

Dear commissioners of the OCPM,

My name is and I am Isabelle Hayes. I've been living in Montreal for 16years. My first apartment was in the big building north of the Chinatown arch. It used to be students accommodations. Since then it has always held a special place in my heart.

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.

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-Elizabeth to the East. I also ask the City of Montréal to affirm their proposal to lower the height and density allowances. These actions are a necessity and the minimum to encourage the preservation and promotion of community and cultural life within Chinatown. Only then can the local economy start to growth.

Throughout the years, I have seen many changes happen to the neighborhood, many of which had begun long before I moved to Montreal, like the boxing of Chinatown with big streets and highways, zoning policies restricting its growth and the construction of more and more condos and hotels. Going to Chinatown to shop is still one of my favorite activities. There's items I can only mostly find there within special groceries or stores, etc. If these businesses are important to me as an "outsider" they are most essential for the community living within Chinatown and the larger asian community living elsewhere.

This is why I am particularly concerned with the types of businesses currently opening in Chinatown. Much like in other big metropolis many family run and historic businesses can no longer stay within Chinatown. They are either forced out by increasingly high rents, buildings are being unkempt and abandoned, then sold to larger national/international chains who can afford increasingly high rents or are just being pushed out by these companies and/or the constant diminishment of quality of life within the neighborhood. While some of these new businesses fit within the general cultural and visual aesthetic of Chinatown, they add nothing to the unique character of Montreal's Chinatown. I would like to see rent subsidies or other incentives for local businesses that contribute to the distinct character and heritage of Chinatown.

With these proposed changes, it is imperative that we do not think of Chinatown as merely a tourist destination or relic of the past, but as a living breathing community which is deeply rooted in the area. We must think of Chinatown considering its past, present, AND future.

Beyond affirming the proposed changes to the Plan d'Urbanism, I join with others in their concerns that the current measures alone will not be sufficient.

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.

Regards,

Isabelle Hayes