

TOMORROW'S CHINATOWN

CHINATOWN CULTURAL PLAN



DRAFT DECEMBER 2021

CREATED BY **DUNEFIELD** FOR THE **CITY OF CALGARY**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY



We acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Nation tribes of Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Stoney Nakoda First Nations tribes of Chiniki, Bearspaw and Wesley, and the Tsuut'ina First Nation.

Chinatown is situated close to the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers that have shaped this land and its people for generations. The traditional Blackfoot name of this place is "Moh'kins'tsis", which we now know as Calgary.

The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

This land has sustained Chinatown's communities through arduous challenges, success and growth. As we continue this work, we honour the Indigenous people of the Treaty 7 region for their past, present and future stewardship of this land and look forward to building on the shared histories, memories and experiences between these communities.

A NOTE TO THE READER

Thank you for reading the Chinatown Cultural Plan. This draft Plan has been created through the willingness and passionate involvement of members of the City of Calgary and Chinatown community in support of recognizing a – sometimes difficult – shared history, and the **desire to build a stronger, harmonious future together.**

An Important Milestone

With so many Calgarians participating in the planning process, and sharing their love and appreciation for Chinatown, we are excited to show everyone how their input has helped shape the Chinatown Cultural Plan. It is an important milestone that we can all celebrate.

The Plan is still a draft; it will evolve and improve as more people have the opportunity to see and reflect on it. We are planning for broader community engagement on this Cultural Plan in early 2022. The kind of questions we are hoping to get people's feedback on are:

- What actions in the Plan appeal most to you, and why?
- What actions should we start with in the next 2 years, and why?
- Is the Plan missing something, or not covering well enough?

By sharing the draft Plan now, we all have enough time to read it, let it all sink in, and shape our thoughts around these questions.

Want to Connect?

Feel free to reach out to our project team if you have a question or thought to share about the Chinatown Cultural Plan:
tomorrowschinatown@calgary.ca

Publishing Information

Title

Calgary Chinatown Cultural Plan

Author

Created for The City of Calgary by Dunefield: Wilco van Bommel, 米家宓 Carmut Me, Albert Lam, Chris Wilcott and Colette Parras

Attribution of Images

Several images in this Plan are provided by members of the community. Attributions to their respective owners can be found in Appendix II.

Status

DRAFT – December 2021

Links

Project updates, outcomes and engagement insights:
calgary.ca/chinatown

Chinatown Cultural Resource Map:
calgarychinatownculturemap.ca

Chinatown “Let’s Talk Culture” videos:
dunefield.ca/tomorrows-chinatown

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS

CHINATOWN ADVISORY GROUP

The Chinatown Advisory Group is a passionate group of community members who's insights and advice were instrumental to this Cultural Plan. We owe them a big 'thank you' for their hard work and guidance through the process.

Members

蔡加秋 Lily Jiaqiu Cai
李陳美儀 Liza Chan
Malcolm Chow
馬鳳齡 Fung Ling Feimo
Annette Fung
Hong (May) Han 韩红
Ernest Hon
林秀明 Alice Lam
Ken Lee
Jamie Leong-Huxley
Aaron Limpin
Christine Louie
Conrad Lowe
Linda Luu
Dale Lee Kwong
Jeanne Kwong 鄭秋琳
Kasia Nguyen
Arielle Perrotta
Lloyd Sciban 史羅一
黃怒寧 Shu-ning Sciban
蘇賀月華 Grace Su
Ed Tam
Terry Wong
Teresa Woo-Paw
April Xinch Zhang
Yangfan (Chris) Zheng

CITIZENS OF CALGARY

Calgarians clearly care for their Chinatown. We are very grateful for everyone who participated in the engagement activities.

Interview Participants

Nearly 130 people took the time speak individually with our project team to share their hopes, ideas and worries for the Chinatown of tomorrow.

Survey Respondents

It was encouraging to see over 1,200 Calgarians respond to the Discover Survey: an online survey to discover people's experiences and aspirations related to Chinatown.

Virtual Talks

Over 250 people attended our 'lunch & learn' talks to speak on Chinatown's cultural future. Thank you to all participants and presenters who kindly offered their time and knowledge.

Roundtable Sessions

Around 200 people participated in our roundtable session, while another 100 joined through online surveys. Our project team learned a lot from these smaller conversations.

Chinatown Cultural Resource Map

Thank you everyone who contributed places and stories to the Cultural Resource Map, and for sharing the map with friends and networks!

STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS

The Chinatown community can rely on a great number of stakeholder organizations who offer residents their cultural programs, advocacy, social services and communal spaces. We thank them for sharing with us so candidly what their hopes for Chinatown are.

Organizations

Calgary Arts Development
Calgary Chinatown Artists Residency
Calgary Chinatown Community Association
Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre
Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association
Calgary Economic Development
Calgary Municipal Land Corporation
Calgary Public Library
Calgary Tourism
Chinatown Business BIA
Chinatown's artists, and art and cultural groups
Chinatown's business owners and operators
Chinatown's societies, tongs and associations
Chinese Cultural Center of San Francisco
City of Calgary (staff and Council)
Clover Living
Diversecities
Glenbow Museum
Heritage Calgary
The New Gallery
Sien Lok Society
Travel Alberta
University of Calgary
Vancouver Classical Chinese Garden

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INTRODUCTION

Tomorrow's Chinatown is a project by The City of Calgary to create Calgary's first neighbourhood-specific Cultural Plan, in coordination with a new Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) for Chinatown. Working together with the new ARP, this **Chinatown Cultural Plan** will support Chinatown's future as a vibrant place to live, visit, work, and do business, for generations to come.

What is Culture?

Culture means different things to different people. The citywide Cultural Plan for Calgary defines culture in the broadest sense; as anything that describes the unique identity of a community or social group. This includes social customs, language, traditions, geography, cuisine, performing arts, fashion, literature, music and religious expression. Culture also includes less obvious aspects of our lives such as heritage, community initiatives, creative industries, advertising, design and fabrication, and much more.

Why a Cultural Plan for Chinatown?

Chinatown is one of Calgary's most distinctive cultural communities, with a long and important history to the city, region and nation. The Chinatown community has been outspoken in its desire to see the evolution of the neighbourhood be anchored in its culture, with development approached respectfully and through a cultural lens. The Chinatown Cultural Plan is a roadmap to take advantage of Chinatown's cultural strengths to sustain and improve the quality of life for its residents, while welcoming visitors and newcomers.



INTRODUCTION

What This Plan Will Do

The Chinatown Cultural Plan outlines the strategic directions for advancing and investing in Chinatown's cultural future — including cultural experiences and programs; spaces, facilities and amenities; and legacy businesses and tourism. It provides guidance for setting priorities, forming partnerships, assigning roles, and securing resources.

This Cultural Plan also informs and complements the new ARP for Chinatown by introducing cultural considerations for use in the planning process, including for new development and public space improvements. The objective is to ensure that new developments do not come at the expense of Chinatown's culture, but instead contribute to what makes this neighbourhood such a special place.

Plan Philosophy

In making this Cultural Plan, and the thinking and decisions it involved, the Cultural Planning team followed the below philosophy:

- **Hope and Excitement:** we aim to capture what excites and concerns Chinatown's residents, visitors and stakeholders most, and grow people's desire to see the recommendations brought to life;
- **Honest:** the Cultural Plan is not just about 'good news'; there are historic and recent challenges, injustices and disagreements that we must talk about as well, even if this is uncomfortable;
- **Actionable:** planning is only the first step towards actual results; we want to carefully select aspirations that – no matter how ambitious – are still based in reality and can feasibly realized;
- **Collaborative:** we want the community to see that this is their Plan; that people see how their voice has shaped the recommendations, and how they have a role in the next steps; and
- **Funnel Energy:** both the community and The City have limited resources, time and funding; to make the best of this, we want to funnel the energy towards the most impactful, meaningful ambitions.



CHINATOWN'S SIGNIFICANCE

Calgary Chinatown is a neighbourhood like no other, with a culture that continues to be meaningful to the lives of its residents and all Calgarians. Shaped over a long and often difficult history, it stands today as a reflection of Chinese Canadian history, struggles, achievements, and values. Chinatown has managed to thrive, despite receiving little to no public support historically.

Stories of Resilience

The current Chinatown location is the third in Calgary. The first Chinatown was formed around 1885, mainly along 8th Ave and between 2-4 St SE. A majority of Calgary's earliest Chinese immigrants were railroad workers on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in BC. Upon the completion of the railway, the CPR reneged their promise to the workers of a return fare home to China. Unable to return home, some of these workers then settled in Calgary.

In 1886, the Great Fire destroyed half of the first Chinatown and in 1892, the Smallpox Riot ravaged the community when a large mob vandalized Chinese laundries and caused injury. Through the years there were many examples of racism and disrespect faced by the community, as well as ongoing hardship caused by the federal head tax enacted in 1885. Despite this, the Chinese population continued to grow and a second Chinatown emerged at 10th Ave and 1st St SW. Around 1910, the Canadian Northern Railway announced its plan to develop this area, displacing Chinatown once more.

The Current Chinatown

The third Chinatown was established in 1910. Community leaders negotiated with City officials for a new location, while facing fierce resistance from local groups. Chinese Canadian businessmen strategically bought a property at the corner of Centre St and 2nd Ave SE and built the Canton Block. This became the cornerstone of what we know today as Calgary Chinatown. It is here that, despite continued anti-Chinese sentiments and government measures, a resilient community has been able to survive and thrive.



CHINATOWN'S SIGNIFICANCE



Recognizable Character

Today's Chinatown is easily recognizable by characteristic red brick buildings, street lamps, banners, Asian motifs and architectural elements, but also by the people and their use of the streets and spaces. Compared to other areas in Calgary's downtown, Chinatown has a lot of residents who support the businesses throughout the day and into the weekends, creating lively and vibrant scenes. Though only a small area, its sense of place is strongly felt because of its colours, scale, cultural activities, people and languages.

Cultural Richness

There is incredible depth in the history and culture of Chinatown, if one takes the time to get to know it. The community has an impressive calendar of annual events, drawing many Calgarians to the area to celebrate Lunar New Year, Canada Day, and the summertime through the Chinatown Street Festival. Chinatown's culture is more than major events, it is a way of life. There is cultural significance within the everyday traditions, wisdom and skills held by residents, cultural groups and businesses.

Sense of Belonging

For many community members, Chinatown is part of their foundational identity, tied to feelings of pride, sense of belonging, and representation of its people and culture. Chinatown is a place where Chinese Calgarians and others with Asian backgrounds (including Vietnamese, Malaysian and Thai) see people like them, and where they can be themselves, meet and play with friends, and feel safe. There are many groups who depend on Chinatown to enhance the quality of their daily lives, including seniors and newcomers.

WHY WE ALL NEED A VIBRANT CHINATOWN

All Calgarians benefit from a vibrant, culturally rich Chinatown. Not only those living and working in the community and nearby areas, but also people with family ties to the neighbourhood, and those visiting Chinatown to enjoy its food, culture, experiences and services. Chinatown is a cultural asset that holds value, meaning and opportunity for everyone.



Anti-Racism & Diversity

Chinatown contributes a lot to the dialogue on addressing racism, power disparities and cultural bias within The City and its systems. By sharing its own experiences with past and current injustices, the Chinatown community can support other cultural groups as they seek equity and representation.

All-Ages Communities

Chinatown offers a model for age-friendly communities where people age in place, enjoy good health and stay involved. Calgary can learn from Chinatown's culture of honouring and providing care to elders, and solidarity between the generations.

Greater Downtown

Greater Downtown needs Chinatown for its cultural depth and vibrancy. Chinatown gives Calgarians a way to engage with people of different backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures. Its small, independent businesses add a sense of tradition, entrepreneurship and local flavour to downtown.

Cultural Economy

Chinatown's cultural foods, arts, crafts and learning give strength to Calgary's cultural economy and provide employment that is resilient through economic cycles. There is opportunity to grow and diversify Calgary's economy with more cultural practices in Chinatown.

Tourism Experience

As one of Calgary's most culturally distinct areas, Chinatown can become a must-see visitor experience with wide appeal. With smart investments, a new tourism destination is created, offering visitors an impression of Chinese Canadian culture and the diversity of the city.

Relationship Building

The experience of the Chinatown community in planning its cultural future together with The City of Calgary, has resulted in renewed trust and understanding. This could be an inspiration for closer relationships between The City and other cultural or underrepresented communities.

FRAMING THE CULTURAL PLAN

The Chinatown Cultural Plan aims to have the broadest possible impact. It builds on the Cultural Plan for Calgary to propel exciting initiatives within Chinatown, and shapes the new Chinatown ARP by applying a cultural lens on how we plan for future development. The Cultural Plan is a supportive plan, that understands it is people – not The City – who create and sustain the culture of our communities.

A Supportive Plan

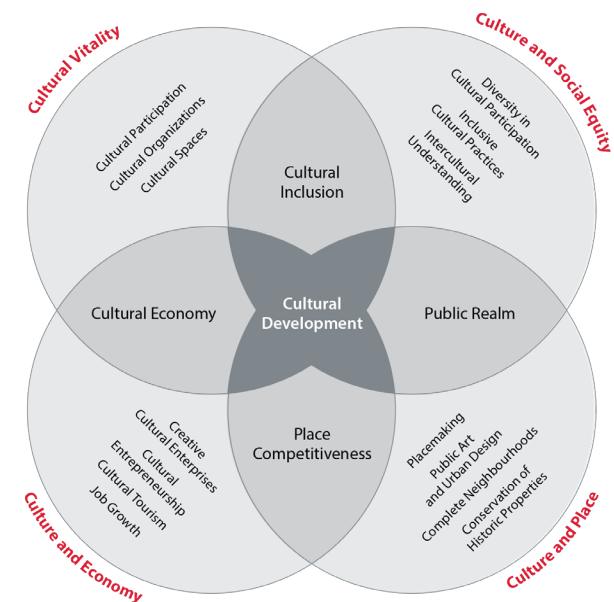
The culture of Chinatown today is the result of decades of contributions and stewardship by Chinese and Asian-Canadian community members. It is not the place of The City of Calgary to determine what Chinatown's culture should be, or for The City to take ownership of this culture. Instead, the Chinatown Cultural Plan is a supportive plan; it humbly follows the lead of the community and looks for effective ways to be supportive to the cultural hopes of current and next generations.

Alignment with Calgary Cultural Plan

The Chinatown Cultural Plan builds on the foundation laid out by the Cultural Plan for Calgary. In the citywide Cultural Plan, The City of Calgary adopted an overarching framework for cultural planning that looks at culture not in isolation, but at how it connects and contributes to every aspect of life and society. This integrated, inclusive perspective on culture very much aligns with how the Chinatown community perceives its own cultural present and future.

Informing the Chinatown ARP

Five Key Themes emerged from engaging with the Chinatown community about its culture. These themes provide us a framework for the Chinatown Cultural Plan, as well as for how we can culturally inform the new Chinatown ARP. For each of the Key Themes, cultural insights and priorities were distilled from community feedback and are – where appropriate – incorporated as policies and strategic actions. The result is Calgary's first culturally-informed Area Redevelopment Plan.



Dimensions of Cultural Planning from the Cultural Plan for Calgary
(Source: The City of Calgary, Cultural Plan for Calgary 2016 as prepared by MDB Insight)

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

This Cultural Plan can be used by everyone, to learn more about the history, significance and ambitions of Chinatown, and to be inspired to enjoy, experience and support its culture. Here are just some of the many ways in which we can all make use of the Chinatown Cultural Plan:

All Calgarians

Everyone can learn something new about the cultural richness of Chinatown by reading this Plan, and find a reason to visit the community and participate in one of its cultural activities.

Business and Developers

As businesses and developers plan for new shops, housing and more, they can first immerse themselves in this Plan to make sure that projects add to the cultural needs of the area.

Community Groups

Cultural and community groups can demonstrate how their work contributes to the Cultural Plan's aspirations as they seek support and funding from The City of Calgary and others.

Policymakers

The City and other authorities can align their plans and policies to better support Chinatown's culture, including policies for tourism, economic development and social services.

Artists and Creators

The artist community can take inspiration from the Cultural Plan and find ways to align their creative work with the cultural themes and initiatives that Chinatown is hopeful of.

City Council

Calgary's Councillors can learn from the Cultural Plan what Chinatown's most immediate concerns and opportunities are, and bring this understanding into their own decision-making.



HOW THE CULTURAL PLAN WAS CREATED

The Chinatown community is knowledgeable and highly engaged. It wants to have a big say in its future, and to be **involved and empowered to make decisions and take action**. Hearing this, the Tomorrow's Chinatown project adopted an approach of listening, stepping aside, and giving space to the community to have the conversations it sees as most important.

Goals for Engagement

We wanted the community engagement process to be transparent, have value, and result in tangible actions and outcomes. Our aim was to reach both deeply-involved residents and those with less of a relationship with Chinatown, and make time for personal, in-depth conversations. We made a range of engagement methods available to people to align with their availability, interests and personal preferences.

A Different Way of Engaging

We decided to go beyond the typical approaches of engagement, to meet the particular needs of the Chinatown community as it explores its cultural future. This was done by:

- Dedicating nearly a full year to community engagement, allowing time to discover what really concerns people, and giving everyone the opportunity to gain understanding and evolve their opinions;
- Letting citizens decide themselves what topics should be on the agenda, and how and with whom these are to be discussed;
- Having sessions open to the general public, and others in small, curated groups, allowing people to speak openly and safely;
- Using social media and online tools to reach Calgarians citywide, and communicate that Chinatown needs their input too; and
- Sharing interim findings timely and fully, to show what we think of, and to give people the chance to guide us.

The Process

The Chinatown Cultural Plan was created in three phases:



HOW THE CULTURAL PLAN WAS CREATED

Who We Engaged With

We engaged with a wide range of people all over Calgary to hear a diversity of opinions and ideas. Our process invited participants from these demographic groups to join the dialogue:



Engagement under COVID-19

No one could have anticipated engaging citizens during a global pandemic. Public engagement in the COVID-19 context forced the project team to pivot from one engagement plan to a completely new one. We were required to postpone in-person engagement activities, and shift to a virtual approach. Although not ideal, we are thankful for everyone's flexibility, and willingness to participate under these unusual circumstances.

How We Engaged

Despite the limitations under COVID-19, we were able to engage with an estimated 1,750 individual people through the following:

- **Chinatown Advisory Group:** a diverse group of 26 committed community members formed an advisory group. The group provided guidance to the planning process through their monthly meetings.
- **Individual and Group Interviews:** we interviewed nearly 130 people via online video or telephone in English, Cantonese and Mandarin.
- **Virtual Talks:** five 'lunch & learn' talks were held to share knowledge and broaden the dialogue about Chinatown's future. Topics included identity, youth, film and food. On average 50 people attended per talk.
- **Social Media:** The City of Calgary's social media were leveraged to encourage all Calgarians to participate in the engagement activities.
- **Discover Survey:** an online survey was conducted in English and Chinese to discover people's experiences, aspirations and worries for Chinatown. We received over 1,200 responses from across Calgary.
- **Create Conversations:** 15 online roundtable sessions were held. Around 200 people participated in these smaller, in-depth conversations. Another 100 responses were received through online surveys, open to the general public.
- **Cultural Resource Map:** a Cultural Resource Map was set up to communicate what our process uncovered, and to ask the community to contribute cultural resources that we were not yet aware of.

Detailed Insights

The findings from our community engagement are summarized in the report **Chinatown Cultural Plan – Engagement Insights**. We encourage you to explore for yourself the richness of what the community has shared with us.

You can find the full report here: calgary.ca/chinatown

CULTURAL RESOURCE MAPPING

Cultural mapping has been recognized by UNESCO as a crucial technique in preserving the world's intangible and tangible cultural assets. We applied this powerful tool to collect, honour and share back Chinatown's diverse cultural resources. Visit the **Chinatown Cultural Resource Map** and learn about the people, places and culture of this important neighbourhood.

What is the Cultural Resource Map?

The Cultural Resource Map is an online platform where the community's stories unfold and are pieced together. This map aspires to:

- Capture the cultural values of Chinatown through different lenses;
- Connect places, people and stories in a compelling narrative;
- Increase awareness and appreciation for the cultural assets; and
- Uncover and celebrate previously unknown cultural resources.

Cultural Stewardship

The Cultural Resource Map is a living document, always evolving to capture and reflect the current community. We continue to encourage all Calgarians as cultural stewards to submit their own stories, memories, images, videos, places of interest and more, and have agency in the shaping of Chinatown's narrative.

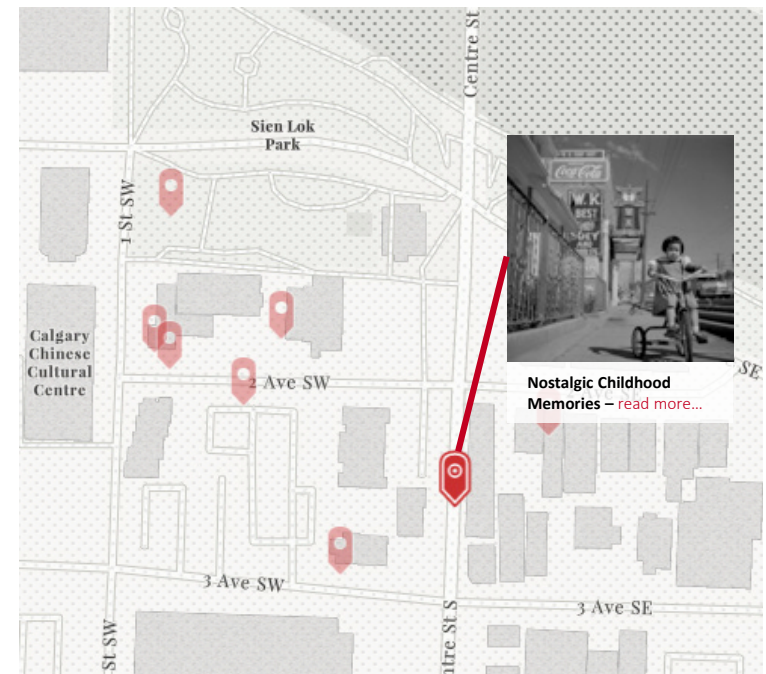
Explore for Yourself

By navigating the Cultural Resource Map and reading the community stories, we hope everyone can find a reason to experience what Chinatown has to offer. Discover the map yourself by scanning the QR code on this page or visit:

calgarychinatownculturemap.ca



You will find more QR codes in this Cultural Plan. Scan these to learn about the background and stories of specific themes and topics.





KEY THEMES

Five Key Themes and areas of opportunity have emerged from our engagement with the community. These themes provide us different perspectives – or vignettes – on the rich culture of Calgary Chinatown and how it can best be strengthened. **The Key Themes give structure to the Cultural Plan**, and help us organize our recommendations for strategies and actions.

In the next chapters, we look closer at each theme to define strategies and actions.



A)
People,
Voices &
Experiences



B)
Culture,
Creative &
Learning



C)
Food,
Merchants &
Tourism



D)
Housing,
Health & Social
Purpose



E)
Places, Spaces
& Natural
Environment



THEME A

PEOPLE, VOICES & EXPERIENCES

Tomorrow's Chinatown as a community that celebrates its diversity, and offers people harmony and a sense of belonging. Community members have very personal connections to Chinatown. Despite being small, Chinatown generates a lot of activity, with different groups represented. From those who call Chinatown home to those establishing their roots – like the seniors who make Chinatown their living room, and new immigrants and youth looking to (re)connect with their heritage – the diverse voices contribute to a rich, dynamic culture.

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

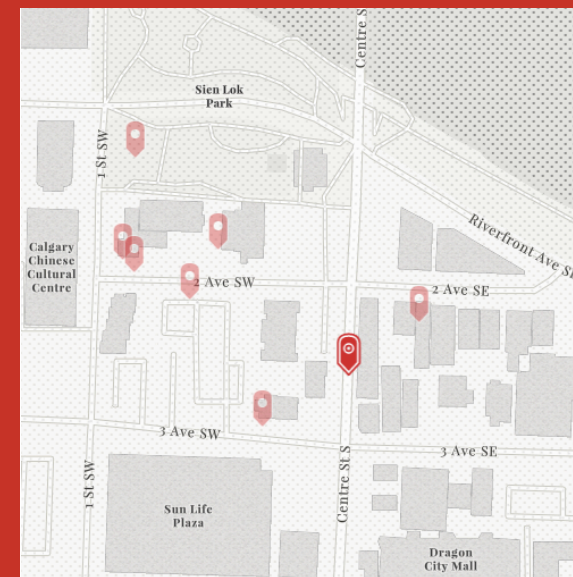
Chinatown is a place where Chinese Calgarians and others with Asian backgrounds see people like them, and where they belong and can be themselves. The community is passionate and dedicated to its future. People take pride in Chinatown's accomplishments, survival and resilience, despite past displacement and hardship. Calgary-wide and beyond, people seem to have an interest in Chinese culture, and are excited to be in Chinatown and experience what the community holds.

- Diversity
- Cultural Identity
- Passion & Dedication
- Civic Engagement
- Resilience

CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

The complex and rich history of Chinatown and Chinese Calgarians remains unknown to many and is becoming lost. There is also an uncomfortable history of racism and discrimination between Calgary as a city and Chinatown as a community that needs to be recognized. There are walls and barriers within the community as well, particularly between the generations, between new immigrants and those who are established, and between groups of different Chinese or Asian heritage.

- Complex Histories
- Unknown to Others
- City Relationship
- Walls & Barriers
- What is 'Chinese'?



Use the QR code to discover more about this theme on the Cultural Resource Map

STRATEGY A1

BRING CULTURAL GROUPS TOGETHER

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown is a place of cultural significance, where legacies are celebrated, safeguarded and passed on. Sharing culture with others is a way to welcome people in to participate and contribute, and to strengthen understanding between different cultures and identities.

ACTIONS

A1.1 HONOURING CONTRIBUTIONS

There are opportunities to address historical wrongs and injustices towards Calgary's Chinese community, and to recognize and share the important contributions of Chinese and Asian Canadians to Calgary and its culture.

A1.3 CHINATOWN 'REACHING OUT'

Efforts should be made to educate the city as a whole and celebrate Chinatown's culture. Chinatown can share its cultural richness with opportunities like Multiculturalism Day, Indigenous Day and more.

A1.2 LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY

Sharing and understanding language in Chinatown encourages more thoughtful engagement. Education and support can be provided to cross language barriers between English, Cantonese and Mandarin speakers

A1.4 CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONS

Chinese Canadians identify with those who have similar struggles for representation, and would like to see their relationships strengthened. This includes the Indigenous, Jewish, Black, Arab and South Asian communities.

"Chinatown provides a glimpse into a culture that is different than my own."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent



STRATEGY A2

BUILD BRIDGES ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown's elders and seniors have many things to say and advice to give to the next generation. Youth are looking to reconnect to their heritage, but experience challenges in making the connection. Genuine dialogue and friendship need to be fostered across age groups.

ACTIONS

A2.1 INTERGENERATIONAL TALKS

Let's start having intimate 1-on-1 or small group conversations between youth and seniors, about migration, work, culture and more. These talks can then develop naturally into lasting connections and mentorship.

A2.3 YOUNG LEADERSHIP

Chinatown's organizations must urgently make efforts to create space for youth to lead and pursue their own ambitions. A critical mass of young leaders is desired in roles that go beyond volunteering.

A2.2 HANDS-ON LEARNING

Skill sharing is a fun and powerful way to build intergenerational friendships and to pass on cultural heritage. More places and programs are needed for hands-on learning, cooking and apprenticeships – across all ages.

A2.4 MULTI-GENERATIONAL CO-OP

A building could be converted into a place where people of mixed ages, backgrounds and skills can learn, create and activate Chinatown together: in the building, on the streets and in the community at large.



"Many of our seniors find belonging and friendship here in Chinatown."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

STRATEGY A3

IMPROVE THE CITY-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown and The City both hope for a strong and fruitful relationship. To advance this, conversations need to be had about what caused damage to the relationship in the past, and about the need and advantages of more diverse representation in The City's processes.

ACTIONS

A3.1 PRINCIPALS OF ENGAGEMENT

A good start to build trust and 'togetherness' is to agree on sustainable, tangible, and binding principles between The City and community. Chinatown aspires to be seen as true partners in the relationship.

A3.3 IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

A multi-year agreement is needed between community and City stakeholders to oversee the implementation of Tomorrow's Chinatown. This will ensure stability and sustainability.

A3.2 CULTURAL TRAINING

The Chinatown community could become cultural ambassadors to The City. Focusing on cultural bias and prejudice, and leading the development of more culturally-aware and respectful engagement.

A3.4 ANTI-RACISM COMMITMENT

Racism and power disparities continue to affect Chinatown today. The City of Calgary can support and fund community-based anti-racism initiatives, as part of its commitment to address this systemic issue.



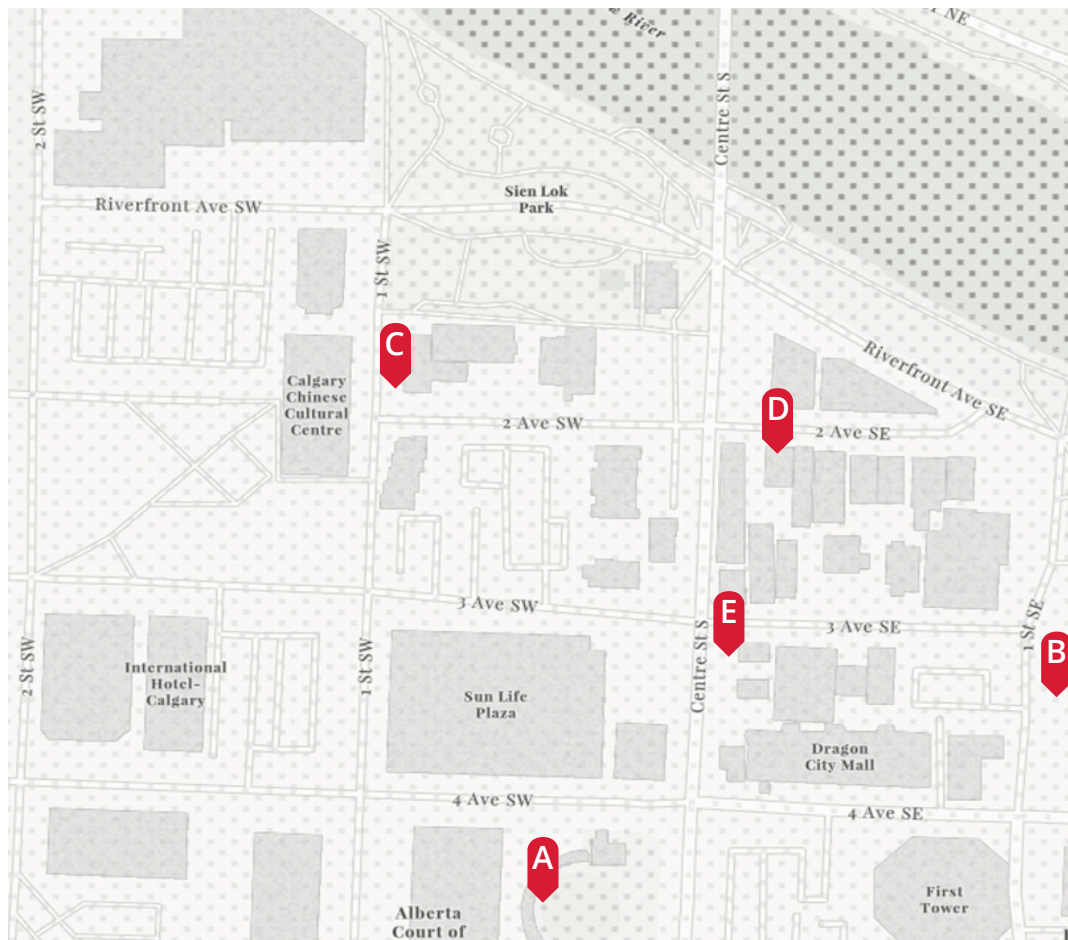
"Chinatown is a living reminder of the challenges faced by the Chinese community."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

THEME A

MAP OF ASPIRATIONS

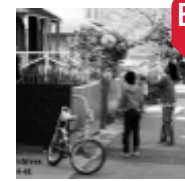
The culture of Chinatown related to 'People, Voices & Experiences' can be expressed and made tangible in the public realm and private spaces. This map captures just some of our aspirations that we hope to explore. Many of these can find a place in multiple locations.



A

Honouring History

The histories of the Chinese community in Calgary can be honoured and celebrated with artwork, commemoration and programming at what was formerly James Short Park.



B

Sustaining Memories

The memory of the displaced residential community at today's Hays Building can be sustained through creative works, information panels, landscaping and more.



C

Indigenous Friendships

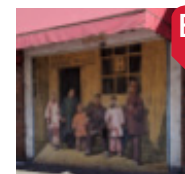
Friendships between the Chinatown community and Indigenous peoples can be expressed with art and events at the site of the former Friendship Centre, among other places.



D

Community Pioneers

Tribute can be made to Chinatown's pioneers, such as George Ho Lem, and the DoFoo and Poon families. The Ho Lem Block is just one place where this can take shape.



E

Storefront Exhibits

Storefront façades can become exhibits that pay homage to the stories, cultural values, entrepreneurship and resilience of the Chinatown community.



THEME B

CULTURE, CREATIVE & LEARNING

Tomorrow's Chinatown as a community known for its artistic production, creativity and opportunities for cultural learning. Culture is a strong builder of connection and community within the urban area of Calgary. The Chinese community in Calgary is unanimous in its hope that Chinatown be the centre for Chinese culture. Nurturing the neighbourhood's capacity for artistic production, creativity and cultural learning represents a great opportunity to bring more people to Chinatown and share in its cultural richness.

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

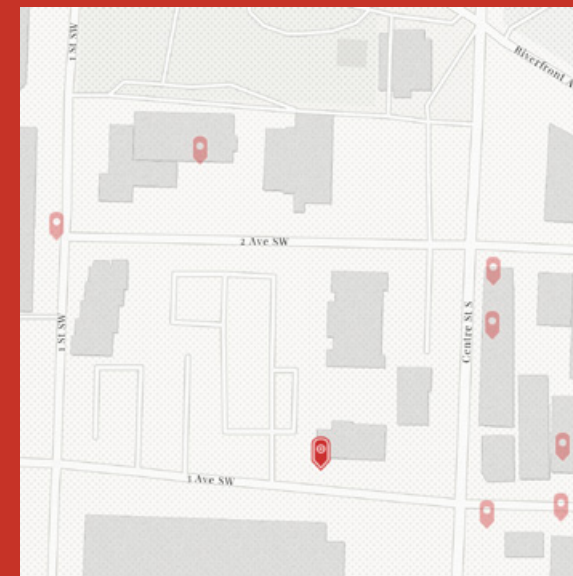
The Chinese Cultural Centre is a key attraction for locals and tourists alike into Chinatown and Chinese culture. It has the greatest reach across the city, especially through its Chinese New Year festival. Chinatown offers both annual flagship events as well as many hidden cultural gems to discover and learn about. A strength to build on is that in Chinese culture, artistic pursuits are considered lifelong endeavours of self-cultivation, offering opportunities for cultural learning.

- Strong Culture
- Chinese Cultural Centre
- Signature Events
- Hidden Gems
- Lifelong Cultivation

CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

There is a lack of space for arts and culture in Chinatown. Spaces are either unknown, inaccessible, or not suitable for cultural purposes. Cultural work is often economically unsustainable, with groups competing for the same funding and the work sustained through volunteerism. There is a lot of art and culture in Chinatown, but much of it is unknown beyond the community. Unless addressed, we are at risk of losing traditional knowledge that is held by Chinatown's elders.

- Lack of Arts Spaces
- Difficult to Access
- Unsustainable
- Undermarketed
- Loss of Knowledge



Use the QR code to discover more about this theme on the Cultural Resource Map

STRATEGY B1

EXPAND CULTURAL PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

"My hope is that Chinatown becomes that hub where Chinese culture can thrive and survive."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

By adding new, and expanding existing cultural programs, there is an opportunity to support Chinatown's cultural practitioners, and attract those who do not identify naturally with the neighbourhood, as well as younger people who want to learn more about their culture.

ACTIONS

B1.1 NEW, YOUNGER AUDIENCES

New, younger audiences can be attracted with cultural activities that are more relatable and relevant to their lives. This ranges from film and live music, to anti-racism dialogues and finding friendships or careers.

B1.3 CHINATOWN CELEBRATIONS

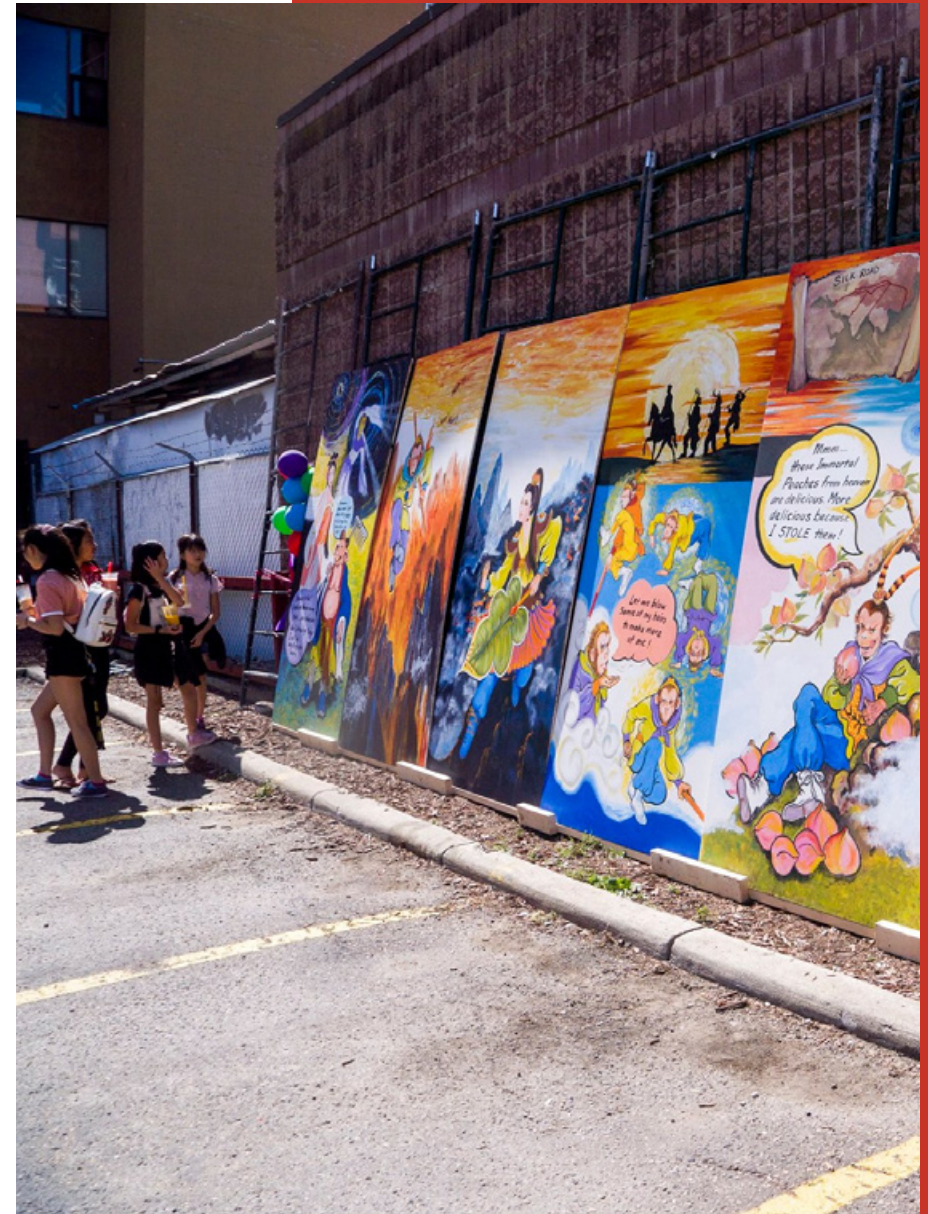
Every season has its own cultural celebrations in the lunar calendar, many of which are still unknown to Calgarians. The City and community can work together to celebrate lunar events in Chinatown with citywide appeal.

B1.2 CULTURAL EDUCATION

Investment is needed in the quality, availability and impact of Chinatown's cultural education. The curriculum should meet the learning goals of all Calgarians with an interest in Chinese and Asian culture.

B1.4 CHINATOWN ARTS COLLECTIVE

A Chinatown arts collective, made up of traditional and contemporary arts groups, can support artist-led grassroots initiatives and public art projects, ensuring the diversity of expression is respected, marketed and celebrated.



STRATEGY B2

SECURE MORE SPACE FOR CULTURE

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown needs more space to develop, express and celebrate its culture. Better use can be made of existing, underutilized spaces; private and public, indoor and outdoor. Securing new spaces would give additional 'canvas' to cultural activities that have citywide appeal.

ACTIONS

B2.1 NEW PURPOSEFUL SPACES

More small and mid-sized cultural spaces are needed that are designed for specific purposes. These should accommodate workshops, cooking, film, music, dance, theatre, exhibits, conversations and audio recording.

B2.3 SPONTANEOUS SPACES

Spontaneous cultural events must be encouraged across Chinatown, with interior spaces, stages, outdoor pavilions and speaker's corners that accommodate events year-round and in any kind of weather.

B2.2 ACTIVATED SOCIETY BUILDINGS

Traditional tongs and societies have underused social rooms, kitchens and gymnasiums that – with the support of a grant program – could be activated and made available for cultural, community-serving activities.

B2.4 CULTURAL CANVAS

Rooftops, façades, awnings, bus stops, shutters and utility boxes; almost anything can become canvas for designs that reflect Chinatown's culture. Policy relaxations and art budgets are needed to support this.

"Chinatown needs more art and performance spaces. This would also add a youthful energy."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent



STRATEGY B3

UNLOCK POTENTIAL OF THE CULTURAL CENTRE

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

The Chinese Cultural Centre's landmark architecture and many cultural experiences make it a gateway for locals and tourists into Chinatown and its culture. It is also clear that there are more possibilities to tap into, making it time to explore how to unlock the Centre's full potential.

ACTIONS

B3.1 ARTISTS SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Centre can support Chinese and Asian Canadian artists, for example with an artist-in-residency program and by recruiting them as guest curator for the big events to create something special for each year.

B3.3 CITY OF CALGARY PARTNERSHIP

There is opportunity for a stronger (funding) relationship between the Centre and City of Calgary, based on a renewed vision, and working as close partners on promotion, programming and facility upgrades.

B3.2 WEST & EAST PLAZAS

The spaces west (Daqing Square) and east (Daqing Ave) of the Centre can be upgraded into vibrant plazas that accommodate cultural events in all seasons, while improving connections with the greater community.

B3.4 SUCCESSION PLANNING

The Chinatown community has many talented young members with a passion for its culture. The next generation of leaders of the Centre need a process of succession to help connect with willing mentors and take ownership.



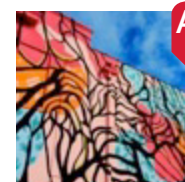
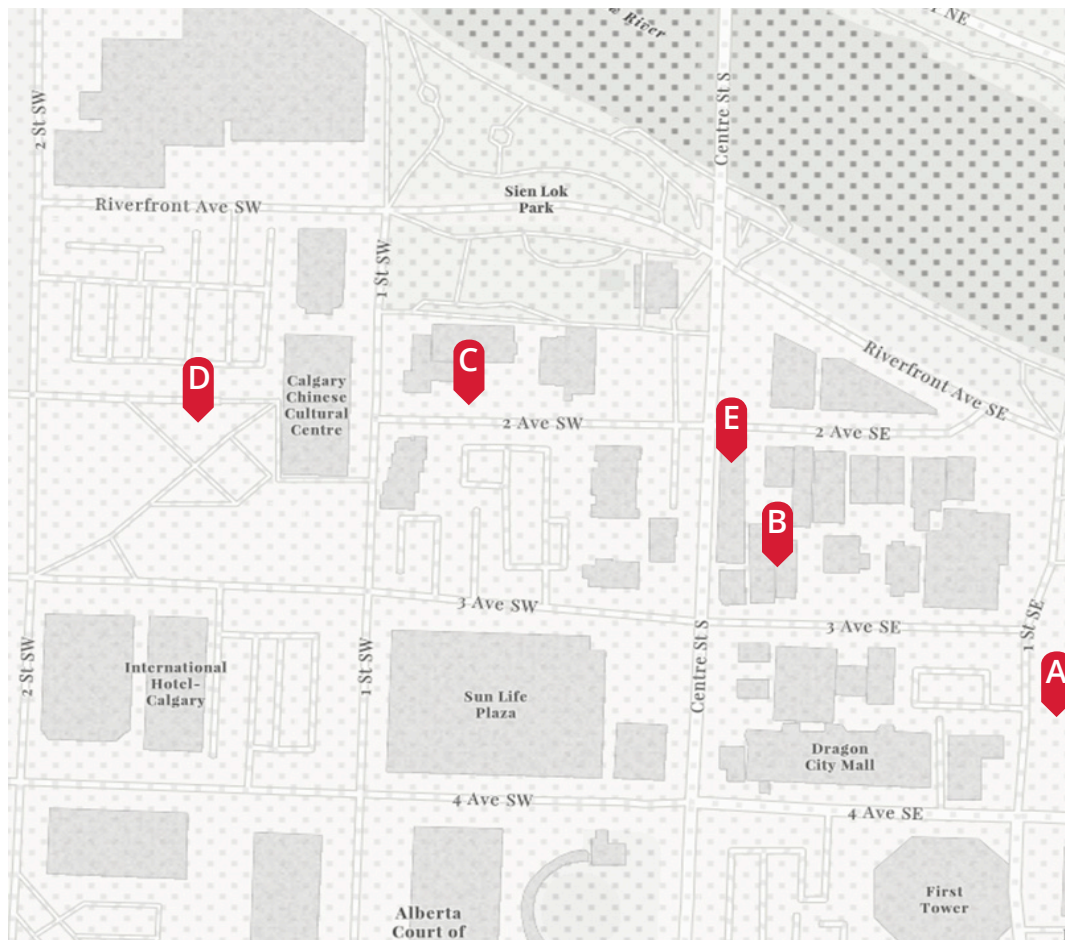
"I would love to see more activities, and learn about Chinese culture and traditions."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

THEME B

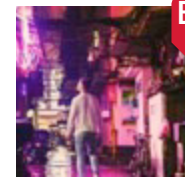
MAP OF ASPIRATIONS

The culture of Chinatown related to 'Culture, Creative & Learning' can be expressed and made tangible in the public realm and private spaces. This map captures just some of our aspirations that we hope to explore. Many of these can find a place in multiple locations.

**A**

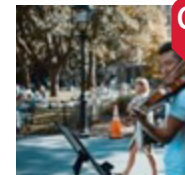
Murals XL

Larger than life murals can mark the edges of Chinatown, and pay homage to its culture and the people it celebrates. Large, blank walls like those of the Hays Building can provide canvas for this.

**B**

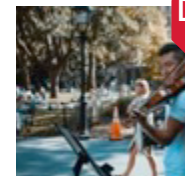
Jazz Up the Alleyway

Chinatown's Mural Alley could become a real experience. Desired improvements include hanging ornaments, lighting, nighttime performances, movable seating and patios.

**C**

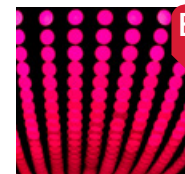
Outdoor Stages

Chinatown's commercial streets could become bustling promenades with street programming, unexpected music and arts performances, and a vibrant hawker culture

**D**

All Season Plazas

Movable or fixed canopies, tents, light fixtures and street furniture would turn spaces like Daqing Square into vibrant plazas that can host cultural events all through the year, rain or shine.

**E**

Luminous Chinatown

The entrance into Chinatown from Centre St Bridge could become a visual experience with an abundance of neon, light art and projections on the façades and rooftops.



THEME C

FOOD, MERCHANTS & TOURISM

Tomorrow's Chinatown as a community valued for its independent businesses that offer cultural food, shopping and tourism experiences. The memory of Chinatown is deeply rooted in its independent business community and the cultural food, shopping and tourism experiences it offers. Many small businesses in Chinatown were started by immigrants out of their savings and built up despite setbacks. Children of family-operated businesses know very well how hard their parents worked and the sacrifices they made to provide a better life for them.

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

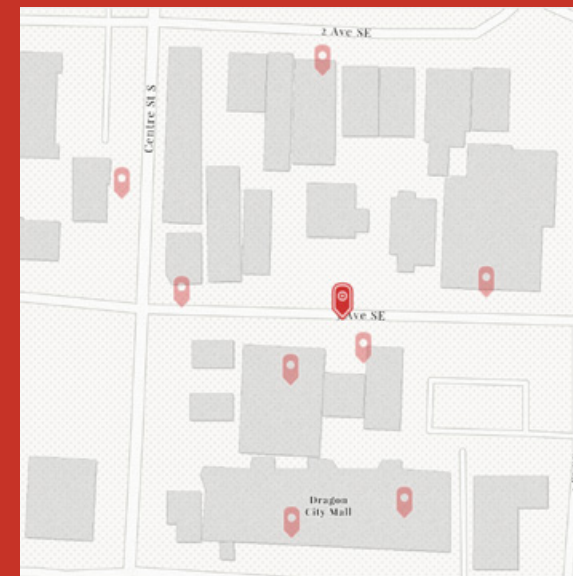
Chinatown's advantage is the density and diversity of Chinese and Asian cuisines. 'Mom-and-pop' shops are the character of Chinatown, providing authenticity and grittiness. Especially valued are the family businesses that offer affordable, culturally relevant goods and services. The daily, personal interactions with small independent business owners are big contributors to Chinatown's sense of community, and can be an exciting visitor experience with local and international appeal.

- Diverse Cuisines
- Family Businesses
- Cultural Businesses
- Value & Quality
- Visitor Experience

CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

The retail experience in Chinatown is not strong, with limited shops outside of food businesses. This has resulted in an eat-and-leave model of visiting Chinatown. The impact of economic decline, COVID-19, competition and lack of succession is taking its toll on Chinatown, seen in the erosion of its small family-owned shops. While retaining and protecting existing businesses is important, there is also a need for their adaptation to attract new audiences and to meet changing demands.

- Eat-and-Leave
- Lack of Succession
- Changing Demands
- Competition
- Economic Hardship



Use the QR code to discover more about this theme on the Cultural Resource Map

STRATEGY C1

SUPPORT EXISTING & LEGACY BUSINESSES

"I love the food of Chinatown. It is very unique and it always reminds me of my heritage"

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown's small, independent stores and its strong food culture are assets to cherish and build on. Longstanding, family-operated businesses give the area its appeal and personality that cannot be replaced. Efforts should be made to sustain this legacy for future generations.

ACTIONS

C1.1 LEGACY BUSINESS PROGRAM

The capacity of legacy businesses* can be developed by offering a suite of shared resources. This includes support with staffing, on/off-line integration, social media and financing, to aid their evolution in a changing market.

C1.3 ATTRACTIVE STOREFRONTS

The appeal of storefronts needs to be revived with freshened-up façades and interiors that make products and activities visible from the street. An incentive program could stimulate businesses and landlords to invest.

C1.2 BUSINESS SUCCESSION SUPPORT

Mentorship must be provided to existing business owners to facilitate the transition to the next generation. Stories of successful succession will attract young entrepreneurs, and with them, new ideas and audiences.

C1.4 COLLECTIVE STORYTELLING

Legacy businesses would benefit from organized, on/off-line storytelling that is crowd-sourced by locals and visitors. It helps a broader range of customers connect with the people behind Chinatown's hidden gems.

* A legacy business is defined as: more than 10 years in operation, small and independently owned, provides retail, food and personal services, adds to the culture and character of the area, and is community oriented.



STRATEGY C2

ATTRACT NEW ENTERPRISES & CONCEPTS

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

New, exciting additions to the retail mix would make for a more complete experience for today's residents, and bring younger and non-Chinese groups into the community. Grocers, fresh foods, fashion, nighttime businesses, and fusions of modern and traditional, East and West are desired.

ACTIONS

C2.1 ACTIVE RETAIL RECRUITMENT

The community is calling for more fresh food, unique cuisines and cultural, community-serving retail. Instead of just waiting, such stores must be actively recruited across the city and nation to set up shop in Chinatown.

C2.3 CULINARY EXPERIENCE HUB

Chinatown can leverage its food culture by creating a community space and platform that features both historically important and new food concepts. Synergies with food halls, markets and schools, can provide an integrated experience.

C2.2 NEW BUSINESS INCENTIVES

Incentives should be deployed to help emerging talent overcome barriers when starting a new business in Chinatown. Criteria would tie such support to the types of businesses the community most desires.

C2.4 CULTURAL INDUSTRY

Chinatown is well-positioned to grow Calgary's cultural industry, building on the community's uniqueness. A policy is needed to create jobs in cultural experiences, traditional crafts, digital entertainment and more.



"I wish for a young generation of Chinese Canadians to open their businesses here."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

STRATEGY C3

CREATE A YEAR-ROUND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown is one of Calgary's biggest opportunities to offer a genuine cultural destination. New, daily experiences are needed to attract visitors regularly and year-round. This can be enhanced by integrating with other downtown experiences and attractions into a seamless journey.

ACTIONS

C3.1 STREET ECONOMY

Locals and visitors would benefit greatly from economic activity on Chinatown's streets, including night markets, all-season patios, and (after-hours) food and retail stalls, as well as late night events.

C3.3 DESTINATION CHINATOWN

A strategic study and marketing campaign is needed to communicate Chinatown's community as an (inter) national place of important cultural development and contribution.

C3.2 CHINATOWN EVERYDAY

The community can be encouraged to show who they are and what they do, offering visitors a journey of discovery in which they always find something to do, and build a connection through honest experiences of daily life.

C3.4 WELCOMING TO ALL

Everyone should feel welcome in Chinatown. Education can be offered to Chinatown's tourism and business community to help overcome any language or cultural barriers that exist today.



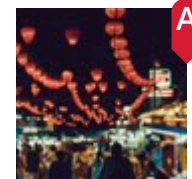
"My hope is that more people can experience Chinatown in a way that it stays true to itself."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

THEME C

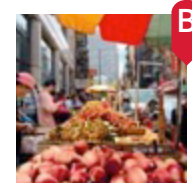
MAP OF ASPIRATIONS

The culture of Chinatown related to 'Food, Merchants & Tourism' can be expressed and made tangible in the public realm and private spaces. This map captures just some of our aspirations that we hope to explore. Many of these can find a place in multiple locations.



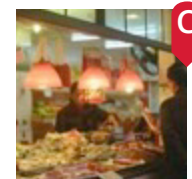
Street Markets

A street or night market with cultural foods and products would be a welcome amenity. It could take place on a parking lot in summer, and move into one of the malls in other seasons.



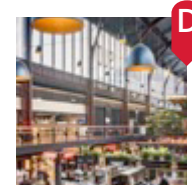
Kiosks and Carts

2nd and 3rd Ave are good places to stimulate a street economy and hawker culture. This can also help make better connections between areas east and west of Centre St.



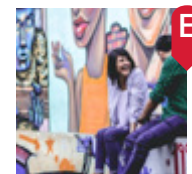
Visible Products

Redesigns of front-of-house spaces and façades can make Chinatown's offerings directly visible to pedestrians. Stimulation of the senses encourages people to stop, shop and interact.



Food Experience Hall

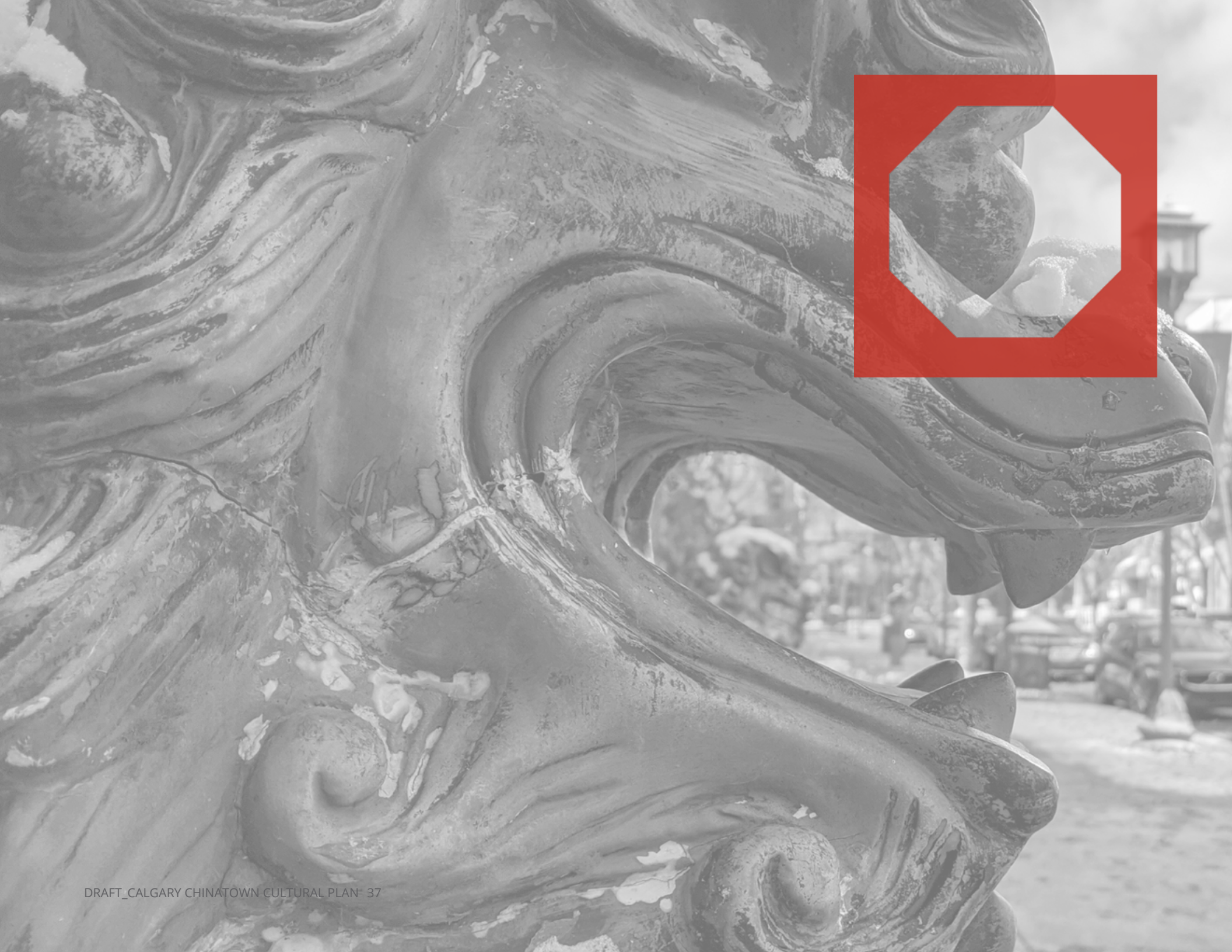
Places like Dragon City Mall can provide small retail units with pop-up or short term leases, where food entrepreneurs can test the market, and offer patrons something new.



Instagrammable Spots

New fun and instagrammable spots will interest people to stay longer and explore unfamiliar areas of Chinatown. Places to sit, chat, learn, experience and take lots of selfies.

Images (from top): Night market | Street vendors in New York Chinatown | Retail offerings directly visible from street | Food hall, Nice, France | Murals and hangout spot



THEME D

HOUSING, HEALTH & SOCIAL PURPOSE

Tomorrow's Chinatown as a community that provides residents the housing and support services they need, through all life stages. The Chinatown community is unique in that people both in and outside the neighbourhood are passionate about the area, all sharing a desire to be part of something bigger than themselves. In its culture, community responsibility and civil society come before profit and personal gain, and family and community gathering are important. You are here to honour those before you and propel those after you.

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

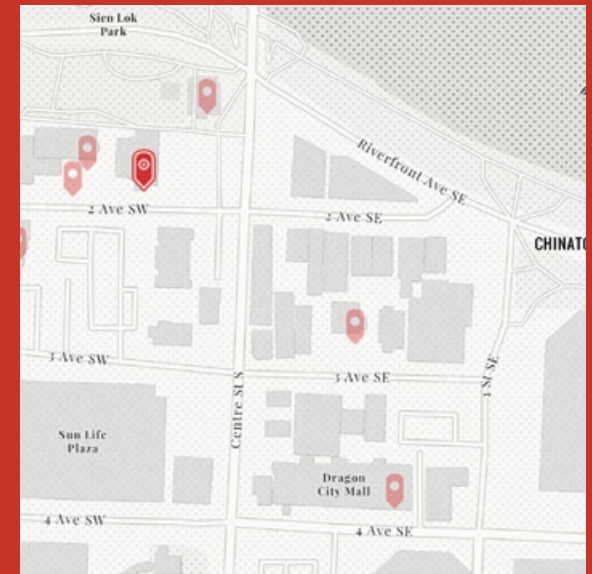
Chinese people consider the well-being of their elders and community a priority, and will make personal sacrifices accordingly. Chinatown's seniors have strong supports and their care is prioritized and a point of pride, thanks to past investments. Chinatown has a long history of volunteerism, civic engagement and activism. Being part of the Chinatown community comes with social responsibility. There is a willingness to be a good neighbour, to serve community, and to share resources.

- Cultural Values
- Seniors Services
- Strong Civil Society
- Active Volunteerism
- Community Care

CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

Less young people are becoming involved in Chinatown, which is concerning as existing generations grow older. A lack of youth and family-friendly amenities and housing contributes to that. Chinatown organizations have a reputation of being insular and not collaborating, but this is because they have established support systems and are not so reliant on outside help. Chinatown has yet to adapt to changing immigration, and there is concern about increasing redevelopment pressures.

- Growing Older
- Housing Gaps
- Perceived as Insular
- Demographic Change
- Development Pressure



Use the QR code to discover more about this theme on the Cultural Resource Map

STRATEGY D1

INVEST IN AN ALL-GENERATIONS COMMUNITY

"My hope is for future generations to embrace Chinatown as much as my generation has."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown could become a community where young people, families and seniors live together, find their home and take care of each other. Investments in additional housing, amenities and services are required to make Chinatown a complete community for all generations.

ACTIONS

D1.1 MULTIGENERATIONAL LIVING

Living with or in close proximity to (grand)parents to provide care and companionship, is a key value in Asian culture. Multigenerational housing options are desired, such as 3+ bedroom units and lock-off suites, and spaces for young and old to mix.

D1.3 CULTURAL HEALTH CARE

Culturally relevant health services are much needed, including a Chinese-speaking family physician, dentist, walk-in clinic, and health lab. Availability of Traditional Chinese Medicine is important as well.

D1.2 ACCESS TO HOUSING

New housing is a priority for those already connected to Chinatown, such as seniors looking to be near cultural services or those with family links, and for new residents from all backgrounds who wish to join a vibrant community.

D1.4 PLAY AND EXERCISE

More culturally-inspired outdoor spaces should be dedicated to play and exercise for all ages. In addition to playgrounds, this includes traditional Chinese mind and body exercises, tai chi, wushu, jianzi, kiting, mahjong and Chinese chess.



STRATEGY D2

CONTRIBUTE TO THE LIVES OF ALL CALGARIANS

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown has always been a welcoming place for Chinese and Asian immigrants; it also has much to contribute to the lives of all Calgarians. Other types of newcomers looking to find their place in society, or those seeking equity and representation, need Chinatown in their lives as well.

ACTIONS

D2.1 CENTRAL NEWCOMERS POINT

Newcomers who seek opportunities in Chinatown would benefit from a central point (digital and physical) where they can find career and volunteering options, education, and social or business connections.

D2.3 ANTI-RACISM ADVOCACY

The City and its civic partners can, through an agreement and actions, act as an innovative, actionable platform of anti-racism, advocating jointly with Chinatown for a more inclusive city.

D2.2 FULFILLING VOLUNTEERING

Chinatown needs a more purposeful volunteering process, where volunteers can easily find positions that match their passions and skills, and are supported with ongoing orientation, training and evaluation.

D2.4 COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Many individuals and groups care deeply for Chinatown. It would be beneficial to have a strategy that guides donations of time, expertise and funds to where they have the most impact, and meet pressing needs.



"Being a first generation immigrant, Chinatown helped me adjust to living in a new city."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

STRATEGY D3

SUSTAIN THE TRADITIONAL TONGS & SOCIETIES

"Chinatown needs an interactive space that reflects the history of Chinese immigrants."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown's tongs, benevolent and family associations played a crucial role in the lives of Chinese immigrants, their families and descendants. As time passed, their original purpose no longer aligns with contemporary needs. A re-imagination is needed to sustain their important legacy.

ACTIONS

D3.1 LEGACY ARCHIVE & CENTRE

The legacy of the tongs needs to be captured and kept alive. Archiving and curation (at a physical place and digitally) is needed to uncover and showcase the documents, images and videos that tell their story.

D3.3 RELIABLE RENTAL INCOME

Tongs and societies can secure new reliable rental income from leasing out their underused spaces to cultural and community groups. A grants program can support them in pursuing these options.

D3.2 MODERNIZED PROGRAMS

Support should be provided to societies that wish to modernize their programs towards affiliation on interests and topics. This will increase their relevance and reach, while staying true to their history.

D3.4 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

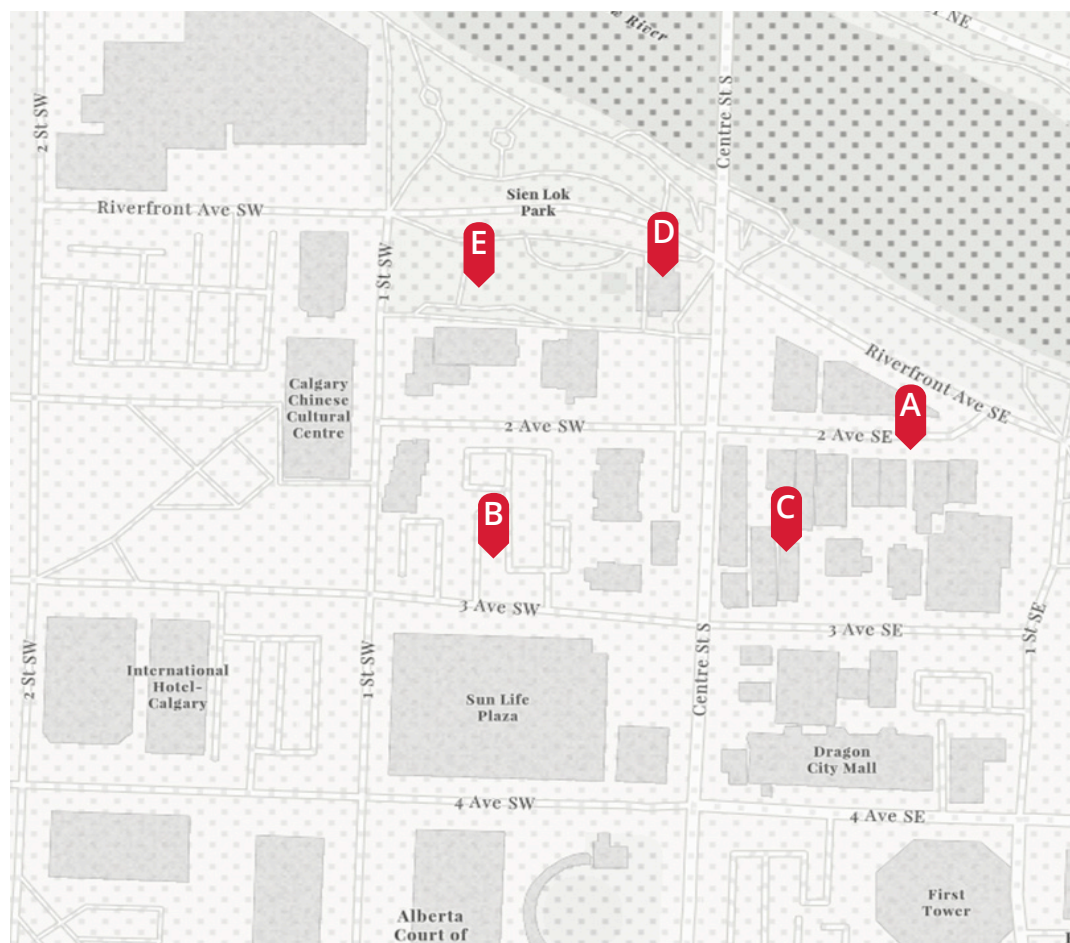
The Chinatown Community Association will play a key role in building community cohesion and prosperity. It would benefit from structural funding, better online presence and a physical location.



THEME D

MAP OF ASPIRATIONS

The culture of Chinatown related to 'Housing, Health & Social Purpose' can be expressed and made tangible in the public realm and private spaces. This map captures just some of our aspirations that we hope to explore. Many of these can find a place in multiple locations.



Space for Play

Outdoor play is a powerful way to enliven public spaces and inspire cross-cultural learning. Places can be designed for Chinese chess, mah jong, ping pong, jianzi and other kinds of fun.



Family Proximity

Innovative housing concepts can redefine multi-generational living, with elderly-friendly units designed for seniors, while the (grand)children live separately in the same estate or nearby.



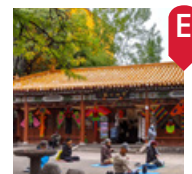
Legacy Centre

The depth of Chinatown's legacy is worthy of a physical place where the histories are made accessible for everyone to enjoy. Perhaps the National League Hall is a suitable place.



Traditional Chinese Medicine

Places that give access to Traditional Chinese Medicine are important to Chinatown's residents. This includes herbal medicine, acupuncture, massage and dietary therapy.



Seniors Workout

Parks and courtyards could become places where seniors enjoy each other's company and participate in low impact exercises, meditation and breathing routines.

Images (from top): Chinese chess at Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Courtyard, Vancouver | Different generations spending time together | Cultural exhibition | Chinese herbal store, Calgary Chinatown | Seniors meditating, Chinatown Montreal



THEME E

PLACES, SPACES & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Tomorrow's Chinatown as a community that expresses its culture, history and stories in the physical environment. Chinatown was established in its present location in 1910, after being displaced twice. Its resilience is a point of pride within the community. There is no other Calgary neighbourhood that has such strong expressions of its culture in the built environment. One knows immediately they are in Chinatown through the unique styling and accents of lanterns, lampposts, Chinese language signage and other cultural markers.

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

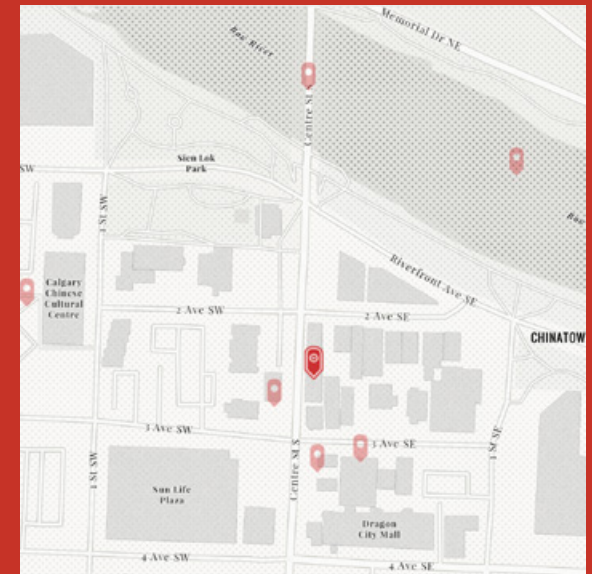
Chinatown's strong sense of place distinguishes it from other downtown neighbourhoods. Although limited in number, several historic buildings have been preserved and are remarkable for their architecture, stories and use. Chinatown has a strategic location by the river that should be leveraged more. The vibrancy, life and authenticity of its walkable streets are created by the density of Asian businesses and people young and old, their active use of Chinese language, and daily rituals, habits and aesthetics.

- Sense of Place
- Strategic Location
- Unique Styling
- Density and Scale
- Walkability

CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

Worries about Chinatown being eroded are very real. New developments on its edges are more congruent with other neighbourhoods or designed with their backs to Chinatown, giving the impression that the area is undesirable. Reminders of a painful and racist past are ever present within the built environment, and Chinatown's vibrancy is in decline as people and businesses leave. There is a lack of spaces for people to linger, and a need for convenient and affordable parking.

- Erosion
- Painful Reminders
- Loss of Vibrancy
- Few Options to Linger
- Mobility and Parking



Use the QR code to discover more about this theme on the Cultural Resource Map

STRATEGY E1

DESIGN STREETS FOR CULTURE & PEOPLE

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown can lead the way and show Calgary what it means to reclaim streets for the needs of people, business and culture. A consistent, people-oriented street design will add life and vibrancy, and communicate to people that they have entered a distinct cultural community.

ACTIONS

E1.1 AGE-FRIENDLY DESIGNS

Chinatown's streets could be more intentionally designed with the youngest and oldest residents in mind. Traffic safety and accessibility are major concerns, and more places to linger and socialize are desired.

E1.3 PEOPLE-ORIENTED STREETS

Chinatown is an excellent location for people-oriented streets that accommodate all sorts of uses, can be closed off for cultural events, and where all traffic modes share space in a safe, vibrant environment – day and night.

E1.2 EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS

Centre St requires a full rethink to no longer act as a divider. New cultural and business activities need to be prioritized west of Centre St to connect it with the existing historic and commercial core.

E1.4 CULTURAL LANDSCAPING

Opportunities exist to apply Eastern garden philosophies more widely. Examples include Chinese garden designs in streets, parks and at senior housing, vegetable gardens and (indoor) edible landscapes.



"I like how walkable the neighbourhood is and would like it to get even better."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

STRATEGY E2

REVIVE HERITAGE TO BENEFIT COMMUNITY

"Chinatown should be recognized as a heritage site for its contributions to society."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Chinatown's heritage is captured in historic buildings, but also in its streetscapes, languages and culture. As built heritage sites are revitalized, the way buildings are used must be considered at the same time, so that these sites remain meaningful and accessible to the community.

ACTIONS

E2.1 BALANCED HERITAGE TOOLS

New funding and incentive tools should be adopted that ensure heritage revitalization does not lead to the displacement of – but instead to new opportunities for – cultural groups, programs and activities.

E2.3 REVEAL OF HIDDEN HISTORIES

Cultural and language barriers have kept much of Chinatown's heritage 'hidden' to most. An opportunity is to reveal these histories through info signs, public art, open houses, social media and cultural resource maps.

E2.2 CHINATOWN'S 'HISTORIC BLOCK'

The Canton / Ho Lem Blocks and National League Hall should be secured as affordable cultural spaces, and revived with experiences, neon and art works at the alleyway, façades and rooftops.

E2.4 COMMUNITY-OWNED HERITAGE

A feasibility study is needed into opportunities and models to empower the Chinatown community to purchase, rehabilitate, program and operate heritage buildings or other important cultural assets.



STRATEGY E3

STRENGTHEN CHINATOWN'S CONTOURS

"I love the proximity to the river and parks, and how you can grab some food and have a walk."

Tomorrow's Chinatown survey respondent

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Many of Chinatown's places with untapped potential are located at its edges. By activating and strengthening these spaces with culture, Chinatown can increase the presence of its community, and make better connections to the riverfront, and East Village and Eau Claire neighbourhoods.

ACTIONS

E3.1 PARK AMENITIES

Sien Lok Park and James Short Park would benefit from more amenities, such as bike parking and rentals, a park pavilion, food trucks, (covered) seating, dog parks, playgrounds and community gardens.

E3.3 CULTURAL GARDEN

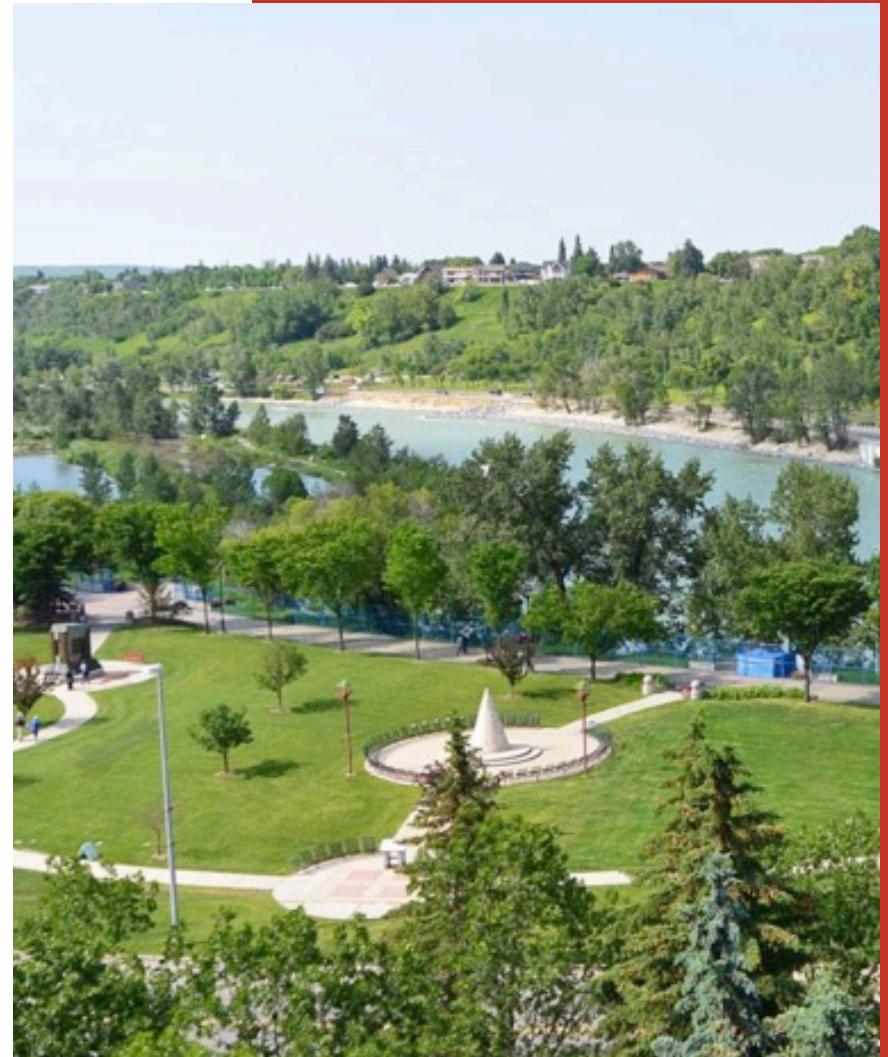
Sien Lok Park (or Prince's Island Park) could be a favourable location for a cultural garden with exhibition spaces. This would help attract visitors, act as a gateway feature and better connect Chinatown to the Bow River.

E3.2 CHINATOWN GATEWAY

Chinatown currently does not have a gateway. Residents, businesses and artists could come together to imagine innovative, never-before-seen ways to visually mark the entry points to this special community.

E3.4 WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

Multilingual, well-designed wayfinding and public signage will raise people's awareness of what community they are in, and tempt them to explore places and amenities they may not be familiar with yet.



THEME E

MAP OF ASPIRATIONS

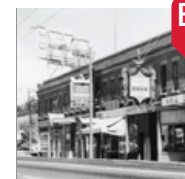
The culture of Chinatown related to 'Places, Space & Natural Environment' can be expressed and made tangible in the public realm and private spaces. This map captures just some of our aspirations that we hope to explore. Many of these can find a place in multiple locations.



A

Park Pavilion

An open or enclosed pavilion in Sien Lok Park could offer a place to have tea with friends or family, listen to a performance, rent bikes or explore what else is happening nearby.



B

Chinatown's 'Historic Block'

A key priority is to revitalize Chinatown's main heritage block into a cluster of cultural activity and business, with small and affordable spaces for community groups.



C

Classical Chinese Garden

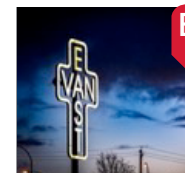
Despite Calgary's climate, a classical Chinese garden is certainly feasible. Sien Lok Park or the eastern section of Prince's island Park could be good locations for this.



D

Cultural Breadcrumbs

Practical wayfinding can be augmented with more subtle, enigmatic ways to tell people where they are and where to go. Such cultural breadcrumbs can be scattered everywhere.



E

Alternative Gateway

Not all Chinatown gateways have to look the same. Maybe Calgary Chinatown could be a bit different and mark the entry points of its community with large (light) art structures.



IMPLEMENTATION

The Cultural Plan identifies the aspirations, strategies and actions to strengthen the culture of Chinatown. The next step is to initiate the implementation. **The City of Calgary wants to sustain our dialogue with the community** to move forward as partners with the recommendations, and direct our combined resources towards the most impactful, meaningful ambitions.

A plan is only as good as the positive impact it generates. To make sure that the Chinatown Cultural Plan leads to the results we desire, we take an implementation approach that rests on these four elements:

1. Chinatown Action Plan

The Chinatown Action Plan will be developed to help the Tomorrow's Chinatown team transition to implementation. The Action Plan will include prioritizing goals and ambitions, while translating them into achievable actions with assigned stewards. Based on the feedback received during Cultural Plan engagement, The City of Calgary will create a community informed Action Plan. It will serve as the vehicle for project sustainability and collaboration moving forward.

2. Community Stewardship

The culture of Chinatown is the accomplishment of its people. It is under their stewardship that this culture can best be sustained and prepared for future growth. The Chinatown community needs to be supported in its role as cultural stewards. In line with this, the current Chinatown Advisory Group will have to transform into a community-led structure that chairs its meetings, and proposes its own agenda, projects and priorities. Other ways to empower the community must be explored as well, such as training and capacity building, and access to research and (digital) tools.

3. Council Reporting

Once the Cultural Plan is finalized and validated by the community, Administration will bring forward the document in a report to Council. This will ensure accountability to project outcomes, and provide a platform for further feedback and discussion. Administration and the community will also have an opportunity to engage Council in a conversation around sustainable funding and what resources are required to continue the work.

4. Celebrate and Reflect

To develop and nurture a culture of celebration and evaluation is another key component of creating a fruitful collaboration with the Chinatown community. Community work often leans heavily on volunteers, and the risk of burnout and fatigue is never far away. To maintain healthy partnerships we need to create a habit of ongoing celebration and evaluation where everyone involved in the Cultural Plan can celebrate their relationship as well as the achievements (big and small) themselves.

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APPENDIX I. THEMES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

This is an overview of all strategies and actions of the Chinatown Cultural Plan, categorized per theme:

A. People, Voices & Experiences	B. Culture, Creative & Learning	C. Food, Merchants & Tourism	D. Housing, Health & Social Purpose	E. Places, Spaces & Natural Environment
Strategy A1: Bring Cultural Groups Together	Strategy B1: Expand Cultural Programs & Activities	Strategy C1: Support Existing & Legacy Businesses	Strategy D1: Invest in an All-Generations Community	Strategy E1: Design Streets for Culture & People
A1.1 Honouring Contributions	B1.1 New, Younger Audiences	C1.1 Legacy Business Program	D1.1 Multigenerational Living	E1.1 Age-Friendly Design
A1.2 Language Accessibility	B1.2 Cultural Education	C1.2 Business Succession Support	D1.2 Access to Housing	E1.2 East-West Connections
A1.3 Chinatown 'Reaching Out'	B1.3 Chinatown Celebrations	C1.3 Attractive Storefronts	D1.3 Cultural Health Care	E1.3 People-Oriented Streets
A1.4 Cross-Cultural Relations	B1.4 Chinatown Arts Collective	C1.4 Collective Storytelling	D1.4 Play and Exercise	E1.4 Cultural Landscaping
Strategy A2: Build Bridges Across the Generations	Strategy B2: Secure More Space for Culture	Strategy C2: Attract New Enterprises & Concepts	Strategy D2: Contribute to the Lives of All Calgarians	Strategy E2: Revive Heritage to Benefit Community
A2.1 Intergenerational Talks	B2.1 New Purposeful Spaces	C2.1 Active Retail Recruitment	D2.1 Central Newcomers Point	E2.1 Balanced Heritage Tools
A2.2 Hands-On Learning	B2.2 Activated Society Buildings	C2.2 New Business Incentives	D2.2 Fulfilling Volunteering	E2.2 Chinatown's 'Historic Block'
A2.3 Young Leadership	B2.3 Spontaneous Spaces	C2.3 Culinary Experience Hub	D2.3 Anti-Racism Advocacy	E2.3 Reveal of Hidden Histories
A2.4 Multigenerational Co-Op	B2.4 Cultural Canvas	C2.4 Cultural Industry	D2.4 Community Mobilization	E2.4 Community-Owned Heritage
Strategy A3: Improve the City-Community Relationship	Strategy B3: Unlock Potential of the Cultural Centre	Strategy C3: Create a Year-Round Visitor Experience	Strategy D3: Sustain the Traditional Tongs & Societies	Strategy E3: Strengthen Chinatown's Contours
A3.1 Principles of Engagement	B3.1 Artists Support Program	C3.1 Street Economy	D3.1 Legacy Archive & Centre	E3.1 Park Amenities
A3.2 Cultural Training	B3.2 West & East Plazas	C3.2 Chinatown Everyday	D3.2 Modernized Programs	E3.2 Chinatown Gateway
A3.3 Implementation Agreement	B3.3 City of Calgary Partnership	C3.3 Destination Chinatown	D3.3 Reliable Rental Income	E3.3 Cultural Garden
A3.4 Anti-Racism Commitment	B3.4 Succession Planning	C3.4 Welcoming to All	D3.4 Community Association	E3.4 Wayfinding & Signage

APPENDIX II. PHOTO CREDITS

We would like to attribute the images in the Chinatown Cultural Plan to their respective owners. If we somehow made a mistake with this, please let us know and it will be corrected swiftly.

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Page 11	Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre
Page 13	City of Calgary
Page 17	City of Calgary
Page 19	City of Calgary
Page 21	City of Calgary
Page 22	Chinatown Business Improvement Area
Page 23	Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre
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