

Tuesday, May 3, 2022 | For Immediate Release

Victoria Reconciliation Dialogues Series Returns With Dialogue #5 on May 30

VICTORIA, BC — The City of Victoria and City Family’s popular series, the *Victoria Reconciliation Dialogues*, returns with Dialogue #5 on May 30 having been placed on hold in early 2020 due to the pandemic. Three upcoming conversations will enable community members to participate in person in reconciliation on Lekwungen territory.

Guided by members of the City Family and special guests, the conversations seek to build the community’s knowledge and understanding of reconciliation – what it is, why it is needed and why community participation in reconciliation is important.

“We are excited to reconvene the *Victoria Reconciliation Dialogues* to provide opportunities for the community to gather in person to learn from our Lekwungen neighbours and other Urban Indigenous people,” said Mayor Lisa Helps. “The upcoming Dialogues will explore the experiences of Urban Indigenous people living in Lekwungen territory, consider Victoria’s colonial civic built heritage alongside Lekwungen lands and cultural practices, and present a proposed Reconciliation Plan presented from the City Family and Lekwungen youth on how the community can carry on the work of reconciliation moving forward.”

The public is invited to pre-register through Eventbrite to participate in some or all of the Dialogues. The format will vary and may include storytelling, discussion and other forms of learning, with each conversation being approximately 2.5 hours in length. Each Dialogue will include an Indigenous welcome by Florence Dick of the Songhees Nation, and a witness ceremony at the end. The three conversations will include:

Dialogue #5 – Guests of Lekwungen: Urban Indigenous Experiences in Canada

Monday, May 30 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (Doors open at 5:30 p.m.)

Victoria Conference Centre, Carson Hall

Urban Indigenous people living in Lekwungen territory are not people of the Lekwungen lands. Yet as Indigenous people in Canada, they are often displaced from their own homelands through the process of colonization, including the sixties scoop and other colonial practices. This Dialogue will share stories that highlight the experiences of Urban Indigenous people living in Lekwungen territory and the diversity of Indigenous experience. There will also be live musical performances.

Dialogue #6 – Rethinking Heritage in the Context of Reconciliation

Monday, July 11 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (Doors open at 5:30 p.m.)

Victoria Conference Centre, Carson Hall

Victoria has an award-winning heritage conservation program that has retained many of the early settler buildings in the city. At the same time as these buildings were built, Lekwungen heritage was systematically dismantled and erased. This Dialogue will feature members of the Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation and City staff who have worked together on the Government Street Refresh project and will explore how to retain and celebrate the city’s colonial-built heritage at the same time as recognizing, honouring and making visible once again Lekwungen culture and land practices.

Dialogue #7 – Na’tsa’maht: Going Forward Together

Monday, September 12 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (Doors open at 5:30 p.m.)

Victoria Conference Centre, Carson Hall

Working with the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, in 2017 City Council established the City Family to take a Lekwungen-led approach to reconciliation. In this Dialogue, the City Family will present a Reconciliation Plan to the City and the community to carry on the work of reconciliation for decades to come. Participants will be asked to make a reconciliation commitment of their own. The session will feature Songhees Nation and Esquimalt Nation youth.

Held over the next five months, the *Victoria Reconciliation Dialogues* will provide opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to come together to share their ideas and stories and explore how we as a community can make the culture, history and modern reality of local Indigenous Peoples present and apparent throughout the city – and understood and valued in people’s everyday lives.

The series is free to attend and will be webcast live. All are welcome. Free childminding will be available (up to two hours) and complimentary refreshments will be provided.

For more information and to pre-register, visit: victoria.ca/ReconciliationDialogues.

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For More Information:

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