



Dragon Festival Report 2024

Chinatown Transformative Collaboration Society of Edmonton

The Hull Block, 10601 97 ST

(587) 858-2627

info@ctcyeg.ca

July 15, 2024



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Introduction



2024 heralds the auspicious Year of the Dragon in Asian calendars, a revered time for Asians globally. Dragons, found in folklore across the world, occupy a unique position in Asian culture. The Asian Dragon is the only mythical creature in Asian calendars. It carries deep symbolism, representing power, strength, good fortune, and abundance.

To pay homage to the Dragon this year, CTC proudly presents the Edmonton Dragon Festival.

From June 8 to July 1, 2024, Edmonton's inaugural Dragon Festival transformed both Edmonton North and South Chinatown, along with the serene Chinese Garden nestled in Louise McKinney Riverfront Park, into vibrant hubs of cultural celebration. Throughout this dynamic month, a diverse array of engaging activities unfolded. Organized by the Chinatown Transformation Collaborative, the festival offered a rich tapestry of family-friendly, inclusive cultural experiences spanning Downtown, Chinatown, and the River Valley.

This series of events was designed to promote Chinese culture and reignite community involvement. The Dragon Festival meets the Chinatown Strategy Pillars: Celebrate Chinatown as a Destination and Improve Sense of Safety and Security.

This report provides an overview of the festival's key events, their outcomes, impacts, and suggests areas for future enhancement.

Unleashed the Dragons Parade on 97 Street

Date: Saturday June 8th, 11AM - 12AM

Location: 97 Street from 107 A Ave to 105 Ave

Unleash the Dragons and Lions! Edmonton's Dragon festival kicked off an unleash of dragons and lions onto 97 street. Brightly colored dragons and lions dancers showcased their moves in friendly competitions as they vie for audiences attention. The lion and dragon dancers proceeded toward a lineup of enormous inflatable dragons, with the highlight being a 16-foot rainbow dragon. Attendees were welcomed to participate in the festivities by dressing up in their preferred dragon (or dinosaur), Hanfu, or anime attire.

Statistics

Runtime: 8AM - 2PM

Number of Attendees: 300 (counted by volunteer with clicker)

Number of Board Members: 6

Number of Volunteers: 28 (Sign-in Sheet)

Points of Success

Through the Dragon Parade, performers created a high-energy environment that kept the audience engaged. Audience members were constantly cheering and taking photos of the parade. These photos eventually made it onto social media, thus providing the event with more recognition. Moreover, the Dragon Parade perfectly displays Chinese culture and allows the community to be involved in the tradition of the dragon and lion dances.



Points for Improvement

Clearer and concise communication through traditional and social media about the Dragon Festival events and activities schedule is needed to the public and the merchants. Merchants should have the opportunity to join the parade and display their offerings for the lions and dragons outside their shops, inviting them to enter and bring blessings to their businesses. Additionally, the cold wet weather did dampen the turn out. A back up venue should be considered for next year. Finally, volunteers should have been organized into different teams before the parade.

Dragons in the Park

Date: Sunday June 9th, 10 AM - 3:00 PM

Location: Louise Mckinney park and the Chinese Garden 9999 Grierson Road. Edmonton AB

Dragons in the water. Dragons in the air. Oh no ! Dragons on the loose everywhere!!!

Dragons took over Louise McKinney Park on June 9th, 2024. Volunteers arrived early to help set up colossal dragon inflatables, transforming the park into a mythical playground. The event kicked off at 10 AM with doors opening, followed by an elaborate opening ceremony at 11 AM featuring speeches, a dotting dragon ceremony, and mesmerizing lion dances. Dragon stickers, kites, red envelopes and cotton candy were given out all day. Foil dragon balloons were given out as prizes for those who completed the scavenger hunt.

Throughout the day, families enjoyed flying huge dragon kites while others embarked on a scavenger hunt using the Story City App. Chinese seniors with kite flying experience were on hand to help the public and to fly the specialty kits. Tours were available in the Chinese Garden with the Chinese Garden Society. The Edmonton Dragon Boat Society was on hand to share insights into the traditions and thrill of dragon boat racing. As a suggestion from CTC, River Valley Adventure offered the sale of savory lobster rolls for attendees to savor.

At 12:30 PM, crowds gathered by the river to witness exhilarating dragon boat demonstrations by Edmonton Dragon Boat Racers.



Statistics

Runtime: 7AM - 4PM

Number of Attendees: 1000 on land (counted on a clicker by volunteers) + 44 Paddlers

Number of Board Members: 6

Number of Volunteers: 90 (Signed in Sheet)

Storycity App Scans: 80 (Provided by Story City)

Cotton Candy : 468 (Provided by Kalina Cotton Candy)

Kites given out: 100

Stickers given out: 730

Dragon Foil Balloon Prizes: 40

Dragon Trinket Prizes: 115

Points of Success

Dragons in the Park was a lively celebration of Chinese culture and community spirit, engaging all ages in a day filled with wonder and excitement. The event had a high level of engagement with the community as seniors, youths, families and young children all gathered to explore the park and participate in event activities together. Many attendees commented that this festival gave them the opportunity to fully explore the park, the Chinese Gardens, and the River Valley. This exploration was further supplemented with a scavenger hunt in the park. Families enjoyed flying the dragon kites and taking pictures with the dragon inflatables. CTC was able to collaborate and engage successfully with many organizations to make this day a success. (Appendix A)

Points for Improvement

Better communication of our schedule and activities via various platforms are needed. Many attendees had questions about activities during the day.

Better accessibility for seniors and those with mobility issues. Due to the regulations in place in the parking lot, the seniors could only be dropped off in an area that is a bit far from the park. To be able to view the dragon boat demonstrations and buy food at River Valley Adventure, attendees must descend several flights of stairs to reach their destination. Consider having food on the grounds or in the parking lot next year.

Dragons on the Loose with Marty Chan

Date: Saturday, June 15, 12PM - 4PM

Location: CTC Storytelling Centre at the Hull Block 10601-97 Street Edmonton, AB

The CTC Storytelling Centre was transformed into a dragon's lair with foiled dragon balloons and huge dragon kites flying out of the ceiling, along with 2 large dragon inflatables sticking out of the windows and on the roof of the Hull block as Marty Chan presented his latest children book, *Dragons on the Loose* and entertained us with a magic show. Families were welcomed with goodie bags and dragon themed crafts. Cotton candy and ice cream were offered to all participants. CTC had sponsorship for the ice cream and books for all the children attending.



Statistics

Runtime: 12PM - 4PM

Number of Attendees: 33 (69)

Number of Board Members: 5

Number of Volunteers: 0

Points of Success

This event allowed CTC to interact with a different and younger audience. As a result, CTC was able to gain a new perspective on the interests and opportunities available with this age group. Having family events such as this re-introduces Chinatown as an area that is safe for families to interact with. By setting up two dragon inflatables at the CTC Storytelling Centre, participants and other bystanders were drawn towards the Centre and Chinatown.

Points for Improvement

Although the turnout for this event was satisfactory, it was unable to reach its full potential. There were 69 people who signed up but only 33 actually showed up. Since this event was held on Father's Day weekend, it is possible that families had other commitments planned prior to this event. A remedy to this would be to schedule the event on a day that does not interfere with other holidays or events. Another possible factor for the low turnout was the marketing strategy. Due to other events occurring before Dragons on the Loose, a lack of emphasis was placed on this event. It is also possible that the advertisement for this event did not reach the right audience.

Other Events

Chase the Dragons Scavenger Hunt



Chase The Dragons Scavenger Hunt was launched on June 22 and remained active during the duration of the Festival. Participants downloaded the Story City app and were tasked with finding landmarks in North and South Chinatown and in the Chinese Gardens. At each landmark, they were provided with the cultural and historical significance behind each location. Statistics from the Story City App showed that 80 individual scans of the QR code provided during Dragons in the Park day. Many chose to play in groups or as family, indicating participation in the experience is much higher. 40 Large Dragon Foil Balloons were given out (ran out or prizes)

and 115 dragon trinket prizes were given out for those who completed the scavenger hunt.

Since it is accessed through the Story City App, the scavenger hunt is a self-directed activity that can be accessed at any time and can be played at the participant's own pace. This makes the scavenger hunt more appealing and user friendly. More creative content, continued development, and refreshes are needed to keep this app engaging and appealing to all ages. More focus marketing for this resource is also needed to bring attention to its availability for use in Chinatown.

Dragon Photography Workshop

Date: Sat. June 8 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Sun June 9 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Dragon Photo Workshop with Dr. Larry Louie and Larry Wong
Storytelling Through Images by Larry Louie
Making Photos With Visual Impact by Larry Wong

Edmonton's own dragon photographers, international award winning photographers, Dr. Larry Louie and Larry Wong hosted a free indoor photo seminar at CTC Centre for photo enthusiasts on June 8th. On Sunday, both Larry's were at the Dragons in the Park Festivities to continue their workshop in an active setting.



This workshop was originally scheduled for June 9 at River Valley Adventure as activity during Dragons in the Park. However, due to popular demand, the workshop was rescheduled to June 8, after the Dragon Parade within the CTC Centre. There were a total of 51 participants.

Spirit of the Dragon Photo Contest

The Spirit of the Dragon Photo Contest was a running event during the Dragon Festival (June 8 - July 7). Over the course of the festival, people were encouraged to take pictures of the festivities and submit them by using #YegDragonFest 🐉 and tagging CTC in their post to earn prizes. This contest encouraged people to post and share pictures during events, thus promoting each of the events. As a result, the Dragon Festival was able to have greater reach on social media.

Dragon Food Tours

Food Tours of Chinatown

To continue with the theme of Dragon Festival. The summer students developed Dragon Food Tours. The first tour is called Indulge in the Sweet Side of Chinatown. The next series will be the savory tour. The tours started June 13, 2024. Two tours with a maximum of 15 people will be conducted every Saturday until Aug. 31, 2024. If budget and funding allows, and popularity in the tours continues, we will look again at our capacity to continue the tours into the fall.



Marketing, Social Media and Conventional Media Platforms



Prepping for parade

Large inflatable dragons, custom made in China for the newly-formed Dragon Festival, are blown up for the first time on Thursday in preparation for the festival's Dragons Unleashed Parade, to be held on June 8 along 97th Street from 107 Avenue to 105 Avenue. *GREG SOUTHAM/ POSTMEDIA*

As a result of the Dragon Festival, there were significant increases in CTC's website traffic and Facebook interactions and across all social media platforms. CTC's official website saw a 324% increase in views and 4,956 new visitors in June. CTC's Facebook reached 33.2% more people and had a 98.2% increase in content interactions. (Appendix B - provided by Churchill Strategy)

Edmonton Journal Article June 1, 2024

Conventional Media:

Dragon Festival breathes new life into Edmonton's Chinatown

<https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/edmonton-dragon-festival-chinatown>

Three to See Edmonton Events: Dragon Fest, Northern Bricks and Listening to the Land
<https://edmontonjournal.com/entertainment/local-arts/edmonton-three-to-see-dragon-fest-northern-bricks-listening-to-the-land>

Impacts of the Festival

- **Promotion of Chinese Culture:** Successfully showcased cultural traditions and engaged the community in cultural exploration.
- **Foot Traffic in Chinatown:** Events highlighted local businesses and landmarks, increasing visitor engagement and community presence.
- **Community Collaboration:** Partnerships with local organizations strengthened community ties and event execution.

The Dragon Festival was able to fulfill the several mandates of the Chinatown Strategy pillars in bringing vibrancy back to Chinatown. A main concern for most visitors is safety in Chinatown. By having more structured events and activities such as the Dragon Festival, Scavenger Hunt, and Food Tours to increase foot traffic in Chinatown, visitors feel it is safer to visit the area to shop and to eat.

Events located in Chinatown are able to highlight and engage local businesses. By having the dragon dancers parade down 97 St, attendees are provided the chance to see what Chinatown has to offer. Moreover, the scavenger hunt that was implemented explores areas in North and South Chinatown and the Chinese Garden, highlighting local landmarks. The food tours also promote business and visitor engagement and interactions. These activities encourage participants to explore the area and interact with the local businesses. Therefore, these events are critical to increasing foot traffic in Chinatown and return visits.

Through the Dragon Festival, CTC was able to display leadership and encouraged collaboration within the Chinatown community and the greater Edmonton community. All the collaborating community organizations are listed in Appendix A. It is important that Chinatown does not isolate itself and strengthens its outreach to the greater Edmonton community and its neighbors. It should be highlighted that Edmonton Chinatown belongs to all Edmontonians. Through these connections, CTC can continue to create these events and networks, allowing the Chinatown community to grow and thrive.

Finally, the Dragon Festival created a point of attraction for Chinatown. The excitement of the Dragon Parade was able to draw Edmontonians towards Chinatown. The incorporation of large dragon inflatables became a main selling point at Dragons in the Park. Photos taken with these inflatables were shared on social media, providing more awareness of the event. The large dragon kites could be seen from afar and brought wonder to the audience. Finally, the integration

of the Dragons on the Loose scavenger hunt and the Dragon Food Tours were able to highlight and inform participants of the historical significance behind each landmark and each local business in Chinatown, thus continuing to bring visitors into Chinatown. The Dragon Festival brought people to Chinatown to celebrate and experience Chinese culture. It has become a talking point of Chinatown and displays the community's capability to create exciting and unique events.

Conclusion

Overall this year's Dragon Festival was a large success. Each event was successfully executed with minor issues. It was able to grasp the attention of 2000+ people and reintroduce Chinatown as an entity that is capable of creating large and exciting events that are inclusive and impactful. Further investment into these types of large community events can greatly boost Chinatown's visibility and gain more recognition. Altogether, these events can enrich Chinatown and increase its vibrancy.

Recommendations

1. **Enhanced Marketing and Communication Strategies:** Increase visibility on Instagram and Tik Tok. Clearer communication on event scheduling and timing.
2. **Accessibility Planning:** Ensure future venues are accessible to all attendees.
3. **Event Scheduling:** Avoid scheduling conflicts with major holidays to maximize attendance.
4. **Community Engagement:** Continue fostering partnerships with local organizations for collaborative event planning.
5. **Early Planning and Funding Access:** The planning and funding process should start as soon as possible so events can be planned and not restricted due to time and funding constraints.

The Dragon Festival has set a strong precedent for future cultural events in Chinatown, showcasing its potential for growth and community enrichment.

Submitted by:

Joanna Wong
Events Committee

Carmin Wong
Student Supervisor

July 15, 2024

Appendix A

Community Partners for the Dragon Festival

Thank You to our Community Leaders and Supporters:

City of Edmonton
Government of Alberta
Government of Canada

Downtown Business Association (DBA)
Chinatown and Area Business Association (BIA)

Chinese Benevolent Association
Chinese Freemasons Society of Edmonton
Chinese Graduates Association of Alberta
Chinese Seniors Lodge/Chinese Elders Mansion
Edmonton Chinese Choir Society
Edmonton Chinese Garden Society
Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre
Edmonton Chinatown Chinese Library
Edmonton Chao Chow Benevolent Association
Edmonton Chinese Computer Society
Edmonton Hubei Association
Greater Edmonton Chinese Community Foundation
National Congress of Chinese Canadians
Peach Garden Art Society
Toi Shan Society of Alberta – Edmonton
Yorkton Equity Group

Edmonton Dragon Boat Festival Association
Edmonton Dragon Boat Racing Club

Leduc Boat Club
Images Alberta Camera Club
St Alberts Camera Club

Dr. Larry Louie
Larry Wong

Hung Mon Athletic Club
Edmonton Hakka Tsung Tsin Association
5 Elements: Drum and Lion Dance Crew
Chiu Lau Kung Fu College

Marty Chan

Sandpiper Studios
Family Fun Edmonton
Story City Inc.
Kalina's Cotton Candy

United Grocers
Market Drugs Medical Ltd.
General Signs and Fabrication Inc.

REACH

River Valley Adventures Company

National Security Guard Protection Services Inc.
Pioneer Sanitary Solutions
River City Events Rentals
Can Travel and Tours
Perfect Printing

Churchill Strategy

Dragon Festival Committee:

Joanna Wong
Kathryn Luu
Sandy Pon
Carmin Wong
Winston Pon
Lan Chan-Marples

Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society

Board of Directors:

Sandy Pon, Chair
Lan Chan-Marples, Vice Chair
Jackie Liu, Secretary
Sharon Zhang, Treasurer
Joanna Wong Louie, Finance Committee
Kathryn Luu
Bob Dawe
Wen Wang

鳴謝

To our 75+ Volunteers for the Edmonton Chinatown Dragon Festival,
We Thank You!

萬分感謝!

Chinatown Transformation Collaborative Society of Edmonton

ctcyeg.com



Chinatown
Transformation
Collaborative
愛城唐人街 發展協會

yegdragonfest.com



Appendix B



CTC/EDMONTON DRAGON FESTIVAL SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTING

As of June 20, 2024

CTCYeg.ca & YegDragonFest.com

May Traffic

Visits - 9,163 - Up 643% mo/mo
Uniq. Visitors - 8,971 - Up 643% mo/mo
Pageviews - 2,417 - Up 481% mo/mo

June Traffic

Visits - 14,103 - Up 324% mo/mo
Uniq. Visitors - 13,927 - Up 324% mo/mo
Pageviews - 4070 - Up 283% mo/mo

Facebook

May Traffic

Impressions - 4.5K - Up 1.1K%
Reach - 1.9K - Up 643.8%
Content interactions - 137 - Up 1.9K%
Followers - 166
Link clicks - 28 - Up 2.7K%

June Traffic

Impressions - 5.6K - Up 41.2%
Reach - 2.3K - Up 33.2%
Content interactions - 218 - Up 98.2%
Followers - 166
Link clicks - 46 - Up 91.7%



CTC/EDMONTON DRAGON FESTIVAL SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTING

As of June 20, 2024

Instagram

May Traffic

Reach - 4.8K - Up 40%

Content interactions - 792 - Up 342.5%

Followers - 2.5K

Link clicks - 16 - Up 100%

June Traffic

Reach - 4.4K - Up 8%

Content interactions - 610 - Up 51%

Followers - 2,5K

Link clicks - 5 - Down 68.8%

Storycity will report back at the month's end with analytics based on the number of people completing the Chase the Dragon in the Park.

Appendix C

Final Expense Report Pending

Appendix D

Posters and Media Graphics



SAURDAY, JUNE 8
Dragon Festival Parade
11 AM - Noon
From 107 Ave to 105A Avenue on 97 Street in North Chinatown

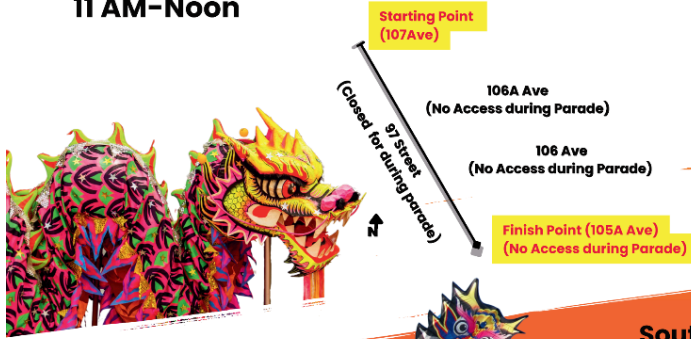
SUNDAY, JUNE 9
Dragons in the Park
11 AM - 3 PM
The Chinese Garden at Louise
McKinney Riverfront Park in South Chinatown, 9999 Grierson Hill NW

SATURDAY, JUNE 15
Dragon on the Loose Family Funday with Marty Chan
1 - 4 PM, Doors Open at Noon
CTC Storytelling Centre @ The Hull Block in North Chinatown, 10801 97 Street NW
Limited capacity.
Register online at YegDragonFest.ca

Learn more at #YegDragonFest
YegDragonFest.com

SAUTRDAY, JUNE 8 North Chinatown

**Dragon Festival Parade:
Dragons Unleashed on 97 Street
11 AM-Noon**



Chinatown Transformation Collaborative
愛城唐人街發展協會



South Chinatown **SUNDAY, JUNE 9**

**Dragons in the Park at the Chinese Garden,
Louise McKinney Riverfront Park
11 AM - 3 PM**



Join **Larry & Larry**



Award Winning Photographers Larry Wong & Dr. Larry Louie

FREE Photography Workshop at Dragons in the Park

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM, Visit YegDragonFest.com to Pre-register.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15 North Chinatown

Dragon on the Loose Family Funday with Marty Chan at the CTC Storytelling Centre @ The Hull Block 1 - 4 PM, Doors open at Noon

CTC Storytelling Centre @ The Hull Block
10601 97 Street NW

Limited capacity. Register online at YegDragonFest.com



available at amazon
Limited number of books will be available for purchase on site.



Capture the Spirit of Dragons Photo Contest Cash Prize
First Prize: \$100 + Limited Edition Dragon Festival T-Shirt
Second Prize:

Thank You to Our Community Partners



Starting June 8th, Chase the Dragon with the CTC Storytelling Centre around Edmonton's Chinatown on the Story City App.

Starting Point
(107 Ave)

97 Street (Closed for parking parade)

106A Ave
(No Access
during Parade)

106 Ave
(No Access
during Parade)



Finish Point (105A Ave)
(No Access during Parade)



DRAGON FESTIVAL PARADE



Dragons Unleashed at 11AM

TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE & PARKING BAN IN EFFECT.



Chinatown
Transformation
Collaborative
愛城唐人街發展協會



Learn more at [YegDragonFest.com](https://www.YegDragonFest.com) #YegDragonFest



DRAGON FESTIVAL IN THE PARK

**SUNDAY, JUNE 9
11 AM-3 PM**



Experience a day filled with wonder at the Chinese Garden in Louise McKinney Riverfront Park, where dragons take over the land, sky, and water. "Dragons Everywhere" invites you to a magical setting where mythical dragons soar through the skies and dance on the waves, creating a fantastical realm for all ages. Enjoy interactive displays, arts and crafts, and storytelling sessions that will transport you into the world of dragons in every corner!

**The Chinese Garden at Louise McKinney
Riverfront Park in South Chinatown, 9999
Grierson Hill NW**



**Chinatown
Transformation
Collaborative**
愛城唐人街發展協會



Learn more at **#YegDragonFest**
YegDragonFest.com

**Now Accepting Pre-orders.
Only Available on
Sunday, June 9**



Lobster Rolls

@  River Valley
Adventure Co.

LIMITED OFFER!



**Chinatown
Transformation
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Learn more at

YegDragonFest.com

#YegDragonFest 



Join Larry & Larry



Larry Wong



Dr. Larry Louie

Award Winning Photographers Larry Wong & Dr. Larry Louie

FREE

**Photography Workshop
at Dragons in the Park**

Chinatown
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Learn more at
YegDragonFest.com

#YegDragonFest 



Share Your



PHOTO CONTEST PRIZE PACKAGE

- First Prize: \$100 + Limited Edition Dragon Festival T-Shirt**
- Second Prize: \$50 + Limited Edition Dragon Festival T-Shirt**
- Third Prize \$25 + Limited Edition Dragon Festival T-Shirt**

Dragon Festival Moment submission must be publicly posted on Facebook, Twitter X, or Instagram to be a valid entry. Maximum 8 Entries per person. Visit YegDragonFest.com for contest rules

Judged by
Award Winning Photographers



Larry Wong



Dr. Larry Louie



**Chinatown
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Enter to win at **#YegDragonFest** 
YegDragonFest.com



DRAGON FESTIVAL

June 8 - July 1



DRAGON ON THE LOOSE WITH MARTY CHAN



Saturday, June 15, 2024
Family Funday Activities at
CTC Story Telling Centre
10601- 97 Street Edmonton, AB
Doors open at 12:00 pm
Story telling by Marty Chan at 1:00pm



#YEGDragonFest 

Families can register at YegDragonFest.com

