

ARP Overview Presentation Notes

SLIDE 1

I acknowledge I work, live and play on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. This includes: the Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations; the Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

1. A prior iteration of the draft ARP planning document was shared with the Citizen-led Chinatown Advisory Group members made up of 25 community activists, leaders and advocates. The **DRAFT document that is now being shared publicly has undergone changes from a previous versions based on feedback we got in February and March of 2022.** The City is now engaging the wider public on this version and open to collecting feedback.
2. Project team anticipates an additional update to the document before we proceed to a Committee of Council in the summer, and our target is to get to Council in the Fall.

SLIDE 2

Tomorrow's Chinatown is a Council directed multi-year program that kicked-off in the Fall of 2019.

As outlined on this slide - under the umbrella of one project – there are 3 coordinated deliverables with the one goal of supporting **Chinatown's future as a vibrant, culturally-rich place to live, visit, work, and do business, for generations to come.**

SLIDE 3

Key objectives of the project are to:

- Outline a vision for community character, cultural preservation and evolution to provide certainty for Chinatown's future
- Consider Chinatown's culture when planning to build in the area
- Find opportunities for public and private investment and redevelopment
- Support successful integration of a new Green Line LRT station in Chinatown
- Strengthen Chinatown's cultural identity by finding ways the community and stakeholders, like The City, can work together

SLIDE 4

Since March of 2020, the Tomorrow's Chinatown program team has been engaging and working with the community and stakeholders to shape and develop the Cultural Plan and the ARP.

We've developed 3 project phases to guide our work.

- Phase 1 – Discover was focused on the community helping the project team in understanding the values, strengths & weaknesses, and future hopes for Chinatown.
- In Phase 2, we continued to meet with the community and also began undertaking technical analysis (to prioritize the most important goals for Chinatown)
- In Phase 3 – we move forward with approvals. As highlighted by the stars at the bottom of this slide – the Cultural Plan for Chinatown has been released publicly and engagement wrapped up in February. So the Cultural Plan is already in the “Realize” phase. The ARP has deliberately been staged to follow the Cultural Plan – and it is at the end of the Create phase.

SLIDE 5

There were 3 main drivers that inspired the Tomorrow's Chinatown program.

- **First**, the last Area Redevelopment Plan was approved in 1986. Updates were required to better reflect Chinatown's current context.
- **Second**, the Cultural Plan for Calgary was approved by City Council in 2016, providing a roadmap for using cultural resources to strengthen Calgary's local economy and improve the quality of life for residents. A key recommendation of the Plan was integrating “*planning culturally*” into the way The City works and develops communities.
 - Planning culturally is a government-led process for identifying and leveraging a community's cultural resources, strengthening the management of those resources, and integrating cultural considerations across government planning and decision-making.

Third, In 2015-16 there was community advocacy to consider and preserve the unique cultural identity of Chinatown as part of new development proposals. The community also collectively asked for some certainty in Chinatown's future. This community desire was heard and understood by City Council – who directed City Staff to start the Tomorrow's Chinatown project.

SLIDE 6

Tomorrow's Chinatown is an innovative and first-of-a-kind project for The City of Calgary. It is the first project to develop a community-level cultural plan and have an Area Redevelopment Plan planning document informed by this process.

Both Plans have also been informed by a collaboration with 3 academic research projects led by professors from the University of Calgary.

Tomorrow's Chinatown also introduced the Chinatown Artist Residency program that gave professional artists an opportunity to be embedded in Calgary Chinatown to support contemporary art practices and facilitate conversation with the Calgary Chinatown community about the future.

Lastly, Tomorrow's Chinatown program has tried new ways of working with the community through workshop sessions, lunch and learn talks, “round-table” conversations, and over 125 interviews with activist and leaders of the community. A Cultural Resource Map has captured many community stories and cultural resources that are valued by the community.

SLIDE 7

The Cultural Plan is structured using 5 Key Themes. A variety of strategies and actions have been developed within each theme. Many of the key themes and actions are referenced directly within the ARP and provide a significant consideration for much of the planning and development related content.

SLIDE 8

This slide outlines a few high-level aspects about ARPs.

In general, an ARP is a long-range official government plan that sets out the:

- **future vision,**
- **development policies; and**
- **objectives** for supporting the redevelopment of a neighbourhood.

This ARP envisions the future while considering the economic, social and environmental realities that a neighbourhood faces and seeks to address. For this project, we have seen clearly the significant role culture plays in the the shaping of neighbourhood.

SLIDE 9

An ARP sets the vision for how a neighbourhood should change over time.

It can direct how the investment in a neighbourhood will be undertaken. Moreover, it typically covers allowable land uses, transportation and mobility matters along with open spaces and other pertinent social issues that are specific to a neighbourhood.

An ARP framework is composed of several layers that together define the framework for any new development. Three frameworks from the ARP that will be covered today include :

- Land use: this is what types of uses can go in which areas of the neighbourhood – for example residential and commercial.
- Density: how big of a building (measured by floor space) can be constructed in what areas of the neighbourhood; and
- Heritage and Design: how buildings or structures can be designed. For example, how the buildings respect adjacent properties and how far a building must be from the street.

SLIDE 10

In the context of this project, The City's task was to balance inputs from a variety of sources as shown on this slide.

With reference to the diagram on the slide, a few examples of these sources of input are:

For public input:

- Community engagement sessions and online surveys
- Feedback from the citizen-led Advisory Group members
- Lunch and learn sessions

For professional expertise:

- The 3 academic research projects from the University of Calgary
- Technical analysis of buildings shadows on green and open park spaces, and at the edge of the river

These are only a handful among many other sources.

All of the analysis is measured against the community's:

- shared understanding of the neighbourhood
- culture
- history
- And the special look and feel of the neighbourhood

SLIDE 11

At the onset of the program, the Tomorrow's Chinatown Advisory Group was established to ensure The City was well-informed regarding the lived experience and cultural context of Chinatown. The citizen-led Advisory Group leaders, advocates and activist that consist of 25 members with strong ties to Chinatown.

So far, the City's staff have met with the citizen-led Advisory Group members on 15 occasions since June 2020. Meetings have covered Area Redevelopment Plan topics in great detail, including:

- Public Realm activation
- Mobility – walkability, transit, parking and safety
- Connections – Plus 15 bridges, linkages and wayfinding
- Look and feel of the neighbourhood - sense of Place
- 3rd Avenue Vibrancy – traffic calming, vibrant street-life through digital signage, string lighting and street mural
- Vision statement and core ideas
- Density and bonusing

The city is extremely grateful for the contributions made by the Advisory Group and extends sincere gratitude for all their time and guidance.

SLIDE 12

On this slide we highlight a few similarities and differences from the 1986 ARP and the draft new planning document that has been shared with you.

They are both long-term planning policy that provide land use and development guidance anticipated to last 30 years. Both highlight the importance of community involvement and participation in the planning process.

One main thing to note is that the 2022 ARP places a high priority on intent (i.e setting the historical context, the vision and core ideas for the neighbourhood) and ensuring this intent follows through to the regulations in the rest of the document.

SLIDE 13

Three key high-level differences are highlighted on this slide. A more detailed list is available at the end of the presentation if that is of interest.

1. The 1986 ARP has a lack of direction on heritage preservation, cultural relevance and community character. The new draft attempts to address Chinatown's history and current cultural context through policies on cultural reference and design compatibility in buildings.
2. The Plan area boundary for the 2022 ARP includes the eastern portion of Prince's Island Park.
3. The development controls from 1986 proved to be inadequate and 8 Guiding Principles for development had to be added in 2016 to support the aging policy framework. The 2022 ARP provides a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of community priorities, and the 8 Guiding Principles have now become the 5 Core Ideas found in Chapter 2.

SLIDE 14

The Draft Chinatown ARP is organized into the following six chapters – as you may come across when going through the Table of Contents. An overview of each chapter will be shared next.

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Chapter 1: emphasis is on 4 key introductory topics that set the context for the ARP. For the purposes of this session we'd like to highlight that in the coming three decades, Chinatown is projected to accommodate growth upwards of **1,600 units** with the population growing to over **5,000 residents** and strive to get back to over **5,000 jobs**. These are important metrics to consider for the Plan.

SLIDE 16

- The vision statement found in the Plan is a comprehensive way look at the future of Chinatown

- We have developed 5 core ideas based on past community discussions, the 5 Cultural Plan key themes, and actions and, the 8 guiding principles that were developed back in 2016.
- The new plan addresses the unique history and cultural relevance of Chinatown to provide consistency and certainty to the community, developers and decision-makers.

SLIDE 17

The Land Use Concept for Chinatown reaffirms the area as a residential mixed-use neighbourhood with important connections to the Bow River through parks, open space and natural areas.

Centre Streets South is shown as a “high or main street” to the neighbourhood – not a divider. 2nd and 3rd Avenues South as important commercial streets connecting the Cultural Centre to the river. 1st Street S.W. is an important connector to the rest of Greater Downtown.

Active frontages areas are indicated on the map which ensure a vibrant and safe pedestrian environment and preserves the historic commercial character of Chinatown. Active frontage areas means the ground floor of buildings must be commercial uses.

SLIDE 18

Specific policies captured within Chapter 3 relate to built-form considerations such as separation between taller buildings, distance of the building away from the street, and number of entrances and street wall heights. These help ensure that density and good design will go hand in hand in Chinatown.

SLIDE 19

The draft Chinatown density framework has been established based on the following 7 elements

1. Sunlight protection at the top of riverbank of the Bow River
2. No loss of development rights
3. Building height and density transition from the downtown commercial core to the river’s edge
4. Shadowing analysis – to make sure new developments do not adversely affect significant public and private amenity and green spaces
5. Vacant site analysis and maximizing future residential and commercial growth with a target toward 70% residential, and 30% non-residential
6. Flexibility in the planning and policy framework that prevents unnecessary future changes to the planning policy document; and
7. Projected population & infrastructure capacity

SLIDE 20

The new ARP aims to intensify and revitalize the area, by encouraging new residential development throughout the neighbourhood to increase the base residential population. To achieve this, the ARP encourages primarily residential growth and establishes a maximum on strictly non-residential or commercial-only development such as office or retail-only developments.

On this slide “Base density” and “maximum density” for different areas in Chinatown are shown. In order to achieve the maximum density, developers must provide a long lasting community benefit through their application. This is called bonusing. The ARP indicates five bonusing items such as affordable housing, heritage preservation or a contribution towards the Chinatown Improvement Fund –

meant to ensure beautification of Chinatown. New community spaces for social interaction as part of a new development also has public benefits, and is included.

SLIDE 21

Three (3) Character Areas are defined with targeted guidance on urban design and heritage conservation. Chinatown's look, feel and function are influenced by the buildings, streets, parks, plazas and other elements valued by the community. This section is designed to promote a high-quality built environment that reflects Chinatown's unique heritage, design and cultural motifs.

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The 3 areas are identified as:

- Heritage core
- Cultural core
- Edge area

SLIDES 23

Streetscapes and buildings should be designed to highlight and promote the gateways, landmarks and view corridors. The identified sites, buildings, structures, parks and escarpment areas all serve as defining elements for both public improvement and development projects in Chinatown.

What is meant by gateways is not necessarily a physical structure, but rather important entrance points into the neighbourhood that should be accentuated with a variety of design elements.

SLIDE 24

Moving around the city should be safe and convenient for people of all ages, genders, incomes and abilities. Mobility refers to a well-connected network that includes options for walking, bicycling/wheeling, taking transit and using personal vehicles. City staff have also heard the need to support localized deliveries and a high level of curbside activity to support business needs. The Area Redevelopment Plan includes policies that ensure enhanced mobility for all modes.

SLIDE 25

City staff has heard on many occasions that parking is of importance to the community members. Many have told us that not enough parking is available or it costs too much. On this slide we are showing the overall stall counts. The City is seeking additional feedback on this matter as part our engagement on the draft document.

SLIDE 26

Finally, the last piece of this ARP is the Public Realm Strategy. This highlights potential future projects in Chinatown where investment should be directed in the future. The actions in the Plan were informed through community engagement.