

Attention : Port Modernization Review

Thank you for the opportunity to make some recommendations on how to better manage Canadian Ports. I will be specific in my critique and recommendations based on my knowledge for The Port of Vancouver (VFPA) as follows:

ACCOUNTABILITY

The current setup is that The Port of Vancouver (VFPA) has an appointed Board of Directors from insider business interests. There is little or no input from local government, provincial government, environmentalists and First Nations. The entire process is undemocratic and reeks of cronyism. Port management also puts in their nominees for the Board of Directors. This must be changed to an independent Board of Directors made up from municipal government, provincial government, environmentalists, professionals and First Nations. Professionals should be independent marine shipping or port engineering consultants and should represent one third of the total board members.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The practice of the Port of Vancouver doing its own environmental assessment and issuing permits to proceed with projects must be stopped. The Port also takes no responsibility for environmental consequences outside the port footprint including accidents and transport of dangerous goods. This is totally unacceptable and again the Port needs to be accountable on this entire subject.

MUNICIPAL TAXES

The Port of Vancouver (VFPA) is exempt from paying municipal taxes which makes them " Corporate Welfare Bums " as far as taxpayers are concerned. First Nations groups are granted tax free concessions under constitutional law. Why should the Port have the same status ? Municipalities need to receive taxes to help pay for infrastructure upgrades often to suit port expansion and modernization projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE COST SHARING

The Port offers no solution to infrastructure deficiencies associated with their transportation requirements, upgrading highways, bridges and tunnels. In Delta we all too often have gridlock problems on Highway # 17, 17A and the George Massey Tunnel. Much of the congestion stems from the huge volume of commercial trucks on the road to service Deltaport. It is somewhat laughable that the Port of Vancouver now wants to do a major expansion that will double the volume of transport trucks. It would seem that the Port expects the public to pay for infrastructure upgrades to suit their needs too ? Any future expansion of port terminals should include transportation & infrastructure cost sharing by the Port.

LAND USE ISSUES

The Port should not be exempt from provincial or municipal bylaws concerning land use. Agricultural Land Reserve(ALR) land in B.C. is precious and the Port should not have the ability to be exempt from these type of land use laws.

TRANSPORT CANADA'S ROLL

Transport Canada needs to take a more active role in overseeing the management of Canadian Port Authorities. The way things are run now Transport Canada is not willing to get involved with the decision making power of The Port of Vancouver (VFPA). We need to have strong leadership at Transport Canada and be prepared to veto project plans and expansion proposals by Canadian Ports that do not make good business sense for the country. If you need to amend the Canadian Marine Act by all means do so. The way things are now we see the role of The Port of Vancouver (VFPA) as empire builders that act more like a real-estate company than simply fulfilling their mandate to suit Canada's needs on marine import/export business.

Thank you again for this opportunity to make some observations and propose changes to the mandate for Canadian federal ports.

Regards

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Delta, BC CANADA