

Discrimination Against Chinese People

By: King-mong Chan

Since my last article on Chinese people in the Downtown Eastside community, there have been two more community meetings where Chinese people gathered at the Oppenheimer Park House to share their experiences living in the neighbourhood and to discuss issues in their community.—With the discussions from all our community meetings and other conversations I've had with others in the community, we began drafting what a social justice zone for the Chinese people would look like.

There are not a lot of places that Chinese people frequent in the DTES. Some people only go to two or three different locations in the area; others stay at home until their family brings them out around town on the weekend. Some of the places they frequented for social activities include: Carnegie Centre, DTES Women's Centre, Vancouver Second Mile Society, Oppenheimer Park House, and Ray-Cam Community Centre. For food, many go to the food line-ups. There are also quite a few who, after purchasing their food from Sunrise Market and other grocery stores in Chinatown, cook themselves. In general, they do not shop at most of the stores in the Chinatown area, even for food; for their daily supplies like toothpaste, they go to Army & Navy.

Discrimination at the service agencies was a topic that came up at every one of our meetings in addition to conversations on the street. Chinese people receive less supplies and food than non-Chinese people in food lines and sometimes get completely denied whatever is being given out by staff and volunteers. Some spoke of being physically pushed out of a service organization in the DTES. They also talked about how they were often sworn at by others in the community.

The language barrier is a severe part of the problem because many Chinese people cannot understand or respond to what others in the community (including staff and volunteers) are saying or doing to them. Language ends up excluding and marginalizing Chinese people, many of whom are seniors in their 80s and 90s; this is especially true how government services (i.e. immigration, social housing, police, social services) are inaccessible to them because such services are largely not provided in Chinese.

The City of Vancouver is nearing the conclusion of its neighbourhood planning process and so we need to clearly summarize our discussions into a vision for a social justice zone for Chinese people, regardless of the results of the City's process. We can break down the zone into the responsibilities of three groups: the businesses & service agencies; the government; and the community itself (grassroots).

NOTES FOR A SOCIAL JUSTICE ZONE FOR CHINESE PEOPLE

Businesses & Service Agencies

- Respect Chinese people (i.e. no discrimination); include Chinese people into the community; maintain a clean environment; translate signs and notices into Chinese; ensure that there are free and low-cost shops for food, grocery, daily supplies etc.; have more places that are welcoming to Chinese people; ensure that no Chinese people are taken advantage of because of their inability to speak English; Hire Cantonese and Mandarin speaking service workers and volunteers

Government

- Continue to build social housing (including specifically for seniors); ensure that no rents are raised without income (i.e. Old Age Security) increasing as well; increase health supports to pay for medication; provide funds for building maintenance and enforcement of standards; fund social activities; make services available in Chinese (i.e. government services like immigration, social housing, and police); increase Old Age Security; continue to have convenient transportation services for seniors

Community Members (Grassroots)

- Respect Chinese people (i.e. no discrimination); treat Chinese people equally; accept and include Chinese people into the DTES community; ensure the safety of everyone; maintain a clean environment

As a part-time community organizer with Carnegie Community Action Project now, I will be continuing meetings with and outreach to the Chinese community in the coming months as we develop our vision for the community and address the specific issues faced by the Chinese community, starting with the most prominent issue of discrimination. I hope you can join me in building an even stronger DTES community with all ethnic groups in the area standing in solidarity with each other.

被歧視的華人

作者：陳敬望

自從上次文章『從東端生活的中國人角度去看他們的社區』，我們繼續有兩次研討會在日本公園分享華人在社區中的生活及商討有關議題。從多方面接觸及討論後，我已經知道如何草擬華人的『社會公義區』。

在市中心東端，華人長者常去的地方不太多。大部份的人只會去附近兩或三個不同的地點，而有些人只會留在家裏等待他們的家人在週末帶他們出外逛逛。社交活動方面：他們經常去參與的地點包括：卡麗基社區中心，市中心東端婦女中心，耆英中心，日本公園和雷坎社區中心（Ray-Cam Community Centre）。食物方面：大多數的人會去派發食物服務點領取食物，而不少的人會去唐人街日昇超市或其他店舖購買食物回家煮食。總括來說：他們不經常去購物，因為他們日常用品可以去海陸空（Army & Navy）購買。

在服務機構被人歧視的經歷是每次研討會必定被提及，甚致我在街上和他們傾談他們也會提出。華人在派發食物服務點獲分派得到的食物少過其他族裔，甚致有時被職員或義工拒絕分派食物，亦有人提及在東端服務機構被人推出門外。他們也有提及在社區中心被人經常用粗口或不雅言語對待。

語言障礙是一個非常嚴重的問題。若華人不諳英語是無法明白或回應主流人仕（包括服務機構職員或義工）的指示。語言令華人不能融入主流社會，因為大多數八十歲或九十歲以上的長者不諳英語，而政府服務在移民服務社會房屋，警務及社會服務等等都不能達到他們的需要因為沒有提供華語服務。

溫哥華市的市政府已接近完成社區規劃的藍圖，所以我們要儘快完成華人『社會公義區』的異象。我們可以將這個『公義區』分為三大類：企業與服務機構，政府和社區居民。

華人社會公議區的重點：

企業與服務機構

- 尊重華人（即沒有歧視）；包括華人融入社區；保持清潔環境；翻譯中文標誌及告示；確保有免費和廉價店舖供應食品，雜貨及日常用品等；更多的地方歡迎華人進入；確保華人沒有因不懂英語而受欺壓；聘請懂粵語和普通話的職員和義工

政府

- 繼續興建社會房屋（包括專為長者而建）；確保老人金和租金一致；增加藥物補助以支付藥費；提供大廈維修基金以保持基本準則；社會活動基金；提供華語服務（即在移民服務，社會房屋，警務等等）；增加老人金；繼續提供方便的交通運輸服務給長者

社區居民

- 尊重華人（即沒有歧視）；平等對待華人；接納及包容華人到東端社區；確保每個人的安全；保持清潔環境

作為『卡麗基社區行動計劃』的部份時間社區組織者，在未來數月，我將會繼續外展華人社區，以便發展華人『社會公義區』的異象。現在首要的任務是對抗被歧視。我很希望你能與我攜手建立一個不分族裔的強而有力『市中心東端』。