

November 24, 2025

The Honourable Christine Boyle
Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8W 1X4

Dear Minister Boyle,

Re: Protection of mature tree canopy in the City of Delta

On October 6, 2025, Delta Council unanimously passed a Motion (enclosed) regarding protection of mature trees in Sunshine Hills, a neighbourhood in North Delta. On behalf of Council, I am writing to request that your Ministry consider amendments to the Community Charter to provide municipalities with greater authority to work with developers on the protection of mature trees in established neighbourhoods.

The Community Charter currently allows municipalities to regulate tree removal through bylaw. However, the provisions of the bylaw are deemed non-enforceable under the Community Charter if they limit zoning development rights unless municipalities are prepared to provide financial compensation. The Province's introduction of Bill 44 in 2023 further increased development rights on all residential properties, allowing up to four units on each lot that previously was zoned for only single-family homes.

Many residents have recently reached out expressing concerns about tree removal in the Sunshine Hills neighbourhood. Delta staff will soon be undertaking public consultation to gather feedback on possible options to enhance tree preservation; however, opportunities are limited given the current restrictions in the Community Charter. The Province's support in considering amendments to the Community Charter to support the protection of mature trees in established neighbourhoods would increase the options available to discuss with the community.

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We would welcome the opportunity to have staff from the Ministry meet directly with Delta staff to discuss this important issue. Mike Brotherston, Director, Corporate Services (604-946-3281) would be pleased to speak with your staff.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "George V. Harvie", with a horizontal line underneath.

George V. Harvie
Mayor

Enclosure

cc: Hon. Ravi Kahlon, MLA for Delta North
Ian Paton, MLA for Delta South
Delta Council
Peter Weeber, City Manager
Mike Brotherston, Director, Corporate Services



EXTRACT OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DELTA CITY COUNCIL HELD ON OCTOBER 6, 2025

10.0 Tree Protection in Sunshine Hills submitted by Councillor Kruger

MOVED BY: Cllr. Kruger

SECONDED BY: Cllr. Boisvert

WHEREAS the Sunshine Hills neighbourhood is defined by its mature tree canopy, which is central to the character, livability, and environmental health of the community;

WHEREAS increasing redevelopment pressures stemming from provincial legislative changes are resulting in the removal of large, mature trees, leading to concerns from residents that the unique character of Sunshine Hills is being eroded;

WHEREAS while Delta has a citywide Tree Protection and Replacement Bylaw, residents of Sunshine Hills have expressed a desire for stronger, neighbourhood-specific protections to preserve their unique tree canopy;

WHEREAS under the current framework of the Community Charter, municipalities cannot use tree bylaws to override the development potential of a property permitted under zoning regulations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Staff be directed to consult with the Sunshine Hills community to develop a Neighbourhood Tree Protection Pilot Program, which may include:
 - Establishing a Heritage Tree designation to protect landmark trees of significant size, age, or community value.
 - Enhanced tree replacement requirements or higher cash-in-lieu contributions within Sunshine Hills to better reflect the value of lost mature trees.
 - A clear opt-in mechanism for neighbourhoods like Sunshine Hills that wish to adopt stronger protections while ensuring consistency within the community.
 - Education and incentive programs for homeowners to preserve large trees during redevelopment.

- Enhanced reporting on the number of heritage trees impacted by development and replacement trees required.
- 2. Staff report back to council on the results of this community engagement by February 28, 2026.
- 3. The City of Delta write to the Minister of Municipal Affairs requesting amendments to the Community Charter to provide municipalities with greater authority to protect mature trees in established neighbourhoods, even in areas where redevelopment is permitted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Certified a true and correct extract of the
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
Council of the City of Delta held on
October 6, 2025

Dated this 20th of October
2025.



Michelle Jansson, CMC
City Clerk