

Wayne Braid

Land Registry in British Columbia: Safe, Secure, and Efficient

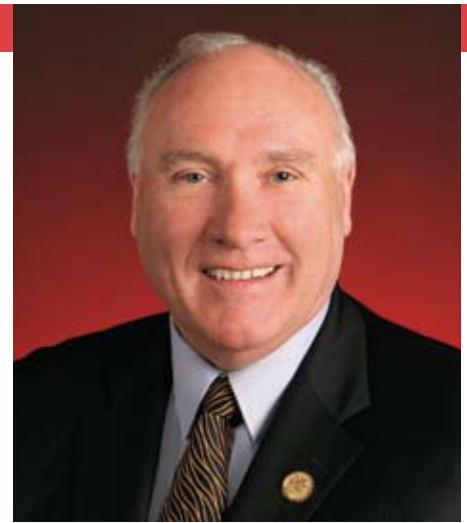


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For most of us in British Columbia, the major financial purchase of our lives will be our home—our residence—the place we raise our children and share our life with a spouse or partner, family, friends, and neighbours.

It is important that we as citizens have the comfort of knowing the title of our home is secure. We need to know our home belongs to us and that we have protection against someone trying to make a claim on it.

This edition of *The Scrivener* features the Land Title and Survey Authority of British Columbia, an organization that came into existence January 2005. This independent, not-for-profit corporation was established under an Act of the Legislature to ensure British Columbian's homes would be protected and that they would have the security that is so vital to homeowners and landowners.

The mandate of the Land title and Survey Authority is “to create confidence by delivery assured land title and land survey systems essential to the property market and economic foundation of British Columbia.” That gives me assurance that LTSA is paying attention to our needs as landowners and consumers.

A person can enlist the services of a BC Notary or other specified professional to search the land registry through the LTSA and immediately access such information as the names of the current owners of a property, the former owners, and details about a mortgage or charge on the property. Additional data include easements, rights of way, and other impediments on the land.

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A quick look at the various land registry systems around the world indicates that we here in British Columbia benefit from a sophisticated system of land registry. Unlike many jurisdictions, our Torrens system includes a cadastral method of registering land—in other words, a title in BC comes with a survey plan that clearly identifies where the land is located and its size and boundaries.

The historic records division of the Land Title and Survey Authority has a most significant function. The Authority has taken steps to carefully inventory the records of the Land Title Offices and the Surveyor General.

Original papers signed by the first governor of British Columbia, James Douglas, are being protected so my grandchildren and your grandchildren may one day view such historic documents!

The LTSA Website states, “In addition to their value for operation purposes, historic records have significant informational and evidential value to local and academic historians, First Nations, researchers, genealogists, and other persons involved in historical or land parcel research.”

As you will read in the pages of this Spring issue, The Society of Notaries Public of BC is one of the organizations that provides representation to the LTSA Board of Directors. BC Notaries are also represented on the LTSA Advisory Board. Both positions serve key functions in providing direction and expertise to the LTSA's management team so they can carry out their mandate and strategic plans successfully.

Our representatives on these Boards are there to serve the interests of BC consumers, ensure the safety and efficiency of our registry system, and at all times protect the well-being of the public.

I am sure you will learn something of value from our presentation of BC's very own Land Title and Survey Authority! ▲