

February 17, 2001

**VANCOUVER AGREEMENT FUNDS CONSTRUCTION OF
THE CHINATOWN MILLENNIUM GATE
A GATE OVER PENDER, THE GATEWAY TO THE SILK ROAD**

VANCOUVER – A traditional Chinese Gate over Pender Street will soon welcome visitors to Vancouver’s Chinatown. The construction of a traditional gate at the entrance to historic Chinatown was announced today by Secretary of State Hedy Fry (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Minister of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers Jenny Kwan, Vancouver City Mayor Philip Owen, and Mr. Tong Yuet, President of the Vancouver Chinatown Millennium Gate Society.

The *Chinatown Millennium Gate* is part of a larger plan to market Vancouver’s Chinatown and to improve business and living conditions in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. This announcement of Vancouver Agreement funding for the Millennium Gate builds on the unique heritage, cultural and business strengths of the community.

The Gate over Pender, to the east of Taylor, is the realization of a long-held dream; one that the Vancouver Chinatown Millennium Society has taken on with a sense of urgency these last few years, to promote community pride and attract shoppers and tourists to Chinatown.



“The investment by the three governments in this community project is an essential component of the Vancouver Agreement and sends a strong signal that we envision the revitalization of the living space in the Downtown Eastside and prosperity returning to Vancouver’s Chinatown,” said Dr. Fry, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women). “Governments can’t do it alone and neither can the community. Together, though, we can turn things around in the DTES.”

“The concept of a gate is steeped in tradition,” said minister Kwan. “The traditional gate will allow Chinatown to announce itself, and complement the other unique attractions of historic Chinatown. It is a gate for the new millennium that links with the past. Today’s funding announcement is the result of a partnership, as symbolic as the structure itself.”

“Historic Chinatown is a vibrant and distinct part of Vancouver. As the site of Vancouver’s early Chinese population, it is home to many original Chinese organizations and cultural institutions,” said Mayor Philip Owen. “The Millennium Gate will be positive for all of Chinatown and encourage the development of Pender Street by increasing the flow of people along Pender and into Chinatown. The gate, once completed, will help preserve the historical character of the community and increase the attractiveness for tourists and Vancouverites.”

- more -

- 2 -

“This new Chinese Gate— the Millennium Gate — will highlight the distinctiveness of Vancouver’s Chinatown and invite people into our community,” said Mr. Tong Yuet, President, Vancouver Chinatown Millennium Society. “ The Millennium Gate marks the start of a new era for us. It enjoys broad community support and is seen as a means of bringing back economic prosperity. ”

The Chinese Gate is a cornerstone of another revitalization initiative: the *Silk Road*, a project whose goal is to strengthen and make visible the ties between Chinatown and Downtown.

The Silk Road walking route — from Gore Avenue to Robson Street — is developing as a dynamic link between Chinatown and Downtown with a host of attractions and services, including, at its eastern end, the Millennium Gate, Shanghai Alley, the International Village, the Chinese Cultural Centre, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, the Pagoda at Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, Andy Livingstone Park, and, at its western end, the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Library Square, the Robson Street corridor, GM and BC Place.

The Vancouver Agreement is a five-year collaboration involving the federal, provincial and municipal governments. Signed in March 2000, the Agreement focuses on three main areas: community health and safety; economic and social development; and community capacity building.

The first Vancouver Agreement announcement, on September 29, 2000, of a package of economic development, housing, enforcement and treatment initiatives, marked a first focus for many actions by the community and governments to revitalize the Downtown Eastside.

Funding for the Chinese Gate comes from the City of Vancouver (\$250,000), the provincial government (\$200,000), the federal government (\$250,000), and the community (\$160,000). The Chinatown Millennium Society has already raised \$20,000 in the community toward the project costs.

Federal and provincial funding for the Millennium Gate was provided for, in part, by the Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA). WEPA is a joint federal-provincial agreement to encourage economic development and job creation in British Columbia. Western Economic Diversification Canada and the Ministry of Employment and Investment are the lead agencies for WEPA. Federal funding for this project was provided for in the February 2000 budget and is therefore built into the existing financial framework

- 30 -

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Federal government:	Jean-Pierre Roy	666-1318
Provincial government:	Trish Webb	209-8901
City of Vancouver:	Catherine Clement	873-7270