

Planning & Development Report to
SPC on Planning and Urban Development
2019 September 04

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
PUD2019-1108

Chinatown Cultural Plan and Local Area Plan – Final Scope

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to bring forward the finalized scope of work for the Chinatown Cultural Plan and Local Area Plan (hereon in referred to as Chinatown Phase 2 work), as was directed by Council at the 2019 March 18 meeting. The original scope was revised to align with the approved project budget and is being shared with the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development as information prior to formal project kick-off, including commencement of the Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the SPC on Planning and Urban Development receive the report and presentation for the corporate record.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2019 March 18 meeting, Council approved the project funding and the recommendations of [PFC2019-0294](#), as follows:

1. Authorize the withdrawal of \$75,000 in 2019 and 2020 for a total of \$150,000 from the Planning and Development's Calgary Building Services Sustainment Reserve to secure funding for the Chinatown Cultural Plan and Local Area Plan;
2. Approve the overall funding framework for the Chinatown Cultural Plan and Local Area Plan from two City sources, being Planning & Development's 2019 and 2020 operating budget and the Council Innovation Fund application in an amount totaling \$500,000; and
3. Report back to Council, through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development, with a finalized scope of work by no later than Q3 2019.

Further previous Council direction and decisions tied to Chinatown Phase 1 and 2 work are captured in more detail within Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

Commenced in 2016, Chinatown Phase 1 work was undertaken with the purpose of assessing the need for a culturally-based Local Area Plan for one of Calgary's most culturally distinctive neighbourhoods. Key pieces of work undertaken in Phase 1 included: exploring the connection between land use planning and cultural planning; examining development potential; and determining budget and funding sources. Chinatown Phase 1 work concluded on 2018 June 25 and received unanimous support from Council, directing Administration to develop a Cultural Plan for Chinatown and to integrate cultural considerations into a new Local Area Plan ([PUD2018-0514](#)).

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INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Scope Finalization

The draft project scope shared with Council in 2019 March was developed with stakeholder input. Since 2019 March, the project scope has been further revised based on additional input from the project team's internal Technical Advisory Committee and community stakeholders. The final project scope, as presented in Attachment 2, is better aligned with the approved budget.

Project Deliverables

The delivery of Chinatown Phase 2 work will be managed under one project team that will be co-led by Arts & Culture and Community Planning. As directed by Council, the scope of work includes two key deliverables: i) the Cultural Plan, and ii) the culturally-based Local Area Plan.

Key topics to be explored include the community's cultural vision for the future of Chinatown, community character and vision in relation to the built form and utilizing the Eight Guiding Principles that were developed in collaboration with the community in 2016. Advancements will be made towards cultural resource mapping, a new land use concept plan, Green Line station integration, and guidelines for built-form design and signage. Based on the attached scope of work, the planned end date for the project is anticipated in Q2 2021.

The finalized project scope of work allows Administration to proceed with the RFP process to on-board the Cultural Plan consultant. Once hired, the consultant will assist in the development of the specific consultation and engagement plans and determine the critical linkages between the two project deliverables.

Project Scope and Budget

Based on the finalized project scope of work, Administration is confident that the approved budget for the project is sufficient, and no significant changes are expected to the overall budget or funding sources. The table provided below captures progress made to-date:

	Approved Budget (A)	Actual Committed/Spent to date (B)	Remaining estimate to completion (C)	Total estimate to completion (B+C)	Projected under/over at completion (D)
Total	\$500,000	\$206,000	\$264,000	\$470,000	\$30,000

As reported above, the actual spent figure includes funds committed towards the Cultural Plan with the following specific break-down of: \$110,000 for the Cultural Plan (RFP being finalized to be released early October); \$50,000 set aside for engagement; and approximately \$46,000 committed to the Urban Alliance partnership.

Urban Alliance Partnership Update

As directed by Council, Administration is actively collaborating with university researchers to advance Chinatown Phase 2 work. To date, two formal Urban Alliance partnerships have been

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entered into with professors from Sociology, Geography and the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape. A post-doctoral research fellow from the Haskayne School of Business is also commissioned to undertake research. The project team is working towards one final partnership that may assist with the project's engagement efforts.

Since the approved project budget is supported by the Council Innovation Fund (CIF), a summary of key findings and an update on Chinatown Phase 2 work will be provided to Council through PFC no later than Q3 2020. The report back will fulfill the requirements of the CIF Terms of Reference.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Chinatown Phase 2 work will require additional purposeful, intensive engagement with citizens, the development industry, community groups, and Council. Creating opportunities for further dialogue will inform the project's communications and engagement strategies prior to the finalization of the project's engagement plan. This project's engagement plan will be a critical component that integrates cultural considerations into the built-form policies of the Local Area Plan.

Extensive City-led engagement was completed in 2016 as a result of a contentious ARP amendment and Land Use application in Chinatown. In responding to Council's latest direction and prior to finalizing the project, targeted consultation in the form of "listen and learn" sessions were held in 2019 June and July. The iterative process allowed for several touch points with various opportunities for feedback. Stakeholders included representatives from the Community Association, Chinatown District Business Improvement Area, landowners, business operators, residents, and active community advocates.

Overall, comments provided suggest that the preparation of the Cultural Plan should be well coordinated and sequenced so that the findings from the Cultural Plan work inform the built form policies of the Local Area Plan. Community stakeholders are supportive of the project scope as presented (refer to support letters in Attachment 3).

Strategic Alignment

Completion of Chinatown Phase 2 work aligns with *Municipal Development Plan* policies that call for creating a livable, vibrant, and diverse Centre City; fostering distinctive complete communities with a strong sense of place; and creating great communities by fostering community dialogue and participation in community planning.

This work also aligns with policy direction from the *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)*, which directs municipalities to increase the proportion of new development within already developed lands through infill and redevelopment. Further, the SSRP calls for planning to be undertaken in such a manner that new development makes use of existing infrastructure.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Work on the proposed Chinatown Phase 2 work will provide new comprehensive policies and growth direction based on social, environmental and economic priorities of community

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stakeholders and all Calgarians that work in, live in, and visit Chinatown. Direction and secured funding for Chinatown Phase 2 work will advance the following Council priorities:

- A Prosperous City – Supporting The City of Calgary and Calgary as a whole to continue to attract diverse talent, build resiliency and be a place of opportunity.
- A City of Safe and Inspiring Neighbourhoods – Supporting the realization of safe, accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods that foster the opportunity for diverse community members to participate in civic life.
- A City That Moves – Ensuring access to safe and affordable transportation choices.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There are no further impacts to the operating budget from this project.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no impacts to the capital budget from this project.

Risk Assessment

Chinatowns across North America are facing a number of pressures that threaten their continued existence. Calgary's Chinatown finds itself at a cusp whereby a new vision is needed to strengthen the community identity and provide direction on the suitable integration of new developments.

The continued existence of an outdated policy plan that does not align with higher order policies and corporate objectives stated within the *Municipal Development Plan* is problematic. An outdated policy framework makes the review and outcome of current and future planning applications more unpredictable and costly. This may put the community, customer, Council, and Administration in a position of uncertainty, and delay timely approval of applications.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Scope of work documents serve as an agreement that describe what work is to be performed, and outlines the deliverables, milestones and expected timelines. The finalized scoping document is being shared for information and to demonstrate that the project work and the funding are aligned. The finalization of the scope is one of the final steps prior to formal project kick-off. Secured funding with an agreed upon project scope for this project sends a strong message of commitment for a vibrant and active Chinatown into the future.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Previous Council Direction
2. Chinatown Phase 2 Scope of Work – Final
3. Chinatown Cultural Plan and Local Area Plan – Letters of Support