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**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"  
**Date:** 11/8/2023 11:25:32 AM  
**Subject:** Memo re: Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Implementation Update (RTS 15432 and 15683)  
**Attachments:** DCM - Memo (Council) - Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Implementation Update (RTS 15432 and 15683) (2023-11-07).pdf

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Good morning Mayor and Council,

Attached please find a memo which provides an update on the City's efforts in supporting Chinatown. A brief summary of the memo is below.

#### **Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Implementation**

The Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan has been implemented as a partnership between City departments, VPD and Chinatown partners (BIA, Chinese Community Policing Centre, and others). Select outcomes by end of July include:

- More than 9000 needles and 2000 garbage bags of litter collected through enhanced micro-cleaning
- More than 1000 volunteer hours of cleaning in 19 cleaning events (City and partner-led)
- More than 2000 feces collected through enhanced proactive cleaning, and comfort stations at Main and Hastings are now open 24/7
- ~600 incidences of graffiti removed
- ~1500 community and 125 business interactions by Chinatown Stewards, who provide supports for de-escalation, wellness checks, overdose responses and connecting to services
- Safewalk program implemented by the BIA

More initiatives and information can be found in the memo. Staff are reviewing and refining our approach with our partners, and will return in Q1-2024 with next steps.

#### **Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office` Satellite City Hall Office in Chinatown**

Office is open Monday to Friday 9-4 and includes:

1. Space for Mayor and Council to meet with community members
2. Staff with language ability to reduce language and mobility barriers for Chinatown residents and organizations in accessing City services, as well as support engagement and coordination of the City's efforts in Chinatown.

The office will soon also include seniors outreach workers to better support Chinese seniors.

#### **Parking**

Parking rate changes have been implemented as per Council direction. Staff continue to work on optimizing parking with regards to special zones (e.g. commercial loading) and parking supply.

If you require further information, please feel free to contact Ben Pollard at [ben.pollard@vancouver.ca](mailto:ben.pollard@vancouver.ca) or myself and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.

Best,

Sandra

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*The City of Vancouver acknowledges the unceded homelands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Seɬ//wítulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.*

**MEMORANDUM**

November 8, 2023

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC  
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office  
Trevor Ford, Interim Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Harrison Fleming, Director of Communications, Mayor's Office  
Patrice Impey, Chief Financial Officer & General Manager Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management  
Lon LaClaire, General Manager, Engineering Services  
Doug Smith, Acting General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability  
Deputy Chief Howard Chow, Vancouver Police Department  
Ben Pollard, Director, Business Planning and Project Support

FROM: Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Implementation Update

RTS #: 15432, 15683

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**PURPOSE**

This memo provides an update to Council on the implementation of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan and related initiatives, including the Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office and neighbourhood parking policies and practices in Chinatown.

Staff will report back to Council in Q1-2024 on overall progress, outcomes, achievements, and next steps associated with the Action Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

On January 17, 2023, Council approved in principle the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan ([RTS 15432](#)). 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.

On May 9, 2023, Council approved four (4) Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan strategic priority grants totaling \$387,000 ([RTS 15683](#)) to the Chinatown BIA, the Chinese Community Policing Centre, and EMBERS Eastside Works, who work in partnership with the City to implement pilot projects and initiatives identified in the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan.

## **DISCUSSION**

This section provides updates on the following:

1. Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Q2 Implementation Update
2. Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Planned Q3 Activities
3. Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office – Chinatown Satellite City Hall Office
4. Neighbourhood Parking Policies and Practices

### 1. Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan – Q2 Implementation Update

All pilot projects and initiatives in the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan were fully implemented in Q2. This section will provide an overview of the implementation and progress to end of Q2 across the three pillars (Cleaning and Sanitation, Graffiti Abatement, and Community Supports), as well as a brief overview of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Metrics Dashboard.

To ensure a comprehensive approach, the City convened the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Working Group to provide a comprehensive approach which includes representatives from City departments, VPD, and community partners, with support from staff in the City Manager's Office. The working group meets weekly. A full list of the Working Group membership can be found in Appendix A.

### PILLAR 1: Cleaning and Sanitation

Cleaning and sanitation services in Chinatown are primarily delivered by the City's Sanitation Services crews, and base service levels include lane flushing, abandoned waste collection, street sweeping, emptying of public waste bins, and loose litter collection. This core work is supplemented by micro-cleaning and feces collection work provided by non-profit organizations (United We Can, Coast Mental Health Foundation, Mission Possible) under the City's Street Cleaning Grant program.

Through the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, the following public realm cleanliness initiatives have been added through Engineering Services, and partnerships with other organizations including the Chinese Community Policing Centre, EMBERS Eastside Works, and the Vancouver Police Department.

City of Vancouver Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced daytime cleaning including sidewalk sweeping, scrubbing, power washing, and additional litter collection.</li> <li>• Installing and servicing an additional 15 public waste bins.</li> <li>• Leading monthly neighbourhood clean-up events and supporting community-led clean-up events in Chinatown</li> <li>• City Street Cleaning Grant:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proactive feces collection increased to 5 days a week (Monday to Friday)</li> <li>○ Micro-cleaning shifts (daily collection of litter and needles on foot using brooms, shovels, and wheeled garbage carts) increased to 13 times per week.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Chinese Community Policing Centre	Participation and partnering in monthly City-led neighbourhood clean-up events, volunteer recruitment and management, as well as leading additional neighbourhood clean-up events and outreach events. Partnered with youth organizations and non-profits of the lower mainland. Members of the general public can sign up to volunteer.
EMBERS Eastside Works	As a part of the Chinatown Stewards Program, Stewards report cleaning and sanitation-related issues to 311 and/or the appropriate community partner for service response.
Vancouver Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting monthly neighbourhood clean-up events by sending officers and cadets.</li> <li>• Bridging the gap and voicing concerns from merchants directly to the members on the Uplifting Chinatown Working Group in regards to sanitation-related issues.</li> <li>• Encouraging merchants to report any street cleanliness issues.</li> </ul>

**Key Highlights:**

- The daytime enhanced cleaning program delivered by City Sanitation Services, was started in May 2023
- The 15 additional waste bins were installed in June 2023
- The City has led six neighbourhood clean-up events since April with a total of 574 volunteer hours of cleaning. The City also supported an additional 13 clean-up events this year organized and led by other local groups, including the Chinese Community Policing Center, resulting in an additional 494 volunteer clean-up hours.
- 2,124 feces collections were completed from April – July, 2023
- 9,042 needles and 2,089 garbage bags of litter were collected through the City’s Street Cleaning grant micro-cleaning program from April-July 2023.

**PILLAR 2: Graffiti Abatement Strategies**

Graffiti abatement strategies are a collaboration between the City, the Chinatown BIA, the Chinese Community Policing Centre, and the Vancouver Police Department. This

collaboration is foundational to addressing the diverse incidents and locations of graffiti incidences in Chinatown.

City of Vancouver, Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of graffiti on all public property and public assets.</li> <li>• Free paint program for Vancouver property owners and tenants.</li> <li>• Businesses, residents, and the general public can report incidences to 311 for service response.</li> <li>• Hate graffiti is removed by the City’s contractor, Goodbye Graffiti.</li> </ul>
Chinatown BIA	Continuation and enhancement of Chinatown BIA contract with Mission Possible for graffiti removal on private property, including collection and reporting of data on type of graffiti incidences and locations.
Chinese Community Policing Centre	Ongoing Volunteer Graffiti Removal Program, which recruits and trains volunteers on graffiti removal techniques and works with businesses to remove incidences.
Vancouver Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-established Graffiti Investigator position, allowing effective communication between community, CoV, and VPD on graffiti related issues.</li> <li>• The Graffiti Investigator works closely with VPD Hate Crime Investigators to identify and charge offenders where graffiti is motivated by hate, bias or prejudice. The Graffiti investigator is also supported by the Investigative Division, on files that require additional resources.</li> <li>• Observed that hate graffiti is vastly underreported and being cleaned up before VPD has the opportunity to investigate. As a result, VPD worked with City to create a Hate Graffiti Reporting Process Pilot Project for various organizations within Chinatown to ensure that hate graffiti in Chinatown is being reported and investigated by VPD.</li> <li>• Collaborated with CoV Bylaw staff to update and streamline the City’s graffiti bylaw ticket process.</li> <li>• Led the graffiti clean-up on the Ho-Ho and Beijing heritage buildings in Chinatown.</li> <li>• Supported June 17 City Beautification Day.</li> </ul>

Staff and the Working Group continue to monitor and assess impacts of the graffiti abatement strategies in the Action Plan to identify improvement areas and new opportunities, including:

- Identifying properties with repeated incidences of graffiti and abatement strategies;
- Graffiti incidences above ground level on upper levels;
- Opportunities to expedite graffiti removal on private property, such as a process to obtain pre-approval from property owners, business, and/or tenants to allow Mission Possible to remove graffiti without obtaining prior consent per incident.

*Key Highlights:*

- 262 incidences of graffiti removed by Chinatown BIA’s contractor between June and July 2023
- 213 incidences of graffiti removed by Chinese Community Policing Centre volunteers between March and July 2023

- Chinese Community Policing Centre’s Volunteer Graffiti Removal Program has temporarily pivoted from reactive graffiti removal to supporting awareness and public education of graffiti abatement strategies. This was due to a significant decrease in graffiti incidents during the summer time. CCPC now incorporates a mix of both proactive and reactive approach to responding to graffiti incidences by increasing outreach, and implementing future workshop opportunities to businesses. As well, continuing existing program mandates by recruiting, training and involving internal and external volunteer participation.
- BC Hydro completed a one-time cleaning of nearly 100 tagged wooden poles in Chinatown to support the City’s efforts.

PILLAR 3: Community Supports

Community supports in the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan are led by the City in collaboration with the Chinatown BIA and EMBERS Eastside Works and the Vancouver Police Department. The City has provided grant funding to community support initiatives in addition to supporting design and implementation.

City of Vancouver, Engineering Services	Comfort stations at Main and Hastings now operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Chinatown BIA	Implementation and operation of a pilot Safewalk program, including marketing of the program, producing print and web promotional materials, and hiring staff.
EMBERS Eastside Works	Continuation of the Chinatown Community Stewardship Program, which hires local DTES residents to act as community stewards in Chinatown. Stewards act as liaisons to support business and residents, and provide support for de-escalation and connecting needs to other Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan initiatives and organizations.
Vancouver Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigned additional patrols in Chinatown to help manage social disorder issues that merchants, community, and visitors are facing.</li> <li>• Introduced VPD’s diversity liaison officer to merchants, in order to have a more direct impact on the safety and cleanliness of Chinatown.</li> <li>• Active foot patrols in Chinatown as well as engaging with local merchants to understand their concerns and to obtain feedback.</li> <li>• Interacting with residents/merchants to increase public/community engagement.</li> <li>• Increasing police resourcing and focusing on public safety activities (e.g. pop-up public safety tents, public forums, Zoom meetings) to enhance public safety for the community.</li> <li>• Continuing to raise awareness on public safety and crime concerns, to inform and reassure the public.</li> <li>• Served as a resource for Chinatown BIA’s community SafeWalk program and informed merchants and encouraged the use of the SafeWalk program.</li> <li>• Educated merchants on when to contact the police and when to contact COV via 311.</li> <li>• Educated and promoted the use of reporting via 311 app.</li> </ul>

### *Key Highlights:*

- Business interactions for community stewards experienced a significant increase in May (28 interactions), June (40 interactions), and July (57 interactions) with a 10 minutes average response time.
- Stewards averaged 436 community interactions per month between May and August. This is a summary of wellness checks, overdose responses, assisting tourists, offering assistance, and connecting to services (paramedics, cooling centres).
- Starting to see an uptake in the Safewalk program in August. Chinatown BIA continues to spread information about the program and create new materials for businesses to circulate. An increase in usage is expected in the fall when there are less daylight hours and students return to the Vancouver Film School.

### Metrics Dashboard

A dashboard has been published to track the Action Plan's progress and impacts across each of the three work streams. City Engineering Services, Chinatown BIA, EMBERS Eastside Works, and Chinese Community Policing Centre collect data for programs and initiatives that they are responsible for executing or managing. Depending on the type of data, the dashboard is updated live, monthly, or quarterly.

The Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan Dashboard can be accessed online at <https://opendata.vancouver.ca/pages/uplifting-chinatown/>. The dashboard will only run for the duration of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan.

### 2. Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan –Q3 Activities

Activities for Q3 include continued monitoring and undertaking analysis and evaluation of Action Plan pilot projects and initiatives. This will include but is not limited to: data analysis; conducting surveys with Chinatown residents, businesses, and non-profit and community organizations; and focus groups and/or interviews with key stakeholders.

Staff will also work with the Working Group to evaluate overall program effectiveness, implementation success and challenges, and recommendations for next steps. This may include exploring new initiatives and/or pilot projects as a part of a future phase of work. This evaluation will be included in the planned Q1 2024 staff report back to Council.

### 3. Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office – Satellite City Hall Office in Chinatown

The Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office is located at 112 Keefer Street and officially opened on July 21, 2023. The office is intended to be a satellite office for Mayor and Council to meet with community members, and to reduce language and mobility barriers for Chinatown residents and organizations in accessing city services. The satellite office also serves as an office space for staff who are coordinating the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan and related community engagement activities, and will have also have seniors outreach workers



#### 4. Neighbourhood Parking Policies and Practices

On March 10, 2023, Council approved changes to on-street parking meter fees in Chinatown to set parking meter fees at \$2 per hour from 9 AM to 10 PM, as a pilot until December 31, 2024 ([RTS 15629](#)). This pilot reduces the cost of parking on the most expensive blocks in Chinatown and provides clear and consistent pricing to customers, regardless of where or when they park in the neighbourhood. The \$2 parking meter fee went into effect on June 1, 2023. Staff are monitoring on-street parking meter use, and will provide an update in Q1-2024 as part of the overall Uplifting Chinatown report back to Council.

Staff continue to review and adjust on-street special zones in Chinatown to improve loading opportunities for commercial vehicles and increase parking supply. This may include relocating, consolidating or adding new zones, or having curb space be used for different purposes over the course of a day. To date, a passenger zone on Gore Ave has been converted into a loading zone to better meet the needs of adjacent businesses, and staff are exploring adjustments to the tour bus zone on Keefer St.

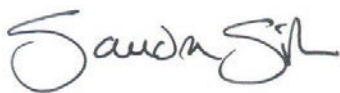
Staff supported the convening of a meeting on June 1, 2023 between representatives from EasyPark, the Chinatown BIA, and the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association to discuss possible community partnerships to encourage and incentivize use of the Chinatown Plaza parkade.

#### **NEXT STEPS AND FINAL REMARKS**

As the 2023 Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan is a pilot project, staff will return to Council in Q1-2024 with a report back on overall progress, outcomes, achievements, next steps, and recommendations in collaboration with the Working Group.

As a part of the 2024 budget process, staff will be working with departments to ensure existing initiatives in the Action Plan are included in the draft 2024 operating budget.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact Ben Pollard at [ben.pollard@vancouver.ca](mailto:ben.pollard@vancouver.ca) and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.



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## APPENDIX A

### 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. Engineering (Public Space and Street Use)
  - d. Finance and Performance Measurement
2. Vancouver Police Department
3. Community Partners
  - a. Vancouver Chinatown BIA
  - b. Chinese Community Policing Centre
  - c. EMBERS Eastside Works