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To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Admin Assistants - DL"
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Date: 8/6/2020 2:44:48 PM
Subject: Chief Equity Officer appointed

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am very pleased to announce that Aftab Erfan (she/her) will be joining the City of Vancouver on September 14, 2020 as our Chief Equity Officer. In this role, Aftab will lead our Equity and Diversity Office reporting directly to the City Manager's Office.

As I communicated last year, we are reallocating resources from Human Resources and CMO to create the [Equity and Diversity Office](#) with a mandate to coordinate, accelerate and track progress on the many equity-related initiatives under way across our departments, including implementation of the Equity Framework that ACCS staff are currently working to finalize. As the Chief Equity Officer, Aftab will lead the development of an organizational plan and approach to institutional and culture change that enables us to attract, welcome and fully support employees that represent the diversity of the communities we serve. Aftab will also work with departments to integrate and strengthen an equity and justice lens in our delivery of services to the public.

It is difficult to overstate how much our world has changed since I initially announced the creation of the Equity and Diversity Office late last year. While the original intent of that decision remains valid, the events of the past six months have brought into sharp focus the extent of the work in front of us to address systemic racism and other barriers that exist inside and outside our organization.

Given the complexity of the work we need to do, I am excited for the wealth of experience, talent and vision that Aftab will bring as our first Chief Equity Officer. She joins us from the Equity and Inclusion Office at UBC where she has been serving as the Director of Dialogue and Conflict Engagement, and teaching at the School of Community and Regional Planning. Prior to her appointment at UBC, Aftab operated her own consulting practice and has worked locally and internationally assisting governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses and academic institutions to build capacity and support collaboration on matters of equity, justice and human rights. Aftab holds a Masters in Urban Planning and a PhD in Community and Regional Planning, which was granted based on years of action research with the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations on Vancouver Island. Aftab also has direct experience working with municipalities as a consultant and as a long-range planner with the District of North Vancouver.

As I welcome Aftab into this position, we would both like to acknowledge the use of the title "Chief" in Chief Equity Officer, which has been appropriately called out as a problem because of its significance to local Indigenous people who use and honour this word in a very different way. We felt it was important for this role to be called Chief Equity Officer to communicate the status of the work on equity in institutional terms. Regardless of the title, the position is fully committed to paving the way for the City of Vancouver's commitments to reconciliation and decolonization, including changes in language we use across our organization to better reflect these commitments.

I am excited to have Aftab join our team in the CMO and lead our work to make the City a more equitable employer and local government organization. Please join me in making her welcome.

I ask that you please keep this information confidential until all City staff have been informed.

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.