



February 10, 2011

## **Statement from the Building Community Society**

### **Regarding Chinatown Rezoning Public Hearing**

The Building Community Society notes that City Council has made a decision to proceed to a public hearing on the question of building heights in Chinatown. We acknowledge and respect the work that has gone on in Chinatown over many years that now enables the public to express its opinion about the proposed rezoning.

BCS is on record as advising against any change in building heights in the Downtown Eastside as a whole until a local area planning program has been undertaken involving all the neighbourhoods, including Chinatown. We believe this is an important principle and BCS will be reiterating this position when the public hearing is held regarding Chinatown. We are of the opinion that Chinatown is a vital part of the DTES and that piecemeal rezoning to establish new heights and densities in that part of the DTES will have significant impact on the whole of the DTES. The proposed local area planning process, that council has recently initiated, is the proper vehicle to assess the social, economic and environmental needs of the area and report on the implications of any proposed changes in the area, including the form and density of desired change. An approval of the rezoning regarding heights in Chinatown at this time will seriously compromise the ability of the planning process to set directions for the future of the DTES.

For these reasons BCS will be opposing the approval of rezoning for height increases in regard to Chinatown at this time. We are also stating that any such proposals should only be considered after a local area plan has been completed and approved. We reiterate our advice to Council set out in our previous letter to you of January 12<sup>th</sup> 2011; that no rezoning should be entertained until a local area planning committee has been established and has begun the process of analysis that establishes the priorities of planning and development opportunities for the well being of the Downtown Eastside community as a whole.

We emphasize as well the importance of Chinatown being included within the DTES local area planning program and note that this can be done while the issue of increased height is in abeyance. We believe an up-dated, successful plan within Chinatown and in relation to adjoining neighbourhoods will be the result.