

CITY OF BURNABY  
COMMUNITY ISSUES AND SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: MULTICULTURAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN SELECTED BC  
MUNICIPALITIES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council write to the Mayor and Council of the City of North Vancouver, commending the City for coordinating preparation of *Multicultural Policies and Practices in Selected BC Municipalities*.

REPORT

The Community Issues and Social Planning Committee, at its meeting held on 2001 January 24, received and adopted the attached report to provide an overview and discussion of the document, *Multicultural Policies and Practices in Selected BC Municipalities*.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston  
Chair

Councillor N. Harris  
Vice Chair

: COPY - CITY MANAGER - DIR. PLNG. & BLDG. - DIR. PARKS, REC. & CULT. SERV.
---

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
COMMUNITY ISSUES &  
SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

2001 January 15

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

OUR FILE: 17.912

**SUBJECT:** MULTICULTURAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN SELECTED BC  
MUNICIPALITIES

**PURPOSE:** To provide an overview and discussion of the document, *Multicultural Policies and Practices in Selected BC Municipalities*.

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** a letter be sent to the Mayor and Council of the City of North Vancouver, commending the City for coordinating preparation of *Multicultural Policies and Practices in Selected BC Municipalities*.

**REPORT**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At its 2000 November 22 meeting, the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee (CISPC) received a copy of the document, *Multicultural Policies and Practices in Selected BC Municipalities*. In turn, the Committee requested staff to prepare a report which provided an overview and discussion of the document.

This report responds to that request.

**2.0 DOCUMENT OVERVIEW**

Work on *Multicultural Policies and Practices* was coordinated by the City of North Vancouver and funded by the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage. A steering committee for the project consisted of representatives from several Lower Mainland municipalities (including Burnaby), the Department of Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism BC, and the United Way.

The study examined the multicultural policies and practices of eight BC municipalities:

- Burnaby
- Coquitlam
- Kelowna
- North Vancouver City
- North Vancouver District
- Prince George
- Richmond
- Vancouver

Its objective was to review the successes and challenges of the subject policies and practices, with the aim of helping interested municipalities in choosing appropriate multicultural initiatives for their jurisdictions.

The study revealed the following:

- all eight municipalities under study had Council-adopted policies in place concerning multiculturalism or diversity; also, they all used internal or external committees to advise them on formulation and implementation of their multicultural policies and initiatives;
- there were several common elements in the multicultural policies (e.g., recognition of cultural diversity in the community, support for equitable access to municipal services, promotion of positive attitudes amongst staff towards all members of the community); and
- the municipalities undertook a variety of activities to implement their policies, including translation, interpretation, awareness-raising events, outreach, and training.

Upon assessing the experiences of the case study municipalities, the study offered observations that may be of use to other municipalities considering development of multicultural policies or initiatives. It concluded with a summary of issues that require further study.

### 3.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The ethnic and cultural diversity of the BC population has increased dramatically in recent years - most notably in the Lower Mainland. For example, between 1991 and 1996, the portion of Chinese residents amongst Burnaby's population rose from 12.7% to 30.8%. During the same period, the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the Burnaby school system increased by 86.6%. Also, in 1996, 39.4% of the local population consisted of visible minorities, compared with 11.2% for the country as a whole.

As the diversity of the population has increased, so too has the need for municipalities to adopt more inclusive policies and practices. Burnaby adopted its Multicultural Policy in 1986, being one of the first municipalities in the province to do so. Over the past 15 years, the City has undertaken several initiatives to implement the Policy. As indicated in *Multicultural Policies and Practices*, several other BC municipalities have been adopting policies or pursuing initiatives regarding multiculturalism or diversity. While some common elements exist, each municipality has developed an approach appropriate to its own particular needs and circumstances.

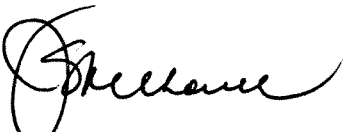
Given the foregoing, it is believed that *Multicultural Policies and Practices* has two key benefits. First, through its case study examples and discussion, it provides a resource for municipalities seeking to develop appropriate responses to multicultural changes in their

communities. In essence, it offers a menu of policy and program options, enabling municipalities to benefit from the experiences of their municipal counterparts from other parts of the province.

Second, for Burnaby and other municipalities involved in the project, it provides an opportunity to document and reflect on past multicultural initiatives. It also allows us to “compare notes” with counterparts from other parts of the Lower Mainland and province. By so doing, it should help in our ongoing efforts to develop and apply culturally sensitive and appropriate policies and practices in the future.

In short, it is believed that *Multicultural Policies and Practices* is a timely and useful document - both for the municipalities examined in its case studies, and for other BC municipalities seeking to respond to multicultural change.

It is thus recommended that a letter be sent to the Mayor and Council of the City of North Vancouver, commending the City for coordinating preparation of *Multicultural Policies and Practices in Selected BC Municipalities*.

  
D.G. Stenson, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JF\sla

cc: City Manager  
Deputy City Manager Corporate Labour Relations  
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

C:\DOCS\JOHN\mcbestpract01.rpt.wpd