

**MULTICULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 21, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee convened on Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 7:01 p.m. in the Council Committee Room, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Councillor Robert Mazzarolo, Chair
Simin Ahmadian, Citizen Representative
Shannon Alves, Citizen Representative
Silvia Luigia Camolese, Citizen Representative
Honore Gbedze, Citizen Representative
Arun Ghag, Citizen Representative
Ann Johannes, Citizen Representative
Nikki Kasravi, Citizen Representative (arrived at 7:06 p.m.)
Bitra Rezaei, Citizen Representative (arrived at 7:06 p.m.)
Lucie Wee, Citizen Representative (arrived at 7:02 p.m.)

REGRETS: Councillor Brent Asmundson, Vice Chair
Carolina Echeverri, Citizen Representative

STAFF: Zeralynne Te, Community Social Development Manager
Miryana Heath, Planning Data Analyst – Community Planning
Caley Amundsen, Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023

The Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 were approved.

Lucie Wee arrived to the meeting at this time (7:02 p.m.).

NEW BUSINESS

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2. Committee Welcome

The Committee Clerk provided introductory comments relative to the 2024 Multiculturalism Advisory Committee (MAC) Meeting Schedule, Committee member attendance expectations, conflict of interest and evacuation procedures.

Nikki Kasravi and Bita Rezaei arrived to the meeting at this time (7:06 p.m.).

The Chair advised Committee members of the rationale for the MAC meeting schedule returning to a bi-monthly frequency in 2024.

There were no comments from the Committee.

3. Review and Adoption of the 2024 Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Work Plan

The draft 2024 Work Plan was presented on-screen and the Community Social Development Manager provided an overview of proposed Work Plan items.

There were no comments from the Committee.

The Committee endorsed the 2024 Work Plan and a copy is attached hereto, and forms a part of, these minutes.

The Committee recommended:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the 2024 Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Work Plan.

4. Metro Vancouver Housing Data Release

The Community Social Development Manager provided introductory comments relative to the Metro Vancouver Housing Data Release.

The Planning Data Analyst – Community Planning provided a presentation entitled “Coquitlam Housing Snapshot” that covered the following topics:

- Overview of 2021 housing data for Metro Vancouver and Coquitlam, including definition of key terms, current housing and population trends, Coquitlam owner and renter demographics by age and income, existing versus in-stream Coquitlam housing developments and immigration housing demographics by status and place of origin

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Development timeline for current in-stream Coquitlam housing developments

- Rationale for decreased Canadian home ownership since 1980
- Concern regarding current government policies and the impact on housing supply and affordability
- Whether the City offers programs to help low-income individuals find housing and the possibility of creating future rent-to-own, adaptable and accessible housing projects
- Concern regarding housing data lacking clarity on timelines for immigrants transitioning from renting to owning and overlooking where renters are employed within municipalities
- The importance of incentives and support from the City for immigrants desiring to purchase real estate
- Metro Vancouver housing market with a focus on Coquitlam's impact, including contributing factors to the ongoing housing affordability crisis, concern that renters are being priced out of home ownership and inquiry into whether Coquitlam has implemented an empty homes tax
- Difference between the Vancouver Charter and Provincial Community Charter in terms of legislative authority
- The importance of attracting business and economic growth to make Coquitlam a live-work municipality
- City initiatives to facilitate multicultural integration in terms of public infrastructure, community spaces and how the Committee can support these initiatives
- The importance of Density Bonus in relation to funding community amenities and services

Arun Ghag left the meeting at this time (7:59 p.m.).

5. Cultural Understanding Project Update

The Sub-Committee Lead provided introductory comments that covered the following topics:

- Update regarding present status of the Cultural Understanding Project (hereon "the Project"), including survey question development timeline, concerns regarding continued delays, desire for City staff resources to be allocated for the Project and next steps for drafting a report

The Committee Clerk advised Committee members of the process for making recommendations and requesting a budget from Council.

The Chair advised the Sub-Committee Lead to hold a meeting with the Vice Chair regarding the Project's feasibility at this time and next steps for drafting a report.

Discussion ensued relative to the recent Provincial housing legislation, Bills 44, 46 and 47, regulatory timeline impact on City policies and staff resources and Committee support for the Project.

6. Committee Members' Roundtable / Multicultural Communities and Emerging Issues

The Chair invited Committee members to share details regarding upcoming events or emerging issues in their communities.

The following information was shared:

- Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership (TCLIP) Arts of Strength: Red Egg event on February 29, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Coquitlam Library City Centre Branch and Hearts Unbound: Unveiling Anti-Oppression Insights with the Warmth of Resilience event on March 8, 2024 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Evergreen Cultural Centre
- Coquitlam Public Library hosting an open house for newcomers on May 7, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Evergreen Cultural Centre

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING - Wednesday, April 17, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Robert Mazzarolo, Chair

Caley Amundsen, Committee Clerk