



Waterfront Park to Honour Former Victoria Mayor Peter Pollen

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — This month the City will dedicate an expanded waterfront park honouring former Mayor of Victoria Peter Pollen. This park will embody Pollen's vision that the harbour should be accessible for all residents.

The area currently known as Laurel Point Park – now a three-acre park space expanded with land recently transferred from the federal government – will become Peter Pollen Waterfront Park.

"A lot of the way Victoria looks and feels today can be attributed to the vision and leadership of Peter Pollen," said Mayor Lisa Helps. "I had an opportunity to meet Peter shortly after being elected and was moved by the passion and dedication he still had for public access to the harbour and the importance of public spaces. It's fitting that we name this waterfront park in his honour."

After serving one term on Council, Pollen became Mayor of Victoria serving two terms between 1971-1975. He returned as Mayor to serve another two terms from 1981-1985, after which he retired from municipal politics.

Pollen championed the preservation of the city's unique beauty and was dedicated to enhancing its livability. One of his proudest accomplishments was the beautification of the Inner Harbour, creating an accessible public space for all to enjoy.

"My husband Peter made Victoria his home for over 50 years," said MaryAnn Pollen. "He referred to the Inner Harbour as the jewel of Victoria and believed strongly in public access to this beautiful waterfront. Our family is deeply honoured by this dedication in his memory."

In line with Pollen's vision for Victoria's harbour, during his tenure the Lower Causeway was constructed and, much to the attention of cities all across North America, Pollen also banned billboards from the City of Victoria.

Laurel Point Park was originally established by Pollen and Council in 1975. After a paint company closed and moved from the location, Council ensured a wide strip of waterfront property was set aside to be used as a public park. Now the waterfront park will bear Pollen's name and continue his desire for Victorians to enjoy the vistas and views of their harbour.

This area also has important cultural significance to the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. The City's reconciliation work aims to make the culture, history, and modern reality of local Indigenous Peoples present and apparent throughout the city and valued in our residents' everyday lives. In this spirit, the City has been working with Lekwungen speakers to learn more about the land and the appropriate name for the park area. At the park dedication ceremony the Lekwungen name for the land will also be incorporated as part of the park signage.

Mayor Pollen passed away in 2017. The City of Victoria will hold a park dedication ceremony on October 26 to officially name the new park with Pollen's family.

Public consultation on the design of the new park will start in late 2019. Following Council approval of the concept design, the detailed design and park construction is anticipated to begin in 2020.

Stay informed and receive project updates at engage.victoria.ca

Background

- Between fall 2018 and summer 2019 Transport Canada remediated the soil from the Laurel Point Park site. The Laurel Point Park Remediation Project was a partnership project between Transport Canada and the City of Victoria.
- Restoration work of the seawall and enhancements to the lower pathway is still underway. The park will re-open to the public once this work is complete in the coming months.

Backgrounder attached:

- Photo of Victoria Mayor Peter Pollen, Photo Credit: City of Victoria Archives Image M07215

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