

Re-imagining Chinatown: How Culture Will Shape the Future of Cities



Chinatown's Legacy: Past and Present



1. Planning with a cultural lens (Helen and Aaron)

➤ **Activity for the Group: Defining cultural values**

2. Repairing and rebuilding relationships (Helen)

3. What's next (Helen)

4. Lessons learned and Reflection (Aaron)

➤ **Activity for the Group: Applying lessons learned**



1. Planning with a cultural lens

During the presentation, please consider:

What lessons from this presentation can you apply in your own work, with the power and resources you already currently have?

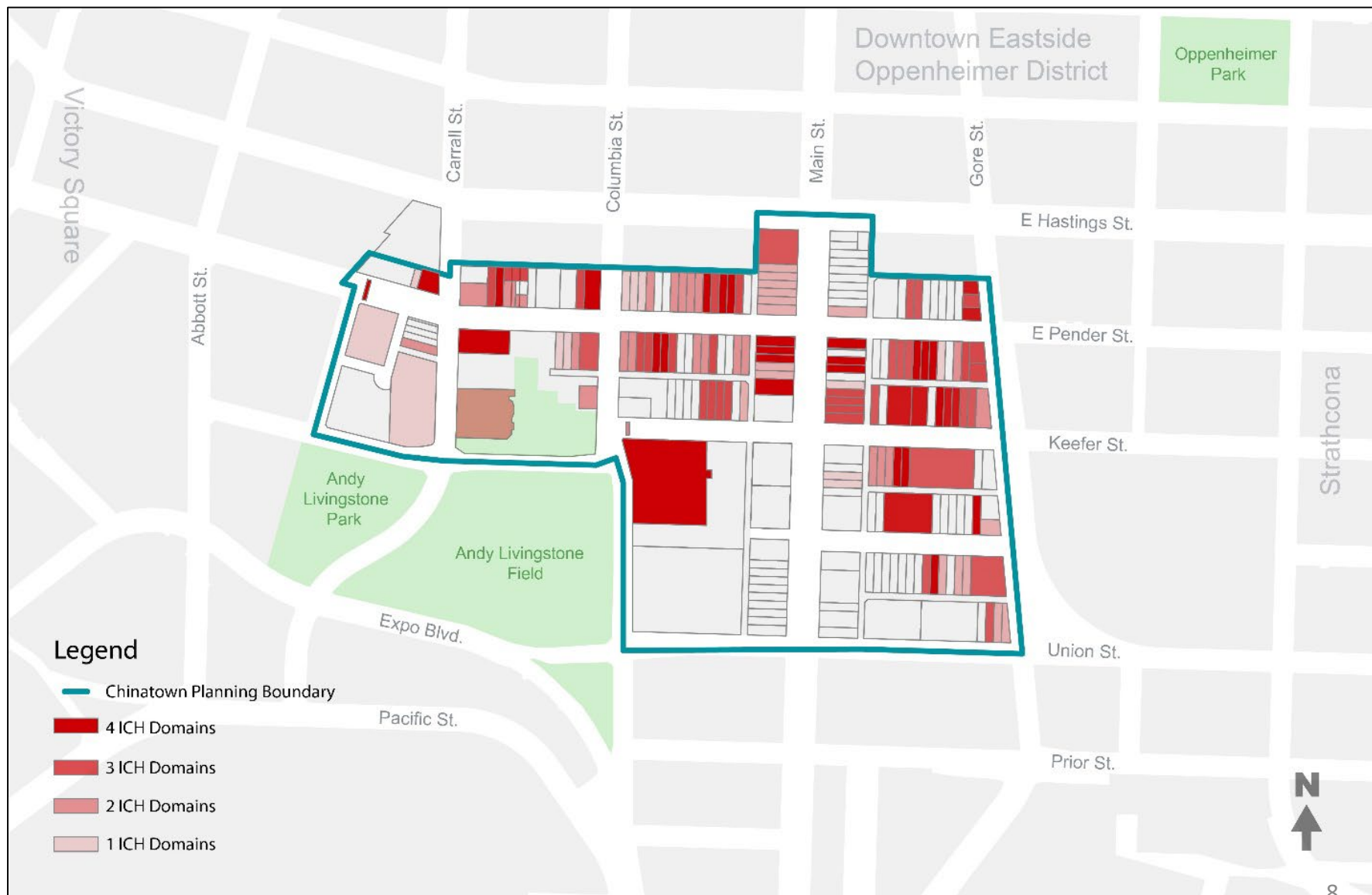
1. Planning with a Cultural Lens



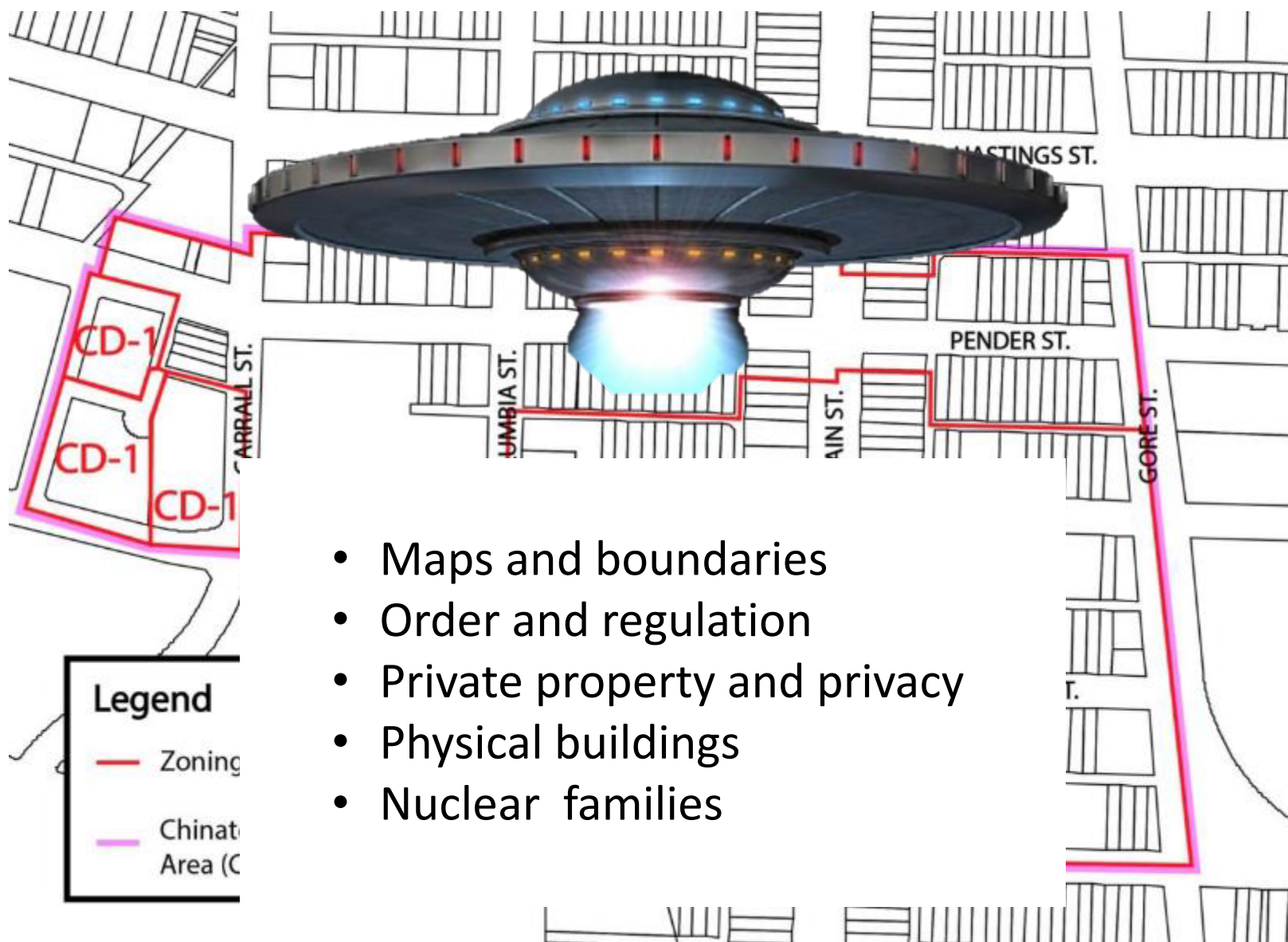
1. Planning with a Cultural Lens



1. Making visible what was erased



1. Planning is part of the problem



- Maps and boundaries
- Order and regulation
- Private property and privacy
- Physical buildings
- Nuclear families

1. Going Deeper into Culture



**Things
we made**

e.g. buildings in
a specific style,
a gate, a mural



Things we do

e.g. cultural activities,
festivals, a way to
prepare food



**How we see and
understand the world**

e.g. world views,
beliefs, values,
attitudes

1. Community-Defined Cultural Values

Why is this important?



Cantonese-style
Barbeque Meat



Tourism

1. Chinatown Community Values

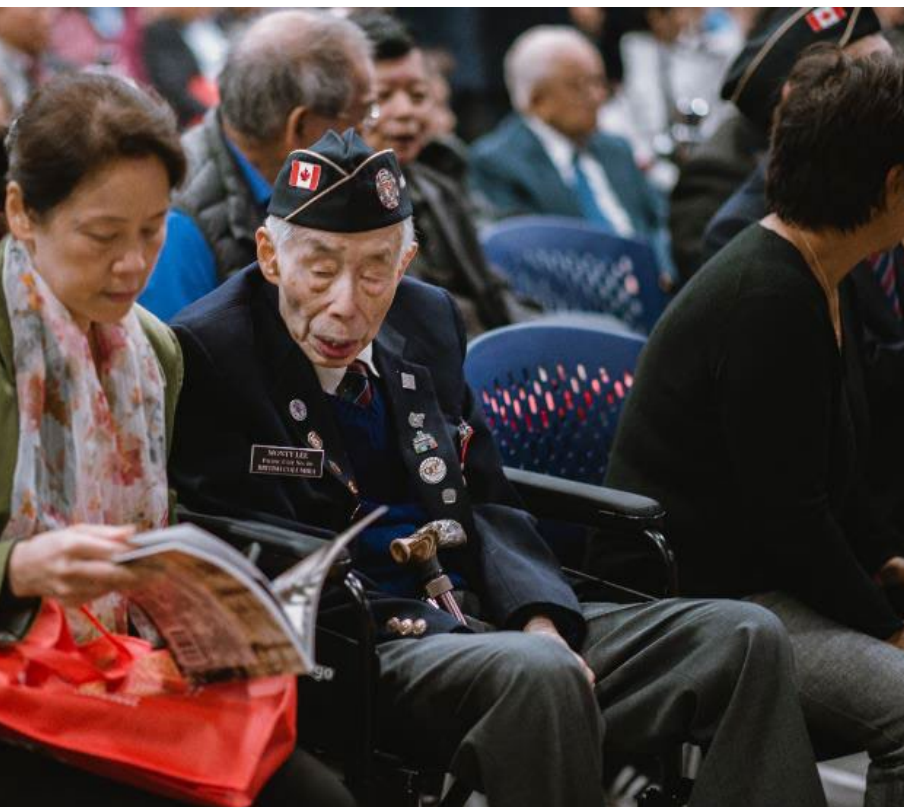
- In Chinatown...
 - we celebrate our **identities** together.
 - we **care** for each other.
 - we fight for **positive change** and **prosperity**.
 - we honour our **heritage** and **memories**.
 - we belong to a **living community**.

1. Activity

1. Form groups of three
2. Take turns being a Participant, Facilitator, and Observer
3. The Participant identifies a cultural asset that is important to a community with cultural values different from the dominant culture (e.g. Chinatown, Punjabi Market, queer neighbourhoods, etc.)
4. The Facilitator asks the Participant to explain Why the thing is important, then continues to ask this for each response, until you reach a core value and this is no longer possible.
5. After everybody has had a chance in each role, briefly debrief what the experience was like.

2. Repairing and Rebuilding Relationships

2. Cultural Redress and Rebuilding Trust



2. Chinatown Transformation Team

- Trilingual staff with diverse community and planning experience
- A multidepartment team



2. Relationships Based on Shared Values

- Trilingual engagement process
- Specific outreach to seniors and traditional societies
- Briefings before and after meetings



2. Community-Led Process

- 16,600 people engaged in over 370 events and meetings since 2018
- 30+ community-led projects



2. The Legacy Stewardship Group

- New leadership: seniors, young people
- Advocacy and establishing renewed directions to community work



3. What's Next

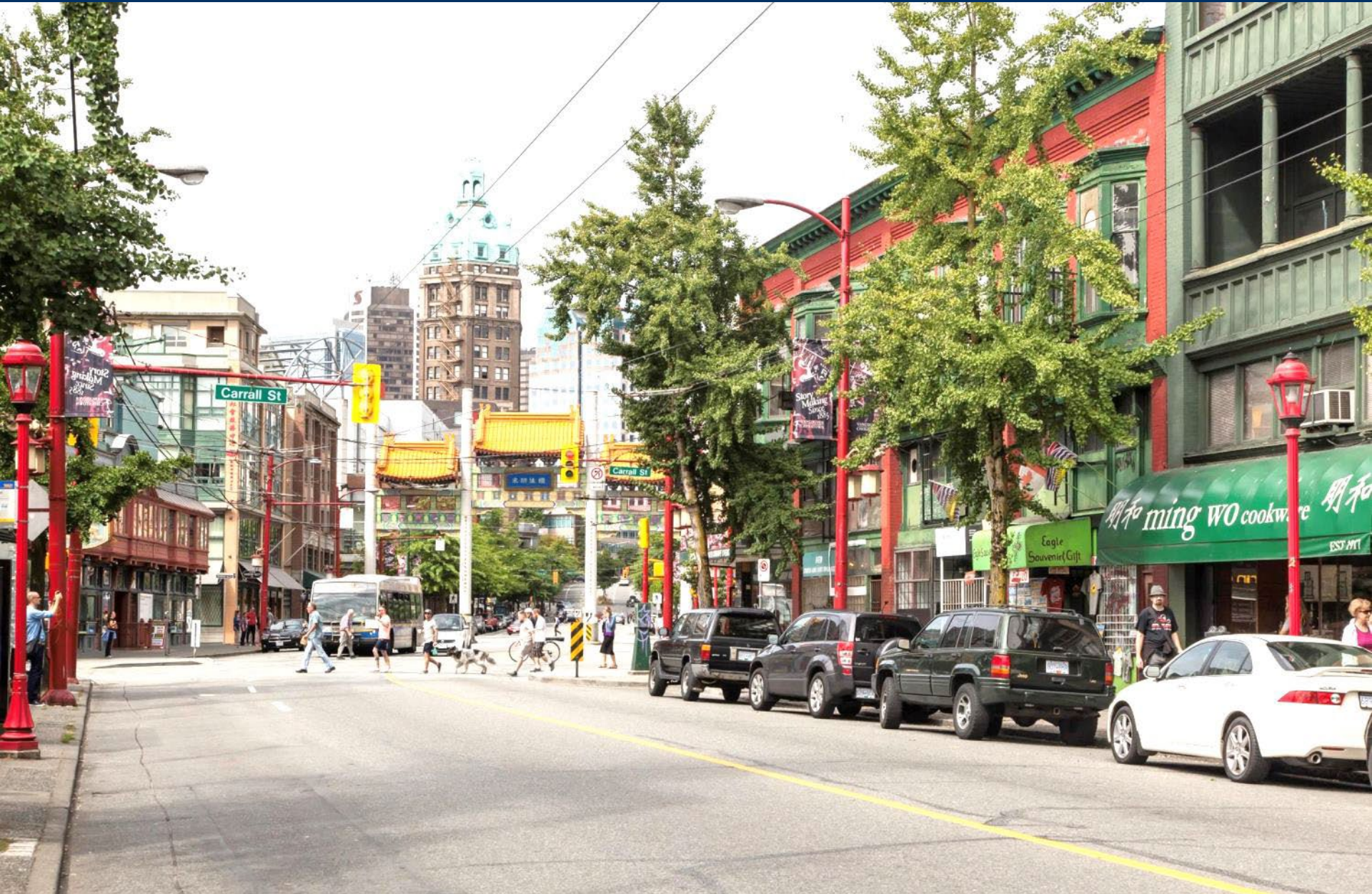
3. A One of a Kind Plan



3. Cultural Redress on Unceded Territories



3. UNESCO: A Designation for Vancouver and Canada



4. Lessons Learned and Reflection

4. Lessons Learned

1. **Values:** Having a hard time connecting with the community? Have you understood their cultural values?
2. **Relationship building:** It takes time. The best way to speed this up is to hire the right people
3. **Unlearn your assumptions:** Challenge conventional planning approaches . Learn from the community.
4. **Be intentional with choices:** Make a choice about what to prioritize; equity is not about being neutral and treating everything the same (e.g. cultural businesses)
5. **Interpret results carefully:** You can only understand the results of engagement if you share the same values as the community; check in with the community often.

What lessons from this presentation can you apply in your own work, with the power and resources you already currently have?

But what is possible to do without additional power and resources?

4. Using the Power We Already Have

Professional Experience & Subject-Matter Expertise

- Technical knowledge
- Institutional power and responsibility
- Resources, access, power, privilege

...in service of and based upon...

Lived Experience & Community Expertise

- Diagnosis of ongoing harms
- Knowledge of community interests and priorities
- New relationships, values, worldviews, ways of being

4. Using the Power We Already have

Equity is about finding a better way of working.

This requires:

- Authentic relationships and deep listening
- Humility, learning and openness to critique
- Challenging and unlearning assumptions
- Collaboration and power-sharing
- Perseverance

4. Things to Start Doing Today

- 1. Set up one-on-one chats** with stakeholders over tea, coffee, etc
- 2. Stand on the side walk and talk to people** (we set up a tea cart)
- 3. Find one community partner** to take action with together
- 4. Start with translation:** No Google translate please! Hire a real person, ideally from the community.
- 5. Find a new way to screw up:** try something new and learn from it



4. Activity for the Group

What lessons from this presentation can you apply in your own work, with the power and resources you already currently have?

Take 3 minutes to reflect on this individually, then share with your group from the previous activity.

Send us an email to chat!

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