

The Chinese Canadian Collective Municipal Elections Questionnaire

About Us The Chinese Canadian Collective is an Ottawa-based organization dedicated towards examining Chinese Canadian experiences, issues, and representation. The collective hosts community events and digital media campaigns in the city to meet its goals.

As settlers of Turtle Island, CCC acknowledges the colonial history and oppression that has shaped this land also known as Canada. CCC operates within the city of Ottawa, which is built on unceded and unsurrendered Algonquin territories.

Demographics Chinese Canadians make up approximately 35,000 of the city's population and is the 2nd biggest ethnic minority in Ottawa. It is also one of the fastest growing Chinese Canadian hubs in the country.

Municipal Impact Municipal policy impacts the everyday lives of Ottawa residents and marginalized groups. We have created a questionnaire focusing on issues in the Chinese community to inform voters on candidates' policies and give a voice to our concerns.

The questionnaire is being sent out to all mayoral and city councillor candidates who have publicly listed emails. We will be publishing our received answers on our social media platforms to inform voters of candidates' policy.

We are asking candidates to respond in short answer with a recommendation of a 150 word count per response. Please submit your answers by email to chinesecanadianco@gmail.com by Wednesday, September 26 @ 5pm. We look forward to your responses.

Chinese Canadian Collective chinesecanadianco.weebly.com chinesecanadianco@gmail.com

Questionnaire

1. Many newcomers and marginalized folks, including Chinese seniors and families, use and frequent community centres to stay active and involved. Some community centres are located in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of the Chinese community such as the Kanata Recreation Centre, Richcraft Recreation Complex (Kanata), Minto Recreation Complex (Barrhaven), Walter Baker Sports Centre, Plant Recreation Centre, McNabb Community Centre and more. How will you ensure these community centres are accessible to those who do not speak or read the dominant languages, being English or French?

As the mother of a child whom I adopted from South America, I am well aware of the barriers one faces when the dominant language is unfamiliar. In my case, I sought out Spanish speaking families to ease the transition for my daughter and increase my awareness of her cultural identity. I have maintained those relationships for more than 10 years. I am thankful to the early years centre for providing the facility and welcoming many families to our Spanish speaking playgroup. I am also aware that the early years centre has provided this ad hoc service for many other cultures. It is just a small thing that can be done that bridges language and cultural gaps.

I see this type of activity playing out in many iterations. I did it for a playgroup for my Spanish speaking 3 years old, it can also be done for adolescents, young adults, middle ages and seniors. Bringing people together not only breeds familiarity but can also share amongst the group experiences and knowledge of the community.

2. OC Transpo

a. This fall, numerous bus routes were changed and shortened to encourage LRT transfers. The LRT has since been delayed to Winter of 2019. Shortened routes like that of the #11 that passes through Somerset St. West and the Chinatown area impact the Chinese community, including seniors, where additional transfers and shortages may affect their accessibility to and from destinations. What will you do to address these issues while the LRT is delayed and while the LRT is operating?

Bring back the buses. It is a huge disappointment that LRT has been delayed again. What I will do to address the accessibility of rapid transit is to re-introduce those bus lines that made transit more accessible.

b. How will you engage customers whose dominant language is not English or French in public consultations regarding issues such as bus route changes, town halls and customer feedback?

Public consultations should always identify their target audience and languages spoken. Every effort should be made to access a moderator within the community that will facilitate the sharing of information

within the community.

c. What will you do to ensure that OC Transpo's services are more affordable and accessible for low-income folks?

To ensure that OC Transpo's services are more affordable and accessible for low income folks, I would maintain the equi-pass which offers a discounted bus pass to LICO passengers.

3. Current Rideau Raceway casino ads are targeting the Chinese community in Ottawa with orientalist graphics and advertisements written entirely in Chinese characters. Gambling is a social activity ingrained in Chinese culture and is also a common problem within the community. How will you ensure that the community is not being unfairly targeted for gambling? What will you do to also challenge the stereotypes and racial bias that is prevalent in the city and that Chinese Canadians continue to face?

To ensure that the Chinese community is not being unfairly targeted for gambling and also challenge the stereotypes and racial bias this practice purports, I would ask the Rideau Raceway Casino to be more sensitive and stop racialized advertizing.

4. Post-amalgamation, the City of Ottawa has never had a Black, East or Southeast Asian councillor on city council. What will you do to ensure that marginalized groups have the same opportunity and chance to be involved in municipal politics as others do?

To promote diversity on council, education is key. Councillors should go into schools and talk about what they do in order to increase interest in council membership. Furthermore, two term limits need to be introduced to allow for an increase in opportunities for new councillors.

5. Chinatown has been experiencing gentrification for years. Newer development is pushing out lower income families and local businesses, changing its landscape and affordability. Chinatown is not only a home to many, but a hub for those from the Chinese community living in other wards to come together to reconnect with food, family and history. How will you ensure that affordable housing and suitable businesses remain while retaining the history and heart of the neighbourhood?

It is an absolute shame that newer development should be allowed to push out lower income families and local businesses. I support a 25% investment on the part of new developments that allow for affordable housing. Where retail and hospitality is concerned, likewise, a 25% retail/hospitality space needs to be allocated. The Chinese community contributes a lot to the fabric of Ottawa. I would support any measure that would preserve the legacy of what has been built along the Somerset corridor.

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