed by valid lease or tenure agreements. Moreover, docks provide safe harbour for stranded vessels and work as lifesaving access points in emergency situations, where boats may be the fastest or only method of transport.

6. Foundation Agreement

What is the relationship between the Land Use Plan and the Foundation Agreement framework? What are the next steps in the negotiations? What is on or off of the table when it comes to Crown land and Crown waters? There is significant public concern that private land, or access to it, could be adversely affected by future negotiations. Will the province commit to excluding private land and access to those lands from negotiations and consult with the public on future Land Use planning for Crown land / waters?

7. Unresolved Dock Management Issues: New, Freshwater, Strata & Commercial Docks & Boathouses

A comprehensive framework for new docks & boathouses, existing freshwater docks & boathouses, community and strata docks & boathouses, and commercial operations within the broader dock management context remains outstanding. It is imperative that the Land Use Plan acknowledges and facilitates the development of clear, equitable and practical guidance that affects the needs and realities of these stakeholders, in conjunction with the goals of this planning process.

We urge you to consider these concerns as you move forward with developing the Land Use Plan, formulate management recommendations and consider mapping public access and locations that are important to the broader community.

The plan must balance various interests and ensure that the rights of the public to access Crown land and Crown waters are maintained. We remain committed to working collaboratively towards fair and balanced outcomes.

Sincerely,

The Waterfront Protection Coalition