

MEMORANDUM

February 14, 2011

TO: Mayor Robertson and Councillors

CC: P. Ballem, City Manager
S.A. Johnston, Deputy City Manager
M. Coulson, City Clerk
M. Welman, Director of Corporate Communications
D. McLellan, General Manager of Community Services
F. Connell, Director of Legal Services
P. Judd, General Manager of Engineering Services
R. Jenkins, Assistant Director of Planning
T. Knowles Yarnell, Planner

FROM: B. Toderian, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Historic Area Height Review - Chinatown Related Items for Public Hearing

The purpose of this memo is to clarify the items for Council's consideration at the March 17, 2011 Public Hearing, related to implementation of the Historic Area Height Review conclusions for Chinatown.

BACKGROUND

On January 20, 2011, Council referred to Public Hearing items relating to the HA-1 and HA-1A zones (Chinatown) from the report dated December 17, 2010, entitled "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" (RTS 8578), and instructed the City Manager to ensure the report is severed accordingly.

The full referring motion can be found on the City's website here:
<http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20110120/documents/csbuurgent1.pdf>

The original policy report can be found on the City's website here:
<http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20110120/documents/penv4.pdf>

SUMMARY OF ITEMS REFERRED

This section summarizes the items that shall be presented to Council for their consideration at the Public Hearing on March 17, 2011.

Due to their interrelated nature, all items will be presented to Council concurrently at the Public Hearing.

It is noted that only the amendments to the HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule (Recommendation B of the "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" report) of the Zoning & Development Bylaw require approval at the Public Hearing. The other recommendations relate to policy, and may be considered by Council during Committee of the Whole immediately following the Public Hearing (or at a future Council meeting).

The following recommendations are offered for Council consideration. Any amendments to the original recommendations contained in the policy report are noted following the recommendations below.

- A. **THAT the "Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A)", generally as outlined in Appendix A of this memo, be adopted by Council.**

(Note: This refers to Appendix A of this memo, which extracts the intent and content for Chinatown South (HA-1A) of the originally presented "Rezoning Policy for Higher Buildings in the Historic Area" and omits the remainder of the Historic Area.)

- B. **THAT the Director of Planning be instructed to make application to amend the HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule (Chinatown Historic Area) as outlined in Appendix B of the "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" report, and that this application be referred to a Public Hearing;**

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary amending by-laws, generally as outlined in Appendix B of the "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" report, for consideration at the Public Hearing.

(Note: No substantive change from original recommendation. The text of the original recommendation has been modified only to specifically reference the name of the original policy report.)

- C. **THAT, subject to approval of the by-law amendments at the Public Hearing, Council approve the revised *Chinatown HA-1 Design Guidelines* and the *Chinatown South HA-1A Design Guidelines*, generally as outlined in Appendix C and D respectively of the "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" report.**

(Note: No substantive change from original recommendation. The text of the original recommendation has been modified to specifically reference the name of the original policy report and to clarify the timing of approvals.)

- D. THAT the *Transfer of Density Policy and Procedure* be amended as generally outlined in Appendix E of the "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" report, in order to support the revitalization of Chinatown.

(Note: No substantive change from original recommendation. The text of the original recommendation has been modified only to specifically reference the name of the original policy report.)

- E. THAT the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee's statement regarding development charges in Chinatown, as well as support letters from other community groups, as attached in Appendix G of the "Historic Area Height Review: Policy Implementation" report, be received for information.

(Note: No substantive change from original recommendation. The text of the original recommendation has been modified to specifically reference the name of the original policy report.)

- F. THAT, in anticipation of development of a district energy system that could serve the Historic Area, new developments in Chinatown (HA-1A) be required to include a hydronic heating system in order to easily connect to a district energy system when one becomes available.

FURTHER THAT, staff be directed to update the *Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A)*, and the *Chinatown HA-1 Design Guidelines* and *Chinatown South HA-1A Design Guidelines* to include provisions for inclusion of a hydronic heating system in new developments.

(Note: The text of the original recommendation has been modified to specifically reference the name of the original policy report. The recommendation has been further revised to refer specifically to development in Chinatown, including rezonings that could proceed under the proposed "Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A)" as per Recommendation A above.)

Staff will be available to answer any questions or concerns regarding the content of this memo at the Public Hearing.

If you have any questions, please contact Rob Jenkins.

Regards,



Brent Toderian
Director of Planning

BT/ky

Attachment: Appendix A - Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A)

Draft Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A)

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1 Intent

The intent of this policy is to provide guidance on rezonings in Chinatown South (HA-1A), specifically related to proposals for additional height beyond provisions in the Zoning & Development Bylaw. Development of higher buildings in this area shall balance the opportunity for additional growth and resulting public benefits with preserving the important heritage and cultural character of Chinatown.

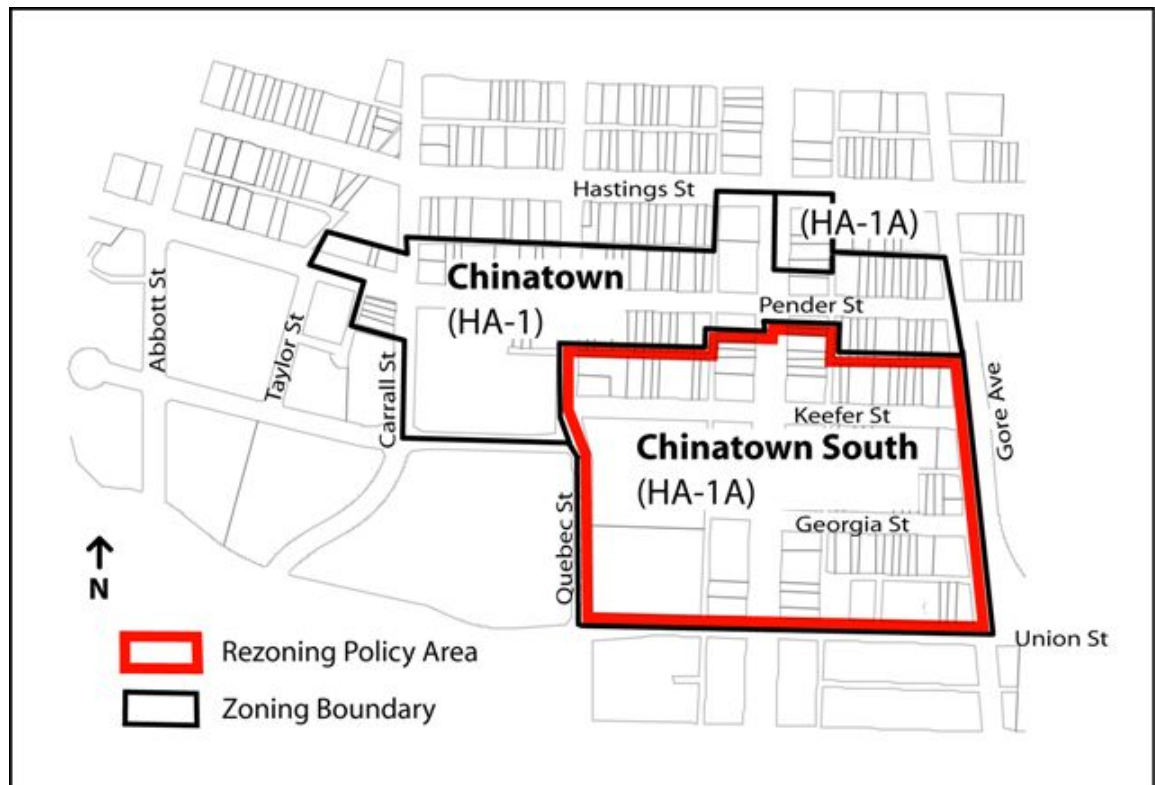
Established in the 1880's, Chinatown is one of the two formative communities of Vancouver. The community has an evolving and enduring cultural identity, with many active community organizations, a distinctive urban and cultural landscape, and a unique vernacular architecture. As such, the overall development scale of the Chinatown, in particular the HA-1 (Pender Street) area, should continue to reinforce and support the prevailing heritage context, fine-grained character, and generally low to mid-rise building forms. Higher buildings are appropriate in HA-1A (Chinatown South) only as outlined in this policy.

Future growth in Chinatown South resulting from this policy is expected to contribute to the overall economic revitalization and residential intensification of Chinatown (HA-1 and HA-1A), as well as to support innovative heritage, cultural and affordable and social housing projects in the Chinatown area.

In addition to the provisions that follow, proposals for higher buildings in Chinatown South (HA-1A) shall adhere to the existing, applicable Council-approved plans, policies, and guidelines for each site. Further, the provisions in this rezoning policy do not preclude additional requirements that will be determined during the enquiry and rezoning process.

2 Application

This Rezoning Policy applies to the HA-1A area, as identified in Map 1 below. For the purposes of this policy, Chinatown South is defined as the portion of the HA-1A zoning district south of Pender Street. In order to maintain an appropriate scale adjacent to the historically significant Pender Street (HA-1, as showing in Map 1) this policy does not apply to the small HA-1A area north of Pender Street.



Map 1 - Rezoning Policy Area for Chinatown South

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this document:

- a) *“Chinatown South”* means that portion of the HA-1A zoning district that is south of Pender Street.
- b) *“Higher building”* means a development proposal that exceeds the maximum height provided for in the site’s zoning district schedule and other applicable Council-adopted policies.
- c) *“Main Street Sub-area”* means that portion of Chinatown South with properties fronting on Main Street, south of Keefer Street.

4 Early Review Process

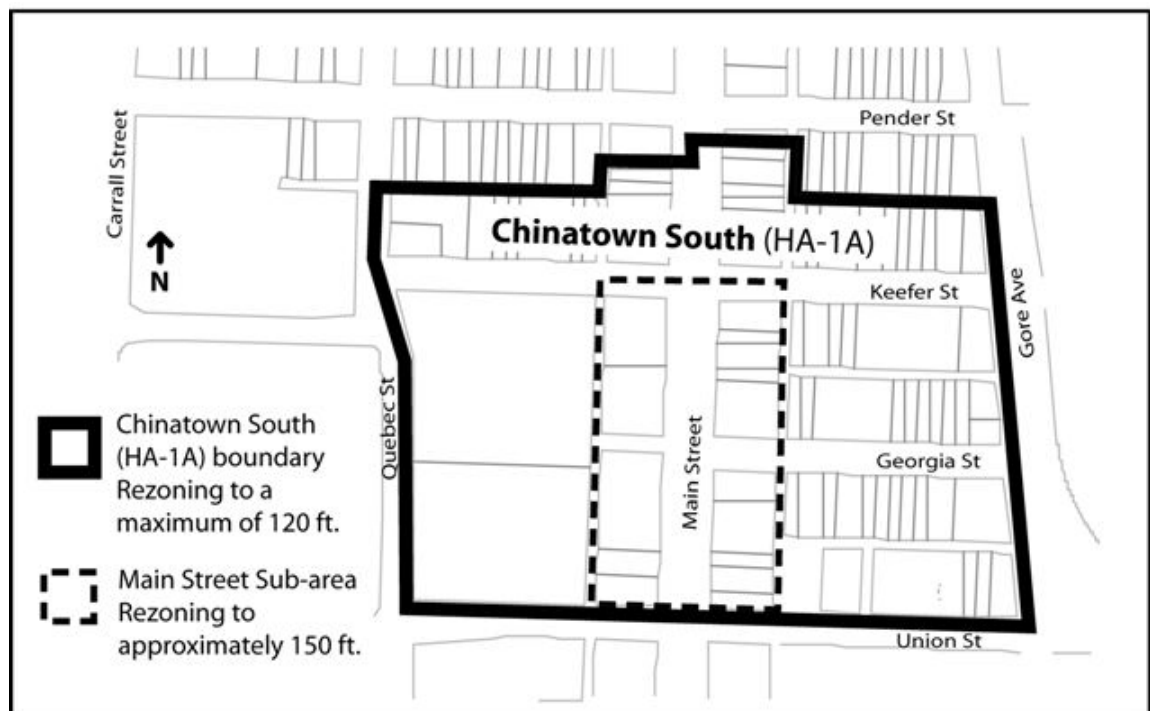
Prior to submitting a formal rezoning enquiry for any site in Chinatown South, applicants shall meet with City staff early in their design process. The purpose of this meeting is to review the development concept, ensure proper contextual influences are considered, and clarify design strategies to meet heritage, land use, built form, scale and character objectives. Applicants are encouraged to prepare a site context analysis and preliminary urban design response for discussion at this meeting.

The processing of rezoning applications that may result from this policy will include the typical review by City advisory bodies, including but not limited to the Urban Design Panel, Vancouver Heritage Commission, and the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee. Depending on the nature of a proposal, additional special review may be required, and could include: presentation of proposals at the enquiry stage, joint committee workshops, inclusion of guest panel members on committees, etc.

5 Height and Massing

The following height limits shall apply to rezonings in Chinatown South, and as identified in Map 2 below, subject to consideration of the urban design provisions outlined in this policy (including view cones, shadow, and context analysis):

- a) *Chinatown South* – Height up to a maximum of 120 ft. will be considered.
- b) *Main Street Sub-area* – Height of approximately 150 ft. will be considered.



Map 2 - Possible Heights through Rezoning

There is no floor area density provision in the HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule, therefore floor areas achievable and related building forms result from the application of maximum heights and the design guidelines to the context of a specific site and proposed development. This approach to managing achievable floor area shall continue under this rezoning policy, noting that both the urban design provisions listed below and the HA-1A Design Guidelines shall be applied.

6 Urban Design Provisions

- a) Respect historic Chinatown (HA-1) in terms of adjacent architectural scale, orientation, massing expression, details and materials.
- b) The recommended development site frontage is 75 to 125 ft.
- c) Vary building facades in order to convey incremental development, and to reflect historic development patterns such as 25 ft. lots, sawtooth building heights, and the resulting asymmetrical streetwall character.
- d) Required setbacks are described in the Chinatown HA-1A Design Guidelines. Additional setbacks may be required and will be determined upon contextually-based analysis towards effective and appropriate transition in form/massing, scale, and character.
- e) For all sites where a higher building would have a visual impact on the protected Olympic Village Pier view cone (G.1.2), upper building massing and roof profile shall be shaped to maintain and respect the mountain profile and further, modulated to provide permeable views to the mountain range and valley profile beyond. Where possible, floor plate dimensions and shape shall be oriented to maximize the open view to the mountains and valley.
- f) Developments with frontages on Main Street should emphasize it as a neighbourhood high street with street-oriented retail uses at grade, and lighting and signage distinct from historic Pender Street.

7 Public Benefits through Rezoning

Appropriate public benefits shall be provided by developments rezoned through this policy, typically in the form of Community Amenity Contributions (CACs), transferable heritage density, or affordable or social housing. Public benefits will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis as part of a rezoning application, according to the Council-adopted policy "Community Amenity Contributions - Through Rezoning", available online at:
<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/guidelines/C025.pdf>

Public benefits provided by rezonings can help to address increased demands that may be placed on City facilities as a result of the rezoning, mitigate impacts on the surrounding community, as well as address neighbourhood needs as identified in plans and policies for the area. For Chinatown, Council endorsed the additional height through rezoning described in this policy for the purposes of supporting innovative heritage, cultural and affordable and social housing projects, as well as to support residential intensification and economic revitalization of the broader Chinatown area.