

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

2. **Equity Lens Review of City By-laws to Ensure Equity is at the Forefront**

Submitted by: Councillor Zhou

WHEREAS

1. The health and vitality of Vancouver's communities is one of the key reasons Vancouver is considered to be among the best places on earth to live;
2. To ensure the continued sustainability and livability of the city's neighbourhoods, Vancouver City Council and City Staff are committed to working with community groups and other agencies to address critical social issues that affect us all, and to ensure that the needs of all residents are met as we work toward making Vancouver a fairer, safer, more equitable, more accessible, and more inclusive city;
3. The City has an Equity Framework, and actions have been taken to ensure that the rights and dignity of all people are upheld, that we are addressing historic and current systemic injustice and reducing harm, that we are removing barriers and creating equal opportunities and accessibility for all residents, and that we are advancing reconciliation, equity, and anti-racism for all people; ⁱ
4. By-laws formalize rules made by a council or board in accordance with their statutory authority and are used to regulate, prohibit, and/or impose requirements;
5. Local governments in B.C. may only make decisions by by-law or by resolution. In some cases, provincial legislation requires that a local government power be exercised only by means of a by-law (while in other circumstances local governments have the choice to either pass a by-law or a resolution);
6. Section 151 of the *Vancouver Charter* describes the powers of Vancouver City Council to establish and enforce by-laws; ⁱⁱ
7. The City of Vancouver has nearly 200 consolidated By-laws. Examples include, the 2010 Winter Games By-law No. 9962, the Area Specific Development Cost Levy By-law No. 9418, the Parking Meter By-law No. 2952, and the Zoning & Development Fee By-law No. 5585;

8. The importance of applying an equity lens to all that we do as a City Council, as a City, and as City staff cannot be understated. By keeping equity at the forefront of all that we do, and by respecting, appreciating, and embracing that which makes us different, regardless of age, gender identity and expression, level of education, neurodiversity, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexual orientation, or national origin, we continue to build a city that is safe, accessible, and inclusive for all where everyone can thrive.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to report back by the end of Q3 2023 with a high level inventory of City by-laws that may potentially require amendments and/or updating in order to align with the City's equity objectives and Equity Framework, including information regarding the scope of work and staff resources that might be required for a substantive review and analysis of all City by-laws and past amendments, as well as information regarding any specific complaints and/or correspondence received by the City with respect to By-laws that may require priority attention;

FURTHER THAT Staff be directed to ensure that all future by-laws and by-law amendments are being conceived of and/or reviewed through an equity lens as a prime consideration.

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ⁱ Under the *Vancouver Charter*, the powers of Council may be exercised by by-law. City of Vancouver bylaws are numbered consecutively, starting with bylaw No. 1, which was enacted (i.e., passed into law) on May 18, 1886. Over the years, Council has enacted approximately 10,000 by-laws. Many of the more recent by-laws have been scanned and are available for viewing on the by-law webpage. The most frequently used by-laws have been consolidated for convenience. In a consolidated by-law, the original by-law (sometimes called the "parent by-law") is updated to include all of the amendments to that by-law. All of the consolidated by-laws are also available for viewing on the by-law webpage. The electronic versions of the by-laws are made available for convenience only. Official copies of most City by-laws can be obtained from the City Clerk's Office. There is a fee for this service for the production of all certified copies of by-laws. https://app.vancouver.ca/bylaw_net/hlpGeneral.htm

ⁱⁱ *Vancouver Charter* Section 151 – Exercise of Council powers by by-law and resolution: (1) Except as restricted by this section, the powers of the Council may be exercised either by by-law or by resolution. (2) A by-law may not be amended by resolution. (3) If an enactment provides that Council is required or empowered to exercise a power by by-law, that power may only be exercised by by-law. (4) If the Council exercises a power to direct that a thing should or should not be done and a person who fails to comply is subject to a fine or penalty, the power shall be exercised by by-law.