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### National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

September 30 is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a day to reflect on the harmful impacts of the Residential School System, recognize the strength and resilience of Indigenous Peoples in the face of colonial oppression, and commit to advancing the Reconciliation process.

City services were closed on September 30. Staff were encouraged to deepen their learning about the legacy of the Residential School System, and were offered learning resources, a list of events, and training opportunities so we may build new relations based on mutual understanding and respect with Indigenous Peoples.

From the 1870s to 1996, Canadian governments removed more than 150,000 Indigenous children from their homes. They forced them into 139 Residential Schools, including the St. Paul's Indian Residential School in North Vancouver. Estimates show

more than 6,000 Indigenous children died in Canada's Residential Schools. Indigenous communities across Canada continue to grieve these losses, and staff and leadership at the City grieve alongside them.

We acknowledge we have a long way to go before achieving appropriate Reconciliation. In 2014, we adopted a [Reconciliation Framework](#) and declared ourselves a [City of Reconciliation](#). We're enacting 27 of the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada related to municipalities. You may [view the calls to action we're advancing here](#) and our most recent [Reconciliation report here](#).

We also recommend reading the “[MMIWG2S Response Report: Response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice and Red Women Rising Report Recommendations](#)” which was approved by City council this past July. [View the staff presentation here](#).

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## **Council approves Historical Discrimination against People of South Asian Canadian Descent interim report**

On July 5, City Council took a step forward in acknowledging South Asian racism and discrimination by approving the *Historical Discrimination against People of South Asian Canadian Descent* interim report and the recommendations within the report.

This interim report provided an update on engagement processes to-date, outlines the next phase of work, including broader community engagement, and also identifies the need for additional resources to enable this next phase of work.

Many of the approved recommendations will require a collaborative approach between governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and individuals from a range of communities.

The City is grateful for the Historical Discrimination against People of South Asian Canadian Descent Advisory Committee for their openness, time and candour through this first phase of work.

[Read the full report here.](#)

Watch the [staff presentation and council meeting here.](#)

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## **Council approves Anti-Black Racism Cultural Redress interim report**

On September 27, City Council approved the "Addressing Anti-Black Racism and Historic Discrimination Interim Report." The report outlines the impact of anti-Black

racism on all communities and includes priorities identified by a community advisory committee for how the City can address racism targeting Black and African diaspora communities in Vancouver.

The advisory committee priorities for the City are:

- Partner with Black and African diaspora community members, businesses and social enterprises to address poverty and increase prosperity in Black and African diaspora communities.
- Work to eliminate systemic racism within City of Vancouver and advocate to other levels of government and community organizations to take action against anti-Black racism.
- Investigate how Black people are impacted by City-led programs and initiatives and how the City's human resources practices impact Black staff and leadership diversity in the City.
- Integrate culturally relevant and safe urban planning processes, and preserve the cultural heritage of Black and African diasporic people

The next phase of this work will include broader community engagement to further define priority areas and work across city departments to coordinate our actions to address anti-Black racism.

We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of all contributors to this work especially Black community members who gave their personal and professional expertise to the integrity of this process and its outcomes.

Read the [full report here](#).

View the [staff presentation here](#).

Watch the [council meeting here](#).

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## Council apologizes to Italian Canadian Community

Vancouver City Council has apologized for the injustices enacted upon the Italian Canadian community during the Second World War, and on June 8 read the proclamation for Italian Heritage Month in Council Chambers which was then presented to several members of the community, including two descendants of the interned.

On June 3, Deputy Mayor Sarah Kirby-Yung read the proclamation and Councillor Melissa De Genova read the full apology to members of the Italian Canadian community at an event co-hosted by the Consul General of Italy – Vancouver, and Il Centro, Italian Community Centre.

### Historical context

Following the declaration of war against Italy by the federal government in 1940, certain Italian men were deemed Enemy Aliens. As a result, nearly 3 dozen men in Vancouver were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to Prisoner of War Internment Camps despite governments having no proof of wrongdoing.

Many families of the internees were not notified as to where their loved ones were taken or given definitive reasons as to why or when they had been apprehended. No communication between the interned men and their families was allowed for approximately two weeks. Most of these men were the breadwinner for their families, and their internment caused major emotional trauma and financial hardship.

While none of the interned Italian Canadians from Vancouver are alive today, we extend this apology to their surviving loved ones and the Italian Canadian community in Vancouver, in recognition of the injustices visited upon the families and impacts on the broader community.

We're grateful to the advisors from the Italian Canadian community, whose work and lived experience informed this apology.

Read the [full apology and historical overview here](#).

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### **Access Without Fear policy and Anti-Racism strategy updates**

We have completed an education and awareness plan to inform all City staff about how to implement the Access Without Fear Policy, which stipulates that City of Vancouver public services are available to all residents regardless of immigration status.

[Click here](#) for more details about the policy.

In August City staff delivered an update on the development of an anti-racism action plan. Staff anticipate bringing forward the recommended strategy after further community engagement.

Click [here to read the full update](#).