

## MOTION ON NOTICE

### 6. Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence in Vancouver's Hospitality and Service Industries

Submitted by: Councillors Boyle and Swanson

#### WHEREAS

1. The safety of women in the workplace remains a top priority for the City of Vancouver;
2. The City of Vancouver has engaged in a variety of ways to strengthen women's equity, including through the creation of a Women's Equity Strategy, unanimously adopted;
3. In 2018, the City of Vancouver joined UN Women's Global Flagship Initiative, "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces" ("UN Women Safe Cities");
4. Vancouver City Council recognizes that safe and healthy workplaces help attract and retain families, and individuals to live and work in the city;
5. The City of Vancouver recognizes and supports the growth of the #MeToo Movement across North America, the human rights of Women, and the need to ensure workplaces in hospitality and service industries are free from sexual assault and harassment;
6. The City of Victoria recently passed a motion to require, among other things, sexual violence prevention training in the local service industry to ensure a harassment-free environment;
7. Recent sexual harassment and sexual assault complaints have been raised at luxury hotels in Vancouver;
8. Sexual assault reports in Vancouver rose more than 16 per cent since 2016, even as rates of other violent crime decreased or remained steady. Nearly 400 of the 1,431 reported assaults over the past three-years came from the central business district, which includes the Granville strip and other nightlife areas<sup>1</sup>;
9. The City of Vancouver has been concerned in the past with the high rate of crime and sexual assault in the Granville Entertainment District;
10. Good Night Out Vancouver was formed in response to high rates of crime and sexual violence in the Central Business District, and Vancouver City Council recently approved additional funding for Good Night Out Vancouver to continue their important education and intervention work, and to build their fundraising capacity;

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<sup>1</sup><https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/sexual-assault-only-violent-crime-still-rising-in-vancouver-stats-say>

11. The City of Vancouver has invested greatly in developing a Nighttime Economy, including passing a recent motion to create “A Comprehensive Strategy for Realizing the Full Potential of the Nighttime Economy in the City of Vancouver”. This work includes keeping the safety of the local workforce in mind, particularly as women constitute a majority of workers in hotels, restaurants and bars and commonly experience sexual harassment in these industries;
12. Attracting greater numbers of tourists and local residents to our downtown social district can yield greater nightlife vibrancy and economic growth, and it can place demands on public safety and create additional risks for vulnerable people, including service and hospitality staff.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to report to Council on recommendations and actions to ensure the safety of women working in the service and hospitality industry, with a specific focus on the Granville Entertainment District and Vancouver’s luxury hotels. In the development of this report Council direct staff to:

- i. Meet with downtown hotel/restaurant owners, related association, service worker advocate groups (unions and community advocates) to formulate recommendations on how to combat the growth of sexual violence in Vancouver’s hospitality and service industries;
- ii. Explore ways to end sexual violence in the city, including in Vancouver hotels, restaurants and bars, as part of its work on the UN Women Safe Cities work and the upcoming nighttime economy strategy;
- iii. Report back with implications of and options for mandating sexualized violence prevention training for hotel and restaurant staff as part of either the liquor licence or business licence approval process;
- iv. Report back on options for conducting audits of venues to ensure the staff and environment minimize risk of sexual violence incidents; including working toward a common policy for business operators that establishes a best practices standard for conduct.

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