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MAYOR KENNEDY STEWART

October 31, 2019

Robin Silvester  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Port of Vancouver  
100 The Pointe, 999 Canada Place  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
V6C 3T4

Dear Mr. Silvester,

**RE: Support for the Vancouver Rowing Club and Coal Harbour as a Multiuse Waterway**

I am writing to you on behalf of Vancouver City Council to affirm our support for The Vancouver Rowing Club (VRC) and their desire to protect Coal Harbour as a multiuse waterway. Established in 1899, VRC is the oldest amateur sports organization in Vancouver, and provides important opportunities for residents to be active and enjoy the harbour.

After hearing from a number of speakers at City Council on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Council approved a motion supporting VRC and Coal Harbour as a multiuse waterway. City Council shares the VRC's concerns that the proposed expansion of the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club's (RVYC) marina, and subsequent narrowing of the Coal Harbour waterway, will have a negative impact on its rowing programs by increasing the number of large motorized boats in the waterway and reducing sight lines.

Further, I would like to affirm City Council's support for the Port of Vancouver to create a multiuse strategy for Coal Harbour, which lays out a long-term plan for ensuring the waterway remains equally accessible for both public and private recreational facilities. It is worth noting that the Park Board recently approved their "On Water, Vancouver's Non-motorized Watercraft Recreation Strategy" which was created to advocate for parks and recreation to benefit all people and the environment, including non-motorized water sport activities.



In your consideration of RVYC's application to expand its Coal Harbour Marina into the shared right of way channel currently used by the Vancouver Rowing Club and others, we hope you keep in mind the importance of maintaining the safety and enjoyment of people in non-motorized watercraft who have a long tradition of using the waterway for rowing.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Stewart", with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Kennedy Stewart  
Mayor, City of Vancouver

Cc: Captain Shri Madiwal, Harbour Master, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
([Harbour\\_Master@portvancouver.com](mailto:Harbour_Master@portvancouver.com))  
Ryan Greville, Manager, Navigable Water Protection, Transport Canada  
([ryan.greville@tc.gc.ca](mailto:ryan.greville@tc.gc.ca))

## Appendix A

### Support for the Vancouver Rowing Club and Coal Harbour as a Multiuse Waterway

Submitted by: Councillor Fry

#### WHEREAS:

1. The Vancouver Rowing Club (VRC) was officially established in 1899, as an offshoot of the Vancouver Boating Club (1886) and is the oldest amateur sports organization in the city. With the exception of two World Wars, when all eligible members volunteered to fight for Canada, the history of VRC and rowing in Coal Harbour has been uninterrupted.
2. Since 1905 the VRC floating clubhouse has been located at Lot 14 Park Bridge (described as “in Stanley Park, just past the bridge, below the bear pit.”). Purpose built in 1911, the popular and picturesque Tudor-style floating clubhouse known today was granted heritage ‘A’ status by Vancouver City Council in 1990.
3. VRC promotes active and healthy participation, with a constitutional mandate to promote community building through amateur athletics. Membership is open to the public, with members ranging in age from 13 to 90 years old.
4. VRC provides inclusive opportunities, with a para-athlete program and facilities to enable wheelchair athletes to access the dock and row in Coal Harbour, and popular “Learn to Row” courses to encourage the development of rowing in Vancouver.
5. VRC has maintained a tradition of athletic excellence both locally and internationally, rowers have gone on compete and win medals for Canada's Olympic, Pan American and Commonwealth Games Teams.
6. The VRC location at 450 Stanley Park Drive is made viable by a City of Vancouver lease, with water access to Coal Harbour and the public right of way to Burrard Inlet.
7. In December 2018, the neighbouring Royal Vancouver Yacht Club (RVYC) submitted an application to expand its Coal Harbour Marina into the shared right of way. The permit application is currently under review by the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, doing business as the Port of Vancouver.



8. The shared right of way channel currently used by the Vancouver Rowing Club and others including RVYC, Harbor Cruises, and local marinas is 91 meters at the narrowest point and already congested. The proposed RVYC expansion would result in a reduction of the channel width to only 71 meters. (<https://www.portvancouver.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/content/uploads/2018/12/Project-Permit-Application-Rowing-Technical-Memo-RVYC-Coal-Harbour-Marina-Expansion-1.pdf>)
9. The proposed expansion of RVYC marina and subsequent narrowing of the Coal Harbour waterway may have a substantial impact on its rowing programs by increasing the number of large motorized boats and reducing sight lines.
10. The On Water, Vancouver's Non-motorized Watercraft Recreation Strategy was approved by the Park Board June 2019. The Strategy was created to "provide, preserve and advocate for parks and recreation to benefit all people, communities and the environment"; non-motorized water sport activities include canoeing, kite surfing, rowing, dragon boating, outrigger, windsurfing, kayaking, paddle boarding, and small craft sailing.
11. Section 3 (iv) of The Blueways Program adopted by the City of Vancouver in the 1990s mandates the City develop a water use plan to assist in the resolution of conflicts between water users; and advise on waterfront plans and development proposals.
12. VRC programming is consistent with Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy goal that: "All Vancouverites are engaged in active living and have incomparable access to nature."
13. VRC is a lease holder of the City of Vancouver and provides an important service to the rowing community in Vancouver at its historic location.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Vancouver City Council affirms support for The Vancouver Rowing Club and the history and future of rowing in Vancouver by sending a letter to the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, doing business as the Port of Vancouver.
- B. THAT Council affirms support for the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, doing business as the Port of Vancouver, to create a multi-use strategy for Coal Harbour to the benefit of the entire Harbour and safety of users including consideration for equally accessible public as well as private recreational facilities.

- C. THAT the Mayor on behalf of City Council and in consultation with the Park Board write to the Harbourmaster, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, doing business as the Port of Vancouver, and the Navigation Protection Program of Transport Canada of the Port of Vancouver advising them of A and B above.
- D. THAT the motion entitled "Support for the Vancouver Rowing Club and Coal Harbour as a Multiuse Waterway", approved by Vancouver City Council on September 11, 2019, be sent to the Board of Commissioners of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation for their consideration and adoption.