

1. Designating Vancouver a City of Reconciliation

MOVER: Mayor Robertson

SECONDER:

WHEREAS

1. On June 21, 2013, the City of Vancouver took the extraordinary step of proclaiming a Year of Reconciliation, a year-long effort that seeks to heal from the past and build new relationships between Aboriginal peoples and Vancouverites, that is built on a foundation of openness, dignity, understanding and hope;
2. During the past year Vancouver has been witness to extraordinary moments that speak to the possibility of reconciliation: the re-establishment of protocol with the welcome ceremony by the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations in the All Nations Canoe Gathering, the witnessing of the testimony of residential school survivors at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's BC National Event, the rain-drenched commitment of more than 70,000 people walking in a September downpour to stand together and celebrate reconciliation, and the events and actions that brought Vancouverites together to learn, sew, drum, weave, sing, carve, eat, connect and share the truth of the past;
3. Reconciling the truth of the past with the present is complex but the facts are not complicated: great harms were done, this harm had impacts across generations and the underlying attitude that allowed harm to Aboriginal peoples also gave rise to injustice against the Japanese, Chinese, South Asians and other cultures;
4. These harms and injustices may define our past and, through unresolved discrimination, define our present. But they need not define our future;
5. All Vancouverites deserve to live in a time where governments and institutions have the courage to be just and fair, where all children have an inalienable right to full democratic, cultural, social and economic participation;
6. The process of reconciliation is not the act of one year, and indeed may not be the act of one generation. It is a long-term effort that takes seriously the responsibility of creating systemic change and new relations based on mutual understanding and respect;

7. Council understood this long-term commitment in February 2013 when it approved the concept of a City of Reconciliation as the next step after the Year of Reconciliation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council reaffirm its commitment to designating Vancouver a City of Reconciliation;

FURTHER THAT Council request staff to bring back a report on next steps to continue the work of healing from the past, and finding a new pathway forward together.

* * * * *