



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: September 19, 2023

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Meeting Date: October 17, 2023

[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Chinese Society Legacy Program and Special Enterprise Program Grant Allocations - 2023

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve \$685,113 in grant allocations to 10 Chinese Societies (as detailed in Appendix A) to support the retention of Society-owned heritage buildings in Chinatown, with funds from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget in the 2019-2022 *Chinese Society Legacy Program*.
- B. THAT Council approve a \$35,000 grant allocation to the *Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association (VCMA)* for capacity building with and supports to Chinatown's heritage businesses, with funds from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget in the 2023 *Multi-Year DTES Special Enterprise Program*.
- C. THAT, pursuant to Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*, Council deems any organization listed in Appendix A of this report that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency to be contributing to the culture, beautification, health, or welfare of Vancouver.
- D. THAT the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (GM of PDS) (or their designate) be authorized to negotiate and execute agreements to disburse the grants described in this report on the terms and conditions generally set out below and on such other terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the GM of PDS and the Director of Legal Services.
- E. THAT no legal rights or obligations will be created by the approval of Recommendations A to D above unless and until the applicable grant agreement or letter of agreement is approved by the City in accordance with Recommendation D above and executed and delivered by both the grant recipient and GM of PDS (or their designate).

Approval of the grant recommendations above requires at least 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members under Section 206 (1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

### **Purpose and Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval of \$685,113 in grant allocations to 10 Chinese Societies as the final phase of the implementation of the 2023 *Chinese Society Legacy Program* (the “CSLP”). The grant allocations will support critical capital upgrades for Society-owned heritage buildings in Chinatown.

In addition, an allocation of \$35,000 is recommended to the *Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association* (VCMA) for capacity building with and supports to heritage businesses as part of the continued implementation of the *Special Enterprise Program* (the SEP). Both the CSLP and SEP’s funding allocations will support the stabilization and retention of Chinatown’s cultural heritage assets, affordable housing, as well as improvements to community well-being.

These recommended grant allocations align with the goals and strategies in the Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) (Appendix D), the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, and the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan.

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

- Chinatown Cultural Heritage Asset Management Plan Strategic Framework (2022)
- Chinese Society Legacy Program (2015)
- Downtown Eastside Community Economic Development Strategy (2016)
- Downtown Eastside Plan (2014)
- Downtown Eastside Plan Implementation and Strategic Allocation (2022)
- Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver and Formal Apology (2017 & 2018)
- Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan (2023)

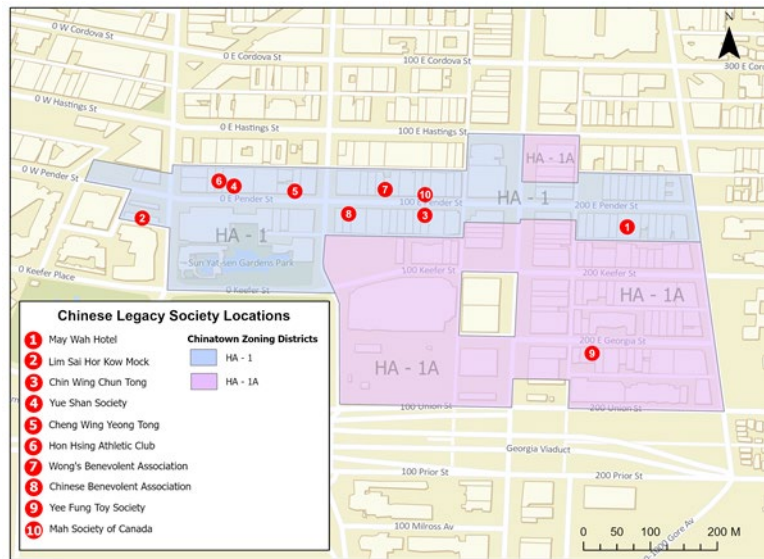
### **City Manager’s Comments**

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

### **Context and Background**

Council approved the *Chinese Society Legacy Program* (CSLP) in 2015 (RTS 11185). The purpose of the CSLP is to provide grants to 12 eligible Chinese Societies to support the retention of their heritage buildings. Chinese Society buildings are key cultural heritage assets in Chinatown, serving as a valuable physical representation of the area’s and communities’ history. The buildings are home to cultural spaces, affordable and seniors housing, as well as retail spaces. The Chinese Societies, who are non-profit organizations, face urgent need and mounting financial pressure to maintain these assets as the buildings continue to age.

The *DTES Special Enterprise Program* was approved by Council in January 2021 as a 5-year pilot (RTS 14172). The SEP provides funding to heritage businesses, social enterprises, and non-profit organizations. The program has three focus areas: capacity building/business supports, affordable spaces, and community-serving retail businesses in Chinese Benevolent Society buildings (RTS 14576). This grant allocation will support VCMA’s strategic planning for the retention of heritage businesses.



**Figure 1:**

Map showing the locations of the Chinese Society Legacy Program's 10 recommended grant allocations.

## Discussion

The CSLP is structured as a matching grant to fund capital projects that work towards the rehabilitation or structural needs of eligible Society buildings. A total of 11 applications were received with 10 being recommended and 1 not being recommended for Council approval (Please refer to Figure 1 for locations of buildings). The funding distribution and project descriptions of the grant applications are outlined in Appendix A.

The CSLP's applications and guidelines were made available in English and Chinese, then distributed through the *Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association* (CSHBA), which advocates for the conservation and rehabilitation of Chinese Society buildings. An in-person information session was held with eligible applicants and CSHBA. All 12 eligible organizations were directly invited, of which, 11 participated. Staff reviewed all applications for completeness and to confirm eligibility (refer to Appendix C for CSLP description). An interdepartmental staff team then conducted a detailed review and assessed the proposed scope of work based on safety and structural needs. In summary, the grants support capital work that ranges from structural repairs, façade rehabilitation, and other capital upgrades to ensure building longevity and safety.

In order to advance the economic revitalization of the neighbourhood, staff recommends an allocation of \$35,000 to the VCMA to support VCMA's strategic planning and build their capacity to continue supporting Chinatown's heritage businesses (refer to Appendix B for project description). The VCMA proposal aligns with the following goals of the SEP: a) attract and prevent the displacement of heritage and community-serving businesses, cultural organizations, non-profit organizations and social enterprises in the DTES and other commercial areas; and b) enhance the capacity of the small business sector to adapt to the current business environment and improve operations (refer to Appendix E). This project furthers the implementation of the SEP, alongside other SEP grant allocations previously approved by Council in 2022 that are underway.

As part of a due diligence process, staff worked closely with staff administering other City grant programs to maximize the collective impact of the City's investments. At the end of the grant cycle, grantees are required to complete a report outlining the outcomes of the project and submit invoices showing how City funds were spent.

### **Financial Implications**

A total of 10 grants totaling \$685,113 in allocations are recommended for the CSLP. Funding will come from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget in the *2019-2022 Chinese Society Legacy Program*, and distributions are based upon available funding. The total combined project costs amount to approximately \$2.5 million. The recommendation in this report represents the final round of grant allocations for this program.

Upon completion of the CSLP, the need for full-scale rehabilitation of Society heritage buildings will remain. The costs for this work exceed the financial limitations of the CSLP. Adequately addressing full rehabilitation will require advocacy to other levels of government, community fundraising, and possible future Capital Plan allocations. All possible future allocations will require Council approval.

A total of \$35,000 is recommended to continue supporting the implementation of the SEP in its second year. This initiative is funded from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget in the 2023 Multi-Year DTES Special Enterprise Program.

### **Legal Implications**

Council is authorized to provide money grants in compliance with section 206 of the Vancouver Charter.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**CHINESE SOCIETY LEGACY PROGRAM 2023 GRANTS (RECOMMENDED)**

No	Organization	Project Description	Amount Requested
1	May Wah Hotel 美華旅店	Rehabilitation of flooring, staircase, and building envelope to preserve the historical significance and provide a more comfortable living experience for residents.	\$75,000
2	Lim Sai Hor Kow Mock 林西河總堂九牧公所	Repairs to the water servicing line and sprinklers as part of a Conservation Plan for the building.	\$75,000
3	Chin Wing Chun Tong 陳穎川總堂	Emergency structural repairs to the back façade of the building.	\$75,000
4	Yue Shan Society 禺山總公所	Repairs to the walls and flooring of 2 commercial units.	\$75,000
5	Cheng Wing Yeong Tong 鄭榮陽總堂	Removal of loose brick and the replacement of exterior windows and skylights. Additionally, roof repairs and resealing will be done to ensure moisture protection.	\$75,000
6	Wong's Benevolent Association - Hon Hsing Athletic Club 黃氏宗親總會 - 漢升體育會	Façade stabilization and light well upgrades to restore principle heritage character. Work will include masonry repointing, sheet metal and brick repair, structural bracing, as well as removal of deteriorated materials.	\$75,000
7	Wong's Benevolent Association 黃氏宗親總會	Collaborative project with the Chinese Benevolent Association. A consultant will be used to assess building needs. Work will include short term stability repairs and long term planning.	\$75,000
8	Chinese Benevolent Association 中華會館	Collaborative project with the Wong's Benevolent Association. A consultant will be used to assess building needs. Work will include short term stability repairs and long term planning.	\$75,000
9	Yee Fung Toy Society 加拿大余風采堂	Bathroom renovations to address waterproofing and accessibility needs for individuals using mobility devices.	\$30,708
10	Mah Society of Canada 加拿大馬氏宗親會	Address SRO safety and heritage building preservation. Work will include rear fire escape remediation, basement foundation wall leak remediation, and upper floor ceiling repairs.	\$54,405
<b>Total Amount</b>			<b>\$685,113</b>

**CHINESE SOCIETY LEGACY PROGRAM 2023 GRANTS (NOT RECOMMENDED)**

<b>No</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
1	Lung Kong Kung Shaw 龍岡親義公所	Replacement of City water system and removal/disposal of asbestos containing materials.	Applicant building is a private limited company and therefore not an eligible heritage society building.	\$108,338
<b>Total Amount</b>				<b>\$108,338</b>

**APPENDIX B**  
**DTES SPECIAL ENTERPRISE PROGRAM 2023 (RECOMMENDED)**

<b>No</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
1	Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association	A strategic planning process to build the capacity of the organization; consultation with heritage businesses at risk of displacement to identify and propose key actions that support their retention	\$35,000
<b>Total Amount</b>			<b>\$35,000</b>

## APPENDIX C

### CHINESE SOCIETY LEGACY PROGRAM 2023 SUMMARY AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability Department is accepting applications for the 2023 Chinese Society Legacy Program. This Program supports urgent capital upgrades and small-scale rehabilitation of Society heritage buildings in Chinatown by providing matching grants between \$5,000 and \$75,000.

The objectives of this program are to:

- Rehabilitate the buildings to preserve the culture and traditions they support.
- Stabilize and repair affordable housing, if applicable, particularly for seniors.
- Strengthen the economy of Chinatown and enhance tourism by updating retail, commercial, and activity spaces.
- Foster the transfer of culture and traditions to younger generations.

#### 2. ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

We welcome applications from Chinese Societies with buildings on the Vancouver Heritage Register located in Chinatown:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cheng Wing Yeong Tong 鄭榮陽總堂</b><br/>79-83 East Pender St.</li> <li>• <b>Chin Wing Chun Tong 陳穎川總堂</b><br/>158 East Pender St.</li> <li>• <b>Chinese Benevolent Association</b><br/>中華會館<br/>104-108 East Pender St.</li> <li>• <b>Chinese Nationalist League</b><br/>中國國民黨駐加拿大總支部<br/>525 Gore Ave.</li> <li>• <b>Lim Sai Hor Kow Mock</b><br/>林西河總堂九牧公所<br/>525 Carrall St.</li> <li>• <b>Lung Kong Kung Shaw 龍岡親義公</b><br/>135 East Pender St.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mah Society of Canada</b><br/>加拿大馬氏宗親會<br/>137 East Pender St.</li> <li>• <b>May Wah Hotel 美華旅店</b><br/>258 East Pender St.</li> <li>• <b>Wong's Benevolent Association</b><br/>黃氏宗親總會<br/>27 East Pender St.<br/>121 East Pender St.</li> <li>• <b>Yee Fung Toy Society 加拿大余風采堂</b><br/>222-226 East Georgia St.</li> <li>• <b>Yue Shan Society 禺山總公所</b><br/>33-39 East Pender St.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|



In addition, organizations must:

- Be in good standing with the Register of Societies, be financially stable with sound administration, and have a proven track record of public service;
- Have an independent, active governing body composed of volunteers whose main responsibilities shall be program and policy development and fundraising.
- The Board is held responsible for the effectiveness of services provided and the financial accountability for funds received from all sources. Voting members of the Board of Directors of a Society may not be remunerated for services to the society, but they may be reimbursed for expenses.

### 3. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Matching grants are for capital upgrades and building rehabilitation. Project should focus on building improvements and extending the life of the building by improving its condition, which may include:

- Improvements to building assets, such as window or floor repairs, adjustments to fire safety, maintenance to amenity spaces, etc.;
- Building and/or façade upgrades for community economic development, enhancing social connections, etc.;
- Rehabilitation, structural and/or safety upgrades; and
- Projects are to be completed within one (1) year upon Council approval.\*

*\*Flexibility considered for time-sensitive, strategic projects with significant outcomes that align with the Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP), subject to City Council's final approval.*

Learn more here:

English: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/chinatown-cultural-heritage-assets-management-plan.pdf>

中文: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/chinatown-cultural-heritage-assets-management-plan-chinese.pdf>

**NOTE: Completed work, debts, or moveable assets are ineligible for funding.**

### 4. COST SHARING

The cost-sharing arrangement is meant to build capacity and leverage funding from other sources. Other funding sources could include government programs, the private sector, trusts, donations, co-operatives, applicant's own reserves and in-kind contributions.

- The City contribution (\$5,000 to \$75,000)\*\* will not exceed 50% of the total project cost. (Grant amounts may vary depending on number of applications received).
- Grants awarded by the City may not be used as matching funds for this grant.
- Applicants must share at least 50% of the total project cost.
- All funding does not need to be secured at the time of application. The applicant has up to one (1) year to raise funds and complete the project, upon Council approval.

\*\* For projects requiring grants exceeding \$75,000, please contact staff prior to submitting an application.

### 5. APPLICATIONS REVIEW & CITY COUNCIL DECISION

Application will be reviewed by staff, and organizations may be invited for an interview. Once all applications have been evaluated, staff will make grant recommendations to City Council. The final decision on grant approval is made by City Council.

Applications will be reviewed based on the following considerations:

- a. Organizations alignment: describe how the organization’s programs and services support the objectives of the Society Legacy Program (section 1);
- b. Project alignment: describe how the project contributes to objectives of the Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan objectives (page 36 - 42);
- c. Project outcomes: describe how the project will benefit the Society’s members and Chinatown community;
- d. Project budget: provide estimated revenues and expenses, including in-kind contributions. A contingency of up to 10% of total project budget may be included;
- e. Anticipated funding sources: list funding sources and amounts for matching contributions, noting those that have been confirmed; and
- f. Previous grants: list all previous grants received from the City, including year received, amount and outcomes.

## 6. GRANT PAYMENT

Following City Council approval of grant recommendations, grant disbursement terms will be outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and Letter of Understanding (LOU) agreement signed by the City and applying organization. The grant will be distributed in installments and will require at least one (1) project progress update and/or final report prior to the final payment.

A grant can only be paid after your organization has confirmed that all matching project financing and contributions are in place.

If an organization is unable to meet the conditions of the grant, including the agreed upon timeline, the project may be terminated, and funds disbursed to the organization returned to the City. Funds returned may be disbursed to meet other granting requests.

## 7. HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please follow these steps:

1. Complete and sign the application form, including all required supporting documentation.
2. Submit the application by either:
  - a) **Email:** Scan the signed form, save it as a PDF document and email it with the subject “2023 Chinese Society Legacy Program” to: [chinatown@vancouver.ca](mailto:chinatown@vancouver.ca)

**Or**

- b) **In person to:**  
City Hall, 453 West 12th Ave, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4  
Attention: Community Planning – Reconciliation and Cultural Change

*In person deliveries are accepted Monday to Friday, 9:00-4:00 pm.*

If you have questions about your application, please send an email to [chinatown@vancouver.ca](mailto:chinatown@vancouver.ca)

**APPENDIX D  
CHINATOWN CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT PLAN (PAGE V)  
THEMES AND GOALS**

<p><i>Theme 1</i> <b>A Diverse, Healthy, and Living Community</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 1:</b> Chinatown is a place of redress on unceded territories.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 2:</b> The shared history of Chinatown, Hogan’s Alley, and Paueru Gai, and the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities are recognized</p>
	<p><b>Goal 3:</b> Culturally appropriate and multilingual housing, services, and amenities are increased and improved.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 4:</b> Chinatown has a safe and equitable environment that serves local residents, encourages visitors, and supports public space activation.</p>
<p><i>Theme 2</i> <b>Cultural Heritage as the Foundation and Future</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 5:</b> Chinatown’s intangible cultural heritage is celebrated and supported.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 6:</b> Cultural heritage infrastructure, including Chinese Society buildings, is invested in, and City-owned assets are maximized as critical sites of intangible cultural heritage activities in Chinatown.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 7:</b> Cultural heritage values are centered in City by-laws, policies, guidelines, standards, and processes to better manage Chinatown as a coherent cultural heritage district.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 8:</b> Chinatown’s cultural heritage is celebrated and made visible in the public realm.</p>
<p><i>Theme 3</i> <b>A Cultural Heritage Economy</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 9:</b> A cultural heritage economy is developed and centred on Chinatown’s values and cultural food assets</p>
	<p><b>Goal 10:</b> Chinatown is highlighted as a cultural tourism destination for local, regional, and international visitors.</p>
<p><i>Theme 4</i> <b>Partnerships and Coordination</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 11:</b> Community-led assets management, advocacy, and coalition building are supported.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 11:</b> City departments are coordinated internally, and partnerships are developed with senior levels of governments in support of a future UNESCO application.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 12:</b> A national and global network of Chinatowns is established.</p>

**APPENDIX E  
SPECIAL ENTERPRISE PROGRAM (SUMMARY)**

1. <b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract and prevent the displacement of heritage and community-serving businesses, cultural organizations, non-profit organizations and social enterprises in the DTES and other commercial areas;</li> <li>• Enhance the capacity of the small business sector to adapt to the current business environment and improve operations; and</li> <li>• Assist property owners (non-profit/for-profit with a social mandate) in activating their vacant spaces with businesses or other activities that align with permitted uses, current policies and that respond to community needs.</li> </ul>	
2. <b>Location</b>	The DTES and Chinatown Historic Area.	
3. <b>Areas of focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable spaces;</li> <li>• Business supports;</li> <li>• Community-serving retail in Chinese Benevolent Society buildings.</li> </ul>	
4. <b>Business categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage businesses;</li> <li>• Community-serving and social enterprises;</li> <li>• Non-profit/For-profit properties with a social purpose.</li> </ul>	
5. <b>Type of supports</b>	<p align="center"><b>Business supports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and promotion methods</li> <li>• Succession planning Business practices and mentorships</li> <li>• Business development</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Space renovation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools, equipment, furnishings</li> <li>• Space design and layouts</li> <li>• Tenant improvements</li> <li>• Tenant curations</li> <li>• Tenant relocation</li> </ul>
6. <b>Eligibility Criteria</b>	<p align="center"><b>Heritage Businesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing and expressing the five identified cultural heritage values of Chinatown: celebrating our identities, caring for each other, positive change and prosperity, honouring heritage and memories, belonging to a living community;</li> <li>• Historic significance and length of operations in the area;</li> <li>• Expression and connection to contemporary or historic cultural heritage of Chinatown including specific domains of Intangible Cultural Heritage as defined by UNESCO: social and cultural practises (including performing arts), language, festivals and rituals, neighbourhood history, traditional craftsmanship, and knowledge of nature and universe.</li> <li>• Priority to Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) businesses (owned and operated).</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>Community-serving Businesses &amp; Social Enterprises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority to BIPOC enterprises (owned and operated);</li> <li>• Focus on mission driven businesses and enterprises that incorporate a social purpose into their strategy and operations;</li> <li>• Alignment with the CoV's plans and strategies: DTES Plan, the Social Impact Assessment, the Community Economic Development Strategy, the Culture Shift Plan and the Healthy City Strategy;</li> <li>• Contributing to local economic development, arts &amp; culture, etc.;</li> <li>• Community-serving characteristics with focus on serving vulnerable low-income residents (e.g. affordable, low cost groceries, etc.);</li> <li>• Details of local employment benefits;</li> <li>• Length of operations</li> </ul>	

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-profit/For-profit Properties with a Social Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Priority to BIPOC properties (owned);</li><li>• Focus on properties that incorporate cultural values, attributes, and a social purpose into their strategy and operations;</li><li>• Alignment with the CoV's plans and strategies: DTES Plan, the Social Impact Assessment, the Community Economic Development Strategy, the Culture Shift Plan and the Healthy City Strategy;</li><li>• Contributing to local economic development, arts &amp; culture, etc.;</li><li>• Length of operations.</li></ul>
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