IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF "CHINESE" SHOPPING CENTRES
IN THE SUBURBS OF VANCOUVER

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ABSTRACT

As a step to understand the impact of immigration on urban development in Greater Vancouver, this thesis documents the development processes of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Vancouver's suburbs over the last decade, examines their roles in the settlement and integration process of Chinese immigrants, and assesses their impact on local communities. "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the Great Vancouver reflected social and physical changes initiated by the Chinese immigration in the Vancouver's suburbs. The developments were driven by dramatic changes in the Chinese-Canadian community in the 1980s and 1990s, and boosted by Canada's immigration and integration policy. Overseas investment has also played an important role in making the development possible and more comprehensive. This thesis finds that it is necessary to distinguish "Chinese" Shopping Centre development from traditional forms of ethnic enclaves, such as Chinatown. It is also important to realize the differences between the "Chinese" Shopping Centre and typical shopping centre in North American cities. Socio-economic and land use impacts of the developments call for planning policy changes in order to address the issues related to this new form of development.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ii

Table of Contents iii

List of Tables iv

List of Figures v

Acknowledgment vi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter One</th>
<th>Introduction: A New Form of Urban Development</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-1 Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centres</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-3 The Ethnic Enclave and Chinatown</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-4 Research Questions and Thesis</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Two</th>
<th>&quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver</th>
<th>19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-1 Chinese&quot; Shopping Centres in Richmond</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-2 Canada Asian Centre, Surrey</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-3 Henderson Centre and Crystal Square</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Three</th>
<th>The Driving Forces of &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centre</th>
<th>51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-1 Changes in the Chinese-Canadian Community</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-2 Immigration Policy</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-3 Overseas Investment</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four</th>
<th>The Characteristics of &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centre</th>
<th>73</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-1 The Characteristics of &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centres</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-2 &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centre and Chinatown</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-3 &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centres and Conventional Shopping Centres</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-4 The Impact of &quot;Chinese&quot; Shopping Centre</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Five</th>
<th>Conclusions and Recommendations</th>
<th>95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-1 Conclusions</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-2 Recommendations for Future Research</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References 98
### LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Period of Immigration to Canada for Chinese-Canadian (1971-1991)  
Table 2: Inflows of Chinese Immigrants to Canada 1986-1996  
Table 3: Distribution of Chinese-Canadian in Greater Vancouver, 1991 and 1996  
Table 4: Vancouver Profile of Immigrants in Different Categories (1994 to 1996)  
Table 5: The Roles of Immigrants in "Chinese" Shopping Centre  
Table 6: Business Immigration in Canada - Top Ten Source Countries  
Table 7: Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver 4
Figure 2: "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Richmond 20
Figure 3: Aberdeen Centre 23
Figure 4: Parker Place Shopping Centre 25
Figure 5: Fairchild Square 25
Figure 6: Central Square 26
Figure 7: President Plaza 29
Figure 8: Yaohan Centre 29
Figure 9: Pacific Plaza 31
Figure 10: Cosmo Plaza 31
Figure 11: Admiralty Centre 32
Figure 12: Union Square 32
Figure 13: Aberdeen Centre Expansion Plan 35
Figure 14: Master Plan of Canada Asian Centre, Surrey 40
Figure 15: Canada Asian Centre 43
Figure 16: Henderson Centre 47
Figure 17: Crystal Square 49
Figure 18: Top 10 Sources of Immigrants to Greater Vancouver, 1991 to 1996 55
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: A New Form of Urban Development

1-1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to document what is informally referred to as "Chinese" Shopping Centres developed in Vancouver's suburbs over the last decade, and to examine their roles in the settlement and integration process of Chinese immigrants, and to assess their impact on local communities.

Greater Vancouver, which *Time* magazine once referred to “the newest Asian capital” (*Time*, November 17, 1997, Canadian Edition), has witnessed significant economic, social and physical landscape changes created by a surge in immigration from Asia as well as other parts of the world over past two decades. The "changing face" of Greater Vancouver is drawing much more public and academic attention to immigration issues now than at any time before in history.

As the number of immigrants increased dramatically, diversity of cultural and economic backgrounds of immigrants has become much more extensive. The geographic distribution, economic activities and social behaviors of immigrant communities have become more complex. More and more new issues are emerging. Researchers have started to realize that conventional nationwide or region-wide studies based on census data are not effective enough to explain the actual integration processes that are taking place in the neighbourhoods
and small-districts. The different experiences among the immigrants from different countries in different periods of time are too diverse to be generalized. More local-oriented, group-specific studies are needed in order to discover the living drama of immigrants in their new homes.

In this thesis, "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the Greater Vancouver are chosen as the objects of study because they reflect social and physical changes initiated by Chinese immigration in Vancouver's suburbs. This thesis finds that it is necessary to distinguish "Chinese" Shopping Centre development from traditional forms of ethnic enclaves, such as Chinatown. It is also important to realize the differences between "Chinese" Shopping Centre and typical shopping centres in North American cities. Following the assessment of socio-economic and land use impacts of the developments, the research is concluded with the some recommendations on planning policy changes in order to address the issues arising from this new form of development.

1-2 The "Chinese" Shopping Centre

The "Chinese Shopping Centre" in this thesis refers to the retail shopping centres developed by Chinese-Canadian developers, consisting of mainly Chinese-Canadian owned, operated retail stores and services. They are usually called "Asian mall" or "Chinese mall" by the English media, and even by government agencies. Their Chinese names are more popular than English names among the Vancouver's Chinese-Canadian community. More specifically, there terms refer to such centres built in the latter half of the 1980s in Vancouver's suburban municipalities. Although there are many differences between these
shopping centres and the conventional shopping centre" in North American cities, they are still commonly accepted by the public as "shopping centres".

The first such "Chinese" Shopping Centre developed in the Greater Vancouver is Aberdeen Centre in Richmond. It was followed by the development of Parker Place Shopping Centre, Yaohan Centre, President Plaza, Continental Centre, and Cosmo Plaza, Pacific Plaza in Richmond, Canada Asian Centre in Surrey, Crystal Shopping Centre in Burnaby, Henderson Shopping Centre in Coquitlam (Figure 1). Unlike the shopping centres in Richmond and Surrey, Crystal Shopping Centre and Henderson Shopping Centre are only parts of large-scale mixed-use complexes rather than single buildings. This thesis focuses on the retail part of the buildings.

It is difficult, and sometime frustrating to find a satisfactory term to name these shopping centres without misrepresenting their nature. This problem relates to the difficulty of naming "Chinese minority" in Canada. The people with Chinese origin in Canada are often called "Chinese-Canadian", or more directly, "Chinese". "Chinese" can be a very misleading term. First, it doesn’t distinguish people inside China, including people in the Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, from about 30 million ethnic Chinese in 134 countries outside China. Second, in the case of Canada, the majority of Chinese consists of Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, because of the high rate of naturalization amongst Chinese immigrants. They participate in the Canadian political, economic and educational institutions, and they share with other Canadians the same rights and privileges. Therefore, they are "Canadian" in the legal sense, not "Chinese". The term "Chinese Canadian" is more
Figure 1: The "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver
appropriate for stressing the fact that they are Canadians with Chinese origins. However, as Peter Li argued, this term still "suggests a class of what we sometimes refereed to an 'hyphenated' or 'ethnic' Canadian, with the implication that the prefix indicates a status lower than that of 'unhyphenated' Canadian" (Li, 1998). In this thesis, the term "Chinese Canadian" is used because it is commonly used in scholarly studies, with the understanding that the term is a remnant of Canadian historical realities which regarded the Chinese as belonging to a "foreign" race in Canada.

Related to the term for "Chinese-Canadian", the shopping centres discussed here are often called a "Chinese Mall", a "Hong Kong Mall", or more popularly, an "Asian Mall". The names indicate that that they are "non-Canadian" malls, although conventional shopping centres in Greater Vancouver, e.g. Richmond Centre, Eaton Centre, is never referred to as a "Canadian Mall" or an "English Mall". This practice of identifying an urban area or a building type with a particular ethnic group, such as "Chinatown", "Asian Mall", or more indirectly, "Monster House", is a reflection of the race relationship in Canadian society, which distinguishes "alien groups" from "mainstream", despite the introduction of multiculturalism as an official policy more two decades ago.

In recent years, research on Chinese communities in North America cities used the term "New Suburban Chinatown" to conceptualize suburban areas in which increasing numbers of the Chinese immigrants are concentrating. The "Chinese" Shopping Centres are the cores for those in suburban communities, and are often referred to directly as "New Chinatown" (Lai, 1988, Fong, 1994). In this thesis, traditional Chinatowns and new "Chinese" Shopping
Centres are distinguished, to point out that the term "new Chinatown" is a misleading term, which ignores the changing nature of Chinese immigration and socio-economic contexts in North American cities.

With these considerations, I use the term "Chinese" Shopping Centre to refer to the aforementioned development projects with quotation marks in order to express my disagreement with using "Chinese", "Asian" or whatever race-related terms to name an urban space or a building.

1-3 Ethnic Enclave and Chinatown

A brief review of previous studies of ethnic enclaves and Chinatown reveals that "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver's suburbs represent a new form of economic activity and a new type of urban development carried out by Chinese immigrants.

- Ethnic Enclave

Researchers who have studied and observed immigrant settlement patterns and economic activities in different cities have noted the tendency of some immigrant groups to concentrate in ethnically segregated job markets (Reitz, 1980). They engage in self-employment in several sectors, such as retail and food services, that are typically found in immigrant communities (Li, 1994). The detection of an ethnically segregated job market and consumer market further suggests the existence of an economic sector that is sustained by ethnic businesses and immigrant populations. Often referred to as the immigrant enclave or the ethnic enclave economy, it operates as a sub-economy within the larger economic structure.
Wilson and Martin, 1982; Wilson and Portes, 1980; Portes, 1987; Sanders and Nee, 1987; Portes and Bach, 1985). Briefly put, the ethnic enclave can be defined as a concentration of minority-owned firms that operate in a discernible immigrant community, and to a large extent, rely on the consumer and labour market made up of members of a minority in an immigrant-concentrated area.

All immigrant groups create a few businesses to serve their own cultural and special needs, but the rise of a full-fledged ethnic enclave represents an exceptional phenomenon. Several studies have identified some factors within immigrant communities responsible for the formation of ethnic enclaves (Richmond 1984, Portes and Bach, 1985):

1. The size of ethnic population that provides markets and sources of labour;
2. The level of entrepreneurial skills among the immigrants;
3. The availability of capital resources.

The most systematic thesis on the ethnic enclave economy was advanced by American sociologists Wilson and Portes (1980), who argued that the enclave economy of immigrants offers them an alternative mode of social mobility. Rather than being handicapped by language and cultural barriers, ethnic affinity and cultural distinctiveness form the basis of labour recruitment for immigrant employers and allow them privileged access to ethnic markets. Accordingly, the enclave economy does not deprive its participants, but rather, the reciprocal obligations between ethnic employers and employees provide new opportunities and alternative mobility for immigrants.
However, Sanders and Nee (1987) have challenged the conclusions of the enclave economy theory on the ground that the economic return predicted by Wilson and Portes (1980) seems to only apply to immigrant employers. Immigrant workers in the enclave economy, in fact, experience a lower return in human capital than their counterparts in the open labour market. The debate suggests that while ethnic affinity and kinship assistance are useful to some immigrants in finding initial jobs in minority-owned establishments, they also become a mobility trap for immigrants who are obligated to remain in economically exploitative relations (Li, 1977).

The debate on the immigrant enclave and enclave economy has been sustained largely by American scholars using data from immigrant enclaves in US cities. There has been little research on immigrant enclaves in Canada and on their economic impact on Canadian society. It is not clear whether immigrant enclaves in the metropolitan centres of Canada are creating new opportunities of employment and self-employment for immigrants or mobility traps for them in an ethnically segregated economy. A limited number of studies have examined the flow of immigrant capital and the formation of ethnic businesses, and has suggested that they stimulated the growth of the economy (Seward, 1987; Li, 1993; Wong and Netting, 1992). However, more precise studies about the magnitude of immigrant capital and the impact of ethnic business on the Canadian economy are lacking.

Another area of research that is related to the immigrant enclave is the formation of ethnic businesses. The debate has to do with whether blocked mobility in the open market diverts
some immigrants into ethnic businesses or that transplanted cultures of immigrants facilitate their success in entrepreneurial ventures (Li, 1992). There is attitudinal research suggesting that ethnic enclaves are formed for protective or defensive purpose rather than for cultural retention as such (Thomas 1994).

It is commonly believed that ethnic enclaves help recent immigrants adjust to the new environment, mitigating the initial shock of entry into a new society. New immigrants draw on the experiences of previous immigrants and gain access to information about the host society in their own language. Established ethnic enclaves also provide many services offered by members of the ethnic group and act as mediators and translators between the new arrivals and the wider public.

On the other hand, ethnic enclaves impede integration by shielding recent immigrants from the norms, values, and behaviors of the society they have entered. As some research suggests, ethnic enclaves could also be destructive insofar as they restrict individual freedom, confine members to ghettos and serve only the ambitions of ethnic elites and power brokers. (Thomas 1994)

- **Chinatown**

Although it is the most visible physical setting related to the Chinese community outside China, the task of providing an acceptable definition of "Chinatown" still remains difficult. Chinatown is commonly referred to an urban district that contains a concentrated Chinese population and economic activities. The scale of Chinatown varies from one or two street
sections to several city blocks. To the Chinese people both inside and outside China, Chinatowns are colloquially called "Tang Ren Jie" or "Chinese Street". "Tang Ren" as one of many names for Chinese, is interestingly only used outside China. It literally means "people from Tang Dynasty. A more formal common name is "Hua Bu" or "Chinese Port".

Chinatowns in North American cities have been subjected to study since the beginning of this century. Scholarly research on Chinese immigrant history and community life has focused primarily on the nature and consequences of the hostile treatment the Chinese immigrants received since they came to North American in the middle of nineteenth century. Before the 1970s, Studies on Chinese immigrant communities basically took a "outsider's" perspective on the causes of anti-Chinese sentiment (Fong 1994, Miller 1969, McClellen 1971). Later internal approaches emerged after some studies blamed the hostility on the Chinese themselves (Fong 1994, Barth 1964). Internal approaches primarily focus on the reactions of the Chinese immigrants under the oppressive situation they faced. Since the early 1970s many broad surveys have been published to explain economic, social and political behavior in the Chinese communities in North American cities. More importantly, works based on the internal approach have emphasized local histories and community life. These more specific approaches better capture the Chinese immigrants' experience, the economic situation, the conditions under which they lived, the relationship between the Chinese community and mainstream society, and their interactions with other ethnic groups.

It is commonly accepted, not without disagreements, that Chinatown was the result of a complex process of involuntary and voluntary factors. As David Lai's study on Vancouver's
Chinatown (1988) indicated, racism, hatred, and violence have resulted in residential segregation of early Chinese immigrants. These immigrants were forced to locate on the fringes of town, in place usually unattractive to the white community, where they could find cheap accommodation and own property. As large portions of early Chinese immigrants in North American were recruited as cheap labourers, their economic situation limited them to the cheapest districts of the cities. Cultural barriers, such as language and differences in custom, also caused them to live together, and voluntarily separate themselves from the host society. When new Chinese immigrants joined their sponsors or friends, they tended to live with their sponsors to share the cost of room and board, as well as to find their first jobs though their co-ethnic community. Eventually, the Chinese grocery store, restaurants, and other businesses were set up to serve the needs of an increasing number of Chinese residents and the surrounding community. Establishment of various types of associations, schools and cultural facilities in Chinatown further stabilized the communities.

In the past century, Chinatown has been viewed as either a ghetto minority community or an ethnic enclave community created by Chinese themselves. However, Key Anderson (1991) adopted a different approach to the study of the formation of Chinatown. It was a fact that the Chinese immigrants have lived in close settlement in the towns and cities in the West, but, Anderson argued that "Chinatown " is not "Chinatown "only because the Chinese, whether by choice or constraint, have lived in the enclave. "Chinatown" in fact was a Western construction, illustrative of a process of cultural domination that gave European settlers in North America the power to define and shape the district according to their own images and interests.
Chinatowns in North American cities today are mainly commercial and tourist districts where many businesses operate. They are still hosting long time Chinese immigrants and newcomers as well. The recent studies on Chinatowns in American cities reflect different views on the consequences of living and working in Chinatowns. Chalsa M. Loo's book *Chinatown: Most Time, Hard Time* (1992) examined the attitudes and opinions of the residents in San Francisco's Chinatown in the early 1980s. Loo found that many Chinese living and working in Chinatown were trapped in low-paying jobs. They had little opportunity to learn English and to access the outside society. Gwen Kinkead in her book *Chinatown: A Portrait of a Closed Society* (1992) described the "mystery" and "chaos" of Chinatown in New York. She believed the residents in Chinatown are still self-isolated, and unwilling to assimilate to the mainstream. However, Min Zhao interpreted the conditions in New York's Chinatown in positive way. In her book *Chinatown* (1992), she argued that Chinatown provided employment and business opportunities for Chinese immigrants. The enclave economy in Chinatown does not obstruct the integration and adaptation processes for newcomer. In fact, staying in Chinatown is a better option for newcomers than leaving.

Starting from the late 1960s, following the new wave of Chinese immigrants to Canada and US, new Chinese business enclaves, or so-called "new Chinatowns" have emerged outside the existing Chinatowns. In Canada, four "new Chinatowns" were established in Metropolitan Toronto after 1960s: Chinatown West, Chinatown East, Scarborough's Chinatown and Willowdale's (North York) Chinatown. "New Chinatown" also can be found in Ottawa, Windsor, Edmonton, and other cities in Canada. In Greater Vancouver, Richmond
is often cited as a full scale "new Chinatown". The "new Chinatown" also emerged in major cities in US, such as New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

The "new Chinatown" is either a new Chinese-operated commercial area separated from old Chinatown, or a new community in which Chinese immigrants and businesses concentrated. The emergence of "new Chinatown" is commonly explained as a result of the increasing Chinese immigrant population, suburbanization of Chinese communities, shortage of land in historical Chinatown for further development (Lai, 1988, Fong, 1994).

The most famous example of "new Chinatown" is in the City of Monterey Park, a suburban city in Los Angeles. Monterey Park was transformed from a bedroom suburban town, to a so-called "the first suburban Chinatown" after 1970s. The Anglo-American population declined sharply to 12 percent in 1990 from 85.4 percent in 1960, while the Asian-American population increased from only 2.9 percent in 1960 to 56.4 percent in the same period (Horton, 1995). Chinese businesses have occupied all the major commercial streets in the city. New Chinese immigrants from Taiwan developed several shopping centres in the city. By the 1980s, racial tension between long-time residents and new immigrants catapulted Monterey Park into the national spotlight. The controversies were over a law requiring English on business signs, Chinese books in the public library and attempts to make English the city's official language, which triggered a recall campaign against three City Council members. Today, many of the racial problems have faded and Monterey Park has emerged as the "new Chinatown," the only city in the San Gabriel Valley with an Asian majority.
The development of "new Chinatown" is a relatively new urban phenomenon in North American cities. Although there is some research on the issues arising from the "new Chinatown" in US cities, for example, Monterey Park, there is no comprehensive study that attempts to explore the social, economic and physical impact of such new developments on immigrants themselves and local communities, especially in Canadian cities.

1-4 Research Questions and Thesis

• Research Questions

Like in other industrialized countries, the issue of immigration in Canada is a subject attracting intensive research and debate. A lot of research on “immigration and integration” in the Greater Vancouver area have been conducted by economists, sociologists and geographers in recent years, covering the impact of immigrants on local economies, the family, educational systems and the physical infrastructure of cities. However, there is no scientific analysis of the planning issues arising out of immigration. Studies of changes in the physical environment initiated by immigrants and the resulting planning response are even more rare. Planning practice in Greater Vancouver, especially in physical planning aspect, basically adopts a "business as usual" approach. This approach indicates that city planning in Greater Vancouver still has not fully recognized the expectations and requirements of new and culturally distinct ethnic groups.

The fundamental purpose of planning is to deal with change. On the one hand, economic, social, cultural and physical changes stimulate innovation in planning policy and practice. On the other hand, planning policy and practice in turn can adjust the trajectories of changes.
Immigration is a powerful and inevitable agent of change. It is re-shaping the social, economic, cultural and physical structure of the cities that are receiving most of the immigrants. It is challenging city planners to reconsider the ultimate goals of planning. What is the future image of the city in a multicultural society? Or what is the ideal city pattern, which can achieve social harmony, equal opportunity, as well as mutual respect for its culturally divided citizens? More practically, the changes brought about by immigrants are posing new challenges for city planners. Should we adjust planning approaches to cater to the needs of immigrants, or just try to absorb them into "our" city to create a homogeneous urban pattern?

To find the answers of these fundamental questions is a long-term task for city planners. Understanding the immigration issues in the urban context is the first step. This thesis chooses one physical element created by recent Chinese immigrants in Greater Vancouver's suburban municipalities, "Chinese" Shopping Centres, to understand the impact of immigration on urban development in Greater Vancouver. These new urban developments may serve as a vehicle by which we can access to a new, uncharted field where a new city pattern is emerging. The four questions asked in this preliminary research are:

1. How did the "Chinese" Shopping Centre emerge in Greater Vancouver's suburbs?
2. Why are the "Chinese" Shopping Centres continuing to be built?
3. What are roles of the "Chinese" Shopping Centre in the Chinese-Canadian community?
4. **What is the impact of the "Chinese" Shopping Centre on the local communities and cities at large?**

- **Goals and Objectives**

The main goal of this thesis is to document the recent phenomenon of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development in the Greater Vancouver area in order to contribute to a better understanding of the planning issues involved in the process. The research has three main objectives: first, to identify the current approaches to "Chinese" Shopping Centre development in the suburbs of Vancouver through studying project development processes; second, to discover the forces which have driven developments in Greater Vancouver; finally, to identify the characteristics of the "Chinese" Shopping Centres and assess their social, economic and land use impact.

This research tries to fill the knowledge gaps between immigrant policies and city planning policies. Basically, the research attempts to change the perspective implicit in the conventional approach, which is based on the interests of the host community, to include an approach based on immigrant communities themselves.

- **Scopes and Limitation**

The study concentrates on the development processes of the "Chinese" Shopping Centres. Its scope is limited to the review of projects implemented. While the study is mainly focused on the physical and economic aspects of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development and its
impact on the community, political and cultural issues are discussed but are not central to the study.

Undertaking such a study was not an easy task for the author, a new immigrant to Canada. The thesis necessarily presents a newcomer's point of view, and the level of understanding of the problems is thus affected. Nevertheless, this limitation also turned out to be an asset when evaluating projects, by contributing to the observation of certain problems with a broader, newer perspective.

• **Methodology and Organization**

This research rests upon a qualitative analysis based on observation and interpretation, rather than a quantitative one with a scientific approach. It is based on both primary and secondary sources. The methodology used in the research is divided into two parts: literature review and field study. The theoretical part of the thesis is based on a literature review. The gathering of information on "Chinese" Shopping Centre development required interviews and field surveys. Developers, managers and tenants in several "Chinese" Shopping Centres were interviewed. Although limited in number, they gave the author an outline of the complex issues arising from these shopping centres.

To analyze the information, a comparative study of different cases is the major tool. The purpose of case studies is to understand the social and economic background of each centre, the linkage between immigration flows and development concepts of the centres, and the different approaches of development projects for different immigrant groups.
This thesis is organized into five chapters. This first chapter introduces the concept of "Chinese" Shopping Centre, reviews related literature on ethnic enclave and Chinatown, and outlines the research questions. The second chapter documents the "Chinese" Shopping Centre development projects in the suburbs of Vancouver. Chapter Three describes major driving forces in the development processes. In the fourth chapter, the characteristics of the "Chinese" Shopping Centres are analyzed, as well as the impact of "Chinese" Shopping Centres on local communities. The conclusions and recommendations are briefly outlined in Chapter Five.
"Chinese" Shopping Centre in the Suburbs of Vancouver

There are fifteen "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the suburbs of Vancouver as defined in Chapter One. Twelve of them are located in Richmond. The other three, in Surrey, Coquitlam and Burnaby, are under construction. Given the relatively short time (less than ten years) from the opening of Aberdeen Centre in 1989, the first "Chinese" Shopping Centre, to the present day, the development of such shopping centres is truly phenomenal. As an important physical existence in an urban setting, they are the reflection of the social-economic reality Chinese-Canadians have been facing. They also represent the creativity of immigrants in a new environment. The unprecedented scale and quantity of development not only have strong impacts on the Chinese-Canadian community in Greater Vancouver, but also on the community at large. To understand the "inside" and "outside" factors, which initiated such development, and their roles in the immigrants' integration process in the Canadian society, a brief description of major centres is a necessary first step.

2-1: "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Richmond

Except for Richmond Public Market, eleven of twelve "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond are located in Richmond's Aberdeen area, along No.3 Road on both sides of Cambie Street. They are clustered into three groups within a relatively small area: south Cambie (Aberdeen Centre, Central Square, Parker Place), north Cambie (President Plaza, Yaohan Centre, Union Square) and the Garden City Road area (Continental Centre, Pacific...
Plaza, Admiralty Centre, Cosmos Plaza) (Figure 2). This new Chinese-Canadian shopping area is so visible that the media and researchers often refer it to "Asian West" or "New Chinatown".

Figure 2: The "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond
The First "Chinese" Shopping Centre -- Aberdeen Centre

As the first "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Vancouver's suburb, Aberdeen Centre is often cited as the prototype followed by other "Chinese" Shopping Centres, and has attracted the most attention and publicity. However, Aberdeen Centre is unique in many aspects, not only because it is one of the earliest specialty shopping centres in North America featuring Chinese-Canadian business, but also because it is a different shopping centre compared to other "Chinese" Shopping Centres that followed it. First, unlike the other "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver, Aberdeen Centre is not a strata titled shopping centre. The stores in the Aberdeen Centre are leased space. It is still owned by the developer, Fairchild Development Ltd. Second, the layout of Aberdeen Centre is a minimized North America conventional shopping centre while the other "Chinese" Shopping Centres are more reliant on the retail units rather than on large "anchor" stores.

Well known as "Xiang Gang Zai Zhong Xin" in Chinese, which means "Hong Kong Guy's Centre", Aberdeen Centre was opened in 1990. It has 120,000 square feet of commercial space hosting 60 retail stores and a theatre, a bowling centre, and a large Chinese restaurant.

As part of his investment in Canada by Thomas Fung, Aberdeen Centre was developed by Fairchild Holding Ltd. through Fairchild Development Ltd. Fung came to Canada as a teenager in 1967. He studied filmmaking at New York, then he went back to Hong Kong for 10 years and started a film-production company, an advertising agency and a public relations firm. In 1984 he moved back to Vancouver, setting up a photo studio. Five years
later, he became one of Canada's media barons. He is the man behind Fairchild TV, the nation's only national Chinese-language network. His broadcast holdings, which started with a radio station he bought in 1992, have expanded to include four more stations and a television network, as well as a local station broadcasting multilingual programming.

Aberdeen Centre is often mentioned as a pioneer of the "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver, and a successful project copied by subsequent "Chinese" Shopping Centres. However, the first "Chinese" Shopping Centre was not built with intention of creating a "new Chinatown" or a shopping district for Chinese immigrants in Richmond. A Chinese-Canadian owned the land on the corner of Cambie Road and Hazelbridge Way. The original plan to develop the land was for a bowling centre, which was very popular in Greater Vancouver in the late 1980s. Eventually the plan was enlarged to maximize the use of the land. A restaurant and several retail stores were added to the plan. The owner at that time hadn't enough money to carry out such a large project, and hesitated to face potential risk. The development package was sold to Thomas Fung, who had just moved to Vancouver. Fung realized that the increasing immigrants from Hong Kong would create a market for a new shopping centre in Richmond. He finalized the development plan according to the typical conventional shopping centre in North America. The shopping centre was financed, owned and managed by the developers themselves, with the bowling centre, a theatre and a then-planned supermarket planned as the anchors for the centre (Figure 3).

The location and non-strata-titled commercial space soon become a major problem for the new shopping centre. in the first several years since it opened, the centre faced serious
problems in marketing it to the Chinese-Canadian community, especially new immigrant groups. The first group of tenants came from businesses in Chinatown, who opened their new outlet in Richmond to serve the Chinese-Canadian population there. They prefer to rent space instead of owning it because of market uncertainty. Several businesses in the centre were owned and operated by Thomas Fung himself in order to fill the empty space and attract other stores and customers. The story about learning how to make pastries by himself was often recalled by Thomas Fung when he was asked to describe the early years of Aberdeen Centre.

Figure 3: Aberdeen Centre

- Parker Place Shopping Centre

Less than one year after Aberdeen Centre was opened, Fairchild proposed a new shopping centre in the same block, south of Aberdeen Centre in 1991. Unlike Aberdeen Centre, Parker
Place Shopping Centre was designed as a strata-titled retail shopping centre with over 100 stores. (The Chinese name for Parker Place Shopping Centre is "Bai Jia Dian, or "One Hundred Stores")

It is not clear whether the idea of building a strata-titled retail shopping centre came from the lessons learned from the early problems of Aberdeen Centre. The developer found the market niche in the new immigrants from Hong Kong who prefer to own commercial space instead of leasing, or to buy space as a investment tool. As the first relatively large strata-titled retail shopping centre in Greater Vancouver, the pre-sale of retail space in Parker Place Shopping Centre was so successful that the units were soon sold out. When Parker Place Shopping Centre was still under construction in 1992, phase two of Parker Place was added to enlarge the whole shopping centre to a 140 retail unit mall, so far the largest "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver (Figure 4).

- **Fairchild Square and Central Plaza**

Fairchild's other development project in Richmond, Fairchild Square, was designed as a mixed-use office complex with retail stores on the ground floor. Eight separate two story buildings form a narrow courtyard, facing Aberdeen Centre on the east of Hazelbridge Way. The offices and retail spaces are strata titled. The major tenants are professional services, such as medical and dental clinics, educational, legal and financial consulting firms. Opened
Figure 4: Parker Place Shopping Centre

Figure 5: Fairchild Square
in 1991, one year later than Aberdeen Centre, it is a functional addition to Aberdeen Centre in which has very limited office spaces (Figure 5).

Central Square is small two-stories outside mall on a narrow lot between Aberdeen Centre and Parker Place Shopping Centre. Opened in 1996, this "in full" development links Aberdeen Centre and Parker Place Shopping Centre together, and takes advantage of customer traffic created by the two larger centres. The name of this mall comes from a landmark building in Hong Kong. The developer even put a small-scale cope of the top of Central Square tower in Hong Kong on the corner of the mall (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Central Square
• President Plaza

After Aberdeen Centre and Parker Place Shopping Centre opened, the corner of No. 3 Road and Cambie Road had become a new retail centre in Richmond. It attracted customers from all over Greater Vancouver. The development potential in the surrounding area drew attention from overseas where the new immigrants came from. The participation of international capital in "Chinese" Shopping Centres development started from President Plaza and Yaohan Centre. Since then, other new development projects in other municipalities in Greater Vancouver have involved overseas capital.

In 1992, President Asia Enterprises Inc., a subsidiary company of President Group in Taiwan, proposed a large mix-use project on the northeast corner of No. 3 Road and Cambie Road intersection. President Group is a leading food processing company in Taiwan. It was expanding its business in many different industries and countries through its subsidiaries both inside and outside Taiwan. President Plaza is a hotel-commercial-office complex on a 3.73-acre site. The site was rezoned from Automobile-Oriented Commercial district (C6) to Comprehensive Development District (CD1) in order to build a hotel tower (Radisson President Hotel), an office section, a Chinese restaurant, a supermarket, and retail stores (Figure 7). The T & T supermarket and a Buddhist temple attract most customers to President Plaza.

Retail stores in President Plaza are relatively fewer than in Parker Place Shopping Centre and Aberdeen Centre. There are 30 retail units adjacent to T & T Supermarket. All retail stores are strata-titled. Although President Plaza has a Taiwanese background and its management
is still conducted by President Asia Enterprises Inc., the majority of retail store owners are people who immigrated from Hong Kong, rather than those from Taiwan. Cantonese is most commonly used language in the Plaza.

• Yaohan Centre

The Japanese-Canadian community in Greater Vancouver has a long history. There was a "Japanese Town" near Chinatown in the Downtown Eastside. The fishing village of Steveston in Richmond still bears traces of traditional Japanese fishers. In the later 1970s and early 1980s, companies with Japanese background controlled a large portion of real estate properties in Downtown Vancouver. Japan is Canada's second most important trade partner next to the United States. There is a Toyota wheel plant in Richmond. Seven of Japan's 12 major general trading companies have selected Vancouver as their Canadian headquarters.

As one of Japanese investments in Greater Vancouver, Yaohan International proposed a shopping centre adjacent to President Plaza in 1992. Opened in 1995, a Japanese supermarket (Yaohan Supermarket), 15 units of food court, and 66 strata-titled retail units make up the shopping centre. While the initial target market of Yaohan Centre was Japanese-Canadian business, the majority of stores are owned and operated by Chinese-Canadian, except a Japanese bookstore. Thanks to the name of "Yaohan", which is well known in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Mainland China, the centre has attracted investors from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Some new immigrants bought their stores even before they came to Greater Vancouver. Chinese people call this kind purchase as "Ge Shan Mai Nu" (buy a cow on
Figure 7: President Plaza

Figure 8: Continental Centre
the other side of mountain before seeing it), a very unusual practice for Chinese businesses in buying properties.

In 1997, Yaohan International's mother company went bankrupt in Japan. A large portion of its overseas properties were put on sale. The T&T Supermarket bought the Yaohan Supermarket. After the acquisition, Yaohan no longer owned any assets in the Yaohan Centre. Yaohan Centre has become a typical "Chinese" Shopping Centre. As a result of requirements from the retail store owners, Yaohan has allowed the Centre to keep the name "Yaohan Centre". The name of supermarket in the centre was changed from "Yaohan Supermarket" to "Osaka Supermarket". It still keeps its focus on Japanese specialty food.

- **New developments after 1995**

After Yaohan Centre and President Plaza opened in 1995, the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres slowed down in the following two years. Only one centre, Central Square opened in 1996. Re-started in early 1997, several new projects merged in the market. On the former Richmond High School site along Cambie Road, east of the President Plaza, an open shopping centre, Continental Centre (Figure 8) was completed in April of 1997. A new cluster in the southwest of Cambie Road and Garden City Road emerged after 1997, which includes Pacific Plaza (Figure 9), Cosmo Plaza (Figure 10) and Admiralty Centre (Figure 11). Then in 1998, a larger open shopping centre near Yaohan Centre, Union Square (Figure 12) started construction.
Figure 11: Admiralty Centre

Figure 12: Union Square
Pacific Plaza is located at the corner of Cambie Road and Garden City Road. Developed by a Chinese-Canadian firm, Ernest & Twins Development Inc., the plaza is one of largest "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond with over 200 strata-titled retail and commercial units. The total floor area is approximately 110,000 square feet. As a market strategy, Pacific Plaza tried to attract personal computer related business to form a "computer city" in the plaza. The developer has offered financial assistance for computer-related businesses to locate in the plaza. While the result of this effort is unknown, it reflects a change of business types in the "Chinese" Shopping Centre.

Almost one year after the building was completed, Pacific Plaza finally opened in November 1998. However, only about one fourth of the units are occupied. The marketing agent for Pacific Plaza explained that the units were actually sold out, but the units owners, largely investors who didn't plan to open their own business, have had difficulty in finding tenants for the units because of the market situation in Greater Vancouver in 1998.

The situation in the immediate neighbour of Pacific Plaza, Admiralty Centre, is almost the same. Another project developed by Western Development Inc., the company that invested in Continental Centre and Union Square, Admiralty Centre opened in early 1998. It is a three-story building with about 60 retail and office units, on a less than two-acre lot. Most strata units are about 200 to 300 hundred square feet, much smaller than those in the other "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The selling price of the units in Admiralty Centre is relatively low because of unit sizes. However, only one third of units in the centre are occupied almost one year after it opened.
In a same cluster with Pacific Plaza and Admiralty Centre, a new shopping centre is currently under construction. Cosmo Plaza contains 80 units in a three story building. Unlike other similar "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Richmond, the developer of Cosmo Plaza, R.M. Development Corp. is a local company that has been in the construction and development business in Greater Vancouver since 1970. In past 10 year, the company has been involved in over 100 different development throughout the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. The development concept of Cosmo Plaza is same as other "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The developer targeted the market of Chinese-Canadian business in Richmond. The marketing agent of the Plaza is a Chinese-Canadian realty firm. The plaza is planned to open in early 1999. The sale of strata titled units was not satisfactory so the developer has changed some strata-titled unites to rental units in order to attract small businesses.

- **Aberdeen Centre Expansion**

The Aberdeen Centre expansion plan has been in the news for more than two years. The project was planned to start in late 1997. Since the rezoning of the land for the project was just approved by city of Richmond in August 1998, and the market situation in Greater Vancouver is being affected by the Asia economic crisis, the project is currently still on the drawing board.

The expansion plan is to add 14,585 square meters retail space and a parking structure with 1,600 parking stalls to the existing Aberdeen Centre. The new Aberdeen Centre will be a 25,455 square meter shopping centre, the largest "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater
Vancouver in terms of floor area. The number of shops in the new Aberdeen Centre will double from 50 to 100 according to the developer. The plan also includes road adjustment to connect Northgate Way and Hazelbridge Way in order to alleviate traffic congestion in the area (Figure 13).

![Aberdeen Centre Expansion Plan](image)

**Figure 13: Aberdeen Centre Expansion Plan**

This $60 million expansion plan raised concerns about competition among stores in the "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the Aberdeen area. The "Chinese" Shopping Centres surrounding Aberdeen Centre formed the Richmond Asian Merchants Committee to oppose the expansion plan. The members of the Committee include Parker Place Shopping Centre,
President Plaza and Yaohan Centre. The most active members of this opposition come from Parker Place Shopping Centre, the neighbour of Aberdeen Centre. It is interesting that Fairchild developed both Aberdeen Centre and Parker Place Shopping Centre. Unlike Aberdeen Centre, Parker Place Shopping Centre is a strata-titled shopping centre in which Fairchild sold all the units to the individual owners. The Aberdeen Centre expansion plan will attract more customers to the new Aberdeen Centre, which Fairchild still owns. The owners in Parker Place Shopping Centre are wondering if they can face the competition from a newer and larger Aberdeen Centre.

It is reasonable to question the timing and consequence of the expansion of Aberdeen Centre. The booming of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond happened between 1990 and 1996, the peak years of Chinese immigration to Greater Vancouver. The developers and owners in existing "Chinese" Shopping Centre obtained good profits by selling strata-titled retail space or renting the stores before 1996. One developer estimated that the property value in "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Aberdeen area has increased 28% in 1996, 42% from 1994 to 1996, and 194% from 1990 to 1996. The success of "Chinese" Shopping Centres built before 1996, and the prediction of increasing Hong Kong immigrants after Hong Kong's return to China in 1997 had given developers confidence that the demand for such shopping centres would continue in 1997 and 1998. However, the handover of Hong Kong to China was much smoother than people in Canada had expected. The number of immigrants from Hong Kong began to drop after 1997. The other unexpected fact is the Asian economic crisis, which is still affecting countries and regions in Southeast Asia, including Hong Kong and Taiwan, the major source countries of immigration to Canada. The economic crisis in Asia
has decreased the buying power of immigrants from those countries where they still own business and properties.

While the demand for "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver, especially in Richmond, is decreasing, the supply, on the other hand, has increased dramatically in 1997 and 1998. Continental Centre, Admiralty Centre and Pacific Plaza were completed in 1997, and all of them have not been fully occupied. Cosmo Square and Union Square are under construction, pre-sale is underway. Several larger projects in other municipalities, Henderson Centre, Canada Asian Centre and Crystal Square are attracting potential investors and businesses to leave Richmond. The existing "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Richmond is facing challenges from new centres both inside and outside Richmond. The expansion of Aberdeen Centre would further shrink their customer base, and lower their property values.

The debate in a public hearing meeting on Aberdeen Centre expansion plan was focused on two issues: (1) the impact of new Aberdeen Centre on existing "Chinese" Shopping Centres, and (2) traffic problems in Aberdeen area.

The planning team for Aberdeen Centre has successfully convinced the Richmond city council that the expansion of Aberdeen Centre demonstrates Fairchild's confidence in the Richmond market and the future. The new Aberdeen Centre will serve not only Chinese-Canadian customers, but also mainstream customers and international visitors. Statistics showed that the commercial space vacancy rate in Richmond is the lowest in Greater Vancouver. The demand for retail shopping centres is still strong in the Aberdeen area. The
city council expressed its appreciation of Fairchild's investment in Richmond when the economy in B.C. and Greater Vancouver has been in recession. The planning department of Richmond did not even ask the developer to conduct an economic impact study for the expansion plan, which is a common practice for such development project in other cities. The offer from Fairchild to build more parking spaces than zoning required, and to build a pedestrian linkage to connect surrounding shopping centres was further praised by the city council. The rezoning application of Aberdeen Centre expansion project was unanimously approved by the city council in August of 1998.

The opposition side, led by the Richmond Asian Merchants Committee, expressed their concern about the future of existing shopping centres if Aberdeen Centre is expanded. They argued that the similar "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Aberdeen area have already been over-built. By the end of 1998 when Cosmo Square and Union Square opened, the retail units in "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the Aberdeen area will have tripled from the number in 1996. There would be a disaster for the existing "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond if Aberdeen Centre were enlarged. They pointed out that the statistic figure the developer used was misleading because the retail units in "Chinese" Shopping Centres are strata-titled. The owners have to keep the store open even when they are losing money, otherwise they would have to sell the units, which is very difficult in recent years. The situation in existing "Chinese" Shopping Centres was described as "no way out" under the economic climate in Greater Vancouver now.
The opposition also expressed concerns about the parking problem in Aberdeen area. They believe that traffic congestion and the parking space shortage in the Aberdeen area is too serious to allow any new large retail development in the area. The traffic problems are driving customers away from the shopping centres. The proposed Aberdeen Centre expansion plan would not ease the parking problem, but create more difficulty for customers instead. However, the opposition has not presented convincing evidence to support their argument. After rezoning was passed, they plan to continue their opposition in the development permits application stage of the expansion plan.

The debate around the Aberdeen Centre expansion raises questions about the future of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development in Greater Vancouver's suburbs: are the "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver over-built? Why are there so many similar centres? Is it necessary for the cities to control the development of such centres in order to protect existing owners and business?

2-2: Canada Asian Centre, Surrey

While new development projects of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond are facing an uncertain market, Canada Asian Centre, a new, relatively large project in Surrey is under construction. The proposal of "Canada Asian Centre" is to build a new business district in Surrey to serve Asia immigrant-oriented businesses. The site of the planned district comprises five city blocks on both sides of 104 Avenue, between 140 and 144 Street. The whole project will virtually link together Surrey's two major town centres -- Whalley and Guildford (Figure 14).
According to the development plan, the first phase is to build a shopping centre on the block bounded by 104 Avenue, 141 Street, 142 Street and 103A Avenue, eventually expanding the commercial area to adjacent blocks. The total land for the project is approximately 14.6 acres.

The idea of developing an Asian Business distract in Surrey emerged in 1995. In the spring of 1995, a group of Taiwanese businesspeople met over a dinner party. All of them were new immigrants in Canada: Mr. Megan Chen came to Vancouver via Los Angeles in the later 1980s. He owns several farms in Surrey, Delta and Washington State to serve specialty vegetables and chickens to the Chinese community in Greater Vancouver. Mr. Chin-Shan
Lui, a developer/builder immigrated from Taiwan in 1993, and has engaged in residential developments in the Westside of Vancouver. Mr. Albert The-Hwa Tseng, a civil engineer in Taiwan, set up his own land development company after moving to Vancouver in 1993. At first, Mr. Lui and Mr. Tseng had entered into joint ventures with local builders in Greater Vancouver to learn the local market and the development process. Then they operated independently in Vancouver. At the dinner party, They shared their business experiences after immigrating to Greater Vancouver. The idea of building a "New Asian Town" in Surrey came out during the conversation. Mr. Megan Chen believed that increasing number of Chinese immigrants, especially Taiwanese in Surrey, Coquitlam and Delta area would support a new larger "Chinese" business centre. All of them agreed that "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond were over-built. The location of Richmond is not convenient enough to serve the evenly scattered Chinese immigrants in Greater Vancouver. Surrey has great potential to be the next Richmond in the latter 1990s and early 2000 for Chinese businesses to grow.

These ideas brought the three of them together to set up a new company - Tahiti Development Ltd. for the purpose of creating a "New China Town" in Surrey, just three weeks after the dinner party. The new company hired a former city planner in Surrey to conduct planning studies for the development plan. In the latter half of 1995, the company formally submitted a plan to develop a "Canada Asian Centre" to the City of Surrey. The estimated $100 million project was cited as a "historic proposal for Surrey (Surrey Now, December 18, 1995).
The first phase of this ambitious development project, a shopping centre named "Canada Asian Centre" was approved by the City of Surrey in November of 1996, after intensive planning study, economic impact study, traffic impact study, the development of a master plan for the whole area and architectural design. Pre-sale for the strata-titled commercial units in the shopping centre started in May 1997. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in September of 1997. Currently it is underconstruction.

The "Canada Asian Centre" shopping centre is a three-story commercial building with a mix of retail and office space. It will contain a supermarket, a bank, an entertainment centre with bowling alley, a medical centre and about 200 retail units. The total cost is around 47 million.

The concept of this development is a copy of similar "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond. The sale of strata-titled retail units is the key to the project. The most unique feature of this shopping centre is its architectural design that has adopted traditional Chinese architecture forms and elements in this commercial building. The symmetry, "U" shape layout gives the building a monumental image, which is typical for Chinese traditional buildings. A classical traditional Chinese roof over the centre portion of the shopping centre enhances the "Chinese characteristic" of the building. The facade of the building was designed to symbolize the Great Wall of China (Figure 15). The building has 250,000 square feet of floor space on a net 4.7-acre site, two levels of underground parking. It will be the largest "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver upon completion.
The proposal was strongly supported by the city of Surrey. Even when the development plan was in the early stages, before the development application was submitted to the city, the then-Mayor of Surrey, Bob Bose, publicly expressed his support of the project (*The Vancouver Sun*, December 15, 1995). He believed that the project would boost Surrey's economic development by attracting more new immigrant businesses to Surrey. The former City Manager Doug Lychak was impressed by a shopping mall in Mississauga, Ont. that was converted from a badly failed conventional shopping mall to a successful Asian business-oriented shopping centre with a new façade and a Chinese gate. He expected the Canada Asian Centre to bring similar results to Surrey's 104 Avenue, where "the rundown shacks should be cleaned up" (*The Vancouver Sun*, December 15, 1995). The local business
community showed positive response to the project. They hoped that the project would lure more investment to the city centre area, and to serve as a bridge that links Surrey's business to the Asian market.

It was surprising for the developer that there was no noticeable opposition from the existing community in the surrounding area. The land for Canada Asian Centre was zoned for commercial use in 1993. The condition of existing residential buildings on the site and surrounding area is not very good. The local residences thought that the development of Canada Asian Centre would improve the condition of the area, and increase their property value. In fact, the announcement of Canada Asian Centre development has attracted some investor to purchase the properties adjacent to the project for future projects. Although a public meeting was not required for the application of this project, the developer held several open houses to explain the project to the neighboring community. At the September 17, 1996 open house, the general tone of the 55 people from the surrounding area was positive. The questions raised by the guests were largely related to traffic issues and property value. There was no opposition to the project, or to the design of the building.

For the developers, the project was not going as smoothly as they had expected. In the planning stage of the project, the original three major shareholders in Tahiti Development Ltd. found that the cost of first phase project was much higher than they had anticipated. After failing to find new partners with strong financial backing in Greater Vancouver's Taiwanese community, they were introduced to the Great Wall International Business Developments (Canada) Ltd. a subsidiary of the Great Wall Companies Group based in
Beijing, China. The Great Wall Group is a new type of enterprise in China, which mixes state ownership and private ownership. It has more than 20 subsidiaries involving real estate investment, manufacture, advertisement and other businesses in China and overseas. Its Canada subsidiary was a trade office for the Group that was established in 1995. An investment agreement between the Great Wall International Business Developments (Canada) Ltd. and Tahiti was signed in early 1996. Tahiti sold a large portion of their shares in Canada Asian Centre to Great Wall. The name of the company was changed to Canada Asian Centre Development Ltd. in which Great Wall was the largest shareholder.

As the project was being carried out, different approaches among the shareholder forced the two original partners, Mr. Lui and Mr. Tseng to leave the development company in early 1997. Two new investors joined the team. Both of them were new immigrants from Taiwan. The market response to the pre-sale of strata-titled units in the Canada Asian Centre was not as overwhelming as the developer had expected when it started in May of 1997. The majority of buyers came from the Taiwanese community, with only a few from Hong Kong and the Mainland China. The questions were raised regarding the original plan and marketing strategy. The Great Wall Group in Beijing asked the Company to reconsider the schedule of the project, either stopping or postponing the project. The disagreement between Great Wall and the rest of the shareholders led Great Wall to withdraw from the project in September 1997. Subsequently the other two new Taiwanese investors joined the project. After negotiation with the city of Surrey to lower the DCC (Development Cost Change) for the project, construction finally started in late 1997.
2-3: Henderson Centre and Crystal Square

• Henderson Centre

The development of Concord Pacific Place marked a beginning of large, unprecedented Hong Kong investment in Vancouver's property market. Through the Concord Pacific Place project, Li Ka-shing's family, the original investor of the project, has established its leading role in Vancouver's land development industry. Concord Pacific Place was also a bridge for other Hong Kong real estate tycoons to access Vancouver's market. The list of partners of Concord Pacific Place was almost the same as a list of Hong Kong's the richest, most powerful individuals. One name on the list is Lee Shau Kee, chairman of Henderson Land Development Co. in Hong Kong. Lee Shau Kee has replaced Li Ka-shing as Hong Kong's the richest individual in 1996. It was reported that his assets in Hong Kong had a market value of more than 28 billion US dollars in 1996. His companies' principal activities are in Hong Kong, and are active in the field of property development, investment, project management, construction, property management, finance and investment holding in Hong Kong as well as in property development in mainland China.

Lee Shau Kee joined the Concord Pacific Place projects after Li's family secured the site. Gradually his involvement in the project concentrated on the development of International Village, one section of Concord Pacific Place. In 1996, his Vancouver subsidiary, Henderson Development Canada, announced a new mixed-use project in Coquitlam, which added a new project to the portfolio of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the suburbs of Greater Vancouver.
Located at Coquitlam City Centre, Henderson Centre is a residential-commercial mixed-use complex. The total floor space of the complex is about 736,000 square feet. It includes three 21-stories high-rise condominiums and a 290,000 square feet shopping centre, which contains a supermarket, banks, Chinese restaurants and retail stores (Figure 16). The total cost for this project is estimated at $130 million.

The developer has publicly distinguished Henderson Centre from the "Asian Mall" in Richmond. The president of Henderson Development Canada, Mr. Allen Lai, expressed his concern about the image of the shopping centre in this project. He "watched what is happening in Richmond, with Aberdeen Centre and other malls that cater so much to the Asian community and alienate the main group. We want to make sure that we don't make the
same mistakes.” (The Vancouver Sun, December 16, 1997). The location of Henderson Centre is adjacent to Coquitlam Centre Shopping Centre and Coquitlam Village. The market niche for Henderson Centre has to be "Asian" in flavour. The intention of this project is to serve the increasing number of new immigrants, especially those from Taiwan and Hong Kong in the surrounding area, particularly in Westwood Plateau. The shopping centre is trying to promote a mix of both "Asian" and mainstream tenants, and to encourage English as the main language to be used in the centre. The regulation of the display signs in the Centre will ensure that non-Asian customers will not be alienated.

- **Crystal Square**

Crystal Square is located in the Metrotown area, the largest shopping district in Greater Vancouver. The developer believes that the project is going to be the largest strata-titled, single-phase, mix-used urban development project in Canada. The project contains a hotel, a conference centre, a high-rise condominium, a low-rise condominium, an office section, a cinema, and a retail shopping centre (Figure 17). All of these different functions are combined into one building complex on one city block. Total floor space is about 755,000 square feet. The shopping centre is on the first and second floors of the complex, surrounding an open plaza in the centre of the complex. There are about 203 retail units, a public market with 38 stalls, and 28 food court units in the shopping centre.

The development of Crystal Square also has some linkages with Concord Pacific Place. The development team is a join-venture of three companies: the Vancouver-based Amara
International Investment Corp., TYBA Group Inc., and one of South Korean's largest public companies, Dong Ah Construction Industrial Co. Ltd. The president of Amara International Investment Corp., Mr. Stanley Tun-Li Kwok, is playing the most important role in this project. The former vice-president of Concord Pacific Development Ltd., Kwok was the person who made Li Ka-shing's investment in Vancouver possible. An immigrant from Hong Kong in 1967, Kwok held several senior positions with property development firms and various committees in the City of Vancouver. After Expo'86, in which he served on the board of directors, he worked through the early negotiation, planning and design processes for the Concord Pacific Place project. Now he is working for his own development firm, and
still practicing architectural design and urban planning. The Crystal Square is the first large-scale project conducted by Kwok's firm. Kwok designed the project himself.

It is too early to predict whether Crystal Square can provide mutual benefits to existing shopping centres and new stores. The situation will demonstrate whether a "Chinese" Shopping Centre can be an integrated part of the regional town centre.
CHAPTER THREE

The Driving Forces of "Chinese" Shopping Centre Development

In order to understand the phenomenon of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development in Vancouver's suburban areas, this chapter look at both "inside" and "outside" factors that have driven development in the late 1980s and 1990s. From economic point of view, the shopping centre development is driven by market demand. "Chinese" Shopping Centres are no exception. However, comparing the developments with conventional shopping centre in Greater Vancouver area, the market of Asian shopping centre suggests that the supply-demand model applied to "Chinese Shopping Centre" is unique in terms of the formation of market. The market demand comes from dramatic changes in the Chinese-Canadian community that took place in the 1980s and 1990s, and was further boosted by Canada's immigration and integration policies at the same time. On the supply side, overseas investment, along with the business immigration program, has played an important role in making these developments possible.

3-1 Changes of Chinese-Canadian community in Greater Vancouver

The Chinese-Canadian community in the 1980s and 1990s differs dramatically from the one in existence 20 years ago. The following section highlights the major changes in the Chinese-Canadian community, which formed the foundation of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development.
Population of Chinese-Canadian Minority in Greater Vancouver

The census of 1996 showed that 860,150 people in Canada belong to the Chinese visible minority, or about 3 percent of the total population of Canada. In B.C., there were 299,860 people, or 8.8 percent of the total population that were of the Chinese minority. About 93 percent (279,040) of Chinese minority in B.C. lived in the Vancouver CMA, which makes Chinese-Canadian the largest visible minority group, accounting for one-half of the total visible minority in Greater Vancouver. GVRD municipalities with the largest concentrations of people identifying themselves as Chinese in 1996 include the City of Vancouver (139,855), Richmond (48,460), Burnaby (39,410), Coquitlam (14,755), and Surrey (12,815).

Immigration after the 1970s has played a major role in sustaining the growth of the Chinese-Canadian population in Canada and B.C. In 1971, the number of people of Chinese origin in Canada was only about 124,600. The number increased to 285,800 in 1981, 633,933 in 1991 and over 800,000 in 1996. Thus in less than thirty years, the Chinese-Canadian population in Canada increased about seven times.

In B.C., where the first wave of Chinese immigrants settled during the late half of the last century, the increase of Chinese-Canadian population is more remarkable than in any other region in Canada. In 1901, about 8.3% of the total population in B.C. were Chinese-Canadian. The percentage of Chinese-Canadian population in B.C. was forced to decrease from early this century until the end of the Second World War. From 1901 to 1941 the population of B.C. increased from 178,657 to 817,861, or 4.7 times. During the same period, the Chinese-Canadian population had only increased from 14,885 to 18,619 due to the anti-
Chinese immigration policy of the Canadian government and discrimination against the Chinese in Canadian society. Immigration from China was almost stopped from 1923 to 1947, when the Chinese Immigration Act, the most comprehensive legislation to prevent Chinese from entering Canada and to control those already in Canada, was enforced. After World War II, especially after 1967 when the Canadian government adopted the new immigration policy, the Chinese-Canadian population increased dramatically. 49.8 percent of Chinese-Canadians in 1981 immigrated to Canada during 1971 to 1980, 63.2 percent Chinese-Canadian in 1991 immigrated during 1971 to 1991. (Table 1).

Table 1: Period of Immigration to Canada for Chinese-Canadian (1971-1991)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>1971 (%)</th>
<th>1981 (%)</th>
<th>1991 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1946</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-1960</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1970</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1980</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1991</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada-born</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>124,600</td>
<td>285,800</td>
<td>633,933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Canada, Li (1998)

The increase of the Chinese-Canadian population in B.C., especially in the Greater Vancouver area has been a major factor in the overall population increase in the region. Immigration data released by Statistic Canada reveal that 189,660 immigrants settled in Greater Vancouver between 1991 to 1996. At same time, the total population grew by 229,075 people, from 1,602,590 in 1991 to 1,831,665 in 1996. This means that international immigration accounted for 82.8 percent of the region’s population growth between 1991 and
1996. The growth rate of 14.35 percent between 1991 to 1996 made Greater Vancouver the fastest growing metropolitan area in Canada, more than twice the national average of 5.7%.

(GVRD, 1998). Immigrants from Asia accounted for 73.9 percent of total international immigration in Greater Vancouver between 1991 and 1996, compared to 48 percent in 1981. Chinese from Hong Kong, Mainland China, and Taiwan accounted for about 30 percent of total immigrants in Greater Vancouver. (GVRD, 1998)

**Change Sources and Mechanisms of Chinese Immigrant**

Today's Chinese-Canadian community in Canada and B.C. has become extremely diverse, quite different from the old-timers who were primarily men from the Pear River Delta of Mainland China. Now they hail from all provinces in China as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan (Table 2). In fact, many immigrants from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Burma, Indonesia and Philippines as well as refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are ethnic Chinese.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Inflows of Chinese Immigrants to Canada 1986-1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Thousand)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hong Kong</strong></td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P. R. China</strong></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taiwan</strong></td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Chinese Immigrants</strong></td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Immigrants</strong></td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>152.1</td>
<td>161.9</td>
<td>192.0</td>
<td>214.2</td>
<td>230.8</td>
<td>252.8</td>
<td>255.8</td>
<td>223.9</td>
<td>212.2</td>
<td>226.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese Immigrants as % of Total Immigrants to Canada</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD, (1998)
Similar to the trend at the national level, Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong, the Mainland China and Taiwan eventually dominated the inflow of international immigration into B.C. and Greater Vancouver. From 1986, Hong Kong, Mainland China and Taiwan have been among the top ten sources of immigrants to Greater Vancouver. Between 1991 and 1996, they were the top three sources of immigrants (Figure 18). There were about 94,035 people from these three regions who settled in Greater Vancouver, near half of them coming from Hong Kong.

**Figure 18: Top 10 Sources of Immigrants to Greater Vancouver, 1991 to 1996**

While family reunion still is a major channel for the Chinese to immigrate to Canada, more and more Chinese immigrants came to Canada as business immigrants and independent skill workers. The factors that propel the new Chinese influx are changing from economic reasons to political concerns. The return of Hong Kong to Mainland China, the fear of Taiwan’s independence and political repression in China were main reasons for these new immigrants to leave their homeland.
• Settlement Pattern of Chinese-Canadian Community

In the past decade, the settlement pattern of Chinese-Canadians in Greater Vancouver has been changing from the central area of Vancouver to the suburbs. The population in Vancouver's Chinatown was decreasing in the 1980s and the 1990s. From 1986 to 1991, the total population in Chinatown dropped by 28.8% (City of Vancouver, 1996). The suburban municipalities in Greater Vancouver, especially Richmond, Burnaby, Coquitlam and Surrey, have experienced a rapid increase in the Chinese-Canadian population (Table 3).

The settlement areas are different among the immigrants from different regions. People from Hong Kong were the top contributors to the immigration totals for the following municipalities: Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Port Moody. The Taiwanese represented the largest group of immigrants in West Vancouver, Langley Township, Maple Ridge, and Langley City (GVRD 1998).

Table 3: Distribution of Chinese-Canadian in Greater Vancouver, 1991 and 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Chinese-Canadian Population</th>
<th>Chinese as % of Total Population</th>
<th>Chinese as % of Total Chinese-Canadian Population in Greater Vancouver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>126,624</td>
<td>148,867</td>
<td>20,765</td>
<td>50,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnaby</td>
<td>158,858</td>
<td>179,209</td>
<td>19,810</td>
<td>40,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coquitlam</td>
<td>84,021</td>
<td>101,820</td>
<td>5,785</td>
<td>15,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>245,173</td>
<td>304,477</td>
<td>5,163</td>
<td>14,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>471,844</td>
<td>514,008</td>
<td>102,950</td>
<td>143,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>456,224</td>
<td>583,284</td>
<td>12,315</td>
<td>25,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Vancouver</td>
<td>1,542,744</td>
<td>1,831,665</td>
<td>166,790</td>
<td>288,780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increasing Chinese-Canadian population, the changing background of new immigrants, and the emergence of a new middle class have created a growing and influential market. A survey showed that the Chinese population in Vancouver had an estimated $500 million in spending power in 1996. The personal income of the Chinese-Canadians in Greater Vancouver was almost 14% higher than the Canadian average (Sampling, Modelling and Research Technologies Inc., Toronto, 1996). Since this market is tied to the inflow of new immigrants, it is more culturally specific. The new immigrants bring a different consumption pattern to Canada, which is not easy to be accommodated by existing businesses. The new market is also difficult to predict due to the uneven numbers of new immigrants to Greater Vancouver each year.

3-2: Immigration Policy

It is obvious that immigration policies in Canada have played the most important role shaping the Chinese-Canadian community. Research on the history of Chinese-Canadian community shows that the social structure and economic activities of Chinese-Canadians before the Second World War were largely produced by government policy toward Chinese immigrants (Li 1988, 1998, Anderson 1991). No other ethnic group, aside from the aboriginal people, had experienced such harsh treatment in Canada as the Chinese. They had been virtually reduced to second-class citizens in Canada for over ninety years since they come to Canada in 1850s. Subjected to social, economic and residential segregation in Canadian society, they responded by retreating to their own ethnic enclave to avoid competition and hostility from the white majority. The emergence of ethnic business and community organizations in Chinese-Canadian communities before the Second World War, which laid
the foundation of Chinatown, had more to do with the unfavorable external conditions than with whatever traditional culture might have been transplanted from China.

Changes inside the Chinese-Canadian community after the Second World War, especially after 1967, have been directly effected by the new immigration policy in Canada. To explore the mechanism by which immigration policy in Canada has influenced the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver, this part of the thesis focuses on different roles played by immigrants in different immigration categories.

- **Immigration Categories**

According to immigration policy in Canada, there are four basic categories under which persons may apply for permanent residence in Canada:

1. **Family class** immigrants are those persons who are immediate family members (i.e., spouses, unmarried dependent children, parents, grandparents, siblings under 19 years and unmarried, nieces, nephews, etc.) of Canadian citizens or permanent residents who may be sponsored.

2. **Independent Immigrant** are persons who qualify under a point system of immigration selection based primarily on occupational skills that are deemed to benefit the Canadian economy. The point system of immigrant selection is designed to link the arrival of immigrants with Canada's labour needs.

3. **Business Immigrants** are persons who qualify for immigration pursuant to a sophisticated legislative selection and processing system. The programs set up in
Canada for business immigration are entrepreneurs, investors, self-employed persons and family business applications.

4. **Refugees** are accepted on the basis of Canada’s commitment to the protection of persecuted peoples pursuant to its obligations as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Refugees

In Greater Vancouver, the numbers of family class immigrants decreased in recent years. The independent immigrants and their dependents accounted for more than half of total immigrants in 1996. Business immigrants were relatively stable between 1994 to 1996. (Table 4)

**Table 4: Vancouver Profile of Immigrants in Different Categories (1994 to 1996)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td>13,430</td>
<td>32.04</td>
<td>11,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Immigrant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Primary Applicant)</td>
<td>4,862</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>6,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Immigrant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Spouse or Dependent)</td>
<td>7,410</td>
<td>17.68</td>
<td>9,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Primary Applicant)</td>
<td>2,668</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>1,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Spouse or Dependent)</td>
<td>7,735</td>
<td>18.45</td>
<td>4,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refugees</strong></td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>4,415</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>1,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>41,920</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>38,166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Immigration and Citizenship Canada, 1997

There are not enough survey data available to show the proportion of immigrants in different categories who participated in the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centre. The surveys and interviews do indicate that immigrants in all categories have been involved in the development process (Table 5). The business class (Entrepreneurs and Investors) and
independent immigrants are major participants in the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres.

Table 5: The Roles of Immigrants in "Chinese" Shopping Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Developer</th>
<th>Investor</th>
<th>Business Owner</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family class</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Immigrant</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Immigrants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investors</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed Persons</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Business Immigrant in the Development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres**

The survey found that there is a mix of reasons for people to be involved in the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The reasons reflect the impact of immigration policy on their decisions. The business immigrants played a major role in the developments.

The business immigration program is designed directly to achieve the economic goals of immigration in Canada. Started in 1976, Canada has developed one of the most comprehensive business immigration programs in the world. The current business immigration program (entrepreneur, investor, self-employed person and family business applications) seeks to promote economic development and employment by attracting international businesspersons to Canada, based on their ability to successfully establish themselves in Canada. The key aspect of the business immigration program is to develop new economic opportunities for Canadians, and to improve Canada’s access to global markets by permitting persons familiar with those markets to make Canada their new home.
Smaller in total number (Lesser than three percent of total immigrants each year nationwide, business class immigrants have made great contributions to the economic development of Canada.

Between 1991 and 1996, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea ranked as the top three sources of business immigration in Canada. The number of business immigrants from Mainland China showed a remarkable increase after 1994. The rank of Mainland China as the source of business immigration has changed from number 16 in 1994 to number 4 in 1996. Together the three Chinese immigrant sources (Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China) accounted for more than 60 percent of the total Business Immigrants (principal applicants only) in Canada between 1994 and 1996. (Table 6). Hong Kong, the primary source, accounted for 44.45% in 1994 and 37.52% in 1996.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>1994 Rank</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1995 Rank</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1996 Rank</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3,122</td>
<td>44.45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,778</td>
<td>33.59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,308</td>
<td>37.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>16.43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>17.26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,181</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea South</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>9.92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China-mainland</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany W.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Top Ten only</td>
<td>-5,586</td>
<td>79.53</td>
<td>-4,124</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>-5,002</td>
<td>81.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Other Countries</td>
<td>-1,438</td>
<td>20.47</td>
<td>-1,170</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>-1,149</td>
<td>18.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-7,024</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-5,294</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-6,151</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Chinese</td>
<td>-4335</td>
<td>62.00</td>
<td>-2833</td>
<td>53.51</td>
<td>-3704</td>
<td>60.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Immigration and Citizenship Canada, 1998
In B.C. the number of business class immigrants has increased very quickly in the early 1990s. Between 1994 and 1996, the number of business immigrants to Greater Vancouver exceeded those going to Toronto, with more than 35 percent of total business immigrants to Canada coming to Greater Vancouver, and more than half of investor immigrants coming to B.C. It is reported that about 80 percent of investor immigrants eventually end up in Greater Vancouver. Moreover, quite a number of business class immigrants who initially go to another province (where they only have to invest $250,000 instead of BC's requirement of $350,000) are known to eventually move to Vancouver.

The business immigrants, especially the entrepreneurs and investors have played the most remarkable role in the development of the "Chinese" Shopping Centre. There are several different reasons that drive business immigrants to become involved in the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centre:

(A) To remove "immigration conditions"

"Immigration Conditions" is a unique requirement for entrepreneurial immigrants. The entrepreneur immigration Program in Canada is intended for successful businesspersons whose backgrounds are suitable for managing small to medium-sized enterprises. An entrepreneurial applicant who is approved will be granted an immigrant visa subject to certain terms and conditions that must be met. Within a period of not more than two years after the entrepreneur's landing, the entrepreneur has to establish, purchase or make a substantial investment in a business or commercial venture in Canada that will make a significant contribution to the
economy. Employment opportunities have to be created or continued in Canada for one or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents other than the entrepreneur and his/her dependents.

An entrepreneurial immigrant has to show the immigration officer evidence of efforts to comply with the terms and conditions. If the terms and conditions of the immigrant visa are not met, the immigrant could be subject to an immigration inquiry and subsequently deported. He/she will be required to report to a local Canada Immigration Centre before the end of the first 12-month period after landing, to submit a report on the progress that has been made in establishing or purchasing and managing a business. The entrepreneur may be required to report once again before the end of the second 12-month period for verification that the terms and conditions of his/her business establishment have been fulfilled.

To remove the conditions in two years is not a easy task for most new immigrants. Unfamiliar with the economic environment in Canada, language problems force some entrepreneurs to look for business opportunities inside the Chinese-Canadian community. The "Chinese" Shopping Centre supplies not only spaces for them, but also, more importantly, an environment that they are familiar with and assistance they can rely on. They can either open a new business in the "Chinese" Shopping Centre, or purchase an existing business, to meet the requirements of immigration. The total number of such businesses in Richmond's "Chinese" Shopping Centres is unknown, because the number of interviews was not enough, and some owners of business in "Chinese" Shopping
Centres did want to divulge whether they use their business in a "Chinese" Shopping Centre in order to remove the conditions. The chairman of the strata corporation in Parker Place Shopping Centre estimated that about 10 percent of the owners in the Centre are new entrepreneurial immigrants who may use their businesses to remove the conditions. The pre-sale record of Canada Asian Centre showed that about 25 percent of purchasers (15 out of total 57 in December of 1997) intended to open a business for removing the conditions.

(B) To diversify business

For entrepreneurial immigrants, not just any kind of business can meet the requirements of immigration conditions. The province has its own economic priorities and lists of desirable businesses as well as businesses that are deemed totally unsuitable for stimulating the provincial economy. In order to meet the conditions, some entrepreneurial immigrants have to establish, purchase or invest in a business in which they do not have experiences (like agriculture). Then they open other businesses in the "Chinese" Shopping Centres to do business over which they have more control. The business in a "Chinese" Shopping Centre can create jobs for their family members, and even the entrepreneurial immigrants themselves.

Opening businesses in a "Chinese" Shopping Centre to diversify investment is also a common practice for investor immigrants. The investor immigration category is intended for successful businesspersons who wish to immigrate to Canada and invest in an enterprise here but who do not wish to participate in its management. The Canadian
government's requirements for an investor are that: (1) the investor must have operated, controlled or directed a financially successful business or commercial undertaking, (2) The investor must have accumulated, by his/her own endeavours, a net worth of $500,000. (3) The investor must make an irrevocable investment of a minimum of $250,000 for at least five years. In British Columbia, a minimum investment of $350,000 is required. This investment must be in a government-approved business or fund. The money must be locked in for a period of five years and does not guarantee a return. The investor does not have to settle in the province of investment.

The one advantage to acquiring an Immigrant Investor class Canadian Immigrant visa is that once the immigrant has been granted a visa, there are no other terms and conditions to be met. The other is that the immigrant does not need to be involved in the day-to-day management of the business (or fund) in which the immigrant has invested.

Immigrants in the investor category have more freedom to conduct their own business after investing in government-approved businesses or funds. On the other hand, if they invest in a fund as most investors did, they do not have control over their investment. If they want to operate a business by themselves, or create jobs for family members, they have to further invest in other businesses. Investing in "Chinese" Shopping Centres is one of the solutions for them.

(C) To invest
There are two major ways for business immigrants to invest in a "Chinese" Shopping Centre. The first is to invest in the development companies. In Canada Asian Centre Development Inc., three out of seven shareholders in 1997 were entrepreneurial immigrants who either have businesses, which met the immigration condition, or their conditions were already removed. In Richmond, almost all "Chinese" Shopping Centres' development companies have shareholders who were investor immigrants. Half of the shareholders in Canada Asian Centre are investors. They either have invested in a business or fund, or had already become Canadian citizens.

The second way is to invest in strata-titled units. A substantial numbers of strata titled units owners in "Chinese" Shopping Centres did not open business by themselves. They purchased the units for investment purposes. The units they purchased during the pre-sale were rented to other people, or sold when the price of the units was getting higher. In the new projects like Canada Asian Centre, Pacific Plaza, Continental Square, the portion of units purchased by people who just invest in the units is larger than that in the existing centres.

- **Independent immigrants in "Chinese" Shopping Centre**

Independent immigrants, also called the skilled worker class are subject to a point system, which is designed to reflect what is needed to succeed in Canada's labour market. To be eligible for permanent residence status the immigrant must receive 70 points. Points are awarded for such things as age, education and facility in the English and/or French languages. The immigrant must also have work experience in an occupation which is in
demand in Canada. These occupations include accountants, engineers, technicians, technologists, secretaries, computer repairers, analysts and programmers. There are over 900 occupations currently in demand.

Independent immigrants in Canada have increased very quickly in recent years. In 1995, the number of this group exceeded the family class and became the largest group. Thirty-eight percent of the total immigrants in 1995 were independent immigrants and their dependents. The percentage increased to 49 percent in 1997. (OECD, 1998). In Greater Vancouver, independent immigrants and their dependents accounted about 44 percent of total immigrants in 1995, and almost a half (49.8 per cent) in 1996.

Because independent immigrants are people with professional education and work experiences, and intend to continue their careers in Canada, it is somehow surprising to see their involvement in retail and services. In fact, they have participated in all aspects of the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The survey found that there are substantial number of business owners in "Chinese" Shopping Centres who immigrated to Canada as independent immigrants. While the professional services in "Chinese" Shopping Centres are largely conducted by independent immigrants, their businesses range from clothing stores to food services. Five store owners in Parker Place Shopping Centre who are independent immigrants indicated that their businesses in the Centre have nothing to do with their education background and profession in Hong Kong.
In "Chinese" Shopping Centres, independent immigrants are also involved as investors in strata-titled units, even as developers. The immigration requirements for independent immigrants are considered to be the most straightforward compared with those for business immigrants. According an immigration consultant, some immigrants who are qualified as entrepreneurs or investors easily find that they also can immigrate to Canada as independent immigrants. They could avoid the immigration conditions or investment requirements for business immigrants by applying for independent immigration, a "much cheaper way" of immigration. This situation may explain the investment power of independent immigrants in "Chinese" Shopping Centres. In Canada Asian Centre, the shareholder who owned the largest portion of shares in the company was an independent immigrant instead of business immigrants who are obviously more qualified.

Although Canadian immigration policy sets up a series of goals which include demographic, cultural, social, linguistic and economic goals, the ultimate goal of immigration policy is to boost economic development in Canada. Despite the economic benefits brought in by immigrants to Greater Vancouver there has been some dissatisfaction with the immigration policy frequently aired in the popular press and published research. One criticism related to "Chinese" Shopping Centres is that the businesses conducted by immigrants have not integrated with B.C.'s economy, but have created their own economy instead. It is partially true in the case of development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. However, instead of blaming immigrants, one may argue that the immigration policy in Canada, which fails to give realistic consideration to immigrants' employment and investment, has created this separate economy.
3-3 Overseas Investment

One dimension of growing linkages between Greater Vancouver and the Asia Pacific region, especially Hong Kong, China and Taiwan, is increasing investment from Asia to property development in Greater Vancouver. From well known projects such as Pacific Place, Coal Harbour to thousands of condominium units, capital movement from Asia to Greater Vancouver has been directed into Vancouver's property market from cities such as Hong Kong and Taipei. In this process land values have increased, dominant patterns of urban form have been altered, and social change has been spurred on. This is particularly true in the downtown core, the suburbs such as Richmond, Surrey and Coquitlam, and in specific segments of the property market such as the condominium market and retail shopping centres discussed here.

Overseas investments have played critical roles in the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The first "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver, Aberdeen Centre, was made possible by financial support from Hong Kong when local developers were unable to carry on this relatively large project. Developers' mother companies directly funded Yaohan Centre and President Plaza. The new, large-scale development projects such as Crystal Square, Henderson Centre and Canada Asian Centre mainly relied on investment from overseas. The overseas investments in "Chinese" Shopping Centre are not only from the major sources such as Hong Kong and Taiwan, but also from Mainland China (Canada Asian Centre) and South Korea (Crystal Square).
Research on overseas Chinese investment in Greater Vancouver has mainly focused on large-scale residential development projects. Similar to the motivation and mechanism of residential development, the overseas investments in "Chinese" Shopping Centres were channeled to Greater Vancouver for the following major reasons:

(A) Market Opportunities

Market opportunities created by the steady flow of Chinese immigrants into Greater Vancouver attracted investors to catch this new market. They could adopt the development methods and marketing strategies with which the new immigrants were familiar. While local developers have not yet realized the market opportunities, or have hesitated to face the potential risks, the overseas developers feel comfortable to invest because they have a better understanding than local developers in terms of the needs of new immigrants and their buying habits.

(B) Supportive Socio-cultural Atmosphere in Greater Vancouver

The supportive socio-cultural atmosphere in Greater Vancouver enhanced capital accumulation in Vancouver. The public and private sectors in Vancouver have made much effort during the 1980s and 1990s to build connections across the Pacific, and to transform Vancouver into Canada's "gateway" to the Pacific Rim. Since the late 1980s, Greater Vancouver has been turned into a relatively welcoming and "open" Western city for Asian investors. An open social structure was important, for it enabled the overseas Chinese developers to become respected players within the business mainstream immediately.
(C) Diversify Property Portfolios

Investing in the property development market enabled the developers to diversify their property portfolios outside Hong Kong, Mainland China, Taiwan and other parts of Asia. While the investment return is unspectacular by Asian standards, it is steady in Canada. It also allowed developers to establish a long-term North American base for future development initiatives. Along with material goals, the goal of diversifying property portfolios overseas was also driven by political and economic conditions in the developers' home countries. The major "push" force, which drove new immigrants to leave Hong Kong and Mainland China, was the fear of potential political problems in those regions. The declaration of Hong Kong's return to China in 1984, The 1989 Tiananmen incident, political uncertainty in Hong Kong after July of 1997, the independence movement in Taiwan, the tension between Mainland China and Taiwan, political and economic uncertainty in Mainland China. All of these factors also pushed the developers to diversify their investments in stable, safe places such as Canada and US.

(D) Connection

Connection, or guanxi in Chinese, is a fashionable term to describe the "Chinese way "of doing business (Kunin and Lary, 1997). Guanxi is a dynamic concept, embedded in Chinese social life, and is continuously being redefined. Most common guanxi in business circles include some family members, close relatives, friendship circles and acquaintances. This concept has been interpreted as the core of Confucian ethics by
several Western scholars such as Max Weber, Talcott Parsons, and Ezra Vogel, as it has been seen as being instrumental in forging business networks. Business' *guanxi* may help to make introductions, secure contracts, deal with officials and avoid problems.

While the importance of *guanxi* for Chinese business, especially for ethnic Chinese business in North America, were overstated by some western researchers, it is still an important factor which affects the direction and progress of overseas Chinese investment. In Aberdeen Centre, the family ties had given Thomas Fong financial support from Hong Kong. Former staff who has immigrated to Canada handled Taiwanese investment in President Plaza. A retired Chinese government business representative, who immigrated to Canada in 1987, initially introduced Mainland Chinese investment in Canada Asian Centre. The overseas investors usually look for business partners or managers, even employees though their *guanxi* instead of advertising.

Aside from the major driving forces discussed above, some social-cultural elements in Chinese-Canadian community also have boosted the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The difference in language between Cantonese speakers from Hong Kong and Mandarin speakers from Taiwan and Mainland China was one consideration in the initial stage of Canada Asian Centre project which was intended to attract Mandarin-speaking immigrants. The projects developed by relatively new immigrants ("Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond) and those developed by earlier immigrants (such as Crystal Square), show different approaches to the market.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Characteristics of "Chinese" Shopping Centres

Comparisons with the traditional Chinese enclave of Chinatown, as well as with conventional shopping centres reveal that "Chinese" Shopping Centres have unique characteristics. Social and economic functions and development mechanisms distinguish "Chinese" Shopping Centres from traditional Chinatown. The differences between "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver and conventional shopping centres in North American cities suggest that a new development category should be created to address the land use planning and development issues related to the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres.

4-1 Characteristics of the "Chinese" Shopping Centre

The development of new business and residential districts in the suburbs of North American cities that have received large numbers of new Chinese immigrants, such as Richmond Hill, Markham and Scarborough in the Toronto area, Monterey Park in Los Angeles, Queens in New York, have become a new topic for researchers of immigration issues. Although the differences between those new urban phenomenon and historical Chinatowns are realized, the terms such as "New Chinatown", "Suburban Chinatown" are commonly used, which express a conceptual understanding that the new business and residential districts are fundamentally the same as Chinatown. In fact, "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the 1990s were built under different social and economic conditions and with different development mechanisms (as discussed in Chapters Two and Three).
They also play different roles in the Chinese-Canadian community.

The functions of "Chinese" Shopping Centres can be briefly summarized below:

- **Business and Employment Bases**
  The "Chinese" Shopping Centre developments have created small business bases and jobs for Chinese-Canadians, especially new immigrants who do not have the language facility or knowledge of mainstream options. They have also created peripheral jobs for others, such as construction jobs, professional service jobs for non-Chinese-Canadians.

- **Investment Tools**
  The "Chinese" Shopping Centres have created channels which make it possible for entrepreneurial immigrants, investors, and overseas capital to invest in Greater Vancouver. The investments have not only benefited the Chinese-Canadian community, but most importantly, they have also contributed to society at large.

- **Transitional Function**
  As "Chinese" Shopping Centres have housed large numbers of small businesses operated by new immigrants, and have created opportunities for new immigrants to settle into the new environment and become familiar with the business environment.

- **Social Functions**
  The concentration of businesses and services in "Chinese" Shopping Centres enables new immigrant businesses to support each other, to attract a larger customer base. Inside
strata-titled "Chinese" Shopping Centres, the competition among the same kind of business is limited by strata cooperation regulations. Through management terms and other businesses and services, new immigrants can gain knowledge of doing business in Canada and receive assistance to deal with problems.

- **Cultural Function**

"Chinese" Shopping Centres incubate a new business culture, which combines Chinese business tradition and modern business dynamics of Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China with Canadian culture.

4-2 "Chinese" Shopping Centre and Chinatown

Vancouver's Chinatown is the largest in Canada, and in North America it is second only to San Francisco. The historic core of Chinatown is found along Pender on both sides of Main Street. The broader district is generally located between Hastings and Union and between Gore and Carrall. It had served as a major economic, social, and cultural hub for the Chinese-Canadian population throughout Greater Vancouver. With over 100 years of history and culture behind it, it is not difficult to understand why Chinatown is still regarded as the centre of the Chinese community.

At first a home to a pool of inexpensive labour, the Chinese community and Chinatown grew and persevered despite the prejudices and systematic discrimination that prevailed in the first half of this century. World War II brought dramatic change in the status of the Chinese and Chinatown, as China fought as Canada's ally in the Pacific. This new appreciation translated into increased business and a boost to Chinatown's economy. The
1960's saw the community band together to successfully defeat a freeway planned to cut through its neighbourhood. In the early 1970's the province, at the request of the city, designated the core area of Chinatown as a historic district.

Compared to the development of Chinatown before the Second World War, the "Chinese" Shopping Centres of the 1990s are a new form of urban development with different development motivations and mechanisms.

- **Initiative Response**

Contrary to the development of historical Chinatown, which was a result of passive reaction to the hostile environment, the development process and driving forces indicate that the "Chinese" Shopping Centres were initiated responses to the changing retail market of Greater Vancouver. Although Canadian immigration policy pushed the formation process of such shopping centres, the "pull" factors are more powerful in the development process. The increasing Chinese-Canadian population in Greater Vancouver has created a new market, which provided new investment opportunities for immigrants themselves, and afflicted overseas capital. The higher investment return pulled developers and investors to the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. For new immigrants, operating a business in a "Chinese" Shopping Centre is a fast and convenient way to establish a business in a new country. The "Chinese" Shopping Centre makes it possible for them to operate their businesses according to their preference, and to create jobs for their family members.
• Development dynamic

Physically, the development of Chinatown in Vancouver was dominated by various Chinese-Canadian organizations. The political/fraternal associations, such as Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA), Zhi Gong Dang (Chinese Freemasons), and Guomingdang (Kuomintang, a branch of Nationalist Party in China), owned a large portion of major buildings in Chinatown. Almost all clan and place of origin associations and commercial and trade associations built their own buildings as gathering places as well as business ventures. The individual development conducted by a small elite of well-to-do merchants was limited in number.

The funding for association-owned buildings in Chinatown came from contributions of their members. While the collective ownership of the buildings allowed the members to equally access the services and employment opportunities, the popularity of an association and economic condition of its members affected the quality and maintenance of the building. Collective ownership also kept these buildings stable for nearly a century.

As discussed in Chapter Two and Three, the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres is based on individual business decisions. As a result of the arrival of new affluent Chinese immigrants and a growing number of Canadians born in Canada, a new Chinese-Canadian middle class has emerged. Different from the people who settled in Chinatown before the Second World War, this new middle class has more autonomy and control over their lives, instead of relying on the support from organizations. Although they are
still the most important financial supporters of major Chinese-Canadian organizations, such as SUCCESS and Chinese Culture Centre, the new immigrants prefer to make investment decisions and own their properties individually. Their social and political activities are now separated from their economic activities.

- Urban Context

Due to the circumstance of institutional discrimination against the Chinese before the Second World War, Chinatown was the only safe place for Chinese-Canadian to live and work. The development of Chinatown was confined to the cheapest district on the fringe of the city where it was unattractive to the white community. The social and economic activities in Chinatown were virtually confined inside Chinatown. An invisible "wall" cut Chinatown out of the urban fabric. Chinatown was a complete "city" inside the city.

Unlike the traditional Chinatown, and the theoretical ethnic enclave, which features self-contained institutions, the new "Chinese" Shopping Centres, and places like the Aberdeen Centre area in Richmond, are integrated parts of urban developments. The developments follow the existing zoning regulations and land use patterns. More importantly, they have become one of the major development forces, contributing to the realization of the Regional Town Centre plan in Greater Vancouver.

4-3: "Chinese" Shopping Centre and Conventional Shopping Centres
A shopping centre in North America is usually defined as a complex of retail stores and related facilities planned as a unified group to give maximum shopping convenience to the customer and maximum exposure to the merchandise. The concept of shopping centre is not new, as early prototypes of modern shopping centres can be found in the *agora* of a typical city of ancient Greece and the Arabian *souk*, or market, of the Middle Ages. However, the past three decades have seen such a tremendous development in planned shopping centres in North America that today's centre has, in fact, become a new building type as well as a new industry.

Population growth in the suburbs, increased car ownership, and inadequate downtowns in most North American cities have driven the development of the shopping centres after World War II. Eventually, each suburban area soon had its own major shopping centre and several minor ones.

In the Greater Vancouver area, the first suburban shopping centre, Park Royal Shopping Centre, opened in 1945, followed by Oakridge Centre in 1959. Other malls quickly sprouted outside the City of Vancouver. The shopping centres in Richmond, Coquitlam and Surrey soon became the anchors for new communities and business districts. In the early 1980s, the framework of shopping centres in Greater Vancouver was fully developed, and no new major shopping centres were developed after 1980, except some expansion of existing shopping centres.
The development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres starting from the late 1980s represented a new wave of shopping centre development in Greater Vancouver. When the first Asian commercial area was proposed in Richmond, the general public and local retail development experts considered it as breaking many of the standard rules of shopping mall development in North America in terms of location, layout, marketing and financing. They doubted that it would be a success, let alone ever being duplicated. Over the years Aberdeen Centre has proved to be great success and has been followed by numerous other similar and successful projects, from Richmond to other parts of the Great Vancouver.

It is necessary to compare the conventional shopping centre with "Chinese" shopping centres to see whether there are differences, and why they are different if there are.

- **Trade Area and Location**

  The shopping centre in North American cities are generally classified into four categories on the basis of the type of tenants, size, and function: neighborhood shopping centre, community shopping centre, regional shopping centre and downtown shopping centre. (Table 7)

  The difference between the types of shopping centre and their locations is largely due to the defined trade area. That is, the geographic area from which the major portion of the patronage necessary to support the shopping centre is to be drawn. The primary trade area that accounts for 60 to 70 percent of a shopping centre's sales usually has a radius of approximately 2.5 kilometer for a neighbourhood shopping centre, 5 to 8 kilometer for a community shopping centre, and 10 to 15 kilometer for a regional shopping centre.
Additional shoppers may come from the secondary trade area, the area for a regional centre that is about 15 to 20 minutes' driving time from the primary trade area and that normally accounts for 15 to 20 percent of sales.

Table 7: Shopping Centre in Greater Vancouver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Neighborhood Shopping Centre</th>
<th>Community Shopping Centre</th>
<th>Regional Shopping Centre</th>
<th>Downtown Shopping Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchor</td>
<td>Supermarket or drugstore</td>
<td>Variety, discount, or junior department store</td>
<td>One or more full-line department stores</td>
<td>One or more full-line department stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Stores</td>
<td>10-25</td>
<td>25-50</td>
<td>50-150 or more</td>
<td>Varied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical Gross Leasable Area (square feet)</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>400,000+</td>
<td>Varied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Gross Leasable Area (square feet)</td>
<td>30,000 - 100,000</td>
<td>100,000 - 300,000</td>
<td>300,000 - 750,000</td>
<td>Varied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical Site Area (acres)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>30 -50+</td>
<td>Varied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Support Required (Population)</td>
<td>2500 -40,000</td>
<td>40,000-100,000</td>
<td>150,000+</td>
<td>Varied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Arbutus Shopping Centre</td>
<td>City Square, Middlegate Mall</td>
<td>Richmond Centre. Metrotown Centre</td>
<td>Pacific Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Floyd (1987)

Defining the trade area for a new shopping centre is a tool to measure the potential market for retail and competition from nearby existing shopping centres. The trade area is a major factor in deciding the suitable size of shopping centre on a given site. It is very crucial for a new shopping centre not to have an overlapped primary trade area with the similar existing shopping centre. Theoretically speaking, the overlap will cause serious competition between
the shopping centres. One or both of them may not survive because of the limited share of
market. For example, when Lansdown Park Shopping Centre in Richmond opened in 1977, it
was the only regional shopping centre in Richmond. Its competitor, Richmond Square, was
much smaller than it is now. Lansdown dominated Richmond's retail market until Richmond
Square was expanded into a larger regional shopping centre, Richmond Centre. The distance
between these two regional shopping centres is so close that Lansdown Park Shopping
Centre has lost its market dramatically. It has been on the edge of closure for many years
since the opening of Richmond Centre.

The planner and developer in North America are fully aware of the importance of the trade
area. Municipal governments usually have planning policies to avoid duplication of similar
commercial developments by reviewing economic impact of new development proposals.

However, "Chinese" Shopping Centres have not followed the rules of the trade area. In
Richmond, nine similar "Chinese" Shopping Centres were concentrated in a relatively small
area. One explanation for this phenomenon is that the importance of the trade area for the
"Chinese" Shopping Centre is lost to the "trade population". Increasing Chinese population in
Greater Vancouver created a market, which is growing each year. For a new project, the
target market is only part of a net increase of the population in the whole region, not in a
limited area. Financial ability of a developer and availability of land largely determined the
size of each "Chinese" Shopping Centre. The concentration of several "Chinese" Shopping
Centres in Richmond would not create serious problems as long as the Chinese-Canadian
population continues to increase. In fact, the "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Aberdeen area formed a regional shopping area for the Chinese-Canadian community.

Except Henderson Centre and Crystal Square, in which the "Chinese" Shopping Centres are only one component of the project located inside existing town centre areas, the "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond and Surrey are intended to locate on the outside of town centres. One explanation is that the goods and services in "Chinese" Shopping Centres are so different that they do not need to be interdependent with existing "non-Chinese" retail in the town centre areas. So the location of "Chinese" Shopping Centres can be anywhere as far as transportation is convenient enough for the shoppers.

In Richmond, before the first wave of "Chinese" Shopping Centres was developed in 1993, the surrounding area largely consisted of industrial facilities and warehouses. Although the land use pattern in adjacent areas was obviously not compatible with the retail shopping centre, the developers believed that the location of the Aberdeen area, which is in the middle of Vancouver and Richmond City Centre, could attract shoppers in Richmond and Vancouver. Because No.3 Road in Richmond is a major transportation corridor linking Richmond and Vancouver, parking for a shopping centre in the Aberdeen area is much easier than in Chinatown. The Canada Asian Centre has a similar location consideration. The project is between Whalley and Guildford Town Centres, along 104 Avenue.

The cost of land is a major factor in any shopping centre development. For "Chinese" Shopping Centres, which need relatively large lots as conventional community shopping
centres, the land is simply not available in existing town centres in Greater Vancouver at an affordable cost. For strata-titled shopping centres, the land cost directly affects the sale price of the units.

- **Size**

The main factor influencing the size of a "Chinese" Shopping Centre is the financing ability of the developer at the time of conducting the project, not the overall market potential for the project. Independent investors carry out most "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond with relatively limited financing capacity. The typical size of "Chinese" Shopping Centre in Richmond is around 10,000 square metres.

The size of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver also reflects the investment tradition of Canadian-Chinese developers. The developers were aware of the risks involved in development. They intended to start from a small size project to test the market, then another project to catch the remaining market. One example is Fairchild's developments of Aberdeen Centre, Parker Place Shopping Centre and Fairchild Square. The several projects developed by Western Development Ltd. including Continental Centre, Admiralty Centre, and Union Square, also showed a step by step model for development.

The increasing size of the projects reflects the changes of the players in the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The direct involvement of overseas capital enhanced the ability in developing the "Chinese" Shopping Centre. President Plaza is an early example of overseas investment. The new projects outside Richmond, Canada Asian Centre, Henderson
Centre and Crystal Square reflect a new direction of future developments: more complete, more acceptable for "mainstream", and more compatible with the regional town centre.

- **Developer and Financing**

The conventional shopping centre is customarily promoted and owned by a developer whose primary motive is a return on his investment in the long term by leasing the space to anchor stores and other merchants. The new trend in development is the participation of ownership by institutions, such as insurance companies and financial companies. Financially, the development of a shopping centre depends on a long-term loan, or direct investment from financial institutions. The amount of loan can be as high as 90% of the total project budget. The developer may borrow interim money, or short-term loan from a bank to cover the cost of construction since the long-term loan usually does not become available until completion of the project. The long-term loan and ownership by financial institutions allow developers to look for long-term, stable income from the shopping centre, instead of short-term return. Leasing space to established department stores and franchise retail stores is the key to a successful shopping centre, because it guarantees a continued income for the developer and the owner.

For "Chinese" Shopping Centres, financing for the project relies solely on the individual developers' investment and short-term construction loan from banks. The intention of the developer is to gain short-term investment return by selling strata titled units, rather than long-term property ownership. The pre-sale of strata-titled units is crucial for a project.
because it allows the developer to shift the risk to the buyer. The investment turnover time, gearing levels and carrying costs are significantly reduced by pre-sale.

4-4 Impact of "Chinese" Shopping Centres

• Social Impact

The development of the "Chinese" Shopping Centre has created a mix of reactions from the public. They obviously directly benefit the Chinese-Canadian community. They supply the goods and service that Chinese-Canadians need, job opportunities for new immigrants and a business base for entrepreneurs and investors.

For long-time residents in the suburban cities, the reaction is different. In Richmond, there were some reports that the long-time residents welcomed the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in their city. In the public meeting on the expansion plan of Aberdeen Centre, several non-Chinese-Canadian residents who live nearby the Aberdeen area supported the plan. In the public consultation process for the Canada Asian Centre project, there was no noticeable voices arising from the adjacent neighborhood, a largely non-Chinese-Canadian community. The support from the local government was more positive because the development would increase the tax base for the local municipality.

However, they were also some negative responses from not only the local community, but the non-Chinese-Canadian community at large. In Richmond, the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centre has changed the image of the Aberdeen area such that many long-time Richmond residents feel that they are becoming "foreigners" in their own city. In a letter to
the local newspaper, one resident thought that "(Aberdeen area) is now out of bounds to us, and we hope that the development is not allowed to extend any further or our beloved city of Richmond will be shrinking for us as it grows for others." One Richmond resident expressed her discomfort in visiting Aberdeen Centre where "everyone stared at us as though we had two heads" (The Richmond Review, January 5, 1994). For a non-Chinese-Canadian, the "Chinese" Shopping Centres are "Chinese-only" or "Asian-Only" shopping centres. They have been aliened in the place they call home. More seriously, some residents thought that they were being discriminated against, that racism was in reverse at Richmond's "Chinese" Shopping Centres.

Chinese-language signs, unfriendly attitudes toward non-Chinese-Canadians, and Chinese-style merchandise are the most often mentioned reasons that non-Chinese-Canadians feel they are not welcome in the "Chinese" Shopping Centres. The signs in existing "Chinese" Shopping Centres are predominantly written in Chinese, but the reaction and objection to Chinese-language signs may have little to do with them being incomprehensible to English-speakers, as almost all the stores in the "Chinese" Shopping centres display English signs simultaneously. The communication problems between the salespersons and English-speaking customers sometime make the shopping unpleasant because of the salespersons' insufficient English language skill. It is no doubt that the marketing strategy of "Chinese" Shopping Centres is targeted at Chinese-Canadian community by supplying specialty merchandise and services. In fact, this market orientation was key for "Chinese" Shopping Centres to emerge and survive in Greater Vancouver's retail market.
Responding to the reaction from the non-Chinese-Canadian community, the existing "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond and new development projects in other municipalities have tried to change their images as "Chinese-only" shopping centres. Six of Richmond's biggest "Chinese" Shopping Centre (Aberdeen Centre, Parker Place Shopping Centre, Yaohan Centre, Central Square, Fairchild Square and President Plaza) have joined forces to attract more non-Chinese to the centres. They promoted themselves as "Asian West", a shopping destination for all Canadians and visitors. The changes they introduced in the centres included adopting signs in English, encouraging salespersons to speak English, and increasing merchandises, which are suitable for non-Chinese-Canadian shoppers, such as larger-sized shoes and clothing. (The Vancouver Sun, December 6, 1997). The new development projects, such as Crystal Square and Henderson Centre, are trying to attract non-Chinese-Canadian storeowners to the centres in their pre-sale stage to create a mixed shopping environment.

The similar "Chinese" Shopping Centre developments in the Toronto area and US cities, such as "Dragon Mall" in Scarborough (1984) and Chinese business expansion in Markham (1995), commercial development in Monterey Park, have created racial tension between the Chinese communities and local long-time residents. (Li, 1998). The social disputes arising from the "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver are very modest. However, a peaceful situation does not mean that society has fully accepted the "Chinese" Shopping Centre as part of the Canadian urban structure. The "Chinese" Shopping Centres or "Asian malls" are often singled out as "foreigners' shopping centres", not a kind of "Canadian shopping centres", especially in the English media. "Tolerance" is often used to praise the
social acceptance of "Chinese" Shopping Centres, while it never applies to new commercial
development conducted by non-Asians.

- **Economic Impact**

The major concerns regarding the economic impacts of "Chinese" Shopping Centres are their impacts on existing non-Chinese-Canadian businesses in certain areas. The main market niche for "Chinese" Shopping Centre is the special needs of the Chinese-Canadian community. It is easy to draw the conclusion that the economic impact of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development on existing businesses is limited, since the existing businesses have little or no special recognition of the special needs of Chinese-Canadians. City planners in Richmond indicated that, despite the large scale "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the city, there has not been any noticeable negative impact on two existing shopping centres in the city. The "Chinese" Shopping Centres were considered complementary to rather than competitive with existing retail areas. Richmond's experience was used as strong evidence to estimate the economic impact of new "Chinese" Shopping Centre development projects outside Richmond, such as Canada Asian Centre and Henderson Centre.

The numbers of similar "Chinese" Shopping Centres are increasing in Richmond, and the competition among the centres themselves is a major issue for the store owners and businesses in the existing centres. The debate around the Aberdeen Centre expansion plan has made the issue public. Lack of accurate data, such as the number of units, vacancy rate, and sales numbers, make it difficult to measure the performance of existing "Chinese" Shopping Centres. There are no efficient tools to forecast the market potential for a new
project. In the case of the Aberdeen Centre expansion, the city ignored this issue, but it is still a problem to be addressed.

**Land Use Impact**

In Richmond, "Chinese" Shopping Centres are concentrated along No.3 Road and Cambie Road, which was not part of Richmond Town Centre until the city changed the boundary of City Centre in 1997. Canada Asian Centre is also located in the area outside the Surrey Town Centre and Guildford Town Centre. Henderson Centre and Crystal Square, in which shopping centres are a part of mixed-use complex, are located at Coquitlam and Burnaby's Town Centres.

The development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres outside the designated Regional Town Centre areas has changed the commercial land use pattern in Richmond. Before 1990, the commercial centre of Richmond was along No. 3 Road, between Alderbridge Way and Granville Avenue. The two regional shopping centres, Richmond Centre and Lansdowne Park Shopping Centre dominated the retail market. The area in which the "Chinese" Shopping Centres were later built was an automobile-oriented retail area, occupied by car dealers, specialty stores, industry buildings and warehouses. The development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres after 1990 shifted this area into a dynamic retail and service sub-centre in Richmond. Although the zoning for the "Chinese" Shopping Centre sites is still geared toward automobile-oriented retail, the area in fact has changed to a multi-functional urban area, in which retail, services, office, entertainment are mixed. The nature of "Chinese"
Shopping Centres is fundamentally different from the conventional concept of automobile-oriented retail.

The new City Centre Area Plan in Richmond redefined the City Centre Area to include Aberdeen area into the City Centre. The city realized that "Asian market specialization" has enhanced Richmond's economic strength. Aberdeen North, the central area of "Chinese" Shopping Centre was planned as "mixed use-specialty" zone in the new plan (1995).

The emergence of this new sub-centre in Richmond directly attracted more shoppers, especially Chinese-Canadians, to Richmond. The increasing number of shoppers in this area has caused serious traffic congestion and parking shortages. Parking in the "Chinese" Shopping Centres has been so difficult that some shoppers have been discouraged to shop there. City planners estimated that there is at least a 1500 parking space shortage in this area.

This fact may have some thing do with parking requirement for projects in automobile-oriented retail district. Unlike automobile-oriented retail stores, e.g. Canadian Tire and Future Shop, the "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Richmond have attracted far more shoppers. Shoppers stay much longer in "Chinese" Shopping Centre than in the conventional automobile-oriented retail businesses. The regular Chinese-Canadian shopper also visits "Chinese" Shopping Centres more frequently than shoppers of conventional shopping centres do. The parking problem reflects the fact that the existing zoning regulations and project reviews processes are not sufficient to deal with this new type of development. An intensive study should be undertaken in order to establish a new zoning category.
In Richmond, where the "Chinese" Shopping Centres were developed by several individual developers, the city reviewed projects on a case by case basis. The Canada Asian Centre project in Surrey had a master plan for the different phases of development. The planning studies for the project have forecast potential impacts on land use pattern in the Whalley and Guildford area, and suggested land use adjustment in the city's land use plan. The traffic study was based on automobile-oriented commercial zoning (C6). Whether it will repeat the traffic problems in Richmond is unknown since the first phase of the project is only now under construction.

- "Chinese" Shopping Centre and Regional Town Centre

Two large-scale comprehensive development projects, Henderson Centre in Coquitlam Town Centre and Crystal Square in Metrotown followed the cities' Regional Town Centre land use plans. These two projects represented a new development force that may contribute to the development for the Regional Town Centre.

The Concept of Regional Town Centres is not a new one. In 1976, Greater Vancouver's Livable Region Strategy identified a system of Regional Town Centres as an alternative to the traditional pattern of living in the suburbs and working downtown. The system of Regional Town Centres provides locations for higher density residential communities, commercial businesses, community services, social services, and public amenities. Strategically oriented toward the regional transit system - Skytrain and Seabus - each Regional Town Centre will emerge as a varied and vibrant mix of activities in a compact, pedestrian-oriented area. Now there are eight Regional Town Centres in the Greater
Vancouver region: Metrotown in Burnaby, Coquitlam Town Centre, Downtown New Westminster, Lonsdale in North Vancouver, Richmond Town Centre, Surrey City Centre, Langley Town Centre, and Haney Town Centre in Maple Ridge.

As Alexander Garvin (1996) pointed out in his book *The American City: What Works, What Doesn't*, a successful urban planning concept has to produce a sustained and widespread private market reaction in order to be successful. Regional Town Centres enjoy firm public commitment such as the strong support of the local government, public investment in regional transit, and the relocation of government agencies and facilities to Regional Town Centres. However, the success of Regional Town Centres relies on whether they can offer a cooperative and welcoming environment and ongoing opportunities for the developers interested in long-term growth potential.

The development of Henderson Centre in Coquitlam Town Centre and Crystal Square in Metrotown demonstrate that it is financially feasible to develop strata-titled "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Regional Town Centres where the development costs are relatively higher than that outside the Regional Town Centres. Whether the "Chinese" Shopping Centres in these two projects are compatible with existing shopping centres nearby is unknown. The experience in Richmond has shown that the "Chinese" Shopping Centres are unlikely to have negative impacts on existing commercial businesses.

As the increase in population in the suburbs of Vancouver is driven largely by international immigration from Asia, and ethnically-oriented developments emerge in the suburban cities,
the city planners and municipal governments should consider how to accommodate the new ethically-oriented development types like the "Chinese" Shopping Centre in the Regional Town Centres.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

5-1 Conclusion

As an effort to understand the impact of increased Chinese immigration on city planning in Greater Vancouver, this thesis documented the recent phenomenon of "Chinese" Shopping Centre development in the Greater Vancouver area. Several conclusions can be drawn from this preliminary review:

• The Creation of "Chinese" Shopping Centres

The development of "Chinese" Shopping centres in the suburbs of Greater Vancouver reflected changes in the Chinese-Canadian community in recent years. The increasing Chinese-Canadian population, the growing immigrant market, and the injection of overseas investment are major factors that drives the development of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Vancouver's suburbs. Immigration policy changes and regulations in Canada further boosted the developments.

• The Characteristics of "Chinese" Shopping Centres

The "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver represent a new form of commercial development. They meet the special needs of Chinese-Canadians, especially new immigrants. The different development mechanisms, the magnitude of operation, and the scale of capitalization distinguish the "Chinese" Shopping Centres not only from
the traditional Chinese-Canadian economic enclave of Chinatown, but also from the conventional shopping centre in North American cities.

- **The Impact of "Chinese" Shopping Centres**

The emergence of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in Greater Vancouver demonstrated the development dynamics of a new immigrant community. The social and economic impact of these developments on the local community, although mainly positive on the surface, still need deeper examination. As the "Chinese" Shopping Centre developments are eventually becoming one of the major forces in the formation of Regional Town Centre in Greater Vancouver, their impacts on land use pattern call for intensive planning studies.

**5-2 Recommendations for Future Research**

This thesis is just a preliminary study on one type of development conducted by Chinese-Canadians, not a comprehensive research on the planning of immigrant neighborhoods or ethnic enclaves in Greater Vancouver. The following issues are recommended for further discussion:

1. Although this thesis discussed some social, economic, and planning issues rising from "Chinese" Shopping Centres, the "Chinese" Shopping Centre somehow still is a myth for the author. Difficulties in collecting data, limited interview responses and time limitation made it difficulty to draw a clear picture of "Chinese" Shopping Centres. More information is needed to find the social and economic structures inside the
"Chinese" Shopping Centre. The impact for "Chinese" Shopping Centres on the Chinese-Canadian community, especially on people working in the centres need more detailed examination.

2. The role of "Chinese" Shopping Centres in the integration processes of immigrants is an important issue. There is still not enough evidence to determine whether the "Chinese" Shopping Centres have speeded up the integration process, or obstructed the integration process. Monitoring the changes is necessary to determine the impact of "Chinese" Shopping Centres on the integration of new immigrants.

3. What city planning policy changes have to be made to accommodate this new development form? How can urban built environments be planned with immigrants in mind? These questions have to be answered by city planners. City planners should be encouraged to develop a better understanding of immigration issues in the urban development context. Changes in existing planning approaches, e.g. zoning bylaw and regulations, should be made in order to meet the special needs of immigrants.
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