

MOTION ON NOTICE

1. Weddings at Vancouver City Hall

Submitted by: Councillor De Genova

WHEREAS

1. City Halls across North America have traditionally served as venues for couples who are looking to have simple and small civil marriage ceremonies;
2. Most City Halls across Canada, offering civil marriage services or venues as a wedding, state that the time of a ceremony ranges between 10 and 20 minutes and can accommodate a range of 5 to 30 guests per wedding;
3. City Halls in Canada, including Victoria City Hall, Calgary City Hall, Fredericton City Hall, Ottawa City Hall and Toronto (both Old and New City Halls) offer the opportunity for couples to book in advance and hold wedding ceremonies on-site;
4. Some City Halls, including Toronto, offer City Hall weddings in a dedicated space. Offering weekends on set days (four days of the year) and typical non-business hours is a practice of many Canadian City Halls, including Victoria;
5. At Ottawa City Hall, couples can choose weekday or weekend options for weddings, at a cost ranging from \$141.30 for week day ceremonies to \$212.00 for weekends, subject to availability. A marriage license can be obtained on-site for a \$161.60 fee, if all requirements are satisfied. Ceremonies are offered in both English and French;
6. Although the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation offers couples the option of applying for permits to be married on designated and non-designated sites; the City of Vancouver does not currently have a program to permit weddings at Vancouver City Hall;
7. Vancouver City Hall opened December 4, 1936, and was designated a heritage building in 1976;
8. Vancouver City Hall was built by the architectural firm of Townley and Matheson. The City of Vancouver website states "On the third floor, the ceremonial and formal spaces including the Council Chamber are substantially intact. The chamber are two stories in height, with a rear wall balcony, central inset clock, high windows, large brass wall sconces, and beautifully veneered wall panels. The woodwork is lovingly detailed and is very well preserved. The four large modernistic cast brass suspended chandeliers, with obscure glass insets, still light the Chamber.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT in the spirit of increasing accessibility, welcoming the public and acknowledging the historical significance of Vancouver City Hall, Council directs staff to:

- i. Explore the possibility of offering Vancouver City Hall as a venue for weddings and civil ceremonies at and on the grounds of Vancouver City Hall;
- ii. Consider the structure City Halls across Canada practice in providing a venue for marriage and in some cases, providing services including resources to obtain a marriage commissioner, officiant or the necessary documents required for marriage in BC;
- iii. Report back to Council with recommendations, including any budget implications, and recommendations for the possibility of a pilot or trial program for holding weddings on set days of the year, or regularly at Vancouver City Hall;
- iv. Consideration to Council Chamber, Helena Gutteridge Plaza and the garden at Vancouver City Hall are considered as possible options for weddings in any recommendations brought back to Council for consideration;
- v. Staff will report back to Council with recommendations by December 2019.

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