

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Administration conducted an extensive community-wide engagement process focused on Chinatown's future. The engagement resulted in a set of guiding principles that reflect community values and can be used to inform amendments to the CPC2015-183, also on today's agenda; provide an additional tool to review future planning applications; and serve as a foundational piece for a future policy work in the community (Attachment 1).

This report also includes a Scope of Work for an Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) and a Cultural Plan for Chinatown (Attachment 2). The work required is extensive and will require significant resources over an extended timeframe.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council:

- 1) Reconsider the reporting requirement arising from Council's direction regarding 2016 January 11 Notice of Motion NM2016-01 for Administration to report back to Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development by 2016 December on the broader scope of the work conducted with stakeholders, and direct Administration to report to the 2016 December 05 meeting of Council.
- 2) Approve the Guiding Principles as outlined in Attachment 1 to be used as an interim guide to reviewing planning applications, in conjunction with the Chinatown ARP, Centre City Plan and other City policies, until a new ARP is approved by Council.
- 3) Direct Administration to conduct Phase 1 of work as outlined in the Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan and Cultural Plan Scope of Work (Attachment 2) and report back to Council, through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning & Urban Development, with a progress report by no later than 2018 Q2.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

Land Use Application

On 2016 April 11, at Confirmation of the Agenda, Council referred Report CPC2015-183 and Bylaws 38P2015 and 179D2015 and the submissions received after the tabling motion was adopted by Council, to the Administration to "undertake a Scoping Report, for a new Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan, to incorporate the following, to return with a Scoping Report to the 2016 December 05 Combined Meeting of Council:

- i) Develop a community-wide City-led Engagement process that identifies key work to be addressed in a new Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan, and identifies preliminary topics, issues, and aspirations conveyed by a range of stakeholders;
- ii) Based on the results of the Engagement process in i) above, provide a supplementary planning report to Council on the subject application CPC2015-183, with recommendations for amendments, as appropriate; and
- iii) Coordinate with the on-going current Engagement projects in Chinatown including the Chinatown Retail Strategy, Green Line Project, and Centre City Guidebook."

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

On 2015 February 08, Council tabled Chinatown policy amendment and land use amendment, Bylaws 38P2015 and 179D2015, CPC2015-183 to the 2016 April 11 Combined Meeting of Council.

On 2015 November 09, Council tabled Chinatown policy amendment and land use amendment Bylaws 38P2015 and 179D2015, CPC2015-183 to the 2016 February 08 Combined Meeting of Council.

Notice of Motion

On 2016 January 11, Council adopted Councillor Farrell's Notice of Motion NM2016-01:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council direct City Administration, through a future Work Program and following the completion of the Green Line and Main Streets planning projects, to consider the preparation of a new Area Redevelopment Plan for Chinatown.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the scoping of such a project shall include assessing resource requirements for, but not limited to, the following areas of expertise:

- Engagement
- Communications
- Real estate development and retail economics
- Urban design
- Heritage
- Parking
- Transportation
- Flood mitigation and resilience
- Parks and Open Space
- Utility Servicing
- Law

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that City Council direct City Administration to prepare a progress report on the scoping of the ARP project and to report back to City Council no later than Q4 2016 through the Planning and Urban Development Committee.

BACKGROUND

Chinatowns across North America are facing a number of pressures that threaten their continued existence. Calgary's Chinatown is in a similar situation. A new vision is needed to strengthen community identity in the face of inevitable change and redevelopment pressures.

Chinatown is Calgary's last cultural neighbourhood and one of only a few remaining Chinatowns in North America. Its population is relatively small, but thousands consider Chinatown as their cultural home, and visit, work or regularly participate in over a hundred community groups. It is a

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

place where family and friends across generations gather. Chinatown is not just for the Chinese community, it belongs to all Calgarians.

Although Chinatown spans about nine blocks, there are only four or five blocks remaining that are readily identifiable as Chinatown. Many in the community feel that Chinatown has been eroded at its edges by large non-Chinese developments and are highly protective of what is left of Chinatown (Attachment 3). The current Chinatown ARP, approved in 1986, is now thirty years old, and is not aligned with The City's policy framework or the realities of the development market.

There are two directions from Council regarding planning in Chinatown. The 2016 January Notice of Motion directs Administration to explore resourcing requirements for a new Chinatown ARP and report back to the SPC on Planning & Urban Development in 2016 Q4. The 2016 April 11 referral motion directs Administration to do a scoping report for a new ARP with a public engagement component and report to Council in conjunction with a supplementary report on application CPC2015-183 on 2016 December, also on today's agenda.

The January and April Council directions can be considered complementary. As such, Administration recommends that Administration's response to the January direction be brought to the same meeting of Council as Administration's response to the April direction. To support this approach, this report's first recommendation asks Council to provide this direction.

The work completed for this report satisfies both motions. This will avoid duplication of similar information presented to Council in two different reports, on two different dates and will meet the community's expectation of a 2016 December 5 Council date.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Guiding Principles

Council's direction was to identify "preliminary topics, issues, and aspirations (for an ARP) conveyed by a range of stakeholders". Administration was directed to undertake a community-wide City-led engagement process, with the outcomes intended to:

1. Identify work in a new Chinatown ARP
2. Inform amendments to CPC2015-183, also on today's agenda

From 2016 July to October, Administration conducted an extensive two-phase public engagement process, described in greater detail in the Stakeholder Engagement section below. The engagement's key outcome was a set of guiding principles (Attachment 1) that reflect a collective vision for the future of Chinatown. The principles were drafted after broad discussion with the community in July and August, and amended following more focussed discussions with the community in late September and early October. A full discussion of both the draft and final versions of the guiding principles can be found in Attachment 4, pages 12-16, and 23-24.

The guiding principles reflect good planning practice and a vision for Chinatown as a distinct cultural and heritage neighbourhood that is predominantly residential, with retail, restaurants, services, and limited office. The most critical physical aspect of Chinatown is its look, feel, and

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

function at ground level. It is a highly walkable community that respects its historical roots, yet is culturally vibrant into the future.

The guiding principles are an additional tool to review planning applications through a lens of community values. They also provide a signal to potential developers about what will be expected in their planning applications. Administration seeks Council approval of these principles to review applications prior to a new ARP, in conjunction with the current 1986 ARP and other relevant City policies. As most community planning exercises begin with a community visioning exercise, these principles should also be used as a foundational piece in any new ARP as they reflect the collective vision and wisdom of wide range of Chinatown stakeholders heard so far. The principles would be further refined and developed into policy based on our engagement in an ARP process.

Recommended Policy Work

The engagement highlighted that much of what is important about the physical and built form in Chinatown ties back to cultural elements. An ARP that only deals with strict planning elements (heights, densities, built form) would only partially address the community's concerns. It is necessary to determine the social and cultural impacts of planning policy on the community; and in turn, how social and cultural elements influence the built form. Both aspects are necessary to a fully formed vision of Chinatown. Administration has identified two key pieces of work:

1. An ARP to create an environment that encourages appropriate redevelopment
2. A Cultural Plan to identify actions to ensure a vibrant cultural presence in the face of change in the community's population and composition and redevelopment

Attachment 2 outlines a Scope of Work for an ARP and Cultural Plan for Chinatown. The Scope of Work also identifies commensurate resources for an ARP process, fulfilling the direction of NM2016-01. Significant pieces of work include planning policy development, urban design, heritage preservation, water resource modeling, and transportation analysis.

Coordination with other projects:

Council also directed Administration to coordinate with other ongoing engagement projects in Chinatown including the Green Line, the Chinatown Retail Vitality Study and the Centre City Guidebook. Attachment 5 provides a discussion of the interface between these projects.

Council's direction to provide a supplementary planning report to CPC2015-183, is addressed in Report C2016-0907. Both CPC2015-183 and C2016-0907 are on the agenda for today's Council meeting.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

City-led Engagement Process

Following a procurement process in 2016 May, Intelligent Futures was hired in early 2016 June as the engagement consultant.

In mid June, the project team and the consultant attended Edmonton's Chinatown Conference as part of its initial research. With presentations from at least ten Chinatowns across North

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

America, the conference provided the team with context and understanding of the situations facing most Chinatowns. The project team also met with The City of Edmonton, as Edmonton is undertaking some work with its Chinatown community.

The consultant took care to develop an appropriate engagement strategy that accounts for Chinatown's social and political complexity, and diverse community voices. All engagement tactics used and questions asked were purposeful and well-considered. Due to the complexity of the community, timelines, number of stakeholders and identified risk factors, the Engagement Plan required General Manager's approval. The final plan was signed off by the General Manager on 2016 June 29.

The engagement was conducted in two distinct phases, designed to hear from a wide range of stakeholders about Chinatown's future. The two phased approach was intentionally constructed to elicit a wide variety of responses about what is important to the community in Phase 1, for use in a focussed discussion in Phase 2. The inclusive scope was necessary and intentional, given the diversity of the community, and Chinatown's importance to all of Calgary. The engagement consultant's report in Attachment 4 gives a detailed account of the engagement process and its outcomes.

During Phase 1 (July - August 2016) citizens were asked five open ended questions about what is important to them about Chinatown, and their vision and concerns for its future. The simplicity of the questions allowed a wide range of people to participate, without need for specific background information.

Phase 1 engagement opportunities included:

- An online survey
- Pop-up on street engagement events via the City events vehicle (8 events)
- In person sessions in Chinatown (2 indoor events)
- A walking tour of the area
- Leaving feedback on a sounding board in the community
- In person interviews of key stakeholders

To engage the community informally on the street, three oral languages (English, Cantonese and Mandarin) and three written forms (English, Simplified and Traditional) were provided. A Cantonese and a Mandarin speaker were both on-hand at most events. Project boards were provided in English, Simplified and Traditional Chinese to allow stakeholders to participate in the language of their choice. The project website was also in English and Simplified Chinese.

Phase 1 yielded much insight into the community, notably that there are a diverse range of opinions about Chinatown. Major themes include:

- The importance of heritage and culture, and fear of its loss
- The distinct character of the area, and fear of its loss
- Parking issues
- The overall sense that the community has stagnated in recent years

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

- A desire for Chinatown to be an active and vibrant community with a distinct Chinese/Asian look and feel into the future

The themes identified in Phase 1 were categorized and then distilled into draft guiding principles that reflect a vision for a future Chinatown.

Phase 2 (September – October) involved a more focused discussion with the community. Participants were asked to comment on the draft guiding principles and how the current Land Use Application does or does not align with them.

Phase 2 engagement opportunities included:

- An online survey
- Three hour workshops (3 events)
- A modified workshop for senior citizens, conducted entirely in Cantonese and Mandarin
- An open house

All of the workshops and the open house had printed materials in English, Simplified and Traditional Chinese. Translation support in Cantonese and Mandarin was also provided.

In response to feedback and various issues arising through the engagement process, the project team took a flexible approach, making continual adjustments during the engagement. These are also discussed in the consultant's report.

Stakeholder response to the engagement was strong and included all ages, from youth to senior citizens, representing a cross section of Chinatown residents, workers, users and visitors.

Engagement Results:

Over 3,600 online participants

Nearly 1,100 in person and in place participants

Over 7,000 ideas shared

To address transparency, "What we Heard" documents were posted online so participants can see what was being said. These documents are available in English, Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese. All verbatim comments were posted as well.

Two key stakeholder groups have provided input over the course of this project; this input was considered in developing the recommendations of this report, and the Supplementary report.

Strategic Alignment

The Centre City Plan describes Chinatown as "clearly distinct", with a "defined identity due to cultural and physical aspects".

If a new ARP is necessary, that ARP will promote growth and development that aligns with *Action Plan 2015-2018* and the associated Council Priorities to create "A Prosperous City" whereby Calgary is, "...a place where there is opportunity for all, and the best place in Canada to start and grow a business," and "A City of Inspiring Neighbourhoods" where "every Calgarian lives in a safe, mixed and just neighbourhood, and has the opportunity to participate in civic life."

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

The guiding principles lay the foundation for a new ARP that places high importance on the MDP goal to create Great Communities:

...by maintaining quality living and working environments, improving housing diversity and choice, enhancing community character and distinctiveness and providing vibrant public places...they provide a variety of housing options and services so that people can meet their day-to-day needs within their own neighbourhood. Essentially, it is about creating communities where residents can live, work and play.

The engagement adhered to City policies, including the Engage Policy that embraces the principles of Accountability, Inclusiveness, Transparency, Commitment and Responsiveness. Inclusiveness was of particular importance in this process:

- *Inclusiveness* – The City makes its best efforts to reach, involve and hear from those who are impacted directly or indirectly.
 - Opportunities are provided for citizens and stakeholders to get involved at the beginning and throughout a City project or initiative when decisions will impact their lives.
 - Best efforts are made to accommodate diverse needs and backgrounds including those in accordance with CSPA003 Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy and CSPA034 Welcoming Community Policy (which encourages immigrants' participation in the social, economic, political, recreational and cultural aspects of our community).

In addition, the Fair Calgary Policy emphasises that “The right and obligation for participation in the processes of governance and decision-making belongs to every Calgarian”.

Through the use of multiple languages, translation support, in-community engagement, Administration adhered to these policies, and will continue to do so in any future processes.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social

The guiding principles are the outcome of a broad and inclusive engagement process, and as such, reflect community values regarding Chinatown's future. ARPs are key policy documents for creating a complete community that attracts new development, residents, businesses, and services. A new ARP would articulate the guiding principles into policy form, and a Cultural Plan would examine the Chinatown's cultural and heritage aspects as it faces redevelopment.

Environmental

The guiding principles emphasize the pedestrian realm in Chinatown.

Economic (External)

A lively and dynamic Chinatown is important to all of Calgary. One of the guiding principles addresses the importance of local commercial activity in the community. New policy that

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

addresses community and cultural values within the context of today's development realities would play a vital role in attracting new business, investment and residents. Updated land use districts would help to further encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in the community.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

In addition to the significant staff resources required to undertake this work, a consultant was retained to assist Administration in developing and executing the engagement process. Translation of materials and interpretative support at workshops were also outsourced to a consultant. This whole process was accommodated through the business unit's existing budget.

Some consulting studies would need to be conducted as background research in Phase 1. These could be accommodated through existing budgets and resources. Following Phase 1, and prior to proceeding with Phase 2, a 2018 Q2 report would be provided to Council. Any further budget requirements and requests would be included in this report. Preliminary Phase 2 estimates are provided in Attachment 2, Section 6.0 Funding Requirement.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no capital budget implications associated with this report.

Risk Assessment

Owing to a long and often difficult historical relationship between the Chinese community and levels of Canadian governments, including The City, there are deep-seated trust issues among some segments of the community. In Calgary, Chinatown was forced to relocate twice previously, was threatened by a proposed freeway in the 1960s, and part of the community was demolished to build the Harry Hays building. These are only a few examples of conflict between government and the community, but the impact lingers. A community planning process cannot be expected to overcome the past, although some may see the opportunities for the community to establish new relationships with The City.

Given this relationship, the recommendations of this report, Supplementary Report C2016-0879, and Council's decision on CPC2015-183 will have an impact on The City's ability to conduct an ARP process. Approval of a land use that the community deems as inappropriate may hinder an ARP process in the near future. However, Administration believes that an appropriate balance between developer and community interest has been struck regarding the land use, and that further work with the community is a positive outcome for both the Chinatown community and for Calgary.

Formal avenues of communication between The City and Chinatown have only been recently established. The Chinatown District Business Improvement Area (BIA) formed in 2015 December. In 2016 October, a Community Association was established for the first time. A community planning process could start to build these relationships and could help to establish better dialogue between The City and the community.

There are diverse opinions on Chinatown's future and who speaks for it, owing to different languages, countries of origin, politics and other factors. This may be difficult to overcome,

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

though some stakeholders may expect a policy process to unite the community. This risk could be mitigated through use of a well-developed engagement plan that considers the cultural aspects of the community, and by including community stakeholders in developing a process to complete this work.

The previous ARP process took several years; any new process is also likely to be lengthy. As a comparison, The City of Vancouver has been actively doing policy planning work in their Chinatown since 2009 stemming from issues that began in 2002. Some of this risk may be mitigated through use of an appropriate consultant working within a defined timeline, scope and budget, and by working with the community to create a process, including timelines, to move forward together.

Without dedicated internal resources for both reading and writing Traditional Chinese, Administration will continue to be vulnerable in terms of accuracy of written content, and timelines. It is critical that any consultancy hired to work through this process must have someone with appropriate Chinese language skills as a core part of its team.

The guiding principles provide a useful framework of community values through which to view planning applications. If the community ultimately does not support these principles, it invalidates the input provided by citizens through the engagement. Then a similar exercise would need to be repeated at the start of an ARP process. However this risk is somewhat mitigated in that the principles, to some extent, are expressed as objectives in the current ARP or Centre City Plan and are fundamentally good planning practices. Administration could also continue to refer to higher level policies, such as the Centre City Guidebook and the MDP for policy support.

Without more definitive policy direction that recognizes both the built form and the community's unique cultural landscape, Chinatown is likely to stagnate, at minimum, or slowly be absorbed into the downtown with its businesses migrating outwards. This situation would be irreversible, and is one that both the community and The City wish to avoid.

CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP) SCOPING REPORT

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

On two occasions in 2016 (January and April), Council provided direction regarding planning policy and engagement for Chinatown. This report's recommendation recommends Administration's response to both of Council's 2016 January and April directions be brought to the same meeting of Council. Administration has included its response to both of Council's 2016 January and April directions in this report.

A cultural vibrant Chinatown is important to the Chinese community, and to all of Calgary. A new vision is required to ensure that Chinatown is not gradually lost over time. Administration recommends further exploring an ARP to guide redevelopment activities in Chinatown, in conjunction with a Cultural Plan to address the community's unique cultural needs that are not adequately addressed in an ARP.

This is a significant scope of work and will require appropriate resources over an extended timeframe. A consultant experienced in working with ethnically diverse communities is required to conduct these processes. At this time, Administration does not have the appropriate skill sets needed to conduct this work over an extended period of time.

As such Administration has identified two distinct phases of work. Phase 1 will comprise internal facing work, including identifying budget and locating a consultant, plus some technical research to ensure that key pieces of information are known, prior to commencing a full community planning process. Once a consultant is in place, work with community stakeholders to develop a process to move forward can begin. Community-facing work should not commence until funding is identified and a consultant is hired.

In the interim, the Guiding Principles provide Administration with an additional tool to review planning applications through a lens of community values.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Guiding Principles for Development in Chinatown 2016 December 5
2. Chinatown Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) and Cultural Plan Scope of Work 2016 December 5
3. Map of Chinatown
4. Planning Chinatown Stakeholder Report Back: What We Heard November 2016
5. Coordination with Other Engagement Projects