



PRESS RELEASE

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MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ADOPTS BY-LAW CONCERNING PRIVATE DOCKS ON PUBLIC LAND

Chelsea, September 10, 2021 – Municipal Council officially adopted the by-law respecting docks and conditions of occupancy of the municipal land bordering the Gatineau River at the September 7 Council meeting. The by-law is scheduled to come into force on January 1, 2022.

The purpose of the by-law is to regulate the issue of existing private docks on municipal land in order to provide public access to the river for all Chelsea residents and to support the environmental protection of the shorelines. The by-law does not address private docks located on private property.

The first draft by-law had been tabled in August 2020. The Council wanted residents to be able to comment on the issue to help build a by-law that is fair to all. After more than a year of discussion, a revised version of the draft by-law was tabled at the August 2021 meeting. This is the version that was finally adopted.

"Council gave this issue a lot of thought, taking over a year to consult with residents before finalizing this by-law. It was important to us that the by-law be fair and allow all residents the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the Gatineau River", said Mayor Caryl Green.

Three possible scenarios

In order to determine which private docks on municipal property may be retained and which must be removed, the by-law sets out three scenarios. The first two scenarios provide that an occupancy permit and a dock permit could be granted on municipal land:

1. To owners of land adjacent to the Voie Verte, whose land would border the river if the Voie Verte did not exist;
2. To owners of land adjacent to the Chemin de la Rivière, whose land would border the river if Chemin de la Rivière did not exist.

Private dock owners authorized to keep their docks on municipal property will be required to sign an annual lease with the Municipality at a cost of \$400 per year plus a one-time dock permit fee of \$25. An identification plaque will also be required on all authorized docks. At this time, the Municipality estimates that the fee for this plate will be approximately \$25. Municipal Council has requested that a budget envelope be created to hold the funds raised. The money will be used to fund the public river access project.



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For all other private docks located on municipal land, but which do not correspond to scenarios one or two, the docks will have to be removed as specified in scenario three. However, it will be possible to propose them to the Municipality for conversion to a public dock. If this is the case, a case-by-case evaluation will be done to assess various criteria such as environmental impact, location, impact on the privacy of neighbors, accessibility, etc. Once the evaluation is complete, Municipal Council will decide which docks will be retained.

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