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To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"
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Date: 6/29/2020 2:11:00 PM
Subject: Commemorations Review Update

Dear Mayor and Council,

Arising from the public dialogue regarding the Gassy Jack statue, we understand that many of you are receiving inquiries regarding the upcoming commemorations policy review as planned as part of the *Culture|Shift* implementation.

Staff at the public art program of Cultural Services are beginning a cross-departmental review of City commemorations policy and practices.

BACKGROUND

- Current [policy](#), set by Park Board, relies on nonprofit organizations to propose and fully fund monuments and memorials. Park Board's public position (see [here](#)) is that new monuments and memorials are not being considered at present, awaiting new policy.
- The City has a [donation policy](#) but does not have specific policies around commemoration.
- The Public Art Committee is charged with reviewing proposals (whether proposed for City or Parks land).
- From an equity perspective, this limits commemoration in the City to groups with access to funds and the ability to incorporate as a nonprofit or find sponsorship.
- The policy doesn't speak to the possibility for City sponsorship or leadership in commemoration.
- It also sidelines other City departments and advisory councils and committees from the process.
- The City's policy work will be done independently, but will inform and be informed by parallel work at Park Board.

POLICY CONTEXT

Other emerging work at the City should inform work on Commemorations, including the following:

- Equity strategy
- Directions on Reconciliation in *Culture|Shift*, including mapping sites of cultural significance to the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations
- City asset naming
- Development of Indigenous Design Principles
- Cultural redress work in relation to Chinatown Transformation, Gastown Streets and Spaces, Punjabi Market, Hogan's Alley, and other projects that recognize the impacts of historic discrimination.

MONUMENTS AND RECONCILIATION AND REDRESS

- Discussions about commemorating historic figures through statues and naming of public buildings have been active for the past couple of years across Canada and the United States.
- Recently, waves of protest across North America began with iconoclastic action against Confederate monuments, but have also focused attention and actions against monuments commemorating Canada's Colonial past, including statues of Captain George Vancouver and John "Gassy Jack" Deighton.
- As immediate work, City staff across Cultural Services, Social Policy, and CMO/Indigenous Relations are working with Squamish Nation, as well as Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and Matriarchs, to consider the future of the *Gassy Jack* sculpture in Maple Tree Square.
- This work will inform Commemorations Policy Review, and will connect with work on Gastown Streets and Spaces, but will be addressed with greater urgency than either project.

CURRENT STATUS AND TIMELINE

- Public art staff are reviewing literature and policy, and researching new developments in commemoration while developing a project charter, timeline and budget.
- Staff anticipate robust public engagement, including involvement of City advisory committees and commissions and focused work within communities currently working to secure their presence, visibility, heritage and culture in the city.
- Timeline: The review should be complete by 2022, with proposals to Council for new policy, tools, and budgets.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Sandra Singh at Sandra.singh@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.