



Check out the latest updates from the Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT)

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City urged to take actions to help Chinatown economic recovery

The Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG) has proposed a series of measures to Vancouver City Council aimed at protecting and conserving the unique characteristics of Chinatown and helping the community to safely and successfully navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a letter to Mayor Kennedy Stewart and Council, the LSG co-chairs Kimberly Wong and Michael Tan noted many businesses and arts organizations in Chinatown were forced to shut down because of the pandemic as well as the worsening opioid health and housing crisis in Downtown Eastside.



The iconic Goldstone is sorely missed by many

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Chinatown Transformation Team welcomes new member

The Chinatown Transformation Team is pleased to announce that Vincent Kwan, the former executive director of the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, is joining the CTT as a full-time social planner with the City of Vancouver.

Born and raised in Hong Kong and fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin, Vincent has lived, studied and worked in the U.S., China and Canada for many years.

His professional experience spans across diverse sectors including in business and technology, and in management role with non-profit and business organizations.

Under his leadership, the Sun Yat-Sen Garden has initiated partnerships and collaborations with diverse sectors and groups in Vancouver including as a key contributing member of the Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group.

“Chinatown Pretty” virtual book talk

Join Andria Lo and Valerie Luu at a virtual discussion on their storytelling project that documents the street style of seniors in six North American Chinatowns including Vancouver. Titled “Chinatown Pretty”, the book is a collection of photos and interviews that use the seniors’ outfits as a gateway to their stories of immigration and values.

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New gates installed to protect Dr. Sun Yat-Sen courtyard

Visitors to Chinatown will notice the colorful new gates that have recently been installed at the Pender and Carrall entrances to the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden courtyard.

In recognizing the courtyard’s important role of serving as a main access point to the Chinese Cultural Centre and Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, the Vancouver Park Board developed the design of gates last year to address public safety concerns and minimize unwanted activities such as graffiti, vandalism, open fires, and other illegal activities.

The new gates are expected to make the courtyard a safer place and support heritage programming such as the series of cultural events held in the summer of 2018 that successfully showcased the courtyard’s potential.



New gate at the Pender Street entrance to the courtyard

The Chinatown House office on Pender Street is now closed. To contact the Chinatown Transformation Team, please email:

 vancouver.ca/chinatown

 chinatown@vancouver.ca



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Chinatown economic recovery (cont')

"Although businesses all across Canada have been impacted, Chinatown merchants were especially hard hit due to the majority of them not being able to access Federal COVID assistance," the letter says, adding the vacancy rate in Chinatown now stands at 17% compared to the city-wide average of 10%.

Citing as example the recent closure of Goldstone Restaurant and Bakery, the LSG urged for immediate actions, to support the more than 700 small businesses and arts and culture organizations, including many culturally relevant or legacy businesses and to avoid more business closures.

The series of actions proposed in the letter, which was endorsed by the Vancouver Chinese Benevolent Association, Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society, Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the Chinese Cultural Centre, include:

- Reduce metered parking rates in Chinatown and eliminate parking fees at the City owned Chinatown Parkade for a period of six months
- Install temporary widened curbs at high traffic areas and shops
- Publicly call on Provincial and Federal Governments to provide targeted emergency funding to Chinatown
- Direct Engineering Services to increase the cleaning of streets, alleys and sidewalks in Chinatown to at least once daily
- Expand and enhance the Community Stewards Program by increasing from a single team of two to two teams of four
- Appoint a dedicated Councillor or delegate to facilitate a more coordinated approach between the City's Engineering and Police services, the Chinatown Transformation Team, Vancouver Coastal Health and the Chinatown community
- Approve and fund the Chinatown Special Enterprise Program

"Without immediate action, this designated National Historic Site will lose the inimitable characteristics that make it so uniquely special to us all. We want the Chinatown that we all know and love to have a future beyond this pandemic, and we need your help to ensure this future," the letter concluded.

"Chinatown Pretty" virtual book talk (cont')

The two co-authors will discuss at the virtual event some of the philosophical wisdom and personal stories about immigration and Chinese American culture in the Chinatowns of San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City, and Vancouver.



Register via Eventbrite to get your zoom link for the event scheduled for Thursday, November 19 starting at 7 p.m.

This virtual event is co-hosted by the Chinese Canadian Historical Society of BC, Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, Massy Arts Society, and Raincoast Books.

BC Heritage Awards 2021

Nominations for the 2021 BC Heritage Awards are now open until Friday, November 27. The Awards celebrate outstanding achievements and best practices that have impacted and strengthened all forms of heritage as a valued cultural resource in communities throughout British Columbia.

The event also recognizes the achievements of individuals, organizations, groups, businesses, and local and regional governments in communities across BC.



The "Hot+Noisy" Chinatown Mahjong Social (shown above) and the Saturday Cantonese School organized by the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown were the recipients of the 2020 BC Heritage Awards in the Education, Awareness and Communication category.