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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 2/15/2023 5:23:46 PM
Subject: Update on Anti-Black Racism Work and South Asian Apology

Dear Mayor and Council,

Staff have received a request for an update regarding the work on historic discrimination toward the South Asian community (South Asian apology and recommendations for redress) and racism toward the Black and African diaspora communities. Please find below an update from the General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services Sandra Singh.

Anti-Black Racism Response Update:

- The anti-Black racism work has been on hold as since the interim report was presented to Council in September 2022 as the planner position supporting this work has been vacant since end of September 2022.
- There has been a challenge to recruiting due to budget uncertainty so the work had been on pause pending the finalization of the 2023 budget process.
- Once/if a budget approach is confirmed, recruitment for the Planner to continue the work will recommence.

South Asian Cultural Redress Update:

- Community Advisory Group:
 - o This group advises staff on recommendations on the responses to historical discrimination and redress for Vancouver's South Asian communities and helps to guide the process and make recommendations for a final report to Council.
 - o At the recommendation of the initial CAG, staff invited expressions of interest for additional members to add in some key missing voices from the group's initial composition. The Community Advisory group, will re-commence in March and the group will be engaged until the final report goes to Council.
 - o The advisory have expressed interest in inviting Council members to attend at least one of their virtual meetings to allow for open communication and relationship building. Staff will arrange an invitation and will provide Council members a briefing note prior to attendance.
- Research and Documentation (ongoing):
 - a. Historical research is being continued by the Planner II and an external independent researcher in support of the City of Vancouver's work to understand and address Historical Discrimination against people of South Asian Descent. One to one interviews with community members for further research and about their lived experiences are to be done by the Planner II and external researcher.
 - b. A Cultural Assets Mapping tool is being created to capture current and historical places of cultural significance to South Asian communities in Vancouver. It will include both the physical manifestation of buildings, and the intangible cultural heritage of daily life, as a living community. This tool will allow the City to better understand erasure, loss of cultural heritage and identify places of significance so that the City can protect South Asian tangible and intangible cultural heritage and improve the communities' sense of belonging in Vancouver.

- c. A community survey will be utilized to field test and confirm the priorities raised by the community advisory committee during Phase I.
- Community Engagement (Q2-Q3 2023):
 - Further engagement will allow us to work collaboratively with those with lived experience, including hearing their experiences related to historical discrimination of South Asian communities. Community engagement will also include targeted discussion with elders to document their experiences and feedback, and identify any gaps or issues not raised during the research.
 - As mentioned in the interim report, multiple culturally appropriate and safe community engagement is needed to take into account the intersectionality and diversity of the many sub-groups that make up South Asian communities.
 - The engagement will be mindful of the varying levels of trust, histories of trauma and marginalisation and consultation fatigue within communities.
 - Council will be invited to attend at least one engagement session.
- Actions while planning from interim report (ongoing):
 - Interdepartmental scoping work to formally recognizing Punjabi Market as a historically and culturally significant area:
 - PDS/Planning: Not yet actioned as it is not yet on 2023 work plan
 - Social Policy: Community input will taken during community engagement. Urgent Punjabi Market concerns including new developments, C2 zoning and the lack of protection of intangible and tangible heritage are arising issues that will have negative long term impacts
 - Creation and preservation of South Asian Canadian community spaces in Vancouver
 - Results and recommendations from the cultural assets mapping tool, survey and engagement sessions will be included in the final report to Council
 - Secondary street re-naming after Komagata Maru
 - Staff are preparing an update to Council on status in the next weeks
- Funding to support continuation of this work with the South Asian community is also a consideration as part of the 2023 budget process.

2023 Resources

- Staff have identified the additional resources needed to continue the work with these two communities as part of the 2023 budget process. The resources are identified in the list of unfunded work provided to Council for consideration and are the resources staff have identified as required to advance the work without impacting other work in ACCS.
- Should Council be unable to identify additional resources in 2023 for staff to continue to do this work but still wish to continue it, then direction to the General Manager during the budget deliberations to identify reallocations within the approved 2023 ACCS budget to continue this work will be needed. This direction will provide the GM with sufficient clarity to reallocate some potential staff time and other project support resources to advance this work with these two communities without additional funding. Such redirection may result in slowing down, back-burnering, or scoping down of other projects or activities.

If Council has any questions, please direct them to Sandra at Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca and she will provide responses through

the weekly Q&A.

Best,
Paul

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