

**From:** "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>

**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

**CC:** "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"  
"Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 5/19/2020 12:42:34 PM

**Subject:** Memo: Deaccessioning of public art work "The Words Don't Fit the Picture"

**Attachments:** ACCS - GM - Memo (Mayor & Council) - Deaccessioning of public art work "The Words Don't Fit the Picture" (2020-05-19).pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached is a memo from the General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services, Sandra Singh regarding the Deaccessioning of public art work "The Words Don't Fit the Picture" from Dilawri Square at the Vancouver Central Library.

- Vancouver artist Ron Terada was commissioned to create a work of public art for the city through the Legacy Sites program of the Olympic and Paralympic Public Art Program in 2009-10.
- Planned changes to the recently renamed plaza required the work be removed from its current location.
- Due to the costs associated with moving and restoring the artwork and a lack of support for re-siting it at the library, the work was brought by staff to the Public Art Committee (PAC) on Oct. 21 to consider under the City's Deaccession Guidelines, a jury was convened to recommend a course of action
- Staff and consultants then developed a plan to remove the work, with full consideration of Provincial COVID-19 health guidelines.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to email Sandra Singh at [Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca)

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** | Deputy City Manager  
Office of the City Manager | City of Vancouver  
[paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca)  
604.873.7666



*The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.*

---

## MEMORANDUM

May 19, 2020

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Communications Director  
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian, Vancouver Public Library;  
Branislav Henselmann, Managing Director, Cultural Services

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Deaccessioning of public art work "The Words Don't Fit the Picture"

---

### PURPOSE

To inform Council of the deaccessioning of the artwork "The Words Don't Fit the Picture" from the collection of the City of Vancouver and its removal from its site in Dilawri Square at the Vancouver Central Library.

### BACKGROUND

Vancouver artist Ron Terada was commissioned to create a work of public art for the city through the Legacy Sites program of the Olympic and Paralympic Public Art Program in 2009-10. Terada proposed an illuminated sign reading "The Words Don't Fit the Picture," addressing the Romanesque architecture of the Central Library.

Planned changes to the recently renamed plaza required the work be removed from its current location. The artwork would also need major restoration due to the failure of many of its LED lighting elements. The cost of refitting and re-siting the artwork was estimated at \$142,000.

Due to the costs associated with moving and restoring the artwork and a lack of support for re-siting it at the library, the work was brought by staff to the Public Art Committee (PAC) on Oct. 21 to consider under the City's [Deaccession Guidelines](#). PAC moved to direct staff to convene a jury to recommend a course of action.

Staff also contacted the artist to offer the chance to comment. He wrote that while it had been a pleasure to have his work on display in the city for nearly ten years, he was disheartened at the recent condition of the work and did not think any fixes would reasonably ensure its long-term integrity. He concluded, "I feel it is best for the work, and the City, that *The Words Don't Fit the Picture* be decommissioned and removed. Save the money! It has been an honour and a wonderful run!"

The jury met on November 21, and moved as follows:

After considered discussion, in accordance with the deaccession guidelines, and consultation with the artist, the jury recommends that "The Words Don't Fit the Picture" be removed from Dilawri Square at the Central Library and deaccessioned from the City of Vancouver public art collection at the soonest possible date. We look to staff to decide the appropriate method of disposal, noting our concern that no recognizable aspect of the work remains in existence after disposal, to preserve the integrity of the original artwork.

Staff and consultants then developed a plan to remove the work, with full consideration of Provincial COVID-19 health guidelines. Given its site-specific nature and the wishes of the artist and jury, the course of action will be to destroy the object and recycle what materials can be in reasonable fashion.

## **FINAL REMARKS**

If there are any questions or Councillors need additional information, please feel free to contact Sandra Singh, General Manager at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca)



Sandra Singh, General Manager  
Arts, Culture, and Community Services  
tel: 604.871.6858  
[sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca)