

MOTION

4. Call for a Public Inquiry into Money Laundering in B.C. and Impacts on Vancouver Real Estate and the Overdose Crisis

At the Regular Council meeting on February 12, 2019, Vancouver City Council referred the following Motion to the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting on February 13, 2019, in order to hear from speakers.

Submitted by: Councillor Boyle

WHEREAS

1. Peter German's 'Dirty Money' report commissioned by B.C.'s Attorney General, revealed significant money laundering taking place in Lower Mainland casinos, estimating over \$1 million has been laundered in B.C.;
2. The work of local investigative journalists, including findings from an RCMP study, has revealed links between money laundering, fentanyl distribution, and Vancouver real estate. These reports estimate that over \$1 billion could have been laundered through Vancouver homes;
3. The Provincial Government continues to investigate these links, through an Expert Panel on Money Laundering, an anonymous tip portal, and a second study by Peter German to be completed in March 2019;
4. Vancouver City Council passed a motion on January 29, 2019, submitted by Councillor De Genova, on Deterring and Preventing Money Laundering and the Business of Organized Crime in the City of Vancouver. That motion included that:
 - a. Page 16 of the Dirty Money Report, recommendation "R45" suggests "That the Province undertake research into allegations of organized crime penetration of the real estate industry";
 - b. In "Dirty Money" Mr. German states "79. Part 2 overviews the phenomenon of transnational organized crime and the unique position in which Vancouver finds itself. It describes the 'Vancouver Model', which provides a very practical framework for what has occurred in recent years. A primer is included on money laundering";
 - c. Mr. German also states in his report the most lucrative crimes in Vancouver are related to illegal drug sales. The drugs of choice cover the spectrum, from natural products such as cannabis, cocaine and heroin, to chemical creations such as opioids and hallucinogens;
5. As of December 16, 2018, an estimated 353 overdose deaths have occurred in Vancouver in 2018, which is almost on par with the 369 overdose deaths that occurred in 2017, despite the extensive harm

reduction investments in Vancouver. Vancouver continues to have the highest rates of death per capita in BC, with 58 deaths per 100,000 people this year, and Vancouver continues to be the most impacted city of the overdose crisis in Canada;

6. Vancouver's housing affordability crisis has skyrocketed over recent years. Data from the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver shows that the average price of a single-family detached home in Greater Vancouver increased as much in 2016 as it did from 1981 to 2005. Local housing costs far exceed local incomes, and the gap between housing costs and local incomes increased sharply between 2011 and 2016.
7. Charbonneau Commission deputy chief prosecutor Simon Tremblay has stated that an inquiry could exist side-by-side with any other investigation in B.C., as happened in Quebec. Meaning that existing investigations needn't be a barrier to beginning a larger Public Inquiry.
8. British Columbians are in favour of a public inquiry into money laundering. A Research Co poll last August showed that three-in-four residents (76%) believe the provincial government should "definitely" or "probably" call a public inquiry.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council endorse a call for the Provincial Government to launch a Public Inquiry into money laundering in B.C., similar to the Charbonneau Inquiry in Quebec, to begin after Peter German's review of money-laundering in B.C. real estate, due in March.
- B. THAT the Mayor write a letter to the Premier, the Minister of Finance, and the Attorney General, communicating Vancouver's support for a Public Inquiry.
- C. THAT Council request the terms of reference for this Public Inquiry include:
 - i. Investigation into money laundering in Vancouver real estate that may have deepened the city's housing affordability crisis;
 - ii. Investigation into links between organized crime, money laundering, and the overdose crisis, which resulted in the deaths of nearly 1500 people across BC in 2018, including an estimated 353 people in Vancouver.

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