



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** March 7, 2019

From: Todd Gross, Director, Parks Services **File:** 11-7200-01/2019-Vol 01

Re: **Boating BC Association's Request for Preserving Access to Waterways**

Staff Recommendation

1. That the staff report titled "Boating BC Association's Request for Preserving Access to Waterways," dated March 7, 2019, from the Director, Parks Services, be received for information; and
2. That the City support the Boating BC Association's revised UBCM resolution "Public Access to Waterways" and that staff be directed to communicate the City's support through correspondence to Boating BC.

Todd Gross
 Director, Parks Services
 (604-247-4942)

Att. 2

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|--|----------------------|
| REPORT CONCURRENCE | |
| CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER | |
| | |
| REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE | INITIALS: |
| APPROVED BY CAO | |
| | |

Staff Report

Origin

At the November 28, 2017, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee Meeting, staff received the following referral:

That correspondence dated October 26, 2017 from the Boating BC Association be referred to staff for response.

At the June 26, 2018, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee Meeting, staff received the following referral:

That staff:

- (1) consider the Union of British Columbia Municipalities resolution made by the District of North Saanich regarding protecting and enhancing the waterfront;*
- (2) an inventory of existing boating infrastructure be carried out;*
- (3) the Waterfront Strategy be updated; and report back.*

The purpose of this report is to respond to the aforementioned referrals.

Analysis

The Boating BC Association (“Boating BC”) is a network of qualified professionals from all sectors of the boating industry. Its mandate is to advocate for and represent the boating industry to all levels of government to ensure that waterways are both safe and accessible.

Boating BC is concerned that an increasing number of small marinas, waterside recreational businesses, and boating infrastructures have been unable to remain in operation due to the pressures of rising land value and densification near waterfronts. Boating BC believes that public access to waterways is integral for a population’s quality of life, especially in urban environments.

Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Resolution – Recreational Boating Access Infrastructure

In September 2018, Boating BC, via the District of North Saanich, put forward the following motion “Recreational Boating Access Infrastructure” to the UBCM:

Whereas recreational boating is part of the fabric of many BC communities, contributes to the quality of life and is an important economic and recreational activity;

And whereas there is an ongoing decline in boating access infrastructure, and marinas and public boat launches are being removed to make way for development and community amenities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM's coastal and lakeshore member communities incorporate existing boating access infrastructure into community planning and identify areas in which there may be potential to add boating infrastructure to their longer-term community plans.

Boating BC's correspondence to the City dated October 26, 2017 (Attachment 1), and its subsequent presentation to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee Meeting on June 26, 2018, were to generate awareness and support for this UBCM resolution.

This motion "Recreational Boating Access Infrastructure" was not passed at UBCM. It was perceived that each community was responsible for addressing their boating infrastructures within community planning processes.

Revised UBCM Resolution – Public Access to Waterways

Boating BC has revised its original resolution to be more encompassing and applicable to a broader range of municipalities. This new resolution, re-titled "Public Access to Waterways," reads as follows:

Whereas access to public waterways in many coastal, lakeshore and riverfront communities, contributes to the quality of life and fabric of these communities, and are an important means for boating, kayaking, fishing and a host of other water-related activities;

And whereas there is an ongoing decline to such access points because of development and creation of community amenities:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM's coastal, lakeshore and riverfront member-communities consider incorporating existing public access points into community planning and identify areas in which there may be potential to add public access provisions to their longer-term community plans.

Boating BC's revised resolution places a greater emphasis on waterside access by not only boats but also personal watercraft, fishing activities, and other water-related activities. Boating BC is currently in the process of generating awareness and support for this new resolution, which they hope to bring forward to UBCM in September 2019, via the City of Esquimalt.

As the City of Richmond is an island community at the mouth of the Fraser River that places a high value on public access to the waterfront, it is recommended that the City support the revised UBCM resolution "Public Access to Waterways" and that staff be directed to communicate this support through correspondence to Boating BC.

Inventory of Existing Boating Infrastructure

Within the City's municipal boundaries, there are numerous public and private points of waterfront access for recreational boaters. An inventory of public and private boating infrastructure can be found in Attachment 2.

There are a total of 16 public and private points of boating access in the City. City-owned assets include Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site, Scotch Pond, Imperial Landing Dock, and McDonald Beach Boat Launch. The City also has lease agreements with John M. S. Lecky UBC Boathouse, the Navy League of Canada, and the Richmond Yacht Club for operations on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River.

A new point of direct public access to the Middle Arm waterfront will be the Hollybridge Pier, which is projected to open in early 2020, with the gangway and float system to be added at a later date. Public uses envisioned for the Hollybridge Pier and Float could include recreational boating activities.

Future public waterfront access is envisioned as part of the City Centre Area Plan along the Middle Arm between the Dinsmore Bridge and Cambie Road, where the City is planning for a destination waterfront park and increased recreational use of the water.

City of Richmond's Waterfront Strategy and Parks and Open Space Strategy

On February 9, 2009, Council endorsed the *2009 Waterfront Strategy: Redefining Living on the Edge* ("Waterfront Strategy") as the long-term planning resource for managing Richmond's waterfront. The Waterfront Strategy established the following vision for Richmond's waterfront

Richmond will be a community that celebrates its rich past and recognizes the full potential of its island legacy – a dynamic, productive, and sustainable world-class waterfront.

The vision aims to position Richmond's waterfront as dynamic, productive, sustainable, and world-class through the following five Strategic Directions:

1. Working together.
2. Amenities and legacy.
3. Thriving eco-systems and community.
4. Economic vitality.
5. Responding to climate change and natural hazards.

Boating BC's revised UBCM resolution to protect public access to waterways is consistent with "Strategic Direction 2 – Amenities and Legacy," which has a goal to create a world-class waterfront experience of vibrancy, excitement, and beauty through a series of linked destinations, landmarks, programs, and activities that promote and celebrate Richmond's island city legacy.

Additionally, Strategic Direction 2, Key Objective 6 addresses “Blueway Programs,” which has the following goal:

To promote the public uses of the water with water-based transportation, maritime festivals, community programs, and infrastructure to support festivals, regattas, and individual recreational boat uses.

Furthermore, protection of public access to waterways is supported by the City’s *2022 Parks and Open Space Strategy*, which was endorsed by Council on October 15, 2013. Outcome #1 of the focus area “Blue Network – Transforming and Celebrating Our Waterfront and Waterways” articulates the following goal:

The recreational and ecological values of the waterfront and waterways are celebrated and protected.

As the spirit and intent of Boating BC’s resolution to protect public access to waterways is consistent with the goals and outcomes identified the City’s Waterfront Strategy and the Parks and Open Space Strategy, updates to those strategies are not necessary at this time.

Recommended Actions

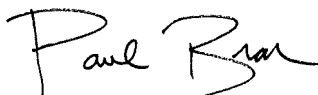
The City places a high value on public access to the waterfront, and is seen by Boating BC as a municipal leader in this area. It is recommended that the City support the revised UBCM resolution “Public Access to Waterways” and that staff be directed to communicate this support through correspondence to Boating BC.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

As an island city, the City of Richmond’s waterfront is an important community asset. Staff recommend supporting Boating BC’s revised resolution “Public Access to Waterways” as it is consistent with the vision and long-term objectives set forth in the City’s Waterfront Strategy and Parks and Open Space Strategy. Staff will continue to research and explore opportunities to further expand public access to the waterfront as part of community planning processes.



Paul Brar
Manager, Parks Programs
(604-244-1275)

- Att. 1: Correspondence from Boating BC dated October 26, 2017
- 2: Inventory of Public and Private Boating Infrastructure in Richmond

Schedule 2 to the Minutes of the
Parks, Recreation & Cultural
Services Committee meeting of
Richmond City Council held on
Tuesday, November 28, 2017.

October 26, 2017

BOATINGBC

Councillor Harold Steves
6911 No 3 Road
Richmond, BC
V6Y 2C1

Re: Access to waterways in British Columbia

Dear Councillor Steves,

On behalf of Boating BC, I am writing to share information and request your support to protect what is left of access points to waterways across British Columbia. Boating BC has been the voice of recreational boating in B.C. since 1957 and is comprised of over 300 member businesses from all sectors of our industry. Our mandate is to provide information and remove barriers for boaters and businesses while ensuring our waterways are both safe and accessible.

In British Columbia, recreational boating accounts for nearly \$1.3 billion of the province's GDP and supports nearly 17,000 jobs provincially. Across Canada, recreational boating contributes about \$5.6 billion to Canada's GDP. With 27,000 km of coastline and thousands of lakes and rivers, British Columbia is most definitively a maritime destination, and recreational boating remains an important part of the culture and economy in many communities including Victoria, Nanaimo, Kelowna and West Vancouver, just to name a few.

Over the past 10 years, as waterfront property prices have risen exponentially, we have seen an ongoing decline of boating access infrastructure. Marinas and public boat launches are being removed to make way for real estate developments and other community amenities, and where there are existing marinas, lease rates are increasing at nearly the same rate as land values. As a result, there are fewer and fewer safe public access points for domestic and visiting boaters to access waterways. The net effect of this trend is a decline in economic spin-off opportunities for local communities and, in some cases, an increase in safety risks as boaters are forced to travel longer distances to reach boat launches and go through dangerous waterways to reach their boating destination.

By way of example, the District of West Vancouver closed the Ambleside Boat launch in October, 2016 without explanation or an alternative access point. Since that time, boaters have been forced to launch in alternative communities – as far away as Sunset Marina, Cates Park or Vanier Park – and travel, unnecessarily, across shipping lanes or the more dangerous waters of Point Atkinson in order to enjoy the waters and fishing off of Ambleside.

In Nanaimo, the Nanaimo Port Authority, which manages leases on behalf of the federal government, has applied methodology resulting in foreshore lease rate increases between 60 and 125 per cent along Newcastle Channel. Such substantial increases would be extremely difficult for any business to absorb, and pose a significant threat to the affected marina operators.

These are just two of the many examples in relation to a concerning trend being played out across our province.

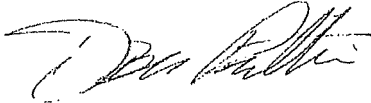
We are writing today to formally request that Council direct staff to do an inventory of existing boating infrastructure within your municipal boundaries, pass a motion that protects the remaining public boat launches in your community and to commission a study of existing private access points within your jurisdiction and incorporate those into your long-term community plans.

Unlike many other boating destinations in Canada and around the world, boating in B.C. is a year-round activity. Countless numbers of jobs are directly and indirectly related to the marine industry and there exists a strong connection between the tourism sector and ours.

Ensuring British Columbians and visitors have easy access to our waterways is critical for B.C. in order to prevent erosion of the industry, to continue to maintain recreational boating as a strong economic staple, and to uphold our maritime culture and boating lifestyle, which is central to who we are.

I would be happy to discuss this issue personally at any time or meet with you at your convenience. I can be reached at 250.893.0055 - I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Don Prittie
President
Boating BC Association

Boating BC Association

Inventory of Public and Private Boating Infrastructure in Richmond

| Asset Name | Public/Private | Location | Notes |
|--|----------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site | Public | 5180 Westwater Dr, Richmond, BC | A City-owned dock used for special events, moorage of heritage vessels, and site-specific programming. |
| Imperial Landing Dock | Public | 4310 Bayview St, Richmond, BC | A City-owned dock used for special events and transient moorage. The fee is \$1 foot /day, for a maximum of three days. |
| McDonald Beach Boat Launch | Public | 3500 McDonald Rd, Richmond, BC | Boat launch is open during park hours with day parking of \$12. |
| Scotch Pond | Public | 12011 Seventh Ave, Richmond, BC | Moorage at the City-owned site is managed by the Scotch Pond Heritage Co-op. |
| Decksides Marina | Private | 3500 Cessna Dr, Richmond, BC | A private marina located on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. |
| Great Canadian Marina | Private | 8831 River Rd, Richmond, BC | A private marina located on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. |
| John M.S. Lecky UBC Boathouse | Private | 7277 River Rd, Richmond, BC | A private facility, used for practice by the UBC rowing team. The facility is available for event rental and private functions. |
| Milltown Marina & Boatyard | Private | 9191 Bentley St, Vancouver, BC | A private marina and boatyard with launch and haul out infrastructure. Located on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. |
| Navy League Dock | Private | 7411 River Rd, Richmond, BC | A private dock used by the Richmond branch of the Navy League of Canada for cadet training vessels. The organization has a water lot lease agreement with the City for the dock. |
| Richmond Marina | Private | 8191 River Rd, Richmond, BC | A private marina located on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. |
| Richmond Yacht Club | Private | 7471 River Rd, Richmond, BC | The moorage is for members of the yacht club. The club has a water lot lease agreement for dock use from the City and the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority. |
| Shelter Island Marina & Boatyard | Private | 6911 Graybar Rd, Richmond, BC | A commercial marina with a marine travelift for launching larger vessels. |
| Skyline Marina Enterprises | Private | 8031 River Road, Richmond, BC | A private marina located on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. |
| Steveston Harbour Authority (SHA) | Private | 12740 Trites Rd, Richmond, BC | A public boat launch located off Dyke Rd. The fee is \$12 for launching and day parking. Moorage is managed by the SHA. D17 Priority is given to commercial fishing vessels. |
| Tom-Mac Shipyard | Private | 17011 River Rd, Richmond, BC | A small shipyard catering to commercial vessels. |
| Vancouver Marina | Private | 8211 River Rd, Richmond, BC | A private marina located on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River. |