

File No. 04-1000-20-2016-487

February 22, 2017

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: **Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")**

I am responding to your request of December 16, 2016 for:

The contract, project plans, schedules, budgets, performance measures, terms of reference and/or mandate, key deliverables (such as reports, reviews, text, video) and invoices related to the contract for goods and services performed in 2016 with Digital Handloom as referenced in the Open Data Catalogue under consultants in the Mayor's Discretionary Budget and Expenses. I am seeking records for January 1, 2016 to December 16, 2016.

All responsive records are attached.

Under section 52 of the Act you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your request. The Act allows you 30 business days from the date you receive this notice to request a review by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number assigned to your request (#04-1000-20-2016-487); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request for information sent to the City of Vancouver; and 4) detailed reasons or grounds on which you are seeking the review.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Freedom of Information Office at foi@vancouver.ca if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Van Fraassen', written in a cursive style.

Barbara J. Van Fraassen, BA
Director, Access to Information
City Clerk's Department, City of Vancouver

Encl.

:kt

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

428 - 4550 Fraser Street, Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8 // 604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandloom.com

Naveen Girn
Consultant
Digital Handloom
428 - 4550 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8
604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandlom.com

Invoice No. 082
Date: April 29, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract April 2016	6000.00	300.00	6300.00
TOTAL DUE			6300.00

Due Upon Receipt

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.



ni? ct xaʔəmətəl, tə ʔnimət, tə təməxʷ ʔi? tə kʷaʔkʷə 1 *

We watch over the land and sea and in turn they watch over us.

April 7, 2016

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL


Mr. Naveen Girn
Digital Handloom
428 - 4550 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8
c/o naveen@digitalhandloom.com

Dear Naveen,

Re: Consulting Agreement with Office of the Mayor, City of Vancouver

This will confirm our agreement that you will provide the services described in the schedule to this letter (the "Services") to the City of Vancouver from April 1, 2016 - April 1, 2017 (the "Term") on the following terms and conditions:

- The City will pay to you the amount of \$48,000 (forty-eight thousand dollars) exclusive of taxes. This is the maximum amount that the City is obliged to pay in respect of performance of the Services unless this letter agreement is amended in writing and signed by both you and the undersigned.
- You will provide the Services as an independent contractor and not as an employee of the City. You will not be entitled to any employment benefits of any kind, and you will be solely responsible for remittance of Canada Pension premiums, Employment Insurance premiums, income tax and any other taxes, based on the total remuneration payable to you under this letter agreement.
- You will submit your invoices on a monthly basis. You will obtain the pre-approval of the undersigned for any disbursements to be reimbursed to you and you will provide original invoices for all disbursements claimed.
- You acknowledge by signing this letter that, in performing the Services, you may acquire information about certain matters which are confidential and that such information is the exclusive property of the City and you agree not to disclose same to any third party either during or after the Term.



Naveen Girn
(Initial Page)



- All drawings, audio-visual materials, information, plans, models, designs, specifications, reports and other documents or products produced, received or acquired by you as a result of the provision of the Services (the “Material”) will be the sole property of the City and the City will have the right to use all of the Material for its benefit in any way it sees fit, subject to third party owned copyright. You will deliver the Material to the City forthwith following the expiry of the Term. Title to Material created by you is to be considered to have been transferred, and any copyright in same is to be considered to have been assigned by you to the City, on creation of such Material. You irrevocably waive, in favour of the City, your moral rights in respect of Material created by you.

To confirm your agreement to the above terms and conditions, kindly sign the duplicate copy of this letter where indicated and return same to the Mayor’s Office as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Michael Magee
Chief of Staff



Naveen Girn
(Initial Page)

SCHEDULE A - "THE SERVICES"

Strategic Community Relations and Outreach Support, including:

- Assistance to the Director of Community Relations for overall Strategic Objectives of the Mayor's Office;
- Increase multicultural outreach;
- Media engagement and monitoring;
- Cultivate relationships and outreach into non-traditional areas;
- Form a team to meet these goals and serve as liaison both with the Mayor's Office and team members;
- Attend meetings with key stakeholders on behalf of the Mayor, as necessary;
- Event Coordination;
- Translations services;
- Digital Media Support;
- Other activities as required.

TERMS ACKNOWLEDGED AND AGREED TO THIS 7th DAY OF APRIL 2016.



NAVEEN GIRN (Signature)

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

428 - 4550 Fraser Street, Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8 // 604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandloom.com

Naveen Girn
Consultant
Digital Handloom
428 - 4550 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8
604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandlom.com

Invoice No. 086
Date: June 28, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract June 2016	4000.00	200.00	4200.00
TOTAL DUE			4200.00

Due Upon Receipt

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.

OK
ILA

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

428 - 4550 Fraser Street, Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8 // 604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandloom.com

Naveen Girn
Consultant
Digital Handloom
428 - 4550 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8
604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandlom.com

Invoice No. 084
Date: June 2, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract May 2016	4000.00	200.00	4200.00
TOTAL DUE			4200.00

Due Upon Receipt

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink are present. The first signature is located above the second signature. Both appear to be stylized initials or names.

Vendor # 126284

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

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Naveen Girn
Consultant
Digital Handloom
428 - 4550 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8
604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandlom.com

Invoice No. 077
Date: January 15, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract January 2016	2850.00	142.50	2992.50
TOTAL DUE			2992.50

Due Upon Receipt

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.

ok'd by M.M.

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

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Naveen Girm
Consultant
Digital Handloom
428 - 4550 Fraser Street
Vancouver, BC V5V 4G8
604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandlom.com

Invoice No. 078
Date: February 29, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract February 2016	2660.00	133.00	2793.00
TOTAL DUE			2793.00

Due Upon Receipt

as per contract.

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.

OK by MM.

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

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Naveen Girn
Consultant
Digital Handloom
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604.715.7374/ naveen@digitalhandlom.com

Invoice No. 087
Date: July 14, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract July 2016	4000.00	200.00	4200.00
TOTAL DUE			4200.00

Due Upon Receipt

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.

*OK to pay
KA*

DIGITAL HANDLOOM

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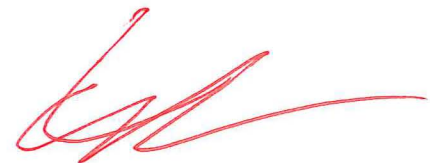
Invoice No. 080
Date: March 31, 2016
GST No: 80088 5683 RT0001

To: Dana Bertrand
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y1V4

Service	Subtotal	GST	Total
Services as per contract March 2016	4015.00	200.75	4215.75
TOTAL DUE			4215.75

Due Upon Receipt

5% interest will be charged on invoices outstanding after 30 days.



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We watch over the land and sea and in turn they watch over us.

September 28, 2015

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Naveen Girn

c/o naveengirn@gmail.com

Dear Naveen:

Re: Consulting Agreement with Office of the Mayor, City of Vancouver

This will confirm our agreement that you will provide the services described in the schedule to this letter (the “Services”) to the City of Vancouver from October 1, 2015 - March 31, 2016 (the “Term”) on the following terms and conditions:

- The City will pay to you the amount of \$24,000 (twenty-four thousand dollars) exclusive of taxes. This is the maximum amount that the City is obliged to pay in respect of performance of the Services unless this letter agreement is amended in writing and signed by both you and the undersigned.
- You will provide the Services as an independent contractor and not as an employee of the City. You will not be entitled to any employment benefits of any kind, and you will be solely responsible for remittance of Canada Pension premiums, Employment Insurance premiums, income tax and any other taxes, based on the total remuneration payable to you under this letter agreement.
- You will submit your invoices on a monthly basis. You will obtain the pre-approval of the undersigned for any disbursements to be reimbursed to you and you will provide original invoices for all disbursements claimed.
- You acknowledge by signing this letter that, in performing the Services, you may acquire information about certain matters which are confidential and that such information is the exclusive property of the City and you agree not to disclose same to any third party either during or after the Term.

Naveen Girn
(Initial Page)

- All drawings, audio-visual materials, information, plans, models, designs, specifications, reports and other documents or products produced, received or acquired by you as a result of the provision of the Services (the “Material”) will be the sole property of the City and the City will have the right to use all of the Material for its benefit in any way it sees fit, subject to third party owned copyright. You will deliver the Material to the City forthwith following the expiry of the Term. Title to Material created by you is to be considered to have been transferred, and any copyright in same is to be considered to have been assigned by you to the City, on creation of such Material. You irrevocably waive, in favour of the City, your moral rights in respect of Material created by you.

To confirm your agreement to the above terms and conditions, kindly sign the duplicate copy of this letter where indicated and return same to the Mayor’s Office as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Michael Magee
Chief of Staff

SCHEDULE A - "THE SERVICES"

Strategic Community Relations and Outreach Support, including:

- Assistance to the Director of Community Relations for overall Strategic Objectives of the Mayor's Office;
- Increase multicultural outreach;
- Media engagement and monitoring;
- Cultivate relationships and outreach into non-traditional areas;
- Form a team to meet these goals and serve as liaison both with the Mayor's Office and team members;
- Attend meetings with key stakeholders on behalf of the Mayor, as necessary;
- Event Coordination;
- Translations services;
- Digital Media Support;
- Other activities as required.

TERMS ACKNOWLEDGED AND AGREED TO THIS 28th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2015.

NAVEEN GIRN (Signature)

Magandang Umaga Po Sa Inyong Lahat

And welcome to City Hall today as we mark this special occasion.

I'm so proud that the flag of the Republic of the Philippines is flying at Vancouver City Hall!

The Filipino flag will be flying next to the Canadian flag for one week to acknowledge not just the 118th Anniversary of Philippine Independence but also to acknowledge the many contributions Filipino-Canadians have made to our great City.

Our city has changed a lot since the first wave of Filipino immigrants arrived in the late 1960s and early 1970s. There are now several generations of Filipino-Canadians in Vancouver who contribute to every facet of life here.

The Filipino-Canadian community now plays a bigger and bigger role in shaping our city as one of the most diverse, liveable and vibrant places in the world.

This is one of the reasons why we have the Mayor's Working Group on Immigration. It plays an important advisory role because although other levels of government set immigration policy, cities are where newcomers live, work and go to school.

We recently became the first city in Western Canada to pass an Access without Fear Policy. This allows migrants with precarious immigration status to access city services without fear that they will be turned over to Canadian Border Services. This is an important step in ensuring we foster a city that safe and secure for everyone.

It's important that we continue to hear from the community about what issues matter most to you and I look forward to building on our dialogue together.

I want to commend all the leaders in the Filipino community here today who organize Independence Day events in cities across the Lower Mainland, as well as celebrations of Pinoy arts & culture throughout the year.

As I've said before, what I admire most about the Filipino-Canadian community is your “**bayanihan**” spirit that keeps you connected to each other and to the Philippines while at the same time being proud and active members of Canadian society.

Our city has benefited immeasurably from your energy and for that I thank you.

Maraming Salamat sa Inyong Lahat!

Maligayang Araw ng Kalayaan!

It is now my pleasure to read this Proclamation:

[to be presented to Philippine Consul General **NAME**]

Canadian Water Network

1. How does water factor into your sustainability vision for Vancouver?

For many Vancouverites, it can be easy to take our high-quality and abundant drinking water for granted. However, a growing population, thriving economy, and climate change will place a greater demand on our drinking water in the future. That's why clean water is one of the pillars of the City of Vancouver's Greenest City 2020 Action Plan. Our goal is for Vancouver to have the cleanest drinking water of any city in the world. And we intend to achieve this by meeting or beating the strongest water quality standards in British Columbia, Canada, or internationally.

We also work to ensure that our natural waterways are kept clean, and have a sewer separation program to ensure sewage overflow does not end up in natural waterways. We are also developing an integrated rainwater management plan, that will aim to capture and clean 90% of rain water before it reaches natural waterways.

2. In light of the water challenges that Vancouver experienced this past year, what are some innovative examples that the City is undertaking to address future uncertainties in your water supplies?

Vancouver is provided with drinking water from three protected freshwater lakes - however expanding the water supply or finding a new one is financially and ecologically expensive. That's way we are developing a significant water use reduction communications campaign that will go out during water restrictions this year. This will help residents understand the impacts of outdoor water use and leaks – the two things which waste the most water.

During the water restrictions, we make use of our VanConnect app and 3-1-1 phone in system to collect reports of bad water behavior, then heat-map the locations of reports in order to better manage operations and enhance our enforcement tools to phase out wasteful behavior.

Finally, the City is demonstrating leadership in this area. For example, more than 100 of the City's 6,000 fire hydrants are leaking at any given time. We established ongoing funding for a leak detection program that will save 200 million litres of water and up to \$200k each year. And last year we worked with the Parks Board to retrofit our spray parks so that parks have user-activated switches, rather than spraying non-stop throughout the day.

To date we have achieved a 16% reduction in water consumption from 2006 levels but our goal is to get it down to 33%. We believe conservation is the best way to live within our means and provide drinking water for generations. I encourage you all to read our Greenest City 2020 Action Plan at Vancouver.ca/greenvancouver. Thank you.

**Welcome to West Coast Family Night at the Vancouver
Aboriginal Friendship Centre.**

**We recognize that we are on the unceded homelands of the
Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil Waututh First Nations, and
we thank the people of these nations for their warm
hospitality.**

**There are many people in the room we need to acknowledge.
Many thanks to:**

- **Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre for allowing us
to use their facility to host West Coast Family night for the
first time**
- **Chief Ian Campbell, Squamish Nation for emceeding
tonight's event**

- **The Urban Aboriginal People’s Advisory Committee, the City’s co-host and partner of tonight’s event**
- **I and the other judges of tonight’s bannock competition would like to thank the 5 bannock makers who made 500 pieces of the incredible bannock served tonight**
- **Jake and his team at Friendship Catering, for the wonderful food**
- **Performers, including Laxkxeen (Lax-Keen) Northern Dance Group, the Urban Kwakwaka’wakw (Kwok-Wok-E-Wok) Dance Group, and Yvonne Chartrand from the V’ni Dansi Metis Dance Company**
- **Our elected officials here in the room:**
 - **Councillors Melissa De Genova, Adriane Carr and Acting Mayor Raymond Louie**
 - **Park Board Chair Sarah Kirby-Yung**
 - **School Board Chair Mike Lombardi**
 - **Melanie Mark, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Vancouver-Mount Pleasant**

This year is the 20th anniversary of our celebration of June 21st, National Aboriginal Day, a day that recognizes the rich culture and the tremendous contributions that First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples make to the fabric of Canada.

As a City of Reconciliation, we would also like to acknowledge the importance of the recent Daniels Decision, a legal victory in the Supreme Court of Canada for the Metis and “non-status Indians”, who now have confirmation of their rights recognized under the Canadian Constitution.

Next week, on June 21st – the 20th Anniversary of National Aboriginal Day in Canada – there will be a large community celebration at Trout Lake. I’d like to invite all Vancouverites to attend and have fun at this great celebration, and more

National Aboriginal Day at West Coast Family Night
June 15, 2016

**importantly, to take the opportunity to learn more about the
Aboriginal culture.**

It is an honour for the City of Vancouver to host this evening.

**Thank you to everyone for attending and for contributing to
this West Coast Family Night and to this great community.**

**May 27, Danielle Horowitz Social Justice Award
Presentation**

Background:

- Dani chose Vancouver as her home in 1986 to pursue a Master's program in criminology and launch a professional career and lifework dedicated to social justice and improving the life of our citizens whose circumstances left them at the margins of society
- Dani delivered workshops, programs and services for young adults with disabilities, for youth at risk, for students of all ages, and for Aboriginal, ethnic and immigrant communities;
- Dani carried forward her commitment to social change through such community service organizations as the Jewish Community Centre, the Elizabeth Fry Society and the Justice Education Society with a goal to lifting institutional barriers for our citizens;
- Dani's teachings about cultural diversity, domestic violence, mental illness, addiction and other social issues have been deeply felt by her students, teachers, members of the Downtown Eastside community, court staff and colleagues in all areas of the justice system;
- Dani's friends and family; her colleagues and students, her collaborators and supporters have established the

Danielle Horwitz Social Justice Award in her memory to invest in future social justice leaders to take up the mantle of the tangible legacies of a life lived so passionately and fully in pursuit of social justice in Vancouver

This year's winner:

- **Ms. Triana Segovia is involved in human rights education and fund-raising for non profit agencies, including assisting the disadvantaged in her country of ancestry, Mexico. She volunteered during the last federal election and addressed Ottawa parliamentarians with a proposal for a new Parliamentary Bill designed to assist university students with financial needs. Triana has an excellent academic record and will be attending a local university next fall. She also trains horses, works part-time in the film industry, participates in kick-boxing and is developing as an artist and a photographer.**

Disability Resource Conference of BC

Hi I'm Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson I want to welcome everyone to the 33rd Annual Disability Resource Conference of BC.

Through advocacy and engagement the Disability Resource Network of BC empowers people with disabilities to achieve the highest levels of success. That's why this year's theme "*Great Expectations: The Post-Secondary Challenge*" is so important. It represents the opportunity for students with disabilities to reach their highest potential.

On behalf of all Vancouverites and my colleagues on Council, thank you for all your hard work and I wish you an inspiring and productive conference.

- **Acknowledge First Nations**
- **For 30 years, the dragon light fixtures have been a unique feature of Vancouver's famed Chinatown.**
- **The Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association was a key partner in the original dragon light installation 30 years ago.**
- **This year, the City of Vancouver is once again proud to partner with the VCMA to refresh and upgrade these fixtures.**
- **The Chinatown community through leadership of VCMA has raised over \$166,000 for the 336 dragon fixtures in this neighbourhood.**
- **These new fixtures have LED technology that can last twice as long as compact fluorescent lamps and they can change colours to celebrate different events and festivals.**
- **Upgrading of Chinatown Dragon Fixtures supports the Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Revitalization Strategy (Council approved –July 2012) and the DTES Plan (Council approved –March 2014).**
- **Creates a thriving business district with vibrant night time lighting and signage strategy reflective of the area's history.**
- **Supports the strategic public realm improvements to enhance and improve public realm quality.**

- **Enhances Chinatown's appeal for both residents and visitors, helps define the neighbourhood, and increases both day and night-time users.**
- **Thank you again to all the community leaders and the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association for all of your contributions to the Dragon Light project and for your continued leadership in Chinatown.**

Eid al-Fitr
Facebook Post

As Mayor, I am proud of the vibrant, multicultural City we live in. These celebrations enrich all of our lives, and help to educate and promote understanding between peoples of all different backgrounds.

Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan and it is my honour to commemorate Eid with all of you. I wish each and every one of you Eid Mubarak.

(Insert Photo from Friday visit to Jama Masjid)

Eid Tweet:

Today marks the end of Ramadan and it is my honour to commemorate Eid with all of you. I wish each and every one of you Eid Mubarak.

(Insert Photo from past events)

Tradeworks

Over the past 21 years, Tradeworks has assisted women and youth in the DTES find employment through skill development and hands-on training in carpentry. Tradeworks members have created everything from intricate Christmas ornaments and wood pens, to podiums for the Vancouver Olympic Games. The organization has helped hundreds of people realize their own capacity and improve their lives. Congratulations on your 21st Anniversary! (insert Pic of Gregor holding pen; no Facebook page only twitter [@TradeworksBC]). (<http://tradeworks.bc.ca/>)

MigranteBC

It was a pleasure to meet the team from @MigranteBC this past week. MigranteBC is committed to the protection and promotion of the rights and welfare of Filipino immigrants and migrant workers in British Columbia. It was an honour to hear and witness the stories of temporary foreign workers and learn the positive impact of the City's new Access Without Fear Policy. Congratulations on the great work! (<http://council.vancouver.ca/20160406/documents/pspc3.pdf>)

(Insert pic of Gregor with the Group)

Vaisakhi:

- Vaisakhi represents one of the most significant holidays for the Sikh community. It marks the traditional beginning of the harvest season in Punjab, - a time where family and friends gather to celebrate hard work and shared success. It's an opportunity reflect on the year that's passed and imagine a future filled with promise and hope for everyone.
- One of the biggest and most important events in South Vancouver - and one of my favourite occasions of the year - is the Vaisakhi parade. For over thirty years, this parade has wound its way through the streets of Punjabi Market and South Vancouver with educational and colourful floats and the rhythms of song and dance filling the air. **The Vaisakhi parade is the largest in the city outside of the downtown core and draws over 100,000 people to commemorate the creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.**
- **This year also marks the 317th anniversary of when Guru Gobind Singh** founded the Khalsa and bound Sikhs together in ties of respect, equality, and freedom from tyranny. It also provides a chance for people of all cultural backgrounds to engage in the values of selfless community service and allows all of us to learn and engage with the diversity of the city.
- **(Green Vaisakhi)** I'm pleased to see that the Khalsa Diwan Society has taken initiative in partnership with Vancity Credit Union to make this year's parade the Greenest Vaisakhi ever. With more than 30 recycling and washing stations set up throughout the parade and a crew of volunteers, the Khalsa Diwan Society is aiming to divert over 90% of the waste generated by the parade from our landfills. This is the first time one of our three Civic Status parades has set such an ambitious target for green initiatives and I'm proud Vaisakhi is leading the way.

Punjabi Market:

- South Vancouver is on the cusp of renewal. Council recently approved a new development in the Punjabi Market that will provide 75 secured market rental units - 39% of which are 2 and 3 bedrooms – while preserving the neighbourhood's diverse and vibrant character. A public art piece will also be added to the front façade of the building to reflect community stories and the area's special legacy. The Punjabi Market is an important part of the city that has been struggling for many years and I believe this new development is the first meaningful step in its revitalization.

Jack Uppal Street:

- Just last week South Asian elders, community activists, business leaders and people from all walks of life joined us at City Hall for the proclamation of Jack Uppal Street, **the first named after a South Asian Canadian in the history of Vancouver.**
- Mr. Uppal dedicated his life to standing up for equal rights and opportunities, and was at the forefront of paving the way for a more equal Vancouver, free from racism and discrimination.
- I'm proud that the City of Vancouver finally recognized an outstanding community leader and role model for all Vancouverites.

Access Without Fear:

- Vancouver's diversity is one of our greatest strengths and this past month provided the opportunity to remember past victories over injustices while recognizing present day inequalities that must be overcome.
- I'm proud Vancouver has become the first city in Western Canada to provide safe access to City services for all residents, regardless of immigration status.
- The newly passed Access Without Fear policy allows vulnerable residents, whether they're foreign students or workers with expired permits, refugees whose claims were rejected, or temporary foreign workers who lost their jobs, to access City of Vancouver services without being afraid of being reported to the Canada Border Services Agency. It's a first step, and a critical one, towards getting other civic areas to follow similar policies of inclusivity.

Conclusion:

- Vancouver's Vaisakhi celebrations present an opportunity for people of all faiths and backgrounds to come together and experience Vancouver's diversity and imagine a more prosperous future for all of us.
- I wish you all a Happy Vaisakhi! Vaisakhi dee lakh lakh vadhiyan (Pronunciation: Vaisakhi dee luck luck vaa-dhai-yaan).

Read the Proclamation

Jack Uppal Street Press Release (Draft)

The Civic Asset Naming Committee, at its meeting on February 15, 2016, approved the name "Jack Uppal Street" in honour of South Asian pioneer and successful businessman Jagat "Jack" Singh Uppal.

Jack Uppal was born in the Punjab on February 7, 1925, and came to B.C. as an infant in 1926. After the death of his father in a traffic accident, he left school at a young age to work to help support his family. He started by piling lumber at Vancouver Island's Kapoor Sawmill and remained in the lumber industry for the rest of his life. By 1971 he was in a position to buy his own business, a small mill on Mitchell Island he named Goldwood Industries. The mill continues to operate today, and Mr. Uppal continued to work there until shortly before his death.

Mr. Uppal dedicated his life to his company but also to his community, especially in regard to issues of racism and discrimination. His treatment as a child and young man by the non-South Asian community spurred his passion for fighting for equal rights and opportunities. He was part of a Sikh delegation to Ottawa demanding the right to vote, which was granted in 1947; was integral to the growth of the Sikh community and the selection of Ross Street as the new location for the Khalsa Diwan Society Gurdwara, and he helped countless newcomers to BC settle and make their way in their new home.

He was the recipient of a BC Community Achievement Award, UBC's Nehru Humanitarian Award, and the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal. In the year before he passed away, Jack Uppal received an honorary doctorate from Simon Fraser University in acknowledgement of his activism on behalf of the South Asian community.

The Civic Asset Naming Committee has been naming new public streets in the River District development in South Vancouver since the Committee's formation in 2012. It views the River District as a significant heritage landscape. Jack Uppal's Goldwood Industries is located just down river from what is now the River District. This will be the first street in Vancouver named after a South Asian Canadian.

National Aboriginal Day Video Script

Vancouver is blessed with a rich Coast Salish heritage as well as the diverse cultures of other First Nations, Urban Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis.

In 1996 the Canada declared June 21st as National Aboriginal Day to celebrate the achievements of Aboriginal peoples.

Vancouver is a City of Reconciliation, and recognizes reconciliation as a long-term effort to create systemic change and new relations based on mutual understanding and respect.

Happy National Aboriginal Day to everyone.

Navroz

Hi I'm Vancouver's Mayor Gregor Robertson

Dating back over three millennia, the Spring Solstice has always been a time for renewal and the hope of a new year. Within the Persian, Ismaili, and Bahai communities, Navroz – or “New Day” - contains the legacy of familial traditions that stretch back to our earliest civilizations.

I join with our Ismaili, Persian, and Bahai' brothers and sisters in celebrating our shared hopes and dreams for the year ahead. May this year bring all of us prosperity and the opportunity to celebrate one of Vancouver's greatest strengths – our diversity.

Navroz Mubarak! (Pronunciation: Nuv – rohz Moo-ba-rak)

Raise Your Hands Against Racism

Hi I'm Gregor Robertson the Mayor of Vancouver.

Although it only began last year, Raise Your Hands Against Racism has inspired interest from around the world. Racism, bigotry, and ignorance are not just problems of our distant past- we can all think of present day examples that have affected our community or our loved ones.

The City of Vancouver is a proud partner of this initiative spearheaded by Spice Radio and our council and staff have provided their own handprints for this cause. This year I encourage you all to raise your hands to show your support in creating a more equal, respectful and understanding Vancouver.

Acknowledge unceded First Nations territory and thank Larry Grant for his welcome

Acknowledge elected officials: Acting Mayor Louie, Councillor Meggs, Councillor Reimer, and Councillor Teri Towner of Coquitlam. Also Lucy Swib, Director, Immigration Integration Unit, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

Acknowledge partners in both planning and funding event: VanCity Community Fund, Vancouver Coastal Health Vancouver Foundation: Fresh Voices, United Way

The images of Syrian refugees seeking safety and their stories of immense sacrifice and courage have affected all of us deeply. Their stories call upon us to act.

The City of Vancouver recognizes that the refugee crisis is a global issue. Refugees arrive in Vancouver from diverse regions of the world. There are over 60 million displaced people worldwide. Some of our highest arriving countries include: Afghanistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, and Sudan. This humanitarian crisis calls upon us to act and demonstrate that we care – and we can help.

“Help” requires us to sustain relationships and deepen engagement with refugee communities. The purpose of this forum is to use dialogue to build understanding about the needs and opportunities for supporting community resettlement and integration of refugees.

I hosted a Refugee Townhall last September when we were all called upon to open our hearts to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Since then the Federal government confirmed 25,000

refugees have arrived in Canada – of which 2500 destined to BC.

The latest information tells us that BC has received 1628 Syrian GAR (Government Approved Refugee) individuals. More than 85% of these groups have settled in Metro Vancouver. Our School Boards are meeting the challenge that 1 in 4 are under 6 years old and 37% are school age with the majority age 6-12. And while close to 180 families have moved into permanent accommodations, housing is a challenge for the close to 859 individuals who are in temporary accommodation in Vancouver, Richmond and Surrey.

The City of Vancouver has liaised with frontline service providers and organizations to ensure they are well positioned to offer support and help – and some of them are invited to share their experiences and recommendations at tonight's forum. The City also participated in a Provincially funded Lower Mainland Refugee Response team and our staff met with key officials both provincially and federally to understand their response and follow-up actions

Tonight we want to deepen our understanding of refugee resettlement needs and learn from one another about the opportunities to build a movement that ensures a healthy and safe city for all.

Thank staff for working to organize tonight's forum and acknowledge Mayor's Working Group on Immigration and other participants for commitment and engagement on this important issue.

March 19

Raise your Hands Against Racism Tweet:

I encourage you to raise your #handsagainstracism. Let's create a more equal and understanding Vancouver.

(Insert Link to Video)

Raise your Hands Against Racism Facebook Message

Racism is a present day problem that affects our community and loved ones. The City of Vancouver is a proud partner of Raise Your Hands Against Racism. Show your support today at: Roundhouse Community Centre, Sunset Community Centre and Fraserview Library. Let's create a more equal and understanding Vancouver. (Insert Link to Video)

Earth Hour Tweet

Get together with friends and join the 10th Annual #EarthHour tonight from 8:30 - 9:30pm by turning off as much power as you can. @wwfcanada

March 21

Navroz Tweet

Navroz Mubarak! May this year bring all of us prosperity and success! (Insert Link)

Navroz Facebook Message

Navroz Mubarak! I join with our Ismaili, Persian, and Bahai' brothers and sisters in celebrating our shared hopes and dreams for the year ahead. (Insert Video Link)

Vaisakhi

Hi, I'm Gregor Robertson the Mayor of Vancouver.

Vaisakhi represents one of the most significant holidays for the Sikh community. It marks the traditional beginning of the harvest season in Punjab, - a time where family and friends gather to celebrate hard work and shared success. It's an opportunity reflect on the year that's passed and imagine a future filled with promise and hope for everyone.

This year also marks the 317th anniversary of when Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa and bound Sikhs together in ties of respect, equality, and freedom from tyranny.

Vancouver's Vaisakhi celebrations present an opportunity for people of all faiths and backgrounds to come together and experience Vancouver's diversity and imagine a more prosperous future for all of us.

I wish you all a Happy Vaisakhi! Vaisakhi dee lakh lakh vadhiyan (Pronunciation: Vaisakhi dee luck luck vaa-dhai-yaan).

Vancouver Vaisakhi Parade Goes Green for 2016

Khalsa Diwan Society and Vancity Credit Union help to make 2016 Parade the greenest in Vancouver's history

Vancouver, BC (April 11, 2016) - The Khalsa Diwan Society (Ross Street) is working together with Vancity Credit Union to make this year's Vaisakhi Parade the Greenest Vaisakhi in Vancouver history. Vancouver-based Green Chair Recycling has been selected to provide over 30 recycling stations along the parade route between Main Street and Fraser Street, as well as two recycling headquarters and washing stations in Punjabi Market to more effectively divert waste from landfill from the parade, which draws approximately 100,000 people annually.

The annual Vaisakhi Parade brings people from across Vancouver together to celebrate the birth of the Khalsa and the harvest season. It traditionally marks the beginning of the new year in the Sikh calendar and celebrates the start of the harvest season. "The Vaisakhi Parade has been a fixture in Vancouver for over 30 years," says Khalsa Diwan Society President Kuldip Singh Thandi. "In the spirit of renewal and taking care of our environment, we pushed to make this Vaisakhi green and clean for everyone."

For 2016, the Khalsa Diwan Society's goal is to divert up to 90% 2000 pounds of the waste generated from the parade from landfills, by providing compost and recycling stations for vendors and attendees as well as information sessions to support vendors and neighbourhood families. Most of the parade's waste is generated by the free food and giveaways for those along the parade route which is easily recyclable and compostable. The City of Vancouver's extensive network of recycling stations as well as those provided by Green Chair Recycling will ensure easily accessible and available recycling options for everyone.

"Recycling waste from events is a great way to build environmentally sustainable communities. We want to support people coming together and leave behind great memories from the event - not great piles of trash." William Azaroff, vice-president of community investment.

"Since receiving Civic Status in 2013, the Vaisakhi Parade has been a great partner and asset to the City that enhances our community spirit," said Mayor Gregor Robertson. "I congratulate the Khalsa Diwan Society for taking initiative in setting a model to become the greenest Vaisakhi parade ever at the same time Vancouver works toward becoming the greenest city in the world."

For more information, visit www.kdsross.com.

VIBC Tweet:

@VIBC celebrates #bhangra and builds intercultural ties across Vancouver. I'm looking forward to this year's festival! #bhangralove

VIBC Facebook Post:

VIBC has been a tremendous success, introducing Bhangra music and dance to diverse new audiences and celebrating the best of local and international talent. After quickly becoming one of the highlights of the year for our city, the Vancouver International Bhangra Festival continues to set a global standard for the kind of festival that not only celebrates performing arts but also builds intercultural bridges across communities. Congratulations to everyone involved in creating this wonderful festival and I hope everyone attending has a great time!

World Refugee Day Video Script:

Vancouver has a longstanding commitment to welcoming refugees in times of need.

City of Vancouver initiatives like the Mayor's Working Group on Immigration, Vancouver Immigration Partnership, and the Welcoming Communities Project foster a strong sense of belonging for newcomers. And we recently donated \$4.1 million in land and grants for the new Vancouver Welcome House for refugees.

Today's World Refugee Day reminds us that kindness and compassion are hallmarks of our city.

Interview questions for print magazine's exclusive section:

1. What would you say are your major contributions to the City of Vancouver as Mayor?

In recent years, we've become one of the most economically powerful cities in Canada and witnessed impressive job growth. Vancouver is leading the country in economic growth, and will continue to do so through 2019 at an average rate of over 3%. We've also been rated by KPMG as 5th most competitive place to do business out of 29 major global cities, ahead of all U.S. west coast cities.

Coming out of the Olympics we're really hitting our stride and technology, innovation, green jobs, and creative industries which is great news for young people. It's very promising for the city's future to be one of the leading places in industries that are the fastest growing in the world right now.

2. What are the core challenges that Vancouver is facing at the moment? How are you dealing with these issues? (Merged these two questions)

3. Housing affordability is an issue that has been in the news lately. What is the city doing to reduce housing prices so that more people can settle down in Vancouver?

Housing affordability in the City of Vancouver is without question one of the most pressing issues our city has faced. I empathize with the anxieties of many families and young people who wish to contribute to the growth and diversity of the City, but who can't afford to live here. It's a complex problem that the solutions for require partnership, collaboration and willingness from all three levels of government.

The City is looking at all tools available to help relieve pressure on young families in an unaffordable housing market that has a lack of family friendly units and a rental vacancy rate of less than one per cent.

We've recently approved in principle and Affordable Home Ownership Pilot the first of its kind in Vancouver that will allow young families to enter the housing market and put down roots in the city. Under the program, first-time buyers who have lived in Vancouver for the last five years would be eligible to participate in the program. At least one buyer must work in Vancouver, and cannot have owned property before. The eligible household income for the program ranges from \$67,540/year (single and couple households) up to \$96,170/year (households with at least one dependent child).

The Affordable Home Ownership program is the latest measure Council has adopted in creating affordable housing options to make Vancouver a place everyone can call home. Other actions on housing include:

- Directing staff to work with AirBNB and other listing services to collect data on the frequency and volume of short-term rental housing;
- Approving a record 1,300+ new rental homes in 2015;
- Offering 20 sites of City-owned land worth \$250 Million to senior governments to use for affordable housing;

- Starting construction on the first below-market family rental building in the City in Southeast False Creek;
- Researching the impact of empty homes in Vancouver’s housing market;
- Calling for both a speculation tax and a luxury sales tax to create a more level playing field in the housing market;
- Bringing in the strongest tenant protections of any municipality in B.C. to Vancouver;
- Directing staff to increase family unit requirements in new housing projects;
- Approving new incentives to create 2 and 3 bedroom units in new rental housing projects; and
- Providing four City land sites to enable Vancouver’s first Community Land Trust.

I’ve called upon the provincial government to introduce a speculation tax would slow down the practice of flipping houses, which treats housing as a commodity and intensifies the price escalation. Also, introducing a luxury housing tax would ensure that the very wealthiest buyers or investors pay an added price, which (like a speculation tax) would raise new funds to make housing more affordable for those on low and modest incomes.

Housing affordability is a keen concern for all of us in the City of Vancouver. It will take a concerted effort from all levels of government to ensure we can tackle this problem. While there is no single solution to housing affordability, we’re on the right track towards understanding the multiple factors we will need to address.

- **Talking about housing, Vancouver is also dealing with homelessness. What steps are taken to reduce or stop this issue?**

Tackling street homelessness will take a multifaceted approach. During my tenure we have expanded the City’s Homeless Outreach Team to be city-wide, providing more services to vulnerable residents and connecting them to housing. We’ve opened new winter low-barrier shelters in neighbourhoods like Downtown South and Mt Pleasant, and we’ve helped more than 1000 people move from shelters into permanent housing since 2009. For the first time in the City’s history we’ve deployed legal injunctions on landlords of Downtown Eastside single-room occupancy hotels, requiring them to fix and maintain their buildings and protect tenants. We’ve also collaborated with the YWCA to build 21 units of housing designated for low-income women and children as part of a new library in Strathcona, and another 31 units on top of a new community Fire Hall in Champlain Heights. The City also purchased the Ramada Hotels on East Hastings and Kingsway to provide low-income interim housing to people who moved from shelters and are waiting for permanent housing. We have also offered 20 sites of City-owned land worth \$250 Million to senior governments to use for affordable housing;

We’re on the right track towards ending homelessness in the city but there is more to do.

4. **What are your views on the latest federal budget? How will it benefit the growth of Vancouver? (Merged questions) 5. You have also talked a lot about the transit system in the city. How will the federal budget impact the transit system?**

I’m encouraged the federal budget makes significant commitments to short and long-term

investments in housing, transit and social infrastructure. The commitments by the federal government to increase funding for affordable housing and homelessness programs are urgently needed given the number of residents throughout Metro who struggle to access housing. As well, federal funding for upgrading seniors' housing, co-ops and maintaining affordability will be a big boost for protecting low-income households. The new funding and flexibility dedicated to transit will help us get moving on improving transit in Vancouver and throughout the region, and will both grow our economy while protecting our environment.

Benefits of the 2016 federal budget for the City of Vancouver include:

- A commitment of at least \$370 million as a down payment for transit in Metro Vancouver;
- A willingness to fund up to 50% of transit projects, instead of just 1/3rd;
- Allowing transit funding to go towards accelerating design and engineering preparations for major projects, like the Broadway Subway;
- Increased funding for the Homelessness Partnership Strategy and Affordable Housing Initiative;
- Commitment to developing a National Housing Strategy;
- Reinstating HUSAR funding to support emergency preparedness.

We're ready to work closely and quickly with the provincial and federal governments to get these projects started in Vancouver. Housing and transit are top priorities for Vancouver City Hall and it's encouraging to see these priorities reflected in the federal budget.

5. *Access Without Fear* is a great policy but what sort of challenges would the City be facing with its implementation?

Vancouver has become the first city in Western Canada to provide safe access to City services for all residents, regardless of immigration status. The policy will allow vulnerable residents, whether they're foreign students or workers with expired permits, refugees whose claims were rejected or temporary foreign workers who lost their jobs, to interact with civil servants without being afraid they'll get reported to the Canada Border Services Agency, unless required by law.

It's the first step towards getting other civic areas (VPL, VSB, Park Board) to follow similar policies and we're glad that the Vancouver Police Board has already come on board to follow our lead.

As a city our commitment is to ensure a safe city for everyone.

6. What is your vision of the city five or 10 years from now?

For the past three terms I have had the honour of being the Mayor of Vancouver. Together we've brought about progressive, positive change. My vision for the city is a place where people of all incomes and backgrounds can afford to live. Vancouver needs to continue to foster a strong, diverse, and resilient economy with good paying jobs and celebrate and recognize the achievements of our intercultural communities. We must demonstrate our environmental leadership by staying on the path to becoming the Greenest City in the world and shifting to 100% renewable energy. I want to ensure that Vancouver remains a vibrant place where people, can live, work, and engage with one another.

City of Vancouver Conducts Comprehensive Study on Housing Vacancy

The major issue I hear about on a regular basis is housing affordability in the City of Vancouver. I empathize with the anxieties of many families and young people who wish to contribute to the growth and diversity of the City, but who can't afford to live here. Because of the concerns I've heard about empty homes impacting housing affordability and neighbourhood vibrancy, we commissioned a comprehensive study on unoccupied homes, which was reported to Council last week.

The study showed that, overall, there has been no change in the percentage of empty homes since 2002. However, even though the rate of empty homes has remained steady at 4.8%, Vancouver is still facing significant affordability challenges and I am concerned about the impact on the already limited supply of rental housing.

Looking at data from 225,000 homes, a total of 10,800 dwellings were empty for a year or more. Of these, 90% were condos. The percentage of empty single-family and duplex properties remains the same as 2002 at around 1%.

It's unacceptable that so many homes are left empty at a time so many of our residents are struggling to find appropriate housing. Housing needs to be first and foremost for people to live in, not to be treated as a commodity.

This study is the first of its kind to find out how many homes are sitting unoccupied on a long term basis. The City worked with the consulting firm Ecotagious, to analyze anonymous BC Hydro data from 2002 to 2014. Their investigation of household energy use was reviewed by a panel of external industry experts to evaluate the methodology and findings. The study looked only at how many homes were being left empty, but not the cause of why some units are unoccupied.

Only by rigorously collecting data and information will we be able to cut through the misconceptions about our housing market - misconceptions that are sometimes based in rumour and anecdote - rather than hard research. The City is taking a leadership role in collecting data and convening discussions with the intent of learning more about why these homes are being left empty and what the potential solutions can be.

I wrote to the Premier last summer requesting the BC government give us tools to better track and discourage homes from staying empty for long periods of time. We are still looking forward to a response on this issue. The City has limited legal tools to enforce actions to discourage empty homes, so partnerships and support from the provincial government will be a critical component of the city's next steps on this issue.

The City will continue to strategize with industry experts, academics and senior governments on how we can address empty homes in Vancouver. We will also keep working to increase the overall purpose built rental housing stock as this form of dwelling is the most likely to be occupied.

Housing affordability is a keen concern for all of us in the City of Vancouver. It will take a concerted effort from all levels of government to ensure we can tackle this problem. While there is no single solution to housing affordability, the report that was submitted in council last week is one step towards understanding the multiple factors we will need to address.

I encourage you to read the full consultant report on empty homes here:
<http://council.vancouver.ca/20160308/documents/rr1EcotagiousReport.pdf>

Gregor Robertson is mayor of the City of Vancouver.

Celebrating South Vancouver's Revitalization and New Year Prosperity

For many communities and cultures, spring symbolizes renewal and prosperity – a time to reflect on community achievements and look ahead to where we can grow together. This spring, City Council has spurred community renewal by implementing several symbolic and important initiatives that commemorate Vancouver's diverse growth while acknowledging our history and recognizing there is more to be done to be a fully inclusive city.

Vancouver's diversity is one of our greatest strengths and this past month provided the opportunity to remember past victories over injustices while recognizing present day inequalities that must be overcome. I'm proud Vancouver has become the first city in Western Canada to provide safe access to City services for all residents, regardless of immigration status. The newly passed Access Without Fear policy allows vulnerable residents, whether they're foreign students or workers with expired permits, refugees whose claims were rejected, or temporary foreign workers who lost their jobs, to access City of Vancouver services without being afraid of being reported to the Canada Border Services Agency. It's a first step, and a critical one, towards getting other civic areas to follow similar policies of inclusivity.

In the same week, South Asian elders, community activists, business leaders and people from all walks of life joined us at City Hall for the proclamation of Jack Uppal Street, the first named after a South Asian Canadian in the history of Vancouver. Mr. Uppal dedicated his life to standing up for equal rights and opportunities, and was at the forefront of paving the way for a more equal Vancouver, free from racism and discrimination. I'm proud that the City of Vancouver finally recognized an outstanding community leader and role model for all Vancouverites.

While recognizing Vancouver's past, we must steer the city forward inclusively and sustainably.

South Vancouver is on the cusp of renewal. Council recently approved a new development in the Punjabi Market that will provide 75 secured market rental units - 39% of which are 2 and 3 bedrooms – while preserving the neighbourhood's diverse and vibrant character. A public art piece will also be added to the front façade of the building to reflect community stories and the area's special legacy. The Punjabi Market is an important part of the city that has been struggling for many years and I believe this new development is the first meaningful step in its revitalization.

Down the street, the Marine Gateway development has officially opened, bringing a new suite of amenities and walkability to an area of the city that was previously underserved. The positive spinoff effects echo throughout the neighbourhood with more town homes, new parks, and new childcare spaces for all neighbourhood residents to access and enjoy.

One of the biggest and most important events in South Vancouver - and one of my favourite occasions of the year - is the Vaisakhi parade. For over thirty years, this parade has wound its

way through the streets of Punjabi Market and South Vancouver with educational and colourful floats and the rhythms of song and dance filling the air. The Vaisakhi parade is the largest in the city outside of the downtown core and draws over 100,000 people to commemorate the creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. Vaisakhi marks the traditional beginning of the harvest season in Punjab - a time when family and friends gather to celebrate hard work and shared success. It's an opportunity reflect on the year that's passed and imagine a future filled with promise and hope for everyone. It also provides a chance for people of all cultural backgrounds to engage in the values of selfless community service and allows all of us to learn and engage with the diversity of the city.

I'm pleased to see that the Khalsa Diwan Society has taken initiative in partnership with Vancity Credit Union to make this year's parade the Greenest Vaisakhi ever. With more than 30 recycling and washing stations set up throughout the parade and a crew of volunteers, the Khalsa Diwan Society is aiming to divert over 90% of the waste generated by the parade from our landfills. This is the first time one of our three Civic Status parades has set such an ambitious target for green initiatives and I'm proud Vaisakhi is leading the way.

As I reflect and look forward this Vaisakhi season, I am struck by how far we have come together as a community. Honouring figures like Jack Uppal, fostering revitalization projects throughout the city, and taking care of our most vulnerable residents allow us collectively to focus our vision to create a more equal Vancouver. But more can be done. South Vancouver and the many communities within it are an important and impactful part of our vibrant City and we will continue working to ensure it is a prosperous place for everyone. Happy Vaisakhi!

Gregor Robertson
Mayor of Vancouver

Sunset Seniors' Centre: Rooted in Community, Growing with the Neighbourhood

Two months ago, I had the privilege of visiting with the Indo Canadian Seniors Society and it was an honour to celebrate their achievements over the past year and recognize the positive contributions of our community elders. After listening to their concerns, I was proud to support a motion advocating for a new seniors centre in the Sunset community. This week, I sponsored a motion allocating \$300,000 for City staff to undertake a feasibility study - including site selection and concept design for a new Seniors Centre in South Vancouver.

Over the next 25 years, not only will the demand for seniors facilities increase dramatically but so will our seniors' population. Vancouver will have an 80% increase of residents aged 65 – 74 and we expect a 100% increase of residents older than 75. However, of the City's eight seniors' facilities, there are only three located in East Vancouver. Providing greater seniors services is a priority for me and my council and I'm happy we have the support of the neighbourhood and the community to move this new Sunset Seniors Centre forward.

City staff will work with the Park Board on a consultative process with the South Vancouver residents, including the input of the seniors groups in the Sunset area, the City's Seniors' Advisory Committee, and the community at large. Staff will also explore potential matching funding resources for the construction of the building from the provincial and federal governments. This model is similar to the Killarney Seniors Centre - driven by your Vision council - which is anticipated to be complete by March 2018.

Sunset is gaining momentum as a vibrant, diverse, intergenerationally inclusive community, building on a strong history and community foundation. As an example, Council recently approved a new development at the old Blue Boy Hotel at Fraser and Marine Drive in South Vancouver. These 4 mixed use buildings will have over 15,000 sq. ft. of neighbourhood servicing retail space, \$170,000 dedicated to start a new 37-space childcare facility, and \$65,000 for a new neighbourhood house. It will also feature 368 residential homes, of which 43% will be family-oriented with 2-3 bedrooms. This project will also contribute \$681,000 to the Affordable Housing Reserve to increase the City's affordable housing supply in and around the Sunset Community area.

I'm confident that, together, we can find a space that seniors – and the broader community - can be proud of: one that brings families together, keeps seniors close to the amenities and community they cherish, and helps the Sunset community prosper for years to come.

Vancouver's homeless counts showed that our city's homeless population increased by 6% this past year. This is a very disappointing result given all of the shelters and social housing the city has created in the past 8 years. It is easy to think that Vancouver attracts homeless from across the country because we invest a lot in housing. However, the homeless count revealed that this is not true and some other startling facts about homelessness.

First, the number of new homeless, defined as those homeless less than one year, comprised 61% of all homeless and that they reported they came from rural areas of the province into the city. This migration from the countryside to the cities is what is being seen in other urban areas like Victoria, Maple Ridge, and Abbotsford. Large homeless camps are growing there despite the fact that these cities do not invest heavily in social housing. This pattern of migration from the countryside to the cities is no different from what is seen in other countries, like China where people come to the city to find work. However, once in the city they do not realize how expensive city living is even if they are working, and have little choice but to live on the streets.

This last fact is supported by the surprising finding that at least 25% of the homeless actually hold regular employment. These individuals make minimum wage and that does not allow enough to for rent, food and transportation. Similarly, many homeless suffer from medical issues, including mental health and addiction that prevent them from working. They receive a disability pension but that amount has not changed for almost a decade whereas rent and food costs continue to rise forcing them to lose their homes. A real tragic finding was that for individuals undergoing treatment for addictions and mental health could not find affordable rent or food after leaving the treatment program so they ended back up on the street.

The numbers of homeless will continue to rise because issues of growing poverty continue to affect low income wage earners, people suffering from mental health and addictions remain. The solution is to create a range of affordable housing. Some of this housing should be for low income wage earners who need help until they are able to get better training and jobs, and some needs to be for people in addiction and mental health treatment programs so that they finish their recovery properly and move to independent living. It's not just about creating low cost housing but housing that supports people in recovery from the effects of poverty, mental health and the addictions. Because health care is so important the cooperation of the Federal and Provincial government is central.

Supportive housing is very expensive to build because the cost of land is so high. This is why the Mayor has offered 20 sites of land worth \$250 million to the Federal and Provincial governments to build supportive housing. The Federal government is very interested in a partnership and given our past partnerships with the Provincial government we are hopeful that this much needed supportive housing can be built and really begin to end homelessness by addressing some of the main issues creating homelessness.