



Victoria to Host the Queen's Baton Relay on July 31

Date: Thursday, July 27, 2017

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — On Monday, July 31, Victoria will welcome and participate in the 2018 Queen's Baton Relay. From July 27 to August 1, 2017 the Queen's Baton will be in Canada visiting the four Canadian cities to host a Commonwealth Games (Hamilton 1930, Vancouver 1954, Edmonton 1978 and Victoria 1994). Launched on March 13, 2017 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth, the Queen's Baton will make a 388-day journey, covering 230,000 kilometres through 70 Commonwealth nations and territories before arriving in Gold Coast Australia for the XXI Commonwealth Games in April 2018.

The City of Victoria and PISE (Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence) have partnered to host the Queen's Baton Relay and invite the community to come out on Monday during the lunch hour to cheer on the participants, who will include Mayor Lisa Helps, marathon runner Bruce Deacon, para-runner and para-soccer player Liam Stanley, Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Multiculturalism and international field hockey player Ravi Kahlon, and Commonwealth Games swimmer and triathlete Suzanne Weckend.

The Queen's Baton Relay will begin at approximately 12:20 p.m. outside Victoria City Hall and will travel along Pandora Avenue, Vancouver Street and Rockland Avenue, finishing in front of Government House. At each Baton hand-off point, the new participant will be joined by those previous, with all five Relay participants arriving in front of Government House at approximately 12:50 p.m., where the Baton will be presented to The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

Before the Relay, the media is invited to attend the official Welcome Ceremony from noon – 12:20 p.m. at the Victoria City Hall Antechamber. Mayor Lisa Helps will be joined by Hugh MacDonald Executive Director of SportHost Victoria and Greg Maychak, Chair of Baton Relay Canada, Commonwealth Games Canada, who will officially present the Baton to the Mayor. There may be a brief opportunity for invited guests to have their photo taken with the Baton before the Queen's Baton Relay begins.

Queen's Baton Relay Start/Photo Opportunity – The Relay will begin outside the Pandora Avenue entrance of Victoria City Hall, with Mayor Helps transporting the Baton affixed to her bicycle along the Pandora Avenue two-way bike lane to Vancouver Street.

Relay Location #2/Photo Opportunity – At the southwest corner of Pandora Avenue and Vancouver Street, Mayor Helps will hand off the Queen's Baton to Bruce Deacon.

Relay Location #3/Photo Opportunity – Bruce Deacon will run south along Vancouver Street. At the northwest corner of Vancouver and View Streets, Bruce Deacon will hand off the Queen's Baton to Liam Stanley outside Frontrunners.

Relay Location #4/Photo Opportunity – Liam Stanley will run along Vancouver Street to Rockland Avenue. At the southwest corner of Vancouver Street and Rockland Avenue, Liam Stanley will hand off the Queen's Baton to Ravi Kahlon.

Relay Location #5/Photo Opportunity – Ravi Kahlon will run along Rockland Avenue to Moss Street. At the southwest corner of Rockland Avenue and Moss Street, Ravi Kahlon will hand off the Queen's Baton to Suzanne Weckend.

Relay Finish/Photo Opportunity – Suzanne Weckend will continue to run along Rockland Avenue, arriving in front of Government House. The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia will formally greet the Queen's Baton Relay participants and accept the Baton. The public is welcome to attend the hand-off of the Baton to Her Honour outside Government House.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

Following the Relay, the media is invited to attend the private (by invitation only) Welcome Ceremony at the Government House Bandshell, where Her Honour will be joined by Mayor Lisa Helps, Robert Bettauer, CEO of PISE (Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence), the Relay participants, and 150 day camp children five to eight years of age, and their caregivers. Brief speeches will ensue with Her Honour handing the Queen's Baton to Robert Bettauer, who will invite the children for a group photo in front of the Bandshell and to participate in a range of interactive sport stations and physical literacy activities courtesy of PISE.

The Queen's Baton Relay is a tradition that connects all nations and territories in the Commonwealth and calls upon athletes to come together in peaceful and friendly competition. The XXI Commonwealth Games will be held in Gold Coast Australia from April 4 -15, 2018. The Queen's message that was placed inside the Baton will be read aloud at the Opening Ceremony. For more information: www.gc2018.com/qbr.

ATTACHMENTS: **Backgrounder – 2018 Queen's Baton Relay / Victoria Relay Athlete Bios**
 Queen's Baton Photo

— 30 —

For More Information:

Mayor Lisa Helps
Cellular: 250.661.2708

Robert Bettauer
CEO
PISE (Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence)
Office: 250.220.2512
Cellular: 250.580.3201

Hugh MacDonald
Executive Director
SportHost Victoria
Office: 250.744.5528
Cellular: 250.213.1465

Rachel Rilkoff
Communications and Events Officer
Government House
250.356.9499