

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

*For consideration at the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting on
July 15, 2026*

11. Sustaining Summer 2026 Festivals

Co-Submitted by: Councillor Kirby-Yung and Councillor Dominato

WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver hosts numerous festivals, cultural celebrations, and community events each year that contribute significantly to the social, cultural, and economic vitality of the city;
2. These festivals provide important opportunities for cultural expression, intercultural understanding, tourism, neighbourhood activation, local business activity, and community connection, while enhancing Vancouver's reputation as one of the world's most diverse and inclusive cities;
3. Many of Vancouver's festivals and cultural celebrations are organized and delivered by non-profit organizations that rely on a combination of government grants, corporate sponsorships, philanthropic contributions, fundraising activities, and community support to remain financially sustainable;
4. The 2026 operating environment presents extraordinary fundraising challenges for many non-profit organizations due to a convergence of factors, including increasing competition for corporate sponsorships, rising operating costs, economic uncertainty, changing philanthropic giving patterns, and constraints affecting traditional funding sources;
5. The delivery of major international events, including FIFA World Cup 2026 activities in Vancouver, has created an unusually competitive sponsorship and advertising environment, making it significantly more difficult for community festivals and cultural organizations to secure corporate support and fundraising revenues that have historically contributed to their operations;
6. Council recognizes that many established festivals and events are facing unique financial pressures in 2026 despite demonstrating strong public attendance, significant community benefit, and substantial volunteer support;
7. Greek Day on Broadway has served as a cornerstone celebration of Vancouver's Greek community for more than 50 years and attracts more than 100,000 attendees annually;
8. Lumière is a free, accessible, and uplifting public artworks festival that brings people and communities together through a series of small- and large-scale illuminated artworks and light-based projections accompanied by dynamic performances;

9. Carnaval del Sol is Western Canada's largest Latin American festival and celebrates the rich cultures, traditions, arts, and cuisines of Latin America while attracting more than 30,000 attendees annually;
10. Light Up Chinatown! celebrates the heritage, culture, and continuing vitality of Vancouver's historic Chinatown and typically attracts between 16,000 and 20,000 visitors over its two-day festival;
11. Indian Summer Festival is one of Canada's premier multidisciplinary arts festivals dedicated to the exceptional creativity of South Asian artists and the diversity of South Asian cultures and perspectives, and in 2025 attracted more than 19,000 attendees over ten days of programming;
12. Pista ng Bayan is one of British Columbia's longest-running Filipino cultural celebrations and a flagship event of Filipino Heritage Month. It brings together hundreds of residents from across Metro Vancouver to celebrate Filipino culture, arts, food, music, dance, and community contributions;
13. Gastown Sunday Set offers a weekly, car-free experience during the summer that includes entertainment, art and shopping;
14. The City of Vancouver has a longstanding practice of supporting community festivals and cultural events that provide broad public benefit, strengthen community connections, support local economic activity, and contribute to the cultural life of the city; and
15. Council recognizes that the circumstances facing many festival organizers in 2026 are exceptional and that one-time extraordinary assistance may be warranted to help ensure the successful delivery of key cultural events that provide substantial public benefit.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council approve one-time extraordinary grants from the City's 2026 Operating Budget, or another funding source deemed appropriate by the General Manager of Finance, to assist organizations facing extraordinary fundraising pressures in 2026:
 - i. \$60,000 to Latincover Cultural & Business Society for Carnaval del Sol 2026;
 - ii. \$40,000 to the Vancouver Chinatown Foundation for Light Up Chinatown 2026;
 - iii. \$40,000 to the Gastown Business Improvement Society (GBIS) for programming of the Water Street Sunday pedestrian zone 2026;
 - iv. \$30,000 to the Hellenic Canadian Congress of British Columbia for Greek Day on Broadway 2026;
 - v. \$30,000 to the Lumière Festival Vancouver Society (LFVS) for Lumière 2026;
 - vi. \$10,000 to Indian Summer Arts Society for the delivery of Indian Summer Festival programming and activities in 2026; and

- vii. \$10,000 to the United Filipino Canadian Associations in British Columbia (UFCABC) for Pista ng Bayan in Vancouver in 2026;

FURTHER THAT these grants are intended as one-time extraordinary funding recognizing the unique fundraising and sponsorship environment facing festival organizers in 2026 and shall not be interpreted as establishing an ongoing funding commitment or annual funding program.

- B. THAT Council declare that the extraordinary grants are in furtherance of the City's objectives of supporting culture, community engagement, local economic activity, and the health and welfare of residents, consistent with section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*;

FURTHER THAT no legal rights or obligations shall arise or be created by this resolution until grant agreements are executed by the City and the recipient organizations.

- C. THAT Council delegate authority to execute grant agreements containing terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services and consistent with the intent of this motion to the City Manager or their designate.

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