



# CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

## NOTICE OF MOTION

From: Councillor Ken Armour

Introduced: Council Meeting – December 16, 2019

Subject: **Victoria Waterways Loop**

**WHEREAS:** The Victoria Waterways Loop (the Loop) is a 17k paddling route that circles Esquimalt (via Victoria Harbour, Gorge Waterway, Esquimalt Harbour and Esquimalt oceanfront) and is endorsed by Tourism Victoria (see attached letter) because it promotes regional tourism, local businesses and environmental stewardship;

**AND WHEREAS:** Loop paddlers face a significant navigational challenge with the tidal rapids at the Gorge Tillicum Narrows (under the Tillicum bridge), which is compounded by the lack of a safety portage beach east of the Narrows and the lack a ramp/pathway under Tillicum bridge that connects to Esquimalt Gorge Park;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That Township staff investigate options to achieve this capital project (including the possibility of using the McLouglin Amenity Funds) and bring back a report on options, costs (including maintenance costs) and timelines in addition to options to amend the parks master plan.

### BACKGROUND:

Esquimalt is the Centre of the Loop



Other Municipal Support

The Town of View Royal has invested about \$185,000 investment in completing the Portage Trail, constructing the Shoreline access ramp, and providing wayfinding signage between the Portage Inlet and the Esquimalt Harbour.

The City of Victoria recently supported a motion to direct staff to investigate and bring back a report on improved beach access at Banfield and Arbutus Parks, as well as an improved 'paddle friendly' dock at Banfield Park.

Proposed Capital Project (portage beach and ramp)

- Beach is less intrusive, less maintenance than a dock
- Beach makes it easier for paddlers to come ashore
- Beach material (sand, gravel) is ideal as a 'forage fish' spawning habitat - 'forage fish' are essential to our aquatic ecosystem, providing food for salmon and migratory birds
- Winter for fish / Summer for paddlers

Future Actions (if capital project moves toward approval)

- Collaborate with First Nations and with stakeholders
- Negotiate right-of-way (ROW) with landowner (Gorge Pointe Condos)



September 1, 2016

**RE: Proposed Victoria Waterways Loop**

Tourism Victoria is happy to lend its support to the proposed Victoria Waterways Loop.

This inland and open-water passage winds its way through spectacular scenery. By providing numerous points of access, the Waterways Loop will encourage people to engage with many of our region's historic locations and commercial attractions.

An analysis of markets with potential travellers to Greater Victoria shows that 16 per cent cite opportunities for kayaking or canoeing as a travel motivator.

The Victoria Waterways Loop fits with our strategy of supporting opportunities for visitors to disperse throughout Greater Victoria. This is our future. We need customers to discover the abundance of experiences available as they deeply engage with our community.

The loop creates a new reason for people to experience a lesser travelled side of our destination, leading to more customers for retailers, restaurants and cafes along the loop, and another reason for visitors to extend their stay at accommodation properties.

The Waterways Loop would be a "soft adventure," accessible to a wide range of abilities, and allow more people the chance to see beautiful scenery from the water — always a different perspective than on land.

Tourism Victoria has agreed to support the development of the Victoria Waterways Loop by helping create a professional marketing brief, and by providing a small but symbolic financial contribution.

Today's traveller looks to experience a wide variety of activities while on vacation. A kayaking and canoeing adventure would be a great addition to the experiences currently available.

Well executed, the Victoria Waterways Loop will offer an authentic, meaningful experience that engages people with the environment around them.

Sincerely,



Paul Nursey,  
President and CEO, Tourism Victoria