

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11

The Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee is an advisory body appointed by Vancouver City Council to advise Council and staff on the development, implementation, and assessment of City policies and services related to strengthening ethno-cultural engagement, addressing racism and racial inequities, and promoting racial justice and equity in the City. The following represents the views of the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee. The Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee is not expressing views on behalf of the City of Vancouver.

April 25, 2022

Dear Mayor and Council:

RE: Letter of Support for Vancouver Black Library

At its meeting on March 10, 2022, the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee passed the following motion:

THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee will draft a letter of support for the Vancouver Black Library and send the letter to Council and the Vancouver Public Library for support.

Black culture was removed in Vancouver when the Georgia Viaduct was built over Hogan's Alley. The history and the culture almost erased from the city and its existence is not well known. Hogan's Alley is an important piece of Black culture that should be celebrated, enhanced, and recognized by the citizens of Vancouver. It's up to The City of Vancouver to create those small steps of reconciliation with the Black community and support work that builds platforms to amplify their history, community, and their voices.

The Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee met with Maya Preshyon, founder and creator of the Vancouver Black Library, who has a proposal for the COV to fund a Black Library and community space. Not only would it provide essential Black History, culture, writers, poetry, and teachings, it would also be a safe space for racialized people for programming and functions. The Vancouver Black Library would be in line with funding for equity deserving communities for the COV and would fill a gap we currently have. It would be a great asset for VSB and VPL, as well as neighbouring post-secondary institutions and the greater community. They would also offer financial literacy workshops to ceramic making, engaging all kind of interests.

The budget summary looks like the following:

- Library construction + furnishing \$17,000
- Salary \$179,604
- Rent \$19,500
- Technology \$13,900
- Book Purchasing \$18,000
- Programing \$30,000
- Operational Costs \$2,400

Total: \$280,404

RECE unanimously supports the Vancouver Black Library's proposal for 1 year of funding from the City of Vancouver and supports further funding on a long-term basis in the hopes of expansion. RECE supports the City of Vancouver to suggest additional means to continue long-term funding for Vancouver Black Library. RECE would like to see a relationship with the Vancouver Public Library, led by and with parameters made by Vancouver Black Library. RECE supports this project as a step forward for the City of Vancouver to become anti-racist, culturally diverse and adding education to our city.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Kallstrom, Chair
Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee

Copies to: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Teresa Jong, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian & CEO, Vancouver Public Library
Chrysalyn Tolentino, Executive Assistant, Vancouver Public Library
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Tina Penney, Director, Legislative Operations
Kevin Burris, Manager, Civic Agencies