

Supports Item No. 3
CS&B Committee Agenda
January 22, 2008



OTHER REPORT

Report Date: December 4, 2008
Contact: Peter Regier, c/o
Denise Salmon
Contact No.: 604.873.7269
RTS No.: 7801
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: January 22, 2009

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
FROM: Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues
SUBJECT: Annual Report for the year 2008

RECOMMENDATION

THAT this report be received for information.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager submits the foregoing for INFORMATION.

PURPOSE

To provide Vancouver City Council with a report on the activities of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues for the period of January 1, 2008 - December 4, 2008.

BACKGROUND

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues was established by Council on December 11, 2003.

Objective

The Committee is advisory to City Council. The mandate of the Committee is to work to enhance access to City services for Vancouver's diverse communities, including the multicultural, Aboriginal and lesbian/gay/transgender/bisexual communities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

Terms of Reference

The Committee:

- advises on matters which affect diverse communities, including, but not limited to:
 - providing City staff with information on issues related to diversity - e.g. addressing racism and discrimination issues, e.g. hate crime, graffiti, civic rental policy;
 - acting as a resource and providing input to staff doing working which involves diverse communities, e.g. housing, youth and seniors, culture and recreation, and community outreach;
 - works collaboratively with staff on events/initiatives which celebrate diversity, e.g. Cultural Harmony Awards, City Hall Lights Program, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
- contributes to City programs and policies to ensure that the needs of diverse communities are considered;
- views City programs and policies through a variety of lenses, including gender, race, ethnic origins, income levels, sexual orientation, age and levels of ability.
- works co-operatively with other civic agencies whose activities affect diverse communities;
- engages in outreach to the diverse communities to disseminate information and encourage participation;
- acts as a conduit for feedback from the diverse communities on civic matters affecting them;
- acts as a resource for staff doing public involvement processes in diverse communities;
- supports groups endeavouring to initiate and develop projects to assist diverse communities;
- attends City-sponsored public forums to provide information on City programs and receive public input on diversity issues;
- produces an annual work plan with specific objectives by no later than March of each year, in consultation with its Council and staff liaisons, for distribution to Council and civic departments for information;
- submits an annual report to Council describing its accomplishments for the year, including reference to each objective set out in the work plan and any arising issues to which the Committee has responded.
- which the Committee has responded.

2008 Committee Members of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues:

- Jagdev (Jay) Bains
- Caryl Dolinko, Vice-Chair
- Barbara Downs
- Saeed Dyanatkar
- Clyde Duncan (resigned January 4, 2008)
- Andrea Gillman (resigned April 29, 2008)
- Sandra Hilyer
- Dan Morin
- Peter Regier, Chair
- Kristi Rivait
- Olga Shcherbyna
- Aaron Sihota
- Kala Singh
- Begum Verjee

ELECTED LIAISONS

Councillor Tim Stevenson, City of Vancouver
Commissioner Spencer Herbert, Vancouver Park Board
Trustee Carol Gibson, Vancouver School Board

STAFF LIAISONS

Monica Kay, Equal Employment Office

MEETING COORDINATOR

Diane Clairmont, City Clerk's Office

DISCUSSION

The Committee Members thank Council for giving us the opportunity to serve Council and by extension the people of Vancouver. We appreciated the platform you gave us to explore diversity issues relevant to the City and its residents, to communicate any concerns we had, and to point out different possible directions and changes in tactics that we thought might improve the programs, initiatives and services under consideration.

This submission first presents a report on the work we undertook this year. We believe we made some progress against our work plan, and worked together to produce a solid and helpful set of comments and suggestions on various services and programs.

We believe that advisory committees can be positive and productive sources of influence. They can give voice to and galvanize communities, help spark new ideas and build connections between different groups and the city. In our view, a number of systemic obstacles exist that block progress for our committee towards that vision. This report, in its later section, also presents some of our ideas for improving the likelihood of this actually happening.

1. Significant Activities

The Advisory Committee met officially six times in 2008, and unofficially several times, due to lack of quorum, to further the work in progress. The committee developed a work plan focusing on two **City Initiatives** (311 Contact Centre; 2010 Olympics & Paralympics) and two **City Services** (Event Funding; City Staff Training). We addressed these items through consultations and dialogue with guest speakers, which ultimately led to documented comments and suggestions, as summarized in the table below.

SEE NEXT PAGE

<p>311 Contact Centre City Initiative</p>	<p>Barbara Pearce Manager, 311 Business Planning (Vancouver)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Does 311 enhance access to City services for Vancouver's diverse communities?</i></p> <p>We had four comments/suggestions to support this City initiative. In response, the 311 Contact Centre staff responded as per the action items listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Publicly report on the language used by callers and "inquiry completion" in those languages.</i> This would serve two fold; measure the scope of the diverse communities allowing the City to understand the needs of each, and provide transparency in how the City delivers services to each of these communities. <i>Action Items:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Procedures are in place to collect the requested data from call patterns, post hard-launch.</i> - <i>Plans are in place to publicly report on this data.</i> - <i>City is investigating broader use of a language service</i> 2. <i>Train staff properly with a view to equity and diversity issues, and intercultural competence.</i> We want to reinforce the importance of a well balanced focus of technical skills and people skills (including diversity in languages), and ensure there is a solid understanding of and respect for diversity and high intercultural competency to enable this initiative to be a success. <i>Action Items:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Training for 311 staff incorporates diversity exercises across the curriculum; specific diversity, respect, and cultural competence modules have been developed, partly in conjunction with the EEO.</i> 3. <i>Plan for consistent and effective access beyond the 311 Contact Centre.</i> We believe that this service needs to extend beyond the Contact Centre should a caller need to be transferred to a specific City department. Withdrawing language services at this point may in fact negate the purpose of this initiative and leave the caller with a dissatisfactory experience. <i>Action Items:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>City is investigating broader use of a language service.</i> 4. <i>Implement the 311 Contact Centre into the City's web services as quickly as possible.</i> World Wide Web services are now a function of how we do business. Being able to provide information services via the web will be a powerful tool which can measure usage by topic area and language (to name a few) and ties in well to our first recommendation. <i>Action Items:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Out of scope currently for 311; City is conducting a web renewal project as part of larger access to city information and services project.</i> 	

<p>2010 Olympics & Paralympics City Initiative</p>	<p>Margaret Dickson Director, Inclusion, VANOC Wendy Au, Assistant City Manager (Vancouver)</p>
<p><i>How is the City ensuring that Vancouver's diverse communities, with a specific emphasis on ethnic and immigrant communities, will benefit from the 2010 Olympics economically and socially?</i></p> <p>One area we felt deserved more attention and detail to planning was the inclusion of immigrant communities specifically those who are marginalized by their socio-economic status. We feel it's important to provide these groups with information about the opportunities and how they can access those opportunities.</p> <p>The Committee offered VANOC contact information for leaders in various multicultural and multi-ethnic communities and encouraged VANOC to attend the many cultural events as a way of promoting an inclusive and diverse Games.</p>	
<p>Event Funding City Services</p>	<p>N.A.</p>
<p>Outcome Despite repeated requests, no speaker was willing to discuss this important issue with the committee. The committee's concerns remain unaddressed:</p> <p><i>How were different community interests considered in developing the City's event funding program, and how does the City ensure that Vancouver's diverse communities access and benefit from the program?</i></p>	
<p>Diversity in the Fire Service City Services</p>	<p>John McKearney Deputy Chief, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Service</p>
<p>The Committee highlighted specific recommendations to address the 'traditional culture' within Fire & Rescue Services. Those recommendations address the following main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic - create an advisory body with the aim of leveraging current City diversity initiatives to assist in the development of a strategic plan for increasing diversity in the Fire Service, including hiring diversity advisors to assist with the implementation of this plan. 2. Outreach - looking to other fire and rescue services within North America to determine best practises on creating a diverse workforce; liaising with communities that represent Vancouver's diverse communities and establishing a relationship that welcomes individuals to pursue opportunities within the Fire and Rescue Services. 3. Implementation & Training - implement best practises, hire diversity advisors and work with City's ODL Offices to further the commitment of fostering respect and inclusion in the working and living conditions of all employed. 	

Staff Training Programs City Services	Monica Kay Director, Equal Employment Office (Vancouver)
<p><i>What is the nature and scope of the diversity training for city staff and is it equipping them to effectively interact with and provide service to Vancouver's diverse communities?</i></p> <p>We commended the EEO Office and HR on their exceptional efforts to provide comprehensive training to City Staff, and their outreach efforts for recruiting new staff. The Committee outlined some specific recommendations to providing more effective City Staff Recruitment and Training Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We had questions about how the City is measuring success in recruitment, retention and promotion of Employment Equity target groups. We were not clear on why the City of Vancouver does not utilize both quantitative and qualitative standards for assessment in setting and implementing Employment Equity Goals.2. We acknowledged that education and training are vital elements in creating an inclusive and respectful workplace for all employees, including handling complaints. We suggested that research and measurement are also necessary in providing an integrated approach to systemic change, and recommended that the City adopt such measures.	

The correspondence referred to in this table is attached as an appendix to this report.

In addition, the Committee continued to liaise with and support the Vancouver School Board's Race Relations Advisory Committee. Andrea Gillman and Dan Morin and Begum Verjee participated as our representatives to that committee.

Finally, to demonstrate visible support for the City's programs, Committee members attended the following City Events and other events:

1. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Proclamation Ceremony
City Hall
2. International Women's Day Proclamation Ceremony
City Hall
3. World Refugee Day Proclamation Ceremony
Vancouver Public Library
4. Pride Week Proclamation Ceremony
Vancouver Art Gallery
5. Diwali Festival of Lights Celebration & Proclamation Ceremony
City Hall
6. Cultural Harmony Awards Ceremony
City Hall
7. Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Communities: What Will it Take
British Columbia Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for
Multiculturalism
Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue

2. Future Directions

As stated above, the committee believes that advisory committees, and in particular, this one with its focus on enhancing inclusion and access for all peoples, can make positive and significant contributions to Council and the City. We hope that the next council will appreciate the value of this committee, re-establish it and appoint new members from the community to further its work.

With that in mind, and assuming the committee is given a new life, we make the following observations and recommendations, first for the consideration of the new council, and second to any future appointees to the committee.

For Council:

- *Review and strengthen the committee's mandate and composition*
 - a) Commission a review of similar advisory bodies within other jurisdictions to identify best practices in scope, composition and governance, and apply those practices to this committee.
 - b) Review the appointment process for this committee and consider pro-actively inviting specific community leaders to join the committee to ensure an experienced mix of capable leaders with strong community connections and proven insight into the relevant issues.
 - c) When appointing members, ensure a balanced and mixed representation of different communities within the committee.
 - d) Consider implementing new procedures to encourage a greater commitment to the work of the committee and new, stronger rules around attendance and termination for failure to attend the committee's meetings.
 - e) To foster greater continuity in the work already in progress, and to help the new committee function effectively more quickly, consider informing or inviting incumbent committee members to apply for re-appointment. Past attendance should be a factor when these applications are reviewed. Other measures, such as staggered terms, could be considered to ensure the committee's perspective is refreshed periodically with new members during the life of the committee, and to ensure its ongoing sustainability.
 - f) Review the current process used in electing the chair and vice chair. The current process does not allow for an informed choice by committee members. Consider placing appointees with the required skill set into the positions on creation of the committee, on either a permanent or temporary basis, to ensure it is positioned to succeed from the start.
- *Redesign the committee's relationship with City staff*
 - a) Provide for appropriate support from City Staff. The committee's work would be better served by a connection with the Social Planning Department, not the Equal Employment Office. The mandates of the committee and Social Planning are more congruent, with Multiculturalism & Diversity initiatives and policy work as it relates to the people of Vancouver at large falling under the jurisdiction of this department. This support will ensure the committee can informally access up to date information on city priorities, approaches, evolving issues, focus changes, etc on diversity issues.
 - b) Create systems to ensure enhanced formal communication and consultation between Social Planning and the committee. Annual work plans and major project

plans and reports should be shared in a routine and timely fashion with the committee, so the committee understands the city's program priorities. An opportunity for the committee to provide comment should be integrated into standard consultation practices for the department.

- *Enhance informal communication with the committee*
Build a stronger informal relationship with the committee (ie outside of official presentations to Council). More frequent, but brief, appearances by official liaisons and other council members at the committee meetings would help ensure committee understanding of and alignment with Council priorities and values. The Committee's value lies in part in bringing its own perspective forward to Council, but we believe it can operate most effectively only when it appreciates the context Council is operating in. A stronger informal relationship will help provide that sense of context.

For future committee members:

- *Build on past committee work*
Review our work plans, letters and reports to build on our work as you see fit. Consider inviting past committee members to share their experience and insight at a meeting early in your term.
- *Build joint commitment to the committee and its work*
Review the formal expectations on committee members and develop your own guidelines on how to work together and expectations for one another. Commit and remain engaged, or leave the committee so others can take your place in advancing the committee's work.
- *Work to link the committee to your community*
Act as a bridge between the committee and your community. Share the work plan and ideas/concerns within your community, and find ways to liaise with and collect ideas from your community. Understand the scope of your role and responsibilities in representing the committee.
- *Be visible at City events*
Attend City events, identify yourself as a committee member and circulate to collect ideas and input relevant to the committee's work. Bring those perspectives back to the committee. Capitalize on City staff expressed openness and seek opportunities to further support City events in the planning and delivery process.
- *Build relationships with other citizen committees*
Identify other related committees in Vancouver and other jurisdictions. Share and compare mandates, work plans, ideas, issues and concerns to sharpen your focus and effectiveness. Consider appropriate and in scope collaborations, joint or merely aligned initiatives.
- *Build informal relationships with Council members*
Seek opportunities to communicate informally about diversity issues and City priorities with council members to inform your approach to the committee's work. The Chair in particular should reach out to council members and invite their attendance and participation in committee discussions.

CONCLUSION

In closing, the Committee members reiterate our thanks for the opportunity to serve Council and the people of Vancouver by working to enhance access for Vancouver's diverse communities to City services and promoting their full participation in all aspects of City life.

We also thank the Elected Liaisons, the City Staff liaison and City Clerk's office for the support and assistance they provided to the Committee over the last year.

The foregoing information is presented to Vancouver City Council for information.

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APPENDIX A

Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues for
CITY OF VANCOUVER

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11

March 10, 2008

Barbara Pearce, Manager, Business Planning
Access Vancouver Program
City of Vancouver
1800 Spyglass Place
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4K8

Dear Ms Pearce:

**RE: February 7, 2008 Presentation to the
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues - 311 Contact Centre**

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is an advisory body appointed by Vancouver City Council. The mandate of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is to work to enhance access to full participation in City services for Vancouver's diverse communities, including the multicultural, Aboriginal and lesbian/gay/transgender/ bisexual communities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues provides comment on the 311 Contact Centre presentation. Please note these comments are the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues. They do not necessarily represent the views of Vancouver City Council or the City of Vancouver.

We thank you for attending our meeting on February 7, 2008, to provide an overview of the 311 Contact Centre and discuss how the needs of Vancouver's diverse communities will be served by this new initiative. We appreciated your willingness to engage in a discussion with us and thoughtfully consider the issues we raised.

The Committee is generally very supportive of the 311 Contact Centre initiative. We see the benefits that flow to individual residents from having one easy-to-remember number to use to gain information on and access to the City's wide range of services and programs, in the language of their choice.

We have some comments and suggestions we ask you to consider as you implement this program:

1. Publicly report on the language used by callers and "inquiry completion" in those languages

We know the City will use and report on a number of measures to determine the success of this initiative. We understand that 311 will offer service to callers in multiple languages, and we suggest that reporting *on the languages used* and how frequently the contact with 311 leads to a resolution of the issue for the caller *in that language* (eg "inquiry completion"

rate). Reporting on these aspects increases transparency on the effectiveness of the 311 service for members of Vancouver's diverse communities. Moreover, it gives all residents a sense of the scope of the diverse population of Vancouver and the need for flexible service to those populations.

2. Hire and train staff with a view to diversity issues and intercultural competence

We urge you to carefully structure the staff training to balance the technical skills/knowledge focus with the people skills/knowledge focus. A solid understanding of diversity issues and high intercultural competence will be required to ensure all of Vancouver's residents equitably benefit from this service.

3. Plan for consistent & effective access beyond the 311 Contact Centre

The 311 Customer Service Representatives will be able to handle many of the calls that they receive, but some callers will need to be transferred or referred on to specific City departments. From your presentation, how this transfer will be handled where callers use a language other than English is not clear. Withdrawing language services at that point represents, in our view, an unacceptable discontinuity in service for these callers. We suggest you carefully consider the issues raised by these transfers or referrals. In our view, the language service provided through the 311 Contact Centre should be made available to all City departments.

4. Implement the 311 Contact Centre into the City's web services as quickly as possible.

We recognize this is out of the scope of the current initiative, but we think this mode of accessing information and services is very important and needed to ensure equal access to City services and programs. We suggest that your team investigate best practices in this regard from other jurisdictions using the 311 model, and tailor that research to our local needs to create a plan with a timeline for online implementation.

Thank you for considering our suggestions. We plan to invite you to meet with us again in the fall, and look forward to hearing about the ongoing implementation of the program and the status of service delivery at that time.

The Committee wishes you and the 311 Contact Centre team much success as you move forward to make this new initiative a reality in Vancouver.

Yours truly

Peter Regier, Chair
Caryl Dolinko, Vice Chair
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues

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Copies to: Mayor and Councillors
City Manager
Janice MacKenzie, Deputy City Clerk



Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues for
CITY OF VANCOUVER

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11

June 24, 2008

Margaret Dickson, Director, Inclusion
VANOC
3585 Graveley Street
Vancouver, BC V5K 5J5

Wendy Au, Assistant City Manager
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1Y4

Dear Ms. Dickson and Ms. Au:

**RE: April 3, 2008 Presentation on 2010 Olympics to
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues**

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is an advisory body appointed by Vancouver City Council. The mandate of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is to work to enhance access to full participation in City services for Vancouver's diverse communities, including the multicultural, Aboriginal and lesbian/gay/transgender/ bisexual communities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues provides comment on the April 3, 2008 presentation on the 2010 Olympics. Please note these comments are the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues. They do not necessarily represent the views of Vancouver City Council or the City of Vancouver.

We thank you for accepting our invitation and participating in our April 3, 2008 meeting. We truly appreciate your time and willingness to answer our questions and your openness in receiving feedback.

After your presentation, the members of the Committee had comprehensive discussions based on the information received. We also reviewed the discussions we had in our previous meetings with the VANOC representatives in 2005. (For your information, we met with Linda Coady, VP Sustainability; Elizabeth Bowker, Project Coordinator, Sustainability; and Kristina Molloy, Inclusivity Assistant on July 26, 2005 and with then newly hired Enzo Guerriero, Director of Social Sustainability & Inclusivity and Kristina Molloy, Inclusivity Assistant on November 8, 2005.)

As it was highlighted in our recent meeting as well as our previous meetings in 2005, consultation with and providing information to diverse communities are key to ensuring an inclusive event. While we commend VANOC's approach towards including inner-city communities, person with disabilities, and some of the aboriginal groups, we think VANOC needs to be more proactive in approaching other diverse communities who don't have the means of accessing the information/opportunities provided by VANOC. In this regard, we draw special attention to immigrant communities, specifically those who are marginalized by their economic/social status. We think it's important to provide these groups with

information about the opportunities for their participation through an outreach process as they often are not familiar with methods of accessing these opportunities in Canadian society. There are different ways VANOC can get in touch with diverse communities. One way is to attend cultural and social events and present the communities with plans for the Games and ask for their participation and feedback. In our meetings in 2005 we offered to help VANOC on creating a forum that consists of representatives from different communities through which VANOC could receive consultations throughout the process of planning for games. Although it may be a bit late to create such a forum at this time, we would like to work together to put together a comprehensive list of the contact information of the community representatives and help you connect to them.

Finally, although we touched on some of the proposed discussion items in the meeting, there was a feeling that we needed more time to properly clarify plans to address each of the issues. Therefore we are listing those items here for your reference for future considerations in planning and preparation for the games.

1. Providing enrichment programs for children and youth among marginalized groups or communities to enable them to use the Games as an opportunity for increased social participation;
2. Ensuring representation and participation of diverse communities in services and programs associated with the 2010 Olympics;
3. Ensuring equitable employment opportunities for members of all communities, including immigrants/newcomers, first nations, gays/lesbians, and visible minorities;
4. Encouraging inter-municipal collaboration which will balance the impact of the Games on diverse populations in all geographic areas in Metro Vancouver;
5. Conveying clear messages to international visitors concerning Vancouver's respect for diversity; and
6. Considering adopting diversity-related themes in communications and marketing strategies such as: City Street Banner Program, multilingual publications, diverse media advertising, presentations, Murals, etc.

Yours truly

Peter Regier, Chair
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues

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Copies to: Mayor and Councillors
City Manager
Janice MacKenzie, Deputy City Clerk



Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues
CITY OF VANCOUVER

February 26, 2008

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11

Deputy Chief John McKearney
AGM/Deputy Chief Emergency Services
Fire & Rescue Services
900 Heatley Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6A 3S7

Dear Deputy Chief McKearney

**RE: January 10, 2008 - Presentation to Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues -
*Diversity Within Fire & Rescue Services***

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is an advisory body appointed by Vancouver City Council. The mandate of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is to work to enhance access to full participation in City services for Vancouver's diverse communities, including the multicultural, Aboriginal and lesbian/gay/transgender/ bisexual communities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues wishes to comment on the presentation on Diversity within Fire & Rescue Services. Please note these comments are the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues. They do not necessarily represent the views of Vancouver City Council or the City of Vancouver.

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues takes this opportunity to thank you for your presentation and truly appreciates your commitment to ensuring diversity within Fire & Rescue Services. We commend you on the efforts you are making through your outreach programs. We also recognize the many barriers Fire & Rescue Services face in creating a diverse workforce.

In light of this, the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues invites you to consider some of the following suggestions to address what you described as the 'traditional culture' within Fire & Rescue Services:

- Explore best practices utilized by Fire Services across Canada and North America in creating a diverse workforce.
- Work closely with the Equal Employment Office (EEO) within the City of Vancouver in looking at these best practices and explore the implementation of strategies that would assist in moving the diversity agenda along. Some of these may include the gathering of data through employment equity surveys, and the recruitment, retention and promotion of Aboriginal people, women, visible minorities, people with disabilities and people from the gay and lesbian communities.

- Liaise, for outreach purposes, with Vancouver Public High Schools and post-secondary institutions, Aboriginal, multicultural, gay and lesbian, and disability organizations across the City, and ensure follow-up with these organizations after outreach events. The Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, MOSIAC and SUCCESS are some suggestions.
- Work closely with Organizational, Development and Learning Offices within the City of Vancouver in facilitating education and diversity awareness training in transforming the 'traditional culture' of Fire & Rescue Services. Mechanisms for transformation should include a commitment to fostering respect and inclusion in the working and living conditions of all employed.
- Explore the possibility of creating a Fire & Rescue Services Diversity Advisory Committee for the purpose of developing strategic plans in addressing individual and systemic barriers that may exist in Fire & Rescue Services. Such a committee would also be accountable in ensuring the implementation and evaluation of these plans. Such a committee may utilize the recommendations of the recent investigations/reviews and subsequent stakeholder consultations and strategic planning exercises conducted for the Richmond Fire-Rescue Services.
- Consider hiring diversity/equity advisors (who are members of the employment equity target groups) that will assist in carrying out the diversity/equity plans through outreach, data collection and analysis, education and training, as well as handle complaints.

We believe that individual and public perceptions will shift when integrated strategies are put into place that attempt to change the 'traditional culture' that exists in the Fire Service. This will, of course, require commitment of human as well as financial resources, but will greatly enhance your diversity efforts in making Fire & Rescues Services the best in all of Canada. Again, we thank you for taking the time to talk with us, and for reading our suggestions.

Yours truly

Peter Regier, Chair
Caryl Dolinko, Vice Chair
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues

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Copies to: Mayor and Councillors
City Manager
Janice MacKenzie, Deputy City Clerk
Fire & Rescue Services Advisory Committee (c/o Charmaine Susanthan)

Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues for
CITY OF VANCOUVER

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11

June 3, 2008

Monica Kay, Director; Parker Johnson and Anne Nickerson, Advisors,
Equal Employment Office
and
Corey Olson, Staff & Organization Development Practitioner, Human Resources
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1Y4

Dear Ms. Kay, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Nickerson and Mr. Olson:

**RE: March 6, 2008 Presentation on City Staff Training to
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues**

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues is an advisory body appointed by Vancouver City Council. The mandate of the Committee is to work to enhance access to full participation in City services for Vancouver's diverse communities, including the multicultural, Aboriginal and lesbian/gay/transgender/bisexual communities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

The Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues provides comment on the March 6, 2008 presentation on City Staff Training. Please note these comments are the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues. They do not necessarily represent the views of Vancouver City Council or the City of Vancouver.

We thank you for attending our meeting on March 6, 2008 and providing a comprehensive overview of City staff recruitment and training strategies. We commend you on your exceptional efforts to provide comprehensive training to City staff, and your outreach efforts for recruiting new staff. While we received a great amount of information during your presentation, we didn't have the opportunity to present some of our perspectives or engage in a dialogue on the issues as we had wished. There were a number of issues and questions we feel require further discussion, including how the City measures progress on employment equity and how it recruits immigrant talent.

Measuring progress

Knowing that the Canadian labour market is highly gendered and racialized, we had questions about how you are measuring success in recruitment, retention and promotion of Employment Equity target groups. There are many large employers in Canada that conduct both qualitative and quantitative measures, and have established best practices in setting and implementing Employment Equity goals. We were not clear on why the City of Vancouver does not use such standards for assessment.

As a committee, we were impressed with your emphasis on inspiring people during City-wide training, and building on those inspirations as a source of strength. We understood, from the

presentation, that you do collect anecdotal data to inform how you are doing. We wondered about the possibility of HR and EEO using a similar framework of inspiration in gathering data, both qualitative and quantitative?

We believe that change requires us to know where we are, and where we are going. Education and Training are vital elements in creating an inclusive and respectful workplace for all employees, including handling complaints. Research and measurement are also necessary in providing an integrated approach to systemic change.

Recruiting Immigrant Talent

According to Statistics Canada, by 2012 immigrants will account for 100% growth in the Canadian workforce. Over 200,000 skilled immigrants come to Canada every year, hoping for better future for their families. However many of them end up working in low paid jobs and/or are still unemployed. In spite of high levels of education and many years of experience, immigrants face significant barriers in accessing professional jobs.

We commend the City's new initiative designed to educate hiring managers and staff on foreign credential recognition issues, and we also suggest broader view be taken to ensure other issues that challenge immigrants be addressed; for example, subconscious biases that hiring managers might have while screening resumés or interviewing candidates, as well as cultural differences and their impact on presentation styles during interviews.

We also suggest that the City examine its recruitment and advertising channels. A recent BC study conducted through the BC Human Resources Management Association found that immigrants often miss job postings that appear only on a company's own website, in the mainstream media or that are circulated through referrals. A more robust outreach to immigrant and ethnic media is required to ensure access to this skilled labour pool. On March 20, one of our members sent you a number of references to relevant web and print resources, including academic articles and practical skills-based tools for managers, for your consideration. (An excerpt from that email is attached as an appendix to this letter for information).

We would like to continue this conversation, and we invite you back to another meeting to engage in a fuller dialogue.

Yours truly

Peter Regier, Chair and Caryl Dolinko, Vice-Chair
Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues

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Telephone: 604.873.7011

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Copies to: Mayor and Councillors
City Manager
Janice MacKenzie, Deputy City Clerk
Mike Zora, General Manager, Human Resources

Appendix - Selected resources

Recruiting, Retaining, and Promoting Culturally Different Employees, L. Laroche, 2007.

L. Hawthorne, *Canadian Issues: Foreign Credential Recognition*, Metropolis, June 1, 2007.

Catherine Murray, Sherry Yu and Daniel Ahadi. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Media in BC*. A Report to Department of Canadian Heritage, Western Region. SFU: Center for Policy Studies on Culture and Communities.

Related links: http://www.bcethnicmedia.ca/md_directory.html.
<http://www.bcethnicmedia.ca/research.html>.

Online workshops - hireimmigrants.ca

<http://www.hireimmigrants.ca/resources/>

<http://www.hireimmigrants.ca/resources/?resource=workshop&id=4>