

Speech by Senator Vivienne Poy

Ottawa Chinatown Gateway launch September 25, 2007

Good evening, Senator Mac Harb, the Hon. Paul Dewar, Mayor O'Brien, Councillor Holmes, Marilla and Larry, colleagues, honoured guests, ladies & gentlemen, friends:

位嘉賓，各位朋友： 歡迎大家來參加今晚《渥太華唐人街門戶》的籌款晚宴。

As Honourary co-patron, I am very happy to be here to support the Ottawa Chinatown Gateway project. It was really because of my good friend Prof. Emeritus, Dr. David Lai, of the University of Victoria, an advisor of the Gateway project, that I became involved. Then I received an invitation from Mayor O'Brien, inviting me to be a co-patron of this project.

The Somerset Heights area in Ottawa has always been distinctive, and this project is a way of recognizing the unique heritage of the area, and the Asian Canadians whose cultures contribute so much to the City of Ottawa.

In launching this project, Ottawa is joining other cities across Canada where Chinatowns are enhanced by a grand entrance. Historic Chinatowns in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Montreal all boast impressive Gateways which attract visitors into their communities.

Ottawa Chinatown Gateway is also inspired by the Italian Gateway which now graces the Dow's Lake entrance to Preston Street. This Gateway has become a tourist attraction, and the Preston Street area has developed a cohesive identity, leading to unprecedented economic growth, along with a sense of renewed civic pride. With the addition of the Chinatown Gateway, Ottawa will become the only city with two ethnic Gateways, right in the heart of the city, which will serve to highlight the importance of diversity to Ottawa.

In the past, during Royal visits to Ottawa, such as that of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, who later became King George V and Queen Mary, temporary arches had been erected in recognition of these

historic events. As Ottawa is the home of the Governor General, and the federal government, it is only appropriate to erect permanent ceremonial archways in the city.

Ottawa's Asian Canadian population has grown considerably over the last few decades. Major milestones include Project 4000, which saw the resettlement of Indochinese refugees fleeing Vietnam in 1979. The other major factor has been immigration from Hong Kong. The result is that, in the 2001 census, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) became the top non-official languages spoken in the capital. Over the last twenty odd years, Asia has become the top source region for immigration to Canada.

The area known as Chinatown today really features, among others, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and South Asian businesses. This area, abutting as it does the Italian community on Preston Street, is an ideal representation of the intercultural nature of Canadian society. The Chinatown Gateway is really an Asian Gateway, and I hope that the many diverse Asian Canadian communities will actively contribute to its evolution and development.

Being the first Canadian of Asian heritage appointed to the Senate of Canada, my goal has been to bring Asian Canadian communities together in dialogue and harmony with mainstream Canada, and I believe that the Ottawa Chinatown Gateway project is one step along the road towards this goal.

My friends, do support this project, and be engaged in its development. 相信完工後，一定會有更多人來參觀，幫助本地經濟繁榮。多謝大家的支持。

The Gateway project is a unique opportunity to increase business opportunities, and showcase your different cultures to Ottawa residents, as well as visitors to our capital city.

Thank you.