



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** General Purposes Committee  
**From:** Marie Fenwick  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
**Date:** March 31, 2025  
**File:** 11-7000-01/2025-Vol  
01  
**Re:** Kaiwo Maru – King of the Sea 2026 Event Options

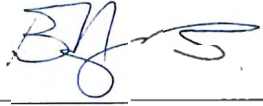


### Staff Recommendations

1. That Council direct staff as to its preferred option for the proposed Kaiwo Maru – King of the Sea 2026 Event, as outlined in the report titled “Kaiwo Maru – King of the Sea 2026 Event Options”, dated March 31, 2025, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services; and
2. That should option 1, 2 or 3 be selected, one-time funding of the associated budget for that option be approved, and the Consolidated 5 Year Financial Plan (2025–2029) be amended accordingly.

*CM Fenwick*

Marie Fenwick  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
(604-276-4288)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>
Intergovernmental Relations and Protocol Unit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Business Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b> 	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> 

## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

At the General Purposes Committee meeting held on December 16, 2019, staff received the following referral:

*That the City make plans to pursue having the Japanese ship Kaiwo Maru as part of the ship recruitment plan for future events.*

The purpose of this report is to respond to this referral and provide event options for Council's consideration.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

*Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.*

*6.2 Enhance the City's network of parks, trails and open spaces.*

*6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.*

This report is aligned with the Council-endorsed City of Richmond Signature and Community Events Plan 2025–2029 which allows for Council to respond to one-time event opportunities.

This report is also aligned with: The Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024; City of Richmond Community Wellness Strategy 2018–2023; Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029; City of Richmond Youth Strategy 2022–2032; City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032; City of Richmond Accessibility Plan 2023–2033; and the Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework.

### **Analysis**

#### **Background**

The Kaiwo Maru is a sail training vessel operated by the Japan Agency of Maritime Education and Training for Seafarers (JMETs), an organization that trains future navigators and engineers. Its home port is the National Institute for Sea Training, located in Yokohama, Japan. At 361-feet long, 182-feet high, and with 36 sails totalling nearly 30,000 square feet, the Kaiwo Maru is one of the largest tall ships in the world (Attachment 1).

The Kaiwo Maru's complement is comprised of approximately 200 people, including 100 cadets. The voyage takes one month to transit across the Pacific Ocean from Japan to Richmond. Richmond hosted this vessel in 2004 and then again in 2017. The Kaiwo Maru last visited Richmond for the *Ships to Shore – King of the Sea Festival* from May 5 to 7, 2017, as part of Richmond's Canada 150 celebrations. An estimated 75,000 people visited Garry Point Park over the course of the weekend to participate in the event.

Program highlights from the festival include:

- Fully subscribed online, pre-booked boarding passes that allowed thousands of local residents aboard the ship. Thousands more viewed from the dock and the shore;
- Fully subscribed online, pre-booked school tours on Friday, May 5, 2017, that allowed 600 students from Richmond schools the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to board the Kaiwo Maru. Hundreds of other students viewed the ship from the dock and the shore;
- Fully subscribed, online, pre-booked paddlewheel boat tours that offered a narrated tour of the Steveston Cannery Channel, from Britannia Shipyards to Garry Point Park, as well as a waterside view of the Kaiwo Maru;
- A Saturday afternoon sail drill that was a festival highlight and drew a crowd that Captain Umatani reported “was the largest he had ever seen” attend a sail drill for the Kaiwo Maru. Special guest appearances during the drill included the Canadian Coast Guard surveillance plane, which flew over in salute, and the Canadian Coast Guard hovercraft;
- Two stages that offered a range of music and performances throughout the weekend, capped off on Saturday evening with headliner Alan Doyle and the Beautiful Gypsies, followed by fireworks;
- A Kids Cove area that was well attended and included a stage featuring children’s entertainers, crafts and a free play area;
- Fifteen food trucks which provided revenue that offset the costs of providing meals for volunteers throughout the weekend;
- A small carnival, featuring 10 rides, which provided entertainment, and 12 community vendors that offered merchandise for sale, both of which generated revenue to help support the festival;
- The debut of the Richmond Canada 150 Pavilion;
- A variety of community partners participating in the event, including Fraser River Discovery Centre, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, Active Transportation Community, City of Richmond Environmental Programs, RCMP, Richmond Carver’s Society, Tourism Richmond, Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (RCMSAR), Britannia Heritage Shipyard Society, Gulf of Georgia Cannery, Nikkei Centre, Steveston Historic Society, and Steveston Japanese Language School; and
- Additional special guests at the festival included Asako Okai, the Consul General of Japan.

#### Proposed Program Options 2026

JMETS has confirmed their interest in coming to Richmond in May 2026. (Attachment 2). Staff have prepared three program options for Council’s consideration. The details of these options are subject to negotiations with JMETS. All three options include dock relocation and repairs required to host the Kaiwo Maru. As with any event, all three options would provide economic benefit to the community. With the increased level of programming and anticipated higher attendance, options 2 and 3 would be expected to have a greater economic impact. For example, an influx of visitors to Richmond can positively impact retail and other local businesses that cater to tourists.

As with the 2017 event, all of the event options detailed below would include extensive opportunities for community engagement and involvement with the local Japanese community as well as other local organizations. Potential collaborators include the Steveston Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Steveston Buddhist Temple, Steveston Community Society, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society, Steveston Merchants Association, Steveston Harbour Authority, Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue, the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, the Steveston Historical Society, Wakayama Kenjin Kai, and Tourism Richmond.

None of these potential community collaborators have been engaged to date.

Event options 1, 2 and 3 below would meet many of the following Council-endorsed guiding principles for events:

1. Build local capacity by prioritizing and investing in community-driven events.
2. Provide opportunities for Richmond residents and community groups to collaborate, contribute and participate.
3. Maximize social benefits to the community by fostering volunteerism and increasing sense of community pride and belonging.
4. Celebrate local themes and include programming that is uniquely Richmond.
5. Advance the City's environmental sustainability goals.
6. Ensure events are safe, well-organized and sustainably funded.
7. Encourage and support the development of unique events with a regional draw that brings economic and community benefits, as well as raise the profile of Richmond.

**Option 1 – Ship Visit and Educational Program – Net Cost: \$1,087,700**

This option would include:

- Up to five days of free public ship viewing;
- Up to two sail drills;
- Paid public ship boarding; and
- Up to three days of paid school visits where local schools would be able to participate in a registered program which would include educational tours of the Kaiwo Maru.

There would be no additional public programming other than ship viewing, boarding and the sail drill(s) in this option.

See Table 1 – Event Budget Options – page 6 below.

**Option 2 – Ship Visit with Educational Program and Festival with Community Performances – Net Cost: \$1,701,900**

This option would include:

- All items listed in Option 1;
- Landside public programming to animate the park, including local music and entertainment, food trucks, cultural displays and a children's activity area; and

- Public shuttle service to and from Garry Point Park, to address anticipated higher visitation.

Should Council wish to host a Kaiwo Maru event in 2026, option 2 would be recommended because it offers an extensive landside program to support the ship's visit.

See Table 1 – Event Budget Options – page 6 below.

**Option 3 – Ship Visit with Educational Program, Festival with Community Performances and Two Evening Headline Performances – Net Cost: \$1,907,400**

This option would include:

- All items listed in option 1 and option 2; and
- The addition of headline performers on two evenings of the festival.

See Table 1 – Event Budget Options – page 6 below.

**Option 4 – No event – Budget: \$0**

Table 1 on the following page provides more details on the proposed budgets for options 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 1 – Event Budget Options**

<b>Event Budget Options</b>	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Option 3</b>
<b><i>Revenue:</i></b>			
Sponsorship	\$0	\$35,000	\$50,000
Boarding Ticket Sales	\$43,000	\$43,000	\$43,000
School Education Program	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Food Truck	\$0	\$3,000	\$5,000
Vendors	\$0	\$500	\$1,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$53,000</b>	<b>\$91,500</b>	<b>\$109,000</b>
<b><i>Expenses:</i></b>			
Programming (including volunteer management, school educational program, shuttle bus, green ambassadors, art displays, etc.)	\$57,000	\$357,000	\$362,000
Ship Logistics (including hosting, crew activities, ACGI, equipment rentals, appearance fee, etc.)	\$444,000	\$444,000	\$444,000
Site Production (including equipment rentals for landside, stage, evening headline performances for Option 3, sound, fencing, washrooms, flooring, tents, tables, chairs, etc.)	\$141,000	\$430,000	\$510,000
Float Relocation and Repairs	\$240,000	\$240,000	\$240,000
Safety and Security (including security, traffic control, first aid, etc.)	\$71,700	\$95,000	\$116,000
Contingency (20%)	\$187,000	\$227,400	\$344,400
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,140,700</b>	<b>\$1,793,400</b>	<b>\$2,016,400</b>
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>\$1,087,000</b>	<b>\$1,701,900</b>	<b>\$1,907,400</b>

**Infrastructure Requirements**

For all event options, the existing floats and gangways at Imperial Landing will be temporarily relocated to Garry Point Park. Imperial Landing will not be available for the current Council-approved program of moorage and fishing for this period of time.

Given the time that has past since the last event, the budget for all event options includes funding for inspections of the pilings, floating docks and gangways and for anticipated repairs, to ensure that all infrastructure is able to safely support the Kaiwo Maru and the public.

Once the event is complete, the floats and gangways will be returned to Imperial Landing. A final inspection will be completed to ensure safe recommissioning of the floating dock. The budget also includes funding to ensure Garry Point Park is able to host the event and that the park is restored to its original condition following the event.

### **Financial Impact**

The proposed 2026 City Events Program and associated budget will be brought to Council for its consideration in Q3 2025. Should a Kaiwo Maru event be approved with this report, options for adjusting the 2026 Program to reduce the budget for some or all events will be provided at that time.

One-time funding from the Rate Stabilization Account is recommended to fund the Kaiwo Maru – King of the Sea 2026 event. Should Council endorse option 1, 2 or 3, the Consolidated 5 Year Financial Plan (2025–2029) will be amended accordingly.

Grants and sponsorships will be pursued to help offset event costs. Any funding received beyond that anticipated in the proposed budgets will be returned to the Rate Stabilization Account.

### **Conclusion**

Events enrich the lives of residents by providing the opportunity for the community to connect, contribute, learn and celebrate together. They contribute to social and economic well-being, foster community resiliency, build community capacity, and contribute to a vibrant city with a strong sense of place and distinct identity. The opportunity to host the Kaiwo Maru in 2026 creates the opportunity for a uniquely Richmond event.



Marie Fenwick  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
(604-276-4288)

Att. 1: Image of Kaiwo Maru: King of the Sea

Att. 2: Correspondence from Japan Agency of Maritime Education and Training for Seafarers



# KAIWO MARU: KING OF THE SEA



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27th March 2025

Mr. Malcolm D. Brodie  
Mayor of the City of Richmond  
6911 No.3 Road  
Richmond, British Columbia  
V6Y 2C1 Canada

Dear Mayor Brodie,

We, the Japan agency of Maritime Education and Training for Seafarers (JMETS), are very honored to have our sail training ship KAIWO MARU invited again in the spring 2026, following our participation in 2017.

Our Board of Governors has carefully examined the feasibility of dispatching KAIWO MARU to this prestigious event.

Taking our training voyage into consideration, I am pleased to inform you that we, JMETS, have begun making the necessary preparations to send KAIWO MARU to Richmond at the end of April or in the first week of May 2026.

We are grateful for your generous support.  
I hope further negotiations can be conducted at the working level.

I sincerely wish for the great success of your event.

Sincerely yours,

Noriaki Tajima  
President

Japan agency of Maritime Education and Training for Seafarers (JMETS)