



MAR 30 2016

JULIE GREEN
MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

Oral Question 44-18(2): Agricultural Land Availability

During question period on February 24, 2016, you inquired about the process for obtaining land for agricultural purposes outside the City of Yellowknife.

While the question pertains to the processes the Department of Lands uses to guide applications for either Commissioner's or territorial land, I would like to add that the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is currently developing an Agricultural Policy, and may be able to provide more detail on agricultural development in the Northwest Territories.

Land which is most suitable for agricultural development is located in the southern regions of the Northwest Territories; this area is not covered by modern Aboriginal land, resources and self-government agreements. While negotiations are underway in unsettled regions, much of the useable land may be subject to Interim Land Withdrawals and Interim Measure Agreements. This provides another impetus for stakeholders to finalize ongoing land claim processes and complete land use plans to provide certainty and open up more land for agricultural purposes.

To address the Member's inquiry regarding specific agricultural processes, the application process for Commissioner's and territorial land is quite similar.

When applying for Commissioner's land, applicants must provide sufficient detail to identify the purpose for which the land is required. The level of detail for a commercial activity such as agricultural use would include, among other items, a site plan and development plan for the land, along with information on the storage of dangerous goods such as fuels or fertilizers. As a commercial activity, performance security would also need to be provided, as required under the *Commissioner's Land Act*. All applications for Commissioner's land are sent to Aboriginal and community governments as required for consultation purposes.

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Applications are reviewed for completeness, conformity with current policies and procedures, and are either accepted or denied. Accepted applications for territorial land are sent to the Lands Advisory Committee (LAC) for a 45-day consultation period. The LAC is comprised of Aboriginal governments, other government departments and regulatory boards. The results of these consultations are taken into consideration when a decision is made to either accept or reject the application.

Specific details on the application process, including application forms, are available to applicants through the Department of Lands' website at www.lands.gov.nt.ca. Should applicants have process-related questions; enquiries can be made to Lands' regional offices where Senior Lands Officers can assist applicants directly.

Original Signed By

Robert C. McLeod
Minister
Department of Lands

c. Mr. Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings
Legislative Coordinator

Mr. Mark Warren
Deputy Minister
Department of Lands