



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: February 13, 2026
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Meeting Date: March 11, 2026
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TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: Chinatown Strategic Priority Grants

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve four strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 from the City's Operating Budget to the organizations and for the amounts outlined in this report, 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 this report 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 as outlined in this report.
- 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.

Approval of Recommendations A and B requires 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members per Section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval for a total of four Chinatown strategic priority grants, totaling \$387,000, to support ongoing implementation of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan. If approved, the grants would be funded by the City's Operating Budget. These amounts are included in the current 2026 Operating Budget, which was approved by Council in November

2025:

- *Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan (\$387,000)*
 - Chinatown BIA (\$150,000) – Ongoing implementation of the Graffiti Removal and Abatement Enhancement on Private Property Pilot Project;
 - Chinatown BIA (\$50,000) – Ongoing implementation and improvement of the Chinatown Safewalk pilot program;
 - Chinese Community Policing Centre (\$10,000) – Ongoing implementation of the Expanded Volunteer Graffiti Removal Program Pilot Project;
 - Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society (EMBERS) (\$177,000) – Ongoing implementation of the Chinatown Community Stewards Program as a pilot action.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- 2025 Draft Capital and Operating Budget ([RTS 17755](#), [November 25, 2025](#)): Mayor and Council approved the 2026 Operating Budget, which included funding to continue initiatives from the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan.
- Establishing a Chinatown Cultural District ([RTS 15529](#), [June 12, 2024](#)).
- Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan ([RTS 15432](#), [January 17, 2023](#)).

City Manager’s Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

On June 12, 2024, Council approved the *Chinatown Cultural District Framework* (“Framework”), which establishes a comprehensive approach to supporting the renewed vibrancy of the neighbourhood, including both economic and community development. The Framework incorporated key initiatives from the Council-approved Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, which consists of a series of actions and pilot projects related to cleaning and sanitation, graffiti abatement strategies and placemaking, and community supports in Chinatown.

Discussion

This report recommends four Chinatown strategic priority grants that are critical to the ongoing implementation of the Chinatown Cultural District Framework and the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, as they fund organizations working in partnership with the City to continue projects related to graffiti abatement/removal and community supports, and longer-term community-led projects that support key goals in the Chinatown Cultural District Framework.

The grants outlined in this report are already included in the 2026 Operating Budget, which was approved by Council in November 2025.

Recommendation A: Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Strategic Priority Grants - \$387,000

If approved by Council, Uplifting Chinatown grants totaling \$387,000 will be distributed from the City Operating Budget to the following organizations:

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

The Chinatown BIA, similar to other BIAs across the city, has an established graffiti prevention and abatement program which supplements the City's public property graffiti removal by addressing graffiti on commercial private property within their boundaries.

In 2025, the Chinatown BIA continued to focus on preventative and abatement measures, including proactive identification of sites that are often tagged with graffiti, and supporting property owners and heritage associations with graffiti removal and abatement. The Chinatown BIA also collaborated with the Hastings Crossing BIA on graffiti removal at the 400-block of Carrall Street to transform a heavily impacted alleyway into a cleaner, safer, and more welcoming corridor for tourists, workers, and residents.

In 2026, private property graffiti removal will be delivered in two phases:

- Phase 1: Large-scale graffiti removal across multiple Chinatown alleyways (March to April); and
- Phase 2: Ongoing maintenance and monitoring to ensure sustained cleanliness (May to August).

In addition to the two phases of work and ongoing abatement measures, the Chinatown BIA will also focus on working with their vendors and property owners in light of the City's 24-hour graffiti removal bylaw coming into effect during the FIFA World Cup to ensure timely and efficient removals.

The pilot project will continue to track metrics including but not limited to: response times; types and size of graffiti removed; locations of graffiti, including repeat incidences; 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 – Ongoing Implementation and Improvement of the Safewalk Pilot Program (\$50,000)

The Safewalk program aims to support individuals who may require or request accompaniment to their desired location. In 2025, the emphasis was on supporting Chinese-speaking seniors living in the area, many of whom are low -income and face systemic and language barriers. The Chinatown BIA also focused on additional outreach measures including community education, media and PR campaigns, neighbourhood collaboration, and seniors outreach. The daytime Safewalk staff also serves as a Chinatown Ambassador to welcome visitors and answer questions about the neighbourhood's attractions and businesses.

In 2026, the Safewalk program will expand to provide additional member engagement with BIA members, and explore collaboration opportunities with other organizations to develop a Chinatown Ambassadors program during FIFA that will support visitors and tourism to the neighbourhood.

The pilot program will continue to 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. In 2026, the Chinatown BIA will also monitor and identify additional metrics, if applicable, during the FIFA World Cup period.

3. *Chinese Community Policing Centre (CCPC) – Ongoing Implementation of the Expanded Volunteer Graffiti Removal Program Pilot Project (\$10,000)*

The Chinese Community Policing Centre (CCPC) is located at 44 East Pender and operates a number of community outreach and safety-oriented programs. In 2025, the CPC volunteer graffiti removal program supported proactive graffiti removal, expediting response times, clean-up events, funding for supplies needed for ongoing graffiti removal, and graffiti prevention education. In 2026, the grant will continue to support graffiti removal program, and introduce graffiti removal shifts that will correspond with FIFA World Cup match days to help maintain an inviting atmosphere in Chinatown.

The pilot program will continue to 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.

4. *Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society (EMBERS) – Ongoing Chinatown Community Stewards Program (\$177,000)*

The Chinatown Community Stewards Program operates seven days per week to provide a visible and reliable stewardship presence in Chinatown for residents, businesses, and visitors. Stewards support cleanliness efforts, contribute to an improved sense of safety at storefronts and in public areas, and provide an additional resource to businesses.

In 2026, the Stewards program will continue to collaborate with other stakeholder organizations, businesses, and service providers to ensure that stewardship activities align with community priorities. Businesses have reported a preference for Stewards assistance due to quick response times and proactive approaches. The program's ability to respond in real time is important for addressing issues specific in Chinatown, particularly with ensuring storefronts are accessible to reduce operational impacts on businesses. The Chinatown Stewards program will bring an additional on-the-ground support to businesses and residents as visitors increase during the FIFA World Cup.

The program currently provides monthly reporting on neighbourhood trends and metrics, such as: storefront interactions and wellness check-ins; 311 reports submitted and supported; business requests for assistance; general community interactions and informal supports; number of requests and incidences addressed, number of calls to other agencies, number of issues identified for rapid response.

In 2026, the program will be operated solely by EMBERS after Eastside Works wound down operations in June 2025. Since June 2025, there has been no change in operations or impact on service delivery. The same staffing and operations model will be maintained through 2026 and 2027.

Next Steps

The Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan was incorporated into the 2026 Operating Budget to continue the pilot for another year, recognizing that continuation of program delivery would be necessary to support continued challenges facing the area especially during the FIFA World Cup. Staff will continue to support the Uplifting Chinatown Working Group (comprised of City staff and delivery partners) to ensure collaboration, streamlined delivery, and proactive and timely response.

Financial Implications

Staff are seeking Council approval of four strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 in support of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan and other initiatives to support key goals in the Chinatown Cultural District Framework. Sufficient funding for all four grant allocations were approved as a part of the 2026 Operating Budget. Funding sources and organizations receiving strategic priority grants are outlined in this report.

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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