



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: January 2, 2018
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Meeting Date: January 16, 2018

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Chief, External Relations and Protocol
SUBJECT: Freedom of the City Award Program and Policy - Revisions

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve revisions to the Freedom of the City Award program.
- B. THAT Council approve the revised Freedom of the City Policy in Appendix A.

REPORT SUMMARY

The report proposes a revised Freedom of the City Award program and policy to Council that aligns with practices in other municipalities for recognizing and honouring outstanding citizens.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

At the Regular City Council (in Camera) Meeting on January 22, 2014, Council directed staff to review the Freedom of the City Award policy and update how recipients are recognized.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

Section 205 of the Vancouver Charter states that by unanimous vote of the members present, the Council may bestow the freedom of the city upon any person considered to merit such distinction, and thereafter such person shall, so long as the bestowal remains unrevoked, be entitled to be called a Freeman of the City of Vancouver.

The City has been granting the Freedom of the City Award since 1936. This award program recognizes residents and organizations of the highest merit. The recipient of the Freedom of the City Award is usually an individual or organization who has gained national or international acclaim in the arts, business, or philanthropy, and who has brought recognition to Vancouver through their achievements. To date, 76 individuals and six organizations have received the award. The most recent recipients of the award are: Michael Harcourt (2017), Dr. David Suzuki (2015), The Vancouver Police Pipe Band (2014), Judy Graves (2014), Jim Pattison (2014), Jim Green (2012), and Milton Wong (2011).

In 1978, a policy was created to set out the specific honours that Freedom of the City Award recipients are eligible to receive. The policy states that recipients of the award are to be recognized during a special ceremony at Council and receive a:

- Framed scroll summarizing the recipient's achievements and reason for the award;
- Freedom of the City medal engraved with their name;
- An ornamental parking plaque; and
- A decal that permits free parking at City parking meters.

In addition to receiving the items listed above, the policy states that recipients are entitled to a post-ceremony reception organized by the City, complimentary admission to civic facilities, and having their funeral expenses paid by the City.

Table 1 summarizes the recipient honours set out in the original policy in 1978, and shows honours awarded to recipients in recent years.

Table 1 Summary of Award Recipient Honours

Award Recipient Honours as outlined in the 1978 Freedom of the City Award policy	Currently Presented to Award Recipients
Freedom of the City medal	Yes
Framed scroll with achievements written out in calligraphy	Yes
Name inscribed by calligrapher in Freedom of the City book	Yes
Ornamental parking plaque	No

Award Recipient Honours as outlined in the 1978 Freedom of the City Award policy	Currently Presented to Award Recipients
Admission, when available, to all Park and Recreation facilities, Civic Theatres, PNE during exhibition time, Aquarium, Museum and Planetarium	No
Decal that allows up to three hours of free meter parking	Yes
City Clerk-authorized offer to the next of kin to pay the reasonable funeral expenses of the award recipient	Yes - but with infrequent uptake

Strategic Analysis

In 2014, Council asked staff to review how the honours bestowed upon Freedom of the City recipients align with the awards programs run by other municipalities. Staff findings from the jurisdictional scan of awards programs in other municipalities are listed in Appendix B.

The conclusion of the review is that the Freedom of the City policy, as approved in 1978, no longer aligns with the majority of exceptional citizen recognition programs in other Canadian municipalities and staff are recommending Council approve the revised Freedom of the City Policy Statements in Appendix A.

Table 2 summarizes proposed changes to the Freedom of the City program and policy as summarized in the right column.

Table 2 Proposed Revisions to the Freedom of the City Award

Award Recipient Honours as outlined in the 1978 Freedom of the City Award policy	Proposed Revisions to the Freedom of the City Award Program*
Freedom of the City medal	No change
Framed scroll with achievements written out in calligraphy	Proposed modification - Printed certificate presented in a folder embossed with the City logo
Parking decal that allows up to three hours of free meter parking	Remove from revised policy
Name recorded in Book of Freedoms	No change
Catered reception for recipient(s) and guests	No change
City Clerk-authorized offer to the next of kin to pay the reasonable funeral expenses of the award recipient	Remove from revised policy
Ornamental parking plaque	Remove from revised policy

Award Recipient Honours as outlined in the 1978 Freedom of the City Award policy	Proposed Revisions to the Freedom of the City Award Program*
Admission, when available, to all Park and Recreation facilities, Civic Theatres, PNE during exhibition time, Aquarium, Museum and Planetarium	Proposed modification - Free admission to Park Board's pools, rinks and fitness centres

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

If the revised Freedom of the City policy is approved, there will be no changes to financial resources for this program. The City of Vancouver's Freedom of the City Award will continue to receive staff support from both the Office of the City Clerk and the External Relations & Protocol Office.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposed revisions to the Freedom of the City Award policy will modernize the program with current best practices, while maintaining the award's significance.

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APPENDIX A: Revised Freedom of the City Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process for awarding of the Freedom of the City by Vancouver City Council, in accordance with Section 205 of the *Vancouver Charter*.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Mayor and Council of the City of Vancouver.

DEFINITION

Freedom of the City The highest award that the City can bestow on an individual or organization to recognize their achievements and contributions to the city of Vancouver

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Conditions for Award of Freedom of the City

City Council reserves the award of Freedom of the City for individuals and groups of exceedingly high merit who have made outstanding long-term contributions to Vancouver

Recipients have generally gained national and international acclaim in the arts, business, or philanthropy, and have brought recognition to Vancouver through the pursuit of their achievements.

2. Nomination by City Council

2.1. Nominations for award of Freedom of the City should be presented by a member of Council in writing to the City Clerk and should clearly outline the accomplishments and/or the distinguished contribution that the individual or group has made to Vancouver.

2.2. The City Clerk will bring the nomination forward to Council at an in-camera meeting for unanimous approval. Awarding of the Freedom of the City requires unanimous consent of Council.

3. Forms of Recognition

3.1. A recipient of the Freedom of the City shall:

3.1.1. Have their name recorded in the City's Book of Freedoms;

3.1.2. Receive a certificate from the Mayor during a civic ceremony;

3.1.3. Receive a customized medal;

- 3.1.4. Receive a recreation card good for free admission to Park Board's pools, rinks and fitness centres. The recreation card will be issued for the life of the recipient.

APPENDIX B: Review of Other Municipal Exceptional Citizen Recognition Programs

Municipality	Exceptional Citizen Award Name	Criteria	Honours Presented to Award Recipient	Schedule of Recognition
Calgary	Grant MacEwan Lifetime Achievement Citizen of the Year	<i>Grant MacEwan Lifetime Achievement</i> - awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the community for the past 25 years. <i>Citizen of the Year</i> - a Calgarian who has made a recent extraordinary contribution to improve Calgary's quality of life.	Award recipients are honoured with a custom, bronze trophy in the shape of City Hall at a live, televised event held at a municipal complex. A reception at City Hall for award recipients and their guests follows the live awards event.	Awarded annually.
Coquitlam	Freedom of the City	Conferred on individuals having made outstanding long-term contributions to the City, made a significant improvement in City life and culture and been recognized by their peers and outside of Coquitlam.	Parking pass valid for anywhere in Coquitlam. Right to be registered to vote in election for Mayor and Council. If Canadian, qualified to be nominated, elected and hold office in the City.	Awarded sporadically.
Edmonton	Hall of Fame	Honours 12 individuals & groups for contribution to Arts & Culture, Community Service, or Sports.	A choice of lapel pin / ring / pendant Public recognition at annual ceremonies with pre-event (VIP) and post-event (public) receptions.	Awarded annually.

Montreal	Prix Thérèse-Daviau	Person of the Year award to honour a distinguished Montreal resident in areas of social development, culture, sports, leisure and who has significantly contributed to improving the quality of life for Montrealais.	Certificate	Awarded every two years.
Kelowna	Freedom of the City	Reserved for individuals or military units of exceedingly high merit and/or recognizes outstanding community contributions of benefit to Kelowna.	Awarded to a distinguished person or group through a public presentation where recipients receive a lifetime parking pass, a framed certificate and a portrait sitting. (One copy of portrait displayed in City Hall, one copy given to recipient).	Awarded sporadically as commendable recipients are identified.
Ottawa	Key to the City	Presented to various dignitaries and residents of high merit.	Award recipients are presented with a key to the City and a framed scroll at a public presentation.	Awarded sporadically as commendable recipients are identified.
Victoria	Honorary Citizen Award	Celebrates individuals who have made significant contributions to Victoria through service to the community or personal achievements.	Award recipients are presented with a framed certificate at a ceremony. A professional photograph is taken at this time and provided to the recipient at a later date.	Granted every three years.