



**Council Member Motion**  
**For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 15, 2020**

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** October 12, 2020  
**From:** Councillor Thornton-Joe and Councillor Young  
**Subject:** Bastion Square Mural

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**Background**

In mid August a mural was created in Bastion Square. It was funded by various donors including a grant from the City of Victoria. After the mural was created and installed, it was found that within the finished mural initials had been included that represent an acronym many find offensive and consider a hate message. Since that time there have been some discussions with varied community organizations and individuals and the City has received a letter from the AHAVI (African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island), one of the main sponsors, indicating their discomfort with the acronym included in the completed mural. They state "while we stand behind the More Justice, More Peace sentiment we do not condone the offensive ACAB acronym."

The Mural Letter of Understanding states that "The City will have the right to request that work cease on the mural project or request its removal at any stage should the following occur..... the mural is deemed to be offensive."

One of the objectives of the City's Strategic Plan is that "there is broad engagement with a diversity of participants conducted in a respectful and inclusive way."

As has been the case with the extensive dialogues underway that are nurturing Truth and Reconciliation, there is a need for a rich and ongoing dialogue that could and should take months and years, as work is done toward systemic changes.

While those dialogues unfold, the offensive acronym within the mural undermines the possibility of collegial dialogue intended to achieve mutually acceptable next steps.

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That staff facilitate further dialogue among AHAVI, the artists, staff, and the police chief, and
2. That the letters ACAB be removed at the earliest opportunity possible, and
3. If the artists choose to replace the removed letters with another design, that they submit their proposal for the staff's approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charlayne Thornton-Joe".

Councillor Thornton-Joe

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Councillor Young".

Councillor Young