

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

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

**CC:** "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"  
"Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 3/2/2020 8:25:06 AM

**Subject:** Memo to M&C in preparation for the MVAEC Site Visits Monday - March 2, 2020

**Attachments:** ACCS -GM - Memo (Council) - MVAEC Site Visit (2020-02-28).pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

The attached memo provides an update to Mayor and Council on the history and background for each of the sites to be visited during their MVAEC tour on Monday:

- Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society
- Urban Native Youth Association
- Vancouver Native Housing Society
- Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society

Please do not hesitate to let Sandra Singh ([Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca)) know if you have any questions.

Best,  
Sadhu

**Sadhu Aufochs Johnston** | City Manager  
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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**

February 28, 2020

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**CC:** Sadhu Johnston, City Manager  
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, 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  
Susan Haid, Deputy Director, Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability  
Katelyn Crabtree, Manager, Indigenous Relations  
Celine Mauboules, Acting Managing Director, Homelessness Services & Affordable Housing  
Ryan Bigelow, Acting CEO, Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency  
Mary Clare Zak, Managing Director, Social Policy and Projects  
Dianna Hurford, Senior Planner

**FROM:** Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

**SUBJECT:** Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) Site Visit Brief

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this memo is to brief Mayor and Council ahead of the March 2nd Mayor and Council site visit with Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) members in Grandview-Woodland.

**BACKGROUND**

On March 2, 2020 Mayor and Council will be visiting four MVAEC organizations: Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society, Urban Native Youth Association, Vancouver Native Housing Society and Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society.

The Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) is an umbrella organization serving 22 Indigenous service providers with policy development, advocacy and organizational leadership for urban Indigenous peoples. On January 19th, 2016, MVAEC and the City signed a

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The purpose of the MOU is to prioritize engagement, policy, and investments that enhance opportunities to meet the unique needs of urban Indigenous communities in Vancouver.

## **DISCUSSION**

Below is background information on the MVAEC members who will be participating in the meeting with you on Tuesday.

### **Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society**

*Established: 1963*

*Executive Director: Susan Tatoosh*

*Regional Clientele Base: 40,000 people*

*Program Highlights: Recreation, Elders Wisdom, Family Support, Shelter, Family Place, Housing Navigation.*

*Current Projects: 1015 East Hastings, 201 Central Aboriginal Shelter, 1607 E Hastings Friendship Centre Redevelopment*

The mandate of the centre is to meet the needs of the urban Aboriginal People making a transition to the urban community. The centre provides programs in health and welfare, social services, human rights, culture, education, recreation and equality for all genders of Aboriginal People of all age groups.

VAFCS is a charitable organization and emphasizes the philosophies and values of varied Aboriginal culture and traditions. For example, VAFCS helps children, youth, families, adults and elders maintain their Aboriginal cultural ties through various program and traditional community activities. VAFCS helps Aboriginal people access education, housing needs and support for families. The centre strives to provide holistic and cultural services to all of its community members.

### **Urban Native Youth Association**

*Established: 1988*

*Executive Director: Walter Schneider*

*Director of Operations: Cheryl Robinson*

*Annual youth visits: 26,000*

*Current Projects: Native Youth Centre Redevelopment*

Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) was formed in 1988 to address concerns facing Indigenous youth, at a time when growing numbers of young people began leaving reserves for the city. Thirty years later, young people continue to arrive in Vancouver seeking job and education opportunities and to experience urban life, sometimes without the important social and family connections to bridge into city life. UNYA is meeting these needs by providing a wide range of services, resources, and opportunities that support Vancouver's Indigenous youth to excel. Today, UNYA delivers 20+ programs, with 175+ volunteers, 100 staff, and more than 300 community partners.

UNYA has been working with many partners including the City of Vancouver, BC Housing, Partnership BC, Native Education College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Suncor Energy and hundreds of individual donors to realize their vision for a Native Youth on Hastings and Commercial. The vision is for a purpose built regional youth services hub with housing on site.

### **Vancouver Native Housing Society**

*Established: 1984*

*CEO: Dave Eddy*

*Portfolio: 19 Buildings (~900 units)*

*Employees: 100*

Vancouver Native Housing Society's mandate is to provide safe, secure and affordable housing. Although their original and ongoing mandate is to focus on the housing needs of the urban Indigenous community, they have expanded operations to include housing solutions for non-Indigenous people, seniors, youth, women at risk, persons living with mental health challenges and people who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness. VNHS provides family, individual and supportive housing options in the Commercial-Broadway, Grandview-Woodlands, Downtown Eastside and West-End neighbourhoods in Vancouver.

In addition to family and supportive housing residences, VNHS runs two Indigenous Social Enterprises called Skwachays Lodge and Gallery. Skwachays Lodge is also home to an Artist in Residence Program, a program that houses, supports, and provides Indigenous artists with a place to live and create. The artist's rents are subsidized by the hotel and gallery revenue.

### **Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society**

*Established: 1992*

*CEO: Bernadette Spence*

*Employees: 171 (~60% are Indigenous)*

The mission of Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society is to provide holistic service delivery that culturally and spiritually strengthens Aboriginal families. VACFSS offers a full spectrum of services encompassing Family Reunification and Preservation, Guardianship, Child Protection and Residential Resources. And they strive to culturally and spiritually strengthen families through practice guided by policy and research done in partnership with the communities they work alongside.

The VACFSS Philosophy of Service Delivery is to ensure that the rights, safety, well-being and spirit of Aboriginal children and families are upheld, honoured and protected. They strive to eliminate oppression, discrimination and marginalization within their community. They acknowledge and honour the inherent wisdom, capacity and resourcefulness of the community in designing programs and services to care for children and families. Accordingly, they are dedicated to planning, developing, and implementing creative and innovative Aboriginal programs and services in collaboration with members of the community and other agencies.

## FINAL REMARKS

Thank you for taking the time to meet with this important stakeholder group. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra Singh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sandra" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Singh".

Sandra Singh  
General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

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