



URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE – PACIFIC REGION

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June 4, 2018

Mayor Gregor Robertson and Council  
City of Vancouver  
453 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor and Council:

***Re: Chinatown Development Policies and Zoning Changes***

As previously corresponded, the Urban Development Institute (UDI) has expressed significant concerns regarding the substantial proposed amendments to the Chinatown Development Policies.

We understand that the same staff report from May 15 is coming back to Council for referral to Public Hearing on June 5. UDI and others have serious concerns with the recommendations and urge Council to rescind the Report and not to refer to Public Hearing until meaningful consultations have occurred with local business groups, property owners and residents. The revitalization of Chinatown is too important to get these policies wrong.

The Chinatown Development Policies were developed over a decade through extensive consultations that resulted in a strong supportive consensus within the community. When the Area Plan and the Policies were finally approved, our members acquired development sites based on Council's and the community's vision, and adopted governing policies for the area. We have been extremely disappointed that projects that were meeting the City's objectives and following the rules established with the community under the Plan, were delayed and ultimately rejected. This significant change in direction has created considerable uncertainty and sets a bad precedent for other Council approved Area Plans across the City.

Now, changes are being rushed forward that would in effect be a downzoning for property owners, and will not only devalue their properties, but will seriously undermine the City's and the local community's efforts to boost Chinatown's vibrancy and economy.

UDI members recently participated in the two information sessions that was held in accordance with Councilor Raymond Louie's recent motion:

*"Be it further resolved that city staff conduct further **consultations** including with the newly formed Chinatown Voices regarding their concerns relating to recommended changes to the "Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A District Schedule, Design Guidelines and policies".*

At the information session, city staff confirmed the report will go forward as prepared to Council unchanged by the discussions from that day's sessions. Furthermore, staff emphasized that the best course of action to provide meaningful feedback would be at the

Public Hearing, after the report has been brought to Council. It was made clear that comments from the information session would not be included in the report. UDI was significantly concerned there was no meaningful consultation at these sessions, despite the direction of Councilor Louie's motion. Hosting an information session after a report has already been completed does not constitute meaningful consultation. In addition, UDI requested a meeting with city staff to discuss the proposed changes and were disappointed to be denied.

Furthermore, following one consultation meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup> insisted upon by the Chinatown BIA to share concerns about the draft plan, significant changes were announced one day later on April 20<sup>th</sup>, in response to these concerns. We believe this hasty response demonstrates a flawed and incomplete process.

We therefore ask that Council direct staff to rescind the report and not refer the matter to Public Hearing until there has been meaningful engagement with the local business community, property owners, and residents, as there are serious implications for Chinatown as well as for other Area Plans across Vancouver.

Yours sincerely,



Anne McMullin  
President & CEO