For Immediate Release: Thursday, March 16, 2017
Press Contact: Gloria Chan, (415) 554-6926, Gloria.chan@sfgov.org

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES EMERGENCY GRANTS
TO SEVEN BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY THE FIRE IN CHINATOWN

Funds to Provide Emergency Capital for Merchants & Employees to Resume Operations

San Francisco, CA—The Office of Economic and Workforce Development today issued emergency grants to seven businesses that suffered a fire in Chinatown on February 3rd. The grants are part of the Small Business Disaster Relief Fund that was activated in response to a two-alarm fire in Chinatown where 22 employees were impacted. A total of $70,000 is being disbursed to impacted businesses to help with inventory replacement, equipment purchases, security deposits for a new lease, employee salaries, or other expenses to stabilize cash flow.

“In the aftermath of the fire in Chinatown, Mayor Lee directed the Office of Economic and Workforce Development to activate the Small Business Disaster Relief Fund to immediately assist small businesses in their time of need,” said Todd Rufo, director of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development. “The funds will help all seven small businesses and their employees in the next steps toward their recovery.”

Seven businesses located at 1199 Stockton were displaced from the fire. With the help from community partners, the Small Business Development Center and the Mission Economic Development Agency, the following businesses applied and received up to $10,000 each to support employees and pay vendors.

- SF Poultry #2
- Tan Store
- Kwong Cheong Tai
- Tan Tan Trading Company
- Bay Area Holiday
- Chong Hing Company
- Pacific Street Fish Market

“On behalf of Tan Tan Trading Co, I would like to extend my utmost thank to Mayor Lee and his staff for the care and help they have been providing to us since the fire incident. The $10,000 Disaster Relief Fund is helpful to us in paying our staff wages and other immediate needs. We will reserve the rest of the fund for our reopening and hope that it will not take too long,” said owner Kevin Situ.
"February 3rd was a black Friday! The 14-years of hard work I have devoted to my business was entirely burned down by a fire. I felt so helpless, hopeless and frustrated. Fortunately, with the warm concern and support from Mayor Lee and various departments of the City Government, we have received sincere help during our hard times. I would like to particularly thank Lawrence Liu, business advisor with San Francisco Small Business Development Center. He is so caring and helpful. Again, thank you everybody in the City Government for your concern and assistance. Thank you,” said Jason Li, owner of Kwong Cheong Tai. “After receiving the Disaster Relief Fund, I will first pay off the wages we owe our employees so as to stabilize their income and reduce the impact brought by the incident. Indeed, my employees are also very grateful to Mayor Lee and the various departments for their concern and support in re-building our business. I will use the rest of the fund towards re-establishing my company, Kwong Cheong Tai. I really hope that we can re-open soon. My sincere thank goes to all of you who have lent us your helping hands over the last few weeks.”

Jason Li

The Small Business Disaster Relief Fund is part of a comprehensive assistance package which include resources and services aimed at helping small businesses and their employees recover as quickly as possible. The immediate weeks after a disaster is critical for a business to determine whether it can resume operations in San Francisco. While many businesses may receive insurance proceeds or have the ability to access a traditional or disaster loan, the delay in receiving these funds can take months. OEWD also provided other services to the affected employees and businesses such as job search assistance, access to unemployment information, help obtaining small business loans, guidance concerning licenses and permits, and other services.

The Fund is led by the Office of Economic and Workforce Development in partnership with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and the Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA). It was created shortly after a fire on 22nd and Mission where businesses were dislocated and did not have access to capital to assist with immediate needs. For more information on the fund, please visit: oewd.org/disaster-relief
About the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD)
The Office of Economic and Workforce Development's (OEWD) mission is simple – we support the ongoing economic vitality of San Francisco. Under the direction of Mayor Edwin M. Lee, OEWD provides city-wide leadership for workforce development, business attraction and retention, neighborhood commercial revitalization, international business and development planning. For more information, go to: www.oewd.org

###