

## Options for Phase 2 Work in Chinatown

### Option 1: Evaluate Applications with existing and new tools / policies / processes

In this option, there is no new policy work. In addition to long term policy such as the Centre City Plan and the Chinatown ARP, Administration would review any planning applications using a number of new tools / policies / processes, including:

- Centre City Urban Design Guidelines (2015)
  - Provide guidance for built form and streetscape.
  - Can be used by applicants in their design work, and by Administration to inform their review of a planning application
- Community developed / Council-approved Guiding Principles (2016)
  - Provide statements about what is important about the community, as envisioned by the community. An applicant can use these to inform their designs. Administration can use these to understand how well a planning application does or does not meet the community's vision and priorities
  - They can also be used to guide community engagement on a planning application
- Urban Design Review Framework (2017)
  - The Urban Design Review Panel gives expert design advice for planning applications. When an application is received, the Panel will review it at an early stage it to ensure the best possible urban design outcomes
  - This is especially critical in Chinatown where character, context and form are key
- Historical Context Paper (2018 under development)
  - Documents major historical events, persons, landscapes and structures and diverse aspects of that community's development
  - Helps build a common understanding between stakeholders (including The City) of the character-defining elements that contribute to its identity
- Transit Oriented Development Guidelines
  - The Guidelines are intended to apply where there is no local area plan, or the local area plan is silent on development near transit (the Chinatown ARP did not envision the Green Line)
  - These guidelines could also be used to inform planning applications within Chinatown via a modern policy lens

<b>Corporate Lead:</b>	Community Planning, as a result of a planning application
<b>Estimated Resources:</b>	Corporate Planning Applications Group, to review a planning application
<b>Consultant:</b>	Historical Context Paper (budget allocated); <i>no further budget required</i>
<b>Additional Cost:</b>	Engagement, if there is a Land Use amendment application
<b>Timeframe:</b>	as per internal business standards to review applications
<b>Other:</b>	application fees will be collected, as per fee schedule

**Pros:**

- Responds directly to an application with commensurate resources, i.e. Administration reviews and application, if and when it is received
- Applications are reviewed using existing tools, policies, and processes that The City has already invested in developing
- Historical Context Paper will provide additional heritage and cultural information about the community (lacking the in current ARP). This will help to address Guiding Principle #1
- In reviewing a planning application, Guiding Principles #2-#8 can be addressed in a general sense using existing policy tools

**Cons:**

- Reactive approach
- Existing policy tools may not provide enough detail to address the nuanced cultural aspects of the community
- Will not provide certainty of what a development will look like, which the community has indicated as important to them
- ARP continues to be out of date
- Does not establish a detailed cultural vision for the community
- Although this is a “no cost option”, if significant community concern arises over a planning application (such as in 2016), The City may incur major expense in staff time / community engagement

## Option 2: Minor policy amendments to character and historical context

Cultural elements make Chinatown distinct, however, there is little in the current ARP that speaks directly to Chinatown's heritage, culture, and character. Some relatively small pieces of work would provide additional contextual information to assist in decision making, in addition to the policies / tools / processes outlined in Option #1.

This option directly addresses Guiding Principle #1: *All new developments reinforce the distinct cultural and historical character of Chinatown.*

Item	What this addresses
Add Guiding Principles to Centre City Guidebook, Centre City Plan, or ARP, through amendment	Community aspirations Community character
Add Historical Context Paper (underway, est. completion Q2/3) to Centre City Guidebook, Centre City Plan, or ARP through amendment	Community history Community character
Evaluate for 4-5 new sites for potential addition to Heritage Inventory	Community history Community character
Continued support for community-led history work underway ("Buildings Could Talk" Community-Led, Canada 150 Grant) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Underway, will inform heritage and community character</li> <li>Portions could be added to planning document, if appropriate</li> </ul>	Community history
Signage Plan (Asian style perpendicular signage) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small piece of work, internal or consultant (no resources allocated)</li> <li>Return on Investment – uncertain level of effectiveness / potential uptake unknown</li> <li>Likely a lot of engagement required</li> </ul>	Community character

**Corporate Lead:** Community Planning

**Deliverables:** *Form is to be determined* - Amend existing planning documents, as appropriate, to contain the work outlined above, or potentially a standalone document ("Chinatown character plan")

### Estimated Staff Resources:

Approximately 2 FTE equivalents, from various departments  
Senior Planner / Heritage Planner / Urban Designer (signage) / Engage Resource Unit/  
Communications / Law

### Estimated Consulting Requirements:

The consulting requirements for this option are relatively minor (estimated \$50,000 - \$100,000) and can likely be accommodated within the Business Unit's current budget:

- Engagement Consultant – to design and execute public engagement strategy
- Translation – language support in Cantonese / Traditional and Mandarin / Simplified
- Heritage Consultant – to conduct Heritage Inventory work
- Option – a planning consultant may be used to undertake the amendment. This option may require additional budget resources*

**Estimated Additional Costs:** Engagement and advertising

**Timeframe:** 6 months, *estimate only*

**Pros:**

- Planners reviewing applications in Chinatown lack policy guidance about Chinatown's unique look and character. Adding the Guiding Principles and the Historical Context Paper to the Centre City Guidebook, Centre City Plan, or the current ARP will provide critical missing pieces of policy guidance at minimal cost and effort, in a readily accessible location
- Amendments and work reflect recent community efforts / engagement outcomes
- This work can be done relatively quickly
- Uses new tools / policies / process that The City has already invested in
- Heritage Inventory work is timely given the community-led "Buildings Could Talk" history project
- Work corresponds well with the limited amount of development expected in the near future
- Work can be done within existing business unit budgets

**Cons:**

- Will not provide certainty of what a development will look like, which the community has indicated as important to them
- Signage Plan may establish a vision, but may not result in uptake. May require more engagement than expected
- Due to the age of the ARP and community expectations about planning work, this scope could increase. Any additional amendments aside from what are proposed above will require additional time and resources
- Does not established a detailed cultural vision or priorities, or planning policies that are tied to cultural elements

### **Option 3: Cultural Plan / Culturally based Local Area Plan**

The 2016 engagement identified the importance of culture in Chinatown and how culture and the built form are linked together. This option is a major city-led full scope project that would address all eight Guiding Principles in a meaningful manner, through:

1. A Cultural Plan to identify actions to ensure a vibrant cultural presence into the future
2. A Local Area Plan to encourage appropriate redevelopment based on community's unique culture, history and character

Cultural Plans identify specific actions and changes to improve cultural life in relation to cultural expression, social connectivity, cultural tourism, natural and built heritage preservation, creative occupations and spaces and facilities. The Plan would:

- identify current tangible and intangible cultural resources,
- engage with the community to establish their cultural vision and priorities
- develop a roadmap for cultural development into the future
- contain an implementation plan
- inform and guide The City's interaction with Chinatown in relation to the built environment, programming and other areas. The community, businesses, and organizations could also use it to undertake their own initiatives.

A significant amount of background work in relation to cultural planning has already been done. A Cultural Plan for Chinatown would align with and build on the work completed to date including:

- Guiding Principles
- Municipal Development Plan, including the 13 urban design elements
- Centre City Urban Design Guidelines
- Federation of Calgary Community's asset mapping of Chinatown (2017)
- Phase 1 ARP inventory work (2017)
- Items outlined in Option #2
  - Historical Context Paper (underway)
  - Evaluation of sites for potential addition to Heritage Inventory (potential)
  - Community Oral History project "Buildings Could Talk" (underway)

The Cultural Plan's implementation could include a This is My Neighborhood component in which residents would identify small-scale, one-time projects that improve their neighbourhood based on identified cultural priorities.

Following the cultural conversation, Administration would undertake a local area plan process to develop planning policies that address the community's planning and development vision through a culturally specific lens. Key to the success of this option is the innovative integration of cultural and planning aspects into a guiding document for Chinatown.

As a Cultural Plan has not been done at the neighborhood level in Calgary, nor has a culturally-based local area plan been undertaken. This provides a unique opportunity to create a “Made in Calgary Chinatown” solution.

**Corporate Lead:** Arts & Culture for Cultural Plan portion; Community Planning for local area plan portion; Calgary Neighbourhoods, for any This is My Neighbourhood project work

**Deliverable:**

- Cultural Plan document that identifies a community cultural vision and actions
- Local Area Plan, based on themes / ideas generated through Cultural Plan process
- Community projects as per outcomes of the This is My Neighbourhood component, if undertaken
- *Note: the Cultural Plan and the Local Area Plan could possibly be combined into one document.*

**Estimated Internal Resources**

Approximately 6 FTE equivalents, from various departments

Planning; Technical Advisory Committee (all relevant technical departments for planning content); Arts & Culture; Engage Resource Unit; Communications

**Estimated Consulting Requirements:**

The consulting requirements for this option are estimated at approximately \$500,000 and cannot be accommodated within the Business Unit’s current budget:

- Local Area Plan / Cultural Plan Consultant - to develop and execute all aspects of policy development process
- Engagement Consultant – to design and execute public engagement strategy
- Translation – language support in Cantonese / Traditional and Mandarin / Simplified
- Heritage Consultant – to conduct Heritage Inventory work

**Anticipated Additional Costs:**

- Public Engagement Sessions - significant public engagement is expected. There are hard costs (venue rental, advertising, etc.) for each session. A detailed estimate will be determined once an engagement plan is developed
- Technical Studies, i.e. engineering, if required
- This is My Neighbourhood Engagement and projects, if undertaken

**Timeframe:**

18 months (12 months for Cultural Plan, 12 months for ARP with overlap) – *estimate only; may take longer*

**Pros:**

- A highly proactive approach to guiding Chinatown's future
- A Cultural Plan would provide a clear understanding of Chinatown's cultural state, with a vision and priorities, as it moves into the future. This is missing from current City policy
- Directly addresses Guiding Principles #1: All new developments reinforce the distinct cultural and historical character of Chinatown. A cultural plan would provide additional guidance and understanding about how Guiding Principles #2-#8 can be enacted within Chinatown's context
- Opportunity to develop Calgary's first culturally-based local area plan. Planning policy within the local area plan would be tailored to reflect cultural values. This would provide an example that can be scaled for other communities, as appropriate, and advances the practice of planning culturally.
- Addresses concerns about "loss of culture" as expressed in 2016 engagement process
- The effort to undertake this process and expected level of detail reflects the important presence and role of Chinatown as a unique historical and cultural community within the city
- Identifies The City's role and opportunities to support Chinatown's cultural development in relation to its people, places and programs
- Responds to One City One Voice and pilots and tests an integrated planning process across three business units, two departments
- Includes a "bottom up" community driven portion through This is My Neighbourhood (possible)

**Cons:**

- Consultants are required for this work. Cost exceeds existing department budget capacity
- Could easily become a lengthier than expected process, which will increase costs
- There may be planning applications that need to be reviewed prior to completing this process. If this happens, Administration is obligated to review and make a decision on the application within mandated timelines.
- Local Area Plans reflect future change, which may conflict with some of the community's visions to preserve Chinatown
- Untried process of integrating cultural planning and development planning
- Requires significant time and energy from the community (volunteers) and significant staff resources