

## COUNCIL MEMBER'S MOTION

*For consideration at the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting on  
July 15, 2026*

### **7. Keep the Artists in: Creating a Cultural Land Trust for Vancouver**

Submitted by: Councillor Orr

#### WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver has lost over 400,000 square feet of artist studio space since the 2010s, representing a critical and accelerating erosion of affordable creative workspace that threatens the cultural vitality and economic diversity of the City;
2. The Government of Canada, through the Ministry of Canadian Heritage, has expressed interest in supporting the creation of a cultural land trust model across Canada, with particular focus on Vancouver, recognizing the urgent need to preserve affordable cultural infrastructure;
3. The Province of British Columbia, through the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, has expressed interest in supporting the creation of a cultural land trust across British Columbia, with particular attention to the need in Vancouver;
4. There exists significant philanthropic interest in the creation of a cultural land trust, including from the Metcalf Foundation, the InSpirit Foundation, private landowners, and real estate developers, demonstrating the potential for a robust multi-sector funding model;
5. Cultural land trust models have demonstrated significant and sustained success in cities around the world, including San Francisco, Helsinki, and London, in permanently securing affordable creative and cultural spaces for artists and arts organizations;
6. 221A has conducted feasibility studies on the establishment of a cultural land trust in Vancouver, with findings indicating that such a trust would generate increased permanent affordability and long-term preservation of cultural spaces; and
7. The establishment of an arms-length nonprofit cultural land trust, operating with City support but independent governance, would provide the structural permanence, flexibility, and credibility necessary to attract multi-sector investment and steward cultural spaces in perpetuity.

#### THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to report back by end of Q1 2027 with a comprehensive report on a framework that can establish an arms-length nonprofit located in Vancouver to create and operate a Cultural Land Trust. This report will include:

1. Information on existing work in ACCS including early explorations on cultural land trusts, work programs in civic facilities and cultural spaces, relevant policies, and other work related to non-profit leases and economic development relevant for this framework;
2. Framework should include operating and policy model, risks and tradeoffs, including a rough operating cost for the program and financial implications for the city and arts sector more broadly; and
3. Information on the portfolio of city owned buildings which can act as potential arts spaces, including relevant information on land values, and operational costs, suitability, condition, and readiness for arts use.

B. THAT Council direct the Mayor to write letters to the Government of Canada (Ministry of Canadian Heritage) and to the Government of British Columbia (Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport) formally expressing the City of Vancouver's support for the creation of an arms-length Cultural Land Trust for the City of Vancouver, and inviting further collaboration, partnership, and financial participation in the development and long-term operation of the trust.

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