



OCCA Communities Association (OCCA)

1460 Inkar Road, Kelowna, BC, V1Y 8H7

Tel: 778-484-6222

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May 16, 2026

Mayor Olivia Chow
City of Toronto

Members of Council
City of Toronto

Via email: councilmeeting@toronto.ca

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

RE: Support for Motion MM41.7

The OCCA Communities Association (OCCA), formerly Okanagan Chinese Canadian Association, is a founding member of the national campaign for a Canadian Chinese Heritage Month.

The OCCA has been part of the national outreach that has led to many municipal motions that support the effort to have Parliament act. We welcome Councillor Lily Cheng's motion which will add Toronto's voice to the campaign.

Chinese Canadians have been in Canada well before Confederation. Many if not all pioneer Chinese Canadians faced government legislated discrimination including a Head Tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act; my own family's roots in Canada date back to 1892. We're proud of our heritage, and we are proud of being Canadians.

Today our community numbers over 1.8 million across the country with over 40% residing in the Greater Toronto Area. Toronto's Chinatown is a national treasure and we have followed the campaign that Council has launched to protect its long-term vitality by seeking protection for it as a Cultural District.

With the anticipated adoption of Ukrainian Heritage Month and Arab Heritage Month, Canada will have 70 commemorative days and months, which includes many Asian countries/communities. The Chinese community considers it an oversight that there is no nationally recognized heritage month for them.



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A previous campaign in 2024 saw Ontario declare February as Chinese Heritage Month in the province when Parliament did not act. Toronto's motion would represent a big step forward for the City of Toronto, and towards an Act in Parliament to recognize Chinese Heritage Month across Canada.

As a proud Chinese Canadian, I thank Councillor Cheng and Councillor Dianne Saxe for moving forward the motion.

Yours truly,

Adrian Marr
Chair, OCCA Chinese Heritage Committee
OCCA Board of Directors