

REPORT

Planning and Development

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: June 23, 2025

From: Jackie Teed,
Director, Planning and Development
File: #2705426

Item #: 2025-179

Subject: **Construction Noise Bylaw Exemption Request: 1031 Quebec Street, New Westminister – Metro Vancouver Annacis Water Supply Tunnel, Fraser River Crossing**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT an exemption be granted to Metro Vancouver's contractor, Traylor Aecon General Partnership (TAGP), from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992, for a period of four consecutive weeks between Wednesday, July 2, 2025, and Saturday, November 1, 2025 on week days from 8:00 PM to 3:00 AM and Saturdays from 6:00 PM to 12:00 AM, excluding Sundays and Statutory Holidays, to remove the Tunnel Boring Machine as part of the Annacis Water Supply Tunnel, Fraser River Crossing.

PURPOSE

To request an exemption be granted from the Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992 to Metro Vancouver's contractor Traylor Aecon General Partnership ("the contractor") to remove the Tunnel Boring Machine in order to complete the installation of new water main, resulting in increased reliability of the clean water supply to New Westminister and other municipalities in the Lower Mainland.

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY

On January 13, 2025, Council passed the following resolution:

THAT an exemption be granted to Metro Vancouver contractor Traylor Aecon General Partnership (TAGP) from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992, from Friday January 31, 2025 to Saturday May 10, 2025 on week days from 8:00

PM to 3:00 AM and Saturdays from 6:00 PM to 12:00 AM, excluding Sundays and Statutory Holidays, to construct the Annacis Water Supply Tunnel, Fraser River Crossing (the "Project").

The contractor advises that they were unable to complete the Tunnel Boring Machine ("the machine") removal within the Council approved exemption period due to poor ground conditions, which required stabilizing and maintenance of the tunnel to enable continuance of the removal. The contractor is now prepared to resume the removal, however, once the work resumes, it is imperative that the work continue in an expedited manner without extended interruption to maintain structural safety of the tunnel, prevent costly damage, and avoiding setbacks that could extend the project by months, hence the need to perform work outside of permitted hours.

ANALYSIS

The site consists of two 60-metre vertical shafts located on the north and south sides of the Fraser River, connected by a 2.4-kilometre tunnel. At the surface, valve chambers have been constructed at the top of each shaft to connect the project to existing infrastructure. The north site, located at 1031 Quebec Street, has served as the receiving shaft for the machine, which has now successfully arrived and is approximately 120 meters away from connecting into the shaft.

The machine is large and heavy and the removal process is a complex and risky operation requiring careful and precise handling in confined underground spaces. The machine supports the tunnel structure during excavation, and delays in removal can increase the risk of water ingress and flooding, which could severely damage equipment and the tunnel lining. The longer the removal process takes, the greater the risk to both the equipment and the tunnel structure, potentially leading to significant delays to the overall project timeline. Continuous work enabling timely removal is critical to maintaining structural safety, preventing costly damage, and avoiding setbacks that could extend the project by months. A noise exemption is essential to allow the work to proceed with as minimal interruptions as possible, ensuring the safe and timely completion of this critical phase.

The removal of the machine is expected to generate minimal surface-level noise impacts for nearby residents. The process will begin with the machine breaking through the north retrieval shaft's (concrete slurry wall), an activity that will occur approximately 50-60 meters below ground. While this may involve some temporary vibration or muffled noise, it will be conducted during permitted construction hours. Once the connection between the tunnel and shaft is secured and tunnel integrity is confirmed, the machine will be dismantled underground and removed in sections. A crane positioned at the surface will be used to lift these components out of the shaft. This crane operation, along with the use of generators to support lighting and power tools, will be the primary sources of above-ground noise during the retrieval. These activities

are not expected to generate significant or continuous noise levels. All drilling, cutting, or higher-impact mechanical work that could contribute to noticeable noise will be limited to permitted hours.

As stated above, once started, the work needs to be continuous to mitigate the potential of tunnel flooding which could cause damage to equipment and integrity of the tunnel. While the work is estimated to take approximately four consecutive weeks, a five month period from Wednesday July 2, 2025 to Saturday November 1, 2025 is requested. Uncertainty with crew availability and scheduling conflicts make it difficult to determine an exact start date and may delay mobilization. Unforeseen conditions or technical issues could further impact timelines and require immediate adjustments. The flexible five-month window is requested to allow for these potential setbacks.

DISCUSSION

No significant noise impacts are anticipated, as surface-level construction activities will be limited to the use of a crane and generators. Any drilling that may be required will be strictly confined to permitted construction hours.

The contractor has committed to implementing the following noise mitigation measures:

- Ensuring all equipment is in good operating order.
- Operating equipment at minimum engine speeds consistent with effective operation.
- Educating and supervising construction personnel to ensure potential noises are minimized.
- Turning off equipment when not in use.
- Having a night time contact person available to respond to any calls from affected residents.
- Delivering notice to affected residents in advance to explain the need to conduct the work at night and to provide contact phone numbers.

If this extension is granted, Metro Vancouver will send notification to neighbouring residents. The area map of where the notifications will be sent is in Appendix A. A copy of the Notification to Residents that will be hand-delivered is attached Appendix B.

Transportation Impact

All work will occur on site and underground and as such there are no anticipated impacts to traffic, pedestrians, or cyclists.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial impact to the City is anticipated by granting the exemption. If the exemption is not granted, the project will likely be delayed which may result in financial impacts for the applicant.

OPTIONS

There are two options to consider:

1. That an exemption be granted to Metro Vancouver's contractor, Traylor Aecon General Partnership (TAGP), from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992, for a period of four consecutive weeks between Wednesday, July 2, 2025, and Saturday, November 1, 2025 on week days from 8:00 PM to 3:00 AM and Saturdays from 6:00 PM to 12:00 AM, excluding Sundays and Statutory Holidays, to remove the Tunnel Boring Machine as part of the Annacis Water Supply Tunnel, Fraser River Crossing.
2. That Council provide staff with alternative direction.

Staff recommend Option 1.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Map of Construction Area and Notification Area

Appendix B: Copy of Sample of Notification to Neighbourhood

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:

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This report reviewed by:

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