



IN CAMERA

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: May 23, 2018
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Meeting Date: June 5, 2018

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: Walk for Reconciliation Commemorations – Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza Name

IN CAMERA RATIONALE

This report is recommended for consideration by Council on the In Camera agenda as it relates to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*: (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council acknowledge and endorse the name identified by Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh (“MST”) Nations for the Queen Elizabeth Theatre (“QET”) plaza, as part of an Indigenous naming pilot for City of Vancouver assets and amenities.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of a government relations and engagement process with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations to name the Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza and the already approved new name for the Vancouver Art Gallery (“VAG”) North plaza.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

At its meeting on February 26, 2013, Vancouver City Council passed a motion to proclaim June 21, 2013 to June 20, 2014, as the *Year of Reconciliation* in Vancouver and endorsed the United Nations’ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. On June 20, 2013 Council officially announced the Proclamation in an intercultural celebration and dialogue event co-hosted with

Reconciliation Canada and attended by local and provincial First Nation and multicultural leaders.

On June 25, 2014, Council formally acknowledged that the City of Vancouver is situated on the unceded traditional territory of the MST Nations. Council directed staff to invite representatives from these Nations to develop appropriate protocols for the City of Vancouver to use when conducting City business that respect the traditions of welcomes, blessings, and acknowledgements of the territory.

On July 8, 2014, after a successful year of encouraging Indigenous communities and the general Vancouver population to participate in City services, events and programs during the *Year of Reconciliation*, Vancouver City Council passed a motion to reaffirm its commitment to designate Vancouver as a *City of Reconciliation*.

On December 16, 2014, members from MST performed a brushing off ceremony for Vancouver City Council members, preparing them for the new council term ahead. The ceremony, held in the Council Chamber, was an historic event for City Council.

On January 19, 2016, Council approved the City's review of the *Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action* report. To date, staff have identified that 28 of the 94 *Calls to Action* are actionable by the City. There are 59 City actions that have been aligned under 3 themes: Healthy Communities and Wellness; Achieving Indigenous Human Rights and Recognition; and Advancing Awareness, Knowledge, and Capacity.

In March 2017, Council directed staff to create an action plan to re-affirm Indigenous place names and to recognize the great diversity of people who have made significant contributions to Vancouver. Included in the action plan are the development of Indigenous design guidelines, and a registry of monuments.

In October 2017, Council identified two public plazas: the QET Plaza and the VAG North plaza to be named in collaboration with MST.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Establishing Vancouver as a City of Reconciliation and including opportunities for visible recognition of MST, is central to the City's 2018 work plan. The learnings from this process, which was co-developed by staff, council and MST, will inform a new permanent City process for Indigenous recognition through the naming or renaming of appropriate civic assets.

REPORT

Background/Context

In March 2017, Council directed staff to create an action plan to re-affirm Indigenous place names and to recognize the great diversity of people who have made significant contributions to Vancouver. The direction includes the development of Indigenous design guidelines and a registry of monuments.

In October 2017, Council identified two public plazas: the QET Plaza and the VAG North plaza, to be named in collaboration with MST. The VAG North Plaza is currently leased to the City by the Provincial government, and all current and future decisions affecting the site require input and collaboration from the Province. The City, along with MST, has been working with the Provincial government, to name these two sites by summer 2018. The process established through naming the VAG North Plaza will help to form the basis of future asset and amenity namings.

Using the VAG North plaza and the QET Plaza as an opportunity to work collaboratively with MST to name civic assets, staff are piloting an appropriate government-relations, community engagement and decision-making process. This honours MST's rights to have their language and culture appropriately represented in their unceded traditional territory. Joint Committee Meetings are co-chaired by representatives of MST and the City.

Strategic Analysis

A series of meetings over the Spring of 2018 were held with identified representatives from various departments within the MST Nations, City of Vancouver elected officials, and City of Vancouver staff from Engagement, Engineering, Park Board, Cultural Services and the City Manager's Office to:

- a) develop an agreed upon name for the VAG Gallery North plaza;
- b) develop a community engagement process with MST to canvass nation members for a shortlist of concepts and names for the QET Plaza; and
- c) engage and inform the Province on the City/MST naming process.

On May 17, MST agreed upon a name for the QET Plaza. It is presented here with the Musqueam language first and the Squamish language second: **šxw^hlexən** in həńqəmińəń, and **Xwtl'a7shn** in Skw̓wú7mesh.

The names have slightly different meanings:

- šxw^hlexən is the həńqəmińəń word for "a place one is invited to"
- Xwtl'a7shn is the Skw̓wú7mesh word for: "a place one is invited to celebrate".

The names have been approved by all three Nations and written band council resolutions are forthcoming.

As approved by Council on April 18, 2018, a name has been agreed upon by MST for the VAG North Plaza on April 18, 2018. It is presented here with the Musqueam language first and the Squamish language second: **ḷənəq** and **Tl'ə7enk**. The meaning of the word is: “to have a cultural gathering: wedding, funeral, memorial, passing on name, coming of age ceremony, and honouring.”

This will complete the naming of the two plazas. Both names will be announced at an event coinciding with National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations tentatively scheduled for June 18th, 2018. The names are to be kept confidential until the official unveiling to ensure appropriate educational and contextual materials are in place before the launch. A precedent for this approach is the recent naming of the néčá?mat ct Strathcona Branch of the VPL.

Public/Civic Agency Input

The name for the QET Plaza has the support of Musqueam Nation, Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation – joint resolution is forthcoming.

The VAG name was presented to the Province of British Columbia, as the landowner of the property, to secure endorsement. On May 17, 2018, the Province provided the City with notional approval to rename the Plaza as proposed. A written approval from the Minister of Citizen Services is forthcoming.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

The City of Vancouver’s Public Engagement, Facilities, Planning, Cultural Services and Engineering departments will work closely with MST to develop a meaningful ongoing planning, education and implementation process. It will include accurate and respectful education about pronunciation, historical and cultural context, as well as involvement in the development of signage that meets City safety and technical guidelines. This work will require an investment of resources and staff time, to be determined through future procurement and communications planning.

CONCLUSION

Vancouver is the world’s first City of Reconciliation and is committed to ensuring that our longer term goals of Strengthening Relations with First Nations and Urban Indigenous Peoples, Promoting Indigenous Peoples Arts, Culture, Awareness and Understanding, and Incorporating First Nations and Urban Indigenous Perspectives for Effective City Services is a key aspect of the work that the City undertakes. In looking at enhancing the visibility of the unceded territories of MST Nations it was evident that work in revitalizing their language and place names through a multitude of ways to be incorporated into City plans, and that new processes for collaboration and engagement with the Nations on this work be started. A permanent policy and process for MST naming of unnamed Vancouver civic assets will be co-developed with the Nations. The outcome of which will ensure that all Vancouverites and visitors to these lands will have a better

understanding of Vancouver, its history, the legacy of the Indigenous peoples who have lived here since time immemorial.

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