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# VANCOUVER ROWING CLUB

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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 29, 2020

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### Online Questionnaire Shows 97% Oppose Yacht Club Expansion, As Project Consultation Deadline Nears

Vancouver, B.C. – With the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club’s proposed Coal Harbour Marina Expansion undergoing public consultation until July 7, 2020, the Vancouver Rowing Club (VRC) – a fierce critic of the proposed expansion – is stepping up efforts to oppose the project. The Port of Vancouver will be the decision-maker on the project.

Buoyed by a media campaign across radio, Facebook, and email, the Rowing Club is conducting an informal online questionnaire to gauge support for the Yacht Club’s expansion plans. The questionnaire is available at <https://savestanleyparkwaters.ca/>, as a lead-in to the formal public consultation survey conducted by the Yacht Club as part of their public engagement.

After one week, the preliminary results of the Rowing Club’s questionnaire are:

- 490 clicked on survey
- 257 opted to give their opinion on the project
- 250 (97.3%) oppose the project
- 5 (1.9%) support the project
- 2 (0.8%) don’t know or are undecided

While the results should not be considered to be statistically accurate, the Rowing Club believes they are indicative of overwhelming opposition to the project. Similarly, a petition on Change.org, opposing the project has almost 10,000 signatures.

“We have rowed the waters off of Stanley Park for more than 100 years, but if the Yacht Club expands, it could be all over for us” says Betsy Segal, a VRC Board Member, who added “It has become clear to us that the Yacht Club’s motivations are financial. They are trying to subsidize their members’ costs of owning a yacht by taking over part of a public waterway, and selling it off at the community’s expense.”

The Yacht Club's expansion proposal includes plans to narrow the waterway by approximately one third at its narrowest point – creating a choke point and dangerous new blind spots that will dramatically increase the risk of a boat collision on the water. Over the past year, VRC has been rallying local elected officials, many of whom are now voicing their concerns with the project.

“For over 100 years, the Vancouver Rowing Club has been teaching people of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels a great sport. It provides an important public service to our City,” says Vancouver City Councillor Pete Fry. “I support the Vancouver Rowing Club, and believe their concerns should be taken seriously.”

Other elected officials have rallied to the cause as well:

- [Spencer Chandra-Herbert, MLA for Vancouver West End has written to the Port of Vancouver](#), stating: *I believe the changes would make it much more dangerous for rowers, and other local users of the water, and would disrupt our local maritime tourism, and active sport economy for little benefit... I do not support this proposed expansion.*
- Vancouver City Council has passed a [unanimous motion](#) stating: *...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...*
- [Mayor Kennedy Stewart wrote to the Port of Vancouver](#), stating: *City Council shares the VRC's concerns that the proposed expansion of the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club's (RVYC) marina...will have a negative impact on its rowing programs.*

In addition to the support from elected officials, VRC is stepping up efforts to inform the public of the need to voice opposition to this project.

In a radio ad campaign running now, the Vancouver Rowing Club says:

*The Royal Vancouver Yacht Club wants to expand their Stanley Park docks... taking over almost a third of a public waterway that has been shared by rowers and other recreational users for over a hundred years. This is dangerous and unfair... and here in Vancouver, we all need what little public space we have left.*

Vancouver Rowing Club has been coordinating opposition to the Yacht Club's expansion plans for several years. Almost 10,000 people [have signed a Change.org petition opposing the project](#). Last summer, VRC released a video featuring two Canadian Olympic Gold Medal-winning rowers, who both stated that the Yacht Club's proposal would mean the end of rowing at Stanley Park. To view the video, and for more information on VRC's opposition to the Yacht Club's expansion plans, please visit: <https://savestanleyparkwaters.ca/>.

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## SUPPORTING INFORMATION AND LINKS

- VRC Radio Ad: <https://app.box.com/s/nzjxz3kw77vozgzo6lxyz5ooipozbd2d>
- VRC's Save Stanley Park Waters Campaign: <https://savestanleyparkwaters.ca/>
- VRC Campaign Video: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=external&v=501884993897454>

- Yacht Club Project Website:  
[https://www.royalvan.com/default.aspx?p=.NET\\_ArticleView&tview=0&plugid=1099322&ssid=334307&qfilter=RSC22012&itemID=314558](https://www.royalvan.com/default.aspx?p=.NET_ArticleView&tview=0&plugid=1099322&ssid=334307&qfilter=RSC22012&itemID=314558)
- Spencer Chandra-Herbert Letter: <https://savestanleyparkwaters.ca/wp-content/uploads/Spencer-Chandra-Herbert.jpg>
- Mayor Kennedy Stewart Letter: <https://savestanleyparkwaters.ca/wp-content/uploads/Kennedy-Stewart-Letter-of-Support.pdf>
- Vancouver City Council Motion: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20190911/documents/motionb4.pdf>
- Change.org Petition: <https://www.change.org/p/port-of-vancouver-keep-stanley-park-s-waters-public>