Tacoma Chinese Reconciliation Project & Park

Lihuang Wung
City of Tacoma
December 5, 2018
Redressing the Outrage of the “Tacoma Method”

Chinese Reconciliation Project

A community-led process for reconciling the 1885 expulsion of Tacoma’s Chinese citizens, which was led by the Mayor and civic leaders of that time.
The History

1849 – Chinese workers began to emigrate to the United States

1860’s – 10,000 Chinese were imported to California to work on the railroads
The History (continued)

1870 – 2,000 Chinese were hired to build the railroads from Kalama to Tacoma in Washington State

(Old Tacoma)
The History (continued)

1873 – Economic recession; Locals looked for someone to blame; What better scapegoat than the Chinese?

1882 – The federal Chinese Exclusion Act enacted

1885 – Mayor and civic leaders met to plan for expelling the entire Chinese populace, so there would be plenty of jobs available for the locals.
“The Chinese Must Go!”

- November 3, 1885
- 9:30 a.m. – Chinese were told to gather at 7th and Pacific Avenue
- Afternoon – Over 200 Chinese were forced to march out in cold rain and bitter wind to Lakeview railway station and manage to go south.
- For several days, Chinese could be seen walking the tracks southward.
- Chinese houses and businesses were burned down.
The Aftermaths

• The 27 ringleaders of the expulsion were arrested, but were never prosecuted nor convicted of wrongdoing.

• No Chinese would be allowed to enter Tacoma until the 1920’s.

• The “Tacoma Method” was successful, but Tacoma lost in the end.

• Tacoma is the only major harbor city on the west coast that does not have a Chinatown.
History Repeating Itself?

“I don’t know of any other ethnic group that has been given so much attention but ultimately forgotten.”

– Jacob Lawrence (1917 – 2000)

(Comment made in 1968, four years after the Civil Rights Act was signed into law, in reference to the negligence of Black artists’ works in the art world.)
Request for Reconciliation

“If old wounds are not healed, new generations cannot be expected to flourish.”

– Dr. David Murdoch

“Request for Reconciliation” Application
August 22, 1991
Scope of Reconciliation

Goal –
Promote peace and harmony in our multicultural community

Objectives –
• Build a commemorative park
• Educate the community
• Set an example for reconciliation
• Celebrate cultural diversity and common humanity
Chinese Reconciliation Park – Chronology

1991 (AUG) Request for Reconciliation
1992 (SEP) Citizens Advisory Committee
1993 (NOV) Wrongdoing Acknowledged (Res. #32415)
1995 (JUN) Groundbreaking (site preparation)
1996 (OCT) Park Site Transferred
2001 (OCT) Master Site Plan
2005 (AUG) Groundbreaking (construction)
2007 (thru 2009) Phase I Construction
2009 (thru 2011) Phase II Construction
2013 (thru 2015) Phase III Construction
2018 Multicultural Pavilion Schematic Design
Park Site (1998 Map)
Master Site Plan (2001)
Design Concept and Principles

Expulsion ➔ Reflection ➔ Reconciliation ➔ Education

- Entrance Gate & Sojourners' Room Area
- Reconciliation Pavilion Area
- Multicultural Pavilion, Pond and Bay-viewing Terrace Area
- Classroom Area
Master Site Plan (Updated 2014)
Completed Items
Walk with the Sojourners

Through the Path of the Expulsion
Interpretive Signs

Dragon Mound
Paths and Landscaping

Shoreline Protection and Restoration
Paths and Landscaping

Shoreline Protection and Restoration
Parking Lot and More Landscaping and Signage
A Ting of Two Cities

一亭渡海 两市传情
中国·福州 + 美国·塔可玛
缔结友城关系（1994年）

Fuzhou, China & Tacoma, U.S.A.
Enjoying Sister City Relationship since 1994
福州亭记

2001.9.15  翁福琳市长听取中国花园筹建汇报
2006.6.22  梁建勇副市长致赠福州亭捐建计划并勘察工地
2010.9.22  福州亭开工大吉
2010.10.6  陈为民副市长视察工程进度
2011.9.22  陈奇副市长与塔可玛市长共同主持福州亭落成启用典礼

Fuzhou Ting – Chronology

Sep. 15, 2001  Briefing of “Proposed Chinese Reconciliation Park” to Mayor Weng Fulin
Jun. 22, 2006  Fuzhou Ting Design Plan presented by Deputy Mayor Liang Jianyong
Sep. 22, 2010  Fuzhou Ting construction began
Oct. 6, 2010   Deputy Mayor Chen Weimin visited the construction site
Sep. 22, 2011  Fuzhou Ting Dedication Ceremony co-chaired by Deputy Mayor Chen Qi and Mayor Marilyn Strickland
Fuzhou Ting Construction – a unique experience in cultural exchange, learning from each other, and mutual respect and understanding.
Fuzhou advisors were amazed with the American crew’s optimistic and cheerful attitude, yet serious at work and going by the book all the time, as well as the “excessive” reliance on tools and equipment.
The American crew was very impressed with the Fuzhou advisors – diligent, intelligent, and easy to work with. They also learned and appreciated the beauty, delicacy, and full-of-meanings of traditional Chinese architecture.
福州亭落成启用典礼（2011年9月22日）

Fuzhou Ting Dedication Ceremony and Grand Opening
September 22, 2011
“Fuzhou Ting Project” Honored, Twice!

The "Friendship City for Communication and Cooperation with China" Honor awarded to the City of Tacoma at the 2012 China International Friendship Cities Conference in September 2012.

The “Innovation: Arts and Culture” Award to the City of Tacoma by the Sister Cities International at the 56th Annual Conference in July 2012.
福州亭：四季风情，自成一景
Fuzhou Ting: A Magnificent Landscape of Tacoma
Next Steps

- Reaffirm the Vision
- Prioritize Improvements
- Expand Partnerships
- Acquire Resources

Master Site Plan (updated 2014)
Chinese Reconciliation Park
Budget and Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase I</td>
<td>$8.0 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase II</td>
<td>$1.0 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase III</td>
<td>$1.0 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase IV</td>
<td>$20.0 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost</td>
<td>$30.0 M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenues</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Grants</td>
<td>$2.8 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Funds</td>
<td>$2.8 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>$4.4 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenues</td>
<td>$10.0 M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. Information compiled in October 2016.
2. Phase IV unfunded; educated estimate.
Planned Item:
Multicultural Pavilion

(Photo Credit: Ben Llanes, Reid Middleton, Inc., Oct. 16, 2013)
Planned Item:
Reconciliation Hall

(Photo Credit: Ben Llanes, Reid Middleton, Inc., Oct. 16, 2013)
Planned Item:

Entrance Gate and Garden Walls

(Photo Credit: Ben Llanes, Reid Middleton, Inc., Oct. 16, 2013)
“What is past is prologue.”

– William Shakespeare

Chinese Reconciliation Project --

Celebrating our multicultural past, present and future …..