

March 9, 2021

Jay Krishan
Director
Pacific Society for the Advancement of Employment Equity (PSAEE)

Dear Mr. Krishan,

Thank you for your letter dated January 27, 2021 in which you have inquired about the City of New Westminster's hiring practices and processes, and how they "bring in rather than screen out citizens of colour". The City shares your commitment to increasing diversity and inclusivity in the workplace.

The City of New Westminster is in the midst of a multi-phase project, facilitated by an external consultant, which will examine our policies, processes, workforce, and culture. This comprehensive project commenced in Fall 2020 with a current state analysis of our organization as well as engagement with employees and stakeholders. The outcome of this project will be a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Framework ("DEIAR Framework") which will be a guide and master plan outlining the City's vision, goals, actions, and deliverables on diversity, equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism. The DEIAR Framework will be a roadmap to ensure the workforce is reflective of the community it serves, and promotes a culture of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism both within the organization and its outward-facing work. This work is being conducted through an intersectional lens that will include race, as well as other identities, in its consideration of the lives and experiences of our staff and community members. This initiative has the full support of City Council.

We have started this work by identifying DEIAR initiatives and strengths already present at the City. Both our Strategic Plan and Official Community Plan highlight inclusion as a priority in our work. We have also established both a task force and an internal committee that are working to bring change to our policies and operations by examining them through an equity lens.

As part of our project, we will be updating municipal employee data with respect to several identifiers. While the DEIAR Framework is broader than the City's human resources practices, hiring is one area that will be expressly included. We will also review human resources practices, including hiring, to consider how we can best advance this goal. Currently, the City includes the following diversity statement on all of our job postings that expresses our desire to support a workforce that reflects our community:

To support a workforce that reflects the diversity of our community; women, Indigenous Peoples, racialized individuals, persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (LGBTQ2S+), persons with disabilities, and others who may contribute to diversity of our workforce, are encouraged to express their interest.

The City also maintains a language bank to facilitate communication with members of the public in various languages. Presently, the bank includes 28 different languages spoken by City employees.

We are currently in an internal stakeholder engagement phase of this process. We will move to external stakeholder engagement when that has been completed.

Thank you again for your letter and we appreciate your commitment to employment equity.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Fong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent than the last name "Fong".

Richard Fong
Director, Human Resources
City of New Westminster