

Proposal

LFS 350

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Introduction

The purpose of our project is to conduct an analysis of the Kitsilano Legion Branch 176's institutional food system, focusing on its kitchen infrastructure and the role of food in meeting the organization (and communities)'s objectives.

The City of Vancouver has been committed to creating a just and sustainable food system (City Of Vancouver, 2013). To do so, the Vancouver Food Strategy was planned and collaborations with community partners and UBC students to assess community kitchens was possible, and in 2016 we will focus on assessing six Royal Canadian Legion branches in Vancouver.

The Royal Canadian Legion is an organization to support veterans and community members, as well as to promote remembrance (Legion, 2016). We will be focusing on the Royal Canadian (Billy Bishop) Legion Branch #176. The demographic of Kitsilano is different to the rest of Vancouver; the majority are single, young adults and English speakers (census 2011).

Significance

The Legion has the mission to invest resources, time and energy to provide essential services; especially to the vulnerable populations (e.g. seniors, youth, low-income families) in their communities. Food security initiatives done by other Legion branches include operating food banks and meal services (Legion, n.d). While charitable food providers tend to be located in the Downtown and Strathcona, the Kitsilano neighbourhood has few or no food programs and also

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lacks in community food resources. Although this area tends to have fewer socioeconomic indicators of food insecurity, there are populations that live here (e.g., seniors, students, recent immigrants) that may be food insecure (FORC, 2006). Hence we chose to focus on identifying issues of food insecurity in the Kitsilano area, and provide new perspectives as to how the Kitsilano Legion branch 176 assets (e.g. community kitchen) can be utilized efficiently to better serve its community.

Objectives

One of the main objectives of our project is to explore the role of the kitchen in the Legion's operations, and from there, identify whether the resources and opportunities exist for expanding the use of the Legion's facilities. With our assessment, we hope that the potential for future collaborations between the Kitsilano Legion and community food partners will be clearly laid out, displaying the Legion as a potential community asset for accessible, safe, and healthy foods. Kitsilano is an expensive place to live, and a location in which affordable and healthy food can be prepared would be an asset to the community, by helping to lower the barrier many low-income individuals face when trying to eat healthy.

Inquiry Questions

Through our research, we aim to answer the following questions:

1. What is the condition and extent of use of the existing kitchen at the Kitsilano branch?
2. What are the opportunities and barriers for improving the use of the Legion's facilities for community food programming purposes as well as for food businesses?

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3. How does municipality engage with Legions in order to promote a healthy, sustainable and just food system?

Methods

The asset-based community development (ABCD) approach focuses on identifying existing assets within a community rather than the deficiencies of the community. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) believe that an effective community-building process is never dependent on deficiencies, but rather on recognition and mobilization of current assets.

Our methodologies first include visiting Legion Branch #176 to observe its members, staffs, facilities, and the activities that they offer. Observation is performed before conducting interviews to minimize the observer effect (i.e. subjects respond differently when they know they are being studied) (Kawulich, 2005). After the initial observation period, short, verbal interviews will be conducted with Legion members and staff (Kawulich, 2005). A prepared set of questions regarding the facilities, resources and other social aspects of the Legion, including various prompts, will be asked. Prior to the interviews, we will inform participants that the responses collected will be used in the future, and we will only proceed if participants consent, as it would be unethical to do interviews without consent (Corti et al, 2000). Two students will conduct interviews with each person; one will ask questions, while the other records responses. Data collected from verbal interviews will be of higher quality than written surveys, because interviewers are able to ask follow-up questions and ask for clarifications, unlike in written surveys, where if a participant does not understand a question, they may inadvertently give incorrect data in an attempt to completely answer the survey, or simply leave the survey incomplete (Szolnoki and Hoffmann, 2013). The backgrounds and number of interviewees

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chosen will be decided after initial observations are done, as we are unsure of the demographics and number of people that frequent the Kitsilano Legion. Interviews will be held when there are not many members around, so as not to disrupt the regular occurrences, members, or staff.

Responses from all interviews will be validated with initial observations taken and weighted equally. We will look for homogeneity of responses as an overall consensus of interviewees, which will help us assess the state and usage of the kitchen, and potential opportunities and barriers for improving facilities and connections with the community at the Legion.

Interview Questions

When we visit the Kitsilano Legion for our assessment, we will be interviewing members and staff in order to gather information regarding the facilities and the community. Below are some of the questions we plan on asking.

Interview questions for staff:

1. What kind of activities do you have here?
2. How long have you had these activities for?
3. Any new plans for the future?
4. How often are the kitchen facilities used?
5. Are you currently partnered with any community organizations?

Interview questions for members:

1. Why did you become a member of the Kitsilano Legion?
2. Do you participate in the meat draw? What do you think about the meat draw? Do you ever question where the meat comes from?

Interview questions for others:

1. What brought you here today? Do you consider becoming a member?

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2. What is your first impression of the place?

Budget

We do not expect to have any expenses, as we only plan to carry out interviews.

References

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