

Memorandum

Date: March 9, 2021

Submitted by: Community Services Department – Recreation Services Division

Subject: Delegation Response – IRC Rowing Club

On February 23, 2021, Council received a delegation from the Inlet Rowing Club (IRC) (**Attachment 1**) requesting Council support for their bid to make Old Mill Boathouse the location for the BC NextGen Performance Centre for rowing. Staff were directed to report back in time to meet the end of March 2021 bid deadline. This memo provides information on the potential impacts of hosting the BC NextGen Performance Centre at the Old Mill Boathouse.

1. Storage and Dock Space Requirements

Storage

- There will be a need to store six to eight boats for the NextGen rowers. With COVID-19 restrictions limiting the number of rowers per boat, more singles boats are needed. Once restrictions are lifted, athletes will be able to row together in the doubles or quad boats, reducing the need for storage of singles boats.
- Short-term needs for additional boat storage space will require negotiation between the Inlet Rowing Club and the Old Mill Boathouse Society (OMBH Society) to address the additional capacity within existing space.
- The IRC request for additional storage in a container across the street from and to the west of the current Old Mill Boathouse parking lot cannot be accommodated.
- All costs associated with additional storage would be the responsibility of the IRC or Rowing BC, with approval required from the OMBH Society.

Docks

- IRC has indicated that the current dock and signage would work for the additional rowers for the interim; however, consideration should be given to future expansion of the white dock and/or addition of another dock. This consideration must include the OMBH Society. There may be potential grant opportunities for shared costs, similar to the partnership with the current white dock.

2. Space Requirements in the Inlet

- The rowers will work to schedule practices at less busy times to minimize congestion with other boaters. Rowing practices are often conducted early in the morning, reducing conflict with other users. Most boating congestion occurs near the boat ramp and docks.
- The Port Authority will be advised of the NextGen Performance Centre if the Bid is successful. There will be no need for new buoys or lane markers in the Inlet. Proposed course maps are included as **Attachment 2**.

3. Potential Noise or Nuisance Issues

- Despite schedule adjustments to accommodate the NextGen rowing schedule, which has yet to be developed, there may be friction with recreational users during boat launch and return to the dock.

- Use of megaphones by rowing coaches has created noise issues in the past, but IRC coaches stopped using megaphones during early morning sessions.

4. Ecological Impacts

- IRC has advised that there is little noise from the rowing shells and coach boats during training sessions. All rowing boats are non-motorized, with the exception of the 15hp coach boats. It is expected that there will be one to two coach boats, with a maximum of six to eight rowing shells, in the water for each training session. Singles boats must be used during the current COVID-19 restrictions. Once permitted, use of doubles and quad boats will reduce the number of boats in the water for each training session.
- Important Bird Area (IBA) Designation: Port Moody Arm falls within the English Bay, Howe Sound, and Burrard Inlet IBA. The IBA designation is based on a scientific review of species population, abundance, and distribution data, and recognizes areas of importance for Canada's bird populations. The English Bay, Howe Sound, and Burrard Inlet IBA was designated for Western Grebe, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Surf Scoter at the global level; and Great Blue Heron at the national level. Disturbance by recreational and commercial boats has been identified as a threat to the IBA, as repeated disturbance may impact behaviour and reduce a bird's ability to build up adequate energy stores to complete their migration. Migratory species congregate in Port Moody Arm from fall to spring, times during which the NextGen Performance program would be operating. An increase in the number of boats and activity will be an additional impact upon wildlife and will likely have a cumulative effect.

5. Requests of the City of Port Moody

- The City would need to be involved in the negotiations with OMBH Society and Rowing BC to develop a Licence of Occupation agreement for the NextGen Performance Centre.
- Long term, if additional storage space cannot be accommodated on the existing Old Mill Boathouse site, IRC may request storage space on City property near the water.

The Inlet Rowing Club is scheduled to meet with the Old Mill Boathouse Society and provide a decision by the end of March. Given the timing of this decision, Council could provide a letter of support contingent on the approval of the Old Mill Boathouse Society.

Should Council wish to support the IRC request for support, staff recommend the following resolution:

THAT a letter of support be provided for the Inlet Rowing Club's bid to host the BC NextGen Performance Centre, contingent upon endorsement of the bid by the Old Mill Boathouse Society, as recommended in the memo dated March 9, 2021 from the Community Services Department – Recreation Services Division regarding Delegation Response – IRC Rowing Club.

Attachment(s)

1. Delegation Request – IRC Rowing Club.
2. IRC Course Maps.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Delegation Response - IRC Rowing Club.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - Delegation Request - IRC Rowing Club.pdf - Attachment 2 - IRC Course Maps.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Mar 15, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ron Higo, General Manager of Community Services - Mar 11, 2021 - 9:30 AM

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Mar 11, 2021 - 9:46 AM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Mar 11, 2021 - 1:49 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Mar 11, 2021 - 3:49 PM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Mar 15, 2021 - 11:15 AM