

From: "Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>

To: "[Direct to Mayor and Council - DL](#)"

Date: 9/15/2025 4:27:00 PM

Subject: Update: Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office Operations

Attachments: CMO - SPSO - Memo (Council) - 112 Keefer Update - 2025-09-15.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached please find a memo providing operational updates at the Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office (112 Keefer St) in Chinatown. Key information includes:

- In Fall 2023, SPSO established a partnership with ACCS Homelessness Services (HS) Outreach team to enhance delivery of City services in response to the types of requests and inquiries that staff received. Day-to-day client services and outreach supports are now provided by the ACCS Homelessness Services (HS) Outreach team, including assistance with housing, income, identification, and language supports in Cantonese and Mandarin.
- SPSO will continue to coordinate Councillor visits and work with staff across City departments to address neighbourhood concerns as intended. The Civic Office also continues to respond to members of the public who may have questions about City services and provides a critically-needed service for the community in Chinatown.
- Appendix A provides an overview of the total number of visits, demographics of visitors, and top inquiry and assistance topics requested by visitors. In 2025, the average number of visits has increased to 119 per month, with visitors being primarily seniors of Asian descent.

The Civic Office is equipped with a small boardroom that can accommodate up to five people and is fully set up for hybrid or virtual meetings. Councillor Assistants can email chinatown@vancouver.ca to book the space.

Please do not hesitate to email me if you have any questions and staff will respond through the weekly Q&As.

Thank you,
Sandra

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges the unceded homelands of the x m k y m (Musqueam), S wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

September 15, 2025

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief of External Relations
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Margaret Wittgens, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

FROM: Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office (112 Keefer St): Operational Update

RTS #: N/A

PURPOSE

This memo provides an update to Council on the management and day-to-day operations of the Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office ("Civic Office") located at 112 Keefer Street.

BACKGROUND

On January 17, 2023, Council approved in principle the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan ([RTS 15432](#)) including the establishment of a satellite City office in Chinatown. The office is strategically located at 112 Keefer Street within Chinatown Plaza, providing visible and accessible street-level access for community members who may require support or information from staff. Its location also offers a dedicated space for the Mayor and Councillors to engage directly with the community.

DISCUSSION

The Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office was established in July 2023 to provide a presence in Chinatown and respond to needs in the area, including Chinese language access supports. In Fall 2023, SPSO established a partnership with ACCS Homelessness Services (HS) Outreach team to enhance delivery of City services in response to the types of requests and inquiries that staff received. To ensure optimal service delivery, day-to-day client services and outreach supports are now provided by the ACCS Homelessness Services (HS) Outreach team, including assistance with housing, income, identification, and language supports in Cantonese and

Mandarin. The Civic Office also continues to respond to members of the public who may have other questions about City services.

Most community members visiting the office speak Cantonese or Mandarin with limited or no English proficiency. Commonly requested services include assistance in securing or maintaining housing, support with income assistance applications, and help obtaining personal identification, often requiring all these services concurrently. There are also visitors who travel from other parts of the city to access language supports available at the Civic Office.

This partnership ensures that the Civic Office remains responsive and provides a service that responds to specific needs in the community. Since the establishment of this partnership, the Civic Office has experienced an increase in visits per month. In 2024, there was an average of 78 visits per month. In 2025, the average number of visits has increased to 119 per month, with visitors being primarily seniors of Asian descent. Statistics can be found in Appendix A.

NEXT STEPS

SPSO will retain overall management of the Civic Office, maintain a regular presence and liaise with the ACCS HS Outreach team, and coordinate Councillor visits. The ACCS HS Outreach team will provide day-to-day staffing of the Civic Office including client services and traditional outreach supports. ACCS continues to track monthly service statistics, which will help monitor demand, identify trends, and guide service adjustments as needed.

The Civic Office is available to Councillors for community engagement and meetings. The office includes a small boardroom that accommodates up to five people and is fully set up to accommodate virtual or hybrid meetings. Councillor Assistants can book the meeting room by emailing chinatown@vancouver.ca.

FINAL REMARKS

The Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office continues to be an effective resource in Chinatown and provides a critically-needed support in the community for Chinese seniors and those seeking language access support in Cantonese and Mandarin.

If Council requires further information, please contact me directly and I will work with Departments on a coordinated response through the weekly Q&As.

Sincerely,



Sandra Singh
Deputy City Manager

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APPENDIX A Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office Statistics

Visitor Demographics Overview

The following table provides a snapshot of key demographic data for individuals visiting the office. It includes the total number of visits, the primary languages spoken by visitors, and their average age. This information supports the decision to transition operations to the Housing and Homelessness Services outreach team, ensuring alignment with the needs and profiles of the individuals being served.

Total # Visits (November 2023 to August 2025)	1940
November to December 2023	51
January to December 2024	938
January to August 2025	951
% Supported by Homelessness Services	95%

Demographics (November 2023-August 2025)	
Language Preferred During Visit*	
<i>*Language that service is provided in may differ from language preferred.</i>	
Cantonese	71%
Mandarin	19%
English	7%
Other	3%
Age	
Average Age	68

Top Inquiry Topics (November 2023 – August 2025)

- Housing: Staff aid in finding housing options and provide support with the application and move-in process.
- Community resources: Staff provide referrals to emergency shelters for a place to sleep, wash, and eat.
- Service Canada-related matters: Staff assist community members in securing an income through federal benefits, including applications for income assistance, employment insurance, pensions.
- Access to health services: Assistance to obtain identification, including applying for and safely storing identification.
- Canada Revenue Agency-related matters: Assistance to reach the CRA and provide contextual information to obtain clarifying information or resolve matters.

Demonstrating Impact

The importance of the Won Alexander Cumyow Civic Office is best illustrated through the direct and meaningful support provided to vulnerable residents. For example, the team assisted a 100

year-old Chinese woman who was living alone with no family support and was resistant to moving into assisted living, despite clear safety concerns. Through multiple visits, the team built trust, helped her complete a wide range of applications to obtain identification and essential documents, and ultimately supported her transition into safe seniors' housing, including coordinating the move itself. The team continues to check in on her regularly to ensure she remains well-supported and connected.

Without this intervention, she likely would have remained in an unsafe living situation, at significant risk of injury, isolation, and further decline in health. This case highlights the critical role the office plays in reaching isolated community members, building relationships over time, and connecting them to essential services that would otherwise remain out of reach.