

# CHINATOWN TRUST FUND COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

*March 2004,  
as amended on September 16, 2005 and July 21, 2006*

## **Overview:**

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Chapter 443 of the Acts of 1990 established the Chinatown Trust Fund Committee (the “Committee”), which is charged with administering a fund (referred to in Chapter 443 as the “Community Development Fund”) generated by certain real estate development projects in Boston. According to Chapter 443, the Committee is to distribute the Community Development Fund “for the benefit of the Chinatown community”. This includes support for new and ongoing programs and special projects that help Chinatown residents access quality living environments, economic opportunities, educational resources, and recreational activities that otherwise improve and strengthen the community in which they live. These guidelines are designed to help the Trustees of the Committee identify worthy programs for funding.

## **Scope of Funding:**

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The primary recipients of Community Development Fund grants will be non-profit organizations that are tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including religious organizations. Priority will be given to community-based projects or programs that promote community economic development, youth development, family services and/or enhanced physical environments, as more fully described below.

- Community economic development may include job creation, staff training and workforce development, as well as the development and maintenance of community assets such as affordable housing, small businesses, and neighborhood commercial centers.
- Youth development may involve increasing academic skills and achievement levels of youth, leadership training to develop future community leaders, exposure to the arts and the development of artistic skills and talents, improving or expanding libraries, and providing community-based recreational opportunities and summer or school vacation programming.
- Family services may include health and wellness programs, child rearing training, day care programs, immigrant services, translation services, language education, social and recreational opportunities targeted at seniors in the community such as adult daycare and programs aimed at protecting the elderly from consumer fraud, and other activities promoting socialization and contributions to the civic life of the community across generations.
- Enhanced physical environment may include the development or improvement of parks and recreational facilities, public realm enhancements such as landscaping, street furniture, and public art, and projects or programs that promote cleanliness, building façade

improvements or capital “bricks and mortar” improvements relating to civic communication and community pride.

As noted above, proposals seeking capital funding for the cost of “bricks and mortar” associated with new construction or rehabilitation may be considered, although soft costs (such as attorneys’, architects’ and consultants’ fees) will only be funded (if at all) on a matching basis. Also, proposals that seek to assist community-based organizations with skills-building and increasing their capacity to better serve the community may be considered. In general, however, the Community Development Fund may not be used as a source of regular operations support. Further, Community Development Fund grants will be awarded only for immediate use in specifically-defined present projects or programs, not for undefined future use. Finally, the Community Development Fund should not be the principal or sole source of funding for a project or program, and should not be the first source of funding for any project or program, but should be used as gap financing in conjunction with other, pre-existing funding sources.

Grants for human services or programming (as opposed to capital costs) will generally be limited to between \$5,000 and \$25,000 per proposal. In addition, the Trustees may award “innovation excellence” grants up to \$5,000 to any group that provides innovative opportunities for personal development and enhanced community life. Depending on the nature of the program, applications for the annual renewal of a grant may be permitted.

**Proposal Content:**

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Proposals for funding should contain the following:

1. Cover Letter: briefly introducing the applicant and proposed project or program and including a contact person with phone number/email address.
2. Executive Summary: a condensed, one-page version of the entire proposal, including the amount requested.
3. Proposal Narrative: an organization description, detailed information about the proposed project or program including specific activities, timing, anticipated outcomes, use of, or collaboration with, other neighborhood resources and the identity of individuals carrying out the project or program.
4. Funding: description of total budget, the amount of funding that is requested, and any additional funding sources or plans for raising additional funds.
5. Evaluation: an explanation of how to define and measure the success of the project or program.
6. Financial Information: an operating budget for the current fiscal year, the most recent audited financial statement, and a project budget.

7. Annual Report: the most recent annual report for the organization.
8. Contacts and References: organization contacts, curriculum vitae and resumes, organization experience, and references.
9. Directors and Officers: a list of the current Board of Directors and officers.
10. Potential Conflicts of Interest: a list of the applicant organization's affiliations with any sitting Trustee(s).
11. 501(c)(3) Status: IRS letter evidencing tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status, if applicable.
1. Prior Grant Award(s): a statement as to whether the applicant organization has received one or more prior grant(s) from the Committee. If the applicant organization has received a prior grant from the Committee, it must provide the following additional information with respect to each grant awarded:

- (a) List the date on which the Trustees voted to award the grant without conditions (or the date on which the conditions to the award were fulfilled);
- (b) Describe how the grant money was used, and the present status of the previously funded program or project;
- (c) Describe the success or failure of the previously funded program or project using the definition of success provided in the organization's original grant application.

Note: An applicant organization must wait twelve (12) months from the date the Committee votes to award the organization a grant without conditions (or the date on which the conditions to an award have been fulfilled) in order to reapply to the Committee for an additional grant.

Prospective applicants should be prepared for the following in addition to the submission of a funding application:

- Post-submission discussions with the Trustees regarding the proposed project or program, and the possible methods of funding (via a lump sum payment, invoice-based reimbursement, etc.). If circumstances necessitate that a proponent amend a project or program proposal after it has been submitted, the Trustees may, in their discretion, consider the amended proposal as re-submitted by the applicant.
- Site visits by the Trustees and reference checks or contact

with other organizations and community members familiar with an applicant's efforts as well as other funding sources that have previously supported the applicant or are currently considering a funding request from the applicant.

- Periodic reviews by the Trustees of the manner in which a Community Development Fund grant is being spent.
- Follow-up meetings with the Trustees to assess the success of funded projects or programs.
- Development of a “next steps” action plan for review and comment by the Trustees.

### **Selection Criteria:**

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- Consistency of proposal with the goals of the Committee.
- Potential impact of the proposed project or program on the community residents or neighborhood environment.
- Quality of planning for the proposed project or program.
- Demonstrated ability to implement projects or programs as proposed.
- Demonstrated ability to work successfully with diverse individuals and groups, particularly with respect to ethnic background. Proposed projects or programs should not discriminate against any group on the basis of ethnicity or otherwise.
- Whether an applicant organization operates within and for the benefit of Chinatown, as geographically defined by the Chinatown Neighborhood Council and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (the “BRA”).
- Whether twelve (12) months have elapsed from the date of any prior grant awarded without conditions to the applicant organization (or the date on which any conditions to the award were fulfilled), and whether the previously funded project or program was a success.

## Basic Procedures:

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- The Community Development Fund will be held in escrow by the BRA, for disposition by the Committee.
- At least three times per year, the Committee will review proposals and make funding determinations. The Committee may employ professional staff to perform initial screening of all proposals. All meetings of the Committee at which funding determinations are made will be open to the public.
- Other than as discussed in public meetings of the Committee, proposals submitted to the Committee will be considered confidential, and Trustees and Committee staff (if any) will not discuss the contents of any proposal, or its status before the Committee, with non-Trustees.
- Media questions related to the Committee, its procedures, or any specific proposal will be answered only by the Chairperson of the Committee, or such other person as a majority of the Trustees may designate.
- Four Trustees will constitute a quorum for the transaction of Committee business. Trustees may participate in a meeting, and be counted as part of the quorum, via telephone or by proxy. Decisions of the Committee will be made by majority vote of disinterested Trustees in accordance with the Committee's Conflicts of Interest Policy dated December 2003. Trustees may vote in person or by proxy.
- Upon approval by the Committee, the BRA will distribute funds to project or program proponents.

## Examples of Projects/Program (Areas)<sup>1</sup>

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### Community Economic Development

- Homebuyer education/support
- Affordable housing development/preservation
- Small business support, including funding equipment purchases such as heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems

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<sup>1</sup> This list is not intended to be comprehensive or limiting of the potential projects/programs.

- Job creation
- Employment training/readiness, including board development
- Neighborhood business district revitalization, including business networking, business district marketing, business recruitment
- Economic literacy training
- Access to computers and information technology/business equipment, including scanners, copy machines, printers, etc.

#### Youth Development

- Academic enrichment, including expanding or improving libraries
- Youth health and safety
- Leadership training, including public speaking, teamwork, public/community service
- Arts/history exposure and artistic talent development, including public performances, cultural events, or art shows
- Youth recreation programs
- **Summer/vacation/after-school programs**

#### Family Services

- Health and nutrition
- Family support and family/child rearing training
- Day care programs
- Immigrant services
- Language education and translation services
- Social centers/programs
- Intergenerational mentoring
- **Senior recreational opportunities**

- **Consumer protection training for seniors**
- **Senior workforce services**

## Physical Environment

- Bricks and mortar capital funding
- Park development/improvement including playgrounds
- Recreational facility development/improvement
- Landscape improvements
- Street furniture
- Public art
- Enhanced lighting of buildings/public spaces
- Banners
- Signage/way-finding systems
- Building/business façade improvements
- Community bulletin boards
- Community meeting facilities
- Community cleanliness programs
- Special community events
- Farmers' markets, open studios, arts programming