



Chinatown and Area Business Association
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2016 ANNUAL REPORT
CHINATOWN AND AREA BUSINESS
ASSOCIATION

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Chinatown and Area Business Association
#304, 9664 – 106 Avenue, Edmonton, AB

Mission Statement

Chinatown and Area Business Association aims to create, promote and maintain an attractive, vibrant and prosperous business district that reflects the unique multicultural identity of the McCauley community.

Vision

Chinatown is an important cultural destination in the City of Edmonton. We want to see Chinatown as a safe, vibrant and healthy place to live, work and do business. Chinatown has a rich history and is culturally diverse. There is a variety of unique specialty shops that attract shoppers and visitors; Chinatown attracts residents because of the choices in housing, restaurants and shops.

Threats to business viability

Homelessness has an immediate impact on the businesses in the Chinatown area, due to the close proximity of social service agencies. Many symptoms related to poverty include people sleeping on the street, public intoxication, panhandling and a number of other negative behaviours.

People living on the streets typically set up temporary camps close to the social service agencies that support them. The Chinatown and Area Business Association is working very closely with City Council and other stakeholders to address these issues and create a long term strategy that will benefit people living in poverty and the business community.

Measuring the Impact

It is often difficult to measure economic indicators that reflect the health of a neighbourhood or business community. The number of vacant businesses typically give an idea of how well and prosperous a community or business area is. Many business owners have set up shop in the Chinatown area, however they end up closing their doors within a few months. The issue of homelessness in the area could be one of the reasons that businesses are not staying. Chinatown is not necessarily viewed as an ideal place to start a business. It is also difficult to attract developers to the area because of some of the same issues. We are also seeing the same impact on young business entrepreneurs who are attracted to more trendy and promising neighbourhoods that are not experiencing the same problems.

Poverty has long lasting and significant impact on communities and Chinatown is no exception. We have significant concerns about the future of businesses in the area. We believe that the growth and sustainability of neighborhoods and communities is directly impacted by social service agencies. We have no doubt that this will only worsen as the proposed injection sites are implemented in the future.

The business community would like to see the 97 street bridge demolished and replaced with an outdoor plaza that can host various events and celebrations. The location is perfect as an outdoor venue because of the proximity to Mary Burlie Park. The park has a large and valuable green space that could accommodate a number of events and attractions and could also enhance the image and reputation of the area. Mary Burlie Park could become a cultural amenity for the City of Edmonton.

Residential Parking

Parking continues to be an issue in the Chinatown area. Prior to September of 2016, residents had access to unlimited parking. The City of Edmonton has initiated a 2 hour parking pilot project, reducing the length of time that a resident or visitor can park their vehicles. This pilot project will be reviewed in September of this year. We would like to see the City of Edmonton provide residents with a parking permit, similar to other areas in the City that have high traffic volume.

Business Improvement Area (BIA) Activities

Lunar New-Year Celebration
Moonlight Carnival
Business Directory / Newspaper
BIA Annual General Meeting
Street Cleaning / Litter Remover
Façade Improvement
Summer Flower Program.

Key Objectives for 2016-2017

- Improve the physical appearance and usability of the area;
- Top 5 ideas for 101 Street streetscape improvement on 101street;
- Advocate inner city issues
- Advocate for the removal of 97 street railway bridge.
- Increase safety and security of entire area and support in attracting new businesses to the area.
- Chinatown and Area Business Association online presence, promote local businesses and Business Improvement Area events through a website.
- Develop strong relationships with all stakeholders.

Submitted by: Ratan Lawrence
Executive Director
Chinatown and Area Business Association