



Chinatown Development Policy Changes - progress update from staff to community

Updated March 2018

*The City wants to see the kind of development
that makes Chinatown so special and unique to many of us.
This includes smaller buildings with narrow storefronts, spaces for
businesses and culture, and housing for families.*

WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US

We gathered the community's feedback about their concerns and ideas for new development in Chinatown, especially the character and impacts of new buildings allowed under development policies adopted in 2011. The main themes of what we heard were:

- New developments are out of scale and lack character.
- Trading character for public benefits is "not worth it".
- The pace of development puts pressure on existing businesses and Chinese seniors.
- Chinatown's intangible heritage (people, businesses and culture) should be the cornerstone of Chinatown's revitalization and future.

UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff are preparing recommendations to Council for their decision. These recommendations could help temper land speculation and adjust pace of development. These recommended changes envision development to proceed gradually, with a mix of newer and older buildings that respect Chinatown's character:

- ☐ **Tall and wide buildings will no longer be considered.**
 - Cancel the Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South. Over-height buildings will no longer be considered.
 - Instead, allow buildings to proceed under the base zoning height of up to 75 ft on Pender Street and up to 90 ft in Chinatown South.
- ☐ **New buildings should be smaller, built on narrow lots with smaller storefronts.**
 - Improve the base zoning by introducing more tools for greater character fit.
 - Remove parking and reduce loading required to help smaller developments.
- ☐ **Involve the community more in the review of new developments**
 - Review the role of the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee.

MARCH 2018 UPDATES

The community has emphasized the need to make sure development fits with the historic and cultural context of Chinatown. The Development Permit Board recently supported this view and emphasized the need to reflect historic and cultural values in urban design. The revised development policies are intended to allow for stronger oversight for new developments, including:

- Expand the ability to require design conditions on all buildings above 1 storey (floor space ratio above 1.0).
- Review design guidelines to improve how we manage change and protect intangible culture and heritage assets.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A VIBRANT CHINATOWN

We know that buildings are just one part of Chinatown's character. During the consultation process, you suggested many ideas on how to support Chinatown's intangible character.

We are improving the way the City works with the community. To ensure Chinatown's culture and people must be at the centre of the City's work. We are setting up **a dedicated staff team** to work with the community on the following actions:

- Develop a more **culturally-centred approach to community building in Chinatown**, recognizing the unique character and needs of the neighbourhood.
- Conserve and grow Chinatown's tangible and intangible heritage, in preparation for the **UNESCO World Heritage Site application**
- Study other cities' **Legacy Business** Program and similar policies and look at how to support similar businesses in Vancouver's Chinatown.
- Provide **grants to non-profit groups** working on community projects in Chinatown.
- Work with **Chinese Societies** to continue capacity building and the heritage rehabilitation of Society buildings.
- Maximize **opportunities for seniors housing and amenities** in and around Chinatown.

In the next few months, we will be reaching out to you to hear what you think the biggest priorities are for Chinatown. We welcome any ideas you have and look forward to working with you to find new ways to support Chinatown.

LET'S DISCUSS MORE

Contact the neighbourhood planner and share your views.

Helen Ma
Planner, Downtown Eastside Group
604-873-7919 (English and Cantonese)
helen.ma@vancouver.ca

For more information:
vancouver.ca/chinatown
vancouver.ca/dtes

Proposed changes to Chinatown development policies - technical summary table

Updated March 2018

The following table outlines the draft proposal that has been developed based on community feedback. These proposed changes will be presented to City Council for approval in the near future.

Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A)		
	Existing	Proposed
Maximum height	120 feet 150 feet (Main Street sub-area)	Rescinded, height above 90 feet and site width over 75 feet are no longer recommended. Using this tool to achieve public benefits is also no longer recommended. Other tools will be used to fund public benefits.
Width of development sites (Site Frontage)	Suggested development site width of 75 feet to 125 feet	
Achieve public benefits through community amenity contributions	On-site or cash contributions towards heritage, cultural, social housing or affordable housing projects.	
Zoning District HA-1 - Historic Pender Street		
	Existing	Proposed
Maximum height	50 feet (outright) 75 feet (conditional)	No change
Maximum number of floors	No maximum	5 storeys (at 50 feet tall) 7 storeys (at 75 feet tall)
Maximum density (FSR)	No maximum	1.0 FSR (outright) 4.8 FSR (conditional)
Land use	Choice of use, no minimum or maximum requirement Dwelling uses (outright)	Maximum 2.95 FSR residential, except for 100% social housing projects Minimum 1.5 FSR non-residential required, except for 100% social housing projects Dwelling uses (conditional)
Ground-floor use	Choice of use	No residential use (except for entrances)
Width of development sites (site frontage)	No maximum	50 feet maximum (or existing)
Width of storefronts	25 feet to 49 feet	25 feet maximum
Mezzanine floor and laneway retail	No requirement	Exempted from being counted toward maximum number floors Including a retail mezzanine and laneway retail will help a development achieve maximum FSR (since residential use is limited)

Family Housing Units	25% of all housing units to be two-bedrooms or larger, in guidelines only	25% of all housing units to be two-bedrooms or larger
Rear setback	1.0 m for any use, 7.0m for residential use	3.0 m for any use, 7.0 m for residential use
Zoning District HA-1A - Chinatown South		
	Existing	Proposed
Maximum height	90 feet (outright)	70 feet (outright) 90 feet (conditional)
Maximum number of floors	No maximum	6 storeys (at 70 feet tall) 8 storeys (at 90 feet tall)
Maximum density (FSR)	No maximum	1.0 FSR (outright) 5.35 FSR (conditional)
Land use	Choice of use, no minimum or maximum requirement Dwelling uses (outright)	Maximum 3.5 FSR residential, except for 100% social housing projects Minimum 1.5 FSR non-residential, except for 100% social housing projects Dwelling uses (conditional)
Ground floor use	Choice of use	No residential use (except for entrances)
Width of development sites (Site Frontage)	No maximum	75 feet maximum (or existing)
Width of storefronts	50 feet (in guidelines only)	50 feet maximum
Mezzanine floor and laneway retail	No requirement	Exempted from being counted toward maximum number floors Including a retail mezzanine and a laneway retail will help a development achieve maximum FSR (since residential use is limited)
Family housing units	25% of all housing units to be two-bedrooms or larger, in guidelines only	25% of all housing units to be two-bedrooms or larger
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