

STREET FOOD
STREET FOOD
STREET FO



ROOT IN FOOD

WONG HAU CHING

DAAI
PAAI
DONG



CANTONESE CUISINE





ABSTRACT

Food is a vital aspect of Hong Kong's identity, characterized by a multicultural culinary scene shaped by historical influences. While renowned as a "Gourmet Paradise," the food and beverage industry faces decline, with revenues struggling to recover post-pandemic and many long-standing restaurants closing. In response, the Hong Kong government is investing in culinary tourism initiatives, such as "Night Vibe Hong Kong," to attract visitors. However, these efforts may only provide temporary relief without addressing the underlying needs of the local food system. This project seeks to connect food tourism with the local community through community-based tourism, fostering a resilient and inclusive food culture that empowers local businesses, enhances cultural appreciation, and promotes economic sustainability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my project supervisor, Professor Hendrik Tiben, for his continuous support throughout my Capstone Project. As my first individual urban design project, his professional knowledge and encouragement have been invaluable to my progress.

I also extend my thanks to all the guest reviewers for their insightful comments, which played a crucial role in refining my work and enhancing the project's maturity.

My warmest gratitude goes to the Yau Ma Tei community. Their active participation in interviews and willingness to share their stories and insights made this project possible.

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Thank you to everyone for your kind support and participation in this memorable experience.

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PROJECT BRIEF



In its early days, before it was known as “Hong Kong,” the territory served as a strategic port for European and Asian sailors

Dried fish from the region was highly valuable. In the pre-refrigeration era, haam yu became a staple, providing sustenance for sailors.

Hong Kong’s culinary scene is also shaped by its fishing culture, with seafood as a key food source. Dishes, such as typhoon shelter cuisine, reflect the area’s history as a bustling harbor.

TO CONTI

OOT IN FOOD

FOOD CULTURE IN HONG KONG



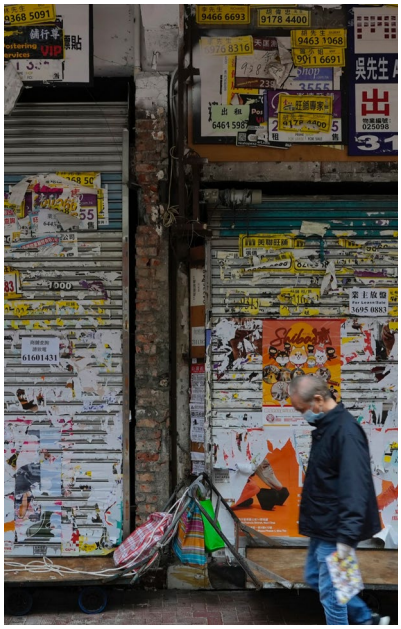
As Hong Kong recovered from World War II, it embraced manufacturing, driving rapid development and population growth. Additionally, British culinary traditions from the colonial period have influenced local tastes in this period.

This era introduced factory-produced foods like white bread, peanut butter, evaporated milk, and instant noodles, giving rise to the unique cha chaan teng diner.



Street food culture is deeply rooted in Hong Kong's food industry. After World War II, the colonial government issued hawker licenses to families as a means of poverty alleviation, allowing them to operate food stalls and earn a living.

From street vendors to Dai Pai Dongs and hawker bazaars, these elements highlight the strong connection between Hong Kong's culinary culture and its vibrant street life.



Food is a vital part of Hong Kong's identity, earning it the titles of "Gourmet Paradise" and "World's Fair of Food." However, it now seems to be losing its prominence.

The closure of traditional restaurants in favor of chain eateries and international brands has become normalized among Hong Kong citizens.

Is Food Culture declining? Is Hong Kong becoming less unique in its culinary offerings?

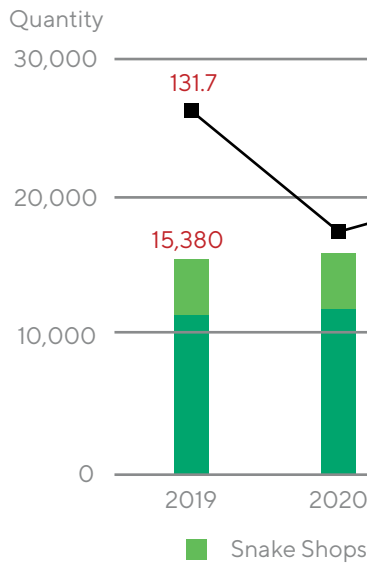
NUE? COME TO AN END?

02

BACKGROUND STUDY

Overview

Relationship bewtween Re



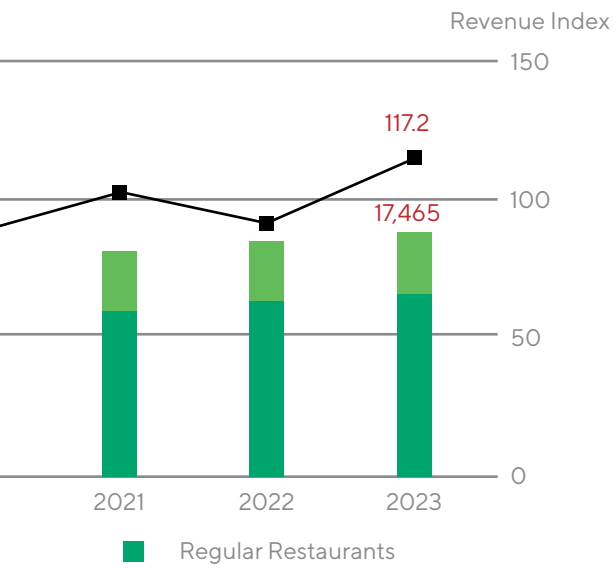
Key Findings



OOT IN FOOD

FOOD CHALLENGES IN HONG KONG

staurants Revenues and Number of Restaurants



15% Decrease
in food market revenue before and after pandemic

13.7% Increase
in restaurants in the market

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Hong Kong's food and beverage industry starting in late 2019. Although revenue is gradually recovering, it has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels. Despite an increase in the number of restaurants, market competition has intensified.

(Census,2024)

Intense Competition in Food Market

LY ← **13.7%** Increase in restaurants

15% Decrease in food market revenue → DEMAND

INBOUND TOURIST

DOMESTIC

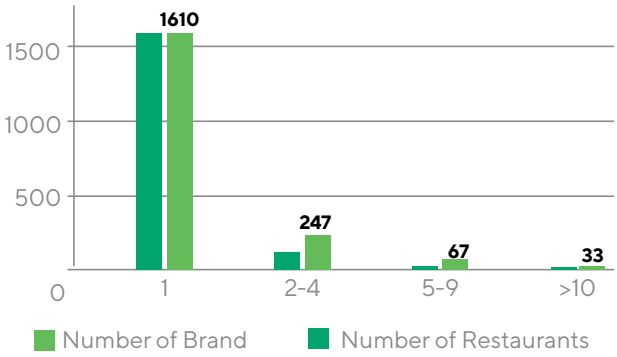
CHALLENGES - SUPPLY PERSPECTIVES

In response to the growing number of restaurants in Hong Kong, the food supply side is undergoing significant changes due to intense market competition, leading to shifts in market composition and the characteristics of food businesses.

MONOPOLISTIC PRESSURE

In response to the growing number of restaurants in Hong Kong, the food supply side is undergoing significant changes due to intense market competition, leading to shifts in market composition and the characteristics of food businesses.

Characteristics of Shutted Down Restaurants in Post- pandemic(2021 - 2023)

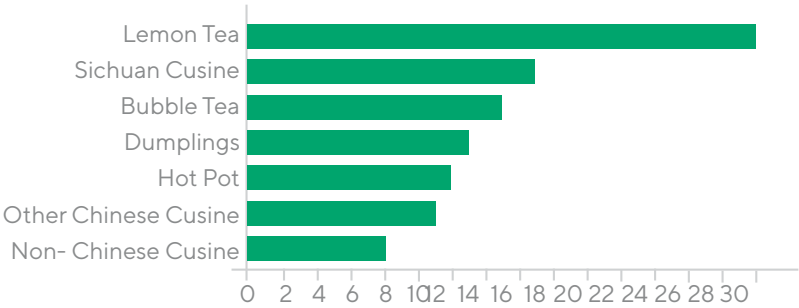


82% loss
in small-business-size restaurants

13.7% Increase
in restaurants in the market

(Census,2024)

Mainland popular brand restaurants opened in Hong Kong (2022-2023)



20% Increase
mainland brand contribution to total restaurant increase

106 chain brand store
open in 2023

(Mr. Lam, Chief Operating Officer of Midland Realty, 2023)



Over 40 Mainland brands registered in HK
20-30 brands already opened physical stores

CHALLENGES - DEMAND PERSPECTIVES

In response to the declining revenue from restaurants, several factors are affecting domestic consumption and inbound tourist spending in the food market.

SHIFT TOWARDS MAINLAND COMSUMPTION (DOMESTIC)

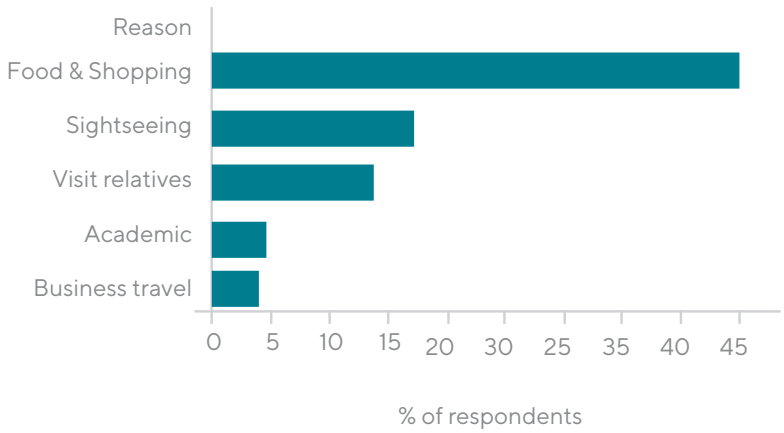
A shift toward mainland consumption has led to an increase in domestic spending on the local food market, which is contributing to the declining revenue in Hong Kong. As consumers increasingly seek dining experiences across the border, local restaurants are experiencing reduced patronage. This trend not only affects sales but also diminishes the overall vibrancy of Hong Kong's culinary scene

Number of times visiting Mainland compare to pre-pandemic period in Hong Kong



Consumption in mainland China has become a trend for Hong Kong residents, particularly in the post-pandemic period. A survey by the Asian Tourism Exchange Centre (2024) reveals that over 50% of respondents have a greater incentive to visit the mainland compared to the pre-pandemic period.

Reasons for Hong Kong people visiting Mainland



Additionally, 45% of respondents cited lower food costs in the mainland as the primary draw for cross-border consumption. As mainland provinces become increasingly attractive, Hong Kong continues to lose its local customer base, which undermines support for the local food and beverage industry.

(Asian Tourism Exchange Centre, 2024)

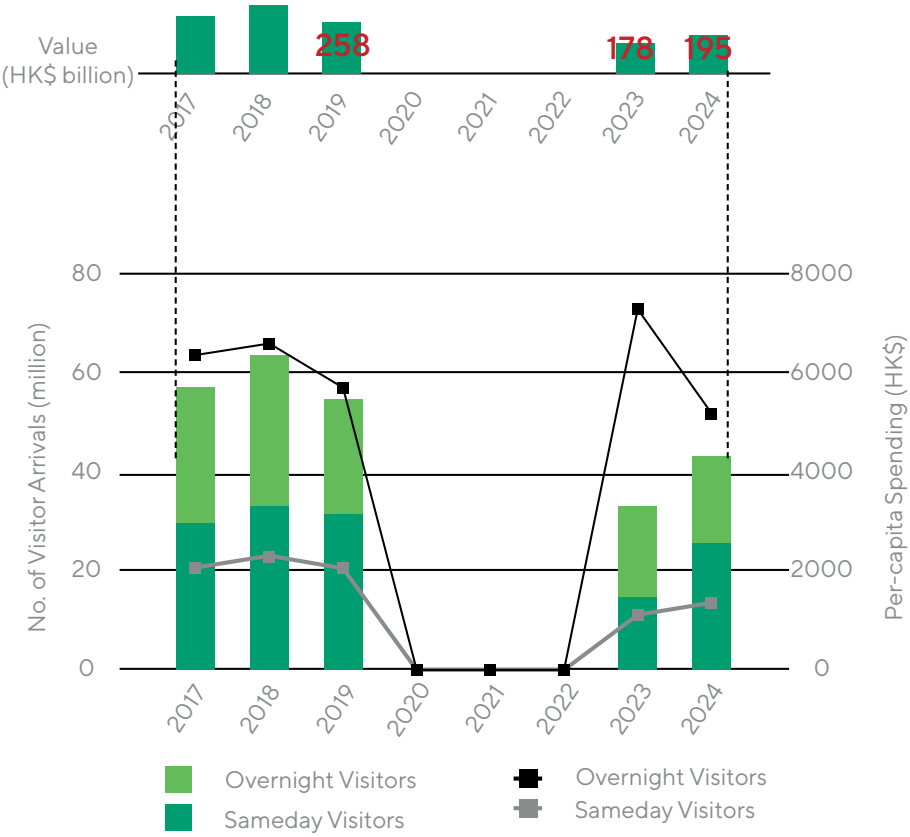
CHALLENGES - DEMAND PERSPECTIVES

In response to the declining revenue from restaurants, several factors are affecting domestic consumption and inbound tourist spending in the food market.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC (INBOUND TOURISTS)

In response to the growing number of restaurants in Hong Kong, the food supply side is undergoing significant changes due to intense market competition, leading to shifts in market composition and the characteristics of food businesses.

Total Inbound Tourism Expenditure



(HK Tourism Board, 2024)

20.3% Decrease
in total visitors, not yet bounced back from pandemic

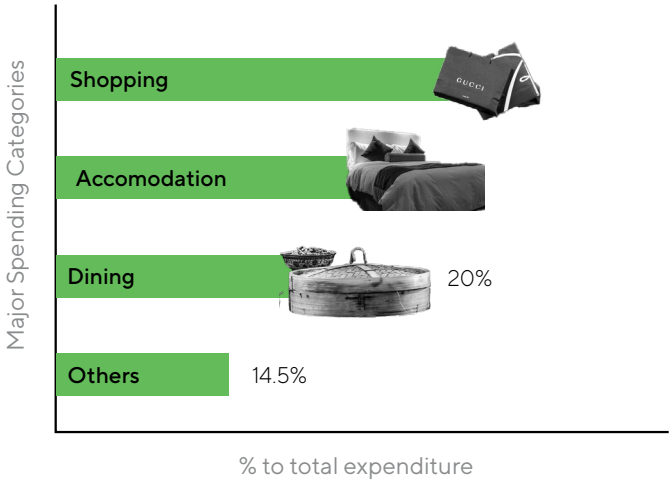
38.5% Decrease
in sameday visitors spending after pandemic

~50% Overnight Visitors
Foreign tourists

~50% Sameday Visitors
Mainland tourists

The pandemic severely impacted the tourism industry, causing income to drop to zero from 2020 to 2022. Although there was a slight recovery in 2023, tourist spending had not returned to pre-pandemic levels by 2024, reflecting a 24.4% decrease in total inbound tourism expenditure. This decline has resulted in a shrinking consumer base.

Consumption Pattern (Overnight Tourist)

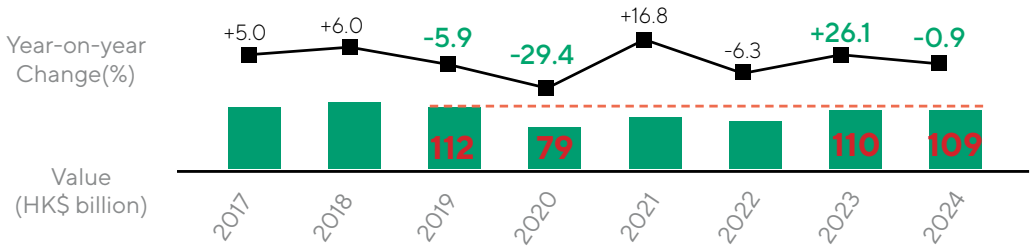


In Hong Kong, food and tourism are interdependent, with tourists typically allocating an average of 20% of their spending to dining and food-related expenditures. This substantial share of tourism revenue significantly supports the food industry, highlighting its crucial role in the overall economy.

Culinary experiences are often a primary attraction for visitors, driving demand for local restaurants and food vendors.

Hong Kong Total Restaurant Receipts

(HK Tourism Board, 2024)



2.7% Decrease only

Relatively fast recovery on food industry, already bounced back from pandemic

GREAT ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

in Food Industry

In Hong Kong, food and tourism are interdependent, with tourists typically allocating an average of 20% of their spending to dining and food-related expenditures. This substantial share of tourism revenue significantly supports the food industry, highlighting its crucial role in the overall economy.

Government also seems to notice the opportunity in food industry, and started food-related events in most tourist visiting district - Yau Tsim Mong



Night Vibe HK (left: Yau Ma Tei, right: Tsim Sha Tsui)

03

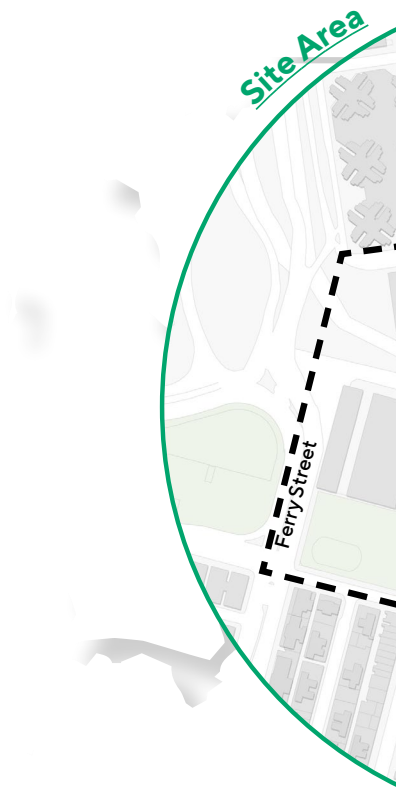
SITE SELECTION

Center Part of Tourism District

Yau Tsim Mong District is the most visited area by tourists in Hong Kong. Visitors typically begin their exploration at one of two endpoints—either Mong Kok or Tsim Sha Tsui. Yau Ma Tei serves as a transitional hub in the middle of this journey, connecting the bustling streets and attractions of both neighborhoods.

Searching for new identity

Yau Ma Tei, one of Hong Kong's most popular tourist destinations, is also grappling with economic and social vulnerabilities. As the government prioritizes redevelopment and introduces new attractions like Night Vibe Hong Kong, the area is undergoing a significant transformation. This pivotal moment calls for a reevaluation of the space's purpose and the communities it aims to serve. Stakeholders must consider how to balance tourism growth with the needs of local residents, ensuring that the redevelopment fosters inclusivity and preserves the unique character of Yau Ma Tei.



OOT IN FOOD

YAU MA TEI



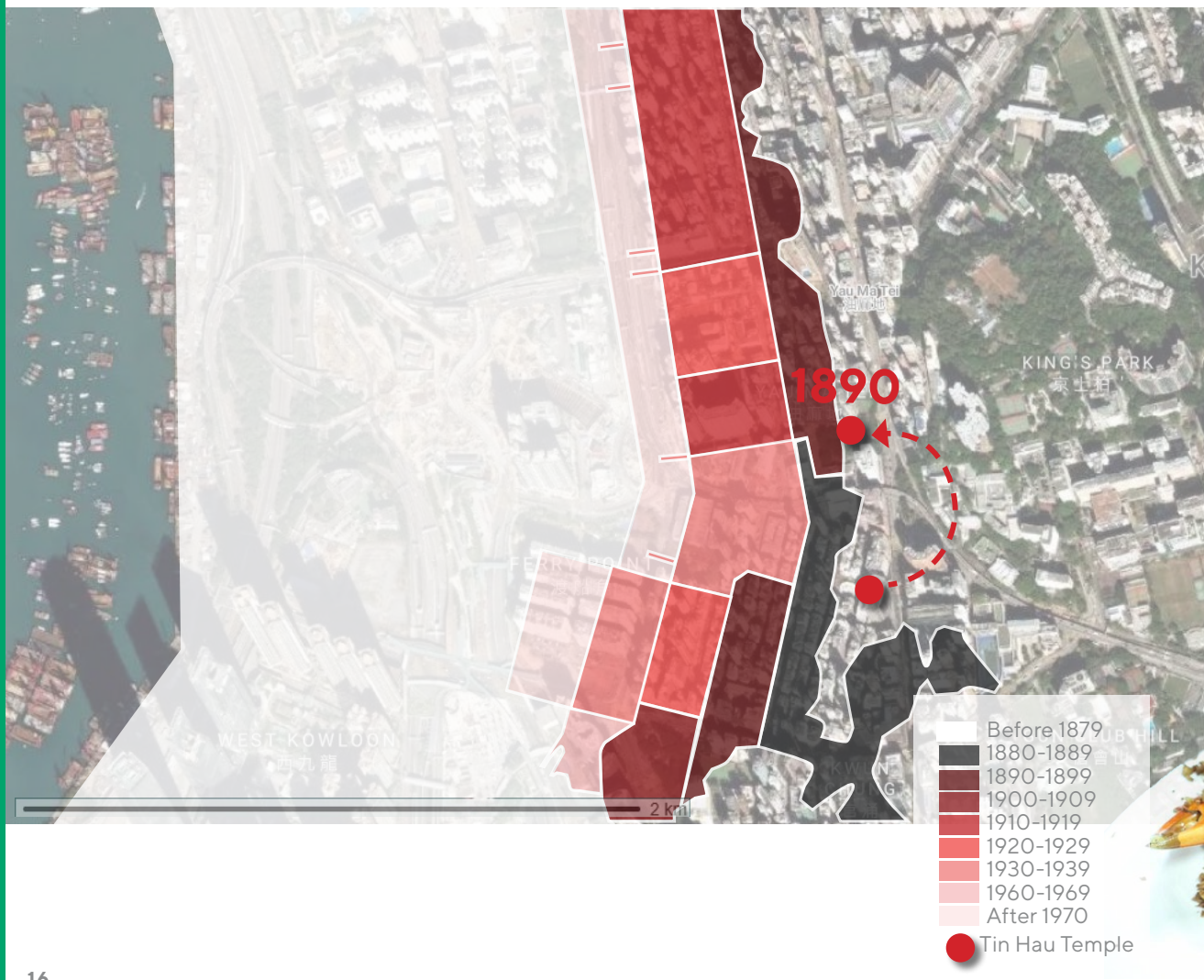


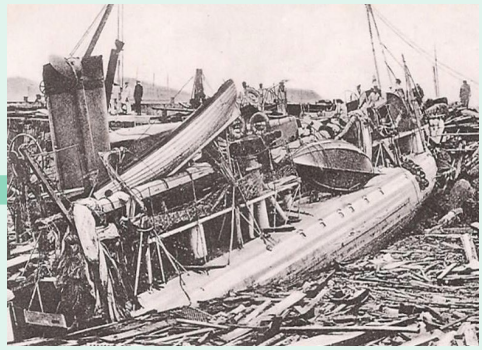
FOOD CULTURE

YAU MA TEI

FISHERMAN FOOD CULTURE

Yau Ma Tei was once developed along the coastal region, with the Tin Hau Temple established by fishermen in the early 1900s to safeguard their sea journeys and fish harvests. This area has a rich food history deeply connected to fishing culture, representing a significant part of Hong Kong's past.





1906

Devastating "French Destroyer Fronde" leaving Yau Ma Tei's coastline in ruins. "Typhoon Shelter Construction Ordinance" in 1909. Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter was built.





1970s

In the 1970s, approximately 5,000 boat households in Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter.



1990s

In the early 1990s, the government launched infrastructure projects in West Kowloon. They relocated fishermen from Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter to onshore areas.

TYPHOON SHELTER CUISINE



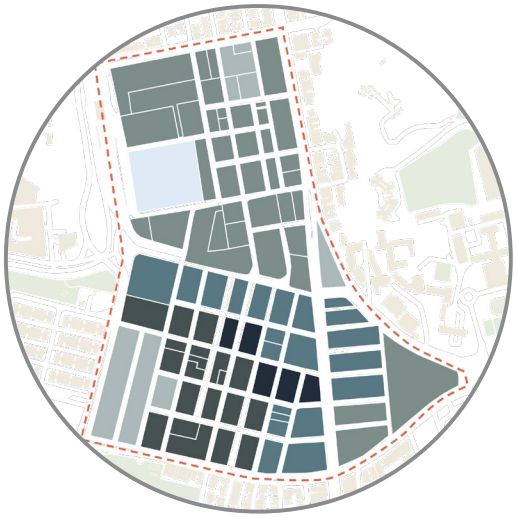
For decades, the old Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter has served not only as a refuge for boats from storms but also as a showcase for unique typhoon shelter cuisine, such as fried crab and fried clams, along with a vibrant street culture.

FOOD CULTURE

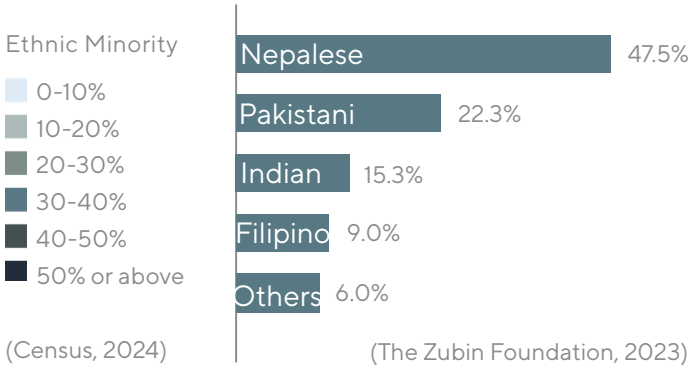
YAU MA TEI

MULTINATIONAL FOOD CULTURE

During the founding of Hong Kong, many Indians and Pakistanis who served in the British military or were employed by British firms were stationed in Hong Kong, working across various industries. They often stayed for long periods, settling down and establishing roots in the city.



Community Composition (2023)



(Census, 2024)

(The Zubin Foundation, 2023)

Many ethnic minorities have established roots in Yau Ma Tei, considering Hong Kong their home and continuing to live here today, with many speaking fluent Cantonese and English. This ethnic population plays a significant role in Yau Ma Tei's food culture. Additionally, the Yau Tsim Mong district has the highest percentage of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.







Photos taken by author, Halal Food Festival 2025

STREET FOOD CULTURE

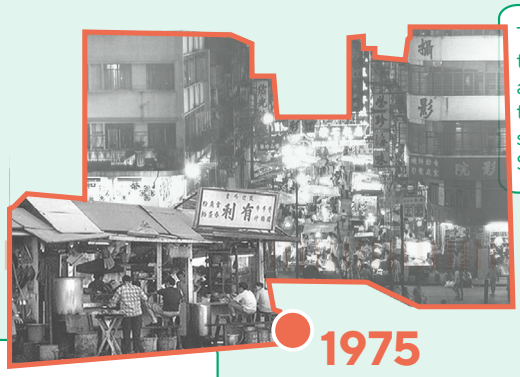
Street culture is a vital part of Yau Ma Tei's food scene, with Temple Street as a prime example. As the first pedestrian street for hawkers in Hong Kong, it is famous for its vibrant atmosphere and diverse food offerings.



The area flourished with numerous cooked food vendors, especially along "Public Square Street."

As the colonial government established public square zoning in front of Tin Hau Temple, known as "Yung Shu Tau," a vibrant open-air recreational area emerged.

1920



This development paved the way for the proposed Community Centre. To accommodate hawkers displaced by this project, the government allocated small stalls along Yau Ma Tei Street and Shanghai Street.

However, this transition was not without conflict. Hawkers staged sit-in protests against the government's registration and stall designation, some even lying on the ground to express their discontent over the reduced space.

1975

Temple Street soon became the first officially designated hawker area, with over 600 spots for vendors to sell their goods. Street life and food culture start to cultivate in the area.



(東網，2018)



The government introduced a compensation scheme to encourage license holders to return their permits and relocate to municipal cooked food centers, marking a significant shift in Yau Ma Tei's culinary landscape.

1986

What can it possibily be ?



Yau Ma Tei is facing restructuring under redevelopment and government ambitious to promote its tourism (Night Vibe HK)

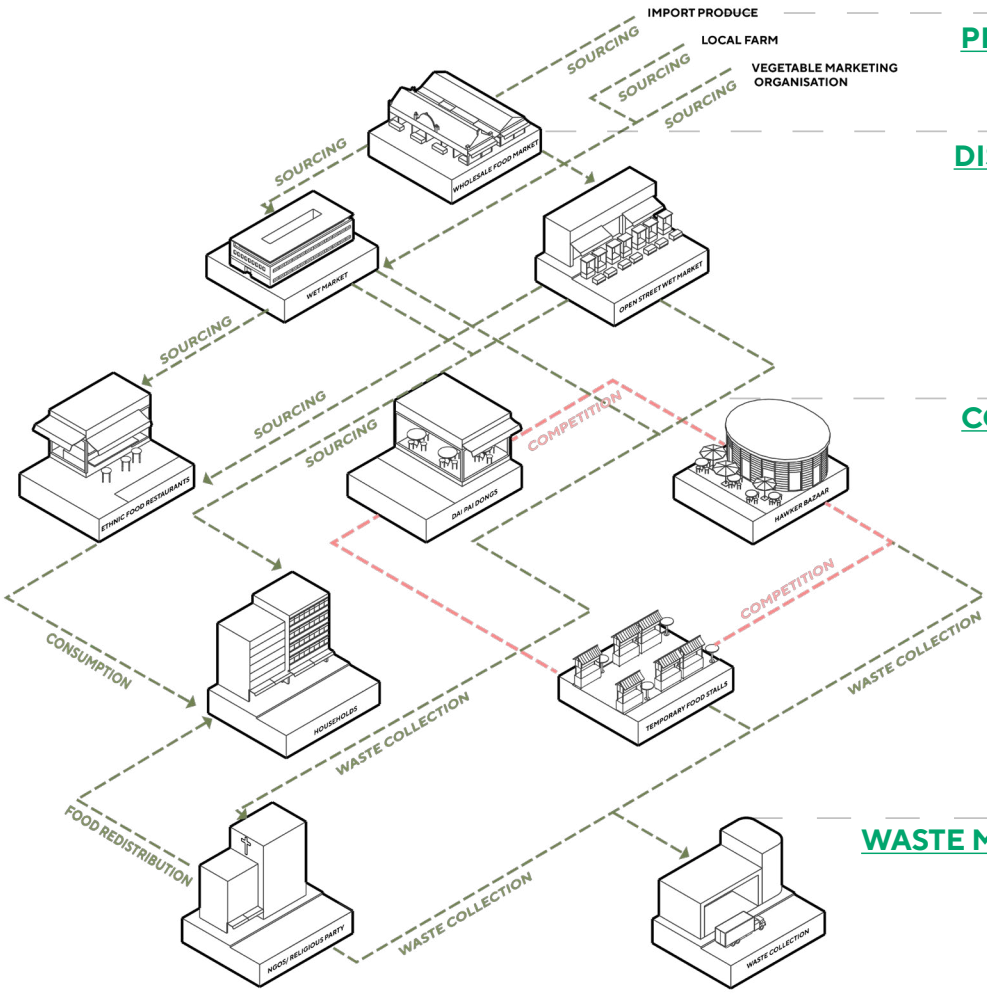
Now

FOOD SYSTEM

YAU MA TEI

FOOD SYSTEM HIERACHY

The local food business in Yau Ma Tei is unique, supported by a hierarchy of enterprises from distribution to waste management, engaging many stakeholders. The graph on the summarizes these relationships



Huge food market across different hierachy in food system

The local food business in Yau Ma Tei is unique, supported by a hierarchy of enterprises from distribution to waste management, engaging many stakeholders. The graph on the left summarizes these relationships

DISTRIBUTION & ACCESS



Wholesale Fruit Market



Wet Market



Open-air Wet Market

CONSUMPTION



Hawker Bazaar



Dai Pai Dongs



Temporary Food Stalls

Common problem of economic unsustainability

Common problems of economic unsustainability in Yau Ma Tei's food system include:

- **Inheritance difficulties**

  Hawker licenses cannot be passed to the next generation due to government policies, and low profit margins make it hard to attract younger entrepreneurs

- **Low Consumption power**

  The local community's limited purchasing power affects restaurant viability

- **High Competition**

  A saturated market with many restaurants leads to fierce competition and lower margins

- **Lack of Innovation**

  A reliance on traditional practices may hinder the adoption of new business models or culinary trends.

- **Waste Management Challenges**

  Inefficient waste disposal and recycling practices contribute to economic and environmental strain

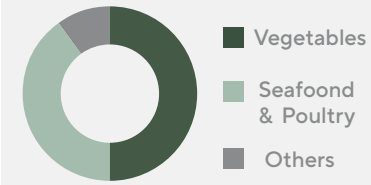
DISTRIBUTION & ACCESS

Wet Market places a important role in the community food access, however, the wet market is now underused, opportunities can be discovered in the areas.

WET MARKET



Shop Composition

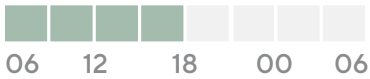


Business inside the wet market with less visitor flows compare to the open street market

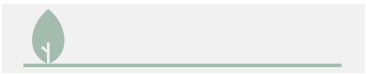
Price



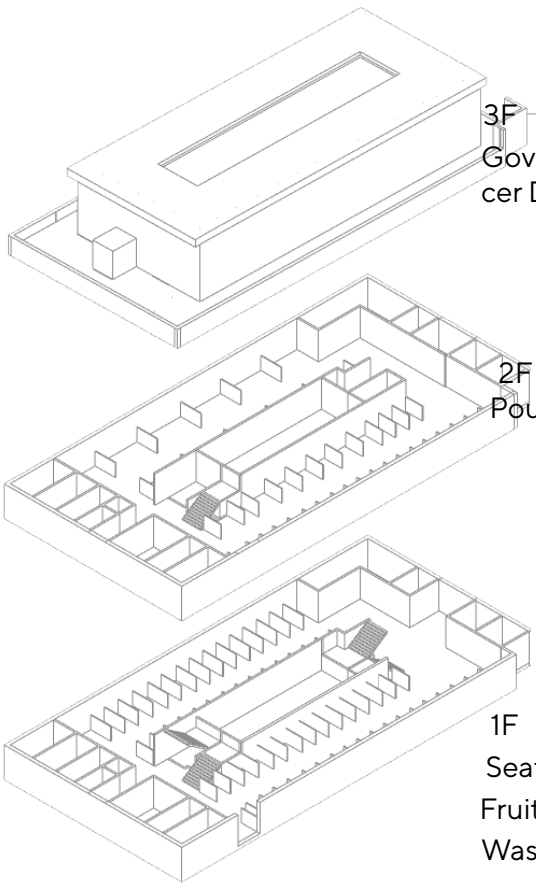
Opening Hours



Use of Public Space



difficulties



3F
Government Officer Dorm

Inactivate Area

The third floor, once a government officer dormitory, is now an unused rooftop area

2F
Poultry Processing

High Vacancy Area

The situation is even worse on the second floor, where high vacancy rates have led to many stalls being reclaimed

1F
Seafood
Fruits & vegetables
Waste Collection

Low Visitor Flow

Businesses in the wet market experience lower visitor flow compared to the open street

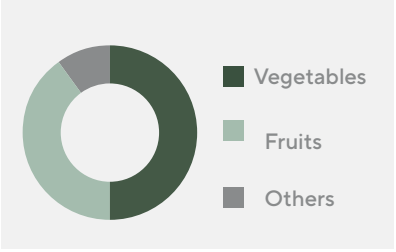
DISTRIBUTION & ACCESS

Open street markets are vital for community food access, but economic unsustainability hinders hawker development and leads to business decline.

OPEN STREET MARKET



Shop Composition

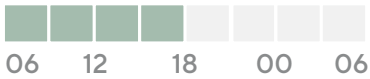


Important buisness to local community with relatively cheap food price

Price



Opening Hours



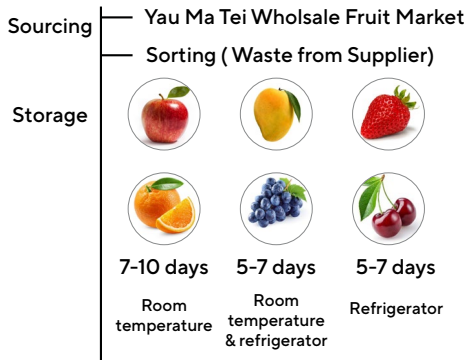
Use of Public Space



difficulties

Hawker (Fruits)

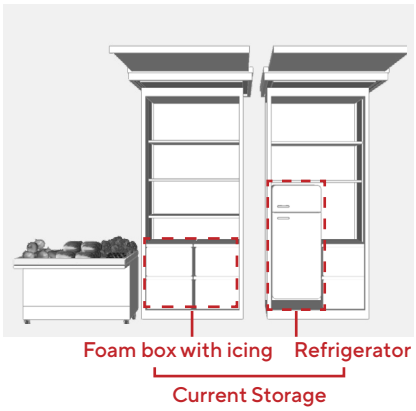


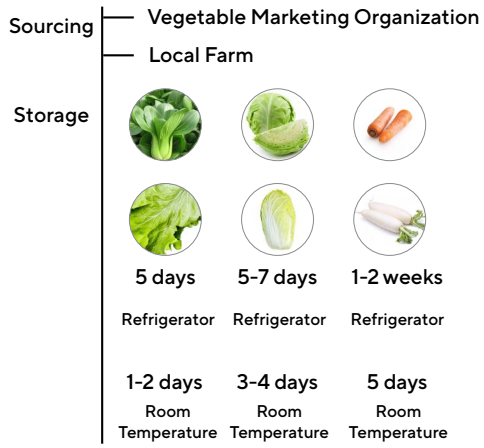


Marginal profit

Open street markets concentrated third-hand sellers who source products from the nearby wholesale fruit market. This reliance leads to low profit margins for these vendors.

Hawker (Vegetables)





Storage problem

Limited operational space makes it difficult to store vegetables, causing them to turn yellow quickly, especially leafy greens.

Waste

Unsold food often becomes waste immediately.

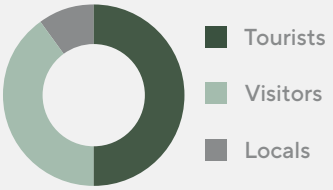
CONSUMPTION (BUSINESS)

Proximity of pop-ups and existing restaurants in the area often cause interest conflicts in sharing the same market in the area. Problem aroused by the newly established pop-ups by government will be illustrated below.

POP-UPS (NIGHT VIBE HK)



Shop Composition



Newly established pop-ups used up street as operation areas

Price



Opening Hours



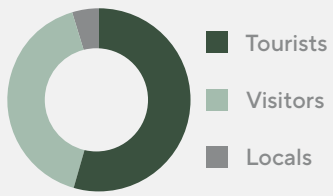
Use of Public Space



DAI PAI DONGS

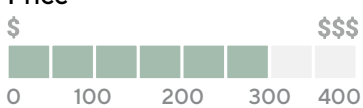


Shop Composition

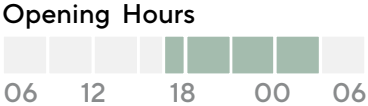


Existing Dai Pai Dongs are regulated, prohibiting them from placing tables on the street.

Price



Opening Hours



Use of Public Space



Before Tighten Regulation

DIFFICULTIES

Ill-targeted initiative

The government is investing in new attractions marketed as representations of traditional food culture for tourists. However, these initiatives often struggle to attract sustainable visitor numbers, resulting in underperformance.



Taken in December 2023



Taken in July 2024

The business is getting hard here!The daily revenue has fallen from around $2,000 to an average of about $400. At its worst, there was a night when the closing amount was only $200!

Mr. Lau, stall owners in Night Vibe HK (2024)

Conflict between Temporary stalls and Restaurants

Temporary food stalls in Temple Street serve as extensions of local restaurants, creating internal competition within the dining landscape. This competition directly impacts customer choices; when visitors opt for street food, they forgo dining in nearby restaurants. As a result, these stalls undermine the very establishments they are linked to, potentially diminishing overall revenue for local businesses.



Competing with themselves
(Street food v.s. Dining in)

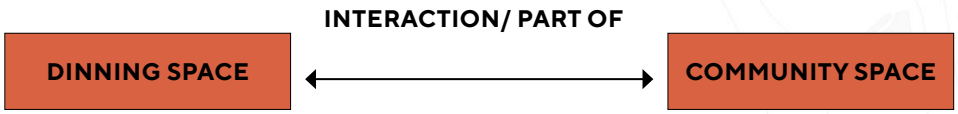
Unequal Opportunity to Participate

This focus on tourist-centric offerings can alienate local customers and restaurant owners, who may feel that their needs and preferences are being overlooked in favour of commercialized experiences that do not authentically reflect the city's culinary heritage.

We're being completely overlooked in this plan just because we're one street away from Temple Street? It's ridiculous! They've taken a chunk of our market share, and we're the ones truly suffering because of it!

Ms. Ng, owners of Spicy Crab on Nam King Street (2024)

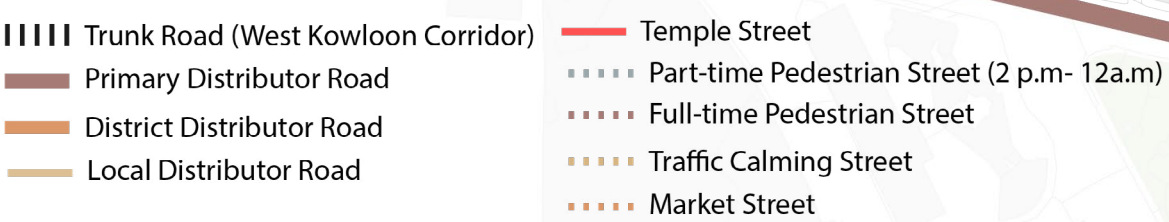
Loosing Iconic Spatial Characteristics of Restaurants



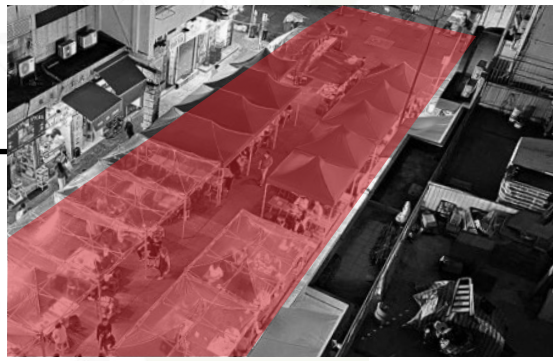
Restaurants along Temple Street are more than dining spots; they are vital community spaces for locals and visitors. The relationship between dining areas and public spaces is evident with clusters of Dai Pai Dongs, which place tables on pedestrian pathways, creating an inviting atmosphere. Unlike traditional restaurants, these open-air eateries attract customers with vibrant displays, lively sounds, and enticing aromas, enriching the street life of Temple Street.

Dai Pai Dongs also serve as community hubs, promoting interaction through food. At the Woosung Street Temporary Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, diners share tables, fostering conversation and connections. This enhances social interaction and community cohesion, enriching the area's cultural fabric.

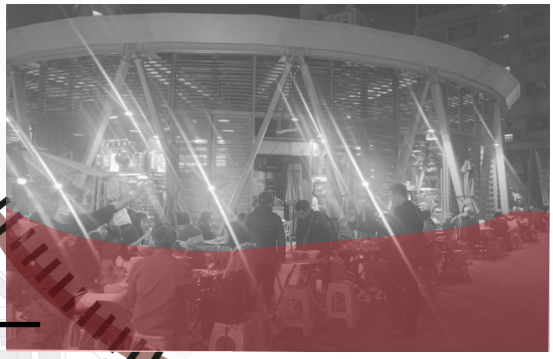
However, this vibrant atmosphere is shifting as new pop-ups replace original restaurants at night. Confusing legislation appears to threaten long-standing culture while promoting a new "Hong Kong style" experience, which may not support existing businesses fairly.



DINING SPACE & PUBLIC SPACE



Woosung Street Temporary Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar





AREA IN RED IS NOW BEING PROHIBITED

CONSUMPTION (BUSINESS)

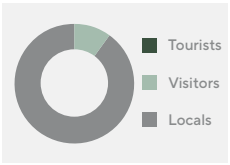
Hawker bazaars, which evolved from street hawkers, now face various legislative constraints that hinder their development. This long-standing food culture is present in Yau Ma Tei, making it a unique and rarely seen aspect of Hong Kong today.

HAWKER BAZAAR (CLOSED)



Reclamation Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, 2023

Customer Composition



Opening Hours

06 12 18 00 06

Price

$ $$$

0 100 200 300 400

Use of Public Space

Dining space as community space

Character

Cha Chaan Teng Food

HK Style

Subsidary

Cheap

Community-oriented

Rating

3.9/5



This is the few low-priced meal choices in the area!



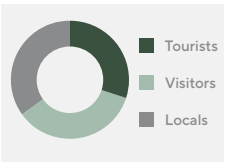
Owners and customers are like family here!

HAWKER BAZAAR



Woosung Street Temporary Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar

Customer Composition



Opening Hours

06 12 18 00 06

Price

$ $$$

0 100 200 300 400

Use of Public Space

Pedestrian Roads

Character

Typhoon Shelter Food

HK Style

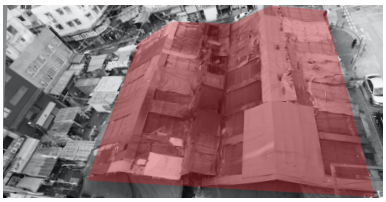
Subsidary

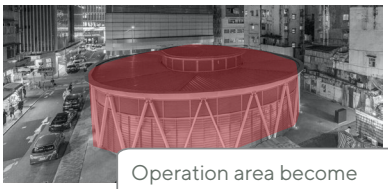
Reasonable Price

Tourist-oriented

Rating

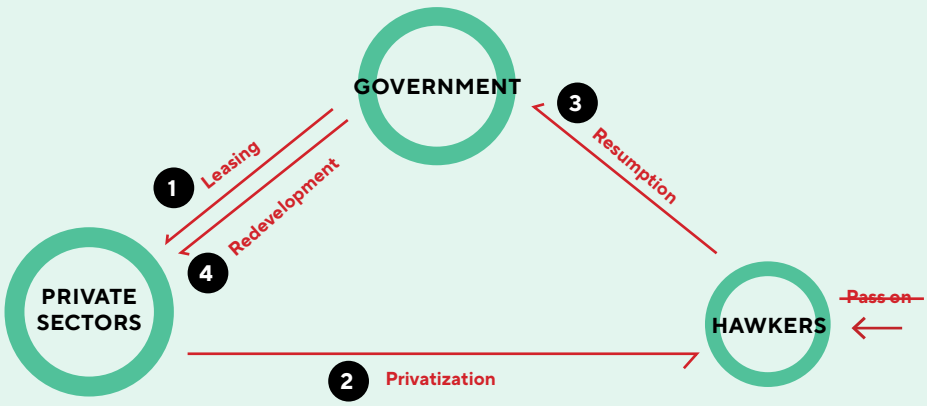
3.6/5





Operation area become much smaller after redevelopment!

Current situation



REGULATORY BURDEN

Regarding the development of Hawker Bazaars in Hong Kong, the government is fading away this special food culture, despite its long history and strong local characteristics, through various measures. Hawkers in Yau Ma Tei face similar challenges.

1 From Leasing to Privatization

The mushroom pavilions are leased by the Housing Department to developers. Many are under redevelopment or revitalization. However, most hawkers cannot survive after privatization due to increased land rent and business size.



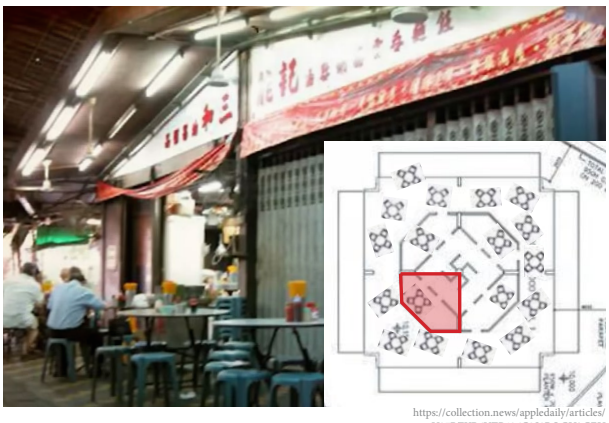
Butterfly Estate Mushroom Pavilion, 2014



Butterfly Estate Mushroom Pavilion, 2022

2 Economic Burden to Culinary Culture

Privatization has altered the operation of food hawkers, affecting business size, costs, and food regulations. Individual hawkers struggle to adapt to rising costs and are often replaced by chain restaurants. The Wong Tai Sin Mushroom Pavilion is an exception, where four hawkers share a single shop after privatization by LINK, operating at different times to serve customers 24/7.



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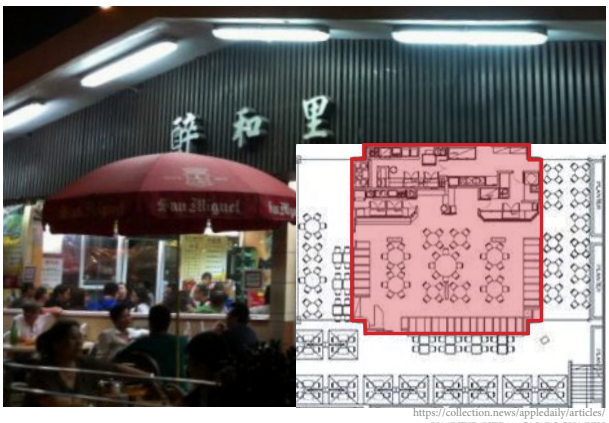
Wong Tai Sin Mushroom Pavilion, 2001



https://collection.news/appledaily/articles/V27RZYB6VZP436C2S3RQGVAGEU

Wong Tai Sin Mushroom Pavilion, 2023

Resumption and Eviction





Infernal Affairs II, Media Asia 2003





Reclamation Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, 2023



Lai Yip Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar



Kwai Wing Road Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, 2023

The redevelopment of food hawker bazaars is mainly driven by high vacancy rates, often displacing hawkers to alternative markets and food centers without considering their preferences or the suitability of new locations. This oversight disrupts established customer bases and diminishes local culinary culture. Additionally, many of these sites remain vacant for several years after displacement.

Redevelopment without Consideration



Lai Yip Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar, 2023



Lai Yip Street Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar (proposed)

Under government-led redevelopment initiatives, hawkers are often excluded from planning. For example, in the Kwun Tong Lai Yip Street Development, the area was turned into a commercial building without provisions for relocating existing hawkers. This oversight effectively evicts them, jeopardizing their livelihoods and erasing a vital part of the neighborhood's cultural fabric. The lack of integration into redevelopment plans overlooks the contributions of hawkers, diminishing the culinary diversity and vibrancy of urban life.

REGULATORY BURDEN

From street food to formalise restaurants, instead of preserving the long-standing street food culture, government tried hard to destroy the traditional and vibrant form of food culture

DISPLACEMENT

FORMALISATION

DECLINE

1845

The Public Health & Hygiene Ordinance was the first regulation to address **urban hygiene issues** related to hawkers, imposing **fines of £50** for illegal street vending.

1914

The first registry for Chinese affairs was established to manage hawker activities. Hawker management responsibilities were officially transferred to the **police for regulation**

1936

The police transferred hawker issues to the Municipal Council, prioritizing public health, which led to changes in hawker management policies.

1946

Police and health authorities crackdown has failed due to large influx of immigrants from China becoming hawkers

1970s

The former Municipal Council **stopped issuing new hawker licenses** in the early 1970s and reduced hawker numbers by **relocating them to public markets**

1986

Announcement on **fixed-pitch hawker stall** design, further formalized hawkers

1996

Former Municipal Council buy back licence from hawkers, offered priority access to **public markets** for hawkers, together with hawker management **increased enforcement power**

2000

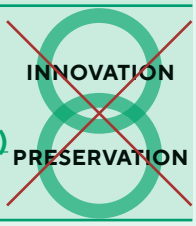
Food & Environmental Department replaced the Municipal Council in hawker regulation, reviewed hawker policies but decided to **maintain the status quo**

2010

After Fa Yuen Street fire incident, Food & Environmental Hygiene Department offered attractive prices to **encourage hawkers to return their licenses**

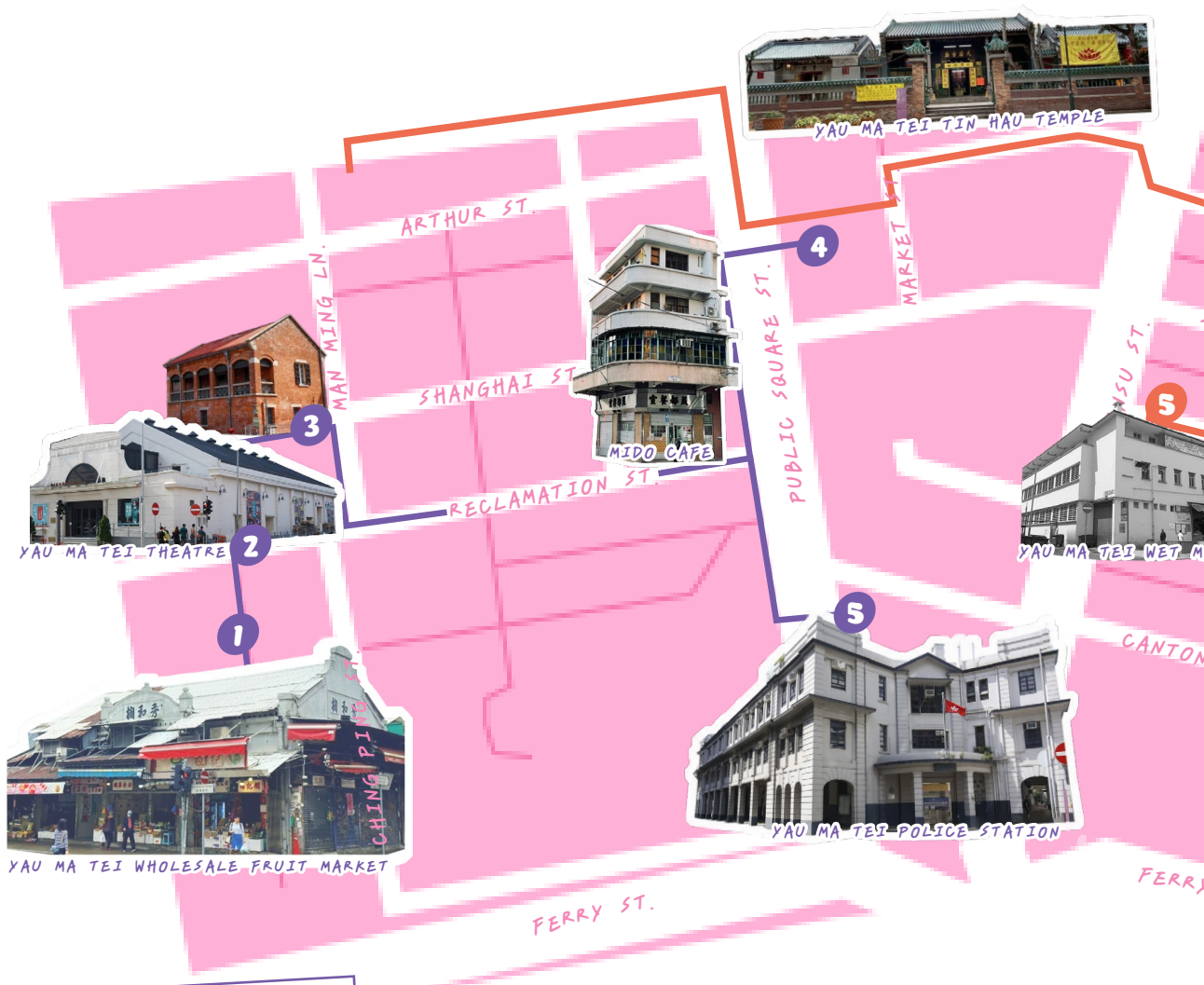
DIFFICULTIES CHECKLIST (FOOD HAWKER)

- ☑ Government Neglect the Cultural Value of Hawkers
- ☑ New Generation Cannot Enter the Market (with relatively low economic barrier to start as hawker)
- ☑ Outdated Regulatory System on Hawkers



FOOD BUSINESS SUMMARY (SPATIAL)

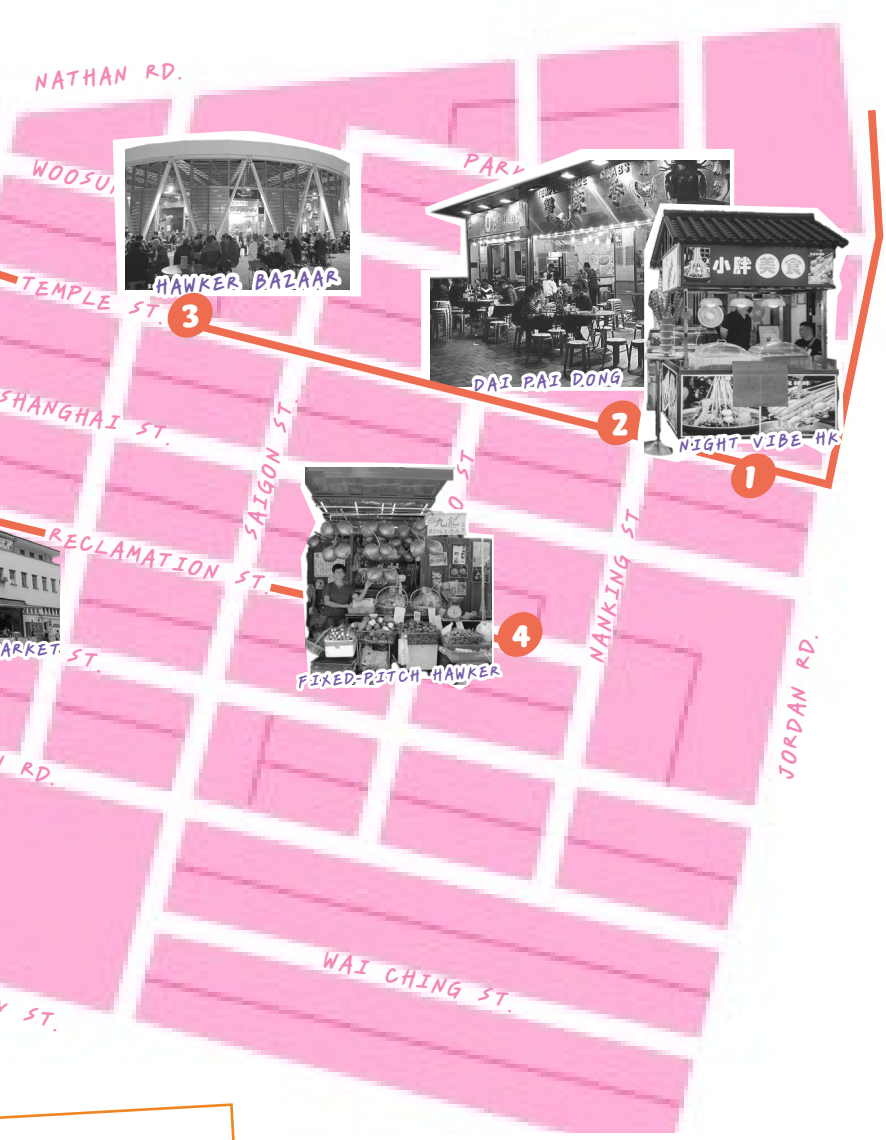
This section introduces the hierarchy of food businesses and the economic problems they face related to operational and legislative constraints. It also outlines the spatial distribution of these food businesses alongside other iconic tourist attractions in the area.



Historical Attraction

1. Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market (Grade II historical building (103 yr))
2. Yau Ma Tei Theatre (Grade II historical building (95 yr))
3. Yau Ma Tei Red Brick Building (Grade I historical building (130 yr))
4. Yau Ma Tei Tin Hau Temple (160 yr)
5. Yau Ma Tei Police Station (Grade II historical building (103 yr))

Fo



Tourist Main Travel Path

11:00 — **Mongkok**
Ladies Market
Goldfish Market

Yau Ma Tei

15:00
- Yau Ma Tei Police Station (most common)
  Movie & Artist related tourist spot
- Mido Cafe
  Movie & Artist related tourist spot
- Yau Ma Tei Theatre
- Public Square Park

17:00

18:00 — **Tsim Sha Tsui**
Star Avenue

ood Attraction

1. Night Vibe HK
2. Dai Pai Dongs
3. Hawker Bazaar

Tourist-oriented

4. Yau Ma Tei Open-air Market
5. Yau Ma Tei Wet Market

Community-oriented

CONSUMPTION (COMMUNITY)

In Yau Ma Tei, economic vulnerability is a key characteristic of the community, significantly impacting access to food resources and participation in the food system.

Economic vulnerability

1 UNEQUAL ACCESS TO FOOD RESOURCES



31% income on FOOD
in food market revenue before and after pandemic

DIFFICULT
to access
QUALITY & NUTRITIOUS FOOD OPTION

study by Food Grace, 2023

Median Monthly Domestic Household Income

- $14,000-$18,000
- $18,000-$22,000 — **4 people household poverty line**
- $22,000-$26,000
- $26,000-$30,000 — **HK Average**
- $30,00 or above

2 COMMUNITY PASSIVE ROLE IN FOOD SYSTEM

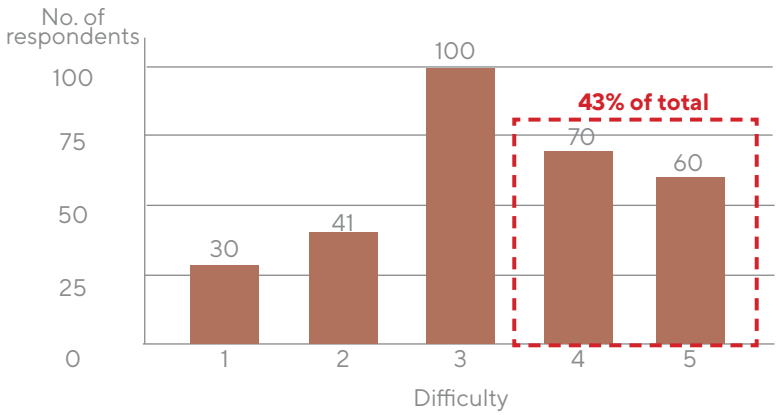
During weekends, free meals are often provided to ealderly and people in need. Many elderly will queue from 2-4pm for free lunch box. Conflicts always occur with the piority of taking the free meals.





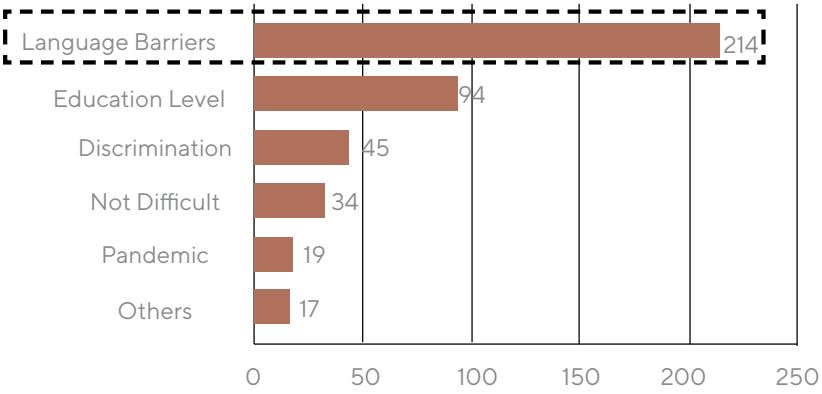
Taken in front of Tin Hau Temple

Scale the Difficulty to Find Jobs in Hong Kong



The Zubin Foundation's 2023 study on ethnic minorities in Yau Ma Tei reveals that over 43% of respondents struggle to find employment in Hong Kong due to language barriers. This issue not only limits job opportunities but also restricts participation in the local food scene, where proficiency in Cantonese, English, or Mandarin is often required.

Major Obsticles in Finding Jobs in Hong Kong



Additionally, Lingnan University research highlights that nearly half of ethnic minority food delivery workers face discrimination, including hostile body language and verbal abuse. This pervasive discrimination further hinders their engagement in urban food system, underscoring the urgent need for interventions to address language barriers and discriminatory practices.

LACKING A PLACE TO SHINE?









Absence of designated spaces for religious activities poses barriers to inclusivity for the Nepalese community in Yau Ma Tei. It is important to establish safe areas for prayer where Nepalese individuals can use fire for religious rituals.

Judy Gurung (2024)
a minority affairs officer of the Democratic Party

There are quite a number of ethnic minority individuals in the area; their population is not zero, but the available venues for them to use are zero.

Mr. Ho Fu Wing (2024)
the district councillor of Yau Tsim Mong District

04

LITERATURE REVIEW

CASE STUDY

Economic Vulnerability

As discussed earlier, both food businesses and the community face economic sustainability challenges in the short and long term. This is an urgent issue to address, as redevelopment could leave the community more vulnerable without adequate resources, leading to further losses in cultural uniqueness.

Tourism & Community Co-flourish

Yau Ma Tei has significant tourism potential, being a historic hotspot with vibrant street life and attractive buildings. Revenue from tourism is essential for benefiting the community and enhancing the city's vibe. This section will explore possible connections to leverage this potential.




永旺麻雀
廟街

FOOD & SUSTAINABILITY

Focusing on inclusivity and participation in local food industry in Hong Kong, integrating a sustainable food system framework is essential. Framework suggested by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is introduced.

Aims of Food System Sustainability

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines a sustainable food system as one that provides food security and nutrition for everyone while preserving the economic, social, and environmental foundations essential for promoting inclusivity in food-related development (FAO, 2018). The following framework addresses immediate culinary development and considers and envisions the opportunities and culinary needs of future generations.

Criteria

Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability related to activities of all participants and support service providers are economically viable. Benefit or economic value to all stakeholders in terms of

(1) Remuneration to employees, (2) income to governments, (3) profit to businesses, and (4) increased access to food for consumers.

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability related to the distribution of economic value, considering vulnerable groups defined by factors such as gender, age, and race.

Crucially, the activities within the food system must contribute to significant socio-cultural outcomes, including (1) nutrition and health, (2) the preservation of traditions, (3) improved labour conditions, and (4) animal welfare.

Environmental Sustainability

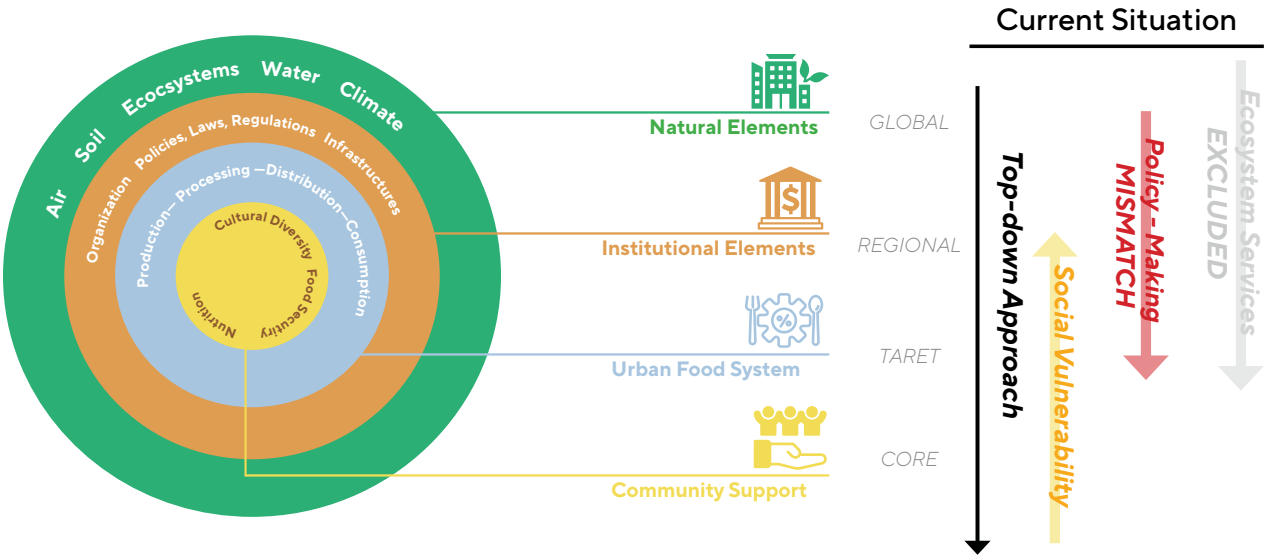
Environmental sustainability related to the need to ensure that the effects of food system activities on the surrounding natural environment are neutral or beneficial, including

(1) biodiversity, (2) the well-being of animals and plants, (3) carbon and water footprint, and (4) food loss and waste.

Food System Sustainability & Social Empowerment

The current urban food system in Hong Kong, largely initiated by the government through initiatives like Night Vibe Hong Kong and the regulation of hawker environments, demonstrates a commendable effort to revitalize urban gastronomy. However, the government's misperceptions and misjudgements regarding what aspects of Hong Kong's culinary heritage should be preserved and promoted have led to misunderstandings among both visitors and locals, as well as within the local restaurant community.

To effectively address these challenges, it is essential to adopt a more bottom-up approach that prioritizes the voices and perspectives of local communities. This shift can help guide the government toward more informed and effective resource allocation, ultimately supporting the shared goal of revitalizing urban gastronomy. This perspective emphasizes the importance of local voices in shaping their culinary identity and culture. By leveraging local knowledge and expertise, communities can assert their influence over gastronomy, leading to improved urban gastronomic governance and a more supportive environment for culinary diversity. Such an approach not only fosters a deeper appreciation for the unique culinary culture of Hong Kong but also ensures that revitalization efforts are genuinely reflective of the community's values and preferences. Ultimately, empowering locals to define and promote their culinary heritage will enhance the vibrancy and authenticity of Hong Kong's gastronomic landscape.



Author's graph, reference to
Food System Wheel (FAO, 2018)

Overseas Case study - Bangkok food system planning

Bangkok has a long history of sustainable food system planning. They aimed to promote diversified food options for cities by providing fresh and healthy food alternatives in urban centers. Besides connecting rural/ peri-urban farmland to inner city, urban food choices also promoted to encourage resilience supply and inclusive growth in food system in urban centers

1989

Alternative Agriculture Network (AAN)

The AAN empowers communities to develop sustainable alternatives and work for change in society.

1998

Thailand Sustainable Agriculture Foundation [TSAF]

NGO that coordinates the program that gather a multitude of civil society organisations and alliances: Green Market Networks, Slum Dwellers Networks and Informal Labour Networks

2004

Bangkok City Farm Project

BMA establishes city farm learning centre and City Green Farm Project

2009

New collaboration of working groups on sustainable food system

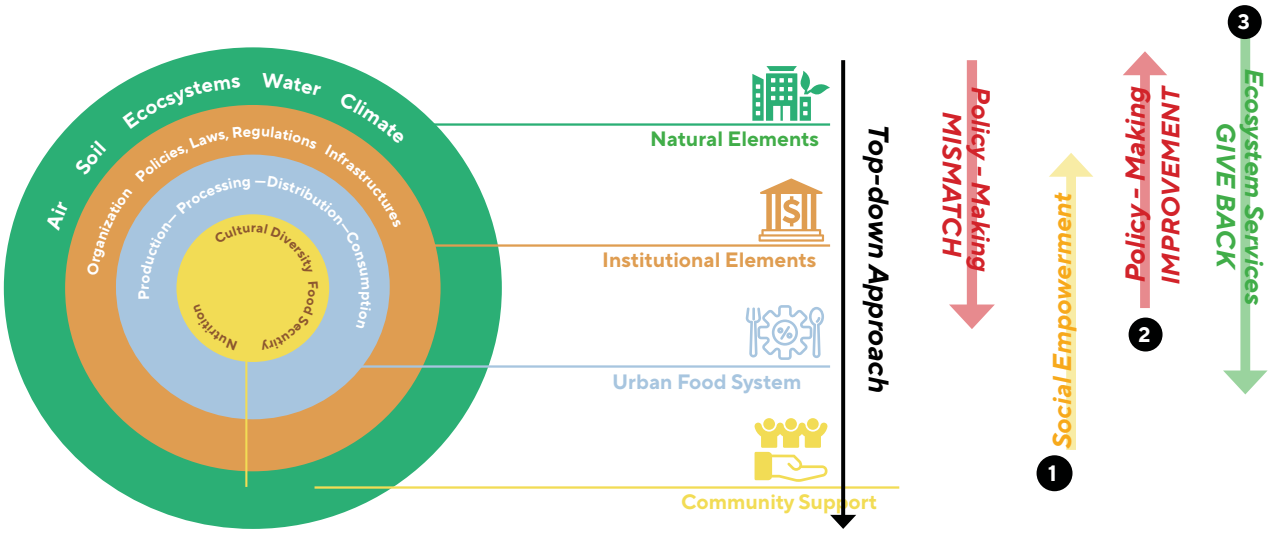
2020





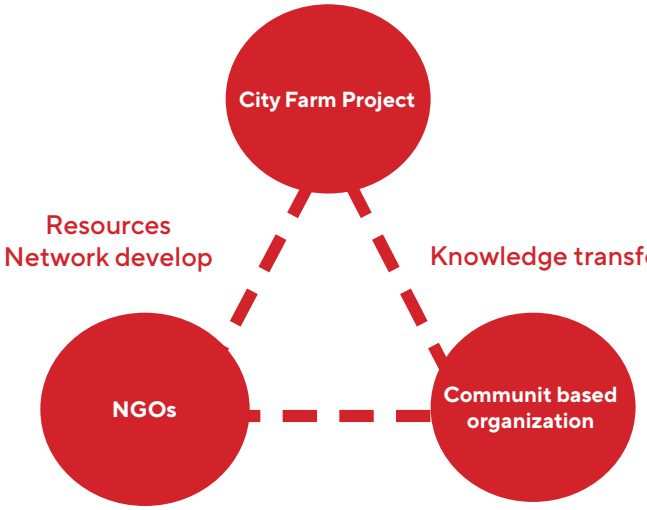
Successfully supports through networks around 300 gardens and initiatives under City Farm Project

Author's graph, reference to Cabannes & Marocchino, 2018



Although Bangkok's food system planning was initiated by the government to promote urban farming, the process has significantly empowered community members to shape their own vision for urban agriculture. The following graph summarizes some of the noteworthy community organizations that have emerged as target groups in this planning effort. These organizations primarily empower economically and socially vulnerable groups to engage in farming, thereby creating equal access to healthy food choices.

CIVIL SOCIETY-LED FOOD SYSTEM PLANNING



Thailand Sustainable Agriculture Foundation [TSAF]

The Media Centre for Developmet

The City Farm Association

The Working Group on Food for Change

Green Market Networks

Slum Dwellers Networks

Informal Labour Networks

Overseas Case study - Singapore Hawker Culture Planning

Singapore is renowned for its hawker culture, which has earned the title of "City of Gastronomy." This designation, promoted by international organizations like UNESCO through the "Creative Cities" initiative established in 2004, aims to enhance the visibility and appreciation of local heritage while fostering creativity as a driver of economic and social development. Singapore's hawker culture is one of 56 recognized for its culinary excellence (Cities of Gastronomy, 2024).

While Singapore employs a relatively top-down approach to preserve this cultural heritage, the government acknowledges the importance of safeguarding its hawker culture. In contrast, the Hong Kong government has not fully recognized the value of its local food culture. This oversight highlights the essential role that community involvement will play in complementing government policies in Hong Kong to ensure the preservation and promotion of its unique culinary heritage.

Food Culture & Tourism in Singapore

The diagram below summarizes the key elements identified in Xiaomin's research (2017), which examines the framework of the City of Gastronomy through the successful case of Singapore. The study outlines criteria for preserving and sustaining food culture alongside food tourism. These criteria are summarized in the following table.

City of Gastronomy

Spatial Elements

Non-Spatial Elements

Vibrant Physical Setting

Criteria	Measurements
1. Well-developed gastronomy that is characteristic of the urban centre and/or region (5 dimensions, 12 indicators)	☆ Food venues
	Food outlets accessibility
	Food consumption
	☆ Scale of food and catering industry
	☆ Economic linkage of food industry
5 Traditional food markets and traditional food industry; (2 dimensions, 6 indicators)	☆ Locally-sourced ingredients
	Traditional food industry
6 Tradition of hosting gastronomic festivals, awards, contests and other broadly-targeted means of recognition; (2 dimensions, 6 indicators)	☆ Vibrancy of food activities
	☆ Influence of food activities

Socio-Economic Sustainability

Criteria	Measurements
2. Vibrant gastronomy community with numerous traditional restaurants and/or chefs; (3 dimensions, 5 indicators)	☆ Local culinary culture
	☆ Participants in gastronomy
	☆ Gastronomic vibrancy
4 Local know-how, traditional culinary practices and methods of cooking that have survived industrial/technological advancement (1 dimensions, 6 indicators)	the protection and inheritance of traditional cooking skills
8 Nurturing of public appreciation, promotion of nutrition in educational institutions and inclusion of biodiversity conservation programs in cooking schools curricula. (4 dimensions, 16 indicators)	☆ Education and training
	☆ traditional cuisine Recognition degree
	☆ Dissemination channel of traditional cuisine
	☆ Promotional efforts

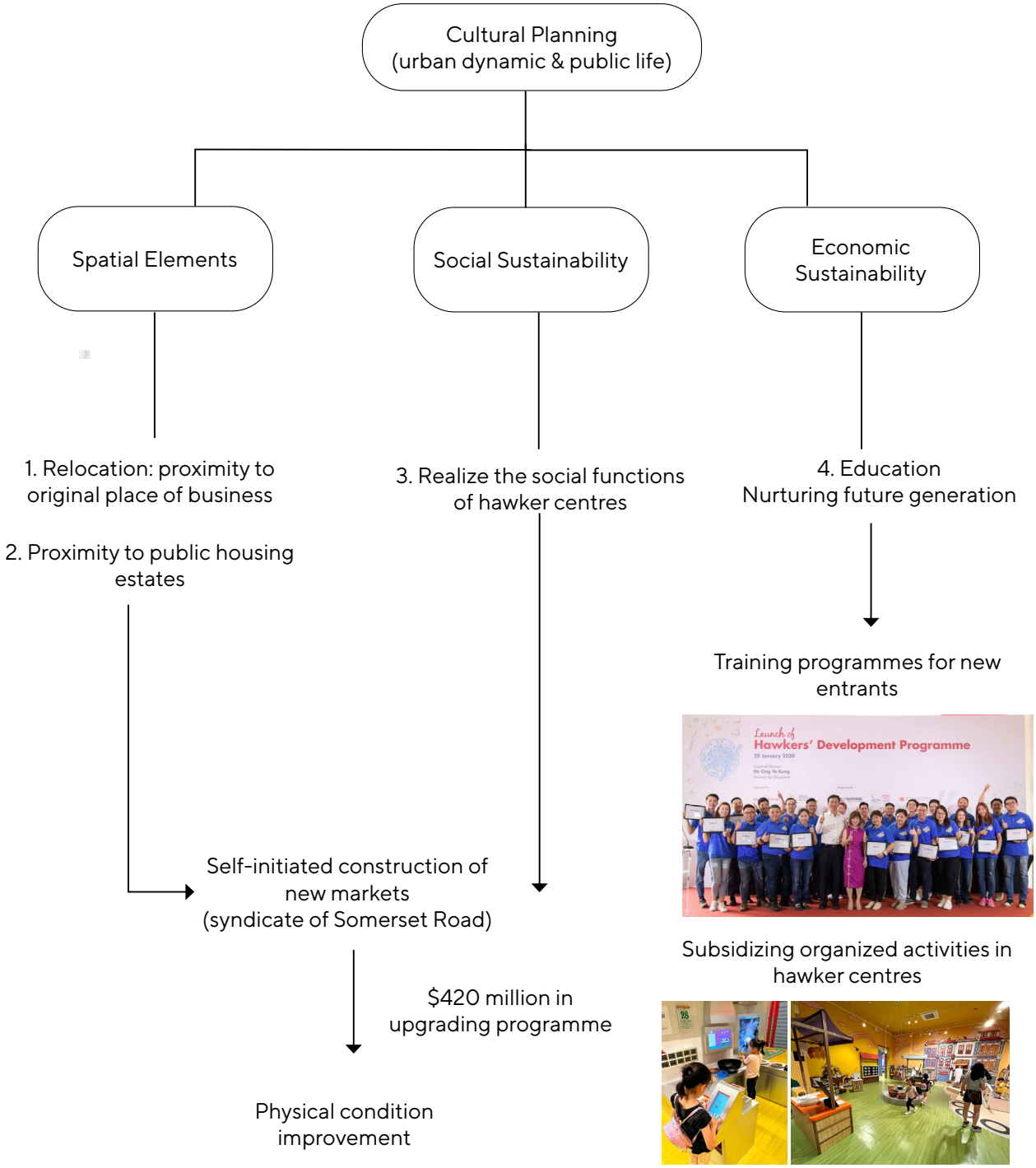
Environmental Sustainability

Criteria	Measurements
7 Respect for the environment and promotion of sustainable local products; (3 dimensions, 10 indicators)	☆ production atmosphere Inheritance
	☆ Agricultural property Ecological utilization
	☆ Governmental support
2. Vibrant gastronomy community with numerous traditional restaurants and/or chefs; (3 dimensions, 5 indicators)	☆ Local culinary culture
	☆ Participants in gastronomy
	☆ Gastronomic vibrancy
3 Endogenous ingredients used in traditional cooking; (2 dimensions, 5 indicators)	Locally-sourced ingredients and regional food specialties
	☆ unique cooking ingredients

(Xiaomin, 2017)

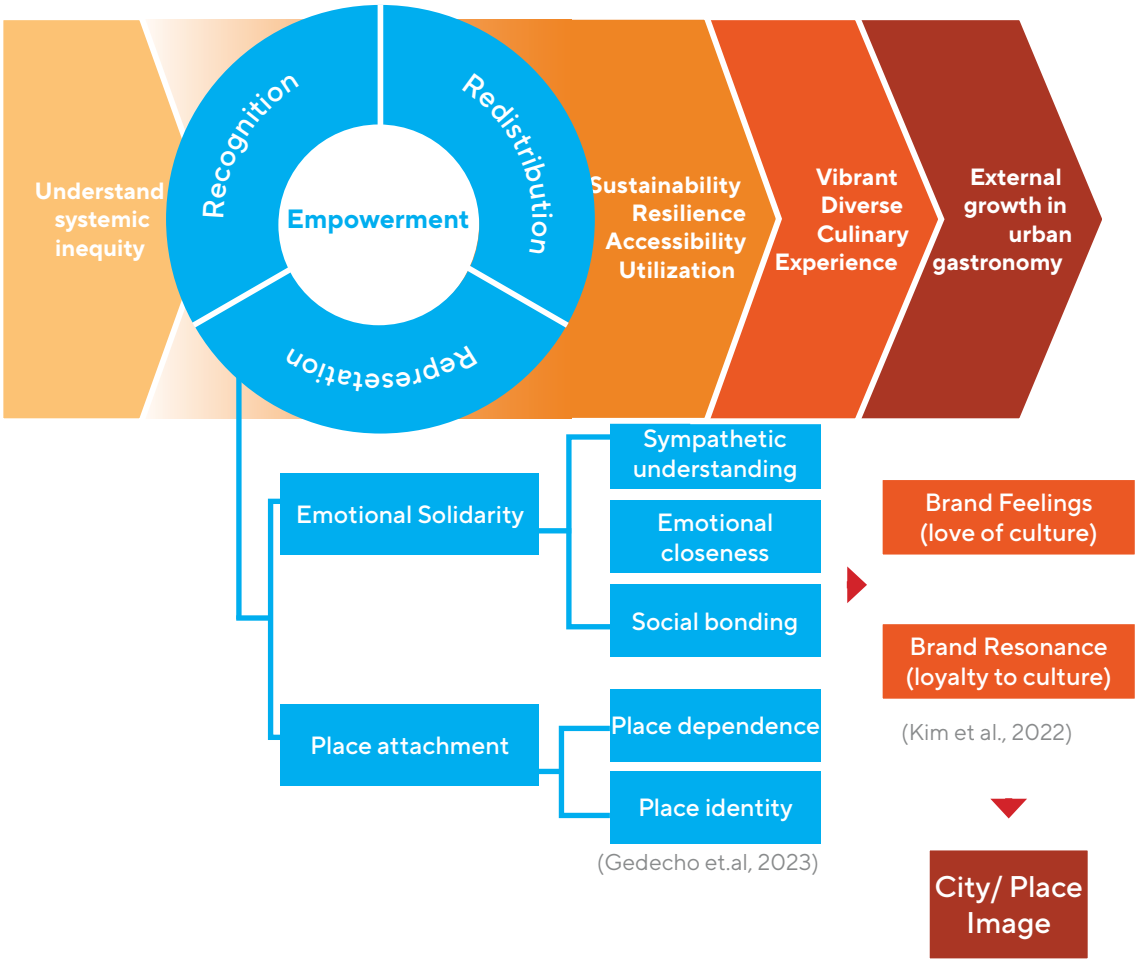
Food Culture & Tourism in Singapore

Different programs and legislation from Singapore can serve as a reference for cultivating hawker culture as a branding process. By preserving traditional hawker practices while maintaining low economic barriers for market entry, Singapore attracts a new generation. Additionally, training and fostering innovative ideas to enhance existing traditions are essential for economic sustainability. These strategies provide valuable examples for Hong Kong to consider in its efforts to support and revitalize its own hawker culture.



Social Empowerment & Tourism

Literature (Gedecho et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2022) has identified a significant positive correlation between social empowerment, place attachment, and emotional solidarity within local communities. These elements play a crucial role in shaping place identity and can positively influence the city's image of culinary culture, as demonstrated by the case study of Singapore's hawker centers.

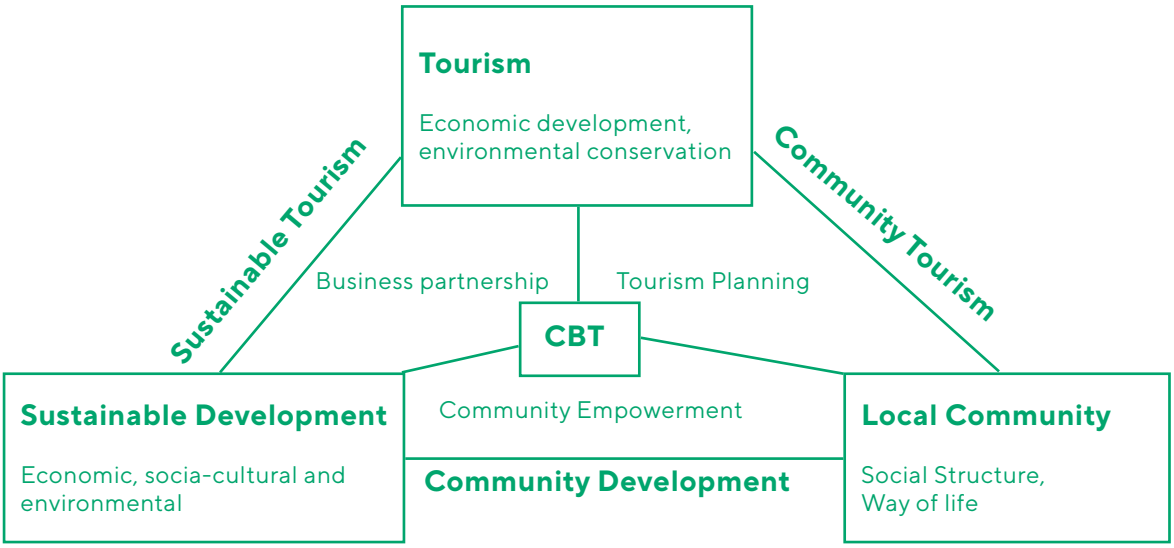




COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

Community-based tourism (CBT) empowers local communities by involving them in the tourism process, aiding poverty alleviation and improving living standards. Locals take ownership of tourism businesses, ensuring financial benefits stay in the local economy. CBT is associated with pro-poor, sustainable, and alternative tourism forms

> **TOURISM AND COMMUNITIES IT IS IN MUST BE VIEWED SIMULTANEOUSLY**
>
> **COMMUNITY TOURISM SHIFTS THE FOCUS AWAY FROM THE TOURIST AND THEIR EXPERIENCE TO THE HOST COMMUNITY AND THEIR EXPERIENCE (KELLY 2002)**
>
> **COMMUNITY TOURISM IS A PROCESS RATHER THAN A PRODUCT. (BUSINESS ENTERPRISES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COMMUNITY TOURISM SUBMIT, 2003)**



Reference (Goodwin, 2019; Dodds et.al., 2018; Dangi, 2016; Deman, 2001)

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) promotes sustainable tourism by prioritizing the host community in planning and development. CBT aims to facilitate an equitable distribution of tourism benefits through consensus-based decision-making and local control. Understanding these power relations is crucial for effective community-inclusive processes in tourism planning, highlighting the importance of empowering local communities to ensure their voices are heard and valued (Beeton, 2006).

05

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Community-based Tourism

Community engagement will be conducted within the framework of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) to more effectively recognize and address the needs of both tourists and various community stakeholders. By actively involving local residents, businesses, and organizations in the planning and development process, the initiative aims to foster a sense of ownership and pride among community members.

INVITING LOCAL COMMUNITY IN DOING CBT

Phase 1

1 **OBSERVING THE CHANGI TRENDS**

1. Types of Tourists
2. Tourists Demand

OOT IN FOOD

YAU MA TEI

INVITING MULTISECTIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO JOIN

COLLECTIVE DESIRABLE FUTURE

ACTIONS TO TAKE

Phase 2 Phase 3 Phase 4

NG

2 **REIMAGINE THE FUTURE**

1. Ability of community members
2. Types of tourism that wish

3 **CO-CREATE THE FUTURE**

1. Preferences of other community stakeholders, e.g. local business, NGOs

4 **HOW THE PLAN WORKS**

1. Possible Partnership, e.g. private-public partnership

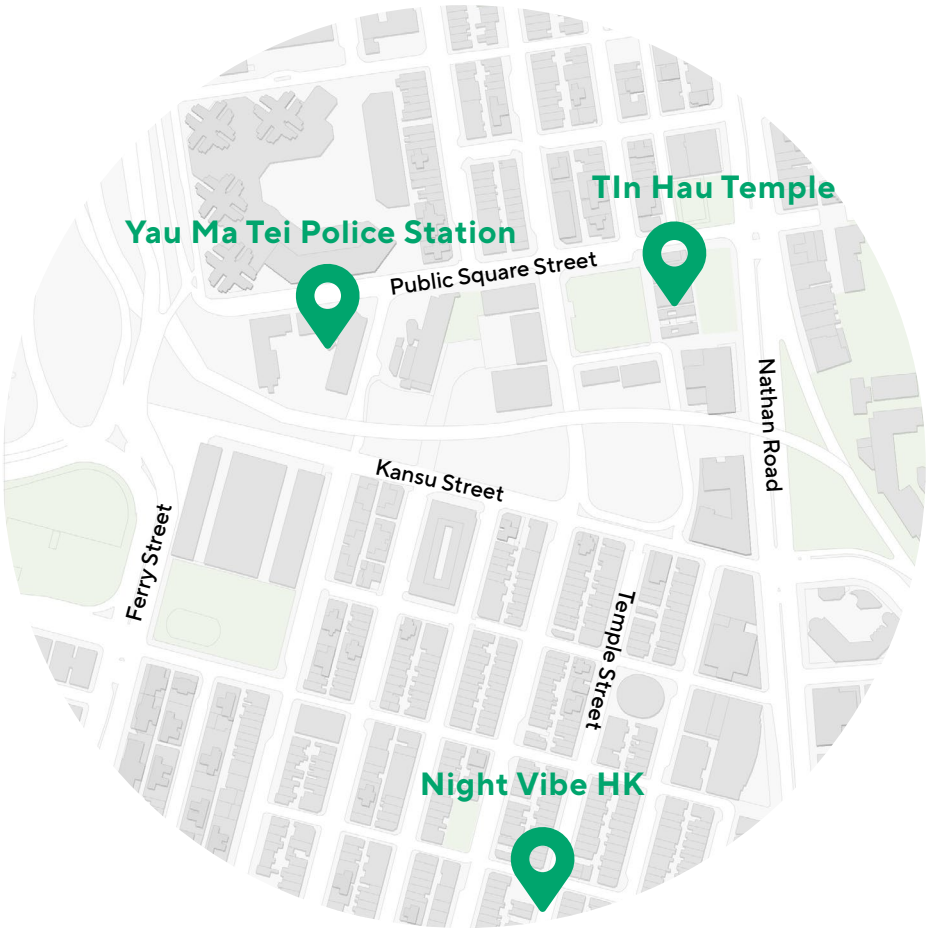
STREET POLLING & INTERVIEW

Street interviews are conducted at various locations in Yau Ma Tei, targeting three distinct groups involved in community-based tourism: tourists, community stakeholders, and local businesses. Each set of interviews is designed to gather diverse perspectives on the tourism experience, community needs, and the impact of tourism on local culture and economy.

Tourist Interviews

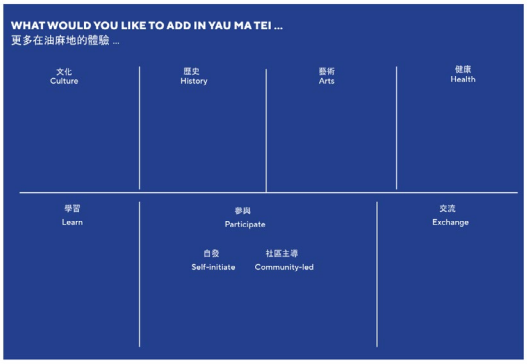
The first step in community-based tourism is understanding the preferences of tourists. To achieve this, street polling and interviews were conducted to gain insights into their motivations, preferences, and experiences in Yau Ma Tei, helping to identify what attracts them to the area.

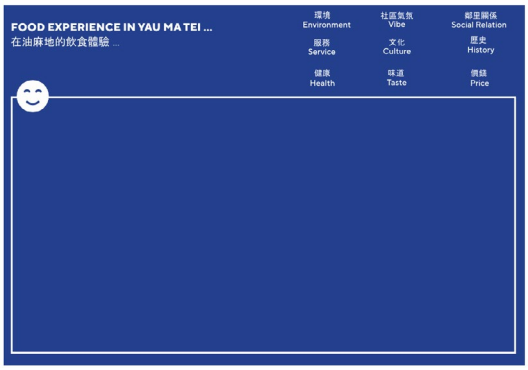
Observations of key tourist spots in Yau Ma Tei revealed that mainland tourists primarily gathered in front of the Yau Ma Tei Police Station during the afternoon. In contrast, foreign tourists tended to cluster around Tin Hau Temple or along Temple Street in the evening.



Engagement Materials Example

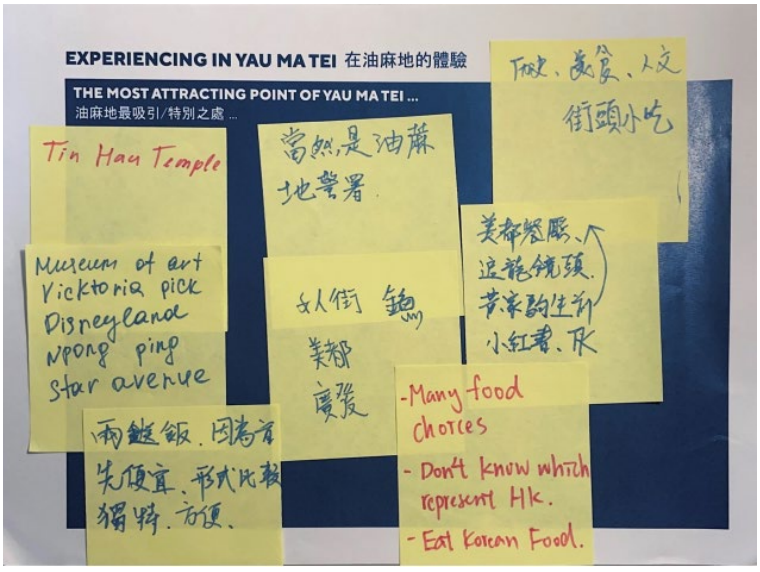








Feedback Collecting Example



Mainland tourists tend to have more structured and well-planned itineraries, making them more comfortable when answering questions during the polling. Their familiarity with their travel plans allows for more detailed and confident responses.

In contrast, foreign tourists often lack knowledge about the local attractions and frequently seek recommendations for tourist spots in the area.

One significant limitation encountered during the street polling experiment is that many tourists were in a hurry to reach their next destination. As a result, the feedback collected tended to be brief or overly general, often provided in a rushed manner. This limited the depth and specificity of the responses, making it challenging to gather detailed insights.

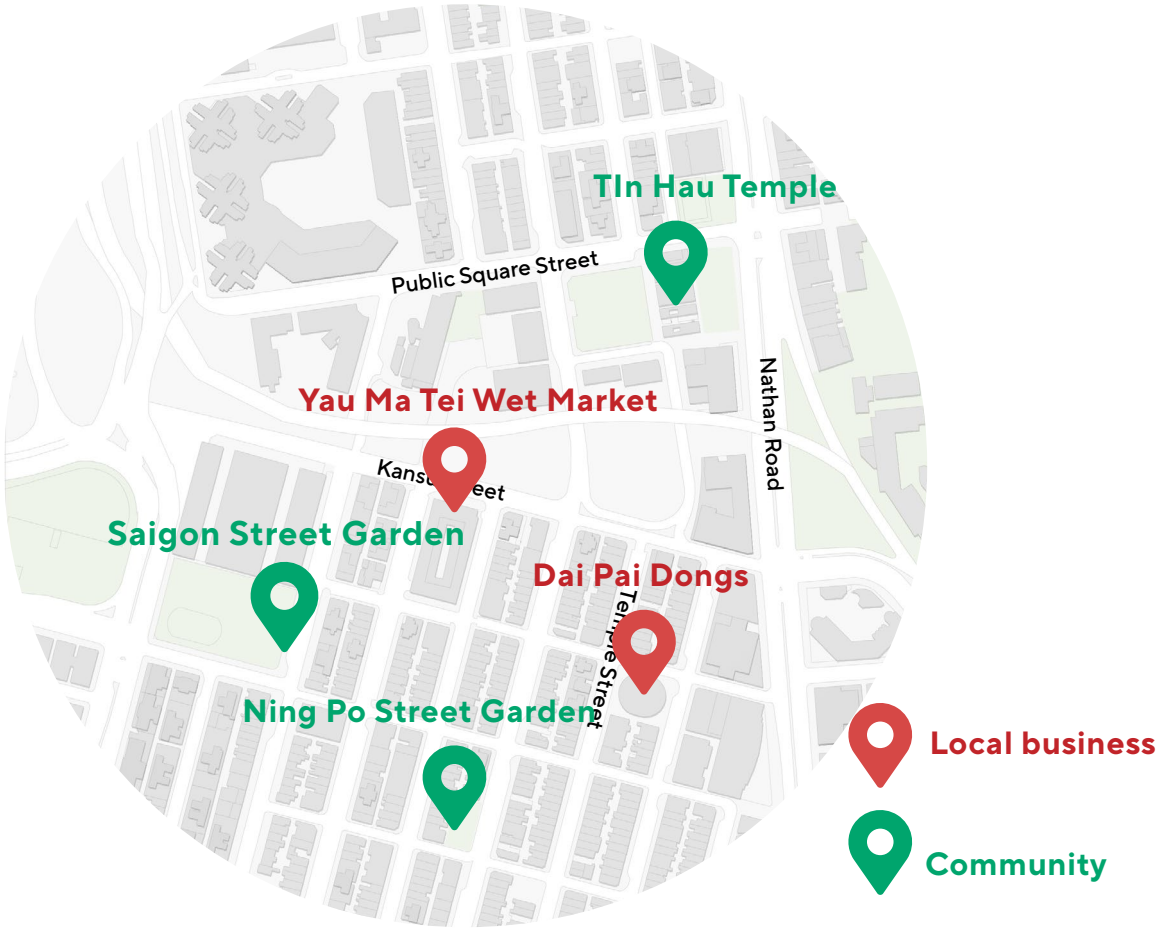
STREET POLLING & INTERVIEW

Street interviews are conducted at various locations in Yau Ma Tei, targeting three distinct groups involved in community-based tourism: tourists, community stakeholders, and local businesses. Each set of interviews is designed to gather diverse perspectives on the tourism experience, community needs, and the impact of tourism on local culture and economy.

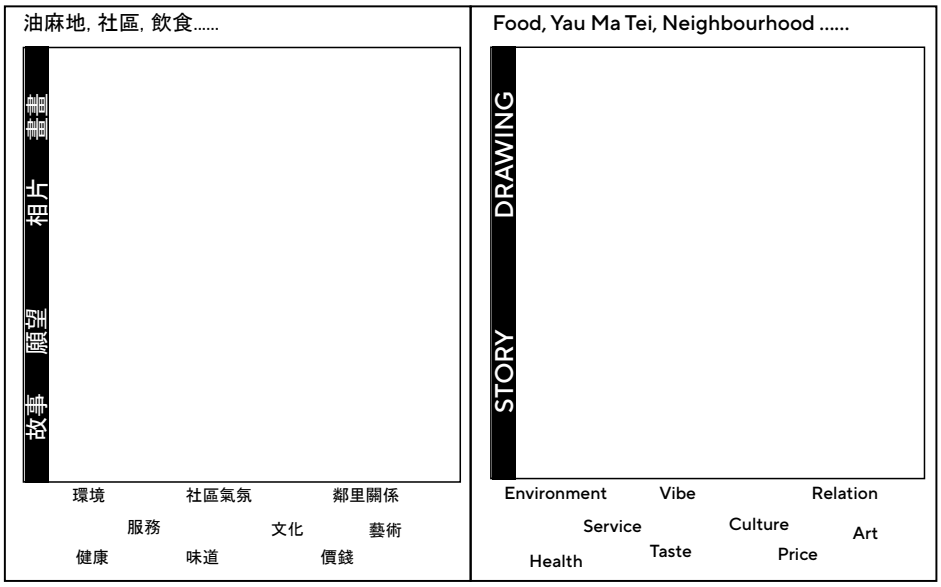
Community Stakeholders Interviews

Based on the results of tourist engagement and analysis of their preferences, community empowerment is crucial for shaping the future foodscape in Yau Ma Tei. The questions primarily focused on inviting participants to share stories about what they treasure most and their wishes for the area. This approach aimed to gain a deeper understanding of their interests and capabilities, which could potentially contribute to the development of the local food system in the future.

By encouraging open dialogue, the initiative seeks to identify the values and aspirations of both tourists and community members. This collaborative effort not only enhances the tourism experience but also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the local food culture, paving the way for sustainable growth and innovation



Engagement Materials Example



Limitation regarding low literacy rate in Yau Ma Tei especially for elderly there, This challenge made it difficult for some participants to engage through writing or drawing. As a result, voice recordings were utilized in most interviews, along with handwritten notes taken by the authors. They are willing to share their story and most of them are talkative in the process.

Other local business Interviews



Interview with local farmer & seller in Yau Ma Tei Wet Market, Mr. Tsui



Interview with owners of Dai Pai Dongs



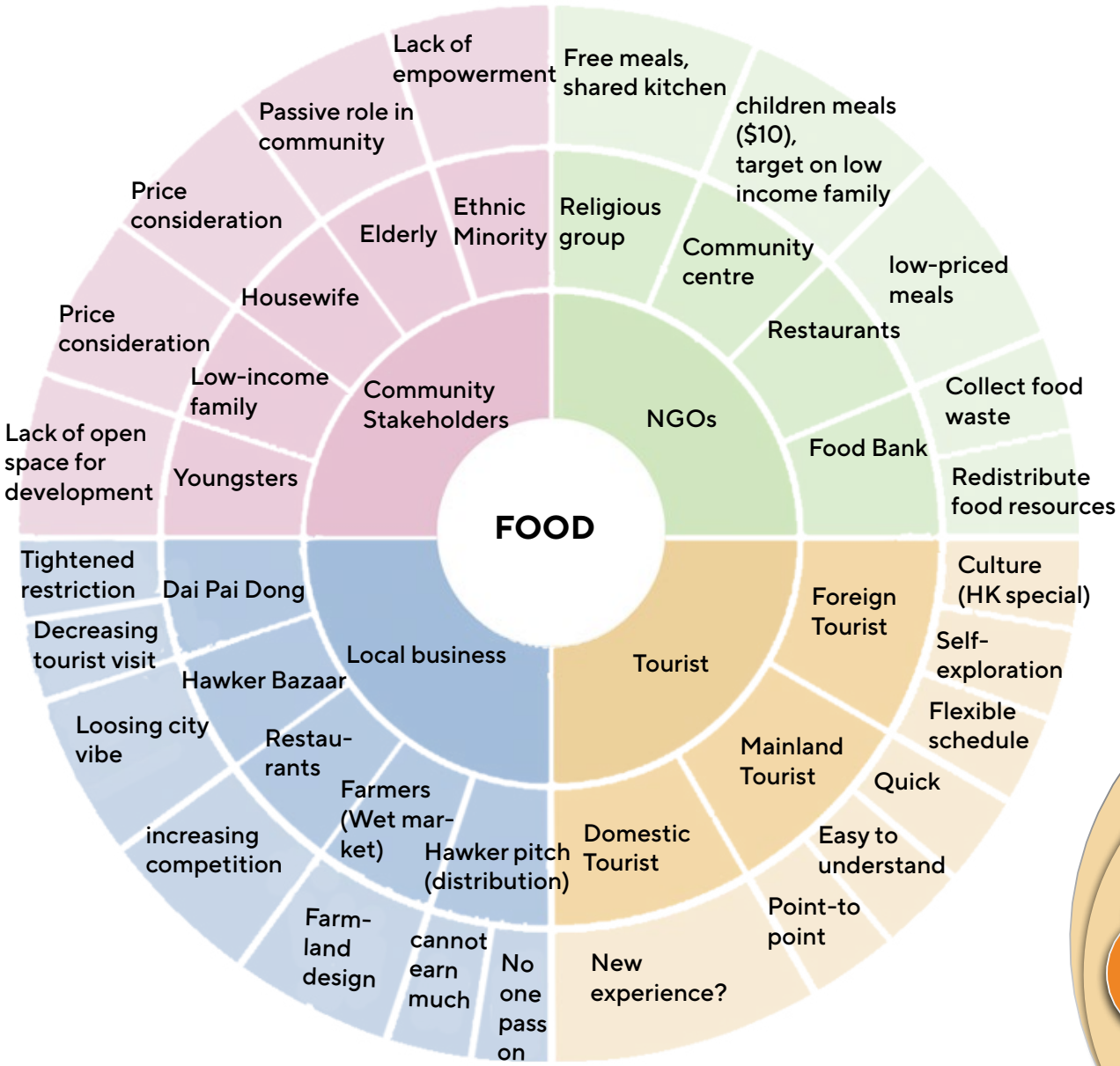


Participate in Halal Food Festivals, interview with stall owners

Interviews with local businesses can reveal talented individuals in the food system, from farm design to food provision. By leveraging these local experts, Yau Ma Tei can enhance its future food planning and create a more sustainable and vibrant culinary landscape.

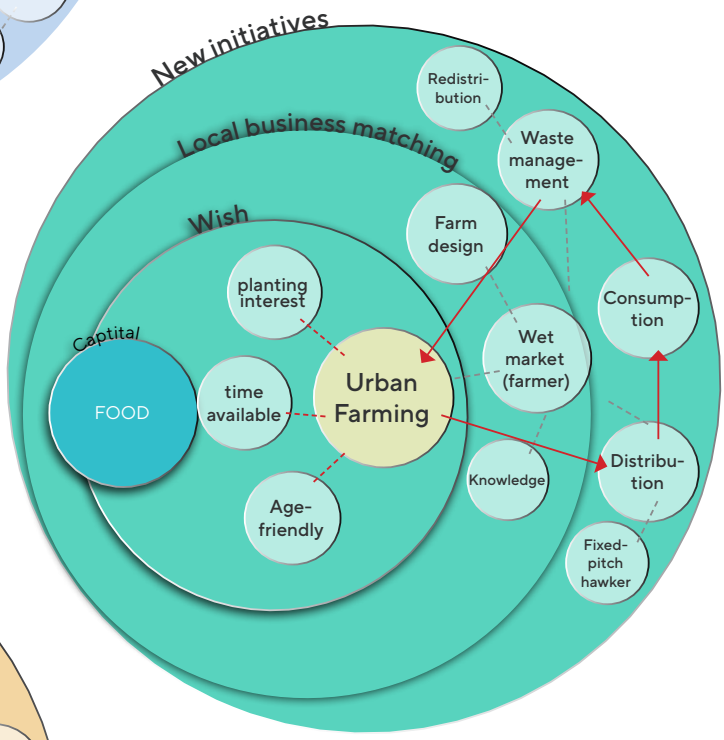
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

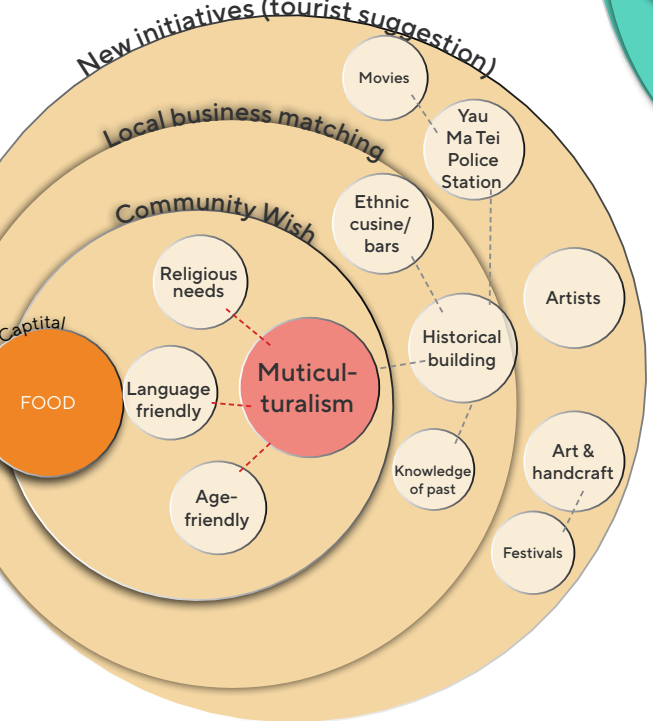
The following summarizes the existing needs, abilities, and wishes identified through interviews and observations after community engagement. Three main development perspectives emerge from the interview results.



FOR MORE DETAIL ANALYSIS (SECTION 02 - FOOD SYSTEM)


Community ability
Local business matching
Demand
Captital/
FOOD
Grap-and-go
Time constraint
Transition
Kowledge
HK Special
Previous hawkers
Street food
Current restaurant
"Yung Shu Tau"
Story-telling
Tradi-tional fes-tivals
Tin Hau Festivals
Festive foods
New business


New initiatives
Local business matching
Wish
Captital/
FOOD
planting interest
time available
Urban Farming
Age-friendly
Farm design
Redistri-bution
Waste manage-ment
Consump-tion
Wet market (farmer)
Knowledge
Distribu-tion
Fixed-pitch hawker


New initiatives (tourist suggestion)
Local business matching
Community Wish
Captital/
FOOD
Religious needs
Language friendly
Muticul-turalism
Age-friendly
Movies
Yau Ma Tei Police Station
Ethnic cusine/ bars
Historical building
Knowledge of past
Artists
Art & handcraft
Festivals

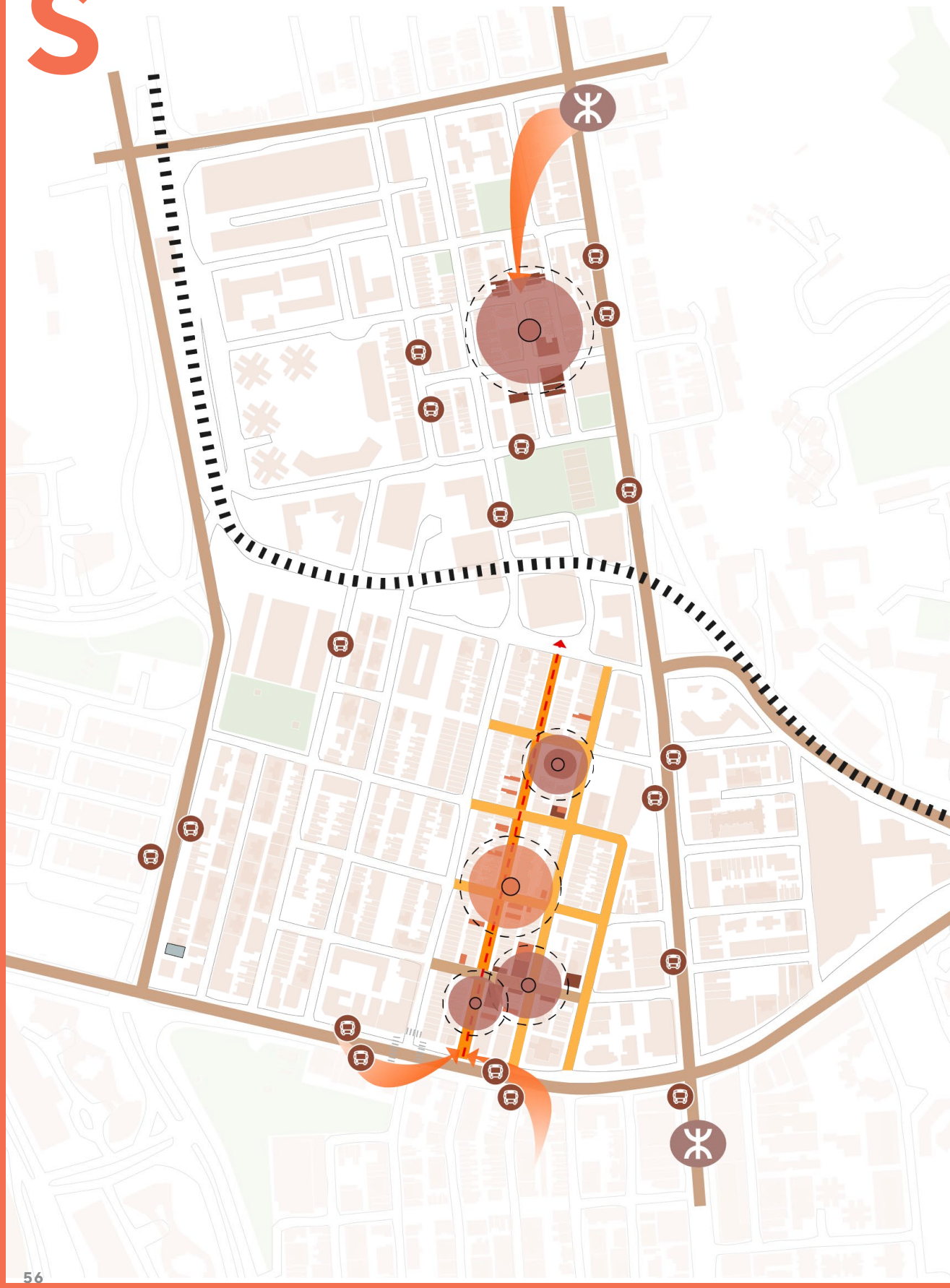
06

SPATIAL ANALYSIS





S



HIGH ACCESSIBILITY

Located near two MTR stations and several bus stops

ENGAGING STREETLIFE (FOOD-ORIENTED)

The cluster of Dai Pai Dong and ethnic food along Temple Street creates a vibrant interaction between commercial and community spaces

CITY VIBE CONTRIBUTORS

Long-standing street vendors attract visitors, contributing to the area's local charm.

HIGH WALKABILITY

Supported by pedestrian-friendly streets, including the full-time and part-time pedestrian , along with nearby traffic-calming roads.

W


West Kowloon Corridor
Ferry Street
Nathan Road
Jordan Road

PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Increase in tourists may lead to pollution impacts to nearby R(A) land use.

NOISE IMPACT TO RESIDENTS

Increased street activity late at night may create potential noise for nearby residents

INACTIVATE AREAS

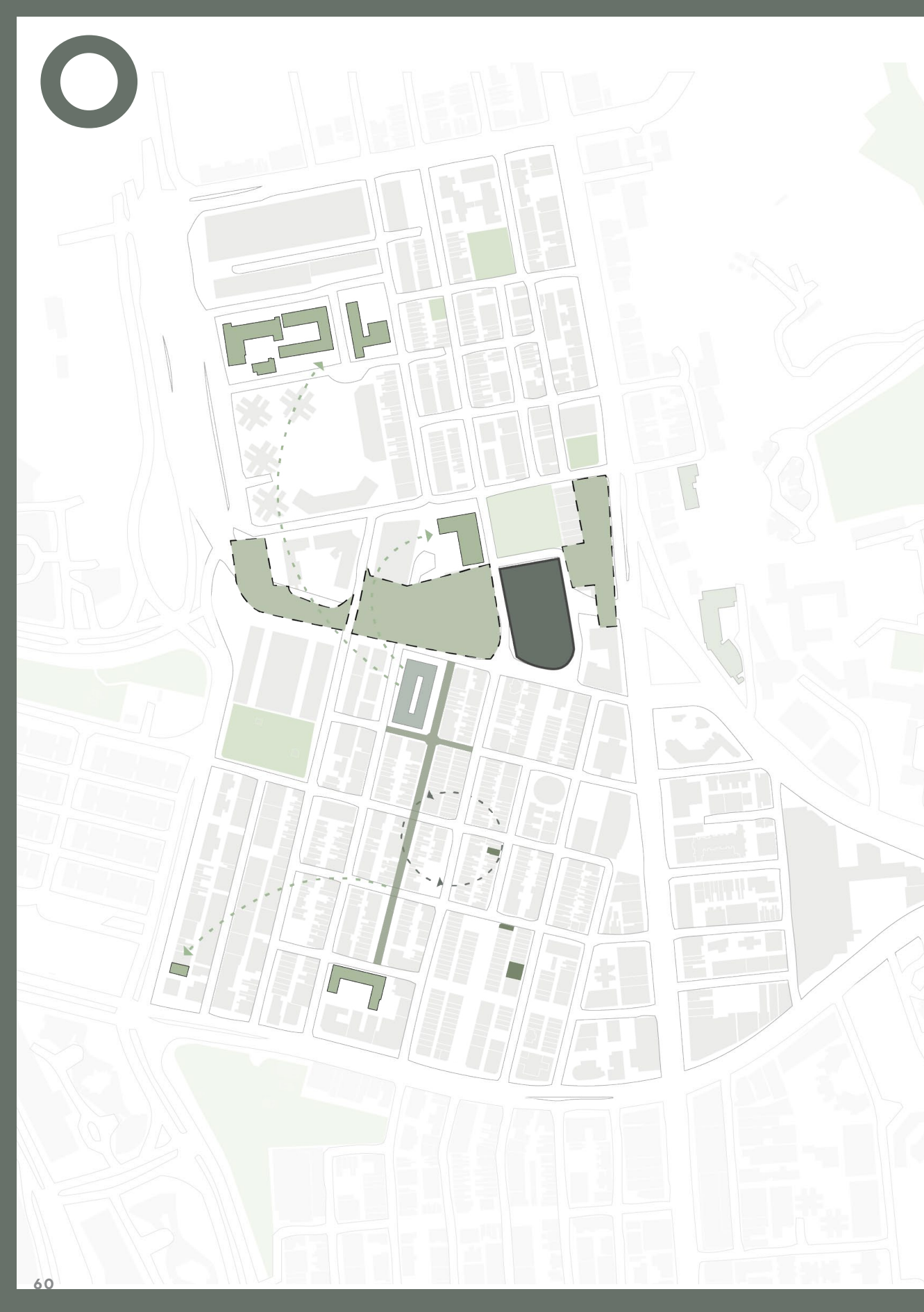
The high vacancy rate on the second floor of Yau Ma Tei Market could be better utilized.





BUSINESS INTEREST CONFLICT

New temporary food stalls has diverted part of the business share of restaurants in Temple Street



POTENTIAL TARGET ON REDEVEOPMENT

The Planning Department proposed a new civic node near Hin Hau Temple.



The District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok Information Booklet, 2022

RICH IN EXISTING PHYSICAL FOOD ACCESS

The area is rich in food access, featuring various wet markets and street vendors that promote affordable food options.

OTHER POTENTIAL CONNECTION IN FOOD

Farmers are now extending their business by collaborating with schools and restaurants, including rooftop designs.


30

REZONING FOR COMMERCIAL USE

The Planning Department has rezoned areas as OU(MU) for flexible commercial use, which may raise rents and prices and reduce public space.

RISING INTENSITY OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

30

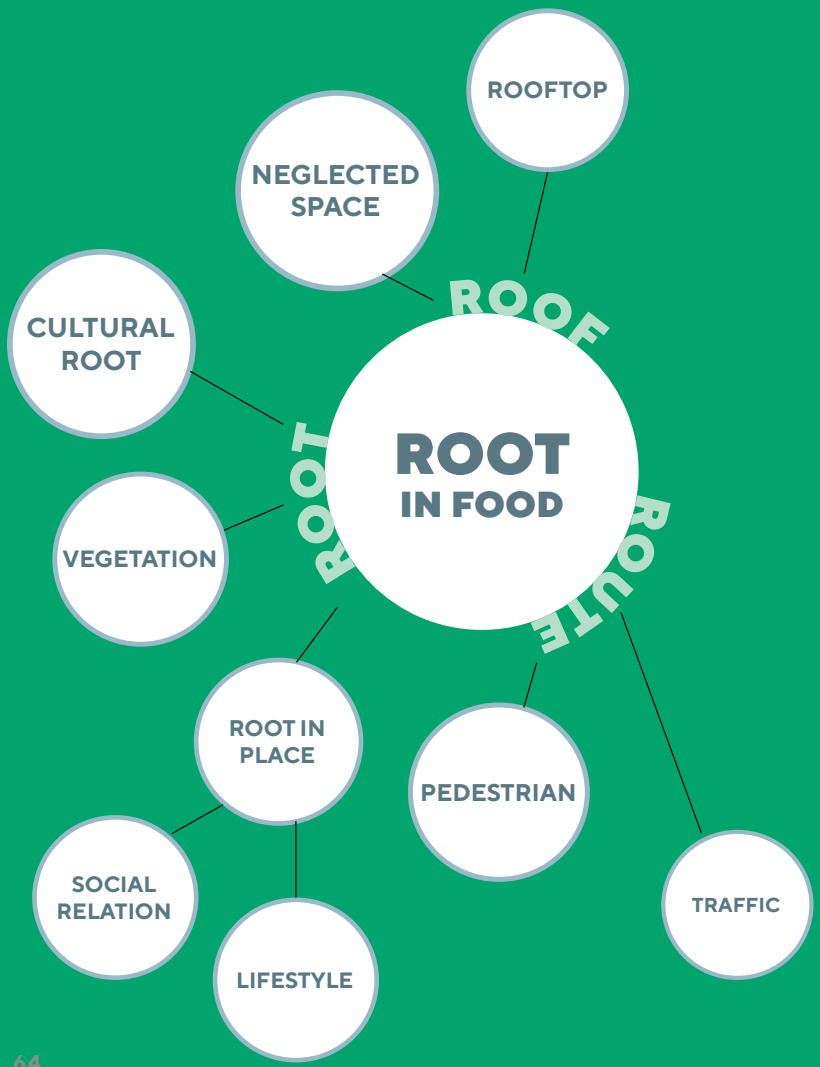
The increased building height limit by 30 meters in red-dotted zones promotes large brand activities, risking the transformation into shopping malls and sidelining smaller businesses.



The District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok Information Booklet, 2022

06

DESIGN CONCEPT



VISION

To cultivate a resilient and
businesses, and fosters cu
community-based tourism

GOALS & OBJ

**Empowering Locals in the Fo
Tourism**

Objective 1.1: Develop educatio
programs that teach community
members about sustainable foo
practices and nutrition.

Objective 1.2: Create workshops
promote local food entrepreneu
focusing on skills like cooking,
preserving, and marketing.

Cultivating Cultural Underst

Objective 4.1: Organize cultural
local cuisine and history, attract
visitors.

Objective 4.2: Develop promoti
highlight the unique food herita
targeting both local and inbour

OOT IN FOOD

YAU MA TEI

d inclusive food tourism that empowers the community, supports local ultural appreciation, ultimately enhancing economic sustainability through m

ECTIVES

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s that
urship,

Contributing to Healthy and Affordable Food

Objective 2.1: Collaborate with local farmers and businesses to create a network that reduces food costs through direct sourcing.

Objective 2.2: Establish community gardens and farmers' markets that provide fresh produce at reduced prices.

Expanding Local Businesses

Objective 3.1: Facilitate partnerships between local food producers, processors, and retailers to streamline distribution and waste management.

Objective 3.2: Implement a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program to strengthen local economic ties.

anding Through Food

events that showcase
ting both residents and

ional materials that
age of Yau Ma Tei,
nd tourists.

Create Vibrant Experience for Tourist

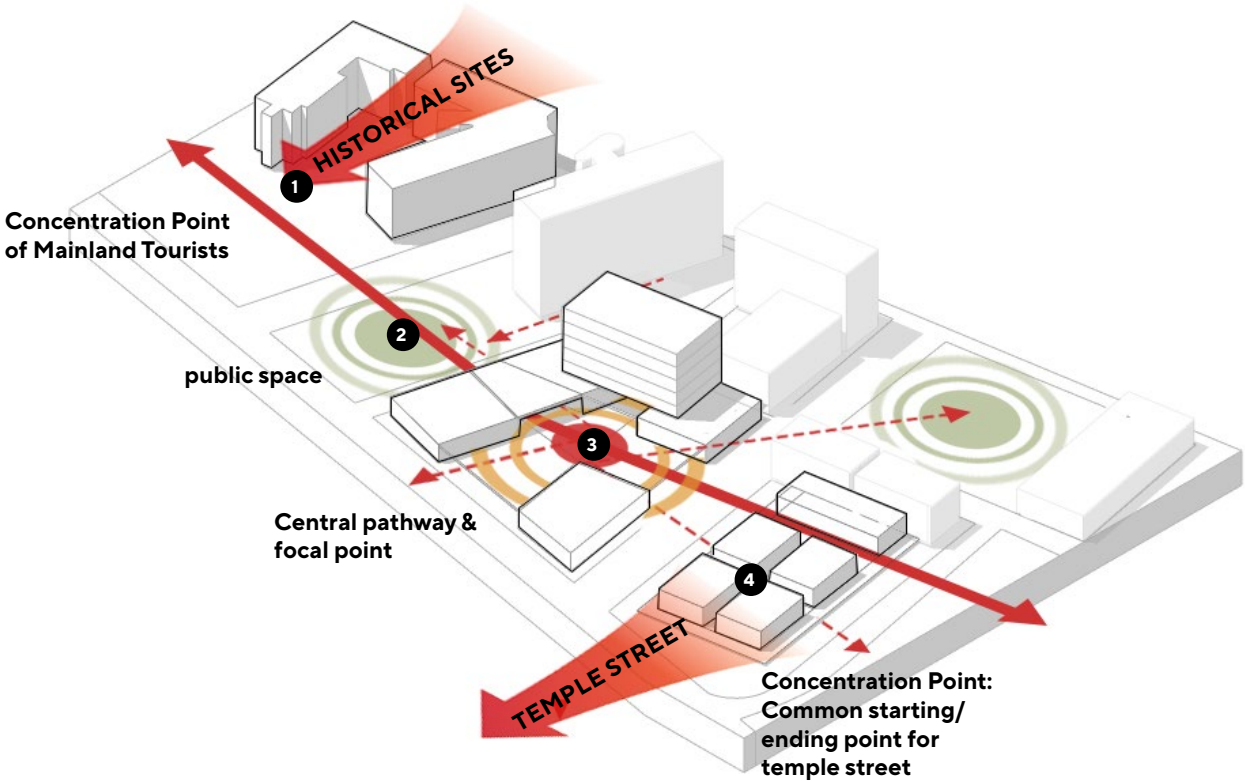
Objective 5.1: Conduct outreach initiatives to understand the needs of diverse religious and social groups.

Objective 5.2: Create inclusive marketing strategies that appeal to local visitors and promote the area's rich cultural tapestry.

SPATIAL STRATEGY

The spatial arrangement of solid and void elements, along with building volumes, is designed to enhance pedestrian movement and integrate natural elements within the site. This thoughtful design fosters a more inviting and accessible physical environment.

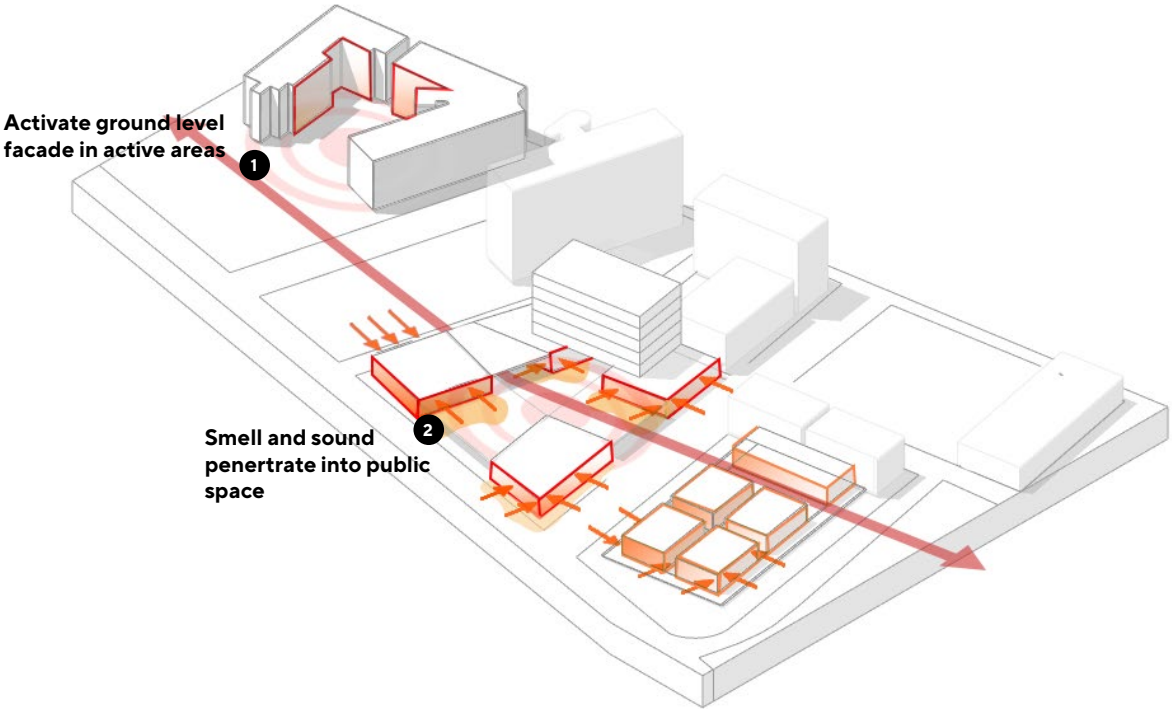
INTERCONNECTING FOOD EXPERIENCE PATHWAY



To connect visitors with the culinary scene, it's crucial to acknowledge existing tourist attractions and current concentration areas. Future designs will guide tourists from these hotspots to less dense areas, allowing for a deeper exploration of the local food landscape. By encouraging visitors to venture beyond popular sites, we can showcase the rich, authentic flavors and experiences that define the community.



ACTIVATING STREET-LEVEL EXPERIENCE

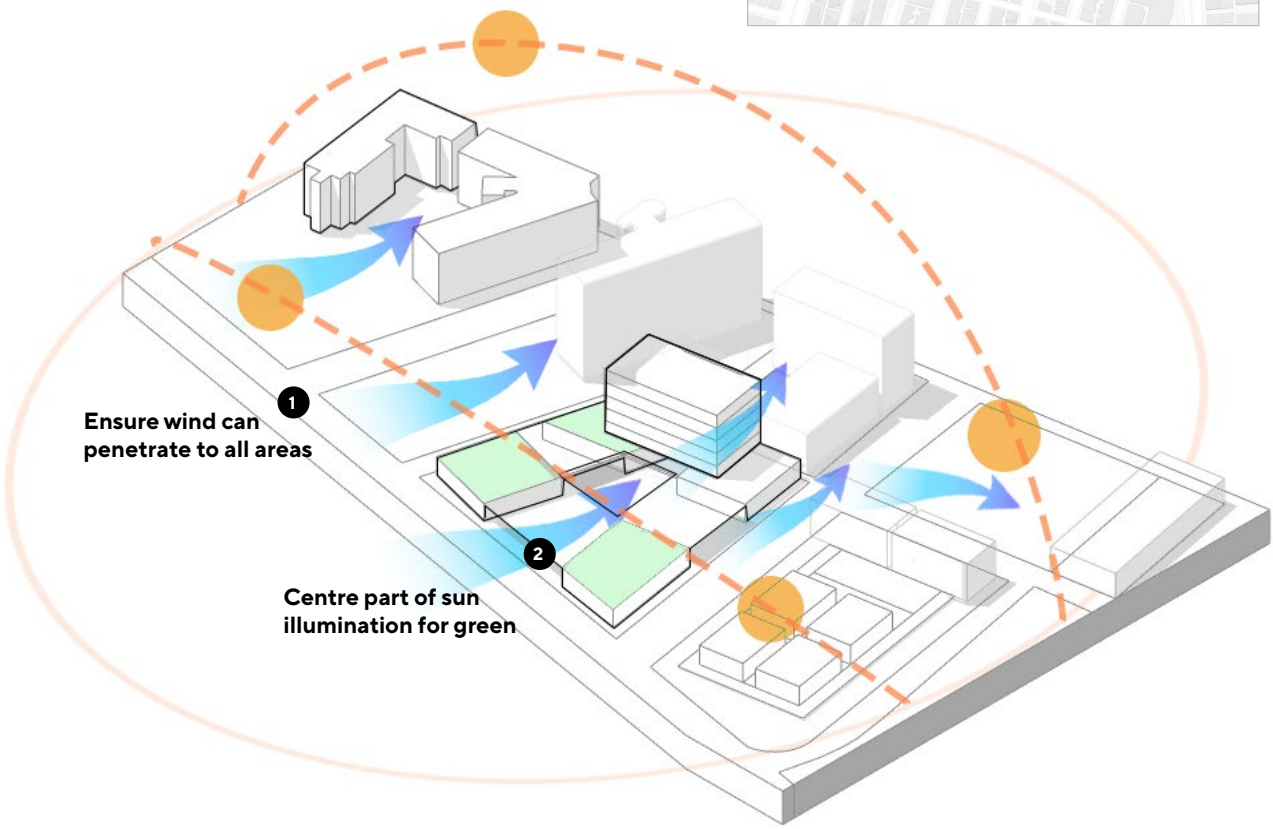


Streets are a vital element of Yau Ma Tei, celebrated for its vibrant street life and rich food culture, which thrive at ground level.

The new design aims to immerse tourists and locals in this culinary experience. With a transparent facade, visitors can not only see but also smell and taste the neighborhood's offerings, exploring the bustling food stalls and local eateries. This engagement deepens their connection to the community and its unique food traditions

UTILIZING EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL STRENGTH



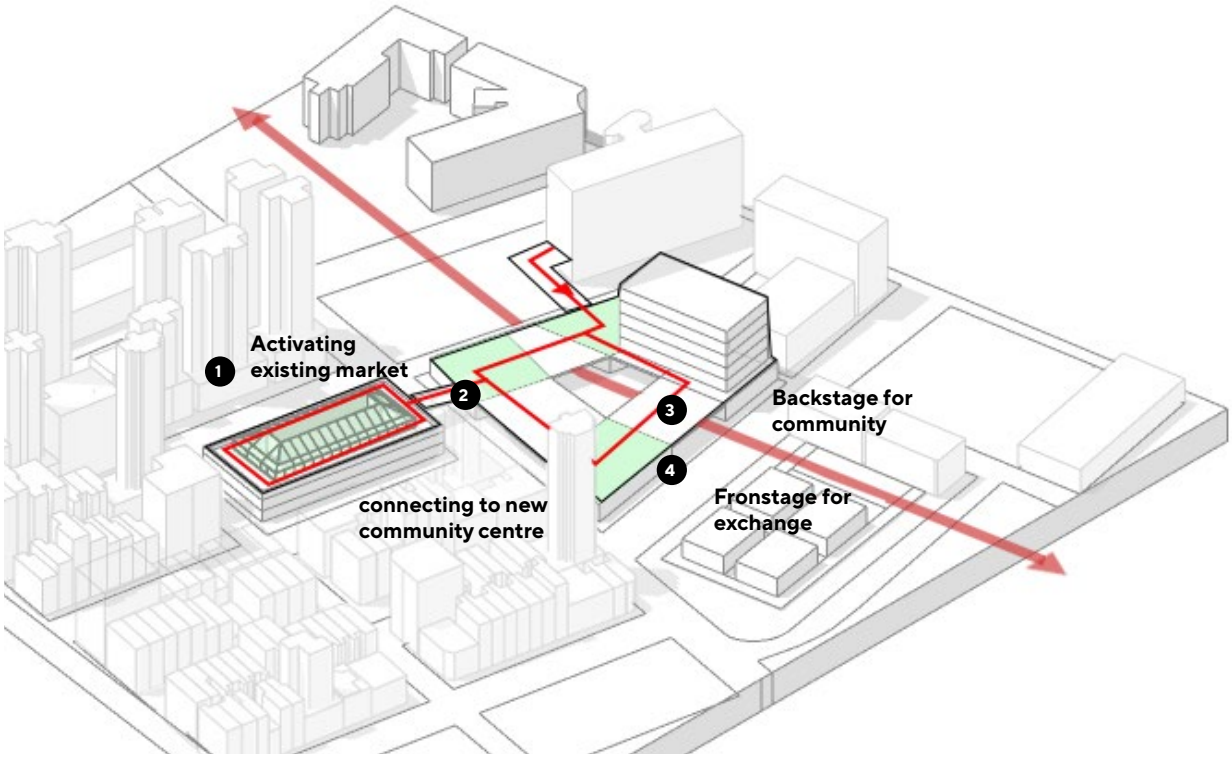


Ventilation is a significant source of pride in Yau Ma Tei's public spaces, as it is highly valued by locals for enhancing comfort and livability. Thoughtfully designed natural ventilation routes facilitate optimal airflow. The strategic use of alternating solid and void elements in the architectural design actively prevents the wall effect, which can lead to increased temperatures in the inner parts of Yau Ma Tei. By mitigating this effect, the design also helps to maintain a comfortable microclimate and prevents wind obstruction in existing public spaces.

Furthermore, the incorporation of rooftop greening not only capitalizes on sunlight but also transforms rooftops into inviting green areas that promote relaxation and social interaction. These green spaces serve as vital urban oases, contributing to the overall aesthetic appeal of the area.of nature not only improves air quality but also fosters a vibrant urban atmosphere.

LAYERING FOR BETTER CO-EXISTENCE





The community may require a “backstage” area for various activities, underscoring the need for layered design in both buildings and public spaces. This layering approach allows for the creation of dedicated zones for behind-the-scenes operations, such as food preparation and storage, while also providing visible spaces that encourage public engagement and interaction.

Moreover, establishing physical connections between different community buildings can facilitate potential linkages to the food system. These connections enable convenient transportation of goods and products across the same level, promoting a close circulation within the system. By designing spaces that prioritize both functionality and accessibility, the community can enhance its operational efficiency while fostering a more integrated and vibrant culinary landscape, ultimately enriching the overall experience for residents and visitors alike.



MASTERPLAN

In Yau Ma Tei, economic vulnerability is a key characteristic of the community, significantly impacting access to food resources and participation in the food system.



1 STREET FOOD AREA

2 SLOW FOOD AREA

- a CENTRAL PLAZA (GF)
- b COMMUNITY BACKSTAGE
- c SENSORY AREA

3 CULTURAL EXPERIENCE AREA

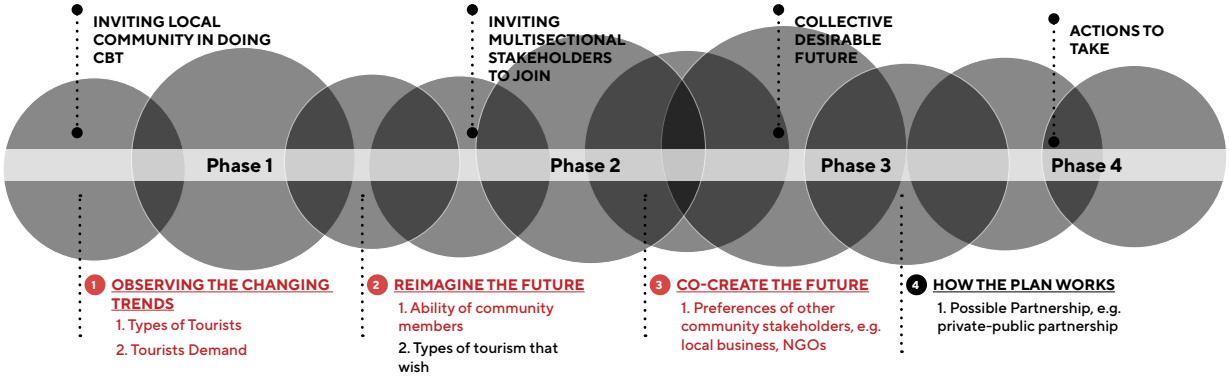
DESIGN DETAILS

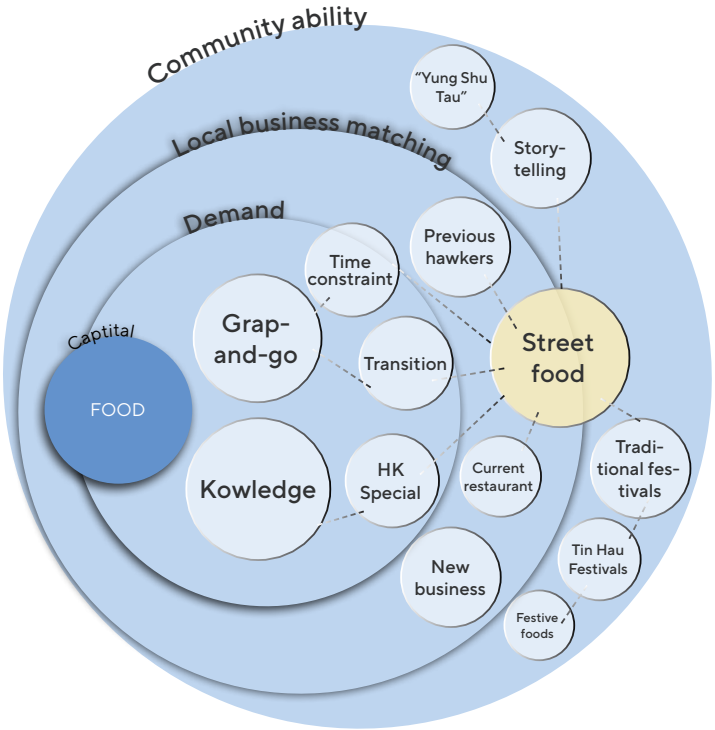
The street food area is a lively hub offering traditional Hong Kong dishes like egg waffles, curry fish balls, and stinky tofu, catering to the quick needs of both locals and tourists.

1 STREET FOOD AREA

Program idea Generation

Community-based tourism as community engagement framework





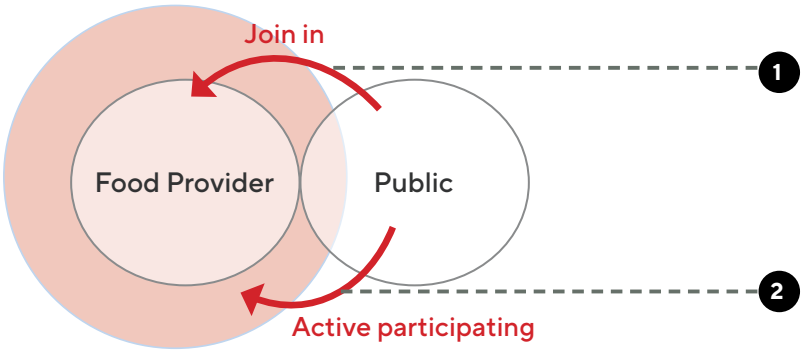
KEY FINDINGS (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

The concept for the street food area begins with a consideration of tourist behavior and the demand for diverse food options. Many tourists are point-to-point travelers, prioritizing fast and grab-and-go food options that fit their busy schedules. Street food, as a quintessential representation of Hong Kong's vibrant culinary culture, is ideally suited for this need.

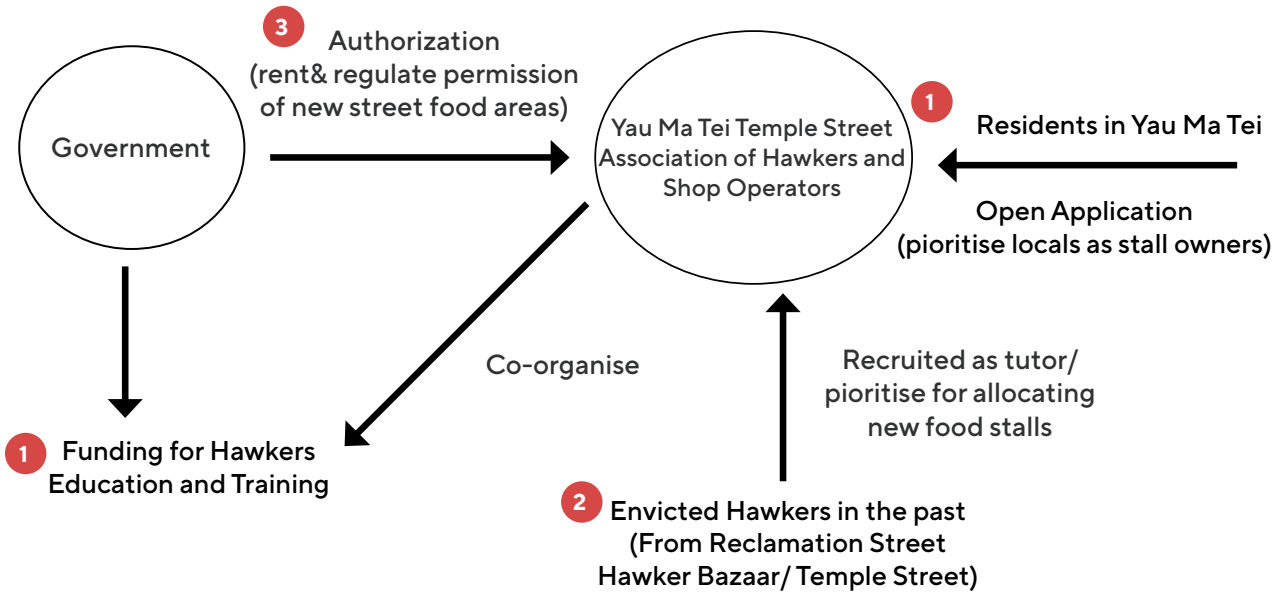
Positioning the street food area at the beginning of Temple Street serves as an essential resting point for travelers moving between North Temple Street and South Temple Street. This strategic location not only provides a convenient stop for food but also acts as a gateway to the dynamic street culture that Temple Street embodies. Here, visitors can immerse themselves in the lively atmosphere, sampling local delicacies while enjoying the colorful sights and sounds of the area.

By creating a designated space for street food, we can enhance the overall tourist experience, encouraging exploration and engagement with the rich cultural tapestry of Temple Street. This area will not only satisfy immediate food needs but also introduce visitors to the temporary yet vibrant street culture that defines the essence of Hong Kong.

Institutioal Design Thinking



1 Direct empowerment (Hawker Management)



1 New Generation involvement (innovative ideas) → Alter the perception of hawkers as sunset industry

2 Food Culture Tradition preservation → Knowledge from existing/ previous food hawkers → Elderly individuals can rejoin the food industry (contribute to their livelihoods and enjoy social life after retirement)

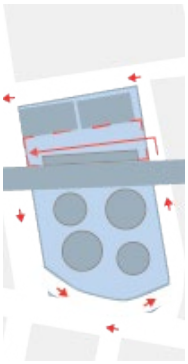
3 Community-led development → Easy to gather business for reflection and planning → A flexible and practical development plan

DESIGN DETAILS

The street food area is a lively hub offering traditional Hong Kong dishes like egg waffles, curry fish balls, and stinky tofu, catering to the quick needs of both locals and tourists.

1 STREET FOOD AREA

Spatial design details



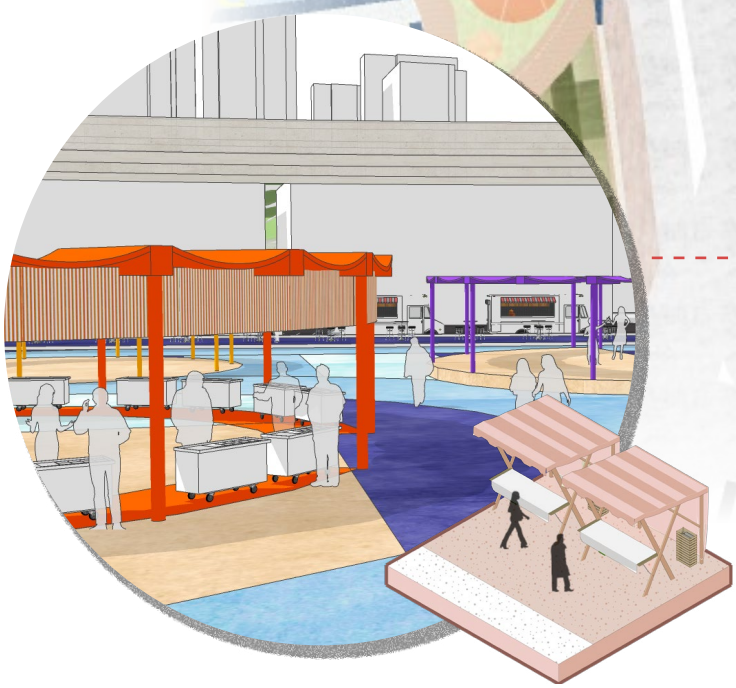
1 Food truck & carpark zone

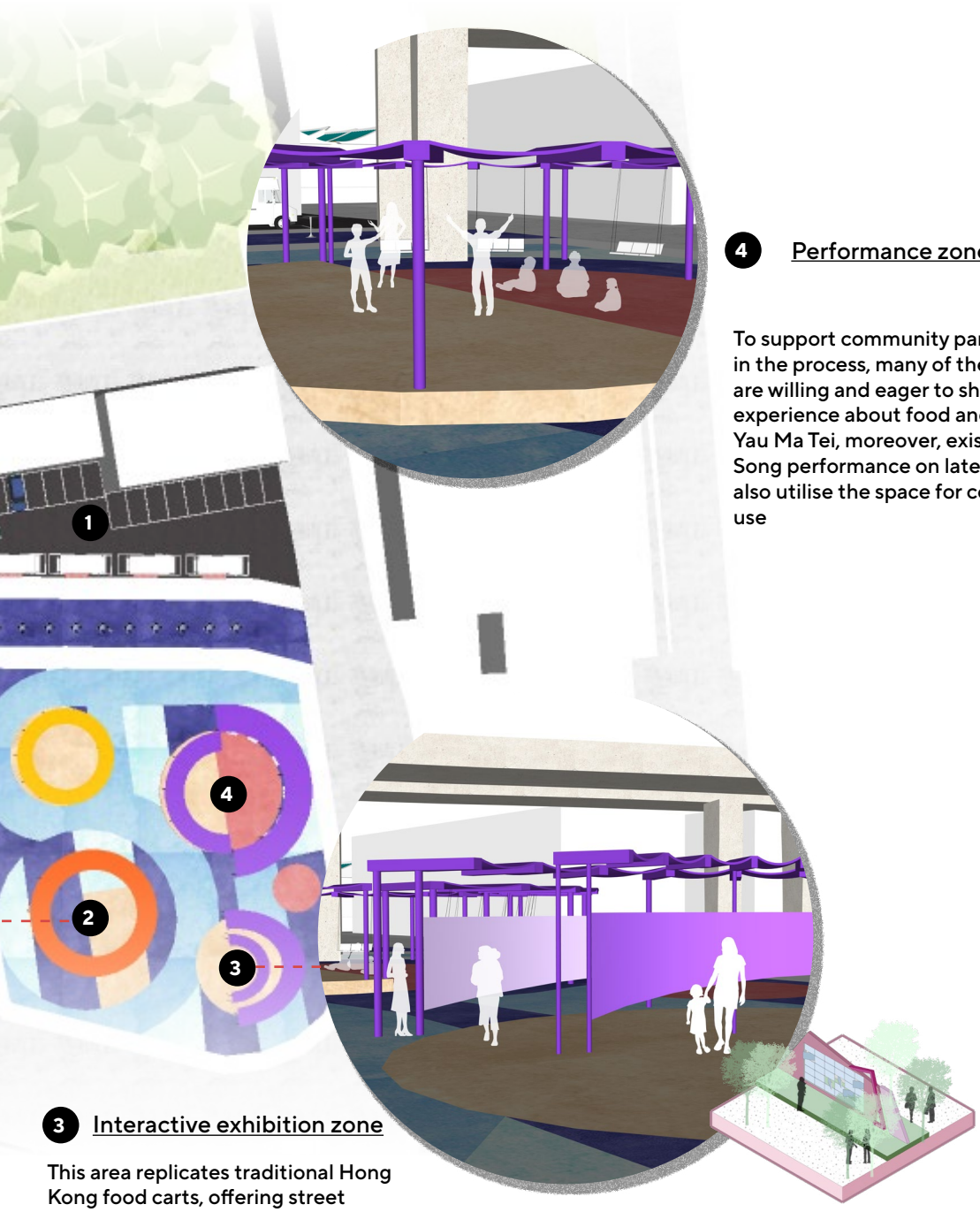
With consideration of previous carpark area, the area is special for its circular traffic direction surrounded. This benefit can be utilise for grap-and-go food for driver.



2 Food hawkers zone

This area replicates traditional Hong Kong food carts, offering street food. Hawker stalls will be open to all individuals, prioritizing local residents for applications as hawkers





4 Performance zone

To support community participation in the process, many of the elderly are willing and eager to share their experience about food and culture in Yau Ma Tei, moreover, existing Canto-Song performance on late night can also utilise the space for community use

3 Interactive exhibition zone

This area replicates traditional Hong Kong food carts, offering street food. Hawker stalls will be open to all individuals, prioritizing local residents for applications as hawkers

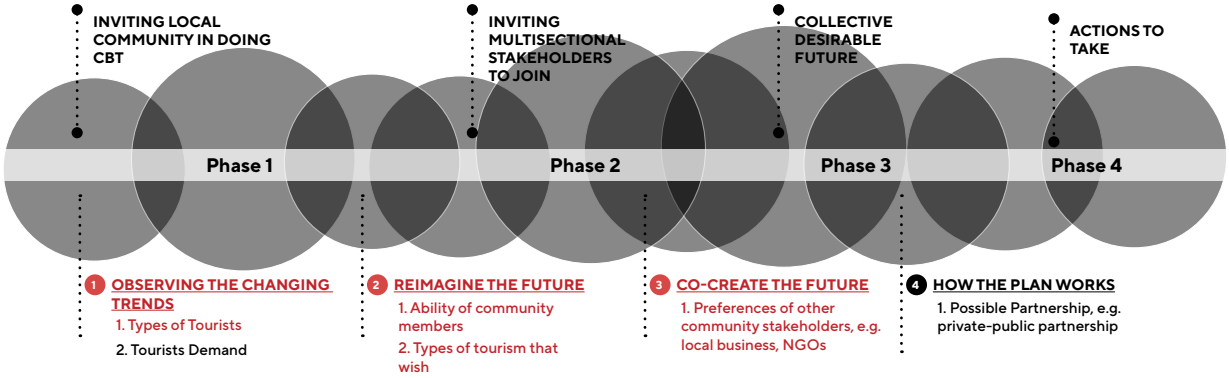
DESIGN DETAILS

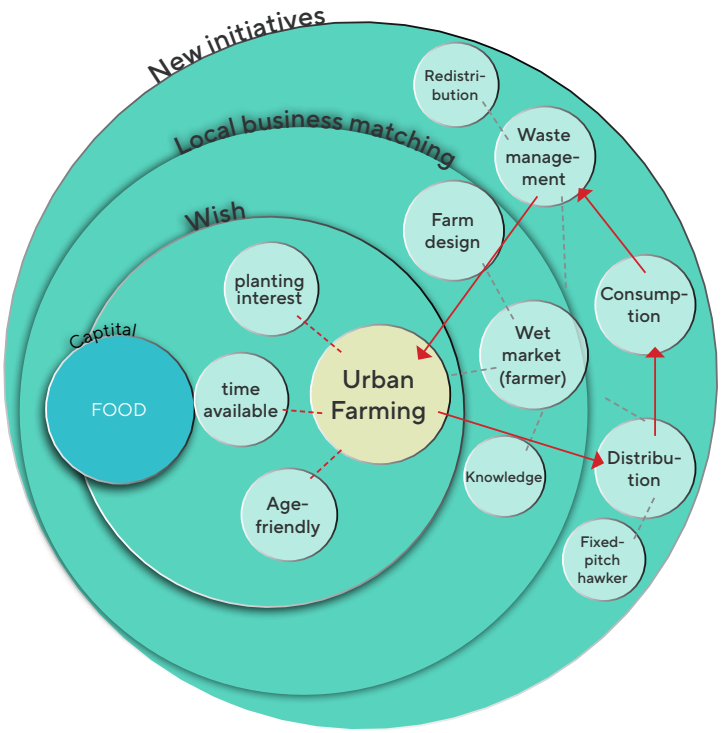
The street food area is a lively hub offering traditional Hong Kong dishes like egg waffles, curry fish balls, and stinky tofu, catering to the quick needs of both locals and tourists.

2 SLOW FOOD AREA

Program idea Generation

Community-based tourism as community engagement framework





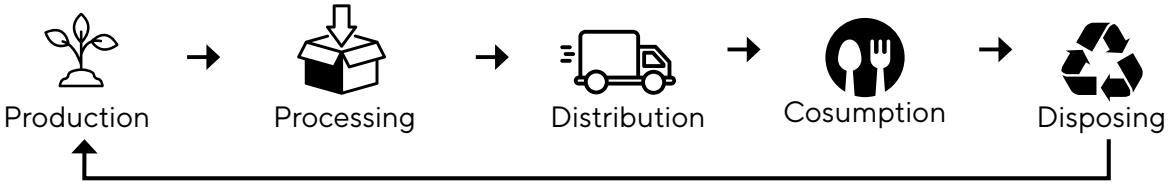
KEY FINDINGS (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

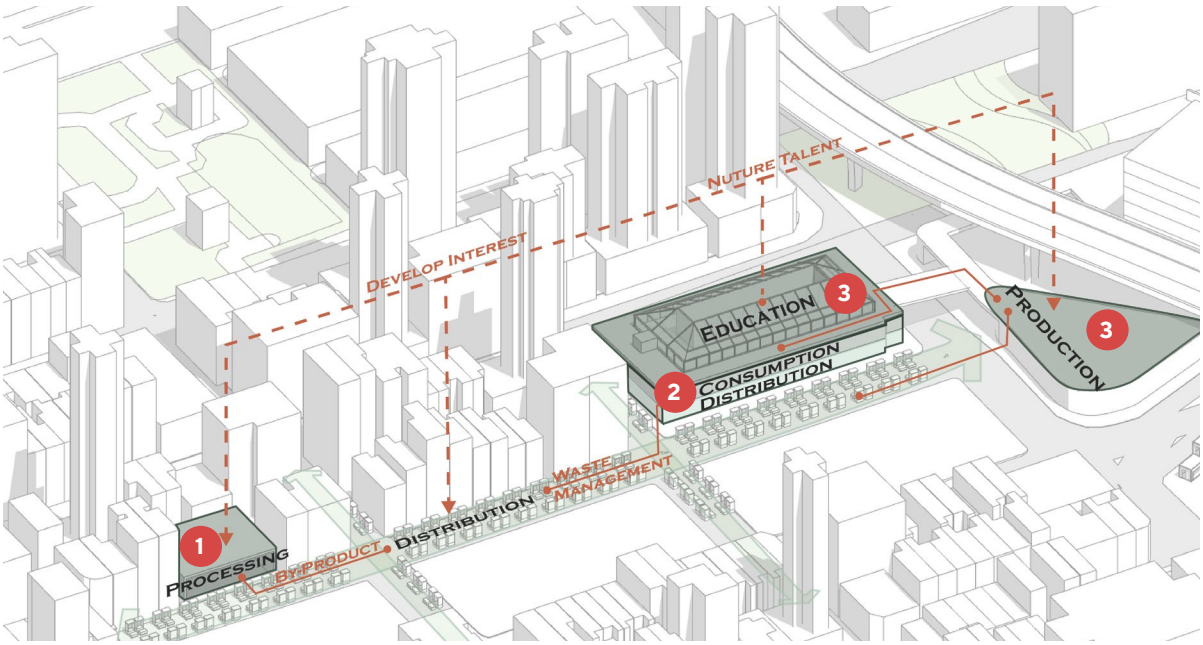
Urban farming is a widely supported concept among various stakeholders, including families, the elderly, and ethnic groups within the community.

Given the existing food hierarchy, urban farming can contribute to a broader vision of sustainable and healthy eating, addressing the need for equal access to nutritious food resources for low-income residents.

The slow food culture area emphasizes the principles of sustainable, locally sourced, and thoughtfully prepared food. It serves as a space for visitors and locals to appreciate the art of cooking and the importance of food in building community and preserving cultural heritage. This area promotes a mindful approach to dining, encouraging patrons to savor their meals and understand the stories behind the ingredients.

1 Food System Connectedness





1 Storage difficulties for Open-air market hawkers → Area for food storage → Refrigerate
Area for food storage → Food processing workshop → Marinated/ fermented vegetables

2 Food Redistribution → Edible but less appealing for sales vegetables → Low-price resumption by community/ NGOs → Community Kitchen
Low-price resumption by community/ NGOs → NGOs for making free lunchbox for low-income groups

3 Farming & production → Education for healthy eating

DESIGN DETAILS

The building area serves as a community hub, connecting the existing food system and strengthening bonds while cultivating local interest in taking part in the food industry.

2 SLOW FOOD AREA (BUILD-UP SPACE)

Spatial design details



3 Community Kitchen (Storage & Work

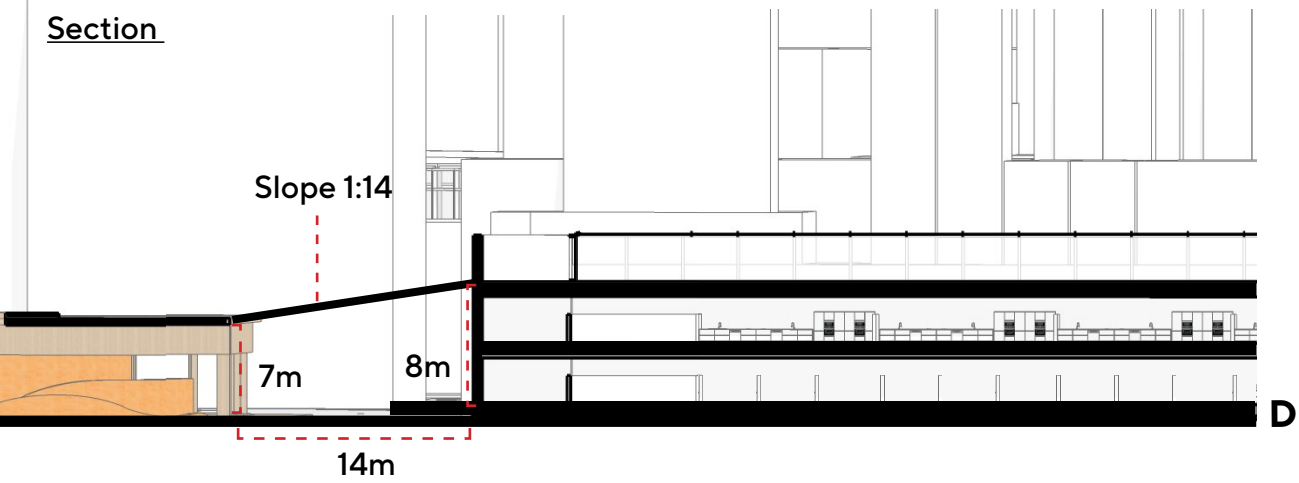
The second floor of the wet market will primarily serve as a backstage area for the community, where open-air market hawkers can utilize the space for workshops on food preservation and for processing food waste from business into meals.



2 Greenhouse

The greenhouse serves as an educational center for urban farming and healthy eating in the community. The indoor area is safe and easy to manage, making it ideal for small classes and lessons.

Section



kshop)



1 Rooftop Garden

The rooftop garden aims to use grid gardens as units for community organizations or households to register small plots of farmland for growing their own vegetables. This initiative serves both as a leisure activity and as a means of expressing commitment to food sustainability.

DESIGN DETAILS

The street-level intervention integrates spaces for tourists and locals, driven by the local community's skills in cooking, storytelling, and cultural exchange.

2 SLOW FOOD AREA (STREET-LEVEL SPACE)

Spatial design details



4 Edible Green Garden

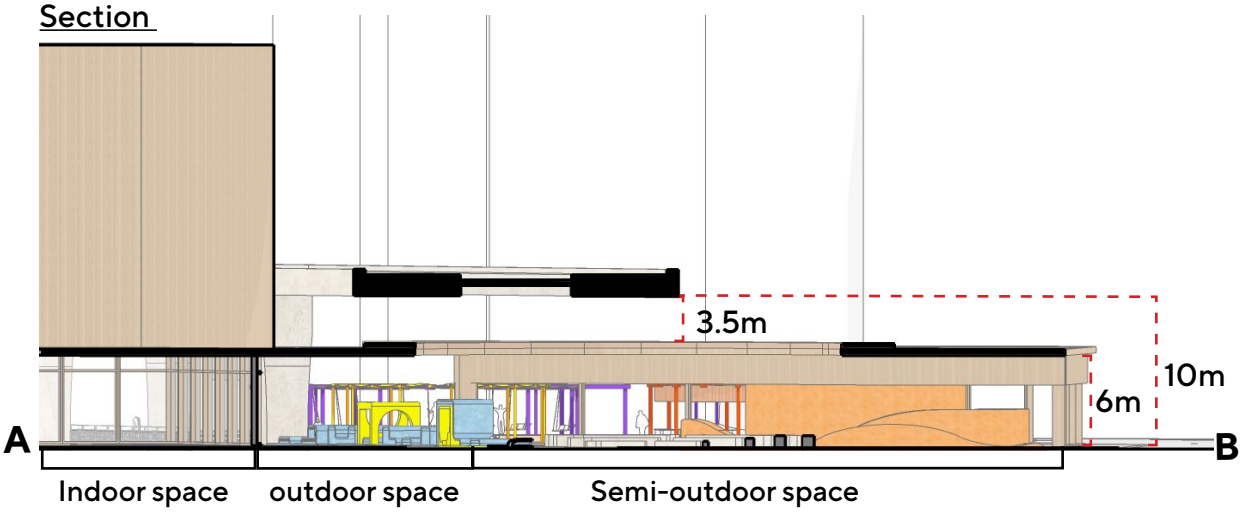
Herbs can be cultivated in the area to provide tourists with a sensory experience, allowing them to interact with the smells and tastes of plants. This initiative would educate visitors about the herbs and spices commonly used in local cuisine, particularly in ethnic dishes that integrate diverse flavors.



5 Green Garden (Rest)

This area acts as a buffer for intense pedestrian activity, providing a relat quiet space in front of the hospital. essential to consider this tranquility support the lifestyle of local residen accommodating public use.

Section





3 Community Kitchen

This area features a community kitchen available for booking by local members and NGOs for various activities. It will be open to the public, allowing tourists to appreciate the art of cooking and the role of food in fostering community connections.

Engagement tools







1 2 Central Plaza

This area is dedicated to exchanging opinions between locals and tourists. Since community-based tourism emphasizes understanding tourist demands and community identity, tools like community maps or games can facilitate communication.

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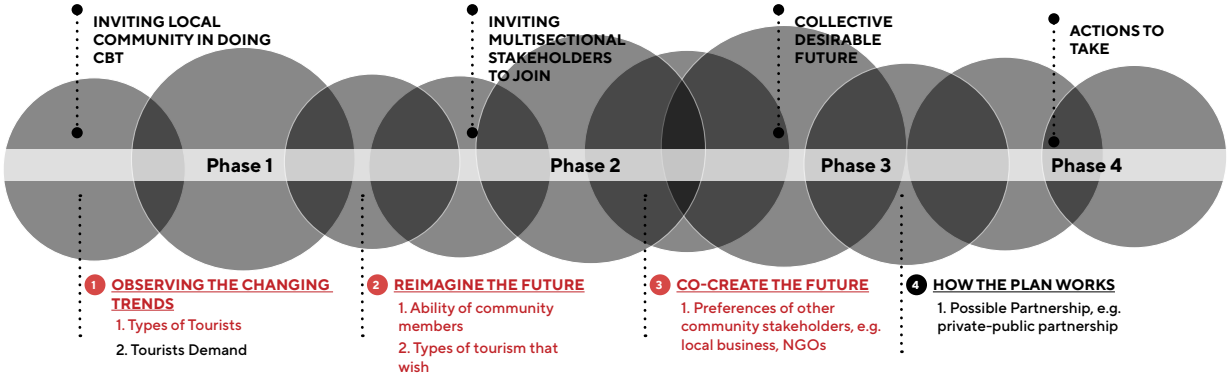
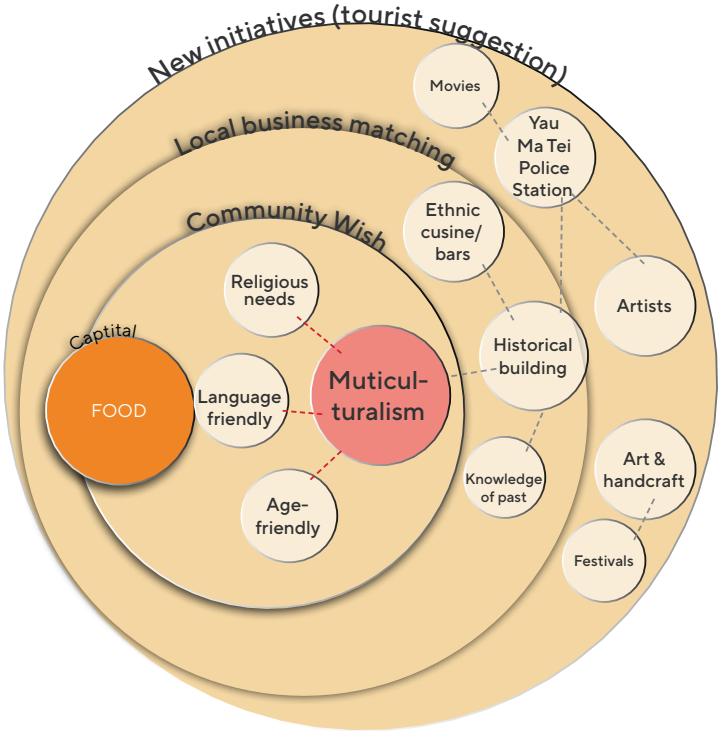
DESIGN DETAILS

The street food area is a lively hub offering traditional Hong Kong dishes like egg waffles, curry fish balls, and stinky tofu, catering to the quick needs of both locals and tourists.

3 CULTURAL EXPERIENCE AREA

Program idea Generation





KEY FINDINGS (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

Multiculturalism is a vital element for the community in Yau Ma Tei. The area's rich tapestry of cultures not only enhances the local atmosphere but also attracts tourists seeking immediate experiences that immerse them in diverse traditions. This demand can be harnessed to promote the intersection of food culture, art, and film, creating vibrant, Instagram-worthy spots that draw visitors.

By showcasing a variety of cultural expressions, Yau Ma Tei becomes a dynamic platform where both Hong Kong heritage and ethnic cultures can thrive. Local food markets, art installations, and film screenings can highlight this diversity, allowing residents and visitors alike to engage with and appreciate the unique stories and flavors that define the community. This celebration of multiculturalism not only enriches the local identity but also fosters a sense of belonging and connection among residents from different backgrounds.



1 Art, Movie, and Food-related exhibition

Since Yau Ma Tei Police Station is a place with many movies taken here, attractin many tourists to visit to take photos. Recreating movie scene and related ehibition can attract more tourists to stay in the area for possible consumption



2 Multicultural Cusine Area

Extending shopfronts enhances interaction between businesses and diverse tourists in Yau Ma Tei, creating a welcoming atmosphere. Hosting cultural and religious festivals in these spaces can celebrate the area's multicultural nature, showcasing rich traditions and fostering unity among residents and visitors while attracting even more tourists.

WAY FORWARD

This project expands the discussion of food tourism in Hong Kong to focus on community-level planning. It addresses existing challenges in the food system related to government control, economic vulnerability, and the potential for positive change in Hong Kong's food landscape.

As a valuable asset, food culture must be thoughtfully planned with input from community stakeholders. Social empowerment is crucial for a bottom-up approach that reveals and preserves this culture, leveraging local knowledge to ultimately yield economic benefits for all.

The project aims to reimagine neglected spaces and industries in Hong Kong, including Hawker bazaars, wet markets, and open street markets, which have a rich history and represent the essence of Hong Kong's food culture.

Additionally, the project will serve as a case study of Yau Ma Tei's unique characteristics, providing insights that may guide future redevelopment efforts.

REFLECTION

The past nine months of research have been a truly memorable journey, marking a significant milestone in my academic career. Throughout this time, I had the privilege of discovering a new community that was initially unfamiliar to me. As I engaged with community members, I found great satisfaction in witnessing their willingness to open up, sharing their experiences—their joys and challenges. This connection has not only enriched my understanding but has also made the community feel like a second home by the end of the project.

Navigating the process of exploring my topic and defining the project direction was challenging. It involved numerous adjustments, from shifting the focus of the topic to selecting the appropriate site that aligned with my vision. Each decision required careful consideration, and it took time to arrive at a coherent narrative that truly represented my intentions. This journey was filled with moments of self-doubt, but through each review and discussion, I gradually built my confidence. I learned to articulate my ideas with clarity and to express them both logically and visually.

Completing this project does not signify the end of my journey in urban design. Instead, it has ignited a deeper passion for creating better community environments and engaging in meaningful placemaking initiatives. I am excited to carry this enthusiasm forward, continuing to learn and grow in this field.

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