



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Committee

Date: April 14, 2021

From: Todd Gross
Director, Parks Services

File: 11-7200-01/2021-Vol
01

Marie Fenwick,
Director, Arts, Culture & Heritage

Re: **Options for Imperial Landing and Britannia Shipyards Dock Operations**

Staff Recommendation

That option 1 “Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society Pilot” be endorsed as the preferred option for the future operations of the docks at Imperial Landing and Britannia Shipyards as detailed in the staff report titled “Options for Imperial Landing and Britannia Shipyards Dock Operations,” dated April 8, 2021, from the Director, Parks Services and Director, Arts, Cultural and Heritage Services.

Todd Gross
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Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO	

Staff Report

Origin

On March 23, 2021, staff received the following referrals from Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Committee:

1. *That staff:*
 - i. *Investigate options regarding an agreement for the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society to take on the moorage management of both the Britannia Shipyards Dock and the Imperial Landing Dock for a trial period with possible extensions based on mutual benefits;*
 - ii. *Investigate further options of operations of the two docks; and*
 - iii. *Report back to the Committee within 30 days.*

2. *That staff report back with options to address the issues of moorage on the Imperial Landing Wharf regarding management and possible elimination, and options regarding vessel sewage pump outs or regulation of existing sanitary facilities.*

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on the current operating model and uses of the two docks and outlines three options for Council's consideration for the future operations.

These options are:

1. Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society Pilot (Recommended);
2. Procurement Process; and
3. Status Quo.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #3 One Community Together:

- 3.3 *Utilize an interagency and intercultural approach to service provision.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #4 An Active and Thriving Richmond:

- 4.2 *Ensure infrastructure meets changing community needs, current trends and best practices.*

- 4.3 *Encourage wellness and connection to nature through a network of open spaces.*

Analysis

Background

Imperial Landing Dock

The Imperial Landing Floating Dock is a modular 600 ft. long by 20 ft. wide steel and timber float that is accessible by boat from the Steveston Channel and landside from the Imperial Landing Pier by way of two gangways (see Attachment 1 – Dock Locations Map). Both the Imperial Landing Pier and Dock are publically accessible year-round.

Signage is in place along the dock to inform users of dock rules and regulations, with contact information available to direct public inquiries to City Staff and Bylaw Officers. There are also eight power kiosks available on the dock for boaters to use and there is limited access to water depending on the season. Safety measures include four dock ladders in strategic locations, three life rings and eight 10lbs ABC fire extinguishers.

The last dredging cut along the Imperial Landing dock was in 2014, with the last depth sounding in 2020 showing a depth of 9' to 12.5' at zero tide which was an increase of up to 1.7m sedimentation since 2014.

Imperial Landing is a destination on the Pacific West Coast for recreational day boat moorage and other recreational activities in the Steveston Channel. While vessels may moor at the dock overnight, live-aboard moorage is not permitted.

The existing program for Imperial Landing was approved by Council on March 12, 2012. The program is intended to meet multiple objectives and community needs, including transient boat moorage, fishing, non-motorized boat launching, hosting of maritime events, and public sightseeing access to the waterfront. Currently 550 ft. along the outside edge of the main float is designated for transient day moorage, with fishing and public sightseeing activities being designated 25 ft. at each end of the main float. A smaller 33 ft. long by 20 ft. wide floating dock is also accessible from the Imperial Landing Pier via a gated gangway.

Transient Moorage is available on a first come, first served basis for a maximum of three consecutive days within a 14 day period. The moorage rate is \$1.00/ft. per 24 hours and is payable at a parking meter located on the pier. Vessels under 10 ft. are charged a flat rate of \$10.00 per 24 hours. The dock is visited by over 200 vessels each year and has generated an average of \$8,709 annually over the past three years in moorage revenue.

The floating dock has become a popular location for recreational fishing in Richmond. Depending on the season, there can be as many as 50 people at one time casting in the Steveston Channel from the dock.

Imperial Landing is also used to host maritime themed events, such as the Steveston Dragon Boat Festival, Ships to Shore, and the Richmond Maritime Festival. It is also home to community groups like the Steveston Paddle Club and the Steveston Radio Controlled Sailing Club.

As a result of the dock's popularity, conflicts between user groups occasionally arise. These conflicts are primarily between recreational fishing users and transient boat moorage users, and typically occur during the peak boating months of May to September. Challenges around enforcement measures also exist for derelict, liveaboard or abandoned boats that are tied up to the dock.

As marine navigation falls under federal jurisdiction and the dock is located within a Provincial Waterlot that is leased to the City for public recreational use, the City cannot infringe upon certain public rights to access the waterfront. These challenges, which are also faced by other coastal municipalities, make it difficult to vacate liveaboard vessels without a court order.

Vessel Sewage Service Options and Existing Facilities

The following information on vessel sewage services options and existing facilities has been included for information. With Imperial Landing currently offering transient moorage and not operating as a long-term moorage facility as per the current Provincial Waterlot Lease Agreement, no additional facilities are required.

Discharge of untreated wastewater can have detrimental effects on the environment, wildlife, and the local fishing industry. Under federal legislation, it is illegal to dump sewage from boats within three nautical miles of shore, unless pump-outs are not available, and you cannot travel three miles off shore.

Although pump-out facilities or wastewater disposal services are recommended in best management practices for marinas and harbours, there is currently no federal mandate that the operator of a transient moorage facility is required to provide pump-out or black water disposal services for vessels. The onus that black water or waste be disposed of in a designated spot or as directed by a harbour master is placed on the individual vessels.

Due to the low exemption requirements for small vessels and a lack of monitoring and enforcement resources, vessels in the lower mainland are known to discharge waste in open water or near shore areas. This is exacerbated by the dearth of nearby pump-out facilities outside the False Creek or Vancouver Harbour areas.

There are currently two pump-out facilities located in Richmond available for public use:

1. Vancouver Marina – located along the middle-arm of the Fraser River, with services available to marina users and the public at their fuel dock open daily; and
2. Shelter Island Marina – located in East Richmond, with services available to marina users and the public with advance notice required as a mobile land side vendor is brought in to support.

Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Dock

The floating dock at Britannia Shipyards is 660ft (200m) of linear timber frame construction (see Attachment 1 – Dock Locations Map). It is composed of three modular sections built for other

purposes and brought to the site over the years. A small section of the dock is removable to allow for moorage of vessels on the inside of the floats.

Limited water and power services are available. Potable water access is available on the eastern half of the floats. Installed in 2020, eight power kiosks are broken into two zones each with a maximum draw of 60Amps. Safety measures include four dock ladders in strategic locations and five 10lbs ABC fire extinguishers.

There are two primary gangways allowing for entry/exit from the dock. A gate adjacent to the Seine Net Loft restricts public access on the west side. Access from the east gangway requires going through the Britannia Shipyard building. Once on the dock, persons have unrestricted access to the rear decks of both the Seine Net Loft and the Britannia Shipyard building.

The last dredging cut along the Britannia Shipyards dock was in 2018, with the last depth sounding in 2019 showing a depth of 14.5' at zero tide.

The dock at Britannia Shipyards is part of the experience of the National Historic Site. As such, it is used to support the heritage interpretation of the site through displays and programming. Currently, public moorage at Britannia Shipyards is not permitted and moorage fees are not charged. Occasional temporary moorage is extended at no cost to heritage boats that support interpretive programming. Due to lack of dock security and easy access to Britannia Shipyards building from the docks, this option is only extended to heritage boats with an established relationship to the site.

Long-term vessel moorage is considered on a case-by-case basis. Vessels that moor long-term do so per the terms of an agreement between boat owners(s) and the City. Stipulations in these agreements specify the rules related to insurance coverage, boat maintenance, and live-aboard activities. Current commitments for long-term boat moorage include:

- 35' *Silver Ann* - The City-owned vessel *Silver Ann* is moored at the Britannia Shipyards dock on an on-going basis. This wooden gillnetter was built at Britannia Shipyards in 1968.
- 85' *SS Master* – For over ten years, the City has had an annual agreement with the SS Master Society to provide moorage throughout the year to the 99-year old wooden tugboat in exchange for opening the vessel for public tours during special events.
- 80' *Providence* - In 2020, the City signed a 3-year agreement with the owners of the 118-year old *Providence* sailing ship to serve as the flagship for Britannia Shipyards and support programming at Britannia Shipyards during special events. In addition to providing annual funding to support the vessels operations, this agreement allows the vessel free moorage at the docks during the winter season.

Britannia Shipyards docks are regularly used for public programs and special events. Generally, programming is developed in partnership with the Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site Society. In recent years, dock programming has included:

- Richmond Maritime Festival – This annual weekend event invites families to experience historic wooden boats at the Britannia Shipyard docks and learn about their history and heritage from boat owners or crew.

- Ships to Shore event – Frequently held in conjunction with Canada Day festivities, this event invited vessels from the Canadian Navy, classic yachts, and historic schooners to dock at Imperial Landing and Britannia Shipyards. Visitors could board the vessels to learn about their functions or go for a sail.
- Wooden Boat Rendezvous – Scheduled during the summer months, visitors walk Britannia’s dock and learn about visiting historic vessels and their contributions to BC coastal communities and the environment.
- River tours – River tours have been offered from Britannia Shipyards docks by private operators on an on-going basis and for special events in past years. A new river tour offer is currently in development.
- Water shuttle service – In 2016 and 2017, ferry service in Steveston was offered from the Britannia Shipyards docks to Steveston Harbour Authority’s 3rd Ave Pier.
- Educational tours – Interpretive staff at Britannia Shipyards offer tours of the docks and vessels for public and school groups on an on-going basis.

In recent years, the Society has supported programming the docks for special events by assisting with boat recruitment and providing volunteers to facilitate public interactions with visiting vessels.

Britannia Shipyards is also a frequent location for film productions. The docks are often included in the site rental for production sets.

Current Dock Conditions and Maintenance Requirements

Britannia Shipyards floating docks have been added onto over the years and are now over 20 years of age. Currently maintenance of the assets are conducted on an as-required basis and have cost an average of \$23,000 annually since 2018. Given their age and condition, a conditional assessment report and maintenance plan would be required to assess the current condition of the assets and the potential remaining lifespan of the structures with ongoing maintenance costs. A conditional assessment would cost approximately \$25,000.

Typically, timber structures have a lifespan between 20-25 years depending on how well they are maintained, industrially treated, and the type of usage. The capital costs for replacing all the timber floating docks and ramps at Britannia Shipyards would be between \$ 2.5M and \$ 3.5M depending on market conditions as we are currently experiencing with current lumber costs in 2021.

At Imperial Landing, the float is now 11 years old and its main superstructure is made of marine grade steel with a minimum 35-45 year life span for the main frame, and a 20-25 year on the treated timber decking. Future capital costs for replacing all the timber on the floats would be approximately \$500,000 (in 2021 dollars) and replacing the whole float (steel and timber) would be \$ 2M (in 2021 dollars). The pier and boardwalk constructed in 1999 are now requiring replacement of deck boards and other components.

Annual maintenance has been done on an as-required basis and costs have remained relatively low with an average of \$9,700 annually since 2018. With the proposed additional use and age of

the dock, a conditional assessment and maintenance plan for this site would also be recommended to determine current condition of the structures, potential lifespan, replacement costs and maintenance costs for the pier and boardwalk. A condition assessment would cost approximately \$15,000.

Given the varied age of implementation and management background, there is no formal operating budget in place for either dock.

Programming and Enforcement

In past years, there has been limited programming or promotion of moorage for the docks at Britannia Shipyards and Imperial Landing. Britannia Shipyard docks are open to the public on a very limited basis. As such, there is no formal budget assigned to day-to-day operations of the docks at Britannia Shipyards or Imperial Landing and minimal funding has been allocated to managing moorage. Waterfront programming for festivals and events has been supported by individual event budgets.

With the proposed increased use, technical personnel with dock management experience should be put in place to oversee the enforcement of moorage policies and support the delivery of new interpretive programming. Staff can continue working with the Society to identify potential revenue sources to support this personnel.

Provincial Waterlot Licence of Occupation

Both the float docks at the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site and Imperial Landing are located within a lot that the City leases from the Province. This waterlot lease went into effect January 1, 2017 and expires in 30 years.

The City is required to have the consent of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development before assigning any of its obligations or permit use of the waterlot lease to a third party. Section 7.1 of the agreement states “You must not sublicense, assign, mortgage or transfer this Agreement, or permit any person to use or occupy the Land, without our prior written consent, which consent we may withhold”.

Additionally, the terms of this lease dictate the current allowable activities at both these sites. These terms are outlined in the Management Plan for the Britannia Shipyards and Imperial Landing waterlot, which states that the City will use these locations year-round for the following purposes only:

- Heritage displays;
- Rental and community events;
- Boat moorage (no live-aboards);
- Boat repairs in Shipyard building (with proper mitigation measures in place to control the spill of hazardous materials); and
- Community recreational use.

Additionally, the City must adhere to the rules outlined in the *Crown Land Use Operational Policy: Community and Institutional Land Use, Public Wharves*.

Wharves Regulation Bylaw

Staff are bringing forward a draft of a *Wharves Regulation Bylaw* in Fall 2021 to formalize specific rules and regulations relating to fishing, moorage and use of public waterfront amenities. As waterfront amenities are part of Richmond's parks and open spaces system, their use falls under the Public Parks and School Grounds Regulation Bylaw No. 8771. A wharves-centric bylaw will provide crucial tools for City staff or a third party operator to address the challenges unique to waterfront activities.

Options for Operations

1. Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society Pilot (Recommended)

This option contemplates entering into negotiations with the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society for the operations of the docks as a pilot program. The Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site Society has an existing operating agreement with the City for the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site. This 5-year agreement will be extended one year and expires April 21, 2022. As per the terms of the agreement, the Society may operate programs at the Britannia Shipyards site, including the docks.

Recently, the Society has proposed to assume the management of moorage at the docks at Britannia Shipyards and Imperial Landing. The objectives of this proposal are to increase use of these public spaces, support waterfront tourism in Steveston, and further support maritime programming at Britannia Shipyards. The proposal to manage the moorage at these sites would be an opportunity for the Society to extend their responsibilities in operating Britannia Shipyards and expand their activities to include Imperial Landing. The Society has requested the support of City staff in the development of this initiative.

2. Procurement Process

This option contemplates undertaking a process to seek proposals from third party operators. Should Council support this option, staff will initiate a procurement process to solicit bids from experienced companies and organizations to determine the best available operator to manage the docks. This will enable the City to consider proposals from a variety of potential operators prior to entering into negotiations with a one organization. Possible types of third party operators could include private companies, government organizations, or non-profit organizations. Under this option, the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society would be able to submit a formal proposal for operations.

3. Status Quo

City of Richmond staff continue to oversee all aspects of dock management and operations at both Imperial Landing and Britannia Shipyards with continued collaboration with the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society on heritage boat recruitment and programming opportunities.

Terms for an Agreement

Should Council choose to enter into negotiations for a third-party operator, the following considerations would be addressed through the procurement and/or negotiating process and ultimately form the basis of an agreement. In addition to these terms, any agreement would adhere to the terms of the Provincial Waterlot lease as well as other applicable City, Provincial and Federal regulations and laws.

- Length of the Agreement
- Description of Premises
- Required Services and Permitted Uses (ie: boat recruitment, marketing and promotion, fee collection, cleaning, maintenance, site improvements, storage, waste removal, security and enforcement)
- Financial Implications (ie; operating subsidy and/or revenue sharing in consideration of associated operating and capital requirements, permitted use of revenue)
- Designated Representatives and Personnel Roles and Responsibilities
- Discretionary Powers (ie: City access to site and use of site for special events and film production hosting)
- Heritage Presentation and Preservation
- Public Relations and Communications (ie: use of City branding, sponsorships)
- Required Annual Filings
- Insurance and Indemnity
- Legal Compliance
- Termination and Renewal of Agreement

Next Steps

Should Council endorse the recommended option 1 of entering into negotiations with the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, the City will first need to contact the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to discuss gaining consent for the Provincial Waterlot Lease Agreement to be overseen by a third party.

While awaiting further direction from the Province, staff can continue to discuss the terms of an agreement with the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society. Staff will report back to Council with the Provincial direction, as well as the proposed terms and financial implications of an agreement.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The Imperial Landing Dock and Britannia Shipyards Dock are popular civic amenities permitting residents and tourists an opportunity to safely access Steveston's historic waterfront. Options for operations for both docks have been presented for consideration, including a pilot with the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, a procurement process and the status quo.

April 14, 2021

- 10 -

The current provincial waterlot lease agreement dictates the allowable activities at both docks and also helps provide direction around services required and currently provided.




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Att. 1: Dock Locations Map



	<h2>Dock Locations</h2>	<p>Original Date: 2021 April 14</p> <p>Not to Scale</p>
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