

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

BOATINGBC

October 26, 2017

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 provincewide. 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.

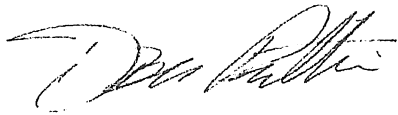
Spencer B. ...

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Prittie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Don Prittie
President
Boating BC Association

Boating BC Association