

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 5/26/2023 8:45:45 AM
Subject: Upcoming information bulletin: City of Vancouver brings temporary Residential Schools memorial at Robson Square to a close (May 26, 2023)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will issue the below information bulletin on May 26, 2023 at approximately 11:30 am.

The information bulletin speaks to the conclusion of the memorial, the need for a future healing space, and words of appreciation for the public for helping to locate missing memorial items.

Due to the sensitive nature of this operation, shared messaging and agreement to coordinate with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations communications teams, I would ask you to refer any media queries you may receive on this topic to media@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
Information bulletin
May 26, 2023

City of Vancouver brings temporary Residential Schools memorial at Robson Square to a close

Following a private burning ceremony on Sunday, May 21, the City of Vancouver has respectfully brought the Residential School temporary memorial at Robson Square to a close. In doing this work, City staff have followed teachings by xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations in hopes to nourish those children, help them find peace, and support them to continue their journey to join their ancestors.

In xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh, and səliłwətał teachings, handed down through generations, memorials are temporary in nature to allow the spirits of those commemorated to move along on their journeys.

The City is grateful to the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh and səliłwətał Nations for their invaluable guidance and patience throughout this process.

The City also extends its appreciation to members of the public who helped identify the location of missing memorial items over the weekend. Staff were able to retrieve a large portion of the memorial items, which they then cleaned and blanketed for the Indigenous-led burning ceremony .

Staff were able to work with volunteers to remove the remaining items and structures at Robson Square early this week. The City thanks the volunteers and the artist for supporting an important and acute need to gather and grieve during this painful time. The City recognizes that this was a deeply meaningful and challenging undertaking.

Following a brushing ceremony, the City will now reactivate the plaza for public use, including supporting Indigenous weekend markets throughout the summer at Robson Square.

Future commemoration

The City acknowledges the atrocities and continued impacts of Residential Schools and recognizes that there is a need for spaces of recognition, honouring and healing for all those affected by residential schools. The City will continue to work with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh, and səliłwətał Nations and Urban Indigenous communities towards creating space for this purpose. The City will ensure that both the temporary memorial artist and the volunteers are invited to participate in these future conversations, anticipated to be led by the local Nations.

We understand the emotional and difficult nature of the process, especially for Indigenous community members, Residential School survivors, and their families. The Indian Residential School Survivors Society Emergency Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for those that may need counselling or support after receiving this distressing information. Call 1-800-721-0066 or the 24-hour crisis line 1-866-925-4419.

Should the public wish to support Residential School survivors, the City suggests a donation to the [Indian Residential School Survivors Society](#), rather than bringing items to Robson Square.