

## OVERVIEW

In March 2022, the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience, located in Seattle's Chinatown-International District (C-ID), entered into work with 701 S Jackson Partners, LLC to collect historic and cultural materials, identify interpretive themes, and make recommendations for potential tours and displays at 701 South Jackson Street, the former location of the Seventh Avenue Service, planned for future redevelopment.

This report compiles:

- Record of historic and cultural findings of the site
- Key themes, stories and facts of the site that can be integrated into the Wing Luke Museum's neighborhood walking tours
- Recommendations on how to organize and present key historic and cultural aspects into the new building design and development

Accompanying the report are:

- Gathered related primary source materials, including oral histories and photographs (please note that materials require further permission for use depending on future display)
- Sample collage images for potential future tours and displays

Wing Luke Museum staff contributing to this report include:

- Cassie Chinn, Deputy Executive Director, project lead and report author
- Bob Fisher, Collections Manager, lead researcher
- Rahul Gupta, Director of Education and Tours, lead contributor for interpretive themes, tours and displays
- Doan Diane Hoang Dy, Senior Tour Manager, lead contributor of interpretive themes, tours and displays

Through this process, Wing Luke Museum staff and various team members of 701 S Jackson Partners, LLC met to evaluate and inform progress of work, including:

- Pre-project briefings and development, August 31, 2021; November 2, 2021; January 10, 2022; March 22, 2022
- Project kick-off, April 6, 2022
- Historic findings discussion, April 28, 2022
- Tour recommendations discussion, May 19, 2022
- Display recommendations discussions, June 2, 2022; June 16, 2022

In meeting and as a foundation for this work, we acknowledge our shared values to:

- Honor the lives and accomplishments of people related to the site
- Highlight the tangible and intangible cultural resources associated with the site, often extending beyond the physical site itself
- Connect with the rich history of the surrounding neighborhood, the Chinatown-International District
- Affirm the many benefits for neighborhood visitors, residents and other stakeholders for an integrated approach to preservation and interpretation of this history and heritage today

## SUMMARY

If we had to pick one word to summarize our findings, that word would be “**nexus**,” meaning:<sup>1</sup>

- a means of connection; tie; link
- a connected series or group
- the core or center

The location at 701 South Jackson Street (from here on out referenced as Seventh Avenue Service) can be explored at the core or center of several streams, radiating out from the location, in increasing expansiveness, whether:

- as a **specific place of connection** among individuals
- along Jackson Street and in the C-ID in connection with **other service stations and garages** in the area and beyond
- showing forth **neighborhood interconnectedness** between Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon
- reflecting the **immigrant experience and acculturation process**, in this case with car culture in the U.S.

Additionally, the site encompasses the story of its primary property owner, the **Mar Family**, long-time community leaders in the C-ID, and especially **Barry Mar** (d. March 10, 2021).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/nexus>

## HISTORIC & CULTURAL FINDINGS WITH KEY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

### Specific place of connection

Table 1 of this report shows various businesses at the site, starting in 1890 with a cigar shop operated by Antonio Eanonimo, co-located with the Holy Names Academy, which was located on the full-block property from 1884-1908. The earliest record to date of “auto” at the site comes from 1916; then starting in 1930, there is a progression of service stations variously operated by:

- Fred I. Hamada and Joe G. Miyagawa, Gasoline Alleys, 1930
- Jackson Service Station, 1937-1938
- Joseph Tsujimoto and R.M. Okada, Jackson Beverage Store (noticeably serving “soft drinks, beer, wine and fishing tackle), 1937-1938
- China Super Service, 1940-1941
- William Oppenheimer, 1943-1944
- T. Imanaka, C.C. Toshi and G.S. Koyama, Seventh Avenue Service, 1948-1959

Records also show owners Nobuo Moritani and Joseph Tsujimoto in 1951. Additionally, a 1946 map also shows Sun Wah Jewelry located in a small building on the property.

Brief survey of businesses at 408 7th Avenue South also show, among others, Leong Plumbing, Insurance and New Century Tea Gallery at the location (see Table 2).

Significantly, even this short progression of business owners at the site reflects several significant historical trends:

- Growth of the Asian immigrant population and settlement in the C-ID at the turn of the century, marked by the moving of the European immigrant population from the area and the rise of Asian American businesses
- Forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II as generally shown by the break in Japanese American business owners around 1940-1944
- Connection with, adjacency to, and co-location of the Japanese American and Chinese American communities especially in this area as shown not only by the China Super Service business from 1940-1941 but also the smaller Chinese American owned businesses at the site during various times.

In most recent times, the site is perhaps most associated with its longest running business owner, Pat Abe, who operated Seventh Avenue Service the longest from 1972-2015. Pat’s personal story reflects a spirit of strong relationships, further embodied in his life’s business.

Pat is a third-generation entrepreneur, following his grandfather Chotaro who started the Dearborn Cash Grocery & Meat Market, which was then run by his father Mitsuji. The grocery itself was on the ground floor of the Hotel Palmer, located at Dearborn and Eighth Avenue, reflecting both the historic extension of Japanese American owned businesses to Dearborn Street before World War II as well as the historic niche of hotel operators within Seattle’s Japanese American community before the war. During the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans in U.S. concentration camps during the war, a Polish family offered to run the hotel for the Abes. Following the war, the Abes were able to return to Seattle and reclaim their business, a rare and significant example of interracial support. The

Abes held the hotel and grocery until the early 1960s when I-5 construction demolished the building and forced them from the neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

Pat himself was born in Seattle on January 24, 1935. Excerpts from an oral history conducted by Ron Chew for the Wing Luke Museum shares his story growing up in the area and his love of cars:<sup>3</sup>

*I was born in Seattle, Washington, January 24, 1935, here in Seattle. My grandmother on my mom's side was a midwife, so she's the one who brought me into this world. Her name was Beppu – Mrs. Beppu.<sup>4</sup> [My parents were] Mitsuji Abe and Hiroko Beppu.*

*I went to Bailey Gatzert, Washington Junior High and Garfield. I didn't go to college. I was inducted into the service, but I joined the Reserves. I was fixing cars from when I was 14 years old. When I was going to junior high school, it was not legal, but we used to buy junk cars and fix them up and drive them to school. (laughs) Park it about three blocks away so the teachers didn't see you naturally...*

*I started [working] with Jack Habu up on 14th and Jackson. It was called Automotive Brakes. Because I heard that Mr. Imanaka was trying to sell his business and so I thought I would rather be my own boss instead of a partnership. So that's the reason I came down here. So I came down here and Mr. Imanaka interviewed me quite a bit because he didn't want to turn his business over to somebody that was not going to be reliable. So he asked a lot of questions. He contacted a lot of people he had talked to. He sold me the business back then and at that time, there were three partnerships. The body shop across the street – the Seventh Avenue Auto Rebuild, and then the gas station was Seventh Avenue Service, and the repair shop over there [pointing to the building adjacent to Seventh Avenue Service].*

*[I had the] repair shop and the gas station. So we were pumping gas for a while until the gasoline was too expensive. You know, competition-wise. I can remember when they had a gasoline shortage. I can't believe all the friends I had that I didn't remember! They would all come in. They treated me like I was something that – but they were actually just wanting to get the gas. After the gas shortage was gone, they never came in back. (laughs) I couldn't believe it... There was no money in gas. At that time, you probably only made about four cents a gallon on gasoline. So it was not profitable that way. But it was a service I remember.*

*... [Mr. Imanaka] sold it to me. I can't remember the price it was. I had to go borrow the money. I bought the business and all the stock in it. But this property here belongs to Barry Mar. So I rent from him. [From 1972 until] May of 2015.<sup>5</sup> I figured, "I might as well retire." So the last day I worked was May 29, 2015.*

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<sup>2</sup> "Car Talk," Marc Ramirez, *The Seattle Times*, June 17, 2005. <https://www.seattletimes.com/pacific-nw-magazine/car-talk/>.

<sup>3</sup> Oral history with Pat Abe, conducted by Ron Chew, June 26, 2015. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Beppu was a well-known midwife of the time, supporting Seattle's Japanese American community at a time when local hospitals refused service to Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans.

<sup>5</sup> Ted Imanaka sold the business to Pat in 1977, not 1972. Pat refers to 1972 because Ted was trying him out first. Ted continued to work full-time at the station until he retired at age 80 in 1991. Additional information from Pat Abe for his oral history, June 28, 2015. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

*Well, from all my customers that tell me that I'm honest and my prices were right. I didn't overcharge. So I think I built up my clientele that way. It's from word of mouth, it just kept spreading that everything I do was guaranteed it would work and so it's been a very good life.*

Additional testimony shows that Mr. Imanaka's trust was well placed with Pat carrying on his family's spirit of service, creating a place of connection among community. Marc Ramirez in his 2005 article, "Car Talk," described it as, "a social hub built around keen customer service, an old-fashioned work ethic and a passion for cards that Abe shares with son David, his sidekick since the 1980s." The article further shares the following vignette:<sup>6</sup>

It's part repair room, part used-car operation, part community center. Stop in, have a doughnut (Abe insists) and see a mix of regular ranging from life-long pals like retired Boeing mechanic Kay Takeuchi to Abe's father, Mits, who at 90 still drives in from his Skyway home to meet Pat for lunch. "He has real loyal customers, strong community support," says Pennzoil driver Mike Irvin, who's pumped motor oil here for 18 years. "You don't see too many non-Asians in here." Inside, he devours a glazed twist before heading out to connect big oil drums to decades-old tanks behind the garage. "Shops like this one," Irvin says, "are a dying breed."

### **Other service stations and garages**

The phase a "dying breed" indicates being the last remaining of many – and indeed, at one point in time, Seventh Avenue Service joined several other service stations and garages in the area. (See Table 3.) Pat himself recalls the China Garage across the street on 7th from his Seventh Avenue Service, "There was a garage there. I know they repaired cabs. And then on the top floor, do you remember the ramp that went up there? There was a body shop up there. I never did meet those guys. But it was a body shop. But they had that wooden ramp that you had to drive around."<sup>7</sup>

An oral history with Hing Y. Chinn, previous owner of the China Garage, shows how discrimination shaped his options for job employment:<sup>8</sup>

*[I didn't go to college.] Heck, no. How could I? In those days, I see a lot of friends, they graduate with master's degrees in electrical engineering. In those days, they go through college, they cannot get any job anyhow. So, in those days, I make up [my mind], "Hey, after I go to school, I don't want to go." I mean, you go through college, you not going to get any better job anyhow. When I graduated, I'm very good at my handy work and I take metal work, I do turning machine shop, like that. I happen to get real good with this teacher on machine work. One day, I happen to talk to him, and he said, "Hey, Hing, what are you going to do when you graduate from high school?" I said, "Well..." But anyhow, at that time, my dad, he had a partnership with somebody else. We had a little taxi cab company. I was involved in the car a little bit at that time. In fact, when I was 16, I learned how to drive a car already.*

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<sup>6</sup> "Car Talk," Marc Ramirez, *The Seattle Times*, June 17, 2005. <https://www.seattletimes.com/pacific-nw-magazine/car-talk/>.

<sup>7</sup> Oral history with Pat Abe, conducted by Ron Chew, June 26, 2015. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

<sup>8</sup> Oral history with Hing Y. Chinn and Mary Chinn, conducted by Ron Chew, May 29, 1991. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

*[The taxi service] was on 424 Seventh Avenue South. You know where that restaurant is one the corner of Seventh and King. Linyen. That used to be our taxi cab... [It was] American Oriental. Well, anyhow, I fooled around with cars. I said, "Well, I'd like to go learn how to be an automobile mechanic." So, he said, "You want to do that? I know they have an auto mechanic class at Broadway. I know the teacher over there, and if you want to go, I'll introduce you." So, one day, after school, that teacher was real good – he took me in his car and he took me to Broadway and he introduced the teacher over there. But you have [to] stand and wait for your time. You can't go in right away. So, I said, "Okay." He tutored me, and then the following year, I went to the automotive school. And that was a two-year course. Not only automobile repair, but they also have machine shop and you learn all that stuff. And I have another class – they call it economics. They teach you a little bit about economics, too. But the first year, I didn't learn anything. Do you know why? Because it's a two-year class. The second-year people get all the good jobs. The first-year people, what we do is sometimes we wash the cars and stuff like that and do little dinky things. So actually, we didn't start learning anything. In other words, you can bring your car in there and be fixed, but that's how we do it. We just charge them for the parts. We can fix the car and charge them for the parts.*

*When we finished the two-year course, automobile [work] covers a lot of ground – electricity, welding and all that stuff. Two years, you're not ready for it... I was going to school at that time; we were married in the meantime. When I finished school, I was pretty brave. I wanted to open a garage myself. You know where the [old] Wing Luke building is? That used to be my garage. I rented that thing for about over 10 years, running it as a garage. That used to be a garage.*

*Must be around '35, '36 – around there [when I had it]. It's a storage garage. I rent the place from them, and then people bring their car in there for storage – keep their car there. And I would have a repair shop in the back. But the storage helped me pay for the rent. See, that's how I can do it. So, I would have a couple of gas pumps, to pump with the hand and sell gas to my friends. They come in there like that. And then the storage garage is down in the basement, too. It's two levels.*

*[I did it about 10 years.] It's a real good experience. It's okay. Well, that was all during the Depression. I'm young. I mean people don't trust me yet. We don't know whether we can do the job or not. In fact, a lot of times when we do the job, we even give discount for them on parts when we buy parts. We get about 25 percent. We give all the customers a discount on the parts; we don't even charge. All we do is charge them a little bit of labor.*

The times further fed into the need for service stations and garages among the Asian American community and within the C-ID. Taxi cab companies were a niche business within the Chinese American community. Mary Chinn, Hing's wife, recalls, "They had a lot of Chinese taxi cabs then. About four taxi cab companies."<sup>9</sup>

Migrant laborers, especially within the Filipino American community, which at one point in time made up the largest population of the C-ID, required a place to store their cars when they were away working in the canneries of Alaska or the fields of Eastern Washington. Housing exclusion and immigration

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<sup>9</sup> Oral history with Hing Y. Chinn and Mary Chinn, conducted by Ron Chew, May 29, 1991. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

restrictions resulted in mostly single men, living in SROs in the C-ID, also needing places to service and store their cars.

As the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities expanded beyond the C-ID, we see other service stations and garages emerge, whether former RS Auto Rebuild on King and Rainier, former Chin Auto near the current Beacon Hill Library, former Seutsay Auto Body at 3565 South Genesee, or current Lioe's Automotive Service at 2400 Beacon Avenue South, to name a few.

Hing's oral history also gives insight into the history of the Seventh Avenue Service:<sup>10</sup>

*Across the street [from China Garage], there's a gasoline station there right now, right? It belonged to Frank Mar. He's a real good friend of mine. The building belonged to him. The service station too. And then one day, he said, "Hey, Hing. Do you want to run the service station?" I said, "Well, I don't know." And then he said, "Well, I'd like to be a partner too." He wanted to be a partner, so that would make three. So, I don't run that garage anymore. So, we formed three partners: my brother-in-law would be working the garage right along with me because we went to the same school together when I opened... There was two mechanics and this Frank Mar... And so we run the garage and run the service station at the same time for a few years until the war started in 1941.*

### **Neighborhood interconnectedness**

Hing's story of running his China Garage across the street from the Seventh Avenue Service, which would temporarily be called China Super Service during World War II reflects the overlapping, interconnectedness of the several areas that make up the C-ID, including Chinatown, Japantown and later Little Saigon, alongside its rich Filipino American heritage, referred to by some as "Filipino Town."<sup>11</sup> Beyond the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, Native American, African American and working class communities also hold presence in the neighborhood.

While various maps capture this in line on paper, Pat's oral history brings out the close proximity of businesses across ethnic groups in the area immediately surrounding Seventh Avenue Service in lived experience:<sup>12</sup>

*And then over there, on the corner [pointing to the northeast corner of 7th and Jackson], I think they used to make shoyu... Right in the other part was called Black Duck. I think they worked on Volkswagens... [And] do you remember Art Louie's restaurant up the street? I got a sign from Art Louie's in the back room.*

*... There used to be a lot of Japanese restaurants in like Puget Sound Hotel. There was a restaurant in the Puget Sound Hotel that was good. There used to be Joe's Café down the street.*

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<sup>10</sup> Oral history with Hing Y. Chinn and Mary Chinn, conducted by Ron Chew, May 29, 1991. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

<sup>11</sup> "Seattle Chinatown Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, page 32, October 9, 1986.

<sup>12</sup> Oral history with Pat Abe, conducted by Ron Chew, June 26, 2015. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

*Mama's Café down on Fifth Avenue. There was another one down here – I can't remember the name of it, on Lane Street, but it was on the corner. These were all little Japanese restaurants...*

*Before it was only Chinese and Japanese. Now there are other countries coming in. Koreans... Cambodian. It's changed a lot since I've been here. I remember when I was growing up, I thought there was only Chinese and Japanese. (laughs) I didn't know there were other Orientals [sic]. They never taught us that in school, right? And so I didn't realize that there were other Orientals [sic] around.<sup>13</sup>*

Indeed, anecdotal stories related to Pat show forth close connections of everyday life within the C-ID. Marc Ramirez's article, "Car Talk," describes Pat's Sunday lunchtime ritual.<sup>14</sup>

Lunch is a ritual with Abe, the Sunday drive in his workday, and he's happy to order for all — almond chicken, ginger beef, asparagus with black bean sauce. Who does Pat take to lunch? Actually, who *doesn't* Pat take to lunch? Along with David and a pair of beefy mechanics, today's entourage to Tai Tung, a block away from the shop, includes his dad and a trio of longtime pals and customers — Takeuchi, ex-police officer Steve Anderson and childhood classmate Larry McCray. "My wife used to come down for lunch," Abe says when asked how it all started. "Then the crowd got bigger. So when I retire, they're gonna all starve."

Tai Tung is just one stop on his circuit, which includes just about anything within walking distance. "He's got a regular routine going," says Anderson, burly and white-haired. "He gives every Chinese place in town a little bit of his money. Or a little bit of our money, I don't know." Afterward, they pack up bounteous leftovers for the mechanics back at the shop, where Abe is among the less than 9 percent of self-employed people who are older than 65. His attitude toward work has mirrored his father's, who worked daily to run the grocery until he sold it in 1978. "He doesn't know what a vacation is," Mits says of his son.

The article goes on to show forth connections across the generations as well:<sup>15</sup>

Real-estate broker Ted Choi, another old-time regular, says Abe first earned local respect by living up to his father's honor. "That's the most important thing there is, especially in the Asian community," he says. "You're your father's son. Everybody knows you down in Chinatown."

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<sup>13</sup> Both Art Louie's Restaurant and the Puget Sound Hotel were located where the I-5 freeway cuts across Jackson.

<sup>14</sup> "Car Talk," Marc Ramirez, *The Seattle Times*, June 17, 2005. <https://www.seattletimes.com/pacific-nw-magazine/car-talk/>.

<sup>15</sup> "Car Talk," Marc Ramirez, *The Seattle Times*, June 17, 2005. <https://www.seattletimes.com/pacific-nw-magazine/car-talk/>.



## Immigrant experience and acculturation process

This last quote leads us to our final key interpretive theme emanating from the Seventh Avenue Service. As demonstrated in Pat's own family life, we see the immigrant experience, unfolding to the next generation and then the next. And along with the immigrant experience typically comes the acculturation process in the U.S.

An excerpt from Pat's oral history gives a teaser to stories of the times when it comes to cars:<sup>16</sup>

*My first car was a Ford. It was a '52 Ford. It was a two-door sedan, dark green. I don't have a picture of it. But when I was in high school, I had a '52 Ford, which I took apart and rebuilt the motor, made it into a full-race engine. When I was in high school, I wanted to have the fastest car in high school back in the '50s, which it turned out it was pretty fast.*

For some, having a car was a strong indicator of Americanization, reflecting a level of prosperity, mobility and belonging (whether actual or not for all three). Indeed, it was commonplace for Asian immigrants to take photos with their cars to send to family overseas – a sure sign that one was “making it” here in the U.S. Cars within the C-ID also demonstrated a certain amount of mobility, being able to readily travel outside of the neighborhood that the community had been excluded into, extend beyond the streetcar lines of the time, and partake in recreation, whether heading to Alki or even further afield to Mt. Rainier. Photos of young men and their friends with their cars exude Americana. And photos of families in front of their cars defy notions of bachelor societies of temporary sojourners, proudly proclaiming permanence in a single snapshot.

## Mar Family

Which finally leads us to the Mar Family, property owners of the location of the Seventh Avenue Service across four generations.

An excerpt from an oral history with Ruth Mar, wife of Frank Mar and mother to Barry Mar, reflects a familiar story of discrimination, which interweaves with our key interpretive themes described above:

*My husband was going to school at the University in 1932 when we came up here. We tried to buy a house near the University of Washington. We found a nice place on 23rd Avenue near the University, and it said, “For Rent.” So, we went in and looked at it, and they wouldn't let us go in. They said, “It's rented already.”*

*... Then we looked at a house on 27th Avenue in the Garfield High School neighborhood. In fact, we put the down payment for the rent – 27th and Jefferson. We paid the down [payment for the] rent and we were ready to move in. Then the door was barred and we couldn't move in. And so, we finally had to have a lawyer to approach the landlord so we could get in. I'm sure it's because of discrimination.*

*... And then when my husband graduated from the U of W, he couldn't get a job. In fact, he went to Boeing School of Aeronautics down in Oakland, California. And Boeing wouldn't hire him. So, he just had to do odd jobs around until it was the war... I think they were hiring people because*

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<sup>16</sup> Oral history with Pat Abe, conducted by Ron Chew, June 26, 2015. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

*of necessity. That's when many of the Orientals [sic] got jobs – like Hing Chinn's wife, Mary Chinn. She got a job with the government. And Hing Chinn, a mechanic in the postal system. Yuen Chinn and all these friends that we know, I'm sure it was because of necessity.*<sup>17</sup>

Despite these forces of exclusion, the Mar Family made a place for themselves in Seattle, especially in the C-ID, owning property both at 7th and Jackson, the site of the Seventh Avenue Service, as well as at Maynard and King, the Atlas Hotel (notably and not without significance included in the *Green Book's* Seattle listings).<sup>18</sup> And beyond owning property and operating businesses, the Mar Family also built community, whether joining in as participants, holding leadership positions, or starting organizations themselves.

For example, Ruth – daughter of Harry Lehm Dott, a U.S.-based missionary doctor (and noted singer) affiliated with the Presbyterian Church and described as an “intelligent, Americanized Chinese” – volunteered at Seattle's Chinese Baptist Church and helped form the Cathay Matrons Club in 1936, a service group that continued until 1991.<sup>19</sup>

This spirit of community service is especially exemplified in Barry Mar, who managed the Atlas Hotel's renovation in the 1970s, eventually lived there for nearly 40 years and also coached basketball for the Seattle Chinese Athletic Association before founding, coaching and serving as chairperson and board member of the Seattle Asian Sports Club.

An oral history with Barry about the Seattle Asian Sports Club brings out his passion for youth and community:<sup>20</sup>

*The philosophy of [fellow coaches] Kevin, Wilson, Norman and myself in terms of kids who want to play, being able to play on a first come, first serve basis. We didn't show any favoritism with regard to, “Let's only get the good players and only let the good players on one team.” We just wanted to coach kids who wanted to play basketball without an interest, without regard to did they already play basketball, were they athletic. We just wanted to give kids an opportunity to experience what sports had to offer.*

*.... Particularly kids who are from homes where the parents are still fairly traditional. You know, they may be second generation, third generation kids but their parents are second generation kids who still hold a lot of the deferential cultural values that we attribute to the stereotypical Asian of the forties and fifties. I think that translates into kids being a little less aggressive. The tendency to be more polite, the kid's tendency to take a back seat to the more aggressive ones. I think that at least one of the real pleasures that I take as a coach ... is to see the shy ones blossom. And I have received direct feedback from parents, particularly on the girl's side who have brought their daughters into the program and who were very shy and reserved and not very aggressive and to see them come at 8 or 9 and then now seeing them at 14, 15 or 16, that they get in there and mix it up just as hard as anybody else. I think that's real, that's very satisfying.*

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<sup>17</sup> Oral history with Ruth Mar, conducted by Ron Chew, July 3, 1992. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

<sup>18</sup> “Site 4: Atlas Hotel,” *Green Book Seattle Self-Guided Tour*, Black and Tan Hall.

<https://blackandtanhall.oncell.com/en/site-4-atlas-hotel-245355.html>

<sup>19</sup> “Ruth Mar,” *Reflections of Seattle's Chinese Americans: The First 100 Years*, co-edited by Ron Chew and Cassie Chinn. “L.H. Dott, lecturer, ‘A Trip to China’ program, March 24, 1892. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

<sup>20</sup> Oral history with Barry Mar, conducted by Kris Kawakami, February 2, 2003. Wing Luke Museum Collection.

*And you know, it's my hope that that translates into them not taking the backseat when they go to college, not taking a backseat when they get a job.*

*... That they belong to something that is positive, an organization that I don't think directly but I think subtly through the name, Seattle Asian Sports Club, through the population that's of kids that are attracted to it... We have an overwhelming league majority Pacific Asian membership that there's something about that hopefully helps the kids be positive about being Asian and being part of a team concept that hopefully they, like the coaches and the organization, are supportive of them and their efforts... That's something that we as a board are really trying to place more emphasis on. Every year we've had some kind of social events, jamborees and picnics but now we're trying to think about more things where parents can be active participants rather than you know they're the people that bring the kid to the event. But we want to have something for the parents that the parents, as members, feel like the club is sponsoring something for them and not just for their child.*

*Definitely the rewards probably on an organizational level are we survived 10 years – not just survived but we've grown every year, that we've served, geez, over 500 hundred families in the community, we've had graduates, we've had probably from an organizational stand point we've had graduates who are now coming back to coach and give back to the program and to the community.*

And it is again that our key interpretive themes emerge – with recognition of the discrimination and exclusion that comes with the immigrant experience, acculturation (this time in the form of basketball over cars), and yet from a position of strength for being Asian American, interconnected with community.

**Table 1: Record of Businesses and Property Owners**

YEAR	DESCRIPTION	ADDRESS	SOURCE
1890	Eaonimo, Antonio (cigar shop)	707 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1890 Seattle Directory.
1884-1908	Academy of the Holy Names / Holy Names Academy	(shown on full-block from 7th to 8th and Jackson to King)	Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Seattle, Wash - Plate 3, spl_maps_341191.3 (1905 map)  <a href="https://cdm16118.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16118coll2/id/5/rec/157">https://cdm16118.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16118coll2/id/5/rec/157</a>  <a href="https://pauldorpat.com/2011/12/24/seattle-now-then-the-jackson-street-regrade/">https://pauldorpat.com/2011/12/24/seattle-now-then-the-jackson-street-regrade/</a>
1908	“The June 7, 1908 <i>Post-Intelligencer</i> described two ‘giants working on Eight Ave in the rear of the Catholic school property.’ The school is Holy Names Academy, originally a formidable landmark with a high central spire that opened on the east side of 7th Avenue, mid-block between Jackson and King streets, in 1884. On June 8, ‘08 the school’s newest graduates, eleven of them, drew a large audience of parents and alums for their	(full-block from 7th to 8th and Jackson to King)	<a href="https://pauldorpat.com/2011/12/24/seattle-now-then-the-jackson-street-regrade/">https://pauldorpat.com/2011/12/24/seattle-now-then-the-jackson-street-regrade/</a>

	baccalaureate. Everyone understood that within a few days the water canons would be turned directly at their campus and memories.” – Paul Dorpat		
1916	“Auto”	(shown on southeast quarter-block of 7th & Jackson)	Sanborn Map 1916 10.png
1930	Gasoline Alleys Hamada, Fred I., and Miyagawa, Joe G.	707 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1930 Heiden’s House & Street Directory, Seattle, WA.
1937-1938	Jackson Service Station (gas station)	701 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1938 Seattle Directory.  1937 WA State Archives photo, 524780-2725, gas station, 1937.tif
1937-1938	Jackson Beverage Store Tsujimoto, Joseph & Okada, R. M. (soft drinks, beer, wine & fishing tackle)	707 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1938 Seattle Directory.
1940-1941	China Super Service (gas station)	701 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database

			The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1941 Seattle Directory.
1943-1944	Oppenheimer, William (gas station)	701 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1943 Seattle Directory.
1946	Auto Repairing Sun Wah Jewelry	(shown on southeast quarter-block of 7th & Jackson)	1946 – Map – Chinatown Seattle.jpg
1948-1959	Seventh Ave. Service Imanaka, T., Toshi, C.C. & Koyama, G.S.	701 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1948 Seattle Directory.  WLM Collection 2011.007.049 photo shows “7th Ave. Service” sign with “Charlie and Ted”
1951	Owners Moritani, Nobuo & Tsujiimoto, Joseph	707 South Jackson Street	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1951 Seattle Directory.
1956	Associated Oil Company listed as fee owner on property records (service station)  Historic assessor’s records indicate that	707 South Jackson Street	524780-2725 post 1972.pdf

	the subject gas station was constructed originally at another location, 520 Seneca Street, in the late 1940s, and moved to the present site in ca. 1956		
1957	Shows service station and beverage store	701-11 South Jackson Street	1957 WA State Archives photos, 524780-2725, gas station-A, 1957.tif, 1957 524780-2725, gas station-B, 1957.tif
1966	Shows service station	(shown on very edge of southeast quarter-block of 7th & Jackson)	WLM Collection 1995.047.001 photo shows "Phillips 66" sign

**Table 2: Record at 408 7th Avenue South**

YEAR	DESCRIPTION	ADDRESS	SOURCE
1930	Lagio, V.M.	408 7th Avenue South	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location is the 1930 Heiden's House & Street Directory, Seattle, WA.
1938	Campbell, Robert P. Sheet metalworker	408 7th Avenue South	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location occurs in the 1938 Seattle Directory.
1951	Sun Wah Jewelry Jewelry store	408 7th Avenue South	Wing Luke Museum Business Database  The earliest found record of this business at this location occurs in the 1951 Seattle Directory.



**Table 3: Garages at Related Properties**

YEAR	DESCRIPTION	ADDRESS	SOURCE
1915	China Garage (T.C. Garage)	413-417 7th Avenue South	Seattle Chinatown Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, October 9, 1986
1916	Jackson St. Garage  "Capcy. 72 cars Power: Electric-heat: Steam – Lights: Electric Re-inforced concrete constrn. Brick fire walls. Concrete floor."	700-710 South Jackson Street	Sanborn Map 1916 27.png
1916	State Garage  "75 cards – one row wood poasts – mill construction – concrete floors – crib floor – crib roof – machine shop – electric power"	405-409 7th Avenue South	Sanborn map 1916 10.png
1927	Depot Garage	404-416 5th Avenue South	Seattle Chinatown Historic District National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, October 9, 1986
1937	China Garage	413 7th Avenue South	WSAChinaGarage.tif
1946	Detroit Garage	407 7th Avenue South	1946 – Map – Chinatown Seattle.jpg
1948	Associated service station  Listed as fee owner on property records in 1956 for 707 South Jackson Street	520 Seneca	197570-0006, gas station, 1948.tif

	Historic assessor's records indicate that the subject gas station was constructed originally at another location, 520 Seneca Street, in the late 1940s, and moved to the present site in ca. 1956		
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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TOURS & DISPLAYS

### Tours

In 2007, the Wing Luke Museum was honored to become the stewards of Chinatown Discovery Tours, founded in 1985 by community leader Vi Mar. Since then, the Wing Luke Museum, under Chinatown Discovery Tours, has developed a robust range of ongoing neighborhood tours of the C-ID, many of which weave in and around Seventh Avenue Service, both in physical location and interpretive themes.

As such, the Wing Luke Museum sees strong potential for integration of Seventh Avenue Service into its ongoing tours and makes the recommendation to tell a neighborhood story focused on the Abe Family and the place that car culture played for many decades in the neighborhood and among the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities beyond. Additionally, the Mar Family serves both as a complementary family story and helps connect additional sites within the Wing Luke Museum's neighborhood tours.

Tour themes resonate with the key interpretive themes described above. More specifically, we would plan to share about the:

- specifics of the property and what it was
- proximity to other service stations and garages in the C-ID
- interaction with neighborhood life in the C-ID
- boom of car culture in the U.S. and its meaning among immigrant communities

Our approach is story-based, interweaving primary sources such as photographs, documents and oral histories, as we work to humanize themes in the broader societal context. As a walking tour focused on specific sites, we also generally look for historic moments across the decades, picking 2-3 talking points per historic moment to share:

#### **1920s-30s Great Depression**

- establishment of service stations and garages
- growing popularization of car culture in the U.S.
- first-generation and second-generation experience

#### **1940s World War II**

- employment opportunities (and continuing restrictions) amidst job discrimination
- impacts of the forced removal of Japanese Americans

#### **1950s Post-War**

- further popularization of car culture
- return of Japanese Americans from U.S. concentration camps
- growth of families

#### **1960s-80s Civil Rights Era and Beyond**

- influx of new immigrant and refugee communities
- further community building

Potential primary source materials to draw on for the tours (and potentially for future display (see below)) may include:

#### *Photographs*

##### Service Stations and Garages:

- Site location at 701-711 S. Jackson Street, 1937, 1957
- China Garage at 407 7th Avenue S., 1937
- Depot Garage at 404-416 5th Avenue S.
- Auto body shop started by Seutsay Sasouvanh, a Laotian immigrant who arrived in 1980

##### People & Cars:

- Convertible top “touring” sedans in front of the Milwaukee Hotel on King Street
- Murakami Family at Volunteer Park, 1927, featured in the book “Meet Me at Higo: An Enduring Story of a Japanese American Family” by Ken Mochizuki, published by Wing Luke Museum
- Young men in front of car, 1935
- Bruce Lee in front of his car on 7th Avenue in the C-ID, 1959-1964 – also a classic image of an individual dressed up in front of a car to send back to family overseas<sup>21</sup>

#### *Documents*

##### Maps at 7th and Jackson and surrounding C-ID areas, showing:

- Early settlement in the C-ID
- Early Japantown
- Further development of Chinatown

#### *Oral histories*

- Pat Abe
- Hing and Mary Chinn
- Ruth Mar
- Barry Mar

We also recommend drawing on objects, such as vintage toy cars and signs, from the Sun May Company, the oldest gift shop in the C-ID, located along Canton Alley. These objects, whether directly of the time or harkening back to the time, have the power of evoking the various historic periods in a tangible, immediate, memorable way, while also connecting to another long-standing C-ID business.

These materials have been referenced in the Initial Collage and notated in the Image Sources. The Initial Collage also includes a few photographs related to the Mar Family, across generations, whether Ruth Mar’s father Harry Lehm Dott, Ruth Mar with the Cathay Matrons Club, or Barry Mar.

Additionally, as a secondary source, the *International Examiner* article, “Seventh Avenue Service closes after 69 years in International District,” by Ron Chew, July 2, 2015, can serve as an accessible resource for tours.

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<sup>21</sup> This photograph is not pictured in the Initial Collage due to copyright and licensing restrictions with Bruce Lee Enterprises. The Wing Luke Museum is the location of the permanent Bruce Lee Gallery and has a long-time partnership with the Bruce Lee Family. Notably, Barry Mar also has a connection to Bruce Lee. Barry became friends with him from his time spent here in Seattle. Barry then worked out and taught with Bruce’s student Jesse Glover, all the way until Jesse’s passing in 2012.

## Displays

Upon review of historic and cultural findings, identification of key interpretive themes, consideration of tour integration, and understanding of the building site plan shared at our meeting on June 16, 2022, we are making the following overall recommendations for potential interior displays:

### *Types of materials*

We envision a combination of historic materials, including maps, photographs and oral histories, along with artifacts and art installations. Maps can show past and current service station and garage locations in the C-ID, as well as nearby businesses across the intersections between Chinatown, Japantown and Little Saigon, especially highlighting places that still exist in the neighborhood. Photographs can show the historic service stations and garages, as well as people and their cars. Oral history excerpts with key quotes layer in the personal stories of the people with a sense of immediacy and closeness.

Artifacts should be secured in cases but also should be those that could be afforded to loss. Cases can include both artifacts and reproductions of archival materials. The cases should maintain ADA accessibility. We recommend sourcing artifacts from Sun May Company – both since they will carry a strong look and feel from the times and also because they further a connection with another C-ID business. Artifacts, beyond vintage toy cars and signs, can speak to the neighborhood from the 1930s and up.

We also can envision a strong artwork piece(s) by contemporary Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander artists. The artwork would draw on the materials, carry forth the interpretive themes, and amplify the desired look and feel.

### *Look and feel*

Displays can embody a feeling of both freshness and nostalgia, carrying a sense of returning home. We envision a borderline futurist feel that carries through car culture from the 1930s-1960s, especially from the 1950s-1960s with the likes of “Speed Racer.”

More specifically, here are some ideas for displays in various areas of the building:

### *Level 2 entry*

This area includes an entry vestibule to the Main Lobby with adjacent Gallery and Leasing Office and Residential Lounge.

The Main Lobby can be anchored by an artwork installation that speaks to a forward-looking nostalgia. When we look at the more recently completed extension of Hing Hay Park, we see an artist’s take on traditional Chinatown gates. It is solid, with clean lines and yet curved in key places, almost embracing the park at the entrance of which it sits. The colors of the new gateway are bold, but where we would recommend solid colors, bold but not as bright. For this artwork, we recommend a take on 1940s and 1950s advertising with strongly colored vehicles and people usually enjoying recreation.

This becomes a strong lead in to historic maps, photographs and oral history excerpts, which can be progressively displayed along the walls of the Lobby, Lounge and Gallery and Leasing Office

to show the historic connections of the site and explore the key interpretive themes. Artifacts decoratively placed in the Lounge can serve as a connecting point between the two spaces.

We especially recommend highlighting the generational story of Pat Abe and his family and the story of the Seventh Avenue Service itself in this area. Following this would be the story of nearby service stations and garages, capturing the story of Chinese and Filipino Americans in the C-ID. Artifacts then help carry forth in vivid color and mix the bustling aspects of the C-ID from the main Asian American ethnic groups residing in the area at that time, but also extending to the Native American, African American and working-class presence in the area too.

#### *7th Avenue entry*

This area includes a smaller entry with commercial lobby and some wall space for display.

We recommend commissioning another original artwork in this area, especially to activate the commercial lobby with views to 7th Avenue. This would be a great location to share more about the Mar Family, their values, contributions and legacy, potentially through a large mural. We appreciate how this area of the building connects into the core of Chinatown along King Street with natural flow to King Street and the Atlas Hotel. It also is directly across from the historic location of the China Garage. The mural has the potential to capture Barry Mar's rich and varied life and interests, including the C-ID, sports, community life, martial arts, visual art, music and more.

#### *Community conference room*

This area is a multi-purpose space, situated below grade, with seating for 15-20 people and including potentially a stage and breakout rooms. It is envisioned as a space for family use for elders and youth.

As a below grade space, we desire to see a design aesthetic that is colorful and bright, paired with photographs of people within the C-ID. They can include photographs of people and their cars with historic connections to the C-ID, but then should also extend out to contemporary community life, transitioning to the present-day and helping to foster a sense of both historic connection to past generations as well as belonging and home today.