



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: May 9, 2023  
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Meeting Date: May 9, 2023  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: City Manager  
SUBJECT: Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Strategic Priority Grants

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve four (4) Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 to the organizations and for the amounts from funding sources listed in Appendix A, in support of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan approved by Council in January 2023.
- B. THAT, pursuant to Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*, Council deems any organization listed in Appendix A that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency to be contributing to the culture, beautification, health, or welfare of the city.
- C. THAT the Director of Legal Services be authorized to execute the appropriate grant agreements with each of the respective organizations listed in Appendix A.
- D. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of Recommendations A through C unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

Recommendations A and B require two-thirds affirmative votes of all Council members under section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval for total of four (4) Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 in support of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, which was approved by Council on January 17, 2023.

Grants funded by City Operating Budget:

- Chinatown BIA (\$150,000) – Pilot Project: Graffiti Removal and Abatement Enhancement on Private Property;
- Chinatown BIA (\$50,000) – Development and implementation of a Safewalk pilot program;
- Chinese Community Policing Centre (\$10,000) – Pilot Project: Expansion of Volunteer Graffiti Removal Program;

Grant funded by Great Beginnings Provincial dollars:

- EMBERS Eastside Works (\$177,000) – Integration of the existing Chinatown Community Stewards Program into the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan as a pilot action.

### **Council Authority/Previous Decisions**

1. Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan ([January 17, 2023](#)): Council approved the draft Action Plan in principle, with the Action Plan budget approved as part of the 2023 Operating Budget.

### **City Manager's Comments**

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

### **Context and Background**

On January 17, 2023, Council approved in principle the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan. The Action Plan consists of a series of immediate actions and pilot projects related to cleaning and sanitation, graffiti abatement strategies and placemaking, and community supports in Chinatown. Staff were directed to include the proposed budget for the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan in the draft 2023 Operating Budget for Council's consideration, and to begin detailed design and implementation planning for Action Plan initiatives, targeting implementation in Q2-2023.

On February 28, 2023, Council approved the 2023 Operating Budget, which included a total of \$2,160,000 for the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan to implement Chinatown-specific and broader DTES and City initiatives.

### **Discussion**

The strategic priority grants recommended in this report are a critical next step in the implementation of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan. These grants provide funding to organizations working in partnership with the City to implement pilot projects and initiatives related to graffiti abatement and removal, and community supports.

### **Allocation of Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Strategic Priority Grants**

If approved by Council, Uplifting Chinatown strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 will be distributed from the following funding sources to the following organizations:

Grants funded by City Operating Budget

1. Chinatown BIA – Pilot Project: Graffiti Removal and Abatement Enhancement on Private Property (\$150,000)

Chinatown BIA, similar to other BIAs across the city, has an established graffiti

prevention and abatement program. The Chinatown BIA's graffiti abatement program supplements the City's public property graffiti removal by addressing graffiti on commercial private property within their boundaries.

This grant will support a pilot project to further enhance graffiti removal and abatement on private property. The pilot project focuses graffiti removal and abatement strategies on: expediting response times; addressing street-front and upper facades; alleys; highly visible and repeatedly targeted locations; anti-graffiti coatings; and removal of large-scale graffiti. The pilot project will track metrics including but not limited to: response times; types and size of graffiti removed; locations of graffiti, including repeat graffiti; number of hours of service. These metrics will inform future graffiti abatement and removal strategies and resources required to address graffiti in Chinatown and potentially elsewhere in the City.

2. Chinatown BIA – Development and Implementation of a Safewalk Pilot Program (\$50,000)

This grant will support the Chinatown BIA to develop and implement a Safewalk pilot program as a new initiative in the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan. A Safewalk program supports individuals who may require or request accompaniment to their desired location, and in particular, could provide extra supports to Chinese-speaking seniors living in the area, many of whom are low-income and face systemic and language barriers. The pilot program will track metrics including but not limited to: number of requests; type of request (e.g.: seniors, residents, visitors, students); and areas and/or locations served to better understand residents' and business needs in the area and inform potential development of an ongoing Safewalk program.

3. Chinese Community Policing Centre (CCPC) – Pilot Project: Expansion of Volunteer Graffiti Removal Program (\$10,000)

The Chinese Community Policing Centre (CCPC) is located at 44 E Pender, and operates a number of community outreach and safety-oriented programs. This grant will support the CCPC in implementing the expansion of their existing volunteer graffiti removal program, including funding for supplies needed for ongoing graffiti removal. The pilot program will provide an additional proactive means of addressing graffiti and expediting response times. The pilot program will track metrics including but not limited to: number of participants/volunteers; total hours volunteered; number of cleanup events; number of graffiti incidences removed, to better inform graffiti abatement and removal needs for the area overall.

Grant funded by Provincial Great Beginnings funding:

4. EMBERS Eastside Works – Integration of the Existing Chinatown Community Stewards Program into the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan (\$177,000)

The Chinatown Community Stewards Program is an employment program operated by EMBERS Eastside Works that hires DTES community members to act as stewards for Chinatown. The Chinatown Community Stewards Program focuses on building a more cohesive, inclusive and harmonious environment in Chinatown by supporting businesses to operate and providing outreach for individuals in distress.

Steward duties include acting as liaisons to support businesses and residents, de-escalation, providing directions to tourists, and providing information on resources and outreach for those experiencing homelessness. As part of the integration into the

Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, the stewards will also help identify locations for rapid response (e.g. feces, garbage and graffiti).

The Chinatown Community Stewards Program began in 2019 as a community-led initiative. Community stakeholders guided the development and implementation of the program with EMBERS, supported relationship building between Stewards and businesses, and helped further understanding of the cultural needs of the neighbourhood, local businesses, and residents. The Chinatown Community Stewards Program has been an important resource for businesses and the neighbourhood overall for the last four years, and positive relationships have been developed between Stewards, businesses, and other community organizations. The program currently provides monthly reporting on neighbourhood trends and metrics.

The continuation of the Community Stewards Program will be funded out of the Great Beginnings Fund, and is being integrated into the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan as a pilot action. The program will work in conjunction with other pilot actions to provide additional support to Chinatown. The program will continue to track metrics including but not limited to: number of requests, number of incidences addressed, number of calls to other agencies, number of storefront interactions, number of issues identified for rapid response. These metrics will inform ongoing needs in the area and inform consideration of the potential continuation of a stewards program beyond December 2023. Should there be a Council decision to continue an ongoing stewards program in Chinatown, staff would undergo a procurement process to award a contract to a service provider.

#### Update on Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Implementation

Staff have been working on implementing actions from the Action Plan, and a number of initiatives are completed and/or underway:

1. Satellite City Hall Office in Chinatown

A location has been identified in the City-owned Chinatown Plaza at 112 Keefer Street. Tenant improvements are underway, with target completion and move-in for end of June.

2. Cleaning and Sanitation

- Expansion of the Feces Collection Pilot program to provide proactive servicing began March 27;
- Increasing of micro-cleaning shifts from 9 to 13 times a week began on March 27;
- Expansion of the Neighbourhood Clean-Up Program to monthly events began in April, with the first monthly event held on April 15;
- Comfort stations at Main and Hastings began 24 hours a day, 7 days a week service on April 9, 2023.

#### Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Working Groups

The Action Plan is guided by two Working Groups, which are responsible for executing and implementing pilot actions as identified in the Action Plan, with coordination support from staff in the City Manager's Office:

1. Uplifting Chinatown Working Group: Responsible for executing and coordinating with other pilot projects, and providing ongoing feedback to monitor, guide, and refine

ongoing Action Plan implementation. This Working Group works across all three Action Plan pillars: cleaning and sanitation, graffiti abatement strategies and placemaking, and community supports.

2. Graffiti Response Working Group: A small sub-group of the overall Working Group, and will focus primarily on graffiti response, concerns, and needs.

A full list of community partners and City departments comprising the Working Groups is included in Appendix B.

### **Financial Implications**

Staff are seeking Council approval of four (4) strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 in support of pilot projects and initiatives identified in the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan. Funding sources and organizations receiving strategic priority grants are included in Appendix A.

The grant allocations to the Chinatown BIA and the Chinese Community Policing Centre were included in the draft budget of the Action Plan, which were approved as a part of the 2023 Operating Budget.

The grant to EMBERS Eastside Works for the continuation of the Chinatown Community Stewards Program will be funded from Great Beginnings Fund (See Appendix A for details).

As the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan is proposed to run as a pilot project, staff will return to Council prior to the end of 2023 with an update report on progress, outcomes, achievements, and next steps. This will include information on associated costs needed to continue the program, should that be a recommended next step for Council decision.

### **Legal Implications**

The grants are authorized by section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*, and require the execution of grant agreements..

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**APPENDIX A**  
**UPLIFTING CHINATOWN ACTION PLAN – ALLOCATION OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY GRANTS**

ORGANIZATION	PROJECT	AMOUNT	FUNDING SOURCE
1	<p>Chinatown BIA <i>(Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society)</i></p> <p>Pilot project to further enhance graffiti removal and abatement on private property. Focusing on graffiti removal and abatement strategies on: expediting response times; addressing street-front and upper facades; alleys; highly visible and repeatedly targeted locations; anti-graffiti coatings; and removal of large-scale graffiti.</p> <p>The pilot project will track metrics including but not limited to: response times; types and size of graffiti removed; locations of graffiti, including repeat graffiti; number of hours of service. These metrics will inform future graffiti abatement and removal strategies and resources required to address graffiti in Chinatown and potentially elsewhere in the City.</p>	\$150,000	2023 Operating Budget
2	<p>Chinatown BIA <i>(Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society)</i></p> <p>Development and implementation of a Safewalk pilot program.</p> <p>The pilot program will track metrics including but not limited to: number of requests; type of request (e.g. seniors, residents, visitors), and areas and/or locations served, to better understanding of residents' and business needs in the area and inform potential development of an ongoing Safewalk program.</p>	\$50,000	2023 Operating Budget
3	<p>Chinese Community Policing Centre</p> <p>Pilot program to support expansion of volunteer graffiti removal program to further supplemental graffiti abatement and removal efforts.</p> <p>The pilot program will track metrics including but not limited to: number of participants/volunteers; total hours volunteered; number of cleanup events; number of graffiti incidences removed, to better inform graffiti abatement and removal needs for the area overall.</p>	\$10,000	2023 Operating Budget
4	<p>EMBERS Eastside Works</p> <p>Integration of the existing Chinatown Community Stewards Program into the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, and continuation of the program as a pilot action alongside other Action Plan initiatives.</p> <p>The Chinatown Community Stewards Program is an employment program operated by EMBERS Eastside Works that hires DTES community</p>	\$177,000	Great Beginnings Fund (See below for background context).

	<p>members to act as stewards for Chinatown. Steward duties include acting as liaisons to support businesses and residents, de-escalation, providing directions to tourists, and providing information on resources and outreach for those experiencing homelessness. As part of the integration into the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, the stewards will also help identify locations for rapid response (e.g. feces, garbage and graffiti).</p> <p>The program will work in conjunction with other pilot actions to provide additional support to Chinatown. The program will continue to track metrics including but not limited to: number of requests, number of incidences addressed, number of calls to other agencies, number of storefront interactions, number of issues identified for rapid response. These metrics will inform ongoing needs in the area and inform consideration of the potential continuation of a stewards program beyond December 2023.</p>		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$387,000</b>	

#### Background on the Great Beginnings Fund:

Great Beginnings funding was provided in 2008 by the Provincial government, and has been held in Trust to support appropriate projects. Council had an official motion providing authority for the City Manager to approve funding distribution for projects under five themes:

1. Public Space Improvements: Physically improving public spaces such as parks, streets, sidewalks, lanes;
2. Private Property Improvements: Assisting private property owners to make physical improvements to their property with City support;
3. Arts and Culture: Expanding existing events;
4. Community Living: Making the neighbourhood more liveable and getting more local residents involved in community activities;
5. Community Pride: Creating opportunities for the DTES and other Vancouver neighbourhoods, including promoting the neighbourhood.

Since 2008, Great Beginnings funding has been used to support a number of initiatives in and around the DTES. Upon allocation of the funding recommended in this report, the Great Beginnings funding will be fully allocated.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **UPLIFTING CHINATOWN ACTION PLAN – WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Uplifting Chinatown Working Group**

1. City of Vancouver Departments
  - a. City Manager's Office
  - b. Engineering (Solid Waste and Sanitation)
  - c. Finance and Performance Measurement
2. Vancouver Police Department
3. Community Partners
  - a. Vancouver Chinatown BIA
  - b. Chinese Community Policing Centre
  - c. EMBERS Eastside Works

#### **Graffiti Response Working Group**

1. City of Vancouver Departments
  - a. City Manager's Office
  - b. Engineering (Public Space and Street Use)
  - c. Finance and Performance Measurement
2. Vancouver Police Department
3. Community Partners
  - a. Vancouver Chinatown BIA
  - b. Chinese Community Policing Centre