



Chinatown

華埠促進會 **BIA**

Business Improvement Area
Suite 208, 328 Centre Street SE, Calgary, AB, T2G 4X6



CALGARY
CHINATOWN

July 8, 2020

The City of Calgary
Attention: Priorities and Finance Committee
P.O. Box 2100, Station 'M'
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Notice of Motion - Renaming James Short Park and James Short Parkade

Your Worship Mayor Naheed Nenshi and Members of City Council

The Chinatown Business Improvement Area (Chinatown BIA) supports the proposed Notice of Motion to rename The City's James Short Park and James Short Parkade in a movement to remove the blight of racism and hatred of the Chinese in Calgary during the turn of the 20th Century.

James Short was a Calgary pioneer from Ontario, a lawyer, a school principal and ultimately a Calgary City Council Alderman who played a significant role in promoting Chinese bigotry and racism after moving here from Ontario in 1890. He ostracized the Chinese community and in 1910 attempted to prevent the Chinese from purchasing property along 2nd Avenue and Centre Street South (i.e. today's Chinatown). The Chinese were forced to relocate after lands at Calgary's second Chinatown (10th Avenue and 1st Street SW) were sold to facilitate hotel and railway station development. It is appropriate that today's City Council address this history of bigotry by James Short and others of the time.

Early Chinese residents of Calgary were migrant workers brought to Canada by industrialists involved in the building of a national rail system, the mining of riches in our mountains and under our streams, the hew of our forests, the expansion of Canadian farms, the development of our fishing industry, and the provision of domestic services to Canadians and European settlers. Unfortunately, they were abandoned without fare to return to their homelands in China and many were relegated to seeking support from cultural benevolent societies and living in rooming houses. For many, their lives of government and private servitude continued through subsequent decades until 1947. Over this period, the Chinese were forced to pay a 'Head Tax' to stay in Canada and restricted Canadian citizenship, voting rights, post-secondary education, and other privileged opportunities. In 1947, the Chinese community received federal recognition and rights.

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This year Calgary Chinatown is celebrating its 110-year anniversary. Renaming the park and the parkade through the Tomorrow's Chinatown project is the right approach. Through research, documentation and recording this blight of history in the form of a permanent plaque is appropriate as this will ensure the history will not be forgotten and not be repeated. The selection of a new name through community engagement will allow the culture and contributions of Calgary's Chinese society to be honored and revered respectfully.

We thank Councillor Druh Farrell, Ward 7, for sponsoring this Notice of Motion and for allowing the Chinatown BIA to suggest these appropriate actions.

Respectfully,



Grace Su,
Chinatown BIA Chair



Terry Wong,
Chinatown BIA Executive Director

Copies:

Lillian Pan, Vice Chair
Bruce Brownlee, Secretary
Ronald Cheung, Treasurer
Annette Fung, Director
Carie Ku, Director
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