



Hon. Nathan Cullen
Minister of Municipal Affairs
PO Box 9056 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Hon. Minister,

Request for an independent review of alleged breaches of the *Local Government Act*

I write to ask you to initiate a thorough and independent review of the circumstances regarding the breaches of the *Local Government Act* in New Westminster related to improperly waiving public hearings with respect to certain development projects. I am also requesting an unredacted copy of the review be released publicly prior to the October 15th civic election.

Recent amendments to the *Local Government Act* allow local governments to waive public hearings on multifamily developments if the development is consistent with the Official Community plan **provided notice of the waiver of public hearing has been given at least twice prior to first and second reading of the enabling bylaw**. I would refer you specifically to ss. 464(2) and 467 of the *Local Government Act*.

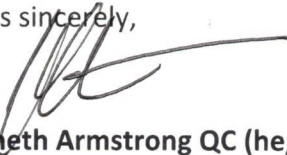
Indeed, as part of the debate on November 3, 2021 in the BC Legislature on this amendment, former Municipal Affairs Minister Josie Osborne was very clear about the process. She stated:

“In the particular case being described, if multifamily housing is consistent with the OCP, then yes, the local government could go through its approvals process without a public hearing. However, should they choose to do that — to not have a public hearing — they are required to provide public notice to the community, prior to first reading, so that the community is aware of what is proposed to take place. Even if it is consistent with the OCP, they will need to do that.”

Based on a revelation by City of New Westminster staff on July 11, 2022, it is my understanding that on at least five occasions, the City of New Westminster approved developments without public hearing, relying upon s. 464(2), without providing notice of the intention to waive the public hearing required by s. 467. As such, in violation of the statutory requirements, residents of New Westminster were denied the opportunity to attend the council meeting(s) related to this redevelopment.

The residents of New Westminster deserve to know how this happened, and what steps will be taken to ensure it won't happen again, and I submit that requires an external review by the Ministry.

Yours sincerely,



Kenneth Armstrong QC (he/him)
Mayoral Candidate
New Westminster Progressives

cc. **Kevin Falcon, Leader of the Opposition**
Sonia Furstenau, Leader of the Green Party