

File No. 04-1000-20-2016-200

July 5, 2016

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")

I am writing in response to your request received on June 8, 2016 for:

Regarding the article "Why Is Vancouver So Expensive?" by Gregor Robertson, published May 30, 2016 in The Walrus: Correspondence between City of Vancouver (specifically the Office of the Mayor and Communications Department) and The Walrus; records about the concept, draft and final submission, including, but not limited to, advice or writing by persons other than the Mayor; and records about the payment to any external advisors or writers.

All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed, (blacked out), under s.22(1) of the Act. You can read or download those sections here: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00

Under section 52 of the Act you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your request. The Act allows you 30 business days from the date you receive this notice to request a review by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number assigned to your request (04-1000-20-2016-200); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request for information sent to the City of Vancouver; and 4) detailed reasons or grounds on which you are seeking the review.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Freedom of Information Office at foi@vancouver.ca if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Van Fraassen', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Barbara J. Van Fraassen, BA
Director, Access to Information
City Clerk's Department, City of Vancouver
Email: Barbara.vanfraassen@vancouver.ca
Telephone: 604.873.7999

Encl.

:cf

From: ["Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca)
To: ["Bertrand, Dana" <dana.bertrand@vancouver.ca>](mailto:dana.bertrand@vancouver.ca)
Date: 6/22/2016 5:40:55 PM
Subject: FW: walrus
Attachments: 2016_05_18_Walrus response.docx

Also this one – in my sent folder

From: Quinlan, Kevin
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2016 6:51 PM
To: Robb, Katie
Subject: RE: walrus

Think this is it

From: Robb, Katie
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2016 6:47 PM
To: Quinlan, Kevin
Subject: Re: walrus

Crap. Can you send me something from the h drive? H>2016>opeds>walrus response>latest version

Katie Robb
778.918.7973

On May 19, 2016, at 6:43 PM, Quinlan, Kevin <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca> wrote:

I don't know the full context of the stat, but I'd clarify it as

In the next six months alone, there are 2,000 job openings that Vancouver companies are hungry to fill that pay 66 per cent higher than the average industrial wage.

From: Robb, Katie
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2016 6:25 PM
To: Quinlan, Kevin
Subject: walrus

What Vancouver also shares with these other world-class cities is a nation-leading economy founded on green, clean jobs in technology, innovation, digital, and knowledge based industries that adds thousands of well-paying jobs to our city per year. In the next six months alone, there are 2,000 jobs companies are hungry to fill that pay 66 per cent higher than the average industrial wage.

Katie Robb
Director of Communications
Office of the Mayor | City of Vancouver
Office: 604.873.7490 | Cell: 778.918.7973
Mayorofvancouver.ca

Re: How Political Correctness is Hurting the Poor

Affordability is, without question, the biggest issue facing Vancouver. The Walrus's feature piece by Kerry Gold, and commentary by editor Jonathan Kay, attempts to answer the question of the disconnect between housing prices and the people who live here. Both believe that the answer is simple: buyers from China are swallowing up our real estate - and politicians ignore it. The end result, they argue? A hollow, cultureless city devoid of millennials and families.

While global capital is undoubtedly a major factor in Vancouver's housing prices, to say that it is the only factor is wrong. Is an influx of global capital impacting Vancouver's housing market? Absolutely. The same thing is happening in diverse, resilient cities like London, New York and San Francisco, who - like Vancouver - are also struggling to protect affordable housing for their residents. **What Vancouver also shares with these other world-class cities is a nation-leading economy founded on green, clean jobs in technology, innovation, digital, and knowledge based industries that adds thousands of new jobs to our city- 2,000 new ones per day.**

What pundits like Jonathan Kay get wrong is assuming that anybody with a Chinese name who is buying a home must not be Canadian. It is an outdated and tired assumption, especially in Vancouver, one of the most multicultural and diverse cities in the world. You can't determine someone's citizenship by their name - and you certainly can't make informed public policy decisions based on it.

To say that political correctness is stifling a public debate on foreign investment in Vancouver is not only absurd, it's false. There is no other issue more talked about, more reported on in print, on T.V., on radio, or across social media channels than the speculated impact of offshore money on Vancouver's housing prices.

The state of Vancouver's housing market today didn't happen overnight. Vancouver is feeling the impact of decades of slashed federal co-op housing funding and the elimination of incentives for new rental apartments, leaving a dearth of housing available for people on low and modest incomes. Planning decisions in the 1990s that prioritized condo towers over townhomes and row houses have resulted in a lack of choice available to today's buyers, leaving millennials and families feeling particularly pressured with a lack of options to put down roots in the city.

So what's to be done? At City Hall, we've taken a number of steps based on the belief that housing should be for homes, and not a commodity. Over the last five years we've taken bold steps to create and protect affordable homes using new tools, policy and partnerships. **Mr. Kay and Mr. Gold both outright ignore the extensive housing options - co-ops, cohousing, and our first ever land trust - available in great neighbourhoods beyond Vancouver's city centre. Limiting analysis to detached homes - which most can agree are a remnant of a past, and less sustainable era of city planning - is as skewed as doing the same analysis of single detached homes in Manhattan and ignoring the vibrant boroughs surrounding it.**

But even with all the City's efforts there's more to be done; and while the City can control what gets built, we can't control who buys. That rests with the provincial government. That's why I've been outspoken in calling for new tools to help create a

more level playing field when it comes to housing in Vancouver. A luxury sales tax and a speculation tax would go a long way to reducing the commodification of housing, and ensure the wealthiest buyers who can afford the multi-million dollar mansions (and increasingly, multi-million dollar bungalows) can give back to those on more modest incomes who need security of housing most.

Kerry Gold's gloomy assertion that Vancouver is a "knock-off Monaco" doesn't hold up. Our cultural scene punches above its weight and routinely draws international attention for our theatre, music, comedy and visual arts. In its first year, we had Canada's largest public New Year's Eve celebration. More than 600,000 people come out to watch the largest Pride Parade in North America.

Patios stay open later, our craft breweries are exploding in popularity, and our food trucks are globally revered. Car-Free Day on Commercial Drive and Khatsilano Fest on West 4th pack thousands of families on our streets every summer. The PuSh Festival, VIFF and the Folk Fest get capacity crowds and have lineups onto the street.

Hollowed out city? Tell that to our public libraries and community centres that are seeing record levels of use. And in the case of daycare, Vancouver has given the single biggest allotment by a Canadian city - ever - to try to keep up with families' high demand.

Yes, housing prices are high in Vancouver, and global capital plays a part in that. If prices keep increasing, many of the things we love about Vancouver are at risk, and many will not be able to put down roots in a city bound together by a rich, multicultural history that has a lot to offer geographically and culturally. But reducing one of our toughest challenges to a series of sweeping statements and generalizations about the people that make up our city - both past and present - misses the bigger picture of what's really happening in Vancouver.

Gregor Robetson
Mayor of Vancouver

From: ["Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca)

To: ["Bertrand, Dana" <dana.bertrand@vancouver.ca>](mailto:dana.bertrand@vancouver.ca)

Date: 6/22/2016 5:40:12 PM

Subject: FW: walrus

Only record I have for FOI 2016-200

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Katie Robb
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Office: 604.873.7490 | Cell: 778.918.7973
Mayorofvancouver.ca

From: "Robb, Katie" <Katie.Robb@vancouver.ca>

To: jonkay@^{s.22(1)}

Date: 5/30/2016 10:53:28 AM

Subject: RE: Mayor Robertson submission

Attachments: Mayor Robertson Re How Political Correctness is Hurting the Poor.pdf

Fair enough –it was inferred in your piece, but I've updated to attached to reflect your change.

Any other questions or concerns, let me know! Thanks for picking it up – if you don't mind sending the link when it's live, I'd appreciate it.

Cheers,

Katie Robb

Office: 604.873.7490 | Cell: 778.918.7973

From: Jonathan Kay ^{s.22(1)}

Sent: Monday, May 30, 2016 10:37 AM

To: Robb, Katie

Subject: Re: Mayor Robertson submission

Yes -- I think i can run this.

But is it fair to say that, in my own article, I was "assuming that anybody with a Chinese name who is buying a home in Vancouver must not be from Canada"

I certainly don't think I ever said that. (But please correct me if I'm wrong)

Could we instead say "What some pundits get wrong is assuming that anybody with a Chinese name who is buying a home in Vancouver must not be from Canada"?

On Mon, May 30, 2016 at 1:10 PM, Robb, Katie <Katie.Robb@vancouver.ca> wrote:

Hi Jonathan,

I don't think we've met before? Nice to e-meet you.

Mayor Robertson would like to submit a response to the Walrus' April ([How Political Correctness is Hurting the Poor](#)) and March ([Sold to the Highest Bidder](#)) online editions – see attached. Happy to discuss further by phone if you like, I can be reached at the numbers below.

Many thanks,

Katie Robb

Director of Communications

Office of the Mayor | City of Vancouver

Office: [604.873.7490](tel:604.873.7490) | Cell: [778.918.7973](tel:778.918.7973)

Mayorofvancouver.ca

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Jonathan Kay

Editor

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Re: How Political Correctness is Hurting the Poor

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Gregor Robertson
Mayor of Vancouver