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

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**Date:** 5/29/2020 3:13:13 PM

**Subject:** Memo: Punjabi Market's 50th Anniversary – Update on Acknowledgement Event

**Attachments:** ACCS-PDS-ES - GM - Memo (Mayor & Council) Punjabi Market's 50th Anniversary (2020-05-29).pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached is a memo from the General Managers of Arts, Culture, and Community Services; Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability; and Engineering Services regarding the Punjabi Market's 50th Anniversary. Of note:

- The 50th Anniversary of the Market takes place on Sunday, May 31. To mark the occasion, City Hall will be illuminated in orange, and a webpage to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Punjabi Market is now live
- Staff have worked with the Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective to support an online celebration event and other activities
- Pending prioritization of work post COVID-19, staff will report back to Council with more details and recommendations related to the larger Punjabi Market planning process

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to email Sandra Singh at [Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca), Gil Kelley at [gil.kelley@vancouver.ca](mailto:gil.kelley@vancouver.ca) and/or Lon LaClaire at [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca)

Best,  
Sadhu

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Pronouns: he, him, his



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

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## MEMORANDUM

May 29, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement & Communications Director  
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Susan Haid, Deputy Director, Long Range and Strategic Planning  
Margaret Wittgens, Deputy General Manager, Engineering Services  
Mary Clare Zak, Managing Director, Social Policy and Projects  
Branislav Henselmann, Managing Director, Cultural Services  
Neil Hrushowy, Assistant Director, Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability  
Wilma Clarke, Assistant Director, Social Policy and Projects  
Lesley Matthews, Chief, External Relations and Protocol  
Lisa Parker, Branch Manager, Street Activities, Engineering Services

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services  
Gil Kelley, General Manager, Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability  
Lon LaClaire, General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Punjabi Market's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Update on Acknowledgement Event

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### **PURPOSE**

To provide Council with an update on plans for a special online Celebration Program to acknowledge the Punjabi Market's 50th Anniversary' and highlight work done to date in response to Council's motion on 'Punjabi Market at Fifty: Celebrating the Past and Planning for the Future'

### **BACKGROUND**

In June, 2019 Council unanimously approved the motion 'Punjabi Market at Fifty: Celebrating the Past and Planning for the Future'. The motion: identifies May 31, 2020 as "Punjabi Market Day", affirms the historic and present day importance of the Punjabi Market, and directs staff to work together with the community to identify "quick wins" for public realm improvements and to collaborate with the community on work related to the Vancouver Plan.

Between July 2019 and March 2020, an interdepartmental team comprised of staff from Planning & Development Services, Arts Culture & Community Services and Engineering Services undertook a number of engagement activities with business and property owners in the Punjabi Market, as well as the community at large. These were designed to raise awareness about the Council motion and to explore ideas around the future of the Market. A set of initial recommended actions was developed and tested with community members earlier this year. Initial recommendations included public realm improvements, the creation of a historic context statement, capacity building for area businesses, and additional support for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, a report to Council on this work has been deferred.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Program**

Based on Council's motion, one of the key planning efforts was to work with the community to plan for and mark May 31<sup>st</sup> 2020 as Punjabi Market Day. Due to the pandemic, the original plan proposed by community for an in-person celebration was adapted to a special online Celebration Program. This virtual program is meant to act as a placeholder for an in person event later in the year when it is safe to participate in large in person gathering events again.

Staff worked with the Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective (PMRC) – a community based organization – to develop plans for diverse virtual events to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Market. The special online Celebration Program includes:

- cultural performances;
- a “virtual” Punjabi Market (an online shopping portal highlighting market products to support small businesses);
- an integrated social media campaign aiming to celebrate the history of the market and acknowledge its significance to the South Asian community and Sunset neighbourhood while also helping sustain local businesses through the crisis; and
- related online programs offered by Indian Summer Festival, South Asian Arts Festival, and the Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration Society's 5X Festival.

### **City Announcement and City Hall Ceremony**

With guidance from a community planning committee, the original plan was to mark the Punjabi Market Day with a City proclamation and celebratory event at City Hall. Prior to the Covid19 pandemic, Staff were exploring the budget supports needed to carry out the committee's recommendation to hold the associated celebratory activities in the market neighbourhood when the emergency response to Covid19 put this work on hold.

Due to requirements for social distancing, alternate plans were proposed to mark the day. The City's Protocol office, working with the PMRC, will host a [landing page](#) on the City's website marking May 31 as Punjabi Market Day. The website features information on the market's history and its cultural, social, and economic significance, along with links to the City's ongoing work in the neighbourhood. On May 31, City Hall will also be illuminated orange, a colour which symbolizes courage and sacrifice and is one of three colours used in the Indian flag.

## **Additional Considerations**

### **Public Space & Streetscape Amenities**

Based on feedback from the public and merchants, staff has identified potential public space and creative streetscape initiatives for the Punjabi Market area. We have committed to supporting a mural led by the community in Punjabi Market and staff will continue to engage with local stakeholders and residents post pandemic to determine interest and support for other initiatives before recommending implementation.

### **Cultural Heritage and Redress**

The revitalization work in Punjabi market also aligns with key directions of *Culture|Shift*, the City's culture plan, which prioritizes the importance of conserving intangible cultural heritage and promoting cultural redress. Cultural grants were approved by Council to Indian Summer Festival, South Asian Arts Festival, and the Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration Society's 5X Festival to work with the PMRC to deliver a range of artistic and cultural activations in the Punjabi Market during the Spring and Summer of 2020. Due to the pandemic, some of the proposed projects will be extended till the end of 2021.

The work will also align with Council's motion on Historical Discrimination and Apology for the South Asian community, which is under consideration by the City's Racial and Ethnocultural Equity Advisory Committee.

### **Capacity Building**

Social Policy staff supported the PMRC as they navigated City processes and facilitated the interdepartmental coordination of the work outlined above. Staff also connected community partners with mutual goals to help leverage community assets and resources, and amplify the impact of this event on economic regeneration efforts.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Punjabi Market revitalization work will take on new significance post COVID-19 as communities re-engage in economic, social and cultural recovery work in the neighbourhood. Learnings from the pandemic crisis may generate new ideas which will further strengthen community's participation. The marking of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary will galvanize community participation and support to the work. Pending prioritization of work post COVID-19, staff will report back to Council with more details and recommendations for next steps.

The cultural, social and economic regeneration efforts outlined above align with the direction of Council's motion on Historical Discrimination and Apology for the South Asian community, which is under consideration by the City's Racial and Ethnocultural Equity Advisory Committee and these efforts represent early steps towards promoting and celebrating the inclusion, belonging and resiliency of the South Asian community.

## **FINAL REMARKS**

If there are any questions or if additional information is needed, please feel free to contact Sandra Singh, General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca); Lon LaClaire, General Manager of Engineering Services, at [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca); Gil Kelley, General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability at [gil.kelley@vancouver.ca](mailto:gil.kelley@vancouver.ca).



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