

**PRESENTATION TO CALGARY CITY HALL ON LAND USE APPLICATION
CPC2015--183
AND REVIEW OF THE CHINATOWN AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP)**

Dec. 05, 2016

My name is Lloyd Sciban. I am a semi-retired professor in East Asian Studies at the University of Calgary. I specialize in and have written extensively on Chinese Canadians and I am a member of the Chinatown Community Stakeholders Committee.

REQUEST: That Council give special consideration to the cultural impact on Calgary Chinatown in considering amendments to the guidelines in the present Chinatown ARP particularly with regard to building height and density (FAR).

ASSUMPTIONS: This request is based upon two assumptions:

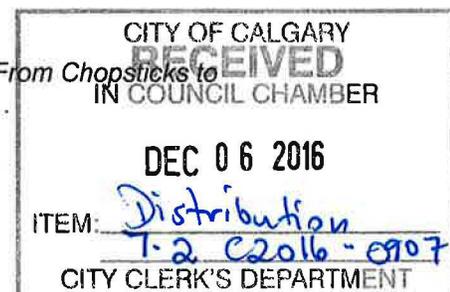
1. Calgary Chinatown is of high value to all Calgarians.
2. The application, if approved, is likely to have a highly detrimental effect on Calgary Chinatown.

ARGUMENT:¹ Evidence for the first assumption is based mainly upon the fact that Canadian Chinatowns have historically supported Chinese Canadians and with them a critical mass of Chinese Canadian culture that not only has sustained Chinese Canadians but has also provided benefits to all Canadians and promises to provide much more as China's international status increases. However, the application before you asks to make major changes to a core part of Calgary Chinatown and has been moved forward without researching the long term effects that would ensue.

Canada's Chinatowns support particular cultural values, such as care for the elderly, preservation of heritage, concern for others, and a sense of self-responsibility. They do so by supporting the residency, commercial operations, visits, and practise of the culture by those who share or might want to share these values. Chinatowns also support the ethnic institutions that are manifestations of these values, such as the seniors' centres, cultural festivals, language schools, herbalists, martial arts studios, and restaurants.

As for realizing the value of Calgary Chinatown to all Calgarians, one must first understand that Chinese Canadians have become major contributors to Canadian

¹ Most of the evidence in support of this argument is contained in a book *From Chopsticks to Hockey Sticks: The Achievements of Chinese Canadians* that the presenter wrote.



society. Their achievements in the creation and transformation of Chinatowns, the promotion of Chinese culture, stimulating economic growth, the establishment of Chinese language media, fostering cultural interaction, setting up culturally-sensitive eldercare, and the establishment of Traditional Chinese Medicine are evidence of this. These achievements are due in large part to Chinese Canadian culture, which is preserved and promoted in critical mass within Chinatowns.

As for the effect of an approved application on Calgary Chinatown, it is likely to be highly detrimental. The application will, in effect, annex Chinatown into the downtown core. The increased height and density will impact Chinatown physically, economically, and psychologically. Vehicle traffic will increase and there will be sun-shadow encroachment and wind tunnelling. Economically, the rents and taxes will increase pushing low-income residents and small businesses out of Chinatown. The largely commercial occupancy of the development will lead to vacant space after closing hours making the area less economically viable. Psychologically, the structures, at twice the presently allowed height and density, will loom over Chinatown. Human scale will be lost and their imposition on the community will create bitterness and an unwillingness to promote Chinatown within the greater Calgary setting.

In closing, allow me to say that I understand that Council may consider amendments to the application. If so, obviously the height and density are major concerns to be considered. Besides these, requiring a larger residential component would fit with Chinatown's residential character, increase activity, and discourage urban sprawl. Furthermore, given the applicant's unwillingness to meet with the community, the City's initial lack of recognition of this fact, and the dissatisfaction that has followed from them, requiring that a development permit be approved prior to a 3rd reading of the bylaw and that the ARP be reviewed would give the community some assurances of what to expect from this and future applications.