Concern Regarding Public Waterfront Access at Canton Waterfront Park

I am writing as a Canton resident regarding the closure of Canton Waterfront Park for the CHICNIC event on Sunday, August 30.

I fully understand and support the City's use of our parks for festivals, cultural events, and private permitted activities. Events are a normal and welcome part of living near Canton Waterfront Park.

My concern is the extent of today's closure.

The fencing and access restrictions effectively created a barrier to the waterfront for residents and other members of the public who were simply trying to walk along or access the waterfront. This was noticeably different from many other large events held at Canton Waterfront Park, where event activities and public use of the surrounding waterfront have been able to coexist.

For those of us who live in the neighborhood, the waterfront and promenade are not simply an event venue. They are part of our everyday pedestrian and recreational environment.

I would appreciate clarification on whether the permit for this event specifically authorized closure of the waterfront promenade and other public-access areas, and whether Recreation & Parks reviews event site plans to determine whether reasonable public pedestrian access can be maintained around a ticketed event.

I would also appreciate a copy of the approved site plan showing the permitted fencing and access restrictions for this event, or information on how I may obtain it. This would help clarify whether the extent of the waterfront closure experienced by residents today was part of the City's approved event configuration.

I am not suggesting that the City stop permitting events at Canton Waterfront Park. Rather, I hope the City will consider requiring future event layouts and fencing plans to preserve a reasonable public route to and along the waterfront whenever possible.

Today's configuration created a significant and unnecessary inconvenience for people who live in and use the surrounding community, particularly because other events at this location have demonstrated that public access and a successful event do not necessarily have to be mutually exclusive.

Thank you for considering this concern. I would appreciate a response explaining the City's policy regarding public waterfront access during permitted events at Canton Waterfront Park.

Sincerely,

Princess Hester
A Canton Resident