

# Albergo Diffuso: District Hospitality + Application to Chinatown

USING THE ALBERGO DIFFUSO HOTEL ARCHETYPE AS A CATALYST  
FOR URBAN RESILIENCE AND A RESPONSE TO UNREGULATED HOSPITALITY

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*This is dedicated to my  
physical and metaphysical families,  
for supporting me financially and emotionally  
throughout a journey that has turned out  
to be more personal and precious  
to me than I realized it could become.*

# Abstract

**Keywords:** Albergo Diffuso, hospitality, urban renewal, tourism development, heritage development, chinatown

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The primary goal of this dissertation is to understand what the Albergo Diffuso (AD) type of hotel is, how and why it works in its original context, and to discern its applicability to Chinatown, Honolulu. The ultimate purpose is to explore how a shift in the structure of a hospitality type can have a beneficially reorganizing impact on the host community by renegotiating the dynamics of control to mutually benefit public and private interest.

The methodology employed is a combination of case studies and qualitative analysis of the Albergo Diffuso concept, resulting in descriptive summary, literary review, site survey and analysis, and finally a brief masterplan design proposal. The intent is to fully describe the original AD concept and its manifestations in order to understand the circumstances of its origin and transferability to other similar conditions. By situating the AD concept amongst current trends in three areas (tourism, heritage preservation, and urbanism), we arrive at a clearer view of how the AD upholds sustainable values. And through selecting a local site and comparing the circumstances, I conclude that fundamental similarities in situations of economic neglect support transferability, however the superficial differences between a rural and urban context would require a modified subtype, which I am labelling the Urban AD. Future research would ideally include experimentation on the proposed site with thorough pre- and post-occupancy evaluation to quantify the impact of an Urban AD.

Developing this urban subtype of the AD has practical implications for all situations of urban decay, even mild examples of economic deceleration since an AD can be scaled accordingly. At its root, the AD concept provides culturally rich districts the organizational tools necessary for connecting them to the level of funding tourism can provide, but in a manner that has embedded checks and balances to prevent unregulated hospitality practice from causing a socio-economic imbalance. The specific application to Hawai'i supports a tourism based economy while providing an alternative to conventional hospitality, which does not engage the community, and current sharing-economy hospitality, which lacks the regulatory checks to properly address exploitation, demographic shift, and safety issues.

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# Chapter 1. Introduction + Methodology

## 1.1 The Albergo Diffuso in a Nutshell

The Italian phrase “albergo diffuso” translates literally as “scattered hotel.” At its simplest, it can be defined as a scattering of hotel rooms across an area while being managed by a centrally located hotel operator.

*Fig. 1 - Comparison of a typical hotel program compared to a diffused hotel*

*Image Credit: Professor Yasushi Watanabe<sup>1</sup>*

## 1.2 Motivation

All cultures can be considered a toolbox of possibilities for designing in response to human situations. Having an open curiosity about the solutions of other cultures can lead to the discovery of unique solutions for urban questions at home. In this case, the application of the Albergo Diffuso form of hotel in Italy sparked my initial interest in exploring what a healthy relationship between tourism and local culture can look like, can it be a true synergy. I believe that the growing interactions between people of different cultures that results from increased tourism will, ultimately, be a generator of understanding and creativity. This dissertation will actively explore that intermixing by adapting an Italian model to a Hawai’ian context, with sensitivity to differences as much as similarities. The following section lists the pain points that can possibly benefit from implementing an Albergo Diffuso (or several) in Hawai’i.

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<sup>1</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall’Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects. Accessed 07/24/2017



## Need for Adaption Beyond Conventional Tourism

*Fig. 2 - View of Waikiki<sup>2</sup>*

According to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, tourism provided \$15.2 billion, or 19%, of the Hawai'i economy in 2015<sup>3</sup>, with Waikiki contributing 8% on its own.<sup>4</sup> Indirectly, the tourism industry supports an even larger portion of the economy through services that directly or indirectly integrate with the industry. Though it's not uncommon for locals to express distaste for invasive visitors<sup>5</sup>, there is no doubt that tourism is now a significant feature of Hawai'i's present circumstances and is here to stay. Another report from the Hawai'ian Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism projects that tourism will continue to grow, in size and profitability<sup>6</sup>. As it does, other pressures in Hawai'i, such as a demand for affordable housing and a desire to achieve a more sustainable food security, will force tourism to be conscientious of local issues lest it become reviled and ultimately inhibit the well being of its host community. The issue is appropriately integrating tourism into a community in a healthy manner.

An important dynamic in the Hawai'i economy, as in any tourist heavy location, is the balance between a thriving entertainment industry and a healthy, efficient urban landscape for locals. The typical solution is to physically separate the tourist zone such that there is minimal, or at least manageable, impact on the rest of the city. The result? Areas like Waikiki form, whose urban pattern emphasizes a self-contained area that isolates visitors in their experience of Hawai'i and locals actively avoid when possible.

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<sup>2</sup> "Waikiki?", <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waikiki>. Accessed 08/02/2019

<sup>3</sup> Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. "The Economic Contribution of Waikiki?", [http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data\\_reports/e-reports/econ\\_waikiki.pdf](http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/data_reports/e-reports/econ_waikiki.pdf). Accessed 02/21/2016

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Infolific: Travel. "7 Reasons Hawai'i Hates You". Accessed 04/05/2018

<sup>6</sup> Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. "DBEDT Tourism Forecast". <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/visitor/tourism-forecast/>. Accessed 09/13/2019

*Fig. 3- There are 6 total hostels in Honolulu and most hostels are located in Waikiki.<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid

*Fig. 4- The Airbnb website estimates 4800+ listings in Honolulu.<sup>8</sup>*

While this approach has its benefits, such as an increased capacity for managing a high volume of visitors, it is limited to creating a specific kind of experience. More importantly, conventional hotels have invested heavily into existing infrastructure and have little motivation to adapt, ignoring a growing market of travellers looking for a more connected and embedded experience<sup>9</sup>. For example, AirBnB is increasingly popular in Hawai'i<sup>10</sup> because it is inherently more integrated into local lifestyle and offers a broader range of prices, capturing the budget end of the spectrum. Even with this unit-sharing model, however, there remain serious unaddressed issues.

Take the influence of AirBnb on Hawai'i neighborhoods. Though not solely responsible for the individual choices of its millions of users, this unit-sharing platform has facilitated a model of side business that is damaging the natural fabric of communities. In places like Kilauea, on the northern side of Kauai, rich

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<sup>8</sup> Airbnb, “*Find Places to Stay in Honolulu on Airbnb*”, Accessed 10/03/2017

<sup>9</sup> Hotel Management, “*Hotel Companies Need to Change with the Times or Suffer a Slow Death*”. Accessed 05/24/2017

<sup>10</sup> Hawai'i Appleseed, Center for Law & Economic Justice, “*Hawai'i Vacation Rentals: Impact on Housing & Hawai'i's Economy*”. Accessed 11/12/2018

property owners buy up neighboring lots and set up as many small vacation rentals in that space as possible.<sup>11</sup> These rooms are then easily sold on AirBnb for short stays and the owners turn quite a profit. While the profitability isn't a concern, the homogenization of the neighborhood, its shift in demographic from primarily long-term residents to short-term visitors, will permanently change the motivations for growth. This will also have long term effects on the experience of the host community, and by extension, those visiting it. Finally, neighbors who can't afford to set up vacation rentals often become resentful of the changing use.<sup>12</sup> This is a simplified instance of the wider impact that unmanaged tourism can have. This effect and more will be explored throughout this dissertation. Ultimately, the goal is not to demonize any particular phenomenon, but rather to call out the objective flaws in current practices and to envision what a culturally healthy alternative will look like.

*Fig. 5- Two neighborhoods on the north shore of Kauai, a neighborhood with single family homes only (left) and a neighborhood being affected by Airbnb cottage compounds (right).<sup>13</sup>*

The key to creating a stable, long-view tourism industry is to diversify the kinds of experiences offered and allow visitors to experience the many facets of Hawai'i, especially **local culture and lifestyle**. **All the while, local culture** should be enabled to flourish and interact with visitors on its own terms.

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<sup>11</sup>Business Insider, "Take a Tour of Mark Zuckerberg's Gigantic \$100 Million Property in Hawaii?". Accessed 09/18/2019

<sup>12</sup> Los Angeles Times, "Kauai Residents Fighting for the Small-Town Feel". Accessed 06/22/2018

<sup>13</sup> Images from google maps, my edit, taken sept 20 2017

### Hospitality, an Evolving Type

At a global scale, the forms that hospitality can take are still evolving<sup>14</sup>. Many alternatives to the traditional paradigm have appeared, each addressing slightly different situations. As such, the newest categories frequently overlap in their quest to cover the entire available market<sup>15</sup>. Broadly, “alternative” refers to forms of hospitality that fall outside the conventional hotel and resort model (see fig X for definition of “alternative hospitality” types). The important trend to note is that these types are being actively explored because travelers are looking for something different from conventional hotel and resort offerings.

Within this alternative category, subtle differentiation can be observed due to factors such as rural-oriented hospitality vs urban-oriented hospitality, or luxury-oriented vs budget-oriented, etc. Each type has different areas of emphasis which work to showcase a particular experience of the host region. In exploring the Albergo Diffuso type within this dissertation, the intent is to test the boundaries of this typological definition, perhaps even extend it to cover yet unencountered situations. In this case, testing the application of albergo principles in an urban context is inherently more complex than the original isolated small village locations in Italy.

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<sup>14</sup> Infor. Perspectives: Customer Experience for Hospitality, “*The State of Customer Experience in Hospitality*”

<sup>15</sup> HospitalityNet, “*Revenue Management and Addressing the Generation Overlap*”

*Fig. 6- Variety of alberghi diffusi in Italy range from urban (top) to more isolated rural locations (bottom). A hotel in Chinatown, Honolulu, would push the urban edge even further.<sup>16</sup>*

With this in mind, a portion of this dissertation will be spent on typology, since the focus of this discussion is the subtleties of the Albergo Diffuso variation of hotel and a possible deviation from it. From an architectural perspective, this will entail a brief introduction to relevant methods of categorization and the value of categorizing at all. Within hospitality, there are categorizations based on sets of experiences as well as types of tourists that seek them out. Between these, common ground lies in the evolution of modern values that underlie the choices of users and designers alike.

#### Tension Between New Development and Sense of Place

Historic areas are especially sensitive to the threat of development since there is low profitability of consistent maintenance for mere preservation's sake<sup>17</sup>. The result is generally a complete loss of heritage in the

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<sup>16</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall'Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, "Welcome to the Official Website of the Popular Hotels". Accessed 11/22/2018

<sup>17</sup> Preserve America, "Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation"

case of blatant new development, or the more controversial process of gentrification, which does more to preserve the physical fabric but has been criticized for socio-cultural insensitivity<sup>18</sup>.

*Fig. 7- San Francisco's Chinatown has long faced conflict between the incumbent population and newcomers.<sup>19</sup>*

At the heart of this discourse is the phrase “sense of place” and what it takes to create and/or maintain it. While it isn’t a subject that can easily be simplified, the definition has certainly expanded to include non-physical aspects of heritage.<sup>20</sup> This comes from the realization that what lends a place its character comes not only from tangible form but also how it is used, thus adding a social dimension. All in all, it is difficult to say there is a single best way to develop a historic district but the surrounding discourse is certainly growing to accommodate the complexity of reality.

Here in Hawai'i, this tension is abundantly evident when observing communities like Kaka'ako. The once degrading warehouse zone was revamped by a growing artistic community and saw the introduction of new restaurants and shops. Now with enough momentum and popularity to attract major redevelopment interest, there are competing desires for expanding the potential through new construction and the possible dilution of Kaka'ako's flavor by bringing in a major demographic shift<sup>21</sup>. With new high-rises already under way, projects are frequently criticized for insensitivity to community needs even as many acknowledge the benefits of densification for the overall economy. While there's certainly no one answer to the complexity of issues in Kaka'ako, it is important to bear lessons in mind from what is already happening in a neighborhood almost adjacent to Chinatown.

Chinatown itself, however, has some protection from unchecked development. Classified as a Historic District on the National Register<sup>22</sup> there are existing guidelines in place to protect it from drastic change, most notably through height restrictions. By capping the Chinatown core at forty feet<sup>23</sup>, there simply is no option for

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<sup>18</sup> Sightline Institute, “*When Historic Preservation Clashes with Housing and Affordability*”

<sup>19</sup> Center for Community Innovation, The University of California Berkeley, “*Chinatown, Community Organizing Amidst Change in SF's Chinatown*”

<sup>20</sup> The 4th PlanoCosmo International Conference, IOP Publishing, “*Whose Sense of Place? Re-Thinking Place Concept and Urban Heritage Conservation in Social Media Era*”

<sup>21</sup> CityLab, “*Can Historic Preservation Cool Down a Hot Neighborhood?*”. Accessed 08/15/2019

<sup>22</sup> National Park Service, “*Chinatown Historic District (Honolulu)*”. Accessed 09/02/2019

<sup>23</sup> Honolulu ROH Chapter 21, Exhibit 21-9.9. Accessed 12/07/2018

the kind of high rise development that Kaka’ako is wrestling with. In fact, the presence of these guidelines, deeply rooted personal ties within the community, and a physical limit to expansion have protected this neighborhood so well that it faces the opposite issue, stagnation. This too is a stage of vulnerability for historic areas, since if at any point the potential for development outweighs the cost there won’t be a resilient and adaptive economy in place that can absorb change without breaking. This is the ideal moment to promote growth from within.

#### Communicating Hawai’i’s Diverse Ethnic Narrative

A special consideration when dealing with Chinatown is its multi-cultural history. This location is especially representative of a particular time and demographic group in Hawai’i’s history, one that is not necessarily well known to outsiders. Developing tourism in Chinatown offers a special opportunity to expose tourists to a different side of Hawai’i (more than just beautiful beaches) and a chance to celebrate the cultural melting pot that has been so formative to modern day Honolulu.

#### Place as Brand

Another aspect to consider is the consequences inherent to top-down branding in hospitality and the impact that has on the very resource hotels rely upon, a memorable place. Globalized brands focus on connecting customers to their company, the better ones connecting customers to a set of values. But there is an inherent lack of complexity in a carefully cultivated and repeatedly distilled identity. While this may help for clarity if one is looking to “stand out by being different”, that difference can be difficult to maintain. As external factors change, new exciting brands or shifting societal values, a company’s identity must somehow adapt while remaining “different.” In today’s branded culture, becoming normative is the death knell of obsolescence<sup>24</sup>. However, identity based on difference isn’t the only way to be remembered.

The other option: cultivating a complex and organic identity based on the unique factors at play within a specific region. Even though these types of identities may lack clear definition, at first or even for extended periods in the life of a place, there is much more to hold on to. The identity of a place is built on so much more than iconography or anything that can be readily distilled. Tying a complex identity to a simple iconography is a method of communication but building from one risks loss or miscommunication of the original complexity. It is built on personal experiences layered on top of the physical sensation of being there. The materials and colors and smells, the local customs, the way you move around the city whether by foot or train or tuktuk, and most of all the interactions with people that become the storyline. Even when one place may remind you of another, it is the subtle differences that still feel exotic and worth your notice. It can be stated that the diversity of factors contributing to an identity correlates to its resilience and permanences in the mind. There is never any question that a place is uniquely its own if there is no way to replicate exactly all the factors of its existence. And the way to ensure sustainable diversity is in maintaining the organic life of a place.

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<sup>24</sup> Hospitalitynet, “*Luxury Hospitality and the Risk of Obsolescence*”. Accessed 11/21/2018



## Untapped and Intangible Resource

*“Intangible Cultural Heritage is embodied in those practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills, as well as in associated objects and cultural spaces, that communities and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. Transmitted through generations and constantly recreated, it provides humanity with a sense of identity and continuity.”<sup>25</sup>*

An important aspect that was introduced to the world of preservation through Asian architecture is the idea of cultural practices and knowledge as a valuable source of heritage, equivalent to and sometimes more important than tangible elements. The Ise Shrine was the project to introduce this concept to the World Heritage List<sup>26</sup>. Since then, many more expressions of intangible heritage, expanding from craftsmanship to include any cultural practice that promotes continuity with the past.

Parallel to this theme in tourism, the UNWTO also identifies strains of tourism types that have arisen and grown into sub-industries of their own. Heritage Tourism<sup>27</sup>, for example, is an obvious example of a strong interest in very specific locations and experiences. Even others such as Sustainable Tourism<sup>28</sup> or Food Tourism<sup>29</sup> can also benefit from the cultivation of intangible heritage and sense of place. Local practices are most often more in balance with the environment and celebrating local food traditions can bring visitors into a co-appreciation for local flavors. New arrangements of hospitality that can tap into culture-oriented areas for tourism will also be able to connect people in meaningful ways to each other and to the past.

## The Human Factor in Sustainable Urbanism

Unlike a single building, projects that affect the urban fabric have both the responsibility and opportunity to address social components if at all possible. We are still teasing out the web of connections between architecture and social issues, even questioning the reach that designed space can have<sup>30</sup>. Yet, in a situation involving tourism, it becomes not only a moral effort but a business one. Tourism ties the success of business to the desirability, and therefore health, of a location. There is much documentation of tourism's negative impact on the quality of life and, ironically, the denigration of the very culture that attracted tourists in the first place. This pattern of exploitation is not sustainable.

With new forms of hospitality, there is a search for finding the right balance between sharing the resource of place with others and protecting its natural livelihood. With entire industries for eco-tourism on the rise, there is even market value in restorative practices. Stretching the possible definitions of hospitality has the potential to lead to urban types that offer socially and culturally restorative business on a large scale.

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<sup>25</sup> UNWTO, “*Study on Tourism and Intangible Cultural Heritage*”. Accessed 05/17/2017

<sup>26</sup> UNESCO, “*Itsukushima Shinto Shrine*”

<sup>27</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, “[*Preservation Glossary*] *Today’s Word: Heritage Tourism*”

<sup>28</sup> Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future, “*Sustainable Tourism*” Accessed 09/09/2019

<sup>29</sup> World Food Travel Association, “*What is Food Tourism?*”

<sup>30</sup> ResearchGate, “*Can Architecture Design Solve Social Problem?*” Accessed 03/02/2018

## 1.3 Methodology

### Theoretical Principles and Objectives

The unique aspects of this hospitality model are the ways it interacts with heritage, leveraging its preservation for the promotion of the brand. This plays directly into trends in the tourism industry, which are seeing travelers choosing more integrated experiences over cultivated ones in addition to simply increasing in overall size as an industry worldwide. The increase in interactions between travelers and residents as tourism grows begets many questions about how we should respond to the impact it is undeniably having on communities, especially since many pre-existing urban issues are only exacerbated and accelerated by touristic presence. This dissertation aims to lay out the biggest challenges in each of these three areas of study and how the Albergo Diffuso can contribute positively, as well as some of its limitations in doing so. And finally, we will explore the concept of cultural sustainability by applying the terminology surrounding environmental sustainability to idea of promoting a flourishing culture. This final section will draw from the previous three fields for a comprehensive set of values that is intended to guide assessment of the Albergo Diffuso model.

In the sphere of Heritage Preservation, areas discussed include the importance of heritage, the significance of intangible cultural heritage specifically, the substantial draw of heritage as a tourist industry, and finally how adopting a preservationist attitude toward maintenance may contribute to evolved typologies fit for urban niches. The Tourism section addresses foremost the concept of authenticity and its contested value, the subsequent sense of place that has the power to push back globalization's negative effects, as well as the generational theory of target market. Also reviewed will be the alternatives to these and what values they fulfill, ending with the tumultuous relationship between tourism and development<sup>31</sup>. In terms of Urbanism, this sphere explores literature around adaptive reuse, how temporary use can be an intentional catalyst for change, broader perspectives on typological classifications in urbanism and their role, and the controversial process of gentrification. Each section will wrap up with how the Albergo Diffuso concept contributes to each trend,<sup>32</sup> all of which builds toward the overall sustainability of the model.

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<sup>31</sup> Kent Business School, Working Paper Series, "*Conflict in Tourism Development*"

<sup>32</sup> Academy of Strategic Management Journal, "'Tourist' Sense of Place", *an Assessment of the Sense of Place in Tourism Studies: The Case of Portugal.*"

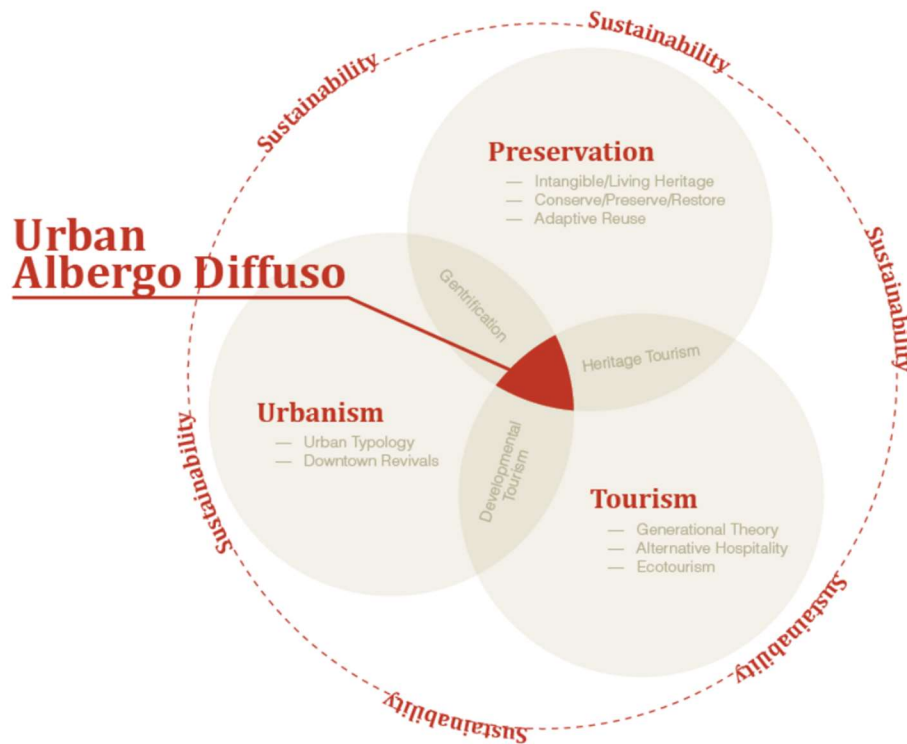


Fig. 8- The confluence of Tourism, Urbanism, and Preservation is the space in which a new typology of AD can begin to take form

Selection of Study Case - Chinatown

Research will focus on an area of living heritage that faces the threat of development and contains opportunity for smart, heritage-sensitive development. Though there were a few different options posed from around Hawai'i, from an abandoned theater in Kaimuki to the historic town of Haleiwa on the North Shore, Chinatown finds a balance between being rich with its own historic and cultural life and accessible to tourists while being laden with underused spaces and an under-shared story. This is an ideal environment to reinvigorate a community in a culturally sensitive way while still benefiting from an increase in money for community use.

There is currently no significant threat of development, which is fortunate. Chinatown is classified as a special district and is listed with the National Historic Register as a neighborhood. The additional effort required to upgrade facilities under these guidelines, however, has left Chinatown in a state of well-preserved distress, with many buildings needing major utilities upgrades before renovation can even be considered. This may be a cost worth handling in the case of the blooming bar and restaurant scene, but these types of use generally target ground floor space only. Many second floor and above spaces are empty or used as storage. The Arts&Foodie<sup>33</sup> scene is also currently limited, by unspoken understanding, to the east half of the

<sup>33</sup> “Foodie” refers to a person with a particular interest in food; a gourmet; a person with a discerning palate. Together the “Arts&Foodie Scene” describes a trend in gentrifying areas where a combination of art galleries and expensive restaurants fuel nightlife activity.

Chinatown block, with immigrant businesses primarily located in the western half<sup>34</sup>. This dissertation proposes the introduction of an additional type of space, hospitality, to cooperate with the existing fabric of Chinatown, fill in underutilized spaces, and potentially bridge the subtle ethnic divide.

Limitation of Research

There are many layers to be explored in order to move from essential philosophy to flourishing business. Each layer will be touched on, but the primary focus will be on explaining the Albergo Diffuso hospitality type and surveying Chinatown for viability and receptivity to the introduction of this form of hospitality:

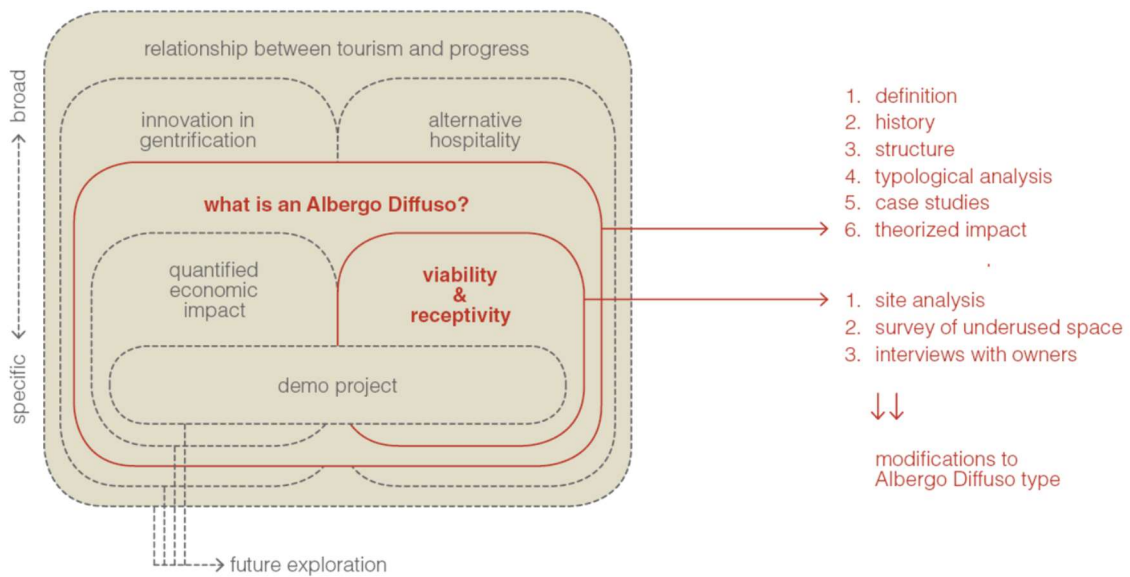


Fig. 9- Limitations of Research & Outcomes

The selected focus of research was chosen to emphasize the introduction of the Albergo Diffuso, a little-known hospitality format in Hawai'i with potential benefits, and to understand if that potential is real by analyzing an area and interviewing it's residents. Actual implementation and before and after observation structured as an experiment will not be covered in this dissertation, but is recommended for further research. Some other potential limitations include the willingness of owners to be interviewed and the inability to analyze the economic impact without further study into economics, marketing, business and other fields outside my current training. However, each of these areas warrants further research into the future.

Intended Final Product

Producing a set of guidelines, strategies and recommendations to facilitate a dialogue between urban planners and small scale developers wanting to experiment with alternative hospitality through a research

<sup>34</sup> Honolulu Civil Beat, "Young Entrepreneurs Make a Stand in Honolulu's Chinatown"

document. This would entail a set of design plans, a business proposal, and supporting implementation and management strategies. The research document will pull together relevant information on issues surrounding hospitality, urbanism and preservation. Anything from current trends and best practices to known controversies and challenges others have faced are reviewed here to provide comprehensive context for the introduction of this new type to Hawai'i. The proposal documents then take all of these considerations into account for a demonstrative project to show what one could look like. These are fully expected to need further drafting for real-world application, but the usefulness lies in communicating the viability and benefit of the idea to stakeholders and the community as a whole.

## 1.4 Relevance to Architectural Discourse

Given the strong focus on hospitality, how does that translate to architecture? Architecture is the sculpting of material for inhabitable space, especially in terms of manifesting a particular aesthetic or function. In the case of this dissertation, aesthetics will be relevant in that it can be an integral part of the sense of a place. Historic districts are particularly reliant on architectural details that set them apart from newer construction<sup>35</sup>. However, this only touches on the impact which understanding hospitality, and Alberghi Diffusi specifically, can have on the architectural discourse.

Architecture as a field encapsulates much more than discussions about architectural details and building technology. In fact, over the millennia of humans constructing the built environment, architecture has birthed many disciplines that have developed into fields of their own, yet are still intrinsically linked with the original practice of sheltering people. Urbanism is a primary example of this, a field which has its origins at the turn of the 20th century, created from the densification of cities spurred by the Industrial Revolution. It has since become recognized as its own field in many schools, but is still considered to be a subset of architectural degrees in others. Nevertheless, a theoretical understanding of urbanism is always part of a basic architectural degree. Buildings rarely stand alone. The conglomerate effect of thousands of buildings together (such as cities or diverse neighborhoods) directly affects the lives of billions of people. Issues of urbanism extend far beyond aesthetics, asking functional questions instead, such as: How does this method of organizing space affect the public? Is it right? And for whom? Who gets to decide to limit or incentivize certain practices? Is there a better way? This analysis of Alberghi Diffusi as a type of hospitality will examine these questions to help conceptualize the impact adaptive reuse has on a community and provide guidelines for the ideal circumstances under which it may provide the most benefit while also exploring its limitations.

Which brings us to the next point: hospitality as an industry is even younger than urbanism, yet its impact is growing and the literature written about its effect on communities is acquiring greater depth and substance. Tourism is often regarded as a primary driver for economic development<sup>36</sup>; in other words, tourism can spark a village to urbanize quickly or cause cultural and demographic shift within a community.<sup>37</sup> All of the questions that urbanism asks are deeply relevant: Who decides when and where to build a hotel? How many

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<sup>35</sup> Salt Lake City Documents, “*A Preservation Handbook for Historic Residential Properties & Districts*”

<sup>36</sup> Senate Finance Report, “*Tourism: A Driver for Economic Growth*”

<sup>37</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, “*Recreation, Tourism, and Rural Well-Being*”

hotels are too many? Who benefits from tourism, local residents or entities with limited interest in the community? If tourism demonstrably impacts a community in a negative way, who is responsible? But most importantly to this dissertation, can tourism be introduced in a way that positively benefits a community? The answer will be outlined in this dissertation, through examination and application of the AD methodology. Of course, it should be noted that this dissertation will limit itself to the implications of this one type of hospitality and only on certain types of districts.

As an adaptive reuse typology, an analysis of the phenomenon necessitates that we look beyond the physical manifestation of space, as it was built with prior purpose in mind. Analyzing something classified as adaptive reuse requires us to typify not only the physical changes of a specific space but also its changed relationship to other spaces. The goal here is to tie spatial arrangements to possible functions and to tie functions to human behaviors, needs and values. If we can understand how the latter leads to the former, we may also be able to predict and preemptively accommodate said behaviors, needs and values. This is what many refer to as “good design” and will inform the proposed design guidelines in this dissertation.

Lastly, my personal interest in this topic was inspired by the sense that there is a gap in architectural education; between selecting idealistic project goals and the actual work involved in getting clients to fund them. Even though this seems to be the process of project selection when in academia, the professional world is often the exact opposite, with designers pursuing clients who already have projects in mind and whose values are often far less idealistic. In my education, many professors have portrayed contractors and developers as the antagonists to design, as though a realistic drive for economic success is somehow contrary to the goals of designers. Fortunately, I’ve already seen some shift on this stance in the recent years at my university and I would like this dissertation to contribute to that trend. By understanding the typology of a spread hotel in more than physical terms, in economic and socio-cultural terms, I am widening my own understanding of the forces that make a beneficial urban change not only possible but inevitable. And by structuring a set of guidelines to take any new person reading this through the process, I hope to make it accessible to others who may have means and drive give it a try.

Buildings themselves are not what solves problems. Understanding the relationships, of stakeholders, of resources, of spaces, and making value judgements on what is working to promote what for whom, is just the beginning.

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## Chapter 2. Typological Description of the Albergo Diffuso

In this chapter I will be laying out a basic description of the Albergo Diffuso. Following a timeline of the evolution of the concept, I will start by summarizing the origin story and philosophy behind the original AD project of Sextantio, then its refinement into the 10 attributes of an AD as described by Giancarlo Dall’Ara in his book *Manuale dell’Albergo Diffuso* and managed by ADI (Assosazione Nazionale Alberghi Diffusi), which certifies new hotels and lists the criteria expected to be met in order to achieve it.<sup>38</sup> Classification was also further split into 3 subtypes of Albergo Diffuso, although there are some criticisms even by the founder himself and I will add my own proposal that an urban subtype should be explored and further defined. And finally, the chapter will finish with a selection of case studies showing a range of manifestations of the AD hospitality model.

### 2.1 Timeline of the Albergo Diffuso

- 1952 trend of displacement and abandonment of villages
- 1976 earthquake damaged buildings in Carnia, initial idea and term Albergo Diffuso is born
- 1982 workgroup working on revival of Comeglians commune, leads to inspiration for AD but not the first AD
- 1989 San Leo de Montefeltro first AD attempt, although there were many hurdles to official recognition
- 1998 first recognition of AD type by legislation in sardinia
- 1999 “Daniele Kihlgren came around the Gran Sasso mountain on his motorbike one day 11 years ago and saw Santo Stefano di Sessanio shining in the distance, and it was, he says, ‘una folgorazione’ – ‘an electric shock.’”
- 2004 campobasso, italy; first national convention
- 2004- Sextantio- Stefano di Sessanio opened
- 2007 matera restoration project begun
- 2008 Sextantio- Matera opened (2nd part of first AD hotel management)
- 2009 alberghi diffusi national association ADI founded
- 2009 internationalization of concept begins with Mase, French Switzerland
- 2010 first international acknowledgment at World Travel Market in london, first article in the NYT
- 2011 croatia, hamlet in san vicenti, istria
- 2012 spain, project near salamanca
- 2012 alberghi diffusi international association
- Since then (2012-2019) ireland, albany, france, slovakia, serbia, san marino
- 2013 japan starts talking about AD

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<sup>38</sup> IGI GLObal, “*Handbook of Research on Global Hospitality and Tourism Management*”

- 2013 japanese book review of italian hamlets
- 2014 interest in china, but no AD
- 2015 japan AD hanare hagiso opens, recognized but not certified
- 2018 germany AD started (to be opened 2020)
- 2018 first AD guide published in japanese language
- 2018 article from UAE, generating interest in the AD model
- 2018 japan first fully certified AD> yakageya inn and suites
- 2019 associazione giapponese degli alberghi diffusi (ADJ) founded
- “Meanwhile”? Many similar to AD but uncertified projects in tasmania and US
- 2019 first international meeting

## 2.2 Origins of the Albergo Diffuso

*“One spring afternoon in the early 1980s Giancarlo Dall’Ara, an Italian hotel marketing consultant [and tourism professor at the Università di Bologna], was wandering the streets of a tiny village near Maranzanis, in Friuli, a rural mountainous region in the northeast corner of Italy.*

*There was an eerie dreamlike feeling to the remote town. Many of its two dozen or so houses had been destroyed by a devastating earthquake that shook the region in 1976. Although a few elderly residents had remained, many of the homes were boarded up and abandoned.*

*Mr. Dall’Ara was in Friuli on behalf of the region, brainstorming ways to bring the local villages back to life through tourism, but the area around Maranzanis was an unlikely spot for a hotel. Though he believed that the area and its wild landscape had some potential, he left somewhat discouraged by its poverty and general sense of emptiness. Yet a seed was planted.”*

*-- extract from NYT, May 19, 2010<sup>39</sup>*

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<sup>39</sup> The New York Times, “*The Albergo Diffuso Puts Rooms All Over Town*” Accessed 11/22/2018



*Fig. 10 right: Giancarlo Dall'Ara, founder of the AD concept and ADI; left: Daniel Khilgren, founder of the first certified AD hotel*

This is the beginning of the Albergo Diffuso concept, as Dall'Ara tells it. In the days since his visit to Maranzanis he has continued to refine the idea with the conviction that tourism holds an opportunity to revive declining villages. After a few experimental projects, the AD was formally recognized by the legislature in Sardinia in 1998.<sup>40</sup> Dall'Ara then founded the L'Associazione Nazionale Alberghi Diffusi (ADI) in 2000, which formally regulates and licenses new hotels wanting to be registered as an official AD. Around the same time, a wealthy entrepreneur founded the first widely recognized AD and the concept took off.

The story of the first working Albergo Diffuso begins with a man named Daniele Khilgren, a wealthy entrepreneur who had made his fortune on the concrete industry in Italy. In 2000, while riding around the Italian countryside by motorbike, he was inspired by the pastoral beauty of the hillside town Santo Stefano di Sessanio. In love with the well-preserved aesthetic, Khilgren promised to invest in the village in exchange for a ban on new construction.<sup>41</sup> With the goal of bringing the fading community back to life he gradually bought one building here, one there, until he collected a scattering of buildings throughout the town and eventually opened what became known as an “albergo diffuso,” or scattered hotel. This first AD became wildly successful, prompting Sextantio (the management company) to open a sister establishment in Sassi di Matera, Le Grotte (or The Caves). Both AD are now internationally known.

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<sup>40</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall'Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, “*The Idea and History*”

<sup>41</sup> <https://issuu.com/ingeniadirect/docs/le-grotte-della-civita-matera>

A brochure put out by the Sextantio group describes the renovation philosophy behind the project with 2 main concepts and a 4-part guideline for public legislation to follow in support of sensitive rehabilitation goals:

- *Creation and enforcement of conservation areas in the abandoned historic hill towns and the surrounding landscape.*
- *Putting in place and enforcing building regulations which are strictly in keeping with the existing historic architecture.*
- *Creation of new economic activity in these areas via conservation projects delivered on time.*

1. *Maintaining the original use, form and materials of the building.*
2. *All the architectural fittings used to replace those which have been lost are sourced from the local area. The difference between classical restoration and this vernacular conservation, is that much architectural salvage is interchangeable between locations.*
3. *Our approach to conservation includes the retention of traces of life found in the fabric of the building - symbols of the lives of the people. In many restorations they are covered up or removed, but for us they are part of the history of a village.*
4. *Furnishing in keeping with the rural historic traditions; from the beds, to the linen which covers them (created by artisans in local style and colour). To make sure that we are following original traditions, we have researched and authenticated furnishings with the Museum of the People of Abruzzo.*

The goal for the feeling of the final product is also described on the AD website as the best of both the feelings of a home and the professionalism of a hotel:

*Fig. 11- The qualities of both a home and hotel are combined within the AD context<sup>42</sup>*

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<sup>42</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall'Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, "Report on the Albergo Diffuso (2014)"

## 2.3 Official List of Attributes

The official definition has evolved over the years, initially described as an "*accommodation establishment located in an historic center, characterized by a living community, located in two or more buildings close to each other, with unitary management and able to offer all guests hotel services*" (Dall'Ara). Then, in 2014, it was developed into a more complete definition: "*Hotels that provide accommodation and other services in rooms located in separate, existing buildings located in an historic center integrated between them from the centralization in a single building of the reception office, in the same or in another building of the common use rooms and, possibly, of the other services offered. The housing units, no more than 200 meters from the building where the reception service is located, are characterized by a recognizable style, uniform and respectful of the identity of the place and are equipped with homogeneous furnishings, equipment and services.*"<sup>43</sup> The Albergo Diffuso type of hotel is regulated by the ADI, an organization dedicated to the certification of Alberghi Diffusi hotels. They list a handful of attributes that are required to be met in order to be officially recognized:

### Essential Characteristics:

1. A small city, with a few hundred inhabitants, but alive and animated. Should have all the basic services of a hotel while also functioning in the **presence of a host community** with a sense of belonging and a culture of hospitality;
2. Availability of some **uninhabited buildings** in the city centre suitable for restructuring purposes, such as providing tourist accommodation and rooms across several buildings;
3. **Hotel services** for all guests staying in the various buildings (reception, restaurant, breakfast room, cleaning, care of the guests, etc.)
4. Presence of a **single management entity**, which means management headed by a single entity for the provision of all services.
5. The need for professional non-standard management different to that which characterizes most larger hotels, while remaining flexible and dynamic, coherent with the proposal of **authenticity of experience**, able to customize services.
6. An **environment made of real fine homes**, renovated and furnished not for tourists, but focused on the area residents, even if temporary.
7. Possibility of locating facilities for **reception in a central position** or at least nearby and easily accessible. Therefore a limit is required for a **maximum distance** between the buildings that will offer all guests the usual hotel services (the distance may vary between 200 and 500m);
8. The need for a **recognizable style**, an identity readable in all parts of the accommodation, that should not be configured as a simple summation of houses renovated and put into the network.

In 2013, the EU refined and clarified the criteria to the following 7 points:

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid

1. Joint management
2. Presence of common areas for the hotel guests
3. Range of hotel services (cleaning, breakfast, reception, assistance to the guests)
4. Presence of hosting community
5. Integration in the territory and in its culture
6. Honest environment
7. Reasonable distance (200-300m) between guest units and areas

The organization also provides resources to those interested in the Albergo Diffuso from all paradigms, whether as a tourist looking for places to visit, a prospective hotel founder looking to meet these criteria for certification, policy makers looking to understand and visualize the concept, and so on. Having an organization dedicated to regulation of this typological paradigm is critical not just for the clarity of the typology as a brand, but also to provide internal checks and maintain a dialog with the academic community. Similar to organizations such as the USGBC and environmentally friendly buildings, this certification is intended to incentivise sustainable values over exploitative practices. This is a key difference between the Albergo Diffuso and other grassroots or sharing economy hospitality types, which struggle with a lack of regulation.

*Fig. 12 screenshot of the ADI website, showing the services it provides a slideshow of images promoting certified ADs*

### ADI Objectives

1. Offer a "Albergo Diffuso" model to the national and foreign tourist market
2. Guarantee a unique rigorous regulation
3. Regulate the quality of the offer
4. Promote initiatives aimed at enhancing the AD hospitality formula
5. Facilitate individual purchases of members
6. Manage shared services
7. Undertake commercial activity, promotion and advertising
8. Internationalize the model

In addition to the ADI website, Giancarlo Dall'Ara also released the handbook *Manuale dell'Albergo Diffuso* which provides further definition of the AD hospitality type, from defining the philosophy of horizontal management to a generational theory of tourist markets and where the AD type fits into trends in the wider hospitality industry. Giancarlo also established the *Scuola Internazionale di Specializzazione in Albergo Diffuso*<sup>44</sup>, a school dedicated to educating those interested in the best practices for establishing and managing AD.

*Fig. 13- The Manuale dell'Albergo Diffuso is the originating text for the AD design concept*

## 2.4 Three Subtypes of AD + A New Subtype

In the effort of further developing the concept, 3 subtypes of AD are proposed on the ADI website. Although these have been added to account for the variety of projects created with similar intentions, Giancarlo himself comments that certain types have seen greater success than others.

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<sup>44</sup> The Rimini School, Small Hotels and SME Tourism, "Research on Small Hotels, Few and of Part"

### Paese Albergo (Village Hotel)

Belonging to the Albergo Diffuso family, the Albergo Paese presents a proposal that involves an entire town or an inhabited historic center, through a network of hospitable offers (rooms, houses, bars, restaurants), reception services, and common areas for the guests. All this is made available to tourists through a centralized booking service, but without unitary management (Dall'Ara). It is not a hotel, but a "hospitable network" that centralizes some services, leaving the operators independent. Observing a resolution of the Regional Council of Sardinia, n.28 / 26 of 26 July 2007, the Hotel Country is defined in Article 30 as a "network of hospitable operators set up through collaboration agreements between different subjects, whether or not they are entrepreneurs, for the purpose of providing accommodation in a coordinated form, without unitary management, in order to provide accommodation and other services in several accommodation facilities, which are of interest a significant part of a built-up area, in possession of the stable requisites by resolution of the Regional Council."

### Residence Albergo

Dall'Ara defines this as "extra-hotel accommodations that provide accommodation in more than one housing unit, together with reception and assistance services, located within a single municipal area, integrated with each other by the centralization of the reception office" (Dall'Ara). It is an extra-hotel accommodation facility characterized by a centralized booking system and the offer of minimum reception and assistance services managed not in hotel form. This may be similar to the Airbnb and VRBO and other short-stay phenomenon, where services such as booking and search for places and experiences are provided by a third party but the stay is managed by individual homeowners.

### Albergo Diffuso di Campagna

Regulated by the Molise Region in 2014, on the recommendation of the National Association of Diffuse Hotels, the diffused country hotel is a real AD, which operates however not in a village, but in a rural context. In addition to these defined and tested formulas, in the operational reality there are models that draw inspiration from these ways of recovering ancient villages and historic centers, but which do not represent all the characteristics necessary to re-enter their classification. Examples of these similar but non-qualifying types are: Hotel Villages , or rather the hospitable structures realized through the recovery of uninhabited villages with unified management, proposing rooms and services located in different buildings not always close together; and Hotel Houses, a more recent formula that entrusts a hotel hospitality service to a network of managers (typically families)."<sup>45</sup>

In an interview conversation, Dall'Ara comments that although the above three types currently count as AD, he has witnessed challenges to the continued success of types of AD which employ diverse management, or operators working together as a hotel. In these cases, internal conflicts between operators can lead to inefficiencies and dilution of a cohesive brand, and more importantly a cohesive sense of place. Time will tell what forms perform best.

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<sup>45</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall'Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, "*Report on the Albergo Diffuso (2014)*"

It is my addition that the Urban type also be considered. While it may be radically different from the circumstances that led to the original abandonment of the villages during urbanization, there are multiple situations that can lead to neglected and empty spaces in the urban context. I believe the AD model has the appropriate intention and capacity to positively intervene in these places. Chinatown, Honolulu, which will be discussed in greater depth in later chapters, is an example of multiple factors coinciding to create a climate of stagnation, including preservation efforts, high numbers of stakeholders in a small area, economic fluctuations, homelessness and crime, slow moving policy, and more.

## 2.5 Qualifying for AD

1. Prerequisites for creating an AD<sup>46</sup>
  - 1.1. “Summarizing, therefore, the realization of a Diffuse Hotel can be facilitated and facilitated when the location object of interest has these requirements:
    - 1.1.1. - presence of a tourist, cultural or environmental context, with buildings and structures of artistic, historical interest that represent the local culture and traditions;
    - 1.1.2. - existence within the village of buildings suitable for restructuring with hotel purposes;
    - 1.1.3. - presence of a comprehensive offer of basic services, such as commercial, cultural and tourist establishments, both for tourists and residents;
    - 1.1.4. - possibility of placing reception facilities in a centered position with respect to the housing units;
    - 1.1.5. - number of inhabitants of the village sufficient to guarantee the possibility of establishing relations and relations with guests;
    - 1.1.6. - organization of events and initiatives for the enhancement of the town centered on the culture of hospitality;
    - 1.1.7. - presence of gastronomic, cultural and artistic traditions to be enhanced;
    - 1.1.8. - interest and willingness on the part of residents, private individuals and operators to engage and invest in innovative forms of management.
2. To qualify for certification/bear the name of AD<sup>47</sup>
  - 2.1. to ensure that the idea is launched by local actors;
  - 2.2. offer hotel services as mentioned above;
  - 2.3. presence of unitary management: single entrepreneur or other effective associative forms; the cooperative is the form most often retained;
  - 2.4. a minimum of seven rooms at a distance of less than 200 meters each that will be laid off for a period of not less than nine years;

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<sup>46</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall’Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, “*Report on the Albergo Diffuso (2014)*”,

<sup>47</sup> Reseau Veille Tourisme, “*Albergo Diffuso: To Develop the Accommodation Offer Differently*”

- 2.5. the village in which the albergo diffuso is located must be able to offer a minimum of resident-oriented services such as a pharmacy, a grocery store, etc .;
  - 2.6. the albergo diffuso must be rooted in a vibrant and welcoming community, open to share experiences with visitors.
3. Recognized challenges in implementation of AD
- 3.1. “The reasons that have delayed the actual implementation are different, first of all those of a normative nature: in Italy, in fact, the first rule that recognizes the Albergo Diffuso from a legislative point of view, and authorizes its opening, is of 1998 (regional law n.27 of 12 August 1998, Autonomous Region of Sardinia). In addition to this obstacle, there were also cultural complexities, resistance linked to the fragmented ownership of the settlements, and the lack of willingness on the part of the owners to invest in solutions considered so innovative. Furthermore, the problem related to the development and improvement of the model was always present, which required a shared formula that could be used in different territorial contexts.”<sup>48</sup>

## 2.6 Spread of AD

Since the success of the Sextantio AD, the concept has exploded in popularity, with about 100 AD registered as of 2018,<sup>49</sup> at least one in every province of Italy, and many more that share some fundamental characteristics despite not fully qualifying. Dall’Ara and the ADI continue to push for legal recognition in all provinces and hope to spread the concept outside of Italy. Currently there are two international AD: one in Spain and one which recently opened in Tokyo, Japan. This is especially hopeful since there is a lot of potential for application to other countries with similar circumstances, such as China, a destination with an overloaded market of internal tourism and largely untapped potential in the form of thousands of endangered and abandoned rural villages.

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<sup>48</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall’Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, “*Report on the Albergo Diffuso (2014)*”

<sup>49</sup> [Albergodiffuso.it](http://Albergodiffuso.it)





Fig. 14- certified AD locations in Italy

### 2.6.1 Legal Acceptance per Region<sup>50</sup>

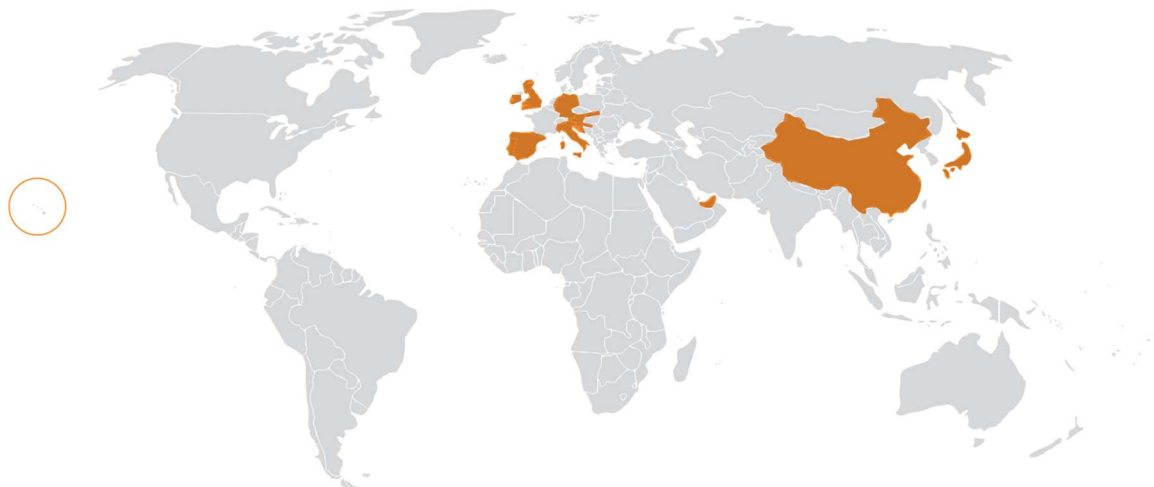
- Sardinia Region (Regional Law No. 27 of August 12, 1998, amendment to Regional Law No. 22 of May 14, 1984)
- Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (Regional Law No. 2 of January 16, 2002)
- Marche Region (Regional Law No. 9 of 11 July 2006. Regional Council Resolution No. 479 of 14 May 2007)
- Umbria Region (Regional Law No. 18 of December 27, 2006)
- Emilia Romagna Region (Deliberation of the Regional Council of June 25, 2007, Regional Law No. 16 of 2004, art. 3, paragraph 2. Resolution of the Regional Council No. 916 of May 4, 2007, prot. No. TUR / 07/149662 )
- Liguria Region (Regional Regulation No. 2 of January 30, 2009. Regional Law No. 2 of February 7, 2008. Regional Regulation No. 5 of October 25, 2007. Regional Law No. 13 of March 21, 2007)
- Autonomous Province of Trento (Law No. 20 of November 15, 2007, amendment to Provincial Law No. 7 of May 15, 2002)
- Tuscany Region (BUR n. 34 of 20 August 2008)
- Calabria Region (Regional Law n. 8 of 05 April 2008)
- Lazio Region (Regional Council Resolution 16 May 2008, art. 2. Regional Regulation n. 16 of 24 October 2008)
- Basilicata Region (2009 Law. Regional Law No. 6 of June 4th 2008)

<sup>50</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall'Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, "Report on the Albergo Diffuso (2014)"

- Lombardy Region (Law No. 8 of 09 February 2010)
- Valle d'Aosta Region (Regional Law No. 1 of February 16, 2011, BUR No. 10 of March 10, 2011)
- Campania Region (Draft of Regional Law on Tourism n. 626 of November 15th 2011. Decree n. 579 of August 8th 2003. Regional Law n. 17 of November 24th 2001, integrated with the modifications brought by the Regional Laws No. 24 of 29 December 2005 and No. 4 of March 15, 2011)
- Puglia Region (Regional Regulation n. 6 of 22 March 2012, Implementing regulation of the receptive activity of diffused hotel of which in the LR n. 17 of 2011)
- Veneto Region (Resolution no. 11 of 30 May 2013)
- Sicily Region (Regional Law 2 August 2013, n. 11)
- Abruzzo Region (Regional Law 9 August 2013, n. 22)
- Piedmont Region (Regional Law 12 August 2013, n. 17)
- Molise Region (Regional Law 25 March 2014, n. 7)

### 2.6.2 Internal Spread

Even though the concept was engendered in Italy, many already see the potential popularity and positive impact the paradigm could have in cultures across the world. The basic concept is simple enough to adapt to many circumstances, bringing with it an inherent ability to pair touristic profit with local revitalization and heritage preservation.



*Fig. 15 - Current and potential future locations of an AD hotel*

Adoption of the AD model has spread quickly throughout Europe, sometimes through the intentional marketing by Giancarlo Dall'Ara, who set up a school<sup>51</sup> for training others in the details of setting up an AD, and sometimes through informal word of mouth, resulting in many variations of hospitality which may not always fall under the official definition of an AD nor have acquired certification. To assist with the process of

<sup>51</sup>International School Specializing in the Albergo Diffuso

adoption, the EU<sup>52</sup> issued its own definition of an AD which refines the original 10 attributes to just 4. Japan, which also saw its first AD in 2018<sup>53</sup> has since established its own association, ADJ, to manage this new hotel type within its own country and an understanding for regional circumstances. In a 2017<sup>54</sup> study conducted on AD-like hospitality organically arising in Slovenia further identified 3 base criteria for the proper established on an AD and 3 additional factors that contribute to its success.<sup>55</sup> Amongst their observations is a description of the various formats of organizational structure seen in AD.

Because AD projects have a marked impact on the economic well-being of a place, and indeed benefit from a thriving host community, most AD sites are supported by a combination of public and private interest. I have identified 4 different components of relationship structure to consider: project initiation, funding, ownership, and operation. For example, the first AD was initiated by Daniele Khilgren, a private party, and subsequently founded by him as well. He also bought all the properties used by the AD, and therefore permanently transferred ownership from the realm of the host community to the Sextantio management entity. In the case of the Sextantio hotels, this supported the community since many families saw the empty properties as a burden and welcomed the opportunity to turn them into financial gain. However, I believe this method may not be applicable to all locations, particularly Chinatown in Honolulu as I will discuss later, since breaking the continuity of ownership may have resonant impact on the future power dynamics and decision making in the future of the community. At the end of this chapter, several case studies will outline a variety of public-private relationships employed by different existing AD.

It should additionally be noted that Italy in particular, and Europe more broadly, is well known for having high levels of governmental support of heritage and cultural preservation. Thus, there are a wealth of institutions from the municipal level to the international level that can offer funding and support for projects that achieve their stated goals. As stated by the Slovenian study, “Support for these initiatives is provided through a special fund, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).”<sup>56</sup> There are also well established formats for public-private cooperation specific to Italy: STU (Urban Transformation Company), BOO (Build Own Operate) and BOST (Build Operate Subsidize Transfer). These are described by a workgroup called ABArchive in the image below, where they also visualize the relationships between multiple levels of local and national entities<sup>57</sup> In the United States, these are called Public Private Partnerships, sometimes referred to as P3s or PPPs. A variety of funding assistance is available for such partnerships including loans, bonds, and grants.

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<sup>52</sup> Project Albergo Diffuso, “*Valorisation of the Territorial Heritage - Typical Local Productions and Tourism*”. Accessed 12/03/2017

<sup>53</sup> The Asahi Shimbun, “*Historic Town’s Old Buildings Form Asia’s First ‘Scattered Hotel’*”

<sup>54</sup> Academica Turistica, “*Albergo Diffuso (Diffused/Distributed Hotel): Case Study of Slovenia*”

<sup>55</sup> Ibid

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

<sup>57</sup> ABArchive, “*Borgbi Abbandonati, Evoluzione Sociale*”. Accessed 10/04/2017

*Fig. 16 - Diagram of the assorted business models that can be used to construct and run an AD hotel*

## INITIATIVE

### PUBLIC

A group of locals creates a consortium and delegate the management of the structure to a private subject, e.g. to the cooperative.

or

### PRIVATE

An investor purchases or rents the accommodation units and becomes the manager.

or

### COMMUNITY

Community actors can join together to create social initiatives on their own, perhaps through cultural centre or a residents co-operative.

## DESIGN

### DESIGN STUDIO

A third party design studio designs the interventions to be made. They may or may not ask for input from the community.

and/or

### WORKSHOPS

Community input can be gathered through workshops and interviews with locals.

## BUILD

### PPP

Public-Private Partnerships can be employed to guarantee a minimum established quality and outcome for the project in the public's interest.

or

### PRIVATE COMPANY

This may be in continuation with the design studio or a contractor hired by the initiating party.

and/or

### VOLUNTEERS

Locals can get hands-on in the construction process, depending on the scope of the project and the skills available.

## OWNERSHIP

### PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

A private business buys up properties at market price and maintains ownership until they decide to sell.

or

### INDIVIDUALS

Individuals maintain ownership of their properties and lease out space to the hotel company for a contracted period of time.

## OPERATION

### CO-OP

An "Urban Transformation Company" or similar agency manages the hotel instead of hiring a third party hotel management.

or

### HOTEL MANAGEMENT

The hotel management company takes full control for centralized and professional service.

or

### RESIDENTS

There are cases of local volunteers or families running their own enterprises, living and working in the AD.

## FUNDING

### PUBLIC

This may be in the form of loans, grants, and tax credits.

and/or

### PRIVATE INVESTORS

This may be a single rich investor, in the case of Sextantio, privately gathered investors, bank loans, etc.

and/or

### CROWD FUNDING

Classroom projects, online crowd funding, and even locals volunteering money and time to any stage of the project.

## 2.5 Case Studies

The following case studies were selected to show in greater detail a selection of AD and AD-inspired projects to show the range of flexibility of the concept. The first is the original certified AD established by Daaniele Khilgren and is the project upon which many future projects have been based. Then an example from Castelfalfi, also in Italy, shows a “failed” iteration of AD from a community standpoint when a project closely resembles a resort and has minimal community engagement. The next project is a small, grassroots-driven project in Italy that highlights the possibility for community engagement at all stages of the project. And lastly, the Hagiso project in Hanare, Japan, shows the first application of the concept in the Eastern Hemisphere and to an urban environment.

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# SEXTANTIO

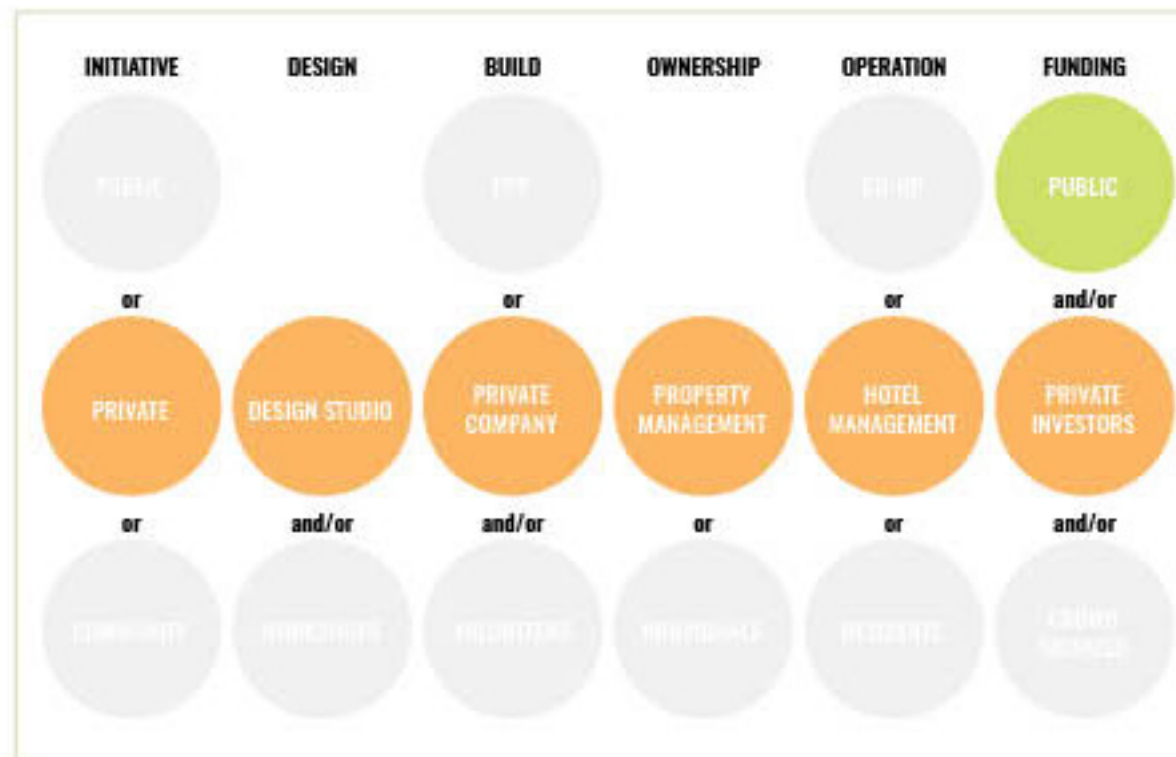


After initial inspiration on a motor-bike ride through the countryside, Khilgren started looking the old owners of abandoned dilapidated houses one by one and made them an offer which almost all of them accepted. Then he began to restoration of the villages: if in 2001 75% of the houses in the village were abandoned, by the end of 2008 there were 120 inhabitants, about 30 commercial activities and 7,300 annual visitors in 5 accommodation facilities. In 1999 the company Sextantio was set up by the sole shareholder Daniele Khilgren. The planning of activities and resources, carried out during 2005-2006 as part of new investments, highlighted the need to strengthen management, to create a corporate structure capable of organically managing the various responsibilities. The four current partners of Sextantio Ltd. have signed an agreement under which a percentage of the gross profits of the budget and a portion of any capital gains from the sale (even partial) of the investment in Sextantio Srl will be directed to the Sextantio Foundation. Given the success of the operation he succeeded to obtain 20 thirty-year concessions for the same number of Sassi from the Municipality of Matera and inaugurated the second most widespread hotel.

- ACTORS:**
- daniele khilgren
  - sextantio ltd. & sextantio foundation
  - inhabitants

Entrepreneur Khilgren was inspired to save a fading village and personally bought up properties and provided 90% of the funding throughout the life of the project with 10% funding support from public sources. The company Sextantio manages the properties and hotel services. Design was done by hired architect.

<b>LOCATION</b>	Santo di Stefano & Matera, Italy
<b>SUBTYPE</b>	main type AD
<b>TERRITORY TYPE</b>	rural, fringe urban district
<b>SSS</b>	€4.5mll (90%private 10%public)
<b>AREA</b>	4,000mq
<b># ROOMS</b>	48
<b>COMMON SPACE</b>	8
<b>F&amp;B</b>	3
<b>SHOPS</b>	1
<b>OTHER</b>	spa, 6 workshops, wine tasting cellar



1. map of all the buildings participating in the AD, with the rooms called out with pins. other buildings are functions such as restaurant and workshop spaces.

2. from the reception area to the farthest room, the distance is ~180m



1. suite
2. superior room
3. classic room
4. cozy fire place
5. tisneria (tea room)
6. common space
- 7-9. details of rustic furnishings

Santo Stefano offers a variety of experiences and workshops, all based around resources of the region, from cooking classes to textile workshops to simple outings into the local environment.

1. better than a plan view, the elevation of the mountainside shows the various cave-like dwellings that participate in the Albergo Diffuso

2. given the layout of dwellings vertically in the hillside you can see that the AD area is horizontally compact, yet following the zig zag path to get to the furthest room its about the same distance as the hilltop sextantio AD

1. view of the hillside
2. view of the ramped streets
3. view of the countryside
4. sketches used during renovation showing the minimal furnishings and interventions
5. three caves/rooms

In addition to the dining experience in an old church setting, food can be ordered in alongside spa services for a luxurious experience. Event spaces and services are also available, especially for weddings.

The hotel offers packaged tours themed on many local resources such as archeology, heritage sites, nature walks, food, wine, cycling, military history, and more.



## CASTELFALFI

The German multinational developer TUI initiated this project, with support from residents and regional municipalities, as an intervention of tourist accommodation accompanied by an agricultural-environmental recovery plan for the municipality of Montalione. The intervention is based on three fundamental strategic lines:

- the conservative of the historic village and the houses on the estate
- the construction of new tourist accommodations
- the development of pre-existing agricultural activity by supplying guests with local agricultural products and engaging them in the agricultural process with package experiences

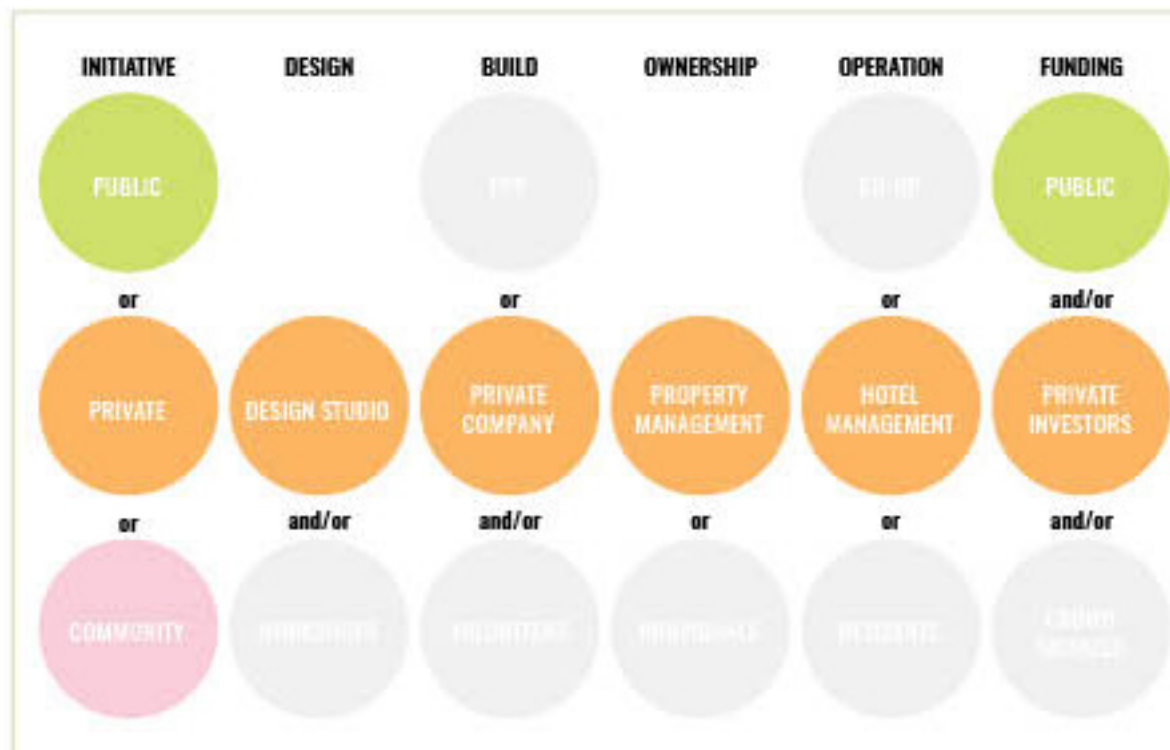
However, initial plans would have required the construction of new buildings that would disfigure the surrounding environment. For this reason Legambiente (League of the Environment, an environmental activist association) opposed the current management of the project and launched an appeal to raise awareness of the inevitable environmental damage that the village would suffer. The Montalione administration decided, before beginning any urban planning, landscaping or construction, to start a wide consultation to allow all interested citizens to express their opinion on this intervention through a debate public.

### ACTORS

- multinational TUI AG
- comune (municipal gov.)
- inhabitants

Inspired by the success of Sextantio and other AD, this project was initiated by a developer and resulted in an more conventional vertically-organized resort, only with emphasis on renovation rather than new construction. This project experienced success as a luxury hotel offering but also pushback from the region.

LOCATION	Tuscany, Italy
SUBTYPE	NA (non-certified)
TERRITORY TYPE	village and countryside
SSS	€295 million
AREA	8430mq
# ROOMS	670
BATHROOMS	
COMMON SPACE	1
F&B	2
SHOPS	
OTHER	luxury spa and fitness facilities



except for the main building, all parts of the resort well exceed the 200m limit

you can see that the region is also much more agriculturally intensive than many of the village AD

1-4. types of rooms offered

5. private buildings further from main reception

6. golf

7. luxury spa, with imported services such as french cosmetic treatments, nordic sauna, and oriental oil treatments

8. opportunities to participate in the harvests, adopt an orchard or vineyard, and taste local products



# MILLION DONKEY HOTEL

The project is a product of the "village of art" festival, an event held by a landscape workgroup Feld72. A group of inter-national architects and artists was invited to address the issues of identity, territory and social landscape through projects that actively involved the local population.

This unique hotel was designed with the participation of the local population to revitalize a semi-abandoned medieval village. The project idea was to see the country as a large hotel with individual rooms to rent: the abandoned spaces are transformed into important rooms not as places of memory, but for their potential for future use. These rooms become a part of a larger organism in which the entire Prata Sannita becomes a single field of design action. The first intervention concerns the creation of three hotel rooms, for seasonal tourists. Each space is combined with a specific theme and an atmosphere that is different every time, inspired by history and emigration.

After completion of the renovation of the selected rooms, residents continue to operate the hotel themselves as a co-op group.

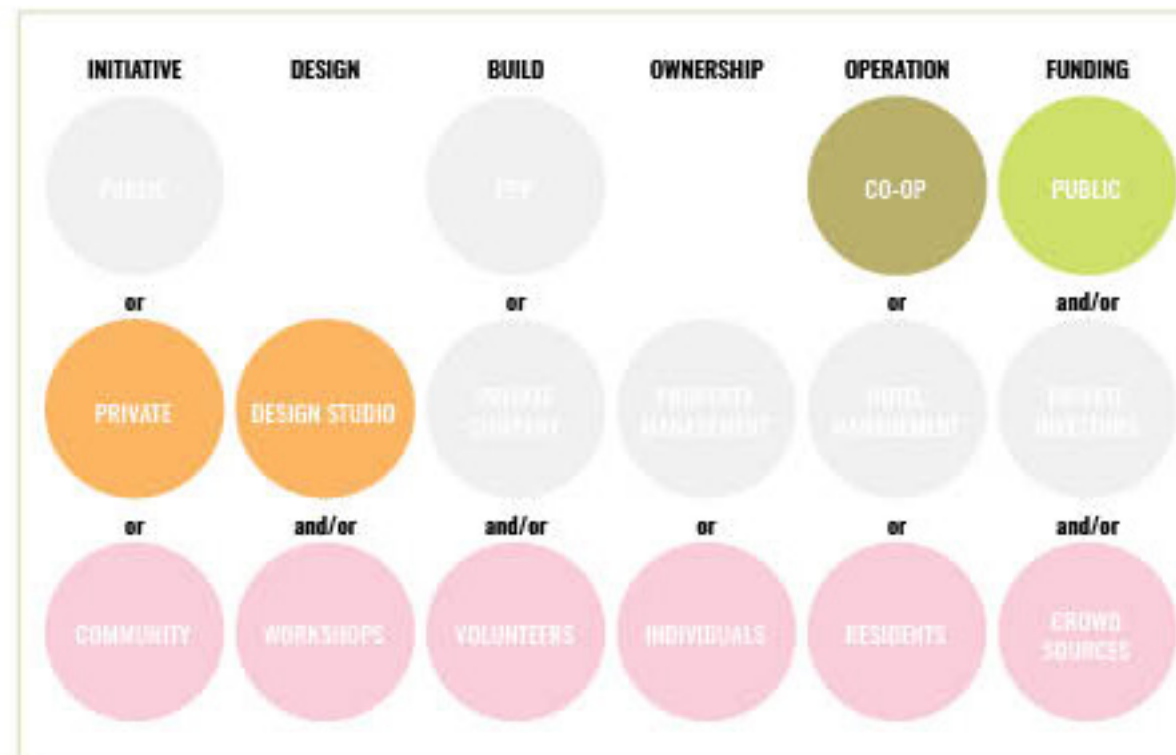
This project is much smaller than the typical AD, but it achieved much greater "horizontality" in its implementation, through the involvement of the community throughout the entire process. Involvement of design and artist groups also resulted in a more contemporary interpretation of the old world landscape than other AD projects.

## ACTORS

- Azione Matese (workgroup)
- FELD72 (architect)
- inhabitants (60 volunteers)



LOCATION	prata sannita, caserta, italy
SUBTYPE	main type AD
TERRITORY TYPE	abandoned village
SSS	€10.000 + 4300 work hrs
AREA	
# ROOMS	3
BATHROOMS	1
COMMON SPACE	1
F&B	4
SHOPS	7
OTHER	castle, museum, church



the rooms of Million Donkey Hotel are very close together, under 50m, and even the farthest reaches of the settlement are below the maximum 200m distance

1-3. volunteers during the design  
and construction of Million Donkey  
Hotel

4. community meeting

5. the cage of "the flying bed" room

6. interior of "the flying bed" room

7. "the black hole" room

8. the shared bathroom with art  
installation



# HAGISO

The Hagiso Albergo Diffuso began as an art collective, which after shutting down in a final gallery event transformed into a local cultural centre and eventually became the reception for the hotel. This hotel has been officially recognized by the ADI as a certified Albergo Diffuso, the first of its kind not just in Japan but all of the eastern hemisphere.

## PROJECT PHILOSOPHY:

I think that hotels have a role of "traffic control in town". This is because the hotel can arrange what kind of people it invites to the town and where it can lead them. It creates a new flow of people in the area and draws potential.

We don't think of a hotel as a business that just rents a bed. It is an irreplaceable encounter stage, a place that has the power to dramatically change the way people see the city, and a place to create a miracle of experience.

We are conducting experiments to create hotels that do not have the same one in such a world, and are also working to increase such places in this world.

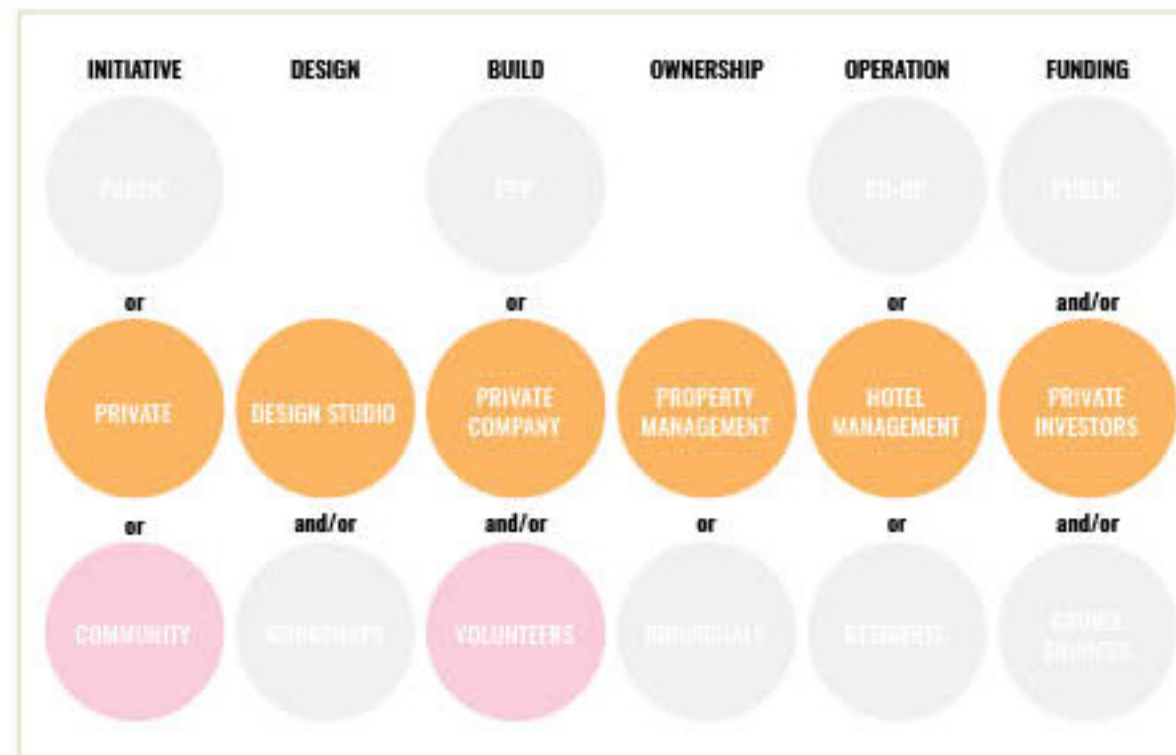
<http://company.hagiso.jp/our-service/hotel/>

## ACTORS:

- art student residents
- Hagi Studio Inc. (design collective)
- Sorinji Temple

Art residence until the building was condemned in 2012. But a gallery showing called "Hagiennale" saved the building from demolition. A cooperative effort formed to create a 'mini cultural complex' in the building, which evolved into the formal corporation Hagi Studio Inc. which runs all operations and has added new sites.

LOCATION	hanare, tokyo, japan
SUBTYPE	Residence Diffuso
TERRITORY TYPE	dense suburban residential
SSS	unknown
AREA	unknown
# ROOMS	6
BATHROOMS	1 + local bathhouses
COMMON SPACE	1 lounge
F&B	1
SHOPS	1
OTHER	art gallery, spa



1. map showing access from airport and major landmarks to visit

2. concept of HAGISO connecting renovated local houses (tangible heritage) with local bathhouses, shopping street, classes in local traditions (intangible heritage), in house cafe, and partnership with local bike shop

3. distance from reception to rooms:

1. before and after of the main building (cultural center and reception)

2. interior concept drawing before conversion into a hotel room

3. final room interior

4. axon of main building

5. shared bathrooms

6. shared lounge space

7. front of secondary building

8. plan of rooms in secondary building

9. interior stair of secondary building

10. reception/concierge

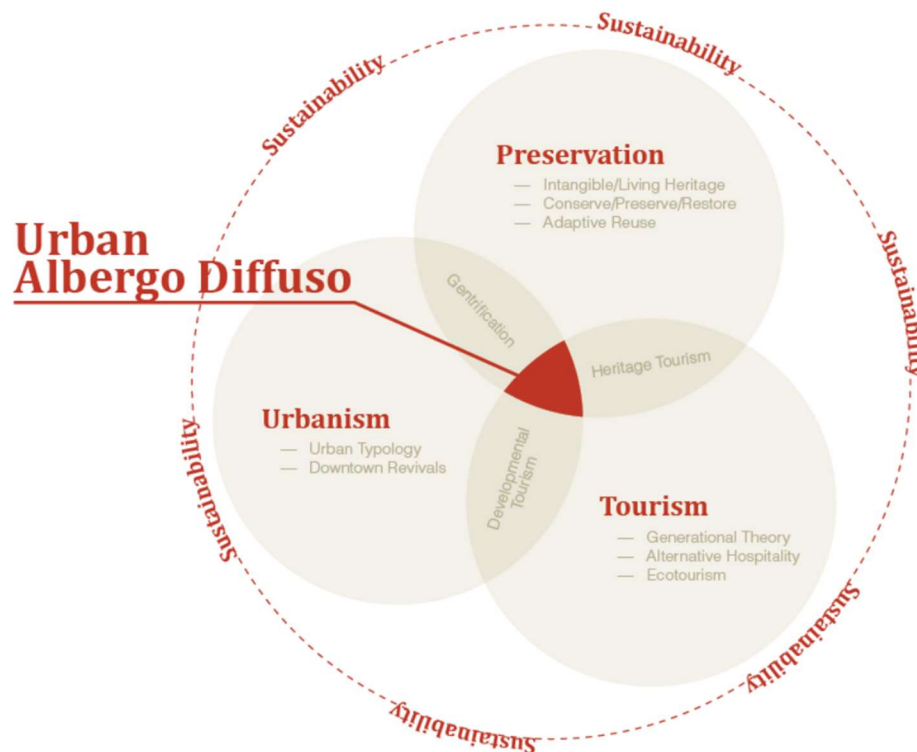
-  - Hagiso Hotel
-  - other Hagiso operations
-  - local partnerships
-  - cultural landmarks

1. rickshaw tour
2. learn to make/play bamboo flute
3. bike rental
4. collodion photography
5. kimono rental

Far left: website for cultural center, with scheduled gallery showings, performances, salon bookings, and other information for guest and resident alike

## Chapter 3. Literary Context

Before turning to the many challenges raised in the first chapter and the possible implications of the alternative hospitality types introduced in the second, this chapter will present a broad overview of the theoretical ideas related to the approach of using a new hotel type as a form of urban preservation. This section will lay the foundation for the three major areas influencing the Albergo Diffuso, namely, heritage, tourism, and urbanism, plus the overarching fourth concept of cultural sustainability. The most unique aspect of this hospitality model is the way it interacts with heritage, but of course, some of the wider trends in the tourism industry should also be understood. Issues in the arena of urban planning will be explored as it relates to the potential development and challenges posed by the introduction of tourists to an urban neighborhood. In each section, the intent is to uncover the values that are motivating current trends and examining the place of Albergo Diffuso in that context.



*Fig. 17 - An urban AD is created from the intersection of several fields*

### 3.1 Tourism

For any readers unfamiliar with the history of tourism, the following section will begin with a summary of its evolution beginning with Giancarlo Dall’Ara’s proposal of 4 categories of tourists. Through the summary we will be able to place the Albergo Diffuso in context of the global trends leading to its success. First, it is important to broadly define the birth of tourism as a scholarly field. Unlike architecture, tourism is a relatively new phenomenon and the existence and growing popularity are explicitly tied to the economic



capacity of individuals in a given society. The very idea of having enough excess resources to spend focused leisure time is something that has only been possible in the recent century. And of course, the invention of various modes of mass and high speed transit can be traced to the industrial revolution, also no more than a few centuries ago and a blip of time compared to recorded human history. The first section will enumerate some of the larger trends in globalization that are driving changes in the tourism industry today. After establishing a rough timeline of phenomena leading to the current state of the tourism industry, I will examine on current trends within tourism. Specifically, I will compare multiple forms of hospitality, the Albergo Diffuso included, to understand exactly what niche each type fills. The conclusion will end with a summary of a “generational theory,” referring to the generations of tourists, by the founder of the ADI Giancarlo Dallara. His writings provide a framework for understanding the changes in tourism as a natural evolution relating to the level of economic and informational resources that each generation has access to and attempts to explain the motivations of each.

*Fig. 18 - The number and origin of tourists over the last 70 years*

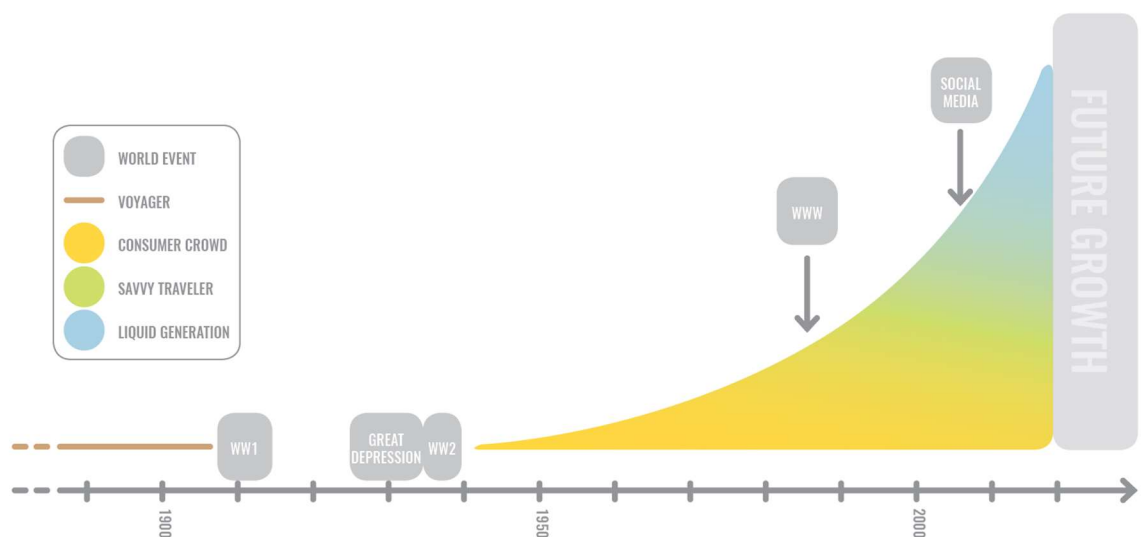
### **3.1.1 Evolution of Tourism**

#### Generations of Tourists, from the founder of the Albergo Diffuso

In his manual defining the concept of the Albergo Diffuso, Giancarlo Dall’Ara constructs a four category breakdown of the types of tourists seen throughout tourism’s history. Each category, or generation of tourist, is put into context with the economic climate that lead to its initial creation and subsequently

characterizes each type in terms of their demands and rough demographic profile. His perspective paints a clear picture of the target market that the AD was designed for: the Savvy Traveler. Understanding this perspective is relevant to understanding the success of the AD and gives a big picture view of where and why the tourism industry is shifting towards integrated experiences. There are certainly many other methodologies for understanding the evolution of tourism, but this is particularly relevant since the AD concept was directly birthed from this understanding of the tourism landscape.

The proposal is a categorization of waves of tourists seen over the last century who can be roughly defined by their motivation for travel and can then be defined by what they seek from the travel experience. Beginning with early century travelers, he names the categories thus: Voyager, Consumer Crowd, Savvy Traveler, and Liquid Generation.



*Fig. 19 - Evolution over time of tourist typologies*

Voyagers come from an era when travel was limited to few, either those rich enough to afford it or poor enough to have no attachments. Because travel was such a rarity, both are moved by an internal wanderlust. They are content with whatever services they encounter and are generally undemanding. There is simple satisfaction in having the time or means at all. Indistinct holiday seasons mean that such vacations are typically long self-ascribed journeys. They travel for their own means and reasons. This is now an uncommon tourist group, except when among the occasional inexperienced traveller.

The Consumer Crowd is the group which is perhaps the most are familiar, given that it tends to be composed of those with a sudden interest in travel and defined by a large number of the middle class. Those looking to buy and revel, the Consumer Crowd is frequently the source of ‘annoying tourist’ tales. Characterized by great numbers, this group is likely motivated by romanticized tales of travel yet desire conveniences similar to home. The desire for the reassurance of familiarity, guaranteed service, safety, etc., limits the types of hospitality to international sameness. Along with expendable income, this new middle class now has structured holidays, which unfortunately result in a huge rush during specific seasons. They prefer to

utilize the services of a travel agency, letting themselves be guided by all-inclusive travel packages. The responding form of hospitality is the widely familiar chain hotel and resorts, tourist bubbles which provide defined boundaries between tourist and local areas. This is the group of tourism that tends to cause the most conflict since it frequently ignores geographical and cultural context purposefully. Fortunately though even mass consumer tastes can change.

Enter the Savvy Traveler, now slightly more experienced than a Consumer Crowd tourist and looking for a little more control over their travel experience, which was likely unfulfilling as a consumer because the offerings were generic. This traveler has a desire to customize services, to tailor their own experience to demand authenticity and greater ties with the local culture. This generation is more directly participatory, needing more information and desiring to form relationships during travel. It is for this generation that the word 'authenticity' became rooted in the lexicon of travel marketers, leaning into the desire to deconstruct the packaged experience.

Finally, the emergent Liquid Generation is yet loosely defined by individuals questioning the work-life balance, active lifestyle experimenters. A generation defined by unparalleled skill in using near limitless internet information and services to half mass-customization of travel plans with no middlemen. They frequently search for unique experiences and hold ideals important enough to motivated decisions, such as choosing environmentally sensitive products over others of equal quality. Interestingly, this generation makes an effort to see vacation time as on a continuum with personal life, rather than separate. Their idea of vacation is more personal, intimate, and less tangible, made up of personal experiences and 'living in the moment' rather than souvenirs and photo-ops. Expanding on the Savvy Traveler's need for relationship building, the Liquid Generation has a need for a sense of community.

Understanding both the progression and the possibility for these generational motivations to transcend culture becomes relevant when returning to Waikiki today. Waikiki as a tourist destination was born during America's Consumer Crowd generation. This is indicated not only historically but by the characteristic separation of Waikiki from the rest of O'ahu and with the conventional forms of hospitality that compose it almost in entirety. What is interesting is that instead of evolving to fulfill changing demands of American tourists, the hotels instead turned to find a new source of travelers with the same inclinations: Japanese tourists. This has influenced the seeming resistance to radical change that Waikiki exhibits as an iconic tourist bubble of highly consumerist-oriented experiences.

According to Dall'Ara's observation in the Manuale AD, tourism is continually evolving, with distinctions between eras most evident in the generations of tourist. He classifies tourists into 4 generations, with some tentative predictions for what future generations may be like. All of these generations happen on a timeline that begins around the World Wars. Before, few but the very rich travelled for leisure. This begins the first generation.

With the explosion of wealth and a new structure to the world's economics after the World War 2, a middle class with the time, desire and money to travel was born. Alongside changes in the structure of work life, the population burgeoned and the advertising industry grew to meet consumers' newfound ability to choose where they spent their resources. This is generation two. Then into the prosperous 80s and 90s, mass

consumerism reached its plateau. Given the huge numbers of new travellers and the simplistic offerings of travel, the impact of the tourism industry became pronounced and it wasn't all positive. It started to become clear that mass tourism was too often culturally insensitive and was blamed for the exploitation of local populations. Enter generation three, the savvy traveler. This generation saw the shortcomings of the mass-consumerist culture and demanded better practices, not just of tourism but from their daily lives. The idea of strict 9-5 work days and short holidays came under question. Vacations became less seasonally restricted, and the search for better quality life translated to more time off. The introduction of the internet has also impacted the way travellers found, organized, and booked their stays, leading to more direct control of the consumer over the quality they could choose.

The implication of these turning points is that it is broadly applicable to every culture, as things like economic growth, urbanization, and wide-spread internet are factors of change that all countries are experiencing, albeit unevenly and at speeds tied to their industrial development. This generational theory bases separation not on decade or even class, but by motivation. Note that a single individual within their own lifetime (especially in fast-changing countries such as China) may actually move through a number of generations as they move through different phases of life. For example, as a Consumer Crowd tourist gains experience and resources to spend on travel, they may move into a Savvy Traveler classification and perhaps even support a Liquid Generation mindset later in life. This theory isn't about boxing people into categories, rather it's about understanding the big picture transitions of desire within tourism. Generationally informed design thinking will be able to ride the wave as we explore new typologies for new tourism situations.

	1ST - VOYAGER	2ND - CONSUMER CROWD	3RD - SAVVY TRAVELER	4TH - LIQUID GENERATION
<b>Economic Context</b>	This generation begins in a time before the tourism industry is fully fledged, and is triggered by changes in policy or economy that provide opportunity for leisure travel.	Policy and economic conditions stabilize holiday seasons and offer vacation pay, and the tourism industry grows to match the demand for travel en masse.	Tourism offerings mature to fulfil demand for luxury tastes, experienced travelers seek greater independence and technology develops to support it, authenticity is a key word in their understanding of value.	Hospitality has come to accommodate the spectrum of affordability, workplaces offer more flexible hours and remote options, travel is no longer limited to seasons or resorts, internet and specifically social media offer a huge variety of choice
<b>Primary Desires</b>	Simply to see the world, however it is available	To see the world, with all the convenience and safety of home	Greater control of their own agenda, and above all, "authenticity"	Quality of connections and experiences, sense of community, travel as a lifestyle
<b>Travel Style &amp; Hospitality Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indistinct holiday seasons, vacations are typically long self-ascribed journeys</li> <li>• travels by their own means</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most characterized by great numbers</li> <li>• holidays are organized and highly seasonal (huge rush around Christmas and New Years, for example)</li> <li>• all inclusive packages (most often provided by a travel agency)</li> <li>• types of tourism provided: tendency towards chain hotels, all-inclusive resorts, defined boundaries between tourist areas and local areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to customize our services.</li> <li>• Demand for authentic experiences.</li> <li>• Need for greater ties with the local culture.</li> <li>• Need for more information.</li> <li>• Need relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New ways of working</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• The need for new and innovative.</li> <li>• Greater behavioral rituals</li> <li>• Ease of transition</li> <li>• The Idea of vacation</li> <li>• Desire for community</li> </ul>

Fig. 20 summary of Dall'Ara's 4 Generations of Tourist

The Albergo Diffuso is a concept that specifically responds to the desires of newer tourist generations. And because it is inherently more economically efficient (based in infrastructural reuse), it does not hold any less weight with the older generations of tourists either. As stated at the beginning of this section, the

desires and tastes of new generations don't replace the old ones; they build upon and expand them<sup>58</sup>. Even the generation 2 tourists, those mass consumers, are fated to become the next generations as well. Already market trend reporters see that the middle class spenders continue refining their tastes and are getting better at knowing what luxury is and isn't. The greater strategy for historical tourism may be to continue to accommodate the Consumer Crowd generation in the short term but use this as an opportunity to educate and elevate their tastes to help them quickly catch up with the world's younger generations.

It should be noted that portions of the Chinese tourist demographic are already part of the later generations, and that much of this difference is split along class lines. In the case of the Liquid Generation, this is more often the domain of the young and those living in urban areas. This means that the generations also tie directly into spending ability and associated spending habits. The Consumer Crowd may be lucrative for its sheer size<sup>59</sup> but, as one infographic report noted, the typical Chinese person is the stingiest buyer in the world.<sup>60</sup> In higher classes, individuals are more willing, even eager, to spend their money on something they value. As for the younger generations, despite having low overall incomes, they tend to seek out items and experiences that they value for qualities such as authenticity and uniqueness. Remember also that the ideal for citizens is to move up in class and many will attain this within their lifetime. In fact, it is the very Consumer Crowd itself that is learning and becoming the Savvy Traveller generation, since the generational shifts are so compressed that change is happening far more quickly in China than it did elsewhere in the world. One can conclude that despite the Consumer Crowd being large in size, it's the later generations that have greater spending desire for new forms of travel, especially if they can also integrate experiences that are oriented around health and happiness.

### Types of Hospitality Offerings

The following two subsection describe Types of Hospitality and Types of Tourism. The former is a typology of the hotel offerings created to fulfill tourist demands, the latter is a typology of the tourism markets which drive new offerings (e.g., what motivates their travel, the choice of hotel, the choice of experiences and destinations). The intent of offerings is to keep pace with the demands of their customers. It is important to understand where the AD fits into the spectrum of new types of hospitality being created, also called alternative hospitality types. For example, farmstay is a phenomenon taking hold in many rural areas and there is certainly some cross-over with the AD: the intent of tourists is to 'get away' and experience an immersive rural lifestyle, just as the AD caters to tourists looking for an immersive village lifestyle. The difference is a subtle emphasis on social or environmental activities as well as the ability of the AD to cross into urban territory. Or, in comparing the AD to Airbnb, a frequent question, we can see that while both offer a platform to network multiple spaces into a hospitality offering, the difference lies in the presence of a physical central hotel location. This resolves many issues that have been coming up with Airbnb, such as difficulty in guaranteeing safety or standards of quality for both hosts and guests, and providing a registered hotel entity

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<sup>58</sup> JWU Online, "*Hospitality Trends to Keep an Eye On in 2019*"

<sup>59</sup> World Economic Forum, "*Which Country's Tourists Spend the Most Money*"

<sup>60</sup>

subject to the same taxes and regulations as other hotels. Below is a chart comparing the AD to several types of hospitality, emphasizing the subtle differences and painting a picture of the exact niche the AD fills.

		Defining Characteristic	Key Contrasts	
			Other	AD
Conventional	Hotel	basic travel accommodations		spread of services across community 'pushes' visitors into exploring the community
	Resort	same as hotel but typically larger premises and fuller list of services; for the 'do-nothing' relaxing vacation; hotel is the centerpiece	fully self contained = no reason to leave premises	community life is the centerpiece
Alternative	Boutique Branch	smaller scale, regionalized branding, owned and operated by corporate entity (e.g. Marriot)	vertically integrated	horizontally integrated
	Hostel	shared-room lodging	explicitly budget oriented; often targeting younger travelers	typically more luxurious offerings (related to costs of renovation); potentially compatible
	Farm-Stay	rural location; involves volunteering time towards dily farm tasks	rural; agriculture oriented	village-oriented
	Ecolodge	emphasis on environmentally sound facilities	nature driven (e.g. Jungle Hut)	social interaction and culture driven
	B&B	converted house into hotel; typically historic houses; provides basic hotel services; personal interactions with owner	single house re-adaption	networked buildigns re-adaption
	Sharing Economy (Airbnb, VRBO)	owners volunteer their spaces for short-stay guests using online booking platform	unregulated; frequently at odds with community interests; community & traveler take on full safety risks	regulated as a hotel; in person, centralized management and community workshops mediate host-guest relationship and safety risks

Fig. 21 - Characteristics and contrasts between hotel and AD variants

Expanding further on the hospitality models that respond to the desires of later generations, let's examine all existing models of alternative hospitality for comparison. Why? The premise of this dissertation is that the AD is a particularly relevant type to Chinatown, specifically, as well as a relevant type to the broader issue of cultural resource management as tourism continues to grow and impact host locations, both positively and negatively. However, analyzing the details of each alternative type is important to understand what is working where and when, as well as what is not. Even the AD is under scrutiny here. While it may have been

perfectly fit for its original environment, there is no doubt that tweaks and evolutions of this typology may be necessary to address the broad set of situations.

We begin with conventional types, the basic hotel and the more luxurious, all-encompassing resort. While the basic hotel doesn't have a strong defining characteristic, up to this point they are commonly conceived as a single newly constructed building that provides the essential set of hospitality services. The resort builds on this accommodation for lodging but typically has larger premises and offers a fuller list of services. This type is characterized by the creation of a complete relaxation experience. Relating this back to the proposed types of tourists, The resort is the epitome of an accommodation for the Consumer Crowd. It is defined by seasonal travel times, the search for a "do-nothing" vacation as an escape from the mundane. Premises are commonly self-contained such that there is no reason to engage with any part of the location outside of the resort. Unlike the AD, this belies an obvious disconnect from the organic social life of the place.

Boutique branches of major hotel chains is another new variety of hotel. And while AD are often touted as a boutique hotel, there are yet some subtle but meaningful differences. Once again, the AD is a network rather than a single building. The AD also does not require the hotel management to own the property, although it can. The AD itself can also be owned and operated by a cooperative group of locals, and herein lies the biggest difference: the AD is meant to be a horizontally structured organization whereas a Boutique branch of Marriott is a small-scale manifestation of a vertical organization. By virtue of this organization, large corporate chains can exploit locations for their touristic value with minimal care for the longevity of the local community. The success of an AD, in contrast, is intrinsically tied to the vitality of its host. The relationship is symbiotic.

Hostels are another interesting phenomenon, typified by shared room lodging and budget oriented services. While the existing AD have been geared towards luxury, the networked nature of the AD means that there is nothing preventing an AD from having a hostel among more luxurious offerings. However, hostels themselves are not AD as they do not meet the requirements of networked locations with central management. There is potential for even more substantial cross-over here although it should be noted that part of the reason for most AD becoming luxury offerings is to account for high initial investment costs during the preservation renovation process.

The difference between an ecolodge and an AD is generally the emphasis on environmental sustainability versus social sustainability. Again, there may be a location where an AD can also observe the values of an ecolodge. The concept of ecolodge is abstract enough that it does not exclude the possibility of cross-over.

As for what the Albergo Diffuso is not, this chart is a more specific comparison of existing types of hospitality. This is to provide contrast with some established (resort or hotel) and alternative (farm-stay, B&B, eco-lodge) types of stay. The point is not to reveal shortcomings but to show that the Albergo Diffuso, like all others, has a specific context in which it works best. From this, one can understand the difference between conventional hospitality and alternative hospitality in terms of the values each cater to, with different subtypes fulfilling more specific situations with these values in mind. There is an inherent timeline of evolution tying conventional values to alternative, as the latter are primarily generated in reaction to the consequences of the



former. For instance, the conventional pursuit of paradise as the ideal vacation spot has resulted in the over-use of paradise-related resources. Awareness of such exploitation has caused many tourists to value ecologically sound practices of companies they choose when traveling. Thailand's hospitality industry exhibits this with the widespread popularity of eco-lodging and work-stay arrangements. Whether or not a company legitimately practices better business can be difficult to track, but the intent has clearly created a market sector of its own.<sup>61</sup>

Aside from the official definition, it is important to see the AD in terms of what it is not: conventional tourism, especially not "complete lifestyle" resort tourism. As mentioned before, large-scale and luxury oriented tourism belong to the demands of a certain generation of tourist, the Consumer Crowd. And while that generation will still be around for a bit longer, the impact this type of tourism has had on visited places has proven to be primarily negative. Listed here are the ways in which the Albergo Diffuso is a deliberate improvement on the existing mass-tourism model:

- • Social Benefits
  - »» Low impact on locals: for example, employment in "hotel services" can be provided through local owned and run restaurants so they are not reliant on a central hotel management
  - »» Low separation between visitors and locals
- • Heritage Preservation
  - »» Low impact on the physical village
  - »» Chance to educate the visiting public on the beauty and usefulness of local building techniques
- • Village Longevity
  - »» Brings a tourist economic base to the village
  - »» High impact on rebranding, future marketing of the village as a destination
  - »» Local ownership and locally produced goods keep the economic benefits within the village
  - »» Tourist motive for upgrading utilities and amenities can simultaneously upgrade life for the villagers
- • Environmental Impact
  - »» Reuse of existing structures reduces or eliminates construction waste
  - »» Even new construction should primarily use locally sourced materials, eliminating the carbon footprints of transportation

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<sup>61</sup> Give an example of a company that's definitely good and one that's questionably good

- Continuum of hotel type factors
- Urban - suburban - village - rural - wilderness
  - Minimalist - budget - affordable luxury - high end luxury
  - Number of beds/visitors hosted
  - Total escape - casual retreat - integrated in local fabric - living with locals - actively working for locals
  - Fully accommodated - balance value - basic necessities - bare minimum
  - Level of impact OR direction of impact? (tries not to have any impact, vs active element of urban design vs actively rejuvenates natural environment... etc)
  - Cultural vs environmental attractors

Types of Tourism Markets

The following chart defines a handful of alternative approaches to tourism, each of which have a promising relationship with various market trends, and pulls out the parts of the Albergo Diffuso concept that have similarities. Since the Albergo Diffuso is above all a structured approach to an idea of tourism, its potential is broad and is meant to be widely interpreted each time it meets a new context. Here are some of those possibilities:

[Tourism Type]	Purpose	How Alberghi Diffusi complement
Sustainable	management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems	reuse of existing structures, embedded respect for heritage and reliance on a healthy local community fundamentally define the Albergo Diffuso and lend it potential to fulfill WTO's sustainable tourism goals
Health	for those seeking out alternative health retreats, specialty or traditional techniques and medicines, and a generally healthy environment	an AD with focus on building technique pairs well with a revival of traditional Chinese medicine; can also provide the atmosphere of an upscale spa
Educational	teaching and learning of knowledge and the enhancing of technical competency outside of classroom environment	provide chance to expose the general public, both domestic Chinese visitors and international foreign visitors, to traditional buildings and village lifestyles
Creative	an engaged, authentic experience that promotes an active understanding of the specific cultural features of a place with active participation of travellers in the culture of the host community, through interactive workshops and informal learning experiences	focus on building technique can also be used as a teaching experience for students as well as young artists and architects; branding can build an identity around the craft, culture and architecture of local town
Experiential	"immersion travel": a major market trends in the modern tourism industry; focuses on experiencing a particular place by connecting to its history, people, food and culture	intent of the AD is fundamentally immersive in nature: by 'diffusing' visitors into rooms spread throughout the city, they can feel a part of daily village life

Fig. 22 - Tourism typologies and their AD complement based on vacation style

*“The model of Albergo Diffuso that was developed in those years changed the initial idea (to recover abandoned houses) and put as its primary explicit objective: to convey, and to propose, the possibility of living in the territory, the village life and the local culture, without ignoring facilities and hotel services. The investigation of the phenomenon of tourism and taking into consideration those connected with minor destinations have highlighted and confirmed that the market of the potential users of this type of offer is composed of experienced and demanding customers. These often belong to medium/high social classes, who travel looking for less crowded destinations, and relatively less predictable ones.” (Petroccia)*

By definition, purpose oriented tourism differs from the currently conventional destination tourism in that the main focus of marketing extends beyond the iconic views and idea of a place to emphasize what a visitor can do there, to what they might be able to take back. For example, the current focus of tourism in China is to push massive crowds to the main world-recognized monuments. Examples include the Forbidden City, the Great Wall, or the Terracotta Army. The tourist contact with these destinations is generally limited to a guided tour, directed at photo opportunities, and ending in a gift shop selling items that can likely be found at any other monumental tourist destination in China. While historically popular, this experience is neither unique nor personal. Instead of fabricated and pre-packaged experiences, the AD approach of orienting towards a specific purpose can provide the visitor with more interaction with the soul of a place and aims to leave them with less tangible but more genuine souvenirs.

*“The intention of the Albergo Diffuso is to invite visitors to truly inhabit a village for a short while, bringing them in direct contact with the local lifestyle. This is not tailored for a quick bus tour with short stops, limited interaction, quick souvenir shopping and a comfortable but ubiquitous hotel style. For example, if the purpose of a visit revolves around food, then everything should slow down to allow a visitor to fully indulge in the culinary experience of that specific place. From waking in the morning and eating a local breakfast to perhaps taking a few lessons in local dishes to shopping for food in the local market, one can take back more stories and experiences, skills even, that a typical bus tour simply would not have allowed. And each town can have its own unique offering of a similar product and won't have to compete with basic quantity and price.”*

This relates to a previous point made about the other trends in China, specifically a revival of heritage, craft, traditional knowledge along with the surge of interest in health products and services. The heritage movement has obviously been fully supported by the government and the next positive step involves bringing the public in direct contact with this heritage, in the form of villages. In terms of craft, this a multi-faceted revival supported as much by a young generation of artists reconnecting with the older generations of craftsmen as it is a search by the rising middle classes for luxury and quality in the products they buy. This dovetails with renewed interest in traditional practices [how]. Many marketers in China are finding that the Chinese people put more trust in the authority of traditional knowledge.

In one article focusing on the recent success of L'Oreal Paris in China, the author wrote that conventional luxury brand marketing, focusing on beautiful women and motivational phrases, failed to bring

Chinese customers<sup>62</sup>. Instead, L’Oreal Paris changed their marketing posters from featuring Fan BingBing to featuring close-ups of herbal elements supposedly contained in the product and sales skyrocketed. This also relates to a growing health focus. The motivations are partly natural, with consumers developing a sensibility for products that are good for them, but are also clearly going to become even stronger with the growing understanding of the magnitude of environmental quality problems in China. Not only do villages have the advantage of being naturally free from intense urban traffic pollution, they can actively promote sustainable practices locally. This is why the greatest benefit of the Albergo Diffuso is an established set of standards that ensure sustainable business practices alongside baseline quality.

- Generations relevant in chinatown
  - a. Hawai’i’s primary traveler type seems to be 2nd/3rd generation, as evidenced by waikiki
  - b. Would even note the recent facelift waikiki is ongoing relates to the gradual shift towards the savvy traveler type who expects and is willing to pay for “nice” over mere convenience
  - c. Tourist group of note that is not mentioned in his theory: business travel
  - d. Target markets:
    - i. Japanese tourist: looking for luxury and historical connection
    - ii. Travelling Professional: looking for hip/comfortable/accessible to downtown accommodation options
    - iii. Hostellers: can support the art/social scene
    - iv. Chinese tourists: new and most likely attracted to waikiki, but some may trickle in for prestige/historical connection reasons

### 3.1.2 Impact of Touristic Development

#### Economic Benefits<sup>63</sup>

According to David J Telfer in his essay “The Evolution of Tourism and development Theory”, the relationship between tourism and development has seen four major paradigms: modernization, dependency, economic neoliberalism, and alternative approaches.<sup>64</sup> These have arisen sequentially, based economic changes over time, but different parts of the world still operate in earlier paradigms, as changes may be yet to come within their own society and as the benefits and failings of each continue to refine the different paradigms. With these paradigms in mind, the perspective this thesis emphasizes is that each subsequent stage should not replace the priorities of the last. Rather, it should build upon any positive aspects held by the prior stage. Because our world is becoming more complex, not less, our solutions should reflect the continuity of issues.

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<sup>62</sup> INSEAD, Business School for the World, “L’Oreal in China: Marketing Strategies for Turning Around Chinese Luxury Cosmetic Brand Yue Sai”

<sup>63</sup> The new orleans case from D Spencer, what else?

<sup>64</sup> David J Telfer “*The Evolution of Tourism and development Theory*”

*Fig. 23 - evolution of tourism development paradigms*

At its simplest, the economic benefits of tourism comes from nature of money coming in from outside the region, through tourists, by the mere provision of the place itself. All additional goods and services provided are a bid to attract and maintain the attention of a non-local audience and get them to leave as much money in the region as possible. A great example is the economy of Hawai'i, of which approximately 20% is based on tourism.<sup>65</sup> This \$14 billion dollar industry may be lucrative, but some criticisms come from the inherent instability of the industry. Since leisure travel is not a necessity, when other parts of the world face hard financial times or if the airfare industry is affected, activities like a Hawai'i vacation are likely to be cut first. This was seen in the Hawai'i economy after the 911 terrorist attacks and during America's housing crisis. Despite the setback, however, Hawai'i tourism has recovered and there is no question that there is opportunity

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<sup>65</sup> <https://www.hawaii tourism authority.org/research/annual-visitor-research-reports/>

in utilizing “free” resources to attract outside money, such as the beautiful beaches and weather. In addition to direct profits from visitor stays, there is also revenue in “backward linkages”, a term in the hospitality industry for the indirect expenditures tourists make on food, activities, gifts, modes of travel, and so on. Especially in this case, a successful albergo diffuso could potentially inspire a boom in preservation-for-profit and, hopefully, boost interest in sourcing materials locally and designing with maximum regional consideration.

Other challenges involve the reality of where money stays when it comes to tourism corporations, like Marriot or Hilton, which benefit from a flow of tourists through an area but partially direct that money up the corporate chain. It is also a common claim that tourism provides local jobs, although this does not account for the common practice of favoring outsiders for management positions over locals. From a corporate perspective, this gives the company greater control of quality checks and maintaining a consistent global brand. From the regional perspective however, this limits the training of locals in levels of management that could translate to locally owned and run businesses. It is evident that organizational structures of tourist offerings can impact who really benefits from a region’s cultural capital. This is where the Albergo Diffuso concept has the potential to increase benefits to a locality.

Evident in the evolution of tourist development is a constant criticism of the past paradigms with a shift of priority. And certainly, the premise of the scattered Alternative Approaches is simply to address the unaddressed, fulfill what business forgot or didn’t care about. As seen in Telfer’s chart, the issues range from concerns about the environment, gender equality, future generations and a long-term mindset, to treatment and autonomy of ethnic minorities. Tourism failed to achieve the lasting positive development that it had promised with models of hospitality that refined economic efficiency without addressing the holistic set of issues which would heal pre-existing social or environmental concerns. A better way to view these shortcomings is to recognize that they revealed underlying issues that, once visible, could be adequately addressed. These paradigms of development, from mere tool of modernization or economic generator to potential holistic catalyst, build on each other. Tourism still remains the most direct form of exchange, bringing one country’s people in contact with another. As such, it is also fertile ground for cultural exchange or, better yet, culture-based economy. So despite the negative consequences of the largest phase, tourism does indeed still have the potential to substantially benefit local economies as long as it can adequately complexify: involve more parties than just investors, address more issues than short-term tourist demand, and provide more exchangeable substance than temporary items such as souvenirs and photo ops.

Sharing-economy short-stay has emerged as an alternative to conventional hospitality and spread rapidly, and there are both positive and negative consequences. Positives include the overall increase in available beds for tourists without investing any money into new construction. The profits also go directly to residents as hosts, instead of as employees of a hotel. This also means that residents have some personal, if small, control over the identity and stories told about them as a population. On the other hand, there are also negative side-effects that have only recently begun to be addressed. By nature, sharing-economy platforms, such as Airbnb or VRBO, increase accessibility for individuals to participate in industries that would normally require much larger investments, and at the same time this means that the regulations large initiatives such as a new Hilton hotel would be subject to go unheeded. And though accessibility is increased for all, it is people

who have access to more money that derive the most benefit, as in the common case of a property owner who explicitly buys more spaces for the sole purpose of using it as a short-stay venue, without the personal interaction or even the personal stake in the culture of the place. This has led to the phenomenon of entire areas in lucrative places being converted from residential to tourist, without the consent of non-participating neighbors or the wider society, leading to imbalances in community cohesion and weakening cultural continuity. Recently, as of July 2019, new regulations have been adopted regarding the enforcement of unlicensed vacation rentals.

Another impact of tourist activity on an area is the level of integration into resident lifestyle. Conventional tourism is notably seasonal, geared towards holidays and “good weather” retreats. This often leads to disruption of local life, which has its own natural rhythms all year long. The conventional hospitality solution to this issue is separation, and Waikiki is a great example. By zoning hospitality into a physically separated peninsula, the bulk of tourism activity is contained, regardless of season. The goal of the AD, on the other hand, is to incite lower levels of tourism all year round such that it can be integrated into residential lifestyles.

*Fig. 24 - seasonal tourism vs possible year-round tourism when the focus is the daily life*

Another shift from convention is the possibility of value co-creation between residents and tourists. Some AD have attempted to establish ways for visitors to participate in the harvest of commodities such as grapes and olives and the perpetuation of knowledge through workshops.

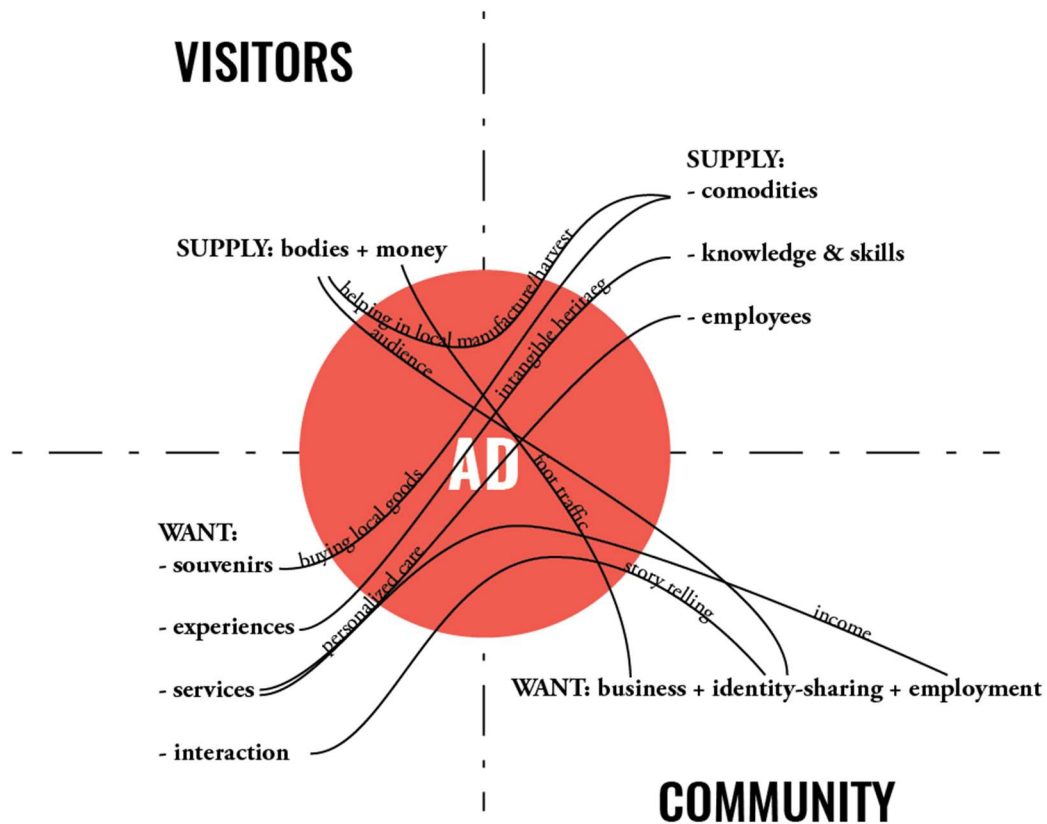


Fig. 25 - two-way value relationships between visitors and community

Challenges with community integration:

There are a number of challenges recognized in the integration of tourism with community. General resistance to change is common, often the result of insufficient control over change. A lack of awareness of positive benefits or programs intended to offer the community a voice can also perpetuate resistance. Or, if the benefit to the community simply can't be quantified or isn't enough, then a fundamental restructuring needs to be considered to achieve a sense of respect. Benefits might include direct financial gains, local employment, upgrades to infrastructure, celebration of identity and a platform for identity sharing, etc. It is important to actively anticipate issues such as a sense of displacement, increase in crime, increases in cost of living, and the loss of resident-oriented spaces. Given that the AD concept revolves around a healthy thriving host community, the community's needs are the AD needs.

**3.1.3 Authenticity**

The desire for authenticity is part of a broader generational shift. Underlying this is a need for status, involving the idea that high quality is harder to fake. This is especially true of the middle class as a traveler group. Where the newly middle class see the opportunity to travel as a luxury, the more experienced and wealthy among them search for ways to exhibit a refinement of taste, seeking quality and genuine articles as



validation of their increased status. As a result, marketing materials in tourism frequently employ the use of the term “authenticity” regardless of truth. This leads us to the challenge of authenticity.

Who gets the right have authority on authenticity? And what is authenticity really? For the purpose of this dissertation, we will use the following definitions to discuss the authenticity, as implied by the AD model. In theory, authenticity is touted as added value but the price of being duped is a big no-no in an economy based on trust. As observed in the essay *Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism*, the layers of misconception surrounding the notion of authenticity are rooted in who is doing the telling. The true story of authenticity is one of power, or empowerment as the case may be. The following if 4 definitions of authenticity, followed by a description of the way each paradigm is upheld in the AD model:

1. Original (“old”)
  - a. “of undisputed origin; genuine.” - google definitions
  - b. Tourism projects which invoke the culturally “authentic” thereby seek to “realize” value and uniqueness in their products through the application of a distance between subject and object that is both spatially and temporally defined. - John Taylor, *Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism*
2. Sincere/Genuine (“traditional” or “primitive”, intent not for commercialization)
  - a. “In “sincere” cultural experiences, where tourists and “actors” are encouraged to “meet half way”, authenticity may be more positively redefined in terms of local values.” - John Taylor, *Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism*
3. Emergent (“generated by internal forces”)
  - a. “This quality in buildings and in towns cannot be made, but only generated, indirectly, by the ordinary actions of the people, just as a flower cannot be made, but only generated from the seed.” -Christopher Alexander, *A Timeless Way of Building*
4. Un-self conscious (created without audience)
  - a. “The sense of place “... does not therefore come from locations, nor from the trivial functions that places serve, nor from the community that occupies it, nor from superficial and mundane experience...The essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centers of human existence.” -Relph, *Place and Placelessness*

The AD & Authenticity:

- Original/Old
  - a. emphasizes historic preservation and historically sensitive development, uses “historicism” in the branding
- Sincere/Genuine
  - a. ideas of an integrated experience embodies both a sense of “togetherness” and the intent for connection over souvenirs
- Emergent
  - a. Concept of co-creation with the community, protection of a continuous living community ensures an element of dynamism and the unexpected
- Un-self conscious
  - a. AD model is self conscious, but horizontality encourages more voices and gives the host community some power over the interpretation of their cultural image

## 3.2 Heritage

### 3.2.1 Intangible vs Tangible, Eastern vs Western approach

#### Conserve, Preserve, Restore

According to the Department of the Interior, which oversees the national standards for registration of historic sites, there are several approaches to consider for a heritage project:<sup>66</sup>

- **Preservation** focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.
- **Rehabilitation** acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.
- **Restoration** depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.
- **Reconstruction** re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.

Not mentioned is Conservation, which entails the least active intervention by merely preventing further deterioration. This is typically a temporary approach before further efforts are decided upon or funded. It is frequently employed in cases where environmental damage threatens the integrity of the site and includes such passive strategies as limiting public access or covering the area from rain, depending on the specific threat. In Hawai'i the State Historic Preservation Department (SHPD) and the Historic Hawai'i Foundation represent the major preservation authorities. The AD falls between the preservation and restoration ends of the spectrum, intending for minimal intervention to allow the locations unselfconscious identity to be on display

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments.htm>

while allowing for specific upgrades relating to the adapted use, such as new restroom facilities, and wifi and other upgraded utilities.

As you can see in the above description of 4 approaches, there is a focus on the tangible aspects of heritage, the buildings and artifacts. What is not mentioned here is the intangible heritage that also makes up the ineffable uniqueness of a place. In 2003, UNESCO began recognizing the significance of intangible heritage by hosting a convention that created a list of recognized elements. Since then, efforts to safeguard intangible heritage practices have gained increased awareness and funding. Intangible heritage involves heritage that is preserved through repetition, such as rituals or skills or performances. Examples range from regional dialects; methods of craftsmanship in textiles, construction, and so on; unique rituals; oral tradition; festivals and holidays; food production and cooking styles; and more.

A key trait of the Albergo Diffuso is its natural safeguarding of local traditions, which is achieved in a number of ways. During the initial stages of an AD, renovation techniques preferentially involve hiring local craftsmen for construction using traditional building techniques and locally sourced materials. In terms of the official characteristics, the safeguarding of intangible heritage is only a subtext, but it is a significant category: the necessity of a living host community. This keeps the AD abstract enough that the primary production and dictation of community culture stays in the hands of the community itself. In other ways, an AD explicitly encourages connecting tourists to intangible heritage experiences, listing classes and workshops as hotel experiences. In this sense, an AD's success with intangible heritage preservation is only as good as its relationship with the community. In this way, AD not only preserves the tangible heritage on initial entry, but continues to support intangible heritage by integrating it into its offering as a hospitality service. Depending on the craft, this can even be converted into a sellable experience once the AD is open to travelers. For example, the Garfagnana region of Italy was known historically for weaving with flax and using certain dyes and patterns. The Sextantio AD revived the practice by employing local craftsmen to create pieces used in the decoration of hotel rooms and then offered classes for tourists to learn and create pieces for themselves. Pieces can also be bought as souvenirs. The AD offers the possibility of much more holistic heritage preservation.

### **3.2.2 Heritage Contributes to Economic Growth**

#### Cultural Tourism Industry

As discussed in the tourism section above, there are whole categories of types of tourism, one of which is Heritage Tourism and, more recently, Cultural Tourism. In recognizing that a substantial number of tourists may seek out travel itinerary with the specific intention of visiting heritage sites, it can be said that there is a market for heritage which pays quite a bit along the way. For example, a report by Europa Nostra in 2017 was conducted to show how big this market really is and the factors that drive it, as well as case study examples of locations that have seen economic growth as a result.

#### Funding Relationship between Heritage & Tourism

Where the Europa Nostra report established firm evidence that the tourism market around heritage is lucrative, it is important to understand other beneficial relationships in heritage touristic development, as well as acknowledge some challenges that should be met with open inquiry. On the positive side, there are many non-private sources of funding for preservation available from governmental agencies, such as the U.S. Department of the Interior which sets the standards for heritage conservation approaches and registration for sites, as well as non-profit agencies, such as DOCOMOMO which can provide documentation and support awareness in the community during projects. Such sources of funding and support can help new development projects secure initial funds, which is very important since the major hurdle to preservation projects is that early stages of a project require high investment before it can begin generating its own income. This hurdle frequently prevents developers from taking interest, but as seen in Europe, viewing the long term sustainability gains, including economic growth, can push governments to be more supportive of private endeavors. Alternatively, the possibility of eventual economic gain will hopefully drive private investors and developers to view heritage projects as worth the initial hassle.

Conversely, it is important to keep in mind that money and ownership translates to power. Despite the obvious mutual gain from public-private partnerships in heritage preservation, it should be openly discussed that public and private values don't always align perfectly. If at any point values diverge, ownership speaks volumes in the decision making process. As we saw in the original AD by Sextantio, the entrepreneur Daniel Khilgren bought all of the properties that are now part of the Albergo Diffuso. This may have worked in that particular situation, since ownership of these properties was seen as a burden by the prior owners. In a case like Chinatown, however, and potentially even in the long term view of Sextantio, allowing hotel ownership to break the continuity of community ownership in a district may have negative consequences in terms of the voice the community has over its identity, possibly even its existence. The hope with a model such as the AD which directly promotes the unique culture of its location is that the value of tourism ends when the culture ends, thus burdening the AD with the responsibility to maintain the holistic vitality of its host.

## 3.3 Urbanism

### **3.3.1 Inevitability of Urbanization and accompanying issues**

#### Pattern of Development

Developers Arrive - Urbanization begins initially with a heavy concentration of economic activities and wealth within a few urban centers, which creates a stark contrast to the relative economic stagnation and lower average incomes of peripheral neighborhoods<sup>67</sup>. This can contribute to issues of poverty even with healthy average urban income. When looking to develop an area, developers will look for easy access to capital and labor, as well as specialized needs such as financial, legal, or technical support services. The requisite spatial concentration of economic activity required to support development makes modern industry a vital component to development, and can show why Urbanization cannot occur in a rural or other low-density area.

Understanding the requisite environment of a developer to begin urbanization can allow us to anticipate where modernization at the expense of culture might occur. Where are historical neighborhoods also located adjacent to business districts or new construction? With this initial knowledge we can act to protect potential AD sites that are at risk.

Raze the village - Unless interrupted, or combined into a process of preservation, urbanization projects will then undergo the next required phase of work, which is to demolish the structures or even infrastructure that is now deemed unnecessary or not profitable. This not only erases the potential of using existing structures as a foundation for AD style cultural preservation, but often simplifies the character of a neighborhood generally.

Common issues with this phase in development include people being displaced (through raised rents or being bought out) and a loss of diversity. This loss can extend beyond the simplification of services and result in a reduction of cultural complexity as well. Without a system of protecting or integrating the so-called “mom and pop” stores or other buildings which have contributed to the fabric of the community, such characteristics tend to be lost in the economic reset of the neighborhood required to begin developing. These effects are felt more over time, as a community begins to feel the loss that accompanies development.

The Hilton - The final step in development can be categorized as the Hilton. A finished, comprehensive project in which all elements of a neighborhood or district are planned to work together as a coherent whole. This can be accomplished once the process of razing has created a blank template for the development project. In some instances, such as the Kaka’ako development which occurred in Honolulu near the business district, original buildings are reused or simply upgraded with new art or amenities. While such repurposing can maintain a portion of the original structures of a neighborhood, the process of razing often completes its task financially if not physically. A recognizable structure may remain, but increased costs or related hardships have pushed the original owners, and their contributions to the neighborhood, out.

### **3.3.2 Tourist Use Spaces as a Layer of Spatial Type in the City**

While it is easy to consider a city as a single large area with a few prominent neighborhoods, the truth is far more complex. Even a small city is made of a rich tapestry of different functional spaces, specialized areas, places of living, work, leisure, arts, transportation, to name but a few. In the context of an AD, the experience of space will play a key role in the experience of the tourist. Where are they during their stay? How are they being exposed to the preserved cultural acts or historical significance of the district? Can this be done

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<sup>67</sup> Urbanization: Patterns and Policies, p.73

in a way that enables a neighborhood to remain solvent while also retaining its character? The study of space is crucial, and below I have listed a few of the most prominent types of space experienced in an AD or typical city.

**Public** - Public areas within a district are simply any area where a person may be at a typical time of day. Parks, walkways, stores, restaurants. The places we inhabit in public on any given day. These areas can expand temporarily as well, such as with the holding of events. When a street or streets are closed down for holidays or a cultural festival, the public space often bleeds onto and subsumes streets, greatly increasing the pedestrian area of a neighborhood. While temporary, it is one of the maximal ways in which public space may be utilized. It should be noted that this definition and others can blend together or shift gently between categories depending on time of day, culture, season, or other variables. Perhaps the defining aspect of public space is that it is a place that is what we need it to be, for whatever time we require it. Then on to a new function.

An enormous amount of an AD can fall under the label of Public Space. This is due to the fact that aside from the room being rented and a potential few other private areas, you are simply in a city enjoying its public places as any other resident or tourist. These may be experienced differently when the following types of spaces are experienced by a tourist or other transient visitors.

**Invitation Only** - Invitation only spaces are those that are available to the general public but with a caveat. The restrictions on Invitation Only spaces are exceptionally varied, but can be pared down to access restricted by notoriety, money, or class. A restaurant which requires reservations and a dress code, any store with a gentleman watching the door, or something as simple as a guest only area within a condo. These areas can be construed as public areas, in that they are that, but with a limited and select crowd. A private garden may act in many of the same ways as a public park, but on a smaller and often far more controlled scale. Private spaces are controlled primarily by a private organization, as opposed to the city or county with regards to a public space.

An AD could be considered an invitation only space for several reasons. The first being that one may simply not know the experience or space exists at all barring an invitation being created, or rather a booking. An AD exists as a part of the local community and is often indistinguishable, if a person is to exist in the space and experience the offerings of that business or culture, it will require an invitation. The management of these invited incursions balanced against the integrity of the preserved place is a primary concern of anyone running an AD. This also underscores why they should be locally managed; there is far less chance of cultural degradation through tourism or development when a business is placed in the hands of those living in the affected area.

**The Voyeur** - This space is seen in several different areas, as it can exist under several conditions. Perhaps the most common voyeur space is that of a cafe or public seating. One of the primary uses for public space are areas within which anyone may engage in people watching. Balconies, events, or even the sidewalk may function as a voyeur space for those who simply use the area to engage in that activity. Perhaps the oldest past-time of humans is the act of watching each other, and public space should include provisions to allow the existence of the Voyeur.

Within the AD setting, this can also be used to describe the experiences being purchased by a transient tourist. The workings of a shop or factory making regionally famous goods could be a voyeuristic space for transient residents paying for the privilege of the experience. Similarly, an experience that allows one to exist within a local culture as if they themselves were raised there can be classed as a voyeur. Annual events, ceremonies, or preserved and living historical districts that immerse a visitor in the genuine life of the people within a culture. This is perhaps the fundamental purpose of an AD; not solely the preservation of history and culture, but the continued expression and experience of it. When done well, an AD may help an historical district carry on through the use of voyeuristic tourism.

Forbidden - Forbidden space exists in a typical city in the world of unseen vice or corruption. While rarely advertised, every city has areas of gambling, prostitution, and assorted dirty deals that occur outside of the regulation of the city and government. While some cities, or indeed countries, choose to legalize and then monetize these spaces, they can never be fully controlled and will always offer some forbidden experience for who know where to find them.

Within the context of an AD, this definition can take on something slightly less illegal and much more intimate. Beyond the idea of a space as an invitation or voyeur space, there may be events that can more aptly be described as forbidden. Secrets of manufacture within an old world culture, the telling of a rich history that has remained verbal throughout time, events known only to those who have spent their lives in this place. Unlike the typical hard-to-find place in a regular city that would be classified as forbidden, within an AD a forbidden place can be created by experience, not just location. By definition, these spaces cannot be bought, but it is possible, and alluring, that a visitor to an AD who is sufficiently folded into the living culture may find them. The sense of adventure that comes from visiting a wild place, not a resort, can be a strong attraction for many. The existence of the forbidden, in story or on site, is something that an AD can provide far more genuinely than a hotel experience.

### **3.3.3 Gentrification**

A major concern with the Albergo Diffuso model is that it strongly resembles the process of gentrification that affects many downtowns across America. In order to understand whether or not an AD would be a beneficial addition to an urban district such as Chinatown, it becomes important to understand gentrification, abstractly, and AD's contribution to it.

First of all, I discovered that there isn't an exact definition of gentrification by all. In fact, some have proposed that there are variations, such as soft and hard gentrification.<sup>68</sup> In this categorization, hard gentrification refers to the archetypal situation, where rent prices rise until the current residents simply cannot afford to stay and new, richer residents move in. The most common solution to this is to impose rent control in landlords. But even despite this, soft gentrification can set in. This variation is when the uses of support spaces changes such that an area no longer accommodates the older residents and they elect to move away because daily life becomes more difficult. Examples are a small grocery being replaced by boutique retail souvenirs or a laundromat being replaced by a high-end French restaurant. This becomes harder to regulate

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<sup>68</sup> Reseau Veille Tourisme, "*Albergo Diffuso: To Develop the Accommodation Offer Differently*"

since the problem is a holistic issue regarding the overall livability of a neighborhood for a particular demographic. Limitations on businesses and landlords from improving and evolving may become unethical, by preventing someone from opportunity, or even damaging to overall growth. The result is stagnation, which may keep a district in stasis; good from a heritage preservation point of view but detrimental to the community vivacity. This is the story of Chinatown, Honolulu, where imposition of district standards has made it overly costly for change and, subsequently, economic growth. Given this relationship, historic districts become particularly vulnerable to gentrification. Preservation initiatives increase the initial cost for renovations, which only outside investors can afford, thus the resulting adaptive reuse is aimed toward a richer demographic of visitors who, similarly to the generations of tourists, have cultivated an appreciation for preservation. What is missing in this model of evolution that has pervaded downtowns is the concept of intangible heritage and a living host community that actively preserves said heritage through daily life. This is where the AD has an opportunity to add value.

### 3.4 Cultural Sustainability

“The orientations of this model are consistent with the values of sustainable development in several ways: Valuing the local culture: visitors choose this type of accommodation among others to live an authentic local experience. Stimulate the economy of the environment: the implementation of a diffuse albergo favors the participation of one or more owners under a generally cooperative model and enhances the development of small businesses in traditional sectors such as crafts and restoration. Preserve the history of the neighborhood by preserving the existing buildings and sometimes offering them a second vocation. Limit the environmental damage that could be caused by the construction of new buildings.”<sup>69</sup>

“Generally, both from the point of view of initial investments and with regard to management charges, the Albergo Diffuso has on average higher costs than those determined by the management of a traditional hotel. Despite this, however, the benefits it can bring to the territory are considerable: enhancing the existing real estate assets; enhancement of cultural heritage and local traditions; revitalization of local production and commercial activities; recovery of otherwise underused resources, etc.”<sup>70</sup>

These benefits have enabled the model to obtain the "sustainable innovation" award from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which recognizes its sustainability under four fundamental aspects:

- 1- environmental: not providing new buildings, but recovering existing ones, it does not disfigure the landscape;
- 2- institutional: provides a development model that involves local actors, giving them the possibility of involvement and cooperation for participation in a project of common interest;
- 3- social: it can be applied to locations outside the most frequented circuits, thus allowing the revaluation of otherwise neglected communities;

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<sup>69</sup> Réseau Veille Tourisme, “*Albergo Diffuso: To Develop the Accommodation Offer Differently*”

<sup>70</sup> GDA Giancarlo Dall’Ara Consulting and Marketing Projects, “*Report on the Albergo Diffuso (2014)*”



4- economic: it requires and supports a demand attracted by the places and by that particular type of proposal, providing the possibility of exploiting new sources of income.

### **3.4.1 UN SDGs: Specific Goals Relevant to AD**

*Fig. 26 - snapshot of all goals and subgoals which are relevant to the AD, through mentions of tourism, heritage, and cooperative public-private endeavors*

### 3.4.2 AD Sustainable Innovation Award, UNDP

These benefits have enabled the model to obtain the "**sustainable innovation**" award from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which recognizes its sustainability under four fundamental aspects:

**1- environmental:** not providing new buildings, but recovering existing ones, it does not disfigure the landscape;

**2- institutional:** provides a development model that involves local actors, giving them the possibility of involvement and cooperation for participation in a project of common interest;

**3- social:** it can be applied to locations outside the most frequented circuits, thus allowing the revaluation of otherwise neglected communities;

**4- economic:** it requires and supports a demand attracted by the places and by that particular type of proposal, providing the possibility of exploiting new sources of income.

"Generally, both from the point of view of initial investments and with regard to management charges, the Albergo Diffuso has on average higher costs than those determined by the management of a traditional hotel. Despite this, however, the benefits it can bring to the territory are considerable: enhancing the existing real estate assets; enhancement of cultural heritage and local traditions; revitalization of local production and commercial activities; recovery of otherwise underused resources, etc." - Dall'Ara

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## Chapter 4. Adapting to Chinatown

In this chapter I propose a process for developing an AD in Chinatown, part of which is conducting an inventory survey of Chinatown's resources, particularly existing empty spaces. The emphasis on choosing a location in an urban area is identifying underused spaces that have the potential to contribute more actively to the local economy and culture. Chinatown meets many of the qualities that strengthen a site's potential to host an *albergo diffuso* and benefit from it. Broadly, Chinatown is a dense, mixed use business district with a high concentration of historic sites. The site analysis maps are intended to orient the reader during examination of the features defining the Chinatown district, leading up to the selection of 4 blocks within the neighborhood for a deeper survey. Identifying the current use of space, particularly the underused spaces, will provide the framework for a final proposed masterplan and several development phases. This chapter will conclude with a summation of the impact an AD style renovation could have on Chinatown, as well as the limits of its influence.

## ITALY

### SITUATION

ghost towns and fading villages as a consequence of urbanization is the defining impetus for creating this new model of revival

### HERITAGE

italy has a large inventory of surviving heritage sites and many are recognized and protected structures, this is partly due to the climate and construction techniques from heavy materials as well as governmental support for heritage conservation

### REGIONAL BRAND

the heritage resources of italian villages is relatively repetitive across the nation, making for a cohesive "italian" branding (food, wine, craftsmanship, etc)

### RESOURCES

many AD in italy showcase not only the tangible heritage of their architecture but the continued production of recognized italian products (cheese, wine, bread, even saffron) and practices of craftsmanship, such as textiles and carpentry

### TERRITORY

rural, isolated villages and sometimes residences spread throughout rural countryside but clearly defined region

### OWNERSHIP

first AD Sextantio, properties were bought up by rich investor Daniele Khilgren, who maintains ownership to this day. Not every AD is cunctucted like this, but it is common.

## CHINATOWN, HONOLULU

## CAN THE AD STILL WORK?

while urbanization has also touched hawaii, the island landscape creates challenges of access, hence I am examining potential in oahu where steady flow of incoming wealthy residents creates an environment of gentrification rather than neglect

the number of recognized heritage sites in hawaii is smaller, partly due to shifting cultural perspective on what counts as heritage, partly due to a hot humid climate, partly due to the political history of change, which contributes to the relatively young age of many landmarks

china town specifically is a site with an identity of diversity and change, with many different waves of immigrant populations and eras of economic use, from manufacturing and trade to vice services and nightlife

china town does not currently have significant production, although there are other unique offerings tied to specific parts of the chinatown story such as chinese apothecaries and tattoo shops that have survived from the WW2 era of occupation

urban districts bleed into each other, may struggle to clearly define its boundaries experientially

china town has a large number of stakeholders in a small area, which could be difficult to manage. however, the narrative of local land ownership turning over to foreign ownership in hawaii has affected whose stories get told and how.

in both scenarios, there exists a threat to regional heritage and sense of place, whether by neglect or through shifted ownership and power dynamics

china town has a high concentration of a specific type of architecture from a specific era in this story of change in hawaii, whose story will add depth to the branding of hawaii as a destination

since the AD roots itself in the idea that each place is unique, this isnt really a hindrance, just an opportunity to tell the story of chinatown! other AD in hawaii may have very different stories to tell

there is an opportunity here to learn about what the community is creating or wants to create

the clear historic district boundary line and subsequent zoning laws have kept the integrity of the district, although some effort should be made to clarify the major points of entry

i believe helping current owners to maintain ownership is the best route, to maintain their stake in how the story of chinatown gets told.

## INITIATIVE

### PUBLIC

A group of locals creates a consortium and delegate the management of the structure to a private subject, e.g. to the cooperative.

or

### PRIVATE

An investor purchases or rents the accommodation units and becomes the manager.

or

### COMMUNITY

Community actors can join together to create festival initiatives on their own, perhaps through cultural centers or a resident cooperative.

## DESIGN

### DESIGN STUDIO

A third party design studio designs the interventions to be made. They may or may not ask for input from the community.

and/or

### WORKSHOPS

Community input can be gathered through workshops and interviews with locals.

## BUILD

### PPP

Public-Private Partnerships can be employed to guarantee a minimum established quality and outcome for the project in the public's interest.

or

### PRIVATE COMPANY

This can be in collaboration with the design studio or a contractor hired by the managing party.

and/or

### VOLUNTEERS

Locals can go hands-on to the construction process, especially in the scope of the project and the skills available.

## OWNERSHIP

### PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

A private business helps in operations at market prices and maintains responsibility until they decide to sell.

or

### INDIVIDUALS

Individuals maintain ownership of their properties and lease out space to the hotel company for a contracted period of time.

## OPERATION

### CO-OP

An "Urban Transformation Company" or similar agency manages the hotel instead of hiring a third party hotel management.

or

### HOTEL MANAGEMENT

The hotel management company takes full control for operational and production activities.

or

### RESIDENTS

There are cases of local residents or families renting their own properties during and willing to the AD.

## FUNDING

### PUBLIC

This may be in the form of loans, grants, and tax credits.

and/or

### PRIVATE INVESTORS

This may be a single rich investor, in the case of Sertantio, privately gathered investors, bank loans, etc.

and/or

### CROWD FUNDING

Community projects utilize crowd funding and can build extensive networks and reach to other regions of the world.

## 4.1 Proposed Process

The guidelines come in two parts: first, a method to identify sites with potential and ranking them by feasibility and value to be used by the initiating entity (this could be a hotel management company looking for new locations or even the regional government, depending on where the impetus comes from), and second, a method of analyzing a chosen location and implementing the AD.

1. Regional Analysis = Site Selection
  - a. Broad Survey + Rank Potential Areas
  - b. Identify Historic & Threatened Sites
  - c. Identify BMX zoning
  - d. Identify competition/unfilled niche
  - e. Experiment Data Collection:
    - i. Archival Data Set
    - ii. Current Data Set
2. Site Analysis = SWOT + Design Proposal
  - a. Identify existing interest (public and private projects that may be an opportunity or threat)
  - b. Establish edges, entry, & center
  - c. Walkability & Max Distance 200m
  - d. Inventory of tangible & intangible resources
  - e. Landmarks & features
  - f. Historic elements
  - g. Practices and festivals
  - h. Empty Spaces
3. Development = Business Proposal + Policies
  - a. Policy analysis > changes needed?
  - b. Target market analysis + surveys > traction
  - c. Character assessment > branding + placemaking
  - d. Owner Outreach > feedback + engagement
  - e. Community Outreach > feedback + engagement
  - f. Detailed floor plans > room layouts, cost and profit assessments
4. Implementation
  - a. Repeat development step to refine as necessary
  - b. Apply for AD certification if desired and/or set up regional institute to play role of ADI
  - c. Experimental Data Collection:
    - i. Observation point set for a period of time after initial founding, 5 or 10 years, perhaps both
    - ii. Analysis provides feedback to refine model

#### 4.1.1 Regional Study

The original AD calls for locations which have historic resources and a minimum of 3 separate empty spaces within 200m of each other to be used in the conversion to hotel space. Within this proposal for urban AD, however, I would like to propose a specific emphasis on threatened historic sites, which included sites that may not even be officially registered but may be found on the wishlist of local heritage organizations. In an urban context, there is also a much higher likelihood of threat from development rather than neglect and abandonment. Additionally, since the state of Hawai'i is not marked by settlements that are clearly defined by hilltops, as in the case of many Italian villages, but may instead bleed together, I propose using zoning maps to identify the business districts for focus on revival. These locations will have existing commercial spaces to support added tourist population and may benefit the communities of Hawai'i by concentrating tourism near business rather than residential areas. This has been an issue since the popularity of Airbnb, VRBO, and other short stay hosting platforms have exacerbated housing issues and community cohesion.

1. Broad Survey
  - a. Identify Historic & Threatened Sites
  - b. Identify BMX districts
  - c. Identify areas with underutilized spaces
2. Rank Potential
  - a. Threatened site that can benefit from the intervention of an AD project have priority
  - b. underused Space Rating: ranks spaces according to their economic contribution to land owners? Is it also ranking the positive contribution to the community?
  - c. Inventory of Cultural Resources
  - d. Type of district (ethnic, art district, historical, # of viable underutilized space, vice districts, etc)
  - e. Viability as hotel: assess supporting amenities, distance to visit destinations, current laws that support or hinder presence of a hotel, etc
  - f. Process/steps to take after viability has been determined: things you can do to make it more viable (upgrading utilities) and then preparation for an incoming UAD (zoning, policy, community awareness, owner outreach, financial projections, etc)

#### 4.1.2 Site Study

1. Site Selection > rank potential (aerial)
  - a. CORE
    - i. Zoning
    - ii. Historic
    - iii. Competition
  - b. BONUS

- i. Ethnic district
    - ii. Arts district
    - iii. Vice district
    - iv. Major Events
- 2. Site Analysis > rank potential (windshield + ground)
  - a. BROAD
    - i. Edges + entry
    - ii. Walkability
    - iii. Openspace
    - iv. Future Dev
  - b. CORE
    - i. Zoning
    - ii. Cultural landmarks/attractions/heritage inventory
    - iii. Local Competition
  - c. BONUS
    - i. Maunakea line
    - ii. Art District/Galleries/Performance Space
    - iii. Vice Summary
    - iv. Events
    - v. 4 blocks
- 3. Space Survey
  - a. underused space survey
  - b. Current Use
  - c. Day Night
  - d. Visitor Local
- 4. Design Proposal
  - a. Masterplan
  - b. Phasing
  - c. Expansion
- 5. Development
  - a. Policy suggestions
  - b. Target market profile
  - c. Character assessment > branding direction
    - i. Team
      - 1. Arch historian
      - 2. Community activist/influencer/figure
      - 3. Tourism branding
    - ii. Can do some community outreach/interviews/workshops



- iii. Pick out large and small gestures that make up “sense of place”
      - 1. This needs a whole section of expansion, can involve physical things as easily as intangible things like behaviors and accents
      - 2. Result: what not to subtract at all costs, what to add more of where possible
  - d. MEP survey > cost assessment
  - e. Walkable Rating > Pedestrian Friendly Upgrade Suggestions (city level)
  - f. Bed layout > profit assessment
  - g. Target market surveys > traction
  - h. Business proposal > investor/partnership outreach
  - i. interviews/workshops > community outreach/feedback
  - j. [feedback loop to refine proposal until step 5]
- 6. Implementation
  - a. Policy changes (if necessary)
  - b. Phase 1
    - i. Renovation
    - ii. MEP feedback
    - iii. Build out
    - iv. Post-occupancy surveys
    - v. Hotel staff feedback
    - vi. Guest feedback
    - vii. Community feedback
  - c. Phase 2, etc
  - d. Academic feedback
    - i. Business sustainability/profitability
    - ii. Alignment with principles
    - iii. Certification (initial and renewal)

## 4.2 Why Chinatown & Other Potential Locations

This section will focus on the chosen location for experimentation: Chinatown, Honolulu. It begins with the criteria for choosing a location and explains why Chinatown will be the primary location for site analysis here, but also lists a handful of other areas around Hawai'i that have potential and would be worth further investigation beyond this work.

*Fig. 27 - Map of the State of Hawai'i showing the capital city of Honolulu*

*Fig. 28 - Map of Oahu showing the region of Honolulu*

*Fig. 29 - Map of Honolulu with Chinatown highlighted with the airport and waikiki shown for reference*

## ZONING

# COMPETITION

## Legend

- Airbnb/VRBO
- Hostel
- Hotels
- Timeshare
- Resort Zoning

## Resort Zones

- Waikiki Zone
- Convention Center
- Kahala Golf & Resort

### District Types that Benefit from AD

Historic districts are an obvious focus in site selection, given the close relationship between AD and heritage traveling. Especially in urban areas where continuous development disrupts continuity with an area's past, heritage sites are a reliable source for cultural capital. As a listed site, they may well have protections in place that reduce potential competition with non-heritage commercial endeavors. If not protected, the recognition and documentation is also valuable to the AD process, which requires that any restoration and renovation efforts be sensitive to the styles of the region. These can also be considered resources for building a narrative about the place that supports the unique brand of each location. However, merely being listed as a heritage site is not enough to be a viable Urban AD, as a successful project will also be defined by connection to living cultural resources and must have a viable urban infrastructure.

#### *Benefits with heritage districts*

- *Existing draw to be adapted, whether by locals or visitors (historic tourism is a thing)*
- *More likely to have underused Space*
- *Preservation efforts can particularly benefit*

Heritage sites come in a variety of sizes and contain all types of spatial layout. Not all historic districts, as recognized by the National Historic Register, are contiguous sites. For example, the Fort Ruger Historic District around Diamond Head is a collection of decommissioned military structures across the Diamond Head crater and surrounding area, with stretches of parkland, commercial, and residential areas between sites.<sup>71</sup> The lack of density can also be at issue, since a key feature of an Urban AD is the presence of underused Space in high enough density, and all within a walkable radius from the chosen central lobby. An Urban AD should feel like a cohesive, integrated experience for visitors. These underused Spaces must also be places that can be used commercially and without causing undue loss of heritage if tourists were allowed to inhabit spaces on the district. For example, the Hawai'i Capital Historic District would be more challenging to integrate tourist rooms as most buildings are in current use as government offices, the sites are separated by large stretches of green space and significant sites such as the Iolani Palace that would be much more sensitive to accidental or intentional harm by tourists.<sup>72</sup> And finally, the district should also be able to support and be supported by the AD by way of restaurants and retail stores, which neither of the prior two examples is able to provide. As such, the characteristic of being a historic district is not enough for a location to be considered as an Urban AD.

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<sup>71</sup> Hawai'i Historic Foundation, "*Fort Ruger Historic District*". Accessed 03/12/2018

<sup>72</sup> Hawai'i Historic Foundation, "*Hawai'i Capital Historic District*". Accessed 03/15/2018

# HISTORIC DISTRICTS

## SITES ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER\*

1. Palm Circle Historic District  
(added 1984 - Honolulu County - #84000104)

2. Foster Botanic Garden  
(added 1993 - Honolulu County - #93000377)

3. Chinatown Historic District  
(added 1973 - Honolulu County - #73000658)

4. Merchant Street Historic District  
(added 1973 - Honolulu County - #73000661)

5. Hawaii Capital Historic District  
(added 1978 - Honolulu County - #78001020)

6. National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific  
(added 1976 - Honolulu County - #76002276)

7. Punahou School Campus  
(added 1972 - Honolulu County - #72000419)

8. Fort Ruger Historic District  
(added 1983 - Honolulu County - #83000249)

## ● THREATENED UNREGISTERED SITES\*\*

\* <https://nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/hi/honolulu/districts.html>

\*\* <https://historichawaii.org/mes/>

Other urban zones that have potential as Urban AD include main streets, ethnic neighborhoods, and art districts. These frequently coincide with historic districts, but may also be found free-standing and still with potential as an Urban AD. Unlike heritage districts, the boundaries of these zones are far more subjective and yet are nonetheless experienced as cohesive places. Main streets are recognizable for their density, commercial zoning, and unique storefronts and street experience. Ethnic neighborhoods contain cues ranging from subtle to flamboyant, in both cases, establishing a presence in their community. Art districts, too, exhibit clues about their culture not just through installations but also frequent event hosting that showcases local artists. All of these result in zones with a distinct look and feel, of walkable size, and an intact host community that may be open to sharing (limited) space with the global public.





# POTENTIAL DISTRICTS

## FACTORS

- Historic District (better protected)
- High Volume Historic Buildings
- Vice District
- Ethnic Neighborhood
- Arts/Culture District
- Commercial District/Main

## Street

- Underutilized Spaces
- Identifiable District Image/

Sense of Place (less important since it can be helped)



Not discussed in depth here is the possibility for more typical AD interventions in the more rural areas of Hawai'i. It is a far less frequent situation in Hawai'i generally since the limited land space and high demand means completely neglected and forgotten villages does not occur. But the fact that Hawai'i is comprised of islands connected primarily by air means that outer islands, what the non-Oahu islands are frequently referred to as, have experienced notably less development than Oahu. There is a good argument for using AD formats of renewal to draw increased tourism to these outer islands.

### 4.3 Existing Interest In Chinatown

The following is a compilation of existing studies and future projects in Chinatown that an AD project could cooperate with towards the common goal of reviving a lively, richly storied version of Chinatown.

#### Rediscovering Chinatown 10 year Strategic Vision

The following pages are excerpts from a study on Chinatown commissioned by the City and County of Honolulu (CCH). Although over a decade old, the stagnation of Chinatown in the meantime means that much of the content is as relevant today as when it was originally published. The 110 page document outlines their methodology for analysis, clarified areas for improvement, and provides tools for prioritizing improvement projects and ranking the qualitative impact they will have. Data was gathered in the form of site visits, resident and visitor interviews and surveys, and research into historical records to establish the overarching narrative of the neighborhood.

*Fig. 30 - summary of the proposed process for urban intervention in Chinatown*

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*Fig. 31 - the report consists of a character assessment, issues assessment, and focus on customer experience*













*Fig. 32 - Flow chart for decision making*

### Chinatown Action Plan

From this, an action plan with shorter term goals was created, involving more detailed studies and community workshops. The most recent accomplishment of the plan was put into effect in 2018: the addition of bump outs to the curbs to protect pedestrian traffic and restrict vehicular traffic, making the experience of public space more pedestrian friendly. These projects have been supported by numerous organizations affiliated with Chinatown. For example, the Chinatown Improvement District (CID) gathered volunteers to implement and maintain small plantings decorating the bump outs, contributing to the beautification goals of the Chinatown Action Plan.

*Fig. 33 - Chinatown action plan*

### SHADE studies and proposals<sup>73</sup>

A more recent contributor to the improvement projects in Chinatown is SHADE, or Sustainable, Humanitarian, Architecture & Design for the Earth. SHADE is a design firm founded by Dean Sakamoto and with the opening of the office in the Kalihi Dole Cannery area, just across the river from Chinatown, the firm began tackling projects supporting the goals of the CCH. The first project was a facade study, cataloging every facade in the Chinatown district and ranking the level of distress, along with a handful of data about property ownership. They've also produced a proposal for developing the promenade along the Nuuanu Stream into a more user friendly and beautiful site, which included a small study and proposal on developing the entry points into Chinatown with gates. So far, none of the projects are built, but they've contributed data and imagery to the conversation about Chinatown improvement.

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<sup>73</sup> Shade, "*Chinatown*"

*Fig. 34 - Vision Map for the future of Chinatown with the coming rail project*

TOD: Transit Oriented Development

With the incoming rail line, called HART, the state of Hawai'i has also embraced a "transit oriented" approach to development. Each rail stop and the surrounding area has been deeply studied by the TOD agency with the intention of creating a framework for development that supports the communities being affected. Chinatown will have one such rail station within its district borders. As a government agency, these studies cover greater a breadth of issues than what an AD will be able to address, such as the shortage of affordable housing in Hawai'i, but provides guidelines for how private enterprise, such as an AD, can integrate into CCH goals. One project already being experimented with in Chinatown is a "mini business lofts" concept, but the location is outside the proposed area of AD so is not anticipated to conflict.

*Fig. 35 - overall rail plan, highlighting the 3-station TOD area involving Chinatown*

*Fig. 36 - closer view of TOD zone and location of rail line*

*Fig. 37 - overview of TOD public space interventions*







*Fig. 38 - Conceptual improvements to the Nuuanu Stream bordering Chinatown*

### Stack renovation of the McCandless building

Some owners in Chinatown have gone ahead with personally funded renovation projects. A notable one is the Stack family's renovation of the McCandless building into business lofts.<sup>74</sup> Allen, sister Lee, and mother Elizabeth Stack renovated their building with the help of a 20% federal tax credit and a low interest city loan, which were aimed at supporting historically sensitive development. The process required thorough documentation of the site's physical state and historical significance.

*Fig. 39 - Mccandless building interior and corner view*

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<sup>74</sup> Honolulu Magazine, "*Chinatown's Latest Revival is Putting it Back on the Map. But Will it Last?*"

### Luxury Lofts

A more recent development project has been the conversion of upstairs spaces of the Yim Quon building into luxury condominiums, begun by Mat D'Ascoli. When they were opened in 2016 they were offered for \$2500/mo. They have been featured in the Chinatown Upstairs summer tour series.

*Fig. 40 - Chinatown loft living*

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<sup>75</sup> Historic Hawai'i Foundation, "*Denby Fawcett: A Rare Chance to Explore Chinatowns Mysterious Lofts*"

### Chinatown Art Lofts

Art at Marks Garage is now a well established art presence in Chinatown. In addition to hosting gallery and performance events in its black box theater, its also manages the Chinatown Art Lofts in the upstairs of the Mendonca block. Artists can apply for residency and live and work in the lofts at a low cost and in return their spaces are opened up to the public for gallery monthly showings every First Friday and other art events such as the annual Fringe Festival.

*Fig. 41 - Arts at Marks Garage maintains the artist lofts and hosts gallery shows and performances*

*Fig. 42 - views of the chinatown art lofts; top: view from hotel st corner; middle: view of courtyard and interior shot of a loft space;  
plan of the upstairs loft units*

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<sup>76</sup> Arts at Marks Garage, “*Chinatown Artist Lofts*”

Joint Outreach Center, Chinatown<sup>77</sup>

Just last year in 2018, a cooperative effort to address homelessness issues in Chinatown led to the opening of the Joint Outreach Center on Hotel Street. They will provide free medical and social services to those in need. Participating organizations: Hawai'i Homeless Healthcare Hui, Institute for Human Services, Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center, Kalihi Palama Health Center, and the Honolulu Police Department.

*Fig. 43 - Joint Outreach Center facade*

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<sup>77</sup> <http://www.honolulupd.org/downloads/HPD2018annualreport.pdf>



Bill 89

In July of this year, 2019, Bill 89 was passed to curb the growth of unregulated vacation rentals in Hawai'i, specifically targeting users of platforms like Airbnb and VRBO. Although sharing economy rentals only account for a small percentage of the total tourist room inventory, it definitely paves the way for alternative offerings to be tried out to bridge the gap between the clear demand for hospitality outside hotel zoning and the issues that plague current short stay platforms, like lack of safety oversight and tax enforcement.

*Fig. 44 - snapshot of Bill 89*

## 4.4 Chinatown Site Analysis

### Walkable Radius & Street Names

The whole of the Chinatown district falls readily into a maximum walkable radius<sup>78</sup> and even with a tighter estimation of walkable distance<sup>79</sup> the 4 block design proposal area is fully encompassed.

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<sup>78</sup> Design Concepts, Community + Landscape Architects, “*Walkability Standards: Test of Common Assumptions*”. Accessed 06/16/2018

<sup>79</sup> College of Environmental Design, “*Reclaiming the Walkable City*”

## WALKABLE RADIUS

centering on a intersection roughly in the center

a standard walkable distance used by planners: 1350' radius (~411m) circle for the MAXIMUM distance a pedestrian is usually willing to walk before they elect to drive. this does not mean all areas in the circle are equally accessib to pedestrians, so further more detailed analysis should be taken to ensure specific walkability. but this can be used to frame the outer boundaries of the hotel

it is my further suggestion that hotel rooms not be positioned closer to the inner circle, which is a 50% reduction of the main circle.

this shows that chinatown is comfortably walkable as a district, but these measurements can also be applied to projects elsewhere

XTRA - real walkability study, see appendix

the 4 block center sits perfectly at the 200m limit, although i propose that urban AD may need more flexible distance depending on the circumstance, such as a linear main street.

## Open Space

The proposed 4 blocks are the most densely built up, and therefore have the richest potential for conversion to hotel space as it is supported by a variety of local businesses that can be treated as amenities. The green spaces in this 4 block area are private rather than public space, but through partnerships with the hotel these could also be made available to hotel guests. Though the 4 blocks are halved by Hotel Street running through the middle, this road is actually a bus-only street. The minimal vehicular traffic and frequent street shutdowns for events actually turns this space into pedestrian friendly public space. Rather than dividing, Hotel Street is a hub of activity. Examples of events that shut down the street: Wednesday Punk Rock nights at Downbeat<sup>80</sup>, monthly First Friday<sup>81</sup> art walks, monthly daytime Art+Flea<sup>82</sup>, weekly poetry slams at The Dragon Upstairs, yearly block parties for major holidays such as New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year, St. Patrick's Day, and more<sup>83</sup>, the annual Hawai'i International Film Festival (HIFF) showings at the Hawai'i Theater<sup>84</sup>, and so many more. This map also connects all parks, plazas, pedestrian-only and bus-only areas under the label pedestrian friendly zone. Note that Fort Street mall is a major pedestrian friendly street although it is not officially part of the Chinatown District.

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<sup>80</sup> Downbeat Diner and Lounge, Events Calendar

<sup>81</sup> First Friday Hawai'i, About

<sup>82</sup> Art + Flea, "*Hawai'i's Favorite Urban Market*"

<sup>83</sup> HiChinatown. Events and Information

<sup>84</sup> Hawai'i Theatre Center, Events

# OPENSOURCE

## Legend

- Open Space + Pedestrian Streets
- Parking
- Private Courtyards
- Landscaped Edges
- Established Trees



### Edge & Entry

The Edge & Entry conditions are important when considering how people will arrive at the site and identify critical points that mark the beginning of the Chinatown District experience. The entry experience is a critical first impression that can define the character of the districts branding, and thus its marketability and sense of place<sup>85</sup>. This is especially important in urban subtypes of AD, where districts bleed into each other without clear definition and urban locations are more likely to have multiple points of entry. The legibility of the district can also be strengthened by creating clear markers of entry into the district, especially important considering the walkability of the district may be skewed if visitors frequently walk beyond the districts boundary without realizing it, leading to a sense of sprawl and a non-cohesive sense of place.

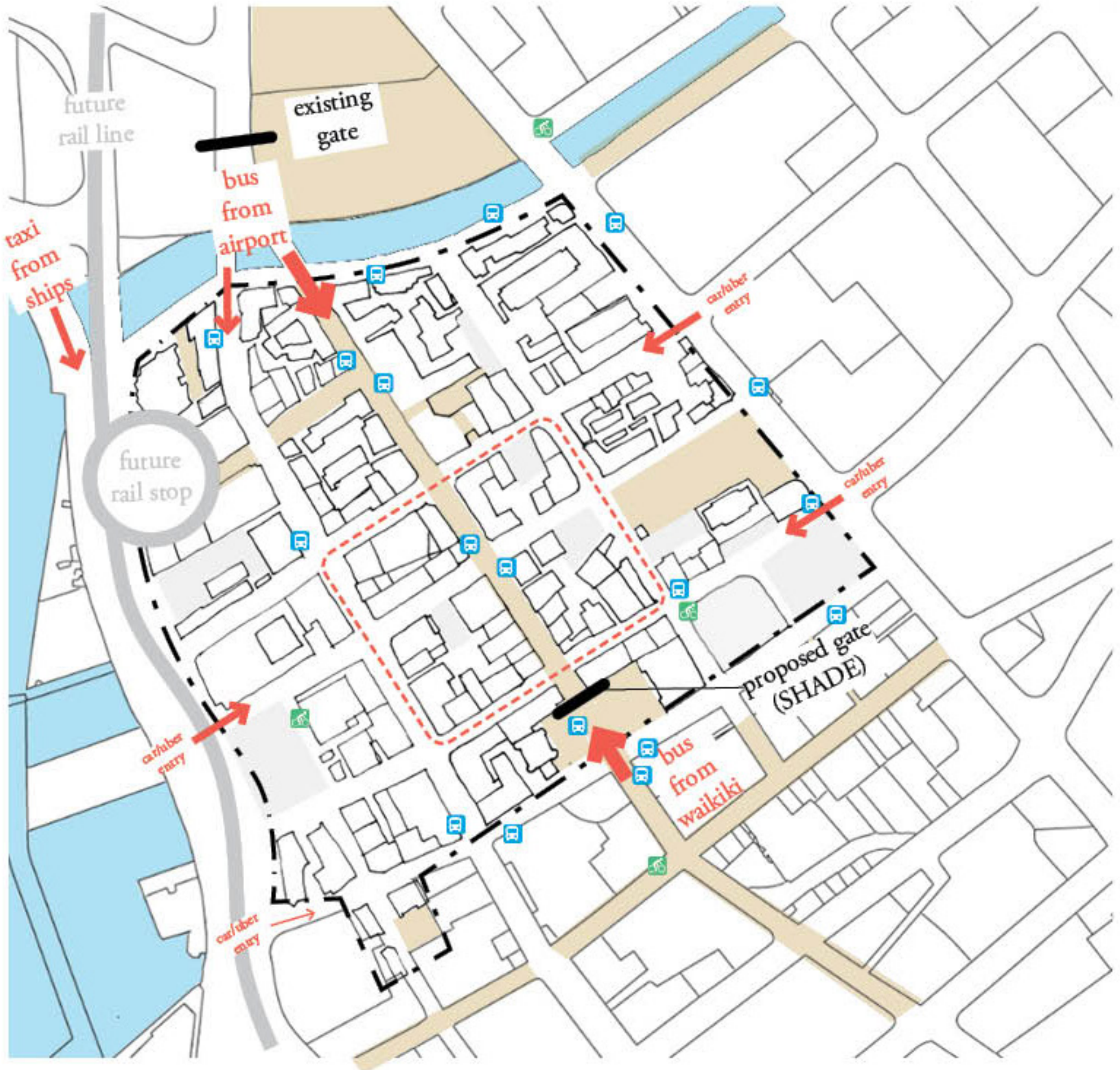
As you can see below, the entry points into chinatown may also change based on the type of transportation a visitor is using, which further correlates to the type of visitor in question. For example, the center street of Chinatown is a bus-only road within the Chinatown district, thus forcing all car traffic to have an entry experience that is entirely different. The parking locations (marked in light grey) end up being the first experience for visitors arriving by car, which are more likely to be people local to Hawai'i and visiting for a few hours. In contrast, for tourists either visiting for the day by taking the bus from Waikiki or even arriving by bus from the airport, they will get to experience the Hotel Street entry points. Given that the goal of a hotel in Chinatown focuses on the experience of tourists, developing their entry experience will be prioritized for this design proposal.

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<sup>85</sup> Neighborhood Planning, “*Urban Design, Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan*”

# ENTRY+EDGE

- Legend
- Open Space + Pedestrian Streets
  - Parking
  - Main District Entry
  - Secondary Entries
  - Entry Gate
  - Historic District
  - Future Rail Line
  - Bus Stop
  - Biki (bikesharing) Station





### Day vs Night Use

A unique aspect to life in Chinatown is that there are clear rhythms of activity throughout the day. As explained by Lynne Matusow, a longtime Chinatown resident and community board member, “There are actually two Chinatowns, maybe three. One starts at 4 a.m. with the markets. Open most of the day, they shut by 5 p.m. Other businesses open at noon and they stay open until later—the restaurants and bars. Later, around eight at night, it’s the clubs.” The Day vs Night use map shows how the central hub of activity shifts between these versions of Chinatown. The daily markets center around Kekaulike Mall, a pedestrian only street. After a noontime lull, the center shifts below Maunakea street where more of the high end restaurants and continue into the late night with clubs and bars, primarily concentrated on Hotel Street. As one contributor for Civil Beat noted, there is an unnamed division of Chinatown along Maunakea Street<sup>86</sup>. While the Diamond Head side of Chinatown is considered a gentrified area by many, with its trendy restaurants and boutique retail shops, north of Maunakea Street has remained primarily untouched by this trend. More shops are well established small businesses aimed at local Honolulu and immigrant communities. This presents both a challenge to integrate disparate communities with competing needs as well as an opportunity to establish precedence of two different but equally rich communities coexisting.

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<sup>86</sup> Honolulu Civil Beat, “*Chinatown Tries to Hang on to Tradition, Even as it Changes*”

## DAY/NIGHT ENERGY & MAUNAKEA LINE

"There are actually two Chinatowns, maybe three. One starts at 4 a.m. with the markets. Open most of the day, they shut by 5 p.m. Other businesses open at noon and they stay open until later—the restaurants and bars. Later, around eight at night, it's the clubs."  
- Lynne Matusaow, Chinatown Resident

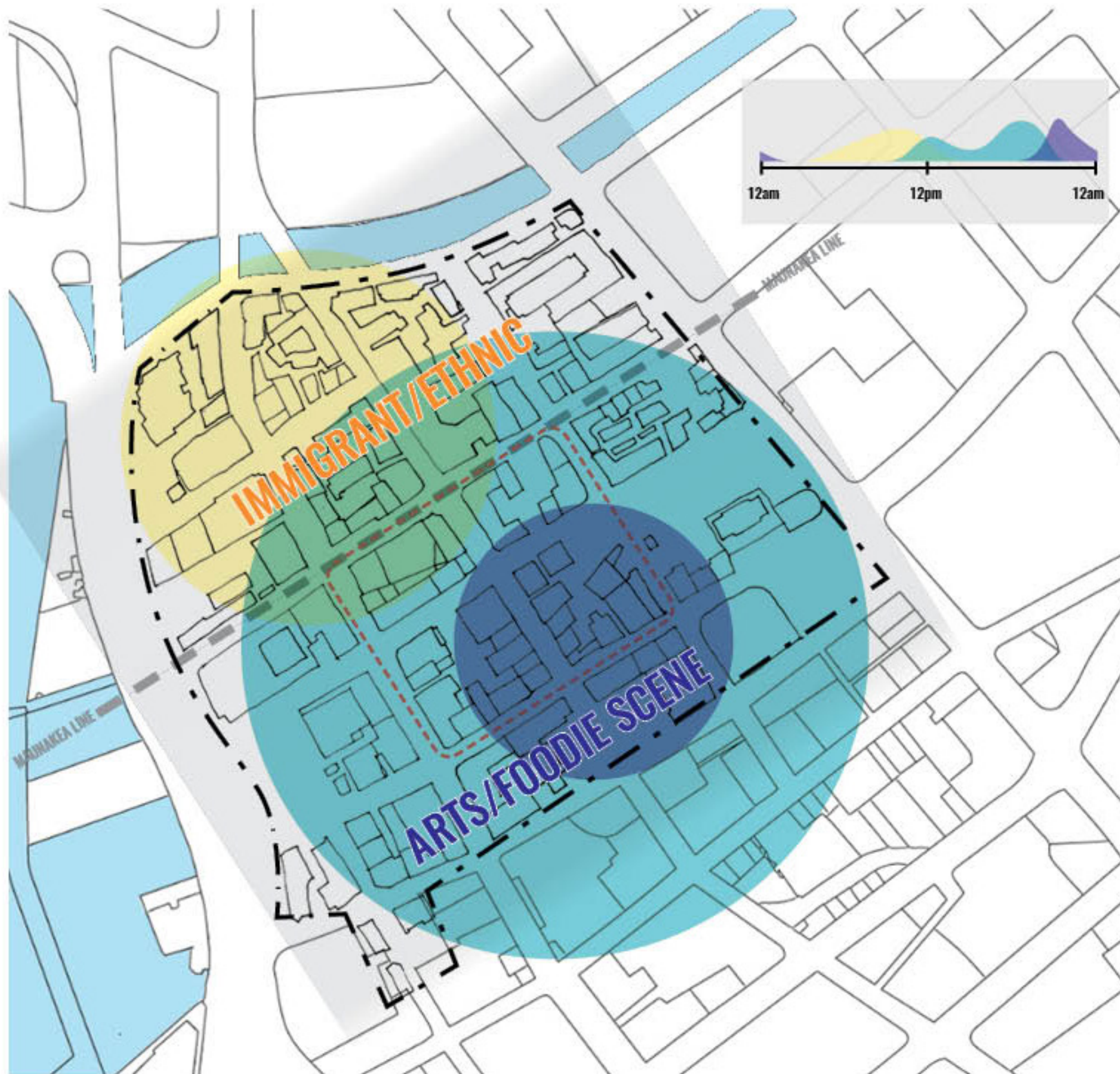
### 3 Busy Times:

-  Morning Market
-  Lunch/Dinner Food Rush
-  Bar/Club Nightlife

### 2 faces of Chinatown:

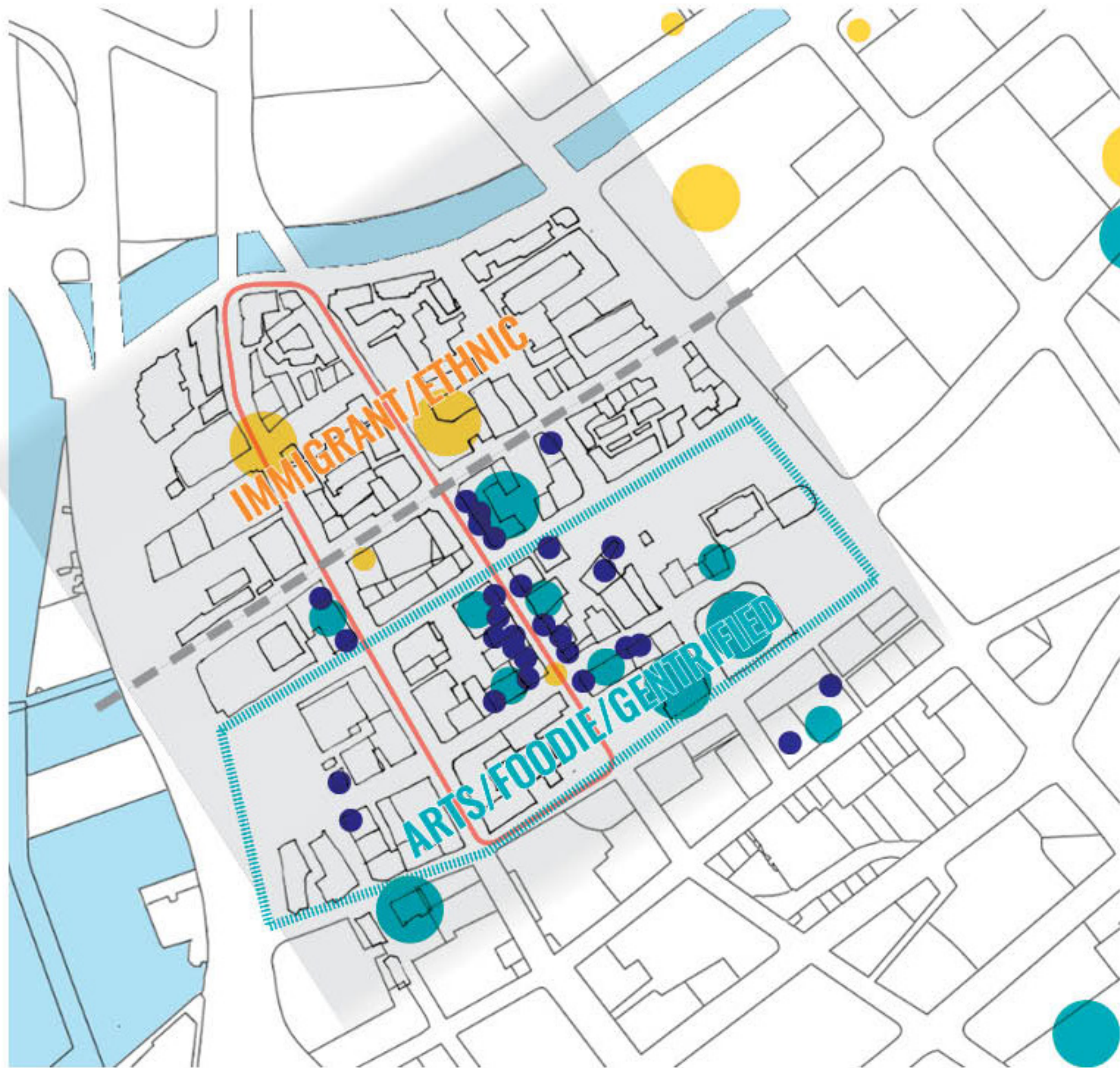
The Immigrant/Ethnic side has more immigrant residents and small businesses, and is most energetic in the early parts of the day.

The Arts/Foodie Scene is considered by some to be gentrifying, in the sense that upper scale restaurants and boutique businesses are growing in number here. The art scene attracts a variety of people, including non-locals.



# MAUNAKEA LINE + ART/FOOD DISTRICT

- Chinese New Year Parade Route
- Major Cultural Landmarks
- Minor Cultural Landmarks
- Major Art Spaces
- Minor Art Spaces
- F&B Nightlife
- Chinatown Art District  
[hosts events like First Fridays and Flea Market]



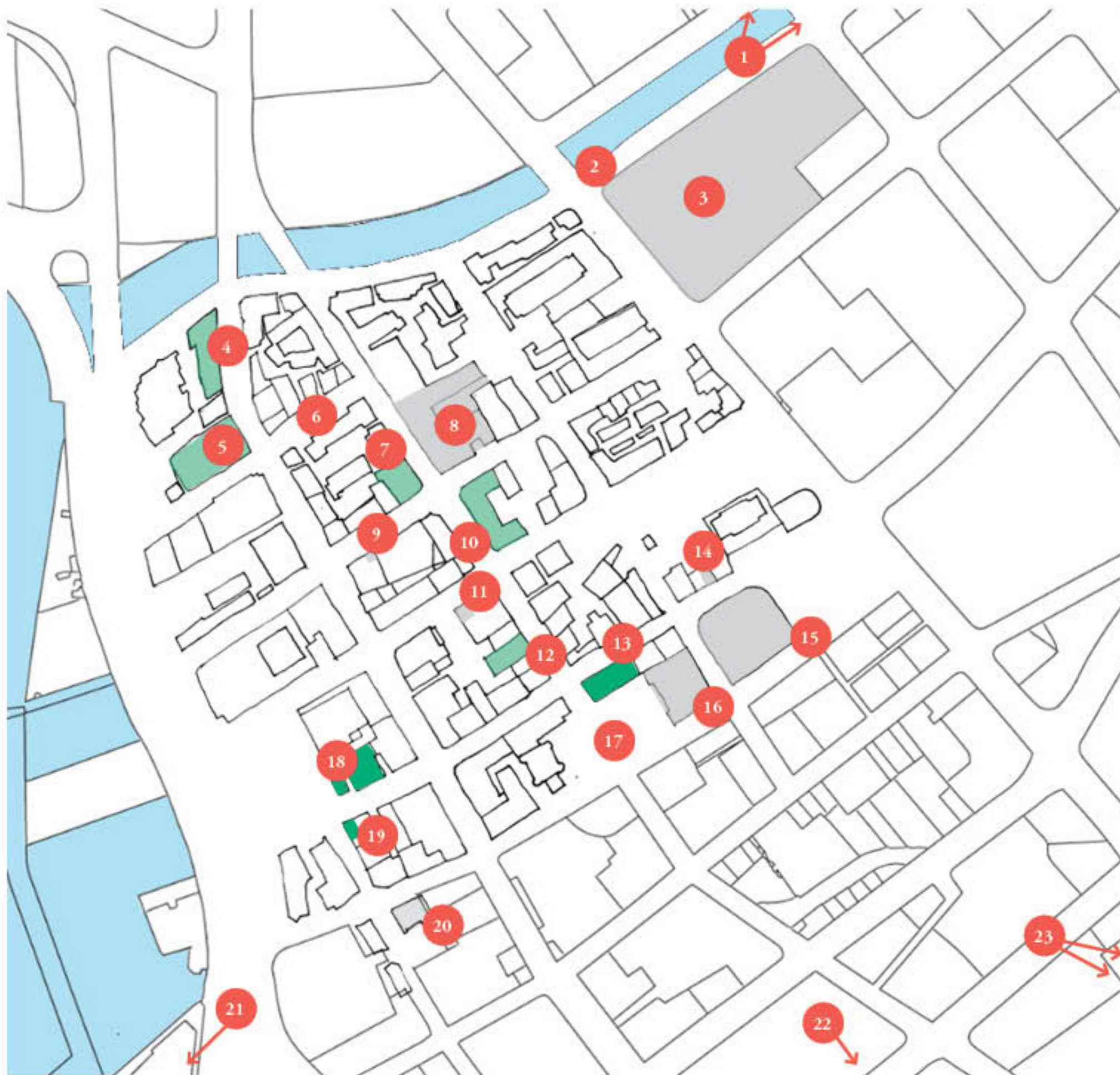
# CULTURAL LANDMARKS

- - predates Fire of 1896
- - predates Fire of 1900
- - post-1900 cultural landmarks

## Cultural Buildings

- 1- Izumo Taishakyo Temple & Lin Hau Temple
- 2- Sun Yat Sen Statue
- 3- Chinatown Cultural Plaza
- 4- Armstrong Building
- 5- Oahu Market
- 6- Kekaulike Mall
- 7- Wo Fat Building
- 8- Maunakea Marketplace
- 9- Lin's Lei Shop
- 10- Chinatown Artist Lofts [Mendonca Block]
- 11- Sailor Jerry Tattoo
- 12- Club Hubba Hubba
- 13- Perry Block
- 14- Pegge Hopper Gallery
- 15- Art at Mark's Garage
- 16- Hawai'i Theater
- 17- Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park
- 18- T.R. Foster Building 1891
- 19- The Royal Saloon 1890
- 20- Kumu Kahau Theater
- 21- Aloha Tower
- 22- Hawai'i Capitol Historic District
- 23- Hawai'i State Art Museum & Honolulu Museum of Art

Not Shown - rumored underground network of opium dens or tunnels and such, that would be a very interesting layer that would be important to the process of fully developing chinatown, but is so specific to chinatown its not necessary applicable to other locations and therefore was not pursued in this diss



### Potential Competition In Chinatown

Though no hotel currently exists in Chinatown, the area does have one hotel in the nearby downtown district. The Aston At The Executive Center is the singular currently operating hotel just outside the boundary of the Chinatown historic district. This combination hotel and apartment building primarily serves traveling professionals who have business in Downtown Honolulu. However, much could be done to better serve that demographic. One working professional noted that her clients frequently requested to be placed in Waikiki, despite the greater travel distance, than stay at the Aston. In addition, through a conversation with a hotel representative I learned that management regularly updates the ratio of hotel to apartment to be in balance with demand and that the balance has notably shifted to become primarily apartments in recent years. They also noted frequent complaints from both short- and long-stay tenants about negative interactions between the two groups. This speaks to an unmet demand for more appropriate hospitality accommodations.

While nothing yet exists to fully meet this need, there are projects, begun and proposed, that aim at addressing this issue. As of 2018, a conventional hotel has been proposed in the Wo Fat building at the heart of Chinatown. Although this poses direct competition as a similar business type in close proximity, there are many ways in which these two hotels could potentially complement, rather than disrupt, each other's mission. Initially, being aimed at two different generations of tourists with different demographics and demands, allows both hotels to cast a wider net in capturing a potential market to fuel a Chinatown economic boom. It is my belief that Chinatown has the capacity to serve far greater numbers of visitors than it currently hosts. Secondly, there is the matter of neglected space utilization, which a conventional hotel does not address. A diffused hotel can specifically target only the upstairs spaces for upgrade and use. Even positioned so close together, the two hotels will not compete for physical space. Alternatively, there is potential competition over physical space with an aspiring development project, converting the upstairs spaces into high-end condos. However, this development approach has received some criticism<sup>87</sup> from the community as it is an example of direct gentrification<sup>88</sup>: upstairs residents and empty spaces that could have remained low-income housing would be converted into living space for a wealthier demographic. Comparatively, an Albergo Diffuso hotel, which can be based on a contract with property owners rather than direct ownership, would only occupy the upstairs only as long as the lease with the community is renewed. Even if hotel rooms were later used for another use, housing or other, it would still have left critical upgrades to expensive internal infrastructure and thus benefit the community even into the future.

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<sup>87</sup> [That article thing? I dunno how to find this one.](#)

<sup>88</sup> Center for Creative Community Development, "*Why is Gentrification a Problem?*". Accessed 11/03/2018

## Competition

### Legend

- Open Space + Pedestrian Streets
- Parking
- Competition for Business
- Competition for Space

- 1- TOD business micro-lofts
- 2- Wo Fat Hotel (2018-not yet complete)
- 3- Luxury Condos
- 4- Aston at the Executive Centre



#### 4 Block Survey

The 4 block area was chosen for a deeper survey and maximum area of the final design proposal, so as to test AD principles in an area small enough to be analyzed while concentrating impact of the AD in an area with the least negative potential and most positive potential. As shown by the prior district level analysis, the 4 block zone lies on the already gentrifying side of the Maunakea Line. This area has already experienced soft gentrification through the variety of businesses that serve leisurely purposes at higher price points than the daily commodities found north of Maunakea. Not only does the 4 block zone limit the AD impact to the already-gentrified area, it benefits directly from having existing support from the high-end restaurants and boutique retail stores. By framing hotel street, entry by bus is an easy trip for tourists to navigate and directs them through the main entry points for the ideal entry experience. From the airport direction, buses cross the bridge over Nuuanu Stream, greeted by ornamental gates, and from the Waikiki direction, buses travel through downtown and enter Chinatown through the Sun Yat Sen plaza. In addition, all future expansion of the AD to the edges of Chinatown will not exceed the maximum distance of rooms from the central front desk.

## SELECTED 4 BLOCKS

Reasons for Selection:

- BMX zoning
- density
- historic district
- threatened historic sites
- underutilized spaces

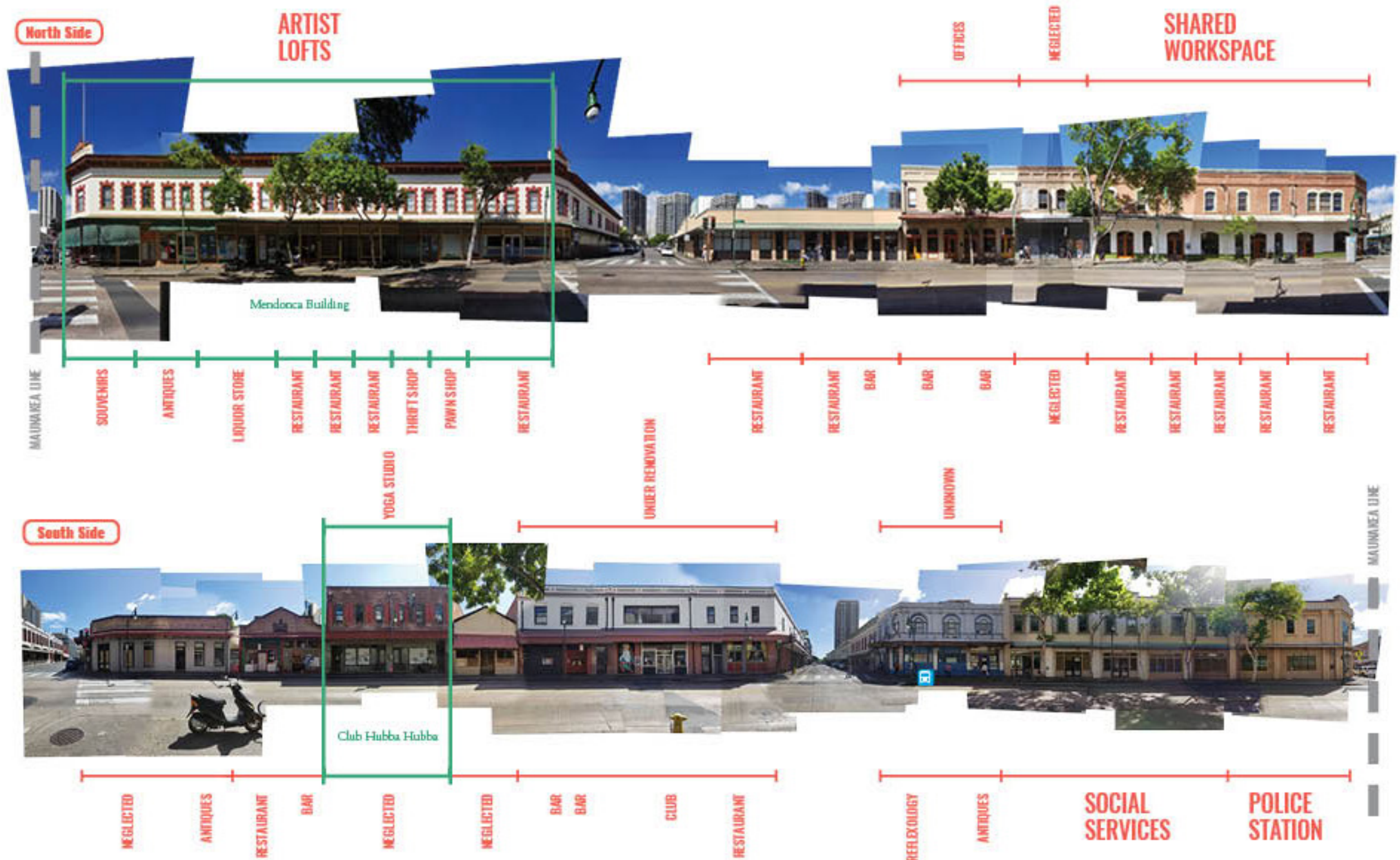
Additional Factors:

- vice district
- arts district
- ethnic neighborhood





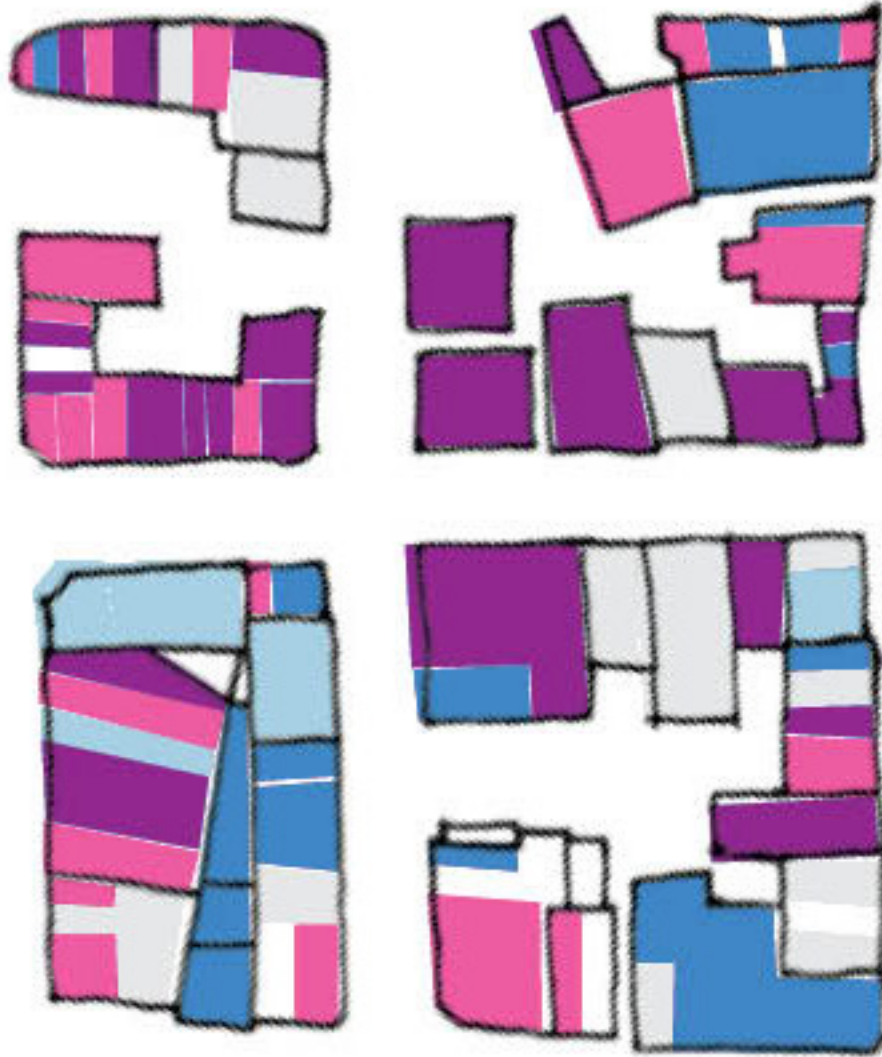
# HOTEL STREET ELEVATION



# CURRENT USE

## Legend

- Retail
- F&B
- Residential
- Services
- Public/Org./Nonprofit
- Underutilized



1st



2nd

### Underused Space

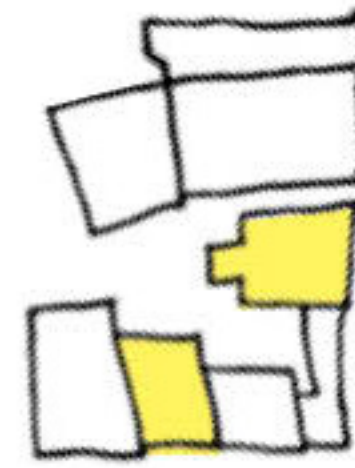
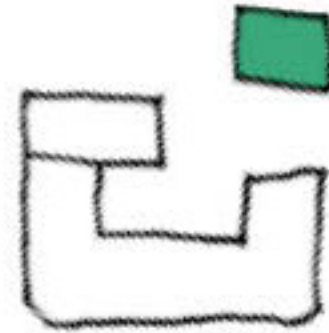
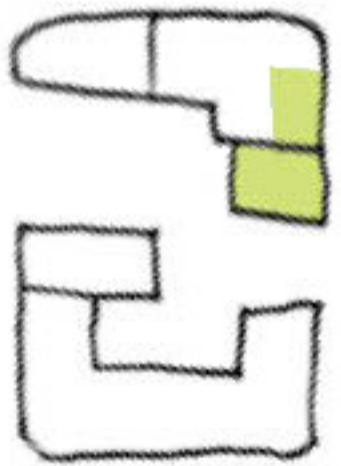
The visual survey was created by walking throughout the Chinatown district and categorizing building spaces according to five predetermined types, and then classifying the certainty of the availability of the space for new use. First, “For Lease” is any space that is actively looking for new tenants, as evidenced by signage and contact information provided on the building facade. “Empty” spaces do not have any signage but are clearly empty of any current use. This is slightly less certain than “for lease” since the empty state could merely mark a transition between tenants and would require contacting the owner or property manager for more certain information. “Storage” marks spaces that are clearly not being used for an active business, yet are full of things. These spaces are being used indirectly by someone, but have the potential to contribute more actively through conversion to rented or otherwise engaged spaces. “Neglected” spaces are difficult to see into due to boarded up windows, so the level of certainty that these spaces are available is lower as some spaces may be undergoing current renovations and some may be completely neglected. Regardless, there is still enough potential availability to inspire further investigation. The final category “Vice” refers to spaces that are rumored to be occupied by non-legal businesses. For the purposes of this dissertation, I was not able to verify these rumors but a full study would entail interviews with local police and building owners. While this dissertation does not presume to offer any moral judgement on such businesses, from the perspective of the tax paying community supplanting an illegal business with a legal one has the opportunity to direct more finances towards community beautification and infrastructure projects and supports the image of Chinatown as a safe place to visit. Alternatively, Vice spaces are marketable feature for certain tourist markets, especially considering that vice is embedded within the history of Chinatown. With this in mind, “Vice” spaces are noted as potential sites but fall lowest on the list in terms of valuable conversion space.

For the purposes of this design proposal, it is assumed that all underused Spaces are available, but with a preference for greater certainty over lower certainty. An actualized scenario would require owner buy-in for each individual property. The categories are structured to avoid including spaces that might be residential or office spaces, using cues such as curtains, window decor, and air conditioning window units. The goal is to avoid displacing currently used space such that a host community is remains present. However, it is a likely scenario that once building owners see the financial benefits of using short term rentals to upgrade their units, they may push lower paying tenants out in favor of conversion. This consequence of an AD may be an inevitable phenomenon, where the alternative is continued stagnation.

# UNDERUTILIZED SPACE

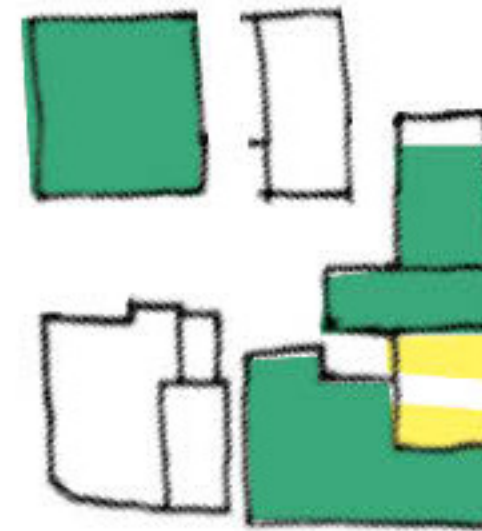
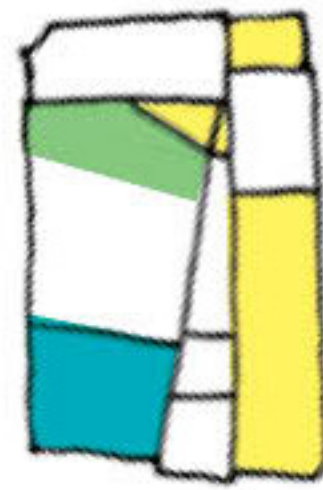
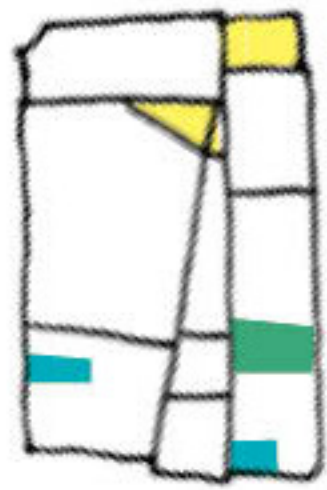
Legend

- For Lease
- Empty
- Storage
- Neglected
- Vice



1st

2nd



## 4.5 Proposal

### Design Proposal

After identifying the empty spaces in the district, the spaces are narrowed down to a final selection by eliminating spaces that are either primarily on the first floor or that do not have a small first floor space to dedicate to hotel access. For safety reasons<sup>89</sup>, these access points need to differentiate between hotel and non-hotel traffic, allowing only guests and hotel staff to enter easily. Rooms will utilize the latest technology, such as Nest or other smart lock systems, to facilitate this. There would also be a preference for converting larger upstairs spaces before smaller ones to get the most rooms per cost of renovation upgrades.

The Chinatown-AD master plan also includes phasing with the intention of renovating the most critical central spaces; the hotel lobby, and the most efficient room type, the hostel. Hostels can have more beds and a lower price point per building renovation cost while also accommodating a demographic that puts a greater emphasis on location and charm than on luxury amenities. As you can see in the master plan on the following page, both the Lobby and Hostel spaces are in the middle of Hotel Street, bringing the first guests close to the nightlife. Guests here may also include traveling professionals who would have easy access to downtown and even use the nearby shared workspace in the building to the right of the proposed hostel, ideally through a partnership with that business. Expansion from there will encompass the lobby block, especially building 2 which, as a three story building with two floors of empty space, has the highest number of units per access space, and then a final phase expanding to all four blocks. There is potential to convert the entire district, of course, but this dissertation limits to the proposal to the core of Chinatown. Realistically, other than starting with the centralized lobby space, coordination with property owners will likely guide the phasing, but in any case, AD are a flexible type that organically expand and contract depending on the host community. Throughout its lifetime, an AD may go through many changes as prior contracts with landowners expire, new properties added, some units converted to long-term residents instead of short term guests, all in the name of keeping the community in a dynamic balance of growth and refinement rather than stagnation and deterioration.

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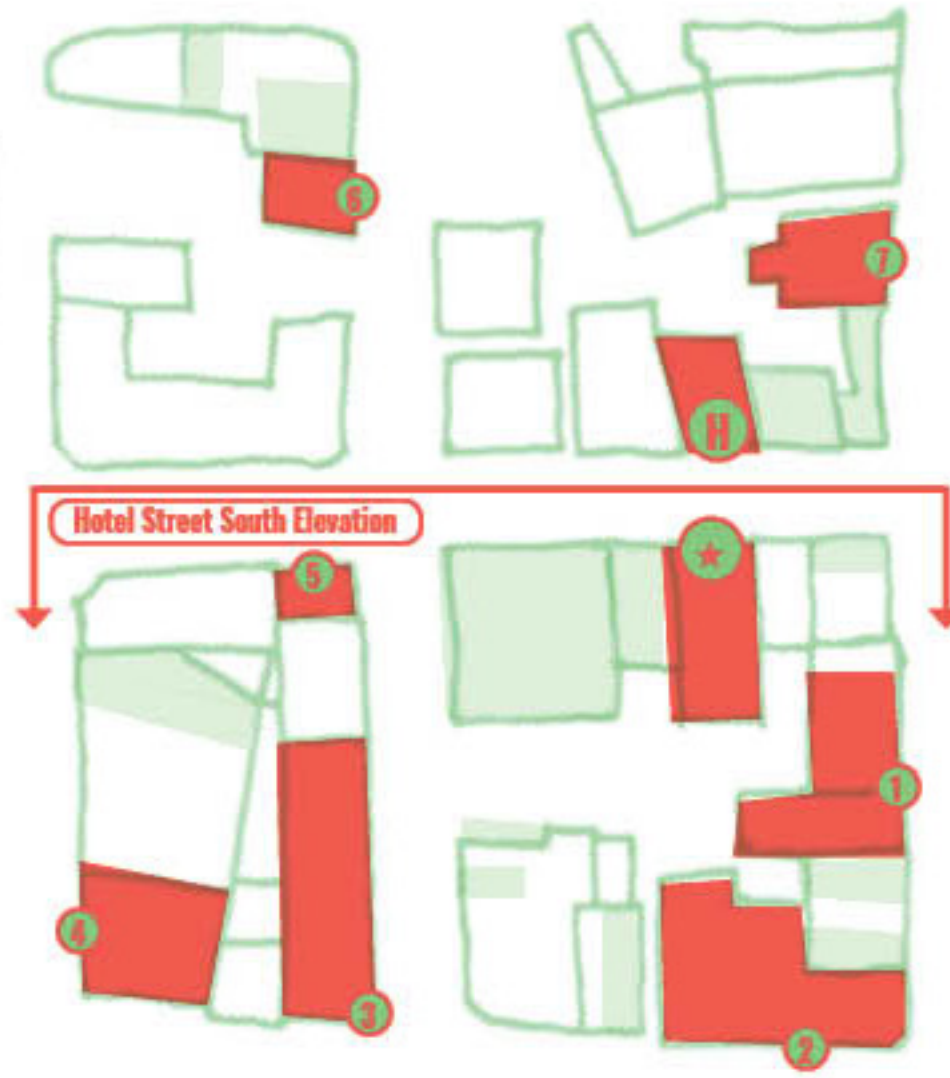
<sup>89</sup> <https://www.oahure.com/pdf/zoning.pdf>

# SELECTED BUILDINGS

## Legend

- unselected empty space
- selected empty space

- ★ - "Club Hubba Hubba"
- H - unnamed
- 1 - unnamed
- 2 - unnamed
- 3 - unnamed
- 4 - Lee & Young Building
- 5 - (year?) Mendonca
- 6 - Tan Sing Building 1926
- 7 - Lai Fong



# PROGRAM + PHASING

## Legend

- UrbanAD support
- UrbanAD partners
- Bed Space
- Not used as UrbanAD

## ★ - Club Hubba Hubba Check In

- admin office
- employee storage?
- maintenance?
- hangout space
- cafe? kitchenette?
- luggage holding

## H - [no building name] Hostel

- M bunk room
- F bunk room
- 2-6 bunk room
- bathrooms
- private room
- work space
- laundry
- locker space

## 1- [no building name]

## 2- [no building name]

## 3- [no building name]

## 4- Lee & Young Building

## 5- Mendonca Building 1913

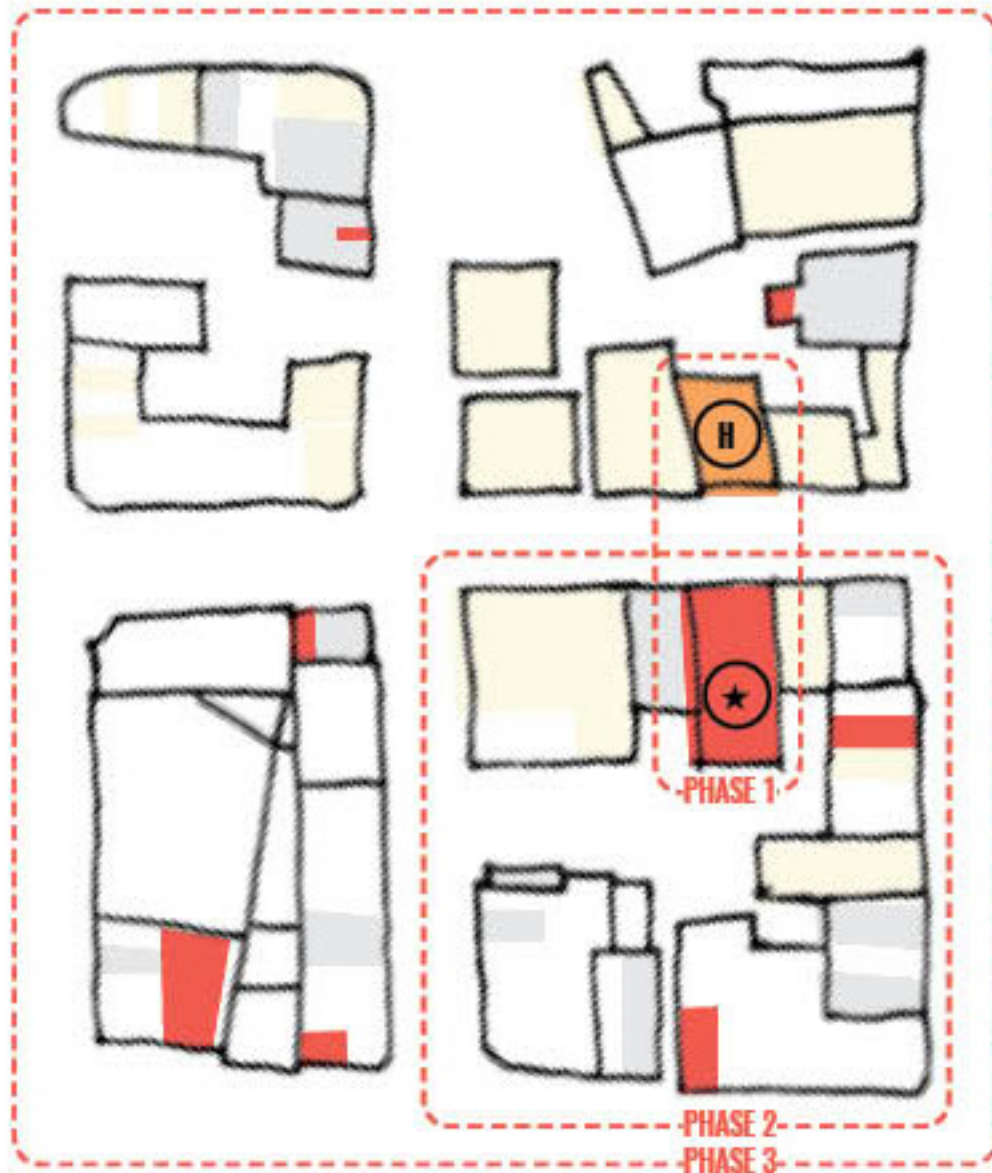
## 6- Tan Sing Building 1926

## 7- Lai Fong Building

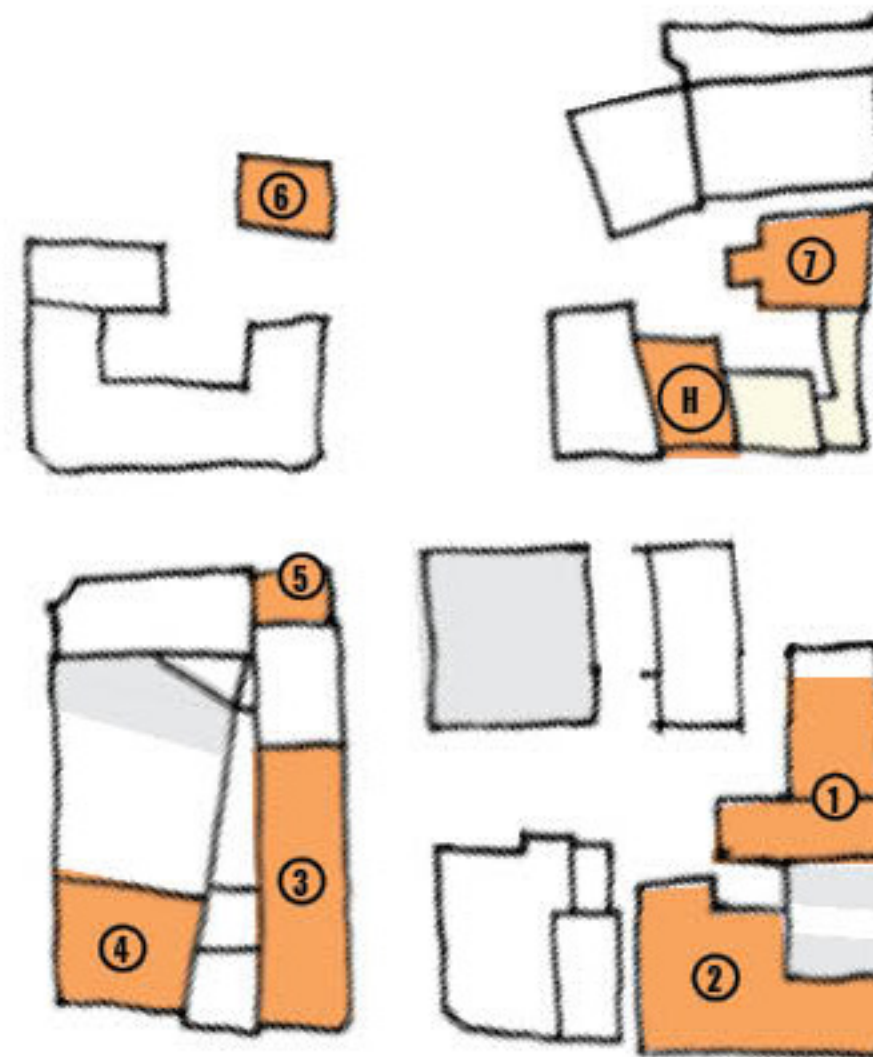
- maintenance satellite
- laundry
- mops/equipment

## storage

- entry vestibule
- lux suite
- Queen
- 2 Queen



1st

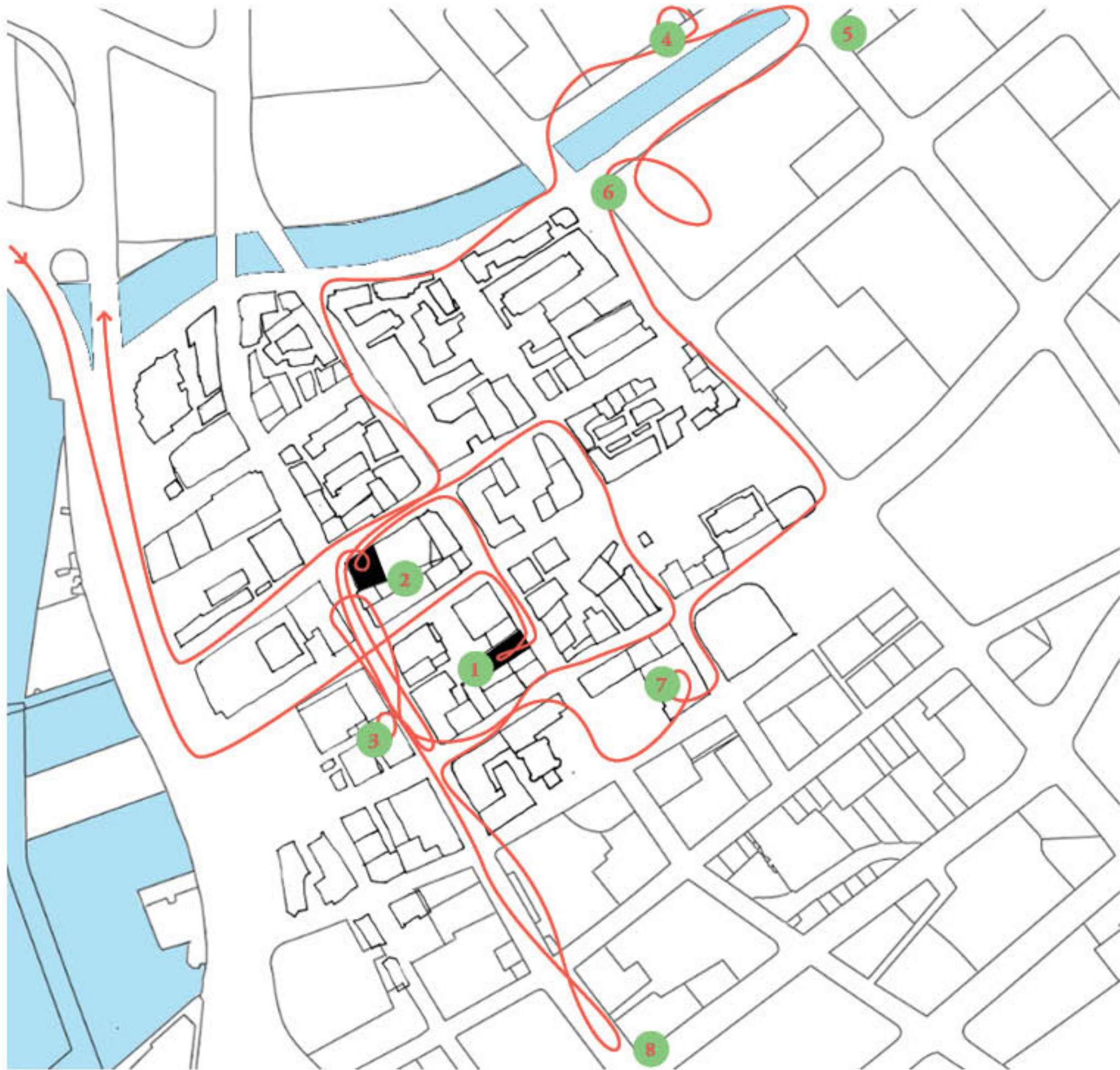


2nd

### User journeys

In the following pages, three potential types of guests and one hotel staff have been identified and defined. The map outlines a typical journey each user experiences to help describe how a Chinatown fused with an AD would be perceived. As previously mentioned the typical hostel traveler, which I will refer to as Backpacker, is of a younger more adventurous demographic. Business travelers, referred to here as a Working Professional, may be of varying age and means but have common expectations for amenities provided. These include functions such as work spaces, wifi, and proximity to their intended destinations. The Leisure Traveler, exemplified here as an older couple with means and time to travel with higher expectations of services, finishes and complete package experiences. And finally, the Hotel Maintenance page follows hotel staff as they go about their duties over the course of a day.





## Lux/Leisure Tourist

### Day 1

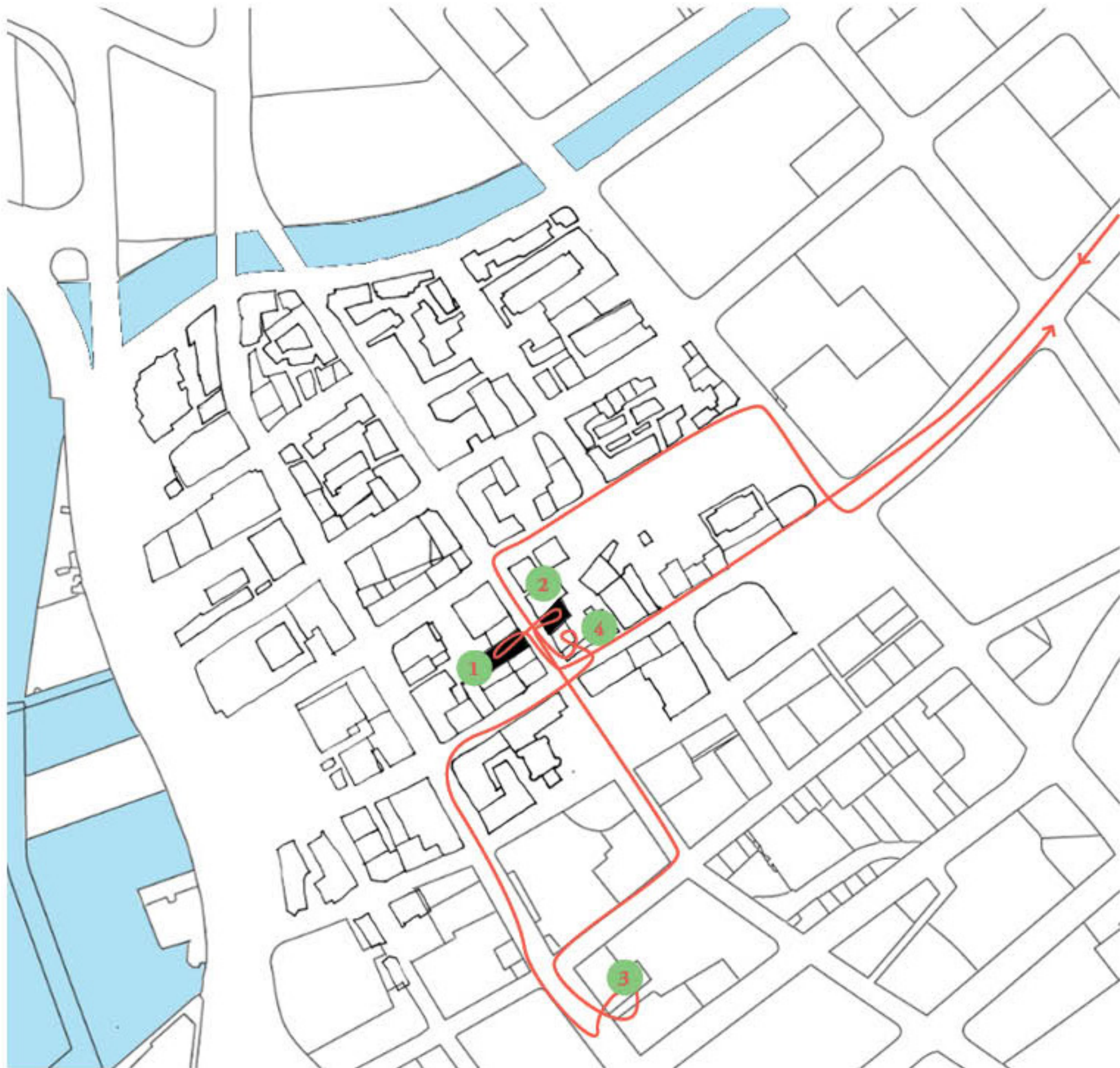
- arrival by taxi from cruise ship
- checkin
- going up to the room
- dinner first night
- sleeping

### Day 2

- morning breakfast
- walk to the temple
- lunch
- afternoon shopping
- dinner
- see a show at hawaii theater
- anniversary sex
- sleeping

### Day 3

- breakfast
- bus to see capitol & waikiki, sight-seeing and shopping and eating
- return in the evening to walk around
- dinner
- sleeping



## Business Traveler

### Day 1

- arrival by lyft from airport
- checkin drop bags
- go to business meeting downtown
- return to hostel, work in the HOC workspace (courtesy of hotel partnership) for a couple hours
- grab some late night drinks
- sleeping

### Day 2

- catch an early lyft back to the airport



## Backpacker

### Day 1

- arrival bus from airport
- checkin drop bags
- checkout the bars and dinner options, hears about a punk rock band session tomorrow night at downbeat
- sleeping

### Day 2

- get up early to visit the fresh food market
- brunch at maunakea marketplace, souvenirs to take home
- spend the day walking around the neighborhood taking photos, swaps stories with some homeless homies
- stops at wings ice cream and takes a selfie with the owner
- walks out to foster gardens for a peaceful moment among the trees
- makes it back in time for punk band session and dinner and drinks
- sleeping

### Day 3

- courtesy breakfast
- bili to downtown, iolani palace, kakaako
- returns in the evening for dinner, catching up with new friends
- sleeping

### Day 4

- bus back to airport



## Hotel Maintenance

### Shift Start

- daily arrival by bus or biki to work (1)
- clock in and start the day with coworkers in the main Hotel Lobby back of house (L)
- recieve assignment to section(s) and tasks; for example, "Room Turnover in Lee&Young Building, Room 203"
- walks or uses cart get to janitorial support room in the assigned section (2), all materials needed to room turnover are in each building, except for laundry which should be centralized for efficiency

### Shift Break

- can take a food break in the lobby or with any restaurants in the district
- employee discounts with partnered restaurants can encourage business

### Shift End

- after completeing daily tasks, return to the lobby to clock out, pack up, and await the bus pickup from inside Section

## 4.6 Benefits + Limits of Influence

### Meaningful Engagement

Above all, the most poignant reason for exploring adaptive reuse is to meaningfully engage our spaces, neither letting them lie stagnant and unused nor settling for development that ignores the richness of a places story and people. Whenever I mentioned the idea of reviving Chinatown, no matter who I was talking to or what challenges were perceived to be in the way, the people of Hawai'i cherish this district and would like to be able to enjoy it. But of course, the perceived challenges are very real and have stymied many revival efforts before and must be considered.

### Safety & Homelessness

A primary concern is the perception of Chinatown as an unsafe neighborhood with a significant homeless population. Chinatown has long been trying to change the perception of it being unsafe. Truthfully Chinatown does have some of the highest crime rates but ironically, the areas with the highest crime rates are not perceived as more dangerous, namely, Ala Moana and Waikiki.<sup>90</sup> This makes sense, as the high crime rates in these locations correlate to easy theft of tourist bags and similar crimes. With this in mind, bringing a hotel to Chinatown would likely increase crime, particularly larceny, but like Ala Moana and Waikiki would have reason and means to modulate the public perceptions of safety. In fact, unlike the other tourist areas, having a host community can potentially be used to keep the community more safe despite increased tourism, based on principles CPTED, or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.<sup>91,92</sup> The basic idea is that crime prevention and safety can be designed into the environment, and one of the main themes is the concept of community ownership, called Natural Territorial Reinforcement. As defined by Tim Crowe in the 2nd edition CPTED handbook, "Territorial reinforcement promotes social control through increased definition of space and improved proprietary concern."<sup>93</sup> In the case of an Albergo Diffuso, there is an opportunity for the host community to provide some level of protection through encouraged ownership of both private and public spaces. The real and perceived safety of Chinatown can potentially be positively impacted through CPTED<sup>94</sup> principles, although it should be noted that some issues are bigger than the Chinatown district. Homelessness, for example, is a nationwide phenomenon that will require systemic solutions at statewide and municipal levels. Issues could be connected to the availability of affordable housing, or the relative lack of mental health support systems. There is also a social services building near the Chinatown neighborhood, across Nuuanu stream, and another center is newly opened as of 2018, the Joint Outreach Center in the heart of Chinatown next to the police station.

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<sup>90</sup> Honolulu Police Department, "*Honolulu Police Department 2018 Annual Report*"

<sup>91</sup> International CPTED Association, "*Welcome to the ICA*".

<sup>92</sup> National Crime Prevention Council, "*Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Training Program*"

<sup>93</sup> Crowe, Tim. (2000). *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*. 2nd edition. Boston: Butterworth – Heinman. ISBN 0-7506-7198-X

<sup>94</sup> International CPTED Association, "*White Paper on Homelessness and CPTED*"

### Beautification of Public Spaces

Another issue, that an AD may have more power to influence directly is the cleanliness and general beautification of the district's public spaces. There are already efforts in place by the community to create a better public environment, such as the Chinatown Action Plan by the City and County of Honolulu and Chinatown Improvement District (CID), a non-profit organization. Most recently, adding bump outs to the curbs to protect pedestrian traffic and take some space back from the vehicular traffic.<sup>95</sup> Some of these spaces have been used to add moped and bike parking as well as Biki stations. Many have been beautified with potted plantings, installed and maintained by volunteers through CID.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, there has been a recent test project in the form of a red box (see below), to add a navigation station to Hotel Street in an effort to increase the navigability of the area as well as a chance to promote businesses and cultural sites. Because the image of an AD is not only the interior spaces but the neighborhood as a whole, it has a vested interest in beautiful streets and easy navigation, meaning that there is overlap between what the community values and what the AD values. Safety, beauty, navigability, promoting local businesses, and promoting the community's sense of ownership, are important to all. As such, improvements that benefit the hotel's profitability may be funded by a cooperative effort between an AD, using tourist income, and local government agencies, using taxpayer dollars.

### Affordable Housing

Another issue that the AD is limited in is addressing affordable housing, although there is potential to cooperate with existing affordable housing projects in Chinatown. An AD will increase property prices through property improvements, an intended benefit to property owners. But the people who make up the community are primarily non-owner tenants. It is foreseeable that if an AD shows success with the initial locations, other property owners would likely want to join, to the detriment of their current tenants. Many upstairs residential spaces in Chinatown are available at low prices given the cost to upgrade spaces. Many buildings have been grandfathered in under current building codes, but any electrical, plumbing or structural upgrades would need to be fully updated to modern standards at a high initial cost. An AD would assist property owners in passing this barrier to upgrading spaces in exchange for a lease to use the space as a hotel room. This process could push out current residents, and make even the resulting space after the lease expires be rented out at a much higher rate. However there is potential for negotiation and balance with an AD, in the case that an AD leases,

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<sup>95</sup> City and County of Honolulu, "*Chinatown Action Plan, Strengthening Commerce, Culture & Community*"

<sup>96</sup> Chinatown Improvement District, "*Current Projects & Programs*"

rather than owns, the properties used for hotel space. There could be a prior agreement to upgrade spaces to a non-luxury degree, intended to be converted back to affordable housing that now at least has updated amenities on the dime of the AD rather than taxpayer dollars. This may specifically work in cooperation with existing affordable housing projects in Chinatown and with the TOD, which will be developing the area around the planned Chinatown rail stop. Aside from the existing project, the AD must find a balance with the existing community regardless of future developmental plans.

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# Chapter 5. Reflection

## 5.1 Summary

In summary, the original Albergo Diffuso is a hotel type deeply rooted in its Italian origins, representing a solution to issues created by urbanization and modernization while reflecting cultural values such as living well and having deep appreciation for craftsmanship. The fundamental values of the AD can be described as a celebration of the heritage, community, and uniqueness of a place, showcased in such a way that guests are enfolded into the narrative of the place as active participants in the task of perpetuating a local story. Since the AD is only one among many emerging types of hospitality alternatives to the conventional hotel, it is just as important to understand what the AD is based on its official characteristics as by what it is not. The AD is separate from the emergence of farmstay, bed & breakfasts, airbnb, boutique branches of corporate hotel chains, and ecolodges. However, this is not to say that each of these emerging types does not have a role to play. In fact the AD type specifically addresses certain types of locations with specific needs, namely, areas of semi-abandonment and rich cultural resource faced with the threat of loss either through neglect and deterioration or encroaching development. Though the AD locations in Italy are decidedly non-urban regions, I propose that through the above generalization some urban districts may also be counted.

Broadening our view to global trends, the AD type finds itself at a nexus of tourism, heritage preservation and urbanism with its capability to advance sustainable values in all three. In the field of tourism and hospitality, the AD provides a change for more immersive experiences and that cater to a desire for wellness, authenticity and connection. In terms of heritage preservation, the act of connecting private enterprise to preservation practices increases the funding opportunities for projects that may have otherwise been overlooked. And with the additional emphasis on the services provided, the AD can support intangible heritage practices as well. In the realm of urbanism, the combined emphasis on place uniqueness and careful renovation supports the search for critical regionalism, pushing back against the thoughtless application of both traditionalism and globalization. This is even further supported by the significance of a vibrant host community in a successful, certified AD. Though not exemplified in every AD project, there is an opportunity for community agency throughout the life of an AD. In each of these areas, there are yet questions that need answers such as: is authentic experience undermined if is monetized? To what degree does private interest skew priorities in the decision making process of heritage preservation? And what level of community engagement is necessary to counteract any negative effects of the soft gentrification an AD inevitably brings? Despite these unanswered questions, the resounding success of the Albergo Diffuso in Italy and subsequent awarding of the Sustainable Innovation Award from the UNDP makes it a proposition worth consideration and further study.

Comparing the site of Chinatown in Honolulu, Hawai'i, to the typical sites in Italy AD, I argue that the obvious differences are superficial and that the similarities of neglect and stagnation are far more relevant in considering the transferability of the AD type from Italy to Hawai'i. In Italy the AD fill in the abandoned spaces of villages far removed from major urban centers like Rome or Florence. Giancarlo Dall'Ara specifically cites the fading villages of the countryside, a result of urbanization, as the inspiration for the AD concept. There is, however, some subtext in the very characteristics of an official AD: by requiring a walkable distance



and provision of a variety of amenities, including restaurants, there is a clear lean towards density and mixed use. Thus, many of the AD now take up residence in villages that were once urban centers in miniature, relative to the openness of the surrounding countryside. There is even a separate subtype, *Albergo Diffuso di Campagna* or *Countryside AD*, that provides flexibility for adaption to more rural areas. And so, I pose that application to a dense urban core is a subtle, rather than radical, adaption of the base concept to a different region. This subtype, which I am labelling the *UrbanAD*, can account for the superficial differences between village and urban district in order to gain the most benefit when applying the AD type to future sites of deterioration in an urban core, generally, and to Chinatown, specifically.

The timing of a potential AD project in Chinatown is particularly ripe. Not only has the period of stagnation in the Chinatown district been going on long enough to be a concern to the community but a variety of changes happening in the environment such as increased regulation on sharing-economy short-stay (Airbnb, VRBO, etc) and future rail development. These changes are leaving an open question: how can economic growth be stimulated while maintaining sustainable values in an urban context? While there is no blanket answer, the *UrbanAD* specifically answers situations of neglect and underuse in urban districts with threatened heritage resources that are zoned for mixed use and have a clear boundary within a walkable radius. The benefit is a form of development that thrives on having a balanced existence with a host community and the unique sense of place that can be cultivated when the host community has agency and ownership in the development process.

## 5.2 Expansion

The survey conducted and resulting masterplan proposed is a very preliminary step towards applying the *UrbanAD* to Chinatown. This is all that was possible within the time constraints of this dissertation but there is much that could be expanded upon. The next stages would be development of this idea into a formal business proposal. This would entail the following: a target market analysis and surveys of potential customers to assess traction, policy analysis to determine if changes may be needed in zoning and regulation, character assessment of the district to begin a branding and placemaking, community and owner outreach to start generating interest and determining which lots are actually available, and detailed floor plans with room layouts to begin the process of assessing the potential profits and costs of renovation. Refinement of the proposed business and design plans would continue until clarity can be brought to the organization structure, sources of funding, and approval by regulatory parties. Continuing along a “business proposal” line of thinking, there is also room to expand the *UrbanAD* concept as a property management company that can open up new locations in areas with potential and share best practices across them all.

## 5.3 Limitations & Further Research

Though the approach of this dissertation professional and design oriented, there are many avenues for further academic research. The most imperative of these would be the construction of an AD as an experiment, where there is observation pre- and post-treatment. Since an AD as a treatment is a large undertaking and

urban spaces have many variables, it would be difficult to use other sites as a control group. There might also be ethical implications in withholding a supposed benefit from certain neighborhoods that could be under time sensitive threats, such as encroaching development or condemned structures. Thus, my suggestion is to observe the same site at an earlier point, say 10 years prior. This would establish what changes have happened, or rather not happened in these cases of stagnation, over a ten year period without the intervention of an Albergo Diffuso treatment. Compared to the current moment before treatment and to a selected time after treatment, it would be possible to establish what effects can be attributed to the AD and which effects were already in motion. This process would ideally be repeated across multiple sites with a predetermined set of types of data that would be collected during each observation period. In the bigger picture, this kind of information would contribute to a broader understanding of which interventions result in what effects and be incorporated into the tool box of urban planners if successful.

In the case of Chinatown, there are a number of areas that could use deeper analysis. A zoning and policy analysis would be necessary to clarify whether hotels are currently allowed in the BMX (business mixed use) zoning area, how Special District status affects this site and how that affects transferability to other non-Special District sites, if the Albergo Diffuso meets all the regulations that conventional hotels are required to, and so on. More might also be conjectured about factors that affect community cohesion in the face of a transient population, tourists in this case. If specific factors could be isolated they would be useful to integrate into the implementation of future AD. Unfortunately, not all issues discovered at the Chinatown site are within the scope of an AD to influence. Chinatown faces issues such as homelessness, an overall shortage of affordable housing, and sea level rise, but these must be solved at a larger regional scale.

That said, I personally see great potential in the cooperation between tourism and urban planning. It is an opportunity to establish ethical norms in the relationships between individuals, visiting and visited, across the globe, a form of small scale diplomacy. One step towards creating a more connected world.

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