# Fight the Power: Redressing Displacement and Building a Just City for Black Lives in Vancouver

**by**

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## Abstract

Past and present planning practices impacting Black people in Canada are brought into focus in this master's project that traces Hogan's Alley, a Black community that existed in Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood and that was displaced through a series of racially-motivated decisions spanning decades. The project documents the efforts made by the contemporary Black community to seek redress for the past displacement, and how the City of Vancouver reacted to those efforts. Engaging critical race analysis along with justice-based planning theory, the project uses auto-ethnography to document the specific justice-based interventions made by the author and other members of the Black community, including the proposal for affordable housing and a non-profit community land trust on the former Hogan's Alley site. This work expands urban studies scholarship by including the histories and perspectives of Black communities, foregrounding the way race influences the ordering of cities and how city planning pedagogy, policy, and practice maintain white colonial hegemony.



**Keywords**: redress; Black community; displacement; affordable housing; racism; Hogan's Alley

# Dedication

I dedicate this project to my mother Lynette Joseph Bani
and my grandmother Stephanie Amelia Joseph,
whose name I am honoured to carry.
In recognition
of the untold sacrifices
hardships
and brutality
endured by all of the Black women
and men
in my ancestry and family
who “perished daily but would not be moved”
and who found laughter and generosity in times of bitter despair.
I am because they were.

For my brothers Stephen and Ezra
who have been supportive and generous
big heads
even when we disagree.

For my sister-mother-friend Erica Nicole
whose kindness,
curiosity,
and one-woman comedy jam
inspired me to take up this journey from there to here.

And for Tom
whose affection comes in whole paragraphs
and has supported every. thing.
from the first day we met
till now
J.T.M.

# Acknowledgements

I acknowledge that I work and live on the traditional homelands and unceded territories of the skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) səl'ilwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musquem) nations. I stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples seeking to eliminate social, cultural, economic, and political oppression that our communities face and work for a world free where all peoples are able to live up to the fullest expression of their being.

The work documented in this project was accomplished through a collaboration of Black people from across the African Diaspora living in the Metro Vancouver region who came together to **dream big** and develop a shared vision of community empowerment and celebration. These people included all members and participants in the Isokan Community Forum, Hogan's Alley Working Group, and Design Advisory Committee, and who wrote letters and showed up with their contribution and support whenever possible. I thank them for their time, energy, and commitment to making a better life for Black people in this region.

I'd also like to thank Andrea, Holly and Emory who did their best under challenging circumstances and understood the value of bringing their own vulnerability to the work of building more inclusive, equitable, and just cities.

Shout outs to my peoples for being a lifeline when a sister needed a pick-me-up: Denise, Denika, Kneka, Uncle Mike, June Lisa, Kevin, Arash, Mat, Katelyn.

Sincere appreciation for my colleagues on the board of the Hogan's Alley Society. Lots of good work done and lots more ahead.

To Karen, Peter, and Terri: heartfelt thanks for your support completing this project. I don't think I would have made it without your encouragement.

And to all the obstacles, setbacks, discouragements, hidden agendas, and systemic barriers: thanks for the invaluable lessons. Because of you I'm smarter, stronger, more capable, and better prepared to dismantle you and leave you for dust.

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| CLT | Community Land Trust |
| COV | City of Vancouver |
| HAWG | Hogan's Alley Working Group |
| NEFC | Northeast False Creek |

# Chapter 1.

# Introduction

*As the rhythm designed to bounce*
*What counts is that the rhymes*
*Designed to fill your mind*
*Now that you've realized the pride's arrived*
*We got to pump the stuff to make us tough*
*From the heart*
*It's a start, a work of art*
*To revolutionize make a change nothing's strange*
*People, people we are the same*
*No we're not the same*
*'Cause we don't know the game*
*What we need is awareness, we can't get careless*
*You say what is this?*
*My beloved let's get down to business*
*Mental self defensive fitness*
*(Yo) bum rush the show*
*You gotta go for what you know*
*To make everybody see, in order to fight the powers that be*
*(Public Enemy, 1990)*

Black people have formed community in and been displaced from sites across Canada since before Confederation and until as recently as the 1960s. Continuous and violent land dispossession, originating with the onset of European colonization of Indigenous peoples' lands, was the normative land-use approach at the time of settlement, conducted to provide lands for British and French sovereignty. This occurred in lockstep with the enslavement of Indigenous and Black people from the sixteenth century until its abolition in 1834. The settlement infrastructures and wealth for white settlers in Canada and elsewhere were made possible through violent land and human theft (Maynard, 2017).

This history of land dispossession, coupled with the legacy of slavery, continues to influence the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of modern Canadian society (Daschuk, 2013; Maynard, 2017) and our country's urban development is embedded in these interconnected systems of oppression. From the rise of technical town planning in the nineteenth century, through the modernist planners of the postwar

welfare-state era, to the current neoliberal/new urbanist agenda, inequality at the city-scale is intrinsic to urban policy and practice and continues to fail prioritizing human equity over economic growth (Fainstein, 2010). This urban inequality impacts Black and Indigenous peoples to a disproportionate degree, reflecting dominant social values in Canada; for cities to be fully understood we must engage critical theory about how cities are racialized, class divided, and gendered spaces (Richardson, 2017).

My urban studies masters project situates the history of Black people (people of African descent) in British Columbia and Vancouver—which is one of avoidance and resistance to white supremacy, place dispossession, and displacement—within the current urban development context of Vancouver. It brings into focus the interventions that have been made by some of us in the local Black community to seek redress and repair for the displacement of Hogan's Alley. Once an industrious and closely-knit Black neighbourhood located in the southwest corner of Strathcona, Hogan's Alley was displaced through a series of state actions that culminated in the construction of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts on lands where the community once stood (Compton, 2010; Rudder, 2004). This project presents the interventions, analysis, and community organizing conducted by the Black community in Vancouver between October 2015 and February 2018 to hold the municipal government accountable for this past displacement. These efforts seek to ensure that the Northeast False Creek (NEFC) area planning process delivered reparations, or as it has been called in the local context 'redress', for the City's past actions of dispossession and for what I argue are the ongoing inequities and erasure that people of African descent experience in Vancouver as a result of past and present systemic injustice.

Similar to other scholar-activists who have emerged from "the conditions of neoliberalism and the educational and societal repercussions of a deteriorating welfare state" with the "aims to make a difference in the lives of others" (Smeltzer & Cantillon 2015: 1) what is documented in this project represents my work as a researcher, professional, and community organizer informed by critical theory grounded in equity, justice, and redress. Susan Fainstein's *The Just City* (2010) was one of the early conceptual frameworks I enlisted for this project. I discovered her work in Spring 2015 during my graduate coursework when it was the core text for a seminar about urban inequality. In it, Fainstein presents a theoretical framework for urban planning based on social justice, encompassing the principles of equity, democracy, and diversity,

suggesting that these concepts should be applied to all policy and urban development initiatives and brought to "bear on all public decisions" (2010, p. 5). I leaned heavily on Fainstein to formulate the arguments in a term paper that analyzed the planning policy context that led to displacement of the Black community in Vancouver. It was in that paper that I began to advocate for consultations with residents of African descent as a means to determine how best to redress the impact that destroying Hogan's Alley had on the Black community, suggesting that space-based reparations should be the foremost consideration. Subsequent to that coursework, I learned that City Council was going to be holding a public hearing in the Fall of 2015 to inform their decision on whether or not to remove the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts. When I spoke at that hearing, I enlisted Fainstein's Just City arguments to convince the mayor and Council to use the opportunity presented by the proposed redevelopment of the NEFC area as pivotal chance for equitable city-building that would support residents of African descent.

As my advocacy for redress through the NEFC process continued, it became obvious that I needed to supplement Fainstein's justice framework with critical race theory to inform my analysis as it had been informing my community organizing efforts. The great urban thinkers I have engaged for this work are not best-selling urbanists such as Richard Florida or Larry Beasley, who are sought-after for their consulting work and frequent the stage at planning conferences. I'd argue that such popular consultant-authors who have presided over and profited from the growth of unban inequality have failed to challenge neoliberalism, capitalism, and patriarchy or engage in gender, race, or class analysis in their work. The collateral damage for these disastrous policy perspectives are the low-income and racialized city-dwellers who live with the violence of growing economic, social, and political inequalities in Canadian cities.

In place of such theorists, I lean on the ideals of Pan Africanism by looking at the kind of justice-based concepts that propelled liberation action across the African Diaspora such as the anti-apartheid movement in South African, Civil Rights and Black Power movements in North American, and the Black Lives Matter efforts taking place globally; each movement in their own way challenged the deeply entrenched institutions of racial exclusion through various means in pursuit of a better quality of life for Black people. It was important for this project as well as my community organizing work to be informed by scholars who could provide advanced analysis on topics such as Canada's history of subjugation and institutional anti-Black racism (Maynard, 2017), urban

segregation (Lorinc & Pitter, 2016; Marcuse, 2001), reparations and redress for historical injustice (Coates, 2014; Morgan, 2019) displacement of Black communities (J. J. Nelson, 2000; Rutland, 2018) and the city as settler colonial structure (Richardson, 2017).

For instance, it is critical for my project to provide readers with a working definition of anti-Black racism in the Canadian context because this framing has not been widely engaged in most areas of urban studies research and policy-making. The definition I have used for this project is as follows:

> Anti-black racism is prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement. Anti-black racism in Canada is often subtle and is generally not accompanied by overt racial slurs or explicitly prohibitive legislation. However, it is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, such that anti-black racism is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger white society. Canadian anti-black racism in its contemporary form continues the historical practices of racial segregation, economic disadvantage and social division (Morgan and Bullen, 2015 as quoted by Mullings, Morgan, & Quelleng, 2016, p. 23).

With this definition, we move beyond interpersonal experiences of racial discrimination to the broader systemic ways that anti-Black racism exists in institutions, policies, and practices, which I utilize to examine the policies and actions that have occurred in relation to this project at the municipal level and in the broader Canadian context. It is my goal that by encapsulating the history of anti-Black racism and white supremacy at the national and local level, and connecting it to the necessity for redress during planning efforts, it will encourage more urban scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners to understand how embedded anti-Black racism is in contemporary urban planning and development and ideally adopt a critical race analysis to their work towards building more equitable and just cities.

## 1.1. Project Methods

This is an Urban Studies graduate project, which combines my professional expertise with the academic skills I gained through my coursework. Through two essays I will use an autoethnographic inquiry format to present, analyze, and draw conclusions about the project content. According to Hayano, autoethnography is a research approach used by individuals who fall into one of two categories: either they have "studied their own cultural, social, ethnic, racial, religious, residential, or sex membership

group, or a combination of one or more of these categories" or "who have acquired an intimate familiarity with certain subcultural, recreational, or occupational groups" (1979, p. 100). I consider myself belonging in the former category with regard to my racial background because I both belong to and have studied my racial (Black) and ethnic (Afro-Caribbean) identities in the Canadian context and am recognized as a member by the groups to which I claim kinship. I also fit into the second autoethnography category with respect to my occupation as a real estate developer and affordable housing expert and this is demonstrated by my employment history and participation in the local affordable housing discourse, as shown in my CV presented in Appendix A. By using my intersecting vantage point as a member of the Black community in Vancouver and as real estate professional, this project delivers an insider/practitioner lens that is uncommon within urban studies scholarship when engaging the topics of race, planning, and urban land development.

There are some criticisms of autoethnography that regard the method as too subjective given the proximity to the subject-matter, but Hayano argues that personal involvement in the research under inquiry can be an asset that deepens understanding in ways not experienced by outsiders (1979, p. 101). Scholars in more recent times are engaging performative autoethnography (Denzin, 2003; Griffin, 2012; Spry, 2001) as a vehicle by which to resist and challenge prevailing norms by situating themselves in the subject matter and reporting back on the experiences. When linked to other critical studies—feminist, race, and Indigenous—performative autoethnography allows researchers like me from underrepresented groups who live at intersections of marginalization and privilege to be fully present in the work, moving between lived experience and representation of those experiences. As Spry utilizes Geertz's "Being There/Being Here" framing to describe the method that distinguishes the research (Being There) from the reflection on the research (Being Here) (Spry, 2001, p. 708). For me, a Black woman who has endured the anguish of racial exclusion yet who also has advantages of higher education and a senior level job, I do not see myself or my community represented in the academy, civic policies, or national discourses about urban development and city-building. Performative autoethonography applied to urban studies strikes me as an ideal way to reject colonized forms of knowing cities through a process by which I can "represent, disrupt, interpret, engage and transform . . . the ideological, and material circumstances that shape" (Giroux, 2000, p. 166 as quoted by Denzin, 2003, p. 266) my life and the lives of other Black people in Vancouver.

In using performative autoethonography for this project, I reject the dominant norms in urban planning in general, and the City of Vancouver in particular, that maintain racial exclusion. I do so by describing my experience of the citizen engagement process and then reporting back on how I and others challenged the white supremacist, neoliberal and capitalist norms on which that process was instituted. It is through this framing—the researcher as an actor within a study area seeking to decolonize and democratize the way we understand cities—that I hope my research can be a catalyst for change within city planning systems that are inherently exclusive. Further, while this project is more constrained in the "performative" aspects of the reporting than work I admire from other autoethnographies (Griffin, 2012; Spry, 2001), I hope to convey my personal sense of urgency in critiquing the structural inequality within the City of Vancouver's citizen engagement process, and my enduring hope for Black self-determination in a Canada that is creeping closer towards fascism and alt-right politics at the time of this writing.

I have also written from a perspective of critical race theory which "assumes that racism and white supremacy are the norms" (Denzin, 2003, p. 271) in Canadian society. My approach is thereby fitting, given the importance of "performative, storytelling autoethnographic methods to uncover the ways in which racism operates in daily life" (Denzin, 2003, p. 271)—in this context as it operates within broader planning and governance structures in the City of Vancouver. My goal in employing this method is to embed my perspective as a Black Canadian with particular professional capacities in housing and real estate within my research project in ways that are rarely visible in urban scholarship or planning practice, contributing to the small but growing body of scholars who are "creating a legacy of inquiry, a process of change, and material resources to enable transformations in social practices" (Fine et al., 2003, p. 177 as quoted by Denzin, 2003, p. 272).

## 1.2. Situating Myself in the Project

### 1.2.1. Racial Identity & Economic Reality

I grew up the youngest of three children in a single-parent household headed by Lynette Joseph Bani, a Black woman who immigrated to Canada from Guyana under the Domestic Worker Scheme in 1962. There were times during my childhood in Hamilton

that our family acutely felt the hardship of life at the socio-economic margins, where many of the amenities and privileges afforded to middle class families were not available to us. We often did not have a family car and relied on public transit to go to church or buy groceries at the cultural food markets downtown. My mother raised my brothers and me with a strong awareness of our Afro-Caribbean roots and we celebrated our Blackness without shame or apology while having an early awareness of the injustices facing people of African descent across the globe. This instilled in me a strong sense of empathy for the suffering of others and a deep-rooted desire to fight back against the injustices I witnessed in the world around me.

My mother forged a successful career for herself as a clothing designer and worked for major labels such as Adidas and SunIce over her career as well as owning several clothing boutiques through the years. However, she also faced employment and housing discrimination that caused periods of hardship and uncertainty for my family. One social safety net that helped was when we moved into public housing on Hamilton's West Mountain in 1981 when I was eight years old. The townhouse-style development was near schools and parks in the middle of a single-family neighbourhood. Looking back I can appreciate what this affordable family-friendly rental housing meant to my family, moving from a 2-bedroom rental apartment into a three-bedroom townhouse with a front and backyard This housing provided my family with a stable place to live and when my mom was able to do better financially, it allowed her the chance to afford things that may have otherwise been out of reach for a family in public housing—basketball camp for my brother Ezra, a bass guitar for my brother Stephen, and a piano for me.

Having grown up with a strong sense of my African heritage, Black identity, and the socio-economic injustices faced by people of African descent in Canada and around the world, and with a personal experience of the how impactful affordable housing is for families, my research interests and community organizing work focuses on equitable and just solutions to poverty, discrimination and oppression facing racialized and low-income communities. In this project I move "back and forth between the contexts and situations of lived experience and the representations of those experiences" (Denzin, 2003, p. 266) to deliver the goals of my research—documenting the City of Vancouver's engagement with the Black community regarding the former Hogan's Alley neighbourhood during the NEFC planning process, and arguing for how to make urban planning and policies more socially just.

### 1.2.2. Professional Capacity

I started my career in real estate development in 2002 after completing a Bachelor's of Business administration degree and for the following nine years worked in the market real estate sector focused primarily on multi-family residential and mixed-use projects that could be described as "pursuing and maintaining the interests of capital accumulation within in a neo-liberal context" (Fainstein, 2010, p. 8). I worked in BC, Arizona, and Alberta, but when the economic downturn of 2008 hit the real estate sector in Canada, I found myself without employment and considering my options. I looked for opportunities where I could combine my personal connection to social justice with my technical skills and capacity in real estate development.

In 2011 I was hired by BC Housing in its Development Strategies Branch as a Senior Project Officer, responsible for developing new projects that would be owned and operated by the province, and also working with non-profit housing providers to support their efforts to develop, own, and operate affordable housing. While at BC Housing, I observed the tension between the state's mandate to deliver on its public responsibilities, and its reliance on private business interests; the neoliberal conundrum of trying to leverage the capital growth machine as a means to eradicate poverty (Fainstein, 2010, p. 8). This was particularly evident during my first tenure at BC Housing, given that over the previous few decades the federal government had abandoned its role in the provision of public housing, leaving provinces and municipalities to rely on mortgage financing coupled with limited capital transfers to facilitate the development of new non-market housing supply. The six years I spent at BC Housing, and my subsequent 18 months in the role as a vice president for a non-profit real estate developer, have contributed to my expertise in the design, finance, construction, and operating of non-market housing in BC. I have relied heavily on this professional expertise to inform my analysis of City's engagement process, rezoning plans, and housing policy presented in this thesis project.

During my time at BC Housing, I commenced my graduate degree at SFU in Urban Studies with a specific interest in understanding how real estate development shapes cities, intending to become a better-informed developer. In the pursuit of my coursework, I enrolled in a class entitled "Urban Inequality and the Just City", which examined the conceptual framework in Susan Fainstein's *The Just City,* which analyzes a spectrum of urban issues through a social justice lens. It was during this course that I

researched the displacement of Hogan's Alley, putting me on the path towards the advocacy and community organizing documented in this project.

### 1.2.3. Connecting to Hogan's Alley

It is noteworthy that the majority of the Black people who have participated in the community organizing and calls for redress discussed in this thesis do not have a personal history connected to the Hogan's Alley neighbourhood. Most of us are not former residents or descendants and the majority have not grown up in Vancouver, only learning this story in the past few years. I believe that what binds those of us without a personal connection to Hogan's Alley is two-fold.

The first reason is because of our shared racial identity and common heritage; whether we are descendants of people who were subordinated under the savagery of European colonization and forced labour in Africa, or descended from African people who were stolen, transported, and held captive in the Western hemisphere for centuries, all of our ancestors were targeted for oppression based solely on their Blackness. The lasting impacts of colonization and enslavement show up in the social, political, cultural, and economic way of life for people of African descent in Canada where racial oppression is particularly embedded in Canadian settler society to the present day (UN Human Rights Council, 2017). Thus, our shared heritage and personal experiences of anti-Black racism are a significant part of what we have in common because it occupies a major position in our daily existence. Even members of our group who immigrated from majority-Black nations have said that their experience of anti-Black racism in Canada has compelled them to get involved in this project as a means to be engaged in something that has the potential to positively address racial inequality.

The second reason we are drawn to this work regarding redress for Hogan's Alley is because we are seeking a place within our city and country to be openly ourselves, to celebrate our culture, and to create opportunities for self-determination that has long been denied by the dominant white power structures. We long for a space free from harm, othering, discrimination, and violence. I spend considerable time in this graduate project tracing the history of Black settlement and displacement in Canada not only as a means to contextualize institutional anti-Black racism, but also because it demonstrates the importance of space-based resistance to white domination that persists. It underscores that people of African descent in Canada share an enduring

desire to establish communities and spaces of refuge free from unyielding societal hostilities (Marcuse, 2001) and where the promise of self-determination could at least be occasionally possible.

## 1.3. Project Scope and Timeline

This project consists of two essays that document the Hogan's Alley initiative spanning a timeframe from the Fall of 2015 and the first public hearing regarding the removal of the viaduct to February 2018, when the NEFC policy was approved by the City of Vancouver (a timeline is presented in Appendix B). It situates the initiative within the historical record of Black settlement and displacement in Canada and calls on critical scholarship about justice, race, and urban planning to contextualize what transpired. Artifacts, documents, and communications relevant to this project will be included in the appendices.

The first essay is focused on the politics of redress and traces the history of settlement, displacement, and racism experienced by people of African descent in Canada in general, and British Columbia in particular, eventually focusing on the once-bustling Black enclave that existed in the Southwest corner of Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood before it was systemically removed. It also chronicles the City of Vancouver's Northeast False Creek (NEFC) planning process and documents the first stage of the community engagement process conducted by the City with the Black community and our response to that process.

The politics of redress are brought into focus in this essay by demonstrating how a group of Black residents engaged with and disrupted the City's engagement process. It recounts how we reimagined citizen participation to ensure that the City's process did not tokenize the Black Community for the purpose of gaining support for the NEFC plan, and how we instead worked to define the goals and aspirations for self-determination in a local context for people of African descent who face the challenges of racial discrimination and exclusion. I show how we held the City accountable to its promises of recognition and redress for the historical displacement of Hogan's Alley by developing our own set of guiding principles for development of the lands that fit within a framework of social justice and decolonization. Further, I present the proposal we submitted to the City of Vancouver that requested a land transfer of the Hogan's Alley Block from City ownership into a Black community-stewarded non-profit land trust and with the intention

of delivering a specific set of guiding principles towards the Black community's goals of inclusion and self-determination.

Related to this section, I have included exhibits in the Appendix for reference that include the following documents:

A. Stephanie Allen CV
B. Project Timeline
C. Stephanie Allen speech to Mayor and Council October 2, 2015
D. Hogan's Alley Guiding Principles
E. Architects' response to Hogan's Alley Guiding Principles
F. Land Trust Proposal letter to City of Vancouver
G. City of Vancouver response to HAWG Land Trust Proposal
H. Redressing Displacement event program
I. Hogan's Alley Block rezoning documents provided to HAWG
J. Letter to City of Vancouver with proposed amendments to the NEFC plan
K. Speech to Mayor and Council January 31, 2018

In my second essay, I dig deeper into the specific justice-inspired affordable housing innovations I proposed as a member of the Hogan's Alley Working Group in an effort to prevent the City of Vancouver's development politics with regard to its specific intention to sell a majority of the housing on the Hogan's Alley block as luxury condominiums. It daylights the events from November 2015 to February 2018, demonstrating how the City's design-led engagement process was structured to delay responding to our land trust proposal, and how that postponement allowed the City's financial planning to proceed unchallenged, posing a risk to the Black community's aspirations of land-based redress. I present how the City's unwillingness to commit to our group led me to conduct an analysis of their preliminary architectural plans for the Hogan's Alley block where I found that between 70 to 80% of the housing planned for the site would be sold as condominiums—an implicit rejection of the Black community's explicit and non-negotiable demands that the City not seek to make any profit from selling the land that they acquired through the displacement of Black residents.

In the second essay of my research, project I detail the second stage of the City's engagement process with the Hogan's Alley Working Group as it progressed within the larger NEFC planning process and provide an assessment of that process based on my

expertise as an affordable housing developer. I also provide some critical perspectives from urban studies scholarship that allows a greater understanding of what happened during the process and why it matters from a social justice standpoint. The arguments I present are centred on the Black community's repeated calls for space-based redress for the systemic displacement of Hogan's Alley. I include an analysis of several key policies in the City of Vancouver from a critical race theory perspective, demonstrating the ongoing systemic exclusion of Black people that persists at the municipal level and connecting this to how the City's engagement process regarding the Hogan's Alley Block was conducted.

Another critical part of this essay is my analysis of the architectural rezoning plans that were produced by the City's consultants based on their interpretation of the Hogan's Alley engagement process. Through this analysis I sought to understand if the designs were compatible with the community land trust proposal and the HAWG Guiding Principles; my findings, confirmed by City staff, allowed us to fully comprehend that the architectural designs for the Hogan's Alley Block prioritized revenue generation for the City's NEFC implementation strategy and not redress for the Black community. The final parts of the second essay document how uncovering the City's plans for land value extraction compelled us to launch two major redress-focused policy interventions during the public hearing for the NEFC plan in February 2018. I present the results of our interventions—which gained broad public support and managed to move the needle towards the specific redress sought by the community—and assess these outcomes by again enlisting critical urban justice literature and connecting this to the overarching themes documented in this project.

The project concludes by offering my recommendations to urban policy-makers, academics, and practitioners—those who occupy positions of privilege and power or aspire to—about how they can transform the practice of planning away from its fundamentally racist and exclusionary pedagogies and ideologies towards a socially just standard that shares power and provides resources and capacity-building to marginalized communities to self-determine their futures; my report from Being There. It also offers my reflections on the community organizing work I performed—Being Here—and offers suggestions to others in similar circumstances about how to engage with planning processes in Canada that are inherently colonial and anti-Black in structure and practice. It may be impractical for me to hope that this project could inspire a demolition

of the white supremacist, neoliberal, capitalist patriarchy that governs our cities, but if it could serve to add another strike against these systems of oppression and violence then it would have fulfilled my aspirations as a scholar, professional, and responded to my ancestors' dream of liberation.

# Chapter 2.

# Essay 1: The Politics of Displacement, Recognition and Redress

Displacement and dispossession are embedded in Canada's formation as a country and remain fixed in the practice of modern planning. Founded on settler colonialism that was made possible by the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands, and enriched through the capture, kidnap, and enslavement of African and Indigenous peoples, Canada has not fully reckoned with its troubled past. In 1988, the federal government enacted the Canadian Multiculturalism Act as a legislative framework that would allow Canadian institutions to recognize diversity as an essential feature of our nation. The Act means to promote "the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation" (Government of Canada, 1988). However, it has been argued that multiculturalism in Canada has rendered its legacy of initial and ongoing dispossession and racial subjugation largely invisible (Bannerji, 1996) by not recognizing its history of institutional racism. This erasure and exclusion shows up in all areas of Canadian society. In past and contemporary urban planning scholarship, this invisibility has resulted in a discourse that has yet to fully incorporate an analysis of Indigenous land theft (Richardson, 2017) or anti-Black racism (Rutland, 2018) and has produced policy, practice and professionals that fail to address this critical aspect of urban inequality.

Such neglect is not benign. It exacerbates inequality by failing to address the countless ways that racialized communities are harmed in our cities as a direct result of being relegated to the margins in both historic and present-day policy-making and city-building. "The making of Black poverty and precarity did not occur by one simple process but is the result of numerous state policies and agencies that have acted in concert on heterogenous and diverse Black populations" while generating "enormous profits for the Canadian economy" (Maynard, 2017, p. 82). Unfortunately, addressing this inequality has not been regarded as a systemic issue with institutional responsibility. It is regarded as an unfortunate distribution curve of the have and have-nots, which is a

harmful neglect characteristic of neoliberal actors who either ignore, stay silent about, or work to exacerbate systemic inequality.

By facing these realities head on and engaging race equity analysis in the academy, policy-making, and city-building we can effectively reject the liberal definition of empowerment that instructs disadvantaged people to resolve their condition by bootstrapping their way to liberation. Kamat describes the idea that hard work and pulling up one's bootstraps as an "apolitical and managerial approach to community development… wherein the poor are encouraged to be entrepreneurial and find solutions to their livelihood needs" and is considerably different "from the understanding of empowerment for social justice that characterized the work" of community-based organizations and which "involves political sensitization and organizing the poor for their social and economic rights from the state and economic elites" (Kamat, 2004, p. 169). Instead I imagine an authentic reckoning of historical injustice that seeks truth-telling as a critical step before embarking on redress, with the ultimate goal of reducing the disparities that Indigenous peoples and people of African descent continue to face in Canadian cities.

In this essay, I present a history of Canada's legacy of slavery, Black community displacement, and institutional anti-Black racism because of its undeniable legacies impacting Black urban life today. According to the UN Human Rights Council 2017 report, we are under-represented in all the areas of Canadian society that we want to be counted and over-represented in areas we don't (2017). By examining Canada's racist history, this essay contextualizes why those of us who were involved in this project were so motivated to capitalize on the Northeast False Creek planning process as opportunity to seek justice for the historical displacement of Hogan's Alley; our aim is to seek redress or reparations that could improve the well-being of the Black community in Vancouver.

The stories of exclusion, discrimination, and violence against Black people in Canada are presented here to demonstrate the systemic nature of white supremacy in nation- and city-building. This historical record helps us appreciate the magnitude of systemic anti-Black racism that Black communities have endured in their pursuit of life in Canada, showing through examples how difficult it has been for people of African descent to migrate, live, and thrive in this settler colonial territory. The stories also reveal the reasons behind the enduring desire for people of African descent in Canada

to develop neighbourhoods or spaces of refuge, free from the terror and intimidation of white supremacy (Marcuse, 2001) where the hope for self-determination may be pursued among those who share a common culture and experiences.

I am also presenting this historical narrative of Canada's anti-Blackness in the context of this project because it should be more visible in the field of urban scholarship and acknowledged within broader discussions about urban development, affordable housing, and city planning. A closer look at Canada's racist history reveals yet another opportunity to engage the overarching concepts of Lefebvre's right-to-the-city discourse (Harvey, 2008) and Fainstein's just city framework (2010) by connecting some critically important but largely concealed dots between Black displacement and the current urban inequality plaguing Black lives. It also sets the foundation on which members of the Black community in Vancouver are seeking redress for the destruction of Hogan's Alley.

## 2.1. Canada's Troubled Past of Displacing Black Lives

As discussed in the introduction, cities are racialized, class stratified, and gendered spaces. (Richardson, 2017). In particular, Canadian cities are rife with anti-Black racism. In order to contextualize the history of Hogan's Alley and Black people's struggle for social justice in Vancouver, it is important to provide background about Canada's treatment of people of African descent both before and since Confederation and the history of Black people in British Columbia and Vancouver in particular. By recounting how Black people have been treated across institutions at all levels of society, with particular attention on the past and current city-planning policies in Vancouver, the case for redress comes into focus. It is this long and troubled past that is presently impacting the lives and wellbeing of Canadians of African ancestry across Canada and here in Vancouver.

The first Black enslaved person, Olivier Le Jeune, landed in what is now Quebec in 1628 (Maynard, 2017, p. 20) and the practice of slavery extended to English-speaking Upper Canada, where it continued for 200 years until it was formally abolished in all British colonies in1834 (Maynard, 2017, p. 31). During this period, on the basis of skin colour alone, "enslaved Africans were not only bought, sold, traded and trafficked as chattel but could also be raped, tortured, lynched and torched with impunity" (Morgan, 2019). Unfortunately, emancipation did not mean the end of anti-Black racism in the territory that would become Canada nor did it transform it into a nation where Black

people could participate equally in society. As with other states that held humans captive for profit, no reparations were paid to the formerly enslaved to "account for the centuries of abuse and stolen wealth" (Maynard, 2017, p. 31) and there were no formal commitments made to racial justice and equity. Instead the meanings that were attached by the dominant white society to justify the enslavement of Black people transitioned from "legal condition to biological condition, from 'slave' to 'black' (Walker 2010: 25 as quoted by Maynard, 2017, p. 31).

Legislation, government policy, and law enforcement established a white European authority upon which Canada's institutions and systems—immigration, education, labour, health care, land ownership, etc.—were based and upheld. As Maynard sums it up:

> The attributes that had been attached to Blackness—subservience, criminality, lack of intelligence and dangerousness—set a road map for treatment of Black life throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Despite the end of formal bondage, Black people's lives would continue to be devalued and their movements subject to surveillance and containment. White settlers and their governments would proactively enforce a racially divided society in which Black lives were worth less" (Maynard, 2017, p. 31).

In contrast to the treatment of Black people, those who presided over the colonies now known as Canada actively pursued European migrants—or as Maynard calls them, colonizers (2017, p. 32). These settlers were given priority for land settlement (Daschuk, 2013), employment opportunities, and were allowed to participate throughout formal areas of authority and governance. At all levels of authority in Canada, from government to judiciary systems, white men established and held power using a variety of enforcement tactics to ensure that their hegemony was maintained in this fledgling nation (Maynard, 2017).

Despite this system of white supremacy, there were occasions when Black migration was solicited by governing officials. With promises of securing freedom from racial violence under British rule, the colonists in British North America offered Black people who had fled American slavery a second-class citizenry (Newfield, 2009) even while slavery was still legally practiced in the colony. One of the more noteworthy reasons that people of African descent were welcomed to take up residence in pre-Confederation Canada was for geo-political purposes—to shore up support for the British Crown over their territories and push back against American infiltration.

Examples of this include the American Revolutionary War, when enslaved people were promised freedom in exchange for fighting on the side of the British (Whitfield, 2007); in 1829, when Governor of Upper Canada John Colborne welcomed Black migrants from Cincinnati (Taylor, 2002); and again in 1857, when Governor of British Columbia James Douglas encouraged Black people from California to migrate to Vancouver Island (Ormsby, 2018). In each of these instances, Black people's lives were used as 1) an opportunity to shore up British sovereignty over lands stolen from Indigenous peoples; and 2) a deterrent for American territory expansion. And in each of the cited examples, the liberty promised to Black people was not fulfilled, and the history of British Columbia provides vivid examples of these occurrences.

### 2.1.1. Early Black Migration and Displacement in British Columbia

As Confederation was being debated in the Eastern territories, James Douglas was appointed to preside over the fur-trading posts on the West Coast and eventually selected as governor of the newly declared Crown colony of Vancouver Island (Ormsby, 2018). By the mid-1800s, Douglas was dealing with a flood of American miners searching for gold on the Fraser River. Concerned that Americans would overwhelm the sparsely populated colony and create a groundswell of support for U.S. annexation, Douglas went in search of immigrants who might be sympathetic to British interests. Douglas was himself a biracial person of African and European heritage, which may have influenced his open attitude towards Black migrants. Ormsby provides an account of Douglas' solicitation of Black migration from the Western U.S. (2018):

> Douglas reached out to members of the San Francisco Black community, who had been discussing the need to emigrate to a more welcoming environment. In 1857, a United States Supreme Court decision had denied citizenship to both free and enslaved African Americans. Douglas promised them British citizenship after five years of land ownership and full protection of the law in the meantime. The community established a 35-member "pioneer committee" to investigate the offer, meeting a "very cheerful and agreeable" Douglas in Victoria on 25 April 1858. Not long after, several hundred Black families moved to the colony (2018).

The Black delegation who met with Douglas reported their optimism about the prospect of finding refuge in Victoria. The following is taken from a first-person report documented in the Salt Spring Archives:

> We are fully convinced that the continued aim of the spirit and policy of our mother country is to oppress, degrade, and entrap us. We have therefore

> determined to seek an asylum in the land of strangers from the oppression, prejudice, and relentless persecution that have pursued us for more than two centuries in this our mother country. Therefore a delegation having been sent to Vancouver's Island, a place which has unfolded to us in our darkest hour, the prospect of a bright future; to this place of British possession, the delegation having ascertained and reported the condition, character, and its social and political privileges and its living resources (Salt Spring Island Archives, n.d.).

It is evident in their words that for these Black asylum seekers, freedom from the oppression they were experiencing in America was what drove them to seek a new home in the colony of Vancouver Island. Relatively quickly, some among this wave of Black migrants gained prominence, obtained land claims, and ascended to positions of prestige in the region including law enforcement, school boards and civic council, as well as representing Salt Spring Island at the 1868 Yale Convention to add their voice to the debate about whether or not British Columbia would join Confederation. And while their early achievements are remarkable for the time, the historical record documents the systemic and inter-personal racism they encountered not long after landing in their new homeland. Jensen describes how "black settlers"[1] engaged in every level of the economy, striving to become valued citizens in their new home. But the racism of the south followed them even to this distant place" (1999, p. 28).

[1] Although Jensen refers to Black migrants as "settlers", this is a descriptor that a growing number of activists and scholars reject when describing people of African descent in the Americas (Amadahy, Zainab & Lawrence, Bonita, 2009; Thomas, 2019). They are reframing the logics of settler colonialism to incorporate this distinction as Chelsea Vowel sums it up: "Enslaved people could not consent to being brought here, and their presence cannot confer upon their descendants acceptance into the settler colonial system, especially since, being inherently white supremacist, settler colonialism is virulently anti-Black. Enslaved peoples were violently dehumanized and forced to serve settler colonialism, and all remaining ancestral worldviews and cultural innovations among their descendants exist IN SPITE [sic] of ongoing attempts to destroy Blackness" (Thomas, 2019).

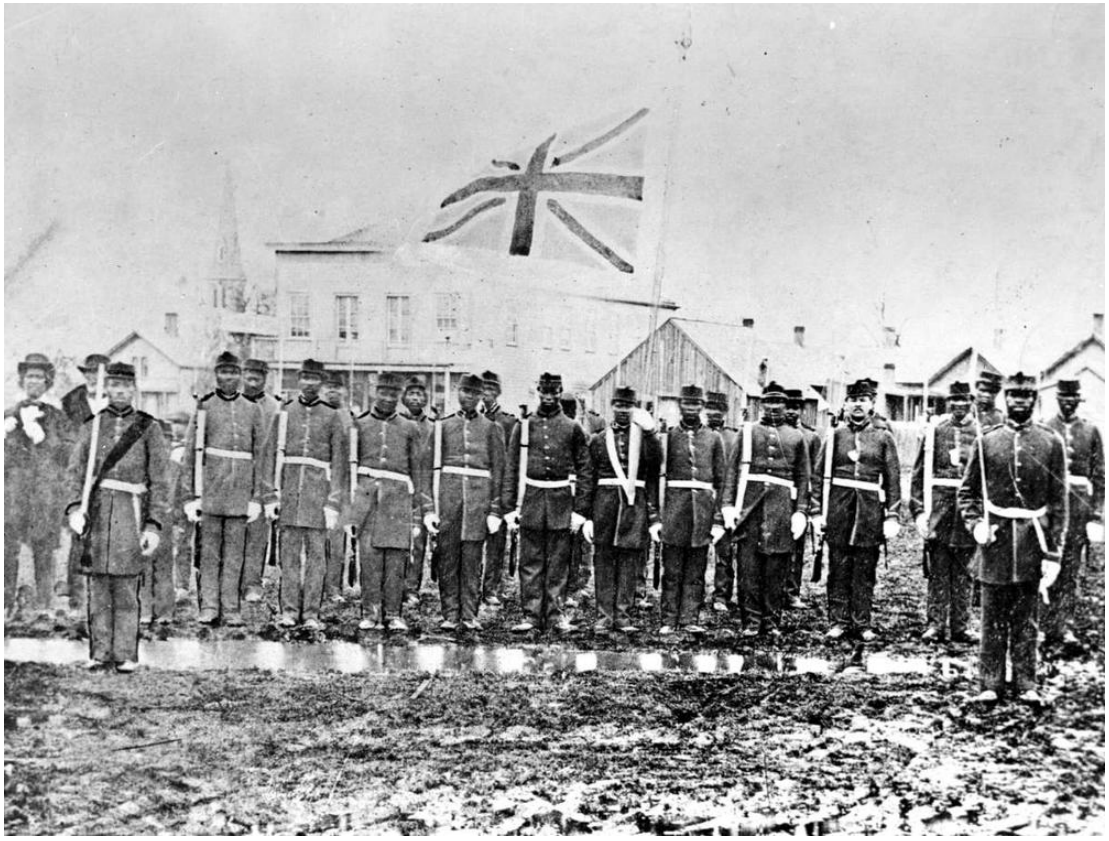


**Figure 1 Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps, also known at the time as Sir James Douglas' Coloured Regiment**
Photo: Royal BC Museum and Archives, 186? (copyright permission pending)

Jensen went on to quote Cornwallis' from his 1858 book The New Eldorado who described what he saw regarding the state of Black lives in the territory then called Fort Victoria:

> I observed that the coloured people i.e. "niggers" collected here, many of whom were "real estate" owners... and one of their number I heard attempted to take his seat with white people at a boarding house table in town, but was expelled in a manner as prompt and merciless as the style of doing the thing was ludicrous. The newly appointed police of the place were negroes, and consequently heartily despised by the Americans.
>
> The colonial police force, appointed in June 1858, consisted entirely of British subjects from the West Indies, all of them black. But the prejudice that arrived with the enormous wave of immigration was already so great that most of the black policemen were withdrawn from service before the end of summer (Jensen, 1999).

Cornwallis' account demonstrates the racial violence that early Black migrants faced in their early days of urban settlement in British Columbia and that despite their efforts to assimilate and fit in, they were subjected to the familiar racial hatred they had fled in the

U.S. In his book “Negro settlement in British Columbia 1858 – 1871”, Pilton provides additional details about the challenges faced by people of African descent in Victoria, describing how “oppression followed them on every gold-rush steamer that arrived in Victoria from the south” and that “many of the British residents became more race-conscious than the Americans”, adding that some of the Black migrants felt “that there was more prejudice against them in British Columbia than in many parts of the United States” (Pilton, 1951, p. 176).

The Salt Spring Island Archive (n.d.) provides several first person accounts of the migration and eventual tribulation faced by members of the Black community including reports of the hostility they faced and they made many attempts to find ways to deal with and escape it. At one point, the Black residents appealed to Governor Douglas to fulfill the promise of equal treatment he made to them by granting them the land necessary to form an all-Black settlement on Salt Spring Island. Douglas denied their request, favouring racial integration instead (Irby, 1974), but did grant some Black people rights to farm lands on the north end of the island (Bowen 2004).

Their desire to form a Black community physically removed from the white-majority settlements—a vision shared by Black people in North American since slavery ended—reminds us that the desire of people of African descent in North America to want to live separately from the dominant white society arises not only as a response to racial segregation and social ordering instituted by white authorities, but also as a post-emancipation dream to escape the presence of their former brutalizers and live free of the terror and hatred they endured throughout their enslavement. (Coates, 2014; Mathieu, 2010; J. J. Nelson, 2000; Taylor, 2002). These fundamental desires to find spaces of refuge where Black people can develop social, cultural, and economic inter-dependencies free from the pressing glare of white supremacy remain to this day and constitutes part of the impetus for the specific forms of redress proposed by the Black Vancouver community as described in this project.

Similar to many accounts of Black settlement during the post-emancipation era and continuing through the 20th century (beginning on January 1, 1901 and ending on December 31, 2000), as experiences of racial violence people of African descent suffered in the colonies around Victoria ratcheted up—including the terror that struck the community when two Black men on Salt Spring Island were murdered in separate incidents—many within the community once again tried relocating to escape harm.

Louis Stark, who was born into slavery in the United States and was one of the Black people provided with land claims on Salt Spring Island decided to leave the area following those murders. He re-established himself on a large tract of land near Nanaimo and resumed his cattle farming there. In 1884, industrialist and future Premier of British Columbia James Dunsmuir sent an intermediary named Hodgson to approach Louis Stark, asking him to sell his cattle ranch which lay on the path of the plans for a mining operation to which Dunsmuir's father had secured the rights. Louis Stark refused the offer and was found dead a few months later by Hodgson, who was later arrested for the crime. Eventually Crown prosecutors refused to pursue the case and Hodgson was later appointed to a role in the Provincial police force (Bowen, 2004). This example of murderous land dispossession committed against Black people in pursuit of enriching white settlers in BC underscores the early and ongoing opposition and harm that is directed at people of African descent for occupying space in white settler societies, and the early and ongoing resistance that Black people make to assert their right to exist in communities across Canada. It also highlights how violence against Black lives was and is seldom punished and often rewarded in states founded in white supremacy and slavery.

With the above accounts, I provide a skimming of the surface of the early history of people of African descent in BC and Canada. It is meant specifically to reveal the linkages between Canada's foundation of systemic white dominance and the ways that Black people were simultaneously subjugated for wealth creation through slavery while being exploited to fortify Canada's geopolitical position. In the history of British Columbia, it highlights the way Black people were used to uphold and protect the sovereignty of the British Empire and fight American encroachment into the colony; it was the founding of the Canadian version of systemic anti-Blackness—extraction of value while perpetuating (often violent) harm. It also lays the foundation on which I build and contextualize the displacement of Hogan's Alley and the actions taken by Vancouver's Black community to resist erasure and/or tokenism while forging a course of self-determination through space-based redress described in later parts of this project.

### 2.1.2. Preventing Black Migration and Disempowering Black Communities

After the abolition of slavery in British colonies in 1834 and Confederation in 1867, emerging national policies, laws and institutional practices were structured to secure white primacy on lands taken from Indigenous peoples. European and American settlers were offered rights and privileges over the lands which Indigenous people had been forcibly removed using state-sanctioned violence. This was done in concert with systemic oppression and subordination of white women, people of colour, Indigenous people, and Black populations (Daschuk, 2013; Maynard, 2017). To inform their racial subjugation goals, Mathieu notes that "white Canadians increasingly turned to American southerners [sic] for cues on how to handle blacks [sic], adopting and adapting Jim Crow to fit into Canada's own political archetype." Consequently, she notes, "analyzing the role of race in state-building processes during the Jim Crow era becomes extremely instructive on how race — in particular blackness [sic] — became a crucial catalyst for advancing debates about national identity, citizenship, empire, and law in Canada" (2010, p. 7).

Canada's first immigration policies reinforced the emerging white national identity. In 1896, the Canadian Department of Immigration established paid positions for agents to persuade migrants from the United States and Europe to come to Canada with the promise of 160 acres of free farmland (Mathieu, 2010; Maynard, 2017). Simultaneously, the Department reflected the anti-Black racism of the greater society, actively discouraging Black Americans and Afro-Caribbean people from migrating to Canada. At first a relentless, if unofficial, campaign was put in place to keep Black people out. Doctors were deployed to the U.S. to warn them that the Canadian climate was dangerous or that they could die of cold; one doctor was instructed to tell African American men that their wives and daughters would be stripped naked and examined by "boards of men", a horrifying reminder of the slave auctions and a compelling reason to avoid migration to Canada (Shepherd 1997 p. 97 as quoted by Maynard, 2017, p. 35). In the case of African-Caribbean people, immigration agents told steamship companies they were prohibited from selling tickets to Black people (Maynard, 2017, p. 35). Mathieu documents: "West Indian migrants so unnerved the Canadian Department of Immigration that agents in Halifax advocated drastic and illegal tactics. In a confidential memorandum sent to the Secretary of the Interior, a Department of Immigration agent

avowed, ‘I think that it is the opinion of the Department that we don’t want the West Indian nigger,’ and the agent insisted that ‘every obstacle is to be put in their way’”(2010, p. 31).

In 1911, Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier and his cabinet approved an Order-in-Council banning Black people from entering Canada. It read:

> For a period of one year from and after the date hereof the landing in Canada shall be and the same is prohibited of any immigrants belonging to the Negro race, which race is deemed unsuitable to the climate and requirements of Canada (The Canadian Encyclopedia, n.d.).

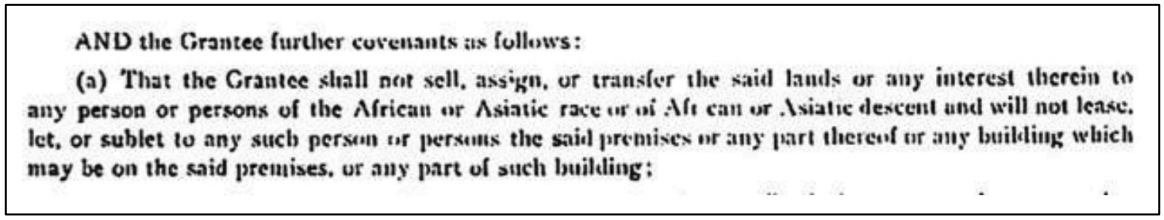
Not long afterwards the order was repealed, but Laurier’s government made it clear that Black people were not welcome or wanted in Canada. This attitude, demonstrated in the hostilities directed at early Black asylum-seekers from the United States or Afro-Caribbean migrants in the 1800s, prevailed for the rest of the 19th and into the early 20th century, with examples such as the forty Black migrants who were turned away at the White Rock BC border in 1911 (Winks, 1997). Although the official number of Black migrants admitted into Canada from the last decades of the nineteenth century to World War I hovered around five thousand in total, the mere idea or rumour of Black migration to Canada generated hysteria comparable to that over Chinese immigrants to Canada and United States during the same time. (Mathieu, 2010).

These parallels to the history of Asian immigration to Canada demonstrate that the narrative of Canada’s legacy of racial exclusion needs to be expanded to include people of African descent. Such expansion will allow us to build a more robust account, one that connects the system that rendered the murder and pillage of the rightful owner-occupiers of Canadian territories “legal” to the ongoing violation of human rights based on race or ethnic origin through exclusionary policies and practices that were established to prioritize whiteness. It is in this context that we understand how people of African descent—facing the compounding impacts of enduring anti-Black racism, hostile Jim Crow-style laws, and barriers to migration—were segregated, ghettoized, vulnerable to displacement, preventing Black communities from gaining and keeping a foothold in Canada during the nation’s formative years.

### 2.1.3. Black Strathcona: Racial Segregation Through Land Use Planning

Within the context of a country and province that were founded upon and structured to protect and perpetuate white supremacy, the earliest waves of Black migrants to Vancouver made their way from other regions of Canada, the United States, and possibly the Caribbean to Vancouver and clustered in the in the area that came to be known as Strathcona in the late 1800s. (Marlatt & Itter, 1979; Rudder, 2004). At the time, the Strathcona neighbourhood was home to many racialized communities. In *Making Vancouver,* McDonald states that more than class was involved in establishing the social ordering of the city: “the anglophone majority, whose members considered themselves 'citizens,' were divided from the 'immigrants,' transients, and poor, whom they categorized as 'outsiders,' by a social boundary that is revealed as much more fundamental than the separation of labour from capital” (1996, p. 2).

The policy and institutional causes of spatial segregation in 20th century Vancouver as well as other Canadian cities have not been widely documented, but there are accounts of redlining and restrictive covenants in Vancouver. The property records for a house near Point Grey Golf & Country Club stated “no Asiatic, Negro or Indian shall have the right or be allowed to own, become tenant of or occupy any part of [the property] ”, British Properties held a strict whites-only policy with one property as recently as 2014 still bearing a restriction on title barring its sale to “any person or persons of African or Asiatic race or of African or Asiatic descent” (Hopper, 2014).



AND the Grantee further covenants as follows:

(a) That the Grantee shall not sell, assign, or transfer the said lands or any interest therein to any person or persons of the African or Asiatic race or of African or Asiatic descent and will not lease, let, or sublet to any such person or persons the said premises or any part thereof or any building which may be on the said premises, or any part of such building;

**Figure 2 Excerpt from a restrictive covenant on title of home in British Properties neighbourhood, Vancouver (Hopper, 2014)**

Restrictive covenants and other segregation measures have been discovered on properties in Calgary from 1920, which intended to “keep African Canadians from purchasing homes outside the boundaries of the railway yards”(Mathieu, 2010, p. 169), and in Hamilton, where institutional lenders favoured the affluent parts of town and avoided the inner city (Harris & Forrester, 2003). McDonald characterized the

geographical divisions in Vancouver society in the following way: “Shaughnessy Heights lumber barons, Mount Pleasant tradespeople, and East End labourers were all part of a complex society and displayed sharp differences in attitudes and behaviour that cannot all be attributed to class” (1996, p. 2).

Certainly a class-based analysis fails to fully deconstruct the underlying causes of spatial segregation in Vancouver, especially considering its status as a settler colony in a country with institutionalized policies against Indigenous peoples (Stanger-Ross, 2008), people of African descent, and others. An example of how Canada turned to the U.S. to guide official and unofficial state policies vis a vis Black Canadians is evidenced when the City of Vancouver hired Harland Bartholomew. America’s first professional town planner, based in St. Louis, Bartholomew was contracted in 1926 to create the first official Vancouver city plan, which was completed in 1928, with a subsequent update in 1929 to include the newly formed municipalities of South Vancouver and Point Grey (City of Vancouver Archives, 2011). Benton documents that Bartholomew was a devoted segregationist whose ideologies on race and class—common among early professional town planners and white society in general—influenced his development of zoning plans for American cities and likely other cities in which he worked. In 1916, when the US Supreme Court “struck down a Louisville, Kentucky, city zoning ordinance that explicitly prohibited blacks [sic] from moving into majority white neighborhoods” (Benton, 2018, p. 1120), Bartholomew created a work-around in the 1920 St. Louis zoning plan that enabled racial segregation to continue. By developing distinct land-use classifications based on home quality and density—seemingly neutral mechanisms under the purview of a town planner—to work in conjunction with restrictive covenants that form a part of the private contract between buyer and seller and thus acceptable in common law, Bartholomew’s policy design would effectively keep racialized and lower-income communities separate from affluent white neighbourhoods, reflecting back the prevailing anti-Black sentiments commonly held throughout society.

As Benton elaborates:

> Instead of explicitly banning blacks from integrating, Bartholomew zoned the city in a manner that assigned “first residential neighborhood” status to existing white-majority neighborhoods whose homes’ deeds legally prohibited sale to blacks, an agreement known as a restrictive covenant. Restrictive covenants prevented the sale of homes to blacks legally, because they were private contracts as opposed to public plans. First residential neighborhoods generally allowed only high-quality, single-family residential homes. Neighborhoods that blacks were living in were

> designated as “second residential” and largely contained dense, multifamily housing. Black residents of Saint Louis were left with little choice than to live in the neighborhoods zoned for them, where deeds did not legally preclude their residence. Furthermore, the 1920 Bartholomew plan mandated that new polluting industry businesses’ construction occur only in neighborhoods with the designation of “second residential,” ensuring not only segregation but also an inequality in housing and neighborhood quality. Whereas white neighborhoods were zoned as residential only, sometimes with light commercial use on the outskirts, black neighborhoods were allowed to be zoned for the mixed uses of dense residential, commercial, and industrial.(Benton, 2018, p. 1121)

Some may argue that there is a lack of explicit evidence linking Bartholomew’s white supremacist ideologies to his work on Vancouver’s first city plan. As a person with lived experience of racism, and once again drawing on critical race theory, it is accepted that when individuals embrace racism, it is wholly unlikely that those beliefs remain in isolation, separate from the way they approach their work. In Bartholomew’s case, he was considered a leading expert on whose expertise cities relied; it is reasonable, then, to conclude that instead of pushback, officials in Vancouver probably found Bartholomew’s approach and segregationist ideologies as complementary to the institutional racism practiced in Canada, including a long history of residential segregation in Vancouver practiced against non-white people.

As the first fulltime city planner in America whose “firm prepared comprehensive plans for over 500 cities and counties” (Cook, 1989), Bartholomew would have carried considerable influence on early city planning in places such as Vancouver (City of Vancouver Archives, 2011) where he was widely praised. He was heralded as developing the “key concepts with which planners continue to work” in an article that described him as the “precedent for the profession” referring to his proficiency (Johnston, 1973) and, in a more recent article, Heathcott refers to him as being “instrumental in forging a national professional culture grounded in a system of urban knowledge production that governed city planning practice through much of the twentieth century” (Heathcott, 2005). Bartholomew represented the mainstream of North American planning orthodoxy and it is likely that his racist approach to planning in places like Richmond, St. Louis ,and Louisville, Kentucky, (where Throgmorten argues his work was, if not malicious, at least “silent about the race-related context of his practice, by complacently planning as if the city‘s segregated way of life was normal, and by not analyzing strategies explicitly designed to improve the quality of life among Louisville‘s African-American population” (2004)) influenced his work in Vancouver. As mentioned

earlier, Mathieu makes the case for how Canada imported American methods of racial segregation and institutional discrimination so employing Bartholomew may have been a natural extension of this practice in the local context.

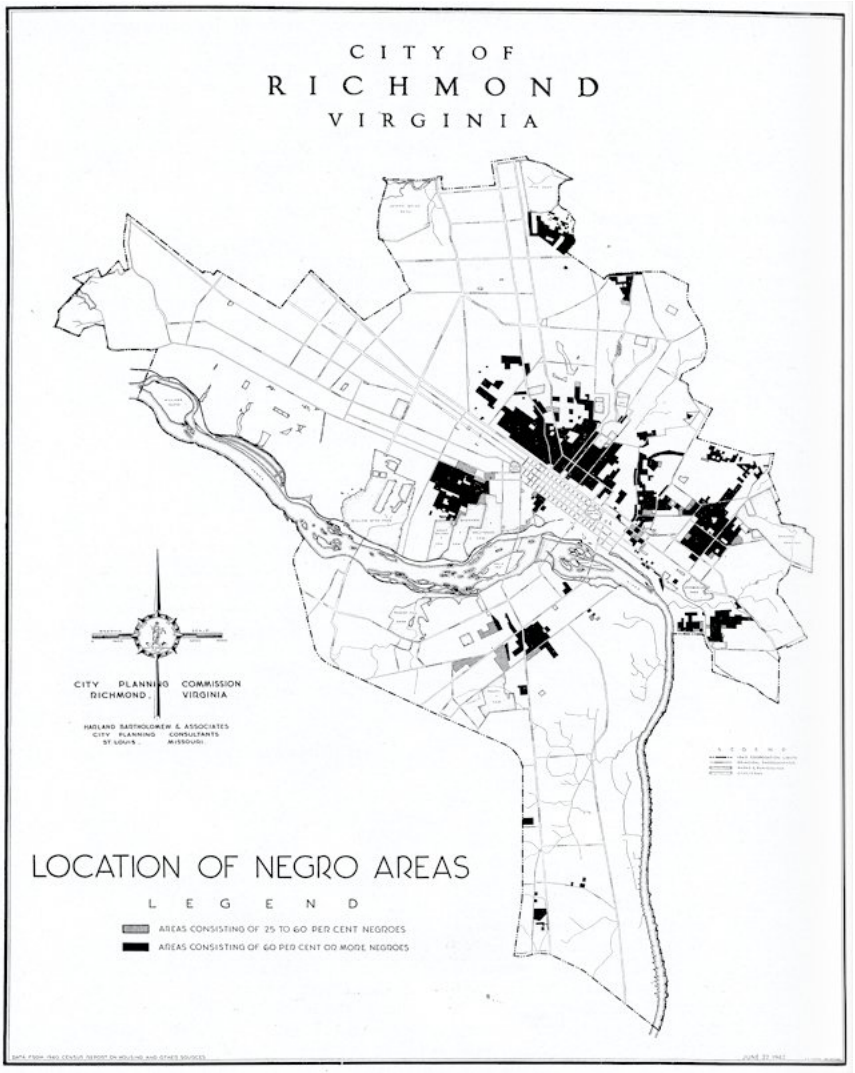



**Figure 3 Bartholomew & Associates' map depicting "Location of Negro Areas" in the City of Richmond, Virginia**
Photo: City of Richmond Planning Commission, 1946

Rutland does an important job connecting how early planning's technical and scientific approach to improving living conditions for white citizens failed to do so for residents who were Black, concluding that their idyllic planning ambitions were "suspended, if not fully inverted" when it came to communities of colour and that "displacing blackness, symbolically and physically, was thus integral to the formation of comprehensive planning and its city-wide interventions… across the entire terrain it was

taking within its grasp" (2018, p. 77). He goes on to present how race shaped planning in early Halifax, N.S., documenting how the rise of scientific anti-Blackness—rooted in "eighteenth-century natural history, anatomy, and theology" (2018, p. 102)—"fundamentally shaped comprehensive planning in Halifax" and "is evident in all of this period's major planning ambitions and interventions" (2018, p. 110). It is therefore reasonable to argue, as Rutland has, that as modern planning emerged, all across Canada and North America it "produced a spatialized version of the period's broader white supremacist and anti-Black preoccupations" and "effectively put the urban terrain in the service of white life and thereby produced a series of spatially derived improvements in white health, convenience, and prosperity alongside and through the creation of Black dispossession, vulnerability and death" (2018, p. 115).

Bartholomew went on to play a leading role in the implementation of later 20$^{th}$century planning principles such as urban renewal that included the slum clearance and highway building that resulted in the kind of displacement of Black communities that occurred in Hogan's Alley and around North America (Brown, 2005; Cook, 1989), all factors that shaped the formation and displacement of Hogan's Alley. Perhaps Bartholomew's segregationist ideology and discriminatory urban design practice does not in itself prove that Vancouver's early and distinct spatial segregation by race are connected, but through a lens of critical race theory, powerful individuals like Bartholomew, who embrace a worldview based on white supremacy, tend to bring their ideologies to bear on their work, particularly in this case where there is power to shape the way societies and communities are ordered (Coates, 2014; Maynard, 2017; Rutland, 2018). It may not have been that he was hired for that explicit purpose but it may have been regarded by Vancouver officials of the day as one of his more attractive attributes

Reconstructing the spatial segregation by class and race in early Vancouver history has been performed by several researchers (Marlatt & Itter, 1979; McDonald, 1996; Stanger-Ross, 2008), but it has proven challenging for scholars and artists to fully explore the Black community in Strathcona, partially due to a lack of available official historical records (Rudder, 2004). A few records exist such as McDonald's research, which documents Black people were present in Vancouver as early as 1875 citing survey records produced by George Dawson reporting that "Negroes and Mulattoes" were among the population of the Burrard Inlet and that, in 1881, there was a 'presence of "Blacks, of whom an unknown but small number (such as the Sullivan family) lived on

Burrard Inlet'"(1996, p. 19). Another reason documentation about early Black life in Vancouver is lacking could be due to writers and reporters being unmotivated to document Black life unless it was regarding crime and disorder (Maynard, 2017) or perhaps because of the impacts of the violent racism and systemic exclusion they faced, they may have wanted to remain as invisible as possible from the dominant white society. In his thesis "A Black Community in Vancouver?: A History of Invisibility", Rudder posits that people of African descent living in Vancouver during the late 1800s and early 1900s were hyper-visible due to their skin color, while simultaneously seeking to be 'invisible' as a means to avoid being targets of white aggression" (2004, p. 4).

In the next section, I focus on the planning elements that led to the formation and displacement of the Black community of Strathcona by relying on the oral histories and official city records. The contrast between the City's description of the community and the way it was regarded by many of the residents provides a glimpse into the social interdependence that that formed in the Black neighbourhood for their own socio-economic survival separate from—to the extent possible—the white supremacist society that surrounded but excluded them.

### 2.1.4. Hogan's Alley: The Formation and Dispossession of a Community

> *A boy last week, he was sixteen, in San Francisco, told me on television — thank God we got him to talk — maybe somebody thought to listen. He said, "I've got no country. I've got no flag." Now, he's only 16 years old, and I couldn't say, "you do." I don't have any evidence to prove that he does. They were tearing down his house, because San Francisco is engaging — as most Northern cities now are engaged — in something called urban renewal, which means moving the Negroes out. It means Negro removal, that is what it means. The federal government is an accomplice to this fact*.
>
> (*James Baldwin interviewed by Kenneth Clark*, 1963)

The ability to exist in a Black body within a white supremacist society is challenged by all aspects of Canadian society, from health care and food security to education and housing (UN Human Rights Council, 2017). Black people in North American have had to contest the dominant white society since arriving on these shores. As emancipated people set out to reconnect with their family members, and to find a space and the means to exist, they were and still are regularly met with opposition, violence, and subjugation. White settlers terrorized Black families and entire

neighbourhoods to enforce compliance with the hierarchies set up to ensure white primacy. While there has been an enormous amount of research on the history of white domination of Black people in the United States, this is a topic rarely taught or explored in Canada. In spite of having a smaller body of research to work from, there exist sufficient inquiries into the Canadian context to reveal the history of Black settlement and displacement in places such as Wilberforce (Taylor, 2002) Amber Valley Alberta (Historica Canada, n.d.; Winks, 1997), Africville (Halifax) Nova Scotia (J. J. Nelson, 2000; Rutland, 2018), and Little Burgundy in Montreal (High, 2019) to name a few. These shared experiences demonstrate how Black people were segregated, dispersed, terrorized, and banished to the margins throughout the nation.

In Vancouver, the Black community was once clustered in a neighbourhood situated in the southwest corner of Strathcona that formed in the late 1800s. Estimates of the population have been difficult to accurately pin down due to the challenges with the enumeration process but, according to Rudder during the early 1900s, the population of "Negro" people enumerated rose in Vancouver from 166 in 1911 to 320 in 1931 suggesting a migration from other parts in Canada (Rudder, 2004, p. 36). This is in contrast to the membership roll of the AME Fountain Chapel church, formerly located at 823 Jackson, which included some 410 names of adults around the same time period (Clark, 2019).

There were several reasons that the Black community located in this area: proximity to the railroads where many Black men had employment as sleeping-car porters; the prevalence of affordable housing; and because racialized people were restricted from and unwelcome in other parts of the city as previously noted (City of Vancouver, 1957; Hopper, 2014). The Black neighbourhood, which came to be known as Hogan's Alley—not because someone named Hogan lived there but because this was a slang pejorative given to racialized low-income communities in North America (Compton, 2010)—was estimated by chief planner Leonard Marsh in 1950 to be 3% of the Strathcona population, who stated that "many of them could afford to live elsewhere, but it is too obvious that they would be unwelcome" (Marsh, 1950, as quoted by Compton, 2010, p. 89).


**Figure 4 Black Strathcona map of people and places in the former Hogan's Alley neighbourhood.**

Note: This resource is taken from Black Strathcona and is copyright Creative Cultural Collaborations Society 2013 reproduced with permission.

As mentioned, the interviews conducted by Marlatt and Itter (1979) and expanded by Rudder (2004) provide the best information that exists about the daily lives of Black people in Vancouver from the late 1800s to the mid-1970s, and also informs us how this community came to exist and how eventually it was displaced. For example, Emmitt Holmes moved to the area in the 1940s and stated that he, like most Black people who migrated to the city, settled in the Hogan's Alley area:

> No, I guess at that time that most of the people in the Black community lived between Main St. and Clark Drive and between I guess about from where the Station is back to the Waterfront, I guess that was the area if you wanted to see Black folks, otherwise you could be in Vancouver for a long time and not find them because you didn't know where to look, and at that time there wasn't that many anyway (Rudder, 2004, p. 37).

Mr. Holmes' statement not only situates the heart of Black life in Vancouver in the physical location of Strathcona, it also reflects how important it was for Black people in general and in Vancouver particularly to "find" each other, to commune and experience a sense of belonging and safety in an predominantly hostile and unwelcoming white society. Mrs. Nealy moved to Vancouver in 1944, recounting in *Opening Doors* "when I

came here, this district was Negroes, from Main Street to Campbell Avenue, like you see the Chinese here now. Whole apartment blocks that were all full of Blacks" (Marlatt & Itter, 1979, p. 59).

Rosa Pryor moved to Vancouver in 1917 from the U.S. and, not long afterwards, opened up Mrs. Pryor's Chicken Inn on Keefer Street, operating it for 42 years. Her restaurant was such a success that she was able to repay the $20 she borrowed to get her operating licence within two days of opening (Marlatt & Itter, 1979, p. 110). The economic impact of her Chicken Inn and other Black-owned establishments was significant for the Black community, especially women, as Dorothy Nealy stated: "practically every Black woman in Vancouver has worked for Mrs. Pryor's Chicken Inn sometime or other" (Marlatt & Itter, 1979, p. 171). This is also an example of how Black women have always had to rely on paid work outside the home as a necessity and that often the best opportunities were ones that did not rely on the dominant white culture for employment.

Another distinguished Black woman from Hogan's Alley was Nora Hendrix, who came to Vancouver in 1911 by way of Chicago and Seattle and was instrumental in founding the AME Fountain Chapel Church on Jackson Avenue in 1918. She also happened to be the grandmother of the famous 1960s rock legend, Jimi Hendrix. Her account of life in Hogan's Alley, and the church in particular, demonstrates the importance of that space for Black community life, fostering social connections and sheltering from the racial hostilities that existed in other parts of the city (Marlatt & Itter, 1979, p. 84). The Fountain Chapel operated for decades until the community sold it in 1989 (Compton, 2010). I offer these few highlights of Black live in Vancouver as just a glimpse into the settlement, life, and experiences of the people who lived there. Hogan's Alley has influenced historians, writers, artists, and researchers who are continuing to document and evolve a body of work that is worthy of a more thorough investigation than I am able to do within this project (Compton, 2010; Creative Cultural Collaboration Society, n.d.; Douglas & Dao, n.d.; Hogan's Alley Memorial Project, n.d.; Rudder, 2004).

Just as segregationist land use, racially restrictive land covenants, and discrimination caused Black people to cluster in the same neighbourhood in Vancouver, systemic racism led to its destruction. G. Sutton Brown was hired as the City's first director of planning, holding the position from 1953 to the end of 1959, eventually leaving it to become a city commissioner from 1960 to early 1973. Langford describes

Brown's career as reflecting the main characteristics of the professional planning movement at that time: eagerly seeking institutionalization as a profession within urban areas grounded in modernist ideology, and adopting practices that could be characterized as "dehumanizing and undemocratic" in theory and practice (Langford, 2012, p. 12). His pursuit of the same modernist and technocratic school of thought as Bartholomew and others is revealed in his 1959 speech:

> What we are all striving for is an improvement – a substantial improvement – in the human environment and in the efficiency of its operation – we are trying to make our cities, towns and villages better places to live in and work in (Sutton Brown as quoted by Langford, 2012, p. 18)

The evidence of systemic racism in planning that Rutland found in Halifax are mirrored in the planning decisions made by Brown and the City of Vancouver that caused the deterioration and eventual displacement of Hogan's Alley. In 1929, the Bartholomew city plan for Vancouver replicated another one of early planning's discriminatory policies—situating industrial land-use zones near low-income and racialized communities. In the Vancouver context, it "led to a 1931 bylaw zoning much of Hogan's Alley and its surrounding area as industrial rather than residential" (Atkin: 1994, as quoted by Compton, 2010, p. 90). This had a devastating economic effect on home-owners for whom lending institutions saw residential property in an industrial area to be high risk for home improvement loans or mortgages—leaving them without access to credit to make repairs and devaluing the residences in the area.

Newspapers of the day also contributed to the devaluation of Hogan's Alley with reporting that named it as a place of disrepute, using "poor-bashing phraseology" and focusing on themes of "squalor, immorality and crime" to the exclusion of the hard-working labourers, "small business owners, families, and church community" who were there, setting the community up for the consequences of displacement that would follow in later decades.(Compton, 2010, p. 91). Meanwhile, the federal government had launched its formal urban renewal policy in the Housing Act of 1944 in which it offered to share the costs of "acquiring and clearing blighted residential areas" with cities in order to provide low- or moderate-income housing (Pickett, 1968, p. 233).

Proclaimed as the solution to urban slums, urban renewal in North America advocated for a scorched-earth approach of removing and/or rehabilitating the low-income, racialized, and densely populated parts of the city that had fallen into disrepair. (Lowden, 1970; Smith, 1985). As a policy, urban renewal evolved over the decades but

its core ideology—planning from a scientific and technocratic perspective—held firm; as Smith recounts his time working for CMHC on urban renewal in Calgary: “slums were the physical evidence of the urban organism's failure to renew itself. In the popular metaphor, which completed the biological analogy, slums were cancers” (1985, p. 9). He went on to state that “the planning conception of urban renewal had…to be couched in terms of an objectively determined public interest not the special needs or ‘rights’ of a select group. Individual planners may have genuinely wished to help the less fortunate, but the planning theory of renewal rejected a focus on social improvements that centred the needs of the less fortunate. Instead, the ‘social neutrality’ philosophy adopted by early planners ‘was proclaimed as scientifically objective’ (1985, p. 10). That neutrality could thereby justify or mask decisions that caused any harm—consequential or intentional—to any particular groups of people because it was in the best interest of the “whole community” and grounded within the realm of science.

Without spending the rest of this project deconstructing the notion that government policies in a settler colonial state could possibly be “socially neutral”, it is clear that urban renewal was not concerned with human rights or the well-being of the people who occupied neglected and disenfranchised ghettos and rather intentionally upheld the social order of the greater society. In Vancouver, City Council was inspired by the book *Rebuilding a Neighbourhood,* written by UBC School of Social Work professor Leonard Marsh, in which he advocated that the City take up the federal government’s urban-renewal incentives. The City’s move towards implementing urban renewal involved constructing a slum by disinvestment in public infrastructure, withholding the approval of any new building and development permits in the area, cutting funding for road improvements, and “eventually they froze property values in Strathcona altogether, discouraging any improvements by local owners” (Atkin: 1994, as quoted by Compton, 2010, p. 95). This practice of large-scale disinvestment to facilitate slum clearance and redevelopment was deployed across North America mainly targeting low-income and Black communities (Benton, 2018; Coates, 2014; Williams, 1969).

By 1956, the federal National Housing Act removed all “restraints on re-use” and provided free reign to municipalities to “clear slum housing and dispose of the land for whatever use was indicated in the municipal plan for the area” (Pickett, 1968, p. 234), paving the way for the City of Vancouver to make its next move towards implementing urban renewal. That next step was the 1957 Redevelopment Study—the result of the

Housing Research Committee that included representatives from the province, the City, and CMHC (Plant, 2008)—which documented the physical inspections of "blighted" areas in the city, evaluating housing quality and compiling inventories of "incompatible land uses" crafting a narrative that would come to define particular neighbourhoods as a "slum." (City of Vancouver, 1957, p. 3).

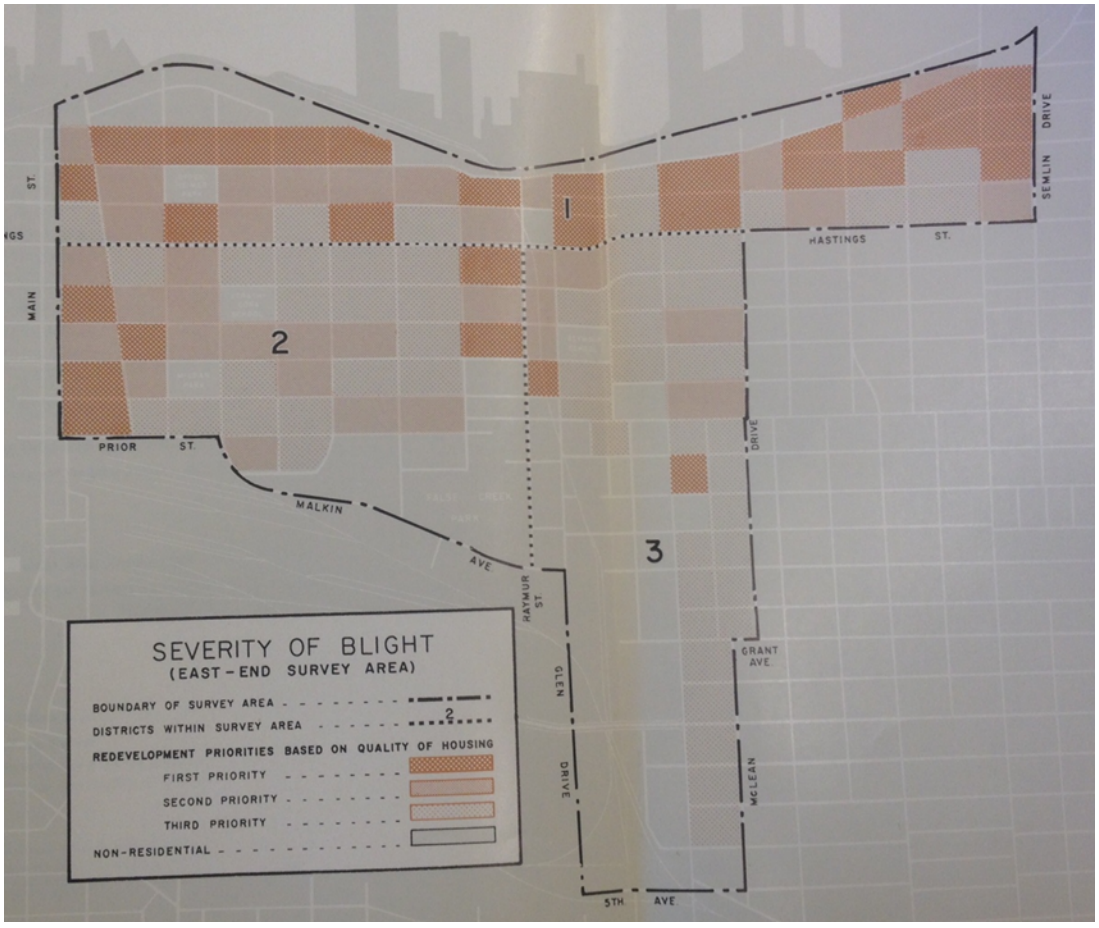



**Figure 5 Map of Blight, City of Vancouver 1957 Redevelopment Study**
Note: The Hogan's Alley block bounded by Main to the West and Prior to the South is identified here as "First Priority" for removal

By claiming that these communities fit into CMHC's loose definition of "blight" or "slum" (Lowden, 1970, p. Ch1 p 10), and documenting this in the Redevelopment Study, Vancouver was positioned to apply for federal funding and advance its plans for slum removal. The planners who prepared the study identified a total of 713 acres around Vancouver as "possible areas to be cleared," which would have displaced an estimated 25,153 people; only 10,723 people were identified as eligible for relocation support, which was assessed by income. The writers of the study estimated that the public and

private market could absorb some of the displaced, but that there would be 13,303 people listed in “Net Displacement” (1957, p. 59).

The study did not include any discussion about how to mitigate the impact on the residents—particularly those who would be displaced without any recourse—nor were residents’ views on the matter documented or considered in the planners’ decision-making process. Instead, the “Merits of Redevelopment” section of the Study provided an argument for supporting economic growth over equity, commerce over human development: “though redevelopment is not proposed primarily to rehabilitate people, the fact is that the change to an improved environment may be reasonably expected to benefit the people of the area. The alternative is to leave things to worsen but even now, the areas cost the City much more in extra public services than the City derives from them in tax revenue” (1957, p. 8). Furthermore, on page 15 of the Study, the intention to intervene on behalf of capital is explicitly given a priority status, stating part of the Study’s mission: to accommodate the “demand of specific sites by private enterprise” (1957, p. 15). As such, consistent with the goals of urban renewal across the U.S. and Canada, the City of Vancouver put forth their case to clear the “blighted” areas, free up land for “highest and best use” and, as a possible side benefit, help the people who were regarded by planners to be in need of a better life through spatial reordering. Although this had the appearance of benevolence, Rutland cautions that the logic behind such reforms were based on a belief that slum inhabitants were failing to meet societal norms due to some pathology that required an authoritative intervention. “A better life was thus imposed more than offered” (2018, p. 118) and these impositions were most likely to deliver negative consequences for the poor, racialized, and working-class residents who lived in these areas.

In Vancouver, the 1957 Redevelopment Study identified Strathcona as being one of the City’s two worst areas of “blight” in urgent need of redevelopment, and the Black neighbourhood in Strathcona was targeted by planners as the “First Priority” for removal:

> “The Negro population, while numerically small, is probably a large proportion of the total Negro population in Vancouver. Their choice of this area is partly its proximity to the railroads where many of them are employed, partly its cheapness, and partly the fact that it is traditionally the home of many non-white groups. The disruption of accustomed social arrangements, which is an inevitably concomitant of relocation, is bound to create special problems for these minority groups. It is, therefore, important that the relocation program should be flexible enough to allow members of the same ethnic group to remain together while at the same

> time discouraging the formation of ethnic enclaves. In this regard previous consultation with responsible leaders of the various groups could materially assist in resolving these and similar problems" (City of Vancouver, 1957, p. 59)

"Disruption" and "special problems" for the "Negro population" are identified as being the likely result of slum clearance in this neighbourhood. And relocation efforts by the City were to be conducted so as to prevent another "ethnic enclave"; the planners proposed engaging "responsible leaders" who would assist in resolving these "problems".

While there are a number of critical aspects to the above statement, it is important to note here the difference between ethnic enclave and ghetto, as analyzed by Marcuse:

> A ghetto is an area of spatial concentration used by forces within the dominant society to separate and to limit a particular population group, externally defined as racial or ethnic or foreign, held to be, and treated as, inferior by the dominant society" whereas an enclave is "an area of spatial concentration in which members of a particular population group, self-defined by ethnicity or religion or otherwise, congregate as a means of protecting and enhancing their economic, social, political and/or cultural development" (2001).

In the case of Vancouver, I argue that the original clustering of Black people in Strathcona (Hogan's Alley) was a process of ghettoization by the dominant white society through land-use planning, restrictive covenants, and housing discrimination. However, due to both the covert and overt racism experienced by people of African descent in Canada, Black people who migrated to Canada in the late 19$^{th}$ and early 20$^{th}$ century sought refuge by clustering in enclaves as a means to support one another and better their situations. Therefore, in their statement about how to manage relocation—preventing ethnic enclaves yet allowing "negros" to stay together—the three levels of government representatives who prepared the Redevelopment Study revealed the juxtaposition of their goals: clear Black people out of Strathcona while maintaining the existing racial segregation in the city.

Thus, by tracing the geography of racial subjugation, segregation and exclusion throughout Canada's history to the formation of concentrated Black communities such as Hogan's Alley, we can see the state, and especially the City, grappling with the presence of Black bodies. By 1957, the scheme devised to remove the Black neighbourhood in Strathcona was legitimized and enabled in the Redevelopment Study without any accounting for the state's role in relegating people of African descent to this space in the

first place, or for the years of municipal neglect that led to the area's degradation. The next step would be to secure the funds and formalize a plan to remove the community.

In the late 1940s, questions about the structural integrity of the original Georgia viaduct were under review, and the City was finding the constant upkeep challenging to manage (Scott, 2013). A team of consultants were hired to assess a replacement of the viaduct and included an analysis of where to locate the new viaduct. This work progressed into the 1950s as the City was exploring Marsh's recommendations for slum clearance. When CMHC's urban renewal funds came along, the City seized the opportunity to kill several birds with one stone so they expanded the viaduct-replacement planning process to include a feasibility study for building a new freeway system and implementing slum clearance—all with the hope of securing funding from the federal government (Pendakur, 1972 p. 33 as quoted by Scott, 2013).

As discussed previously, this approach to comprehensive planning sought to bring about improved living standards in the human environment in ways "which did not apply to Black existence, and all of which were promoted, in part, through damage inflicted upon Black lives" (Rutland, 2018, p. 113). Sutton Brown corresponded with planners in Seattle, Baltimore[2], and Pittsburgh to learn how they were approaching urban renewal, relying "to a considerable degree on the up-to-date experience" (Sutton Brown as quoted by Langford, 2012, p. 23) and, in what I argue is not a coincidence, Seattle and Pittsburgh both implemented urban-renewal schemes that displaced Black communities in a pattern replicated across North America (Fullilove, 2016; Schill, Nathan, & Persaud, 1983). This is also another instance of what Mathieu describes as government officials in Canada importing made-in-America policies that sustained and exacerbated racial inequalities.

For Sutton Brown and Vancouver City Council, their top priority became implementing urban renewal in Vancouver. With the 1957 Redevelopment Study in hand, the first phase of urban renewal implementation began with the plan to wipe Hogan's Alley off the map by using the Georgia-viaduct replacement project as the catalyst. With a time lag between the planning and administrative work necessary to secure implementation (as detailed by Langford, 2012), the City secured the vote to

[2] Baltimore struggled with a significant economic downturn in the 1950s that likely made the implementation of urban renewal plans obsolete (Levine, 1987).

replace the Georgia viaduct in September 1965 (Langford, 2012, p. 31) with the replacement roadway designed to run directly through the heart of Hogan's Alley. What was not revealed at the time of the approval was that the City had plans for a freeway that would connect to the new viaducts and run directly through Chinatown. When City Hall finally disclosed their freeway plan in 1967, those who were still in the neighbourhood revolted and local figures organized community resistance against this displacement. In spite of those efforts, and its eventual success at halting the freeway, the City had the funds and was able to implement the first phase of its plan, proceeding with expropriation of the properties needed to build the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts. The western end of Hogan's Alley where the sleeping car porter's dormitory had been, as well as the residence of Vie Moore, was seized by the City to allow construction of the roadway to commence (Compton, 2010, pp. 96–99), giving Vancouver the partial highway that exists to this day.

For years before the viaduct replacement project happened, the Black community made several attempts to organize against injustice and racism in Vancouver—the Canadians League for the Advancement of Coloured People in 1945; the Negro Citizens League and the British Columbia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People both formed as a response to the brutal police murder of a Black man 1952 (Rudder, 2004). But organizing and impacting institutional change proved difficult for these group. By the time the viaduct-replacement project got underway, the Black community had been living with the threat of displacement for many years, causing some families to disperse in the years leading up to demolition. Others have argued about the possible motivations for this, most notably Compton and Rudder (2010; 2004), both of whom have influenced my own research significantly. I would argue that a full understanding of why some departed without resistance is not possible, but it is conceivable that they left for the same reasons that the early Black migrants to B.C. decided to return back to the U.S.; for a small population without support from other community groups and facing exclusion, intolerance, and even state-sponsored violence, it was easier to leave before trouble got worse. But as Dorothy Nealy's words reveal, some members of the Black community remained, fighting alongside everyone else to remain in their community:

> When we heard of city council's plans for the neighbourhood, we were horrified, we just screamed. They intended to put high-rises all over here, like the West End. But the people that lived here, we just took up a petition. We got thousands and thousands of names. And we stopped them. The

> Vancouver Resources Board met with city council and they met with different organizations. They met with SPOTA. You see, it wasn't just SPOTA that fought for this East End. There was the churches and all kinds of people got involved. The whole neighbourhood got involved. Because we were satisfied with our neighborhood. But the people from outside came in, and told us we shouldn't have these houses, we should live in housing projects, we should live in high-rises. But what was wrong with living here? They didn't live here, I don't know what they were so worried about. As I said, I've lived here for thirty-three years. I wouldn't want to live anyplace else. But somebody comes over from Dunbar district, looking down their nose at this end of town. It's just like the Christians going to Africa, trying to convert you to Christianity when you already have your own tribal laws and religions and everything else. And that was their attitude when they came down here. They interviewed every individual and they had all kinds of books. And they'd go from room to room. First thing they'd ask, "Wouldn't you like to move out of here?" We'd say, "Move where?" "Well, out of this neighborhood." No, nobody wanted to move out of here. It was just like a village, just the same. You went out the back door, you stood on the back verandah, and somebody'd wave at you, over there. Even if you didn't know them, you'd wave back. And when you walked down the street, you nodded your head. Sometimes you said, "Hello," or you just nodded your head and smiled and kept going. That's the way we lived. (Marlatt & Itter, 1979, pp. 173–174)(1979, 173–74)

This small reveal of Ms. Nealy's life in Hogan's Alley paints a dynamic (and for some of us, emotional) picture of the fear, joy, resistance, and satisfaction that she and her neighbours experienced as a part of the Black community. The fact that the Black people who lived there managed to survive, some perhaps finding better/less racially segregated accommodations elsewhere, should by no means minimize the long-term political, economic, social, cultural, and possibly personal harm that has occurred to the former inhabitants and subsequent generations of Black Vancouverites.

The history of Vancouver's Black community and the lives of the people who lived there as documented in *Opening Doors* (Marlatt & Itter, 1979), and by Rudder (2004) and Compton (2010) have been summarized here and presented in contrast to the City of Vancouver's 1957 Redevelopment Study and the state actions documented by Atkin (Atkin, 1994) and Langford (Langford, 2012) to reveal how planning actions in the Vancouver's history had "expansive ambitions… [that] were never distributed equally across the urban terrain" (Rutland, 2018, p. 114). In fact, the first professional planners who shaped Vancouver embraced spatial segregation, disinvesting in low-income and racialized parts of the city only to later wield slum-clearance policies under urban renewal as if they had no hand in the blighted conditions. When this history is analyzed through a critical race analysis, such as offered by Maynard (2017), decades-long efforts

to displace the Black community of Hogan's Alley is best understood as an act of racial violence enacted against Black bodies. In her work on the dislocation of Halifax's Black community of Africville—which has many parallels to Hogan's Alley, including freeway planning, land expropriation, and zoning adjacent lands to industrial use—Nelson (2000) argues that the community's destruction must be understood not merely as the legal regulation of space by modernist planners, but also as a means to mask discrimination and racial intolerance. Due to racial exclusion and neglect, sites like Africville and Hogan's Alley became, according to Nelson, "repositories for all that the dominant group wanted to contain and distance itself from…becoming a self-fulfilling prophesy … the slum legitimates dominance by offering a concrete example of filthy, intolerable conditions, a notion of helplessness and a lack of self-determination that can be seen as inherent to its inhabitants" (J. J. Nelson, 2000, p. 168).

Lefebvre said "space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies… [it] is a social product" (Lefebvre & Enders, 1976, p. 31). In other words, space reflects the ordering of the society which governs it. In the case of Black communities throughout the history of Canada, British Columbia, and Vancouver, the dominant white society has and continues to enact policies and regulations that displaced, disrupted, and subjugated Black lives. In the case of urban renewal, in Vancouver as throughout North America, it amounted to "negro removal." As mentioned above, this displacement and fragmentation has arguably had a lasting impact on people of African descent in Vancouver, stunting the development of a healthy Black community and denying the potential contributions that Black people may have made in this region.

The injustice that occurred to the Black communities in Vancouver has remained invisible and unchallenged for decades, until recently. In the next section, I will discuss how I came to join with others in holding the City of Vancouver responsible to repair the harm that has happened to people of African descent in this city as a result of the destruction of Hogan's Alley decades ago.

## 2.2. Recognition or Redress for Hogan's Alley

*"And that's about all that's left here, of the black people. Everybody's gone. That was after hundreds and hundreds of families" (Dorothy Nealy as quoted by Rudder, 2004, p. 52)*

In 2013, I researched the history of Vancouver's Black community as a part of my Urban Studies coursework for a class entitled *Urban Inequality and the Just City.* The class was framed around Fainstein's book *The Just City* (2010) and the syllabus was based on readings that brought forward the challenges faced by cities to produce just and equitable outcomes through planning policies and land-development programs. At the time, I had never heard about Hogan's Alley or the political decisions that led to its demise. When I began my research into the subject, I leaned heavily on Fainstein's theoretical framework of social justice to unpack what happened to Hogan's Alley and to inform my arguments and ideas about policies or programs that might redress this past injustice—both then and now. Fainstein's work was especially appealing to me because of its focus on the principles of diversity, equity, and democracy—acknowledging the tensions that exist between them—as the basis on which Western societies can pursue more just cities. I found her concepts important to my developing critique of how cities and planning operate, with the notion of social justice being of particular interest to me.

Based on my own life experience and my exploration of the history of resistance and struggle shared among the African diaspora, I was immediately drawn to what I learned about Hogan's Alley and believed that the systemic dismantling of this community was a social, political, and economic loss for the Black people in this region. In the case study I wrote for the class, I leaned heavily on Fainstein's unpacking of the capabilities approach to the three justice measures of democracy, equity, and diversity (2010, pp. 54, chapter 6) that describes a system in which people are afforded the opportunity to do what is best for their own personal freedom without having to make substantial life-diminishing trade-offs. Her concepts resonated with me because of the way they align with the social justice goals of the Civil Rights movement, the Pan African movement, and the anti-Apartheid movements of the last century—subjects about which I have spent considerable time in study and are grounded in critical race theory. Fainstein does not engage these concepts directly, and actually offers critique of feminist and "ethno-culturalist theory" (and by ethno-culturalist I assume she means critical race theory) suggesting that such analysis is not capable of dealing with "oppression carried out by members of groups that are themselves oppressed" (Fainstein, 2010, p. 47). In such cases I disagree with her, regarding the work of emerging scholars and activists working intra-community and using intersectional feminism and decolonial theory to overcome lateral oppression as evidence against her arguments, helping me expand my

own critical analysis (Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays, & Tomlinson, 2013; Coates, 2014; Lorinc & Pitter, 2016; Mullings et al., 2016; J. J. Nelson, 2000; Richardson, 2017).

In spite of this divergence, Fainstein's theories also connect with me professionally because she provides practical examples of large-scale real estate development projects in three global cities with an analysis of how those projects measure up to the criteria of democracy, equity, and justice. She provides a roadmap for decision-making on real estate projects that advance the interests of justice, stating that projects ought to "benefit low-income people in the form of employment provisions, public amenities, and a living wage" or be rejected if they "disproportionately benefit the already well-off" (2010, p. 175). Such changes, she proposes, "do not call for government takeover of functions such as housing or business premises" but rather a kind of "social market economy" that "points towards an incremental approach to increasing fairness of access to employment, public space, housing, and other socially produced goods and services, employing a variety of hortatory and market-based devices to make the system function. This means identifying opportunities as they arise and constantly pushing for a more just distribution" (2010, pp. 175–176). Having worked so long as a real estate professional, perhaps I have been influenced to think that incremental changes are the most sustainable and that the "revolution"—a tempting thought to indulge at times—will not benefit anyone in the long run. However, my belief in the possibility of more dramatic change is also be the reason I left private real estate development behind to work in the community-housing sector.

As I progressed in my Fainstein-based analysis of the history of Hogan's Alley, I learned that the City of Vancouver was initiating public consultations for the Northeast False Creek (NEFC) area planning process which included a proposal to remove the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts. In the recommendations section of my paper, I suggested that the City's NEFC planning process, was an opportunity to publicly recognize the past injustices carried out against the Black community as a result of their predecessor's actions to displace Hogan's Alley. Further, I suggested it was also a chance to explore redress for the historical injustice by looking to the historical record to inform just policy-making and equitable outcomes on the lands where the viaduct roadways were to be redeveloped. While I agreed that monuments, memorials, and tributes are important, I argued that they do not go far enough to hold the City of Vancouver responsible for what I framed as its colonial-style displacement of Hogan's

Alley, reminiscent of the displacement of people of African descent across the diaspora. Given this history, in order for justice to be achieved, benefits for Black Canadians, such as housing capacity, economic opportunities, and social spaces, must be factored into the area redevelopment plans.

By the time I completed my coursework in December 2013, I was sufficiently motivated by what I had learned about Vancouver's Black history to seek ways that I, as a person of African descent, could get involved in putting pressure on the City of Vancouver to apply the kinds of justice-centred recommendations Fainstein makes in order to account for the lasting impact displacing Hogan's Alley had on generations of Black people in Vancouver and beyond.

### 2.2.1. Looking for Hogan's Alley within Institutional Erasure

The City of Vancouver's documents and studies as they relate to the redevelopment of the area known as North East False Creek (NEFC) reach back to 1990 and, until 2013, focused entirely on technical design elements, economic development, and transportation planning; no mention was given to the former Black community or the displacement that occurred. A Council report from July 26, 2011, provided a historical overview about the Georgia & Dunsmuir viaducts but included no mention of the Black community (2011b, p. 3). A thorough review of the City of Vancouver files relating to the NEFC planning process demonstrate that the history of the Black community was not referenced in the policy or background information until 2013 when reference to Hogan's Alley appears for the first time in the *Council report: Dunsmuir and Georgia Viaducts and Related Area Planning Report* (City of Vancouver, 2013a).

In that report, there are several references made to Hogan's Alley and the former Black community. The first reference is made in the section "Strategic Analysis of Viaduct Removal: 1.2 'Repairing' Main Street," which reads:

> There are also significant and symbolic city-building opportunities to 'restore' the Main Street corridor providing a continuous active street front where a gap currently exists, and re-establish housing and services along Main Street and to the city-owned blocks between Quebec and Gore Avenue. The block east of Main Street, was known as Hogan's Alley which was once home to Vancouver's black population(2013a, p. 9).

Stated as it if were common knowledge that the East block of Main Street was "once home to Vancouver's Black population", the inclusion of Hogan's Alley at this point in the planning process is puzzling. Perhaps it was the work done by writers (Compton, 2010) activists, and community groups such as the Hogan's Alley Memorial Project (Hogan's Alley Memorial Project, n.d.) that had started to have an impact on the City's awareness of the former Black community. It could also possibly be attributed to the work done by local Black activists to urge the City to formally recognize Black History Month in February 2011 (City of Vancouver, 2018g), sixteen years after it was first celebrated at a national level (Canadian Stamp News, 2018). Whatever the reason, this sudden introduction of Hogan's Alley as an issue to be considered in the NEFC planning process is perplexing.

Further in the 2013 report to Council, there are two mentions of Hogan's Alley in Appendix A, Guiding Principles for Removing the Viaducts (City of Vancouver, 2013a) which outlines the philosophies that were to inform Council, staff, and stakeholders when developing the plan for the NEFC area:

> To create an active and diverse waterfront neighbourhood through removal of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts, shifting the balance away from an automobile-dominated landscape to one focussing on improving public life. The tasks will focus on enhancing pedestrian and cyclist connections, creating larger parks, and providing a dynamic mix of uses including entertainment, employment and new residential opportunities, while respecting the essential movement of goods and services to and from the downtown (p.1).

This focus on "improving public life" is a reminder of the analysis presented earlier about 20$^{th}$ century planners' preoccupation with improving living standards through technocratic methods which, in this instance, focuses on pedestrian and cyclist connections, parks, entertainment and other uses, "while respecting the movement of goods and services"; what is does not mention are equitable or justice-centred objectives considering the viaducts history or the people who were impacted.

The guiding principles that mention Hogan's Alley are somewhat disjointed and fail to capture what if any intentions the City may have had with respect to the possibilities for Hogan's Alley Block or the Black community. One would not be able to read the Guiding Principles as drafted and understand why the planning staff was including this particular aspect. For example, the first mention in the Guiding Principles

suggests open space for the Hogan's Alley Block as if it were a known place with a distinct history, even thought that history is not made clear in the planning documents.

> 2) Expand Parks and Open Space. Increase the amount of parks and open space in current plans. Removal of the viaducts, and a more efficient street network (combination of Pacific and Expo Boulevards, closure of a portion of Union and Carrall Streets) results in a potential park increase of 13% (approx. 3 acres) and presents the possibility of a more coherent open space system with greater flexibility for a variety of programming opportunities. A Dunsmuir 'elevated plaza' and open space on the Hogan's Alley block may provide additional park spaces.

The second mention of Hogan's Alley within the Guiding Principles section is contained within the housing and place-making principle and suggests that the planning process find ways to remember Hogan's Alley with no mention of why that matters or connecting it to the topic being discussed:

> 4) Explore Housing Development and Place-Making Opportunities on the City Blocks. Utilizing a building form and development patterning consistent with the historic community of Chinatown (to the north) and the more contemporary buildings of the Creek (to the south), the City-owned blocks could generate approximately 850,000 square feet of density, potentially representing about 1,000 units with 200-300 affordable housing units, depending on the final density and unit mix. *Ongoing planning must find ways to remember the historic neighbourhood of Hogan's Alley* (emphasis mine). Building heights, density, unit mix (including affordable housing), uses, open space patterning and other potential public benefits will be refined through further study and consultation with the neighbouring communities.

Interestingly, Guiding Principle 3 focuses on repairing certain aspects of the area:

> 3) Repair the Urban Fabric. Forty years ago, buildings on the blocks between Quebec and Gore were demolished to make way for the viaduct structures. Removal of the viaducts allows for restoration of shops and services along the Main Street corridor, and the mixed-use development of the two city-owned blocks.

This emphasis on the significance of repairing the urban fabric that was demolished to make way for the viaduct only speaks of restoring developments of shops and services; the people who were removed along with the buildings and the impact on their lives are not mentioned in the restoration objectives.

Finally, the fourth reference to Hogan's Alley in the Viaduct Removal Report occurs in Appendix E where findings from the public consultations were summarized and included the following statement:

> Revitalization of Hogan's Alley was identified by many as a positive aspect of the proposal. There was a range of feedback on the proposed built form ranging from too much density to not enough density, for a need to further design work on the relationships to Strathcona, and a desire for a mix of housing types including family housing, a need for more cultural diversity in the plan (p. 5).

This feedback from pubic consultations may be another reason why Hogan's Alley suddenly appeared in the City's NEFC planning document, especially because this part of the plan relates to the removal of the viaducts and therefore the lands where the heart of the Black community was located. The inclusion of Hogan's Alley may have also happened as a result of the work done by community members to daylight its history. An explicit connection between Hogan's Alley and the existing viaducts is not made clear in this report, but this report demonstrates that for the first time in the twenty-three years of the process, planners were acknowledging some significance of Hogan's Alley to the NEFC area.

As presented in the beginning of this chapter, Canada has yet to fully confront, let alone acknowledge, its history of institutionalized racial exclusion or proactively extend apology, repair and redress for past injustices. This is true in the context of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, redress for Japanese Canadians during the WWII internment, or reparations for African enslavement. The City of Vancouver, in this report, does an unsatisfactory job of connecting the displacement of Hogan's Alley to the viaducts as they exist today or providing a clear understanding of what possibilities exist for recognition or revitalization of the Black community. In contrast, the City is quite clear in their goals to restore commercial enterprise, development, and transportation routes which is "the fundamental mission of the neo-liberal state… to create a 'good business climate' and therefore to optimize conditions for capital accumulation no matter the consequences for employment or social well-being" (Harvey as quoted by Fainstein, 2010, p. 8).

The concept of erasure and how it is enacted in terms of historical, cultural, race, gender, or sexual identities is covered in an expansive body of scholarship (Jordan-Zachery, 2013; McKenzie & Phillips, 2016; Monteiro, 2016; Russett, 2005) and bears noting in this context because although the City does mention Hogan's Alley in the Viaducts Removal Report, they fail to acknowledge the harm that occurred to the Black community then or the condition of inequity that persists to the present.. As I continued my research and discovered how the City had minimized and thereby erased the Black

history of Vancouver within the NEFC area being considered for redevelopment, my resolve to get involved in the City's engagement process and speak up for meaningful consultation with the Black community intensified.

### 2.2.2. Self-Determining Redress

In September 2015, I attended an engagement session conducted by one of the City's NEFC planners, along with other students from SFU's Urban Studies program. The presentation gave an overview of the NEFC planning work to date and included a presentation and walking tour of the area. During the presentation, the planner gave an overview of the history of the neighbourhood without any reference to the former Black neighbourhood. I told him about my research and asked him why the City did not cover the history of Hogan's Alley in presentation materials. He was not able to provide me with specific reasons and instead stated that the omission was likely a result of brevity. He offered me his business card and suggested that I get in touch with him and consider speaking at the NEFC public hearing that would be scheduled later in the Fall of 2015.

Taking that advice, I wrote an email to Vancouver City Councillor Geoff Meggs following the presentation, introduced myself and let him know that I had just attended the NEFC presentation and noticed the lack of inclusion of the Black community history in their presentation about the historical context of the viaducts. I reminded him that, during the City's Black History Month celebration in 2014, the Mayor and Council participated in celebrating the history of Hogan's Alley by joining in the announcement of the Canadian government's commemorative stamp about the former community, suggesting that this was an opportunity to incorporate restorative/regenerative justice ideals into the viaducts redevelopment plans. In his brief reply, Councillor Meggs recommended that I register to speak at the public hearing but did not respond to the other points I raised in my email.

On October 6, 2015, the City of Vancouver issued a report entitled "Removal of the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts" as a part of the larger NEFC planning process (City of Vancouver, 2015e). In the report, staff sought Council approval for removal of the viaducts and for the NEFC Conceptual Plan "to guide area planning without the viaducts for the remaining areas of the False Creek North Official Development Plan and the two City blocks east of Quebec Street" (2015e, p. 1) It included a recommendation to plan the area "with landowners and interested citizens" and report back with any necessary

amendments to the existing official development plan, associated by-laws and policies, and revisions to the Public Benefits Strategy. Also included was the recommendation to adopt the Viaducts Guiding Principles to inform the public consultation process with a few amendments: to add an eleventh principle focused on enhancing the entertainment and festival functionality of the area; to include designing an engagement process; and an amendment to the principle about the efficiency of the street network (2015e, pp. 1–3).

Notably, in the two years that passed between the 2013 and 2105 Council reports about the viaducts, a time span that included Council's adoption of the City of Reconciliation designation in 2014 (focused primarily on reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples), the 2015 report did not include history of the Black community or the displacement that occurred, furthering the erasure noted in their previous reports. In this updated document, the history of the viaducts was offered as follows:

> "In 1971, the original Georgia viaduct was replaced with the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts that were built as the first phase of a larger freeway network intended to connect downtown Vancouver to communities to the north, east, and south. However, the remaining portions of the freeway network were never completed due to community opposition and a lack of federal funding" (2015e, p. 9)

It is significant that City Council and staff, having participated in the commemoration of Hogan's Alley during Black History Month in 2014 some 20 months earlier, omitted any historical context about the Black community and provided no acknowledgment of the role the construction of Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts played in the displacement of Black people. Two weeks later, on October 21, 2015, the public hearing to adopt this report was held and featured a presentation was made by staff. Included in the presentation was the following image depicting the viaducts and the caption "A once in a generation opportunity"


**Figure 6 Slide from the City of Vancouver's Presentation at the October 21, 2015 Public Hearing begs the question "for whom?"**
Source: City of Vancouver, 2015c, p. 23

I and other members of the Black community spoke to Council at the hearing and I read the passage from the 1957 Redevelopment Study quoted earlier in this chapter outlining the negative impact city planners predicted would happen to the "negro population" (City of Vancouver, 1957), expressing what I saw as the long-lasting repercussions this has had on people of African descent in the region. I suggested that the removal of the viaducts was an opportunity for meaningful recognition of the past dislocation that occurred to the Black community by returning space back to Black people in Vancouver, making a connection between the current inequalities and discrimination that we endure as a community and the destruction of Hogan's Alley which has caused a lasting erasure of Black culture from the Vancouver landscape. It was the first time I publicly stated the idea of redress taking the form of space reparations.

Other speakers at the hearing said similar things about the need to recognize Hogan's Alley and the past displacement, suggesting that Council to pursue some form

of acknowledgement for the devastating impact it had on Black lives in the region. A link to the video minutes from the meeting are included in the reference list of this project (City of Vancouver, 2015a) and a copy of the speech I gave to Council on October 21, 2015 is included in Appendix C.

After approving the motion to commence the work necessary to plan for the viaducts' removal, the City staff issued a report to Council on December 15, 2015 establishing a citizen advisory body called the Northeast False Creek Stewardship Group (the "Stewardship Group") to provide advice "on an approach to public engagement, how to address City Council's eleven Guiding Principles approved in 2013 for planning the NEFC area, and how to acknowledge and incorporate social, historical and cultural significance from a city-wide perspective into the NEFC Conceptual Plan" (City of Vancouver, 2015b, p. 1).

The report also lays out the criteria for being appointed to the Stewardship Group, stating people with experience/knowledge of the "history of the area including historical use by the Chinese and Black communities" were preferred (2015b, p. 5). Looking only at the official City planning documents up to and including this report, one would be surprised to see this specific criterion given priority since a clear context for the Black history of the area and the significance of that history was largely excluded up to that point.

Two members of the Black community were appointed to the Stewardship Group: Anthonia Ogundele and Wayde Compton, and on November 28, 2016, they organized the "Iṣọkan Black Community Open Forum," which I attended. This event was sponsored by the City of Vancouver with the intention of providing a chance for the Black community to hear from City staff about their mandate to "recognize Hogan's Alley in the new plan for the area" and to offer their ideas and suggestions about what they wanted to see result from the NEFC planning process.


**Figure 7 Facebook event notice for the Iṣọkan Black Community Open Forum, November 28, 2016**

Iṣọkan is a Yoruba word that means "of one mind" and, during the event, community members were encouraged to relate their personal and collective experiences in Vancouver as well as the challenges they face to secure opportunities and resources in the city. People described their needs in the areas of arts, culture, social spaces, business and social enterprise resources, as well as a range of housing concerns across many typologies. They discussed their desire for historical acknowledgement through the process and the hope that a thorough engagement would be conducted including engagement with youth and elders, with the eventual goal of securing funding for projects for people of African descent and creating a space for the community to come together and create "a place of 'daily return' (African Roots TV, 2016). During the meeting, several individuals voiced their concerns to City staff about the authenticity of the process, sharing their general distrust that the City was going to listen and respond to the needs of the community in the NEFC plan in a meaningful way.

The comments made by members of the Black community in Vancouver reflected their lived experiences; as discussed earlier in this chapter, people of African descent have not been beneficiaries of government policies and programs in Canada and have, throughout history, been subjected to harsh treatment and brutality at the

hands of the state. If Black folks were distrustful, it was because civic institutions and Western democratic processes have consistently failed them. In The Just City, Fainstein cites Arnstein's "ladder of citizen participation", an enduring citizen-engagement model, which argues that "the stronger the role of disadvantaged groups in formulating and implementing policy", the greater chance that the outcomes will be redistributional; and that it is through redistribution of decision-making power that the redistribution of benefits can occur (2010, p. 66). While the dream of being empowered with the resources and decision-making power is a mainstay for marginalized communities no matter their background, Fainstein suggests that participation in most public-engagement processes is usually limited, restricted to slight modifications and symbolic recognition. As a community, we were seeking answers that would provide us with some basis to reasonably believe that the engagement process would listen to our concerns and prioritize equitable outcomes for Black residents.

During this meeting, it was announced that a smaller working group would be formed to participate in a few meetings with the City about the design of the east block of Main Street, identified previously in the plan as the Hogan's Alley Block. This group, which came to be known as the Hogan's Alley Working Group (HAWG), was a result of an idea proposed by Ogundele and Compton with the intention allowing a more in-depth consultation with the Black community where members could provide feedback to the City on the development of the Hogan's Alley Block. However, at the time that this group was being announced, a clear articulation of the goals or terms of reference was not included. I was invited to join the roughly 25-member group while I was at the Iṣọkan meeting due to the work I did to advocate for consultation with the Black community during the City's public hearing in October 2015.

At the first HAWG meeting I attended on January 23, 2017, hosted by the City's NEFC planning team, the City's design consultants presented their preliminary design concepts for the Hogan's Alley Block. In my professional experience with design development for real estate projects, consultants must work from some instructions or functional program provided to them by their client, which in this instance was the City of Vancouver. It appeared to me, based on the advanced level of the design drawings for the Hogan's Alley block that I saw at this meeting, that the City had already provided the design consultants with a set of assumptions on which to guide the renderings that were presented; assumptions to which the Black community had not contributed nor been

consulted, immediately giving me cause for concern before the meeting started. Unfortunately, my concerns were confirmed during the course of the meeting as the consultants presented their work and revealed some of the pre-determined assumptions and rationale that were guiding it. As we listened to the presentation, many of us became increasingly uneasy as revealed in our physical disposition, comments, and questions to the design team. Members of the HAWG, myself included, commented that the meeting did not feel like an authentic engagement session that would be driven by our vision since so much of the design had already been done. Instead, it appeared to be a token gesture instead of the meaningful participation we were expecting. During the meeting, I suggested that if the Black community was going to be genuinely consulted about what should be developed on the Hogan's Alley Block, then we should be starting with a blank canvas and not the advanced designs that we were being shown.

As a means to emphasize the importance of the engagement process to those gathered there and the carefulness we felt it deserved, one of the HAWG members is a descendant who lived for a time in Hogan's Alley, told a personal story about what the community meant to the people who lived there and how important the social networks were for Black residents at that time. He shared how the City put pressure on the neighbourhood to vacate—weeks without garbage pick-up, the use of highly carcinogenic creosote on roads and sidewalks to manage the accumulation of road dirt, and how the City purchased and left vacant the house next door to his own dwelling, leaving it abandoned with boarded-up windows and causing it to deteriorate visually, negatively impacting his family's home value and other surrounding properties. His family eventually had to sell their home and leave the neighbourhood because of the City's neglect of the infrastructure and ongoing pressure to leave. As he told the story, many members of the HAWG were visibly distressed, myself included, as the impact of the City's anti-Blackness and this lost community hit all of us who have experienced the pain that comes from discrimination and bigotry.

In what I can't fully understand to this day, the lead consultant and the team in general were completely unmoved by this story and the personal stories of others who were doing what we could to communicate how deeply we felt about this work of revisioning Hogan's Alley. Instead of empathy, they defended their position and said they were simply looking for us to tell them how to "make it vibrant." This technocratic, creative class neoliberalism response was so void of humanity that it served to escalate

tensions in the meeting to a level where effective communication was no longer possible. Members of the HAWG, myself included, were angry, disturbed, and upset. It was at that moment that one of the City planners, who up until that point had allowed the consultant team to lead the meeting, interrupted the intensifying exchange to offer an apology. This planner stated that they heard what we were saying, that they feet the engagement process needed to pause, and that they would report what they heard at the meeting to senior management at the City. They said they could see the importance of the City going back to the drawing board to change the engagement process, particularly to allow the time needed for a meaningful engagement with Black residents.

As referenced earlier, in order for citizen engagement processes to deliver equitable and just outcomes there must be a commitment to the redistribution of benefits that favour the least advantaged. This is what members of the HAWG were expressing when describing the impact that enduring anti-Black racism and systemic exclusion in the City of Vancouver has had on our collective experiences. We regarded this opportunity—in practical as well as symbolic ways—to remedy the challenges that Black people in the city face by developing our own vision for the future of the Hogan's Alley Block. We saw the consultant team's pre-determined design plans and their narrow focus for our participation—telling them how to "make it vibrant"—as a failure to deliver the justice we were seeking because it relegated our participation to a tokenistic involvement with extremely limited space for input. It was the kind of engagement that Fainstein regarded as status quo, one in which the needs of the least advantaged were subordinated to the development goals of private market enterprise, reflecting the neoliberal government paradigm that governs most institutional decision-making. (Fainstein, 2010, pp. 66–67). Members of the HAWG were not satisfied with process and as the City pushed pause on the engagement process to make modifications, we decided to take matters into our own hands.

### 2.2.3. Hogan's Alley Guiding Principles & Community Land Stewardship: Towards a Vision of Redress and Self-determination

Following this meeting, while the City's NEFC team reworked the engagement process, two significant interventions were carried out by some of the members of the HAWG: The first was an email that Anthonia Ogundele and I collaborated on and sent

to the City's NEFC planning staff on February 6, 2017 (Appendix D). In that email, we presented ideas and guiding principles that we believed should inform not only the design of the Hogan's Alley Block, but also establish an overarching approach to the development, ownership, and operations on the site. We insisted these must become a roadmap for the engagement work being done by the City with the HAWG, and that, while design principles were important, it was necessary for the process to intentionally consider the complexity of Black people's shared humanity and the way that the displacement of Hogan's Alley was emblematic of our shared struggle. It was this consideration that was sorely absent during our first engagement with the City's design consultants.

The guiding principles that we submitted were founded in the ideals of justice, equity, and redress that match what Miki describes as "social justice for individuals and groups whose rights have been abrogated by government actions and policies" (Miki, 2004, p. xi). Brooks provides a comprehensive examination of historical redress movements for injustices such as the Japanese internment, Romani victims of the Holocaust, enslavement of Africans, South African Apartheid, and crimes committed against Indigenous peoples over centuries. His theory of redress posits that there are four conditions necessary for successful redress: that it is best handled by legislators not the judiciary, arguing that the authority to enact laws was more enduring than case-by-case adjudication; that the movement for redress must reach the hearts and minds of lawmakers and citizens alike; that the movement for redress feature strong internal support among the victims themselves with an "unquestioned support for the claim being pressed"; and that the claims for redress have merit and be founded in something substantive for lawmakers to promote (1999, pp. 6–7).

In order for a claim to overcome political pushback, Brooks modifies Matsuda's conditions of redress (Brooks, 1999, p. 7) to offer what he suggests are the prerequisites for a valid redress claim:

1. a human injustice must have been committed;
2. it must be well-documented;
3. the victims must be identifiable as a distinct group;
4. the current members of the group must continue to suffer harm; and
5. such harm must be causally connected to a past injustice

Members of the HAWG had not read Mr. Brook's book nor was there a premeditation on how to deploy a successful redress strategy. We were acting on instinct informed by the legacy of Black resistance and liberation struggle, many of us coming from a generation raised by immigrant parents or immigrants ourselves, immersed in politically infused art and culture such as reggae and hip-hop, and we were living the daily reminders of why redress in this instance mattered to Black lives in this region. Looking back on our work and comparing it to Brook's elements, we had documented evidence of injustice (the work done by historians, writers, and academics documenting the destruction of Hogan's Alley); we were an identifiable group by virtue of our Blackness; and we were repeatedly communicating with the City's Council, staff, and consultants our shared experiences of racial discrimination and exclusion in Vancouver and the resulting harm it caused, tying it back to how the displacement of Hogan's Alley has had a lasting negative impact on the contemporary Black community.

As such, the guiding principles for design on the Hogan's Alley Block we presented discussed how to approach recognition, access, security of tenure, inclusion, and specifically stating that the former Hogan's Alley Block should be an investment in the people of African descent, to "support the Black community in rebuilding the strong social networks that were lost and generationally entrenched" (A. Ogundele, personal communication, February 6, 2017). A copy of the final draft of the Hogan's Alley Guiding Principles are attached in Appendix D and were eventually included in several City reports and policy documents.

The second intervention grew from an idea proposed by Ogundele to some members of the HAWG and a few other Black people (who would later join the HAWG) for a Black citizen-led non-profit community land trust (CLT). The first CLT on the continent was formed in Albany, Georgia in 1969 and was born out of the Civil Rights movement with the motto "cooperative living, learning, earning and doing together empowers a collective group of people" (New Communities Inc., 2017). CLTs function in a variety of ways. The definition provided by the U.S. Institute for Community Economics are that they are "a non-profit corporation created to acquire and hold land for the benefit of a community and provide secure affordable access to land and housing for community residents" (The Canadian CED Network, 2005). While CLTs have a long-standing tradition in Europe and the United States, the tradition is less established in Canada, with only a few operating across the country and many more in start-up phases

(Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2005). Prior to Ogundele's suggestion, I had very little exposure to CLTs, knowing of only one local non-profit organization—the Community Land Trust Foundation of BC—that started up as an arm of the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (Community Land Trust Foundation of BC, n.d.).

Self-determination through land ownership –individual or communal—has been a commonly held dream for people of African descent, whether descendants of enslaved people in the Western hemisphere or Indigenous African people living in post-colonial societies on the continent, and while it is not the intent of this research to conduct an intensive review of this phenomenon, I've included some references for further inquiry (Belz, 1980, 1980; Bergh & Feinberg, 2004; Coates, 2014; Copeland, 1984; W. E. Nelson, 1978; Pennick, 1990). The vision of self-determination is foundational in Black liberation movements the world over (Nelson Mandela and the anti-Apartheid movement; Walter Rodney and Marcus Garvey and the Pan Africa movement; the Black Panther party; and the Black United Front in Nova Scotia among others) because it acknowledges the history of White-led institutions' inability to provide equitable distribution of benefits to Black people due to the embedded white supremacy within such institutions (Coates, 2014).

The idea proposed by Ogundele resonated with me and many others because it offered a pathway towards community ownership of land that would prevent future displacement and allow the Black community to self-determine a vision for the Hogan's Alley Block that would be F.U.B.U (for us by us), leveraging the lands to create social, economic, and cultural opportunities for people of African descent in the region that are largely absent. Based the expertise and professional background in planning and development that some of us have, members of this group were aware that, given location of the Hogan's Alley Block in downtown Vancouver, a mixed-use urban development would be the most likely form of development for the site and the most fitting with the surrounding area of the Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, and Crosstown neighbourhoods.

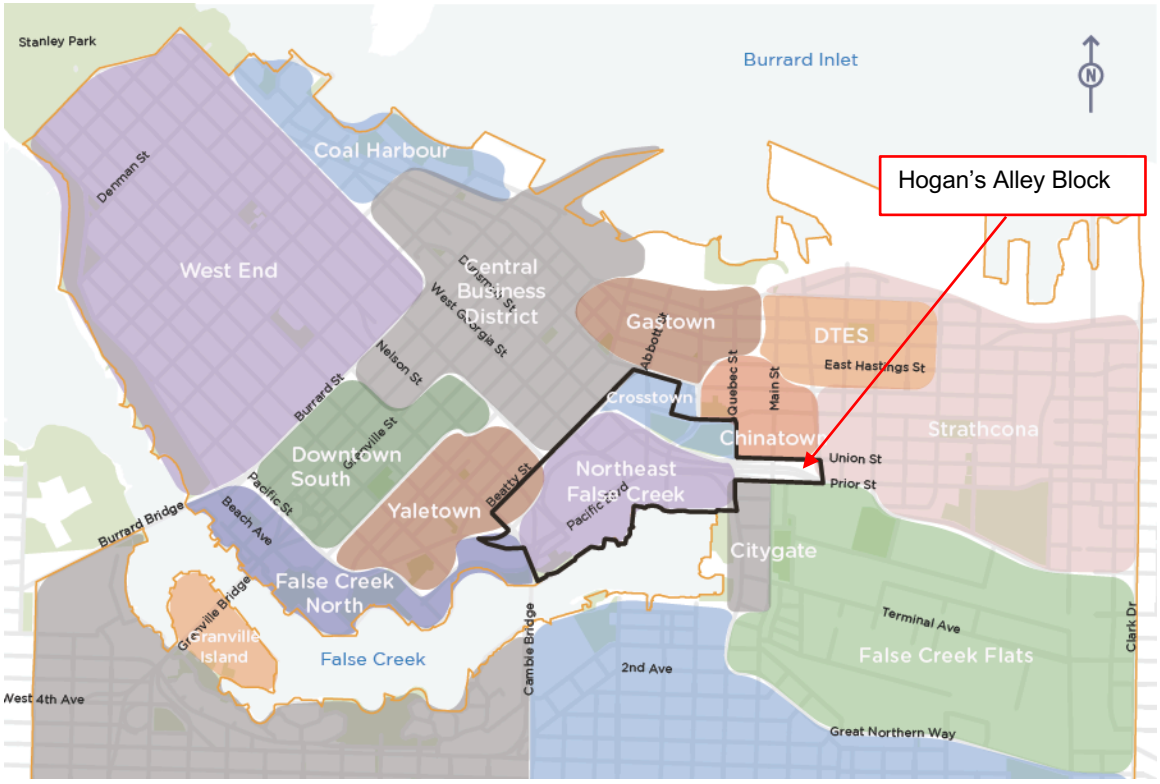



**Figure 8 Map of Northeast False Creek planning area showing neighbourhoods surrounding the Hogan's Alley Block**

Source: Northeast False Creek Area Plan, p. 26

Strathcona to the east is still fairly low-density residential but, because the Hogan's Alley Block was on Main Street, the form of development would have to fit within the medium-to-high-density context and, for this reason, would likely include a mix of residential and commercial uses with ground-floor retail. There were also some early discussions with City planning staff that indicated a cultural centre or other amenities may be included on the site.

Our internal discussions about the land trust idea were clear on one point in particular: that the only way to realize the vision being developed for the Hogan's Alley Block through the City's engagement process would be if the Black community were the owners and long-term stewards of the lands. It also delivered on several more of our objectives. First, a non-profit community land ownership model would be the best way to prevent future displacement of the people or built forms that would occupy the site. Second, because non-profit or public land ownership "devalues" land by removing it from the speculative market, we believed that a CLT would prevent gentrification pressure on the neighbouring communities of Strathcona, or the low-income community of the

Downtown Eastside and Chinatown—it would uphold the goals that emerged during the Isokan community forum that our work in this process "do no harm" to other marginalized and racialized communities. Third, we maintained that the City should by no means profit from the wilful destruction of Hogan's Alley if justice was to be served through the NEFC process and the removal of the viaducts. By securing the lands in a community-owned CLT, it would prevent the City of Vancouver from selling the lands on the market and extracting revenue from the land they acquired through institutional anti-Blackness.

The individuals in this start-up land trust group met regularly to develop the idea and map a strategy forward. As the engagement process with the City had failed to fully meet our expectations, it reinforced our view that the only way to ensure that the Hogan's Alley site would be justly honoured and recognized in perpetuity was to have control of the spaces and ensure our long-term stewardship of whatever was built there.

It is notable that, although the City had suggested that a Black cultural centre would be a likely outcome of the engagement process—perhaps based on advocacy done by the Hogan's Alley Memorial Project and/or other individuals over the years that discussed the idea of an archive and cultural amenity—our group held that a Black cultural centre in the midst of a downtown mixed-use and market-rate residential development would not be sustainable. We felt that, unless it was situated within a community context that included other Black-focused enterprises or included some housing that prioritized vulnerable members of our community, there was a strong possibility that the long-term success of a cultural centre would be at a high risk of failure. This was based largely on our collective lived experiences of the functioning of anti-Black racism in Canada such as how even small groups of Black people in one location (outside of a specifically culturally themed event) can attract negative attention from white people (Global News BC, 2018), or lead to excessive police surveillance (The Canadian Press, 2018). We believed that without a surrounding community of Black residents, non-profits, and/or businesses creating a "cultural hub" of sorts, it would not attract patronage or use by the regional Black community and be at an increased risk of failure.

The early suggestions of a cultural centre signalled to me the possibility that the City of Vancouver may have indeed been working with a predetermined outcome in mind, that the engagement process with the Black community may have been structured in a way that would fit with—or at a minimum not disrupt—the predetermined goals and

objectives they were working from. I had conversations with other members of the start-up land trust group who expressed similar concerns as I had about the process, originating in all of our past experiences of institutional anti-Blackness in Canada; for us, we rarely experience institutions eager to share or give away power and control of resources to community groups, made even less likely in the case of racialized citizens particularly when it comes to land and space claims.

When the HAWG was reconvened by the City for a reset of the engagement process, we continued to participate in it because we saw value in remaining involved in the design planning process and maintaining a working relationship with the City while organizing separately around the idea of the CLT. As a result of that organizing, we sent a letter to the Mayor, Councillors, and senior staff at the City of Vancouver on February 24, 2017, to express our intention to form a CLT that would act as the long-term steward of the Hogan's Alley Block. In the letter, which several of us participated in drafting, we requested the transfer of the Hogan's Alley Block (currently owned by the City of Vancouver), into a non-profit organization led by Black citizens for the purpose of development, operations, and long-term stewardship. The following excerpt of the letter, which is provided in Appendix F describes our group's objectives:

> This working group has been inspired to determine how the City of Vancouver can ensure a just and viable outcome through the opportunity and occasion presented by the resolution to remove the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts.
>
> As key contributors to the North East False Creek (NEFC) area planning process and guided by proposed core principles of the Hogan's Alley Working Group (including Honouring, Access and Inclusion, Security of Tenure and Investment), this community-led working group presents the following proposal to the City of Vancouver:
>
> That the City of Vancouver make possible the transfer of the city-owned lands bordered by Main Street, Union Street, Gore Avenue, and Prior Street to a not-for-profit community organization (eg. Community Land Trust), led by citizens of African Descent and elected and public interest representatives. This organization will work in good faith with the City of Vancouver to pursue residential, commercial, cultural, and public land use opportunities on the site. Those opportunities will be built together with community-based service providers, community organizations, residents of adjacent neighbourhoods (ex. Chinatown, Strathcona, DTES, NEFC, etc.) and a specific intent to include Indigenous peoples on these, their traditional territories (2017)

We had a high degree of confidence in the non-profit CLT structure we were proposing because it is a model already being used by the City, non-profit organizations such as the Co-op Housing Federation (Community Land Trust Foundation of BC, n.d.; Pablo, 2019) and housing funders such as CMHC (CMHC, 2016), BC Housing (BC Housing, n.d.), and VanCity Credit Union (Bula, 2017) to support the delivery of below-market and affordable mixed-use developments (Spacing, 2018). This local model differs from the traditional CLT model—one in which a non-profit retains ownership of the land in perpetuity and a home-owner (typically with a household income that is at or below a predetermined level) owns the improvements on the land (house, accessory buildings, etc.); when the home is sold to the next buyer, the value of the land is not factored into the price of the home thus maintaining affordability (Community-Wealth.org, 2014).

The non-profit CLT model being used in the Vancouver context, and that we were basing our strategy on, is based on a rental housing instead of home-ownership. In this model, a municipality or other land owner provides a long-term lease (60 or 99 years) for a nominal rate (typically $10/year) to a non-profit CLT. Leveraging the value of the land and accessing equity, grants, and/or subsidy from government or other granting bodies, a rental-based CLT model develops multi-unit housing and offers units at below-market rates—the depth of affordability depending on many factors including the ratio of debt to cost, economies of scale based on the number of units, and other factors.

It was important to utilize a model that the City had vetted and were using to increase the likelihood of acceptance of our proposal and demonstrate our organization's capacity to work with the City's affordable housing policies and models. Our strategy was to make it as easy as possible for them to accept our proposal, especially since they were likely to be seeking to maximize the value out of the lands to meet the NEFC's break-even mandate.

While senior staff and Council at the City received and likely reacted to our letter internally, we moved forward with the NEFC planning team's restructured engagement process. The NEFC team informed us that, in response to our feedback about the failures of the first meeting with the design consultants, they were expanding the scope of the process with the Black community and adding more meetings to the timeline than was originally planned (three in total), which would include a multi-day design charrette. Further, they informed us they had worked within the design consultant's corporate

network to source a team with experience in design-based citizen engagement for Black communities, particularly redevelopment projects for communities that had been displaced by urban renewal. The team was headed by Zena Howard, a US-based architect who had worked as the project manager for the African American Museum of History and Culture that opened in 2013 in Washington DC (Perkins + Will, 2014).

In the second essay of my project, I will provide a detailed analysis of the revised design-led engagement process and the additional interventions members of the HAWG and start-up CLT group performed to ensure that the vision developed by the Black community would be implemented and sustainable over the long-term.

## 2.3. Conclusion Essay #1

> *The urban future envisioned by Black United Front [in Halifax] and BLM is not reducible to a set of physical forms or quantifiable outcomes. Nor does it entail a universal conception of what human life is or should become. Instead it shows how the process of city making, including the process through which the meaning of a viable life is defined, can be radically altered. In broad terms these groups envision an almost total break with the prevailing form of modern planning and modern state power. They seek to end the ongoing process through which planning simultaneously assumes jurisdiction over Black lives, on the one hand and evicts these lives from any desirable future, on the other (Rutland, 2018, p. 303).*

As presented earlier in the project, redress is a term used to describe reparations for past injustice associated with some form of discrimination, exclusion, or act of violence against a group of people and can take the form of various kinds of reparations (apologies or financial compensation) and best decided upon by legislators not the court system. Reparations were something that people of African descent fought for in the days immediately following the abolishment of slavery and yet it was the former enslavers who were given compensation by the state for the loss of their financial benefits when slavery was abolished (Engerman, 2000).

As Black people generally let go of the fight for reparations, most notably in the United States, where the promise of 40 acres and a mule was never fulfilled, former slave-owning colonies were relieved of any formal pressure to make compensation to the descendants of formerly enslaved people, ensuring that the inequalities which resulted from enslavement were never institutionally or structurally addressed. In more recent times, Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote an award-winning essay called “The Case for

Reparations," published in *The Atlantic* in 2014. He argued that reparations for the hundreds of years of enslavement people of African descent faced is not only important but also a moral obligation of former slave-owning states because these nations can trace their current wealth to the institution of slavery and the overwhelming benefit that has been given to white citizens (Coates, 2014).

When applied to the Hogan's Alley context, our case for redress stands up to Brooks' criteria for redress presented earlier, and also aligns with the scholars and writers who are revising the arguments for reparations which have started appearing more regularly in the public discourse in Western countries including Canada (Coates, 2014; Manjapra, 2018; Morgan, 2019) and are even being suggested by Democratic candidates heading into the 2020 US presidential election (Lockhart, 2019).

The City of Vancouver officials and other levels of government who made the decisions that negatively impacted the Black community of Hogan's Alley during the decades that the community was gradually evicted—through neglect, expropriation pressure, and anti-Black racism—put people of African descent in the City at increased risk of poverty and other negative socio-economic and educational outcomes, including housing quality and security. The 2014 UN Human Rights Council report on Canada's treatment of people of African descent states "the cumulative impact of anti-Black racism and discrimination faced by African Canadians in the enjoyment of their rights to education, health, housing and employment, among other economic, social and cultural rights, has had serious consequences for their overall well-being. Anti-Black racism continues to be systemic, leaving African Canadians among the poorest communities in Canada in 2016" (UN Human Rights Council, 2017, p. 12). While grim, the UN report validated what we as people of African descent were already cognizant of due to our cumulative lived experiences in Canada. Therefore, when the start-up CLT group comprised of Black community members submitted our proposal to the City of Vancouver for the entire Hogan's Alley Block to be transferred into our stewardship, holding title to that land in perpetuity as means to develop economic, social, and political capital in the city and region, it was a very specific claim for redress.

In this essay, I have provided the historical context of anti-Black racism in Canada, BC, and Vancouver in which people of African descent have and continue to exist. Since the first enslaved African was brought to Canada, through pre-Confederation times and since then, Black people have had to struggle to establish and

maintain community in Canada. In some cases, such as Salt Spring Island, Wilberforce and Amber Valley, communities were displaced without a trace and, in others such as Africville, they were dispersed, their lands seized, and pushed into areas of concentrated low-income households. The story of Hogan's Alley closely matches these other displacement histories, most closely with those that have vanished with no current landmarks that would indicate that Black people ever resided on those sites. All of these examples provide evidence that planning policies in Canada upheld white supremacy in the city and enforced the dominant social order of racial subjugation and exclusion.

As the Black community in Vancouver and others have worked to keep the memory of Hogan's Alley alive, the NEFC planning process presented an opportunity for advocates of social justice to pressure the City of Vancouver for a process and outcomes that would right past wrongs. What we sought was similar to what Rutland describes in his definition of self-determination: "the principle of self-determination… refers to the ability of an oppressed group to participate in the decisions that affect their lives. It was the logic or means through which… oppressed people could define their own destiny" (2018, p. 205). In his book about the displacement that occurred to Black communities in and around Halifax he documents not only the brutality of urban renewal but also the resilience of the Black community that fought back—and continues to fight—against the land dispossession they endured.

I maintain that it is not possible to discuss redress for past injustices without engaging institutional systems change towards social and spatial justice and that, if efforts for redress do not include sharing power and resources with racialized groups, such efforts remain performative and without substance. There have been substantially negative impacts on Black community development in BC—socially, economically, and culturally—and this has affected the long-term well-being of Black citizens in this region since the first Black migrants arrived here. This is especially clear when we look at how Black many of the Black asylum seekers who arrived in the mid-1800s decided to cut their losses in BC, sell their land holdings, and seek refuge elsewhere, inflicting substantial inter-generational economic loss with the disposition of those real assets (Coates, 2014). Therefore, while it may not be feasible to quantify a precise value of the loss experienced by Black citizens though the many decades of exclusion and subjugation, institutions must come to terms with and make moves towards substantive redress that includes empowerment and resource allocation to impacted communities.

The next chapter will unpack how I, together with other members of the HAWG and newly forming Hogan's Alley Society, continued to align with the social justice ideals of Black liberation movements as well as Fainstein's specific recommendations in the area of urban planning. I will assess the disruptions we made to the City's planning process when I discovered that the City had planned to sell market condominiums on the Hogan's Alley Block—privatizing the public assets that they acquired through urban renewal—and the affordable housing innovations we proposed to ensure an equitable outcome for the Black community.

# Chapter 3.

# Systemic Exclusion of Black Life from Vancouver Civic Policies and the Ongoing Fight for a Just City

The second half of my research project documents and analyzes how the City of Vancouver conducted their engagement with Black residents during the Northeast False Creek (NEFC) planning process, relying on my experience as an affordable housing developer and as one of many Black people seeking redress for the displacement of Hogan's Alley. As in the first chapter of this project, I continue to draw on Fainstein's just city framework, critical race theory, and other urban justice scholarship as I present how Black citizens have been almost entirely excluded from Vancouver civic policies. I offer a review of the rebooted engagement process with the Hogan's Alley Working Group (HAWG) and argue that even when led by a culturally competent consultant team, engagements occurred within a policy framework that failed to prioritize redress and equity for Black citizens.

Next, I present a brief quantitative and qualitative analysis of the architectural plans for the Hogan's Alley Block's which demonstrated to me that that the City intended to sell between 70 – 80% of the residential floor area on the Hogan's Alley Block as market condominiums in direct contradiction to the HAWG Guiding Principles. It also revealed that, if the City predetermined to privatize a majority of the housing on the block through selling to a developer who would in turn sell the majority of the housing as condominiums, our proposal for a non-profit community land trust on the block would not be considered. It was also evidence that they did not accept our arguments that to privatize the Hogan's Alley Block— lands they acquired by their predecessors' destruction of the community—would be a gross injustice. The City's failure to respond to our proposal and work transparently with us towards our redress goals—in this case the HAWG non-profit land trust—is evidence of how being excluded from civic policies keeps Black residents in the margins and renders our needs invisible or inconsequential to decision-makers.

Finally, I describe how the Black community staged justice-inspired interventions leading up to and during the NEFC public hearing, and how the City responded: during Council deliberation; in the final adopted policy text; and in subsequent communications

about our land trust proposal. It shows what was accomplished through the Black community organizing regarding recognition in the NEFC policy, and daylights the City's ongoing resistance to fully commit to our calls for redress, documenting another example of how city planning, policy, and practice continue to reflect the systems of oppression that permeate society

## 3.1. Excluding Black Lives: Our Absence from City of Vancouver Policy

> *"In Canada… Black populations have been subject to distinct state processes of abandonment, which have cemented the economic subjugation of Black Communities" (Maynard, 2017, p. 71).*

The ability for the state to address socio-economic inequities at legislative, policy, and program levels is nearly impossible unless the nature of the issues are known and understood. From data collection methods to analysis and prioritization, tackling systemic inequality requires intentional departure from the norms and assumptions that that have been inherited from our colonial past. When welfare state policies—which briefly helped to close the income gap between white Canadians and racialized communities in the 1960s—began to be replaced by neoliberal reforms in the 1980s, the cuts to social spending and "equity supports for low-income families" (Maynard, 2017, p. 72) widened the gap between Canada's rich and poor, having some of the worst impacts on Black and Indigenous communities (Maynard, 2017, p. 73).

Fainstein describes neoliberalism—the doctrine upon which developed nations such as Canada currently formulate most of their policies—as a form of governance that renders the state almost exclusively a facilitator of free-market processes; a belief that economic development will ultimately solve social issues such as poverty. She posits that urban planning, in theory and practice, has failed to create cities that are equitable and just, providing her text as "a guide to what to do if justice is the first evaluative criterion used in policy making" (2010, p. 6) For people of African descent in Canada, the neoliberal state (and, to a slightly lesser degree, its predecessor, the welfare state) is a place of injustice and inequity (Mathieu, 2010; Maynard, 2017; Rutland, 2018; Winks, 1997). Evidence of this is provided in the United Nation's 2017 Human Rights Council *Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its Mission to Canada* which states:

> Despite Canada's reputation for promoting multiculturalism and diversity, and the positive measures referred to [earlier in this report], the Working Group is deeply concerned about the human rights situation of African Canadians. Across Canada many people of African descent continue to live in poverty and poor health, have low educational attainment, and are over represented at all levels of the criminal justice system (2017).

Of the many recommendations made in the report, it is suggested that the government of Canada establish a national mandatory disaggregated data collection policy, based on "race, colour, ethnic background, national origin, and other identities" to identify if and where racial disparities exist for African Canadians so as to address these inequalities. While it stops short of telling policy-makers that their neglect of Black Canadians in data reporting has enabled the substantial socio-economic disparities that exist, it certainly makes clear that government has a responsibility to address the problems in policy by starting with the data.

At the level of city government in Vancouver, it does not appear that policies and citizen engagement efforts prior to the NEFC planning process have given particular attention to the circumstances and needs of the local Black community and I would argue this is largely because said circumstances and needs are not known—either willfully or though systemic erasure. A review of several recent City of Vancouver policy documents and citizen advisory groups demonstrates that Black people and the human rights issues referred to in the UN Human Rights Council report are not being addressed at the local level. Although the term "intersectionality" is mentioned and there are instances of race being referenced in recent City policy initiatives, including the Women's Equity Strategy, poverty reduction recommendations made to the federal government, and the Housing Vancouver Strategy (City of Vancouver, 2017a, 2018d, 2018c), there is a lack of genuine engagement with race or an applied race analysis to policy in Vancouver, particularly where Black citizens are concerned.

The misuse of the term intersectionality is particularly striking when examining its reference in the Women's Equity Strategy because, despite its purported commitment to this concept, the policy has no mention of Black women; the only two intersecting identities discussed in the strategy are Indigeneity and disability. This is especially ironic, given that the term originated with Black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw "to address the marginalization of Black women within not only antidiscrimination law but also in feminist and antiracist theory and politics" (Carbado et al., 2013, p. 303). In contrast, the

Working Group Report on People of African Descent in Canada documents the significant disadvantage faced by Black women:

> African Canadian women often find themselves entrenched in a cycle of poverty, with low levels of vocational and/or career advancement, lack of access to justice and deprived of the resources necessary to fully enjoy and participate in Canadian culture and life. An African Canadian woman who is poor and unemployed or who has a precarious immigration status or who is at risk of harm or domestic violence, or any combination thereof, is highly vulnerable to a deepening cycle of marginalization and social exclusion, which also affects her children and her community" (UN Human Rights Council, 2017, p. 14).

The City's inability to engage, document and address the compounding marginalization of Black women in Vancouver in the Women's Equity Strategy is a prime example of how a lack of representation exacerbates systemic inequality.

I think it is relevant to include the photo below of the 2016 - 2018 City of Vancouver outgoing Women's Advisory Committee here; none of the members appear to be visible minorities and, while they may have racialized identities or backgrounds, by not being visibly racialized they are less likely to have lived the experience of discrimination and racism referred to in the UN Report than if their race were visible. And arguably the lack of inclusion of a race analysis in the Women's Equity Strategy is one of the consequences of this lack of representation on the advisory committee.

**Figure 9 City of Vancouver outgoing Women's Equity Committee, 2018**
Source: Photo courtesy of Facebook October 23, 2018

The City of Vancouver has a number of other policies that I argue are impactful to people of African descent in the context of the areas identified in the UN report (UN Human Rights Council, 2017). Listed below are a number of City of Vancouver policies along with the results of a keyword search of the terms "race", "racism", "Black" or "African" with the corresponding results.

- **Vancouver Food Strategy (2013b):** no mention of "race", "racism", "African" or "Black"
- **Housing Vancouver Strategy (2018c)**: "race" mentioned in the introduction (p.9) as one of the compounding factors impacting people's ability to find affordable housing however strategies on how to address this is not provided in the recommendations; the words "racism", "African" or "Black" were not found.

- **Prosperity for All through a Healthy Communities Approach: Vancouver's Recommendations to the Federal Government's National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2017a):** "racism" mentioned twice – once as it relates to Indigenous peoples (p. 6) and once as it relates to creating a successful poverty reduction approach (p. 10) but no specific engagement is made with a race analysis of poverty either as it pertains to the current situation or in the recommendations.
- **Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (2015c):** no mentions
- **Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan (2014)**: mention of the history of "the loss of the physical and social heart of Vancouver's Black community, known as 'Hogan's Alley'; and future policy direction to "recognize and honour the former Black community of Hogan's Alley that existed prior to the viaducts construction" if the viaducts removal are approved by Council
- **VanPlay (2019):** a Parks and Recreation strategy for the purpose of guiding capital investments and making parks and services more equitable (p. 54); "access indicators" for parks and recreation mentioned in the report are car ownership, people with disabilities, and languages spoken at home; no mention of race, racialized or Black/African people
- **Resilient City (2017b)**: strategy "aimed at addressing acute shocks (sudden events like earthquakes, floods, and fires) and chronic stresses (daily or ongoing issues like affordability, aging infrastructure, and reduced social cohesion)"; report identified equity and inclusion as a measure of resilience, however on p. 10 there is an acknowledgement that the eight month engagement process that included a range of stakeholders failed to adequately engage with non-English speakers, faith-based groups and that, while leadership of multi-cultural groups were engaged, it was not an adequate substitute for direct communications with group members.

These examples demonstrate that, with the occasional exception of Indigenous peoples, racialized people in general, and Black residents in particular, are significantly under-represented—often missing entirely—in City of Vancouver policies and frameworks. Such omissions may be the result of planners approaching policy-making from a race-neutral perspective but I would argue that, by not being intentional about inclusion and equity, the unique circumstances for Black people in Vancouver are excluded and thus redress for persistent inequalities are not achievable. This argument is made by Yogeeswaran et. al. in their research (2018, p. 284), which specifically seeks to examines how a colour-blind approach—defined as a "multi-faceted ideology that is sometimes construed as a means to achieving racial equality by ignoring group membership and focusing on each person as a unique individual, or as a means to opposing race-conscious policies that assist marginalized and racial minority groups in society"— negatively impacts policies meant to redress racial inequality. They found that colour blindness in this context allows decision-makers to "support the symbolic

incorporation of minority cultures to redress inequalities (e.g., teaching of minority languages in schools, representing minority culture at national events, etc.) while simultaneously opposing policies that address those inequalities through resource based redistribution" (2018, p. 286). Bannerji's argues that in "posing 'Canadian culture' against 'multicultures', an element of whiteness quietly enters into cultural definitions, marking the difference between a core cultural group and other groups who are represented as cultural fragments" (Bannerji, 1996, p. 15). Therefore, instead of lessening racial inequality, multiculturalism maintains racial divides and reinforces white supremacy all while pretending to celebrate diversity. Instead of seeking "meaningful change or the implementation of anti-racist policies that could have challenged the status quo" (Maynard, 2017, p. 74), multiculturalism provides a picture of racial harmony that belies the discrimination prevalent throughout Canadian society.

By revealing that the majority of planning policies in Vancouver are "colour-blind", I wanted to illuminate that the context within which Black citizens mobilized to seek justice through the NEFC process was one of institutional denial, where the issues impacting our community were not acknowledged, engaged, or considered. Further, by maintaining institutional ignorance about race and the impacts of white supremacy, the City had plausible deniability when we made our case for redress.

## 3.2. Engaging Black Lives: Architecture as Redress?

As presented, the context within which the Black community advocated for redress during the NEFC planning process was one of exclusion from the City of Vancouver's policies. At the end of the previous essay, I described how, after a particularly fraught meeting, the City decided to expand the scope of their engagement with the Hogan's Alley Working Group (HAWG) due to concerns over a lack of cultural competency. The City responded by hiring US-based architect Zena Howard, an African American, and her team to lead the process, based on her expertise working on major redevelopment initiatives and projects with cultural significance to Black communities (Perkins + Will, 2014).

On April 24, 2017, the HAWG met with the City's NEFC planning team and they informed us that Ms. Howard would lead us through a three-day design charrette. In the book *Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning*, Sanoff describes charrettes as a "participatory design strategy" spanning three to five days with defined

problems and/or goals to be addressed. He states that the two main objectives of a design charrette are: “to gain the unified support of a representative cross section of citizens who are committed to implementing the proposed solutions” and “to get the commitment of the power structure to secure the necessary resources in order to effect the changes” (2000, p. 50).

During the City’s presentation at the pre-charrette meeting, they provided us with an overview of the charrette process but not with a clear understanding of their goals or intentions for the process, much less a “commitment to provide the necessary resource in order to effect changes” as described by Sanoff—which was specifically our land trust proposal. From my professional experience having previously led project-based charrettes, I had some understanding of the process and assumed that, given the lack of definition provided by the City, we would be provided with a blank canvas from which we would shape a vision for the Hogan’s Alley Block based on the specific needs and goals that would be expressed by the community. Outside of the City’s meetings, we met as a group to discuss moving cautiously forward in the charrette process while maintaining our focus on our overarching shared goals. Several people in the group communicated that they were unclear about what exactly the process would produce or how it would deliver the redress being sought on the former Hogan’s Alley site, revealing another gap in how the City was communicating their intentions to the HAWG.

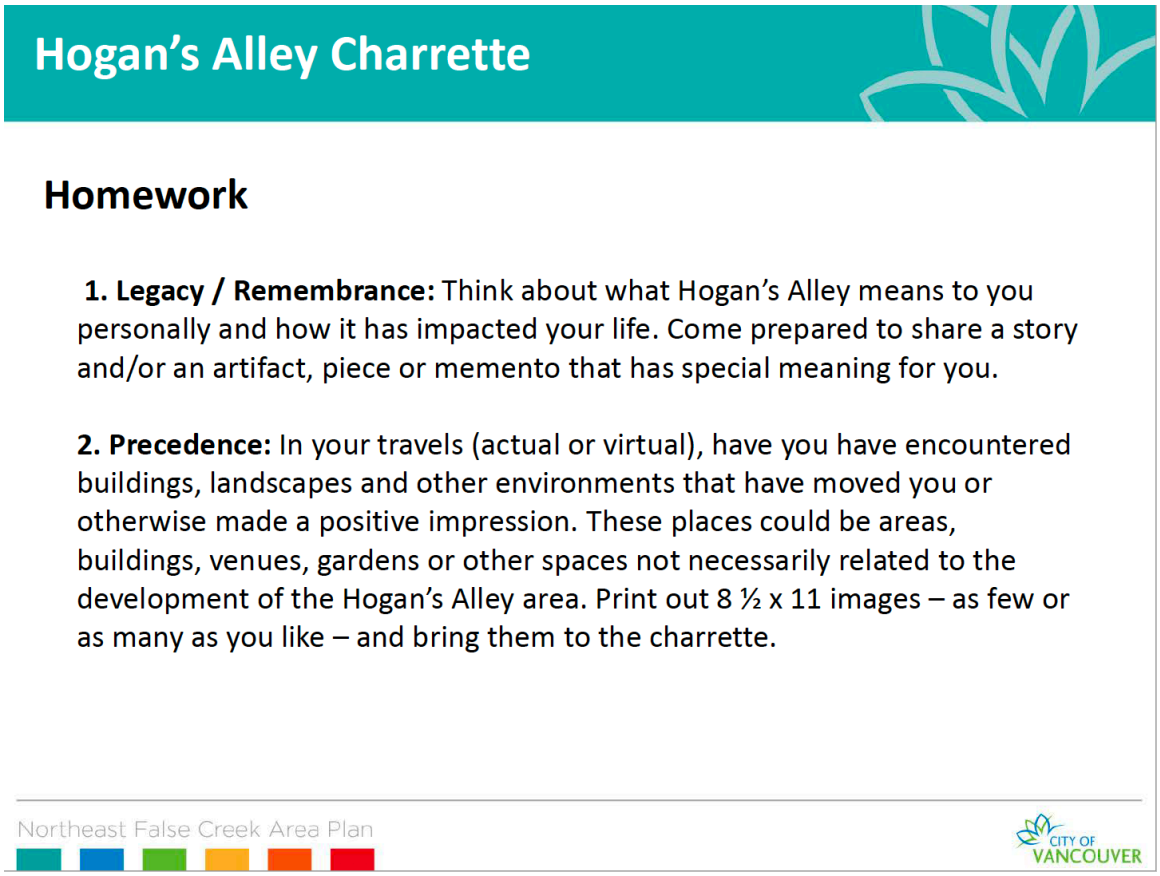



**Figure 10 Hogan's Alley Design Charrette homework instructions**
Source: City of Vancouver presentation to Hogan's Alley Working Group, April 24, 2017

I considered the City's engagement of Ms. Howard a well-intentioned effort to supplement the lack of cultural competency on the local consultant team, but also with some general hesitation. While it signaled to me that the City wanted to remedy our concerns about the former lead consultant's inability to understand the significance that Hogan's Alley held for Black residents, and their lack of sensitivity to our shared experiences of anti-Black racism, I didn't think that senior City officials had provided any signal to us that they were committed to the redress outcomes of a community land trust that we proposed. I hoped we would have a better engagement experience but remained concerned that the design-centred process might distract us from the material redress outcomes that for me was more important than the physical shape of the buildings. I was concerned we might become caught up in the fun of the creative process that design-led engagements are focused on and fail to press the City on some of the more targeted goals such as affordable housing, economic development opportunities, and preventing displacement pressure on the surrounding communities. I was also cautious

that Howard's star power presence. She was the project manager on the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC (Perkins + Will, 2014)—a bucket list destination for people of African descent around the world—and she would therefore have the ability to captivate us on a cultural level; that captivation could serve to work against our ability to maintain a critical eye on the process and outputs. I believed there was also a risk that the design focus could neutralize our insistence on our equity-based outcomes if we got caught up in the excitement of developing Afro-centric architecture and place-making. What benefit are lovely buildings if they are not held in perpetuity by the community but rather sold to the highest bidder to fund the NEFC expenses?

The design charrette was held from May 11 to May 13, 2017. Zena Howard's role leading the engagement process was a significant improvement from the City's first attempt at engagement led by the former design consultant and she was successful in immediately connecting with local Black community members. Her lived experience as a Black woman—even though there are unique nuances among cultures within the African Diaspora—allowed her to connect to the lived experiences of members of HAWG who have endured both interpersonal and institutional racism and exclusion. She also built a career leading culturally significant projects that according to her corporate bio, stating that her work serves to:

> reconcile the results of poorly-conceived urban renewal and development policies which often decimated established African American and other minority communities; this 'remembrance' work brings historical and cultural relevance to struggling downtowns, reignites connections between people, and engages people that have historically been denied a voice in the design and decision-making process" (Perkins + Will, 2018).

An example of this was when I expressed that there needed to be a balanced approach to design practices such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (International CPTED Association, n.d.) because these can negatively impact racialized people and lead to exclusive, unwelcoming spaces with increased surveillance and possible harm; Howard acknowledged and agreed with me without the need of supporting evidence that can happen when a consultant is white and working from a colour-blind perspective.

However, it is important to note that during the consultation process, Howard's role seemed to me be firmly bound by the contractual requirements of her client, the City of Vancouver, and those obligations guided her facilitation techniques and approaches

when resolving any areas of conflict between the HAWG and the City. This came sharply into focus during the final day of the charrette when it was revealed that the City was planning to locate a fire hall on the Hogan's Alley Block. When probed about this by charrette participants, Howard replied that her design team could take steps to make sure that the fire hall would be beautiful and well-designed so as to fit into the form and character of the site. One of our team members stood up and said that this was unacceptable no matter the design and that it would not be in keeping with redress to place such an undesirable land use on the site committed to addressing the needs of the Black community. This team member went on to cite the way Black communities through history have had to suffer being situated near or within the least desirable land uses such as garbage dumps, heavy industrial or polluting industries (Benton, 2018; Fainstein, 2010; Rutland, 2018). I also participated in this debate, pointing out that fire halls have been notorious sites of exclusion from both a race and gender perspective—as Chetkovich stated "neither the working conditions not the occupational culture of firefighters have been determined in a social vacuum; both are embedded within historical relations of race, class, and gender" (1997, p. 36). I told the design team and City staff present that, given this history of exclusion, I thought a firehall on the Hogan's Alley Block could create social tensions between a predominantly white and male fire department and the residents, businesses and visitors to the Hogan's Alley Block.

Howard insisted that it could be managed through design (a comment worthy of further deconstruction; however, out of the scope of this project) and it wasn't until a general manager with the City of Vancouver intervened in the discussion, stating that he heard us and that he would instruct staff work on relocating the fire hall, thus resolving the debate between Howard and members of the HAWG. This moment in the charrette made it clear to me that Howard and her team were bound to the City's terms of reference—consultant to client—and, as such, it was the City who maintained the ultimate power to decide the outcome of the charette process. For the HAWG and the Black community, the City retained the final word on the fate of the Hogan's Alley Block and our role was confined to informing the shaping of the architectural aesthetics—making it vibrant. Our experience substantiates the case made by critics of participatory planning models who argue that in most cases, the state maintains control and power throughout the entire process, from making space for participatory process to happen and determining who is invited into the process (Cornwall, 2002) to how and who maintains power throughout the process (Gaventa, 2006). As Cornwall states, "any act

of space-making is an act of power" (2002, p. 10) and, in the case of the City of Vancouver's engagement process with the Black community, I argue that they held and maintained the power over the Hogan's Alley Block throughout the process due to their authority as the level of government responsible for the laws and policies governing the area and also due to their ownership of the lands.

The charrette report was completed by the City's consultants in July 2017 and, as discussed previously, since we were not told about the City's objectives for the charrette prior to commencing, it was the first time we learned what the objectives were:

1. To understand better the rich tapestry of individuals, families, businesses, and social bonds that made up the Hogan's Alley community, as well as those that make up Vancouver's present day [sic] Black community. Altogether, these relationships will form the DNA of an authentic and sustainable future for Hogan's Alley. This requires a high degree of trust, a willingness to share, and an openness to issues that may not be comfortable but must be addressed"
2. To understand the physical characteristics of the Hogan's Alley neighbourhood, both historically and present. The complete destruction of Hogan's Alley has left only memories and photographs to represent what once stood on this site. The physical form and space of a place has a direct influence on social dynamics. While the neighbourhood will not be reconstructed as it was prior to 1970, the new development can craft a physical environment that honours the past and supports positive social engagement that will help build community.
3. To explore with Vancouver's Black community how best to honour its history and chart a path forward that is more inclusive and builds for this community, as well as all citizens of Vancouver the opportunities for a self-determined future. This inclusiveness begins with open channels of communication and leads to development guidelines that prescribe clear objectives for social, cultural and economic diversity"

(Perkins + Will, 2017, p. 20)

The objectives listed are quite hopeful and inspiring on their face, suggesting that the NEFC engagement with the Black community would provide ample space to learn more about the past and contemporary Black community and tackle uncomfortable issues with the goal of moving towards a more inclusive future. But a closer look reveals an absence of any commitments to justice, redress, or reparations for the past displacement of the Black community—the goals we held and repeatedly communicated to the City leading up to and during the charrette. In the first objective, it speaks about establishing trust so that uncomfortable issues can be addressed; however, these

statements are silent on the methods and means to address said issues. The intent "to understand and explore" through the charrette came with conditions on what was permissible: first, the objectives state that the neighbourhood will not be reconstructed as it was prior to 1970. It is not clear who set this condition, but it's not difficult to imagine why. Prior to 1970 the Hogan's Alley Block featured low-density housing with a few multi-unit rental buildings. Given the current high demand for housing in Vancouver—for both home-ownership and all forms of rental—and the extremely high price for downtown development sites, a low-density development would be impractical from both a market and non-market perspective. It would be interesting to have an exploratory conversation with the City staff at the time to see if they were indeed willing to consider all of the ideas put forth by the Black community, including a full reconstruction proposal but since we have all been living with a keen awareness of housing shortage for some time now we understood the impracticalities of building a single family subdivision on a downtown city block.

**Figure 11 232 - 240 Union Street depicting the low density housing that previously existed on the Hogan's Alley Block**
Photo: Vancouver Archives, 1968. Reproduced with permission.

**Figure 12 251 Prior Street showing the low-density housing that characterized the Hogan's Alley**
Photo: Vancouver Archives, 1968. Reproduced with Permission.

Moving on to objective number three above, it states that the charrette is meant work with the Black community to determine how to honour the history of Hogan's Alley, finding a way to build greater inclusion for Black people and "all citizens" to have a self-determined future. It seems reasonable that all residents in Vancouver ought to be able to self-determine their future, but it is curious to me why Black people—a disempowered and minority population dealing with ongoing socio-economic exclusion—are here charged with delivering "social, cultural, and economic diversity" for the rest of the city or supporting others to self-determine through this process when historically being denied the same. In the next sentence, their interpretation of inclusiveness is further defined by it "begins with open channels of communication and leads to development guidelines that prescribe clear objectives for social, cultural and economic diversity." In my assessment, there are a number of challenges in this framing.

First, the HAWG did not discuss honouring the history of Hogan's Alley in order to facilitate self-determination for *all citizens* of Vancouver. We were quite specific in centring the people of African descent who were arguably most impacted by the slum

clearance that happened in the past. Second, we felt like we already were working within open channels of communication with the City and that while it could be improved, it wasn't as if we were just beginning a dialogue about Hogan's Alley or the need for redress with City officials. Third, members of the HAWG were not seeking *development guidelines* nor undefined *social, cultural, and economic diversity*; we wanted very specific decision-making authority and community-based ownership of the Hogan's Alley Block as a pathway towards improving socio-economic conditions for Black people. Contributing to the social, cultural, and economic diversity in the city would be one of the many additional benefits that would result from empowered Black citizens. In this way, the consultant's descriptions of the design charrette objectives appear structured to avoid entertaining the possibilities of land stewardship by the Black community which formed a core part of the HAWG goals.

As Rutland suggests, self-determination for Black communities includes agency and empowerment (2018, p. 28), and decision-making authority over our own lives (2018, p. 205), all of which is regarded as a challenge to existing mostly white authority structures (2018, p. 184). In my assessment, the HAWG was not provided the agency, empowerment, or decision-making authority during the consultation process but rather, to the City, we were mere stakeholder participants, which would make sense given the structure and design of the process in the first place. As further evidence of this, neither the City nor their consultants solicited the HAWG's input on the final workshop report; instead, the community's words and stories were collected and summarized by the design consultants for the uses and purposes of the NEFC plan and to inform future development on the Hogan's Alley Block, which is detailed in later sections of this chapter.

I've interrogated the design charrette objectives to demonstrate the juxtaposition between the narrow outcomes the City was willing to accept from the engagement process and the ambitious intentions for redress that the HAWG and other members of the Black community repeatedly said were our priorities during the Iṣọkan community forum and in previous discussions with the City representatives. The contrast between what the City would accept and what the Black community wanted was significant, especially when we look closely at the difference in the way self-determination is defined. It eventually led to considerable challenges for our group and in my assessment is another example of how urban planning orthodoxy in Vancouver persistently fails to

acknowledge its colonial and anti-Black past or make meaningful moves towards equitable and just city planning.

## 3.3. Evading Black Lives: Charrette Outcomes and Shortcomings

Despite the narrow focus on architectural design and the limited range of outcomes the City may have been prepared to accept, the Hogan's Alley design charrette provided a unique opportunity for the regional Black community to come together and develop a vision for the kind of place that would support people of African descent in living up to our fullest potential, contribute to the greater Vancouver mosaic, and thrive in a space free from racial barriers. Black participants in the process imagined a city where we would be welcomed, included, and supported in our individual and collective pursuits and came from a variety of African Diaspora perspectives—descendants of Hogan's Alley, long-time Vancouver residents, multi-generation Black Canadians, and new immigrants, all who represent a variety of ages, education levels, and economic circumstances.

The process facilitated a rare moment for the Black people in attendance to fellowship amongst each other, express our personal connection to Hogan's Alley, share our vision for the future of the lands, and be in a space where we open about our experiences as Black people without fully surrendering to white gaze and norms. While these additional benefits were enriching for many of us in attendance, I would argue that the engagement process fell considerably short of prioritizing the needs of the Black community because it was not founded on a shared understanding between the City and Black community of redress as described in the previous chapter. In policy and reports the City recognized the past displacement of Hogan's Alley but this recognition appeared limited to historical acknowledgement; the harm and ongoing marginalization that Black people experience in Vancouver was and remains structural and institutional and therefore, the ability to implement meaningful change can only occur at the systemic level. The City's failure to respond to or acknowledge the letter sent to them by members of the HAWG[3] requesting decision-making authority over the Hogan's Alley

[3] By the time the charrette wrapped up in July 2017, five months had passed since we submitted our land trust proposal to the City.

Block while the charrette process continued felt like a further rejection of our calls for justice. Whenever I or others queried City representatives about how and by whom the vision for the Hogan's Alley Block would be implemented, we were told that the design charrette was a stand-alone process and that any commitments about implementation would be determined at a later date. I repeatedly flagged this as a risk to my team members because I regarded the City's responses—or rather lack thereof—as a failure to make their intentions clear or give any assurance that what we were seeking would be taken seriously. In my assessment, the design consultation, although an enriching experience, was not a substitute for the land-based reparations that we aspired for and may actually be used as a distraction from our long-term goals.

Again, I draw on Yogeeswaran et. al. whose research found that "colorblindness may uniformly undermine support for any policy that seeks to redress racial inequalities, as colorblindness involves the belief that race is irrelevant in contemporary society" and further, that this belief is used as justification that the existing social, political and economic system is regarded as fair and legitimate (2018, p. 286). It's possible that our proposal for a Black citizen-led community land trust may have appeared unnecessary and unwarranted from the City's point of view if, as review of their policies suggest, they are operating from a colourblind perspective. And if City leadership in Vancouver are indeed operating from a colourblind belief system or some other harmful bias, they would be less willing to step up and take action to address inequalities between majority and minority groups, in this instance for the benefit of Black people.

It would take considerable time to conduct a thorough analysis of the Workshop Report and while it is not the goal of this project to fully interrogate design-based civic engagement or offer detailed arguments about the limitations of design-focused citizen participatory processes, I would summarize my impression of the report as "for us, by others." Meaning, while there are parts of the report that I consider strong, such as the inclusion of the HAWG Guiding Principles with the suggested that they should be "included with all development plans for Hogan's Alley" (Perkins + Will, 2017, p. 7), the report is deafeningly silent on the themes of equity, justice, redress, land stewardship, or self-determination which were repeatedly communicated by me and other members of the HAWG throughout the charrette process. The report suggest that redevelopment of the site provides "an important opportunity to reconcile a painful moment in Vancouver's history that resulted in the displacement of Vancouver's Black community during the

construction of the viaducts" (Perkins + Will, 2017, p. 18); however, it is silent on *how* to reconcile in spite of the very detailed proposal that we provided to that end months earlier. For me, perhaps the most disenchanting part of the report is the summary of the Emerging Directions/Themes section:

> These goals are important to the process and outcome of this project because they form the spiritual foundation for the new masterplan, connecting it to the history of the site and today's Black community, helping it tell the community's story through design. They also become tangible metrics for measuring the success of the master plan and its ability to guide the design and construction toward a successful conclusion. As the master planning process advances, it will necessarily address many additional requirements for city planning and development pro forma. These will at times seem at odds with one another and compromises will be necessary. Nevertheless, by establishing these goals early on there will be clear expectations for those seeking development opportunities so that the interests of the Black community are well represented and the story of Hogan's Alley will not be forgotten (Perkins + Will, 2017, p. 63)

This is a prime example of "for us by others" because they distilled what they heard and prepared the report <u>for</u> the Hogan's Alley Block, but it was prepared and written <u>by</u> the consultant, through their lens, which is likely influenced by their client/consultant relationship with the City. As a professional working in affordable housing, as a member of the HAWG seeking redress, and as a Black scholar-activist interested in equitable city-building and justice, I find the for-profit developer-centric bias imbedded this statement to be a wrenching revelation of the COV's biases and priorities. As an affordable housing professional, I reject the suggestion that ideals expressed by the Black community for the Hogan's Alley Block would necessarily be at odds with the development pro forma because non-profit housing—while not able to deliver the extravagances offered by the market sector—can and does deliver outstanding design aesthetic while meeting budgetary constraints. The consultants appear to either have a limited experience working across the housing continuum or are biased towards for-profit development, either due to their own limited work experience of community-based housing or based on the terms of reference provided by their client, the City of Vancouver. Furthermore, the consultant appeared to be in risk management mode, tempering expectations of the HAWG and Black community against the harsh reality of the approvals, development, and construction stages of the project. It presumes that members in our community don't have the capacity to understand the complexities of master-planned development and should brace for compromise. I find it particularly

disturbing that our goals—described as the “spiritual foundation” at the beginning of this quote are then reduced to simply the “interests” of our community.

Finally, I find the specific distinction between “those seeking development opportunities” and the “interests of the Black community” a particularly egregious form of erasure. The Black community group that submitted the land trust proposal made clear our intentions to be the ones leading the development of the site. I find it hard to give serious consideration to the possibility that the consultant team and City were not aware or forgot our intentions to lead the proposal, given how frequently we referenced it and how frequently they dodged our comments by reminding us that implementation planning would occur after the NEFC policy was adopted. This choice of framing in the workshop report appears to imply that that our community land trust proposal had already been considered and dismissed in spite of everything we did to make the case for reparations.

Given the considerable shortcomings in the Workshop Report, it strikes me as nearly impossible for City staff and external consultants to listen to, document, comprehend, and equitably respond to the complex realities of the African Diaspora of Vancouver, the intricacies of our lived experiences, and the hoped-for futures expressed over a three-day workshop. This seems especially unlikely considering the City’s long history of anti-Black racism and the current lack of policy intentions around race and inequality documented earlier. So, while the Workshop Report captured the general ideas and vision expressed during the charrette meetings, it is my assertion that the report is a distillation of the community’s voices through the consultants’ lens as overseen by, and reporting to, their client the City of Vancouver. It therefore falls remarkably short of capturing the heartfelt yearning for justice and equity, and the resilient hope for better that I and other members of the Black community expressed during the charrette workshop. The case for reparations we made during the consultation was not documented by the consultants, which I argue is an injustice in its own right, but also does not do a satisfactory job communicating to the City the importance that redress held for charrette participants.

## 3.4. Assessing the Capacity for Redress in the Hogan's Alley Block Design

Being guided by Fainstein's social justice frameworks and informed by the Civil Rights, Black Power and Black Lives Matter movements that seek redress from the deeply entrenched racial inequalities in North America, I maintained a posture that would allow me to work proactively with the City while holding firm to our goal for redress. I and others understood that there was a strong possibility that our objectives of self-determination through community ownership of the built spaces on the Hogan's Alley Block might not be supported or endorsed by senior staff and Council and prepared ourselves to be ready with a community-based response should the final NEFC plan not reflect the specific asks we had made throughout the process.

In August 2017, we received a reply from the City Manager acknowledging our February 2017 letter proposing the community land trust for the Hogan's Alley Block. The City Manager's letter did not specifically respond to our request but stated the NEFC Area Plan would include "guiding policy and an implementation strategy for future detailed site planning, design, programming, and development of the lands" and that, should Council approve the NEFC Plan, "implementation would begin including a public process to select the appropriate development partner(s) for the lands" (Appendix G). This response lacked any indication that the City was willing to explore or support our our land trust request. Although it was not explicitly turned down, it was my impression that we remained at a significant risk of having our land trust proposal rejected.

The next phase in the City's formal engagement process with the HAWG involved convening a sub-group of individuals to work with their design consultants to refine the design concepts that emerged from the charrette in preparation for the City submitting a rezoning application. Staff stated that they felt it was important that the Black community stay involved so that the proposal would not elicit opposition from the community and would be an appropriate articulation of the vision developed in the NEFC policy process. This subset of the HAWG, of which I was a member, was named the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) and, over a series of workshop meetings in the Fall of 2017, the DAC provided feedback to the City's design consultants as they advanced the rezoning application through the approval process, which included the Urban Design Panel presentation in December 2017. If successful through the process, we were told that they would submit the Hogan's Alley Block for rezoning in early 2018 immediately

after the Northeast False Creek plan was approved. Based on my professional background in real estate development and the City's approval process, this signalled to me that the City was advancing towards the implementation stage of the project without resolving our request for a community land trust and thus not addressing the specific redress being sought by the community. It was an indication to me that participatory engagement processes on their own—even advanced formats such as design charrettes—do not ensure that marginalized communities will secure just outcomes without "constant monitoring and activism by those on whose behalf" the City makes decisions (Fainstein, 2010, p. 179).

During the time that the DAC was meeting, a group representing the land trust proposal was invited to meet with City staff on November 17, 2017, to discuss the overall objectives and next steps. At the meeting, we shared why we felt that the appropriate redress for the displacement that occurred to the Black community was a community-owned non-profit land-based asset. We explained to the staff—none of whom were Black or of African descent—the persistent social, political, and economic exclusion that Black Canadians in Vancouver face, and what we believed were the lasting impacts destroying Hogan's Alley had on us. We made arguments consistent with the history of Black liberation scholarship and activism that centres on securing resources for self-determination as a means to alleviate oppression (Brooks, 1999; Coates, 2014; Rutland, 2018) while avoiding the pitfalls of capitalism or (neo)liberalism which maintains rather than dislodges white political, social, and economic power structures (Bluestone, 1969; Boyd, 1990; Ferguson, 2013).

During the meeting, it was asked by a member of our delegation if the City would allow the Hogan's Alley group to make the rezoning submission and lead the project through the approvals process. Once again, we were put off and told that a more active role in leading the project might be possible during later stages of the implementation process, but at the present state the City was simply moving the Hogan's Alley Block through the preliminary approval stages in order to expedite the work and meet the deadlines for Council approval of the NEFC plan targeted for early 2018. It may be reasonable to regard the City's response as coming primarily from an administrative point of view and that staff were working to their imposed deadlines; however, such timelines and efficiencies are based on status quo engagement protocols that often fail to fully address community requests for resources, decision-making authority, or shared

power. Rutland makes this point, arguing that community consultations are but one of many inputs into the planning process that have to compete with more influential technical and financial factors such as infrastructure and service delivery costs (2018, p. 271). We understood that our proposal for a community land trust and request to move into a leadership role on matters relating to approvals for the Hogan's Alley Block were just two of many considerations for City of Vancouver staff to evaluate and that they were working prescribed time constraints. However, given our experience during the engagement process and the City's unwillingness to work with us on the land trust proposal, it reinforced my distrust that equitable outcomes for the Black community would be prioritized above financial or technical goals or that any equity analysis be used to inform this specific policy-making initiative. Fainstein's analysis suggests that, in typical planning approaches, "groups most lacking in political and financial power and most subject to disrespect are least likely to be included in deliberation or to prevail in the outcome. A commitment to justice over technical efficiency in evaluating the content of policy would shift the balance in their favor" (2010, p. 56). As such, we were cognizant that the City of Vancouver maintained the decision-making power over the Hogan's Alley Block and that our proposal for a community land trust remained at risk of being rejected.

### 3.4.1. Design Response to Our Guiding Principles

One of the ways I attempted to understand how the City was prioritizing our requests during my time on the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) was to ask the staff and consulting team to provide a written response detailing how the Hogan's Alley Block design being prepared for preliminary zoning approval specifically delivered on the HAWG Guiding Principles. The following excerpt contains one of the responses:

HAWG Principle: Security of Tenure and Our Definition of Land Use

> The redevelopment of Hogan's Alley must consider the legacy of displacement that unfolded on this land. Zoning of this development will provide long-term and self-determined security of land tenure that guards against the possibility of forced displacement and also is mindful of the urban fabric that it is integrating with as to promote this same value. This includes access to affordable housing, cultural, arts, retail and commercial spaces. By collaborating with our community partners, we will develop innovative solutions to support the social and economic well-being of our community

Design Team Response:

> In coordination with those development requirements set forth by the City of Vancouver, the architecture of the new Hogan's Alley will be one of inclusion and empowerment. Affordably designed living units and small-scale retail and commercial opportunities can support a financially accessible and economically sustainable community. The aim is an architecture that honours and supports the Black community by providing a built environment that it can call its own (Hogan's Alley – Design Response to Guiding Principles November 2017, Appendix E).

The design team qualified their response by stating that the architecture of the new Hogan's Alley happened in coordination with "those development requirements set forth by the City of Vancouver" which are neither explicitly in this response nor did the HAWG have a working understanding of these requirements during the charrette or DAC consultations. Also, the HAWG principle cited above explicitly addresses preventing future displacement and ensuring that spaces on the new Hogan's Alley Block will promote the social and economic well-being of our community. The design team's response states that the "*aim*" is for "architecture that honours and supports the Black community by providing a built environment that it can call its own," which doesn't expressly confirm ownership by the Black community through either freehold title or leasehold interest. Rather it suggests that it will be space that "it can call its own", which implies a notion of shared interest in a public amenity in the way that the waterfront or mountain views are elements that Vancouver can "call its own." Further, this response does not specifically address *how* design can deliver the HAWG goal for "long-term and self-determined security of land tenure" but rather offers that the spaces are "affordably designed".

In my professional experience, when designers suggest to the public, planners, and civic officials that architecture can deliver on ideals that are difficult to define and measure such as inclusion, empowerment, or the honouring of a disadvantaged group, that assurance obscures and diminishes the other critical systemic factors that are necessary components to achieving said ideals. A physical structure on its own is not inclusive or empowering, but rather it is the use, long-term operational program, and degree of power-sharing granted to marginalized communities that determines how inclusive, empowered, or honoured they might be.

One of the factors we regarded as critical to ensuring that the Hogan's Alley Block be an inclusive space was that a majority of the housing be made affordable to

people who are struggling to find housing or make rent in Vancouver. Consistently throughout both phases of the engagement process, I raised questions about the intention for affordability on the site. I was informed by staff that the NEFC policy for the city-owned lands under the viaducts would accommodate up to 1000 units of multi-family housing and that 20—30% of that would be provided for social housing (City of Vancouver, 2015d) distributed between the East and West block of Main Street.

At the time of this writing, the City of Vancouver Zoning and Development By-Law defines social housing in all areas outside of the Downtown Eastside (where the Hogan's Alley Block is situated) as rental housing whereby:

- at least 30 per cent of the dwelling units are occupied by households with incomes below housing income limits, as set out in the current "Housing Income Limits" table published by BC Housing;
- is owned by a non-profit corporation, by a non-profit co-operative association, or by or on behalf of the city, the Province of British Columbia, or Canada;
- is secured by a housing agreement or other legal commitment (City of Vancouver, 2018c)

The inclusion of social housing was important for the community, and so many of us were clear in our feedback to the City that 20 – 30% of the total fell short of delivering the goals stated in the HAWG Principles. I calculated that if the maximum of 300 social housing units were delivered between both the East and West block of Main Street, assuming for analysis sake that it was divided evenly across both blocks, it would result in 150 units of social housing on the Hogan's Alley Block. At 30% of the 150 units being offered to at the Housing Income Limits set by BC Housing (BC Housing, 2018) that would equate to 45 housing units of below-market and 105 units of market rental housing on the Hogan's Alley Block. Therefore, the balance of the housing on the site—again assuming for discussion purposes that it would be 50% of the 1000 units estimated for a total of 500 units—would consist of 350 market condominiums. This was concerning to me for three specific reasons.

First, with a commitment to only 45 units of below-market rental housing on the Hogan's Alley Block, it would mean that the balance of the housing—whether for rent or for purchase—would be offered at market levels or possibly above. This stands in contrast to the specific HAWG Principles of *Access and Inclusion* and *Security of Land Tenure & Our Definition of Land Use* because it would result in a majority of the housing on the Hogan's Alley block being out of reach for many people earning median income

levels or below. Given that Black Canadians are identified in the UN Report as earning lower wages, attaining lower levels of educational outcomes, and suffering higher levels of poverty due to systemic anti-Black racism and interpersonal discrimination, I regarded the City's affordability proposal as a barrier to inclusion for Black people.

The second reason I was concerned was because, if there were a majority of market condominiums on the Hogan's Alley Block, it would put significant gentrification pressure on the existing low-income communities nearby. According to Ley, "gentrification involves the transition of inner-city neighbourhoods from a status of relative poverty and limited property investment to a state of commodification and reinvestment" (2003). The adjacent communities of Strathcona, Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside have been facing intensifying pressure from market developers for decades (Canada, 2017; Franks, Mori, Lohan, & Masuda, 2015; Wideman & Masuda, 2018). A decision by the City to situate 350 market condominiums next door to these communities—especially considering the housing market that Vancouver has experienced in the past decade or more—would exacerbate land value increases and intensify development pressure on these already vulnerable communities. It would constitute a remarkable rejection of the HAWG Principles specifically seeking to prevent future displacement and ensure a security of land tenure so as to prevent any future displacement.

The third reason I was concerned about the targeted minimum social housing policy was that, if the remaining 70 per cent of the multi-family housing on the site were sold as condominiums, it would signal a rejection of our request to transfer the entire Hogan's Alley Block into a non-profit community land trust since a majority of the housing would be privatized when sold to individual buyers. Further, it would render a publicly owned asset a privately held estate and thus be a rejection of the HAWG *Access and Inclusion* Principle which specifically seeks to leverage the land for shared equity and publicly beneficial opportunities. Although we had met with the City once in November to discuss our community land trust proposal, we did not receive any indications—in principle or in writing—that our goal for community land stewardship would be supported or approved by the City.

The lack of assurance that the City would accept our land trust proposal and their inability to commit to more than 30% social housing on the Hogan's Alley Block, layered on our long-standing experience of institutional exclusion, instilled a significant amount

of doubt in me and others that our vision would become a reality. Without a majority of affordable rental housing on the site, we were concerned that the Hogan's Alley Block would be a place of exclusion, affordable only to those earning high incomes or wealthy real estate investors, which are not areas where Black people are typically well represented.

### 3.4.2. A Review of the NEFC Affordable Housing Policy and the Prioritization of Profit

> *"You can't talk about solving the economic problem of the Negro without talking about billions of dollars. You can't talk about ending the slums without first saying profit must be taken out of slums. You're really tampering and getting on dangerous ground because you are messing with folk then. You are messing with captains of industry. Now this means that we are treading in difficult water, because it really means that we are saying that something is wrong with capitalism." – Martin Luther King Jr. in a speech to his staff, 1966 (Dyson & Jagerman, 2000).*

I conducted a review of the City of Vancouver's documents and studies related to the NEFC/False Creek North areas to get a better understanding of the context and guiding principles that informed the City's planning efforts. One such document was the Viaducts and False Creek Flats Planning: Eastern Core Strategy presented to the Standing Committee on Transportation and Traffic (City of Vancouver, 2011c). In the report, staff recommended that Council direct staff to undertake analysis of the options for reconfiguration of the viaducts and the surrounding area, and report back with policy direction for the Eastern Core area of NEFC. It was the first appearance in any of the policy documents about the possibility of removing the viaducts and including those lands in the NEFC/False Creek Flats study area.

The process committed to in that report was described as "extensive and innovative pubic engagement on the viaducts" and, while it may not have contemplated the engagement with the Black community as a means to redress the displacement of Hogan's Alley, it may have enabled its accommodation. One of the engagement efforts included an ideas competition held in 2011 which featured proposals that ranged from keeping and repurposing the viaducts to total removal. The results of the ideas competition was presented in "Vancouver Viaduct & Eastern Core Re:Connect" report (City of Vancouver, 2011a); of the fifty-plus submissions that the City received, ideas addressed park space, traffic, and development. Besides being a creative exercise and

opportunity to engage urbanists, one proposal for street reconfiguration was named as a specific area for further analysis by City staff.

As previously mentioned, I reviewed the June 2013 Dunsmuir and Georgia Viaducts and Related Area Planning Report wherein specific opportunities for "affordable and subsidized housing on city land" were identified (City of Vancouver, 2013a, p. 2). Included in the "key benefits associated with removal of the viaducts" was "Repairing Main Street" which stated: "the block east of Main Street was known as Hogan's Alley which was once home to Vancouver's black population" (2013a, p. 9). Further down that page, in the section entitled "Housing Amenity on the City-owned Blocks," it was proposed that approximately 1000 housing units would be feasible on the two City-owned blocks that lay on either side of Main street—where the viaducts' on-ramp currently sits—"of which a minimum of 200 – 300 (20%) were assumed as affordable non-market housing" (2013a, p. 9).

The policy goals for "a minimum" of 200 – 300 non-market housing" of the approximately 1,000 housing units planned for Sub-Area 6D was always regarded by the HAWG as a just that– a minimum. Throughout the consultation process, I and others persistently reminded the City that the Black community was committed to achieving much more than the minimum target of 20% and we assumed that this objective was shared by all stakeholders involved given the housing affordability crisis in Vancouver (Moos & Skaburskis, 2010). The City staff typically responded to our inquiries about affordable housing by reminding us that the 20—30% goal was just a minimum and that increasing the affordability was a conversation for *after* the NEFC policy was approved at Council. However, delaying a commitment to increasing the affordable housing percentage on the Hogan's Alley Block was another cause for concern; I was not comfortable postponing this critical aspect until after the NEFC policy was finalized because it did not provide any assurance in writing from the City that they would uphold this critical element of the HAWG Guiding Principles.

### 3.4.3. Quantitative Analysis of Housing Affordability on the Hogan's Alley Block

It is important to spend a moment contextualizing how affordable housing is typically financed and developed in the city of Vancouver by non-profit organizations. The basic elements are comprised of land—the site on which the new building(s) are

situated; soft costs—fees for architects, lawyers, consultants, permits & approvals; and hard costs—construction labour and materials. In the current economic realities of development in Vancouver, it is not financially viable to pay market values for land, market values for soft and hard costs, and deliver below-market rental housing; some intervention is necessary. Either the land is supplied by a non-profit land owner or the government and contributed at zero or a very reduced cost to the project, or grants are secured to acquire development sites. Typically, free land is not enough of a reduction of the total development costs to create viable below-market rental housing; projects also need additional capital grants or social purpose equity investors to provide funding towards the costs of the project. And for housing that is targeting households earning the lowest incomes or receiving social assistance benefits, either substantial capital grants or ongoing operating subsidies are necessary to make the housing financially feasible.

In Vancouver, as with other places in Canada, the definition of housing affordability is varied and contested, and it is not the goal of this project to interrogate the meaning of affordability. For the purposes of the HAWG, our goal was an inclusive community that provided a range of rental housing which is affordable to households paying no more than 30% of their annual income on rent for a spectrum of income levels—from individuals or households receiving social assistance to those who can afford market rents. The reason we did not support market condominiums on the Hogan's Alley Block was because we felt that a mixed-income community—with the majority of housing being offered below market—would provide a better quality of neighbourhood for all residents. There are countless examples of Black communities that are isolated in large-scale, low-income urban housing developments that lack proximity to economic opportunities and public infrastructure, social capital, and political access, exposing inhabitants to higher risks of intergenerational poverty or over-policing and racial profiling (MacLeod, 2018; Maynard, 2017; UN Human Rights Council, 2017; Varady, 2005). Our vision for renewing Hogan's Alley would avoid the mistakes of the past that put Black people in isolating segregation and therefore we rejected the idea of an over-representation of either very-low income or market rate housing.

I performed a rough order of magnitude financial analysis on the architectural plans that were going to be included in the preliminary rezoning application in order to assess the potential for affordable housing on the Hogan's Alley block. I asked for and

received a copy of drawings from staff, (Appendix I) but several critical pages were missing, including the development statistics cover page which would typically feature detailed information about each of the buildings planned for the block including the total square footages by use (residential, commercial, etc.); the number of car and bicycle parking provided; and the number of housing units with a breakdown of the unit mix (units by number of bedrooms). These statistics are necessary in order to prepare budgets and assess the ability for the project to deliver on the affordability goals held by the community. I also enlisted the help of a local architect to help me in understanding the buildings' designs from an overall feasibility perspective.

Because the development statistics were missing, I had to go through each of the six buildings that comprised the Hogan's Alley Block and tabulate the square footages for each housing unit and retail/commercial space in order to perform my analysis. I approached the study as if it were one project comprised of six different buildings which featured residential and commercial spaces – a typical mixed-use urban development but at the scale of one city block. The cultural centre and child care centre were excluded from the analysis because both were meant to be funded by the NEFC Area Plan as part of the public benefits (City of Vancouver, 2018f). My analysis led me to understand that the City's rezoning application did not demonstrate that it would achieve the HAWG goals for affordable inclusive housing and that a substantial percentage of the housing units were designed to luxury condominium standards. A breakdown of my analysis is presented below.

### *Housing Unit Sizes*

Affordable housing in Vancouver is designed to very specific policy guidelines which include unit sizing criteria. The larger the unit (typically measured in the industry by square footage), the more expensive it is to build and, in turn, the less affordable it is. As mentioned, where costs exceed the ability to make a particular housing development affordable, subsidies in the form of capital grants and/or operating funds are necessary to meet the debt and operational costs of the development and keep rents within reach of people earning incomes along the non-market housing continuum. The gap between the cost to operate and pay the debt is even larger when the housing is targeted to people earning incomes on the lower end of the spectrum. This has been made increasing more challenging in recent years due to the escalating cost of construction,

which has been trending upwards in 2017 and 2018 at 1%, according to my industry experience.

The following table presents a comparison between the City of Vancouver Housing Design and Technical Guidelines (City of Vancouver, 2018e) for unit sizing and the unit sizes shown on the architectural designs for the buildings on the Hogan's Alley block. I used a methodology of recording each of the units by type (number of bedrooms) and size in square feet in a spreadsheet. I then counted the all of the units that were equal to or greater than 20 square feet larger than City's Guidelines to accommodate for slight overages using the rezoning documents I received (Appendix I) When tabulated, I found that approximately 60% of the units were larger than the City's Guidelines, which would indicate that only 40% of the homes would fall within the City's size guidelines for Social Housing.

**Table 1 Comparision between City of Vancouver Housing Design and Technical Guidelines for Housing Unit sizes and Preliminary Rezoning Inquiry Design Drawings**

| | City of Vancouver Guidelines | Number of Units by Type, Hogan's Alley Block Design | Number of Units over Guidelines, Hogan's Alley Block Design* | Percent of Units over Guidelines, Hogan's Alley Block |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Studio | 320 | 2 | 2 | 100% |
| 1 bedroom | 500 | 270 | 168 | 62% |
| 2 bedroom | 700 | 117 | 50 | 43% |
| 3 bedroom | 900 | 44 | 39 | 89% |
| Total | | 433 | 259 | 60% |

* To be counted as over, all units that were 20 square feet or more above the City of Vancouver Guidelines were included.

Although 40% of the suites would appear to be suitable for affordable housing according to the City's Design Guidelines, and this could allow a greater share of affordable housing units than the 20 – 30% targeted in the 2011 NEFC policy for this site, I could not conclude that with any certainty. Also, I did not regard the proposed unit mix to have sufficiently delivered on the HAWG goal of preventing gentrification pressure on the surrounding communities because the majority of the housing would remain at the market sizes and likely be offered at market rates, which typically puts upward pressure on surrounding land values. Additionally, it was not confirmed in any of the previous NEFC studies and policy that priority would be given to rental housing beyond

the existing social housing target. Therefore, even if 40% of the unit sizes complied with the Social Housing Design Guidelines, there was no certainty that all of those housing units would be used for below-market or even market rental housing instead of condominiums. Without any certainty that the City would make increasing the percentage of affordable housing a priority, I interpreted the unit sizing as an indicator the City did not intend to deliver more than the minimum requirements for affordable housing and thus putting HAWG Guiding Principles for inclusive, affordable housing at risk.

***Building Typology***

In addition to my analysis of the unit sizes, I solicited the help of a couple local architects whom I knew from my professional network to review and advise me on the Hogan's Alley Block designs. My initial review of the building typology led me to regard the structures as particularly expensive to build and thus make it more difficult to deliver affordable housing. During my meeting with the architects, they identified that the designs featured some units that were not only larger than the Social Housing Guidelines but also significantly larger than typical market condominiums. They also discussed that the way the buildings were designed, featuring frequent horizonal and articulation would result in non-replicable floor plans and unit plans in the building and thus increase the construction cost for the major building components and prohibit the cost savings that typically result in replicable layouts. This conversation with other design professionals experienced in delivery of urban mixed-use and multi-family development gave me a better understanding of the position that the HAWG may be in going into the NEFC public hearing, and the degree to which the Black community's vision for redress on the Hogan's Alley Block expressed in the consultation process and described in the non-profit land trust proposal may be at risk of not coming to reality. Perhaps even precluded from the outset.


**Figure 13 3D view of the Hogan's Alley Block design showing the articulation of the horizontal ground plain and vertical elevations**

Source: 800 Quebec St. & 801 Main St. & 898 Main St. (Hogan's Alley Block) Rezoning Drawings provided to me by City of Vancouver on request. Note the design team's decision to locate a basketball court on top of a building identified in the application as a cultural centre for people of African descent.

***Review with the City***

After I completed my rough order of magnitude analysis of the designs and received feedback from other professionals in the field, I became more anxious that what I found in the drawings, coupled with the City's resistance to make a commitment to the land trust proposal, signalled that our requests were either not being considered, or that they had already been dismissed without telling us so. In an effort to communicate my concerns to the City, I met with staff in December 2017 to discuss my analysis. During the meeting, I explained to them that, from the appearance of the buildings and floorplans in the rezoning drawings for the Hogan's Alley Block—featuring large luxury units and architectural design that would create a construction cost premium, it appeared that the residential housing was targeting market-rate, for-sale condominiums. I explained that, if the City planned to sell condos on the site, it would be a rejection of our repeated calls for affordable and inclusive housing, a dismissal of the HAWG's Guiding Principles, and further perpetuate the injustice that originally occurred to the Black

residents of Hogan's Alley should the City seek to profit from their institution's past racially motivated displacement of Black people.

I asked how they could expect support for the NEFC plan from the Black community at the upcoming public hearing if they refused to commit to the redress and equity-based solutions we proposed. Finally, I directly asked the City staff gathered if my concerns were valid and if they were intending to sell condos on the Hogan's Alley Block. One of the staff members replied that my analysis of the policy and rezoning application were generally correct and then matter-of-factly said that yes, the City did plan on raising funds to pay for the NEFC plan through the sale of condominiums on the Hogan's Alley Block which was part of city-owned lands identified as Sub-Area 6D.

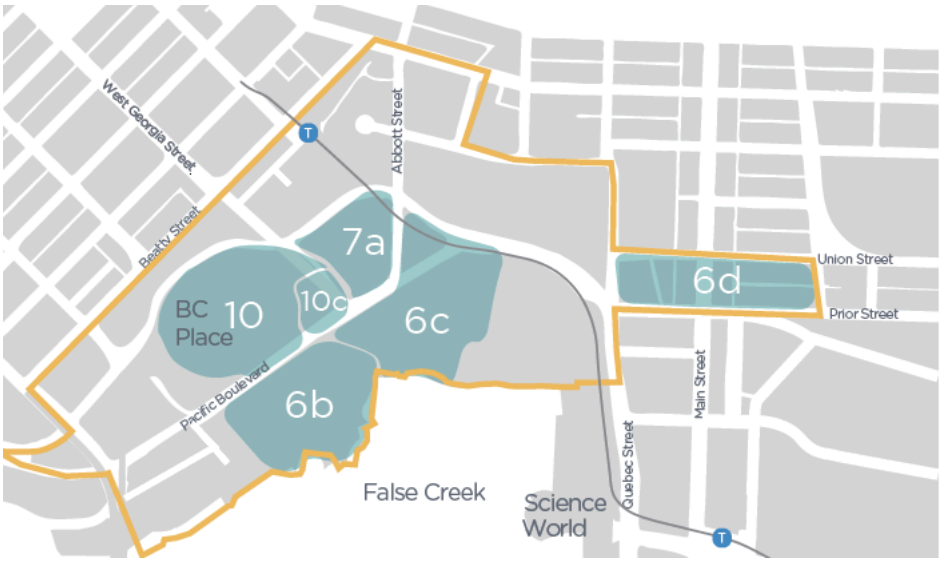



**Figure 14 Map of NEFC sub-area 6D, lands currently owned by the City of Vancouver where the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts are situated**
Source: Northeast False Creek Area Plan, p. 71

Hearing this confirmation was another devastating (yet unsurprising) moment for me, given all that the community had put into the engagement process—our stories and emotional accounts of dealing with anti-Black racism, and our unpaid labour and the time away from our personal responsibilities—to craft a vision for redress for the past displacement of Black people in Vancouver. It was a considerable letdown by those in the City with decision-making authority and it felt like yet another episode of systemic injustice. We had stressed that, if a significant part of the Hogan's Alley site were sold to market developers after the City completed the rezoning process, it would not be an authentic reflection of the community's goals and certainly fail to reconcile with the Black

community, one of the Charrette Workshop Report's key findings that we agreed with. The City could not claim ignorance of our intentions and goals considering all we had openly shared through the consultation process and in meetings with various departmental groups (Planning, Housing, Real Estate, and Finance). I recall that during the previously mentioned November 2017 meeting with the City's departments to discuss the land trust proposal, one of our team members shared a very specific instruction to the City staff in attendance:

> We have asked repeatedly for the financial models and assumptions that you're using to determine the project viability and costs [for the Hogan's Alley Block] and you continue to tell us that you are not able to provide it to us. I want to make something very clear to each of you: you cannot ask the slaves to pay for the dismantling of slavery and you will not ask the Black community of Vancouver to pay for the dismantling of the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts. No revenue extraction in the form of condominium sales can occur on Hogan's Alley block to pay for the NEFC plan. Is that clear?

Unfortunately, in spite of our best efforts to find an equitable outcome for our community, the City of Vancouver's choices demonstrate the inability of contemporary planning theory and practice, one that isolates "process from context and outcome" (Fainstein, 2010, p. 57). The City's engagement process undertaken with the Black community either did not seriously consider our repeated insistence that people of African descent be prioritized for distribution of benefits, or it was predetermined to preclude such redress options from the outset. As Fainstein states, "planners face equity issues most directly when devising policies for housing and urban regeneration" (2010, p. 77). The HAWG was unequivocal when we asked the City of Vancouver to commit to redress by redistribution of the land assets that came into their possession through displacement of the Black community, but it was evident by their choices that they were only willing to consider design elements as a means to recognize the history redress the displacement of Hogan's Alley (City of Vancouver, 2015d, p. 7). This was not the justice and equity we were seeking or repeatedly asked for. As highlighted by Fraser, institutional preference for the "politics of recognition is displacing the politics of redistribution…aiding the forces that promote economic inequality" (Hobson, 2003, p. 22).

We felt that our idea for Black community land stewardship of the Hogan's Alley Block could be a catalyst to reduce the persistent inequality that Black people in Canada face; we wanted to transcend the limitations of *recognition* towards the more critically

important *self-determination*. It was a reminder that when others control the resources that influence our social, political, and economic well-being, Black people are not able to make the gains necessary to eliminate our ongoing disadvantages. Although I was inspired and drew heavily on Fainstein's just city framework during my participation in the City's engagement process, I find her non-reformist reforms do not challenge the prevailing capitalist and neoliberal systems enough, and when she suggests that "the most just solution means that the equity implications should always be spelled out and given priority, but depending on the context sometimes other values ought to prevail" (2010, p. 82) it doesn't respond to the sense of urgency felt by oppressed groups seeking an end to injustice. Further, her reliance on non-reformist reforms—while commendable for her intention to move away from process-driven, technocratic planning towards a social equity model—may be too incremental to create the kinds of desperately needed transformation of urban planning that remains entrenched in white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism. It is reminiscent to a small degree of Martin Luther King Jr's Letter from Birmingham Jail that reprimands the liberal white moderates who criticized the Civil Rights movement for civil disobedience and "breaking laws", believing that Black people ought to be patient in their quest for liberation. He said:

> Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co workers [sic] with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation (King, Jr., 1963).

Religious and gendered references aside, his suggestion can be applied to planning practice and pedagogy: for justice to take root in this field, it must be understood for the structural violence it causes to marginalized people and addressed accordingly. For me, Faintein's theories provide arguments that can be beneficial in some instances of just city-building but don't provide all of the tools I believe are required to correct the persistent issues of urban inequality nor does it fully align with my lived experience of what is necessary to create meaningful change towards ending systemic anti-Black racism.

Case in point: the Black community was facing a situation where the City had facilitated a design-centred vision for a regenerated Hogan's Alley but remained unwilling to commit to our land trust proposal or any other substantial form of redress. To those of us who proposed the community land trust, it was a fundamentally flawed idea that a space meant to honour the Black community would be parcelled off and sold

to the highest bidders in one of the most expensive real estate markets in the world instead of being stewarded by a non-profit organization comprised of Black citizens. Perhaps the plan proposed by the City may have seemed like a reasonable compromise, an incremental step towards reconciling with the Black community by designing iconic buildings with input from the community, providing 20-30% of the housing as affordable, and funding an African cultural centre that was included in the Hogan's Alley Block design. But to us, it was another way for the City of Vancouver to receive the greatest benefit from the unjust displacement of the Black community: the first time occurred when the lands were turned into a roadway that would subsidize the movement of goods and labour in and out of the city's urban centre; this time, through the NEFC planning process as the City sought to capitalizing on the global demand for housing in Vancouver and extract the value necessary to pay for the NEFC infrastructure work.

A strategic response was needed to prevent the City from proceeding with their plan and secure the redress we were seeking. In order to do this, I relied on my professional knowledge of the development process and on the justice-inspired work of past and present Black liberation scholars, writers, and artists who, standing in solidarity with Indigenous peoples, offer a model for equitable interventions based on the concepts of intersectional feminism, decolonization, and reparations (Carbado et al., 2013; Coates, 2014; Maynard, 2017; Richardson, 2017). It bears noting that for many Black people, we walk around with an advanced knowledge of social justice and resistance ideology because is imbedded in all facets of our identity and culture[4] as a response to existing within a white supremacist system that violently, systemically, and implicitly subjugates our personhood. It's why for me, to qualify as a great urban thinker, an individual would have actively worked for the human rights and liberation of Indigenous peoples, racialized, LGBTQ+, and disabled people who suffer the greatest levels of urban inequality. Otherwise, it would require a protracted debate about the word "great."

Through my analysis of the rezoning application, I was able to confront the City about their plans for market condominiums on the Hogan's Alley Block, utilizing my real

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[4] It is important to state here that Blackness can be understood as both racial identity and shared history. Blackness has been constructed around the Black body, not from the Black body, thus many of the cultural aspects of Blackness are shared throughout the Diaspora having been constructed in resistance and response to white supremacy. This is evident in music, food, oral-practices and oral-histories, as well as Black liberations themes.

estate background and contacts in the industry to call them out and confirm my suspicions. With this validation in hand, I made a plan to convene the HAWG with the purpose of formulating a strategy that would put a stop to the City's plan to privatize the Hogan's Alley Block and push harder for the reparations being sought by the Black community.

## 3.5. Our Right to The City: Making Moves for Redress

My next step was to organize an emergency meeting of the HAWG and land trust organizing committee members in January 2018 to discuss my findings and to determine a course of action. The NEFC public hearing was scheduled for later in January and we needed a strategic approach to how we would participate in it, given that the City's NEFC team told us that they were relying on our support to counteract the possible risk of mobilized opposition to the plan. They emphasized that if the NEFC Plan wasn't approved, the viaducts would remain in place and our dream for the Hogan's Alley Block might never materialize.

At the meeting, I explained to everyone that I believed we were in a precarious situation. On the one hand, the NEFC plan captured the vision for the Hogan's Alley Block that was developed in consultation with the community and included a written summary about the history of Hogan's Alley submitted by one of the HAWG members (2018f, p. 15) which, we were informed, was the first time a member of the public was invited to do so. I also shared with the group what the City staff had told me—that we might lose everything we worked for if the Black community came out in strong opposition to the plan and it was voted down by Council in spite of the City's failure to make any commitments to us about the land trust proposal or affordable housing. It could mean that even the few items that were already agreed to in principle—the proposed African Canadian cultural centre to be located on the Hogan's Alley Block—would all disappear if we did not support the plan[5].

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[5] There is a parable in my ancestral Guyanese culture that tells the story of a hungry man who had been hunting unsuccessfully for something to eat. He spied an iguana across great divide and in haste he threw his cutlass in the hope it would kill the iguana and secure a much-needed meal. Unfortunately, not only did he miss the creature, his cutlass was now resting on the other side of the dangerously inaccessible divide. This story gives rise to the expression "lose 'guana and cutlass" that I am reminded of when reflecting back on the precarious position we were in when deciding whether or not to support the NEFC plan.

My suggestion to our group was that we draft a letter affirming the portions of the NEFC Area Plan that we supported while making clear proposals for amendments that would prioritize rental housing on both of the city-owned blocks that constituted Sub-Area 6D and make them commit to working with us on our land trust proposal. The group members present at that meeting approved this strategy and we planned to show up at the public hearing to extend our support the NEFC plan under the condition that the City amended the plan according to our amendments. With the help of a teammate, I drafted and sent a letter to Mayor, Council, and senior staff dated January 29, 2018 (Appendix J) that spelled out the conditions under which we, the HAWG, could in good conscience support the NEFC plan. An excerpt from the letter is included below:

> The current plan captures the ideas, hopes and intentions we share about the future of Hogan's Alley. In order to actualize our dreams in a manner that is in keeping with the mandate set forward by the community during the Hogan's Alley Working Group consultation process, we have isolated the following opportunities for the plan to better deliver on the promises of redress and reimagining with Vancouver's Black community:
>
> Sub-Area 6D are the City-owned lands, acquired through displacement of the Black community, that will be freed up when the viaducts are removed. The general consensus in the Black community is that section 4.4 and 10.4 captures the overall vision for the future of Hogan's Alley as expressed through the design engagement process. However, affordable rental housing must be prioritized on Sub-Area 6D in accordance with the City's own policies and action plans to create more affordable housing in the city. The Hogan's Alley Working Group has been unwavering in their stance with the City that housing in this area be accessible, inclusive, and accommodate a diverse range of incomes and household types. Therefore, we seek the following amendment:
>
> Change 15.1.4 From: Target 300 new social housing units to be delivered on the Main Street Blocks, as supported by the Downtown Eastside Plan.
>
> To: Target 100% rental housing on the Main Street Blocks consisting of at least 70% below-market rental units which includes the 300 social housing units previously identified in the plan.
>
> The vision for Canadians of African Descent presented in the NEFC plan will only be successful if the Black community takes a leadership role in the delivery, and long-term stewardship of, the Hogan's Alley block. This must be acknowledged in policy and committed to at this time. The Hogan's Alley vision is a foundational element of the long-term viability of this future neighbourhood and an outstanding opportunity to offer a significant cultural contribution to the greater Vancouver mosaic.

> Change Section 4.4.3 from: Continue to work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long-term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.
>
> To: Commit to work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long-term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.

Our letter intended to inform the city that would accept the way the vision for the Hogan's Alley Block was captured in the plan but that it fell short on delivering our definition of redress, and we spelled out the ways that they needed to amend the plan in order to have our support. It was important to those of us leading this effort to ensure that we honoured the trust placed in us by the larger community, conveying with a united voice the mandate we developed during the consultation process, while remaining uncompromising in our insistence that the NEFC plan redress the injustice that has and continues to harm Black citizens in Vancouver. The letter is a clear communication that token gestures are not redress and that the Black community must be involved in the long-term stewardship of the Hogan's Alley Block. We also took it as a chance to signal to Council and the greater public that the Black community was committed to equitable solutions for other disadvantaged communities and would not support any policies that exacerbated the gentrification pressure on the surrounding neighbourhood or that would privatize publicly owned assets during a time commonly regarded as a housing crisis.

After sending this letter to Mayor and Council, we worked with a local housing activist to create a letter generator that contained the amendments listed above, allowing citizens from across the city to demonstrate their support the Hogan's Alley vision to Mayor and Council. We ran a broad-reaching social media campaign and enlisted the help of other community groups to amplify our message to Council. Our strategy was to get the NEFC plan to pass with the amendments we suggested and to demonstrate to the City that the Black community had wide support from across the political spectrum. In a city with less than 1% vacancy at the beginning of 2018, we believed that our proposal for a mix of market and non-market rental housing was something that would inspire broad support across the political spectrum. By January 31, 2018, the date of the public hearing, we were told that there were over 200 letters sent in support of our amendments through the letter generator and during the presentations from the public,

dozens of speakers from both the Black community and general population offered their endorsement for our amendment.

At the end of the public hearing which lasted into the late evening on January 31, 2018, the Mayor adjourned the meeting without a vote by Council. By the time Council reconvened on February 13, 2018, for a special meeting, there had been two memos sent from the Director of Planning providing responses to Council questions (City of Vancouver, 2018a, 2018b), some of which centred on our rental housing amendment and land trust proposal. Unfortunately, in the response dated February 12, 2018, staff did not signal support for our amendments and rather suggested that Council commit only to the minimum 300 units of social housing (30%) originally targeted in the existing NEFC policies, stating that after the NEFC Plan was approved, they would "seek to maximize the amount of below-market rental housing that can be achieved beyond the 300 units including a focus on seniors housing" (City of Vancouver, 2018a).

This was yet another denial of the Black communities' petitions for redress for the historical displacement and signaled to us that decision-makers in the City remained unable or unwilling to prioritize equity over capital. Stone suggests this is short-sighed because "economic development does not exhaust the matters on which city well-being rests" (2005, p. 247) and that by prioritizing human capital instead, it is possible to achieve both redistributive benefits for marginalized communities and economic grown over the long-term.

During the February 13, 2018, Council debated the proposed amendments at great length and finally adopted the following policy as it relates to the Hogan's Alley Block and our land trust proposal, as documented in the meeting minutes (City of Vancouver, 2018h), the following policies were adopted by council:

> THAT, as part of the upcoming financial strategy report back to Council, staff include an option for residential floor space for sub-area 6D that consists of 100% rental housing, as well as an option of 100% rental housing including 70% of units renting at below market rates, with details on the funding required and impacts on the overall financial strategy for the Northeast False Creek Plan" (p.8).

With respect to Hogan's Alley, the following amendments were made to the final policy:

> Amend 4.4.3 to read: Commit to work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.

> Amend (page 169) to read: For 898 Main Street, the City commits to work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of a land trust, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.
>
> Amend 10.4.2 to read: Target a minimum of 300 units of social housing, a cultural centre and a childcare centre in Sub-area 6D, and seek to maximize the amount of below-market rental housing that can be achieved beyond the 300 units, including through strategic partnerships with senior levels of governments and/or non-profits. This housing mix should also include affordable seniors housing to support efforts by the local community to continue to house vulnerable seniors. (p.6).

The recognition of the Hogan's Alley amendments in policy and direction to staff was a significant victory for the Black community, one that came about by our strategic approach that included cooperating with the City through the design-led engagement process that I and others regarded as fundamentally flawed, while remaining clear about our vision and maintaining significant pressure on staff and Council for justice. The final policy falls considerably short of ensuring the redress we hoped for but, as Black citizens with a history of exclusion, oppression, and unjust treatment, we are not surprised when Canadian institutions, no matter their liberalism, uphold and maintain white supremacy. The UN Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its mission to Canada lays bare the truth about Canada's persistent and ongoing treatment of people of African descent: we are under-performing in all the areas we wish to be excelling, and over-represented in the areas we don't. According to the report:

> …the poverty rate among Black Canadians is more than three times the average for Whites. In 2000, one in two African Canadian children lived below the low-income cut-off rate before taxes, compared to one in 10 for European Canadians. Furthermore, poverty among single-parent, mother-led families stood at 65 per cent for African Canadian families compared to 26 per cent for European Canadian families. African Canadians in Montreal, Quebec, have the highest poverty rates among all "visible minorities" in the city. Approximately 50 per cent of the Black Canadian population are categorized as low income, with that number jumping to 65 per cent for new Black immigrants (2017, p. 12).

As Coates posits "as surely as the creation of the wealth gap required the cooperation of every aspect of the society, bridging it will require the same" (Coates, 2014). Unfortunately, based on my experience with the City of Vancouver through the NEFC engagement process, Canadian society is not yet ready to prioritize the well-being of Black citizens or bridge the gaps that keep so many people of African descent in the

margins.  I expect that our ongoing work to secure a commitment from the City for a community land trust, which continues as of this writing, retains a high degree of risk of not being supported by staff or approved by Council.

# Chapter 4.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

> *Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it's faced (James Baldwin, 1962).*
>
> *By our unpaid labor and suffering, we have earned the right to the soil, many times over and over, and now we are determined to have it (anonymous, 1861).*
>
> *'Cause I'm Black and I'm proud*
> *I'm ready and hyped plus I'm amped*
> *Most of my heroes don't appear on no stamps (Public Enemy, 1989).*

My urban studies graduate project is an examination of how anti-Black racism, a Canadian legacy, shows up in Vancouver city planning past and present. With a focus on the City of Vancouver's engagement process with the Black community between October 2015 and February 2018, I presented the work done by myself and others in the Black community to pursue redress for the past destruction of Vancouver's only Black neighbourhood, linking that event to the ongoing disenfranchisement and inequality that people of African descent in Vancouver face. I chose an autoethnographic method for this work because it was best suited for the kind of scholarship I wanted to accomplish: discourse from the margins of the dominant urban studies pedagogy, research, and practice as means of rejecting said dominance; situating my Blackness and lived experience directly into the research; and delivering analysis of the City's engagement process with Black citizens that could not be accomplished without centring someone with lived experience.

This project documents my experience researching the City of Vancouver's deeply entrenched anti-Black policies and how I and others navigated the NEFC community engagement process in pursuit of redress. I demonstrate how we confronted City Council and staff with the history of *how* Hogan's Alley was dismantled as our claim for reparations, using my professional expertise to analyze their policy and design plans, daylighting their implicit rejection of our proposal for a community land trust. In the end, we managed to disrupt the NEFC planning process and succeeded in having the majority of our amendments adopted into the final policy which requires that the City of Vancouver "work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long term

involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of a land trust, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate" (City of Vancouver, 2018f, p. 169). While we are pleased with this success, as of the time of this writing in May 2019, the City has yet to formally respond to a draft letter of understanding we submitted in April of 2018 outlining the terms and conditions for the long-term lease and land trust development as outlined above. We remain aware that our work is not done, that the City continues to underperform in dealing equitably with us, and that our community land trust proposal remains at risk of being delayed indefinitely or rejected altogether.

## 4.1. Conclusions from Being There: Ways to Build a More Just City

### 4.1.1. As an Individual or Organization with Power

Based on my experience with the City of Vancouver's NEFC engagement process, I offer the following three recommendations for educators, policy-makers, and urban professionals to create more just cities.

First, we must come to terms with the colonial, anti-Black past upon which Canadian cities are founded and gain awareness of the invisible hand that has maintained white supremacy in urban planning and development. It must be understood as structural inequality baked into all facets of urban life accompanied by a complete rejection of 'colour-blindness' to avoid facing the brutal realities head-on. This important first step will allow individual and institutional awareness of how cities privilege some and oppressed others. It is important for those undertaking this step to consult the existing scholarship and thought-leaders on this topic and refrain from putting the burden of education on marginalized individuals either inside or outside of institutions.

Second, awareness alone is not enough: by reckoning with the problematic past on which current urban studies, policy-making, and development rests, there comes a responsibility to enact equitable policy-making practices, and to do so with a sense of urgency. Equitable strategies can take many forms but it is imperative to centre the needs and voices of the marginalized in the process—not in the tokenistic way that the City engaged Black citizens during the NEFC planning process—but by decolonizing every part of the process, from how and by whom policy is designed, to intentional

resource redistribution. This is by no means easy to do, especially in urban environments where there may be competing needs among disadvantaged communities and a prevailing neoliberal context that prioritizes capital interests. But at a time of destabilizing levels of income inequality and rising alt-right political sentiment, bold and courageous steps towards equity ought to be regarded as non-negotiable. And while some cities and other levels of government attempt to incorporate decolonial practices, they must be prepared to make reparations for past injustices, working with communities that may lack capacity to pursue such claims by providing resources for individual and organizational development.

Third, policy-makers must give up their reliance on technocratic, scientific urban planning ideology, coming to terms with how such methods are biased towards white, male, heterosexual, capitalist norms. From the early town planners' anatomical approach to amputating urban blight, to design-centred citizen engagement and emerging "smart cities" rhetoric, reliance on technology as the means to create urban areas that nurture and empower people from all walks of life has and continues to fail its lofty ambitions: homelessness is dramatically rising in the richest cities on earth and even middle-income earners are unable to find affordable, suitable, and appropriate housing for their families near the places they work and play. I'd suggest the best ways to break these norms will be though a holistic approach, reducing the emphasis placed on technical aspects of city-building and ensuring that marginalized communities and people with lived experience are seated in decision-making roles at institutions of higher education, civic governance, and industry. And the only way for that to happen is to redistribute power to those who have been traditionally disempowered.

### 4.1.2. As a Community Organizer and Advocate

We learned valuable lessons throughout this process and I humbly offer the following suggestions to other community organizers embarking on a civic engagement process with institutions that have a long history of racial exclusion while in pursuit of self-determination:

1. Participate in the process for as long as reasonably possible while standing firm on community-derived principles. Abandoning the process can result in permanent exclusion and you must decide if the process is merely flawed or illegitimate. It might be preferable to get your community's vision documented in the process than waiting until

the process is perfect. This is a very difficult decision and must be made together with your community members after weighing the options.

2. Scrutinize and put pressure on the system while acknowledging that you're dealing with individuals inside the system who "didn't start the fire." This does not mean that racism, disrespect, or abuse should ever be tolerated. You are in the best position to evaluate the disposition of the people you're dealing with and we found that there were many sincere staff members who were taking responsibility for their own personal anti-racism work while trying to implement changes from within.
3. Collaborate with good intentions with members of your community. Often marginalized people come from a personal and ancestral history of trauma and it can lead to intra-community turmoil. This is further exacerbated by internalized white supremacy. By remaining focused on shared goals and establishing respectful working standards, you might avoid some of the common pitfalls that plague organizing in racialized communities.

## 4.2. Conclusions from Being Here: Performing Autoethnography as a Black Canadian Woman

I grew up second generation Afro-Caribbean Canadian in a low-income renter household, living in a variety of rural, urban and suburban areas in my childhood. I can't recall when I learned I was Black, but I was still in elementary school when I felt the tensions between the joy and pride in my culture at home surrounded by relatives and the anger and humiliation of the treatment of Black lives in school. At university and in my career, I was expected to empty myself of my lived experience and cultural background in order to conform to the dominant norms if I had any hope of academic or professional success. I reluctantly upheld white hegemony and swallowed the discomfort I felt on the job and in the classroom as the perspectives and lives of people like me were entirely absent or portrayed as a negative and inferior pathology. Achieving success meant straightening my hair, stifling my rage when harmful racist comments were made in my presence (either at me or at other marginalized groups), and enduring micro as well as macro aggressions that were levelled against me by people in positions of authority.

Putting this all into my graduate project has been a reclamation of my Blackness within institutional settings, an unapologetic retelling of my experience and inspired by Black liberation workers who sought to reorder social structures in ways that uplift

oppressed peoples. In documenting the work done by members of the Black community, Hogan's Alley Working Group, and me, I am adding our voices to urban scholarship and representing the perspectives I have so longed for in my academic and professional lives. It is my sincere hope that other researchers from disadvantaged groups consider methods like performative autoethnography so that their voices can join with others as a counterbalance to the persistent dominance of privileged perspectives in the pursuit of systemic change. More directly, I hope that other Black students working in the area of urban studies take up the fight for just city-building and work on issues of importance to themselves and our community, serving notice to urban institutions, scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers that Black Lives Matter.

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# Appendix A.

# S. Allen CV

**AVP, Strategic Business Operations & Performance, BC Housing**
April 2019 to Present
**VP, Project Planning & Partnerships, Catalyst Community Developments Society, Vancouver BC**
August 2017 to February 2019
**Senior Project Officer, BC Housing, Vancouver BC**
June 2011 to July 2017
**Principle Consultant, Phoenix AZ, Edmonton & Calgary AB, Kelowna BC, Vancouver BC**
March 2006 to May 2011
**Director of Development, Comfort Living for Seniors/Bruckal Developments, Kelowna BC**
October 2002 to February 2006

**Education**

| | |
|---|---|
| Master of Urban Studies, in progress Simon Fraser University, Vancouver BC | Defense: Summer 2019 |
| Highlights: | |
| Presenter SFU Pubic Square Researching the City | |
| Panelist Beyond the Women's' March, SFU Centre for Dialogue | October 2015 |
| Panelist Women & Gendered Bodies in City-building, UBC SCARP | February 2017 |
| Panelist Alternatives to the Housing Crisis: Case Study Vienna | February 2017<br>May 2017 |
| Project Management Professional (PMP), Project Management Institute, PA | January 2016 |
| Bachelor of Business Administration, Okanagan University College, Kelowna BC | May 2002 |

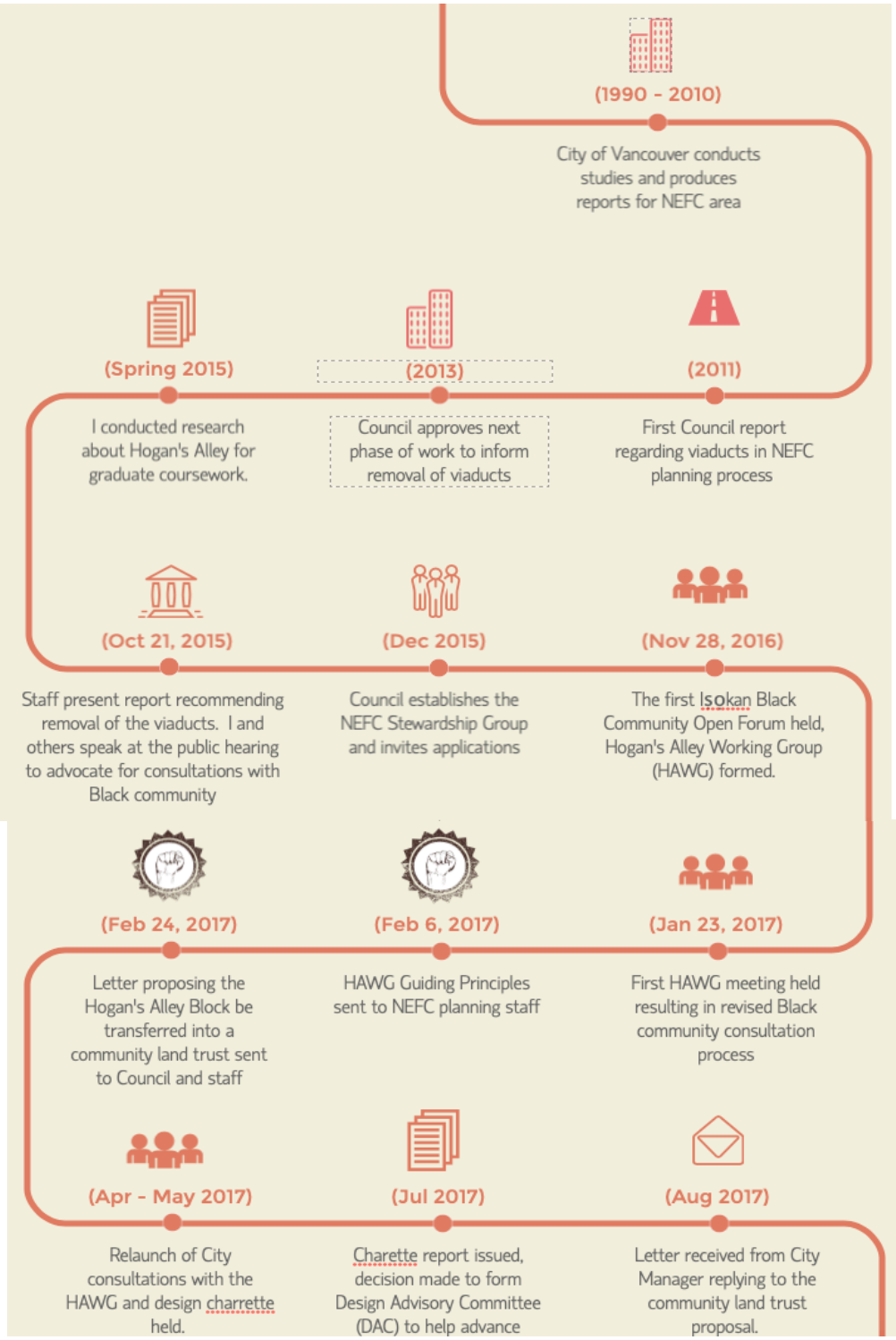
**Awards, Volunteer, Conferences, & Presentations**

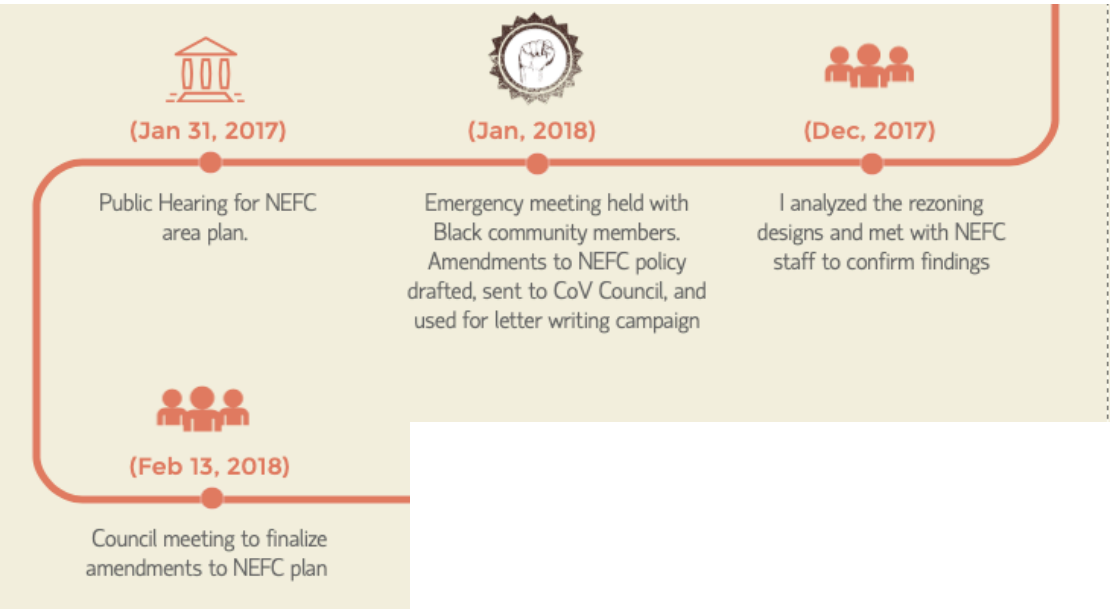
| | |
|---|---|
| *Hogan's Alley Society*<br>Founding Director | September 2017 to Present |
| *City of Vancouver Development Permit Board*<br>Advisory Panel Member | February 2018 to Present |
| *City of Vancouver Poverty Action Advisory Committee*<br>Advisor | April 2018 to Present |
| *Vancouver Magazine*<br>One of Vancouver's 50 Most Powerful People | November 2018 |
| *Real Estate Institute of BC President's Luncheon*<br>Panelist, "Let's Talk Value Risk and Return with Community-Builders" | December 2018 |
| *Canadian Housing Renewal Association Congress on Housing & Homelessness*<br>Presenter, "Perpetual Affordability and Community Control of the Land: Community Land Trusts in Canada" | April 2018 |
| *Sidewalk Toronto Affordable Housing Panel*<br>Presenter | April 2018 |
| *UBCM: Housing in Rural Communities* | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Presenter | September 2015 |
| *Fort St. James Housing Forum*<br>Presenter and Workshop Participant | July 2015 |
| *Director, True Vision Ghana*<br>Canadian chapter of Ghanaian NGO supporting HIV/AIDS orphans and their caregivers | February 2009 to February 2015 |
| *Diversity & Inclusion Employee Committee*<br>BC Housing | December 2014 to October 2016 |
| *2014 International LNG in BC Conference*<br>Exhibitor: Affordable Housing Options for Resource-Impacted Communities | May 2014 |
| *Northeast BC Community Coal & Energy Forum*<br>Presenter: Developing Affordable Housing | October 2013 |

# Appendix B.

# Timeline




(Jan 31, 2017)
Public Hearing for NEFC area plan.
(Jan, 2018)
Emergency meeting held with Black community members. Amendments to NEFC policy drafted, sent to CoV Council, and used for letter writing campaign
(Dec, 2017)
I analyzed the rezoning designs and met with NEFC staff to confirm findings
(Feb 13, 2018)
Council meeting to finalize amendments to NEFC plan

# Appendix C.

# S. Allen Speech to Vancouver Mayor and Council, October 2, 2015

Today, your worship, you and Council are here to decide on action. Action that will impact many in Vancouver, and that will impact the region. But in so doing, I offer that consideration must be given to other actions taken by the City of Vancouver in the not too distant past.

I am speaking about how the City displaced the black Strathcona neighbourhood, referred to as Hogan's Alley, in order to situate the current Viaducts,

If you decide to remove the Viaducts, you have an obligation to address past unjust actions taken by former Council and staff by pursuing policies and actions that will seek to bring restoration and regeneration in this place. This is your chance to not only acknowledge past dislocation and exclusion, but to see to it that the black community that was displaced, and the subsequent generations who have been impacted by that loss, are thoughtfully consulted with the purpose of re-establishing a place for Vancouver's black community.

A bit of history to remind us all of what happened:

The National Housing Act of 1956 promoted urban renewal which involved the public acquisition and clearance of privately-owned property through the power of eminent domain to support economic growth. Consideration was not duly given to the human, social or cultural significance that was contained in such buildings nor the lasting impact on the those affected. In 1957 the city's Planning Department published the Vancouver Redevelopment Study. Meant as a tool to guide urban renewal, the study mapped blight in the city and proposed one of two solutions: clearance or rehabilitation and conservation. For decades, the City had spent little to no money on infrastructure in the area, the streets, landscaping, and sidewalks had fallen into disrepair and the threat of expropriation loomed on the horizon for the community. Thus, the blight that occurred can be traced back to City *actions*.

In the Study the area occupied by black community was identified as being "first priority for removal" due to the severity of blight. To quote from p. 59:

"The Negro population, while numerically small, is probably a large proportion of the total Negro population in Vancouver. Their choice of this area is partly its proximity to the railroads where many of them are employed, partly its cheapness, and partly the fact that it is traditionally the home of many non-white groups. The disruption of accustomed social arrangements, which is an inevitable concomitant of relocation, is bound to create special problems for these minority groups. It is, therefore, important that the relocation program should be flexible enough to allow members of the same ethnic group to remain together while at the same time *discouraging the formation of ethnic enclaves."*

This curious statement leaves us with more questions than answers. But what is quite clear is that the disruption that would happen to the so-called Negro population was known, that it would cause "special problems" and that these folks should be "discouraged from forming other ethnic enclaves".

Urban renewal policies of times past have been equated with colonialism in its success at destabilizing, dismantling, and erasing communities.

What can be done about it now?

Perhaps we start by asking: What was lost? What would have happened if, like other cultural communities in this city, the black residents had been allowed to remain, grow, and thrive; a treasure of art, culture, music, enterprise, social networks, faith-groups and families that were never allowed to reach their potential nor contribute to the mosaic of urban Vancouver.

Just cities are not to be "citadels of exclusivity" but should facilitate the opportunity for people of all income levels, ethnicities, educational backgrounds, social groups, and ages to take residence. Policy-makers can do this by ensuring that City actions provide benefits in greater proportion to human capital than hard capital.

Mayor, Council, staff: this is within your power to provide.

I offer that should you decide to remove the Viaducts, the City should facilitate a collaborative consultation with past Hogan's Alley residents, their descendants, and the greater Black community to work on a plan that will restore and regenerate what was lost; to bring justice to past injustice; and that these efforts result in space.

Space for the black community to live and play and raise families again, to work and engage in social networking, and economic enterprise; space that nurtures arts and

culture and allows space for the black community pursue their future within the greater Vancouver community.

Please consider this as you move forward should the Viaducts be removed. As it is true for Council and staff in times past, it is true for all of you here today: your *actions* will be your legacy, but it will also be shared and become all of ours as citizens of this city.

# Appendix D.

# Hogan's Alley Working Group Members & Guiding Principles

Members of the Hogan's Alley Working Group (HAWG) who participated in some or all of the meetings hosted by the City of Vancouver from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. Given the timespan and varying participation at the meetings, this list may not be inclusive of everyone who attended meetings throughout the engagement process. It should also be noted that broad support for the work done by the HAWG from the broader Black community in the Metro Vancouver region was evidenced by the support for the amendments to the NEFC plan during the public hearings in January 2018.

- Angela MacDougall
- Wayne Stewart
- Wayde Compton
- Vanessa Richards
- Tracey McDougall
- Stephanie Allen
- Roger Collins
- Randy Clark
- Pete Fry
- Parker Johnson
- Marguerite Laquinte Francis
- Lama Mugabe
- Kombii Nanjalah
- Kevan Cameron
- Kaidra Mitchell
- June Francis
- Josh Robertson
- Joan Wandolo
- Constance Barnes
- Bertha Clark
- Barbara Chirinos
- Anthonia Ogundele
- Anika Gibson
- Mabel Taunu
- Crystal Adams
- Maurice Earle
- Cicely Nicholson
- Adam Rudder
- Ezeadi Patrick Onukwulu

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES FROM THE HOGAN'S ALLEY WORKING GROUP:** The following Guiding Principles from the Working Group became a part of the proceedings of this workshop and should be included with all development plans for Hogan's Alley.

### Recognition

While recognition has focused on the form, community and history of Hogan's Alley, I gleaned from our conversation that an authentic and just course of recognition for Hogan's Alley is the City of Vancouver acknowledging the actions of former City of Vancouver Council and staff who enacted discriminatory policies which led to the displacement of the Black community of Hogan's Alley.

### Honouring

I would shift the language we have been using from recognition to honouring. We honour the black community that lived in Hogan's Alley by celebrating the history and ensure pursuits on the land honour the history of those that were displaced and will create a legacy of acknowledging, honouring the past Black community while nurturing and developing the contributions of our contemporary black community.

### Access and inclusion

The same institutionalized racism that created and demolished Hogan's Alley continues to put people of African descent at a disadvantage in accessing housing and economic opportunities. It will be important that this space generate meaningful and substantive opportunities for social and economic inclusion, driven and led by the community. It will be a space that creates access by unlocking resources, reshaping markets, and generating equitable opportunities for all people and provides the necessary stability to build assets in community.

### Security of Tenure and Our Definition of Land Use

The redevelopment of Hogan's Alley must consider the legacy of displacement that unfolded on this land. Zoning of this development should provide long-term and self-determined security of land tenure that guards against the possibility of forced displacement and also is mindful of the urban fabric that it is integrating with as to promote this same value. This includes access to affordable housing, cultural, arts, retail and commercial spaces. By collaborating with our community partners, we can develop innovative solutions to support the social and economic well-being of our community.

### Investment

This land will be seen as an investment in our community. It will support the black community in rebuilding the strong social networks that were lost and generationally entrenched, while recognizing that cultural and demographic diversity creates unique needs in our community. We can now begin to find opportunities to share and repurpose resources that have traditionally been poorly distributed and begin to build social and economic capital

# Appendix E.

# Architects' response to Hogan's Alley Guiding Principles

PERKINS+WILL

Hogan's Alley – Design Response to Guiding Principles
November 2017

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***GUIDING PRINCIPLES FROM THE HOGAN'S ALLEY WORKING GROUP:*** *The following Guiding Principles from the Working Group became a part of the proceedings of this workshop and should be included with all development plans for Hogan's Alley.*

### *Recognition*

*An authentic and just course of recognition of the collective contribution of the Black Canadian identity both historical and contemporary.*

How the design responds:
The richly diverse community that once thrived at Hogan's Alley and the historic and contemporary contributions of the Black Canadian identity will be recognized and honoured by the new design. From re-creation of historical thresholds, new passages that tell stories as visitors enter, expression of the 25ft subdivisions and porches of many sizes and levels of community, the physical structure of the new Hogan's Alley development will celebrate the history of the site and the Black Vancouver community.

More specifically, the masterplan framework will provide this recognition by prescribing or strongly suggesting the manner in which the design further develop to include:

- Interactive elements, interpretive kiosks and displays along the pedestrian alleyway and in all outdoor public areas. Interpretative elements can include timelines, names of notable persons, quotes, walk of fame. The design should be developed such that each passageway / threshold has art or interpretation that commemorates an historic individual, place or event/time.
- Outdoor public art celebrating Black Canadian identity – this can include murals, ground mapping, pavilions and/or sculpture in all public areas
- The Hogan's Alley Cultural Center on Main Street will support the Black Canadian community in creating programs of recognition that address past and present subjects relevant to Black identity. Although level of programming is not able to be fully depicted in architectural illustrations, we strongly imply and suggest that the mission of the cultural center include programming activities for all indoor and outdoor public spaces. It is also important that the more detailed design development and programming support spontaneous performances as well as planned performances
- The Hogan's Alley Cultural Center on Main Street should be an iconic and inspiring design - infused with and embodying the culture and values of the Black Canadian identity
- Healing & wellness – the design will provide for agrarian connections such as urban gardens, upscale flea markets and farmer's markets
- Multi-generational and multi-cultural experiences – the scale of the alley and public space within the development varies to allow for slower-paced activities such as leisurely strolls or market shopping to more dynamic activity such as street performances or frolicking around interactive features.

***Honouring***

*Honour the Black community that lived in Hogan's Alley by celebrating the history and ensure pursuits on the land honour the history of those that were displaced and will create a legacy of acknowledging, honouring the past Black community while nurturing and developing the contributions of our contemporary Black community.*

How the design responds:
(See "Recognition" above)

***Access and inclusion***

*This space will generate meaningful and substantive opportunities for social and economic inclusion, driven and led by the community. It will be a space that creates access by unlocking resources, reshaping markets, and generating equitable opportunities for all people and provides the necessary stability to build assets in community.*

How the design responds:
The architecture of the new Hogan's Alley will include a range of scales and infrastructure generally tailored to the needs of small business enterprises, including market stalls, live/work/sell units, collective community amenities and an overall architectural fabric, urban scale and modest character aimed at encouraging diversity of use and income.

**Security of Tenure and Our Definition of Land Use**

The redevelopment of Hogan's Alley must consider the legacy of displacement that unfolded on this land. Zoning of this development will provide long-term and self-determined security of land tenure that guards against the possibility of forced displacement and also is mindful of the urban fabric that it is integrating with as to promote this same value. This includes access to affordable housing, cultural, arts, retail and commercial spaces. By collaborating with our community partners, we will develop innovative solutions to support the social and economic well-being of our community.

How the design responds:
In coordination with those development requirements set forth by the City of Vancouver, the architecture of the new Hogan's Alley will be one of inclusion and empowerment. Affordably designed living units and small-scale retail and commercial opportunities can support a financially accessible and economically sustainable community. The aim is an architecture that honours and supports the Black community by providing a built environment that it can call its own.

***Investment***

*This land will be seen as an investment in community. It will support the Black community in rebuilding the strong social networks that were lost and generationally entrenched, while recognizing that cultural and demographic diversity creates unique needs in our community. We can now begin to find opportunities to share and repurpose resources that have traditionally been poorly distributed and begin to build social and economic capital.*

How the design responds:

Strong and thriving communities need a place to call their own and the new Hogan's Alley will be that place for the Black Vancouver community. Hogan's Alley will be a cultural destination that celebrates blackness, encourages continuous investment, and invites all of Vancouver to enjoy the wonderful qualities engrained in the Black community. Critical to this success will be an architectural environment that permits the Black community to make this place their own – the feeling of 'home' – so that what flourishes here will be truly authentic and inclusive, a natural attraction to all.

# Appendix F.

# HAWG Land Trust Proposal Letter

# Memo

To: City of Vancouver Council and Staff
From: Community-Led Land Stewardship Working Group
Subject: Land Transfer Proposal

Date: February 24, 2017

**Context**

In October 2015, Vancouver City Council voted to remove the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts. The construction of these viaducts almost fifty years ago displaced the diverse immigrant enclave, historically known as Hogan's Alley, which was home to Vancouver's Black population.

The City of Vancouver's systemic and deliberate erasure of this community created not only an immediate impact on the individuals, families, businesses, and social networks that were dismantled and displaced, but has had a long-term and sustained impact on the economic prosperity, political visibility, historical recognition, and social well-being of citizens in Vancouver and the region from the African Diaspora over generations.

Today, the removal of the viaducts presents an opportunity for reconciliation between the City of Vancouver and the Black community, ensuring there is adequate historical recognition on the site, and to enable the community to lead and steward the rebuilding of what was lost so many years ago.

Outcomes of initial community consultations and discussions have highlighted that recognition must go beyond the acknowledgement of history (space and place), but that there also be the highest possible standards of inclusive and participatory process to guide how we can best address what was lost.

**Intention**

In support of this vision of inclusion and participation, a group of engaged members of the community have come together, to create a working group, bringing their professional skills and acumen to begin realizing a vision of community-led planning and long-term land stewardship.

This working group has already received a commitment of seed funding from Vancity Credit Union and will be working in close partnership with them, in order to realize this vision.

This working group has been inspired to determine how the City of Vancouver can ensure a just and viable outcome through the opportunity and occasion presented by the resolution to remove the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts.

As key contributors to the North East False Creek (NEFC) area planning process and guided by proposed core principles of the Hogan's Alley Working Group (including **Honouring, Access and Inclusion, Security of Tenure and Investment**), this community-led working group presents the following proposal to the City of Vancouver:

*That the City of Vancouver make possible the transfer of the city-owned lands bordered by Main Street, Union Street, Gore Avenue, and Prior Street to a not-for-profit community organization (eg. Community Land Trust), led by citizens of African Descent and elected and public interest representatives. This organization will work in good faith with the*

*City of Vancouver to pursue residential, commercial, cultural, and public land use opportunities on the site. Those opportunities will be built together with community-based service providers, community organizations, residents of adjacent neighbourhoods (ex. Chinatown, Strathcona, DTES, NEFC, etc.) and a specific intent to include Indigenous peoples on these, their traditional territories.*

**Rationale**

- To ensure pursuits on the land honour the history of those that were displaced and will create a legacy of acknowledging and honouring the past Black community while nurturing and developing the contributions of our contemporary Black community
- To ensure this development provides long-term and self-determined security of land tenure that guards against the possibility of forced displacement (including access to affordable housing, cultural, arts, retail and commercial spaces) and does not further contribute to the spatial inequality and segmentation that is growing in our city
- To rebuild from the lasting impact of social, economic, cultural, and political marginalization that occurred for people of the Black community when the City enacted policies of displacement in the decades leading up to and during the Viaduct replacement project
- To ensure that this space generates meaningful and substantive opportunities for social and economic inclusion, driven and led by the community
- To ensure recognition of the past injustice
- To ensure the social, economic and/or environmental interests of NEFC community by managing land and other assets in order to provide benefit to citizens of Vancouver and beyond
- Presents a unique opportunity to support the regeneration of a vibrant Black and multicultural community in this area of Vancouver
- Establishing the necessary amenities and social infrastructure to support a complete community including, Affordable Housing, Cultural Centre and Public Space
- To ensure that the land remains held in community and continues to meet the long term needs of NEFC and the Black community and multicultural community herein

**The proposal to be delivered to the City will:**

- Highlight the role of the not-for-profit entity as a steward that will oversee the development and build-out of the aforementioned lands in harmony with the vision that emerges from the NEFC engagement, City of Vancouver policy, continued stakeholder engagement, and sound planning and development practice
- Highlight the accountability of the not-for-profit entity to manage assets and property in alignment with sound financial and facility management best practices
- Outline the results of community engagement with various individuals and groups from the African Diaspora within the Lower Mainland and public interest representatives
- Highlight potential partnerships that will be necessary to deliver the vision of this work
- Establish clear next steps in the creation of an MOU between the not-for-profit entity and the City of Vancouver that will outline the intentions, responsibilities, and obligations of both parties with respect to the land transfer and long-term sustainable development of these sites in a way that prioritizes the social, economic, cultural, and political development opportunities for Black citizens that upholds the NEFC visioning for the community.

We believe there is a strong alignment between: the City of Vancouver's emerging principles and directions of the NEFC area plan, the objectives of the Hogan's Alley Working Group and this community-led working group. The working group shares the vision of creating a diverse and vibrant community, accessible to all people without the fear of future displacement and discrimination. We believe that a community led not-for-profit entity will reflect the needs of the community now and into the future. We are excited about this timely opportunity and look forward to ongoing conversations and engagement with the City.

**Timeline**

The working group intends to present the proposal to the City of Vancouver after the final community engagement meetings have been concluded and findings have been documented. The timeline for submitting the proposal is Q3 2017 and we welcome the opportunity to meet with Council and staff in advance to discuss the proposal.

# Appendix G.

# City of Vancouver Response to HAWG Land Trust Proposal

CITY OF VANCOUVER

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
Sadhu Johnston, City Manager

August 25, 2017

Community-Led Land Stewardship Working Group
Sent via email to aogundele24@gmail.com

Dear Anthonia Ogundele:

**RE: Response to Letter of Intent - Land Transfer Proposal**

Thank you for submitting your letter of intent, dated February 24th, 2017 regarding a proposed transfer of lands bordered by Main Street, Union Street, Gore Avenue, and Prior Street, historically known as Hogan's Alley, to a not-for-profit community organization.

The lands outlined in the proposal are located within the boundary of the ongoing Northeast False Creek (NEFC) area planning process, which is underway and expected to be considered by City Council in January 2018. The NEFC Area Plan will include guiding policy and an implementation strategy for future detailed site planning, design, programming and development of the lands. The foundational work completed by the Hogan's Alley Working Group has been instrumental in beginning to shape the vision for the Hogan's Alley block.

Should Council adopt the NEFC Area Plan, implementation would begin, including a public process to select the appropriate development partner(s) for the lands.

City staff look forward to better understanding the goals and objectives of the Community-Led Land Stewardship Working Group, please contact Holly Sovdi, Senior Planner, to set up a meeting with the appropriate representatives and City departments. He can be reached directly at 604.871.6330 or holly.sovdi@vancouver.ca.

I encourage the group to continue participating in the overall NEFC area planning process. The group's contribution is invaluable to shaping the bright future of this community.

Yours truly,

Sadhu Johnston
City Manager
*tel:* 604.873.7627
*sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca*

cc: Robertson, Gregor
Affleck, George
Ball, Elizabeth
Carr, Adriane
De Genova, Melissa
Deal, Heather
Jang, Kerry
Louie, Raymond
Reimer, Andrea
Stevenson, Tim
Kelley, Gil
Dobrovolny, Jerry
Aujla, Bill
Llewellyn-Thomas, Kathleen
McNaney, Kevin
Sovdi, Holly

# Appendix H.

# Redressing Urban Displacement Event Announcement

The SFU Institute for Diaspora Research and Engagement in Collaboration with the City of Vancouver invite you to a conversation with renowned architect Zena Howard and the Hogan's Alley Working Group entitled:

## Redressing Urban Displacement:
## The Re-imagining of Hogan's Alley

Vancouver City Council has voted to remove the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts, presenting the City with a unique opportunity to address the past wrongful displacement of Vancouver's former Black community that settled at the edge of Strathcona at the turn of the 19th Century. Familiarly known as Hogan's Alley, this community was home to railway porters, entrepreneurs, shopkeepers, families, and featured a church owned by people of African descent. It provided a place of refuge from the harsh realities of racial exclusion that existed in Vancouver at that time.

Over decades and culminating in the replacement of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts in the 1970, this community experienced intense pressure from the City and others to vacate their neighbourhood. This pattern of displacement was experienced across many North American cities under Urban Renewal which targeted racialized and immigrant communities with highway infrastructure projects.

Through the Northeast False Creek area planning initiative, the City has been working with representatives from the Black community to create a vision for what will happen when the viaducts are removed and the lands are redeveloped because of the lasting adverse impact displacement has had on people of African descent in this part of Canada.

To facilitate this community consultation work, the City engaged architect Zena Howard of Perkins + Will, Durham North Carolina, to lead the visioning process with the Black community specifically as it relates to the East block of Main Street between Prior and Union, the former Hogan's Alley.

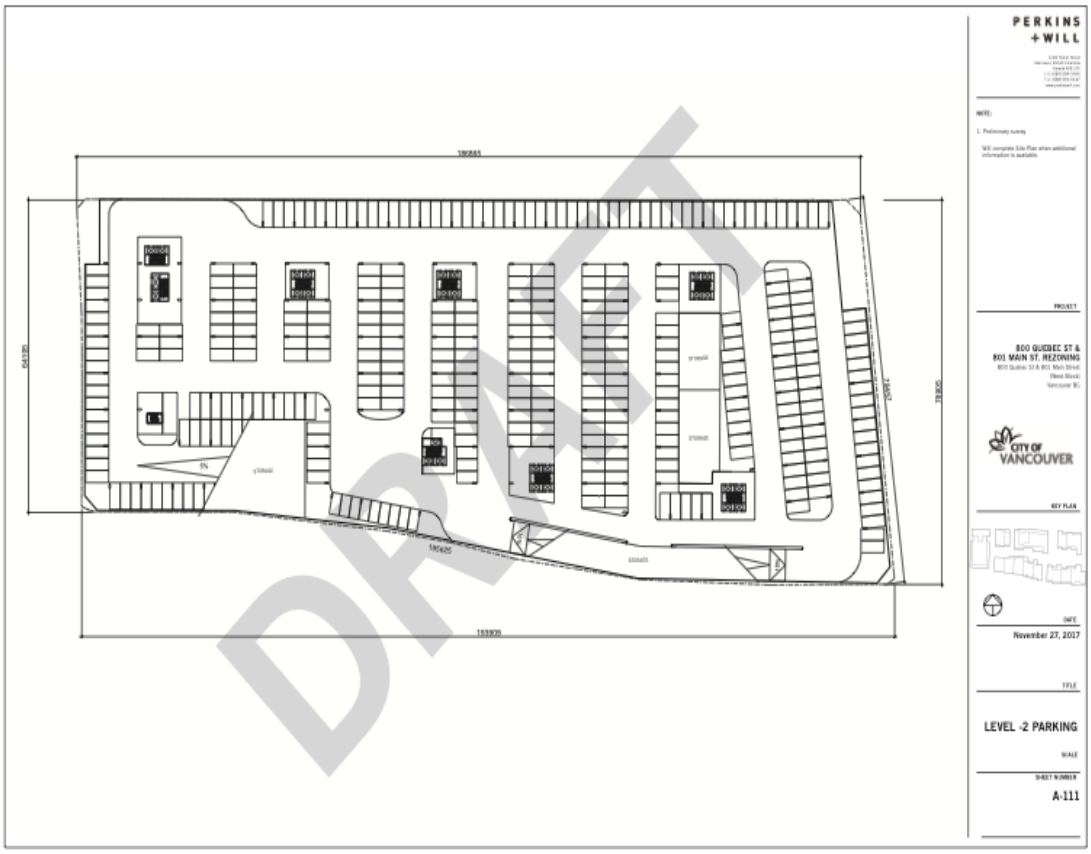
Ms. Howard together with a with a panel of the Hogan's Alley Working Group will discuss their work to-date for the NEFC Area Plan and how to overcome systems of exclusion, building a more equitable, resilient, and inclusive metropolis. This presentation is an outstanding opportunity for meaningful dialogue between planners, urbanists, architects, city-builders, and community activists alike.

About Zena Howard, AIA, LEED AP BD+C
Managing Director, North Carolina Practice
Durham, North Carolina

"For nearly three decades, Zena has passionately served as a model for underrepresented populations in the architectural profession. Zena's management of Smithsonian's new National Museum of African American History and Culture, with its fast-track delivery model, politically charged program, contextually sensitive site, and diverse stakeholders and institutions, presents a model for transforming an underfunded public design process into iconic architecture that uplifts both its purpose and its program. Zena is at the forefront of infusing cultural elements into neighborhoods that have historically been denied a voice in community decision making.
Zena's facilitation has been instrumental in working with the local black community to reimagine and restore the social, economic, political and cultural heart of this historic inner-city district. The goal is to right pass injustices by centering the black community in a robust visioning and consultation process."

# Appendix I.

## Excerpts from Sub-area 6D Rezoning Documents Provided on Request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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
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November 27, 2017
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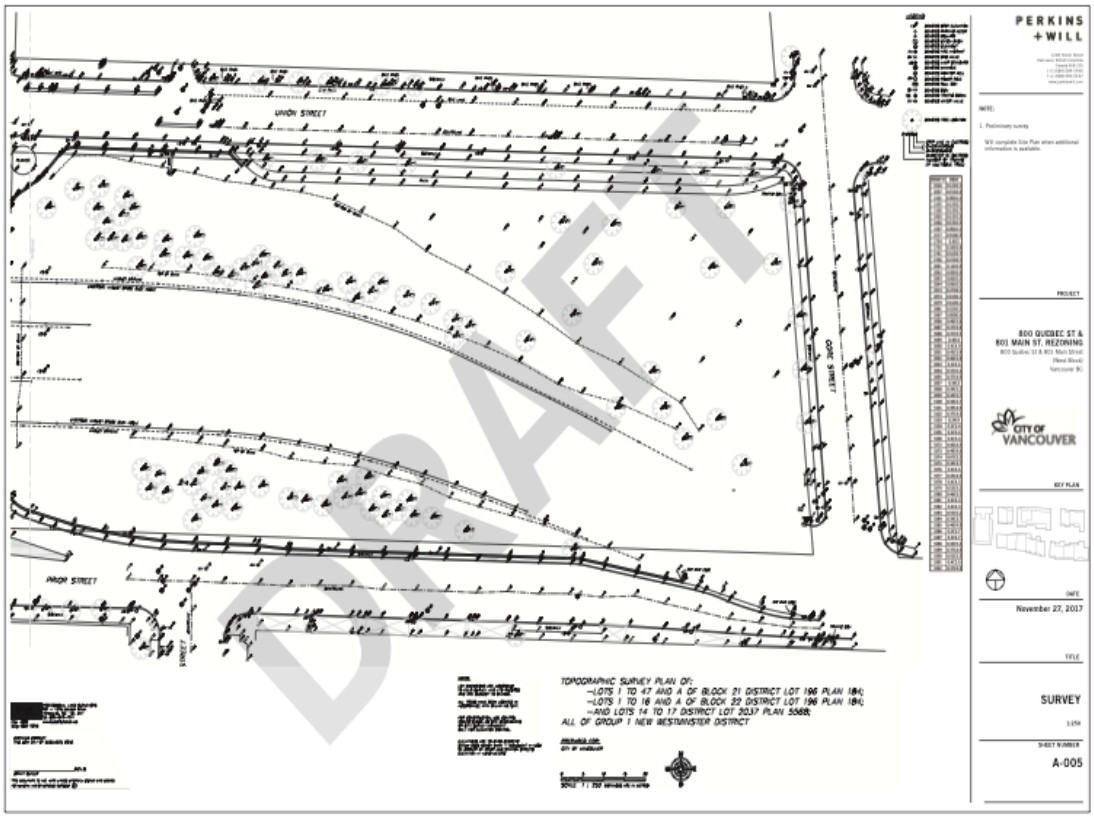
SCALE
SHEET NUMBER
A-111
DRAFT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CAMBIE STREET
IRON STREET
DRAFT
TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY PLAN OF:
—LOTS 1 TO 47 AND A OF BLOCK 21 DISTRICT LOT 196 PLAN 184;
—LOTS 1 TO 16 AND A OF BLOCK 22 DISTRICT LOT 196 PLAN 184;
—AND LOTS 14 TO 17 DISTRICT LOT 3037 PLAN 5588;
ALL OF GROUP 1 NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT
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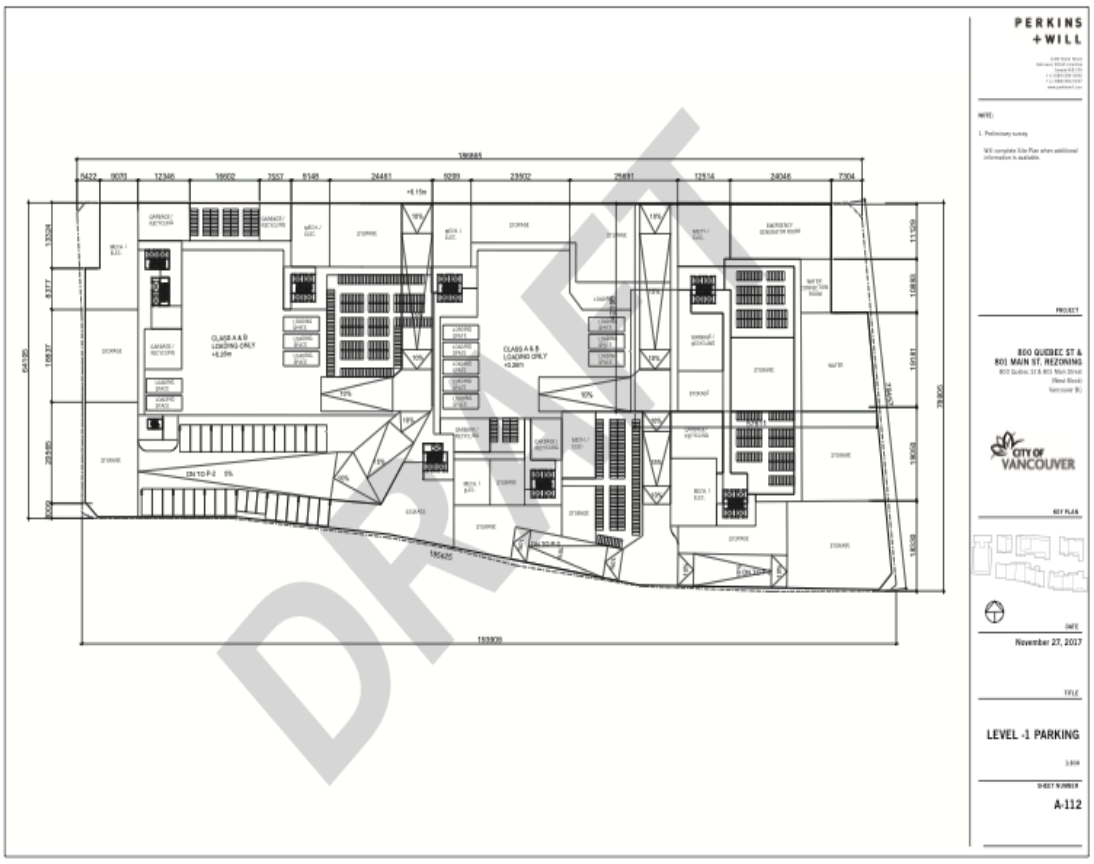
CITY OF
VANCOUVER
November 27, 2017
SURVEY
A-005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KEY PLAN
DATE
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TITLE
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SHEET NUMBER
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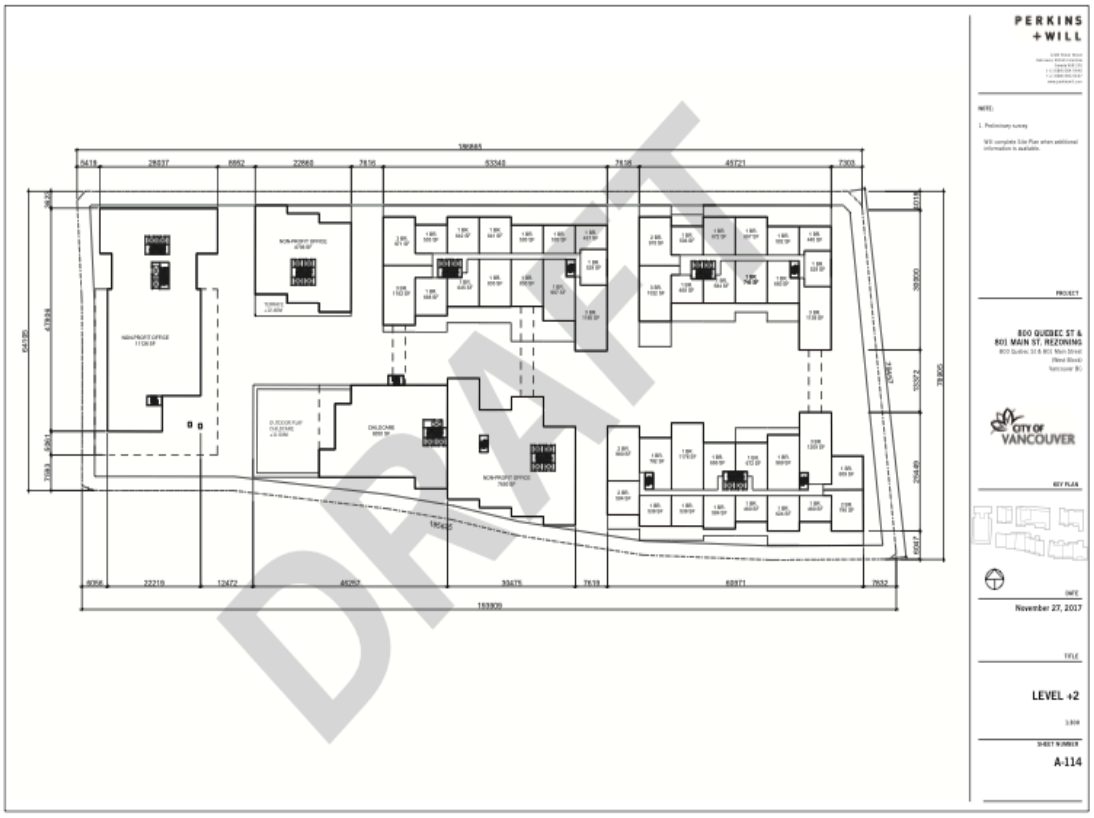
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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
TITLE
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SHEET NUMBER
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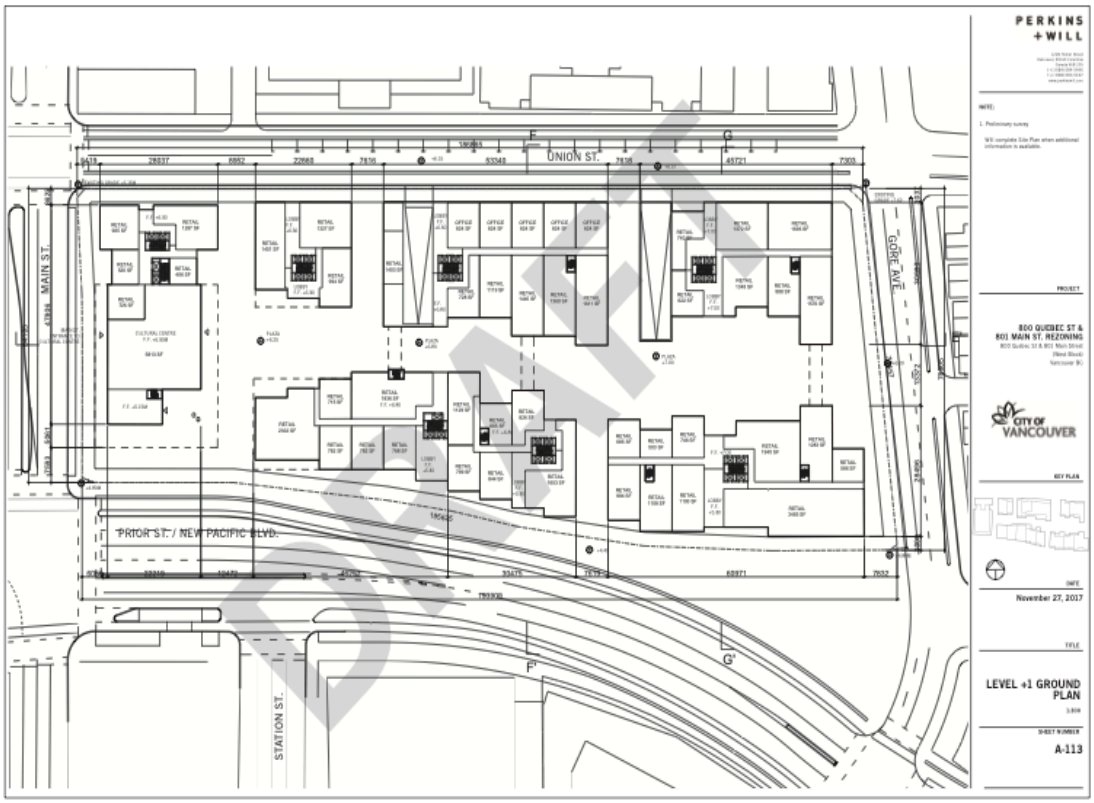
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(West Block)
Vancouver BC
CITY OF VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
TITLE
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SHEET NUMBER
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MAIN ST.
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PRIOR ST. / NEW PACIFIC BLVD.
STATION ST.
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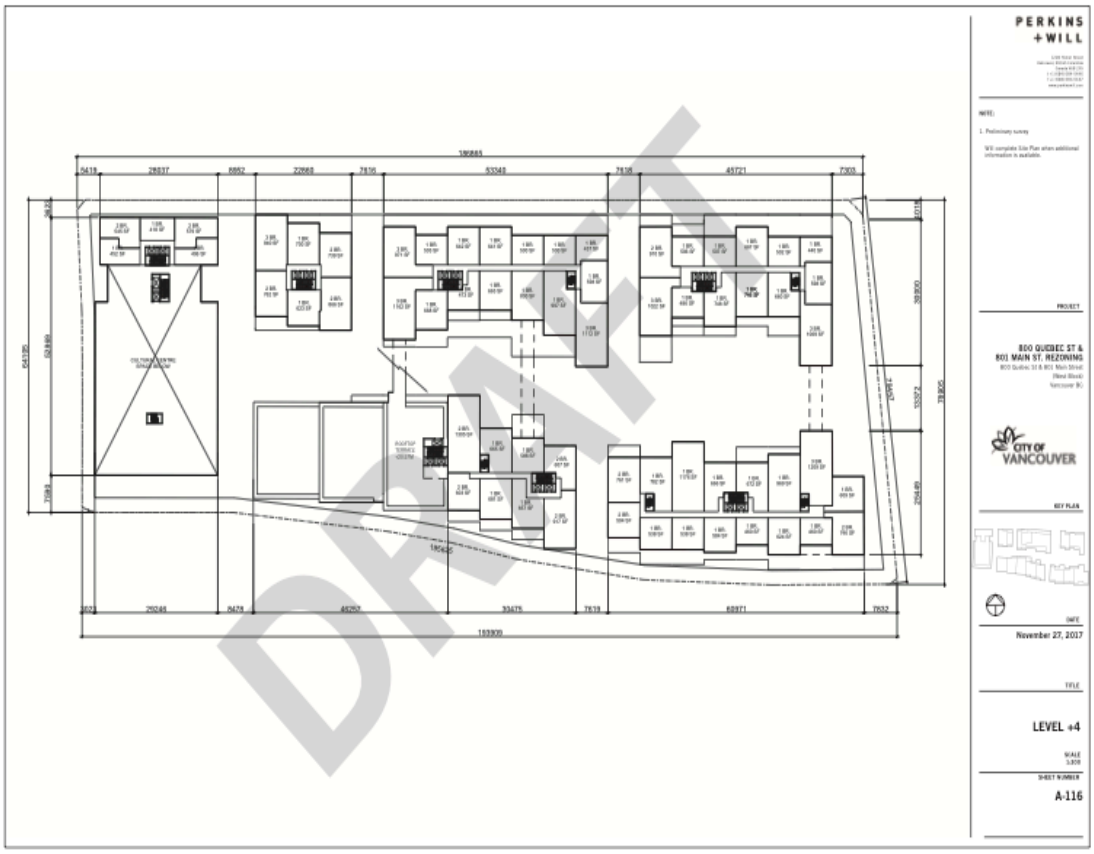
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VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
TITLE
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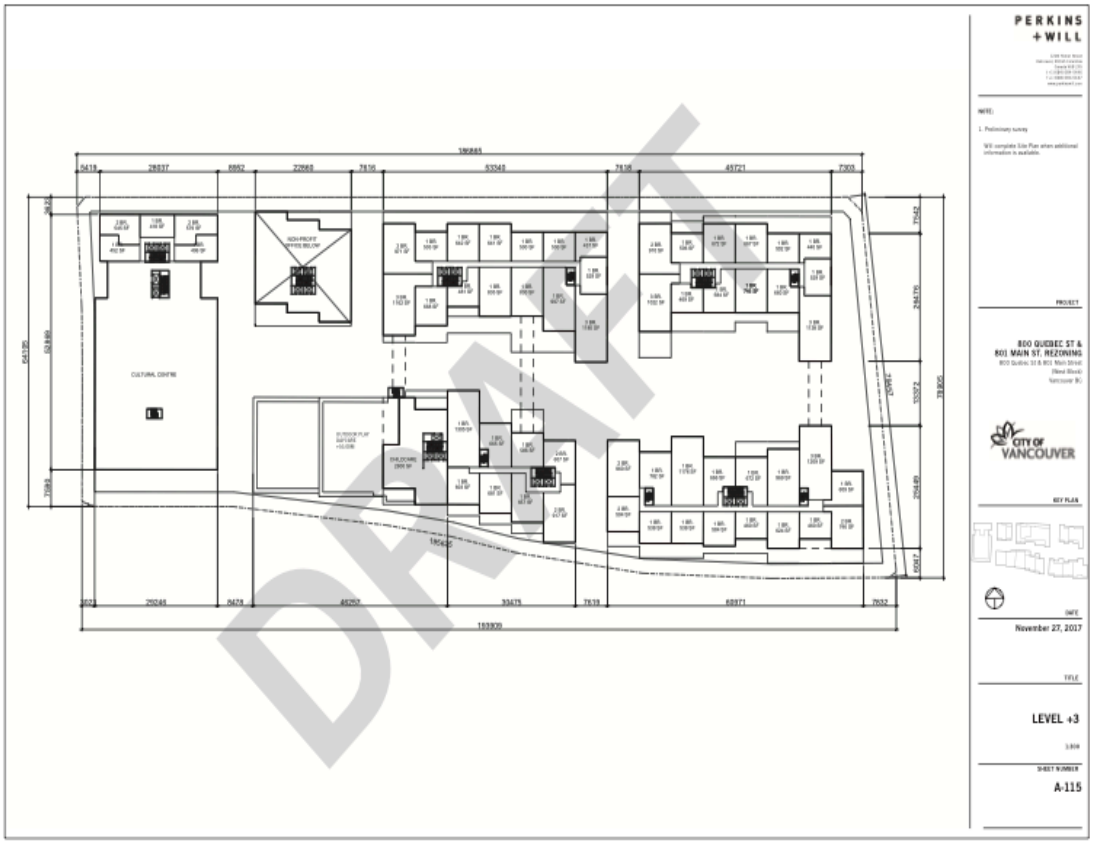
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NOTE:
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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
TITLE
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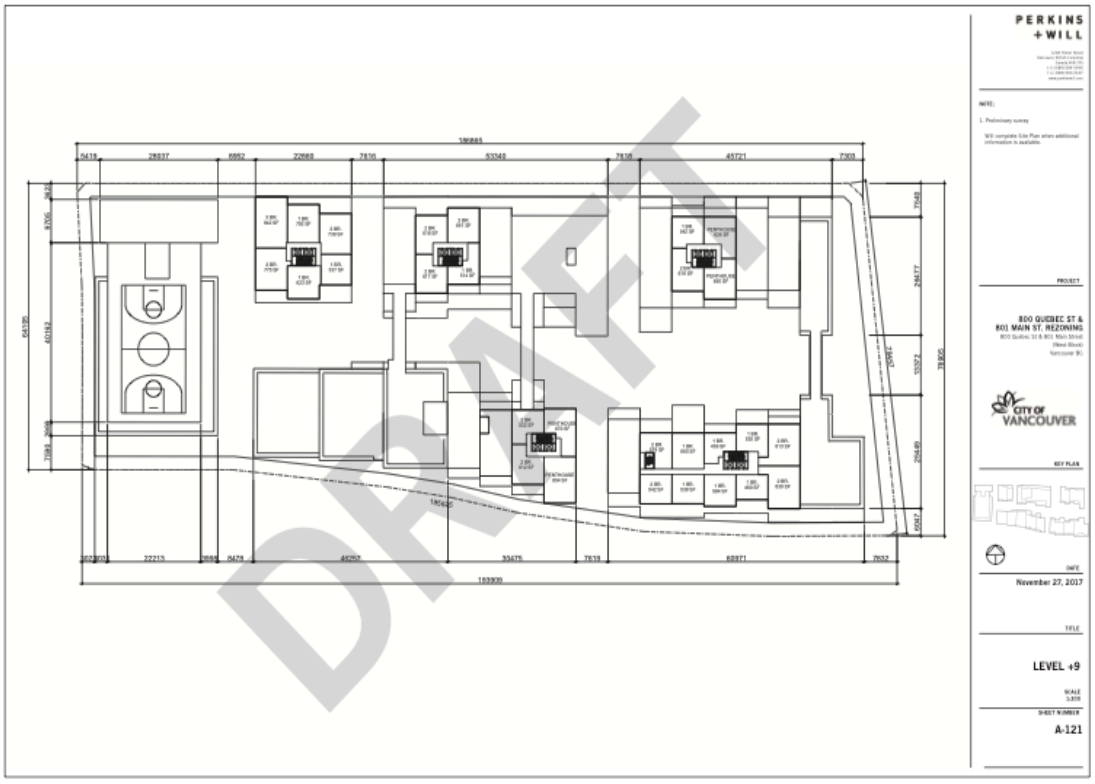
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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
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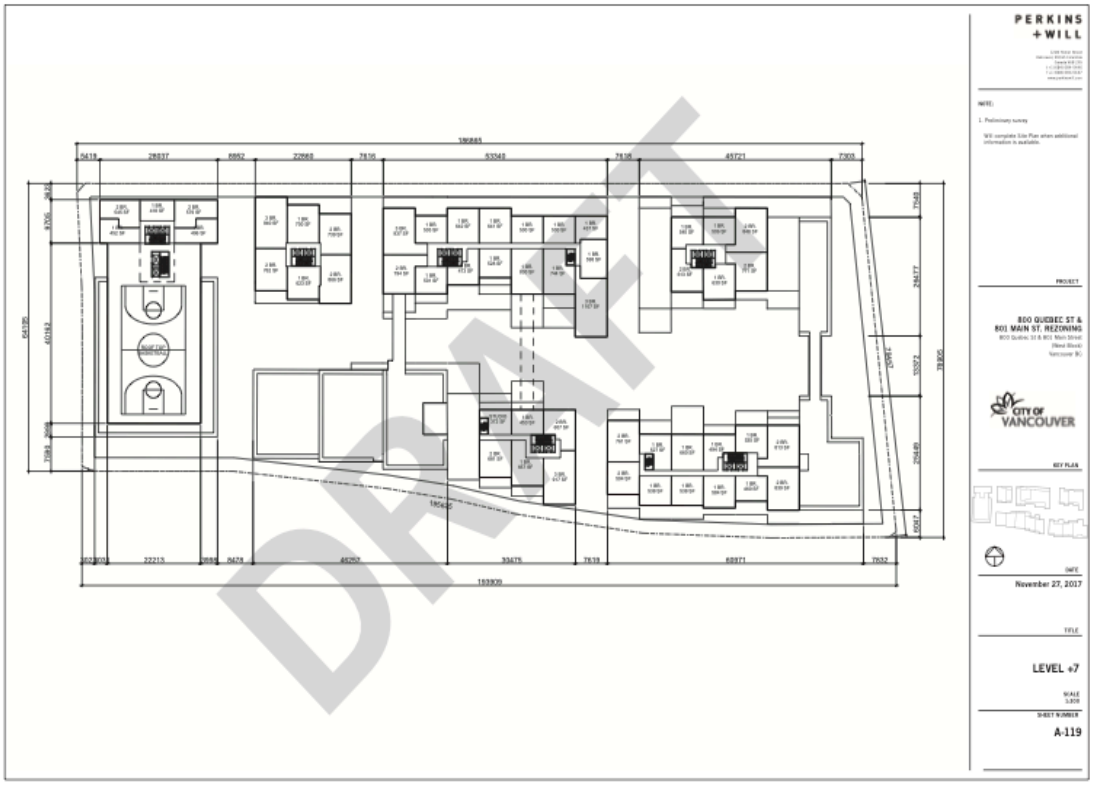
A-121
DRAFT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1. Preliminary survey
Will complete Site Plan when additional information is available.
PROJECT
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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
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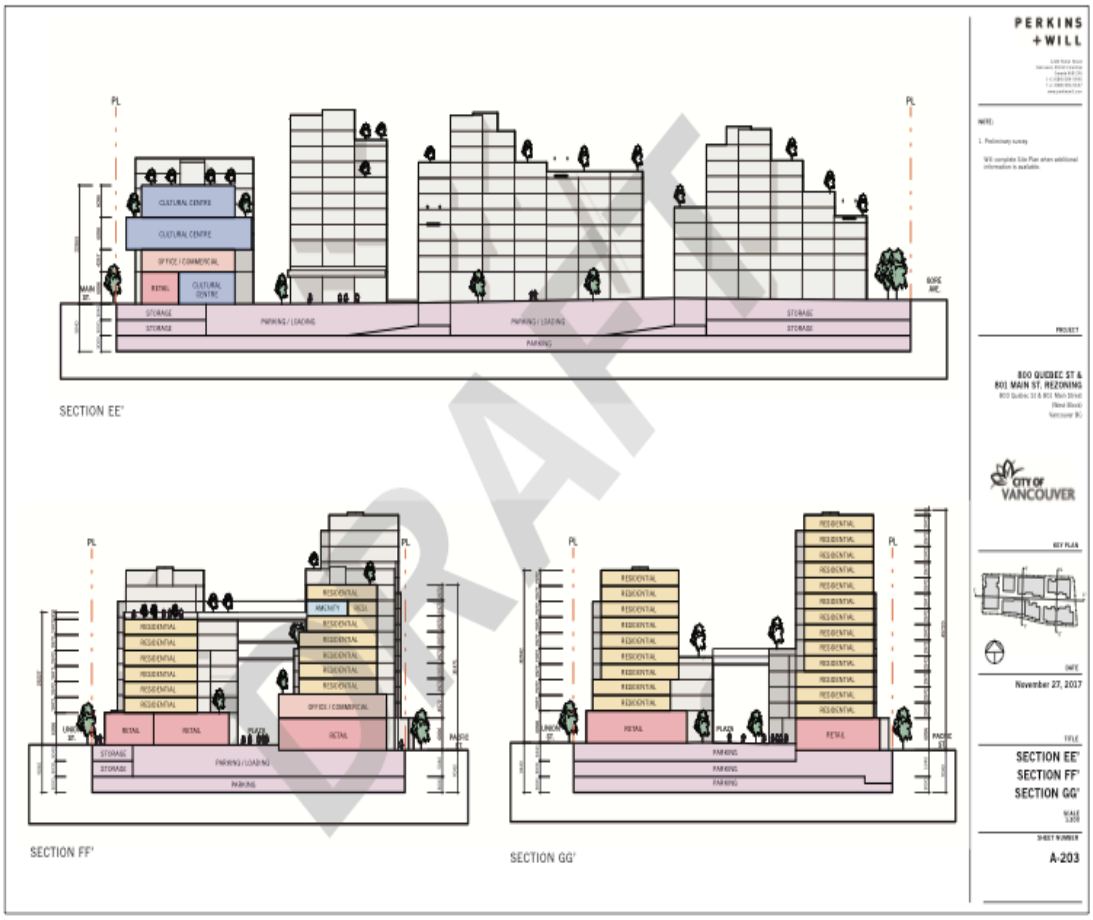
DRAFT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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
KEY PLAN
DATE
November 27, 2017
TITLE
SECTION EE'
SECTION FF'
SECTION GG'
SHEET NUMBER
A-203
SECTION EE'
SECTION FF'
SECTION GG'
DRAFT

# Appendix J.

# Letter to City of Vancouver with Proposed Amendments to the NEFC Plan

January 29, 2018

City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Ave
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor, Council, and Staff

We write to express support from the Hogan's Alley Working Group for the adoption of the Northeast False Creek (NEFC) Plan. While we are in support of most aspects of the plan we are proposing two amendments. The first is aimed at delivering more affordable housing, while the second is aimed at ensuring the vision for the East block of Main Street (previously referred to as Hogan's alley) is realized in a culturally sustainable way.

We commend the city for the inclusiveness of the engagement process with us throughout the planning process and acknowledge efforts by staff to expand the existing consultation approach. Going forward we hope to work with the City and staff to further improve the transparency, cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness of the processes and outcomes of city planning activities. We are encouraged by the extent to which our visioning has been included in the plan, especially the acknowledgement of the need for Reconciliation and Cultural Redress.

The current plan captures the ideas, hopes and intentions we share about the future of Hogan's Alley. In order to actualize our dreams in a manner that is in keeping with the mandate set forward by the community during the Hogan's Alley Working Group consultation process, we have isolated the following opportunities for the plan to better deliver on the promises of redress and reimagining with Vancouver's Black community:

1) Sub-Area 6D are the City-owned lands, acquired through displacement of the Black community, that will be freed up when the viaducts are removed. The general consensus in the Black community is that section 4.4 and 10.4 captures the overall vision for the future of Hogan's Alley as expressed through the design engagement process. However, affordable rental housing must be prioritized on Sub-Area 6D in accordance with the City's own policies and action plans to create more affordable housing in the city. The Hogan's Alley Working Group has been unwavering in their stance with the City that housing in this area be accessible, inclusive, and accommodate a diverse range of incomes and household types. Therefore, we seek the following amendment:

   **Change 15.1.4 From**: *Target 300 new social housing units to be delivered on the Main Street Blocks, as supported by the Downtown Eastside Plan.*

**To**: *Target 100% rental housing on the Main Street Blocks consisting of at least 70% below-market rental units which includes the 300 social housing units previously identified in the plan.*

2) The vision for Canadians of African Descent presented in the NEFC plan will only be successful if the Black community takes a leadership role in the delivery, and long-term stewardship of, the Hogan's Alley block. This must be acknowledged in policy and committed to at this time. The Hogan's Alley vision is a foundational element of the long-term viability of this future neighbourhood and an outstanding opportunity to offer a significant cultural contribution to the greater Vancouver mosaic.

   **Change Section 4.4.3 from**: ***Continue*** *to work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long-term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.*

   **To**: ***Commit*** *to work with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to establish the long-term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.*

3) In addition to the above amendments, we would like to see a correction of the following inaccuracies in the chronology of the settlement of people of African descent in Hogan's Alley:

   a. *The Black community in Strathcona began taking shape as an organized community from approximately 1900 to 1918 when the efforts of community leaders culminated in the construction of the Fountain Chapel African Methodist Episcopal church at 823 Jackson Ave. which occurred in 1918 not 1923.*

   b. *The statement in 3.6 "homes in Hogan's Alley were removed" must be amended to acknowledge the willful and racially motivated policies and actions taken by the City of Vancouver to create slum conditions and eventually displace the Black community from the area to build the current Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts in 1971.*

   c. *The statement in 4.4 "What was lost in this process were cultural and social assets…", should be amended to include economic assets in addition to social and cultural.*

We value this opportunity to inform the NEFC planning process and look forward to speaking to Council on Wednesday January 31 at the public hearing. We urge the Council to pass the NEFC plan with the amendments as proposed.

Sincerely,

The Hogan's Alley Working Group.

# Appendix K.

# Stephanie Allen Speech to Mayor and Council January 31, 2018

Hello Mayor and Council.

In October 2015 I and others were here and implored you to conduct meaningful consultation with the Black community to redress the past displacement of Hogan's Alley. We spoke about what was lost, about the racially motivated actions and policies that former Council and enacted to clear out the neighbourhood of not only the so-called blighted buildings but also how it upended the lives of the people who lived there, raising their families, operating businesses, working to get by, contributing their art and culture, and having a rightful place in this city.

We explained to you how wiping out this community had a lasting impact on Black people in this region, that generations of valuable social, economic, and political contributions were lost when we pushed out the residents of Hogan's Alley and made Vancouver an unwelcoming place for new residents from the African diaspora.

You heard us and answered our request. You instructed staff to engage with the Black community in the design and visioning of the East block of Main Street, and we showed up. We showed up to every meeting and design session, we gave up time with our families, from our jobs and businesses, and put aside our weekends. We initiated larger community forums and we went out into the surrounding municipalities to speak to Black people about what was going on. We spoke up when the process was broken and we accepted the apology for the absence of cultural competency within the city's existing engagement process.

And when you had to go as far as North Carolina to find an architect who had the capacity to work from the ground up with our community, we bared our souls and spoke about the pain we have all experienced living each day in a society that does not yet judge us by the content of our character. We knew when members of the city's team had empathy for us, and we could detect when others were incapable or unwilling to sit with the discomfort of hearing the truth about our lived experiences.

We set out a vision of "what" we wanted to see through the design engagement, and we were relentless in asking "how" it could become a reality. We had guiding principles of our own, and these were rooted in 1) preventing future displacement of the communities surrounding Hogan's Alley and 2) meaningful acknowledgement of the unseded territory of the Musquem, Tslei'Watuth and Squamish nations, 3) and creating inclusive, diverse, and accessible residential and enterprise spaces.

We were told that implementation happens after design, but we knew that without mapping out a feasible way to move the plan forward, design would just be pretty architectural renderings and not a community.

The NEFC plan has done a good job of capturing the result of the consultation process with the Black community. Indeed, that there is a chapter in a city planning document in this country entitled “Reconciliation” demonstrates that we are moving the needle towards a more inclusive and just city. But we are not at the promised land just yet.

That’s why I encourage council to adopt the NEFC plan but with the following amendments:

**Change 15.1.4 From***: Target 300 new social housing units to be delivered on the Main Street Blocks, as supported by the Downtown Eastside Plan.*

**To***: Target 100% rental housing on the Main Street Blocks consisting of at least 70% below-market rental units which includes the 300 social housing units previously identified in the plan.*

These are city-owned lands that you hold title to because of colonization on Indigenous lands and then through displacement of the Black community. The City should not seek to extract funding for the NEFC plan by privatizing these lands into market development.

Next

**Change Section 4.4.3 from** *the word* ***Continue*** *to* ***Commit*** *work with the Hogan’s Alley Working Group to establish the long-term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the block through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.*

Leadership by the Black community will ensure the sustainability of the vision captured through hours of consultation and documented in this plan.

When I was a little girl, the elders in my family felt that my life would be different from what they had to face. That the crushing bombardment of institutional bigotry, the despair of dreams deferred, and the sea of hostility in public life were due for a change.

And yet here we are, in 2018, a few months after a neo-Nazi rally was planned for the threshold of this very building. We are not yet rid of the scourge of discrimination and hate and it bears on my daily life in ways my elders had prayed it would not.

That said, I know the universal arc bends towards justice, but it will take the courage of each one of you and each one of us to move us there so that perhaps the generation coming up now will be unburdened by the dehumanizing impact of racism and inequality and be empowered to live fully up to their potential, free to participate and contribute to a better city for everyone.