



Report Date: May 10, 2022  
Contact: Helen Ma  
Belle Cheung  
Contact No.: 604.873.7919  
604.829.9572  
RTS No.: 13710  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: June 8, 2022  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services

FROM: General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (PDS)  
General Manager Arts, Culture and Community Services (ACCS)

SUBJECT: Chinatown Transformation: Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan  
(CHAMP) Strategic Framework and UNESCO World Heritage Site Process

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council adopt the Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) Strategic Framework, co-created with the Council-appointed Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG), as presented in Appendix A.
- B. THAT, subject to the approval of Recommendation A, Council direct staff to report back in 2023 with an implementation plan that includes:
  - finalized strategies and actions, including a comprehensive financial and delivery strategy;
  - a recommendation on the future of the LSG; and
  - a schedule for on-going monitoring and progress report to Council.
- C. THAT Council instruct staff to initiate the process to have Chinatown ready for the next update of the National Tentative List, beginning in January 2027, as part of Chinatown's pursuit of a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides a summary progress update on the initial phase (Phase One, 2018 to 2021) of Chinatown Transformation work. The report further recommends Council's adoption of the Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) Strategic Framework, and seeks

Council's direction for staff to work with the community on an implementation plan as part of Phase Two (2022 to 2028). Lastly, the report seeks Council's direction to initiate a process for Chinatown to be ready for the next National Tentative List review, which will begin in January 2027. Being on the National Tentative List is a prerequisite for a future UNESCO World Heritage Site application.

### ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

- Equity Framework (2021)
- *Spaces to Thrive: Vancouver's Social Infrastructure Strategy* (2021)
- Vancouver Heritage Program (2020)
- *Culture|Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture* (2019)
- *Making Space for Arts and Culture* (2019)
- Vancouver Music Strategy (2019)
- Amendments to the Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule, Design Guidelines and Policies (2018)
- Northeast False Creek Plan (2018)
- Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver and Apology (2017 & 2018)
- Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan (2014)
- City of Reconciliation Framework (2014)
- Healthy City Strategy (2014)
- Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Revitalization Strategy (2012)
- Chinatown Vision Directions (2002)

### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

### ***REPORT***

#### ***Background/Context***

Vancouver Chinatown and the areas surrounding it were built on—and remain to this day—the unceded traditional and ancestral territory of xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

Vancouver Chinatown is often regarded as the physical and symbolic heart of the Chinese Canadian resistance against racism and erasure. Vancouver Chinatown embodies for young and old a sense of meaning and emotion, both in the physical manifestation of its historical heritage buildings, and the intangible cultural heritage of its daily life, as a living community. Its rich cultural heritage and long history are inseparable from its efforts to confront and overcome discrimination. Chinatown evokes powerful memories of connection and resilience that transcend boundaries of geography, race, and class, and adds to the rich diversity of the cultural fabric of Vancouver and its complex identity as a city and community.

In April 2018, Vancouver City Council delivered a formal apology for historical discrimination against people of Chinese descent. Council adopted actions across three work areas to give meaning to the apology. The Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT) is a cross-departmental

staff team established to undertake these actions in partnership with the community. The three work areas are:

Area A: Establish a Legacy Working Group to guide actions on cultural redress

Area B: Continue education and outreach with Vancouverites on anti-racism

Area C: Conserve, commemorate and enhance living heritage and cultural assets with a focus on Chinatown. This area includes:

1. Preparing a Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan as part of the application;
2. Redesigning Chinatown Memorial Square; and
3. Initiating a process towards a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation for Chinatown.

The Chinatown Transformation work has provided an opportunity for the City to repair its relationships with Chinatown communities. During Phase One (2018-2022), the CTT and the Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) worked together to identify the community's values, priorities and challenges. Phase One culminates in the Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) Strategic Framework, which identifies a unified vision for Chinatown's future.

Chinatown is at a critical time in its history. The COVID-19 pandemic has surfaced alarming rates and incidences of anti-Asian racism, and worsened the impacts of poverty, homelessness, and challenges facing low-income people and Chinese seniors. Many businesses have closed, including cultural heritage shops and restaurants. Key cultural facilities face recurrent vandalism.

Just as previous generations fought for Chinatown's survival, this current generation is fighting to ensure Chinatown and its rich cultural heritage are sustained for future generations. This work honours Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside's long and shared history of struggle against racial discrimination and displacement, and charts a future that is rooted in principles of resilience, inclusion, and equity.

## ***Strategic Analysis***

The recommendations in this report aim to strengthen and support Chinatown's cultural heritage assets for future generations. This vision, as well as key goals and strategies, are summarized in the Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) Strategic Framework.

Chinatown requires support and investment now more than ever. Continuing Chinatown Transformation work and implementing the CHAMP Strategic Framework are important parts of the City's commitment towards cultural redress, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and equity. Preparing Chinatown for the next federal National Tentative List review is a required step in the process towards a UNESCO World Heritage Site application. If successful, Vancouver's Chinatown will be the first Chinatown in the world to receive such international recognition.

Area A: Establish a Legacy Working Group to guide actions on cultural redress

*The Legacy Stewardship Group*

Building trust and repairing the City's relationships with communities in Chinatown are critical first steps to cultural redress work. As such, a cornerstone of CTT's work has been to establish and work with the Council-appointed Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG).

LSG currently includes 32 members representing diverse community members and organizations. The main roles of LSG are to guide and undertake pilot community actions and to provide advice to staff on the CHAMP Strategic Framework. LSG represents a diverse body of perspectives, viewpoints, and priorities for Chinatown. This diversity is a key strength of LSG, and it is not expected that LSG provide one singular and cohesive voice as all communities are complex. LSG provides a platform for stakeholders who may not otherwise work with each other on a regular basis to discuss and share different viewpoints on different issues. Through working with LSG, CTT has supported this community-led process to work with community stakeholders and organizations in determining Chinatown's future, particularly as it relates to cultural heritage assets and unaddressed or emerging community needs.

LSG's leadership and advocacy have been and continue to be instrumental in developing renewed directions for the community, including: advocating for equitable access to support for Chinese seniors, promoting intangible heritage as the future of the community, and leading the development of a community-led approach to manage cultural heritage assets. Since 2019, LSG has developed the CHAMP Strategic Framework together with CTT and led eight pilot projects that begin to address some of the highest priority community needs.

LSG's priorities for the remainder of 2022 include guiding CTT on the development of the implementation plan for the CHAMP Strategic Framework and continuing to lead priority community projects. A full list of community and LSG-led projects, as well as LSG's terms of reference and membership, are included in the CHAMP Strategic Framework in Appendix A.

#### Area B: Education and Outreach on Anti-racism

Part of the Chinatown Transformation work included continuing education and outreach with Vancouverites on anti-racism. From 2018 to mid-2021, CTT staff was the liaison on the City's Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee and supported discussions on Council motions related to cultural redress and anti-racism, including the apology to the South Asian community. CTT staff also served as a liaison with Provincial and Federal governments on anti-racism initiatives and attended a community forum on anti-racism. The Arts, Culture and Community Services (ACCS) department also sponsored the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP) from 2014 to 2020.

This work is now led by the Anti-Racism and Cultural Redress team within Social Policy and Projects of ACCS. CTT staff will continue to work closely with this team to ensure alignment of strategic priorities and in development of the CHAMP Strategic Framework implementation plan.

#### Area C: Conserve, commemorate and enhance living heritage and cultural assets with a focus on Chinatown.

##### *1. The Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) Strategic Framework*

The CHAMP Strategic Framework is the first plan of its kind in Vancouver that is built on a cultural redress approach. This document is the product of three years of collaboration with the Legacy Stewardship Group and its six working groups. It reflects the shared aspirations and

priorities for Chinatown as identified by the many stakeholders, with the City as one of those stakeholders. The Strategic Framework synthesizes these aspirations into a unified vision:

*To honour Chinatown and the neighbouring areas' shared history and experiences of racism and resilience by strengthening and sustaining cultural heritage assets for future generations.*

Chinatown's and the surrounding neighbourhoods' shared histories and experiences of racism, discrimination, loss, displacement, and resilience are expressed and continued through the area's many cultural heritage assets. By supporting these assets, the CHAMP Strategic Framework ultimately supports sustaining the community's values, way of life, and legacy of confronting racism and discrimination.

In Chinatown, examples of notable tangible and intangible cultural heritage that are an integral part of this living community include the Chinese Society heritage buildings, Chinese diaspora dialects, culinary heritage, as well as the community's many traditions, rituals and celebrations, such as the Lunar New Year festivities. The Chinese Cultural Centre, the Chinese Canadian Military Museum, and the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden are also key City-supported cultural institutions. The majority (97%) of assets are owned by the community, including private property owners, business owners, non-profit organizations, and Chinese clan societies. With this ownership pattern, coordination and partnerships across stakeholders are key to successful assets management.

Parts of Chinatown and a number of buildings are designated as historic areas and sites. However, Chinatown's intangible heritage assets remain unrecognized and under-supported. Many of Chinatown's needs, including adequate investments in cultural heritage programming and infrastructure, and support to senior residents, remain unaddressed. The CHAMP Strategic Framework centers cultural heritage in all work for Chinatown, and finds new ways to protect and promote cultural heritage assets.

The implementation of the CHAMP Strategic Framework is dependent on multiple partners, including all levels of governments, non-profit organizations, philanthropic foundations, property and business owners, and residents, taking concerted efforts together. With this understanding of partnership, the City will need to continue to play important leadership and implementation roles as in areas directly related to the City's mandate.

The CHAMP Strategic Framework includes thirteen priority goals across four themes.

### **Theme 1: A Diverse, Healthy, and Living Community**

- Goal 1: Chinatown is established as a place of redress on unceded territories.
- Goal 2: 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.
- Goal 3: Culturally appropriate and multilingual housing, services, and amenities are increased and improved.
- Goal 4: Chinatown has a safe, clean, and equitable environment that serves local residents, encourages visitors, and supports public space activation.

## **Theme 2: Cultural Heritage as the Foundation and Future**

- Goal 5: Chinatown's intangible cultural heritage is celebrated and supported.
- Goal 6: 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.
- Goal 7: Cultural heritage values are centred in City by-laws, policies, guidelines, standards, and processes to better manage Chinatown as a coherent cultural heritage district.
- Goal 8: Chinatown's cultural heritage is celebrated and made visible in the public realm.

## **Theme 3: A Cultural Heritage Economy**

- Goal 9: A cultural heritage economy is developed and centered on Chinatown's values and cultural food assets.
- Goal 10: Chinatown is highlighted as a cultural tourism destination for local, regional, and international visitors.

## **Theme 4: Partnerships and Coordination**

- Goal 11: Community-led assets management, advocacy, and coalition building are supported.
- Goal 12: City departments are coordinated internally, and partnerships are developed with senior levels of government in support of a future UNESCO application.
- Goal 13: A national and global network of Chinatowns is established.

This document is prepared following UNESCO's recommended heritage management framework, called the Historic Urban Landscape, and serves as a foundational document for a future UNESCO World Heritage Site application. Pending Council's approval, CTT will work with LSG and the Chinatown community to develop the implementation plan.

### ***2. Chinatown Memorial Square Redesign***

Chinatown Memorial Square is a key cultural asset that serves as a physical reminder of the legacy and contributions of Chinese Canadian veterans and railroad workers. As one of the few public spaces in Chinatown, Memorial Square hosts important community events, draws visitors to the area, and provides a space for residents, seniors and visitors to gather and practice their cultural traditions. The redesign aims to improve this space to better serve the community.

The redesign process has begun and a Community Advisory Group has been formed to guide the work. Project vision and goals have been drafted with input from the Advisory Group and the public. A concept design for the Square is anticipated by 2023, with construction to follow.

### ***3. Initiating a process towards a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation for Chinatown.***

Chinatown work has generated widespread interest not only from within Chinatown and Chinese Canadian communities, but also beyond Vancouver. Since 2018, CTT has engaged over 16,600

people in over 370 meetings and events. CTT, with the support of its multi-lingual staff members, has led a multi-lingual engagement process, with a focus on reducing barriers for people who do not speak English. Engagement materials are provided in Chinese and English, and interpretation support is provided where feasible. A tremendous amount of community efforts and volunteer hours were dedicated to this work, demonstrating the opportunity and the need to continue to work together. For a list of community engagement activities, please refer to CHAMP Strategic Framework in Appendix A.

### **Community Engagement and the Chinatown Reimagined Community Forum**

In October 2021, the City of Vancouver, in partnership with the University of British Columbia, and supported by LSG and its working groups, hosted the Chinatown Reimagined community forum. This event provided a further opportunity for experts and community leaders from Asia and Chinatowns across North America to discuss shared challenges and community-led solutions. The forum shows that Vancouver has the opportunity to become an international leader by continuing its work in Chinatown and redress with cultural communities.

### **UNESCO World Heritage Site Process Overview and Status Update**

Pursuing a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) designation is a significant endeavour. The nomination of the site must have the support of the country's governments. In Canada, this means support by the municipal, provincial and federal governments. The site must also be placed on the National Tentative List, which is reviewed every ten years in a process administered by Parks Canada. The next review begins in January 2027, concluding with an updated list in 2028. Further, the site must also be a National Historic Site before it can be included on the National Tentative List.

An initiative of this importance and scale requires sustained efforts and significant investments by multiple partners and all levels of government. Based on other sites' experiences, this process could take a minimum of five to ten years. Considerations for a candidate site include an assessment of site integrity, authenticity and management, and protection. In summary, there are three areas of pre-requisites:

- National Historic Site status and inclusion on the National Tentative List;
- Completion of an Asset Management Plan and demonstrated progress in protection and management of site; and
- Community support.

Phase One work has made progress in meeting these pre-requisites. Achievements include:

- The City signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Province of British Columbia in 2018 to work together on Chinatown's UNESCO bid. The permanent site of the Provincial Chinese Canadian Museum is now located in Vancouver's Chinatown;
- The completion of the CHAMP Strategic Framework and over 30 community-led pilot projects to kick-start implementation; and

- Broad community engagement has begun, including at the Chinatown Reimagined Forum, to garner support towards moving forward with a UNESCO WHS application.

Pending Council's approval of Recommendation C, CTT will begin preparing Chinatown for the next National Tentative List review. This includes first applying to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to expand Chinatown's National Historic Site designation boundaries to include all of Chinatown, before the National Tentative List review begins in January 2027. This process will include consultation with property owners, businesses, residents, organizations and other stakeholders.

On April 13, 2022, City Council passed a motion requesting staff to report back on the increase in anti-Asian hate crimes, violent and property crime, vandalism, and theft in Chinatown, and specifically, the impacts this may have on Chinatown's pursuit of a UNESCO WHS application. Staff report back is included as Appendix B.

After Chinatown has been successfully accepted on the National Tentative List, the application to UNESCO can begin, marking Phase Three of the journey. A successful WHS nomination for Chinatown will provide international recognition for Vancouver, British Columbia, and Canada, and more importantly, honour the legacy of Chinese Canadians and support Chinatown's cultural heritage for future generations.

### Moving Forward: Phase Two Chinatown Transformation Work

Recommendations A and B are designed to move the Chinatown Transformation work into Phase Two (2022 to 2028). In parallel to developing an implementation plan and continuing to work on Chinatown Transformation with Chinatown communities, Recommendation C directs staff to continue preparation towards a UNESCO WHS application.

In addition to continuing work started in Phase One, Phase Two and the preparation towards a UNESCO WHS application place an emphasis on advancing Reconciliation by establishing Chinatown as a place of cultural redress on unceded territories of the three host Nations. Further outreach to senior levels of government to garner support and develop partnerships, and more engagement with communities are also important in Phase Two.

CTT will also work with LSG on the future of the Group, as their current term expires at the end of 2022. A recommendation on the future of LSG, and considerations of financial and staffing resources to best support Phase 2 work and the CHAMP Strategic Framework implementation will be included in CTT's report back to Council in 2023.

A number of key initiatives and changes in the area are relevant to the implementation of CHAMP Strategic Framework. These include the implementation of the Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan, the Northeast False Creek (NEFC) Plan, and the St. Paul's Hospital and Health Campus. CTT recognizes the importance of a whole City approach to Chinatown moving forward that includes the CHAMP Strategic Framework implementation, responses to public safety, and implementation of the aspects of the NEFC Plan that relate to Chinatown. Staff work in this area and discussions are underway, coordinated through the City Manager's Office, on a multi-department approach.

### ***Public/Civic Agency Input***

On April 11, 2022, the Vancouver Heritage Commission passed a resolution in support of CHAMP Strategic Framework.

On April 14, 2022, the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee passed a resolution in support of CHAMP Strategic Framework.

On May 3, 2022, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee passed a resolution in support of CHAMP Strategic Framework.

### ***Financial Implications***

While the City plays an important role in coordination and developing actions within the City's mandate, many of the strategies in CHAMP Strategic Framework, including those related to cultural infrastructure, programming, inclusive and affordable housing, entail significant investments beyond the capacity of the City alone. As such, strategic partnerships and funding from senior levels of government and other partners will be required to achieve the community's vision laid out in the CHAMP Strategic Framework. Support from all three levels of government is also required for a successful UNESCO WHS application. Pending Council's approval of Recommendation B, staff will prepare a report back to Council in 2023 with an implementation plan supported by a financial and delivery strategy that optimizes the City's regulatory, financial and advocacy tools, while considering the City's financial and operational capacity.

### ***CONCLUSION***

Chinatown's cultural heritage is the key to its future and a UNESCO WHS application. Chinatown work is at a watershed moment. The LSG and the community have built a unified vision for Chinatown and committed a tremendous amount of time and effort to work with the City. The Chinatown Transformation work is a seminal endeavour that requires continued City leadership, significant investment from all three levels of government, and continued commitment from Chinatown communities. Successful implementation of the CHAMP Strategic Framework will keep Chinatown's long, unbroken thread of cultural heritage alive for future generations, make significant contributions towards equity, cultural redress and Reconciliation, and allow Vancouver's Chinatown to be the first UNESCO WHS of its kind.

\* \* \* \* \*

## VANCOUVER CHINATOWN CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT PLAN (CHAMP) STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

---

*Pending adoption by Vancouver City Council.*

June 2022

Prepared by the City of Vancouver

In collaboration with the Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group and the University of British  
Columbia

*This page is left intentionally blank.*

DRAFT

# Contents

Contents .....	iii
Executive Summary .....	iv
Unceded Lands of Musqueam, Squamish, & Tsleil-Waututh Nations .....	vi
Part 1: Chinatown's Legacy, Past and Present.....	1
Part 2: Planning Chinatown in a New Way .....	10
2.1 Chinatown Neighbourhood Context .....	10
2.2 Chinatowns Around the World: Part of the Global Chinese Diaspora.....	15
2.3 An Approach that Centres People and Heritage .....	16
2.4 Community-Led Process: The Legacy Stewardship Group.....	20
2.5 Chinatown Community Values.....	21
2.6 Chinatown's Cultural Heritage Assets.....	23
Part 3: Strategic Framework.....	33
3.1 Plan Vision, Mission and Principles .....	33
3.2 Plan Themes, Goals, and Strategies .....	36
Theme 1: A Diverse, Healthy, and Living Community .....	36
Theme 2: Cultural Heritage as the Foundation and Future.....	38
Theme 3: A Cultural Heritage Economy .....	40
Theme 4: Partnerships and Coordination .....	41
Conclusion .....	43
Acknowledgements.....	44
Appendices .....	45
Appendix A: Legacy Stewardship Group Terms of Reference .....	45
Appendix B: Legacy Stewardship Group Membership List 2019-2022.....	51
Appendix C: Community Partnership and Pilot Projects Supported Through Chinatown Transformation Phase One Work (2018 -2021) .....	54
Appendix D: Chinatown Transformation Public Engagement Summary 2018 - 2021 .....	56
Appendix E: Demographic and Economic Profile Analyses .....	57
Appendix F: Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory Methodology and Supplementary Maps .....	73

# Executive Summary

Today, Chinatown is defined by geographical boundaries that were determined by government-led planning processes. Throughout its history, however, Chinatown extended beyond these artificial borders and daily life was interwoven with communities throughout Strathcona and the Downtown Eastside. The Vancouver Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) aims to honour Chinatown and the neighbouring areas' shared history and experiences of struggle and resilience by strengthening and sustaining cultural heritage assets for future generations.

CHAMP is built on four years of community-led work that identified Chinatown values, inventoried the neighbourhood's cultural heritage assets, and used a cultural heritage-centered approach to inform the plan's key goals and strategies. CHAMP reflects the shared aspirations and priorities identified by the many stakeholders, including the City government, who participated in this process. The implementation of the Plan's strategies are critically dependent on multiple partners taking concerted efforts together. With this understanding of partnership, the City plays an important role as a leader and as an implementer in areas directly related to City's mandate. The CHAMP Strategic Framework focuses on four key areas:

- **A Diverse, Healthy Living Community:** Chinatown is a place where cultural redress is advanced on unceded territories, the area's shared history is recognized, and Chinatown remains an affordable and safe place that provides culturally appropriate housing, amenities, and services;
- **Cultural Heritage as the Foundation and Future:** Cultural heritage is centred in all City policies and processes, and Chinatown's cultural heritage assets, intangible heritage and cultural infrastructure are supported, and cultural heritage is visible in the public realm;
- **A Cultural Heritage Economy:** Cultural food assets are supported and Chinatown is established as a cultural destination; and,
- **Partnerships and Coordination:** Partnerships with community advocates, leaders, and organizations who continue to steward and lead impactful work, and with senior levels of government, are furthered developed and strengthened.

Phase One of Chinatown Transformation work (2018-2022) focused on building trust, repairing the City's relationship with Chinatown communities, and establishing a sense of cohesion and a unified vision for Chinatown's future. Phase Two (2022-2028) work must set the context for Chinatown as a place of redress that is rooted in its place on unceded territories. Informed and shaped by the shared history of struggle and resilience, Phase Two must consider the layered complexities of historical redress and Reconciliation together, and advance these goals in partnership with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwəta. ɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

The Vancouver Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) proposes a new way of planning through cultural redress policies designed to decolonize the planning process, build an inclusive community, support social and cultural organizations and expressions of cultural heritage, and nurture a sustainable inclusive cultural heritage economy. CHAMP provides an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to chart a different future for Chinatown together – one that is rooted in its legacy as a place of resilience, equity, and inclusion.

<p><i>Theme 1</i></p> <p><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></p> <p><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 centred 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></p> <p><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></p> <p><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 12:</b> City departments are coordinated internally, and partnerships are developed with senior levels of government in support of a future UNESCO application.</p>
	<p><b>Goal 13:</b> A national and global network of Chinatowns is established.</p>

Table 1: CHAMP Themes and Goals

# Unceded Lands of Musqueam, Squamish, & Tsleil-Waututh Nations

The Vancouver Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) is built upon the understanding and recognition that what is now known as Vancouver is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, who have lived throughout this region for thousands of years.

Like the plan itself, Chinatown sits on the traditional, unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Chinatown Transformation work must also affirm the importance of Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh visibility and voice in the work of building better relationships and advocating for a more just future on their lands.

The term unceded acknowledges the dispossession of the land and the inherent rights that the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations hold to the territory. The term serves as a reminder that they will always retain their jurisdiction and relationships within their territory.

The xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations websites contain information about their histories, cultures, governance, and ways of affirming their continuity on these lands:

- Musqueam Indian Band: [musqueam.bc.ca](http://musqueam.bc.ca)
- Squamish Nation: [squamish.net](http://squamish.net)
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation: [twnation.ca](http://twnation.ca)

The following pages on the City's website contain information about Vancouver's designation as a City of Reconciliation and the City's relationship with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations:

- [City of Reconciliation](#)
- [First Peoples: A Guide for Newcomers](#)

## Part 1: Chinatown's Legacy, Past and Present

Vancouver Chinatown is often regarded as the physical and symbolic heart of the Chinese Canadian resistance against racism, white supremacy and erasure. Vancouver Chinatown embodies for young and old a sense of meaning and emotion, both in the physical manifestation of its historical heritage buildings, and the intangible cultural heritage of its daily life as a cultural heritage community.

Chinatown has long been the site of recurring struggles for its very existence: from attempts to exclude Chinese people from Canada between 1885 to 1947; to anti-Asian riots that looted and damaged businesses in 1907; to discriminatory legislation at every level of government; as a target of government-led demolition in the name of urban renewal; to growing redevelopment pressure and real estate speculations that displaced long-standing businesses; and most recently, as a high-profile site of increasing incidences of anti-Asian racism as a result of the global coronavirus pandemic.



*Figure 1: Chinatown 100 Block Pender Street East in 2021*

Despite almost a century and a half of struggling for its existence, Chinatown has endured and become a meaningful symbol of Chinese Canadian resilience in asserting their dignity and determination for inclusion. This heritage of resilience and resistance has made Chinatown one of the most powerful sites of memory in Canada. Through their efforts to confront and overcome discrimination, Chinatown and its communities have made Canada a more inclusive and just

society. In recent years, the fight for Chinatown is for sustaining it as a living community (i.e., a living and evolving place with people) rooted in place, history, and cultural heritage.<sup>1</sup>

Vancouver Chinatown, both historically and as a contemporary living community, evokes powerful memories of connection and resilience that transcends boundaries of geography, race and class. Unlike many descriptions of Chinatown as a place only occupied by Chinese, the long history of Vancouver Chinatown and its surrounding neighbourhoods have been a nexus of many intersections – including race, culture, and socioeconomic status – far beyond the commonly held narratives or perceptions that a homogenous ethnic Chinese community have primarily occupied the area.<sup>2</sup> Chinatown's future must involve the diverse communities that have and continue to care for Chinatown.

### Unceded Indigenous Territories: Local and Global Contexts for Chinese Migrations to 金山 Gold Mountain

Chinatown and its surrounding neighbourhoods were built on – and remain to this day – the traditional, unceded territories of the ɬəpəne xʷəmə (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples. Chinese people arrived in what is now known as British Columbia in 1788, and early Chinese Canadian migrants shared interconnected histories with First Nations communities throughout these lands.<sup>3</sup>

Vancouver is a site of local and regional historical importance, but it is also a place of global significance. In 1858, Victoria (called 大埠 *dai fow*, “big” or “main port”) became the first transpacific port in what is now known as British Columbia and Canada on the territories of the Lekwungen peoples of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations. Victoria Chinatown, and the number of Chinese migrants, grew along with other non-Indigenous migrants as Victoria became one of the main entry ports for ocean-going vessels on the Pacific Coast, and for Chinese labourers that built the western portion of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR).<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Henry Yu, *Journeys of Hope: Challenging Discrimination and Building on Vancouver Chinatown's Legacies*, 希望之旅：挑戰歧視、宣揚溫哥華唐人街的歷史文化遺產, bilingual English/Chinese, author, with editors Sarah Ling, Baldwin Wong, and Szu Shen, translated into Chinese by Szu Shen (Vancouver: INSTRCC UBC and City of Vancouver, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> John Atkin, *Strathcona: Vancouver's First Neighbourhood* (Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 1994); Catherine B. Clement, translated by Winnie L. Cheung, *Chinatown Through a Wide Lens: The Hidden Photographs of Yucho Chow* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> John Price, “Relocating Yuquot: The Indigenous Pacific and Transpacific Migrations,” in *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly* Special Issue (Un)Settling the Islands: Race, Indigeneity, and the Transpacific: No. 204: Winter 2019/20, 21-44; Jean Barman, “Beyond Chinatown: Chinese Men and Indigenous Women in Early British Columbia,” *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly*: No. 177: Spring 2013, 39-64.

<sup>4</sup> John Adams, *Chinese Victoria* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of BC, 2022).



Figure 2: Pender Street East in 1912

With the completion of the CPR in 1885, Vancouver (called 鹽水埠 *ham sui fow*, “saltwater port”), would soon replace Victoria as the main Pacific gateway.<sup>5</sup> Vancouver Chinatown would play an increasingly crucial role in Vancouver’s and British Columbia’s development, as Chinese merchants and workers helped create and grow industries ranging from agriculture to lumber to mining, while transpacific shipping relied on Chinese passengers and Chinese imported goods to be economically viable.<sup>6</sup>

Vancouver Chinatown served as the connection point for Chinese migration and settlement across Canada. Initially spurred by global migration rushes to mine gold, the term 金山 *gum san* (“Gold Mountain”) represented many migrants’ dream of economic mobility through the development of resource industries (e.g., logging, fishing, and mining) and small businesses (e.g., farms, restaurants, general stores, and laundries).<sup>7</sup>

### 唐人街 *Tong yun gai* – Chinatown: A Place of Layered Meanings

Founded in 1885, Vancouver Chinatown is the vibrant centre of an enduring culture that embodies important historical themes related to urban immigration, settlement patterns, and the formation of cultural identity. Chinatown is a rich cultural landscape expressing the deep and evolving relationship between culture and place. Here, cultural identities are strongly rooted in its history and cultural practices. More importantly, this connection remains vital to life today and how people engage with, value, and experience Chinatown.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Paul Yee, *Saltwater City: Story of Vancouver’s Chinese Community* (Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Winnie Cheung, Carolyn Heiman, Imogene Lim, David Wong, Jim Wong-Chu, *Celebration: Chinese Canadian Legacies in British Columbia* (Province of BC: Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, 2017).

<sup>7</sup> Henry Yu, “Mountains of Gold: Canada, North America, and the Cantonese Pacific,” in Chee-Beng Tan, editor, *Handbook of the Chinese Diaspora* (London: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>8</sup> HeritageBC, “Vancouver Chinatown Intangible Heritage Report,” Victoria: Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council of BC, 2015 <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/our-history/historic-places/documents/heritage/chinese-legacy/clan-associations->



Figure 3: Chinese Benevolent Association at 104-108 E Pender Street

Chinatown's cultural heritage is an expression of social and cultural history, embodied through its built form and intangible cultural heritage apparent in the daily life of residents, businesses, and community organizations in the neighbourhood. Chinatown was formed out of a necessity for survival of early Chinese migrants who faced racial discrimination and segregation policies from all levels of government. Many of the City of Vancouver's discriminatory policies from 1886 to 1947 were documented in the Historic Discrimination of Chinese People in Vancouver report.<sup>9</sup>

Social life in Vancouver Chinatown was conducted in English, as well as the regional Chinese dialects of 四邑 *sze yup* ("Four Counties"), 三邑 *sam yup* ("Three Counties"), and 中山 *Chung saan* ("Zhongshan") that today are forms of what is commonly known as "Cantonese." Distinctive regional dialects shaped the social networks of business and everyday life, with district associations and clan societies organized around common county origins, common surnames, and vernacular languages.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout its history, 唐人街 *tong yun gai* ("Tang people's street") in Vancouver has represented cultural exchange and adaptation as migrants brought together a complexity of cultural practices from around the world. Even among those who saw themselves and whom others saw as "Chinese," there was a great variety in what that meant: rural villagers from Guangdong in the late 19th and early 20th century, urban Hong Kong Chinese in the 1970s-1990s, Sino-Vietnamese and Sino-Cambodian refugees in the 1970s and 1980s, and increasing numbers of migrants since the 1960s from Mainland China and Taiwan, and Hakka, Teochew, Hokkien, as well as, Minnan speakers from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, South Africa, Peru, and Cuba. The term 唐人街 *tong yun gai* does not simply indicate that an area is a "Chinatown," but rather also captures the complex dynamics and identities of early Cantonese-speaking migrants who used a unique name – 唐人 *tong yun* ("Tang people") – to represent and identify themselves and their urban settlement.<sup>11</sup>

[pdfs/vancouver\\_chinatown\\_identifying\\_intangible\\_heritage\\_values\\_report\\_pdf\\_25mb.pdf](#); Katie Cummer, "Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study: Final Report," Vancouver: City of Vancouver and UBC INSTRCC, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> City of Vancouver. (2017). *Report – Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver*. Retrieved from the City of Vancouver's City Council Agenda and Minutes Public Archive: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20171031/documents/rr1.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Harry Con, Ronald J. Con, Graham Johnson, Edgar Wickberg, and William E. Willmott. *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*, edited by Edgar Wickberg. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982.

<sup>11</sup> "The Rise and Fall of the Cantonese Pacific, 1850-1950," in *The Transcultural Streams of Chinese Canadian Identities*, edited by Jessica Li, Preface by Vivienne Poy (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019); Wing Chung Ng, *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-1980: The Pursuit of Identity and Power* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000).

The willingness of multiple generations to defend threats to Chinatown has marked its history and that of Vancouver. Chinatown and its surrounding neighbourhoods hold significance in Vancouver's history for the crucial role that they played in protesting and stopping a downtown freeway between the 1950s and 1970s. This fight for survival meant that Vancouver avoided the creation of freeways that drained vitality out of other cities in North America. The freeway project as a whole was ultimately stopped, however, the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts portion of the freeway were constructed. Many businesses, homes, and most notably, Vancouver's only Black Community in Hogan's Alley, were demolished and displaced as a result.<sup>12</sup> After the "freeway fight" between the 1950s-1970s, Chinatown was recognized as a historical place: HA-1, the first Historical Area designated in Vancouver.



Figure 4: Public Hearings at City of Vancouver Council Chamber in 1973 (left) and 2018 (right). Image Source: Jim Wong-Chu (left) and Melody Ma (right).

Five decades later, the same generation of community advocates who stopped the freeway in the 1960s looked on as respected elders when a new generation of young advocates protested several rapid and out of scale new developments throughout the neighbourhood. Seeing a rapid loss of affordable food options and housing, displacement of vulnerable Chinatown residents, in particular low- and fixed-income Chinese seniors, and a sense that a proud history of cultural and historical heritage was under threat, the community was galvanized to come together to demand change.

### Adapting Culture, Sharing Resilience

During the height of racial segregation from the 1890s to 1950s, Vancouver's Chinatown stood out as one of the few welcoming and inclusive places in the city for those facing racism and discrimination. Whether it was Irish or Indigenous women who found work as waitresses in Chinese restaurants, or the ethnically diverse people who sought out the Yucho Chow

<sup>12</sup> Wayne Compton, *After Canaan: Essays on Race, Writing, and Region* (2010); Crawford Killian, *Go Do Some Great Thing: The Black Pioneers of British Columbia* (2008); "Black Strathcona: One Community, Six Decades, Ten Stories <http://blackstrathcona.com/>.

Photography Studio for family portraits when they were denied service elsewhere, Chinatown was a place of entwined histories for the many communities who lived in and around the area.<sup>13</sup>

Multiple communities of migrants to Vancouver occupied the area now described as the Downtown Eastside – the historically diverse communities of Strathcona included Chinese, Japanese, Italians, Scandinavians, Russians, Ukrainians, Black, and Jewish migrants. These concentrations of businesses, social institutions, and residents paralleled and overlapped with those of Chinese Canadians, creating a rich combination of social and cultural life that changed over time.<sup>14</sup> Government planning processes, however, created artificial boundaries that generally did not reflect the everyday experiences of the communities who lived in the area. These boundaries have shaped Chinatown and its surrounding neighbourhoods.<sup>15</sup>

Vancouver's history is marked by exclusion and erasure: the thriving community of Black businesses and residents clustered around Hogan's Alley in the late 19th and 20th century was displaced by the same planning processes of "urban renewal" that affected Chinatown and Strathcona between the 1950s and 1970s;<sup>16</sup> the vibrant Paueru Gai (Powell Street) concentration of Japanese Canadian businesses, residents, and community and cultural institutions was eradicated between 1942 and 1949 by the state-sanctioned internment of Japanese Canadian removal and the illegal liquidation of their property held in trust.<sup>17</sup> Chinatown, Paueru Gai, Hogan's Alley, and Strathcona to this day continue to reflect the reality of a mixed community where inclusion, diversity and acceptance are part of everyday life. At the same time, these historical areas serve as a reminder of the long and shared history of struggle and resilience against racial discrimination and displacement.

## April 22, 2018 – The Significance of the City's Apology in Chinatown

Between 2015 and 2017, a working group appointed by the City of Vancouver researched the City's role in historical racism against people of Chinese descent in Vancouver<sup>18</sup>. This advisory group is comprised of retired judges, former City Councillors, community elders and advocates, historians, veterans and their descendant. This group oversaw archival research that examined the role of municipal legislation and enforcement in legalizing and implementing anti-Chinese

---

<sup>13</sup> Rosanne Sia, "Making and Defending Intimate Spaces: White Waitresses Policed in Vancouver's Chinatown Cafes," MA Thesis, University of British Columbia, 2010 <https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/download/pdf/24/1.0071209/2>; Yu, *Journeys of Hope*; Clement, *Through a Wide Lens*.

<sup>14</sup> Atkin, *Strathcona*.

<sup>15</sup> Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montreal and London: McGill Queens Press, 1995).

<sup>16</sup> Stephanie Allen, M.Urb Thesis, Simon Fraser University, "Fight the power: Redressing displacement and building a just city for Black lives in Vancouver" <https://summit.sfu.ca/item/19420>;

<sup>17</sup> Ken Adachi, *The Enemy that Never Was: A History of the Japanese Canadians* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979); Ann Sunohara, *The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians During the Second World War* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1981); "Landscapes of Injustice: The Dispossession of Japanese Canadians" <https://loi.uvic.ca/narrative/index.html>; Jordan Stanger-Ross, editor, *Landscapes of Injustice: A New Perspective on the Internment and Dispossession of Japanese Canadians* (Montreal and London: McGill Queens Press, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> City of Vancouver, From Exclusion to Citizenship: Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver: <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/historical-discrimination-against-chinese-people.aspx>.

racism. The advisory also guided a process of public consultation and recommended next steps, resulting in the unanimous vote on November 1, 2017 by City Council to issue a formal apology to the Chinese communities of Vancouver.

Because of its significance, Chinatown was chosen as the ceremonial site of the City of Vancouver's formal apology for its history of anti-Chinese discrimination. On April 22, 2018, City Council made a formal apology at the specially convened Council meeting in Chinatown at the Chinese Cultural Centre - the first council meeting held outside of City Hall. The Center was filled to capacity and thousands more watched the apology live on projection screens in the streets of Chinatown. Amongst the attendees were World War Two Chinese veterans, who volunteered in the army despite being denied citizenship rights, and people of all ages and backgrounds wanting to witness this historic moment.



*Figure 5: Attendees at the April 2018 City of Vancouver Apology to Chinese People in Vancouver at the Chinese Cultural Centre*

## Chinatown Transformation and the Opportunity Ahead

The City of Vancouver's apology followed formal apologies made by the Province of British Columbia in 2014 and the Federal Government of Canada in 2006. Beyond recognizing past wrongs, City Council committed to working with community members to transform Vancouver Chinatown into an international cultural gem where its cultural heritage is supported, and to seek a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation as the next step of recognizing its importance.

A cross-departmental Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT) of community, social, heritage and cultural planners and a Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) of community representatives were formed to implement this commitment. After over three years of collaboration and work, CTT and LSG have charted a Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) for Vancouver Chinatown.



*Figure 6: Elder Larry Grant Speaking at the April 2018 City of Vancouver Apology to Chinese People in Vancouver*

The Chinatown Transformation work provided an opportunity for the City to repair its relationships with Chinatown. During Phase One (2018-2022), CTT focused on cultural redress and building trust with the community. This work focused on establishing new relationships with Chinatown residents, businesses, social and cultural institutions and organizations, and community advocates and leaders that were grounded in respect for Chinatown's history, culture, and legacy of resilience and advocacy. CTT and LSG worked together to identify the community's values, priorities, challenges, and ways of promoting and supporting cultural heritage. Through the development of CHAMP, Phase One work has focused on bringing communities together and establishing a sense of cohesion and a unified vision for Chinatown's future.

Building on the community values and priorities established in CHAMP, Phase Two (2022-2028) work will need to consider the layered complexities of historical redress and Reconciliation together and advance the work together with the *w̓məθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7mesh* (Squamish) and *səlilwətaʔt* (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Vancouver's

Reconciliation Framework underpins all planning work at the City by making city-wide commitments towards Reconciliation and decolonization. CHAMP sets the context for Chinatown as a place of redress that is rooted in its place on unceded territories. There is an opportunity for Phase Two work to substantively build on past initiatives, such as *Storyscapes Chinatown*, *Cedar and Bamboo*, and *All My Fathers Relations*, that have engaged notable host Nations and Chinese Canadian elders to illuminate historic and ongoing relationships between Chinese Canadian communities and Indigenous peoples.

Chinatown is an urban cultural landscape built by migrants from around the world on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. CHAMP is a product of this proud history of resistance and resilience. The Chinatown Transformation work and process are born out of a need for historical cultural redress and a recognition that Chinatown's legacy is continued through protection and promotion of cultural heritage for future generations. A key goal of CHAMP is to recognize the entire historical area's long and shared history of struggle and resilience against racial discrimination and displacement, and ensure that a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site application is not constrained by artificial planning borders that have defined Chinatown.

CHAMP is the first plan of its kind in Vancouver - it is co-developed with communities in Chinatown and focusing on culture and heritage. The plan's values, goals, and strategies are the result of community leadership, advocacy, and collaboration with the City through relationships built with the Chinatown Transformation Team. As such, the strategic framework illustrates a cohesive approach that reflects the shared priorities of the City and the community for the future of Chinatown.

In addition to centering cultural heritage, the plan identifies specifically how City policies and processes must change to acknowledge Chinatown as a culturally important place of meaning and connection because of its people and history. CHAMP recognizes that supporting cultural heritage assets is a way of supporting the continuation and embodiment of a community's living cultural heritage, and in doing so, honours Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside's long and shared history of struggle and resilience against racial discrimination and displacement.

*CHAMP Part 1: Chinatown's Legacy, Past and Present is developed in collaboration between the Chinatown Transformation Team and a team of experts on Chinatown, heritage, and Asian Canadian and Chinese Canadian history:*

- [Dr. Henry Yu](#): Associate Professor of History; Principal, St. John's College; and Director of the Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies, at the University of British Columbia;
- [Denise Fong](#): Independent Curator, and Research Director of the Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies, at the University of British Columbia;
- [Bill Yuen](#): Executive Director, [Heritage Vancouver Society](#);
- [John Atkin](#): Civic historian, heritage consultant, and Vice President of the [Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia](#).

## Part 2: Planning Chinatown in a New Way



Figure 7. Chinatown Millennium Gate on East Pender Street

### 2.1 Chinatown Neighbourhood Context

Vancouver Chinatown is one of the oldest Chinatowns in Canada and one of the top three in geographic size in North America. Since its establishment, Vancouver Chinatown has remained in the same location as a living and thriving neighbourhood. This long unbroken history makes Vancouver's Chinatown an excellent candidate as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Throughout its history, Chinatown has gone through growth, decline, and regeneration. Today, Chinatown faces new and complex challenges. There are concerns about redevelopment that could accelerate land value increases, displace long-time residents and businesses and decrease affordability of housing, goods and services. Many of Chinatown's cultural heritage assets are fragile and quickly disappearing.

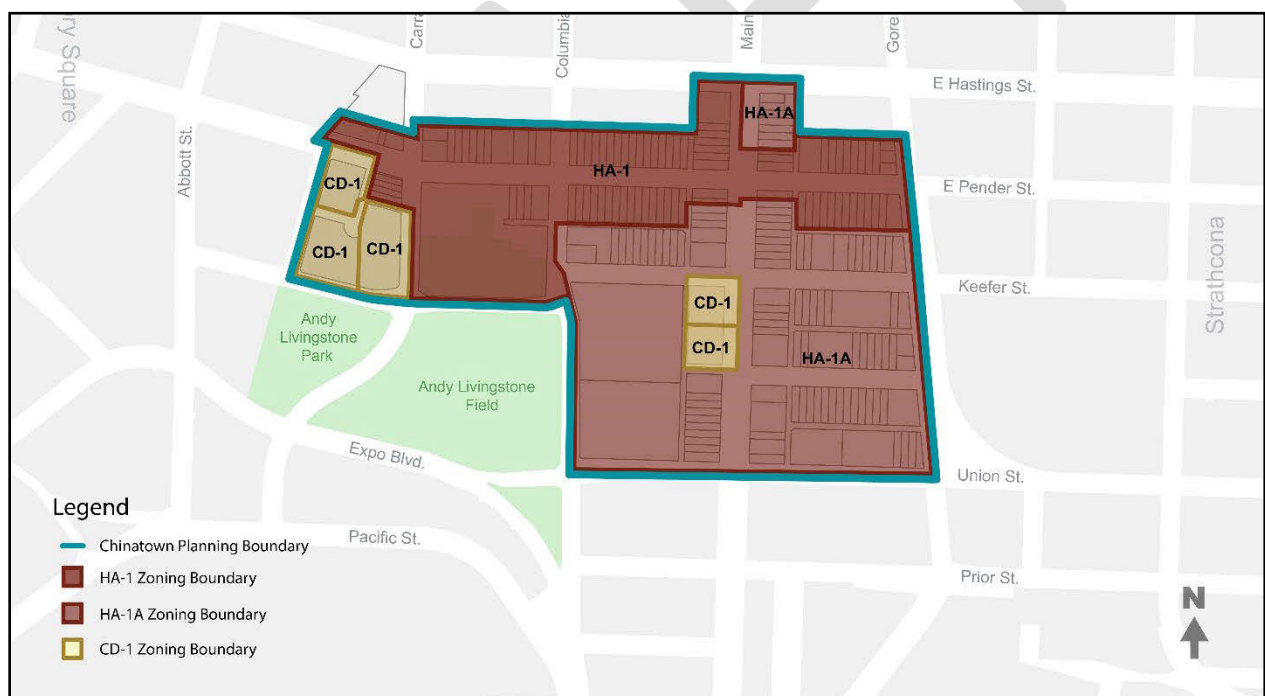
Many of the Chinese seniors living in Chinatown, Strathcona and Downtown Eastside continue to live in poverty, and face discrimination and barriers in their everyday lives. They rely on Chinatown for their daily needs, especially to access culturally appropriate and multilingual services and affordable goods. Meanwhile, there are concerns about business closures and

vandalism of important cultural assets – all issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and rising anti-Asian sentiment and racism.

Building a future around Chinatown's cultural heritage is about more than the conservation of historic places. It is about sustaining the community's value, unique identity, and people's way of life into the future. This work is complex and often made more difficult by the lack of tools and gaps in current cultural, heritage and neighbourhood planning practices.

This section provides an overview of Chinatown's current physical, economic and demographic characteristics, and a summary of surrounding context that will contribute to shaping Chinatown's future. This section also outlines the City's current understanding of Chinatown, and the limits and opportunities set by current government regulations and policies. This understanding is critical to establishing new approaches for Chinatown.

### **Current City of Vancouver's Understanding of Chinatown: Planning Boundaries, Summary of Demographic and Economic Profiles, and Area Context**



*Figure 8: Map of Chinatown Planning and Zoning Districts Boundaries*

Chinatown's planning boundaries cover approximately 10 blocks and 45 acres of land, but the connections that it has with people extend far beyond the city and the region. It is a recognized historic and cultural precinct in Vancouver. Pender Street, corresponding to the HA-1 Zoning District boundaries, is a designated National Historic Site.

Chinatown's recognizable character comes not only from the urban fabric and heritage buildings, but also from the many organizations, businesses, activities and people that make up its living culture. Section 2.6 further details the tangible and intangible cultural heritage assets that are unique and important in Chinatown.

## Demographic and Economic Profile Analyses

These demographic highlights are based on 2016 census data from Statistics Canada. For showing changes over time, census data from 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011 were included. The Chinatown study area is relatively small in size and population. The Strathcona study area was included in the analysis as many Chinatown community members live nearby in Strathcona (Please refer to Appendix E for more detailed demographic and economic profile analyses and maps).

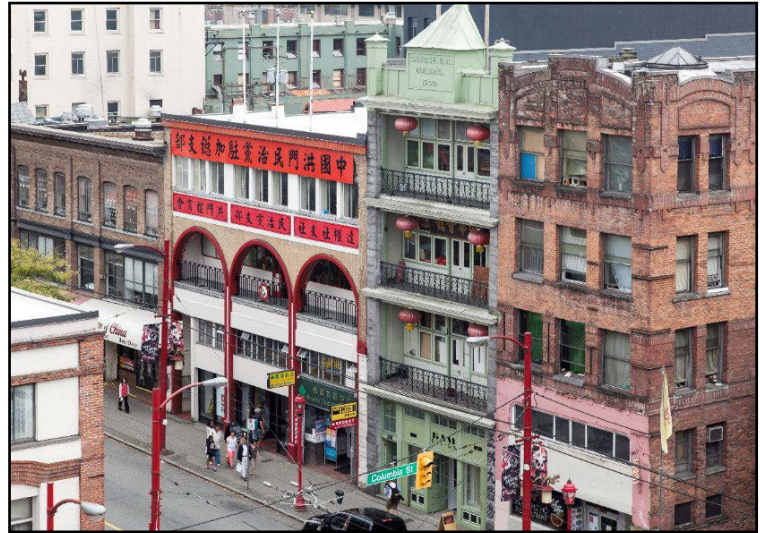


Figure 9: 100 Block Pender Street East

## Key Chinatown Demographic Characteristics

Population size in 2016	1821 people
Population change from 2011-2016	43% population increase (544 people)
Average household income before tax	\$54,391
Median household income before tax	\$35,347
Unemployment rate	5%

## Chinatown Demographic Highlights - 2016

- Chinatown's population is growing rapidly, more than doubling in 20 years from 1996-2016 - 116% increase (979 people)
- Chinatown is home to a high number of female seniors - 18% (~320) of the population is female 65 and over
- Close to half of households (45%) make less than \$30,000 annually, which is below Canada's official poverty line for Vancouver in 2015 at \$39,951.
- More than half of Chinatown's households are one-person households (61%)
- The top two languages spoken in Chinatown are English (59%) and Cantonese (12%), with 3% of the population speaking Mandarin, Japanese, Spanish or French.
- Chinatown's population density (109 persons/ha) is double that of Vancouver's (54 persons/ha)
- Apartments make up the overwhelming majority of housing in Chinatown (98%).

- The top three population groups by racial identities are White (720), Chinese (265), and Black (110).
- The representation of Indigenous people in Chinatown's population (6.8%) is three times greater compared to Vancouver (2.2%, not including Musqueam Reserve No. 2).

## **Chinatown Economic Profile Highlights**

Chinatown is home to a total of 420 businesses, according to data from Bizmap's Chinatown Market Area Profile<sup>19</sup>. The three biggest business categories are: retail, healthcare and social assistance, and accommodation and food service. A quarter of Chinatown's labour force works in sales and service jobs, and about 5% are unemployed. The data contained in this brief profile has limitations, including gaps in the City's business license records, and do not represent the full context of the Chinatown community. Cultural businesses play an integral role for the Chinatown community and economic profile. These micro economies can take the form of cultural heritage businesses, culturally-appropriate food ways, and other formal and informal exchange of goods and services. These cultural businesses contribute to the livability and accessibility for local residents, and additionally have links to larger macro economies and tourism.

The neighbouring communities around Chinatown have a diverse economy linked to the regional and global economy, with opportunities presented by its strategic geographical accessibility, industrial premises, and road, rail, and adjacent port infrastructure. There is a local informal economy related to the survival livelihoods of residents who are dependent on income assistance and pensions. Activities include self-employment through micro-enterprise, binning, vending, bartering and volunteering for income supplementation.

## **Major Infrastructure Changes in the Area**

There are major changes taking place in the surrounding area that could bring opportunities to Chinatown. These include the new St. Paul's Hospital and Health Campus, immediately south of Chinatown. This Hospital and Health Campus includes research, offices, hotel, and workforce housing buildings, which will bring acute care and integrated health services closer to residents and increased investment/spending in the local economy.

Construction is underway for the Port of Vancouver's initiative to expand capacity of the terminal immediately north of Chinatown in support of Canada's growing international trade demand for goods shipped in containers. The City is working with Canadian National to upgrade rail service to the Vancouver Port and ultimately add a second rail along the Burrard Inlet Line through neighbouring Strathcona.

Southwest of Chinatown, the redevelopment of Northeast False Creek area will greatly increase the number of local residences and park amenities. This could generate increased customers

---

<sup>19</sup> Bizmap Market Area Profile. (2019) *Chinatown – Vancouver Neighbourhoods*, BIZMAP.CA.  
<https://www.bizmap.ca/neighbourhood/chinatown/>

for Chinatown, and repair the physical disconnect to False Creek by removing the viaducts in the redevelopment process.



*Figure 10: Bird's Eye View Looking North on Main Street*

### **Evolving Community Challenges**

Chinatown is surrounded by the mixed-income neighbourhoods of Gastown, Oppenheimer District, Thornton Park, City Gate, Strathcona, Victory Square, and Vancouver Central Business District. Collectively, these neighbourhoods are known as the Downtown Eastside.

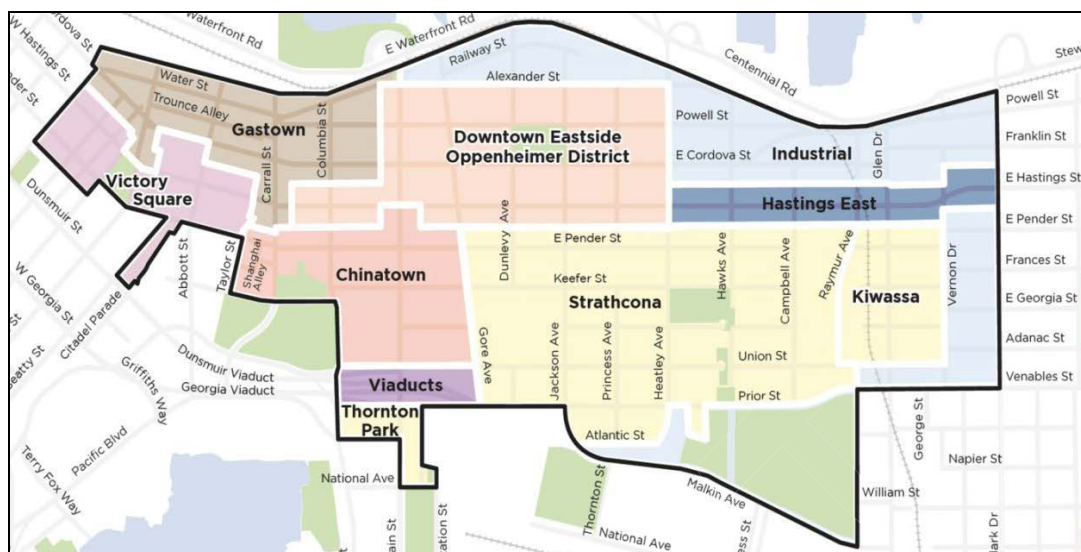


Figure 11: Neighbourhoods in the Downtown Eastside

There have been several unforeseen challenges in the neighbourhoods around Chinatown that have affected the well-being of those who live, work and visit. These challenges include the overdose and coronavirus public health emergencies, increasing street homelessness, and the need for supportive and shelter rate homes, affordable places, and retail commercial space.

These challenges are systemic and multi-jurisdictional in nature, and require continued efforts and collaboration by municipal, provincial and federal governments, Vancouver Coastal Health, non-profit sector groups and community organizations. Challenges in the community have also resulted in remarkable volunteerism and social cohesion as residents come together to support each other.

## 2.2 Chinatowns Around the World: Part of the Global Chinese Diaspora

Vancouver Chinatown is not alone in its struggles – Chinatowns around the world face similar challenges of change, real estate speculation, and development pressures. Chinatowns in Canada and around the world are undertaking similar city planning work to reimagine Chinatowns, and recognize the critical role that Chinatowns play in their city's history and cultural fabric.

The summaries below provide a brief overview of similar work in other Chinatowns, and provide context for Vancouver Chinatown as one site in the global Chinese diaspora. The Vancouver Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan is a leader in centering cultural heritage across urban, heritage, culture, and social planning in order to bring a cohesive approach to the neighbourhood.

**Calgary**<sup>20</sup>: Since 2016, the City of Calgary has undertaken work in Calgary Chinatown. “Tomorrow’s Chinatown” includes several years of community engagement with community members and advocates, the BIA, and landowners. The City has commissioned a draft Cultural Plan for Calgary Chinatown to strengthen the economy and provide a roadmap for the planning and use of cultural resources, and help integrate cultural consideration into municipal planning and decisions. The City is currently working on a new Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan.

**Montreal**<sup>21</sup>: The City of Montreal recognized Montreal Chinatown as the first city-designated historic site in January 2022, after years of community advocacy for heritage designation and protection from development that does not fit Chinatown’s character. The City is currently undergoing a consultation process, and have drafted a 2021-2026 Chinatown Action Plan that focuses on four key areas: quality of life, housing, and public spaces; commercial vitality; identity, outreach and heritage; and neighbourhood consultation.

**San Francisco**<sup>22</sup>: San Francisco Chinatown is the oldest and second largest Chinese American community in the US. San Francisco’s original Chinatown was destroyed by the 1906 earthquake and later rebuilt. The City of San Francisco established its Chinatown Area Plan in 1995, which focuses on: preservation and conservation; mixed use; housing and open space; tourism; commerce; and transportation.

**New York City**<sup>23</sup>: In November 2021, New York City announced that Manhattan Chinatown would receive \$20 million in funding to focus on: economic revitalization; affordable and seniors housing; creating new arts and cultural space; public realm improvements; attracting visitors, and supporting the neighbourhood to become a cultural destination.

**Honolulu**<sup>24</sup>: The City of Honolulu compiled a Chinatown Action Plan in 2016 that focuses improvement actions on livability, neighbourhood connectivity, economic vitality, and housing needs. The Honolulu Chinatown Action Plan works in collaboration with Honolulu’s Downtown Neighbourhood TOD Plan, which includes preservation of Chinatown as a historic district.

## 2.3 An Approach that Centres People and Heritage

Part of Vancouver’s Chinatown has been a heritage area designated by the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver since the 1970s. Despite that, many of Chinatown’s needs, including investments in cultural heritage and support to its senior residents, remain unaddressed. These gaps exist largely due to the legacy of discriminatory planning practices

---

<sup>20</sup> City of Calgary, Tomorrow’s Chinatown: <https://www.calgary.ca/pda/pd/current-studies-and-ongoing-activities/tomorrows-chinatown.html>.

<sup>21</sup> City of Montreal, Building a Vibrant Chinatown Together: <https://makingmtl.ca/chinatown>.

<sup>22</sup> San Francisco General Plan Chinatown Area Plan: <https://generalplan.sfplanning.org/Chinatown.htm>.

<sup>23</sup> Governor Hochul Announces Chinatown as \$20 Million New York City Region Winner of Fifth-Round Downtown Revitalization Initiative: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-chinatown-20-million-new-york-city-region-winner-fifth-round>.

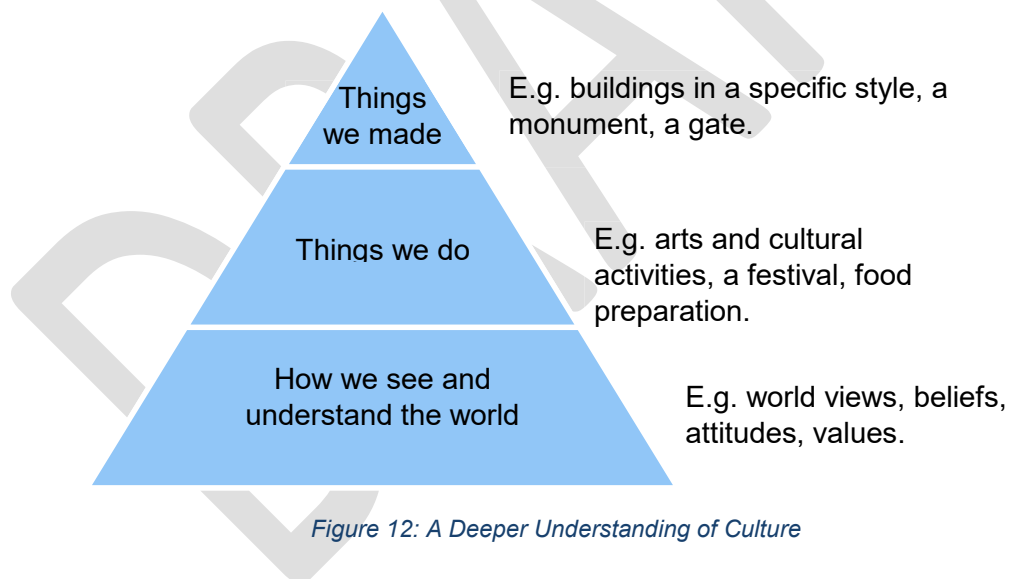
<sup>24</sup> City of Honolulu Chinatown Action Plan: <https://www.honolulu.gov/tod/projects/planning-initiatives/chinatown-action-plan.html>.

that have segregated racialized communities, inaccurate understanding of Chinatown's cultural heritage values, and devaluing of cultural heritage that is not of western or colonial origins.

Cultural heritage encompasses both tangible and intangible forms, and refers to a community's way of life that is passed down through generations. In Chinatown, examples of notable cultural heritage assets include the Chinese Society heritage buildings, Chinese-diaspora dialects, culinary heritage, as well as traditions, rituals and celebrations, such as Lunar New Year festivities.

There had been plans and strategies developed for Vancouver's Chinatown in the past. CHAMP differs from past planning efforts by centering people and their values as a foundation. This approach sees both tangible and intangible cultural heritage assets as extensions of a community's cultural values (See Figure 12). This means that strategies and actions aimed at protecting and promoting these assets all share the goal of upholding the community's cultural values and way of life.

CHAMP stresses the importance of community-led involvement and actions in the ongoing management of assets. The establishment of the Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) is a critical pillar of this planning process (See Section 2.4). In addition, CHAMP follows the general guidance of UNESCO's Historic Urban Landscape approach.



## Current Urban, Cultural and Heritage Planning Tools: Limitations and Opportunities

In developing a new approach, it is helpful to recognize the limitation of current urban, cultural and heritage planning tools, including government policies, bylaws, programs and processes. A review of current City of Vancouver regulations and tools applicable to Chinatown reveal a common theme that the current system is built around an inaccurate or incomplete

understanding of Chinatown's cultural heritage values. As such, it does not adequately recognize or support Chinatown's importance, uniqueness and needs. Examples include:

- The city-wide land use definitions are not detailed enough to allow for careful assessment of compatibility in Chinatown. For example, there is no distinction between small versus large format retail stores in the current definitions;
- Planning boundaries that artificially separate Chinatown into two districts with separate regulations based on past inaccurate understanding of Chinatown's values;
- Lack of inclusion and recognition of Indigenous history;
- Lack of recognition and protection of intangible heritage. This lack of understanding can result in protection of a building but displacement of the use and people that give the building meaning;
- Barriers to the reuse and renovation of heritage buildings, particularly when the buildings are owned by non-profit organizations or long-time owners who do not have the needed financial and technical means;
- Although funding criteria of grant programs were significantly updated recently to include intangible cultural heritage, there is significant funding shortfall, due to historic under-funding;
- Significant language barriers for non-English speakers to understand City information or participate in civic process;

**Key City of Vancouver Regulations, Policies, Programs and Processes that Affect Chinatown (list is not exhaustive):**

- Land use and land development as governed by the Zoning and Development Bylaw, particularly the Zoning Districts of Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A
- Design guidelines that accompany the Zoning Districts of HA-1 and HA-1A
- Legal protection of heritage properties as governed by the Vancouver Heritage Bylaw
- The Vancouver Heritage Register and associated heritage planning tools such as Statements of Significance that identify properties with heritage values
- Design and constructions standards for permitting new buildings and changes to existing buildings as governed by The Vancouver Building Bylaw
- Various funding and granting programs with eligibility and evaluation criteria that do not suit Chinatown's needs

By recognizing gaps and limitations, it creates awareness and opportunities to expand and change them. The City of Vancouver's Reconciliation Framework (2014), Equity Framework (2021), the Vancouver Heritage Program (2020) and the "*Culture|Shift*" Plans (2019), are proposing new approaches to address these gaps. The strategies and actions in CHAMP build on and add to these City plans and policies as part of the effort to effect systemic changes.

## The Historic Urban Landscape Approach

“A society’s values and the way they are expressed are their culture. Cultural resources are the distinguishing feature of our cities.”

*Quote from UNESCO HUL Guidebook (page 6)*

UNESCO recommends the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach as a more appropriate and effective way to understand and plan for urban historic places with complex layers of histories and living communities, such as Vancouver’s Chinatown.

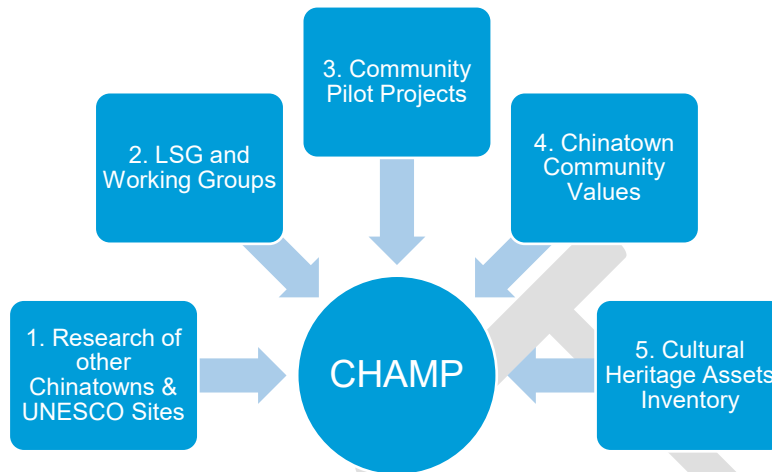
HUL emphasizes the need to involve the community to identify the cultural heritage assets of a place, their significance to a community and why they are valued by people. Because cultural heritage assets, both tangible and intangible, are an expression of a community’s values, protecting them contributes to the long-term goal of upholding a community’s way of life. For a place like Chinatown, its values have been suppressed and erased because of racism and discrimination. In the past, assigning heritage values was often done by experts who have no cultural understanding, or worse, who have discriminatory views, of the place, leading to many ineffective and harmful regulations and policies. In this current planning process, it is vitally important that the values are identified using a cultural lens to make visible what has been erased.

For example, Pender Street (HA-1) was identified as the area within Chinatown with “more” heritage value, compared to the southern portion of Chinatown (HA-1A), which has been seen as less important. This has resulted in a different set of land use and development regulations. However, this is due to a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Chinatown’s heritage value, which as to date primarily considered the presence of physical heritage-designated buildings rather than including considerations for and placing equal importance on intangible cultural heritage.

To correct and fill gaps in current policies and regulations, CHAMP is developed based on the HUL’s approach and process. This is part of Chinatown Transformation Team’s preparation of a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site application for Chinatown. The following steps were taken to develop CHAMP:

- (1) Conducted research of other Chinatowns and relevant UNESCO sites through partnership with the University of British Columbia;
- (2) Established the Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) as the main community engagement platform, which identified priority strategies and pilot actions for CHAMP with LSG’s six working groups;
- (3) Supported community partners to undertake pilot actions to kick-start implementation and build partnerships towards community-led asset management;
- (4) Engaged the community to uncover and document Chinatown’s community values;

- (5) Compiled a baseline cultural heritage assets inventory to identify Chinatown's cultural heritage resources and assess vulnerability;



*Figure 13: Steps Taken to Develop CHAMP*

## 2.4 Community-Led Process: The Legacy Stewardship Group

Community involvement is integral to determining asset management strategies and sustaining long-term asset management. Chinatown work has generated widespread interest not only from within Chinatown and Chinese Canadian communities, but also beyond Vancouver. Since 2018, CTT has engaged over 16,600 people in over 370 meetings and events. A tremendous amount of community efforts and volunteer hours were dedicated to this work, demonstrating the opportunity and the need to continue. (For a list of community engagement activities, please refer to Appendix D.)

Current heritage management best practices include inclusive and sustainable frameworks for decision-making that include all relevant authorities and stakeholders. The creation of the LSG helps fulfil the principle of community involvement and inclusive decision-making framework as required by UNESCO.

LSG was established in 2019 as a Council-appointed advisory group tasked with bringing forward a broad range of community perspectives and interests to guide community actions, and provide advice to CTT on the development of CHAMP (See Appendix A for LSG Terms of Reference). The LSG includes 32 members (See Appendix B for LSG Membership List), with a diversity of perspectives, including experiences in arts and culture, tangible and intangible heritage, working with youth, seniors, immigrants and Indigenous communities, community capacity building, and economic development. The members include area residents, property owners, business operators, and non-profit organizations, including traditional family and clan associations.

As part of the CHAMP development process, LSG formed working groups on six key topics, which focused on priorities that needed to be addressed in the Plan. Since the start of the Chinatown Transformation work in 2018, over 30 community projects have been completed or initiated, including eight pilot projects organized by LSG Working Groups (See Appendix C for complete projects list).

LSG serves as an inclusive platform for members from multiple sectors of the community to share information, explore partnership opportunities, and advocate for urgent issues in Chinatown beyond the scope of CHAMP. LSG has been an invaluable platform for community partnership, collaboration and leadership. Continued community leadership will be a crucial component in the implementation of this Plan.

#### LSG's Six Working Groups

- Cultural Heritage
- Small Businesses & Economic Development
- Relationship Building, Public Education & Capacity-Building
- Low Income Residents, Living Conditions & Gentrification Issues
- Safety, Health & Public Spaces
- Seniors Housing (*Added In 2021*)



Figure 14: Legacy Stewardship Group meeting snapshots

## 2.5 Chinatown Community Values

To make visible Chinatown's cultural heritage values, in 2019 CTT invited public participation in a campaign called "The Hidden Gems of Chinatown." The intent of the campaign was to uncover cultural assets, including the lesser well-known ones, and the values and meanings people attach to them. This is an important part CHAMP's approach of centering strategies and actions around people and the meaning of the place.

After reviewing over 500 pieces of input from the campaign, the Chinatown Transformation Team held workshops with the Legacy Stewardship Group to identify Chinatown's community values. It is no surprise that these values express the themes of resilience and inclusion, while

asserting an identity and existence that are present through Chinatown's history and struggles against racism. These values, rooted in the history and experiences of Chinatown's community, are critical in carrying Chinatown's legacy forward into the future. These values are also important to the process of decolonizing current practices by ensuring that values, which inform policy and planning directions and decisions, are developed with a cultural lens and deliberately make visible Chinatown's importance as a place of cultural meaning.

#### **In Chinatown, we celebrate our identities together.**

We welcome each other into a strong community where we can share our identity and culture, growing through experiences and relationships.

E.g. cultural events, Cantonese meet-ups, Pride in Chinatown, hybrid architectural styles.

#### **In Chinatown, we care for each other.**

We support and care for all community members, especially those who may be excluded elsewhere.

E.g. volunteering for non-profits, taking care of seniors, social service organizations.

#### **In Chinatown, we fight for positive change and prosperity.**

We work for a better future with opportunities for all, through advocacy, activism and entrepreneurship.

E.g. freeway protest, starting small businesses, overcoming discrimination, construction of the Chinese Cultural Centre and the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Chinese Classical Garden.

#### **In Chinatown, we honour our heritage and memories.**

We cherish the shared history the community inherits, and pass on our heritage into the future.

E.g. intergenerational relationships, learning history, participating in traditions, storytelling.

#### **In Chinatown, we belong to a living community.**

We invigorate the neighbourhoods and its cultural heritage by living our daily lives as residents and community members.

E.g. affordable goods and services, non-market housing, inheriting family businesses, health care.

## 2.6 Chinatown's Cultural Heritage Assets

Chinatown's cultural heritage assets are expression of Chinatown's history and legacy of resilience, and are critical part of Chinatown's future. The Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory is the first time where both of Chinatown's tangible and intangible assets are recorded and documented in one place. This inventory provided a comprehensive baseline and a better understanding of Chinatown's cultural heritage assets. (Please see Appendix F for the Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory Methodology and Supplementary Maps.)

The Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory, feedback from the Legacy Stewardship Group and responses received from the public identify four prominent categories of cultural heritage assets in Chinatown:<sup>25</sup>

1. Community and Chinese Seniors;
2. Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH): Language, Culinary Heritage, Festivals, Rituals and Traditions;
3. Built Heritage and Society Buildings; and
4. Small Businesses and Cultural Assets.

The inventory included a SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis to outline areas of concerns and opportunities around these key categories. Using this information, the Chinatown Transformation Team and the Legacy Stewardship Group identified strategic areas of focus for cultural heritage assets, which subsequently informed community pilot actions and the strategies in CHAMP.

### Summary of Findings from the Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory<sup>26</sup>

- Tangible and intangible cultural heritage assets often exist on the same site, indicating a strong interdependence between them. Cultural heritage activities need appropriate and affordable places to be practiced. Yet, there is a significant shortage of spaces for arts and cultural activities, indicating a major vulnerability in the neighbourhood.
- There is also a shortage of spaces for seniors programs and activities. Further, many seniors in the area urgently need affordable and appropriate housing and services, particularly in a culturally and language-accessible manner.
- Intangible heritage domains are found throughout Chinatown, including language, rituals, festivals, and culinary heritage of Chinatown. Despite their prominences, these assets are vulnerable and require more support and attention.

---

<sup>25</sup> Katie Cumber, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

- Culinary heritage, and associated knowledge and traditions around food, is a large part of Chinatown's character. Cultural food businesses, and many other small businesses, are not only places of commerce, but also places of cultural exchange and practice, and require new approaches to ensure support is provided.
- Chinatown boasts an impressive and substantial amount of intact building stock. Many of these heritage buildings are owned by Chinese Societies. This built heritage is vulnerable to change, deterioration, and being lost as the area continues to face development pressures.
- Despite challenges and changes over time, a strong cultural identity persists in Chinatown due to the continued efforts of a community clearly invested in protecting Chinatown's heritage for future generations.
- Cultural heritage assets are found in both the HA-1 and HA-1A zoning districts. This indicates that the perception that HA-1 is the more "heritage" area does not match the reality. The inventory shows that both districts are equally important to Chinatown's identity and character. However, these two zoning districts are not equally valued.
- Partnerships are needed to manage assets. 97% of the cultural heritage assets in Chinatown are not owned by the City of Vancouver. The City does own a number of key assets. Further, the City is in a position to play an important role in facilitating and supporting partnership development.

## Cultural Heritage Asset Example: Lion Dance

In a living community where culture is actively practiced, many assets can be both tangible and intangible. They are often interconnected and rely on each other to thrive.

Lion Dance is a prominent example in Chinatown. It is a tradition, practiced by lion dancers and their Sifu masters, organized by Society athletic and martial arts clubs, and takes place over generations inside society buildings.

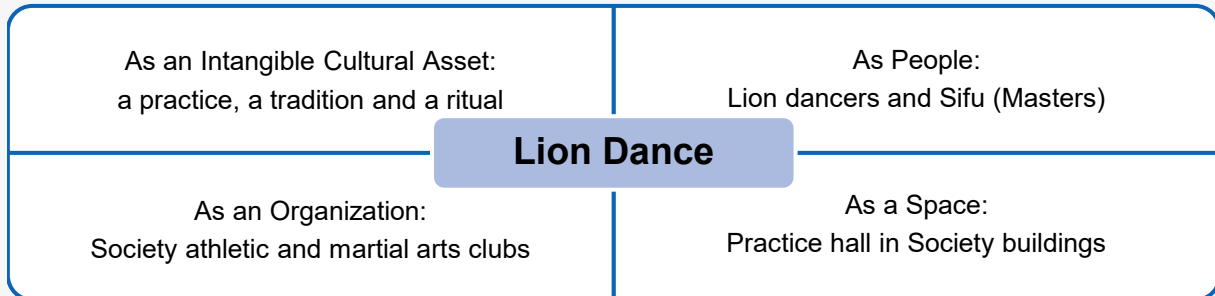


Figure 15: Lion Dance Practice at the Hon Hsing Athletic Club at 27 E Pender Street

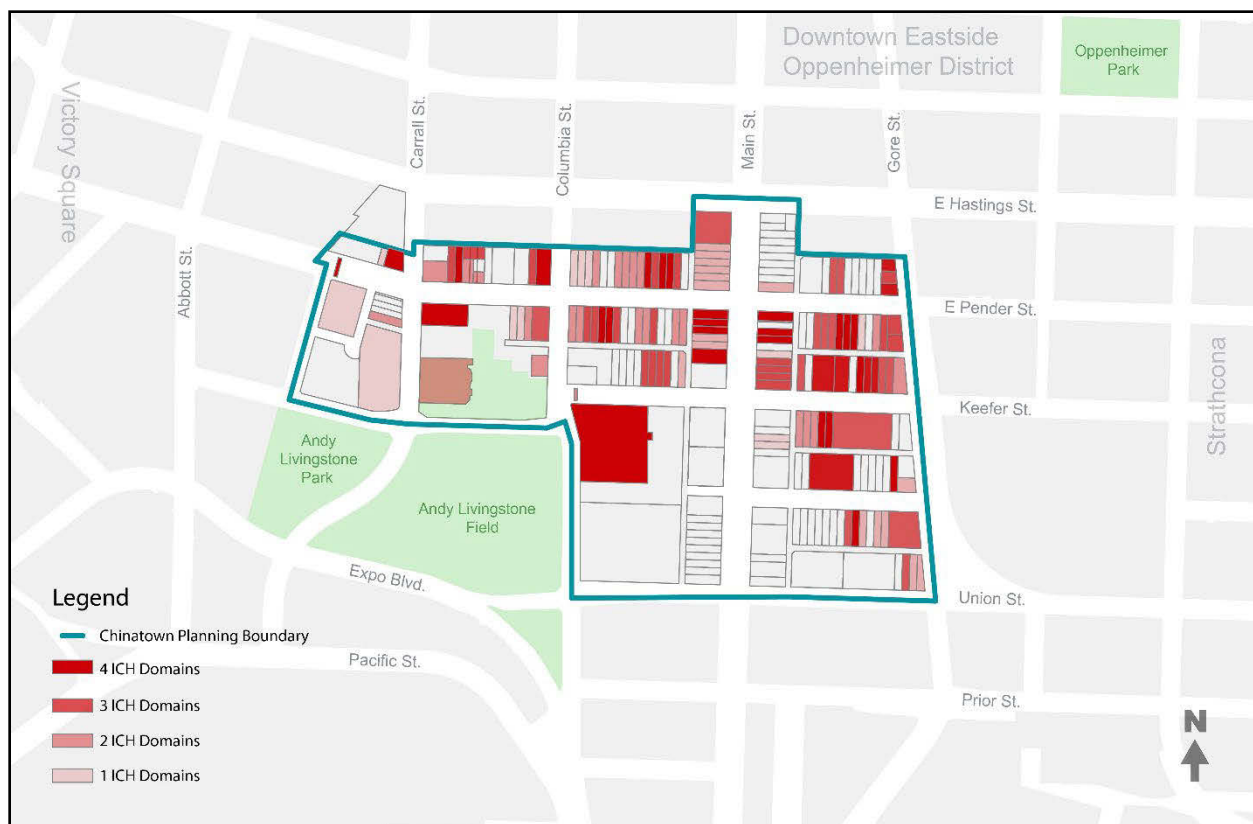


Figure 16: Map of Intangible Cultural Heritage Domain Density in Chinatown<sup>27</sup>

## The Community and Chinese Seniors

The Downtown Eastside is home to 4455 seniors, of whom 1590 are Chinese<sup>28</sup>. Seniors in the area rely on Chinatown for their daily needs, especially in an affordable, culturally appropriate, and language accessible manner. Seniors in Chinatown and Strathcona are an invaluable – and the most vulnerable – asset in this community. They are the stewards of culture because they are the holders of knowledge, traditions, and language, and are an inseparable part of the community's fabric.

Caring for seniors is a strong tradition in Chinatown and Chinese Canadian families. These relationships and networks of care become the glue that brings the younger and older generations together. Many people describe memories of visiting grandparents, going for dim sum, and grocery shopping in the Hidden Gems of Chinatown engagement campaign as part of their experience in Chinatown and being Chinese Canadians.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Statistics Canada. (2016) 2016 Census Profile. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

Unfortunately, many seniors live in unsecured and inadequate housing, have very low income, face barriers to service, and experience discrimination. A 2021 study led by LSG revealed that the oldest senior living in a Single Room Occupancy hotel, a form of housing that entails a small room with no private bathroom, kitchen or any support services, is 97 years old.<sup>29</sup> The lack of affordable, publicly accessible senior spaces in Chinatown was also identified in the Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory a major gap.<sup>30</sup>



*Figure 17: Woman and Child Examining Herbal Store Products in Chinatown.*

The community itself is also a foundational asset in Chinatown. Many individuals, groups, non-profit organizations, and service providers work tirelessly to serve the social, cultural, and economic needs of the community. Their work contributes to and upholds Chinatown's tradition of advocating for and advancing equitable social change.

### **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH): Language, Culinary Heritage, Festivals, Rituals and Traditions**

Intangible cultural heritage makes up a large part of people's experiences and memories of a place, and is a key component of individual and community identity. The Inventory confirmed that oral traditions (75 sites, 19% of all sites), and social practices, rituals, and festive events (61 sites, 15% of all sites) are the most prevalent intangible cultural heritage domains found in Chinatown.<sup>31</sup> Some notable examples include:

- **Oral traditions:** The Chinese diaspora dialects spoken in Chinatown are Cantonese and Sze Yup dialects. Sze Yup includes the "Four Counties" dialects of Toi Shan, Hoi Ping, Sun Wui and Yan Ping. Other oral traditions include language classes and schools for Cantonese and Mandarin, and storytelling.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Helen Hong Su, Identifying the Needs and Support for Chinese Seniors in Downtown Eastside Vancouver

<sup>30</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

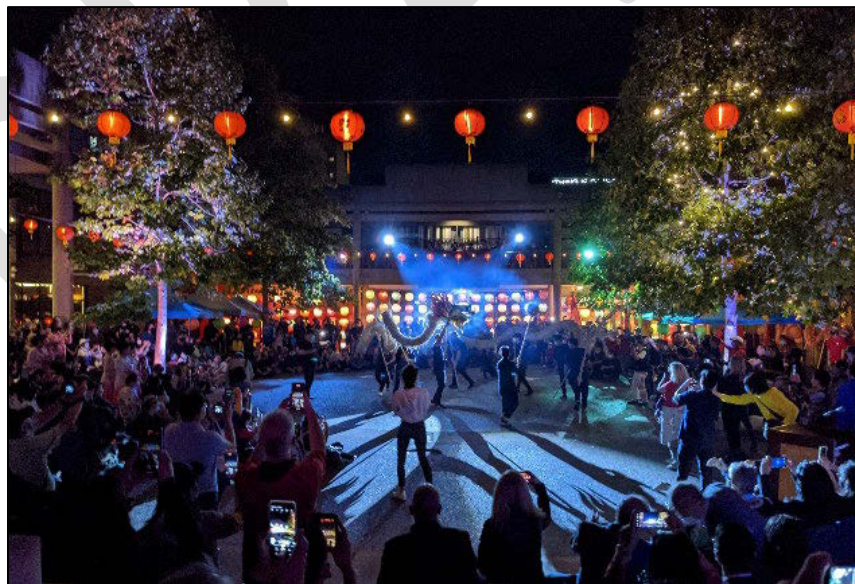
<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

- *Social practices, rituals, festivals and events:* dim sum, family gatherings, low-cost shopping (such as at green grocers), mah-jong playing, shared meals, Tai Chi, observance of festivals and rituals such as Ching Ming, Lunar New Year, Mid-autumn, Tuen Ng Festival and Remembrance Day service for Chinese veterans. These activities often take place in Chinese Society buildings, as well as in public spaces and cultural facilities such as the Chinatown Memorial Square, the Chinese Cultural Centre and the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden.<sup>33</sup>



*Figure 18: Lion Dance Celebration for the Chinese Canadian Museum Project Office Opening in 2019*



*Figure 19: The Chinatown Fire Dragon Festival in September 2021*

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Traditional Chinese medicine and food are also important intangible cultural heritage assets. These ICH domains are typically found in small businesses, making small businesses not only a place of commerce, but also places where culture is produced, practiced and consumed on a daily basis (See also Small Businesses and Cultural Food Assets below).

The Inventory also revealed that arts and cultural activities are vulnerable. There is a shortage of arts and cultural spaces in Chinatown, representing only 8% of all sites on the inventory.<sup>34</sup> Many arts and cultural groups, such as martial arts clubs or Chinese Societies, face constant shortages of funding and a lack of accessible and appropriate spaces for activities.

Despite the many challenges and changes in the neighbourhood over time, a strong cultural identity persists in Chinatown due to the continued efforts of a community clearly invested in protecting its heritage for future generations. There is an opportunity to promote Chinatown and create economic opportunities for its culinary, creative, arts and cultural sectors.<sup>35</sup>

### Built Heritage and Chinese Society Buildings

Chinatown boasts an impressive and substantial amount of intact building stock, and the oldest building in Chinatown was built in 1889.<sup>36</sup> Despite development pressures in recent years, there is still a fair amount of site integrity.<sup>37</sup> Chinatown's "buildings are characterized by a distinctive hybrid architectural style that blends aspects of Chinese regional architecture with Western styles and building methods."<sup>38</sup> Chinatown's physical characteristics are unique and often described as "fine-grained", with buildings on narrow 25' to 50' wide lots and small storefronts. This fusion of design contributes to Chinatown's character and is a physical representation of the area's history.<sup>39</sup> However, this built heritage is vulnerable to change, deterioration, and being lost as the area continues to face development pressures.

There are 33 sites in Chinatown on the Vancouver Heritage Register, and 72 municipally-designated sites. However, six sites on the Vancouver Heritage Register do not have legal protection as they are not municipally-designated.

---

<sup>34</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Park Summaries British Columbia." *Parks Canada History ELibrary - Park Summaries British Columbia*, Parks Canada, 25 Sept. 2019, [http://parkscanadahistory.com/park\\_summaries/bc-e.htm](http://parkscanadahistory.com/park_summaries/bc-e.htm).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

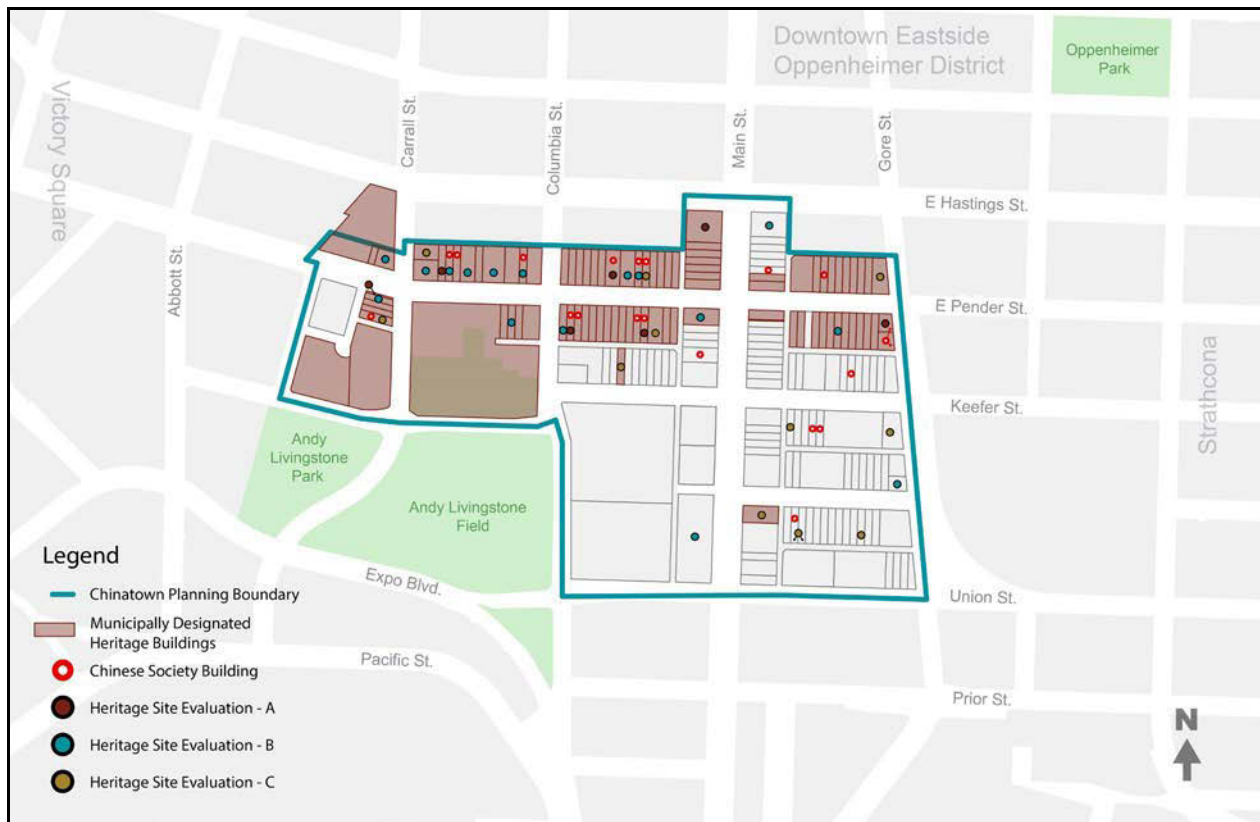


Figure 20: Map of Chinese Society Buildings, Municipally Designated Heritage Buildings, and Buildings with Heritage Evaluation in Chinatown

Further, there is a clear lack of recognition and protection of the buildings in the HA-1A area. 34% of the buildings in Chinatown from the 19th or early 20th centuries (1880 to 1923), and 63% of those built during the Exclusion Act period (1923 to 1947) are located in HA-1A as opposed to in HA-1. <sup>40</sup> However, there are only eight buildings in HA-1A identified on the Heritage Register, and only two of those are protected through a municipal designation. <sup>41</sup>

Chinese Societies are unique and important cultural heritage assets in multiple ways. There are 53 Chinese Society buildings in the Downtown Eastside. Twelve of these are also heritage buildings and are located in Chinatown. Chinese Societies continue to practice and pass on cultural traditions through their martial arts clubs, annual rituals, and festivals. They provide social, recreational, and cultural activities for their members, such as mah-jong, singing, and dance clubs. They also provide spaces for small businesses. Most of these buildings have not had significant upgrades, and are at high risk of being lost due to deterioration. They are also very vulnerable to earthquakes and climate emergency events. Maintenance costs continue to put Societies under financial pressure.

Chinatown's Society buildings are a major draw for the area. Highlighting the uniqueness and function of these buildings are an opportunity for Chinatown to lead the changing approach to heritage and equally focus on both tangible and intangible heritage.

### Small Businesses and Cultural Food Assets

Small businesses contribute to people's connection to the place, and reflect their history and values.<sup>42</sup> Previous research and community engagement have already identified the significance of businesses as a part of Chinatown's character and socio-cultural fabric. Many Chinatown businesses provide affordable, culturally appropriate goods and offer services in Chinese diaspora dialects. They are also places where social interactions happen on a daily basis. These businesses hold important knowledge of customs, traditions, and craftsmanship.



Figure 21: The Lim Sai Hor Benevolent Society at 525-531 Carrall Street

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Heritage BC. (2015). *Vancouver Chinatown Intangible Heritage Values Report*.

<https://heritagebc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Vancouver-Chinatown-Identifying-Intangible-Heritage-Values-Report.pdf>

They enable cultural practices to continue, and enrich the lives of many local residents and visitors. Some notable examples include the Hong Kong style bakery cafes, dim sum restaurants, shops that sell incense and items for Chinese rituals, and clinics and professional services that speak Cantonese dialects.

Retail and food services have a large presence in Chinatown, comprising nearly a third of all sites on the inventory, including many cultural food businesses.<sup>43</sup> Yet, cultural food assets are disappearing. Many long-term residents, particularly low-income seniors, are losing places to buy affordable, culturally appropriate produce and food. Between 2009 and 2016, nearly half of Chinatown's cultural food assets (e.g. green grocers, bakery cafes) have closed<sup>44</sup>.

These cultural businesses are particularly important to people's experience of Chinatown. While some of them have existed for multiple generations, there are also newer businesses that the community has grown to appreciate and accept. This reaffirms that cultural heritage assets are not only defined by age, but more importantly by their connection to the community's culture, values, and identity. Support and incentives for cultural businesses that connect to Chinatown's identity, especially for those that provide affordable goods and services, are urgently needed.



Figure 22: Dollar Meat Store in Chinatown

---

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Alen Chen & Angela Ho. hua foundation. (2017). *Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report*. <https://huafoundation.org/portfolio/vancouver-chinatown-food-security-report/>

## Part 3: Strategic Framework

### 3.1 Plan Vision, Mission and Principles

The Vancouver Chinatown Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) honours Chinatown and the neighbouring areas' shared history and experiences of racism, discrimination, loss, and displacement. The area's legacy is continued through cultural heritage assets, which embody the community's values and way of life.

CHAMP centres cultural heritage as a collective goal for Chinatown work, and identifies new ways to protect and promote cultural heritage. CHAMP also serves as a foundational document for a future UNESCO World Heritage Site application.

CHAMP is the product of three years of collaboration with the Legacy Stewardship Group and its six working groups. The goals and strategies in this plan reflect the shared aspirations and priorities identified by many stakeholders, including the City government, who participated in this process. The implementation of the strategies are critically dependent on multiple partners to lead, coordinate and work together. Within this understanding of partnerships, the City plays an important leadership role and as an implementer particularly in areas directly related to City mandates and by-laws.

#### Plan Vision

*Honour Chinatown and the neighbouring areas' shared history and experiences of struggle and resilience against racial discrimination and displacement by strengthening and sustaining cultural heritage assets for future generations.*

#### Plan Mission

*Establish Chinatown as a cultural heritage destination for Vancouver and beyond, and centre the community in ongoing management.*

The CHAMP Strategic Framework focuses on four key areas:

- **A Diverse, Healthy Living Community:** Chinatown is a place where cultural redress is advanced on unceded territories, the area's shared history is recognized, and Chinatown remains an affordable and safe place that provides culturally appropriate housing, amenities, and services.
- **Cultural Heritage as the Foundation and Future:** Cultural heritage is centered in all City policies and processes, and Chinatown's cultural heritage assets, intangible heritage and cultural infrastructure are supported, and cultural heritage is visible in the public realm;
- **A Cultural Heritage Economy:** Cultural food assets are supported and Chinatown is established as a cultural destination.

- **Partnerships and Coordination:** Partnerships with community advocates, leaders, and organizations who continue to steward and lead impactful work, and with senior levels of government are further developed and strengthened.

While strategies are focused on Chinatown as a geographic area and a community, CHAMP also intends to provide a framework that supports the work and visibility of other equity-denied communities in the city. While some goals and strategies are specific to Chinatown communities, others lay a foundation for policy work that extends beyond the colonial planning borders of Chinatown.

## Guiding Principles

The Plan's strategic framework is guided by seven principles:

1. **Chinatown is a place of cultural redress on unceded territories.** Cultural redress and Reconciliation are interconnected goals which must be advanced together.
2. **Affect systemic change in pursuit of decolonization and cultural redress,** and advocate for equitable approaches that address historical and contemporary discrimination, systemic racism, and white supremacy. This work is informed and guided by the City's Reconciliation and Equity Frameworks.
3. Seek **equity** and opportunities for all, especially for equity-denied communities, and include a **diversity of perspectives and lived experiences.**
4. Center **cultural heritage**, emphasize people-centred approaches and value-based planning, and recognize that cultural heritage has immense social, cultural and economic values, which drive community regeneration.
5. Advocate for **inclusive economic growth** and a **cultural heritage economy** focused on stabilizing and supporting small businesses and people's livelihoods. Work on increasing Chinatown's economic competitiveness, by supporting its unique cultural assets and improving local conditions.
6. Use a **community-led and relationship-building approach** to affect and implement change, with a focus on inter-community and inter-generational relationships.
7. **Be action-oriented and impactful** in protecting and growing Chinatown's cultural heritage assets, which require urgency in the face of imminent loss.

<p><i>Theme 1</i></p> <p><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></p> <p><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 the use of City-owned assets is 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></p> <p><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></p> <p><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 12:</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 13:</b> A national and global network of Chinatowns is established.</p>

Table 2: CHAMP Goals and Strategies

## 3.2 Plan Themes, Goals, and Strategies

### Theme 1: A Diverse, Healthy, and Living Community

Building a diverse, inclusive, and healthy community must include redress with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. In Chinatown, the work must consider the layered complexities of historical redress and Reconciliation together. CHAMP provides an opportunity to build on past initiatives that engaged notable host Nations and Chinese Canadian elders to illuminate historic and ongoing relationships between Chinese Canadian communities and Indigenous peoples, and ensure that Chinatown's is a place of redress on unceded territories.

As a living community with multicultural backgrounds and a legacy of advocating for equitable social change, the area's most important assets are its people, organizations, and communities. These goals aim to recognize the shared history of Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities. They also advocate for Chinatown to remain as a place that offers affordable, culturally appropriate and multilingual amenities and services that are especially important to low-income residents and Chinese seniors.

<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Chinatown is a place of redress on unceded territories.</b>  <i>Outcome: Relationships are built with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations and urban Indigenous communities as part of City of Vancouver's commitment to the Reconciliation Framework.</i>
<b>Strategy 1.1</b>	Build on existing research on xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations presence and connections in the Chinatown area that engaged notable host Nations and Chinese Canadian elders to illuminate historic and ongoing relationships between Chinese communities and the host Nations.
<b>Strategy 1.2</b>	Use findings from City staff review and training to inform the development of proposals to work with the host Nations on collaborative research and consultation/engagement proposals to align Chinatown planning and host Nations interests.
<b>Strategy 1.3</b>	Facilitate and support engagement between the urban Indigenous community and Chinatown through dialogues, sharing of histories, and lived experiences.
<b>Goal 2</b>	<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.</b>

	<i>Outcome: Chinatown is a diverse place with meaningful participation, representation, and leadership from many different communities.</i>
<b>Strategy 2.1</b>	Advance cultural redress in Chinatown, the Downtown Eastside and Northeast False Creek by documenting and sharing the stories and experiences of Indigenous, Black Canadian, Chinese Canadian, and Japanese Canadian communities.
<b>Strategy 2.2</b>	Build and strengthen intercultural and intergenerational relationships across communities in Chinatown.
<b>Goal 3</b>	<p><b>Culturally appropriate and multilingual housing, services, and amenities are increased and improved.</b></p> <p><i>Outcome: Chinatown remains an affordable, age-friendly and inclusive community that provides a variety of housing options with access to amenities and services, particularly for Chinese seniors.</i></p>
<b>Strategy 3.1</b>	Work with housing funders and operators to improve and increase the continuum of housing choices that serve the cultural needs of Chinese seniors, and the needs of low-income people.
<b>Strategy 3.2</b>	Improve access to health, medical, and social services for seniors by supporting DTES and Chinatown organizations who advocate for and provide multilingual access and serve the cultural and social needs of the community.
<b>Goal 4</b>	<p><b>Chinatown has a safe and equitable environment that serves local residents, encourages visitors, and supports public space activation.</b></p> <p><i>Outcome: Chinatown is a place where residents and visitors feel safe and accepted, and are encouraged to participate in community life.</i></p>
<b>Strategy 4.1</b>	Improve the overall street environment in Chinatown, including public spaces that are clean, comfortable, and well-maintained.
<b>Strategy 4.2</b>	Work with local businesses and community organizations to encourage provision of affordable goods and services for residents.

## Theme 2: Cultural Heritage as the Foundation and Future

Chinatown's cultural heritage is the heart of the community. Cultural heritage activities, practices, and traditions embody the community's identity and values. Chinatown's cultural heritage practices are also important ways of inviting people to learn about the neighbourhood's place, culture, and history in an effort to combat racism.

Chinatown is home to many cultural anchors. These cultural anchors are not only important heritage buildings and cultural spaces that have historical and architectural value, but are also important sites that support the continuation of intangible heritage. These spaces are physical reminders of Chinatown's history and contemporary relationship to Chinese Canadian and Chinese diasporas.

In addition to celebrating cultural heritage activities and investing in cultural infrastructure, this section emphasizes a need to decolonize City processes and policies, and to manage physical change in ways that align with Chinatown's identity and values. This decolonization work requires a willingness to rethink current approaches to urban, heritage, social, and cultural planning practices, policies, and regulations. Systemic change is required to center cultural heritage as Chinatown's foundation and future, and to support and empower other equity-denied communities.

<b>Goal 5</b>	<b>Chinatown's intangible cultural heritage are celebrated and supported.</b>  <i>Outcome: Chinatown's heritage activities, traditions, and practices attract people of all ages and backgrounds, and are resourced so that they can be passed on to future generations.</i>
<b>Strategy 5.1</b>	Support research, documentation, and development of funding mechanisms for Chinatown's intangible cultural heritage practices, including the priority areas of:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Local Chinese diaspora dialects;</li><li>2. Culinary heritage; and</li><li>3. Traditional cultural practices, including traditional Chinese and herbal medicine, festivals, rituals, and arts and cultural events and activities.</li></ol>
<b>Strategy 5.2</b>	Work with relevant funders and organizations to create opportunities for people to document, record, and share oral histories that sustain community memory and identity.
<b>Goal 6</b>	<b>Cultural heritage infrastructure, including Chinese Society buildings are invested in, and City-owned assets are maximized as critical sites of intangible cultural heritage activities in Chinatown.</b>  <i>Outcome: Chinatown's cultural anchors support the community with programming and access to cultural spaces. Heritage buildings are rehabilitated and continue</i>

	<i>the legacy of cultural heritage. The use of City-owned assets support cultural heritage values.</i>
<b>Strategy 6.1</b>	Facilitate the development of a cohesive and complementary vision for the Chinese Cultural Centre, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, and the Chinese Canadian Military Museum, to transform the City-owned Pender block into a community hub that leverages shared values, existing infrastructure, and resources.
<b>Strategy 6.2</b>	Maximize the potential of the City-owned Chinatown Plaza by reimagining its role as a community anchor that supports cultural heritage in its uses, programming and management. Additionally, seek opportunities to support the use of under-utilized spaces for social-serving programming that are complementary to Chinatown's community and values.
<b>Strategy 6.3</b>	Work with relevant funders to provide critical funding to cultural anchors and Chinese Societies in need of infrastructure upgrades, and encourage more arts, cultural and social uses, including supporting spaces for artists, social programming and enterprises.
<b>Goal 7</b>	<p><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.</b></p> <p><i>Outcome: City policies and processes not only recognize, but also provide concrete supports, for cultural heritage in Chinatown and for other equity-denied communities.</i></p>
<b>Strategy 7.1</b>	Update current and explore new planning, heritage conservation and regulatory tools with the goal of managing and recognizing Chinatown as a coherent cultural heritage district.
<b>Strategy 7.2</b>	Align across City-departments to ensure planning, heritage, cultural policies and funding mechanisms work together to support cultural heritage assets in Chinatown.
<b>Strategy 7.3</b>	Remove regulatory barriers facing heritage buildings in Chinatown, and recognize the specific needs of Chinese Society buildings.
<b>Strategy 7.4</b>	Update heritage statements for Chinatown to center community values and include Indigenous voice and visibility, and intangible cultural heritage.
<b>Goal 8</b>	<p><b>Chinatown's cultural heritage is celebrated and made visible in the public realm.</b></p> <p><i>Outcome: Chinatown's public realm centers artists and cultural heritage, and features cultural programming and events throughout the year that draw local and regional visitors to the neighbourhood.</i></p>

<b>Strategy 8.1</b>	Develop a consistent approach built on Chinatown's values, and add culturally relevant uses, to public realm design, maintenance and public space activation that makes visible Chinatown's cultural heritage.
<b>Strategy 8.2</b>	Ensure public art in Chinatown respects the neighbourhood's history, and supports cultural and artistic expressions of living cultural heritage and identity.
<b>Strategy 8.3</b>	Identify and support the creation of or access to parks and green spaces that meet local-serving needs and seniors, including for gathering, socializing, and cultural activities.

### Theme 3: A Cultural Heritage Economy

A cultural heritage economy ensures that economic development is built around the strengths of cultural heritage assets. Small businesses are foundational to Chinatown's identity, history, and contemporary experiences. Chinatown's unique draws are its small and local-serving businesses, cultural food assets such as green grocers, fishmongers, and specialty retail stores, and independent restaurants. The viability of small businesses are critical to the economic health and development of Chinatown. A strong cultural heritage economy sees businesses and restaurants not only as places of commerce, but also as places where people can experience, learn about, and participate in Chinatown's cultural heritage.

Local residents and Chinese seniors rely on many small businesses for low cost and culturally-appropriate food, groceries, and daily goods. Connecting business and economic development to Chinatown's cultural values and ensuring that businesses continue to serve local residents are important to the community.

<b>Goal 9</b>	<p><b>A cultural heritage economy is developed and centered on Chinatown's values and cultural food assets.</b></p> <p><i>Outcome: Chinatown is a place with thriving small businesses and cultural food assets, including green grocers, fishmongers, herbal stores, and other retail stores focused on cultural heritage activities or items.</i></p>
<b>Strategy 9.1</b>	Recognize Chinatown's cultural food assets as a defining characteristic and contributor of the cultural heritage economy.
<b>Strategy 9.2</b>	Support the development of a business curation model in Chinatown that focuses on cultural heritage, and includes business retention and recruitment strategies, as well as strategies that support local community economic development.

<b>Strategy 9.3</b>	Support the City's work, including the work of the Small Business Task Force, on tax policy, assessment policy and operational changes to better support small business, and ensure Chinatown small businesses are included in this work.
<b>Goal 10</b>	<b>Chinatown is highlighted as a cultural tourism destination for local, regional, and international visitors.</b>  <i>Outcome: Chinatown is a destination and unique draw for its unique cultural heritage economy, programming, and activities.</i>
<b>Strategy 10.1</b>	Work with local and regional economic development and tourism organizations to promote Chinatown as a cultural heritage destination and encourages sustainable cultural tourism that supports the local community.

## Theme 4: Partnerships and Coordination

Through CHAMP, Vancouver Chinatown has an opportunity to be a leader in the promotion of cultural heritage, cultural neighbourhoods, and in advocating for the recognition and support of all Chinatowns. Vancouver Chinatown is not alone in its struggles – Chinatowns around the world face similar challenges of change, real estate speculation, and development pressures.

CHAMP's vision, including plan implementation, requires leadership from and partnerships with community organizations and all levels of government to ensure that Chinatown and the surrounding area's cultural, social, and economic needs are met. The pursuit of a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation is a significant endeavor that will require substantial intergovernmental coordination and investment.

<b>Goal 11</b>	<b>Community-led assets management, advocacy, and coalition building are supported.</b>  <i>Outcome: Chinatown is led and managed by community organizations who work together to determine the area's future.</i>
<b>Strategy 11.1</b>	Support the establishment of a community-led entity that will coordinate and steward Chinatown's cultural heritage assets, and work with the City on implementation of the Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan.
<b>Strategy 11.2</b>	Support the growth and capacity of community organizations so that they can continue to lead stewardship of cultural heritage assets.
<b>Goal 12</b>	<b>City departments are coordinated internally, and partnerships are developed with senior levels of governments in support of a future UNESCO application.</b>  <i>Outcome: Internal coordination and partnerships are strengthened; investments into Chinatown are leveraged for maximum impact.</i>

<b>Strategy 12.1</b>	Ensure City departments are coordinated on work that involves Chinatown, including supporting implementation of the Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan and the Northeast False Creek Plan.
<b>Strategy 12.2</b>	Engage senior levels of government and external partners to explore the development of a fund to support the implementation of CHAMP and pursuit of World Heritage Designation.
<b>Goal 13</b>	<p><b>A national and global network of Chinatowns is established.</b></p> <p><i>Outcome: Vancouver is a model for Chinatowns around the world and how cities can recognize, support, protect, and promote cultural heritage.</i></p>
<b>Strategy 13.1</b>	Celebrate Vancouver Chinatown as an important part of the broader national and global network of Chinatowns.

## Conclusion

Following Vancouver City Council adoption of the CHAMP Strategic Framework, CTT will begin working with Chinatown communities to develop a detailed implementation plan that includes:

- Finalized strategies and actions;
- Budget requirements for capital and programmatic investments; and
- Continued reporting and progress updates to Vancouver City Council, including preparing Chinatown for the next update of the federal National Tentative List in January 2027.

Just as the CHAMP Strategic Framework was co-developed with Chinatown communities, the implementation plan must follow in the same footsteps to ensure that community leadership not only guides, but remains at the heart of Chinatown Transformation work. The CHAMP Strategic Framework and the forthcoming implementation plan together form the full CHAMP, which will serve as foundational documents for a potential UNESCO WHS application.

Chinatown is at a watershed moment. The CHAMP Strategic Framework is built on three years of co-development between the CTT and Chinatown communities. Through community leadership, commitment, continued advocacy, and on-the-ground work, Chinatown communities have presented a vision that spans all aspects of the neighbourhood and centres cultural heritage as the foundation and future for Chinatown.

## Acknowledgements

This Chinatown Heritage Assets Management Plan, and all the work behind it, would not have been possible without the numerous efforts and contributions made by Chinatown communities. We thank them for their time and dedication to this difficult work. In particular, we would like to thank the following for their various contributions towards CHAMP.

We would also like to recognize the many friends and community members not on this particular list who have been involved with Chinatown work.

Alain Chow  
Alisha Masongsong  
(past member)  
Amanda Huynh  
Anita Chan Bardal  
April Liu  
Aynsley Wong  
Meldrum  
Bill Kwok  
Bill Yuen  
Brooke Xiang  
Caleb Nakasaki  
Carmut Me (past  
member)  
Cecil Charles Chi  
Chung Fung (past  
member)  
Charlotte Li  
Danny Quon  
Dina Shum  
Denise Fong  
Doris Chow  
Elisha Yao  
Fred Kwok  
Fred Mah  
Guan Yu Yin 關玉英  
Glynnis Chan  
Henry Tom  
Dr. Henry Yu  
Inge Roecker  
Janssen Ong

Jessica Chen  
Joanna Yang  
John Atkin  
Jordan Eng  
Jugen Li  
Jun Ing  
June Chow 周慕慈  
Kamala Todd  
Dr. Katie Cummer  
Kevin Huang 黃儀軒  
Kimberley Wong  
(past member)  
King-Mong Chan  
Laiwan Chung  
Lesley Anderson  
Leslie Shieh  
Li Yu Rong  
Lorraine Lowe  
Louis Lapprend  
Louisa-may Khoo  
Mark Lee (past  
member)  
Martha Burton  
Michael Sing YauTan  
譚聖祐  
Michelle Fu  
Minna Van  
Nicolas Yung  
Peter Wong  
Queenie Choo  
Raymond Tam

Robert Sung  
Rory Sutherland  
Rosie Wang  
Ross Lam  
Russel Chiong  
Sarah Ling  
Sean Cao  
Sinder Kaur  
Sonny Wong  
Stephanie Leo  
Susan Ma 馬曉明  
Terry Hunter  
Terry Yung  
Tiffany Zhang  
To Trinh Diep (past  
member)  
Todd Huang  
Vincent Kwan (past  
member)  
Wan Ya Qin 萬亞琴  
Will Tao (past  
member)  
William Ma  
Willie Chan (past  
member)  
Y Vy Truong (past  
member)  
Yu Rong Li 李玉榮  
Zhaojun Liu  
Zhengchao Fu

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Legacy Stewardship Group Terms of Reference

### Legacy Stewardship Group Terms of Reference

Chinatown Transformation Project  
Approved by City Council on April 2, 2019  
Revised April 24, 2019

#### 1. Background

In October 2017, Vancouver City Council adopted the recommendations of the Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People (HDC) Initiative, which includes actions to foster a vibrant Chinatown. A vibrant Chinatown will include a thriving economy, a strong community and reinvigorated culture and heritage.

The City's Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT) supports community actions that can help achieve the long term vision of vibrancy. As well, the CTT is convening a process to co-develop with the community long-term plan, called a Cultural Heritage Asset Management Plan (CHAMP), to manage and grow Chinatown's cultural and heritage assets. The process will involve working with community partners in addressing the social, cultural and economic development needs of the Chinatown community.

#### 2. Purpose & Objective

The City is looking for volunteers from the community to join the Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group.

City Council directed staff to establish a Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group with community representatives to oversee and report back on the implementation of the Chinatown Transformation work.

The Legacy Stewardship Group will bring forward a broad range of community perspectives and interests to guide community actions and provide advice to staff on the development of the long-term plan (CHAMP).

#### 3. Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group Roles

The roles for members of the group are to:

- Act as champions of the Chinatown Transformation work (see part 9 for more description);
- Identify community priority actions and form partnerships to implement these actions;
- Help build common understanding on key neighbourhood issues that contribute to Chinatown's long-term future;
- Provide advice and guidance to staff on the Chinatown Transformation work, including input to CHAMP and recommendations on the feasibility of a UNESCO World Heritage Site application for Chinatown;
- Enhance and support public engagement and information sharing;
- Promote and foster relationship building, both within Chinatown and with neighbouring communities, including urban Indigenous groups, the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and groups in the Downtown Eastside, Hogan's Alley, and Japantown/Powell Street;
- Form and recruit sub-working groups;
- Bring forward broad and diverse perspectives of the Chinatown community; and,
- Build towards long-term sustainability and coordination of community actions.

#### **4. Member Responsibilities**

Responsibilities will include:

- Monthly meetings are expected for the duration of the term;
- Support or host additional public engagement, including the proposed Chinatown Summit;
- Share information with the wider community; and,
- Provide a summary of preliminary findings or proposed recommendations on Chinatown Transformation Work to the City, and present at the proposed Chinatown Summit. This will include, but is not limited to, identifying potential partners, resource needs, and feasibility.

City staff request that members do not miss more than two consecutive meetings and keep up to date on correspondence with the group. Legacy Stewardship Group members are volunteer positions.

#### **5. Term**

It is expected that the group will serve from Spring to end of 2019. The term may be extended depending on future work.

#### **6. Composition of the Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group**

It is preferred the group will include approximately 15 to 25 members. The goal is to include representation of diverse perspectives, experiences and ensure effective collaboration and communication. After reviewing all expressions of interests submitted, 36 members are recommended.

Proposed members would include:

- People who live in Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside;
- People who own properties in Chinatown;
- People who operate a business in Chinatown;
- Organizations and groups who represent a broad range of interests related to Chinatown and/or provide services to the community, including arts and culture, history, heritage buildings, seniors, youth, businesses, immigrants, intangible heritage;
- Organizations and individuals who are from the urban Indigenous communities, and the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations; and,
- General members of the Vancouver public who are interested in Chinatown.

## **7. Selection of Members**

Members will be selected based on relevant experience, demonstrated ability to fulfill the role as described above, and active involvement in the Chinatown and/or Chinese Canadian community.

The goal is to achieve gender balance and a range of backgrounds including age, income, cultural diversity, networks and experience in the community for the Legacy Stewardship Group. Members of the Legacy Stewardship Group will be confirmed by Council.

The Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group will be recruited by the City of Vancouver Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT) through an open public expression of interest process. Individuals can self-nominate. Individuals who are representing an organization should include a recommendation letter from the organization by submitting it as a paper copy along with their expression of interest or by emailing it to [chinatown@vancouver.ca](mailto:chinatown@vancouver.ca).

## **8. It is important to note that:**

- All community members interested in participating in the group were required to complete the online or in-print expression of interest form by the prescribed deadline;
- Legacy Stewardship Group members may express opinions that are different from each other. All ideas and views must be recorded and acknowledged in minutes and recommendations. In incidents where there is conflict or disagreement, the meeting facilitator should lead conflict resolution and consult the Council advisory code of conduct;
- Input from the Legacy Stewardship Group will be vital to the creation of the Cultural Heritage and Assets Management Plan (CHAMP). City staff remains responsible to create the plan and make final recommendations to City Council for their decision;
- Members may share information from the meetings with the community;
- Meeting dates and times will be determined by Legacy Stewardship Group members. The group may wish to hold more than one meeting in one month; and,
- Meetings will be conducted in English. Chinese interpretation will be provided upon request.

## **9. Role of the Chinatown Transformation Team**

The City of Vancouver Chinatown Transformation Team, formed in August 2018, is the secretariat for the Legacy Stewardship Group and responsible for convening a process to co-develop the Cultural Heritage and Assets Management Plan (CHAMP) with the Chinatown community. This plan is a key component of the overall process towards a possible UNESCO World Heritage Site application for Chinatown. The team will support/implement partnership projects in Chinatown.

The team's strategies are to:

- Undertake actions with community partners;
- Convene a community process to develop CHAMP;
- Build partnerships to enable coordination and long term sustainability of community actions;
- Support public policies which strengthen Chinatown's social, cultural and economic development and improve responsiveness to the community;
- Advance relationships between historic communities and move towards reconciliation and mutual respect; and,
- Partner with academic institutions and community partners to undertake research on Chinatown's tangible and intangible heritage.

In addition to the Legacy Stewardship Group, there will be different opportunities throughout 2019 for community members to be involved. For example, topic-focused Working Groups could be formed to focus on undertaking actions and projects within the community. The CTT will also do further outreach to ask the community what values, cultural assets, and issues in Chinatown are most important to them.

## **Additions to Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) Terms of Reference**

As Adopted by LSG on April 24, 2019

### **Values and Guiding Principles**

The LSG will provide leadership, advice and support to the City of Vancouver's Chinatown transformation work. Members will contribute knowledge and expertise towards the successful planning and implementation of Chinatown-related actions and policies.

The LSG will always act in the best interests of the Chinatown community and discussions will be held in a collaborative and respectful manner. LSG will conduct business and make decisions in the context of shared values and principles. The following Policy Statements on Values and Principles are used by the City of Vancouver's Council, advisory groups and staff and can be applicable for adoption by LSG.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

1. **Integrity:** Council officials, staff and advisory body members are keepers of the public trust and must uphold the highest standards of ethical behaviour. Council officials, staff, and advisory body members are expected to:
  - a) make decisions that benefit the community;
  - b) act lawfully and within the authorities of the Vancouver Charter; and
  - c) be free from undue influence and not act, or appear to act, in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, family, friends or business interests.
2. **Accountability:** Council officials, staff, and advisory body members are obligated to answer for a responsibility that has been entrusted to them. They are responsible for the decisions that they make. This responsibility includes acts of commission and acts of omission. In turn, decision-making processes must be transparent and subject to public scrutiny; and proper records are kept and audit trails are in place.
3. **Responsibility:** Council officials, staff and advisory body members must act responsibly, within the law and within the authorities of the Vancouver Charter. They are to observe the Code of Conduct\*. This means disclosing actual or potential conflict of interest relating to their public duties and taking steps to resolve the conflict for the protection of the public interest; following the letter and spirit of policies and procedures; and exercising all conferred power strictly for the purpose for which the powers have been conferred.
4. **Leadership:** Council officials, staff and advisory body members must demonstrate and promote the key principles of the Code of Conduct\* through their decisions, actions and behaviour. Their behaviour must build and inspire the public's trust and confidence in local government.
5. **Respect:** Council officials, staff and advisory body members must conduct public business efficiently, with decorum and with proper attention to the City's diversity. They must treat each other and others with respect at all times. This means not using derogatory language towards others, respecting the rights of other people, treating people with courtesy and recognizing the different roles others play in local government decision-making.
6. **Openness:** Council officials, staff and advisory body members have a duty to be as open as possible about their decisions and actions. This means communicating appropriate information openly to the public about decision-making processes and issues being considered; encouraging appropriate public participation; communicating clearly; and providing appropriate means for recourse and feedback.

\* Code of Conduct

*LSG members are expected to adhere to the City's [Code of Conduct Policy Number AE-028-01 Section 4.1 – 4.10](https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/boards-committees-code-of-conduct.pdf) (<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/boards-committees-code-of-conduct.pdf>). Given that individual circumstances may change from time to time, members should confirm and declare any real or apparent conflict of interest to the group if it arises.*

#### 1. LSG Co-Chair

- a. At the second LSG meeting, members will be asked to nominate two members to be the Co-Chair of the LSG.
- b. The roles and responsibilities of the Co-Chair are as follows:
  1. facilitate discussion at LSG meetings to build towards a shared vision;
  2. work with secretariat to set agenda for LSG meetings;
  3. act as the spokespeople on behalf of LSG, including with the media;

#### 2. Working Groups

A number of working groups will be established by LSG on specific topics of interest. Members of the LSG and the public at large are encouraged to participate in the working groups.

Working Groups will meet on a regular basis to:

- a) review and identify issues of the topics;
- b) develop strategies, priorities and actions related to the topics; and
- c) report back to LSG for coordination and support.

#### 3. Meeting Procedures

- a. A quorum is obtained by the presence of 50% plus one of the total number of LSG members.
- b. LSG members should not miss two consecutive meetings without seeking leave.
- c. As with other City advisory groups, LSG will allow members of the public, upon approval by the Co-Chair, to attend meetings as observers.
- d. Meeting minutes adopted by LSG will serve as official records of meeting proceedings and discussions. Anyone wishing to make audio/video recording during the meetings must seek prior consent by the LSG.
- e. In consultation with the Co-Chair, the CTT secretariat will be responsible for preparing meeting agenda and draft minutes for adoption by the LSG.

## Appendix B: Legacy Stewardship Group Membership List 2019-2022

Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) members were recruited through an open public expression of interest process and members are recommended to City Council for their approval. Members are recommended based on relevant experiences, including professional, volunteering and lived experiences. Members were also considered based on their demonstrated ability to fulfill the roles of LSG, and active involvement in the Chinatown and/or Chinese Canadian community. In addition, the recommended membership strives to achieve balance across a range of backgrounds including age, gender, income, networks and experiences to reflect the diversity of the community.

LSG holds monthly meetings, and the Group is chaired by two co-chairs who were elected by LSG members. All LSG meetings included interpretation, and written materials are translated. Monthly meeting agendas and notes in both Chinese and English are also available on a publicly accessible website. In addition, briefing meetings were offered to members, for example to the Chinese seniors in the group, prior to the monthly LSG meetings.

No.	Name	Affiliation	Status	Membership Duration
1	Alain Chow	Individual	Active	2019-Current
2	Anita (Chan) Bardal	Individual	Active	2020-Current
3	Aynsley Wong Meldrum	Wongs' Benevolent Association	Active	2019-Current
4	Bill Kwok	Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver	Active	2019-Current
5	Brooke Xiang	Chinatown Today	Active	2021-Current
6	Charlotte Li	Individual	Active	2020-Current
7	Danny Quon	The Hon Hsing Athletic Club of Vancouver	Active	2019-Current
8	Fred Kwok	Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver	Active	2019-Current
9	Fred Mah	Individual	Active	2019-Current
10	Glynnis Chan	Individual	Active	2019-Current
11	Henry Tom/Joey Wong	Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association	Active	2020-Current
12	Inge Roecker	Individual	Active	2020-Current

13	Janssen Ong	Chinese Community Policing Center	Active	2021-Current
14	Jordan Eng	Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association	Active	2019-Current
15	Jugen Li	Chinatown Concern Group	Active	2019-Current
16	June Chow 周慕慈/ Susan Ma 馬曉明	Youth Collaborative for Chinatown 青心在唐人街	Active	2020-Current
17	Kevin Huang 黃儀軒	Hua Foundation	Active	2019-Current
18	Laiwan Chung	Individual	Active	2019-Current
19	Leslie Shieh	Individual	Active	2019-Current
20	Li Yu Rong	Individual	Active	2019-Current
21	Lorraine Lowe	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden	Active	2020-Current
22	Michael Sing Yau Tan 譚聖祐	Individual	Active	2019-Current
23	Minna Van	West Coast Technology Innovation Foundation	Active	2019-Current
24	Robert Sung	Individual	Active	2020-Current
25	Ross Lam	Individual	Active	2019-Current
26	Sinder Kaur	SUCCESS	Active	2021-Current
27	Sonny Wong	Individual	Active	2019-Current
28	Stephanie Leo	Individual	Active	2019-Current
29	Todd Huang	Yarrow Intergenerational Society	Active	2021-Current
30	Wang Zhao (Rosie Wang)	Chinatown Concern Group	Active	2019-Current
31	William Ma	Mah Society of Canada	Active	2019-Current
32	Terry Hunter	Individual	Active	2019-Current
33	Albert Wei	Chinese Community Policing Center	Inactive	2020

34	Amanda Huynh 黃珮詩	Individual	Inactive	2019
35	Carmut Me	Heritage Vancouver	Inactive	2019-2021
36	Cecil Charles Chi Chung Fung	Chinese Freemasons of Vancouver	Inactive	2019-2021
37	Elisha Yao	Chinese Community Policing Center	Inactive	2019-2021
38	Joey Wong	Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association	Inactive	2020
39	Jun Ing	Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver	Inactive	2019-2020
40	Kimberley Wong	Individual	Inactive	2019-2021
41	Lesley Anderson	First United Church	Inactive	2019
42	Louis Lapprend	Chinatown Today	Inactive	2020-2021
43	Mark Lee	Yarrow Intergenerational Society	Inactive	2019-2020
44	Michelle Fu	221A Art Gallery	Inactive	2019
45	Peter Wong	Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver	Inactive	2021
46	Queenie Choo	SUCCESS	Inactive	2019
47	Terry Yung	SUCCESS	Inactive	2019
48	To Trinh Diep	Individual	Inactive	2019
49	Vincent Kwan	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden	Inactive	2019-2020
50	Will Tao	Individual	Inactive	2019
51	Willie Chan	Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association	Inactive	2019-2020
52	Y Vy Truong	Individual	Inactive	2019-2020

## Appendix C: Community Partnership and Pilot Projects Supported Through Chinatown Transformation Phase One Work (2018 - 2021)

No.	Project Name / Description	Date
1	Business Awning Cleaning	2018
2	Chinatown Summer - Movie Night	2018
3	Chinatown Summer Events Series	2018
4	Shape the Courtyard Summer Festival	2018
5	UBC SCARP Laneway Study Project	2018
6	Historic Chinatown Map Guide	2018
7	Chinatown Through a Wide Lens: the Hidden Photographs of Yucho Chow	2018
8	Chinatown Artist Call Murals: Celebrating Spring Festival in Chinatown	2019
9	Chinatown Artist Call Murals: Everyday Things	2019
10	Chinatown Artist Call Murals: Gathering	2019
11	Chinatown Artist Call Murals: The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea	2019
12	Chinatown Stories Volume 2: Aunties, Elders & Ancestors	2019
13	Chinatown Mural Showcase and Walking Tour	2019
14	Chinatown Community Stewardship Program	2019
15	Chinatown Dried Goods Guide	2019
16	Summer Season Programming: Food and Memories in Chinatown	2019
17	A Seat at the Table Exhibition	2019
18	Banquet of Stories Event	2019
19	Historic Chinatown Map Guides Reprint	2019
20	Seniors Support - Youth Volunteers Training	2019
21	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Heritage Significance Podcasts	2020
22	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Chinatown Safety Initiative	2020
23	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Fire Dragon Festival	2020

24	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Identifying Needs of Chinatown Seniors Housing & Improving Living Conditions Study	2020
25	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Navigating COVID-19: Stories of Recovery and Resilience and LSG Indigenous Relations & Education	2020
26	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Noodlelicious Festival	2020
27	Legacy Stewardship Group Pilot Projects: Solidarity Bridging Arts, Bridging Resilience	2020
28	Additional Support to Graffiti Removal Program	2020
29	Additional Support to Chinatown Security Patrol	2020
30	An Ox-picious Vancouver Chinatown Lunar New Year Celebration Virtual Event	2021
31	Multi-lingual Vaccination Clinics and Awareness Campaign	2021
32	Chinatown Reimagined Forum	2021
33	Documenting Chinese Societies' Intangible Heritage Videos	2021
34	Critical Safety Upgrades to Activate Ground Floor Space of a Heritage Building	2021

## Appendix D: Chinatown Transformation Public Engagement Summary 2018 - 2021

Engagement Event/Activity	Total occurrences	Total # of participants	Date (if applicable)
Legacy Business Study	2	1630	Q1 2018
Community Engagement and Outreach	123	1189	2018-2021
Hidden Gems of Chinatown: Cultural Heritage Assets Engagement	9	605	Q3 2019
Cultural Visits (Musqueam; Tsleil-Waututh)	2	68	2019
LSG Monthly Meetings	23	861	2019-2021
LSG-Related Meetings	158	1320	2019-2021
Public Events: City Apology & Cultural Day; BC Province MOU Signing; Chinatown Summer Events Series; Dr. Ho Yin Lee on UNESCO; A Living Tradition; ACAM Lecture; Beyond Pender Talk; VPL Book Launch; Fire Dragon and Noodlelicious Festival; Heritage Vancouver Panel; Ox-picious Vancouver Chinatown Lunar New Year Celebration; Chinatown Mural Showcase; Chinatown Public Art Talk; Chinatown House Creative Fair; Chinatown Murals Artist Call - Info Session; Chinatown Summer Events Learning Session	24	9300	2019-2021
Council Advisory Committees (CHAPC; VHC)	6	44	2019-2021
CHAMP Engagement Events and Meetings	6	87	2019-2021
Memorial Square Community Engagement	7	439	Q2-Q4 2021
Memorial Square Community Advisory Group	4	50	Q1-Q4 2021
Northeast False Creek Chinatown Working Group	3	88	2020-2021
Chinatown Reimagined Community Forum	1	1000	Q4 2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>16681</b>	

## Appendix E: Demographic and Economic Profile Analyses

The boundary for demographic analysis of Chinatown varies slightly from the planning boundaries because census information is only available in full blocks. The data contained in this brief profile has limitations, and should not be understood to represent the full context of the Chinatown community. For example, census indicators do not include people living in Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing, which includes 13 buildings in Chinatown.

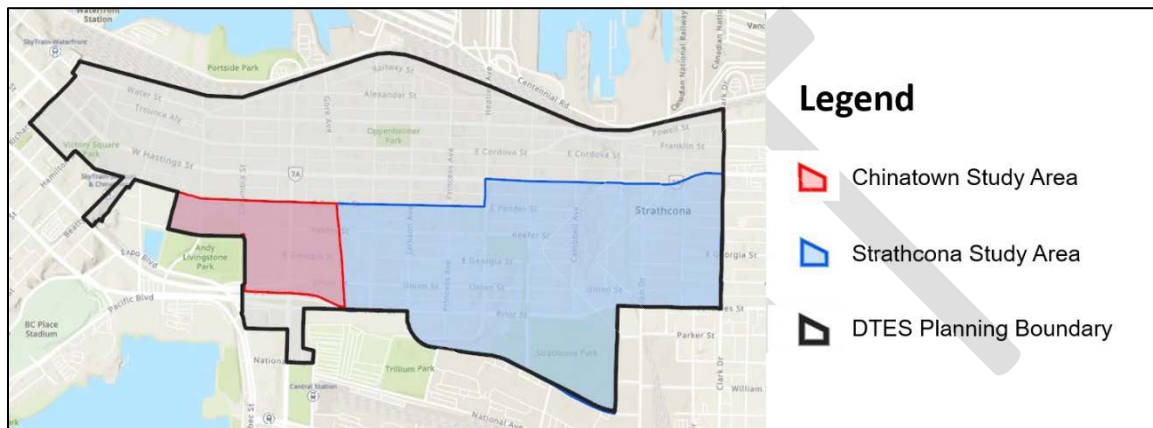


Figure 23: Map of Demographic Study Area Boundaries for Chinatown, Strathcona, and the DTES

### Population Size and Growth Over Time

The population of Chinatown in 2016 was 1821, about 0.3% of Vancouver's total population. Since 1996, it has grown by 116%. Between 2011 to 2016, Chinatown's rate of population growth has been much faster (43%) than that of Strathcona region (3% decrease), DTES (8%) and Vancouver overall (5%).

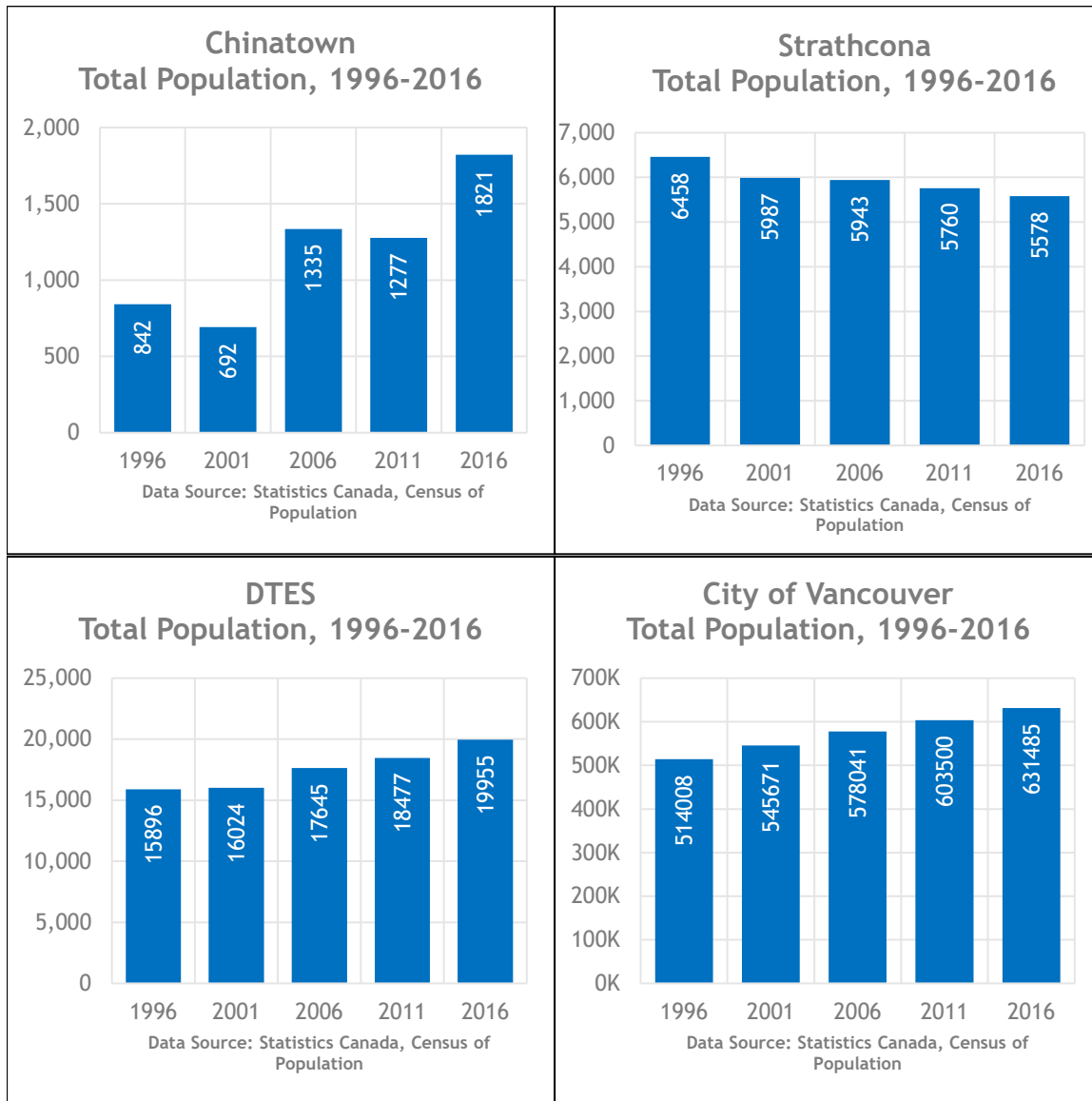


Figure 24. Population Size and Growth Over Time

## Population density

Chinatown's population density is double that of Vancouver's, and is greater than Strathcona and the DTES.

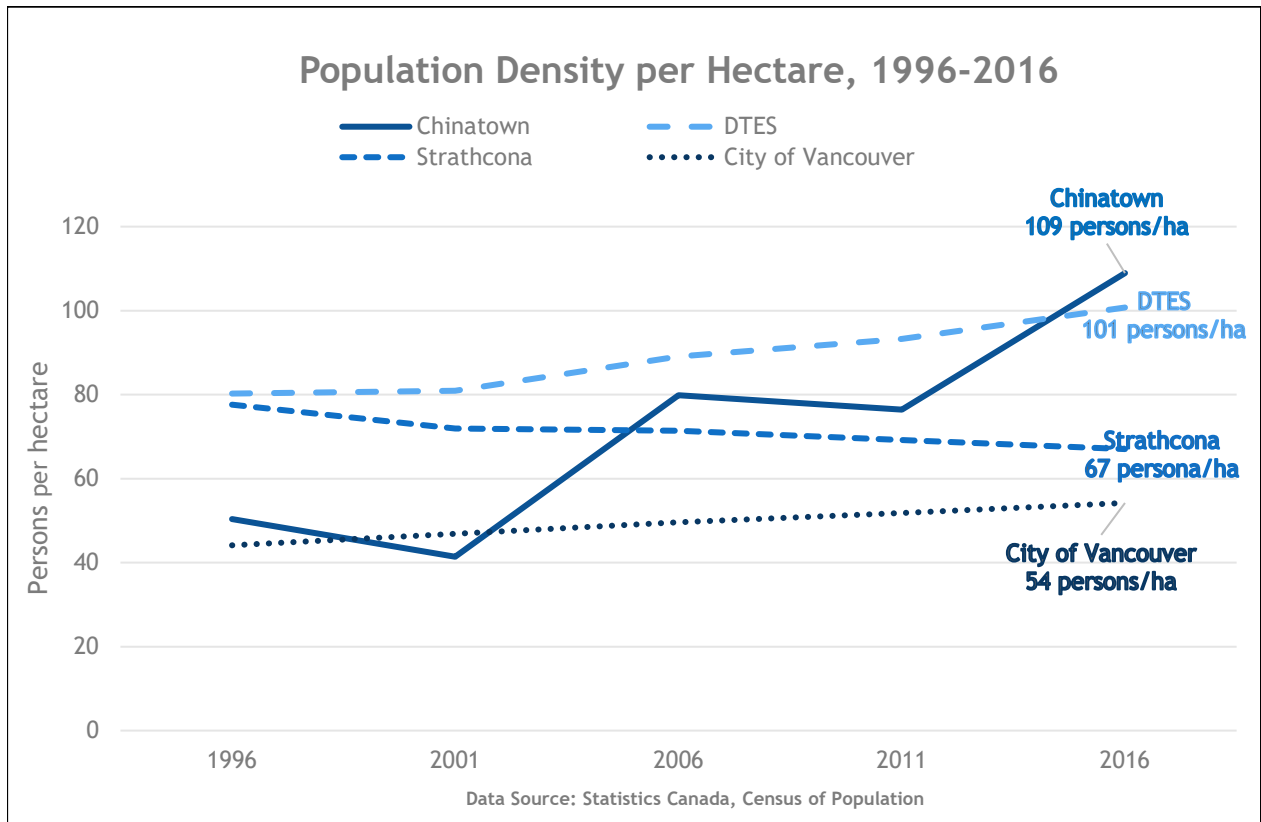


Figure 25: Population Density per Hectare, 1996-2016.

## Age

The census data indicates that Chinatown has a lower percentage of female-identifying individuals compared to Vancouver, although there are more female seniors than male. Chinatown also has a larger percentage of people in their 30s and a smaller percentage of children aged 10 compared to Vancouver, as well as Strathcona and the DTES.

According to 2016 census data, there are 695 male Chinese seniors and 895 female Chinese seniors over the age of 65 in the DTES.

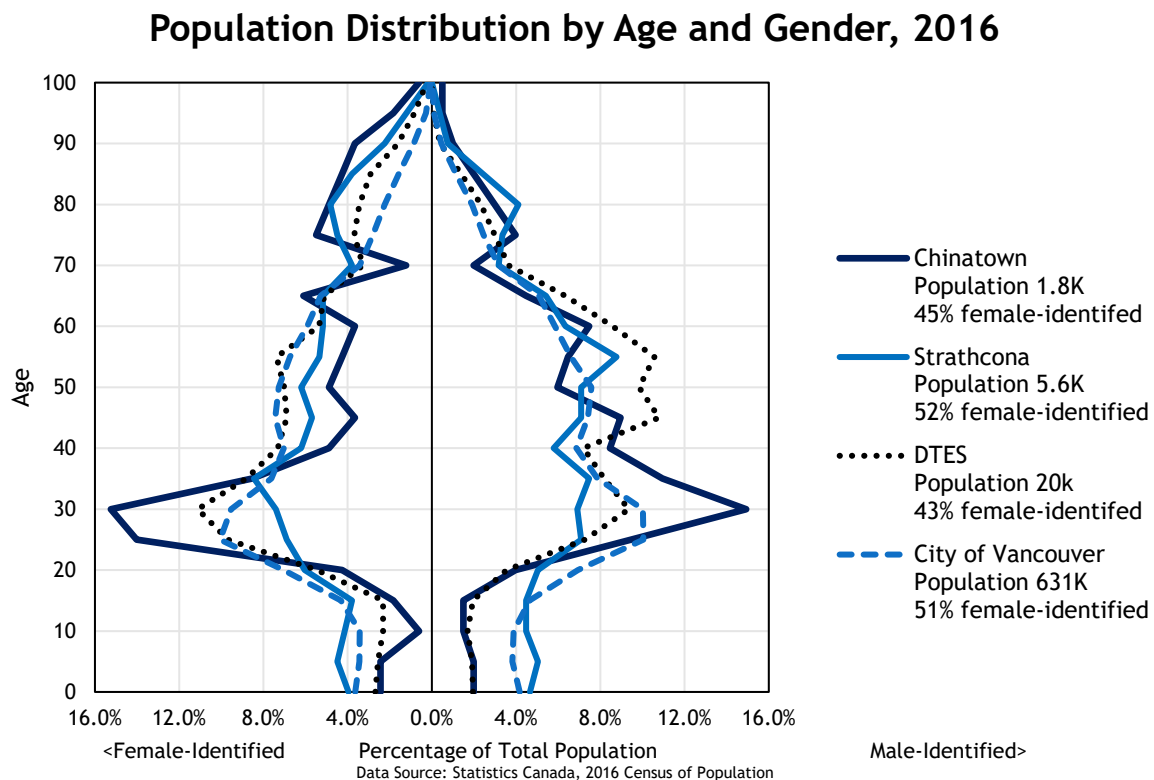
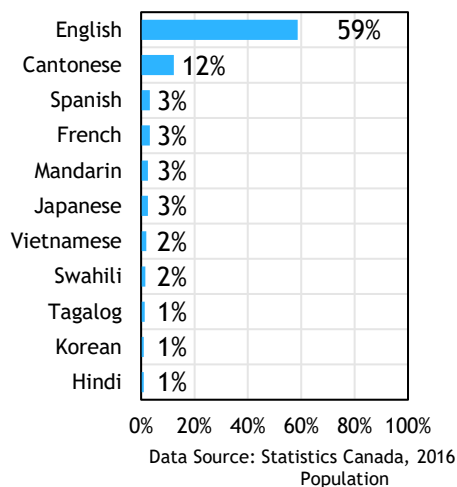


Figure 26: Population Distribution by Age and Gender, 2016.

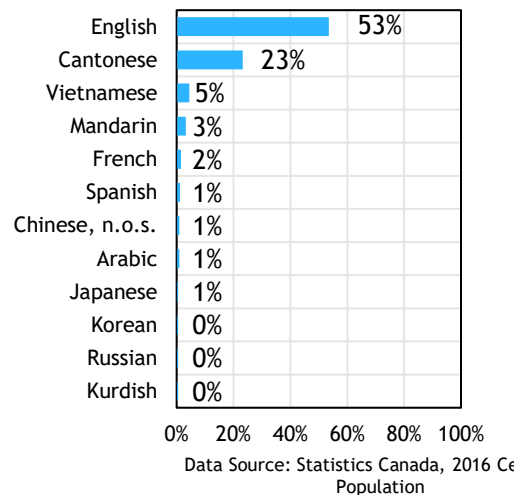
## Languages

When comparing mother tongues across regions, Chinatown stands out as having a greater percentage of residents who speak English as their first language than Strathcona or Vancouver. In contrast, the proportion of Chinatown residents who speak Cantonese (12%) as their mother tongue is about the same as Vancouver but almost half that of Strathcona.

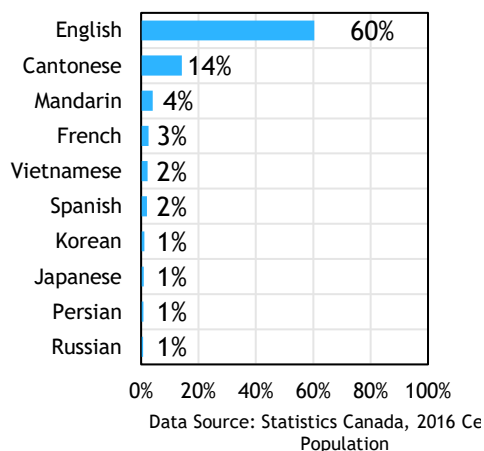
**Chinatown: Top Mother Tongues, 2016**



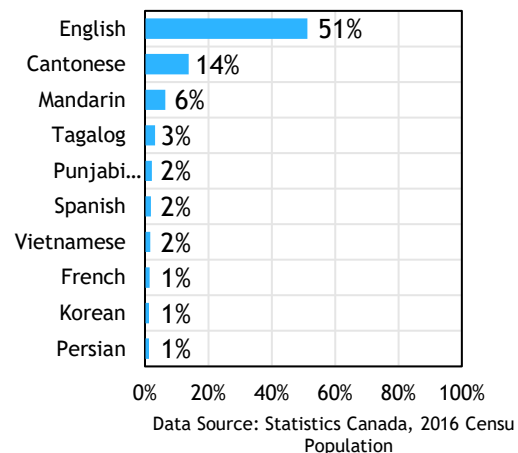
**Strathcona: Top Mother Tongues, 2016**



**DTES: Top Mother Tongues, 2016**



**City of Vancouver: Top Mother Tongues, 2016**



*Figure 27: Mother Tongues across Regions, 2016.*

## Immigration

The percentage of second generation individuals in Chinatown (29%) is greater than that of Strathcona, DTES, and Vancouver overall. While Chinatown's ratio of third generation individuals (31%) is greater than Vancouver's (26%), it is smaller than both that of Strathcona and the DTES. In terms of the percentage of first generation individuals, Chinatown (41%) is less than Vancouver (48%).

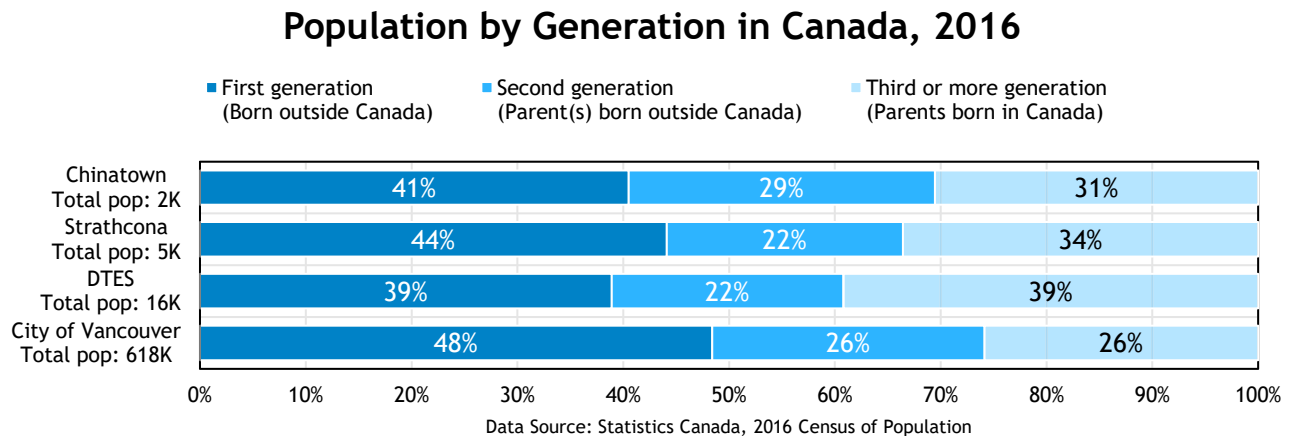


Figure 28: Population by Generation in Canada, 2016

## Income Level

Many households in Chinatown have low incomes, with 45% making less than \$30,000 per year. Vancouver's median household income is \$65,000 while Chinatown's median household income is \$35,347. Canada's official poverty line for Vancouver in 2015 is \$39,951<sup>45</sup>, indicating that large number of households in Chinatown live in poverty and are economically vulnerable. Chinatown households are much less likely to be very high-income, with households in Vancouver generally earning more than households in Chinatown as well as Strathcona or the DTES. As noted earlier, households in Chinatown are much more likely to be one-person households.

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html>

## Distribution of Total Personal Income, 2016

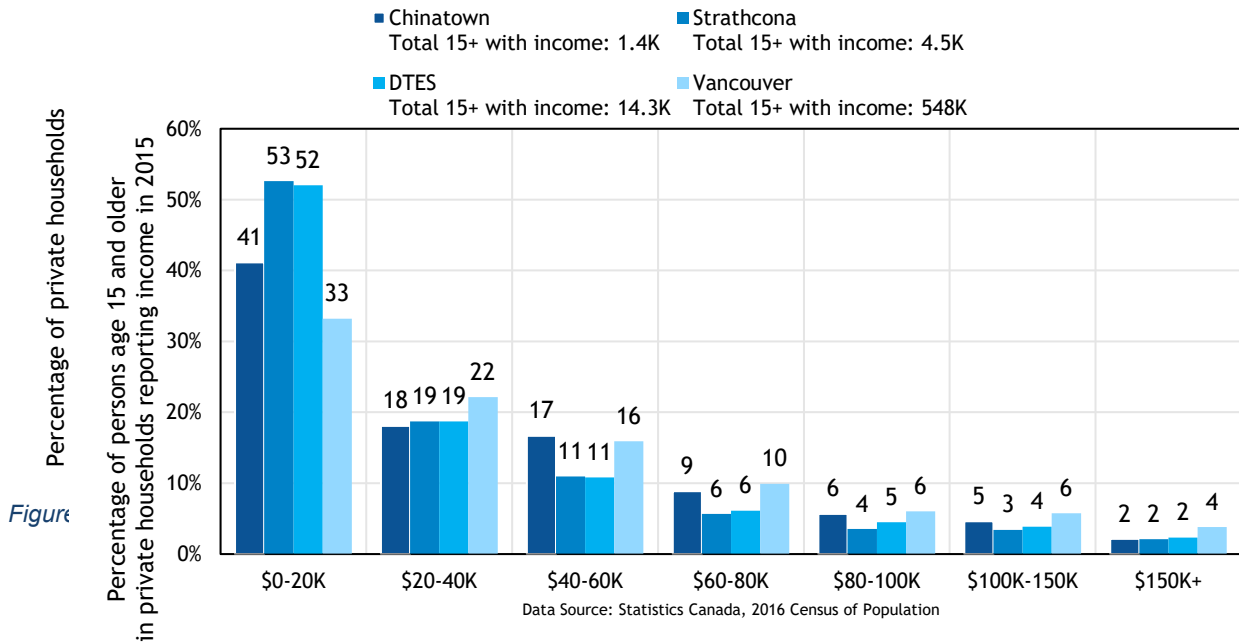


Figure 29: Distribution of Total Personal Income, 2016.

The distribution of personal income is similar to that of household income distribution. Overall, the patterns of distribution in Chinatown are heavily skewed towards lower income brackets. However, Strathcona and the DTES show greater percentages of individuals earning less than \$20,000 than Chinatown.

### Population Groups

Based on the 2016 census, about one hundred people —4.2% of Chinatown's population—are Indigenous, compared to 1.4% of Vancouver. There are an estimated 65 people identified as First Nations, 25 identified as Métis and 15 with multiple or other Indigenous identities in

## Population with Indigenous Identity, 2016

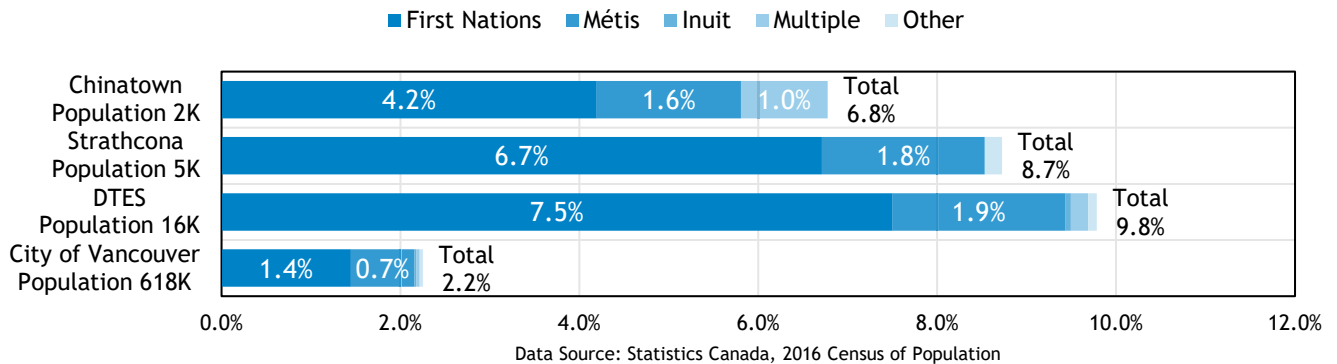
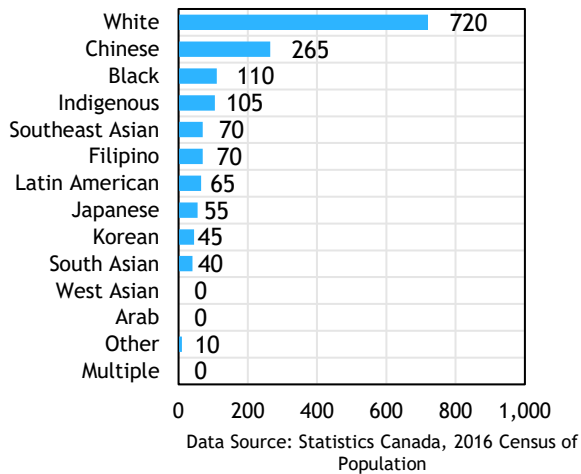


Figure 30: Population with Indigenous Identity, 2016.

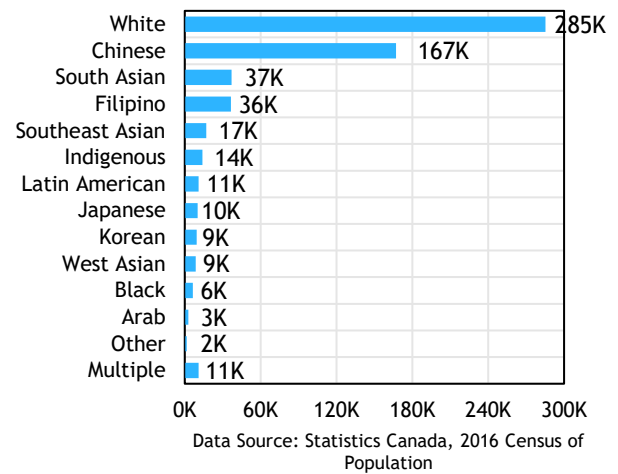
Chinatown. The federal census has many limitations in its validity, reliability and relevance to Indigenous communities. The census and other governmental data sources should be supplemented with other sources of knowledge within Indigenous communities to fully understand population demographics and trends. In addition, the exclusion of SROs from census data in the context of the DTES and Chinatown may significantly impact population estimates presented here.

This dataset describes the racialized identities in each of the four regions examined. Among Chinatown's population in private households, about 720 are identified as white. About 265 residents are identified as Chinese. Other population groups with relatively large populations in Chinatown include Black, Indigenous, and Filipino populations.

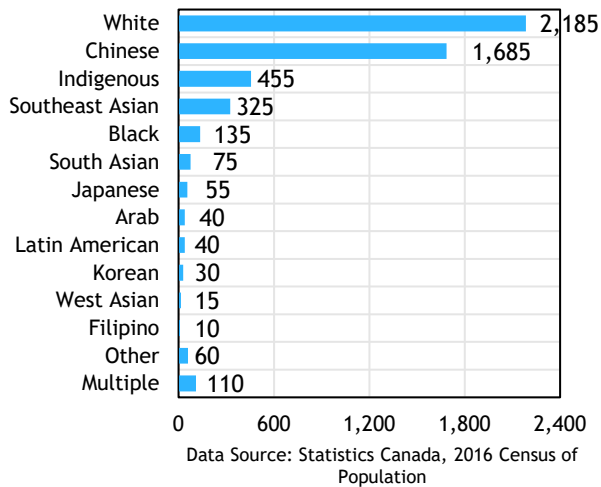
### Chinatown: Population Groups, 2016



### City of Vancouver: Population Groups, 2016



### Strathcona: Population Groups, 2016



### DTEs: Population Groups, 2016

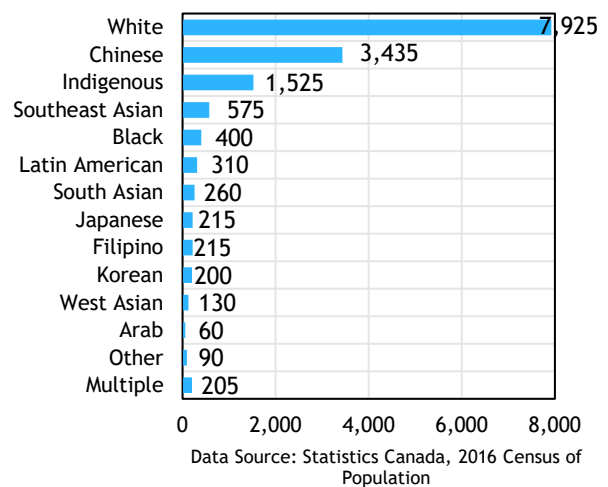


Figure 31: Population groups across regions, 2016

## Household Types

61% of households in Chinatown are one-person households, which is much higher than Vancouver's (39%). Compared to the city overall, Chinatown households are much less likely to have families with children living in them.

### Private households by Type of Household, 2016

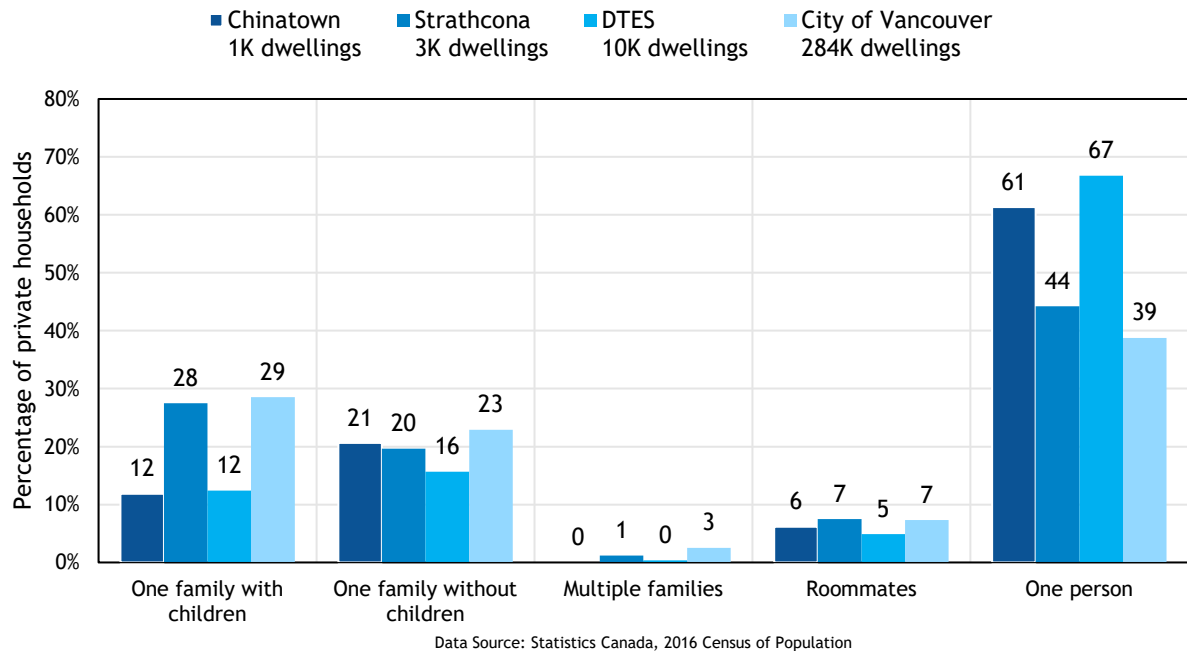


Figure 32: Private households by Type of Household, 2016

In addition, Chinatown's dwellings are almost entirely comprised of apartment units compared to Strathcona and Vancouver.

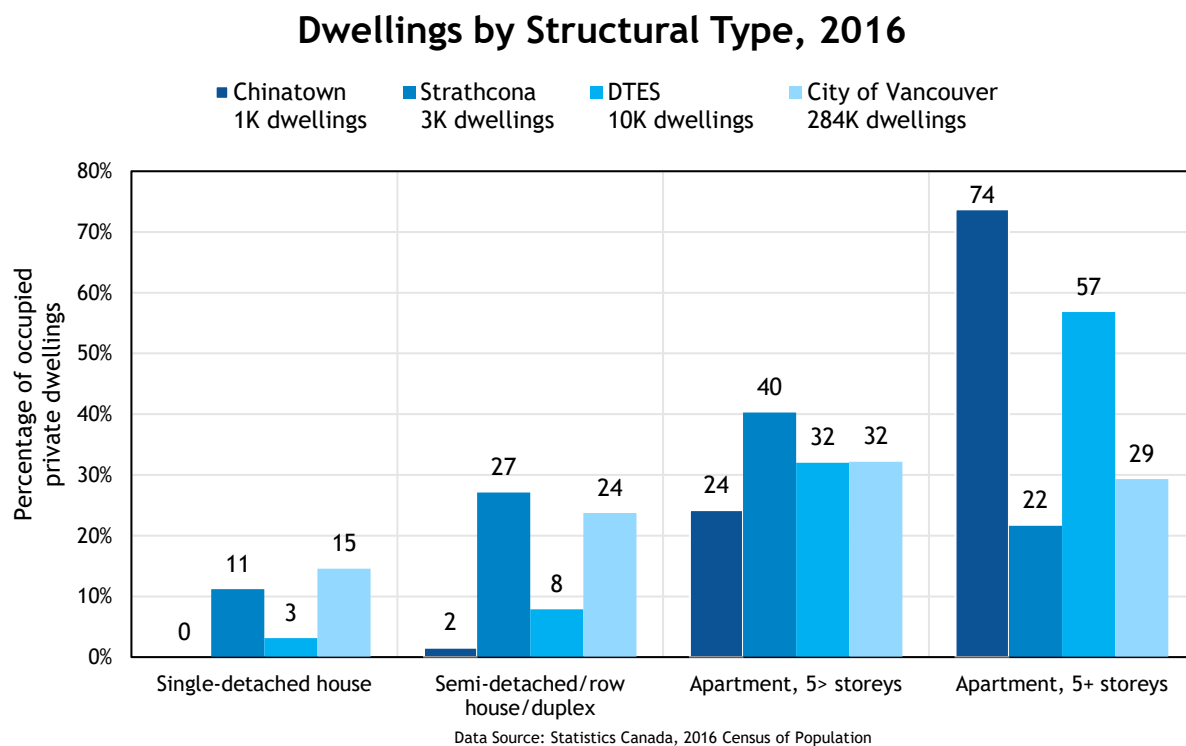


Figure 33: Dwellings by Structural Type, 2016

Nearly 70% of households in Chinatown are rented. Inversely, housing ownership in Chinatown is lower than Vancouver but higher than the DTES and Strathcona.

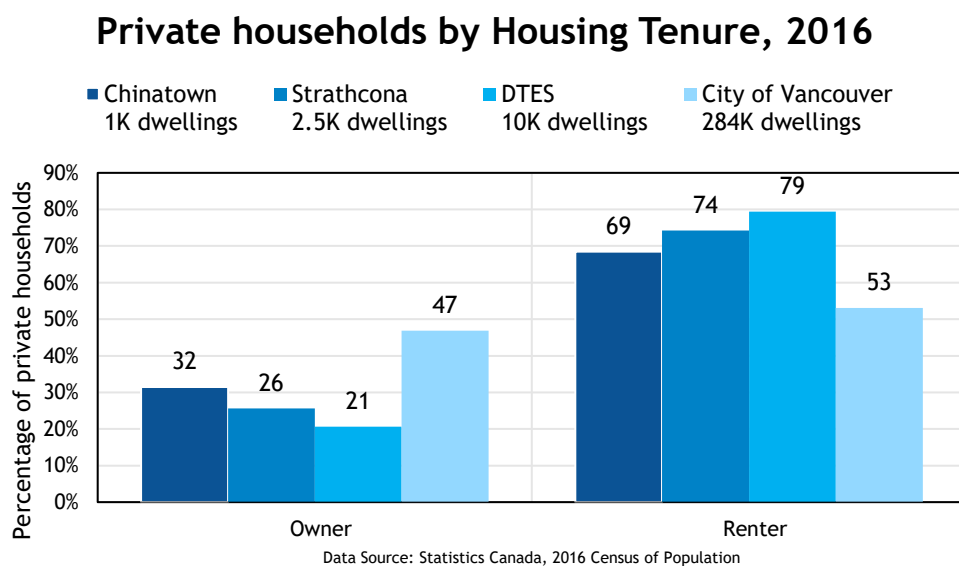


Figure 34. Private households by Housing Tenure, 2016

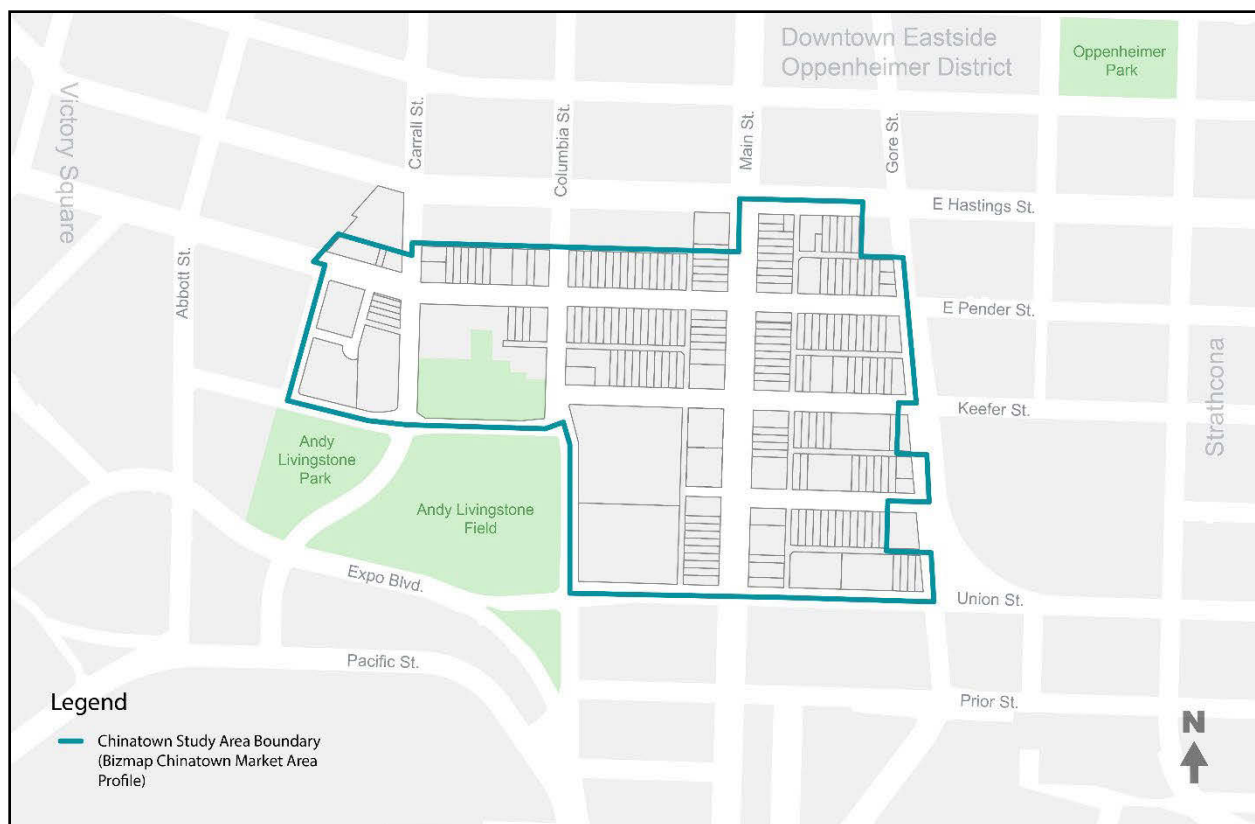


Figure 35. Map of Bizmap Chinatown Market Area Profile Study Boundary

Business mix

Chinatown’s business mix has a much greater percentage of retail than Vancouver, with relatively more health care/social assistance and accommodation/food services. On the other hand, Chinatown as a relatively smaller percentage of professional, scientific and technical services as well as other services.

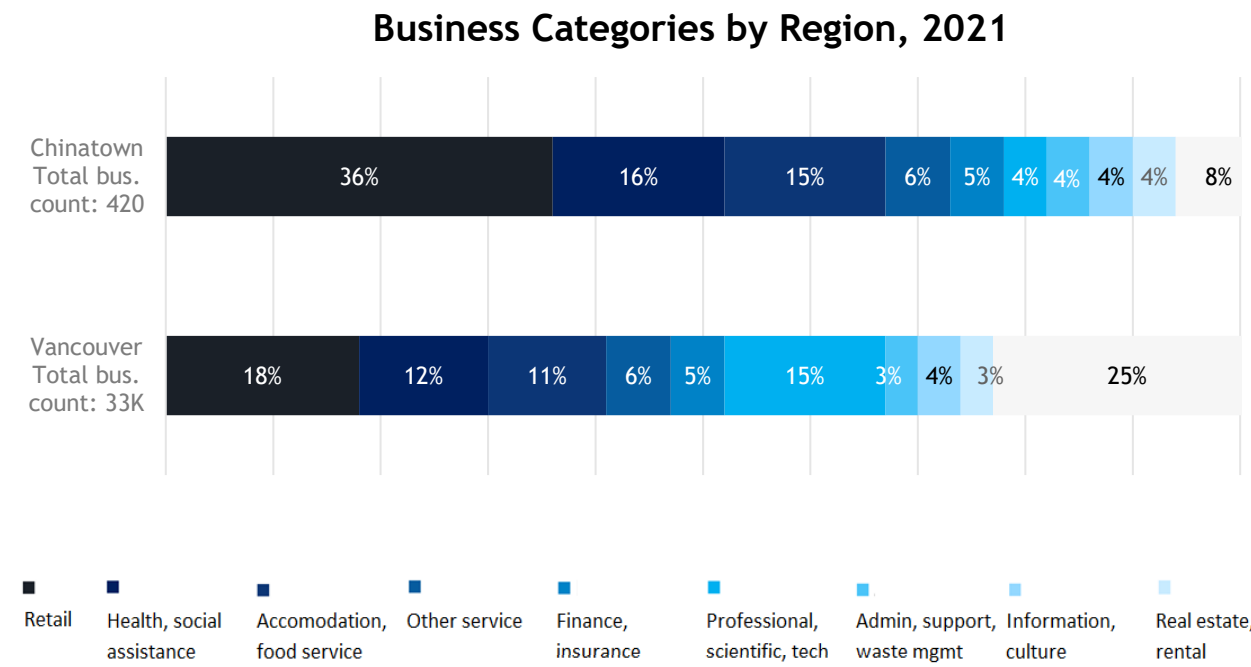
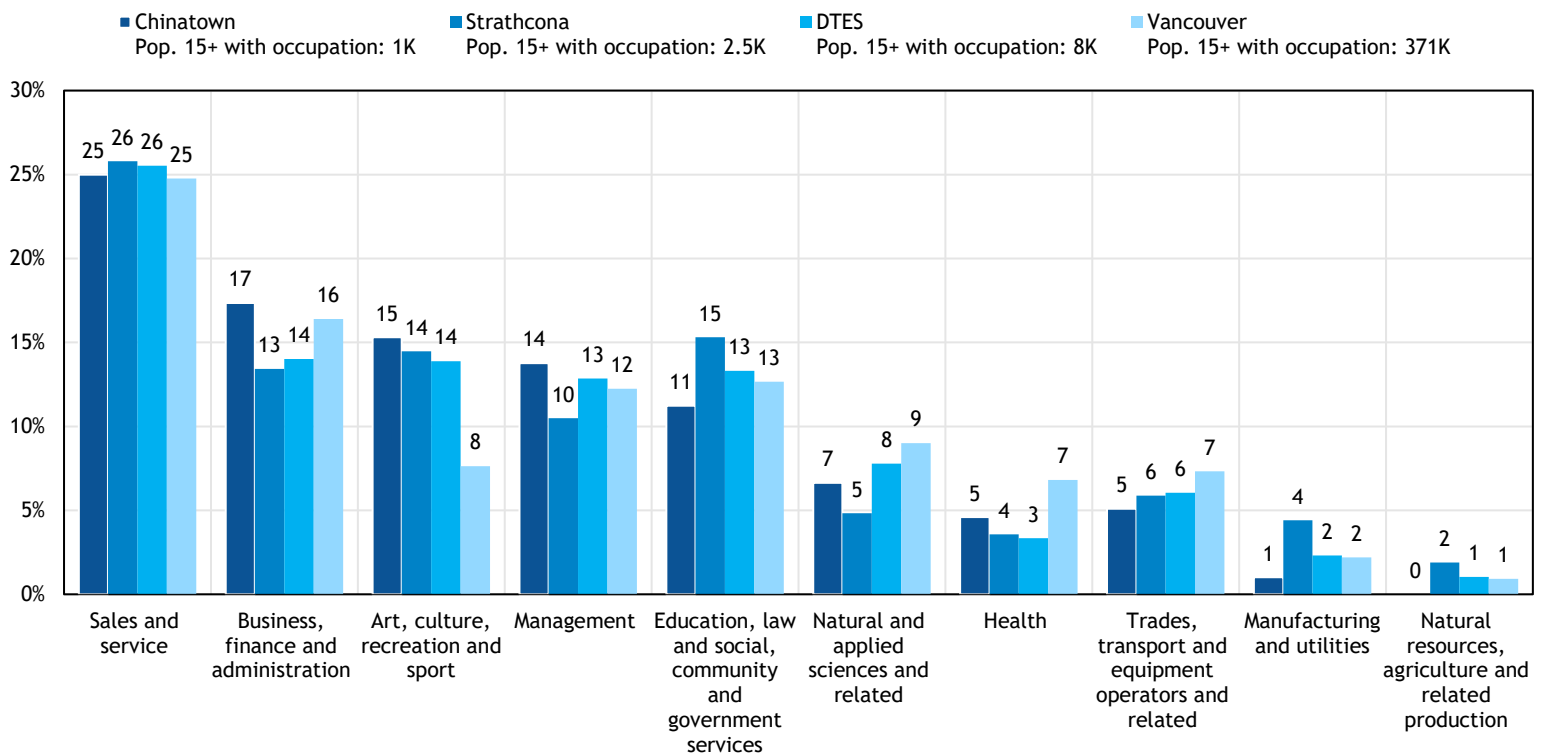


Figure 36. Business categories by region, 2021

## Jobs

About a quarter of Chinatown residents work in sales and service occupations, a rate equal to the city overall. The top three occupational categories in Chinatown are: sales and service, business, finance and administration, and art, culture, recreation and sport. Chinatown boasts more than double the proportional labour force in the arts industry than Vancouver, while having the much lower rates of workers in manufacturing than Strathcona, DTES and Vancouver.

### Occupation Categories of Labour Force Living in Area, 2016



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

Figure 37. Occupation Categories of Labour Force Living in Area, 2016

Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate in Chinatown is lowest when compared to that of Strathcona, the DTES, and Vancouver.

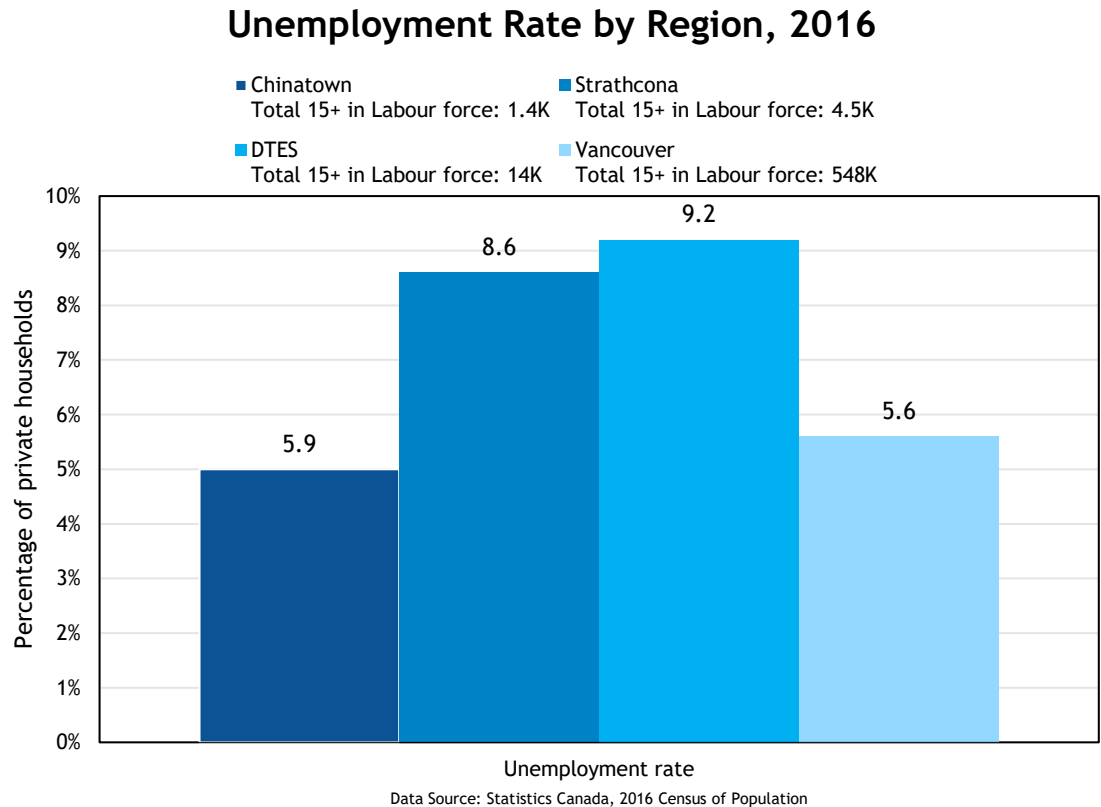


Figure 38. Unemployment Rate by Region, 2016

## Appendix F: Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory Methodology and Supplementary Maps

### Cultural Heritage Assets Inventory Methodology<sup>46</sup>

CHAMP includes the first comprehensive inventory of Chinatown's cultural heritage assets, spanning tangible and intangible assets, as well as traditional heritage attributes. Initially conducted in 2019, the inventory used the Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A Zoning Districts, as well as the CD-1 Districts within Chinatown, as the study area (See Section 2.1, Figure 8).

The inventory creates an inclusive baseline of tangible and intangible assets at all addresses in the study area at the time of data collection, and provides a comprehensive source of foundational information to inform the development of strategies and actions. This baseline supports consistent and ongoing monitoring of change in the neighbourhood, and is also a required foundational document for a UNESCO World Heritage Site application. It is important to note that the inventory deliberately does not rank or assign a level of significance to each asset.

Tangible assets recorded in the inventory included all buildings, historic places, and monuments within the study area. Visual documentation for all buildings, photographs of each building, with separate photo of the ground floor retail within the building, are included in the inventory. The inventory also included research on historical activities in the area. An example of a historical activity is a well-known restaurant that was in Chinatown but no longer exists in the current day such as the Marco Polo nightclub at 90 E Pender Street that was demolished in the 1980s.

Intangible assets recorded includes time-limited experiences such as events, intangible art forms such as performing arts, knowledge and cultural expressions such as language, and craftsmanship. The intangible assets are organized into the five UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage domains<sup>47</sup>:

- (1) Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- (2) Performing arts;
- (3) Social practices, rituals and festive events;
- (4) Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and
- (5) Traditional craftsmanship.

It is important to emphasize that cultural heritage assets are not only historic (i.e. not dependent on the number of years or length of time they have existed), or be a physical object to be included in the inventory. They are, however, included as being tied to specific physical

---

<sup>46</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> UNESCO Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>.

addresses in the inventory in recognition that many intangible assets carry significance because they are tied to the place where the activity takes place.

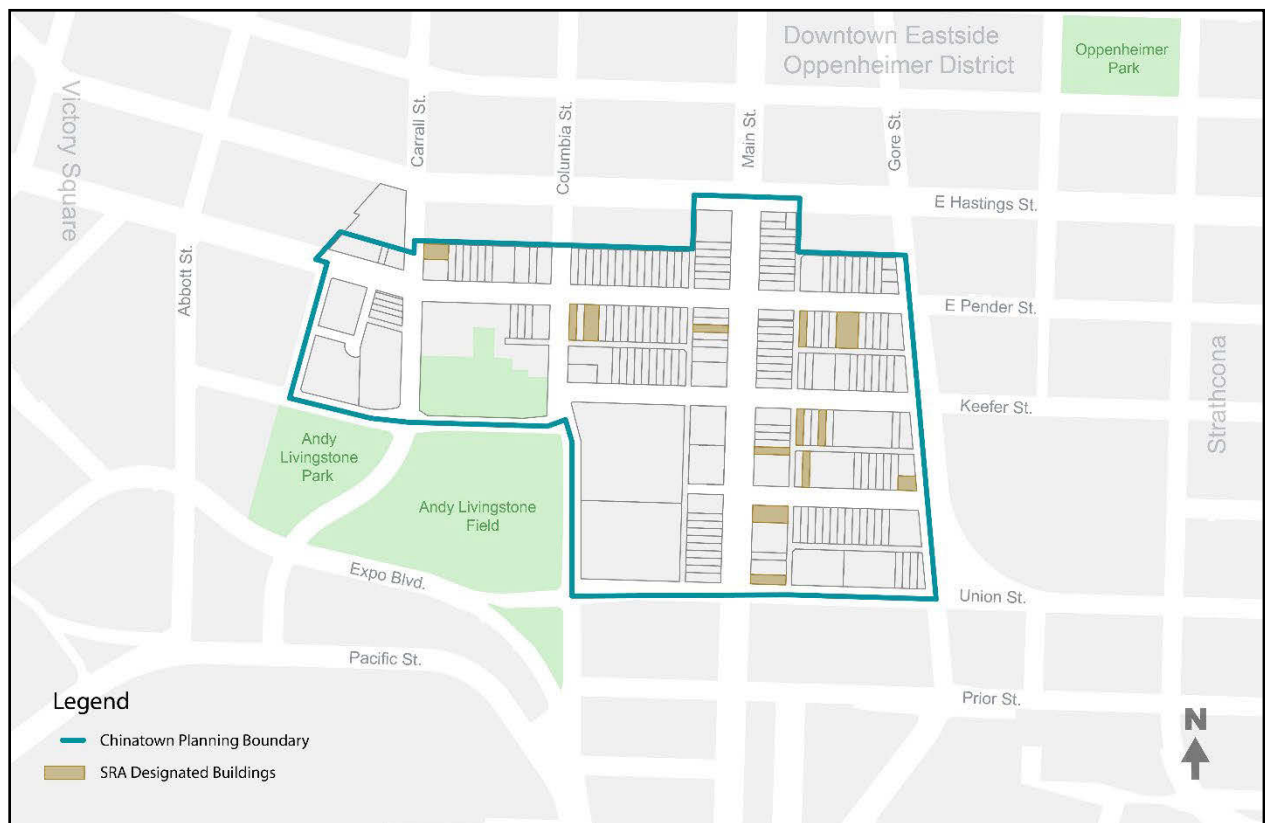


Figure 39. Map of SRAs in Chinatown

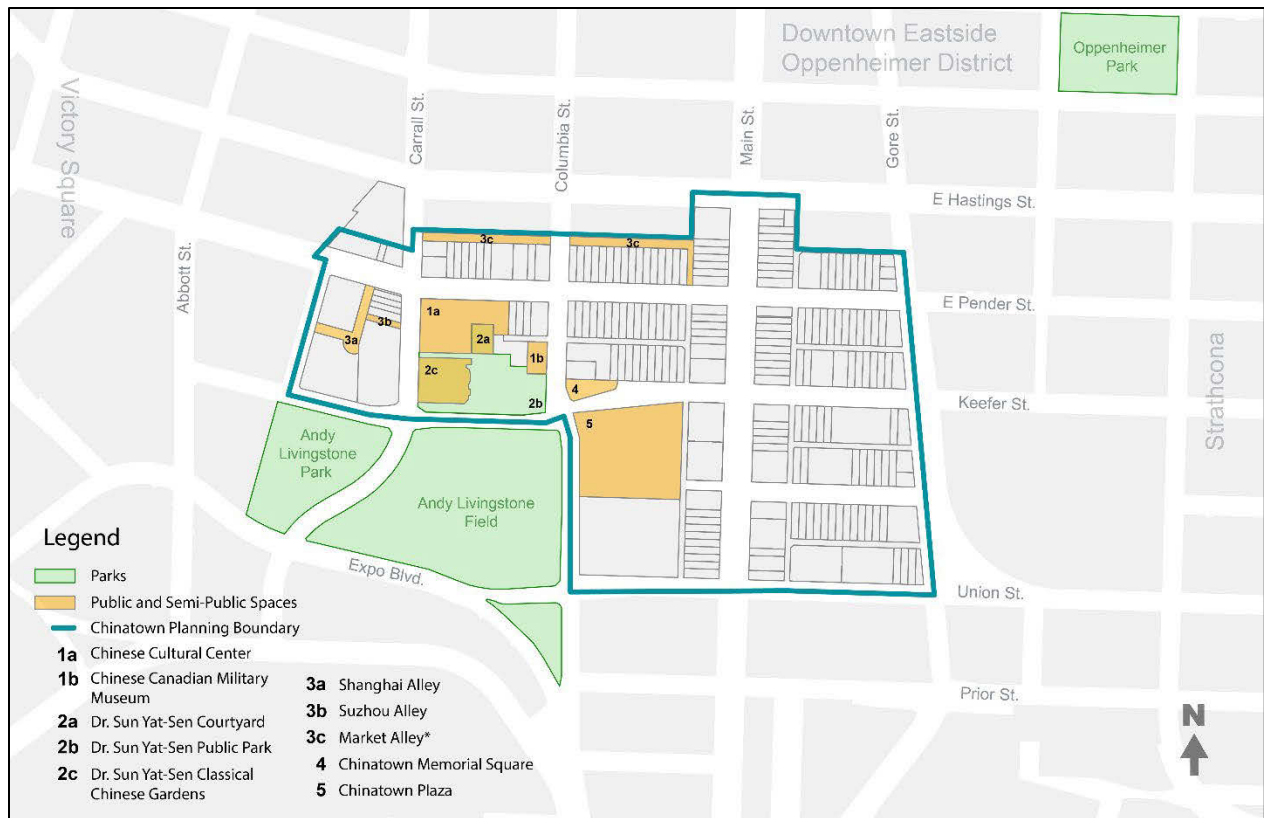


Figure 40. Map of Public and Semi-Public Spaces in Chinatown

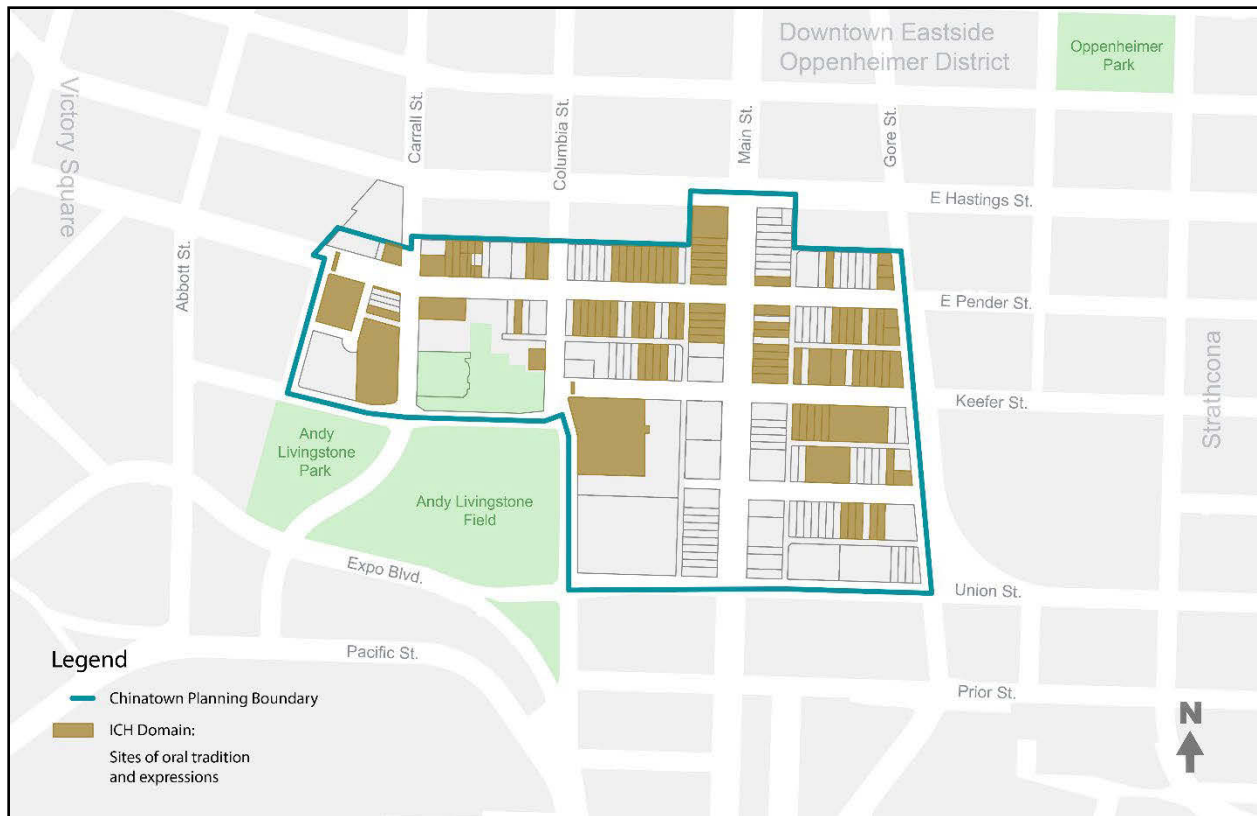


Figure 36. Map of Intangible Cultural Heritage Domains regarding “Sites of oral tradition and expressions” in Chinatown<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

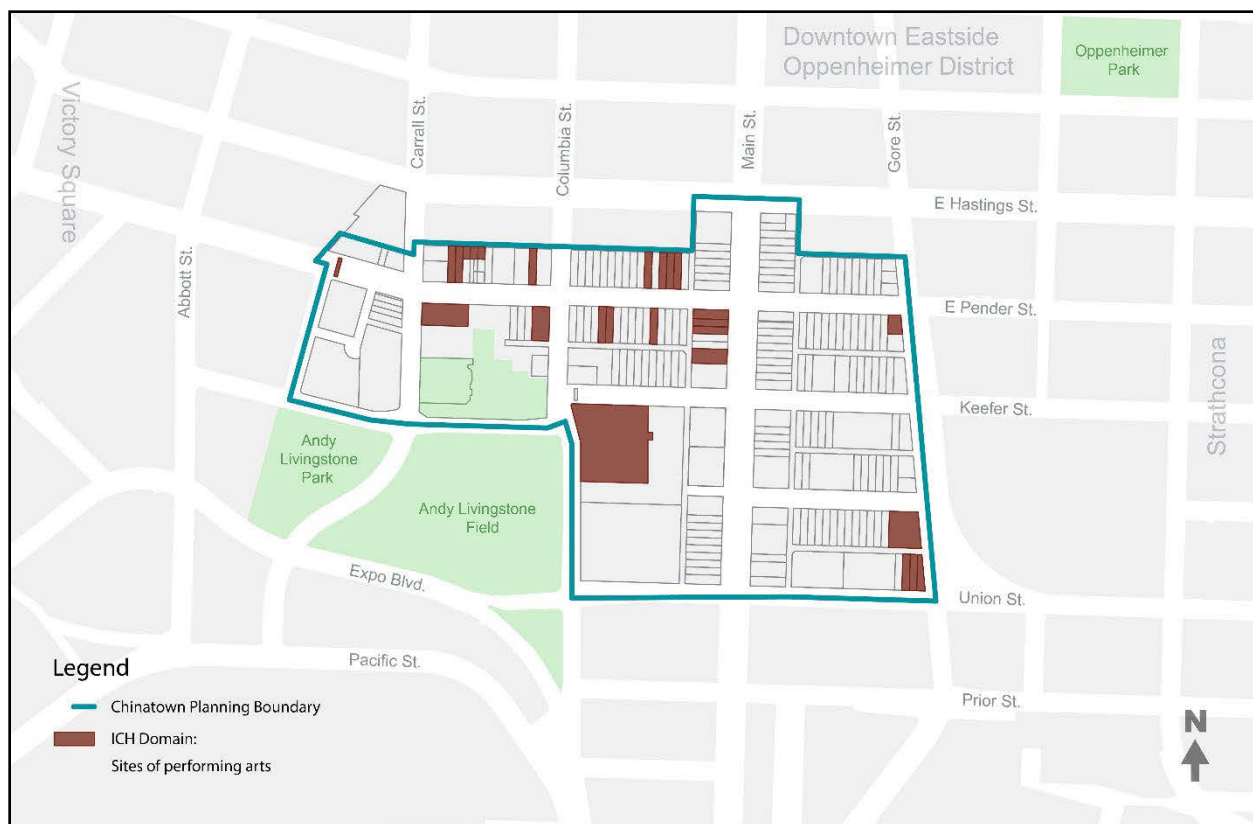


Figure 42. Map of Intangible Cultural Heritage Domains regarding “Sites of performing arts” in Chinatown<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

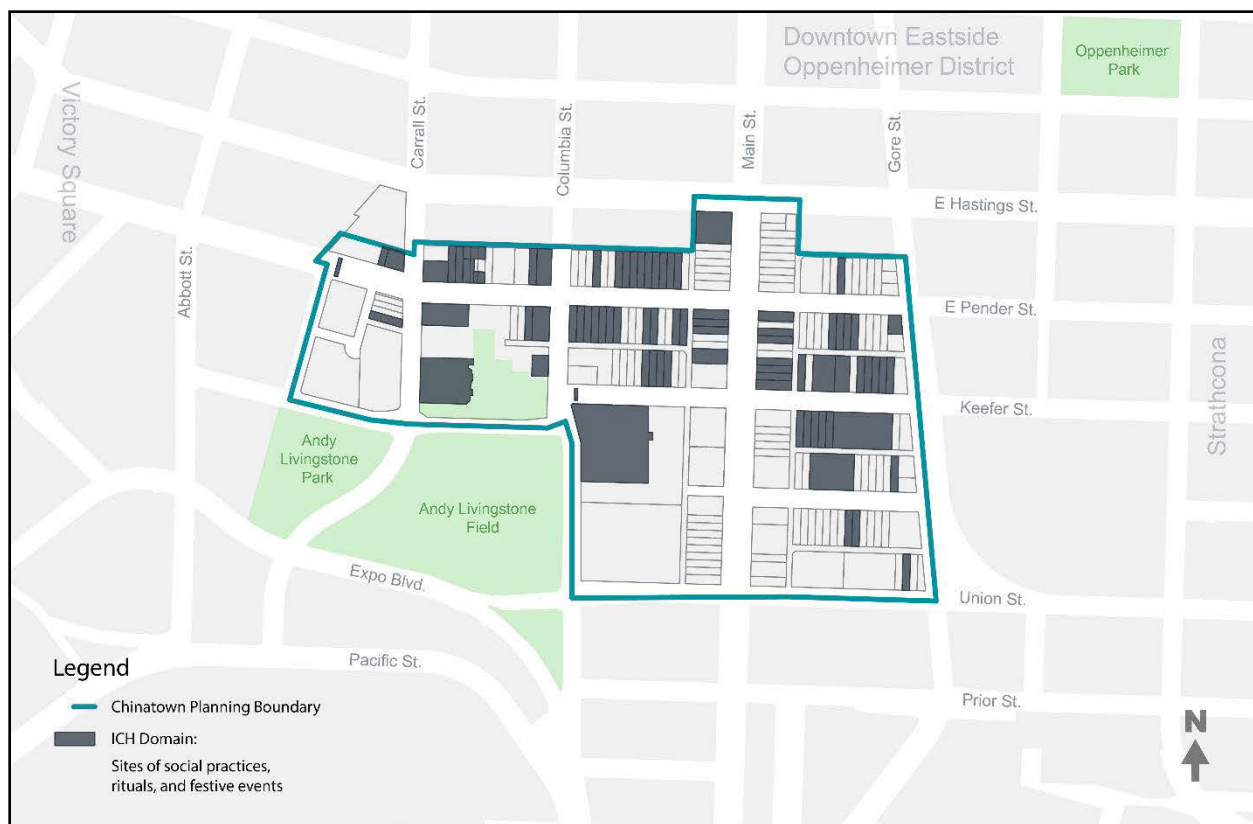


Figure 43. Map of Intangible Cultural Heritage Domains regarding “Sites of social practices, rituals, and festive events” in Chinatown<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

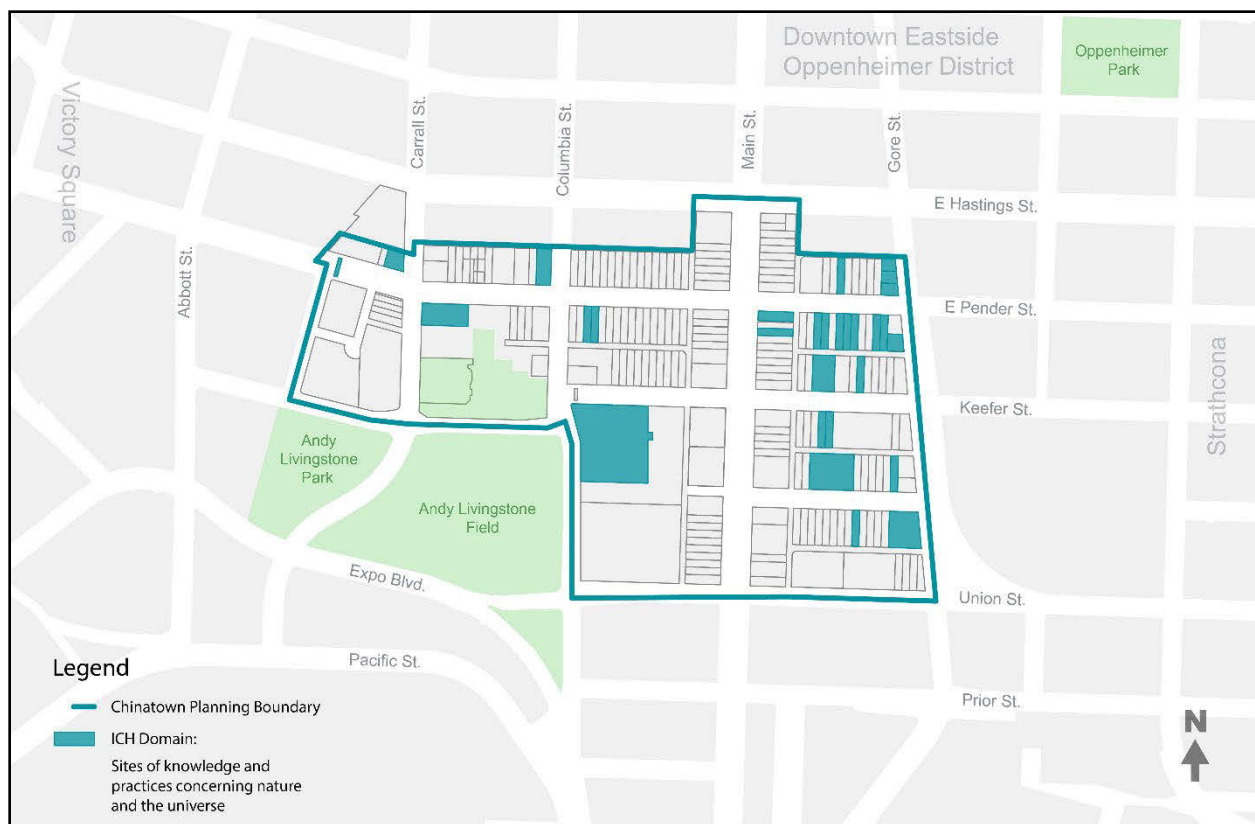


Figure 44. Map of Intangible Cultural Heritage Domains regarding “Sites of knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe” in Chinatown<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

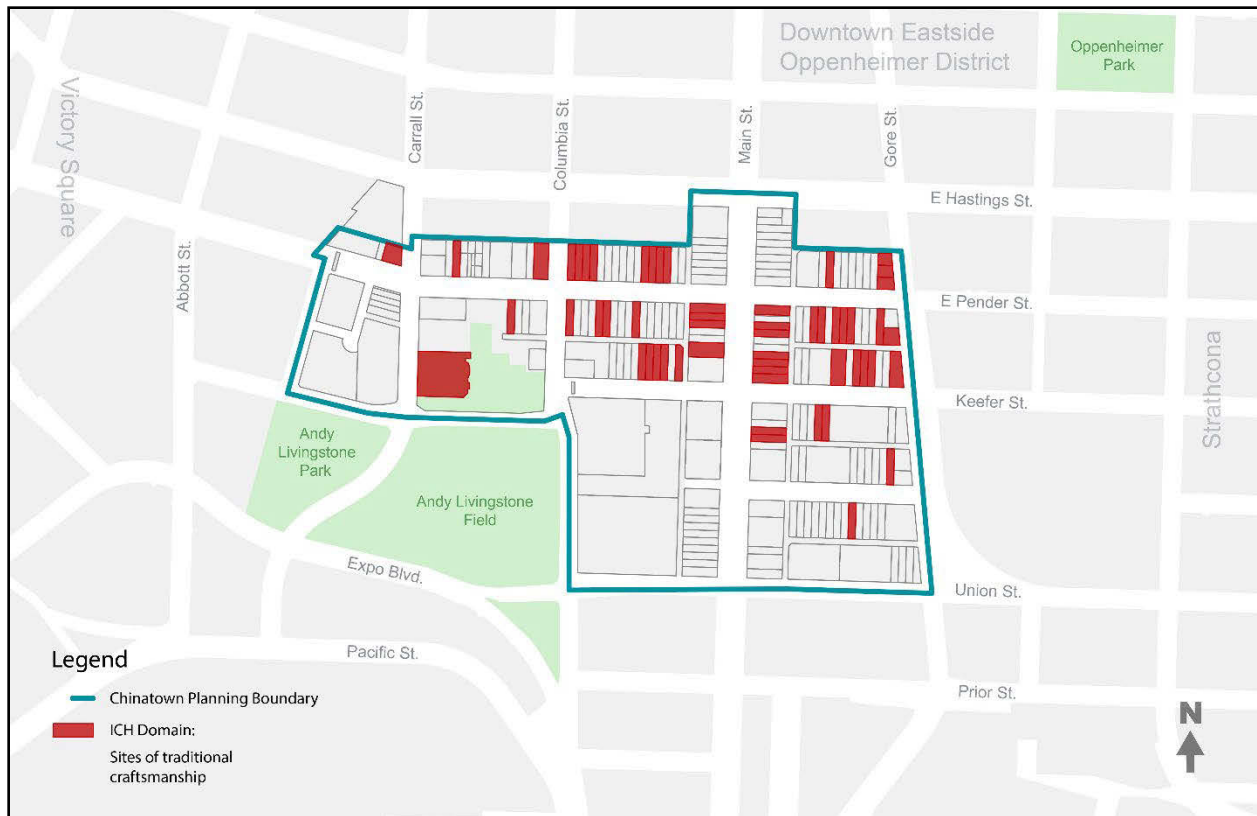


Figure 45. Map of Intangible Cultural Heritage Domains regarding “Sites of traditional craftsmanship” in Chinatown<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Katie Cummer, Cultural Heritage and Asset Mapping Study Final Report: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cultural-chinatown-heritage-and-asset-mapping-report.pdf>

DRAFT

*END OF DOCUMENT.*

**Staff's Response to City Council's Motion on Free Parking and Other Measures to Address Public Safety and the Revitalization of Chinatown**

On April 13, 2022, City Council passed a motion Free Parking and Other Measures to Address Public Safety and the Revitalization of Chinatown. This motion requests staff to report back on the increase in anti-Asian hate crimes, violent crime and property crime, vandalism, and theft in Chinatown and specifically impacts this may have on Chinatown pursuit as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

According to UNESCO's World Heritage Site application guidebook, the nomination package must include a section that identifies factors that would compromise the cultural heritage values and assets of the area. For example, risk factors can include damage to historic buildings, cultural institutions, and displacement of existing residents. Further, the management plan for the nominated area is required to include strategies to effectively protect and manage assets, including addressing relevant challenges and threats. The evaluation of the nominated site also includes a site visit.

In Vancouver, according to recent data from the Vancouver Police Department, anti-Asian hate crime increased by 575% in 2021, and graffiti increased by 300% in Chinatown. These on-the-ground challenges negatively impact residents, businesses, and community organizations, and are factors that must be considered in the area's planning. Addressing these issues and their root causes are key to sustaining an equitable and living community, which is a key feature of Chinatown's cultural heritage value.

The preparation towards a UNESCO nomination is an opportunity to advocate to senior levels of governments on shared priorities that can benefit the wider neighbourhood, including more social supports, mental health and addiction services, poverty reduction, affordable housing, and community safety through social and community development.

The City of Vancouver is a participant of the United Nations Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces initiative. As part of this work, the City conducted a public survey to gather feedback from people who have experienced harassment in public spaces. They indicated that better lighting and street activations are important to increasing public safety. Further, they responded that peer outreach teams or security guards are the preferred method of intervention.

CTT has worked with LSG on pilot projects including laneway activation through art, and a peer-based Stewardship Program that has received positive feedback from businesses and residents. As part of Phase Two work, the CHAMP Strategic Framework includes strategies that direct staff to work across departments and establish an interdepartmental team to continue improving public safety and supporting community-led initiatives that contribute to Chinatown's vibrancy.