

**From:** ["Levitt, Karen" <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)  
**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
**Date:** 8/1/2023 5:42:58 PM  
**Subject:** ACCS Organization Update: New Portfolio and Deputy General Manager, ACT  
**Attachments:** ACCS - GM - Memo (Council) - ACCS Organization Update (2023-08-01).pdf

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached please find a memo from Sandra Singh, GM, Arts Culture and Community Services that she sent to staff today that provides an update on a new integrated, interdepartmental portfolio in ACCS and a new Deputy General Manager position.

Should Council have any further questions please contact Sandra directly at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca) and she will respond through the regular weekly Q&As.

Thanks,

Karen

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**Karen Levitt**, Deputy City Manager (she/her)  
[karen.levitt@vancouver.ca](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)

The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm/Musqueam, Sḵwx̱ú817 wú7mesh/Squamish and səliłwətał/Tsleil-Waututh nations

## MEMORANDUM

August 1, 2023

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC  
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk  
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office  
Trevor Ford, Interim Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

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

SUBJECT: ACCS Organization Update: New Portfolio and Deputy General Manager, ACT

RTS #: N/A

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### PURPOSE

This memo provides an update on a new integrated, interdepartmental portfolio in ACCS and a new Deputy General Manager position.

### BACKGROUND

Over recent years, the complexity and volume of work in ACCS has increased considerably. With Council's increased and evolving interest in activating Vancouver through events, tourism, and the cultural economy, and recent years' intensifying commitments and engagement from senior levels of government in the creation of affordable housing, working with the DTES, and addressing homelessness, we continue to have a multitude of opportunities in ACCS to advance key work in our Department in a way that we have not had before. Alongside these strategic public policy and service goals, there remains a significant volume of very important and similarly strategic internal and external work and service delivery across all of our ACCS Departments.

Over the past years, with the intensifying challenges and opportunities, it has been increasingly demanding to keep up with the workload across ACCS, while ensuring that I am providing the type of support I would like to provide to our teams and in the way I would like to be able to provide it. Accordingly, earlier this year I began to consider how to better enable ACCS

Managing Directors and myself as General Manager to better support the current and future work of the various ACCS Departments.

Following in the footsteps of Engineering Services who has created two distinct interdepartmental portfolios, each with a Deputy General Manager overseeing a specific portfolio, I have decided to create a distinct integrated, interdepartmental portfolio in ACCS, along with a Deputy General Manager role to oversee this portfolio.

## **DISCUSSION**

The new Arts, Culture and Tourism (ACT) portfolio will bring together two substantive and interrelated ACCS departments into one strategic portfolio: Cultural Services and Vancouver Civic Theatres. As well, this new portfolio will become the key focal point for the ACCS response to destination and other cultural or entertainment events, liaising and aligning strategic priorities with the tourism and events sectors.

After over six years as Managing Director of Cultural Services, Branislav Henselmann will take on the assignment of Deputy General Manager, Arts, Culture and Tourism. Since there are no additional funds in the ACCS budget to create a new position, Branislav's current duties as Managing Director, Cultural Services will be incorporated into his new position assignment. The Deputy General Manager will represent the General Manager in matters related to Arts Culture, and Tourism and other matters that may arise as required.

We will realign reporting for Vancouver Civic Theatres (VCT) to the new Deputy General Manager, ACT. VCT is Vancouver's largest and most complex bespoke performance venues operation, playing a key role in City's cultural and economic development. VCT Managing Director, Natalie Lue, will continue to be a key member of the ACCS Senior Leadership Team. This model of mixed reporting for a senior leadership team has proven to work well across various other business units including Engineering and PDS, as well as within the CLT. While VCT will remain a distinct operation within ACT, this new integrated portfolio creates the possibilities for increased collaboration and engagement across diverse cultural, entertainment and destination development endeavours and has the potential to create additional pathways for and between VCT and other work related to the cultural, event, and entertainment sectors.

We are also in discussion with the City Manager's Office about the future of destination development and event hosting generally, exploring various approaches that will enable the City to work most efficiently and in a coordinated manner to support our partners in the tourism, cultural, and event sectors.

## **NEXT STEPS**

This new portfolio and role will come into effect on September 5. I recognize that, as Council priorities and our service delivery related to the multitude of areas delivered by the newly formed ACT evolves, we will have to make sure to monitor and assess associated needs moving forward.

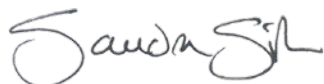
## **FINAL REMARKS**

With the creation of ACT, I believe we will be well-positioned to both support the increased activation of the city that Council wishes to see, as well as deliver on ACCS' other core lines of business, collectively working to ensure Vancouver is a vibrant and exciting city in which to live, work, and play. Alongside the creation of ACT, I hope to be better positioned as General Manager to stay connected with our diverse teams in ACCS who are – every day – working on the very services, programs, and policies that seek to ensure Vancouver is welcoming, affordable, safe, and inclusive for all Vancouverites.

As with any change, we will monitor the impacts and outcomes through transition and into operations, and I will stay connected with Branislav and Natalie as we step forward with this new integrated portfolio.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca) and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.

Sincerely,

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

[sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca)