Beyond the GenerAsians:
INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING AND VANCOUVER'S CHINATOWN

by

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Abstract

Applying the “age” lens, this paper asks: how can intergenerational programming move the current Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization process towards a more age-integrated and life course-oriented approach? In addition, a meta-question is: How can intergenerational programming assist diverse populations (i.e. younger and older people) collectively search for new meanings for Chinatowns in transition?

The qualitative and quantitative methods used in this research include reviewing literature, primary documents, city documents, unpublished works, and conference papers. Basic demographic analyses, community interviews, and surveys were conducted. As a member of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee and intern at the City of Vancouver, personal observations were also made between 2002 and 2004.

This research adopts the Community for all Ages model to evaluate Vancouver's Chinatown revitalization process and makes recommendations that move it towards intergenerational programming - a mechanism to respond to key challenges from the “age lens”: changing age demographics, the diversifying Chinese-Canadian community in Vancouver, and aging institutions in Chinatown.

Challenging traditional theories of generations and assimilation, the results of this research illustrate the need for planners, policymakers, and community workers to recognize the diverse stories and experiences along the age continuum and to adopt a life-course approach in moving communities from age-segregation to age-integration. Identifying some key issues for implementation and future research, this study has implications for the application of intergenerational programming in Vancouver’s Chinatown but also in other Chinatowns currently facing similar challenges.
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I would like to dedicate this paper to my grandparents and all who have walked with me through the different seasons of my life. I would like to thank my mom, my dad, and my brother, for their continuous support and grace. Their love and care have blessed me and taught me to cherish those young and old in my life.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Hush, Little One

Where are we mama? Is this the Mountain of Gold
Where the trees grow tall and the birds sing bold?

Hush, Little One, you need not know, but a wall separates us
from the shining sun and the sweet dancing waters that flow.
But sleep now, Little One, sleep.
For watch over us, the stars in the sky keep.

What are you doing, Mama? Why do you hold a shovel of steel?
Are you not tired and of the burning heat -- do you not feel?

Hush, Little One, you need not know, but Mama will come back
With food so that tall and strong her Little One may grow.
But take heart now, Little One, take heart.
For tonight you'll taste the fish's cheek, the special part.

Who's on the other side of the wall, Mama?
Why do they peek out of the cracks and at us spit and sneer?
For from them, names and words of hatred is all that I seem to hear.

Hush, Little One, you need not know, but they're people just like you and me
To whom the truth will soon unfold.
But be strong now, Little One, be strong.
For we'll win the battle no matter how tough or how long.

What's happening here, Mama? Why do you hold a big paper sign
And with the other ladies march up and down in a line?

Hush, Little One, you need not know, but Mama's searching
For the life and the rights that I know we'll one day hold.
But go read now, Little One, read.
For wisdom and knowledge are nurtured through curiosity, the thought, a book, a seed.

Mama, where has Papa gone? Why has he left for such a long time?
Is it me, did I do something wrong?
For Mama, I truly miss his bright smile, his voice, his bed-time song.

Hush, Little One, you need not know, but papa's gone to fight in the war,
To fight for honour, to break the wall of stone.
But don't cry now, Little One, shed not a tear.
For Papa will come back a hero, and Victory is near.
Are we there, Mama? Is this the mountain of Gold
where the trees grow tall and the birds sing bold?

Hush, Little One, you need not know, for its time to rejoice,
To dance to the wooden flutes that blow.
After years of sweat and pain, the walls have fallen
And we've won the long-winded battle.
Forevermore, we shall see the shining sun
And feel the sparkling waters flow.
We will speak our minds, our hearts, our souls
And never again, must we linger a world of shadows and crows.
In the days to come, we will not be laughed at whatsoever,
For laughter will surely come, but with all brothers and sisters of the Mountain,
We shall laugh together.
But rejoice now, Little One, rejoice.
May the highest peak and the lowest valley
Be filled with our joyous noise . . .

Mama, Mama . . .
Hush Little One, you ought to know,
For Mama is tired, grey, and old.
Never forget our past – our heroes, our foes.
But to your kids and their kids
Should the story of the Battle of the Golden Mountain be forever told.

Andrea Tang, 1997

My Story

My story begins at the Chinese Cultural Centre (C.C.C.) multi-purpose hall in
Vancouver’s Chinatown. I was 16. I still remember nervously reading in front of
hundreds of people – the children sat on the floor while seniors sat on fold-out metal
chairs. I had submitted *Hush, Little One* for a poetry contest put on by the Centre in
1997 to commemorate the 50 years of Chinese enfranchisement in B.C. I dedicated the
poem to my grandfather who, throughout my childhood, daily shared stories with me of
himself serving in the navy and later on, working as a dishwasher. He had lots of stories
about his friends who were once veterans, and at one time, community advocates during
their early years in Vancouver.

His stories shaped and inspired many poems that I wrote including *Hush, Little
One* - a portrait of how it might have been like for a Chinese child and his mom to reside
in Vancouver in the mid 1940s, although very few children and women were admitted to
Vancouver until the post-war period. Although my grandfather had passed away a year
before, that day at the C.C.C., I accepted the first prize medal on behalf of both of us.

I cherish this poem, not only because I co-wrote it with my grandfather, but also
because it reflects some of my recollections of the importance on knowing one’s roots
and the understanding and hope that stories can bring across generations and cultures as they shape our changing landscapes of memory. The poem-reading event also alludes to the important role that a place like the C.C.C. in Chinatown could play in bringing people together, not only for those rooted in Chinatown, but also for those who are not, to remember and celebrate stories from the past, the present, and future.

**The Story of the C.C.C. & the 1970s Youth**

Although the C.C.C. was originally built to be an intergenerational and cultural heart of the Chinese Canadian community in Vancouver in 1971 and as an expression of the then new multicultural policy, it never fully realized this vision. The building of the C.C.C. began as a youth-driven project, but the participation of this group in Chinatown began and ended quickly. The rise and fall of the C.C.C. in Chinatown is symbolic of the waves of change and challenges that Vancouver's Chinatown has faced as well as Chinatown's evolving meanings for Chinese-Canadians in Vancouver. A pivotal piece that was written to make sense of what happened is Paul Yee's, "Where have the young people gone? Vancouver's Chinese Cultural Centre and its Native-born" (1981).

Yee recalls the rise of a group of about 70 young people who having benefited from public education, were literate, energetic, and visionary university students. Although they resided outside of Chinatown and spoke limited Chinese, they sought to rediscover their roots and take up responsibilities and roles in the Chinatown community. Tracing the ideologies of this group, Yee recalls university discussions on Asian-Canadian identity\(^1\), which triggered a paradigm shift where recognizing the distortions of Asian-Canadian history as a racist tool meant making "new connections to family and community to rediscover the past (Yee, 1981: 357)." A series of workshops and

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\(^1\) Yee identifies Ron Tanaka as an influential person to many of those young people. Tanaka, at that time, was a professor of English visiting the University of British Columbia from Berkeley, where there had been much Asian-American activism in the 60s. Tanaka argued that assimilation had led Asian-Canadians to believe that white-Anglo population was superior and challenged Asian-Canadians to reconnect and rediscover the past to re-associate themselves with their ethnic roots (Yee, 1981: 357).
conferences spurred on the involvement of this group while a series of threats served as opportunities for this group to practice what they preached.

In the same year, the first phase of C.C.C. opened. Its plaque read: “Dedicated to the Preservation of Chinese Cultural Heritage and to Multiculturalism in Canada” (Wai, 1998:13). As Mah recalls, “I remember when Bing Thom put up the plaque . . . we were all very excited.” The Centre’s classrooms, meeting rooms, gym, and museum archives would facilitate the endeavours of a new generation – shaping and expressing cultural identity, arts, and heritage preservation, among others.

Despite support from all three levels of government and the air of excitement in the community from its commencement, implementation depended on the “lobbying of this small core of interested ‘Chinese’” (Anderson, 1991:231). The C.C.C. team consisted of a diverse array of tusheng (native-born) and immigrants, professionals, and Chinatown businessmen. After Canada established a diplomatic relationship with China in 1971, Kuomintang (KMT) supporters of Taiwan gained control of the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) – the “traditional community spokesman” (Yee, 1981:359; Ng, 1999:115; Anderson, 1991: 233). As the CBA became pre-occupied with Taiwan, the C.C.C. with its young vocal members rose as a new spokesman (Yee, 1981:359; Ng, 1999:112). In the following year, C.C.C. members, merchants, organizations, fought a number of community battles and public protests such as challenging the building of a major firehall next to an elementary school and stopping the building of a four-lane connector freeway that would have ran right through Chinatown.

2 Interview with Fred Mah, now vice-chair of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee, April 10th, 2004.

3 When City Hall announced plans to rezone a one-block site in Strathcona (then considered as residential Chinatown by some) for the building of a major firehall immediately next to an elementary school, language school, and public housing in August of 1972, residents, Chinese organizations, social service agencies, and these new young Chinese-Canadian activists along with the Wakayama group organized themselves in vocal protest. The plans were dropped. This protest acted as a “catalyst” as Wai (1998:9) and Yee (1981:356) note, that caused this group of young Chinese-Canadians to organize itself for community activism that included countless hours put into community festivals, social services, and public protests.
Despite the successes, this young Chinese-Canadian group's involvement in Chinatown's C.C.C. quickly dissipated with a change in participation structure. In 1977, the C.C.C., with a larger Board of Directors, launched a fundraising campaign that reduced the role of the young *tusheng* and gave the more affluent, older, and established members in the community more voice (Yee, 1981: 365). The change in direction in the C.C.C. did not encourage diversity and involvement for younger members. Consequently, many young people moved on from the C.C.C.

With a decreased role for young people and other changes, many of the younger members moved into voicing themselves in other forms of activism. As Yee notes, with a "new confidence" they began to "address university audiences about community development and about broader Chinese-Canadian concerns" (Yee, 1981: 365). While some remained active in bringing about social change in their community, some changed personal goals, grew older and became,

... even a bit weary and turned to their own families and careers ... for those committed to their identity goals, the building [C.C.C.] had never been that important – what had bonded them to the C.C.C. was not the building but the struggle to build it. (Yee, 1981: 365)

Yee's article ended on a positive note, stating that the young *tusheng* left the C.C.C., but did not abandon their goals. Yee stated that many realized that "their vision was actually an intangible one – they wanted to create a Chinese-Canadian identity and community that was proud and confident. And the quest continues" (1981:367). Besides the lack of facilitation to "clarify and relate public issues" regarding the needs of young people, Yee believes that youth involvement in Chinatown fell as the fight for these young Chinese-Canadians moved from tangible and immediate threats like the freeway and the firehall fights to "more subtle" ones like racism in media, equality in the workplace, etc. With greater confidence in creative and personal forms of expression such as writing, art, and music, many members of this group moved on with their commitment to "a new
ethnic sensibility”. Although Yee claimed that the “tangible C.C.C. building” was never important but the “struggle to build it”, more recent developments challenge this statement. Chinatown Vancouver’s current revitalization process values the neighbourhood for its “intangible qualities” as a symbolic landscape of evolving cultural meaning and memory as well as tangible socioeconomic spaces in which people inhabit.

Applying the “Age” Lens

The Politics of Age & Age-integration

The story of the C.C.C., I would suggest, points to some of the key factors that led to the retreat of the 1970s youth. A critical point in the story of the C.C.C. is when its Board of Directors indirectly reduced the role of the younger native born participants to favour the participation of the more affluent, older and established members in the community. No framework was provided for the active and equal involvement of a variety of age groups. Just as there has always been politics within the Chinatown community between people and groups, there has always been an age politics. Revering and accepting the views of the elders is a strong value within traditional Chinese culture. For this reason, the issue of “youth” and whether they are heard, recognized, and involved, are recurring themes when discussing change in the Chinese-Canadian community.

This thesis addresses, to some extent, this politics of age, in the context of the VCRC, and ways to move this committee towards a more age-integrated framework.

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Some argue that the generational and cultural gaps that exist within those involved in Chinatown’s planning, for example, are a reflection of some of the cultural tensions being experienced between generations in diverse Chinese-Canadian families. As discussed in Chapter 2, even within intergenerational programming, there needs to be caution in generalizing the experiences of families of Chinese-Canadian backgrounds. This is reflected in debates of the relevancy of understanding “filial piety” in developing intergenerational programs (see for example, Ng et. al, 2002). Filial piety originated in Confucian teaching and is seen as a hallmark component of the traditional Chinese cultural framework for structuring intergenerational relations within care for elderly family members, while the elders are reciprocally expected to provide guidance and support for the young and to bind the household together (Chang, 1997). As Kaplan et. al note, “a question of interest is to the extent that the core value of “xiao” [or filial piety] evolves as a function of different national acculturation experiences (2002:3).” In reality, however, Chinese families living in different places in the world face different social, economic, and political realities.
Life course Participation

Furthermore, Yee also notes as the 1970s youth became “tired and weary, they turned to their families and career (Yee, 1981: 366).” Although there were many factors, one of the reasons that acted as an excuse for their retreat, was that they “grew up”. Implicitly, the participation structure of the C.C.C. did not facilitate people moving into different life stages. Currently the VCRC has not yet addressed this issue. However, as it moves from vision to implementation, it will need to develop strategies to facilitate people’s participation over the life course in the long-term.

Vancouver’s Chinatown Revitalization Process as a Case Study

Since the retreat of the 1970s youth, Vancouver’s Chinatown has been trying to bring back the younger generations. This goal continues to be a priority in the present Chinatown revitalization process in light of an aging population and a growing urgency for Chinatown to reposition itself as a regional cultural centre in an increasingly global and multicultural city. Those involved in the current process including City of Vancouver planners and policymakers as well as members of the revitalization committee, have not fully recognized that the presence of younger as well as older members does not guarantee their meaningful, active, and sustained involvement.

In Context: The Downtown Eastside

Vancouver’s Chinatown is located in the larger community of the Downtown Eastside, one of Vancouver’s oldest neighbourhoods and the historic heart of the city. Although rich in history, architecture, and diversity, in recent years, this traditionally low-income community has found itself struggling with many complex socio-economic challenges “such as drug dealing and addiction, HIV infection, prostitution, crime, lack of adequate housing, high unemployment, and the loss of many legitimate businesses” (City of Vancouver, 2003).
The Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program was developed in 1999 through the Vancouver Agreement between the three levels of government and the National Crime Prevention Centre to address safety and economic revitalization issues. Other partners include the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Vancouver Economic Development Commission, National Crime Prevention Strategy, the Four Pillars Coalition, and surrounding communities. As a "multi-faceted" approach which seeks to revive the area as a livable neighbourhood for all, it includes developing and implementing long-term approaches to community health, community safety, housing, and economic development.

The Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) was formed to address these issues in the Chinatown community's context. Although this paper focuses mainly on the VCRC and its revitalization process, it is recognized that there are many dimensions of revitalization in Vancouver's Chinatown that may be addressed outside of that framework through the efforts of other Chinatown community organizations and through groups within the larger Downtown Eastside community. As such the VCRC is a coalition of stakeholders, rather than an umbrella organization, that works with different organizations in the area. The VCRC builds on the assets of the existing community. Therefore, a successful and sustainable revitalization process would be reflected in the number organizations that the VCRC builds strong partnerships and collaborations with.

**Chinatown Challenges from the Age Lens**

A number of North American planners interviewed indicated that their Chinatown communities are currently experiencing some level of intergenerational tension, challenges due to demographic aging, and/or lack of interest from younger generations to participate. However, very few Chinatowns have revitalization or community processes that explicitly incorporate intentional intergenerational programming, decision-
making, and interaction (Appendix A). Some intergenerational efforts have begun more recently in Chinatowns of Vancouver, Boston, San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles. Although the contexts are diverse and unique to each city, especially between the Canadian and American cities, there are many lessons and examples that can be shared between them. Therefore, although I focus on Vancouver’s Chinatown, some implications may also apply in the contexts of other Chinatowns or similar ethnically-defined communities.

From the age lens, three key challenges that the current VCRC process must respond to include: changing age demographics in Chinatown and Strathcona, the diversifying Chinese-Canadian community in Greater Vancouver, and the aging institutions and service providers in Chinatown. These challenges call for the development of response mechanisms. In Chapter 4, I will discuss these challenges and introduce what the VCRC may or may not be doing to address them. Linked to these three factors is the challenge of engaging youth in Vancouver’s Chinatown the last few decades.

**Contribution to Chinatown Literature: Towards Multi-age Involvement**

In 2002, Yan stated that the “leakage” or “loss of neighbourhood youth and young clientele to other parts of the city”, meant that strategic youth outreach was needed to keep Chinatown relevant (Yan, 2002: 68). Although overlooked in the past, more recently, outreach to youth, a group which has appeared to lack interest in Chinatown, has been repeatedly identified by the community as key to making Chinatown vibrant in the 21st Century. From 2000 to 2003, a number of youth-driven and oriented awareness-raising events were held in Chinatown. Furthermore, the development of a VCRC youth subcommittee has allowed more strategic outreach to younger people. Although the presence of a VCRC youth subcommittee appears to
segregate youth involvement, in reality, this committee is moving towards age-integration and this set-up has been purposeful for its early visioning process.

This paper therefore, to some degree, follows-up Yan's earlier concern about youth. Since the time of his research, youth in Greater Vancouver have indeed become more aware of Vancouver's Chinatown and are showing greater interest to participate. However, there is now a larger and more long-term question of what mechanisms can be developed to meaningfully and equally involve youth in the overall revitalization process? Also, how can the VCRC, beyond involving younger people in the revitalization process, ensure that they are sustainably involved over the life course? This paper is therefore, written with the intention of addressing the VCRC's current process, development, and timing in mind, and evaluates whether its current approach is moving the community towards the intergenerational programming lens. The recommendations provided in later chapters therefore, seek to encourage and move the VCRC process in that direction. Furthermore, I hope to contribute to Chinatown literature through illustrating the benefits and application of intergenerational programming to Chinatowns experiencing similar challenges.

Research Questions

Applying the "age" lens, this paper asks how can intergenerational programming move the current Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization process towards a more age-integrated and life course-oriented approach? In addition, a meta-question is: How can intergenerational programming assist diverse populations (i.e. younger and older people) collectively search for new meanings for Chinatowns in transition?

The purpose of this paper then, is to bring together two areas of research: intergenerational programming and revitalization of Vancouver's Chinatown. While there is growing recognition of the need to respond to cultural diversity in Chinatown's revitalization, there has been less attention to responding to and bridging the
experiences of different age groups. With more recent recognition of the need to respond to demographic aging, more attention has been given to the building of intergenerational communities as healthier and more sustainable communities. This has led to a growing foundation in intergenerational programming theory, research, practice, and application.

Methods and Data Sources

A number of qualitative and quantitative methods and data sources were used in preparing this thesis. For literature, this thesis draws on a number of works written on the Chinese in Vancouver and Canada (history, sociology, and geography), theories of generations and assimilation in classical sociology, as well as more recent works on intergenerational programming locally, nationally, and internationally. Primary documents were also used including newspaper articles, city documents and unpublished tables and works generously shared with me from friends and partners in the Chinatown community. Besides attending the 2004 Intergenerational Consortium of Intergenerational Programming Conference, I also consulted conference papers and follow-up reports from previous years. Furthermore, basic demographic analysis was done in this thesis using primary documents and sources such as StatsCan and BC Stats.

My involvement in the Vancouver Chinatown revitalization process began in 2002 when I attended my first Vision Subcommittee meeting. I am currently an executive member of the current Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee for the 2004-2006 term and a member of the youth subcommittee. I have also worked as an intern for the City of Vancouver planning department. As such, I have mediated youth workshops, conducted research on North American Chinatowns (See Appendix B for summary), as well as participated in numerous aspects of Chinatown’s revitalization process. Interviews were conducted with members in diverse Chinatown revitalization
initiatives not only in Vancouver but also in other North American cities. Participants included organization members, students, youth workers, consultants, community activists, and planners, among others.

In addition to these resources, I have also included key findings from workshops conducted by Uth Rev Group from S.U.C.C.E.S.S. in Chinatown (summer of 2003) as well as the VCRC Youth subcommittee’s inaugural workshop Choosing Chinatown (October 2003). Most of my community observations in Vancouver’s Chinatown were made from the Winter of 2002 to Spring of 2004.

Definitions

*Intergenerational Programming*

This paper utilizes the definition developed at the first International Consortium of Intergenerational Programming Conference in 2001: “Intergenerational programs are social vehicles that create purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations (Newman, 2002: 266).” This is now a standard definition used in many communities around the world. Intergenerational programming in this paper also alludes to employing such intergenerational concepts, models, and criteria to existing projects, programs, processes, working bodies, and the design of spaces. Although the term “intergenerational programming” is most commonly used to refer to life-course based initiatives that bring people of different ages together, the growing movement of this field is towards “multigenerational programming” or bringing all generations together - a term that more accurately reflects the goals and values of these catalyzing changes all around the world. Please see Chapter 3 for more information on this concept.
Generations

There have been two definitional emphases in understanding “generations”. The first approach views a generation as a cohort of individuals born at a given time - emphasizing the specific chronological location of a generation. This definition alone however, is limited and does not fully facilitate questions where the specific date of the cohort may be less important than the historical backdrop. In generational literature, there is a continual tension between cohort and sociological analysis, in treating generations as naturally occurring phenomena (age-groups) and as socially occurring phenomena (social groups). Nevertheless, many people today still use the traditional “thirty-year interval” of genealogical time, while generally recognizing that the term now identifies with a much broader framework (Hepworth, 2002).

The second definitional emphasis, which is preferred among social scientists today, views a generation as an age cohort that has social significance simply by constituting itself as cultural identity through the interaction between historical resources, contingent circumstances, and formation that makes “generation” a unique sociological category (Turner, 2002:15). A defining feature of this second definition is that it recognizes the significance of “generational consciousness” (Eisler, 1984; Andrews, 2002; Eisenstadt, 2003; Hareven 2002) or that a cohort becomes a generation only when many of its members become “aware” that they are bound together by a shared group consciousness and mobilize as an active force for political change (Braungart and Braungart, 1987:217). Hepworth adds that members of a generation identify with a “common frame of reference” (2002: 138). While seeing generation as solely dependent on birth cohort is to render generational identities as static and inflexible, as socially constructed entities, they are recognized to be much more malleable and susceptible to change. In this paper, I integrate both definitions to better understand the stratified experiences, values, and needs of people of different generations and
backgrounds in Vancouver’s Chinatown. Similar or common threads in socio-political, economic, and cultural experiences may be uniquely or differently experienced by one age group than another at various levels of community.

**Youth & Seniors**

In gerontology, chronological age is simply a convenient indicator of three conceptually interrelated processes: biological aging (physiological changes), psychological changes (changes in learning, memory, motivation), and social aging (changes in social roles as an individual moves into old age). In generational literature, Pierre Bourdieu (1993:95) suggests that it is due to the tension that exists between cohort and sociological analysis in treating generations as a naturally occurring phenomena (age-groups) and as socially occurring phenomena, that terms like “youth” have emerged to broaden the age-restricted definitions of young and old. While the chronological definition of “youth” varies significantly from context to context, the chronological definition of “senior” does not vary as much. For seniors, age 65 emerged as a common definition of the beginning of old age because it was the age at which the Social Security Act of 1935 provided for old age benefits (Markides & Mindel, 1987, 12).

For the purposes of this paper, I will adopt the City of Vancouver’s definition of 65+ years of age as representing a “senior” and 15 to 29 years of age as representing those who fall in the “youth” category.

**Vancouver’s Chinatown**

Vancouver was founded as a sawmill settlement called Granville in the 1870s. The city was incorporated in 1886 and renamed after Captain Vancouver. Today, with a population of about 560,000 (estimated for 2004), Vancouver lies in a region of more than 2 million people. Vancouver is the largest city in the province and the third largest in Canada. The city has been divided into twenty-three communities, with Chinatown designated as a part of the community of Strathcona.
Vancouver's Chinatown is the third largest Chinatown in North America, after New York and San Francisco. It is one of the earliest neighbourhoods in Vancouver that began with the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1884. Thousands of Chinese (mainly male) workers from the Sze Yap region, a group of four Chinese counties in Southern China who spoke mainly Cantonese, having worked on the CPR soon settled in Vancouver (Yee, 1988). Between 1884 and 1947, racism against the Chinese in British Columbia rose to high levels – manifesting in violence, professional, legislative, and immigration exclusion and restrictions. It was out of such a racist environment, that Chinatown formed on Vancouver's swamplowlands.

The Chinese-Canadian population has been in Vancouver for well over a century. Over this period of time, with changing meanings developed from the inside and often imposed from the outside, there have been at least four different geographic definitions of Chinatown prior to the present-day City of Vancouver's definition of the HA-1 Chinatown Historic Area District (Cho, 1970). This present geographic area definition was developed in 1974 and has been adopted more recently as a negotiated output of sociopolitical conflicts and discussions that have continued into the 21st Century. This area is bound by Hastings Street to the north, Union Street to the south, and Carrall Street to the west (Figure 1.0).
The Strathcona community, east of Chinatown, has been a key residential neighbourhood for the Chinatown community for many years. However, the City has excluded Strathcona from Chinatown's definition completely, thereby, defining Chinatown solely by its historic commercial core and identifying it as a commercial district.\(^5\) While recognizing the unique interests of both neighbourhoods, since Chinatown is predominantly commercial and Strathcona is mainly residential, the local histories of both communities have divergent as well as convergent points.\(^6\)

**Chinese Canadian community**

A growing recognition of ethnic diversification in Canadian cities and many other cities in the world, points to the need to more clearly understand what is meant by the

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\(^5\) Nevertheless, Chinatown's zoning allows for significant flexible residential use. Due to a number of socio-economic and demographic reasons, current land use has been predominantly commercial. This however, is changing with new revitalization initiatives.

\(^6\) In her article, through illustrating the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants resistance against urban renewal in the 1960s and 1970s, Jo-Anne Lee argues for the need to recognize that existing studies tend to ignore the agency of minority ethnic men and women as leaders of these community battles, thereby, collapsing the important distinctions between Chinatown and Strathcona completely, by simplying paint-brushing over their "inordinate Chineseness." Please see Jo-Anne Lee, M. Bruce, M. Vancaillie. (forthcoming)."To Build a Better City": Gendered Resistance, Ethnicity and Cultural Hybridity in the Strathcona Story.
“Chinese Canadian community” in Vancouver in this thesis. Yan notes that out of all the terms in his thesis, “a definition of the Chinese Canadian community is perhaps the most difficult” (Yan, 2001: 13). Li notes that it is easy to misrepresent members in this community, if it is not recognized that although there are 1.2 billion people who live in mainland Chinatown who are “Chinese”, there are also millions of other ethnic Chinese outside of China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (Li, 1998:4, quoted in Yan, 2002:13). In this paper, I define “Chinese Canadian” as those who identify with Chinese ancestry and live in Canada, as defined by Canadian census. Thus, this definition will include Chinese Canadians who more recently immigrated to Canada all the way to those who can trace their roots back five generations in Canada to those who are from a variety of East and Southeast Asian countries, further differentiated by class and socioeconomic status. It is recognized in this thesis, that there is a multiplicity of Chinese Canadian identities and communities at present in the City of Vancouver. Vancouver’s Chinatown faces the challenge of responding to these communities, which are very different from the original settlers from the Sze Yap region in China who spoke mainly Cantonese. This alludes to the need to develop means and strategies to respond to this increasing diversity of the population socially, physically, economically, and culturally.

**Neighbourhood versus Community**

These two terms are often used quite interchangeably in planning vernacular. For the purposes of this paper, a “neighbourhood” is defined as a spatially bound unit with identifiable geographic references. In contrast, a “community” is not bound spatially and may refer to groups of people who share a common interest, social values, practices, and cultural identity. In the case of Vancouver’s Chinatown, a number of Chinese Canadian communities may be identified with the neighbourhood but also exist inside as well as outside of the spatial boundaries of Chinatown. This is the result of both imposition from the outside as well as conscious advocacy from within.
Structure

In the first few chapters of this thesis, I build a foundation to discuss intergenerational programming in Chinatown Vancouver's context. In Chapter 2, I provide a theoretical framework for this paper by evaluating the ways that Chinatowns have been understood, including the classical sociologists' views of generations and assimilation. In Chapter 3, I introduce the concept of intergenerational programming and its application in community development and neighbourhood revitalization through the Community for all Ages model, which acts as an analytical framework for my paper.

In Chapter 4, I introduce Vancouver's Chinatown revitalization process as a case study. I do this by highlighting a few key challenges that Chinatown is facing from the age lens and how the VCRC is trying to respond to them. In Chapter 5, I analyze VCRC's process through the lens of the Community for all Ages model. Finally, in Chapter 6, I define some key issues and points of leverage in implementing intergenerational programming in Vancouver's Chinatown. In this Chapter, I also make some key recommendations based on my analysis, suggestions for future research, and concluding remarks.
In a time of need, we proved our loyalty. And we knew when we came back [from the war], the government would be morally and legally obligated to recognize us as citizens of Canada.⁷

Roy, 85

In an interview with the Vancouver Courier, 85-year old Roy recalls that after a rowdy meeting with about 100 men at a church in Chinatown, he decided that he would travel overseas to fight in World War II. After many years of enduring a highly racist government and opposing several anti-Chinese leagues, Mah said the only way to prove himself a worthwhile citizen of Canada at that time was by going to war.

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⁷ Chinese-Canadian war veteran, Roy Mah was interviewed by Mike Howell for the article, “City Belatedly Recognizes Chinese Veterans, Workers”, Vancouver Courier, September 10, 2003.
Chapter 2

The Theoretical Framework

Epistemology

"Saving Chinatown" - the title of Yan and Nakagawa's well-received article on the state of San Francisco, New York, & Vancouver's Chinatown, reflects a revived interest in the so-called "predicament" of many North American Chinatowns at present: decline. But in a way, as a colleague of mine recently noted, Chinatowns have always been "dying" or "declining" because they originated out of racist agendas. There's always someone who wants Chinatown to "die" in that sense. The reality is however, that while plaques and deteriorating buildings are the only remnants of some ethnic neighbourhoods, many North America Chinatowns created in the late 1800s out of imperialist agendas on the outside but also from within, have "survived" although they face social, economic, demographic, environmental, and physical challenges in their unique contexts. Vancouver's Chinatown is one community that continues to "survive", evolve, and grow through its present revitalization framework.

In almost every North American Chinatown revitalization profile, there is recognition of an ongoing challenge of "bringing back" the younger generations to succeed an aging population in membership, business, institutions, services, and clientele. Most Chinatowns however, are not so well equipped to respond to this challenge – the growing diversity of cultural and social identities in cities in the last few decades add to the complexity in the negotiation of identity, place, and power.

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In this paper, while acknowledging the ongoing struggles of Chinatowns, I approach the topic by moving away from the gloom and doom mentality to argue that Vancouver's present revitalization process needs to take a more life course approach, incorporating intentional intergenerational programming as an essential component to ensure its sustainability.

**Chinatown Epistemologies**

While decline indicates degradation, revitalization in Chinatowns literally translates “to impart new life" into them. In order to understand this statement, we need to evaluate the nature of Chinatowns and to consider the epistemologies that have been taken by social scientists or the ways that people have tried to understand Chinatowns. Sandercock's work on deconstructing planning history and the importance of epistemologies has challenged and heightened planning sensitivity to questions of "how do we know what we know? How do we arrive at truth or certainty, or some adequate foundation for action" (Sandercock, 2003: 60)? While the dominant epistemology since the 17th Century in the West has been based on empiricism or “the verification of the physical world through scientific observation”, Sandercock argues for the need to move toward an “epistemology of multiplicity”.

Without discarding these scientific and technical ways of knowing, we need to acknowledge, as well, the many other ways of knowing that exist; to understand their importance to culturally diverse populations; and to discern which ways of knowing are most useful in what circumstances. (Sandercock, 2003: 76)

In the context of Chinatowns, Andrew Yan’s graduate thesis, “Rethinking Vancouver’s Chinatown: Planning in a Global Neighbourhood" (2002), provides a comprehensive overview of the epistemological approaches that various scholars have used in studying Chinatowns and points to the need to recognize that since some approaches have been more favourable to planners than others, “... an examination on how knowledge is

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produced can be as important as the knowledge itself . . . "(Yan, 2002:20). While I will
not provide an extensive survey of literature and approaches used in studying
Chinatown, I will explore some key ways that Chinatowns have been understood and
point to some alternative ways of knowing.

**Ethnic Enclave or Empowering Place**

The meanings and significance of Chinatowns have changed dramatically from
generation to generation since World War II.\(^{10}\) Chinatowns existed in the past largely
because of discrimination and segregation by the “host society.” It was the only place
where Chinese Canadians found refuge, safety, and community. To many, Chinatown
was also seen as an ethnic enclave\(^ {11}\) where Chinese ethnic economic activity took place
(Portes and Bach, 1985; Guest, 2003:39) or a “training base” where new immigrants
learned English and become accustomed to Western culture (Lai, 1981; Anderson,
1991; Laguerre, 2000). With the removal of discriminatory and exclusionary laws
against the Chinese after World War II, increasing numbers of Chinese people moved
out and away from Chinatown. The second and third generation after the Exclusion Act
of 1923, continued their “spurt toward equality” – bettering themselves through education
and moving into professions and businesses while developing a sense of comradeship
with other small Chinese communities across Canada. For the first time, Chinese
Canadians took part in federal, provincial, and municipal politics and experienced some
level of spatial mobility.

\(^{10}\) It seemed that stigmatization by race was not enough but location as well was necessary to reinforce
discrimination. The negative meanings assigned to these labels did, however, lose strength over the years.
(See James Duncan and D. Ley (eds), Place/Culture/Representation. New York: Routledge, 1993; K.
Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 6 (1988): 127-149.)

\(^{11}\) Portes and Bach (1985:38) explain that the concept of ethnic enclave is difficult to generalize. In the case
of the Cuban ethnic enclave in New York, they identify some key characteristics. Often the ethnic enclave
may not be an “ethnic neighbourhood” but rather a sort of ethnic economic activity base, which has a portion
of the entrepreneurial class that sets up ethnic businesses, with fluctuating employment depending on the
businesses’ growth or decline.
This integration experience in the post-war period, however, began to bring
about discussion on whether Chinese Canadians would be able to sustain their own
cultural heritage and in the words of Hope, “bring this into the Canadian mosaic for all to
share? And will Chinese Canadians recognize others in similar measure as well? Will
stereotypes then disappear (1981:334)?” He answers himself, by saying that the answer
must be “yes” no matter how long, in order for multicultural Canada to survive.
Meanwhile, the concept and physical landscape of Chinatowns remain – their roles now
debated and negotiated in light of these questions.

Within the work of many (for example, Yan, 2002; Anderson, 1987; 1991;
Lai, 1973), is recognition that Chinatowns were initially formed out of issues of racism,
physical, social, political, and economic discrimination of Chinese in Canada and a
colony or a “little” version of the “East” in the “West” (Anderson, 1987). Laguerre points
out that this is obvious not only by the marginalized city spaces in which these
neighbourhoods are located, but also from the sobriquets, the language, the names,
such as “little Tokyo” and “Chinatown” – names used by those on the outside, which
were different from those used in the communities themselves (Laguerre, 2000: 5).
Those from within have never used the term Chinatown to describe their community in
the Chinese language, but have preferred to use terms which, translate to Chinese
People town or Chinese People street. Therefore, according to Anderson, Chinatowns
are places where racisms can be explored.

Different definitions of Chinatown have been contested and critiqued. Wing
Chung Ng, in his book, the Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-1980, for example, argues that
despite the importance of Anderson’s work in identifying the need to deconstruct the
West’s view of the Chinese, Anderson’s work does not acknowledge the “initiatives and
conscious motivations” of the Chinese and their subjectivity thereby, overlooking entirely
the importance of Chinese agency, their reactions, and responses (Ng, 1999, 6,7). This
is a caution for all writing and researching the Chinese-Canadian community. Laguerre also points out that while Chinatowns like other historic ethnic enclaves are always born out of and may remain as contested spaces where racist initiatives throughout history have continually been devised through various mechanisms to get rid of enclaves, residents have fought back and "won" in many occasions (Laguerre, 2000, 10).

Increasingly, there are examples of such works.

Hayne Wai's "Vancouver's Chinatown: 1960-80, A Community Perspective," is an explicit example of work which reflects his views as both "researcher and community participant". In this piece, Wai recognizes how the Chinese-Canadian community has responded to "challenges which threatened its livelihood and integrity" between 1960 and 1980 and "encourag[es] continued community advocacy for social justice and equality for the next millennium" (Wai, 1998:1). What follows are powerful stories knitted together of battles fought by Chinatown and adjacent Strathcona communities and future stories that point to growing challenges of a multicultural city. The theme of "story" is an important one as I shall discuss later on. These newer stories differ from the standard Canadian minority ethnic histories, in which one finds a repeated template of generational experience.

The Epistemology of "Generations"

The first generation came to Canada with great hardship. A second generation benefited from public education and strived to escape the ethnic community or ghetto. The later generations faced the popularity of multiculturalism but community cohesion

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12 Hayne Wai, "Vancouver's Chinatown: 1960-80: A Community Perspective," New Scholars-New Visions in Canadian Studies, Vol.3, No.1, Summer 1998, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington: Canadian Studies Centre. Using personal accounts, research, and accounts of colleagues and family, Wai recounts in some detail battles in the Chinatown and Strathcona communities from the 1960-80 including the proposed urban renewal in the 1960s and 70s, Chinatown freeways, and the firehall site. On the "offense", Wai recounts pioneering community rehabilitation in the City through Chinatown-Strathcona's SPOTA, the making of the Chinese-Cultural Centre, the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, and other community initiatives like countering media. In conclusion, Wai alludes to the need to recognize and realize Vancouver's change from "Saltwater City" to being an 'International Gateway' in all community endeavours.
has declined. These are the usual key themes in Canadian minority ethnic histories and narratives. As Yee notes, "the price for integration appears to have been the dissolution of the ethnic community . . . but this is not the case for visibly distinct minorities who continue to be identified and linked to a community they may or may not feel they belong to" (Yee, 1981: 355). The evolving community organization of such ethnic minority groups as Chinese-Canadians then can only be better understood by first, re-evaluating the epistemology of "generations".

At once a sociologically enticing and perplexing concept, "generation" has been socially under-theorized as both a structural dimension of social stratification and as a lens through which to observe and understand social change. Turner has called attention to the reality that the topic remains surprisingly underdeveloped (2002:13), arguing that generation in the public arena is a neglected sociological dimension (Turner 1998:303). McMullin agrees and responds to the lack of theory on age and generational relations in feminist sociology (McMullin, 1995; McMullin and Cairney, 2004).

An epistemological approach to theories of "generations" inevitably begins with Karl Mannheim's (1952) path-breaking essay on "the Problem of Generations" – a paper that has been widely credited as a promising basis for the sociology of generations (Corsten, 1999; Edmunds and Turner, 2002; Eisenstadt, 2003; Kertzer, 1983; Longhurst, 1989; Pilcher, 1994). Mannheim explored the role of age groups as agents of social change that carried intellectual and organizational alternatives to the status quo (Laufer and Bengston, 1974:186) and through collective organization, challenge existing societal ideas and structures to bring about social change (Laufer and Bengston, 1974:186).

Mannheim, as a pre-eminent scholar of the theory of knowledge contended that all knowledge is founded on perspective, or is "position determined" and that we are all in a "historical stream" that is constantly in transition and motion. The importance of generations, he believes is that "individuals who belong to the same generation, who
share the same year of birth, are endowed, to that extent with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process" (Mannheim, 1952:290). Members of a generation may be exposed to the same historical events at the same time in their life courses. Although their individual experiences may be unique, this is significant since, Mannheim says, there is a fundamental connection between knowledge and socio-historical structure. Following Mannheim's work, a number of others (for example, Comte, 1974 and Halbwachs, 1967) sought to further develop Mannheim's generational theories in classical sociology. From the sociologist's perspective, declining youth involvement in Chinatown is explained by: theories of "active generations" and "assimilation".

"Active Generations"

Sociologists not only argued that generational units (or measure of generation) were created from historical events but that there is a differentiation of generational responses that shape more "active" and "less active generations". More "active generations", Turner suggests, make a "generative contribution" to a community instead of passively accepting a given culture, taking up strategic opportunities that are present in a specific period (2002:16). His definition echoes Wyatt who defined generations as shaped "by a traumatic event, a set of political mentors, a dramatic shift in demography, a privileged interval, and collective rituals that sustain a collective memory" (quoted from Turner, 2002:4). In this process, a concrete bond is created between members of a generation (Mannheim, 1952). Many have focused on the War generation or the "Civic generation" as critical generations for studies.

Building on Bourdieu's definition of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986), Putnam echoes elements of this view in his popular book, *Bowling Alone: Decline of Civic America* (2000). He warns that people born after 1945 are not taking over the civic responsibilities of their elders, arguing that older cohorts have higher levels of civic
connectedness than younger ones, and that as younger citizens take the place of older ones, the civic character of the nation changes. Putnam describes this trend as "generational replacement" and says that it is a "new formulation of the mystery" of why social capital has declined in America, and consequently, why there is less civic engagement from younger generations. However, Putnam's theories have been heavily critiqued by many (for example, Mclean et. al, 2002; Coleman, 1990). Maclean et. al argue that Putnam's replacement theory has many shortcomings since:

... generational identity is probably not formed by a single event or even a series of separate occurrences but constructed over time in a social process of remembering, acting, and defining one's moral values. The impact of the past is modified or defined by how groups of people interpret it in terms of present problems... Did the events of 1930 to 1945 simply launch the activities of the Civic Generation, or is it the subsequent process of remembering and memorializing those events over the years that continually drove their activity? (Maclean et. al, 2002: 159)

Others like Eisenstadt (2003) focus on how some active generations form through spurts of rebellion. Out of tension and conflict, do generations, according to Eisenstadt, revolt against the existing structure and form a collective identity. Trauma produces a generational consciousness which acts as an impetus for social change at various levels of community, from neighbourhoods to nations.

Assimilation

The school of assimilation sees that lagging involvement and desire for participation from youth in Chinatown is a natural expression of the transitional movement of the Chinese-Canadian community in Vancouver from segregation to

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13 Putnam noted that the age cohort born between 1925 and 1930 is "exceptionally civic" but he rejected generational factors as the "main culprit" because he could not find a link between "crisis" events after WWII and the more or less steady decline of civic engagement in postwar age cohorts. Thus his new focus on generational replacement is a significant amendment of his ideas (2000:147-148).

14 To read more on the formation of youth groups, organizations, and his extensive work and theories on youth rebellion, see S. Eisenstadt. 2003. From Generations to Generation., New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. Eisenstadt, like many others (e.g Putnam, 2000), view that people of various age groups in society either "integrate" or "deviate" from the norm. Others (like Hareven, 2000; and Lopez, 2001) disagree.
assimilation or integration over the generations. This view echoes some of the earliest work done in ethnic minority mobility in cities by the Chicago School of Sociology (Bonvalet et. al, 1995:87; Jackson and Smith, 1984) who are often seen as the 'classical assimilists'. The processes of assimilation and ghettoization have both been widely observed in American urban areas throughout the twentieth century (Massey, 2001) and according to Poulsen et. al (2002:229), are the twin sorting processes that create plural, ethnically heterogenous cities and communities. They play a role in shaping the plurality which characterizes emerging "world cities" (Friedmann, 1986; 2002).

Assimilation involves decrease in spatial separation of ethnic groups due to economic and cultural factors as a group's economic status improves. Ghettoization, in contrast, combines economic disadvantage (which restricts housing choice) with overt discrimination to produce extreme spatial segregation (despite the removal of economic disadvantage) (Poulson et.al, 2002:230). Historically, this was certainly the case of Vancouver's Chinatown. Furthermore, Boal (1999) argues that the more polarized the city (or less integrated its ethnic groups are), the greater their degree of residential concentration. Very few people and even Chinese-Canadians now live within the predominantly commercial boundaries of Chinatown – Chinese Canadians reside in every single municipality in Greater Vancouver and every neighbourhood in the City of Vancouver.

It is clear that the pattern of segregation and the process of assimilation are linked and that there is a high degree of correlation between spatial pattern and social behaviour (Duncan and Lieberson, 1959; Massey, 1985). Bonvalet et. al argue that:

New migrants arrive in a city neighbourhood (invasion) and over time come to transform the character of that neighbourhood completely (succession). Later a new wave of migrants will produce the same effect, with the earlier migrant arrivals being themselves 'invaded' and 'succeeded'. (Bonvalet et. al, 1995: 87)
Although Bonvalet et. al illustrate a relationship between changing cultural identity and character of place, their explanation of invasion and succession is narrow since it implies that space is "possessed" by migrant groups (and thus "invaded") and doesn't consider internal change of values and lifestyle and construction from within the migrant community over time.

In 1990, Eva Jim and Peggy Suen developed an educational piece, called *Chinese Parents and Teenagers in Canada – Transitions and Cultural Conflict*, sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association and Burnaby Multicultural Society with the Support of the B.C. Council for the Family. In it, Jim and Suen (1990) describe cultural assimilation from first to second to third generation of Chinese-Canadians in the following diagram:

**Figure 2.0 Adjustment Process of Chinese-Canadians**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
<td>Dual Cultural</td>
<td>Assimilated or integrated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jim & Suen, 1990

Jim and Suen (1990: 10) reason that most immigrants make or wish to make the necessary transition to become "Canadianized" although some prefer to live on the periphery of mainstream society. Some however, “don’t make the transition and hold dearly to past memories and tradition", while others begin to move onto stages 2 and 3, negotiating their identities to adopt new values. They note that many in these two stages may go back to their countries of origin to trace their roots or encourage their children to take Chinese language lessons. For some Canadian-born Chinese, they may simply call themselves Canadians (stage 4) and may even consider their cultural heritage as "strange and alien".

Although an improvement from the classical assimilation framework, the downfall of this model is that it does not recognize the existence of multiple generations of Chinese-Canadians nor the diversification of Chinese-Canadians (age, sex, income,
ethnic background, values). It also assumes a uni-directional movement (i.e. that people move from place A to place B and that they and their successive offspring will stay in that city or country endlessly) rather than recognize the often multi-directional movement of people in an increasingly global world. This model is challenged by recent social phenomenon such as the Hong Kong “Astronaut” experience in Vancouver (Water, 2001; Wong, 1997), media sensationalism with refugees and so-called “ethnic crimes” (e.g. gangs, car racing, etc.), and educational issues (e.g. diversity training). Differences and perceived “clashes” in approaches and needs in the community as reflected in emergent social issues also occur in place-making and community planning discussions regarding Chinatown.

Rethinking Theories of “Active Generations” and One-way “Assimilation” Models

While those who argue for the existence of “active generations” and “assimilation” theories have been highly influential and valuable, the theories developed by the classical sociologists’ are problematic as they focus on the “grouping” of people and their experiences into manageable generational units.

Although speaking mainly from the American context, Henry Yu, professor of history at UBC, in his book, *Thinking Oriental* (2001), gives the example of the diverse life stories of the Issei (first generation), Nisei (second generation), and Sansei (third generation) in the Japanese American community in contrast to theories of “assimilation and the narrative of generations”. The Chicago School of sociologists’ for example, used individual experiences and particular points or racial “epiphanies” in a narrative to produce generational categories of analysis around created “generational units” (i.e. first, second, third) that were more easily “measurable”. The result is as noted by Mannhaim in 1952:
If we speak simply of "generations" without any further differentiation, we risk jumbling together purely biological phenomena while others which are the product of social and cultural forces: thus we arrive at a sort of sociology of chronological tables which uses its "bird's-eye perspective" to "discover" fictitious generation movements to correspond to the crucial turning-points in historical chronology. (Mannheim, 1952, 1968:311)

As a result, Yu argues, "holistic representations" especially of second-generations, Nisei, in the Japanese American community (who were seen as "caught between two worlds") were made, representing an "ideal type"\textsuperscript{15}. Consequently, Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans came to be lumped together as "Orientals" and later, Asian Americans. The Nisei’s narratives therefore only became representative of how the sociologists themselves retold their life histories. Any quality seen as part of the "Old World" was a quality of the first generation that was opposed by the second generation — these traits were very arbitrary and changed depending on who did the defining and the questioning as well as with different people at various historical times.

In the context of Vancouver’s Chinatown and the Chinese Canadian community, a deeper understanding of what is meant by "generational issues" is therefore needed rather than reverting to the same old narrative of the "first, second, and third generations" that can easily be categorized and inserted into generic generational tables, which in the past, have been used to facilitate the re-inforcement of age and generational stereotypes. As Mitchell notes in the past of Vancouver’s Chinatown,

\ldots generational and class differences between the older members of the community and newer arrivals often lead to bitter struggles over community events, funding, representation, and the right to define community boundaries and meanings \ldots there is an ongoing power struggle between different groups that is fundamental to an understanding of political dynamics, yet it is often rendered opaque by broad-brush analyses \ldots assimilationist and structuralist perspectives. \ldots tend to posit either a unified community culture or singular structuring force through which individuals are interpellated as fundamentally non-differentiated subjects. (Mitchell, 1998: 731)

\textsuperscript{15} This was based on Max Weber’s ideas of a conceptual ideal that didn’t exist in reality but that clarified analysis by providing an extreme example of a hypothesis (Yu, 2001:101).
Similarly, at a recent lecture entitled "Astronauts are not New", Yu challenged the tendency for academia to present one-way stories rather than the multiplicity of stories that exist within immigrant groups and generations. Making parallels between some of the first Chinese-Canadian pioneers in Vancouver who originated in Chinatown and the more recent immigrants from East Asia, as well as other cultural groups, Yu explained that for many years, immigrants have moved in "calculated way to extend the family", while often, maintaining familial networks all around the world. This fascinating phenomenon is not new he says, but has only become more complex and common with growing diversity in race relations and globalization in the 21st Century. One-way stories where a family moves to one-place and stays there endlessly therefore are "unrealistic" and forced. Except for what he calls an "aberration period" after WWII and the Cold War period where immigrants were forced to be "Canadian" and "nothing else", true migrant histories are multidirectional (i.e. reflecting growing mobility) and multidimensional (i.e. reflecting growing diversity of cultural identities).

Challenging the traditional generational and assimilation theories consequently means recognizing the growing diversity inside and outside of the Chinese-Canadian community. It also alludes to the need to recognize that aging is a continuum rather than static and sporadic, as implied by traditional "generational units".

**Recognizing Aging as a Continuum: From Age-Segregation to Age-integration**

Problems of intergenerational relations and aging are central to the analysis of social structures and their change over time: issues of power, position, expectations, and indeed, the social contract itself are related to the succession of one age group by another. (Bengston, 1993)

Our modern day concern with old age and rational tendencies to categorize and measure have diverted attention to stages of life in isolation, rather than the entire life

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16 Dr. Henry Yu, professor of History at the University of British Columbia, spoke at a dinner held by the Association of Chinese Canadian Professionals on May 4th, 2004, at the UBC Golf Course Club House in Vancouver, BC.
course. While there are undoubtedly challenges in planning for unique stages of life (childhood, adolescence, adult, midlife, old-age), this paper argues that it is important to interpret them within the life-course context. This view counters the trend towards age segregation in the family and in the larger society and community (Haraeven, 2000, 1994). Revitalization of communities such as Vancouver’s Chinatown must include “revitalizing” or “restoring” an age-integrated community.

While in pre-industrial society, demographic, social, and cultural factors combined to produce only minimal differentiation in the stages of life, industrialization and urbanization are two among other forces that drastically urged age-segregation. In pre-industrial times, childhood and adolescence weren’t seen as distinct stages; children were seen as miniature adults, gradually assuming adult roles in their early teens and entering adult life without a moratorium from adult responsibilities (Hareven, 2000:121). Adulthood flowed into old age without institutionalized disruptions such as compulsory “retirement”. Industrialization along with redefinitions of “home”, “work”, and “family” in North American society, however, changed this.

In the West, “childhood” emerged as a specific stage first in the private lives of middle-class urban families in the early part of the nineteenth century. The new definition of childhood and the role of children were related to the retreat of the family into domesticity, the segregation of the workplace from home, the redefinition of the mom’s role as the key caretaker of the domestics, and the focus on sentimental rather than instrumental relations at the base of family interaction (Hareven, 2000:59). Emerging first in the middle class, the evolution of the concept of “childhood” led to volumes of literature on child-rearing and family-help, which in turn, popularized the idea. Other age concepts such as “adolescence” followed a similar pattern of “discovery” in the 18th Century. A gradual differentiation in age groups and specialized age-related functions began to emerge in the 19th Century.
In the past, the combination of relatively late marriage, shorter life expectancy, and high fertility rarely allowed for today's common "empty nest" stage in the past. Marriage marked the transition to autonomous adult life in the nineteenth century. In urban communities, where immigration produced both scarcity in housing and unemployment, it was difficult to set up an independent household, so newly weds may live with their parents for a transitional period (Hareven, 2000: 53). Even when they lived separately it was often near by - this arrangement offered parental assistance and support, especially during period of economic crisis and depression (Chudacoff, 1978).

Despite changes in age definitions in North America, the "family" continues to be a critical factor in shaping one's view of intergenerational relations. As a basic form of community, "family" shapes our perspectives, value, and understanding of intergenerational roles and relationships. In fact, Hareven among others, view the family as the "missing link" between individual lives and the larger processes of social change (Hareven, 2000: xv). Eisenstadt echoes this in saying, "generational consciousness . . . is rooted in the family, being taken out into the public realm – whether the realm of politics or of culture – and it contains very strong potentialities of social, political, or cultural protest (Eisenstadt, 2003: 377).” Although I will not discuss this issue in detail in this paper, I recognize that the changing views of "family" in each community context need to be considered when discussing intergenerational relations and life-course approaches.

Emergence of Age-stereotypes

In the 19th Century, anxiety over “youth conduct” grew, particularly in large cities, where reformers warned against the potential risks and threats of youth gangs (Hareven, 2000: 223). This fear was reflected in the treatment of adolescents, where undisciplined and unsocialized young people were seen as the “dangerous classes” (Hareven, 2000: 224). The common argument against the neglect of children then, was that they might
grow up into socially destructive adults. The elderly received less attention since they were not seen as "dangerous" to social order.

From the mid-19th Century onwards, North American society slowly began to develop corresponding series of institutions to deal with newly identified "life stages", usually without questioning masked age-related stereotypes, consequently, furthering the divisions between age-groups. The result is the change from perceiving aging as a continuum to perceiving aging as sporadic spurts where a child jumps from being an adolescent to an adult to a senior.

By the late 19th Century, North American society had passed from an acceptance of aging as a natural process to a view of it as a distinct period of life characterized by decline, weakness, and obsolescence. Once seen as "survival of the fittest", aging was now viewed as a condition of dependence and deterioration: "We are marked by time's defacing fingers with the ugliness of age" (from an article entitled "an Apology from Age to Youth," 1893: 170). In 1910, setting a basis for geriatrics, I.L. Nascher, a New York physician, was the first to formulate the biological characteristics and needs of senescence as a life-cycle process (Hareven, 2000: 221). The convergence of a growing volume of literature in gerontology, the rise of negative age stereotypes, and the establishment of a mandatory requirement for social benefits represent the first moves in the direction of a public and institutional formulation of "old age" as a distinct stage of life (Fischer, 1977). Growing influences in consumption and media in the late 1900s have furthered solidified old age stereotypes, creating a "cult of youth" and rejection of age.

Returning to a Life course Perspective

The history of age concepts in North America therefore illustrate that besides biological aging, the meanings of age are socially and culturally determined. Age-related concepts as social, cultural and biological phenomenon can therefore, be best understood in the context of other stages of life and the cultural context (Hareven, 2000: 35).
The social conditions of children and youth in a society are related to the way adulthood is perceived in that society. Conversely, the roles of adults and older people are related to the treatment of children and youth. It is therefore important to acknowledge people's experiences in the entire life course. Erikson notes,

As we come to the last stage, we become aware of the fact that our civilization really does not harbour a concept of the whole of life . . . Any span of the cycle lived without vigorous meaning, at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end, endangers the sense of life and meaning of death in all those whose life stages are intertwined. (Erikson, 1964: 132-133)

Accommodating Life course diversity in Planning

While traditional methods of planning have tended to isolate and segment certain age groups, planning for the life course promotes age-integration. The life course perspective is also essential in North American communities and equips planners, policymakers, and communities to respond to new trends like demographic aging and longer life expectancy, phenomena that are rapidly redefining concepts such as retirement, support, and caretaking.

As stated earlier, although learning to plan for diversity in planning has exploded in the last decade, up to now, there has been little acknowledgement that diversity includes the experiences of different generations. Laguerre points out that there too, is a "genealogy" of meanings of Chinatowns (2000: 12). The genealogy of meanings is linked and complicated by a number of factors including race, ethnic background, language, and gender, among others. And thus, the best way to understand complex race relations today, Kisubi and Burayidi (1998) argue, is through the personal accounts and real life stories of individuals in those communities as they go through the life cycle – stories that illuminate how families, peer groups, and workplaces influence views about other racial and ethnic groups. As with multiculturalism, this life course diversity calls for new conceptualizations of what constitutes planning history and knowledge and an
evaluation of what the appropriate methods are. The theme of “story” is important to the life course approach.

From Generational Tables to Life-course Stories

Sandercock (1998a; 1998b; 2000; 2003a; 2003b) is accompanied by a growing number within the urban planning field who urge planners to move from the dominant and universalist epistemology to uncover, consider, and actualize alternative narratives in mediating change in the community (such as Kisubi and Burayidi, 1998; Burayidi, 1997, 2000; Forester, 1989; 1991; 1999; 2000; Friedmann, 1992; 2002; Eckstein and Throgmorton, 2003; Healey, P., 1992; 1997; William & Nussbaum, 2001).

Such research invigorates planning with a set of new theoretical tools and epistemology including the use of “story”. As Winslade and Monk (2000) note, the “storying process allows” new understanding of the role of storytelling and its possibilities including co-authoring, healing, listening, and developing new rituals and approaches in community planning. Planning thus, acts as “performed story” in community or public participation processes where one seeks to hear the stories of as many people as possible, identifying convergent as well as divergent themes in mediation, facilitation, conflict resolution, intercultural and intergenerational collaboration, and participatory action research (Sandercock, 2003: 186-188). Stories convey a range of meanings and may include several elements including characters, plot, time-frame, and some level of coherence among others, and may be expressed through various means such as written form, oral storytelling, and various expressions of art and other non-verbal ways. An important development is the “core story” (Sarkissian, 1994, quoted in Sanderock, 2003: 188).

Drawing from her film school training and Ruth Finnegan (1998), Sandercock argues that there are 4 key properties of stories: temporal or sequential framework, element of explanation or coherence, potential for generalizability, and the presence of recognized, generic conventions that related to an expected framework (a plot structure and protagonist).
The idea of the core story as methodology draws on work in psychology which suggests that each of us has a core story: that we do not merely tell stories but are active in creating them with our lives. We become our stories....social psychologists argue that communities, and possibly nations, have such core stories that give meaning to collective life. (Sandercock, 2003: 188)

Stories therefore catalyze change and are as much about the real lives of people as they are about what is remembered, hoped, and imagined. Stories have a function that no other means can replicate. For as Ochberg says, "[I]ndividuals do not merely tell stories, after the fact, about their experiences, instead they live out their affairs in storied forms" (Ochberg, 1994:116). Andrews echoes this saying, "we become who we are by the stories that we tell; our stories are a cornerstone of our identity" (Andrews, 2002:81). Stories therefore, speak not only about the past, present, and future, they help to tell and make sense of various aspects of our identity - origins, visions, values, needs, and aspirations. This applies in the life of a person as it does in the life of communities.

Each generation has its own stories . . . while the older generations in Chinatown may tell stories of their experience of fighting segregation, the younger generations can also tell stories of life in an increasingly multicultural and diverse community – experiences that may be foreign to the older generations. In this way, joint learning is emphasized.

Norma Jean McLaren18

While a handful of writers have sought to understand experiences of different generations and related them to each other in the context of Chinatown, almost none have identified means to “connect” the stories of generations or those over the life course. To a large extent, this is a reflection of the lack of attention that planning and policy have given to intergenerational initiatives.

The Chinese Cultural Centre in Vancouver’s Chinatown today finds itself in a fragile state19 – this is a clear indication that some of the issues faced by youth of the

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18 Interview with Norma-Jean McLaren on April 10th, 2004.
19 The Chinese Cultural Centre currently finds itself in much financial debt as well as in a place of questioning as to whether its programs and objectives meet the needs of a diversifying Chinese-Canadian and general multicultural society. There is much discussion from within the Vancouver Chinatown community as to its future directions. Please see Chapter 4 for more discussion of this issue.
70s continue to persist into the 21st century. Surprising though, little follow-up has been
done to Yee’s work – what happened in that generation and what has happened since
– 80 (1999) is one of the few books which discuss tensions not only within generations
but between generations in Vancouver’s increasingly diverse Chinese community. His
book, however, stops at 1980 with the disappearance of the 1970s youth. How do
people of other age groups and cultural backgrounds view participation in Chinatown?
What are the new stories? These are important questions not only to bridge the
generations, but also to remember where the community came from and where it is
going.

Intergenerational Programming in Vancouver’s Soft and Hard Chinatown

The city as we imagine it, the soft city of illusion, myth, aspiration, nightmare, is
as real, maybe more real, than the hard city one can locate in maps and
statistics, in monographs on urban sociology and demography and architecture.
(Raban, 1974: 9-10)

Through the theoretical and literary framework painted in this chapter, I have
implicitly illustrated the importance not only of the physical (hard) city of Chinatown but
the importance also of the imagined, the remembered, and symbolic (soft) city of
Chinatown – a landscape created through personal as well as shared and bridged
stories. Life course stories and intergenerational programming have implications for
both the hard and soft city. This is a theme that runs throughout this paper. In the past,
planning tended to focus on the hard, built city, but with recent development, more
planning attention has been given to the soft city, including the realm of memory and
identity.

20 Kenneth Guest’s God in Chinatown: Religion and Survival in New York’s Evolving Immigrant Community,
is an ethnographic study in New York’s Chinatown, in which he collects “immigrant stories” from six waves of
immigration to illustrate the changing landscape of a highly stratified ethnic community. (Guest, 2000:33).
Intergenerational Programming and Identity

Age Dimension: from instrumental to truth

The emergence of the autonomous, self-reflexive individual is a major source of social change in the modern and postmodern era . . . there is a growing sense of many in middle age, who can no longer sustain the illusion of youth, and who have begun to experience the truths of aging: human mortality, fragility, vulnerability, the inherent peril of life, disenchantment with materialism, the realities of love, loss and suffering, the value of kindness, openness and compassion, and the salience of early life memories . . . These perceptions are often accompanied by a growing resistance to purely instrumental values geared to consumerism and materialism. (Polivka and Longino, 2002, 288)

The continuous process of aging and its realities are important to one's identity.

As Polivka and Longino allude to, recognizing this help one move from "instrumental" consumer-oriented age values which tend to focus on the "illusion of youth" to embracing or better understanding the continuum and the "truths of aging". Although more people in the middle age are experiencing this shift in paradigm, intergenerational programming helps individuals of different ages directly connect and experience these age realities from the interactions and relationships in their lives.

Cultural Dimension: City of Memory and Cultural Continuity

A failing or conquered culture can spiral down into a long decline, as has happened in most empires after their relatively short heydays of astonishing success. But in extreme cases, failing or conquered cultures can be genuinely lost, never to emerge again as living ways of being. The salient mystery of Dark Ages sets the stage for mass amnesia. People living in vigorous cultures typically treasure those cultures and resist any threat to them. (Jacobs, 2004: 4)

In Chapter One of Jane Jacobs' book, Dark Age Ahead (2004), she warns of a kind of "mass amnesia" which leads to the death of cultures in North America and the need to fight the "dark forces" which promote it. According to Jacobs, this fight entails experiencing and "soaking up" one's culture in contrast to travel writers', photographers', and novelists' "glosses [that] are unavoidably sketchy". Jacobs identifies five central pillars of our society that show serious signs of decay: community and family; higher education; science and technology; governmental representation; and self-regulation of
the learned professions. Deterioration of these pillars, Jacobs warns could mean arriving at a point where we will no longer recognize ourselves.

It is interesting that the first of the five pillars Jacobs discusses, is the “family and community”. Jacobs speaks of notions of “family” and “community” because they are interlinked. As mentioned, families and communities shape each other. The significance of this first pillar is that it is central to cultural continuity and self-awareness of one’s cultural identity. To some degree, my paper echoes Jacobs’ warnings in this area and the need to rebuild intergenerational relations in the “family and community”. Intergenerational programming is a tool which fights against this cultural forgetfulness.

In the concluding chapter of her book, Sandercock points to the need to expand the planning imagination for the 21st century and proposes three concepts or ways that the language of planning can be expanded to help shape 21st Century cities and planning: the City of Memory, the City of Desire, and the City of Spirit. One concept that I find particularly relevant in the context of Vancouver’s Chinatown is the City of Memory. Memory locates us, as part of a family history, as part of a tribe or community, as a part of city-building and nation-making. Loss of memory is, basically, loss of identity . . . whether or not we are one of those people who likes to ‘dwell in the past’, the past dwells in us and gives us our sense of continuity, anchoring us even as we move on. Cities are the repositories of memories, and they are one of memory’s texts. (Sandercock, 2003: 222)

Many Chinatowns in North America have become designated as “historic sites” under city zoning by-laws. Vancouver’s Chinatown became “Historic Chinatown” in 1971.

. . . [there] are other modes of its [memory’s] presence such as the material traces it leaves on the landscape, its embodiment in ways of organizing space and its imprint on patterns of perception and cultural repertoires. (Algazi, 2003)

The question however is whether this designation is only a top-down effort to preserve and impose a concept of “Chinatown” and thus, risk re-inventing the orientalist and racist agendas of the past, or whether it is actually substantiated by the memories, the stories, interactions, motivations and relationships of Chinese-Canadians on the ground. While
the first is disempowering as illustrated in discourses of “authenticity vs. exoticism” and the issue of “tourism” and “facadism” in Chinatown, the second is empowering and results in strengthened and more cohesive communities that value past, present, and future stories.

There is a growing collection of literature on the notion of collective memory not only reflected through stories, songs, and other soft city vehicles, but also through the physical landscape. This is reflected in popularity of heritage preservation and planning in North America. Dolores Hayden notes, in her book, *Power of Place*, that

> ... a socially inclusive urban landscape history can become the new basis for new approaches to public history and urban preservation ... it can also stimulate new approaches to urban design, encouraging designers, artists, and writers, as well as citizens, to contribute to an urban art of creating a heightened sense of place. (Hayden, 1999:12)

Furthermore, Hayden notes that this process of place-making is an ongoing “historical and cultural process” and recognizing varying senses of place is an important consideration (1999:13, 16). This “varying sense of place” includes that of the young and old. As such, the City of memory is also a City of imagination, accompanied by “future stories” (Sandercock, 2003: 191). This is reflected in the words of Freire:

> We are conscious of time and our location within time ... that [we] have a past, a present, and a future ... and thereby act with intention upon the world ... Humans can know that they have been different in the past ... that they may become different in the future. (Freire, 1985 quoted in Lankshear, 1993:97)

A community of memory is inherently intergenerational, imaginative, and has real-life consequences, including tensions. As Chizuko notes, there too is a “politics of memory” (2001) – which means that all need to bear in mind the issue of positionality; “where does the ‘I’ speak from”? These are important considerations in process of bridging stories and finding common threads in them that become part of collective stories that in turn, shape cultural identities and promote cultural continuity. While heritage planning often denotes preservation of the “past” – in this paper, I take the view that it is
empowering and important to “remember” (for example, the experiences of the first Chinese Canadians, those who fought in the war and for citizenship, etc.), but that it is also important to “reach out” and embrace new stories – thereby applying lessons learned in the past to the present, rather than simply dwelling in the past.

New Stories, Symbols, and Rituals: From Memory to Mobilization

Communities themselves, as well as other socio-cultural systems, can also be described along a trajectory of change. These can be progressive and enriching or retrogressive, declining, and frozen in the past while the world changes. (Giuliani & Feldman, 1993, quoted in Fried, 2000).

Chinatown as a landscape of memory is constantly changing and in motion. Its members must respond to change without compromising collective values. The result as Giuliani and Feldman allude to, are communities that are more “progressive and enriching”. Conversely, a community of memory without new stories is static and counter productive. New rituals and symbols help to build and rebuild the city of memory.

Beyond monuments, plaques, and statues, rituals are important as they involve living members of a community. Rituals are means for collective expression as well as channels, through the habits and ceremonies of the participants, for the needs of contact, belonging, and love (Lopez, 2002: 112). They are symbolic tools which prepare people for the life or community aspired to. This identity-constructing dynamic of rituals like stories, is the driving force behind intergenerational dialogue and negotiation. Sometimes, intergenerational rituals have to do with collective agreement or succession.

Rites of passage have always been channels and celebrations of generational succession. In the early 1900s, Van Gennep wrote that rites of passage include rites of incorporation or initiation, threshold or transition, and separation or farewell, unequally developed in each society (Lopez, 2002:119). These rites are important to generational succession but also community inclusion. Lopez describes the importance of such
rituals in her study of youth in the 1960s and 1990s in Spain (2002). According to Lopez, youth wait for rituals and give new meanings with alternative ceremonies. Youth rituals may be complex expressions of belonging to the area of the community and the area of society. In the past, they are sometimes "ceremonies of resistance", and at other times, "ceremonies of celebration, cooperation, and mutual understanding." Eisenstadt believes that rituals as rights of passage for youth help to acknowledge that youth are not just transient members but contributing members. Rituals and symbols that are inclusive, designed to actively involve a diversity of age groups are most effective.

Chapter Conclusion

Tracing the epistemology of Chinatowns and classical theories of generation and assimilation, I have illustrated that past understanding of these concepts were narrow and tended to side with an unquestioned "official story". As such, they have promoted age-segregation, stereotyping, dominant and uni-directional stories. These theories also render Chinatown a static and segregated place of the past, rather than an empowering place where past stories are bridged with future stories. In this Chapter, I have argued then that planners must return to thinking about the life course and putting that knowledge into practice. In this way, they acknowledge the age continuum and the existence of multiple and multi-directional stories of people who make up the community.

The life course lens has implications for both the hard and soft Chinatown and the community's role in promoting cultural continuity for Chinese Canadians in an increasingly multicultural society. As a cultural and historic neighbourhood, Chinatown has an evolving landscape of memory, which is created through the community's past, present, and future. The next chapter introduces the practical aspects of the life course.

perspective through a detailed overview of the concept of intergenerational programming.
Fred

I remember... I started off playing ping-pong in the CBA (Chinese Benevolent Association), that's when a group of us realized that there were no English language classes offered for new immigrant students in Chinatown. There was a need, so the group of us would volunteer our time after class to help other students. That's how I first got involved in Chinatown... there was a whole group of us in the 1970s, we were university students then... we hung up the new Cultural Centre sign... we protested and wrote to City Hall...

Age 68

Fred, now a vice-chair of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee and a long-time community advocate of the Chinatown community, can still vividly recount story after story of the fights and flare of Chinatown's youth in the 1970s. From the freeway fight to the building and programming of the Chinese Cultural Centre, Fred remembers the countless hours spent in battling injustices and building new structures in the 1970s.
Chapter 3:
The Concept

Intergenerational Programming

A society that cuts off older people from meaningful contact with children is greatly endangered. In the presence of grandparent and grandchild, past and future merge in the present. We need a human unit in which to think about time. (Margaret Mead, 1972, quoted in Bosak, 2001)

As a new but emerging area of research, practice, and policy, intergenerational programming facilitates meaningful and intentional interaction between younger and older generations in an increasingly age-segregated and diverse society. This chapter explores the following questions: What is intergenerational programming? What are its benefits to communities?

The International Consortium of Intergenerational Programming (ICIP)

Throughout the world, in countries with a variety of differing economic, political, and social infrastructure, there are common challenges such as changing social structures, shifting roles within families, and the differing needs of generations in communities. The occurrence of a few key global events catalyzed the emergence of global discussions on these challenges. These discussions, in turn, have served as an impetus for the growth of the social phenomenon of “intergenerational programs” as a means to address the needs of young and old and support the creation of new and positive roles for children, youth, and older adults within communities.

By the 1990s, the United Nations recognized that the dramatic demographic shifts in developed and developing countries were already having profound impact on every aspect of society, requiring adjustments in economic and social policies and infrastructure. In developed countries, discussions regarding “aging in place”, productive

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aging, pension, and affordable housing, are only a few of many items reflecting these
concerns. It was with these issues in mind that the United Nations declared 1999 as the
International Year of Older Persons with the theme of "a society for all ages." This
represented an extension of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development's vision for
a "society for all" – an inclusive society posited as the aim of social integration.

Recognizing both the uniqueness in every local context and a growing "global
malaise and readiness" for this social phenomenon, in April 1999, a group of
international human service groups including UNESCO (the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization) met at University of Dortmund, Germany, to discuss
intergenerational solutions to some of the universal issues and problems affecting the
two generations at the two ends of the human continuum. This discussion led to a
consensus of creating a formal organization that would both "promote and give
credibility" to intergenerational initiatives, providing a framework for communication and
an impetus for developing them in communities around the world. Consequently, the
International Consortium of Intergenerational Programming (ICIP) formed in 1999.

In October 1999, the first International Conference on Intergenerational
Programs to Promote Social Change in Vaals, the Netherlands, was launched, bringing
over 60 people that represented UNESCO and 12 countries: Belgium, Canada, Cuba,
France, Germany, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, the United
Kingdom and the United States. The conference included numerous interactive
workshops on intergenerational issues related to social policy, community development,
employment, childcare, education, multicultural issues, research and networking
(O'Sullivan, 2002: 270). In the process, the participants also shared their countries' interest in and recognition of the need for intergenerational programs. O'Sullivan
remembers that "the workshops and discussions were informative, enthusiastic and
probing, with participants expressing a commitment to the value of the intergenerational
approach to promote social change from a multinational perspective (2002:270).” Since its conception then, the ICIP has been a means to facilitate discussions, integrating global trends and local experiences.

**Intergenerational Programming**

Intergenerational programs are social vehicles that create purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations (Newman, 2002: 266). This definition, developed by the ICIP, has now been adopted by many communities around the world.

Miriam Bernard, keynote speaker of the 2004 ICIP conference, contends that intergenerational programming work is concerned with research, theory, policy, and practice, with research as a key element that provides linkages and “holds the jigsaw together”. Breaking the barriers between them, she says, is key to realize the potential of this developing field. Bernard believes that there have been remarkable changes in the field of intergenerational programming in the last twenty years.
A key illustration of this is the immense growth and diversity of intergenerational practice and application in area or community-based initiatives that range from oral history projects to neighbourhood revitalization and inclusive participation.

Despite significant changes there are many challenges ahead in this growing field including developing an articulated value base, creating accurate terminology, integrating its practice, developing appropriate methodologies, acquiring funding and support, developing more systematic reviews, and defining community-level indicators.
While American literature on intergenerational programs is quite extensive there is still less originating from other countries, including Canada\textsuperscript{23}. This is reflected in the fact that although intergenerational programming is a growing field globally, especially in the United States, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Singapore and Japan, there are only a handful of Canadian organizations dedicated to intergenerational initiatives, most notably in British Columbia and Ontario. The University of Victoria’s intergenerational program, has been actively involved in this area’s research and policy development.\textsuperscript{24} Although Intergenerational program consulting is a growing profession\textsuperscript{25} in the United States, it is still foreign in Canada. Figure 3.3 illustrates some examples of current intergenerational organizations internationally, nationally, and locally.

\textbf{Figure 3.3}

\textbf{Examples of Intergenerational Program Organizations}

\begin{itemize}
  \item **INTERNATIONAL**
    \begin{itemize}
      \item International Consortium of Intergenerational Programs
      \item Elderhostel
      \item Helpage International
      \item Homeshare International
      \item Beth Johnson Foundation, U.K.
      \item Intergenerational Innovations
      \item Generations Together, U.S.
      \item Generations United, U.S.
    \end{itemize}
  \item **NATIONAL**
    \begin{itemize}
      \item Generations Can Connect
      \item Volunteer Grandparents
      \item United Generations Ontario
      \item The Learning Partnership
      \item National forum on Intergenerational Issues, Montreal
    \end{itemize}
  \item **LOCAL**
    \begin{itemize}
      \item BC Council for Families
      \item Generation Connection Society
      \item Zajac Foundation
    \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

Increasingly, information is well-shared through tight networks established through the ICIP which holds biennial conferences. For example, Valerie Kuehne,

\textsuperscript{23} Hundreds of intergenerational program guidebooks and manuals have been published over the past 15 years. In the last few years, particularly, authors in the intergenerational field are finding mainstream venues for their publications (e.g., Brabazon & Disch, 1997; Hawkins et al., 1998; Henkin and Kingston, 1998/1999; Kaplan et al., 1998; Kuehne, 1999; Newman et al., 1997; and Winston, 2001).

\textsuperscript{24} Intergenerational exchange is a theme gaining increasing attention at conferences of professional societies from a broad range of fields including volunteerism, child development, service learning, and gerontology. In all of these venues, there’s a growing recognition of the potential of intergenerational methodologies for enhancing people’s lives and strengthening communities.

\textsuperscript{25} It houses the second bi-annual ICIP Conference from June 3-5, 2004, entitled, “Global Challenges – Future Directions: Intergenerational Programmes, Research, and Policy”.

\textsuperscript{26} Intergenerational consulting has been pioneered by companies such as Points of View Intergenerational Media and Consulting in the United States.
Associate Vice-President Academic Planning at the University of Victoria and Host of the 2004 ICIP Conference, recently completed an important Canadian intergenerational programming review paper: “The State of Our Art: Intergenerational Programme Research and Evaluation: Part One”, published in the new *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* (2003:145-165). Resource lists to document literature, organizations, articles, and new research and projects are also expanding.26

**Application of Intergenerational Programming in Communities**

Most research, discussion and policies in the past have tended to focus on macro concerns such as financial transfers, in particular public pension issues and long-term care (transfers between generations in the general sense); less attention until recently has been given for example, to the micro-level private sphere of intergenerational services and care (transfers between biological generations). The private sphere of intergenerational relationships is often discussed as it relates to the wider macro issue of financial costs to governments and, in some developed countries, the cost to the younger generations (Lane, 2003: 3). This discussion has been augmented with the anticipation of demographic aging (a large proportion of the population aging).

**The “Intergenerational Contract”**

The “intergenerational contract” is a community’s unspoken sense of intergenerational responsibility and care, generally of older people. The contract is governed and guided by rules, norms, convention, practices and biology, with the “contract” being implicit rather than arrived at through individual negotiation. Although

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26 For example, an Intergenerational Resource List containing references on approximately 1000 articles, books, documents and videos has been researched and is continually updated by Abigail Lawrence (arlawren@umich.edu) while studying for her PhD at the School of Social Work and Sociology at the University of Michigan in the USA. To view the intergenerational resource list, refer to: http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu/IGResourceList.htm
not as common today, it was standard for some cultures to ensure that power over resources lay with older persons (especially with older men). It has been argued on many occasions that the welfare of older persons has become largely a community rather than a family concern such that in some countries the conventional role of the family has been minimized (Malhotra and Kabeer, 2002; Kaplan, 2002a). The existence of different views of what constitutes intergenerational contract, solidarity and relationships, therefore, needs to be recognized.

Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that there has been a shift in the nature of intergenerational relationships in all societies over the years. As I began to discuss in the last chapter, the reasons for this change have focused on two key possibilities: (a) changing beliefs and values that have affected the role of the family and the relationships between its members; and (b) socio-economic transformation that has led to changes in the institutional organization of family life and a change in family relationships. The first view sees that the decline in family-based production and migration of younger family members have brought about a shift in attitudes about family and a change in the flow of wealth. The second view emphasizes that while there may have only been two or three generations in existence at the same time in the family in the past, now there are many more, which has led to some blurring of intergenerational boundaries. Therefore, there are many different kinds of families and “social contracts” within societies today. Many believe that the reasons for the changes in intergenerational relationships lie somewhere between the two possibilities. Lane argues that although many attribute change in intergenerational relations to industrialization, globalization, and economic development; although these processes set the conditions for the direction of social policy development, they don’t determine the content of the policies and cannot be the sole determining factors in any “one size fits
all" theory (Lane, 2003:5). The local context, historical development and political processes of any given city and country have been extremely important in shaping policy evolution (Heidenheimer et. al., 1990). This has been a critical issue in the advancement of intergenerational programming. The definition of family and intergenerational relations has also been identified as a factor.

As discussed in Chapter 1, some of our earliest understanding of intergenerational interaction is perhaps derived from our experience and understanding of family. For now, research however, has only managed to illustrate tenuous connections between intergenerational relationships in the community and family. It is recognized however, that besides the family, there are very few meaningful opportunities for interaction between different ages in North American cities. Even within the family, however, as Ashfield notes, there are many reasons why interaction between the oldest and youngest generations do not happen as often as we may like (Ashfield, 1994).

Funding and Policies

As alluded to earlier, the rich potential of intergenerational programming and its prioritization has not been realized at policy level discussions. This must change in order to advance intergenerational programming efforts in Vancouver's Chinatown and other communities. As Walker notes, "policy makers have not grasped the fundamental importance of intergenerational solidarity... they perceive only a funding/spending relationship" (Walker, 1993: 20). Walker argues that although the economic relationship is one consideration, the intergenerational contract also includes an ethical dimension that expresses the social cohesion of societies, achieved by ensuring security and rights for all citizens – not only those who are able to pay for it. A "one-dimensional" interpretation of intergenerational relationships or the intergenerational contract is therefore, inadequate. Lane echoes Walker:
policies and programmes based on an intergenerational approach should promote an essential interdependence among generations and recognize that all members of society have contributions to make and needs to fulfill. While the nature of these contributions and needs may change over the course of one’s life, the giving and receiving of resources over time is crucial to promoting intergenerational trust, economic and social stability, and progress. The means by which resources are transferred are also important, whether they be formal mechanisms provided by the State or informal kinship and community networks. (Lane, 2003:12)

Nevertheless, there is greater recognition of the value of intergenerational interdependence than in the past and growing discussions and developments of intergenerational tools and applications that promote community development and social cohesion.

**Demographic Aging**

In May of 2002, the United Nations held the Second World Assembly on Aging in Madrid, Spain. At the first meeting, held 20 years earlier in Vienna, Austria, worldwide aging was just a long-range statistical possibility. But the findings of the 2002 assembly were “almost cataclysmic” and thus, the conference was devoted to discussing the huge impacts demographic aging will have on healthcare, housing, welfare, and consumption, among other challenges that will emerge like never before in communities around the world.

We’ll be influenced in every way by the dramatic shifts in worldwide demographics. The effects of this silent revolution “... are being felt by every individual, family, neighbourhood, and nation throughout the world” (U.N., 1999)

The tremors of what is being called an “agequake” (Alvarez, 1999), already being felt at all levels demographically, call for the drafting of many new partnerships, funding sources, research, and planning initiatives. Leonard Heumann, a review editor of the American Planning Association Journal, echoes the U.N.’s forecast:

... many of these issues will find their way into regional, municipal, and neighbourhood planning debates as well. So while we have seen relatively little written on the subject of aging and planning in the Journal thus far, we predict that aging and planning will become a hot item in the not too distant future. (Heumann, Winter 2003: 86)
Heumann's prediction is echoed by Kuehne's research presented at the ICIP Conference in 2002 entitled, "What's hot, What's not, and What's next". Kuehne warns people in all professions and areas of academia including planning and healthcare to acknowledge the growing demographic challenges through intergenerational programming.

Demographic aging is affecting communities at different scales. By the year 2050, it is estimated that about a third of the world's population will be 60 or more years of age. One million people are turning 60 every month – 20% are in the developed world. Alvarez (1999) warns that the aging of the Baby boom population will have huge ramifications from redefining age concepts to challenge current social services, structures, and infrastructure. New challenges will exist in providing the younger and the older with health care, education, financial assistance, and social support systems (Kaplan, 2002a:20). Ironically, Kaplan notes, it is these “two groups of people that need one another. To meet the challenges of this demographic change, strategies are needed to restore and maintain bonds across generations” (2002a:35). Recent discussions of intergenerational programming have led to developing new strategies to not only respond to demographic aging, but also to build meaningful relationships through the generations.

**From “Doing for” to “Doing with”**

Over time, applications of intergenerational programming have grown to include a range of possibilities to bring multi-generations together for dialogue, mutual learning, community service and development, activism and volunteerism. Typically, there are four generally agreed types of intergenerational programming (Hatton-Yeo & Ohsako 2000; Kaplan et. al, 2002).
Type 1 and 2 are most common. Type 1 is illustrated by the work of Volunteer Grandparents Society of B.C., Big Brothers or Big Sisters, or mentorship programs, while Type 2 may typically include young people serving older people in seniors housing or hospital settings, such as the Christie-Ossington Neighbourhood Centre and Toronto Intergenerational Partnership program which equips ‘high risk’ unemployed youth with skills to service seniors.

While the last two types of intergenerational programming are not as common as the first two types, increasingly, they are recognized as the most powerful ways of cementing relationships between generations since there is equal and mutual exchange (O'Sullivan, 2002: 36; Hatton-Yeo & Ohsako 2000). Thus, participants are encouraged to move away from "age-segregated" communities to move towards "age-integrated communities" (O'Sullivan, 2002: 36).

**Intergenerational Programming Reflected in the Hard & Soft City**

Intergenerational programming informs physical planning and design (the hard city) as well as community development and social planning processes (the soft city), which are mutually supportive.
These qualities make intergenerational programming a powerful tool in community planning, speaking both to the design of community process as well as the design or "programming" of tangible spaces to facilitate intergenerational exchange and express the intergenerational values of the community. Other applications may include creating networks or developing a more diverse working body (e.g. organizations and committees). Growing discussions in various areas such as heritage planning (Chapter 2) have also viewed intergenerational programming as an important element that promotes shared landscapes of memory.

Benefits

Our communities, and consequently our world, benefit by recognizing the contributions and assets of each generation.

Donna Butts

While past intergenerational programs focused mainly on the benefits of human development, recent research is beginning to illustrate the markings of a broader theoretical framework which considers outcome variables that include impact upon community institutions and settings. This emerging trend has been cited as an exciting and new direction in intergenerational research. Many intergenerational organizations have formed as social scientists, healthcare professionals, and politicians recognize

27 Donna Butts is executive of Generations United, website: http://www.gu.org/

28 Dr. Matthew Kaplan, Pennsylvania State University, USA spoke on the "impact of intergenerational programmes on community initiatives and settings" at the first ICIP International Intergenerational Conference held April 2-4, 2002, at Keele University, England. See the Conference Report for more information his presentation, which highlighted key aspects of his current research (Kaplan, 2002b).
intergenerational programming is a necessary tool in promoting healthier and more inclusive communities (Pylon, 1998:2; Shipman: 1997; Ontario Premier's Council on Health, Well-being and Social Justice; 1993).

**Figure 3.6 Multi-dimensional Benefits of Intergenerational Programming**

![Diagram of Multi-dimensional Benefits](image)

A key benefit of intergenerational programming is that its incorporation helps to recognize the unique needs of various age groups as well as facilitates the benefits of bringing generations together. In this section, I will highlight some benefits more recent intergenerational research has pointed to.

**Intergenerational Shared Sites & Community Design**

Recognizing both bio-psychological and social well-being benefits, increasingly planners and urban designers are integrating intergenerational concepts in the design of place and communities, for example, the incorporation of daycares near senior centres, as well as intergenerational housing options such as homeshare (Klercq, 2002; Baldwin, 1990; 29). These “shared sites” which service both children and older adults is an exciting new development in the intergenerational landscape – Nursing homes with on-site child care centres, adult and child day care services co-located in the same building, senior centres offering after school programs, and senior centres within schools are all examples of this growing phenomenon. (Kaplan et. al, 2002:73). As more people are recognizing the benefits of places that promote intergenerational interaction, research, development, and design of “intergenerational shared sites” are growing. In the United States, this is illustrated from the increasing numbers of American models and public
policies that support intergenerational programs and place-making as well as resources available through local governments and organizations such as Generations United (Steinig & Peterson, 2002). In Singapore, there has been a major movement towards building “3-in-1” centres that combine daycare for infants, children and the elderly (Thang, 2002, 126).29

*Tampines 3-in-1 Centre

As an original vision by Mrs. Amy Fong, The Tampines 3-in-1 Family Centre was opened by the Prime Minister in March 1999, with the goal of broadening the connection between the old and the young. It was opened as a model for expanding intergenerational activities in Singapore. Situated in the Tampines, a large housing estate in the eastern suburb of Singapore, the family centre provides three service centres under one roof: day care for those 55 years and up, infants up to six years old, and before-and after-school care (BFSC) for children aged seven to 12. There are roughly 160 children in childcare and BFSC respectively, while aged care has daily attendance of 35 seniors. Besides 38 staff in three centres, the kitchen has two cooks who receive volunteers who help and serve the children and the elderly daily. Although it may not be unusual in a place like Singapore with services for different age groups so close in proximity to one another, the 3-in-1 Centre is unique for its active efforts to promote age-integration.

The young and old are brought together to take part in activities that promote mutual care and friendship. The children gain insight of the aging process as they interact with the seniors who become supportive grandparent figures. The activities they engage in together may include dining together, doing jig saw puzzles or crafts, or having

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29 Despite the success of 3-in-1 sites in Singapore, some politicians in Singapore have critiqued their effects on family. Prime Minister, Go Chok Tong, for example, suggested that those intergenerational shared sites and the services they provide can weaken family ties ("Good Leaders Deliver Hardware," March 8, 1999).
the children help seniors with their physiotherapy treatments by playing catch with bean bags together or music therapy. Intergenerational outings to parks and zoos are a weekly event. To celebrate the International Year of Older persons in 1999, a three-generational concert was held. At traditional festivals, stories are exchanged along with hands-on activities.

There were a number of barriers at the beginning. These included developing ways to break negative stereotypes of the elderly and their sicknesses, both from the children and their parents, as well as helping children and seniors engage in nonverbal gesture where seniors only spoke dialects the children didn’t understand. Despite these challenges however, more than five years later, the Centre has succeeded in making age-integration an acceptable concept in the community. The registration both for children and seniors is now increasing rapidly at the 3-in-1 centre, largely, because of the testified benefits of the age-integrated experiences provided there.

**Bio-psychological Health**

With the most research in this area up to now, studies have clearly illustrated the bio-psychological benefits of intergenerational programming for both young and old. Research in youth development and successful aging for example, suggest a convergence in strategies that promote healthy development across the life course (Zeldin, 2000). For seniors, intergenerational programming may promote more meaningful activity into later years, which contributes to health. For children and youth, intergenerational programming may encourage self-esteem and support. In numerous studies, intentional intergenerational relationships were found to help in preventing teenagers from dropping out of the school and social system (Pilon, 1999: 2). New terms are constantly being developed in this area to reflect recent research. “Productive aging”, coined by American Pulitzer Prize winner Robert Butler, M.D., for example, is “the capacity of an individual or a population to serve in the paid work force, to serve in
volunteer activities, to assist in the family, and to maintain himself or herself as independently as possible." There are challenges facing both developing and developed nations to find culturally, politically, and economically appropriate strategies for promoting lifelong productivity, supporting family care giving, and ensuring cultural continuity (Kaplan, 2002 et. al: xi).

**Challenging Age Stereotypes**

Said the little boy, "sometimes I drop my spoon."
Said the little old man, "I do that too."
The little boy whispered, "I wet my pants."
"I do that too," laughed the little old man.
Said the little boy, "I often cry."
The old man nodded, "so do I."

"But worst of all," said the boy, "it seems that grown-ups don't pay attention to me."
And he felt the warmth of a wrinkled old hand.
"I know what you mean," said the little old man.


Silverstein's famous poem reflects sentiments resulting from the tendency to stereotype and neglect the young and the old in North American society. Williams and Nussbaum note that intergenerational communication, according to recent research, "has rich potential for misunderstanding and miscommunication (2001)." While we are accustomed to talk about responding to diversity in intercultural and other arenas of social life, we typically give little thought to the reality that we interact in a world of intergenerational communication, with many false assumptions about age.

Age stereotypes are reinforced through media. In a study comparing Japanese and American television programs for children, Holtzman and Akyama (1985:6) noted that older people are portrayed, often in a negative or stereotypical manner. Others have also noted the importance of battling media in pursuit of building intergenerational relationships in communities (Erlich, 1992; Granville and Hatton-Yeo, 2002). Sadly, up to now, there has been little effort in fighting age-stereotyping in media. This has counterproductive realities, especially in civic engagement.

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Civic Engagement

The young and old are two groups that are often left out in community discussions and participation. When they are involved, there is often a tendency towards token involvement. As Nadim Kara, at the City of Vancouver Social Planning Department, Civic Youth Strategy team, states,

... it [age stereotyping] still remains as one of the biggest barriers in youth community participation. That is why many of our projects entail working with young people and identifying both how they feel they are viewed and how they view older adults.31

Youth and seniors have many common traits including often not being taken seriously in community politics and participation, having varying degrees of conflict with the middle generation, and facing discrimination in the workforce (Kuhn, 1985; Mullahey et. al, 1999). Yet, a downfall of most age-related outreach for community workers and social planners, is that they have tended to focus on one group or the other without bringing the experiences of the two together.

Meaningful community participation can be enhanced through intergenerational programming. Meaningful community participation has elements that include: actions that intervene in existing conditions; involvement in public dialogue and decision-making; and, engagement that is influential and creates changes that are significant (Checkoway, 1994; Mullahey et. al, 1999: 4). Intergenerational programming implicitly promotes this meaningful participation for all ages. Increasingly, intergenerational programming is seen as a key element in promoting strong social networks and active community engagement – critical elements for successful community development.

Cultural Regeneration & Cross-Cultural Understanding

Intergenerational programming responds to those like Jane Jacobs who urges everyone to “remember” and “live” their own culture. By nature, intergenerational

programming almost always involves creating the space for sharing stories intergenerationally and even interculturally. As such, it points to opportunities for cultural healing, continuity, and understanding, and new partnerships.

Intergenerational programs can play a significant role in transmitting values from generation to generation within a culture and in promoting understanding and tolerance across cultures. Intergenerational programs can also provide a tool for addressing cycles of intolerance that historically have been passed down through the generations. (Kaplan et. al., 2002: 7)

Intergenerational programming can encourage the search for cultural self-identity, which encompasses the recognition and placement of one's individual and family history into a larger historical experience. “Generational memories”, according to Hareven, are "memories which individuals have of their own families' history, as well as more general collective memories about the past" (1978: 137, 2000). The transmission of collective histories, often an intergenerational enterprise, has implications for strengthening the bond between generations, promoting a sense of cultural continuity, and exposing individuals to a process of learning which promotes cultural awareness, identity, and group consciousness.

Intergenerational programs may be designed to use storytelling, dance, cultural crafts, healing arts, language and other modalities to provide participants with a sense of cultural pride and connectedness to a cultural timeline. In this light, intergenerational work presents a powerful approach for promoting cultural values and perspectives and addressing problems associated with cultural discontinuity while also promoting cross-cultural understanding (Kaplan et. al, 2002a: 7).

Many ethnic minorities in Canada such as Chinese-Canadians have faced many forms of inequality and discrimination in the past – the way to fight them and to move on is not to forget them nor to dwell on them as victims as Ng says, but rather to remember and retell them along with new stories that illustrate the "importance of Chinese agency" (Ng, 1999: 6). In the words of Yu, by doing so, we realize that each of us, no matter who
we are, is the “subject” but also “has something at stake” – we recognize the need to hear the multiple stories of our families and our communities in order to embrace a better future. Many First Nations communities in British Columbia act as leading examples of what intergenerational programming that incorporates multiple stories can do.

*From Storyscapes to Storylines: Intercultural, Intergenerational Programs (IIPs)*

Storyscapes is an Aboriginal storytelling project that gives Aboriginal people the opportunity and means to express their stories of Vancouver, to represent their own maps, to give voice to their own dreams, to honour the stories of the ancestors, to share rich knowledge of the land . . . We will place a special focus on working with Aboriginal youth as the story gatherers, providing opportunities for them to learn story gathering techniques, work with a variety of technologies and reconnect with their cultures and communities.

Stories between generations are a theme in a number of successful intergenerational programs. Funded by the Ministry for Community, Aboriginal and Women’s Services and supported by the City of Vancouver (June 2003), Storyscapes is a unique First Nations intergenerational project which seeks to build both intergenerational and intercultural understanding. The project has three themes: invitation, inclusion, and expression and makes use of digital and internet archives so that many are able to contribute to an evolving storyscape. For indigenous peoples, various notions of intergenerational re-connection have been found to help restore cultural knowledge (including indigenous languages), perspectives, and pride. Another example is the development of “Na Pua No’eau” (The Centre for Gifted and Talented Native Hawaiian Children), a cultural immersion program in Hawaii, that involves elders and youth in all aspects of the educational process (Ball et.al, 2002).

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http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/cyclerk/cclerk/20030708/a3.htm

Currently, research in this area is still considered very new and there is little empirical research that examines intergenerational communication across different cultures (except for some like Nor Al-Deen, 1997; Kaplan, 2002). Consistent with notions of cultural diversity in North America, some intergenerational models have been created to promote multicultural awareness and acceptance (Perlstein, 1997; Sklton-Sylvester and Henkin, 1997; and McGowen, 1997). As McGowan notes, weaving cross-cultural experience into intergenerational experience compounds the rich, reflexive insights gained by the participants and stimulates their rejection of ageist and racist/culture-based stereotypes.

There are numerous examples of such programs. Storyline is a project that delivers intergenerational programs in primary and secondary schools. The key principles of the Storyline method seek to enable students and older people of different cultural backgrounds to learn together as equal partners and involves the adoption of roles in the creation of characters, setting a location for the story, and resolving dilemmas as events unfold... the story culminating in a successful conclusion; the celebration. Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders) in the United States, pairs college students with immigrant elders – an example of intergenerational cross-age programming. The UNESCO institute in Germany is an intergenerational initiative that seeks to heal wounds of war, ethnic hatred, and discrimination. The Intercultural Grandmothers Uniting is a growing network of First Nations, Metis and other Canadian older women in rural Saskatchewan set up by the Regina Seniors’ Centre and the University of Regina in 1997 to build bridges of

Inc., 2002., 83 – 99, provides a comprehensive overview of the range of intergenerational programs that have played a critical role in the revitalization of their communities.

P. Tench and G. Stanton made a presentation entitled, “Using storyline to deliver intergenerational programmes in schools – challenges and successes” at the first ICIP International Intergenerational Conference held April 2-4, 2002, at Keele University, England. See the Conference Report for more information on their presentation, which highlighted key aspects of their current work with Storyline.
understanding between the generations and the races and healthy, violence-free families and communities.

**Intergenerational Programming and Neighbourhood Revitalization**

There is growing literature and number of case studies that support the effectiveness of intergenerational programming as a tool in area or neighbourhood-based revitalization. Moving from theory to action, intergenerational programming involves developing community criteria and indicators for evaluation, requiring thinking intently about the outcomes before developing the strategies. Although there are a number of written initiatives on community-based intergenerational programming, one of the first formalized and documented strategies is the *Community for all Ages* approach.  

**The Community for all Ages Approach**

The *Community for All Ages* concept defines target neighbourhoods, rather than specific populations and focuses on the promotion of the well-being of all populations young to old. *Communities for all ages* are those that

... promote the well-being of children, older adults, strengthen families, and provide opportunities for ongoing, mutually beneficial interaction among age groups ... [though] themes exist regardless of age group.

(Henkin et. al, 2003:2)

This approach emphasizes mobilizing those of different ages – particularly older adults and youth are resources for one another and for their communities, building human and social capital in knowledge, advocacy, skills, and historical and cultural knowledge, while differences are bridged. The different age groups in the community are seen as mutual resources rather than competitors. Yielding change on both practical and policy levels, this intergenerational approach may be used as a tool to

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35 This concept was developed and coined by Nancy Z. Henkin, April Holmes, Benjamin Walter, Barbara R. Greenberg, and Jan Schwarz, authors of “Community for All Ages: Youth and Elders as Allies in Neighbourhood Transformation,” a Paper written for The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, November 2003.
promote sustainable community development and neighbourhood revitalization. As Henkin et. al testify, "[programs and policies designed within this approach embrace age-group defined priorities, while moving forward the entire community (Henkin et. al, 2003:2)."

Using age as a lens, the Community for all Ages approach may be used to build on existing theories and programs as part of a community building and revitalization strategy. Some of the theories that the age-integrated life course approach may complement include social capital, social networks, and community capacity building (Raynes & Rawlings, 2004:7) as well as other traditional planning and funding strategies.

The four over-arching strategies of this approach include:

1. Expanding social networks, especially for vulnerable young and older members and families;

2. Increasing social capital by promoting ties across ages & developing opportunities for lifelong civic/social engagement;

3. Integrating life-course perspective into existing institutions and services; and

4. Creating policies and promoting norms that foster reciprocity, interdependence, and age-integration

At a more detailed level, Henkin et. al propose that there are some key elements that are necessary in moving towards Community for all Ages approach. In this paper, I adopt these criteria as an evaluative framework for analysis.

**Criteria for Community for all Ages Approach**

> **Opportunities for life-long civic engagement**

All age groups are involved in community planning initiatives, and there is a social expectation of services at all stages of life, with a range of opportunities for traditional volunteer, stipend volunteer, and paid workforce available for all age groups.
These opportunities are supported by a solid infrastructure for the recruitment, training, placement, and support of all people engaged in service.

➢ **Collaboration across systems and organizations**

  Partnerships exist across systems serving different age groups, facilitated by age-integrated funding streams that encourage collaborative efforts.

➢ **Opportunities for life-long learning**

  Educational (and cultural) institutions are utilized as centres for life-long learning. Quality learning opportunities for extended learning are available for all ages. Older people may also be included as learners as well as teachers, tutors, and mentors. These may include schools, educational centres, cultural centres, libraries, and museums.

➢ **Support for caregiving families**

  This includes accessible services in the community for families caring for children, people of disabilities, and frail older adults, with assistance available to navigate service delivery systems. Different kinds of care are acknowledged and services are available to respond to their unique needs. These might include family support services, community centres, and daycares.

➢ **Access to quality health care and social services across the life course**

  Age-and culturally-appropriate health, mental health, and social services are available across the life course. Community activities are developed to respond to the developmental needs of especially, children, youth, and older adults. I would also like to add that community activities developed to respond to those of “middle age” or “the generations in between” are also important. This includes diverse health centres and facilities that promote growing up and aging in place.
Institutions with a life-span perspective

Policies, seamless services, and programs support lifelong individual development and health, as well as the ability to transition between phases of education, work, and leisure. This continuum of services supports people and families at all life stages. Basic needs such as housing, safety, food, and transportation are met across the life course.

Physical Infrastructure

Housing, childcare, transportation and public buildings are designed to be safe and developmentally appropriate for diverse age groups. Tangible intergenerational gathering places are also important such as parks and recreational sites.

Planned efforts to promote meaningful cross-age interaction

Structured opportunities exist for intergenerational, multigenerational, and cross-cultural interaction, with no age barriers to participation. These opportunities provide the “soft” spaces for all ages to identify common issues, engage in community improvement projects, and consequently, better understand each others’ needs, strengths, and visions. These might include rituals, celebrations, workshops, and coffee/tea houses.

Examples of “Communities of All Ages” in the Making

Although these criteria are far reaching and may require the parallel development of short-term and long-term goals and outcomes, together, they create a firm foundation for a life-course oriented, age-integrated, and more sustainable community development and neighbourhood revitalization strategy. A number of cities and neighbourhoods have already begun to adopt this approach (or at least elements of it) to their community programs. This next section will highlight the stories and testimonies of a few of these communities.
*Charlottesville*

Charlottesville, VA, with an aging population and issues of age-segregation in the community, was one of the first to embrace the *Community of all Ages* approach to its community planning process. This approach was initially adapted to remodel a Charlottesville thoroughfare to make it more pedestrian-friendly, by involving people of all ages, with an emphasis on children and seniors. The success of this project in Charlottesville has since meant integrating the approach in larger community planning processes there, including a diverse cross-section of agencies, organizations and activities, building bridges across service providers that in the past, focused on distinct populations and issues.

*Victoria, BC*

Very early on in the 1980s, the University of Victoria began to develop their intergenerational program to address issues of age-polarized communities. This is often due to the pattern of young people leaving the city after high school or university in search for jobs. Youth-retention, participation, and tension between different age groups are therefore commonly sited as community issues. In 1999, the Intergenerational Week Committee, gave a keynote address on the importance of positive intergenerational relationships at the University's Centre on Aging Community Forum. Those who attended this forum brought back to their own neighbourhoods and community ideas to incorporate intergenerational programming – including the *Community for all Ages* approach.

What followed were a number of intergenerational projects, processes, and initiatives. For example, an intergenerational planning group began the Festival of the Ages in 1999, featuring a cross-generational “Fashions Then and Now” show. The younger generations dressed in fashions that are “in style” today, while the older
generations of different cultures dressed in fashions that were “in style” when they were younger. As Carol Matusicky of BC Council for Families recalled,

... the event in 1999 was a great success, bringing mutual learning among the different generations. It catalyzed and invigorated various community age-integrated processes in Victoria and brought out about better understanding, and actively engaged everyone ... it was fun too.

The festival now occurs annually in May. Since the first Festival, a number of community-based initiatives began including information about short- and long-term intergenerational projects, life histories, an intergenerational paper “quilt,” intergenerational sports days and dinners, and facilities were developed in various neighbourhoods in Victoria. The University of Victoria Centre for Aging and Intergenerational Programming continues to work with diverse communities to adopt age-integrated strategies like the Community for all Ages approach in building and revitalizing their neighbourhoods.

*Netherlands

A neighbourhood-oriented strategy which incorporates elements of the Community for all Ages approach for improving intergenerational communication and connections has been underway in the Netherlands since 2000. Initially, community workers facilitated a developmental process that involved all age groups to discuss how the neighbourhood could better meet their needs. Working together to identify areas of common interest while building trust, neighbourhoods developed specific intergenerational projects that fit existing policy frameworks such as community plans, education, parent support, and care for young and old (Penninx, 2002). This process has encouraged the younger and older to enter each others’ living environments and to be actively engaged in changing the way residents and social service and community practitioners of all ages think and work. Alongside, numerous other community-based intergenerational initiatives are integrated with larger community processes.
Furthermore, the Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare (NIZW) has developed two methods for promoting the integration of generations (and cultures): neighbourhood reminiscence and intergenerational neighbourhood improvement. Both methods have been noted as successful strategies in promoting social cohesion and community development at the neighbourhood level in the Netherlands. Integrating these strategies is effective in that it deals with both the cultural and remembered landscape as well as the physical place, integrating those of all ages and cultural groups. Communities in the Netherlands continue to lead by example in research and practice.

*Westchester County, NY*

Westchester County reflects a story of how a community might strategically and creatively make use of funding opportunities to pursue intergenerational programming and its consequent benefits. In 2000, the Helen A. Benedict Family Foundation applied for an intergenerational funding strategy to make Westchester County a place where one could age and grow in community. Although beginning with a focus on older people, they eventually adopted the *Community for all Ages approach*, developing a mandate to “enhance the quality of life for people of all ages” in Westchester County. Moving away from traditional ways to apply for funding, the foundation’s stated mandate was to make an impact on the well-being of children and families in Westchester. It then reached out to policymakers and planners to develop new mechanism to meet the goal, eventually moving towards the development of an Intergenerational Fund, which awarded 21 intergenerational grants to 15 organizations interested in implementing programs in which younger people and older adults worked together in their communities. The

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36 C. Mercken and K. Penninx presented on, “intergenerational community building at the neighbourhood level” at the first ICIP International Intergenerational Conference held April 2-4, 2002, at Keele University, England. Please see the Conference Report for more information their presentation, which highlighted the Netherlands case study to illustrate the benefits of intergenerational projects for community development at neighbourhood levels.
Benedict Foundation also gave 15 grants to nine regional or national experts to serve as “field-builders” to local grantees, to guide leadership and capacity building. After adopting the Community for all Ages approach, changes at the policy level and leadership include the following.

- Nonprofits throughout the area now sponsor intergenerational programs/projects
- Residents and leaders have expressed change in the way they view their community
- Neighbourhood associations, non profits, city, and county governments have adopted intergenerational concerns, criteria, and indicators in their policies and projects.
- A directory has been created, based on asset-based mapping
- A Yonkers Intergenerational Task Force was established to promote interdisciplinary partnerships for intergenerational initiatives;
- Reduced tensions in neighbourhoods

Intergenerational Programming in Context

While each community continues to develop strategies, goals, and anticipated outcomes in their unique contexts, having adopted elements of the Community for all Ages approach, they share some common themes as well as diverse lessons that can be learned from. The success of the ongoing community programs depends on its involvement of diverse members of the community as well as sensitivity to the community’s history, culture, geographical, socio-political and economic factors.

... clearly specific contact programs need to take into account the local cultural dynamics operating in a cross generational communication. Until recently, much of the literature on intergenerational contact programs implicitly assumes cultural equivalence. (Giles et. al, 2002:22)

There is a lot of cross-cultural as well as intercultural variation on conceptions of “aging”, family, community, and “meaningful” intergenerational interaction (Kaplan et. al, 2002: 1). Other factors may include history, religion, economic factors, and indigenous patterns of social organization.
Chapter Conclusion

Intergenerational programming is a vehicle that bridges the diverse experiences, needs, and stories of the younger and older members in a community. Recent developments demonstrate that intergenerational programming does not only promote bio-psychological health but also provides numerous benefits at the community level. For this reason, intergenerational programming is an effective tool for neighbourhood revitalization and community development. The “Community of All Ages” approach serves as a framework for communities who are moving in that direction. The next chapter will introduce Vancouver’s Chinatown and its revitalization program as a case study for evaluation.
Charlie

I remember getting hair cuts and eating at the restaurants in Chinatown with my parents as a young child. My main interest when joining the revitalization process was not just for the cultural aspect, but I was interested in the process of city planning and the idea of bring back the younger generations... myself, I would also like to see more entertainers and artists in Chinatown... there's also no formal representations of faith-based groups.

Age 30
Chapter 4

The Case Study

Situating Vancouver's Chinatown and the VCRC

In this Chapter, I introduce this paper's case study, Vancouver's Chinatown, by asking the following questions: From the age lens, what are the key challenges in Vancouver's Chinatown revitalization process and how is the VCRC trying to address them?

**Challenge 1: Changing Age-Distribution**

As with many North American communities, demographic aging is already impacting Greater Vancouver immensely. The figures below illustrate that there is the greatest number of people currently in the mid-age categories (25 to 65 years of age) who, as they continue to age in the next twenty years, will become the largest group of seniors we have seen in the last century. In Chapter 3, I have discussed some implications of demographic aging and the challenges that will need to be confronted in the community.

![Figure 4.0 The Age of Immigrants in Greater Vancouver](source)

![Figure 4.1 The Age of Vancouver Metropolitan Area](source)

Although Chinatown is moving towards mixed land uses, Strathcona, just east to Chinatown still remains as an important residential neighbourhood that houses the most families and Chinese seniors in the larger area. In particular, the percentage of seniors living in Strathcona is very high (over 20% of the total population in this neighbourhood.
is 65 years of age and older). Many of the seniors living in the Strathcona neighbourhood are of Chinese-ethnicity and may be or were active members of the Chinatown community. To them, Chinatown remains an important place – a community they have aged in that has brought them refuge and many memories. Chinatown has also served them as a commercial and service centre that has provided them with their daily needs in their own language.

Contrastingly, there are still relatively few children and youth residing in or near Chinatown. There is however, a growing number southeast of Chinatown in Strathcona (age 6 to 10 category) and west of Chinatown in the International District as well as Yaletown area (age 20 to 24 category).

These age demographics point to the challenge of developing a more “multi-age” community while responding to the reality of an aging population, including a significant number of Chinese seniors that will continue to remain in Chinatown’s immediate vicinity. Although there appears to be a growing number of children and youth in the larger area, this number remains small and affirms the need for outreach to youth in the Region.

**Challenge 2: The Changing Chinese Canadian Community**

Vancouver, as a gateway city (Ley & Murphy, 2001), is a prime example of what Leonie Sandercock calls the mongrel city of the 21st century (Sandercock, 2003). One of the most prominent distinguishing characteristics of the City of Vancouver is its increasing ethnic, racial and linguistic diversity. According to new research, Vancouver is currently the second most ethnically diverse (second to Toronto) and Canada’s most

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37 Although today Vancouver is seen as a multicultural city we still see many struggles of racism, prejudice, and misunderstanding accompany the high influx of newcomers and changing demographics in Vancouver and the Greater Vancouver Regional District (Semotuk, 2003).
ethnically integrated city\textsuperscript{38}. The changing Chinese-Canadian community in Vancouver testifies to this increasing diversity but poses challenges to Chinatown's revitalization process, as the committee seeks to respond to it.

While many early Chinese that formed Chinatown, were primarily from the rural Say Yap ("Four Districts") region of Guangdong province of China speaking Cantonese or the sub-dialect of Toishan, the origins of Chinese immigrants have changed immensely since the mid-1900s. In British Columbia, up to 1990, major sources of immigration have been from Hong Kong, Taiwan, as well as countries from Southeast Asia. More recently Vancouver has been experiencing a large influx of immigration from Mainland China. Of the 18% of the Canadian total Vancouver represents, recent Census results illustrate that Asia was the most common origin of Greater Vancouver immigrant arrivals between 1996 and 2001 - led by the Peoples Republic of China (20 percent), followed by Taiwan (13 percent), India (9 percent), Hong Kong (9 percent) and the Philippines (8 percent).\textsuperscript{39}

**Figure 4.2 Most Numerous Groups of Immigrants Living in Vancouver in 2001**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th># of Recent Immigrants</th>
<th>Percent of Total Recent Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People's Republic of China</td>
<td>16,845</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>6,190</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>5,085</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>4,945</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17,250</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>52,860</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While "Chinese" was the top language registered in 1996, English returns as the top language in 2001. Note that the "Chinese" category has also been changed to three separate dialects of "Chinese n.o.s", "Cantonese", and "Mandarin" in 2001 (Figure 4.3).

\textsuperscript{38} C. Skelton, "Beyond Diversity: Why Vancouver is a world Leader," The Vancouver Sun, 22 May, 2004, C1, C3
\textsuperscript{39} http://www.qvrd.bc.ca/publications/file.asp?ID=599, source: Stats Can, 2001
While this reflects the growing diversity within the Chinese community, it also reflects perhaps, the growing number of native-born Chinese-Canadians, or simply the struggle for Census categories to be more sensitive to increasing diversity.40 While in the past, there has been recognition of ethnic stratification, there is growing awareness of "internal community stratification" within the cultural groups which follows a number of lines: class, religion, regional, immigrant vs. local-born, and gender (Isijaw, 1999:124).

*Satellite Chinatowns and other Ethnic-defined Concentrations

The emergence of Chinese commercial centres and "satellite Chinatowns" outside of Vancouver's Chinatown is a reflection of this phenomenon. Vancouver's significant change in "look and feel" in the 1980s and early 1990s was largely facilitated by the Canadian government's prioritization of human capital (education, marketable skills, and language proficiency) and financial capital in dollars as key criteria for citizenship. Such laws in BC have led to consequent patterns of Chinese ethnic residential and commercial concentrations or centres such as Richmond and Victoria

40 Please see Paul Ong (ed.), 2001. Transforming Race Relations. A public policy document for LEAP Asian Pacific American Public Policy Institute and UCLA Asian American Studies Centre. This document points to the growing complexity in race relations and its consequent pressures on American census to produce ethnic categories such as "multi-racial" or "mixed racial".
and 41st in Vancouver.\textsuperscript{41} Characterized with high literacy, capital, specific tastes for consumption, and values, those who immigrated from Hong Kong to Vancouver in the 1980s, for example, poured investment into the real estate market in Vancouver, Richmond and other areas and “literally changed Vancouver’s landscape” (Yan, 2001). The Asia West initiative in Richmond, which included the initial construction of an Aberdeen mall is an illustration of this.

The Asia West Project was built to cater to the taste of the wealthier group of Hong Kong immigrants that moved to Greater Vancouver after the 1980s and was seen as “an alternative to Chinatown”\textsuperscript{42}. The project drastically quickened the pace of a trend that had begun with standard Chinese goods moving out of Chinatown and into other areas and even mainstream grocery destinations like Safeway, IGA, and Superstore. While other such malls followed, including Yaohan and Parker Place in Richmond, and Crystal Mall in Burnaby, smaller Asian supermarkets like T&T started to show up at new major developments such as Vancouver’s International District (adjacent to Chinatown), Richmond, Burnaby, and Renfrew-Collingwood. This pattern meant trading off the pedestrian-oriented shopping experience along with variety and freshness for one-stop parking-oriented supermarkets. More than 10 years later, a new Aberdeen Centre has been built and opened on December 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2003 in Richmond, promising to be an East meets West “centerpiece of North America”\textsuperscript{43} that will draw multicultural youth from the entire region. To some degree, this development has been seen as one of “many new threats” to the livelihood of Chinatown – a suburban development that would draw young

\textsuperscript{41} Yan’s work (2001) illustrated a relationship between income and mobility of Chinese in Vancouver – noting that Chinese Canadian residents had increasing moving from Chinatown (north), to Victoria and 41st, to Richmond (also known as “Asia West”).
\textsuperscript{42} Named after Hong Kong’s Aberdeen harbour, it was the largest enclosed Asian retail centre of its kind in North American at the time of its opening. http://www.aberdeencentre.com/en/history.php
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
people further away from the once vibrant cultural centre of Chinatown\textsuperscript{44}. Some but not all members currently involved in Chinatown’s revitalization recognize that developments like the Aberdeen centre is a reality that began many years ago with the change of demographics and globalization, and repositioning Chinatown as a revived regional cultural centre is a key way to respond to these changes.

The 2001 Census also reports that higher percentages of residents of “Chinese ethnicity” are residing in a diversity of neighbourhoods within the lower Mainland like Victoria-Fraserview, Renfrew-Collingwood, and Hastings-Sunrise (Figure 4.8).\textsuperscript{45}

\textbf{Figure 4.4 Spatial Distribution of Residents: “Chinese ethnicity”}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure4_4}
\caption{Spatial Distribution of Residents: “Chinese ethnicity” in Greater Vancouver.}
\end{figure}

Recent immigrants to Vancouver usually move to areas in the city that already have high concentrations of immigrants or those immediately adjacent to high concentrations.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{44} Interestingly but perhaps not surprisingly, the architect of the new Aberdeen Centre is Bing Thom, one of the key members of the youth of the 1970s in Chinatown’s community activism.

\textsuperscript{45} City of Richmond social planners note that there has been some movement of first generation Chinese immigrants from the City of Richmond to Vancouver over the last 10 years. For more information, see the City of Richmond website: \url{www.city.richmond.bc.ca}. 

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Interestingly, while recent immigrants from Mainland China largely live in East Vancouver, a large number of them have also moved to Marpole although it did not previously have a large concentration of these immigrants. Similarly, the earlier wave of immigrants from Hong Kong (i.e. up to 1990) was concentrated in the Aberdeen District, in Richmond, B.C. In 2001, however, although decreased by 7.7%, they are more spread out residentially throughout the city than any other immigrant group. The undeniable residential and mobility patterns of recent immigrants from China and even the earlier wave of immigrants from Hong Kong pose questions also to the sustainability of ethnic commercial centres such as Richmond, B.C. Chinatown is therefore, not alone in discussions of responding and repositioning to a growing Cosmopolis.

**Challenge 3: Aging Institutions and Service Deliverers in Chinatown**

The third challenge is perhaps one of the most significant in the context of Chinatown’s revitalization process – institutions and service deliverers in Chinatown that are aging in the biological, but even more so, conceptual sense. The Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, a landmark and Chinatown attraction is already seeking solutions to succeed an aging volunteer pool - a problem that has crept up on them over the last ten years. “We have a core group of women in their fifties who are literally irreplaceable . . . if we don’t do something soon, we may have to consider computerized technology," says Kathy Gibler, a member of the Garden’s board. More pro-active mentorship and training of younger volunteers and more strategic outreach to younger clientele are options that the

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46 Logan and Molotch (1987) explain, immigrants may often join "urban growth machines" (as suggested by) or local interest coalitions in professions such as realtors who steer customers to sometimes racially segregated neighbourhoods – commercial or residential. This builds on Palm’s work (1985:66) which found that home buyers often chose real estate brokers partially on the basis of race and the brokers tend to worker for “brokers of the same race or ethnicity”. Thus, Light notes that rather than seeing residential and commercial formation as a leaderless social process, “immigrant place entrepreneurs create choice contexts by conscious entrepreneurial initiative” (2002: 225).

Garden is considering. Traditionally key organizations in Chinatown including the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA), Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association (VCMA), S.U.C.C.E.S.S., the Chinese Cultural Centre (C.C.C.) are among many others that are also experiencing this challenge. The Garden’s experience is a reflection of a slow but sure epidemic, a “crisis of succession”, that is sweeping through Chinatown, but also of the tensions between the conceptually aging service provider and yet the desire to reach out to a younger population.

In the context of revitalization, the challenge of aging institutions and services poses questions for the community’s search for new meanings, functions, and identities for Chinatown, a process that is happening and that will benefit from dialogue through intentional intergenerational programming. This means that service providers and institutions in Chinatown will need to be more open and responsive towards changing community composition and needs.

Towards a Pan-Asian Identity?

As more younger people of diverse backgrounds move into Chinatown, its identity will change. Many Vietnamese and residents of various Southeast Asian origins, especially those who speak Chinese, have also settled and established businesses in or nearby Chinatowns. The “Pan-Asian” community is a trend happening in many North American cities. Although the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden continues to be a potential intercultural intergenerational gathering place, without supporting infrastructure and amenities in the neighbourhood and without strategic outreach to diverse age groups, full-time garden membership has decreased in every category – dropping from 600 in 2001 to roughly 400 in 2004. While senior members consist of 27% of the membership, only 8% are students. As a Garden volunteer says, “it’s true that membership has dropped. We recognize that we need to train younger volunteers to work with and eventually succeed the older ones and to do strategic outreach as well. Succession and reaching out to different age groups needs to be a part of our long-term work plan.” While almost every service provider in Chinatown is facing or anticipating this situation, those who work at the Garden are the few to recognize that they must take action.

In the United States, the complications and challenges of “pan-Asian” communities are apparent from the tension between age groups – where some of the older, more traditional members of the Chinatown community maintain the “older Chinatown”, while the younger tend toward the newer more “international” district in the example of Seattle’s Chinatown-International District/Nihonmachi. The development of these
Although this phenomenon is relatively new and is lacking research in North America, what is clear from the emergence of these communities, is that multiculturalism is increasingly embraced and celebrated. For example, younger generations in Vancouver, the most ethnically integrated city in Canada, increasingly embrace interracial marriages and friendships like no other generation before them. What will this mean for Chinatown? As Baldwin Wong, multicultural planner at the City Vancouver notes, “besides the young, the new immigrants . . . the many mixed couples and children in Vancouver . . . how do they fit into Chinatown’s picture?” Clearly, this is a critical issue for Chinatown and has implications for its residential (surrounding areas), commercial, recreational, and cultural uses and directions.

 Already, on the fringes of Vancouver’s Chinatown a number of “fusion” businesses are emerging. These include businesses near Chinatown’s gate on Pender Street such as the Wild Rice restaurant and the Peking Lounge antique store. Some of these businesses are not run by Chinese people. The issue of welcoming newcomers to the neighbourhood while preserving Chinatown’s stories will mean a more pro-active approach in bridging younger and older people in Chinatown’s revitalization process.

districts is an intriguing phenomenon that possibly speaks to the future of neighbourhoods and communities, and is well worth mentioning in the context of Vancouver’s Chinatown. It is however, important to note the differences in race, ethnicity, and identity between Canadian and American cities. The sustainability of these new neighbourhoods has been debated, however, as Ong notes, “. . . this identity is ‘fragile’” (Ong, 2001). For more information regarding Seattle’s pan-Asian community see Seattle’s International District: The Making of a Pan-Asian American Community (2001), in which Doug Chin chronicles the tension-ridden journey that Seattle’s Asian communities took to embrace diversity through forming a larger pan-Asian community. See also Bob Santos, 2002. Hum Bows, Not Hot Dogs: Memoirs of a savvy Asian American activist. Seattle, WA: International Examiner Press.

50 C. Skelton, “Beyond Diversity: Why Vancouver is a world Leader,” The Vancouver Sun, 22 May, 2004, C1, C3
A Vehicle for Response: Vancouver's Chinatown Revitalization Process

The Vancouver Chinatown revitalization process is a key vehicle of response for these three key challenges. The VCRC's mandate in the 2004-2006 work term is to act as a "vehicle venue for information sharing and problem solving where all people who live, work, or visit Chinatown - individuals and organizations - can identify issues, carry open discussions and develop work items that will help revitalize Chinatown." Discussions and their consequent recommendations from this committee are communicated to the Planning Department and/or City Council. The outstanding characteristic of Chinatown's revitalization process is that from its conception, it has a more inclusive and "age" outlook than any other efforts in the past. After some preparatory research work, from August of 2001 until February 2002, the VCRC Vision subcommittee developed a public outreach process "recognizing that Chinatown is a community not only for people to live and work there, but also for all Vancouverites who care about this historic area" (Chen-Adams, 2002). This outreach culminated in a set of Vision Directions which, in summary, stated that the future Chinatown should be "a place that tells the area's history with its physical environment, serves the needs of residents, youth and visitors and acts as a hub of commercial, social and cultural activities".

Responding to Age Demographics

An emergent theme of the focus groups was that Chinatown needed to be a "real place" that was inclusive linguistically and culturally and brought together the "young and old" (Chen-Adams, 2002). The challenge of this theme however, reflected in the findings

51 This was agreed upon in February 2004 at a VCRC prioritizing workshop.

52 Quite a significant amount of preparatory research work was done prior to establishment of this committee. For example, a Land Use Survey and Analysis: 1970 – 2000 was conducted in 2000, a Business Telephone Survey of the Chinese-Canadian Market for Chinatown in 2001, and research on North American Chinatowns' challenges and experiences in 2001. This research set a guiding foundation for an extensive public outreach process, which was explicitly designed to involve a diversity of people including youth.
from the focus groups and surveys, was that Chinatown still does not attract and cater to the needs of young people. This was recognized by those involved in the revitalization process as a critical issue as "[d]rawing youth back to the community will help develop the next generation of Chinatown's leaders" (Chen-Adams, 2002). It was recognized that an intergenerational Chinatown is also needed for the purpose of succession and sustainability, but that strategic outreach to youth was needed.

**Strategic Outreach to Youth**

With it a heightened level of discussion, interest, and excitement in the revitalization process regarding this issue, youth began to join the process. A year-end party for the Asian Heritage Month on May 31st, 2002 in Chinatown's "C-town Dance Revolution" and a youth talent show were the first among many youth-awareness raising events held in Chinatown. The Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Youth Subcommittee formed in the Spring of 2003 as the eighth subcommittee – almost exactly at the 30 year mark since the rise of the youth of the 1970s who took leadership in Chinatown's Chinese Cultural Centre. Over time, this new youth group's mandate was clear: to promote youth presence, voice, and participation in Chinatown.

On October 18th, 2003, the youth group had their inaugural event – a workshop that brought together over a hundred university and college students of diverse backgrounds to discuss Chinatown's past, present, and future. In preparation for the workshop, the youth group aimed to do both extensive "outreach" (to students) and "inreach" (to existing organizations, business owners, and service providers in Chinatown). The theme of this workshop was "Choosing Chinatown: Past, Present, and

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53 "C-Town Revolution" was a hip-hop dance competition which attracted hundreds of youth into the area.
54 The core group members of the youth subcommittee was small consisting of Dexter Lam, Tracy Lau, Herman Cheng, Eugene Lok, Charlie Cho, and myself.
55 Representatives also attended from youth-involved organizations like Civic Youth Strategy (CYS), S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Uth Rev, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST), Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA), Chinese Community Policing Centre (CCPC) volunteers and Strathcona Community Centre. Young artists, professionals, and business entrepreneurs were also present.
Future”. It included a historical presentation of Chinatown’s past battles and successes from Hayne Wai, a diverse panel discussion of younger and older people with interest in Chinatown about present initiatives\textsuperscript{56}, and a visioning exercise. Participants sought to hear the local stories and histories of those involved in Chinatown, the current revitalization process, and how they too, could participate. One output of the workshop was a top-ten list of vision priorities which would guide the youth subcommittee’s work plan from 2004 to 2006.\textsuperscript{57} A community bike event, a youth-oriented night market, and a new mentorship program, are only a few of the projects underway.

While there remains discussions on physical infrastructure in the community on issues such as heritage conversion and the creation of live-work studios for younger people, the VCRC Youth subcommittee finds that most of its work plan has to do with building social and cultural infrastructure, diverse networks, awareness of Chinatown-based issues, opportunities for dialogue and participation. Today, the C.C.C. no longer attracts the involvement of youth as it did in the 1970s. Although it is not physical buildings that the youth are constructing, the newer generations of youth involved in Chinatown’s revitalization process find themselves in a place to construct “bridges” for example, with surrounding neighbourhoods (which have also changed immensely, including the socially stigmatized Downtown Eastside), with different cultural groups, communities, organizations, and generations. This process inevitably means connecting rather than disassociating themselves with the new so-called “satellite Chinatowns” and encouraging Chinatown merchants to take a more aggressive rather than residual approach by being more responsive to changing demographics. Now moving into

\textsuperscript{56} The panel included a diverse group of people of various age groups who work, live, or are active in discussions and initiatives in Chinatown: Fred Mah (community volunteer and VCRC), Hayne Wai (community volunteer and UBC professor), Steven Tong (artist), Chris Lee (entrepreneur with family business in Chinatown), Michael Bennett (entrepreneur), and Jessica Chen-Adams (City of Vancouver, planner).

\textsuperscript{57} This includes: more diverse businesses, mixed housing, safer environment, transportation, history, special events, youth outreach, spatial programming, cultural language, and more social clubs and organizations.
implementation phase, the VCRC faces the challenge of developing ways to integrate and sustain this growing number of youth participants.

New Housing and Live-work Options

Another way that the VCRC is seeking to respond to changing age demographics is through pushing for more mixed, affordable, and non-market housing options. The possible conversion of present heritage buildings may mean new and exciting possibilities of live-work such as artists' studios and galleries. A housing and economic feasibility study will be complete by fall 2004 and will inform the community's directions and potential residents.

Responding to the Changing Chinese-Canadian Community

The VCRC is currently seeking to reposition Chinatown culturally, socially, and geographically, through strengthening it as a regional cultural and social hub for Chinese-Canadians. Building on community cultural assets, the VCRC is seeking ways to reach out to key players such as family associations to document and share the stories of not only the earlier Chinese in Vancouver, but diverse Chinese-Canadians as well. Growing partnerships with groups that work with more recent Chinese immigrants such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and other new immigrant service providers, for example, is moving VCRC in this direction. Furthermore, the VCRC is seeking ways to strengthen Chinatown as a cultural learning centre. This means creating intentional opportunities as well as supporting existing resources in the community such as the Cultural Centre, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, and the new Chinese Canadian Historical Society.

Responding to the Aging Institutions and Service Providers

This area is a key focus in the VCRC's current work program and this area includes initiatives for cultural management, economic revitalization, and marketing and promotion. Besides active outreach to family associations and other cultural resources, the VCRC is also trying to reach out to property owners, key organizations like the
VCMA, and the CBA, encouraging them to recognize changing realities in the community and to adapt. To build on the community’s strengths, the VCRC is continuing to encourage organizations and merchants to participate in the revitalization process through various means. The VCRC has focused also on developing a Chinatown marketing and promotion plan which will guide these organizations in their succession and adaptations in the coming years.

A New Work Term

From being handheld to walking on its own, the committee is now increasingly taking full ownership of the process. Although the City fully supported the administration and coordination of the VCRC through a five year funding program, the VCRC must now face significant new challenges in developing its own means for fundraising, capacity building, and facilitation, among other priorities. It also faces questions of how it will sustain the revitalization process in the long term. The committee is currently working on a variety of shorter-term and longer-term revitalization projects.

Through the Chinatown vision and the heritage bonus system already in place, we are ready to welcome up to 5,000 new residents to this neighbourhood while respecting the community's unique character. This is the opportunity we want to highlight for investors and developers. Chinatown is ready to begin a new era.58

City of Vancouver Councilor Raymond Louie, 2004

In May 2004, the Mayor and Councillor Raymond Louie discussed with members of the Chinatown community the development of a comprehensive community plan, based on the Chinatown Vision directions. Such a plan would encourage private sector investment and would emphasize the following:

- an expansion of residential housing stock, including non-market housing
- revitalization of the retail and business district
- youth involvement

• support for Chinatown's further development as a social and cultural hub of the region's Chinese-Canadian population.

Targeting youth, this plan emphasizes creating more accessible housing as well as revitalizing Chinatown’s businesses and functioning as a regional Chinese-Canadian cultural and social centre. The success of this plan, in my opinion, will depend on its active involvement of the Chinatown community and surrounding neighbourhoods. Furthermore, youth-targeted initiatives will need to be re-evaluated in light of a more intergenerational perspective, since it is not only their presence but their active participation with existing members that will promote a more sustainable community. Explicit provisions to incorporate intergenerational programming will therefore need to be made.

**Chapter Conclusion**

This Chapter has situated Vancouver’s Chinatown by identifying three key challenges that the VCRC is currently forced to respond to from the age lens: changing age demographics, the diversifying Chinese-Canadian community, and aging institutions and service providers. Facing changing demographics and geographically-related pressures such as social issues in the adjacent downtown eastside, Chinatown revitalization efforts are complex.

Although youth are beginning to return to Chinatown, the issues in the implementation phase of the VCRC’s vision are now much broader and have implications that are far reaching and extend to numerous groups. A critical question is whether the community will remain actively involved and how age-integrated rather than age-segregated future initiatives will be. In the next chapter, I will evaluate the application of intergenerational programming, a mechanism which will enhance Chinatown’s revitalization process and help respond to challenges identified in this chapter.
Dexter

New generations of Canadians face a different kind of fight. The battle for our identity has two fronts – one in determining our niche in an increasingly intricate social fabric, and the other in ensuring that we respect our heritage and keep sight of how we have reached where we are today. Efforts to renew Chinatown reflect this struggle, as we seek to bring diversity and vitality to the community while ensuring that the vivid culture and history are preserved.

age 24

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59 Dexter’s speech at the War Veterans’ Memorial Ceremony at the Keefer Triangle in Vancouver’s Chinatown in November 2003, encapsulates well the sentiments and vision of a new group of youth who have too, like the generation before them, returned to Chinatown in response to their convictions and search for cultural identity.
Chapter 5

Analysis

Moving Vancouver’s Chinatown Towards a Community for all Ages

It’s time that people recognize that Chinatown is not just a place for consumption, it is also a place for production.

workshop participant, age 26

In the previous chapter, through the age lens, I introduced the key challenges that the VCRC is currently facing in its revitalization process. In this chapter, I use the Community for all Ages model as a framework to analyze, inform, and move the VCRC’s existing work program, directions, and implementation goals towards age-integration and a more life course-oriented approach.

Figure 5.0 The Community for All Ages Model: Key Elements/Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process-oriented Criteria</th>
<th>Outcome-based Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➤ Opportunities for life-long civic engagement</td>
<td>➤ Access to quality health care and social services across the life course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Collaboration across systems and organizations</td>
<td>➤ Support to caregiving families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Institutions with a life-span perspective</td>
<td>➤ Physical infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ Opportunities for life-long learning</td>
<td>➤ Planned efforts to promote meaningful cross-age interaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are a few key assumptions and constraints in this analysis:

- This analysis focuses on the current process as a key vehicle for revitalization in Chinatown. However, there may also be various contributing efforts outside of this framework.
- Although this chapter focuses mainly on Chinatown in scope, since Chinatown’s City-defined boundaries ignore its vital connections to Strathcona, a more

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60 Choosing Chinatown workshop, October 18th, 2004.
holistic view of the area and a continued movement towards collaboration with surrounding neighbourhoods is needed.

- Another key assumption in this paper is that the present revitalization process is ongoing and is just entering the phase of vision implementation. Therefore, I acknowledge that although Chinatown is not yet a Community for all Ages, discussing its present and future directions in such a framework is important in getting there. This analysis therefore differentiates "process-oriented" versus "outcome-oriented" criteria. While I will focus on the "process-oriented" elements, "outcome oriented" criteria (pertaining to physical infrastructure and amenities) are not appropriate as criteria for intergenerational programming evaluation at this point and thus outside of the scope of this paper.

Based on these assumptions, the following analyzes whether the Chinatown revitalization process, Vision, and work program are helping move Chinatown towards a Community for all Ages and makes some recommendations.

**Process-Oriented Criteria: The Revitalization Process**

- **Opportunities for lifelong civic engagement**

  A strength of the VCRC is that from the initial outreach process in 2000 onwards, it has tried to actively involve a diversity of people in the community. Emphasizing capacity building, the structure of this organization promises the involvement of youth not only as labourers, but also partners in decision-making. Members of the youth subcommittee are encouraged to be represented on each of the various subcommittees of the VCRC, have "two votes" and have opportunity to sit on the committee executive. The youth subcommittee also has its own executive and youth-oriented priorities and

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61 The youth subcommittee has two votes at general membership meetings, participates in planning, decision-making, and is represented in the committee executive. As a member of the youth subcommittee, I am also secretary on the executive in the 2003-2005 term.

62 Each member organization has 1 vote. The youth subcommittee, made up of individuals, is represented in the general membership by at least 2-3 people and has two votes.
projects based on their own visioning process, while partnering with the committee’s general members.

On the flip side, as a “vehicle” for those who want to work on revitalization initiatives together, the VCRC needs to be more inclusive. When the process was catalyzed, the process took off with those who were interested, without criteria for sustained outreach to diverse groups. This means that although a handful of local businesses and organization are represented, the full range of people that make up the community including seniors, residents and other minority groups in Chinatown may not be heard. From a life course perspective, the involvement of seniors is important. How can the VCRC be changed to include the larger community? What are mechanisms to involve seniors, and to promote intentional interaction between the different participants of different ages? While youth presence in Chinatown is on the rise, as mentioned before, their presence does not necessarily equate to active and meaningful participation. As a member of the VCRC noted, “the question is not just who’s in the picture, but is there a heart in it? I can show up, but if my heart isn’t in it, I’m just whistling in the wind. How can you help people more meaningful and actively integrate and participate in Chinatown’s revitalization?”

1) Interests & Gifts

One of the ways to meaningfully involve those of different ages is to better understand their interests and gifts to the community. This is consistent with a number of planning models including John McKnight’s work on asset-based capacity building (Kretzman & McKnight, 1998). Although this form of outreach continues to be done with younger people in the revitalization process, so far there has not been any strategic outreach to older members in the community. As illustrated in Figure 5.1, 38 participants in the Choosing Chinatown youth workshop indicated their potential areas of interest in Chinatown Vancouver’s revitalization process. Their responses help gage where
strategic points of youth involvement are, but also not surprisingly, reflect some of the critical issues of Chinatown today. The top four areas of interest include: arts and culture, heritage issues, entertainment, and housing.

Figure 5.1
Choosing Chinatown: Top Areas of Interest in Participation from Youth

Rather than "meeting to death", as Fred Mah notes, "it is more important to help participants of all age groups and backgrounds understand the larger picture and to respond based on her abilities and passions". Given this understanding, it is important to consider integrating diverse strategies for revitalization - what are some arts-based community development strategies or cultural community development strategies (Borrup, 2003: 2, Pacific, 1999) that younger and older people can be effectively involved in, for example? These different revitalization and community development strategies have not been considered in Chinatown's revitalization so far.

2) Range of Activity

Although the process allows anyone to be involved in the planning or execution of initiatives, it does not strategically provide opportunities for intergenerational partnership characterized by a range of activity and physical mobility. An example of this is the "Adopt-an-Alleyway Program" in San Francisco's Chinatown revitalization

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63 Interview with Fred Mah, April 10th, 2004.
work program where students adopt an alleyway in Chinatown as part of a public realm improvement strategy. While students work with teachers, mentors, and older members of the community in the re-design of the alleyways (including furniture, flowers, and murals, for example), they are responsible for the physical upkeep of their alleyways. In Chinatown’s revitalization process, strategic partnership with Chinatown-based groups like the Chinese Community Policing Centre, run mainly by younger people will be important.

3) Financial Support and Training

A range of opportunities for involvement – volunteering, stipended volunteering, and paid work, should be available to support younger as well as older members who want to participate, but may not have the capability due to time and financial constraints. The availability of these possibilities may help to recognize in some situations, that the young and old are not only labourers, but actively and meaningfully involved, valued for their skills and abilities. Although the VCRC does on occasion, retain community members to take up paid work and special projects, there are limited resources, and such opportunity has been restricted thus far. As the VCRC continues to look at creative and meaningful ways to involve, for example, students in their areas of training, honorariums and stipended amounts may help facilitate their work (e.g. purchase of supplies).

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64 Chinatown's Chinese Community Policing Centre (CCPC), for example, formed its programs out of the community's common concern for safety. Involving a few hundred young volunteers and five full-time staff, the CCPC since 1992, has served the Chinese community throughout the Greater Vancouver District by offering victim assistance, translation services, public education, a Chinatown walk, foot and bike patrol program, tourist assistance, and graffiti removal program. Majority of the volunteers are Chinese-Canadians and between 15 and 30 years of age. The CCPC plays a highly important role in Chinatown and is well appreciated by the young and old who work, live, and visit Chinatown. Volunteers of the CCPC report a sense of community pride and ownership as they play a part in building and revitalizing the community.

65 Examples of paid community work in Chinatown, include, for example, program evaluation and interviews.

66 For example, the University of British Columbia Architecture department has set up a studio in Chinatown's Chinese Cultural Centre. An agreement has been made between the City and the architecture department for students to be involved in the development of a Chinatown community plan.
4) Support for Life course-oriented Participation

Another critical question that has not been considered in Chinatown’s revitalization process is not only how to bring people (i.e. of different ages and cultural backgrounds) into the process, but also, how to facilitate their continued/lifelong involvement and meaningfully integrate them in the process with other members.

With inevitably growing numbers of young urban professionals, young couples, and families moving into and around Chinatown, the VCRC will need to consider both how to facilitate their participation as well as how to retain them through transitional points in their lives. For example, will daycares be available for new parents? How do we help students, who tend to be more “mobile”, remain in the process? Can school-community programs be set up to encourage sustained involvement and long-term relationship building? How can different members of families be involved? So far, these questions have not been discussed for the most part, and where there has been discussion, it has tended to concentrate on groups in one or two life stages as if they will remain unchanged and static.

Recommendations

While the VCRC needs to continue to build a more inclusive framework in the short-term (i.e. strategic outreach to younger and older members in the community among others), in the long-term, members will need to consider implications and diverse ways for sustained involvement over the long-term and life course. To do this, the VCRC and others involved in the current revitalization process need to move from the dominant paradigm of age-segregation (i.e. “we need youth”), to a more age-integrated or life course-oriented approach. This entails designing strategic opportunities for intergenerational engagement.
Collaboration across systems & organizations

Do partnerships currently exist across systems serving different age groups and are they facilitated by age-integrated funding schemes? As a community vehicle for discussion, information-sharing, and participation, the VCRC has been active in building partnerships with different members and organizations inside and outside of the Chinatown community.

There has been little intentional evaluation and partnerships however, from the age “lens”. For the VCRC youth, partnerships have not only built stronger initiatives, but have enabled the organization to reach out to a greater diversity of youth, while making use of resources located elsewhere in the community (e.g. S.U.C.C.E.S.S., Uth Rev youth worker and volunteers, and the Civic Youth Strategy from the City of Vancouver). These partnerships however remain oriented around “youth” issues. There have been no partnerships built with the intention of engaging different age groups. A key challenge then is to bridge the work of the VCRC Youth with specific groups in the community.

1) Seniors Groups

There are a significant number of seniors groups, homes, and facilities in or near Chinatown. The S.U.C.C.E.S.S. care home and the Chinese-Canadian War veterans association, for example, are two among many groups that could be partnered with. None of these groups are currently involved or represented in Chinatown’s revitalization.

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67 The wave of immigration from Hong Kong in the 1970s to the early 90s was accommodated by the creation of a highly influential United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) in 1972 by a group of young professional from Hong Kong who had come in the 1960s (Ng, 1999:123). By the 1980s, SUCCESS had gained a few thousand volunteers both young and old, and became an organization that alerted funders and social service providers to the needs of immigrant Chinese. While SUCCESS’ head office remains in Chinatown, it now has a network of eleven offices throughout the lower mainland and is branching into new areas such ethnic seniors housing provision. SUCCESS in 2001, formed a youth group called Uth Rev to take part in revitalization efforts in Chinatown and to join forces with the VCRC.

68 For example, through joint efforts and collaboration in the larger downtown eastside community, a community youth video was put together involving youth in Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona, and the Downtown Eastside. It will be aired in the summer of 2004.
process. They are an important but neglected resource in the community.\textsuperscript{69}

Collaborating with these groups will encourage the development of a Chinatown that is more sensitive to the needs and abilities of those who are aging or wish to age in the community such as seniors who choose to remain "connected" to Chinatown over the years.

2) \textit{Merchants and Property Owners}

Reaching out and building strong relationships with the aging Chinatown merchants and property owners are a constant challenge for the VCRC. As with the youth of the 1970s, the VCRC Youth subcommittee recognizes the importance of building relationships with merchants and property owners, echoing \textit{Chinatown News} back in March 1973 on construction of the Cultural Centre: "Chinatown merchants and property owners should be eager to participate too" and that "it is in their interest and profitability" too.\textsuperscript{70} A critical issue is the fragmented ownership patterns and the prevalence of vacant buildings, which limits the use of land as well as the kinds of services in Chinatown, facilitated by globalization, changing socio-demographics, and the presence of inactive family associations that continue to hold property.\textsuperscript{71} The active participation of merchants and property owners is also important considering the financial support, goods and services, infrastructure, and cultural amenities needed in building Chinatown. The current involvement of the members from the VCMA, the Chinatown Business Improvement Area (BIA) association, and local business representatives, should lead to more strategic outreach to the wider business community.

\textsuperscript{69} Seniors’ age and dependence on Chinatown has meant historically, that they have been one of the “hardest hit” groups when it comes to demolitions, higher rents due to gentrification, displacement and relocation. For some Chinese seniors in Vancouver, Chinatown is a place of cultural and social importance – a place that provides the daily goods and service they may need and facilitates their personal social networks.


\textsuperscript{71} An indication of what has happened is that in a 10 year land use study of Chinatown – it was shown that the vacancy rate of commercial buildings has nearly doubled. We now have just around 28 restaurants compared to three dozen or so just 10 years or so.
in Chinatown. The future of businesses in Chinatown will depend on how willing merchants and property owners, and younger/newer community members are in working together.

3) Neighbouring Communities

The VCRC is doing well in building relationships with people and organizations in surrounding communities (more recently, with Downtown Eastside groups and the First Nations groups, for example), although these efforts need to continue. Since Chinatown is lacking some educational and recreational amenities, it may be more dependent on neighbouring communities to meet some of the needs of its future residents. As mentioned a more “holistic” view of the area is necessary. Numerous intergenerational and intercultural partnership opportunities could exist by involving for example, the Strathcona Community Centre or the many seniors housing centres located nearby. Even though Strathcona has been important to Chinatown for many years, the VCRC surprisingly, does not have a strong relationship with Strathcona community groups.

4) Age-integrated Service Providers, Organizations, and Funders

Although the present revitalization process will increasingly support “youth” initiatives, moving towards an age-integrated community will mean strategically bringing together those initiatives with the efforts of other “age-oriented” service providers and funders. This may include “inter-age” partnerships (e.g. youth group/funder and older adults group/funder), “intra-age” partnerships (e.g. one youth group/funder and another), or partnerships with “multi-age” or “life course” oriented groups (e.g. B.C. Council for Families, Beth Johnson Foundation, MOSAIC, United Way, Big Brothers/Sisters, S.U.C.C.E.S.S, community centres). As Hayne Wai, UBC professor noted, “Who are you fundraising from? Who your funding partners are, speak to your
community's goals and objectives." In seeking a more intergenerational Chinatown, the VCRC therefore must consider partners and funding sources that support that objective. As illustrated in the Westchester County example in Chapter 3, strategic fundraising is often necessary to implement intergenerational initiatives.

Recommendations

The VCRC must strategically reach out to groups that are aging in the community: seniors, merchants, and property owners. New partnerships with neighbouring communities and age-integrated service providers and funding resources are also necessary to facilitate the development and implementation of a more intergenerational and life course-oriented Chinatown.

- **Institutions with a life-span perspective**

The lack of life course-oriented policies, strategies, and programs in Chinatown is reflected in the current challenge of succession of service providers and business owners, as well as outreach to a younger clientele. The "crisis of succession" situation, noted in Chapter 4, has evolved with the changing role of family associations and socio-demographics.

1) **Family Associations**

Ironically, although family associations are currently represented by not strategically involved in the revitalization process, they played an important role in succession and intergenerational programming in Chinatown and in the lives of many older *wa kiew* for many years. Family associations were initially developed in Vancouver often to facilitate the settlement of new immigrants, and to help provide work and social support upon arrival. Family associations integrated strategies to encourage young people in their group to transition life stages such as offering employment advice and scholarship funds. The role of family associations in today's revitalization framework is

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currently debated as settlement services like S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and neighbourhood houses have for the most part, taken over those functions. While some family associations are still somewhat active, many are no longer active but continue to hold property. Consequently, their buildings, as one family association member admittedly said, "are often vacant or wastefully used only for a handful of meetings a week . . . adding to the already fragmented land and ownership patterns in Chinatown."

Besides renewed land use opportunities, more importantly, family associations bring to the revitalization process, their rich history and meaning and diverse opportunities for intergenerational and intercultural exchange. The role of family associations will need to be redefined, reflecting change in the Chinese-Canadian community. A member of the Zhong San Association noted the importance for family associations to join the revitalization efforts: "The Zhong San Association is atypical in that we do integrate intergenerational activities, we recognize the diversity of youth."

This is reflected by his family association's presence at the annual Chinese New Year Parade in Chinatown - where some of members of the first generation holding the banner were followed by the second and third generations, a visual spectrum that reflected an increasingly multicultural make-up from the oldest to the youngest. Although this is a rare example, it hints at the future of this community and the

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73 Many immigrants to a specific location would be from the same village in China, and therefore often of the same surname. The family association was seen as a natural extension of an already existing process. As a result, it was often the case in those early years that a particular surname clan would completely control a certain job such as barbers, bakers, etc. Soon after, merchant associations were also developed. As discussed in earlier chapters, some of these associations took part in fighting discriminatory legislation and built mutual aid networks. In many North American Chinatowns, these associations for a period of time, grew and continued to evolve into more of a quasi-governmental body within Chinatown. Illegal "tongs" also grew in existence (which means, "meeting hall," and gave protection to the associations upon a small fee. "Tong Wars" involving territorial claims and illegal activity raged in Chinatowns throughout America from the 1850s to the 1930s. After all these years, the number of family associations have gone from more than eighty in the 1970s to about forty family associations and merchant associations in Vancouver's Chinatown - almost all of the family associations hold property in Chinatown. While some have become dormant with changing times, a handful like the Zhong San Association is still active and involved in community interests.
adaptation of family associations (if they are to remain active) and alludes to new
directions that the VCRC will need to consider.

The VCRC is currently trying to reach out to these associations, encouraging
them to be pro-actively involved in the revitalization process as well as to consider new
opportunities (e.g. heritage preservation and density bonus programs) for mixed use. To
support this, the City has sponsored economic feasibility and housing studies (to be
completed in summer 2004) for the conversion of heritage buildings for various uses
such as live-work studios, housing, among other options that suit the needs for younger
people and a more diverse population. New stories are created as new users of the
heritage buildings remember and respect the stories preserved within family
associations, for example, the Yip Sang family\textsuperscript{74}, while bringing new revived uses to
them. Language barriers and fear of change have led to resistance from some family
associations to cooperate with the VCRC. While the VCRC has developed “road shows”
- a mobile presentation used to reach out to these associations, encouraging them to
join and consider new uses for their buildings, they have been put on hold due to some
unexpected challenges.

There has been no consideration yet, however, of the possibility of reviving the
role of family associations in playing a more active role implementing intergenerational
programming in Vancouver’s Chinatown. In terms of the commercial function of
Chinatown, such an approach would be strategic both in succession and catering to
diverse age groups, since businesses in Chinatown are unlike the franchise, corporate,
and chain stores that characterize many neighbourhoods in the City, but for the most
part, continue to be family-owned and run.

Strategies for succession and a life span approach need to be integrated with the
current revitalization process, outreach, and work program. Although there are some

\textsuperscript{74} Please see http://collections.ic.gc.ca/yipsang/ for a “Chinese Canadian Story: The Yip Sang Family”
family-run businesses with succession plans, these examples are rare. As a member of the VCRC youth subcommittee who manages her family’s two Chinatown appliance stores said, “we need a larger framework to help other young people like me work in Chinatown. The more we can do this, the more interested they would be in participating in Chinatown.” As this happens however Chinatown will continue to change and adapt, as new meets old. It is highly unlikely for example, that Chinese seniors that currently work for low wages, but tirelessly, at serving regular customers by picking the best bunch of bok choy and moving boxes of produce, will remain there in the next ten years. What kinds of programs and/or strategies can be developed to encourage businesses as well as service providers in Chinatown to begin involving younger people before it is too late? How can family associations be meaningfully brought into this revitalization equation?

2) Other mechanisms

Besides partnering with newer organizations like S.U.C.C.E.S.S., in developing succession and life span mechanisms, as discussed in the last section, the VCRC will need to build new partnerships, (e.g. with schools, new businesses) as well as developing incentives that cushion the involvement of younger generations (e.g. Chinatown artist’s program, new entrepreneur program). The VCRC may also develop ways to actively encourage service providers and merchants to develop a more life-span oriented approach, through facilitating opportunities for co-ops, internships and learning exchanges with colleges and universities.\(^7\) Both the Choosing Chinatown workshop and Uth Rev focus group findings\(^6\) indicate that youth currently feel that Chinatown

\(^7\) One way the VCRC Youth will seek to do this is through encouraging university commerce students to set up their own businesses at the annual Chinatown summer night market.

\(^6\) Uth Rev took on a pilot project in the summer of 2003, which entailed surveying youth from their own membership, 6 community centres (Douglas Park, West End, Trout Lake, Dunbar, Marpole, and Riley Park), and the Youth Volunteer Corps of Canada. They also conducted 4 focus groups at Dunbar, Marpole, Riley
does not yet adequately meet younger people’s needs. While some believe the problem has to do with a lack of promotion of what is already in Chinatown, the majority agree that the most deliberate ways of addressing this issue is by connecting younger people with opportunities to promote positive change in Chinatown.

Recommendations

Over time, new cultural services in the City as well as societal tendencies towards age-segregation have led to institutions, service providers, and family businesses in Chinatown that lack mechanisms to deal with the issue of succession and responding to a younger clientele. Adopting a more lifespan approach to revitalization will entail re-evaluating the existing resources in the community, redefining and perhaps, recapturing the role of family associations in succession, and forming new partnerships and programs in a succession strategy. Reaching out to family associations should return as a priority in the VCRC’s work plan. While completely absent from the vision directions at the moment, a more intergenerational Chinatown will call for the revitalization process to encourage programs and policies so that more sustainable and “seamless” changes occur in the community, as aging is recognized as a continuum. As demographic aging continues, this will be a critical issue.

> Opportunities for lifelong learning

1) Educational Partnerships

Chinatown’s landscape is rich in historical and cultural stories. As a community that is changing rapidly and where issues of difference are so explicit in a multicultural city, Chinatown is a community that facilitates bountiful opportunities for lifelong learning. Despite the lack of educational centres in the larger area (Chapter 4), the VCRC is beginning to play an increasingly strategic and important role in catalyzing, visioning,
and bridging groups to realize opportunities for cultural learning and experiences that are beyond what Jacobs identify as surface-level (Jacobs, 2004). Recent partnerships and learning exchanges with Simon Fraser University City Program and the University of British Columbia planning, architecture, and history testify to this. Although the planning and implementation subcommittee has a full work plan which includes organizing public lectures with S.F.U. and actively involving school groups in Chinatown's planning process through development of future plans (e.g. UBC Architecture) and initiatives, its scope is still currently quite narrow, focusing on building relationships with a few departments of two key university institutions as a starting point. These are exciting developments nevertheless. Learning partnerships will need to diversify, connecting young and old from inside and outside of Chinatown.

2) Joint Life course Learning

There is a place for the "mentorship model" where the skilled teaches the unskilled, but let's move towards "joint learning" where both equally have something to offer.

Norma Jean McLaren

A strength of the VCRC is that since its conception, it has designed a process for participation which seeks to be open, receptive, and respective of younger members. While the traditional model generally views younger people as recipients of education and older people as givers (which has its benefits), a more intergenerational approach also includes opportunities for mutual learning and learning through the life course (e.g. older people may teach cultural stories and skills to younger people, younger people may teach older people how to use the internet or computer). Consequently, older people may also be included as learners as well as teachers, tutors, and mentors.

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77 Interview with Norma-Jean McLaren on April 10th, 2004.
Although it has not been explicitly discussed, the VCRC is increasingly progressing towards a joint learning approach – where regardless of younger or older, each participant has something to offer, and even more, to learn together.

While some efforts have been made by City staff to help build capacity in the VCRC by offering training sessions on leadership, fundraising, evaluation, and facilitation workshops in the past, the committee must now look for ways to incorporate formal and informal ways to build capacity and sustain their growing committee and maturing process. In moving towards an intergenerational community, newer learning opportunities and topics will need to be ventured into such as workshops dealing with age integration, cooperation, conflict resolution, creative mediation, and issues of succession. Members of the VCRC will need to build in priorities to update itself with new available research, policies, and programs.

With limited resources, more educational partnerships will need to be formed, for example, with nearby libraries (Carnegie and Strathcona), schools, community centres, family associations, cultural centres, and organizations to build on their assets and strengths. S.U.C.C.E.S.S., for example, has been frequently identified as an intergenerational gathering place where volunteers young and old visit, work, and learn together. An admirable quality of S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is its focus on education and training for families, the young, and the old. It also offers a diversity of activities, services, and programs such as a mentorship program for recent immigrants from Hong Kong and Mainland China (regardless of age) and long-term residents in Vancouver. Although S.U.C.C.E.S.S. continues to cater mainly to a specific Chinese immigrant population and is not as accessible by the larger community, it is a good partner in moving towards intergenerational initiatives in the revitalization process.
3) Fighting Stereotypes

Although the VCRC is quickly learning to battle media and develop initiatives like positive media campaigns based on their research, age and cultural stereotyping is still a challenge. Rick Lam, Chair of the VCRC noted, “There are currently some age perceptions that Chinatown is a place for “older Chinese” and that it is no longer relevant to today’s multicultural youth, but this is a stereotype.” Furthermore, Choosing Chinatown workshop participants articulated the need to be more pro-active in redeveloping positive intergenerational and multicultural images for Chinatown through media, creative community participation, special events, and promotion. The new marketing and promotion material of Chinatown, events, youth initiatives such as mentorship, public realm and housing studies facilitated by the current VCRC speak to many of these concerns. The growing involvement of a vocal and literate group of younger Chinese-Canadians and formal media training for leaders, have meant step-by-step victory in this area.

4) Chinese-Canadian Cultural Identity and Education

Vancouver’s Chinatown is of great importance to today’s youth. It is a link to our roots, exposing modern Canadian-Chinese culture to be much more than bubble-tea and karaoke.

Dexter Lam

As the VCRC continues to move closer to its vision of enhancing Chinatown as a regional Chinese-Canadian cultural centre, it will need to incorporate intentional strategies to connect the diverse cultural narratives and treasures of the evolving Chinese-Canadian community in Vancouver that help people connect, find belonging, and learn about others.

Working with the Chinese Cultural Centre there, those involved in San Francisco’s Chinatown planning developed the “In Search of Roots Program”. The

78 Interview with Rick Lam on March 20th, 2004.
program allows Chinese American youth to interact with overseas Chinese, bridging their experiences with past generations. Through exposing common and divergent points in cultural experience, the program has aided numerous Chinese American youth in search of their cultural identity (Louie, 2004). Although there were a few similar programs at the Chinese Cultural Centre in Vancouver’s Chinatown in the past, including historic tours led by older *wa kiew* women and a cultural exchange to Chinatown to reconnect with roots, they have been discontinued for many years due to lack of funding. If Chinatown is to be a regional Chinese-Canadian cultural centre, it will have to seriously consider bringing in renewed programs and initiatives that play a role in shaping Chinese-Canadian identity for younger generations and in turn, reflect the multicultural values of today. As an active member in Chinatown noted,

Something like the Roots program is needed in our Chinatown. So we might not have the resources right now, but we can certainly do things that have a similar effect – intergenerational storytelling, ceremonies, or fund students partially to go abroad . . . this is important for a richer revitalization process.

It is recognized that Chinatown also has a role to play for those who may not be “rooted” in Chinatown as well. Beyond tourism and bi-lingual signs, Chinatown may also be an important centre that includes culture and language education for a diversity of people. A repeated suggestion from public surveys is the need for Chinatown to develop more accessible cultural/language education for non-Chinese speaking people including Canadian-born Chinese and those of other cultural backgrounds (e.g. C.S.L. or Chinese as Second Language) of different ages.

Although there has been no formal discussion, the VCRC is slowly beginning to identify and support key cultural anchors. Although the VCRC continues to encourage the Chinese Cultural Centre to take a more pro-active role in this area, the future of the
Centre remains in debate. VCRC members and others involved in Chinatown’s revitalization process or interested in preserving the stories of the Chinese Canadian community, are developing a new Chinese Canadian Historical Society (CCHS) in Vancouver - a project that will be an important contribution to Chinatown as a regional Cultural Centre that will promote learning for all ages and cultures. The CCHS, registered and with a developed constitution, is currently in the fundraising phase of their establishment.

A long awaited initiative and the first of its kind in Canada, the CCHS will present exciting opportunities to collect, preserve, and share past, present, and future stories of those in Chinese-Canadian communities in evolving stories and forms. The VCRC could play a highly strategic role in bridging members in the community in support for such an initiative. As one of the organizers stated, “we will emphasize collecting the stories of families and Chinese Canadians through the generations and eventually, it is our hope that we will develop programs and activities that will bring people together and promote interactive learning.” The diversity they seek to reach out to is reflected in the range of the CCHS organizers which includes professors, community activists, students, and community organizations. Their first step will be to set up an archive and website which will be run by Simon Fraser University students. Although the CCHS is still at an early phase of development, its connection to Chinatown would be beneficial to the current revitalization process. Although there are increasing numbers of local interactive

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79 The Chinese Cultural Centre is currently in a significant debt situation and is undergoing a process of evaluation. Although the Chinese Cultural Centre was built with intergenerational interaction, as many noted in interviews, the Centre has changed its focuses. As a past member of the C.C.C. notes, “this vision has not been fully realized.” Although there are services at the Cultural Centre for those of varying age groups such as Tai Chi classes, E.S.L. classes, and children’s art, there is little interaction and integration of the different age groups as well as little effort to reach out and cater to a more diverse community – this is reflected in their Newsletter which is mainly written in Chinese, with some or little English. The issue of language is one among several barriers that challenge intergenerational interaction and participation.
storytelling museums like the newly developed Storyeum in Vancouver\textsuperscript{80}, the
dependencies of the CCHS more closely resemble that of the Museum of Chinese
Americas (MOCA).

[B]ecome a part of Chinese American history... \textbf{MoCA's CHINESE
RESTAURANTS: A FAMILY BUSINESS} documentation project will highlight
and bring to the forefront those who work behind the scenes, capturing the
families for which a restaurant is an extension of the home, a testimony to their
entrepreneurship and a legacy passed from generation to generation. If you or
people you know are connected to a restaurant, \textbf{MoCA} would love to see your
photos and hear your stories. All snapshots, whether amateur or professional
ones, are accepted...

\textbf{MOCA website}\textsuperscript{81}

The Museum of Chinese in the Americas (MoCA) seeks to be the “cultural and
historic cornerstone” and a vital component of community’s revitalization in New York’s
Chinatown since the tragedies of September 11\textsuperscript{th}. MoCA is the first full-time,
professionally staffed museum dedicated to reclaiming, preserving, and interpreting the
history and culture of Chinese and their descendants in the Western Hemisphere.
Currently, MoCA has nine full-time staff, but 100 volunteers that support and drive their
their initiatives which include a spectrum of creative and intentionally intergenerational
strategies. Diverse gallery displays, education and outreach, historical walking tours,
among numerous other activities are aimed at the development of “shared stories” of
different generations of immigrants – newer and older. The year 2004, for example, is
MoCA's year of “Food”. The entire year is marked with events that bring about cultural

\textsuperscript{80} Storyeum is the first interactive and storytelling centre which focuses on re-telling the history of West
Coast Canada and aims speaks to those of all ages and cultural backgrounds together. Located in
Gastown, neighbouring Vancouver’s Chinatown, the Storyeum also seeks to act as an “economic stimulus”
and “heritage showcase”. Involving a number of diverse cultural groups including the First Nations,
Chinese-Canadians, and Japanese Canadians, the success of Storyeum will depend on who’s telling the
stories and how those who participate are engaged. While Storyeum seeks to “bring together” key themes
in Canadian West Coast history through the different cultural groups, its focus is still geographically defined
rather than culturally defined (i.e. the in depth experiences within cultural groups).

\textsuperscript{81} MoCA website: www. moca-nyc.org
stories through the use of “Food” as a theme. In its May-June 2004 newsletter, MOCA also asks for favourite family recipes for the MoCA Chinese Family Recipe, asking participants to submit their “Chinese American equivalent of meatloaf and mashed potatoes”. Other projects are centred around stories such as experiences after September 11th and oral history projects. An outstanding feature of MOCA is that it integrates a highly intergenerational focus.

MoCA does not only incorporate intergenerational initiatives – they are part of an intentional intergenerational program. MoCA NEXT or their “young associates program” facilitates opportunities for museum members in their 20s and 30s to meet one another as well as with older members to discuss the museum’s projects and to explore Chinese history and culture – a deliberate part of a succession and multigenerational leadership plan. MoCA serves an exciting example for the CCHS and informs the future intergenerational initiatives of the VCRC in promoting cultural education and continuity.

Recommendations

The VCRC needs to continue building new and innovative educational partnerships with universities and organizations such as the CCHS, while continuously embracing possibilities to develop revitalization strategies that promote Chinatown as a community for lifelong cultural learning. Despite lacking resources, the VCRC must act as a living example of this, updating itself with the educational resources and learning from its educational partners and other communities (e.g. MoCA), as well as finding means for training, workshops, and other forms of capacity building opportunities. By doing so, the committee would be more equipped to fight, respond to, and capitalize on media for a more accurate representation of the community.

82 MOCA’s current exhibitions tie in with their theme of “Food”: “General Lee’s Banquet Room” illustrates the story of L.A.’s Chinatown’s oldest restaurant while “Chop Suey” documents photographer Rick Wong’s travels to “chop suey houses” along the Pacific West Coast and uncovers unique stories from the owners. Other exhibitions centre around the theme of stories: “Many true stories: life in Chinatown On and After September 11th” and “The Telling Lives Oral History Project”. 
Planned efforts to promote meaningful cross-age interaction

“From little things, BIG things grow.”

Urban Village Well

Although there are overlaps with the last section, this section focuses on the integration of more small-scale, intentional, regular, and sustainable opportunities for intergenerational dialogue, interaction, and collaboration in the revitalization process and work program.

1) Sports and Recreation

Sports and recreation is increasingly recognized as a tool which draws intergenerational and intercultural crowds. Although the promotion of sports is one of the current VCRC focuses, there has been little effort in this area. Despite the availability of some sports and recreational infrastructure (e.g. Andy Livingstone Park and C.C.C. and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. multi-purpose halls) in the larger community, there has been no strategic spatial programming for regular activities or special events such as community picnics and barbecues, family sports day, and other sporting events.

2) Intentional Intergenerational Forums

Besides special events and VCRC general membership meetings, there are very few opportunities for regular intentional intergenerational discussions regarding issues of community, culture, and identity. “What we need is an intergenerational philosopher’s café or a monthly tea house gathering to discuss topics relevant to Chinese-Canadians, an increasingly multicultural population, and the role of Chinatown . . . this could happen,

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83 The few parks and community centres in Chinatown’s immediate vicinity are underutilized, at least by those who are associated with Chinatown. Sports and recreation are increasingly seen as arenas for intergenerational activity. Chinatown does not have its own community centre. However, there are a number of community centres nearby including Strathcona, RayCam, the Roundhouse, and Coal Harbour. Andy Livingstone Park (bounded by Keefer Street to the north, Expo Blvd. to the south, Taylor Street to the West, and Quebec Street to the east) is the key recreational green space in the vicinity of Chinatown. With a large artificial turf field and a playground, it is currently underused, servicing only soccer teams from the outside of the community in the afternoons and weekends for games.
for example, at the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen garden," said a VCRC youth member. The
Repositioning Chinatown in Time and Space summer public lecture series held at Simon
Fraser University hints at the school-community joint efforts to involve the public more
regularly on Chinatown revitalization efforts. Although discussions such as those
facilitated by the lectures will be important in Chinatown's community development, this
more academic approach by itself does not fully capture the potential range of
participants in the community; for example, older ethnic Chinese residents, or high
school students. More creative and strategic approaches therefore need to be
developed in addition to current efforts.

An example which illustrates the VCRC's possible role in creative
intergenerational "bridging" is the Chinatown as Home Workshop led by Steven Dang
and Jocelyn Yu, as part of the Spring 2003 UBC Learning Exchange Program. This
workshop was held at the newly renovated Cooper's Place – an assisted living complex
in Strathcona which houses a significant number of Chinese seniors who have lived and
worked in the Chinatown community most of their lives. The four-day learning exchange,
of which the workshop was a part, creatively brought together students and seniors for
mutual learning and discussion where possible on topics such as storytelling and
Chinatown in the past, present, and future. It also encouraged interactive effort in arts
and crafts, cooking classes, and the construction of a roof-top garden at Coopers' Place.
The multicultural group of students and seniors co-learned to respond creatively and
sensitively to overcome barriers of language and physical disability. The effectiveness
of this workshop was reflected in the fact that many student participants and the staff at
Cooper's were willing to develop a formal intergenerational volunteer program beyond
the four days. The VCRC should develop ways to encourage more of these small-scale
but creative, meaningful, and interactive intergenerational opportunities to be happening
regularly in and near Chinatown.
3) Arts & Culture

There has been a growth in verbal and non-verbal use of intergenerational storytelling and art in Vancouver's Chinatown, as expressions of cultural experience and identities. For the last few years, through City celebration grants and community grants, the VCRC has been organizing a one-month summer arts and culture festival in Chinatown annually. Involving Chinese, South Asian, First Nations, and Japanese community groups, the festival highlights music and dance, food tasting, kids craft and an artisan marketplace. Drawing all different age groups, like the annual Chinatown New Year Parade, the festival is an important community celebration of arts and culture and a yearly symbolic gesture of Chinatown's special role as a cultural meeting place.

While Chinatown organizes many "special events", the difference that the VCRC can make to promote a more sustainable revitalization process is developing strategies to encourage different age groups to visit Chinatown for arts and culture more regularly. One of these strategies is to join in existing arts and cultural events and activities in the larger community. The VCRC Youth, for example, has taken part in a community video-project developed by the Civic Youth Strategy (CYS) which will be shown at a summer open air movie-night as part of the Chinatown night market84. Although these joint community arts events are beginning to emerge, more support and coordination with different community groups is necessary.

4) Story Projects

Imagine how it might be like if we had storytelling tour guides in Chinatown — one younger, one older, each telling their stories ... just imagine what kind of community we would have.

A VCRC Youth Member

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84 The CYS video project involved youth representatives in various Downtown Eastside neighbourhoods (Chinatown, Strathcona, Downtown Eastside). This joint video includes inspiring stories of the past, present, and future of their communities and point to these communities future collaboration — encouraging cultural and social healing of past wounds and tensions. In the process of creating this video, the public was invited to join the youth representatives in a number of capacity-building sessions including discussions of democracy, youth involvement in communities, and identifying community assets.
Story projects are slowly but surely emerging in Vancouver's Chinatown as a critical intergenerational and cultural tool in revitalization. Originating in Toronto, the [murmur] project in Vancouver, an archival audio project that has collected stories set in specific locations throughout Vancouver's Chinatown, was one of the two events featured by the "Chinatown in a New Way" initiative. This event was held to introduce and revive some historical memories of Chinatown in a continually modernizing city, and to encourage reflection on the cultural significance of the community. [murmur] in Vancouver involved collecting 30 stories for 18 different locations throughout Chinatown. At each of these locations, a neon-green [murmur] sign marks the availability of a story with a telephone number and location code. By dialing the number with a mobile phone, one can listen to a first-person account or an anecdote of the specific location while engaging in the full physical experience of being there. While such a uniquely designed story project excludes those who do not have mobile phones, it does catalyze new ideas and possibilities for future storying processes in Chinatown. The VCRC can support groups like the CCHS (Chinese Canadian Historical Society) to ensure that there is a means for ongoing telling and preserving of stories, as well as to ensure accessibility to these means.

5) New Rituals and Celebrations

New rituals and celebrations are collective expressions of something important in a community. This area, although identifiably significant to the community in Chinatown, has not been fully recognized for its intergenerational value and role in cultural continuity. The unveiling of a monument that recognizes Chinese Canadian war veterans and CPR workers at the Keefer Triangle (corner of Keefer and Columbia Street) in Chinatown in November 2003 illustrates the importance of rituals and celebrations.
The Youth Network of the VCRC is trying to instill in today's youth that pioneering spirit and pride that those before us had. . . This memorial serves to remind us all of the challenges that have been overcome, and to inspire us to stay vigilant with the obstacles we now face. Chinatown has been built on perseverance, diversity and the ability to adapt, and it will continue to thrive on these same principles. We will take the lessons ingrained in our heritage and continue to be pioneers in a modern Canada.

A pivotal moment of this ceremony was when Dexter, representing the VCRC youth, handed his scroll containing his speech, to a Chinese-Canadian war veteran representative. This action was a symbolic gesture, a ritual, which reflected the promises of the youth involved in the current revitalization to continue the fight that the older generations of Chinese-Canadians had begun, now in a more multicultural city that has benefited from their selfless efforts. The “passing on of the scroll” was to some extent, a form of rite of passage (Chapter 3) – a mutual agreement for partnership between the younger and older generations. Monuments, like the war memorial, need to be “activated” through the intergenerational sharing of stories and rituals as was done on the day of the celebration. These stories in turn “activate” enthusiasm, vision, and action in the community. Without these elements, monuments like the heritage buildings that some in the community are trying to preserve, remain only as “shells” of the past – the community then too, is also stuck there, excluding many who cannot identify with it. Chinatown faces this predicament also if it does not consider developing new rituals and means for storytelling.

New rituals should be developed in Chinatown on a regular basis from the community. A community participant and UBC planning student noted, “new rituals have to come from the community . . . we try to structure and order things too much, there is sometimes too much emphasis on built form.” He recalls the time after the completion of the Chinatown Millenium Gate where two symbolic “stone balls” trapped in the two granite lions’ mouths were stolen and replaced several times. After each consecutive disappearance, pedestrians would put oranges as a temporary replacement for the
stone ball. This became a pattern that intrigued the Chinatown community as well as the public. "What might have happened if this was maintained as community ritual?" he asked. One possibility is that it may have served as a catalyst to draw people to the bountiful stories that the gate represents. The VCRC can encourage the development of creative rituals which help physical landmarks like the Millennium Gate come to life through joint storytelling, rather than simply be looked at for their grand and glittering beauty.

Recommendations

The VCRC and other members of Chinatown hold many special events like the annual New Year Parade and festivals that indeed, draw intergenerational and multicultural crowds. In this section, however, I have alluded to the need for the VCRC and other Chinatown groups to stand back and develop collaborative ways to facilitate more small-scaled, but regular, sustainable and meaningful, planned and as well spontaneous opportunities for meaningful intergenerational storytelling and interaction. Exciting arts and cultural as well as story projects have been emerging in Chinatown – the VCRC can encourage more of them to be intentional and intergenerational. New creative yet meaningful rituals can also be integrated into the life of the Chinatown community as markers and collective expressions.

Outcome-based Criteria: Looking into the Future

Up to now, Chinatown's revitalization process has identified some key issues in the Vision Directions. Already in the process of developing a new Chinatown Plan, the VCRC must now consider issues of implementation and means to carry out stated goals and strategically build on initiatives so far in the process. Addressing the last three criteria of the Community for all Ages model, this next section briefly discusses considerations for the future development of a more intergenerational Chinatown. No recommendations are made in this section.
Support for care giving families

Currently, there are very few services that support the families who may decide to reside in or near Chinatown. There are not many daycares available, nor a range of supporting services for those who want to age in the community. Although SUCCESS does offer some family counseling services and programs, they are once again, aimed towards new immigrant families from Hong Kong and East Asia. The Chinese Community Policing Centre also offers some family assistance in the area of violence and intervention. Beyond a few examples, there is little support for care giving families currently available in Chinatown. Chinatown and Strathcona will need to be evaluated in light of the shared resources in the larger community.

As Chinatown becomes a more intergenerational community and houses another 5000 residents, support for care giving families of diverse backgrounds will be increasingly important. Besides partnering with nearby community centres and facilities, implementing a neighbourhood house or centre similar to the 3-in-1 Tampines in Singapore should be considered. Such centres in or near Chinatown would facilitate the growing diversity of people and families that will be living, working, or visiting Chinatown and encourage joint community-building efforts.

Access to quality health care and social services across the life course

An intergenerational Chinatown to me is one where my changing needs for facilities and services as I continue to age are met, but where I don’t just hang around older people. I like younger people too . . . they have their needs too.

A senior at Goldstone Bakery in Chinatown

Chinatown continues to have the highest concentration of traditional Chinese medicinal shops, herbalists, and acupuncturists in Greater Vancouver, servicing a

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Through numerous programs such as “Family Place” and “Nobody’s perfect”, the Collingwood neighbourhood house (CNH) offers educational, cultural, recreational, counseling and social programs to support families and people of all age groups and cultural backgrounds. See www.cnh.bc.ca for more information as well as Steven Dang’s thesis (2003).
growing population of both Chinese and non-Chinese users. There are also a significant number of medical clinics in the area. All of these health-related services are critical for the needs of a variety of people, but especially for Chinese seniors, who can communicate with these service providers in their own language. Despite the availability of these services however, the challenge of meeting the health and social needs of seniors who want to age in place in or near Chinatown remains.

Since the 90s, more recent developments in social planning have begun to recognize the challenge of meeting the needs of ethnic Chinese seniors in Vancouver (Wood, 1991; City of Vancouver, 1993). This may include those who are rooted in Chinatown or who have been in Vancouver for many years and speak various dialects of Cantonese, as well as those who have recently immigrated to Vancouver and may speak other dialects of Mandarin and Taiwanese. In Vancouver, a large group of the older generation wa kiew Chinese Canadians continue to be very dependent on Chinatown as a meeting place that offers a range of amenities all within one area of Vancouver (Chen-Adams, 2002). Adequate age-sensitive physical infrastructure (e.g. wheelchair accessibility) and culturally-sensitive care homes are needed in the larger community to facilitate aging in place. Concepts like aging in place and naturally occurring retirement communities (NORCS) (Hirsch de Haan & Poliakoff, 2002), should be increasingly considered for Vancouver's Chinatown.86

86 Back in 1981, Lai had studied the potential of Victoria's Chinatown as a strategic retirement centre. In the midst of residential and economic decline, Victoria's Chinatown had at that time lost a personal care home and hospital in 1977 and 1979 respectively (Lai, 1981: 71). The question Lai studied was whether a rehabilitation scheme for Victoria's Chinatown ought to be developed as a commercial district catering to tourists or a residential-cum-commercial area, which included making Chinatown a residential site for Chinese seniors. Lai conducted surveys which asked Chinese in the Victoria Metropolitan Area whether they (especially senior citizens) would consider living near or in Chinatown again. His survey revealed that Victoria's aging Chinese population would consider living in an improved living environment in Chinatown (services, goods, & low rental housing) and that there was general support for the hypothesis that "Chinatowns in North America are potential retirement centres for elderly residents (Lai, 1981:79)." Much of this had to do with the proximity and availability of cultural and social networks, services, and goods. Many of Lai's recommendations were accepted by Council towards a rehabilitation plan for Victoria's Chinatown. Despite that many Chinese seniors have remained Victoria's Chinatown, Micky Lam, planner at the City of Victoria, states that there is now still great difficulty in maintaining the younger and middle generations.
The S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Simon Y. K. Seniors care home in Vancouver’s Chinatown is a rare example of a health facility that has been successfully designed and programmed to allow residents to age and transition in place. The centre recognizes that aging is a continuum – providing services and facilities that help residents age in place and to stay in the Chinatown neighbourhood. The Home provides professional care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for residents from the Intermediate Care 2 Level (someone who has a physical or mental limitation, for example, has difficulty going up and down stairs, bathing) to the Extended Care Level (someone who is bed-ridden and requires 24 hours care). Also, the Chieng Adult Day centre at the complex provides health monitoring, therapeutic activities and social/personal activities for seniors current living at home with their families. The S.U.C.C.E.S.S. facility is an interesting example because it incorporates cultural and intergenerational strategies. It houses both long-time Canadian *wa kiew* as well as seniors who are more recent immigrants from Hong Kong, providing services in a few Chinese dialects. As such, it responds to the changing Chinese-Canadian community, and to the more recent challenges of ethnic senior health care (Masi & Disman, 1994). The facility also integrates some level of intergenerational programming as youth volunteers work with seniors weekly and often engage in joint activities. Facilities such as the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. care centre contribute to a more intergenerational and inclusive Chinatown and act as models for future developments. They may also be a strategic source for seniors’ involvement and potential partnership in

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Although such a study has not been conducted in Vancouver, there are encouraging examples of initiatives that “work” and meet the need of demographically-changing communities.

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87 The S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Simon K. Y. Lee Seniors Care Home is a multi-level care facility project was initiated in 1989 in response to the demand for a linguistically and culturally sensitive facility by a growing population of Chinese-speaking seniors in Vancouver. Operated by the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Multi-Level Care Society, the facility was complete and began opening residents after 12 years of construction in September 2001 with 103 private en suite beds.
Chinatown’s revitalization process. It will be increasingly important to involve service providers like the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. care home and their residents in community discussions and revitalization efforts.

➢ Physical Infrastructure

Physical infrastructure sensitive to the “life course” will need to be integrated in the design of future developments and in any heritage conversion sites. As the VCRC continues to push for more live-work and family-friendly living options, the “life course” perspective must influence the design of future amenities, facilities, and buildings in the community - everything from parks to street furniture to pedestrian walkway and facilities that meet the recreational, educational, and social needs of a more intergenerational population.

From housing, to the public realm, to the design of stores and buildings, Chinatown will need to re-evaluate its current use of space through the “age” lens and consider the following:

• Infrastructure that is missing or inadequate and needs to be built or rebuilt

• Infrastructure that could be programmed or reprogrammed more effectively

• Infrastructure that is missing that can be “shared” with surrounding communities

• Infrastructure that should be removed because it is unsafe for children and seniors
Chapter Conclusion: Moving Chinatown Towards *Community for all Ages*

Figure 5.2 Summary of Recommendations from the Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process-oriented Criteria</th>
<th>Key Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Opportunities for life-long civic engagement</td>
<td>• Develop ways to build a more inclusive framework (younger &amp; older people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create strategies to sustain involvement over the life course</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Move from age-specificity/segregation to more age-integrated approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Collaboration across systems and organizations</td>
<td>• Strategic outreach to aging population</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop new partnerships with nearby communities &amp; age-integrated organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Institutions with a life-span perspective</td>
<td>• Encourage more life-span oriented programs &amp; policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Redefine role of family associations, intergenerational link</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Identify existing &quot;age&quot; resources &amp; potential partners in moving towards a succession strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Opportunities for life-long learning</td>
<td>• Build more innovative educational partnerships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Continue to incorporate joint learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Include diverse training and community-based capacity building (life span-oriented)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop mechanism for integrating new research</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Adopt different forms of cultural education needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Planned efforts to promote meaningful cross-age interaction</td>
<td>• Include small-scale regular intergenerational opportunities for dialogue, interaction, &amp; collaboration (arts, sports, stories, forums, &amp; rituals)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the *Community for all Ages* framework, this Chapter has analyzed and discussed whether Chinatown’s revitalization process, vision, and work program are moving the community towards age-integration and helping the community respond to some of the three key challenges identified in the last chapter.

Using the “age lens”, one can see that the current process has strengths as well as weaknesses. Intergenerational programming was not explicitly identified in the original Chinatown vision. The focus so far in the process, has been on reaching out and bringing youth back to Chinatown’s revitalization process. In the long term, however, it will be increasingly important for the VCRC to move from this age-specific and segregated paradigm to a more age-integrated and life course approach which leads to a more sustainable revitalization process. Such an approach demands
broadening the current VCRC outreach framework to include more diverse people including seniors, surrounding communities, other cultural groups, and community organization, as well as adopting a more holistic view of the larger area and community that Chinatown is a part of.

As reflected in the recommendations of the analysis, developing more creative, collaborative, and strategic ways to incorporate intergenerational programming in the process will be needed in the revitalization process and work program. Although the VCRC is already working on some initiatives that will help the process respond to changing age demographics, the evolving Chinese-Canadian community, and aging institutions, the recommendations of this paper will strategically enhance and build on them. A brief discussion of the more outcome-based elements of the Community for all Ages model alludes to some supporting infrastructure, services, and amenities that will emerge or need to be implemented at a later point in the process as Vancouver's Chinatown continues to move in this direction.
Tracy

I grew up in Chinatown . . . I went to Elementary school nearby at St. Francis Xavier. My dad opened an appliance store in Chinatown in 1988. But even before that, I remember Chinatown was a place that I hung out at a lot. Me and this other girl would be running around to buy cha siew (barbecue pork) . . . I'd come down with my grandma too. We were happy. My parents had no problems letting me run around Chinatown . . . I would head over to the area near now Garland Pharmacy to buy things . . . but it was safer there then. I work in Chinatown everyday now and I don't agree with people who think that Chinatown is unsafe to visit. Now I find myself involved in the Chinatown Revitalization Process . . . but originally my parents forced me to go to a meeting . . . I've stayed ever since. Everything we're trying to do in terms of revitalization is hard . . . my friends think its cool, but they're not yet convinced themselves. Things are starting to change though. I know it will take time.

Age 24
Chapter 6

Implications and Conclusion

A Chinatown Beyond the GenerAsians

Re-addressing the questions of this paper, this Chapter outlines some key issues for the incorporation of intergenerational programming in Chinatown Vancouver’s revitalization process, future research directions, and concluding remarks.

Mechanism for Succession and Cultural Continuity

As a member of the VCRC noted, “Who will succeed [the owners of] these stores? How will these stores in Chinatown adapt in a rapidly changing market? They certainly won’t if young and old are cut off from each other.” Much like the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen garden, the majority of family businesses and service operations in Chinatown are currently facing a “crisis of succession”. While reviving the role of family associations is one possibility, an overall succession strategy, which incorporates intentional intergenerational programming - including new partnerships, programs, incentives, and opportunities for participation, will be necessary. One way the VCRC is responding to this, with City supports, is encouraging the development of more diverse housing options and mixed uses such as live-work. The youth subcommittee is also building a mentorship program among other increasingly intergenerational initiatives.

Intergenerational programming is a mechanism for bridging the past, present, and the future. As Vancouver becomes an increasingly mongrel city, intergenerational programming will also act as a critical on-going mechanism to recognize and respond to increasingly diverse people and cultural stories in the city, while preserving the valuable stories of Chinese-Canadians. In such a way, future stories are possible and the community’s collective memory actively encourages mutual learning and strengthened cultural identities, while informing community directions.
**Professionalization vs. Criteria-based Implementation**

Another key issue is professionalizing, training, and/or developing criteria for intergenerational programming application in the current revitalization process. This has varied from community to community and neighbourhood to neighbourhood. In the MoCa example, all three are incorporated to various degrees. The museum and its programming are coordinated by 9 full-time workers who guide their work with intergenerational goals and criteria. To build capacity into the community, the projects and processes however, are realized by more than 100 community volunteers, who may or may not be trained. Although MoCa in New York’s Chinatown needs to be politically, geographically, culturally, and socially situated, it sheds light on Chinatown Vancouver’s current situation. The Chinese Canadian Historical Society (CCHS) could play a similar role of importance in Vancouver and may learn well from examples like MoCA.

Developing intergenerational criteria for implementation of projects and programs provides opportunities for more effective evaluation and strategic processes. Developing criteria and program objectives that are generally measurable is important as they help the community evaluate and move closer to meeting outlined goals. As the BC Council for Families’ intergenerational resource booklet suggests, “clearly defined objectives are the foundation for a successful program.” The Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee took part in an outcome-based planning workshop in the fall of 2003. Therefore, this kind of planning exercise is not unfamiliar to them.

Outcome based goals may be differentiated as long-term, short-term, or immediate outcomes. The *Community for all Ages* Program is a model, which can be constantly adapted and modified based on Chinatown’s implementation goals.
Figure 6.0
Community for all Ages Program: Potential Strategies & Outcomes
Adopted from: Nancy Henkin, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BROAD STRATEGIES</th>
<th>SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES</th>
<th>INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES</th>
<th>LONG-TERM OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate services meet needs across life course</td>
<td>Successful implementation of needs/resource assessment</td>
<td>Enhanced support for care giving families &amp; dependent populations</td>
<td>Improved well-being for children, youth, elders, &amp; families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop-structured cross-age interactions</td>
<td>Increased public awareness about “communities for all ages” concept</td>
<td>Policies promoting life long well-being &amp; meet basic needs</td>
<td>Increased civic participation &amp; interaction across age groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand opportunities for lifelong civic engagement &amp; learning</td>
<td>Successful engagement of key system and community actors</td>
<td>Increased opportunity/infrastructure for lifelong learning &amp; civic engagement</td>
<td>More comprehensive and responsive systems to support all age groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infuse life span thinking into institutions</td>
<td>Successful implementation of model intergenerational programs</td>
<td>Increased interaction across age groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modify physical infrastructure to support all ages</td>
<td>Physical environment that promotes healthy living &amp; supports changing needs in lifecycle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop policies that support care giving</td>
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</table>

Figure 6.0 illustrates some differentiated outcomes a community like Chinatown may adapt in their plans to move towards being a Community for all Ages.

**Doing with vs. Doing for: Co-storytelling, Co-engagement, Rituals**

While initiatives that encourage one age group to service another age group such as children or seniors’ daycare, mentorship, etc., are necessary, intergenerational programming initiatives that encourage mutual learning and participation of various sorts will be key to Chinatown Vancouver’s revitalization process. Education, sports, planned opportunities for discussion, rituals and celebrations are among many of the important arenas for intergenerational co-operation and co-storytelling. These stories build a stronger community foundation and may counter often negative Chinatown and age-related stereotypes portrayed by media.
Intergenerational programming encourages taking students out of classrooms and into the community to interact with its members and vice versa. Programs like the UBC learning exchange and community-school partnerships which have begun with UBC architecture, planning, and history departments for example, should be encouraged and supported. Reaching out to business students will be important as Chinatown seeks to diversify its businesses while strengthening its own niche. As a cultural centre, Chinatown also has great potential as a centre of learning.

Cultural Diversity

An intergenerational Chinatown is increasingly also one which is culturally diverse. While reaching out to those “rooted” in Chinatown is necessary, as discussed in this paper, intergenerational programming can be extended to those who are not rooted as well, bridging stories from the past, present, and future as well as cultures. Rather than viewing Chinese centres like Richmond or Victoria & 41st as competition, intergenerational programming alludes to another possibility. An intergenerational programming approach recognizes that these centres tend to cater to specific Chinese-Canadian populations that also need to be invited and included in Vancouver’s Chinatown. After all, Chinatown is no longer the segregated ethnic ghetto it was before. A “revitalized” Chinatown in Vancouver means replenishing it with life, with a diversity of people who circulate, visit, work, live, and participate in Chinatown. The annual Chinese New Year parade in Chinatown is increasingly reflective of this cultural diversity, as Brazilian, Japanese, First Nations and other cultural groups and organizations join not only in the watching but the walking as well.
**Chinatown as a Cultural Centre of Memory and Museum of Changing stories**

In this paper, I take Jane Jacobs warning about North America's growing “mass amnesia” of culture seriously. Vancouver's Chinatown has transitioned from being a segregated ethnic neighbourhood to a space in which people can re-tell, re-write, and re-develop empowering stories together that recognize, preserve, and activate real stories of people. This inevitably means finding common threads and bridging intergenerational stories. As such, Chinatown is a landscape of memory as well as a museum of changing stories, which testify to and correlate with, the ongoing aspirations, visions, and lived-experiences of Chinese Canadians as well as an increasingly multicultural city.

This year's establishment of the Chinese Canadian Historical Society (CCHS) will mark an all important milestone in Chinese Canadian history – a long-awaited inaugural effort to bring together the stories and experiences of Chinese Canadians over the years. As some advocates for Chinatown are also on the CCHS board, there will be immense opportunity to link the efforts of the CCHS and VCRC. Although the results are dependent on the agreed directions of this society, this is truly an exciting step towards building the necessary infrastructure and anchor for Chinatown as a regional Chinese-Canadian cultural centre that welcomes and is run by the young and old of diverse backgrounds. As discussed in the last chapter, building new multigenerational rituals, symbols, and celebrations will signify these new endeavours and promote active storytelling as lived experience.

**An Added Literacy for Planners and Community Workers**

Finally, I would like to speak to implications for planners and those who work with Chinatowns or other communities and neighbourhoods. In the Appendix of *Towards Cosmopolis* (1998), Sandercock states that there are a number of qualities that future planners need to be armed with, qualities that professional accreditation bodies with a generally more “technocratic paradigm” tend to overlook. She proposes five literacies:
technical (t), analytical (a), multi- or cross-cultural (m), ecological (e) and design (d), that lead to a more “tamed” planner – one who is more “humble, open, and collaborative than the heroic modernist planner” (Sandercock, 1998: 225). I would like to propose a sixth literacy – life course literacy.

Life course literacy is about being able to more equally and fully recognize and respond to the diverse needs, experiences, and stories of those of different ages. A planner or community worker with life course literacy recognizes that aging is a continuum and understands the importance of promoting age-integrated rather than segregated communities as healthier and more sustainable communities. Such a planner employs creative dexterity in employing various intergenerational tools to bridge the diverse age experiences.

As demographic aging is an inevitability that has already begun, rapid changes in age-definitions and proportions of older to middle age to younger people will mean drastic changes in our communities. Planners need to be equipped to respond to these changes and to have a better understanding of the aging experience (young to old) – civic engagement, age-friendly public processes, and public realm design are three of many, many planning areas that will need to confront these life course realities.

With growing public and international recognition of intergenerational programming as a critical area for research, practice, policy, and theory, there is a growing pool of resources now available or being developed. There are also numerous case studies of neighbourhoods and communities to learn from. As a closing remark at the 2004 International Consortium of Intergenerational Programming Conference in Victoria, the conference organizer alluded to the need for people of diverse disciplines and professions to collaborate, with planners playing an increasingly important role in catalyzing this change in neighbourhoods and communities around the world.
Conclusion

In bringing two areas of research together - intergenerational programming and revitalization of Chinatowns, I have addressed some key questions of this paper. Using Vancouver's Chinatown revitalization process as a case study, I have illustrated that intergenerational programming and the "age" lens can help planners, policymakers, and the VCRC be more equipped to avoid the situation that happened in the 1970s in the case of the Chinese Cultural Centre. By taking a more life course-oriented approach, the VCRC better ensures that all age groups of different backgrounds are included and meaningfully, actively, and sustainably engaged in the current revitalization process.

Moving away from narrow "official stories", I have illustrated the need to recognize the diverse as well as common experiences and stories along the age continuum and the importance of embracing an age-integrated community in Vancouver's Chinatown.

Using the Community for all Ages approach, I have illustrated that although Chinatown's Vision is limited in that it focuses mainly on youth, Chinatown's current revitalization process is moving in a positive direction, in which more intentional intergenerational initiatives need to be incorporated in its future work program. From the age lens, Chinatown must develop strategic intergenerational programming strategies to effectively respond to the challenges of changing age demographics, an increasingly diverse Chinese-Canadian community, and aging institutions and services in Chinatown. With a growing number of youth participants and now moving from the vision to implementation phase, the timing for embracing such a framework is appropriate. Besides building a healthier and more sustainable community and neighbourhood revitalization process, I have illustrated the importance of an intergenerational approach in promoting cultural continuity and repositioning Chinatowns as significant cultural centres in mongrel cities of the 21st Century. Bridging the younger and the older, I have
highlighted how intergenerational programming offers creative and meaningful ways to facilitate dialogue and collective search for new meanings for Chinatown. As such, although this paper has focused on Vancouver's Chinatown, lessons learned may also have implications for Chinatowns facing similar challenges.

Rapid global changes such as demographic aging, longer life expectancy, and evolving social expectations, point to the growing urgency for researchers, policymakers, community workers, and politicians to recognize the importance of this topic area. As a quickly growing field, there are numerous issues that need to be researched and defined including the development of appropriate terminology, models, outcome-based evaluation and community criteria, meeting the needs of a demographically aging population, and creative ways to bridge the generations. As such, I have pointed to the reality that planners will also need to gain greater literacy of the life course and understanding of its implications in their work. Building a healthier, more sustainable, socially, economically, and culturally vibrant Chinatown, will mean that we will all need to collaborate on intergenerational initiatives – building new bridges and remembering our community's stories.

And never again, must we linger in a world of shadows and crows.
In the days to come, we will not be laughed at whatsoever,
For laughter will surely come, but with all brothers and sisters of the Mountain,
We shall laugh together.
But rejoice now, Little One, rejoice.
May the highest peak and the lowest valley
Be filled with our joyous noise . . .

Mama, Mama...
Hush Little One, you ought to know,
For Mama is tired, grey, and old.
Never forget our past – our heroes, our foes.
But to your kids and their kids
Shall the story of the Battle of the Golden Mountain be forever told.
Appendices
# Appendix A

## Summary Table of Research on North American Chinatowns, 2003

*Source: Andrea Tang, 2003. Research on North American Chinatowns for the City of Vancouver, Planning Department*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANADIAN CITIES</th>
<th>Urban Context</th>
<th>Planning Initiatives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Vancouver, British Columbia | CMA: 1.98 mn  | Chinatown Revitalization Program (1999): as part of the Vancouver Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program. As a community development & mobilization process, this program emphasizes safety & economic revitalization. The committee (VCRC) formed in 2001 and includes residents, merchants, arts, community and non-profit groups. The VCRC's current priorities are reflected in its subcommittees including arts & culture, youth network, marketing & promotion, sports, parking, and others. The committee continues to work on short-term revitalization plans as well as a long-term vision for Vancouver's Chinatown. | • It is supported by funds from the 3-levels of government as well as the National Crime Prevention Centre  
• Its funding period will end in March of 2004 and will propose a new structure and funding program to City Council. |
|                      | City Population: 545,674 |                      |                                                                            |
| Montreal, Quebec     | CMA Population: 3.5 mn | Chinatown Development Plan (1998): 10-year plan for Chinatown, stating objectives and initiatives to promote safety & investment. | • Cooperative action in 1987 – 1990 between Montreal’s City Administration and representatives resulted in the Chinatown Development Consultative Committee, which continues to work with the City.  
• City promises funding via participation in larger community initiatives such as Plan Opération Commerce, Programmed de revitalization des quartiers centraux. |
|                      | City Population: 1.1 mn |                      |                                                                            |
| Toronto, Ontario     | CMA Population: 4.9 mn | Downtown Chinatown Initiatives: In 1998, specific initiatives were identified including increasing affordable housing, open space, enhancing public space, recreational services, facades, and sidewalks. | • With competing satellite Chinatowns emerging in the late 1970s, the Spadina Chinatown residents began to work more closely with the City to carry out civic improvement projects in their highly dense neighbourhood.  
• Chinatown is seen as part of Toronto’s Downtown and is mainly funded as such by the City.  
• No direct City staff assigned, only through projects |
<p>|                      | City Population: 2.49 mn |                      |                                                                            |
| Victoria, BC         | CMA Population: 325,754 | Tax Incentive Program (1990s): specific buildings identified in for residential conversion. | • In response to the gradual decline of Victoria’s Chinatown, Dr. David Lai (University of Victoria)  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMERICAN CITIES</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boston, Massachusetts</strong></td>
<td><strong>City Population: 600,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Population: 74,125</td>
<td>Gate Refurbishment: joint community efforts to improve &amp; maintain Chinatown gate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCBA as umbrella Association: most planning work done by this community group (walking tours, public events, improvements, etc.)</td>
<td>began to work with the Chinatown community &amp; City staff to understand causes &amp; effects. Their work together shaped Victoria Chinatown’s direction to decrease government involvement in their neighborhood’s planning to slow down rising land values and to maximize use of community resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• While the City of Victoria continues to fund minor projects &amp; maintenance of public realm, a significant number of projects are funded by members of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No longer any direct City staff assigned. Project-based relationship with City and Dr. David Lai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Los Angeles, California</strong></td>
<td><strong>City Population: 3.7 mn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Population: 600,000</td>
<td>Names: This paradigm shapes L.A.’s Chinatown planning to create an interesting mix of residential and commercial uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinatown Charter: This was created to decentralize land use decisions to a more local level through neighborhood councils.</td>
<td>Creating an Urban Village: This paradigm shapes L.A.’s Chinatown planning to create an interesting mix of residential and commercial uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial–Residential Conversion: numerous live-work studios.</td>
<td>Included in the larger Central City North Community Plan, L.A.’s Chinatown planning was agreed through the creation of a Chinatown Charter to bring decision-making to a more local level with neighborhood councils. Chinatown’s residents continue to work with City staff to develop Chinatown into their envisioned “urban village”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mainly state funding for Central City North initiatives as well as community grants and donations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>City Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Los Angeles, California  |                 | **Light Rail Station Development Project:** One of the “Gold Line” stations is located in L.A.’s Chinatown. This station will act as a point for TOD (transit oriented development)  
**Rail Line Property Conversions:** Rail-line properties on the Chinatown edges are being converted into park and open space.  
**L.A. River Rehabilitation:** Re-habilitating the waterfront  | No direct City staff assigned to L.A.'s Chinatown, except for head of Central City North Area – Patricia Diefenderfer.                                                                                                                                  |  |
| New York, New York       | 8 mn            | **Rebuild Chinatown Initiative:** This collaborative community planning project sponsored by Asian Americans for Equality emphasizes rebuilding New York’s Chinatown in the past September 11th period.                                                                                                                                   | In July 2002, the Asian Americans for Equality and several community partners initiated a community-based planning process to address Chinatown needs, resulting in the Rebuild Chinatown Initiative, involving community groups, residents and business owners through a steering committee.  
Various funding sources for the initiative including Federal (Freddie Mac & HUD community development block grants) as well as Deutsche Bank, private donors, and donations.  
2 staff from AAE (Robert Weber & Jennifer Sun) & 1 City staff (Nicole Ogg).  |  |
| Portland, Oregon         | 529,121         | **Vision Plan for Old Town/Chinatown (1997):** This vision is foundational to Chinatown’s planning. Created under the Good Neighbourhood agreement, it sets the community’s directions.  
**Old Town/Chinatown Development Plan (1999):** This plan proposes initiatives to carry out the economic development objectives of the Vision.  
**Old Town/Chinatown 3rd & 4th Avenue Streetscape Plan:** Led by the Portland Development Commission, this plan acts as blueprint for $4.5 mn worth of the neighbourhood’s improvements to streetscape and public amenities.  | In December 1997, City Council adopted a Vision Plan for Old Town/Chinatown which brought together a diversity of representatives from the public & private spheres. Key emphasis was on the Good Neighbor Agreement & collaboration to balance social and economic factors, private and public investment  
Old Town/Chinatown is funded as part of a renewal area from City and taxes, with no date of expiration.  
Public funding is mainly tax increment funds  
No direct City staff, project-based staffing (reference Streetscape Plan - Katherine Krygier)  |  |
| San Francisco, California| 776,733         | **Chinatown Alleyway Master Plan (1998):** The Chinatown Community Development Centre leads this planning initiative to design & renovate 31 alleyways in Chinatown with 5 project plans.  
**Dept. of Public Works Project:** A number of streetscape-related projects to be integrated with the Alleyway Plan.  | As a major “Chinatown model” to New York and Boston, in 1996, Mayor Willie Brown appointed a 21-member task force (Chinatown Economic Group) to implement economic activities in the Chinatown. Revitalization became a focus through working with the Chinatown Community Development Centre, business owners, residents, |
are underway for the period 1998 – 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seattle, Washington</th>
<th>City Population: 563,374</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Chinatown/International District Strategic Plan (June 1998): Provides strategies for 4 areas including 1) cultural &amp; economic vitality; 2) Affordable &amp; diverse housing; 3) Creating safe, dynamic, &amp; ped. Friendly public spaces; &amp; 4) Accessibility to and Within the neighbourhood for all modes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Preservation: As International Special Review District, Chinatown/ I-D building changes are reviewed by the board &amp; dept. of neighbourhoods.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In 1973, the City of Seattle made an ordinance to preserve Chinatown as the “International Special Review District (ISRD)”. This was to identify Chinatown as being important to the nation’s heritage. In the late 80s, the City carried out extensive community outreach to develop Seattle’s Chinatown Community Plan in 1992 and to encourage ongoing community participation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Funding based on various sources such as tax (incentives for new businesses, density bonus programs) &amp; State funding for housing initiatives &amp; historic preservation in that neighbourhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A few City staff are currently working with the community to implement projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• As part of North East quadrant of San Francisco’s planning structure, much of Chinatown’s funding is through gas tax. Trammel Crow funds – 2.3 mn dollars collected in 1994 as capital improvement monies plus funds from National Endowments for Arts, National Historic District Funds, Community Development Block Grants, Transportation Funds, Private & community donations.

• 1 City project staff (Lois Scott) has been assigned to carry out Chinatown projects besides North East Team Leader (Craig Nikitas)
# Appendix B

## Survey of Sample Intergenerational Programs in Nine North American Chinatowns

**Source:** Andrea Tang, 2003. Research on Chinatowns in North America for the Downtown Eastside Program, City of Vancouver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Demographic Aging/ Tension</th>
<th>Explicit Youth and/or Intergenerational Programming? (Examples of some key youth/intergenerational programming initiatives available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Increasingly intergenerational decision-making through Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• VCRC youth subcommittee (2003-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Uth Rev, SUCCESS (2000 -)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Growing partnerships with universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Toronto Chinese Business Association Junior Chapter (1992 -)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Redesign of recreational activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Outreach from older to middle-age Chinese-Canadians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Tension over “pan-Asian paradigm” &amp; name of neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Educational partnerships between universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Adopt-An-Alleyway Youth Project (AAA) was adopted after recommendation made by graduate research in Berkeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chinese Cultural Centre Roots Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• San Francisco Chinatown Teen Zine: after school program using internet, media, &amp; technology to involve youth with local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chinatown Youth Centre: established to help high school students through counseling, cross-cultural resources, bilingual services and activities. Programs are also provided for parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chinatown Community Children’s Centre: bilingual-bicultural child care centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Project involvement (eg. Central Artery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Visions &amp; Voices Program is explicitly intergenerational &amp; intercultural in nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Community Services training/educational program for youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chinatown Community involves students &amp; educational institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Boston Redevelopment Authority will be involving youth in planning &amp; design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Lively night life that attracts youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Neighbourhood councils seek to promote youth, intergenerational, and intercultural involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Chinatown Service Centre Youth Department provides a number of educational programs, leadership projects, art projects, and opportunities for joint educational partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• High youth involvement in East Wind Lion Dance Troupe Martial Arts Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Gallery Street: has designed to become a highly attractive street and includes venues attractive to the younger and multicultural/pan-asian art community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Asian Americans Federation of New York provides a scholarship funding for 24 students annually (1999-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• MOCA – Museum of Chinese Americas integrates intergenerational programming through story projects, mentorship, and other initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Initiatives promoting vibrant life has been key approach in attracting youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Educational partnerships between Chinatown &amp; Universities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Interview Participants

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Kathy Gibler
Nadim Kara
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Tracy Lam