

**From:** "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

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

**CC:** "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"  
"Matthews, Lesley" <lesley.matthews@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 12/9/2019 2:26:39 PM

**Subject:** Memo - Staff Review of Council Hosted Annual Events

**Attachments:** BPPS - Council Events Policy - Current State - Memo to Mayor and Council....pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find attached a memo regarding a project to review the following "Council Hosted Annual Events":

- Lunar New Year
- Black History Month
- International Women's Day
- Persian New Year (Nowruz)
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- Italian Heritage Month
- World Refugee Day
- National Indigenous Peoples Day
- Vancouver Pride Week
- Eid-al-Adha
- Diwali, Festival of Lights
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Christmas

The purpose of the review is to:

1. define a framework that guides decision-making around Council Hosted Annual Events,
2. evaluate and prioritize the current events to affirm alignment with the framework, and
3. ensure that resources are in place to support the events on an annual basis.

We invite you to complete [this brief survey](#), by **Tuesday, December 31**, to share your experiences with these events and the priorities you feel are most important in the hosting of these events. As the official hosts, your feedback is critical to the development of a framework that reflects Council's values and priorities.

A report to Council is expected in May 2020 recommending the establishment of a clear prioritization criteria and governance framework.

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to me or Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk at [Katrina.Leckovic@vancouver.ca](mailto:Katrina.Leckovic@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

December 6, 2019

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Lesley Matthews, Chief External Relations and Protocol  
Shannen Zaturecky, Project Manager, Business Planning & Project Support

FROM: Sadhu A. Johnston  
City Manager

SUBJECT: Staff Review of Council Hosted Annual Events

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to share information about a staff review of Council Hosted Annual Events and the development of a policy framework to guide future decisions with respect to these events. This memo also serves as a preliminary report back regarding the March 6, 2019 Council motion asking staff to provide a fulsome analysis of an appropriate annual celebration to recognize 'Vancouver's Birthday'.

### BACKGROUND

In January 2007, City Council approved a list of designated National and International Events (Council Hosted Annual Events) to be officially recognized by the City, including:

- International Women's Day – March 8
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – March 21
- National Aboriginal Day – June 21
- Pride Week – July/August
- International Day of Disabled Persons – December 3
- Lunar New Year – January/February
- Diwali Festival of Lights – October/November
- Christmas – December

The first five events were selected to recognize the five dimensions of diversity, including gender, race, sexual orientation, Indigenous heritage, and disability and the last three events recognized the largest regions of origin of Vancouver's population at the time, including East-Asia, South-Asia, and Europe. Council designated each event with a \$2,000 budget for hosting receptions.

With Council's approval, External Relations and Protocol was mandated to coordinate the annual events with the support of a cross-departmental planning team. Events were recognized in a standard format during Council meetings to ensure equity and full Council participation and generally involved a Mayoral proclamation followed by a small reception in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor foyer of City Hall during a Council break.

## **DISCUSSION**

Over time, Council Hosted Annual Events were no longer marked during Council meetings as they were taking time away from Council's regular business and community members were unable to attend due to work schedules. Concurrently, the planning of these events became the sole responsibility of the External Relations & Protocol team as departmental mandates shifted to focus on core services. In addition, Council approved more events without additional budget or staff resourcing, including:

- Black History Month, Eid al-Adha, and World Refugee Day (2011)
- Italian Heritage Month (2018)
- Nowruz (2019)

As a result, the events with high community support and participation continued and increased in size, scope and complexity, while other events that did not have the same level of community support were either discontinued or not marked in any notable form.

To support the ongoing success and equitable recognition of the city's diverse community, City staff are:

- developing a policy framework to guide decision-making,
- evaluating and prioritizing the current events to affirm alignment with the proposed framework, and
- ensuring that resources are in place to support the events annually

It is expected that the draft framework will be presented to Council for consideration in Q2 2020.

To assist with the development of the framework, you are invited to complete a brief survey regarding your experience and participation in the annual events, and the priorities you feel are most important in the hosting of these events. As the official hosts, your feedback is critical for staff to build a policy that reflects Council's values and priorities. To complete the survey, please click on the link at the end of this memo.

As a final note, the drafting of the policy framework is happening concurrent to Council's request to conduct a fulsome analysis on an appropriate annual event to celebrate "Vancouver's Birthday". Staff recommend that the analysis and recommendations regarding "Vancouver's Birthday" be considered once a new events policy framework has been approved by Council.

Should you have questions or require further clarification, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sadhu A. Johnston  
City Manager

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[Click here by Dec 31, 2019 to provide feedback on the Council Hosted Annual Events.](#)