Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis:
Public Spaces Improvement to Expand Multicultural Visibility in Nanaimo

by

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Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

a) Human research ethics approval from the Vancouver Island University Research Ethics Board; or

b) Advance approval of the animal care protocol from the Vancouver Island University Animal Care Committee; or

c) Has conducted this research as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance of the author’s involvement.

A copy of the application has been filed with the Research Ethics Board at Vancouver Island University and inquiries may be directed to that authority.

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Abstract

In a mosaic multiculturalism policy context, how can local governments realize “harmonious multiculturalism”, which is defined here as maintaining diversity while integrating all differences, this is a challenge for Canadian cities with increasingly diverse populations from all corners of the globe. While there are similarities in approaches that can be used across metropolitan areas, large cities, and medium-sized communities, the challenges facing the latter category requires specific attention. This research will explore a way to enhance multicultural integrity in Nanaimo through improving public spaces.

Keywords: multiculturalism; harmonious; public place-making; history; Nanaimo.


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List of Acronyms

CIP       Canadian Institute of Planners
OCP       Officially Community Plan
PBS       Professional Board of Standards
PIBC      Planning Institute of British Columbia
PNE       Pacific National Exhibition
VIU       Vancouver Island University
Introductory Image

Figure 1 Nanaimo Downtown View from VIU

Every time I am shocked by its beauty from far place, but how can I come into it to feel it?

1 Source: Author
Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Introduction

With globalization and the increased movement of people around the world as political, economic, and climate refugees, multiculturalism is a growing force impacting the shape and character of cities. This raises concerns with the integration of new cultures, the expansion of existing cultures, and potentially the decline in influence of the earlier settler cultures in Canadian cities. In the past, conflicts between cultures may have been viewed as inevitable threats, but ideally, today’s cities are more open to new influences and better able to integrate new cultures into the urban landscape. In a “mosaic” multiculturalism policy context, Canada is generally viewed by other nations as having a relatively positive and permissive attitude toward immigration and multiculturalism.

However, how to realize this harmonious multiculturalism – encouraging the diversity while integrating all differences – is still a big challenge in Canadian cities: on one hand, although there is extensive literature on multiculturalism, especially related policy analysis and theory study, how to take multicultural issues into physical planning (depending on functions of multicultural service) requires further study. On the other hand, in addition to metropolitan areas, many relatively small and middle-sized communities (especially around big cities) also have obvious demographic trends towards diversity; multicultural issues are becoming an important indicator for potential residents or economic investors. The City of Nanaimo presents an example of this issue in Canada: originally an important settlement area for First Nation communities, the city has changed through waves of immigration: first were British migrants attracted to the coal mines, then other western European settlers seeking new opportunities, followed by later migration from Pacific Rim Nations. The 21st...
century has opened the world to Nanaimo, with new population tracing their homelands to everywhere across the globe. The purpose of this research is to focus on smaller, non-metropolitan communities, to examine if physical planning can promote or “make visible” the past, present, and future of multiculturalism in the city. It is recognized that the physical planning is a gradual method of place renovation: this research takes Nanaimo as a case study to explore if gradually improving public spaces can reveal the true multicultural nature of the city; and if the “harmonious multiculturalism” can actively enhance intercultural communication in public spaces.

This research has implications for other areas in Canada and other multicultural nations. In addition, it can inform change in places that have historically been viewed as more mono-cultural, such as China. This research considers both the theoretical and practical components of multiculturalism: theoretically, this research will start from reviewing the multicultural policy mainly in Canadian context, and examine case studies to find some experiences and lessons about the shared use of public spaces by different groups. In addition, depth interviews conducted in Nanaimo will help to fill in the gap between what is known and not known in the development of multicultural spaces. This research will try to explore a way to facilitate the multicultural harmony in Nanaimo and will speak to the planner’s role in research process. Ideally, this practice in Nanaimo may have applicability to other similar places.

1.2. The Primary Research Question

Focusing on non-metropolitan communities, this research examines if physical planning can promote or “make visible” the past, present, and future of multiculturalism in the city. It is recognized that physical planning is a gradual means of place renovation: taking Nanaimo as a case study, this research will explore if gradually improving public spaces can reveal the true multicultural nature of the city, and the term “harmonious multiculturalism” is used to describe the anticipated
changes to physical identity that can result from actively promoting multiculturalism in public spaces. The primary research question, then, is: What do we mean by harmonious multiculturalism?

1.3. Sub-questions

A series of sub-questions are also addressed in this research:

01. Is there a relationship between public spaces, physical planning, and harmonious multiculturalism? And are there some practical experience and lessons in related planning?

02. In Nanaimo history, how have multicultural issues shaped this city? Is there a trend toward greater diversity of population and spaces in the future?

03. What are actual needs to improve the intercultural relationship in Nanaimo especially around public spaces (attracting different group gather and communicate)?

04. How can better shared public spaces lead to increased harmony among multicultural groups in Nanaimo and is there effective method and predictive model that could be developed to lead to positive change?

1.4. Significance & Justification

1.4.1. The Importance of the Study

Although the multicultural character has been generally accepted in Canada, as a complex social issue, especially in a mosaic multiculturalism policy context, how to realize a harmonious multiculturalism — keeping the diversity but not aggravating fragmentation — is a big challenge in Canadian cities.
Furthermore, in addition to metropolitan areas, mid-sized communities have the growing need to address this issue: plenty of multicultural studies focus on the large cities, but there is still some neglect in non-metropolitan cities. In addition, growth in Canada is partially happening in the smaller and mid-size cities, and little research has been conducted on this issue in Canada’s smaller places (Seasons, 2003). In addition, to the contrary, many small places are experiencing population decline, while the remaining population becomes increasingly diverse. Increased multiculturalism, along with low birth rates and aging, are changing the landscape of Canada’s small and mid-sized cities (Kurtz, 2015). Geography also plays a role: the location of many middle-sized cities proximate to large metropolitan centers creates a different set of conditions and change factors. All of these places are worthy of further study.

More important, though many planning policies encourage create diversity communities, there is still a lack of implementation method, especially in physical planning. Thus, this research focuses on through improving public spaces to facilitate multicultural harmony in middle city, and also examines the planner’s role in creating harmonious places and spaces.

1.4.2. Site Selection

There are many reasons why Nanaimo was chosen as the research subject: First, from a historic perspective, multiculturalism has long been a hallmark of this place. With the development of mining and logging industries, many newcomers of Chinese, Norwegians, Japanese, Finns, Italians, and others settled in Nanaimo; and they change the face of Nanaimo, bring its “a multicultural look”, which can be said as “a microcosm of the future face of Canada” (Nanaimo an early melting pot, 2015). Second, from a macro-policy perspective, since the 1970s Canada has shifted its multicultural policy to be much more supportive of cultural diversity. Moreover,
Nanaimo is close to Vancouver — an important multicultural center in the world. Change in Vancouver is reflected to a lesser extent in Nanaimo, most recently in the number of newcomers from Pacific Rim nations, along with South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Change can bring conflicts, although Canada sees itself as a highly tolerant, welcoming nation, this may not be the experience of every migrant. The reason for the location of the site, also from the scale perspective, Nanaimo is not too small community to explain the problem, nor too big and complex to start the research. Finally, there are many cities and communities have a similar condition like Nanaimo, so this research has some degree of applicability to other places.

1.5. General Organization

Multiculturalism, as an abstract concept, it is not easy to define. The nuances of this discussion have shaped the organization of this research, which is organized into six chapters:

Chapter 1, Introduction, which explains the background information, study framework, and original intention, includes the research questions. The second chapter is Literature Review, which focuses on the multicultural policies and theories, history evolution, and relevant cases. Chapter 3, Methodology, introduces the research methods. This research is based on a qualitative way mainly through the semi-structured interviews in Nanaimo to realistically learn the need of improving multicultural integration in the public space. Chapter 4, Findings and Results, has two parts: firstly, based on summarizing the related literatures and cases to address “the harmonious multiculturalism”; then focusing on the specific study case—Nanaimo, summarizing the findings of the multicultural facts of history and state quo, which mostly based on the research interviews. The findings and results are discussed in the Chapter 5; then this Chapter explores the recommendations to introduce multicultural
factors into public space design, and based on that, it tries to provide the exploratory
designs. Chapter 6 concludes this research and discusses the future research.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

Literature Organization:

Figure 2 Literature Map²

The literature review through four sections explores the multiculturalism. It starts from the macro level: the demographic composition change; the definition of multiculturalism and multicultural city; the multicultural policies, which mainly focuses on the Canadian macro-policies development. The second section focuses on the multiculturalism in city planning, including the growing multicultural problem exploration, the general influence and the various multicultural aspects of city planning. The following section explores the relationship with the multiculturalism and public place. Additionally, the fourth part introduces some multicultural planning cases.

² Source: Author
A potential gap could be found: although the numerous exploration of the multiculturalism is found in the macro policies levels and the city planning undertaking, there is a not sufficient attention on specific policies or planning “tools” in the local scale, especially in the mid-sized and small city, which is also not enough addressed in the public place sphere.

2.1. The Review of Multiculturalism: Background, Policies, Rise and Critique

2.1.1. The Demographic Composition Trends and Cultural Diversity

Canada is a pluralistic society. Apart from Indigenous people, everyone who makes there home here is a migrant. From the foundational British and French settlers, additional minority ethnic groups comprise Canada’s population: German, Italian, Ukrainian, Chinese, Indian, and so on. In a 2011 National Household Survey, the visible minority group represented 19.1% of the total population, up from 4.7% in 1981 (Dewing, 2013).

Throughout Canada’s history, there has been a demographic trend towards diversity, especially in recent decades, due to the increased movement of people as political, economic, and climate refugees. The census data of ethnic and cultural origins shows an obvious diversity trend, in 1871, there were 20 origins in the Canadian population, but in 2016, there are more than 250 origins and 41.1% of the population recorded more than one origin (Statistics Canada, 2016).
Recent decades, the major population growth has been from immigration (King, 2009). According to Statistics Canada (2016), there are about two-thirds of population growth in Canada was derived from an increasing international migration from 2011 to 2016; due to the population aged and low fertility rates. In future years, the Canadian population is projected to increase more from migratory growth than from natural growth. Furthermore, compared to the large center cities—Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver—the immigrant and pluralistic issue has been raising in outside of these areas (King, 2009). As the small and mid-sized communities are under the more risk of population decrease and economy decline than the large cities, the immigrant factors is becoming a significant consideration involving in these areas (Bryant & Joseph, 2001; Kurtz, 2015).

This demographic change is also reflected in other aspects of Canadian society, especially its linguistic diversity. Take the province of BC for example: in 2001 more than 75% of British Columbians reported English as their mother tongue; it became 71%

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in 2006, then in 2011 the number was about 70.3% (Census of Canada, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2011). The multicultural trend brings larger challenges when it comes to dealing with social issues in many dimensions.

2.1.2. The Definition of Multiculturalism City

Multiculturalism is a complex and abstract concept, which encompasses multiple meanings and perspectives, it can be “a philosophy of the nation and nationhood, a set of public policies, and a demographic reality in many countries and cities in which ethnic and racialized variations exist in the population” (Fincher, Iveson, Leitner & Preston, 2014, p.3). Berry, Kalin and Taylor (1977) state that multiculturalism mainly includes two aspects: the ethno-cultural diversity and the participation situation of different ethnical groups in a society. In a harmonious multicultural society, both the cultural diversity and equitable participation is indispensable, otherwise, it will result in cultural segregation or assimilation. Berry (2016) states that multiculturalism also can be defined in three dimensions: it can be understood in demographic composition, which is always as a physical foundation of the existence of multiculturalism; and to some extent, it implicates most countries have the plural culture at present. Also, multiculturalism refers to a policy consideration focusing on managing multicultural-group relations and cultural integration. Furthermore, multiculturalism can be reflected in psychological aspects, such as the identity of individuals and the public’s attitudes towards the multiculturalism issue (accept or disallow).

Depending on the concept of multiculturalism, multicultural city or Cosmopolis city, with reference to Sandercock (1998) is an important reflection of multiculturalism both from the physical and psychological aspect. A multicultural city is a place to “learn to live positively with cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity” (as cited in Vandenabeele, 2012); it can be defined by six features (Qadeer, 2016):
“(1) an ethno-racially diverse population; (2) a regime of civil/human rights that enacts cultural and religious freedom...(3) an institutionalized common ground of basic societal values, ideologies, constitution and laws, norms, moral codes, and official language(s) as well as shared space and service;(4) reasonable accommodations of cultural differences that make public institution pluralistic and inclusive; (5) a harmonization of differences and reconstruction of mainstream institutions to promote shared citizenship, a sense of belonging...; and (6) a changing subculture and common ground through diffusion of influence from one to the other” (p.266).

The multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multiple is or will be one of the important characteristics of modern cities (Sandercock, 1998); a multicultural city is indeed a place to embody and interpret the conflict and integration of different cultures.

The diversity of cultures and lifestyles can be seen as a driving force in modern cities’ development, which brings vitality rather than threat in many dimensions, like an expected vision mentioned by Sandercock (1998): the postmodern utopian city would be a kind of cosmopolis in which exists more development opportunities; it needs the cooperative efforts among all ethnical groups in a diversity and harmonious society.

2.1.3. Multicultural Policies

- **Two multicultural model: “melting pot” and “mosaic”**

There are many types of policies to dealing with the immigrating culture, generally the multicultural policies have are two styles: one is a melting pot model, which means one mainstream group dominates in society, and other minority groups exist in marginal positions until they are assimilated into the major culture (the USA is an example). The other multicultural style is a mosaic model, in which the social institution is regarded as a “larger society”, trying to accommodate all difference of ethnical groups, regard their culture, interests and other rights equally; and “all ethno-cultural groups (dominant and non-dominant, indigenous and immigrant) attempt to
carry out their lives together” (Berry, 2011, p.6). Canada is one of the important representatives of this multicultural vision.

It is difficult to say which model is better, these two models are formed by specific developmental conditions in different countries; the influence of different cultures is bidirectional in these both models. According to Berry (2011), an obvious difference between the two models is that the former focuses on assimilation into dominant culture, while the latter emphasizes mutual negotiation; to some degree, it ideally facilitates cultural diversity in the acculturation process. Actually no any country is fully in line with one of these models.

- **Canadian multiculturalism policies**

In the past, multiculturalism was always regarded as a detriment to social integrity, and the earlier policies tended to assimilate or marginalize the Native people, minorities, and immigrants. But today, with the increasing globalization and democratization, current policies have shifted to accept more diversity. Generally, there are three development periods of related policies on the federal level:

- **Earlier phase (Pre-1971)**

This step can be described a period in which ethnic diversity was accepted legitimately by degrees. Racial difference was still deemed a threat to most government policy at the time; however, a set of events and movements in the 1960s (such as Quebecois nationalism) provide early preparation for the following multicultural policy (Dewing, 2013).

- **Formative phase (1971-1981)**

The first Multiculturalism Policy in 1971 can be seen as a mark of the related policy shift. According to Esses and Gardner (1996), Canada’s first official
Multiculturalism Policy "Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework" was announced by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1971. It was in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which was appointed to facilitate an equal partnership of the British-French and other ethnic groups in 1963. Following the Official Languages Act (1969) emphasizing on French equality, this policy focuses on non-French and non-English groups, intends to provide support for all Canadians' cultural freedom and to build the consensus of broader ethnic groups to contribute to Canadian society:

This policy emphasizes integration than assimilation. There are three key points: from cultural aspects, this policy supports keep the diversity of language and cultural heritage, which can be shared among all ethnical groups. From social aspects, it encourages communications of ethno-cultural groups in the daily time to enhance mutual understanding and intercultural relations, and supports positive intergroup attitudes. The third point, this policy emphasizes it is necessary to learn a common language to improve the communication among all groups (Berry, 2011).

On the other hand, a set of related policies and programs are carried out. “Equality through the removal of racially discriminatory barrier” and “encouraging...cultural minority groups fully participate in Canadian society” became their core issue (Dewing, 2013, p3). At the same time, in order to implement and monitor them, Multicultural Directorate (in 1972) and Ministry of Multicultural (in 1973) were built successively.

➤ **Institutionalization phase (1982-Present):**

In this phase, multicultural policies have been improving gradually. As facing difficulties when dealing with the multicultural issue, policy makers shift their focus on institutional adjustment for integrating diversity, especially the increasing new immigrant issue; on the other hand, the government introduces many anti-
discrimination programs to reduce the separation between the minorities and mainstream groups (Dewing, 2013).

The "Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism in Canada" in 1988 is an act further improves the related policy. According to Esses and Gardner (1996), it includes: “recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada's future;...advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada” and so on. Also, it states some measures about policy implementing.

In 2011, the Canadian Federal government emphasized the intercultural integration is bidirectional; both new immigrants and earlier settlers’ communities have obligations to support this integrating process (Berry, 2011).

Generally, these policies’ principle is to enhance intercultural relations among all ethnical groups and to let “all groups and individuals have a place, both within their own heritage environment and within the larger society” (Berry, 2011, p.8). Ideally, in this “mosaic” policy framework, every social member and group contribute to social multiculturalism, which emphasizes the coexistence and equity of diverse culture rather than the assimilation of dominant groups.

- **Multiculturalism policy index**

Recently there are two important indexes about analyzing and quantifying multiculturalism policies: one is the Multicultural Policy Index, which is “a scholarly research project that monitors the evolution of multiculturalism policies in 21 Western democracies” (Banting & Kymlicka, 2006–2012), it mainly provides three types of minorities index: immigrant groups, historic national minorities, and indigenous
people; and it has nine criteria to evaluate the promotion of related policies (such as funding for cultural organizations); the other index is the Migrant Integration Policy Index. It is based on a set of migrant integration indicators to assess the related policy-making and implementation (MIPEX, 2010). These policy indexes and supporting documentations provide a way to assess multicultural policies and resulting effects.

- **Multicultural Attitudes**

  The multicultural attitudes also become more positive, according to Dewing (2013), the proportion of people regarding multiculturalism as an important symbol of Canadian identity increased from 37% in 1997 to 56% in 2010; and the people who think the immigration level is too high decreased from 61% in 1977 to 38% in 2011.

**Conclusion:**

The multicultural issues in Canada are very important. Firstly, Canada is a high plural society. Secondly, recent decades have seen a constant change of ethnical composition in Canada, especially, the proportion of immigrants from different countries has been changing; this trend will continue in the next decade. Thirdly, under the “mosaic” multiculturalism policy frame, Canada encourages keep cultural diversity rather than merge them into one dominating culture, which is a difficult mission to maintain the differences of all groups’ culture and value while reducing the culture conflict within a national common ground.

**2.1.4. The Rise, Limitation and Introspection**

Multicultural theories have to balance between integrating the mainstream and keeping the diversity. In the 20th century, the change of power of the different ethnical groups (such as the number of minority immigrant descendents increasing) leads to the multicultural issue get attention, many multicultural policies changed
from the “melting pot” to “mosaic” style (Burayidi, 2015). To some extent, economic, social and cultural power influences the selection of multicultural modes. However, in the early of 21st century, the inadequate fragmentation of the population from the approach has led many regions to rethink this viewpoint (Burayidi, 2015). For example, “multiculturalism in Germany has failed” mentioned by German Chancellor Merkel (as cited in Fincher et al., 2014). One of the problems reflected in multicultural policy is too general and lack of concrete and effective methods: the “old approaches to the management of cultural diversity were no longer adequate” (Council of Europe, 2008, p.9), the more approach should be explored. These flaws do not mean to totally repudiate multiculturalism (Fincher et al., 2014), but improving multiculturalism with a more tangible method should be considered.

There are some critical views about multiculturalism: some critics argue that encouraging the minorities’ own cultural identities will separates them from major cultural people; on the other hand, it will let minorities in a subordinate identity (Koopmans, 2010). Other critical view is about the difficulty of policy implementation (Fincher et al., 2014).

2.2. The Multiculturalism in City Planning

2.2.1. The Growing Multicultural Problem in City Planning

From the beginning of modern city planning, the issue of multiculturalism cannot be separated from addressing the social problems: poverty, slums, and affordable housing issues (Hall, 2002). However, most of the modern planning practice focus on the physical planning--from the early “utopian plans” including Howard’s Garden city, Corbusier’s technical planning, to city beautification projects. Later modernist planning emphasizes the rationality, technocratic premise, comprehensiveness, economic dominance, “big blueprint” and state-directed aspects
of cities; however, to some degree, they ignore the social concern and the real needs of people (Jacobs, 1961; Sandercock, 1998). In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jacobs emphasized on the interactivity and diversity of the urban population’s behaviour and specific social context. She believed the function of cities was complicated, and that it is inadvisable to use a simple model to understand the city. Sandercock (1998) emphasized that the feminism, race, and homelessness issues do not get enough attention in modern planning. The postwar demographic change brought by the increasing immigrant population aggravates the introspection of modernist planning practice (Sandercock, 1998; Qadeer, 1997; Burayidi, 2003). There were some “conceptual roots” of the multicultural planning in the early 1900s: contact theory, the culture of poverty, and neighbourhood planning and social capital, and so on (Fincher et al., 2014, p.4), but these have been poorly explored in planning as a profession or theoretical pursuit.

According to Filion (1999), the shift from the modern to the postmodern planning is in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The postmodern planning focuses on the pluralist than universalism planning, the broader democratic and social inclusive process. “The multicultural conception of citizenship recognizes ethnic diversity and allows participants to embody their ethno-cultural traditions and values even as they participate in the public sphere as equal democratic citizens” (Burayid, 2003, p.261). One important planning theory is Davidoff’s advocacy theory (Davidoff, 1967). Davidoff believes that multicultural planning needs highly citizens’ involvement and the broader equality.

However, there is also some confusion and challenges in multicultural planning. Although many researchers address pluralist planning, the planners still have no clear responsibility requirements in practice (Hardwood, 2005; Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011). In reality, it is not easy to “disentangle a specific planning policy” facing multicultural issue; it is also reflected on making the built environment to improve the community
harmony (Fincher et al., 2014). Sandercock (2000) mentioned there is a kind of fears for the difference, the other ethnic groups, that makes more obstacles in planning practice. Another challenge is from the growing ethnic diversity of small and mid-sized cities (Kurtz, 2015), and so on.

Lastly, there are two key principles about the multicultural planning: the right to keep diversity and equality (Qadeer, 1997). According to Kurtz (2015), “the ‘dominant culture’, aboriginal groups, and all other minority cultural groups within the community have equal opportunity in the planning and management of the built environment” (p.29).

2.2.2. The General Effect of Multiculturalism on Planning

• Policy Amendment

The growing multicultural issues stimulate the amendment of planning policies and regulations to accommodate multiculturalism in accord with the related social values and goals (Qadeer, 1997). Planning tools such as official community plans, zoning bylaws, and some provincial government laws like the Community Charter and Local Government Act, should be made to accommodate the needs of diverse groups both in process and substantive aspects. Qadeer (2009) pointed out it should be considered from “policies of historic preservation, urban design, commercial development, neighborhood and housing, signage, public transportation and parking” (as cited in Kurtz, 2015, p.16) perspectives as well.

• The Extension of Planning Practice

Multiculturalism should be reflected in planning processes: ethnical and cultural elements must become an important category to assess planning goals, and planners should pay more attention to the different needs of ethnical groups in their
research, especially in the minority communities. Furthermore, the public participation should consider more multicultural factors in planning scope and procedures, the more planning technique need to be explored (Qadeer, 1997).

• The Planners’ Role & Public Interest

The consequences from ill-considered decisions result in misallocation, failure of opportunity, and waste of resources, especially in the planners’ world. Planners is responsible to the city development, thus, one important role of the planners is monitoring and evaluating the cities’ change timely (Seasons, 2003) and clearly know the outcomes and influences of the planning interventions (Murtagh, 1998). Especially for different development step, what is the most effective and resource-saved way to address this issue?

With an increasing focus on multicultural issues, planners ought to keep it as an important consideration factor in the whole planning process; and they should focus on reducing discrimination in important planning processes such as land use, housing programs, and public services and so on. Whether it should hold an important planning role, however, it is still an ambiguous concept, Kurtz (2015) finds there are two reasons: there is no a defined and unified interpretation in high level policy and the current planning practice still do not take account of this issue. She suggests policy/standard amendments should more deeply consider in terms of planning the role both from government and planning organizations such as CIP.

Furthermore, in terms of planning ethics, the multicultural issue expands the definition of the public interest (Qadeer, 1997). If the public interest means “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” (Campbell & Marshall, 1999), how should planning address the right of marginal groups and equity issues? Davidoff (1965) considered that the effective multicultural planning can improve democracy, which
should respond to the requirements of people of different races, classes, genders, and cultures (Qadeer, 1997; Sandercock, 1998).

### 2.2.3. Different Aspects of the Multicultural Planning

- **Ethnic Commercial Area Arrangement**

  Although multicultural policies and programs have been improving in recent years, there is still an obvious lack of planning legislations and related policies to support planning department directly and proactively when intervening in ethnic commercial development (Zhuang, 2013). Many cases reflect the passiveness of planners confronting ethnic commercial developments. Based on these considerations, related multicultural policies should provide planners a more active condition in multicultural planning; especially, ethnic business characters sensitively respond the change of demographic composition, planners should pay more attention to this shift.

- **Private Space: Housing Issue**

  Housing choice is one of the most important issues in multicultural planning (Qadeer, 1997; Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005; Rapoport, 2000), especially in a pluralistic community, various ethnical groups with their own cultures and lifestyles have different housing needs including dwelling size, layout, construction materials and community facilities. For example, Asian-Canadians are more likely to prefer multi-generational families, but North American home often prefer the nuclear family; the Caucasians have strong needs of landscaping and gardens (Qadeer, 1997), while the Chinese focus on the philosophy of Feng Shui and building direction (Rapoport, 2000). Although the financial situations influence housing choice (Kurtz, 2015), cultural preferences are a non-negligible consideration of the different groups.
Housing issues also involves considerations about overall urban layout, traffic arrangement, and the whole architectural character unity. According to Uyesugi and Shipley (2005), in order to select proper sites to develop traditional Chinese courtyard housing, planners need to coordinate all the influencing factors and cope with different relationships. As a result, the related planning policies and zoning bylaw should fully consider the multicultural preferences and “integrate diverse architectural and functional elements into coherent local and regional idioms” (Qadeer, 1997, p.491). There is a counterexample in 1980s: the “Monster Homes” in Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy, Vancouver (Qadeer, 1997). Although the new houses, which were developed by immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan, fully complied with local regulations, they did not fit the form and character of the historic neighbourhoods on the west side of Vancouver and as such created negative sentiments among existing local residents due to the aesthetic impacts on the local landscape.

- **Public Space: Religion Building, Park, Signage**

Many multicultural cases more or less involve the consideration of public space design. Public spaces accommodating multiculturalism need to consider about corresponding use function, such as multicultural commercial activity, and psychology need including safety sense, the familiarity feeling, and happiness; these factors can be embodied in improving "multilingual signage to ensure equal access, culturally sensitive services and design guidelines for built forms and aesthetics that are both diverse and harmonious" (Qadeer, 1997, p.490). In implementation process, city planners need to adjust the related regulations and standards to meet construction requirements, especially for religious buildings, parks for different user, and the multilingual signage (Kurtz, 2015). This topic with public place design will further explain in the following section.
• **Improving Community Services and Social Institutions**

Improving neighborhood services and social mechanisms is also important aspects to achieve increasing multicultural needs. As adding new festival, sport, food, art, ethno-cultural groups also brings rich public life. Though not all the community members can participate in specific cultural activities, especially some religious activities, planners can integrate new cultural characteristic elements into local culture to improve community’s vitality. They also should consider how to distribute equitably public funds for different cultural programs; moreover, community services should consider multicultural outreach strategy such as intercultural contact, extensive translations. Finally, it is necessary to form a planning mechanism to accommodate multicultural services in city planning (Qadeer, 1997).

• **Other**

Qadeer (1997) introduced a “ladder” of planning principles to support multiculturalism. It still works and provides guidance for today’s multicultural planning. One or more of these planning methods are highlighted in some multicultural planning:

“1-Facilitating access by diverse communities to the planning department; 2- Inclusionary Planning Process-participation by and representation of multicultural groups on planning committees; 3-Accommodation of diverse needs through amendments and exceptions, case by case; 4-Special District designation for ethnic neighborhoods and business enclaves; 5-Provision of specific public facilities and services for ethnic communities; 6-Cultural and racial differences reflected in planning policies and acknowledged as bases for equitable treatment; 7-A multicultural vision of the development strategy for a city or region”(p.492).

Finally, the multicultural character is dynamic with multiple reasons including demographic composition change, it is necessary for planners to monitor and proactively consider this issue in different contexts (Qadeer, 1997).
2.3. The Multiculturalism and Public Place-Making

2.3.1. The City Culture & Public Place-Making

Beyond the physical function, public places are a link to a city’s culture as it unfolds over time: just go back to see the beginning function of the public space, in an historical Roman city: civic cultural sites are an important part of the using function of the public space (Amin, 2008). In the view of city planning, the exploration between the urban culture and urban public space “draws on a long lineage of thought including the classical Greek philosophers, theorists of urban modernity such as Benjamin, Simmel, Mumford, Lefebvre and Jacobs, and contemporary urban visionaries such as Sennett, Sandercock and Zukin” (Amin, 2008, p.6).

However, social and cultural needs are generally not practically considered in the early modern public place-making principles. From the City Beautiful Movement to technique planning, place making is an important part to improve the quality of life, and there are many theories to improve the space from different aspects. However, what should be the aim of public place making? Taking an example from the City Beautiful Movement in the twentieth century, which “was a total concentration on the monumental and on the superficial......most complete lack of interest in the wider social purposes of planning”(Hall, 2002, p.236).

Plenty of the failure of physically planning letting the place making consider more factors than simple aesthetics: Jane Jacobs (1961) provided a concept of “Eyes on the street”; Ian McHarg (1969) emphasizes the natural factor in planning in his book of Design with Nature; Kevin Lynch explores seven principles to define environment quality: vitality, sense, fit access, control, efficiency, and justice (as cited in Von Hausen 2013). All of these emphasize to incorporate functional requirement both from physical and psychological aspects in place making process. Namely, place
design needs to consider both physical and social aspects; especially some non-measurable elements should get more attention. For example, the method of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) became an important method to increase the sense of security in the 1990s; this kind of design consideration to a great extent meets the social need. As one important consideration, the cultural factor in public place making not only helps to enhance the city’s landscape features, improve the attraction, but it helps to shape the civic culture (Amin, 2008). Could multicultural considerations be included as an additional element or explicitly included into the place making principles as is CPTED or Design with Nature approaches?

In recent decades, with more social needs requiring consideration in city spaces, especially facing the increasingly multicultural issue, is it possible that multicultural considerations could be integrated into these physical design principles or become a new principle? How can this issue be developed into a separate and specific practice? This research focuses on two perspectives studies—the place attachment theory and the exploration in community level or daily life—as means of including multiculturalism into the planning landscape.

2.3.2. Place Attachment & the Cross-Culture Influences

The exploration of the relationship between people and place has gained prominence over the more superficial study of use functions in public spaces. Current research suggests that place can provide a link to people’s experiences, emotion and the physical environments, and it reflects a dynamic process: human beings and their environments, places and identities are mutually constructed and constituted (Harvey, 2001; Conver, Corsane, & Davis, 2012). To this, “Place Attachment Theory” describes this link as an emotional bond of individuals or groups and environments (Low & Altman, 1992). “Places develop symbolic meanings and cultural importance beyond that of their physical appearance or function, and that this attachment is shaped by an
individual’s own life experiences” (Rishbeth, 2001, p.353). The place attachment considers the childhood landscape experience is an important factor shaping people’s cultural identity (Morgan, 2010), especially the people with different cultural backgrounds (Brierley-Newell, 1997).

From the aspect of the place attachment, there are increasing studies focusing on the immigrant issue and the cross-culture influences: some studies show immigrants preferring their living position to large extent by their own cultural experiences (Lyons, 1983; Orland, 1988). Rishbeth (2001, p.364) explored the relationship between the minority groups and public place design in British context, and suggested the public open space management should “respond to ethnic minority users, ranging from the subtle to the obvious” and landscape design incorporating the dynamic and multicultural elements can enrich the all groups’ experience and create new ideas; he also emphasized the importance of the green space experience and inclusive parks design.

In addition, due to place attachment theory evolving mainly from environmental psychology, it focuses on the individual cultural experience rather than the large scale. In a recent study, Manzo and Perkins (2006) explored the place attachment in a community context, and suggested that there is a proper “person-environment transactions” can improve the “community social cohesion, organized participation, and community development”.

**2.3.3. Multicultural Encounter in Daily Place**

Recently, the diverse cultural studies are focused the multicultural experience in daily place. Different from the community cohesion building, Amin (2002) focused on the “negotiation of difference”, which “occurs at the very local level, through everyday experiences.”
Fincher and Iveson (2008) addressed it by enhancing intercultural encounter in public spaces; particularly they focus on proving the more opportunities to share cultural activities, like multicultural festivals. Many local governments support the multicultural festivals, “hoping such festivals promotes greater tolerance and understanding of ethnic minority communities and cross-cultural understanding” (Fincher et al., 2014) Research in Australia finds the multicultural festivals often are regarded as the good action by governments dealing with the intercultural relations (Dunn, Hanna, et al., 2001; Dunn, Thompson, et al., 2001). However, there are still many limitations: they focus on good apparent effect and commercialization rather than genuinely authentic ethnical culture. Fincher et al. (2014) provide some three suggestions: flexibility, the proper location, and less formal.

Furthermore, beyond the multicultural activities, is the “everyday multiculturalism” (Wise & Velayutham, 2009) that can be put into daily services, facility and accessible place, such as the street, public transit, the library, the park and so on. Just as Amin (2008, p.6) mentioned “public space, if organized properly, offers the potential for social communion by allowing us to lift our gaze from the daily grind, and as a result, increase our disposition towards the other.”

2.4. Practical Cases

2.4.1. Case selection Rule

As multicultural issues are complex and abstract, this paper focuses on conducting a multiple-case study to explore multicultural planning; this method is relatively easier to examine and generalize across various dimensions (Gagnon & Canadian Electronic Library (Firm), 2010; 2000). Choosing cases in this research is based on following considerations: The multicultural programs/activities, serving immigrants as an important factor of multiculturalism; cultural diversity is easy to
observe in some places with high ethnical economic vitality; and the case serves as an example of mosaic multiculturalism.

2.4.2. Cases

- **Vancouver’s Community Visions Program**

  Vancouver’s Community Visions Program mainly uses an approach of community visioning, “which contain[s] policy directions on topics including new housing types, shopping areas, traffic and transportation, and safety and services”, to make a set of community-level development plans based on an extensive public involvement (Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005, P307). This program examines multicultural planning both from the participation of ethno-cultural groups and related physical planning.

  According to Uyesugi & Shipley (2005), “One indicator of multicultural planning is the extent to which the typically marginalized voices of ethno-cultural groups are manifested in policy. A second indicator may be the tangible results, witnessed on the ground as land use change, of planning policies and programs” (p.310). On the one hand, in a planning process, Community Visions Program encourages ethno-cultural groups to join in public participation, which creates more communicating opportunities among different groups. On the other hand, in the planning outcome, it adjusts related policy and bylaw depending on the research and discussion of local hot issues such as ethnical housing style; and it improves multicultural outreach strategy such as diverse language service.

- **“Highway to Heaven”— A Multicultural Religion Place**

  “Highway to Heaven” is a three-kilometre stretch area of the Number Five highway, in the eastern suburb of Richmond, Vancouver, which gathers more than 20
different religious buildings. City planning in this place needs to consider many different factors: suburban land use, multiculturalism, religion, and immigration.

Ideally, due to the concentrated accommodation of diverse cultures in land use and public space planning, generally, this creative practice is regarded as a successful example of multicultural planning. But actually there are also limitations. According to Dwyer, Tse and Ley (2016), this designation of religious buildings on the city’s edge is used to control farm land uses urban sprawl; this mix of many religious cannot easily meet the needs of religious groups themselves (some critics mention it is too commercial); it is difficult to respond the dynamic of multicultural issue depending on the change of demographic composition timely; to some extent it leads to the lack of integrated landscape. All the advantages and disadvantages in this case can be valued lessons for other multicultural planning, especially in land use arrangements.

Figure 4 Map of No.5 Road, Richmond, Vancouver

4 Source: Dwyer, Tse & Ley, 2016
• Agincourt’s Chinese Mall in Toronto

Agincourt is a community in incorporated suburb, Scarborough, Toronto. In 1983 there was a proposal about changing a roller-skating rink into a Chinese shopping mall called “Dragon Centre”. To some extent due to the ethnic issue, the community and local officials objected that plan and explained the reason is about design; but at last the mall was approved with modifications of the parking lot and restaurant arrangement. Following this shopping centre, other eleven malls or commercial complexes were developed; most of them contain Chinese businesses. These designs mostly depend on city guidelines with not much distinctive Chinese style (only signage and decorative character).

One of the core issues in this case is that some big scale restaurants are designed as anchors, which raises concerns about parking problems and congestion by residents. Facing this conflict, planners and related departments took a neutral attitude to all groups. On the one hand, they supported improve development in real estate market; on the other hand, they focused on site layout design to meet the community’s requirement and tried to balance the community’s stability and development. Additionally, through a set of forums, repeated site design and zoning

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5 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62z1QZ6uzAY
adjustment, it provided an intercultural understanding platform and gradually facilitated to achieve a consensus among different groups (Qadeer, 1997).
Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1. Research Methodology & Research Design

This research takes a transformative worldview, which focuses on the experiences of diverse groups that have been marginalized; the research design considers a collaborative and change-oriented thinking (Creswell, 2014).

Multiculturalism is an interdisciplinary issue; it is always reflected in specific groups and varies largely based on specific conditions in any place. This research uses an interpretive approach and qualitative methods, which focuses on understanding a phenomenon through seeking empirical support to understand the visibility of multiculturalism in public space.

This qualitative research uses inductive approach, and the research methodology focuses on a qualitative case study. The research collected and analyzed primary data through selecting representative individuals or key stakeholders in relevant aspects rather than a wider range of random selection--it is effective to focus on an in-depth communication of a specific group including related professionals in terms of multicultural issues. In addition, given that Nanaimo is not of a sufficient size or differentiation to provide a research field site, this research analyzed other supplementary cases. Furthermore, this research combined the data both from the views of informants and the observations of the interviewer in a collaborative way.

The qualitative research is suited to address a complex issue, which requires the consideration of multiple sources of data rather than rely on a single data source. Therefore, the design of this research has multiple methods: documenting data from literature and government report; summarizing the experiences and limitations from previous cases (secondary resource); observing the specific study object and
conducting depth interviews with open-ended questions (primary resource); consulting experts advice and collecting the feedback to continuously adjust the details of research design including research questions; and using text and image analysis.

In order to obtain data in Nanaimo, this research used open-ended questions and asked representatives from the government, planning department, organizations, and representatives of related community members for their responses. These questions contained three aspects: the understanding of multiculturalism; the need for multicultural activities and services; and the requirement of physical space accommodating cross-cultural interaction (especially the public space). These questions were designed in a flexible frame which let researcher easily start to dialogue in specific conditions and make interviewees on track; at the same time, the questions were intended to encourage participants to feel easy to express their views, attitudes and observations, making an effective way to gather and analyze data (see Appendix C and D).

3.2. Research Ethics Issue

This research uses interviews to collect related data in Nanaimo, which may bring some impact on communities and interviewees; thus this research considered the ethics issue and reduced the possible influence (see the Appendix A and B).

3.3. Data Collecting Methods

The research questions are as follows:
1. How can “harmonious multiculturalism” be measured, what is the description of the ideal multicultural city, and opinions about proper multiculturalism policy?

- This research completed a literature review to seek the description of the ideal multicultural city and to summarize general characters of “harmonious multiculturalism”. Given that multiculturalism has a close link to related policy, and this research used a macro-perspective to review policy documents and literature to study the evolution of multiculturalism policy, the related theory, and influences; additionally, through studying the history and current condition of multiculturalism, the research discussed the actual value of this research.

2. Is there a relationship between public spaces, physical planning, and harmonious multiculturalism? And are there some practical experience and lessons in related planning?

- This research used literature review and cases study to answer this question. This research collected related literature about multiculturalism in community planning to find the requirement of multicultural activities and related planning, seeking how the physical space accommodating the multicultural issues (such as the functional need of different groups). Considering there is probably some gap in this field, this research summarized both valued experiences and failed examples (the cases includes Vancouver communities, a mixed multicultural religion place in the suburb of Richmond, and so on).In addition, this research explored place-making and site design principle in the literature review to further understand the relationship between public spaces planning and multiculturalism (such as the place design’s psychological needs).
3. In Nanaimo history, how have multicultural issues shaped this city? Can it be reflected in specific spaces, and is there a trend to diversity in future?

- On the one hand, the research reviewed the literature and report of Nanaimo’s development and population data to answer this question: on the other hand, the research further understood this issue through the interviews.

4. What is the current situation of cross-cultural communication in Nanaimo including cultural activities and related facilities; what are the actual lacks or demand accommodating cross-cultural activities in public space (such as how to attract different groups gather and easily access to intercultural communication)?

- This research mainly used depth interviews to answer this question (reading Nanaimo’s cultural planning policy as a supplement). This research conducted interviews with key stakeholders to understand the current actual intercultural communicating needs. And finally, the interviews included the following groups: government or planning department representatives, and related organization and community representatives.

**Interview List:**

- Official Community Plan Advisory Committee:
  - Culture and heritage department;
  - Social Planning and Advisory Commission;
  - And so on.
- Island Health
- Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society
- Cultural activity and related organizations
- Vancouver Island University (VIU)
 Ethnic minorities’ communities (through inform interview/talk style)

The research approaches: Face-to-face, telephone, and email (the effective interviews are 12).

5. How can better public spaces lead to increased harmony among multicultural groups in Nanaimo? And is there effective method and predictive model that can be provided?

- This research analyzed related data, then provided some “vision” images at a concept design level, and tried to make recommendations for better shared public spaces leading to enhance the harmony among all groups. In addition, this research consulted experts’ advice and made adjustment in the design process.

3.4. Data Analyzing Methods

There are two parts to the data analysis:

- Data from literature including planning cases and theories (secondary data): firstly, this research chose the most relevant literature and documents, and then summarized the related planning theories, planning techniques and limitations in selected planning cases. This research used Microsoft Word to code these selected data. These data served as “external theory” to provide support to following interview investigation.

- Data from interviews (primary data): this research collected raw data from in-depth interviews and then sorted and classified the information Microsoft Word and Excel to organize and categorize data for analysis. A coding process identified patterns and outliers, and the data were
interpreted through the presentation of precedent images (using Photoshop or other related software).

3.5. Feasibility

This research considers the following on the feasibility of data collection and analysis:

Accessibility of data: the major data collection is in Nanaimo and do not require long distance traveling. The primary data collection techniques are face-to-face interviews in Nanaimo, with the possible use of email or telephone when a face to face meeting is not possible.

Cost factor: Due to no long distance traveling in this research, the research cost is low including printing fees and traffic fees.

Time factor: A proper timetable is needed, from May to September in 2017 the research focused on literature review and completing the interviews; the data analysis and design started after September in 2017. The completion of drafts and conclusions followed. The time period allows for possible adjustments to the research, delays provided by difficult to schedule interviews, and other unpredictable problems.

3.6. Scope & Limitations

Due to the complexity of multicultural issues, and the limitation of time, this research focuses on a qualitative method that limits the interviews to those that represent an agency or group.

This research method requires that the scope of the interview be broad, not just the profession participants but for each of the groups or agencies. This recognizes
that although multiculturalism is a common topic, it is also a kind of “wicked problem” that is not necessarily easy to discuss or resolve. People who have much related experience may find that they have no idea about specific aspects of the issue, how it may be considered by other groups, or how it could be improved. The questions remain general to ensure that the respondents have the widest possible leeway in their responses.

There is other limitation is the researcher’s knowledge background. As an international student, the researcher’s language and identity will shape the interview process. It is more convenient for the researcher to consider respondents from the researcher’s nation, ethnic, or language group. To address this, the researcher is considering multiple case studies, and interviewing subjects based on their employment capacity. This will result in the inclusion of a wide variety of interview subjects from across a range of backgrounds.
Chapter 4 Finding and Results

This chapter focuses on the former four research questions. Through summarizing the relevant literatures and observing practical cases in the different aspects of multiculturalism, this chapter firstly explores the general understand of harmonious multiculturalism and its relation with the public place. Secondly, mainly based on the interviews from Nanaimo’s multicultural participators, the chapter then studies Nanaimo’s multicultural history and current status to provide practical foundation for the research.

4.1. The Harmonious Multiculturalism

4.1.1. Multiculturalism: the Continuous Exploration of a “Wicked Problem”

Pluralism is not a new emerging issue but it indeed recurs frequently, whether its advocators or the discommenders, many of them have to admit, to some extent, sometimes it is not easy to directly deal with this issue in real world. One key reason that is diversity itself can bring conflict. An additional issue is that values are not easily compromised, and a third is that it is relatively easy to create misunderstandings between different groups through unaware negligence. The conflicts created by multiculturalism and diversification could be regarded as wicked problems: these problems are not like mathematical problems – the “tame problems” – instead the “wicked problems” are too complex to address in practices and there is no opportunity to use “trial-and-error way” such kind of scientific methods to deal with (Horst and Webber, 1973).

Considering the nature of wicked problems, if there is no basis of actual condition, it is easier to lead to meaningless and fruitless efforts, consequently, it is
almost impossible to find the definite universal standard for solving plural issues applied in any context. But even so, the exploration of this question has not stopped, especially in recent decades facing an increasing pluralism in globalization process, different disciplines from the study of philosophical theories to specific multicultural policies including immigration issue are exploring this issue (Fincher et al., 2014).

In city planning, multicultural issues have long been a consideration. Modern planning arose from western modernism ideology, which emphasized the rationality, scientism, state-directed and “big blueprint”; many scholars condemn this “utopian plan” because it to large degree was divorced from real social need (Jacobs, 1961; Sandercock, 1998). One of the tipping points between modern planning and postmodern planning is the focus of the pluralist, the broader democratic participation and social concerns (Burayid, 2003). In fact, with the exploring the pluralist, city planning discipline itself has been improving constantly.

4.1.2. The Need of Harmony Raised from “Separating Multiculturalism”

In the early of 21st century, ethnic population fragmentation led many regions to question the multiculturalism viewpoint. Some condemn that it let the minorities separated from the majority culture; others argue that it makes minorities take on subordinate identities (Koopmans, 2010). Others suggest that multicultural policies are often too general and lack of concrete and effective methods to actually promote positive change. These flaws do not mean to deny multiculturalism (Fincher et al., 2014), but instead question how to improve multiculturalism in a more proactive and productive way that results in greater harmony among all groups and individuals.
4.1.3. The Understanding of Harmonious Multiculturalism

At the outset, this research contends that there must be practices and processes that lead to greater harmonious multiculturalism. Finding these practices and processes is the focus of this research. We start with the definition of Harmonious: “Harmonious” is made by “agreement in feeling, attitude, or action”; “forming a pleasingly consistent whole”; “congruous”, and so on. It always reflects a period of relatively stable condition of “reconciliation”. Perhaps it reflects a kind of balance—needing a longer period cultural accumulation, instead of the drastic change. In fact, the conflict, fusion, and multicultural aspects have co-existed from the beginning of cities: in essence they form the very definition of “integration”. But different means of addressing this integration has created very different results. For example, the “forced integration”: the residential schools for Indigenous people in Canada are an obvious example for enforcing integration, which brought terrible consequences. Thus, this research emphasizes the method, the multiculturalism should try to implement in a gradually harmonious way. It is not against pluralism but instead allows time for cultural foundations to form and develop. There is some general thinking on this topic:

- **1) Diverse does not mean separate.**

  On the contrary, it emphasizes achieving a consensus in general common ground (maybe in a country, a city, a community...in different style depending on specific circumstance)

- **2) Positive but not aggressive.**

  Building a positive atmosphere is seen as a necessary foundation that allows for later specific implementation that may require more assertive actions.
3) Focus on “Processing”.

Harmonious multicultural emphasises the process. Due to it always reflected in a couple of generations, it is impossible to solve these problems all at once, or once and for all.

Multiculturalism is far more complicated than mono-cultural considerations. The "multiculturalism" may be regarded as a kind of culture, also can be seen as a changeable fusion process, such as the cultural development in Chinese history: it could be said as an integrating process of different ethnical groups, through long time integration, as a “result”, it still keeps some degree diversity, but it is not easy to say the obvious boundaries of different ethnic culture. The shared historical experience probably can provide a vessel to realize a kind of harmonious multiculturalism.

4.2. The Relationship between Multicultural Practice and Public Space Shaping

4.2.1. Place Making addressing Multicultural Issue

The multicultural factors both affect the city’s private space and public space (Kurtz, 2015). In the private space, housing preference is an important aspect. The different ethnical groups build their home to a large extent based on their own cultural background (Qadeer, 1997; Rapoport, 2001; Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005). The multicultural factor is increasingly taken account in to the urban public space: the religion building, park, multilingual signage, which gradually affecting the whole city landscape (Qadeer, 1997; Kurtz, 2015).

Beyond the physical appearance and foundation function, the public place provides an approach to address multicultural issue: the civic cultural inculcation
(Amin, 2008). With the more social needs are considered into the city planning (Jacobs 1961; Sandercock, 1998), the public place making has also been assigned more social issue concerns and design principles. One important mission is to help to enhance the city’s culture character and even help to shape the whole city cultural atmosphere, especially the multi-faced cultural factor (Amin, 2008).

The place attachment provide important theoretical support (Low & Altman, 1992; Morgan, 2010), especially recent decades, the increasing attention to the cross-culture influences (Brierley-Newell, 1997; Rishbeth, 2001) and the community context, (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). The other is the “everyday multiculturalism” (Wise & Velayutham, 2009), which emphasizes multicultural encounter in daily place, such as the public transit, the library, the street, the park and so on (Amin, 2002; Fincher & Iveson, 2008; Fincher, et al., 2014). The multicultural festivals are regarded as a relatively simple approach to improve the inter-cultural encounter, due to its limitations, some improving suggestions are put forward: flexibility, the proper location and less formal (Fincher, et al., 2014).

4.2.2. The Considerations of Cases

There are mainly three considerations of the cases above: first, it is necessary to consider the combining of social and physical planning to address multicultural issues. Second, the “mechanical mosaic” does not well consider a holistic approach to multiculturalism: the formation of single-function developments or areas like “Highway to Heaven” address a single issue, not the entirety of harmonious multiculturalism. And third, some small practices are advocated such as the local bylaw amendments and improving small space design – not every solution requires high-level or widespread change.
4.3. The Multicultural Facts in Nanaimo --The History & State Quo

A culture is generally defined as an aggregation of the way of life, beliefs, art, and customs that are shared by people in a particular society. Culture also includes “a time dimension”: it is inappropriate only to understand it from a certain perspective as culture changes over time. Culture is a process of integrating diversity and accumulating consensus, its history, state quo and future trends are "indivisible". Multiculturalism, as a sub-concept of culture, emphasizes the conflict and coexistence of differences, also reflects its status and process. Thus, it is better from a developmental perspective to explore and understand the multicultural issue in specific area.

Based on this consideration, this section uses Nanaimo’s historically multicultural evolution as an entry point to explore this issue, through the change of physical space and people’s recognition to further understand the multicultural facts in this city. The following findings are derived from the related literatures and interviews from the city planners and multicultural practitioners.

4.3.1. The evolution of “multicultural face” in Nanaimo

From a mining outpost to a regional center city today, the multicultural factor has been playing a non-negligible role in shaping the city of Nanaimo. The earliest colonial historical record can be traced back to 1791, Commodore Alejandro Malaspina sailed into Nanaimo area and named it “Winthuysen Inlet”, prior to that, the Aboriginal people “Snunéymuxw” were the residents in Nanaimo area, they left abundant archaeological traces of the original settlement that long predated Malaspina’s visit (Nanaimo’s Historical Development, 2017). Until 1852, along with the discovery of abundant coal resources, Hudson's Bay Company built a small outpost
called “Colvile town” in this area then renamed it “Nanaimo” eight years later (A Historic Timeline for Nanaimo, 2017). From that time the external culture began to be brought into Nanaimo gradually. The flourish of coal mining in following decades, not only brought the fishing, logging, sandstone quarrying, transport, as well as the service business all developed, but also attracted many other ethnic groups. In Nanaimo’s history, even the early time could see the minority groups in the town life. Many newcomers from China, Norway, Japan, Finland, Italy, Croatians, India, Pakistan, and other countries have settled in Nanaimo. The interaction among British descent, indigenous people, and minority groups has been gradually changing the face of the city, which bring it a dynamic multicultural look, which also could be said as “a microcosm of the future face of Canada” (Nanaimo an early melting pot, 2015).

- **The change of demographics and the related influence in the city**

  As a Nanaimo city planner in this research interview mentioned that the people often expect that they have quite a diverse multicultural history in Nanaimo. Although there is not a strong sense of pluralism contrasted with the neighboring city Vancouver, the evolution of different cultural groups can be clearly found in its historical context; furthermore, this particular historical character (implicit historical line) probably could be formed into a basis of building the harmoniously multicultural development.

  Generally, the main minority immigrations are different in different stages, and the different phases illustrate changing human geographical divisions.

  - **The early immigration (around 1860s-1920s)**

    According to the research, in the early period, the most immigration was from English speaking areas: Britain, Scotland, Wales, many of them are miners. Following the them, attracted by the opportunities of mining work and other business, especially
around 1860s-1920s, other early immigration generations, mainly including the Chinese, Japanese, Croatian, Finns and Italians, came to settle in Nanaimo (Nanaimo’s Historical Development, 2017): The Chinese immigration came to Nanaimo as early as the 1860s. Many of them came to build the Canadian railway, when the railways finished, they set up in Nanaimo and opened small businesses like restaurants, laundry; the first Italians to settle Nanaimo also in 1860s, they lived on fishing and farming, and some logging.

The racial segregation of Nanaimo from that early time was obvious, according to the interview, take the Europeans, indigenous and Chinese as an example, their settlements were geographic distinctly: the Snunéymuxw people were gradually pushed to the south area. The most Chinese concentrated to stay one area of the town, like Chinatown. The Europeans lived in everywhere else, some were less and scattered, some larger and more concentrated, which shaped their own small cultural circle, such as the Finns settled around Wellington and Milton Street, then the latter one became known as “Finn Town”. Italian built their gathering center around Extension area (Nanaimo an early melting pot, 2015)

On the other hand, the change of demographics was also reflected in the terms of city space, the building style, the change of the position of the ethnical settlements.

For example, there were four Chinatown in Nanaimo in different phases. The (1860s-1884) was around the Esplanade and Victoria Crescent area, which mainly were the company-built structures; in order to alleviate the growing racist tension; the Second Chinatown (1884-1908) moved to the area near the Nanaimo city limits in 1884 (Nanaimo Chinatowns, n.d.), as a self-contained community, it became the third largest Chinatown in the province, especially in 1901, six hundred Chinese resided in Nanaimo, most were residents of Chinatown, but then it was abandoned by the high
raising of the rents; the Third Chinatown (1908-1960) was located along Pine Street, with well economic vitality, the community for a time had about 1,500 residents and non-Chinese population also frequented Chinatown for shopping and entertainment. Because in the early 1920s the wane of coal mining industry and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923, this Chinatown decayed and was destroyed by fire in 1960. The Fourth Chinatown, as an extension to the third Chinatown, developed in the 1920s on near Machleary Street.

Figure 6 Nanaimo’s Chinatown (left: 1880s; right: 1910s)\(^6\)

Post-war (WW II) & Recent

According to the interviews of city planners and relevant workers, the following immigrating peak in post-World War II brought different European cultures to Nanaimo. Due to the economic depression and social instability, many Germans, Slovaks, Polish, Italians, and Greeks left their countries which were affected by the war and came to Nanaimo, one of the obvious reflection in the face of the city is the buildings of Italian dance hall, Greek restaurant, Polish cultural centre, German cultural center, and so on.

Around 1960-70s a lot of people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other Asian countries began to arrive here. They also bring East Indian restaurants, Vietnamese food stores and other ethno-economic.

In recent years, most immigration is from Asia (see the map below), but according to the interview, with the change of international situation, and the resulting refugee and immigration policy, the city can see many people from some parts of Africa and the Middle East come here, like Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria. Different kinds of food, clothing, dance, festivals will further enrich the local life.

7https://chinatowns.viu.ca/photos/
Note: Nanaimo District Museum Photograph Collection (Photographer)
Figure 8 Recent Immigration\(^8\)

- The current Multicultural Trace in City Space

Changes in demographics and cultural life were part of the growth of Nanaimo. This can be seen in various place and space names representing specific groups,

\(8\) Source: Social Geography, 2017
providing an institutional expression of multicultural facts, also it like a window to see a multicultural link from present days to early times in this city.

- **Architecture - Religious Buildings, Cultural Centers, and Other**

  The religious building is one of the most representative to find multicultural trace, these city face can tell people more than themselves: as the Italians, the Hungarian, the poles, the Czechs, the Greeks many are Christian, there are a lot of churches are built nowadays to come with them, and small Christian churches are in many places; Near St. Peter’s Catholic Church is a Sikh Temple, and not far away is a Russian Orthodox church. People can follow the churches to see which immigration groups they served.

  The different groups choose their gathering space are not limited the religious spaces, there are also many cultural center, dancing hall, restaurant and other buildings: like “Cavalotti Lodge”, a Italian gather place with dance hall, kitchen, can be rent for wedding and other activities, it was initially founded in 1860s, now it not only serves to Italians descendants but opened its doors to all.
The Open spaces, Parks, Street Art, and Other

While these buildings provide the use function concentrating on specific group which bring more the difference, the open space and its appendant— the parks, street, sculpture, plaque with different cultural factors—provide a more inclusive place and participating attitude for outside groups to share the place.

Although many the historical trace were damaged and disappeared, the different ethnical theme parks and are still scattered across this city, to some extent showing a kind of “mosaic collage” (see the photos below). They not only help to remind some part of Nanaimo’s history, but the current time even the future could see their participation.

The Place Names

9 https://www.google.ca/
10 https://www.google.ca/
11 http://cavallottilodge.org/
12 https://www.wayblaze.com/project_ideas/refurbish-the-italian-fountain-in-downtown-nanaimo/
13 Source: Author
Even not very strong, the multicultural part still leave the trace in many aspects, one of the easy ways is from the place names. Street names often celebrate early pioneers: for example, from the name of the signature park “Maffeo Sutton”, it is not difficult to know Maffeo should be a name from Italian descendant. “Bing Kee Street” in the former address of Chinatown also remembers a Chinese person Mah Bins Kee, who is a laundry owner and participated to building the third Chinatown in 1900s.

**Conclusion**

There is not a long history of Nanaimo from the first colonial settlement: 166 years is not a long time in terms of culture. On the other hand, as one feature of city is multicultural, how Nanaimo evolved as a multicultural city can be observed over this short history.

**4.3.2. The specific problems and findings from Nanaimo’s Multicultural Practitioners**

The city’s physical spaces and demographic evolution are just one part that reflects the multicultural facts of a place: these are the “hardware” of change. The other important part is the “software” of change, which examines people’s recognition and true feelings relating to this issue, both from their daily life and the expectation of city development. Thus, to further understand Nanaimo’s Multicultural situation also need to come back to “people”. Through interviewing the practitioners of multicultural issue—and believing that they have relatively comprehensive and rational thinking on this topic—this research focuses on Nanaimo’s multicultural situation as understood through the depth interviews (see Appendix C and D). This section summarizes the specific problems and main findings from the interviews.
• The General Recognition of the Multicultural Issue from History and Current Status

In the terms of history, all the participants agree that a multicultural factor plays a positive role and shaped the city’s development; however, half of interviewees, especially city planners, mentioned that the most people (both residents and visitors) were not clear on this history. Furthermore, most participants think that this history has been lost: when people came to Nanaimo, the diversity of groups and current signs on the landscape are missing from the built and social environments.

Even at present day, with a growing number of people are starting to pay attention to this topic, the recognition of multicultural issue is increasing, but it is still not very strong. Question three: “From a score of 1 to 10, how would you rate the current status of multicultural recognition in public spaces in the city?” (See Appendix C and D). The average score is 5, but two thirds of responders mentioned that this recognition is increasing in part because it started from such a low level. The multicultural factors exist, but just like scattered pieces that can be found in everywhere, it is not clear or obvious on the landscape.

There are some viewpoints to understand about the multicultural condition. One expression of this condition mentioned in the interviews is that Nanaimo is relatively small community, and with the exception of the domination English context, the scale and influence of all the other groups are similar and relatively less. That is, there are not obvious prevalent ethnical groups like the Chinese community or Indian community in Vancouver.
• **Different Cultural Character is Expressed in the City Space**

One interview subject noted that city spaces are still a good way to show the diverse culture in Nanaimo: the diverse cultural character and traditions in the centre can be represented in public buildings, gathering spaces, and in public art. For example, there are the dance houses—Nanaimo contains Italian, German, Hungarian, and Greek halls, where traditionally people used to gather and dance on a Saturday night. The same is not true for other groups: it is less likely that one would see a Chinese dance hall. Thus, different people build different things: churches, restaurants, dance houses, temples, cemetery, gardens, and they also use different art style to show their culture character: statue, plaques, mural, pavilions and others depending on where the people are from.

However, while some groups are interested in expressing their own culture by creating public spaces, such as the Chinese people who developed gardens, cemeteries, and even the neighbourhood of Chinatown, other groups have not established buildings or structures on the landscape and it is much more difficult to find visual representations of these cultures. It may be that they prefer “private” gathering space and more exclusive activities, or it may be that the buildings and structures are not so different from the mainstream and therefore do not stand out in the urban landscape. A café, shop, plaza, or square may be representative of a different culture, but may not be so different from the surrounding structures to ensure that it stands out. Other groups, such as recent Syrians migrants, may prefer to focus on their own homes rather than public spaces. The challenge of finding representations will be discussed in the next section.

• **The Main Gathering Spaces & Design Suggestions**
The major festival and gathering spaces in Nanaimo are found mostly around the downtown area: Maffeo Sutton Park, Diana Krall Plaza, Bowen Park, and Beban Park are the primary gathering spaces.

Most interviewees do not find there is obvious design deficiency hindering intercultural communication in these public spaces, but many improvements were suggested:

- (In aspect of function) No big change, but increasing small facilities to consider broader groups’ need, like rain covers over picnic areas, would encourage different activities;
- Murals or plaques could be used to introduce the multicultural history;
- Blending in multicultural factors in street art: Especially in parks and walkways, where art is more visible, there appears to be a good reflection of multiculturalism in Nanaimo streets art. More could be included, especially representing First Nations’ cultures;
- The “multilingual signage” could be used as art: the application of multilingual signage alone may not help to promote the transmission of multiculturalism, it could be considered an expression of art, along with paintings, statues, and structures;
- Festivals and events should be encouraged: for example, the Vancouver Chinese Lantern Festival in Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) attracts a multicultural crowd to each event;
- Site design should provide for multiple and complex functions, and needs to be compatible with different ethnic groups. For example, if organizing a Lantern Festival activity, the specific site, facilities, power, weather
condition and safety issues should be considered.

- **The Population Change and Trends**

  One major part of the research examines different stages of immigration to Nanaimo (as mentioned on S.4.3.1).

  The general trend of increasing immigration including the share of recent immigrants from a wider range of countries, the obvious growth of international student VIU clearly reflects international trends: In VIU, in 2001, before the university constructed the international building, there was no international space on campus; there were 800 international students from 58 countries. Now, 16 years later, in 2017: the university has more than 2,000 international students from 80 countries. So it is growing obviously. The role VIU plays in building multiculturalism in Nanaimo cannot be ignored.

- **Two Challenges on Integrating Multiculturalism and Public Spaces**

  One challenge in improving multiculturalism is that it is not easy to decide which cultural theme should dominate in one place, setting the cultural theme for that place. This raises the question: what kinds of principles and considerations should guide city planning in this decision-making?

  Furthermore, demographic changes aggravate this problem (including the distribution of "horizontal" different ethnic groups and "vertical" aging). There is a lag in the arrival of specific groups, understanding what would represent this group, and
constructing any works. The different groups have different needs, and different cultural themes. It is difficult to keep pace with change prompted by immigration.

Thus, site design needs to be more flexible. Diversification should be favoured over single uses, multi-use facilities should be constructed, and the needs of a range of users should be considered.

**The Related Policies**

There is no specific multicultural planning policy in Nanaimo. Nanaimo Official Community Planning (2011), the Nanaimo Cultural Plan (2014-2020), and the related neighbourhood plans emphasize the importance of community diversity and historical heritage, but there is no clear related policy about minorities’ issues. This likely results from two issues: first, the lack of mention may be intentional and an approach to not aggravate specific groups; and second, as previously noted, harmonious multiculturalism is a wicked problem with no easy solutions.

**Some Examples of multicultural Practice in Public Spaces**

This first example is about promoting diverse ethnic commercial uses in Montreal. Apparently the approval process for sitting a new use is fairly simple in this city, making it an attractive business venture for new residents.

A second example is a well-design open space, which includes the park and street, and contains mixed structures that provide for a range of uses. An example mentioned in one of the interviews was Halifax, Nova Scotia: “Point Pleasant Park”, has a lot of picnic tables. Normally Canadians do not use them, and instead use the park for dog walking or exercise. Other migrants, however, use the picnic tables every weekend: the relatively recently arrived group of migrants from Saudi Arabia are much more likely to use tables. Entire families will spend the day together, because
gathering and food are important cultural elements. Some people do not need to sit down but keep walking and exercising; but for other groups they may think that is the best thing to do. There is not a lot of design, no signage or special languages—the park is very simple but provides spaces for different groups. Stanley Park in Vancouver is also a good example. Many groups share the same public space—one place provides different function for many groups. For the street, cities like New York are a good example of the street serving a strong gathering function with multi-usability, and multicultural promotion can be explored in this aspect. Nanaimo’s Commercial Street could learn much from these examples.

- **The Multicultural Activities/Programs in Nanaimo**

  There are many multicultural activities/programs in public spaces, in the terms of the participation scope, these activities could be divide into two categories: one is for the wider cultural groups, like the Multicultural Festival in Old City Quarter every summer or public events like the “Multicultural Speaker Series”, a series of programs mainly for immigrants organized by Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (a non-profit organization supporting the new immigration), VIU hosts many of these types of events: these activities are a "hodgepodge" that is accessible to different groups, with lower thresholds and easier acceptance.

  The other cultural activities are peculiar to different groups. Examples include festival celebrations, such as the Chinese Spring Festival (lion dance and firecracker), Lantern Festival activities; Indian people’s light festival—Diwali (an important Hindu festival), in Nanaimo, sometimes the Indians celebrate it in Maffeo Sutton Park, sometimes in the temple, sometimes in the space they rent. These have relatively high levels of participation: while anyone could attend, they are focused on the celebration of a specific cultural aspect or event. The better multicultural activities convey the characteristics of different groups: traditional costumes, food, and activities. It is also
a window into different cultures. Relatively, some cultural activities is exclusive, such as Muslim Ramadan—for whole month Muslim people cannot eat between sun rise and sun set, forbid to eat during the day, Ramadan for Muslims means staying in the house, they don’t have a festival at the square.

It is difficult to say which style is better, as these two kinds of activities have their maintaining the event over many years can be difficult, and authentic cultural character is not strong, such as the Multicultural Festival, which is just like a common street market sometimes. The specific organizations’ activities focus on a particular people, which may feel exclusionary to other populations. The latter one is more obvious in large urban areas such as Vancouver, which has some big ethnic communities providing support.

In addition, the question “Do you think it is possible to enhance intercultural communications through the built environment or programmed activities?” All the answers are affirmative, on the one hand, in the aspect of increasing the visibility of multiculturalism, the activities and places cannot be divided: a well-designed place let activities become more welcoming and attractive, at the same time, the positive activities bring the more meaning of the place by enriching by the using function. On the other hand, to some extent, place designing itself could make up for the defect of the activity mentioned above, especially increasing the readability of place and the educational significance.

- **Education: Which Kind of Styles are More Feasible and Efficient?**

  Some interviews mentioned that education is important for both activities and the built environment to lead to improved levels of mutual understanding. This issue will be further discussed in the analysis section.

- **Other Findings and Comments**
For the needs of different ethnic groups, policy guidance frameworks and bylaws (such as the OCP and zoning bylaws) could be more flexible to allow for a greater range of activities and events. Especially to encourage small ethnic businesses, approval processes could be made less complex. Another issue that could be addressed is housing styles. In Nanaimo housing is mostly in a North Americans style (like single family house), but the other groups have different needs, such as Turks who prefer to share a large home with their extended family. Bylaw amendments could be made to allow for multi-generational and larger housing to fit the needs of some migrant groups.

There are many examples of cultural conflicts. In the 1990s, the construction “monster houses” by Hong Kong immigrants in Vancouver created a lot of conflicts with the local community. The local community believed that the buildings of Hong Kong immigrants destroyed the original street environment. So city planners need to get involved in the "early" period without a lot of conflict.
Chapter 5 Discussion and Recommendations

Through analyzing and discussing the finding of the research interview, combining with the viewpoints and thinking from the related literature and cases, this chapter focuses on the last research question—how can better shared public spaces lead to increased harmony among multicultural groups in Nanaimo? This question will be answered by exploring the recommendations, which help to introduce the harmonious multicultural principles in the physical space and improve multicultural visibility. And based on the proposed recommendations and the specific condition of Nanaimo, this chapter tries to further explore specific place-design in a visible way.

5.1. The Problems Discussion

This section summarizes the research finding into five parts for analyzing and discussing clearly:

5.1.1. “Jump out” the Wicked Problem — General Direction

- Wicked Problem

As mentioned above, harmonious multiculturalism is a wicked problem. It is hard to deal with partly for its complexity. It involves too many aspects, especially
many disputed topics, including the unmanageable ideologies, the group interests and values issues, and the equity issues, which challenge many previous useful “measures of accomplishment” (Horst and Webber, 1973, p.156). Partly due to the responsible people, it seems no person in charge to deal with this issue. Who or which groups should be responsible for it? Thirdly, the processes aggravates the difficulty: as constituting the many different sub–issues which constantly changing and influencing each other, the multicultural issue itself could reflect a “process”, to a certain extent, one factor changes, sometimes the overall strategy has to change.

So it seems to become a classic avoidance item, especially in the practical daily work: to cope with this issue is very likely take long time and energy but get a thankless, fruitless result, even probably be condemned for occupying resources for other undertakings; or rather, people do not just avoid discuss the multicultural issue itself, but almost regard it as an unrealistic notion. For this issue, it is necessary to review the target of multiculturalism, for different fields there could be different answer. But there is a common consideration the all fields have to face — the issue is interdisciplinary beyond their own profession — that easily leads to a common failing: setting too high an aim. For such a complicated problem, many very high goals are came up with a but in a not “enough time”, also lacks corresponding practically solution strategies, that often makes it very difficult to practice.

- “Jump out” in Harmonious way

Thus, facing the wicked problems, a general strategy is jumping out the “impossible solving part” and changing that negative attitude to this issue. Concretely speaking, there are four discussions of this multicultural issue:

Firstly, it should consider lowering the threshold of difficulty degree: jumping out directly deal with this wicked problem. The multicultural issue includes economic, social, political ... many complex problems in many aspects, some sub-topics have no
effective solution for the most area, such as race interests conflicts. Thus, it could start by suspending the disputes and the impossible tasks. In the perspectives of city development, it could “jump out of” multiculturalism itself: “diversity does not mean separation”, focusing on building the whole city cultural intercommunity (a community consensus) as the basis to discuss multicultural issue rather than just directly deal with the pluralism conflict, but whole culture should not ignore every different cultural parts from the history to nowadays. For example, it could choose the city’s shared memory, the public space, the landscape... as the entry point; these are the shared things of the city’s residents.

Secondly, dealing with an accessible task: Which thing now we can do? Which is relatively simple and efficient? It should find the methods that can be put into daily life. Perhaps some big activities have big influence for a certain time, but if or not it can be hold and play the role regularly?

Thirdly, considering the harmonious multicultural should emphasize process rather than result, it is not necessary to set a very inspiring aim and “a perfect plan”, but should focus on the specific status in different phases and the developmental consistency.

Lastly, the duty issue is still unavoidable to discuss. Similarly, like many wicked problems, it is difficult to figure out who should be responsible for it, the government officials? City policy makers? Ethnic groups? Immigrants? Perhaps, from a non-rational feeling, there are many responsible people, maybe it is “the city’s duty”. Or perhaps everyone has a role. Practical speaking, for the different standpoints, this ethical issue actually has not an agreed answer. If forcing to define certain groups or some organizations as having the responsibility, it is unrealistic and meaningless. The one thinking is addressing the multicultural issue within the scope of different sections of one’s own functions and duties. For city planners, they are more likely to undertake
this “city’s duty” if it is considered to be part of their daily planning work. It may be
back to the original intention of this research, for the planning duty, the important
thing is not just figure out the most priority (such as the economic development) and
specific solution of that issue, but need to fully consider and evaluate in different
steps which targets can address the city development efficiently (Seasons, 2003),
especially in the aspect of policies.

5.1.2. Nanaimo’s Multiculturalism Status Analysis

This section focuses on Nanaimo’s specific status to consider multicultural
issue. According to the research findings for this city, from its history, city size,
population to the related cultural activities, the multicultural situation is not very
obvious, it is implicit but scattered everywhere; with internationalization development
especially in recent decades, the multicultural issue gets the increasing attention.
Depending on that condition, how can we understand and address the multicultural
issue in Nanaimo? Using which kind of method and in which period to deal with it?

• “Five”: An Intermediate Position

Probably the average score of five, which is given by the research interviewees
for evaluating Nanaimo’s multicultural recognition (from 1 to 10), can express this city
multicultural status: Nanaimo is not a big cosmopolitan city like Vancouver, nor a
small community, but a regional medium-sized city with increasing influence. From
historical perspective, this city has rich multicultural components, but it is not
strong—the multicultural history is often beyond people’s the expectation. It also
reflects on the evolution of population composition, and the change of city space and
landscape. For the current status, the multicultural cognition is not strong but is still
increasing.
Furthermore, the whole city culture is English context dominating with other cultures—the most small communities is relatively with a balanced power, non-negligible, but do not like Vancouver which has some obvious minority communities. This point is obviously reflected on the related cultural activities: because there is no big minority community, each cultural group’s own resources and capital are relatively limited, thus it is not easy to find a strong ethnical group supporting to make big events for their own cultural community regularly, thus the multicultural activities tend to be a “hodgepodge”, is not a dominating a certain ethnical group. As a result, it is suitable for the government or relevant organization (such as the city cultural department, Multicultural Society) to guide and promote cultural activities rather than by individual groups, which could encourage a broader participation, to some degree, it is suitable for a balance and harmony process.

Thus, based on this condition, it shows the drastic measures cannot be adopted, instead, it should take a kind of gradual and mild way, and enhancing the city’s multicultural history expression as one entry point to address the issue.

- An Appropriate Period

The other discussion of Nanaimo’s multicultural condition is about the applicability in this time point. Why should we pay attention to this issue during this period? At present, there is no obvious social problem due to the multicultural issue, nor dramatic social change; however, it is an appropriate period to consider to deal with this issue in a relatively simple way, also it could save social costs in long term.

In the current stage of development, compared to other areas, Nanaimo has moderate population and stable change trend, and the moderate develop opportunities, it is not a huge city, nor a small community, which makes it not need to face a more complex situation, and provides with some potential space to consider this issue.
Also, there is still an ambivalence for this issue, people want maintain the good today’s life but also know nothing is unchangeable—be worse or be better. Probably one reason is people realize that sooner or later will be a big problem but are unwilling to tackle it, because it may not be the top priority. However, if problems have long been neglected or have no actual action, the more cost will be spent in a deteriorating period.

Thirdly, there is no obvious ethnic problem in the Nanaimo area (more is implied and small) and no change driver now that can be reflected on the current policy: partly it leads to this topic does not get much policy attention. But seeing from the perspectives of history, the current diversification trend and the surrounding environment, the multicultural problem has already been aggravated.

More importantly, the multicultural problem cannot get an immediate solution, as mentioned above, it involves too much difficult issue to address: the cultural differences, economic issues and so on, the complexity makes this problem difficult to get effective solution, so it need a period of time and accumulating process to address it. Once the multicultural issue becomes a serious social problem, it will need other ways to deal with, and more difficult, there seems no suitable methods to solve it. Thus, providing preventive methods in the early stages of the problem, starting at a proper time, will save social costs and provide the more solutions in the long run.

In conclusion, this developmental period it is an appropriate time to address multicultural issue, as analyzed in the last discussion, in order to jump out this wicked issue, it is necessary to use a substituted method — building a whole city cultural intercommunity — than directly tackle that problem when the problem become worsen. Although a relatively longer time may be needed, it could avoid the more unwanted social costs consuming and probably more effective actually.
To further address this issue, the whole city cultural intercommunity building, it needs to consider all the different cultural communities, also considering about Nanaimo’ multiculturalism status, to use a moderate strategy or say a harmonious methods through gradually improving the city multicultural visibility could be a reasonable option.

5.1.3. Improving the Multicultural Visibility in a Harmonious Way

According to the research findings, it is easy to see that a series of multicultural activities and programs are one of the important parts to improve the multicultural acceptability of Nanaimo; however, there also are obvious limitations of these activities from the operation process to the actual result. For this question, this section starts from the discussion of the limitation of multicultural activities and the public place’s education meaning to explore to improve the multicultural visibility.

- The limitations of Multicultural Activities

The multicultural activities and programs indeed play a positive role of the city’s multicultural recognition, but there are obvious limitations:

Firstly, in respect of the participation process, the involvement degree of the broader groups is still limited. Especially, there is still the threshold for all groups participating in the multicultural activities that are unique to an individual group, the difficulties mainly reflected on the language barrier and unavailable activity notice. These participatory difficulties hinder the deeply multicultural communication. Additionally, in Nanaimo, there is no many strong minority community to hold multicultural activities regularly.

Secondly, for the outcome, due to the limitation of the funding and human resource (volunteer is also limited resource), many programs are short and often do
not keep longer, consequently, and many of them have no obvious effect in the long term. On the other hand, the "hodgepodge" style activities is indeed more accessible to different groups (such as Multicultural Festival), but the authentic cultural character is not strong. Even the adequate resources are provided, the multicultural activities do not always achieve the target: They need to provide a profound and original cultural experience to motivate participants' emotional responses, curiosity and other positive thinking. To achieve all of them, the extraordinary efforts of organizers and just one or two events are not enough; it also needs a long term effective commitment.

Thirdly, from the aspect of the participants, practically, there is a priority issue: if they have extra time and energy to attend these activities and if these activities are enough attractive to overcome an embarrassing condition of the language barrier? Even the weather condition becomes a big consideration to decide to attend or not.

Thus, to improve multicultural activities should consider many aspects: stable and regular, funding, the lower threshold, attraction, approachability for participants, and so on.

About the thinking of how to improve multicultural activities themselves, as the space is limited, this section does not discuss them. But there is another thinking that not directly improves these activities themselves: How to define the multicultural activities? In a broad sense, they could be considered as the actions improving multicultural recognition, the activity modes are not limited to the types mentioned above, but just small actions could be useful, even like learning the other ethnical groups’ food name or other knowledge from a street poster. That probably provides another simple way: using the physical environment directly affects people in daily life.

Although many multicultural activities and programs are very attractive—it is easy to see the organizers’ great effort, to deal with this wicked problem still need
long time spending, or a processing perspective. Thus, directly educating by the public space should not be neglected, which can provide another stable and regular way in the long term.

- **Introducing the Harmonious Multiculturalism in Place Making**

  ➢ **Passive Education of the Public Place**

  Combining the current requirement of multicultural activities and the thinking of the harmonious multiculturalism—from a processing perspective to keep the diversity rather than separate, a long time “education” by the public place is proposed to address to this issue.

  There mainly are two considerations: on the one hand, the culture inculcating through physical environment is a way to address the harmonious multiculturalism, which not only emphasizes to cultivate a whole city culture in public space (Amin, 2008), but needs to keep the diverse “sub-culture”, a long-term gradually recognizing is needed in this process. In superficial communication, most people welcome diversity and easily to accept them, especially in terms of food, festival, clothing. But it seems not easily affirmative in the deeper communication. There is a case of education: some international students cited the case of severe internet addiction, which is fairly common in some countries, but other students felt "ridiculous" because that is not common in their countries; on contrast, when people have relevant experiences or involved in the multicultural work, it is obvious to find they are more easily to communicate with foreigners, such as they consciously slow to speak and choose simple words, something it even becomes a subconscious behaviour. The education and knowledge background could affect people's attitude and behaviour in
detail (even subconscious), the open mind and acceptance attitude is also largely from the rich individual experiences and an inclusive city background.

On the other hand, the physical planning is an important aspect of traditional planning, especially the public place design; however, it does not get more attention to the multicultural visibility, that is probably a new direction to explore this issue: The public space could be a good area to address the multiculturalism, which provides an accessibly shared place for every groups.

➢ Embodying the Multicultural Factors in the Place Making

Specifically speaking, the multicultural education through public place-making to some extent could remit the dilemma of the wicked issue and the limitations of multicultural activities:

Firstly, a “passive education” in public place could be easily involved in people’s daily activities. One factor hindering people to attend the multicultural activities is these activities are probably out of people’s ordinary routine. In fact, it is not easy for common people break away from the daily schedules even a short time, including their daily work, their own group’s context; they have to decide their priority: family party or multicultural activities? Or they may think, except daily work, there is no much time to consider other issue. However, the long time’s neglect may produce serious problem. Thus, place making should provide people with potential “passive learning” opportunities—it can also be regarded as an ancillary way to support the usual multicultural activities. People do not need to choose the priority (being voluntary to attend some activities). It is not like the school education, which needs the more attention and conscious effort, but it could be unexpected benefits of daily activities: some multicultural knowledge could be gained from a poster or wall painting during a street walk, which is not out of the daily routine.
As Amin (2018) mentioned, “Public space, if organized properly, offers the potential for social communion by allowing us to lift our gaze from the daily grind, and as a result, increase our disposition toward the other” (p.6). A properly public place making could provide a low access threshold for broader groups to share one place and improve the degree of involvement. Especially for “introverted” cultural groups, it to large extent avoids some embarrassing occasion.

Secondly, compared with the normal multicultural activities, public place making can relatively easily provide a long, frequently influence of multicultural recognizing on the city’s culture atmosphere building. On the other hand, it could be as a part of place improvement program or as a design consideration in other projects, there is no big funding and human resources problem for the long term operation.

Thirdly, this “education” is considered within and outside the ethnical group, which makes mutual-effect among different groups: firstly it helps self-positioning for the group members themselves; furthermore, it could provide a more objective and accessible way to learn from other groups: Generally, multiculturalism is often a group issue rather than individuals. On the one hand, the first impression of other people are more likely about their color, racial, language, which belong to the recognition of the certain groups, but if people have more opportunities to deeper understand others, probably there is big change form the first impression, even the change can impact on the whole recognition of a group. On the other hand, like a view mentioned in interviews, “you and your behaviour represent your group”, especially the minority groups, other groups through their individual behaviour to recognize their group, the individual behaviour always are regarded as group’s general character. However, in reality, personal behaviours cannot representative their group, also there is often not such more opportunities to let people to spend time to re-understand other groups, or just understand others from the individual level not the group level; the ways to learn others—for most time there is no more energy to learn them actively—are easily
or enjoyably from gossip, stories or news under political color, even if people know there are much ridiculous views, but it is not easy to avoid them.

Through place making to improve multicultural recognition could to some degree jump out the limitations of the multicultural activities. The function of a place is like the software, while the hard ware is physical space: this software is not limited to the organized multicultural activities, it could be all of action in the place with multicultural affecting, and it could be very flexible not limited to the time and form. To explore to embody the multicultural factors into the place making principle, many aspects should be considered: the place making theories and practices, the place using function, aesthetic views including art expressing styles, specific city contexts, and so on.

5.1.4. Cultural Theme Choosing Principles: History & Intercommunity (Resonance)

During the research, some similar questions about multiculturalism in public place are mentioned frequently: the multiculturalism represents not just one or two culture patterns, but as a “collective” concept integrating multiple themes. However, in the physical planning, especially place design, what style can express multiculturalism? Which cultural theme should be chose? Furthermore, what is the meaning of these cultural factors for the place making?

According to these questions, the discussion explores a bridge to link the local context and the harmonious multiculturalism: how to keep the cultures diversity but in a common ground? There is a thing containing individually cultural characters also shared by all people: the city’s multicultural history. That shared city memory not only remembers cultural groups’ own stories but also provides the basis to understand other groups. Also, there are many similar things or ideas in different cultural background, although expressing in different language, taste, music, color, and all
different styles, these intercommunity bring great understanding, fun, kindness and resonance between different groups. Thus, to express multiculturalism and select cultural theme need to consider history factors, find intercommunity, which help to cultivate a common city culture; in that way, the cultural factors could rich the meanings of a place.

- **Choosing Principle one: Integrating Historical Factors**

  The theme choosing principle should respect the place’s multicultural historical factors. It should not only highlight one specific group, but it could share the common historical memory by all the people:

  From the perspectives of individual group, it is necessary to consider about the specific historical elements, to remember some important events or the people who made great contribution. One way is setting street names. According to a city planner, Nanaimo has many street names for different sorts of people, like Italians, Greek people, Dutch people, Croatian...European names. But there are less African names, Eastern Indian names and so on. For example, the “Bing Kee Street” in the former address of Nanaimo Chinatown, which is to remember a Chinese people Mah Bins Kee who supported to build the Chinatown. These stories not only help the next generations know their history and define their “identity”, but from an aspect of the intercommunity, regardless of the people inside and outside of this ethnical group, all the people (including the visitors) can recognize Nanaimo more clearly and interestingly. And in that way everyone can see it very easily, even just during a walk.

  Furthermore, in some place involving historical factors, the introduction signage can be set more distinctive and interesting (could use different languages and
the different expression forms including art expression) to enhance the place’s readability and to promote the understanding of the city.

- **Choosing Principle two: Intercommunity**

  The other choosing principle focuses on building a common ground through public places (Manzo & Perkins, 2006), especially finding the intercommunity or resonance in gathering places. One interesting point of this principle is to explore the similar things in different cultural background; beyond the language, people also can share the information in different expressing forms, especially the art, like the paint, sculpture, and green environment. Public place needs to be more approachable and inclusive. Take the Italian fountain in Nanaimo downtown as an example, every people can walk there, and everyone knows what this is, it is a fountain, not only Italian, but anyone can be part of it, go sit down and play around the water. It invites people and does not close them off. So anything we do with the multicultural thing, the various cultures should be invited. That should be easy for everyone to be part of that, and learn that.

  These two choosing principles neither need big change. These cultural factors increase the function of the places, especially the readability of the place and educational significance.

5.1.5. Other Discussion

- **Design with “Nature” and other principles**

  The multicultural design should combine some place-making principles. From the perspective of facility setting, one consideration is the natural environment and climate requirement, such as adding rain cover and using local material, plant, color, and so on. Making the public space welcome to anyone at any time, it could consider
the whether (and season) factors, people do not like to go outside in the rain. Take an example in downtown, Diana Krall Plaza, there is almost no where to stand when raining, it just likes a big empty space. The small improvement like building a cover space could be considered, and in that cover space, may be some art walls or others showing multicultural elements could be added.

- **Flexibility**

The multicultural design should not ignore the demographic change, which means a flexible design needs to be considered. For example, small street art or performances could be shifted in every month or season with different cultures, it may be February, Japanese month or something like that. It gives that multicultural group “some ownership” in the city, and they can be really involved, excited and share with the brother communities, and then every month or season they change it. It does not need a lot of work to do, just like small street art installation, simple performances, traditional food selling (combining the festival celebration) and so on, which do not need to be very “splendid” but the authentic and simple style could be more helpful.

**5.2. Integrating Harmonious Multiculturalism into Public Place**

Based on the analysis and discussion above, this section summarizes a series of suggestions to introduce the harmonious multicultural factors into public place making. And in order to further explore the feasibility of these recommendations, this section also tries to provide an exploratory design in a visible way.

**5.2.1. Recommendations**
• 1) Integrating multicultural consideration into major place making principles

Integrating the multiculturalism into place making principles could be an approach to improve multicultural visibility. The multicultural considerations to large extent cohere with the currently major design principles, or say it can further explain and extend these principles: From the multicultural perspectives, these intangible principles like “diverse”, “welcoming”, “readable”, “historic”, “attractive”, “useful”, “vital”...and their measurements (See the figure below) could have the further interpretation, such as the measurement of “diverse”, it could be not limited to the “number of women, children & elderly”, but extended by involving more various cultural groups.
2) A “Passive Learning”: Introducing the multicultural learning into daily places

In order to support the multicultural communication, a well-designed public place ought to be available to accommodate multicultural activities, like the facility, the space style, and the power need to be fully considered. But the effect of physical environment itself should not be neglected: Beyond the current multicultural activities, a “passive learning” through physical place could be used to provide a long term, frequent, low cost’s improvement of a widely multicultural recognition. The public place is easier to provide an accessible and approachable, multi-use space for different groups, and to support the city’s multicultural atmosphere creating. People do not need to decide the priority: attending multicultural activities or others, but can learning gradually in daily routine; it is not like the school class—need to be an active learner, but it encourages an easy, involuntary learning in daily life.

3) Cultural theme choosing: visualizing the multicultural history and respecting community context (cultural diversity and intercommunity)

Which kind of culture could represent the multiculturalism or improve the multicultural visibility in a specific place? Two cultural theme selecting principles in place making are suggested: integrating specific multiculturalism-history elements into the site in which the related “cultural events” taken place, such as Chinatown; exploring the more “cultural intercommunity” of the whole community, especially in the main gather place. Both of them focus on creating a rich and harmonious city culture atmosphere, also, highlighting the city’s overall cultural characteristics.

Specifically speaking, in Nanaimo, English cultural context is dominating; this city also has many multicultural factors including its history, but most of them are scattered and not very visible. To celebrating the multiculturalism, it is not necessary “overly add” a certain cultural element with no reason; but it could be based on history or other reasons, like increasing immigration and tourism, to visualize existing but implicit multiculturalism within the major character of the community; from another aspect, the multiculturalism visualization could be a way to increase this city’s characteristics.

4) Improving the public space’s multicultural readability: the art expression and place’s use

Public place making can use different expressing styles to improving the place’s multicultural readability, especially the multicultural history telling could be as an entry point, it is not limited of the multi-language signage, but it can be expressed by painting, sculpture, pavilion, plant, lights and so on—the art design could play an important role; at the same time, it is necessary to combine the art expression and place’s use, especially the facilities, like seating. There is a case: the long corridor in the Summer Palace in Beijing has plenty of traditional style panting of the story telling, which makes strong sense of cultural readability (see the picture below; right pictures: the wall painting usually showing well-known historical stories).
Furthermore, a proper multicultural expression could be read by the broader people, which provides an opportunity of both-way education within and without a certain ethnical group: not only do they understand their own ethnic history (especially, many immigrate descendants do not clearly know their history, why they came? what happen in the past? A well-designed place may inspire them to think their identity both belong to one group and a city), but they also enhance the understanding of other groups: in some degree, the proper art expression helps intergroup mutual-understanding and overcoming the embarrassment of language barrier and cultural differences, especially, some “introverted” character ethnical groups, the visitors and new immigrations; on the other hand, some common/similar things of different cultures may facilitate a communication, such as some similar food culture.

- **5) Focusing on a processing improvement: Flexibility & Gradualness**

A harmonious multiculturalism focuses on the processing perspective. On the one hand, due to the population mobility, the design needs to think the flexible approach than the fixed strategy, especially choosing the construction material, like replaceable mural, pave, growing plant; it also should fully consider the local environment: the city landscape, the weather, local material and plant, color, and so on.

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On the other hand, compared to the large multi-cultural center area, it is not easy to make the big construction project for multicultural issue in small and mid-sized cities like Nanaimo currently. As a long time undertaking, it is reasonable to consider about the low cost, small and gradually improvement, or it can combine some city environment improving projects.

- **6) Social collaboration & voluntary program (VIU)**

   In the respect of implementation, the social collaboration and voluntary program should be considered. For example, the concretely multicultural art design could be supported by other sections, like VIU plays an important role in Nanaimo’s culture and education, if there are voluntary activities and other program can provide help? While the planning work gets supports, students could know more about the local culture in practice.

- **7) Consideration of the planners’ role and multicultural policy in different levels**

   As mentioned above, Nanaimo does not have specifically multicultural policies currently, partly due to there is no obviously ethnic conflict, or say it is more implicit; although this issue has become more obvious gradually, but there is no a big "change driver” for getting much attention to it. In reality, there is also a series of difficulties to amend or implement the related policies to support multicultural planning: there is no a clear and unified planners’ role even in high level policies (Kurtz, 2015), and this issue has generally not been considered in the main current planning so far.
Thus, suggestions could be considered in different levels: in the federal and provincial level, governments and planning organizations, like CIP, PIBC, and Professional Board of Standards (PBS), should amend related policies and guidelines to help planner further understand their role. For example, amendments could be considered in Local Government Act or Community Charter, which can guide OCP modification; amendments can also be made in PIBC Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and PBS school accreditation standards, which could help planners to understand the multicultural planning through school courses (Kurtz, 2015).

In local level, planners should timely respond the community’s change, as it is not easy to get modification in macro policies, municipal planning departments could integrate the multicultural considerations into other policy implementation, such as culture, art and heritage guidance and public engagement policy.

5.2.2. Exploratory Design

In fact, multiculturalism is considered in some public art installation programs in Nanaimo, including the street art and interpretive sign making; a number of city cultural guidelines and goals are also involved in the community plan and cultural plan. But how to install multiculturalism into the physical environment more feasibly, especially for living facilities and daily need, these guidelines should be further defined. Furthermore, “visualized suggestions” may be more easily understood by wide groups.

Based on the specific place conditions, this section provides two kinds of design solution by choosing different cultural themes: in a main gathering place, integrating multicultural factors into the place-making principles to enhance entire physical/cultural environment; visualizing a specific cultural theme in a site where the related “cultural events” taken place.
About the concrete expression of art styles, these conceptual designs just provide general ideas (as guiding principles); in practice, it could explore the more proper expressing ways pertaining to the specific project.

- **For shared place (gathering place) : Diana Krall Plaza**

  **Choosing reasons:**

  Diana Plaza is one of the main gathering places in downtown, it has the more possibility of encounter among different ethnical groups, especially in the cultural activities; secondly, it is next to many “life place” like library, bank, commercial place and waterfront, providing a intersection space of the daily life; thirdly, except the multicultural consideration, it still has some defects: the cheerless square environment makes this place negative and no vitality, like largely blank building façades near an open space, which does not provide the attractiveness to attract people from streets; consequently, it reduces the opportunities for passive surveillance, safety problems may increase at night. In this research, some interviewee feel it is an “empty space”, single function, not only needs to add more facilities, but the entire environment should be improved.

  ![Figure 16 Diana Krall Plaza](https://www.google.ca/)

  **Design Considerations:**

  Properly conveying multiculturalism through the physical place could be a way to further improve the place’s mix-use, or say to the large extent improve the

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16 https://www.google.ca/
public place’s value. Generally, public place-making can be considered in three aspects: aesthetics, basic use requirements, and information transmission. These factors should be taken into account together, and correspond with the city entire context including the historical continuity; thus to convey multicultural information is not limited of the multilingual signage, which should be considered by various art styles and combine with daily facilities. Specifically in Diana Plaza, multicultural considerations are as follows:

- In this gather place, design theme is “culture intercommunity”, which mainly emphasizes improving intercultural readability; thus, multiple cultural symbols and universally art expressions are suggested; also multicultural history as a shared heritage element should be added, including and not limited to interpretive signs and murals installed.

- The other key consideration is integrating multiculturalism into the plaza’s use function improvement: as some facilities are suggested to be improved or added, like temporary seats, rain cover, light furniture, and green environment, multicultural factors could be added into these city furniture designs.

On the other hand, multicultural design should maximize people’s use of place than just make a beautiful space. Diana Plaza is not a large space, but its use space could be expanded by increasing information transmission; thus, design mainly focuses on improving the multicultural readability in “edge spaces”: the empty façade, plaza’s main/connecting pavement, “landscape boundary” (sea view and green boundary), and so on. These do not occupy people much activities space but rich people’s spatial experience; consequently, this
physical space itself can support the multicultural atmosphere creating.

- The flexibility and gradualness considerations are mainly focused on choosing the proper materials, which can be interpreted as local, alterable, simple and easy operating, growing, and so on. There are wide options: alterable murals for multicultural story telling in building external walls (may combine rain cover), changeable light designs, pavement pattern designs, growing plant wall like plant moss showing different cultural information, and so on. The concrete designs could get support from social collaboration, such as student volunteer programs.

- The cheerless plaza environment does not provide the enough attractiveness for people stop, which to some extent cause the safety consideration. Thus multicultural design could consider to infill some attractive points to rich the empty parts, especially the largely blank façades, the less green space, light design aspect, and so on; also, enhancing the space’s connection and eye-guidance is considered to improve the attractiveness.
Figure 17 Design Explanation

Source: Author
Site A: Focusing on space connection and attracting people from the street

Figure 18 Site A Design$^{18}$

$^{18}$ Source: Author
**Site B:** Multicultural design enhancing space vitality and addressing safety issue

*Figure 19 Site B Design*¹⁹

¹⁹ Source: Author
• **For specific place: China Steps**

**Choosing reason:**

The China Steps is situated near Victoria Crescent Street in downtown, which is built in memory of the early Chinese immigration. An interpretive signs set at China Steps showing the history of four Chinatowns and Chinese immigration story, but it is no obvious. And the place does not provide a “good link” with surrounding environment (see the pictures below; left picture shows China Steps).

![Figure 20 Two sides of Victoria Crescent Street](image)

**Design Considerations:**

As a piece of the city’s shared multicultural history, Chinese immigration history could provide design elements as a “bridge” to link with other parts. Also, the multicultural design is suggested to be integrated into small environment/facilities improvement, such as signage, bike facility, lights and so on.

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20 Source: Author
Furthermore, other “culture sites” can consider to some extent highlight their cultural theme, in this way, to integrate and improve the city’s unique cultural character.

Figure 21 "Specific Cultural Theme" Site Design

21 Source: Author
Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1. Conclusion

The cultural diversification is an approach to help people to further understand their own culture and position their identity by comparing other cultures, in fact, some degree of cultural conflict, which supports the “negotiation of ethnic difference” (Amin, 2002, p.959), could enhance the intercultural understanding. With an increasing globalization, the cultural fusion has become an unavoidably general trend, what way should be chose to treat “difference” and respond the inter-culture impact? All the areas have to give their own answers, including the more mono-cultural countries. The different answers produce different results, such as some kind of “forced fusion” have been widely criticized for bringing a series of negative consequences; thus, focusing on reducing ethnic conflicts and minimizing social costs, a more gentle and gradual approach is suggested rather than taking tough measures; Canada’s answer is “multiculturalism”, which is more consistent with this thinking, many valued experiences can be learned from it.

Beyond the current multiculturalism practice especially high-level policies, from a community planning perspective, multiculturalism could be further explored in a more harmonious way: emphasizing the diversity does not mean separate, which is a development opportunity than just a threat; addressing multiculturalism, this wicked problem, in a long term with “non-independent solutions”. Due to the complexity of multiculturalism, it is almost impossible to address this issue in one or two fields, it could not just count on the government or business investment to independently solve it; thus the cooperation between different sections are needed. Especially in community planning, how multiculturalism can be integrated into the city development and improvement program, and how it expands planners’ role? At the
same time, a gap exists among the macro multicultural policies, local communities especially small/mid-sized cities, and the public place making, a connection could be explored to further understand the harmonious multiculturalism; based on the case of Nanaimo, the exploration is from four aspects:

- Exploring harmonious multiculturalism in the physical planning of city public space:

Although there is the growing consideration of multiculturalism in city planning, the physical planning especially the public space-making does not fully reflect this issue. The connection of multicultural planning and public places could be considered in three aspects: the public space has a long history to help the whole city culture shaping (Amin, 2008), the “new element” multiculturalism should be integrated into it; this view is supported by place attachment theories (Low & Altman, 1992; Brierley-Newell, 1997; Rishbeth, 2001; Morgan, 2010), which recently paying attention to immigration issue (Rishbeth, 2001) and community common ground building (Manzo & Perkins, 2006); improving the multicultural visibility in daily space is also a key consideration (Wise & Velayutham, 2009; Amin, 2002; Fincher, et al., 2014).

Or say, it further answers a traditional planning question: What should the place design convey? Beyond the purely “geometrical aesthetic” and basic function, what can make a great place? Visualizing multiculturalism into physical place is not a “mechanically multicultural mosaic making”, but it should be properly integrated into place-making principles like the specific use requirement, and fully consider the whole community context. A multicultural place-making should improve the value of public places. Particularly in Nanaimo, as a mid-sized city, large project and big
funding input is unrealistic; thus, a low cost, small and gradually place improvement is suggested.

- **Reviewing Nanaimo’s multicultural history:**

  The multicultural history provides another connection to multiculturalism. Nanaimo has a rich but implicit multicultural history, “visualizing” this shared city memory could provide a foundation of building city common ground and keeping the diverse cultural face; it also provides an approach to further improve the city characteristics and history continuity, such as the specific place making can choose “cultural theme” based on the city’s multicultural history.

- **Discussing Nanaimo’s reality challenges of multiculturalism:**

  According to research interviews, two key considerations are focused on: Firstly, there are limitations of the multicultural activities: due to the funding issue, it is not easy to provide the stable and regular multicultural program in long term; the involvement degree is still limited by the “cultural threshold” like language barrier; there is no enough authentic culture feature, and the activities’ accessibility is still not enough, and so on. Thus, except multicultural activities, place making could be considered as another approach to support a long term, regular, low cost’s multicultural understanding.

  Secondly, planners should further clarify their role based on the increasing multicultural issue. And multicultural issues need long time to deal with, thus to consider it timely will reduce unnecessary social cost losses and provide the more effective solutions.

- **Summarizing recommendations:**
A series of recommendations are suggested, integrating multiculturalism into place-making principles, the place’s multicultural readability should be improved, especially fully consider the various art expression, history factors and place’s using function, which can provide a “passive learning” of multiculturalism in daily life; the social collaboration also should not be ignored, such as VIU. Additionally, based on these recommendations, a visualized concept design is provided to support wide groups understand related suggestions.

6.2. Further Research

When considering future directions for the research, further study could include more interviews and a survey of a broader array of stakeholders; additional research could also test the feedback from communities to assess research conclusions and outcomes. Different formats of research could also be investigated, included a greater focus on quantitative research.

Furthermore, this research focuses on Nanaimo as the study object, undeniably, this city has its specific issue and “unique” character; but multiculturalism is a common issue exists in many different cities. Thus, it is necessary to further learn from the other city’s practice and suggestions to deeper consider this issue.
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Appendix A: Consent Form

Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis:  
Public Spaces Improvement to Expand Multicultural Visibility in Nanaimo

Consent Form

Principal Investigator                                          Student Supervisor
Yi (Danna) Hu, Student                                          Pamela Shaw, PhD MCIP RPP FRCGS
Master of Community Planning Program                           Master of Community Planning Program
Vancouver Island University                                    Vancouver Island University
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Purpose: My name is Danna Hu and I am a student in the Master of Community Planning Program at Vancouver Island University (VIU). My research, entitled “Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis centre” aims to explore if public spaces can be used/improved to actively enhance multicultural integration in the City of Nanaimo. I am hoping to speak to individuals who are directly employed in not-for-profit organizations or local government departments who would be involved in this connection between multiculturalism and public spaces.

Description: If you consent to being interviewed for this study, you will be asked to participate in a 30 to 50 minute research interview (at your workplace or any other public location you choose). You will be provided with the research questions in advance of the interview. You will be asked a series of questions on the connection between multiculturalism and public spaces. With your permission, the interview would be audio recorded.
You can withdraw from the interview at any time and for any reason while the interview is being conducted. You may also choose not to answer any question for any reason that you are under no obligation to declare.

**Potential Risks and Benefits:** The information collected during the interview would likely be uncontroversial, and thus the research poses only a very small risk of harm to participants. You will have the option of reviewing your interview transcript, and can then decide if you would like to be represented by name/title or by a generic descriptor (staff person, planner).

It is possible that the outcome of this research could involve citations, attributions, or quotes that could have an impact on the professional status of the interview subjects, so you will be offered this opportunity to edit/amend/delete any information in the transcript.

The potential benefits of this research are a more engaged community and the improvement of civic public spaces.

**Confidentiality:**

*Information Management:* All records of participation will be kept confidential, only I will have access to information in which you are identified. Digital data will be stored on a laptop and a flash drive (both password protected). All printed materials will be stored in a locked file drawer at Vancouver Island University; only I will have the key to that drawer. Data will be deleted and shredded at the end of the project, approximately July 2019.

*Information Use:* The research data will be compiled into a written report (Major Project) to meet the graduation requirements of the Master of Community Planning program, and will be presented in an oral defense during a university presentation. Information about your participation in the research will only be made in the way you approve, below (see check boxes).

*Participation:* Your participation is completely voluntary. After the interviews, you will be provided a copy of your transcript and can amend/alter/edit any portion of the transcript in any way. You are asked to provide this response within three weeks (15 business days) after this interview. You may withdraw from the research at any time up to that point (following the completed interview, and prior to the return of the edited transcript) without any penalty or declared reason.
Consent

I have read and understand the information provided above, and hereby consent to participate in this research under the following conditions:

I consent to the interview being audio recorded.  

Yes  No

For the next three items, you may choose more than one, one only, or none (depending on how you wish to be identified in the research):

a) I consent to having name published as part of this research  

Yes  No

b) I consent to having my job title published as part of this research (note: this would be a term such as “the Heritage Planner” or other identifier that would be known to apply to you.)  

Yes  No

c) I consent to being referred to by a generic descriptor in this research (for example, planner or staff person).  

Yes  No

I consent to being quoted in this research (as directly taken from the interview transcript).  

Yes  No

I understand that I will be provided with a copy of my transcript, and I will respond with any edits or changes within 3 weeks (15 business days) of this interview.  

Yes  No

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and I may withdraw from this research at any time prior to providing the finalized changes of my transcript back to the researcher.  

Yes  No
Participant Name ____________________________ Participant Signature ________________________

Date _______________________________________

Commitment of Principal Investigator

I, Yi (Danna) Hu, promise to adhere to the procedures described in this consent form.

Investigator Signature _________________________ Date _____________________

Concerns about your Treatment in the Research

If you have any concerns about your treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the VIU Research Ethics Board by telephone at 250-740-6631 or by email at reb@viu.ca.

If you have any questions about this research, or would like more information, please feel free to contact me at the e-mail address below:

Yi (Danna) Hu
MCP Student, Vancouver Island University
Danne0421@gmail.com

Or contact my supervisor:

Pamela Shaw, PhD MCIP RPP FRCGS
Pam.Shaw@viu.ca
250.753.3245 extension 2620
Appendix B: Recruitment Process

Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis: 
Public Spaces Improvement to Expand Multicultural Visibility in Nanaimo

Recruitment Process

**Principal Investigator**
Yi (Danna) Hu, Student
Master of Community Planning Program
Vancouver Island University
Danne0421@gmail.com

**Student Supervisor**
Pamela Shaw, PhD MCIP RPP FRCGS
Master of Community Planning Program
Vancouver Island University
Pam.Shaw@viu.ca

1. Researcher will search out potential interview subjects from publically available website information (lists of staff)

2. Interviewees will be sent an email requesting their participation in the research. The email will read:

   Good Morning/Afternoon (Name of Potential Participant):
   My name is Danna Hu and I am a student in the Master of Community Planning Program at Vancouver Island University (VIU). My research, entitled “Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis centre” aims to explore if public spaces can be used/improved to actively enhance multicultural integration in the City of Nanaimo. I am hoping to speak to individuals who are directly employed in not-for-
profit organizations or local government departments who would be involved in this connection between multiculturalism and public spaces.

If you consent to being interviewed for this study, you will be asked to participate in a 30 to 50 minute research interview (at your workplace or any other public location you choose). You will be provided with the research questions in advance of the interview. You will be asked a series of questions on the connection between multiculturalism and public spaces. With your permission, the interview would be audio recorded.

You can withdraw from the interview at any time and for any reason, with no repercussions.

The information collected during the interview would be likely uncontroversial, and thus the research poses only a very small risk of harm to participants. You will have the option of reviewing your interview transcript, and can then decide if you would like to be represented by name/title or by a generic descriptor (staff person, planner).

It is possible that the outcome of this research could involve citations, attributions, or quotes that could have an impact on the professional status of the interview subjects, so you will be offered this opportunity to edit/amend/delete any information in the transcript.

The potential benefits of this research are a more engaged community and the improvement of civic public spaces.
Please let me know by return email if you are interested in participating in this research, and thank you very much for your consideration.

Danna Hu, Student
Master of Community Planning Program, Vancouver Island University

3. If the potential participant responds in the affirmative, the interview will be scheduled.
4. The researcher will carefully review the consent form with the potential participant.
5. Should they agree to participate, the consent form will be read and signed by the participant before the interview start.
6. The interview will be conducted.
7. The participant will determine how they would like to be referred to in the research (note: this may be changed at any time in the process of reviewing the transcript up to the final approval of the transcript).
8. Consents will be made in duplicate. As most interviews will be face to face, the researcher will leave a signed consent form with the participant. If the interview is conducted by phone or Skype, the signed consent forms will be sent back and forth by email or fax.
9. Interviewees will be provided with a transcript of their interviews after the completion of the interview. They can make any amendments/additions/deletion edits to the transcript and will be requested to do so within 3 weeks (15 business days).
10. It will be emphasized that participation is completely voluntary and the participant may withdraw for any reason without explanation and without penalty.
11. Once the interviewee has signed off on the transcript, the information will be used in the study as permitted by the participant.
12. Interviewees can choose not to answer any question for any reason.
Appendix C: Interview Questions (a)

Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis:
Public Spaces Improvement to Expand Multicultural Visibility in Nanaimo

Interview Questions with Planners, Staff at Local Governments

Principal Investigator
Yi (Danna) Hu, Student
Master of Community Planning Program
Vancouver Island University
Danne0421@gmail.com

Student Supervisor
Pamela Shaw, PhD MCIP RPP FRCGS
Master of Community Planning Program
Vancouver Island University
Pam.Shaw@viu.ca

1. Could you describe for me Nanaimo’s/Vancouver’s multicultural history?

2. Do you think this multicultural history is reflected in the city’s character? More specifically, in the public spaces in the city (parks, open spaces, street art)?

3. From a score of 1 to 10, how would you rate the current status of multicultural recognition in public spaces in the city?

4. When there is a festival or gathering, where does it usually take place? If there is any design deficiency in these places hindering intercultural communication, especially the service facilities and site design flaws (such as the need for more seating, multilingual signage in gathering places)?

5. What are your thoughts on the development of different multicultural themes in different public spaces?

6. Has the city completed a multicultural study/report (including and beyond Statistics Canada information)?
7. Are you familiar with any policies or regulations that relate to multiculturalism and public spaces?

8. What recommendations would you make on this topic?

9. How can the city relate public spaces to changing demographics (increasing immigration from a wider range of nations?)

10. What problems do you foresee in integrating multiculturalism and public spaces?

11. Do you know of any good examples of multiculturalism in public spaces world-wide that you have seen or are familiar with?

12. Beyond the built environment, are there activities or programs that you would recommend that could help to increase the visibility of multiculturalism in public spaces?

13. Do you think it is possible to enhance intercultural communications through the built environment or programmed activities?

14. How should multiculturalism be addressed in the development/public space planning process? In long range plans? Zoning?

15. Any other comments or questions?

16. Is there someone else you feel I should interview? If so, will you provide them with my contact information? If they contact me I will send them a recruitment email. I will not contact them directly without them first contacting me.
Appendix D: Interview Questions (b)

Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis:
Public Spaces Improvement to Expand Multicultural Visibility in Nanaimo

Interview Questions with staff of multicultural organizations

Principal Investigator                                      Student Supervisor
Yi (Danna) Hu, Student                                      Pamela Shaw, PhD MCIP RPP FRCGS
Master of Community Planning Program                        Master of Community Planning Program
Vancouver Island University                                  Vancouver Island University
Danne0421@gmail.com                                          Pam.Shaw@viu.ca

1. Could you describe your organization’s role in multiculturalism in Nanaimo/Vancouver?

2. Could you describe for me the city’s multicultural history?

3. Do you think this multicultural history is reflected in the city’s character? More specifically, in the public spaces in the city (parks, open spaces, street art)

4. From a score of 1 to 10, how would you rate the current status of multicultural recognition in public spaces in the city?

5. When there is a festival or gathering, where does it usually take place? If there is any design deficiency in these places hindering intercultural communication, especially the service facilities and site design flaws (such as the need for more seating, multilingual signage in gather places)?

6. What are your thoughts on the development of different multicultural themes in different public spaces?
7. Has your organization completed any studies/reports on multiculturalism in the city?

8. Are you familiar with any city policies or regulations that relate to multiculturalism and public spaces?

9. What recommendations would you make on this topic?

10. How can the city relate public spaces to changing demographics (increasing immigration from a wider range of nations?)

11. What problems do you foresee in integrating multiculturalism and public spaces?

12. Do you know of any good examples of multiculturalism in public spaces worldwide that you have seen or are familiar with?

13. Beyond the built environment, are there activities or programs that you would recommend that could help to increase the visibility of multiculturalism in public spaces?

14. Do you think it is possible to enhance intercultural communications through the built environment or programmed activities?

15. Any other comments or questions?

16. Is there someone else you feel I should interview? If so, will you provide them with my contact information? If they contact me I will send them a recruitment email. I will not contact them directly without them first contacting me.
Appendix E: Ethics Approval Letter

June 23, 2017

Hello Yi (Danna) Hu,

The Vancouver Island University Research Ethics Board (REB) has reviewed your revised application for ethical review for the project entitled “Harmonious Multiculturalism in a Non-metropolis: Public Spaces Improvement to Expand Multicultural Visibility in Nanaimo.”

I am pleased to relay that your application is approved as resubmitted.

For your records:

REB Protocol: 2017-034-VIUS-HU
Date of Approval: June 23, 2017
Expiry Date: June 22, 2018

We wish you the very best with your research!

Sincerely,

p.p. VIU Research Ethics Board

Chris Turner

Research Ethics Officer | https://www2.viu.ca/reb/ | reb@viu.ca

Animal Care Committee Coordinator | https://www2.viu.ca/animalcare/ | acc@viu.ca

Vancouver Island University | Building 305 / Room 460 | (250) 740-6631 | chris.turner@viu.ca