

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"
Date: 9/25/2020 1:30:07 PM
Subject: Making 3rd Floor More Welcoming and Accessible

Dear Mayor and Council,

The 3rd floor will undergo some changes in efforts to make it more welcoming and accessible to the public. Timing is very appropriate given the worldwide attention on the anti-racism movement and a way to support the equity and anti-racism work that the City is undertaking.

At present, the display in the foyer consists of custom-built wood cabinets that showcase an assortment of gifts to the City, artifacts from Vancouver's role as an Olympic and Paralympic host city, and ceremonial civic objects. Black and white architectural photographs are wall-mounted on either side of the main entrance doors. Portraits of Vancouver's past mayors are found on the walls adjacent to the Council Chambers entrance.

While exposing visitors to segments of Vancouver's history and its official civic functions, the foyer is not a space in which all of Vancouver citizens can see themselves reflected. It presents an Anglo-centric, settler-focused interpretation of Vancouver. The city itself is home to many Indigenous and diasporic communities – Chinese, South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, Filipino, Italian, German, and many others – who have made and continue to make significant contributions to the city.

Lastly, the foyer does not adequately situate Vancouver within the unceded, ancestral territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Council Chamber houses three panels crafted by artists from each Host Nation; however, not all visitors to the third floor enter the chamber.

This project presents an opportunity to tell a richer and more complete set of stories about the past and present contributions of Vancouver residents in ways that better reflect our diverse population. The 3rd floor foyer currently displays official artifacts and photos that generally represent the colonial history of Vancouver. There are few display items or installations that reflect the diversity of Vancouver's population, including contributions and experiences of Indigenous Peoples and other racialized members of our community. The project is estimated to cost approximately \$18,500 and expected to be funded from the savings of cancelled events within existing budget.

Working with the Museum of Vancouver's curator, this project will contribute to the following City of Vancouver strategic commitments:

- The City of Vancouver's **Equity Framework**
- The City of Vancouver's **City of Reconciliation** commitments
- The City of Vancouver's commitments to addressing **anti-black racism**
- Goal 4 of the **City Clerk's Strategic Plan 2020**: "The City Clerk's Office fosters openness, transparency, access and participation in City government"
- Your City Hall (YCH)**: a new City Clerk's office initiative that takes a systems change and equity-focused approach to increasing civic literacy, deepening democratic participation, and reducing barriers to participation in civic life within and beyond City Hall. Action areas of YCH include: (1) A listen and learn campaign to understand and respond to gaps in knowledge about how local government works, how to get involved, and how to make change happen, (2) A toolbox of resources to fill gaps in information and clarify pathways to civic participation, and (3) Convening partners and amplifying actions among

interested individuals, groups and organizations in ways that reflect different understandings and lived experiences related to democratic participation.

Project Outline:

The walls on either side of the entrance to the foyer are the most visible and accessible space on the third floor. This is where visitors enter and congregate before Council sessions. The project will include replacing the architectural photographs on either side of the entrance with two large screens which will feature archival and contemporary images: on one side, a slideshow of Vancouver's past mayors, and on the other, a slideshow of citizens and groups of activists who have affected change in Vancouver. The mayors' portraits will be removed from the walls on either side of Council Chambers and will be digitized over the next few weeks. These scans will be used for the past Mayors slideshow. The architectural photos, which are strong stand-alone images, will be removed from the walls on either side of the foyer entrance and relocated to walls outside of Council Chambers.

Examples of individuals and groups for potential inclusion in the "citizen slideshow":

- Shirley Chan and residents of Strathcona, who led the fight to stop the freeway;
- The Militant Mothers of Raymur, who occupied the railway track near Admiral Seymour Elementary School until a safe crossing was built for their children;
- Vivian Jung, the first Chinese-Canadian teacher hired by the Vancouver School Board, and whose life-saving certification resulted in the termination of segregation practices at Crystal Pool (now the Aquatic Centre);
- Greenpeace, which emerged from Vancouver-based protests of the Amchitka nuclear tests;
- Bruce Smyth and Jim Deva, founders of Little Sister's, the first queer bookstore in Western Canada and site for LGBTQ2+ community building during the AIDS epidemic; and
- Lorelei Williams, MMIWG activist, founder of Butterflies in Spirit, and Women's Coordinator for the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre.

Objects to add from MOV Collection to be displayed in the cabinets:

- City of Yokohama key, c. 1970s: H984.97.1*
The key was gifted to Halford Wilson, acting as representative of the City of Vancouver, during a formal visit in the 1970s. When Mr. Wilson was a City of Vancouver Alderman in 1942, he, along with Alderman Price, was responsible for passing the motion which resulted in the forcible relocation of Japanese-Canadians from the Pacific Coast to internment camps.
- Brick thrown from the Komogata Maru, 1914: H982.217.104*
Thrown by Sikhs aboard the "Komogata Maru" anchored in Vancouver Harbour, 1914, July 19th at 1:30 am to protest anti-Asian immigration policy.
- Ken Brock's Gay Games medal: H2008.24.34*
The third Gay Games were held in Vancouver August 4-11, 1990. Donor Ken Brock was awarded this bronze medal in the sport of racquetball. This is part of the first installment of a collection of personal items selected by Brock to document his life as a gay man during the years between 1960s and the present.
- Centennial Mayor's Chain of Office: H2006.44.2*
Chain of Office made by Stewart Ross for Mayor Mike Harcourt to wear during Vancouver Centennial celebrations. The chain is comprised of various sizes and shades of jade set in silver.

Please contact Rosemary Hagiwara at rosemary.hagiwara@vancouver.ca if you have any questions.

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.