

MOTION

11. Designating "Little Italy" on Commercial Drive

At the Regular Council meeting on June 23, 2015, Vancouver City Council referred this matter to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment meeting on June 24, 2015, to hear from speakers.

MOVED by Councillor De Genova

SECONDED by Councillor Ball

WHEREAS

1. Vancouver's extraordinary cultural diversity is greatly valued by the people of our city, and those who visit our city, and is seen as a source of creativity and strength;
2. Commercial Drive has been the focal point of Italian history and heritage in Vancouver for over 50 years and is widely considered to be Vancouver's original "Little Italy";
3. Italian immigrants to Vancouver who settled in the northern Commercial Drive area the 1940s and 1950s are widely credited with revitalizing the neighbourhood;
4. Although many Italian businesses also sprang up in the Hastings and Nanaimo area in the 1960's, the cultural core of Vancouver's Italian community remained in the Commercial Drive area;
5. Commercial Drive continues to be a vibrant cultural and business centre in East Vancouver with at least thirty businesses over a seven block radius and over 80% of the buildings continue to be Italian-owned and/or operated;
6. Commercial Drive is host to "Italian Day on the Drive" celebrating our city's Italian heritage and culture and the many contributions made to Vancouver by Italian immigrants and their children;
7. "Italian Day on the Drive" is the most popular celebration of Italian Culture in Vancouver drawing an estimated 350,000 plus attendees from all over Vancouver in 2014;
8. Major cities such as Montreal, Toronto, New York and Boston all enjoy the economic, tourism and cultural benefits of having areas of their respective cities officially designated and recognized as "Little Italy".

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver formally recognize and designate a portion of Commercial Drive as "Little Italy" in recognition of the city's Italian cultural heritage, subject to consultation with the community and Commercial Drive businesses, business groups and other stakeholders;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to report back with the results of the consultation within six months with recommendations for an official location for "Little Italy" on Commercial Drive.

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