

## NEWS RELEASE

# Statement from Chief John Elliott and Mayor Aaron Stone on Crown Water Lot Lease Transfer

**Ladysmith, BC - April 27, 2023** - For decades Stz'uminus and Ladysmith leadership, elders and community members have worked together to build a better future for all of us.

In the context of modern reconciliation, and the respectful, collaborative relationship we have cultivated, the early transfer of the Crown water lots from the Town to Stz'uminus was seen as a fantastic opportunity to advance our shared vision and goals on the waterfront.

We all benefit from the strength of our relationship; We are stronger together.

We are in a new era of reconciliation. Moving from consultation and accommodation to collaboration and consent regarding developments and activities in unceded territories across BC and Canada. This isn't about "giving away" lands but returning only a small portion of what has been taken from First Nations people through forced resettlement to reserves, residential schools and many decades of marginalization through systemic racism.

The Town and Stz'uminus could only anticipate that we would be marking this new era of progress and reconciliation with a celebratory return of Stz'uminus to the Ladysmith side of the harbour.

We do this because it is the right thing to do. Healing and hope for a better future together.

We recognize that this is a stressful situation for all involved. However, some of what we have witnessed over the last few weeks has created a much more divisive and very concerning narrative.

As Chief and Mayor, we've had conversations about moving the Waterfront Area Plan forward and are encouraged by the messages of support for righting past wrongs and bringing our communities together in a good way.

The water lot transfers will be completed. The Town and Stz'uminus are steadfast in our resolve to do what is right. We are committed to this process and to achieving what is right for the people of Stz'uminus and Ladysmith.

We are always stronger together. Working together with one heart, one mind. Naut'sa Mawt.

Thank you.

Chief John Elliott and Mayor Aaron Stone

-30-

For Information:

Mike Gregory  
Communications and Engagement Specialist  
[mgregory@ladysmith.ca](mailto:mgregory@ladysmith.ca)  
250.210.1740