

Dear Commissioners of the OCPM,

My name is Terry Chiu and I am a lifelong patron at Montréal's Chinatown. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed new height and density permissions of buildings situated in Chinatown. I strongly support the City of Montréal's proposal to lower the height and density allowances. This consultation matters deeply to me for the connection I feel to the district's cultural and interpersonal history.

For my very personal part—what does Chinatown mean to me?

Montréal's Chinatown has been the only place that's felt like existential haven for the parts of my identity I wish to cherish the most—the place where my Asian identity and values are most celebrated and at harmony with the Western world I navigate. A place of communion and familiarity to all the immigrant parents—mine too—who gave it all they had to contribute in a country not of their native tongue so that my generation can know more opportunities.

I ask that the City of Montréal affirm the heritage designation of Montréal's historic Chinatown from René-Levesque to the North to Viger to the South, and Rue de Bleury to the West and Sainte-Élisabeth to the East. I also ask the City of Montréal to affirm their proposal to lower the height and density allowances to encourage the preservation and promotion of community and cultural life, and local economic growth in the neighbourhood. We need to further cultivate a future that aesthetically, culturally, and soulfully reflects Chinatown's historic legacy and what makes it unique for its residents, businesses, and supporters.

Supporting Chinatown has never been as actively conscious a choice as it's been to me now. Though I've pretty badly botched the tuning to my Asian roots—something many can relate to growing up in North America—I've cherished from the start what heritage means to its multigenerational community, local businesses, and patrons. Unless you're a visible minority, you might not conscientiously get what it is that there could be a place where people like you can do and own their own thing without feeling “othered”.

The fact is culture and heritage matter, and I fear that without these initial additional measures proposed by the City of Montréal, we will **All** feel Chinatown's erasure to gentrification and institutional apathy, simply another version of systemic racism.

I've seen and read the history of what Chinatown used to be when it first prospered—this borne out of its marginalized populace's defiance to exist and manifest a place of their own, both by necessity and determination. And as history has shown, the officials, colonists, developers, and politicians (all interchangeable) set to colonize, erase, dismantle, and destroy the one haven of societal-cultural acceptance and opportunity for the Chinese community. This in the name of the government needing to re-assert its racial and socioeconomical supremacy over who they deemed lesser-class citizens who need to be remedied by the likes of the Guy Faveau complex that the Chinese are at the existential mercy of those in power who could erase what's left of them without second thought.

And yet, here we are today, on the public consultation with our Chinese elders, side by side with today's youth, nurturing a community that bridges the intergenerational trauma between our seniors' exploitation and our continued discrimination and underrepresentation.

We may have been dismissed, pitted against one another, and left behind, but we collectively never stopped resisting and making sure our voices are heard. And we need to stop the bleeding wound of gentrification and systemic racism before it all suffocates and collapses what's left of Québec's last Chinatown. Only then could we even start healing the neighborhood, rebuilding, and ultimately have it thrive anew.

So if you really mean it that by the city consulting the Chinatown community, you have committed to hearing what we have to say about the future of Chinatown—then this written submission is my contributory step to rebuilding what was lost in the hope of cultivating what the future of Montréal's historic Chinatown can be.

And that future has community centers where youth, families, and elders can find support, connection, and opportunities for intercultural and intergenerational exchange. It's a future with affordable and social housing where residents and families can live peacefully without the threat of gentrification evicting them; where seniors can age in place and with dignity. That future is a gathering place embedded with memory and history, alive with arts and culture, green and outdoor leisure space, that generations of Asians in Montréal identify with.

Beyond affirming the heritage designation of Chinatown and the height and density limits, I join our fellow neighbours and community members in their concerns that the current measures alone will not sufficiently bring about the desired results mentioned above. I hope with the adoption of the proposed changes to the Plan d'Urbanisme, the City of Montréal and the Borough of Ville-Marie will further consider creating a more holistic development plan for Montréal's historic Chinatown that aims to protect, preserve, and promote the history and culture of its historical populations. This should also include considerations for affordable and social housing, improved and dignified quality of life, and both indoor and outdoor gathering and cultivation spaces.

I hope you will take this recommendation seriously and continue to use the feedback of residents and community members to develop a holistic plan that values the unique character of Montréal's Chinatown.

You can still save the last Chinatown in Québec. You can still help preserve and nurture the district's future to embody both its legacy and its possibilities.

Regards,

Terry Chiu

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Chiu', written in a cursive style.