



November 9, 2017

**TO:** Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** KitsFest 2018 - Licensed Bathtub Race Activity Area - Special Event

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## RECOMMENDATION

- A. **THAT** the Vancouver Park Board approve a request from the Canada One Foundation, organizers of the annual KitsFest event, for a new all ages bathtub race activity area with a capacity of 1,200 guests at the north end of Kitsilano Beach on Saturday, August 11, 2018, from 1:00pm to 8:00pm, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board.
- B. **FURTHER THAT** the Board approve an application from the Canada One Foundation for a Special Event Permit from the BC Liquor Control & Licensing Branch to serve alcohol at the aforementioned location and date, with a maximum combined capacity of 1,200 guests.

## BOARD AUTHORITY

Park Board approval is required for special events not included in the annual Calendar of Major Special Events and/or that are in variance with one or more Park Board by-laws.

## BACKGROUND

In [2009, the Park Board approved the inaugural KitsFest event](#), a two-day sports and healthy living community festival featuring basketball, volleyball, and tennis. The event was subsequently [expanded to three days in 2010](#), and over the past seven years, festival participation, spectators, and activities have grown incrementally. New activities include child and family zones, sunset yoga, touch football, boot camp, spin bikes, water polo, fun run, and Zumba. The objective of the Canada One Foundation, organizers of KitsFest, is to generate funds to support a variety of initiatives in the Kitsilano community, including upgrades to the basketball and tennis courts at Kitsilano Beach Park. The event captures many positive aspects of community building and successfully engages participants of all ages and genders in outdoor sports activities.

In 2015, the Vancouver Park Board [approved an increase in the size of the festival's licensed areas](#) to 800 guests across three separate licensed locations. In 2017, the festival's licensed activities were consolidated into two locations (the 800 guest capacity remained unchanged). There have been no alcohol-related issues reported at KitsFest in recent years.

## DISCUSSION

For 2018, the organizers of KitsFest, in conjunction with the Loyal Nanaimo Bathtub Society and the Pitblado Group, are proposing to incorporate a bathtub race activity into the festival

programming. Unlike the historic bathtub races from 1967 to 1996 that featured a race across the Straight of Georgia from Nanaimo to Vancouver, the proposed programming in 2018 would feature a bathtub racing circuit in English Bay at the north end of Kitsilano Beach. Preliminary plans call for programming to include several race heats and category finals between 4:00pm and 6:00pm on August 11, 2018. All water-related permits and approvals from the applicable jurisdictions/authorities would be obtained by the Loyal Nanaimo Bathtub Society.

The organizer for the bathtub race program will be Vancouver-based Pitblado Group, which is led by Jamie Pitblado. Mr. Pitblado has over 25 years of experience in brand management and engagement, event marketing and communications, sponsorship, promotions, government and stakeholder relations, and fundraising. He has provided oversight, advice, and leadership on major local and national events and programs for both the profit and not-for-profit sectors, and is recognized for his creative, solutions oriented thinking, strong leadership skills, and ability to forge strategic partnerships.

In order to support KitsFest's bathtub race program, the event organizers are seeking exclusive use of an area at the north end of Kitsilano Beach (see Appendix A). This area would allow spectators to meet the racers, watch the racers set up their bathtubs, and engage in photo opportunities. The area would have a combined capacity of 1,200 guests and be licensed with bars, tables, and lounge area. The sale of alcoholic beverages would be permitted between 1:00pm and 8:00pm, with last call at 7:30pm.

The proposal has been reviewed and approved by the VPD, VF&RS, and BC Liquor Control & Licensing Branch. Supervisory staff from the Park Board's Park Operations and Outdoor Pools & Beach teams have also signed off on the initiative. Subject to Park Board approval, the event organizer would be responsible for developing comprehensive event plans for the activation.

After careful review, staff believe that the abovementioned request from the organizers of KitsFest can be executed successfully, and will continue to collaborate with the organizers to ensure the event is delivered in accordance with all permit conditions.

## **SUMMARY**

KitsFest is a recurring and very popular event that has grown incrementally in recent years. It engages one of Vancouver's most vibrant communities and promotes participation in activities that contribute to overall health and wellness. It has proven to be a very well-organized event, and the organizers have been very responsive to Park Board feedback and direction. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the request from the organizer as outlined above.

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Preliminary Site Map - KitsFest 2018 - Licensed Bathtub Race Activity Area

