

Chinatown Planning Framework is now a displacement framework

29 communications with similar text were received between July 8, 2026 at 9:55 a.m. and July 8, 2026 at 2:22 p.m.:

My name is , and I am a resident of Chinatown. Chinatown matters to me because it is my home. It is where I live, shop, and connect with my community. I value the neighborhood's unique culture, local businesses, and the sense of belonging it provides. I am writing to you regarding TE34.17 – Chinatown Tomorrow Planning Initiative – Final Report, coming to Toronto and East York Community Council on July 8, 2026.

On April 1st, our Chinatown community came together to respond to the Proposals Report that was considered by Toronto and East York Community Council. Across 130 letter submissions and 10 deputations, the Chinatown community laid out 4 concrete demands to strengthen protections for Chinatown:

- Designate West Chinatown as a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) immediately, with dedicated, long-term public funding for legacy businesses, tenants, community infrastructure, and collectively-stewarded space. Symbolic recognition without real investment is not enough.
- Launch a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) study that protects Chinatown's full cultural fabric, including clan associations, community institutions, locally-serving businesses, and built and intangible heritage. Preserving buildings cannot come at the cost of displacing the communities that give them meaning.
- Adopt a Secondary Plan with strong, enforceable anti-displacement measures. Planning policy must have real legal force to protect the community.
- Deliver meaningful cultural redress, alongside permanent public investment in housing and community infrastructure that reflects Chinatown's needs. Recognition must be paired with repair.

City staff were then directed to revise the planning framework based on community feedback, which is to be considered on July 8th. While we appreciate the work that has been made by city staff, the revisions continue to fall short of our demands. In fact, none of our demands appear in the recommendations made by the Planning Framework. In its current state, the Framework does very little to secure the concrete tools needed to protect Chinatown; the mechanisms that will put real decision-making power into the hands of the community are quietly and discreetly being erased; and suggestions made in the Framework actually make Chinatown more vulnerable to displacement and land speculation.

There are many glaring gaps in the revised draft of the Framework:

- The Council directed staff to scan other Ontario Secondary Plans for enforceable anti-displacement measures and report back. That report is not present either.

- The language of equity, cultural redress, and anti-displacement have been woven throughout the materials presented, and yet, there is no clear funding attached to ensure that these principles are put into action.
- The language of the framework remains passive and modest, and does not provide the legal conditions to secure affordable housing and community benefits; in fact, the only legally binding suggestion is the removal of SASP 200 and 202, which increases the risk of land speculation and displacement immediately.

Time and time again, we see history repeat itself. From the Save Chinatown campaign in the 1960s to our present day struggle in 2026, every move to mitigate displacement and invest in our community's infrastructure is met with a placating promise of consultation and preservation, but nothing actionable to secure the future of an affordable, enduring, healthy Chinatown.

What do we want?

The Chinatown Tomorrow study identified community priorities; however, Council has not given adequate directive to staff that would empower staff to use and develop real policy tools to address those priorities. We want Council to give directive to:

- Upgrade the proposed West Chinatown Planning Framework to a Secondary Plan with enforceable policies; (Council to give directive to city planning)
- Establish a Chinatown Community Improvement Plan aimed at protecting and expanding small, locally-serving business; (Council to give directive to community planning)
- Develop a city-wide anti-displacement strategy for designated Cultural Districts at-risk of gentrification and loss;
- Initiate a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) study to protect Chinatown's full cultural fabric, including intangible cultural assets (Council to give directive to heritage staff through city planning)
- Establish a community development plan with an interdivisional approach for Chinatown (Council to give directive to Social Development Finance and Administration SDFA and Economic Development and Culture EDC)

Cultural redress is long overdue, and without concrete actions to deliver your promise, Chinatown risks becoming but a plaque amidst unaffordable high rises. I support the ongoing advocacy of the [Chinatown Advocacy Network \(CAN\)](#). I urge Council to meaningfully engage CAN in this process, and to act with the urgency this moment requires.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sender Names:

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