



**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
Committee

**Date:** June 29, 2026

**From:** Elizabeth Ayers  
General Manager, Parks, Recreation and  
Culture

**File:** 06-2025-20-008/Vol 01

**Re:** Options on the Management of Scotch Pond

### Staff Recommendation

That the City undertake a feasibility study to assess potential future program uses for Scotch Pond and that a \$150,000 one-time additional level request be submitted for consideration in the 2027 budget process, as outlined in the report titled “Options on the Management of Scotch Pond”, from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture, dated June 29, 2026.

### Executive Summary

Scotch Pond is a designated heritage site located in an environmentally sensitive area in Garry Point Park. The site has significant historical value from its association with Steveston’s Japanese Canadian community and fishing industry. The site is currently operated by the Scotch Pond Heritage Cooperative (Cooperative) as a moorage facility for commercial fishing boats. However, the Cooperative has concerns about the sustainability of moorage operations. The site requires significant maintenance and upgrades, including dredging the pond, to maintain its heritage integrity and support public use. For these reasons, it is recommended to explore alternative options for the future operating program for the site.

Working with the Steveston Historic Sites Building Committee (the Committee), it is recommended to a) complete a feasibility study to assess potential future program uses, operational costs and dredging options, and b) update the facility condition assessment with capital cost estimates. The cost for this work is estimated at \$150,000. Should Council endorse the recommendations in this report, this cost will be brought forward as a one-time additional level request as part of the 2027 budget process and the outcomes of the work will be brought to Council for consideration.

## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting held on June 24, 2025, staff received the following referral:

*That staff explore options and consult with the Steveston Historic Sites Building Committee on the management of Scotch Pond, and report back.*

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.*

The purpose of this report is to respond to this referral.

### **Analysis**

#### **Background**

##### ***Scotch Pond History***

Scotch Pond is an early and rare example of industrial development and a small community built away from the shoreline within an area of tidal flats. The pond was originally constructed by the Scottish Canadian Cannery in 1899. For many years, the pond provided moorage for fishing boats associated with the cannery and was connected to the well-known Atagi Boatworks. In 1925, the land was leased to the Canadian Fishing Company who used the facility as a fishing station. It was then acquired by David Boatworks in the 1940s following internment of the Atagi family, then by a Mr. Takugaki, around 1949. The Canadian Fishing Company dredged the slough in the early 1950s to provide additional moorage and supported returning Japanese Canadian fishermen in constructing a new net storage facility.

Scotch Pond was purchased by the City of Richmond in 1989 and designated a Municipal Heritage Site in 1992. At that time the Cooperative was formed to manage the operation of the facility on behalf of its members for use as a moorage facility for the fishing industry.

The Scotch Pond site represents an important cultural landscape for Richmond and serves as a landmark for the Japanese Canadian history of Richmond. Scotch Pond offers heritage value to the community from its historical and social associations related to the early fish canneries in Steveston, the multicultural nature of the fishing and boat-building industries, and the continuing re-use of the site by the fishing industry after the downsizing of the Pacific salmon fishing fleet.

### *Scotch Pond Site – Current Condition*

The Scotch Pond site includes a dredged pond; a 3,100 square foot net shed built on pilings and approximately 270 metres (886 feet) of moorage floats and additional net racks (Attachment 1 – Scotch Pond Context Map). The net shed building is entirely clad in asbestos panels. The interior of the net shed consists of seven storage compartments and has limited electricity and water service. The site is currently accessible only to members of the Cooperative and is not open to the public.

Scotch Pond was originally a slough and is connected to the Fraser River by a short channel. The pond sits within a City and Provincial waterlot lease and was most recently dredged in 1994 and again in 2003. The pond is currently significantly silted in, making boat access very challenging, restricting it to high tide (Attachment 2 – Image of Scotch Pond). Any ongoing moorage at the site will require dredging. Scotch Pond is outside the scope of the current dredging project which focuses on the main Cannery Channel and adjacent city water lots at Imperial Landing and Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site.

Due to visible deterioration of the site's facilities, in 2021, a building condition assessment was undertaken. At that time, the building was found to be structurally sound, however, the roof was in need of replacement. Since this time, minor upgrades have been made to improve electrical and fire safety. During this assessment, the float pilings were found to be in good condition but the decking is in need of replacement. For the site to be made publicly accessible, significant repairs and upgrades would be required.

### *The Scotch Pond Heritage Cooperative*

The Cooperative was incorporated in 1992, with the purpose of “managing the Scotch Pond as a commercial fishing vessel moorage pond on behalf of its members”. In 1993, the Cooperative entered into a License to Occupy Agreement with the City which rolls over annually in December and is still in place.

The Cooperative has responsibility for the operation and management of Scotch Pond including the leasing of moorage and locker space to its members, site security, maintenance, repair and improvements to the building, floats, dock ramps, net racks, and parking lot.

The Cooperative is represented by a Board of Directors and currently has 21 members; 11 members with vessels requiring moorage, and additional non-active members who do not have moorage but maintain shares in the Cooperative. Membership has been slowly declining and with this, the volunteer help needed to support site upkeep has also declined. Through its membership, the Cooperative generates modest revenue which covers the costs associated with managing the site and undertaking basic maintenance.

Recently, the board has expressed that it is increasingly difficult for the Cooperative to maintain the site and moorage operations due to a decline in memberships. Membership decline is related to the decline in commercial fishing and exacerbated by the silting in of the pond, making it very challenging to enter/exit the pond. In conversations with the City, the Cooperative has expressed

support to explore an alternative future use for Scotch Pond that continues to respect its important heritage.

### *Steveston Historic Sites Building Committee*

On February 10, 2025, Council approved updated Terms of Reference for the Committee. The Committee's purpose is to provide advice and input at key milestones during the planning, program development and restoration/construction process for several projects in Steveston, including Scotch Pond.

As stated in the Committee Terms of Reference, members of the Committee are responsible for advising on the planning, program development and restoration/construction for Scotch Pond while adhering to all approved matters of scope, schedule and budget related to the project, as approved by Council.

Staff will work with the Committee for the duration of this project.

### Options for Management of Scotch Pond

To determine the appropriate operating model for Scotch Pond, it is necessary to understand Council's desired future program for the site. Over the past years, there have been a number of program ideas informally discussed, including but not limited to:

- Interpretive centre of the river, the natural environment, and/or Steveston history;
- Water sport centre offering recreational boating or kayaking;
- Artist-in-residence studio;
- Pleasure craft moorage; and
- Storage for City assets.

Because of its unique heritage value and location within an environmentally sensitive area, any future program would need to fit with heritage and environmental bylaws and regulations. It is recommended that the City:

- a) undertake a feasibility study to better understand what types of programs would fit the site's unique heritage and environmental qualities, meet market demand, and match with a suitable operating model, including a review of the options and costs of dredging the pond; and
- b) update the facility condition assessment with order of magnitude costing to restore the current heritage building and floats.

The total cost for this work is \$150,000.

### Next Steps

Should Council endorse the recommendations, a one-time additional level request will be brought forward for consideration as part of the 2027 budget process to undertake a feasibility study and update the facility condition assessment to assess potential future program uses and

provide estimated operating and capital costs. Staff will work with the Committee to identify program opportunities suited to the site and provide value to the community.

Following the completion of this study, options for the future program use of Scotch Pond will be brought to Council for consideration.

### **Budgetary Implications**

Should Council endorse the recommendations in this report, a one-time additional level of \$150,000 to support a feasibility study assessing potential future program uses and a facility condition assessment will be submitted for consideration in the 2027 budget process.

### **Conclusion**

Council referred staff to consult with the Committee to explore options for the future management of Scotch Pond. To understand the future management of Scotch Pond, it is recommended the City undertake a feasibility study to better understand what types of programs would fit the site's unique heritage and environmental qualities, review options and costs of dredging the pond, and update the facility condition assessment with costing to restore the current heritage building and floats.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Fenwick, Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
Todd Gross, Director, Parks Services

### **Report Contributors**

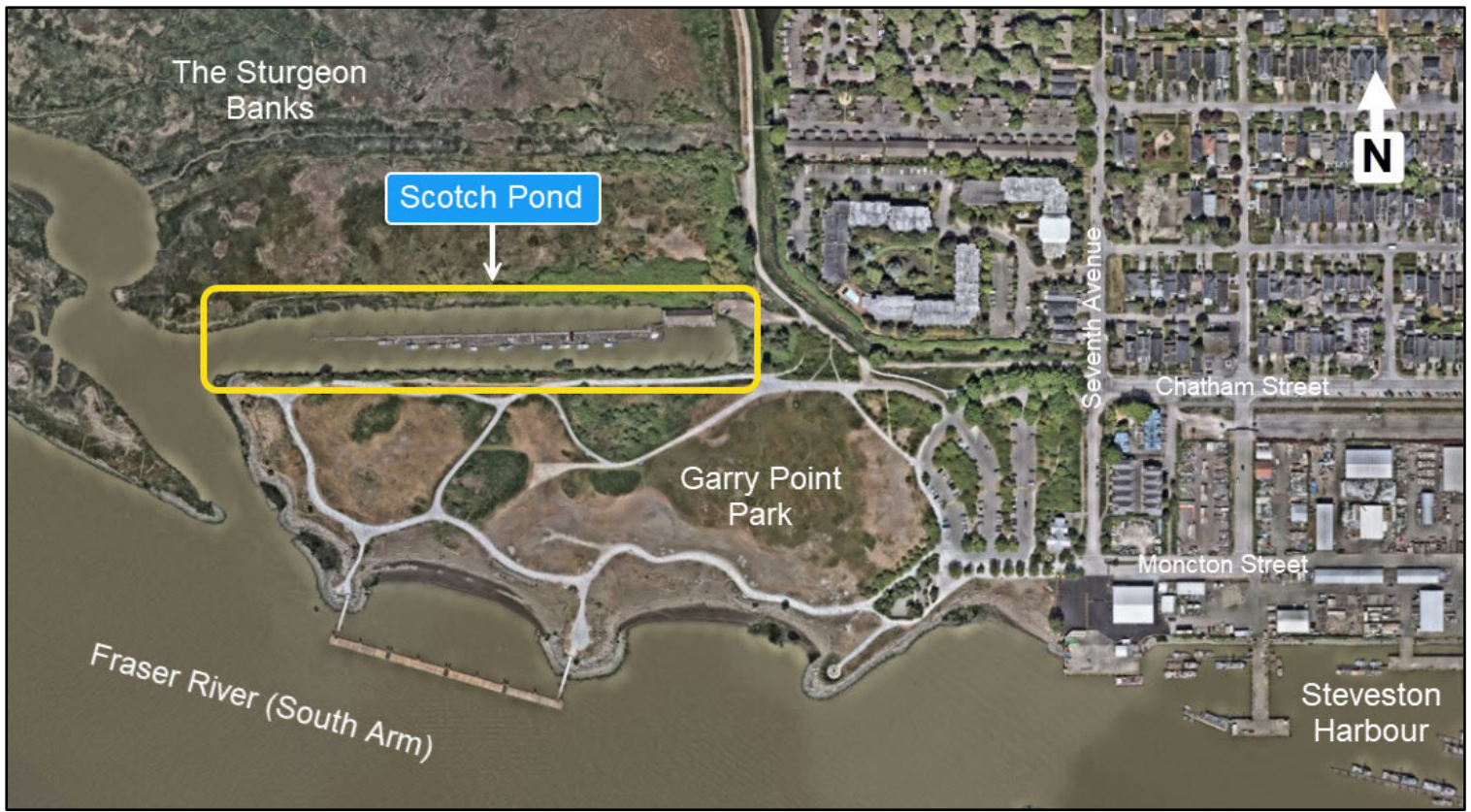
This report was prepared by Rebecca Clarke, Manager, Museum and Heritage Services, and Alex Kurnicki, Manager, Parks Programs, and reviewed by Facility Services and Project Development, Finance, and Climate and Environment.

Endorsed by Serena Lusk, CAO

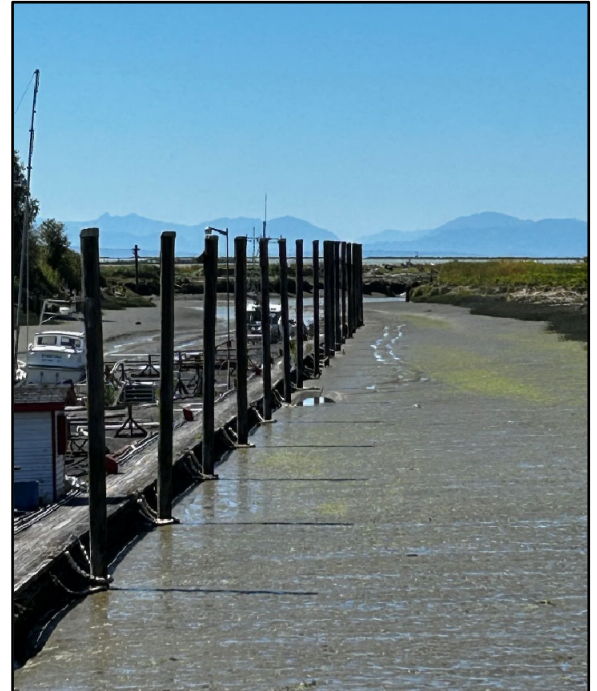
Att.

- 1: Scotch Pond Context Map
- 2: Image of Scotch Pond

Scotch Pond Context Map



Above:  
Scotch Pond Net Shed (2020)



Above:  
Scotch Pond at low tide (July 2025)

Image of Scotch Pond



Scotch Pond (2020)

Approximate extent  
of the Low Tide Line