



Coalition For A Better Chinese American Community 華埠更好團結聯盟

September 17, 2025

Chairwoman Laura Flores
Chicago Plan Commission
City of Chicago
121 N. LaSalle St.
Chicago, Illinois 60602

RE: Planned Development No. 1434 located at 1434 101-213 W. Roosevelt Rd. /
1200-1558 S. Clark St.

Dear Chairwoman Flores and Members of the Chicago Plan Commission:

This is an urgent call to protect Chicago's iconic Chinatown from inequitable development, as we are on the brink of significant changes coming to the city of Chicago's iconic Chinatown.

These changes will affect the infrastructure and neighborhood of Chinatown and the surrounding areas. The current proposal includes construction of a stadium of the Chicago Fire along with market-rate high-rise and development along the Chicago River in creation of the 78th neighborhood in the City of Chicago.

Chicago's Chinatown is more than a neighborhood—it is a living story of migration, resilience, and cultural pride. For over a century, generations have built a community here against the odds, creating a vibrant home for families, small businesses, and visitors from around the world. But today, this historic neighborhood faces one of the greatest threats in its history.

We ask for the City of Chicago's partnership in protecting residents and small businesses from gentrification and cultural erasure by commissioning a Displacement Impact Study conducted by a neutral third party agreed upon by a planning development committee; the committee should include local resident representation. The study should include Chinatown, Bronzeville and Pilsen neighborhoods and consultation from community representatives of these neighborhoods before any final development approval.

We ask the City of Chicago to support the status of Chinatown as a Cultural District designated by the State of Illinois that already protects and supports Chinatown's heritage, small businesses, and public spaces.

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We also request that a third party conduct a neutral traffic study on the impact of the proposed development — not only for Chinatown. We would like to include the surrounding areas: Bronzeville, Pilsen and South Loop — to fully consider its effects on traffic and transit. The current study failed to address traffic congestion in and around Wentworth Avenue, and Clark Street, weekend safety risks from pedestrian-traffic conflicts and improved signage, speed reduction, protected bike lanes, and crowd management.

And finally, we call upon all involved parties to demonstrate its commitment to equitable and inclusive development through the co-creation of a Community Benefits Agreement.

As Chicago's Chinatown is more than a neighborhood—it is a cultural anchor and home to generations of immigrants who built a thriving community despite systemic barriers. Yet today, this historic neighborhood is under threat from large-scale development proposals that fail to account for the lived realities of residents and small business owners.

For the past eight years, since General Mediterranean Holdings purchased the city's riverside property and Related Midwest gained development rights, the plans for the 78 have shifted again and again.

The latest proposal to build a Chicago Fire stadium by 2028 has grown community concerns. The proposed development now seeks to roll back TIF infrastructure improvements to hurry the stadium build along. The Redevelopment Agreement infrastructure improvements are no longer part of the plan. These previously proposed improvements include: a new Red Line L Stop, the relocation of Metra Tracks, improvements to Clark Street for pedestrians and cyclists, and a 15th street roadway and rail bridge.

These plans raise serious red flags: already-congested streets will face overwhelming traffic, public transit access remains inadequate, and the lack of meaningful infrastructure planning threatens to make the area even less accessible for new residents, surrounding communities, visitors and tourists. Chinatown's particular concerns are with its historic and narrow streets where new tourists will traverse during the neighborhood's most congested and busy times, i.e. weekends. Wentworth Ave will become a default entry/exit out of the property, adding safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike.

In addition, Related Midwest is ignoring equitable transit-oriented development principles—despite this being a stated priority for the City of Chicago. Instead of centering equitable access and sustainable mobility, the current plan risks deepening disparities, overburdening roads, and sidelining the very people who have preserved and grown Chinatown for over a century. An alternative to reaching the property would be by riverfront - its current plan is insufficient and could create a destination that would be reached by private individuals with personal boats.

We ask the City of Chicago to work with the Friends of the Chicago River, to uphold the goals of its adopted river vision plans and the Chicago River Design Guidelines. We ask the specifics to be studied as details such as ensuring that the South Branch riverwalk of the proposed development is extended in a way that enhances the city's environmental, social, and economic

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vitality, while keeping ecological restoration and river protection at the center of all phases of development.

Chicago's Chinatown residents express concern over what is described as a long faced inequitable treatment in development planning—receiving less investment in public transportation, green space, and pedestrian safety compared to other neighborhoods. Without intentional action, these new developments risk displacement, cultural erasure, and a loss of community identity. Given that the community leaders before us have demanded these institutions over generations, it is our duty to maintain them for future generations to use and improve on.

We ask the City of Chicago to halt any plans that move forward without equitable engagement, robust transit solutions, and safeguards for the existing community.

Sincerely,

Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community

Active Transportation Alliance

Better Streets Chicago

Center for Neighborhood Technology

Elevated Chicago

11th Ward Independent Political Organization

Friends of the Chicago River

Lugenia Burns Hope Center

McKinley Park Development Council

Metropolitan Planning Council

People Matter

Ping Tom Park Advisory Council

Teen Coalition of Chinatown

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