

Dear Mayor Ted Wheeler,

My name is Baifei Zeng. I am a Portland resident and work for Intel as a layout engineer. I am also a co-owner of historic Wong Laundry at Chinatown near Lan Su Garden. This letter is about adding new 200 bed homeless shelter at old town/Chinatown which I don't think it a good idea for homeless, for old town/Chinatown, and for Portland.

I moved to Portland in 1992 after completed my Ph.D. study on the east coast. I loved Portland downtown at first sight, especially Chinatown. It is near the beautiful Waterfront Park, not far away from Pioneer Square and tree-lined central avenues. Although Chinatown was small, it was clean and filling with historical buildings, Chinese restaurants and Asian shops. There is even a beautiful Chinese Arch at the entry. It is totally different from Baltimore where I studied for my Ph. D degree. At that time Baltimore was dirty, smelly and dangerous and I only visited Baltimore downtown few times during my 4 years there, even though driving there only took ~30 mins. After moved to Portland, I was doing my postdoctoral research at Shriners Hospitals and my son went to his Chinese School at PSU on every Sunday afternoon. We visited Waterfront and ate at Chinatown almost every weekend. We had buffet at Lin Yuan Restaurant for breakfast/lunch, had dinner at Great China Seafood Restaurant, and stood in a long line of people outside of House of Louie Restaurant for Dim Sum, and so on. We have a lot of beautiful memories about Chinatown.

Several years later, my husband and I moved to Dallas, TX for new jobs. And another several years later, we moved back to Portland to continue our West Coast life. Naturally I would love to go to Chinatown for dinning. I was shocked when I saw Chinatown again. It feels like another Baltimore (by the way, I heard that Baltimore improve a lot in recent years). It was dirty, bad smell, plenty of drunks and panhandlers, and only a couple Chinese restaurants and shops still open. There is line, a long line of homeless standing there waiting for their lunch. It was sad to see Chinatown run down.

We need to do something to help our old town/Chinatown. That is why I joined another 13 people to purchase Wong Laundry. We want to keep this historic building in good shape and remodel inside of the building for good purpose. We have many ideas about the building; That is why my friends and I volunteered at Chinatown Saturday performances for 4 weekend in 2016; That is why we had a protest against OTC TCA's rebranding attempt. We want to preserve Chinatown's precious history and unique cultural atmosphere; and that is why I attended public hearing about 200 bed shelter last month for which I needed to drive from Hillsboro to downtown during traffic hour. All of these are because we love Chinatown. We love Portland.

At public hearing, a city officer explained the reason to adding new shelter at old town/Chinatown is because the increase number of homeless in this area. This doesn't make sense. I remembered before 2000, there is almost not homeless in old town/Chinatown. After introducing first few social services which began attract some homeless, some business left, and more social service, more homeless, and more business left. If this bad circle keeps

growing, one day the whole old town/Chinatown will become a big homeless shelter. This is not the right way to help homeless and it will make damage to old town/Chinatown and to Portland.

We need to help homeless by job training and affordable housing so homeless can be back to his/her normal life. With limited resources, we can build much bigger shelter and provide more meal, job training, and affordable house for homeless if we have new shelter located in less expensive area, instead in the expensive old town/Chinatown.

Old town/Chinatown is a unique ruby gem with same years of history as Portland and it belongs to all Portland residents. We need to take a good care of it and make it glorious again. With good care, old town/Chinatown will make Portland even better place for living, attract more tourists, create more job opportunities, and generate more money for the community which will also ultimately help homeless at Portland.

Sincerely yours,

Baifei Zeng