

CHINESE ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE AND THE SPATIAL DISCOURSE OF  
VANCOUVER'S CHINATOWN.

by

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## ABSTRACT

The thesis examines Chinese architectural practice within the city of Vancouver as a means of identifying the historical extent of Chinese lived social space and to challenge the notion that Vancouver's Chinatown existed as a clear and separate spatial category. By using a definition of space that includes its temporal dimension the thesis argues that Chinatown spatially is a dynamic phenomenon that has exhibited tremendous changes over the last 130 years. The intention of the thesis is two part, first it illustrates the historical significance of early Chinese architectural practice, and secondly, it begins to construct a spatial discourse that considers the totality of Chinese lived social space and its influence on the formation of the city of Vancouver.

The research specifically examines Chinese hybrid architectural practices that have been organized as a genealogy in an attempt to provide a means to identify and explain multiple points of origin from multiple sources. These practices have been placed within a series of maps defined by the Canadian Pacific Railway's subdivision of District Lot 196 and include Chinese land occupation, city zoning boundaries and major urban development proposals. The study is divided into fourteen discrete architectural cases. Although the cases are organized into three general periods the intention of the research is to identify the specific historical and contextual circumstances that produced and inform each case. The intention was to identify how hybrid architectural practices were used to negotiate space and produce new social practices.

The thesis reaffirms the social, historical and cultural significance of the architecture produced around the area identified as Chinatown. The area is populated with a number of historically significant buildings, comprising a number of distinct architectural practices that have produced some unique spatial conditions. The study also clearly refutes the conceptualization of Chinatown as a coherent or accurate historical image of Chinese lived social space within the city of Vancouver. The research identifies fundamental problems in the conception and historical description of Chinatown as a discretely defined space.

## TABLE OF CONENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Figures.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vii
CHAPTER I Introduction and Theoretical Overview.....	1
1.1 Thesis Introduction.....	1
1.2 Literature Review.....	1
1.3 Methodology and Theoretical Overview.....	4
CHAPTER II Early Chinese Architectural Practices.....	14
2.1 Introduction.....	14
2.2 Wing Sang Company Building.....	15
2.3 Chinese Benevolent Association.....	23
2.4 Ko Sing Theatre.....	31
2.5 Chinese Nationalist League Building.....	35
2.6 141-147 East Pender Street.....	40
2.7 Cheng Wing Yeong Tong Society Building.....	44
CHAPTER III Post 1930 Chinese Architectural Practices.....	54
3.1 Introduction.....	54
3.2 Shell Service Station.....	55
3.3 Chinese Public School.....	61
3.4 136 East Pender Street – Quon Wong Building.....	67
CHAPTER IV Architectural Practices after Chinatown’s Historic Designation.....	72
4.1 Introduction.....	72
4.2 Lee Building.....	72
4.3 200-224 East Pender Street / 500-504 Main Street.....	77
4.4 Chinese Cultural Centre.....	82
4.5 Murrin Parkade.....	86
4.6 Rehabilitation of Chinese Times Building and Wing Sang Co. Building.....	91
CHAPTER V Conclusion.....	101
Footnotes.....	105

Bibliography.....	140
Appendices.....	150
Appendix I    Vancouver Specials.....	150
Appendix II    List of Recent Developments Published in the 1976 Chinatown Planning Newsletter.....	151
Appendix III    Heritage Designated Buildings in Historic Chinatown.....	152
Appendix IV    Housing Developments and Applications Received for Historic Chinatown from 2002.....	154



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 1887 District Lot 196 Subdivision Plan.....	10
Figure 1.2 Genealogical Trace of the Use of Flaring Eaves + Tiled Roof.....	12
Figure 2.1 Photograph of Wing Sang Company Building.....	16
Figure 2.2 Main Floor Plan Wing Sang Co. Building, 1912.....	19
Figure 2.3 1895 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	22
Figure 2.4 Chinese Benevolent Association Building, 1909.....	24
Figure 2.5 Photograph of Empire Reform Association. ....	26
Figure 2.6 1906 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	29
Figure 2.7 Ko Sing Theatre 124 (122-126) East Pender Street, (Renovation 1921).....	34
Figure 2.8 Photograph of Chinese Nationalist League Building.....	36
Figure 2.9 1915 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	39
Figure 2.10 Second Floor Plan of 141-147 East Pender, 1921.....	43
Figure 2.11 Exploded Axonometric Projection of 79 East Pender, 1910-1952.....	46
Figure 2.12 Space Time Progression of Chinese Voluntary Associations, 1903-1926.....	49
Figure 2.13 Chinese Land Purchases and Building Production, 1886-1926.....	51
Figure 3.1 Shell Service Station No. 154, 231 East Pender Street, 1931.....	56
Figure 3.2 1930 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	60
Figure 3.3 1955 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	65
Figure 3.4 Quon Wong Building, 136 East Pender, 1967.....	69
Figure 3.5 Vancouver Special as Spatial Negotiator, 1963-1991.....	71
Figure 4.1 Elevation of Lee Building after Restoration, 1974.....	76

Figure 4.2 1976 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	78
Figure 4.3 200-224 East Pender / 500-504 Main Street.....	80
Figure 4.4 Ground Floor Plan of Chinese Cultural Centre, 50 East Pender Street, 1981.....	85
Figure 4.5 Murrin Parkade, 1994.....	87
Figure 4.6 1994 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	90
Figure 4.7 Spatial Diagram of Wing Sang Co. Building Rehabilitation, 2007.....	96
Figure 4.8 2007 Chinese Land Occupation Map.....	98
Figure 4.9 2007 Chinese Cultural Institutions and Non-Market Housing with Significant Chinese Occupation.....	99

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **1.1 Thesis Introduction**

This study is an examination of Chinese architectural practices in relation to spatial discourse on Chinatown over the last 130 years. Through an analysis of architectural form, social context and location the study addresses the discrepancy between the concept of Chinatown and the reality of Chinese lived social space within Vancouver. The intention is to gain an understanding of how discrete architectural projects contributed to the formation of a Chinese spatiality and to illustrate that the spatial conceptualization of Chinatown does not accurately account for the socio-spatial history of Chinese in Vancouver. The study is not intended to be exhaustive, but an attempt has been made to illustrate the historical, social and spatial diversity of Chinese architectural practice and the myriad of socio-economic and political circumstance that produced them over the last 130 years.

#### **The Spatial Discourse on Chinese in Vancouver**

Historically Chinese lived social space has predominantly, if not exclusively, been defined within a particular discourse that viewed Chinatown as a spatial nexus of Chinese bodies, history and culture. From the mid-nineteenth century the term Chinatown within Canada has been used to denote the space of Chinese and spatial difference.<sup>1</sup> However, as early as 1908 it was estimated that one third of Chinese in Vancouver owned property outside of the “Chinese Quarter.” The significance of this is paramount because it illuminates that one third of the Chinese population is not accounted for in the most prevalent cultural conceptualization of Chinese lived social space within the city.<sup>2</sup> The difficulty with Chinatown’s conceptualization and common definition is the adherence to it as an abstraction, a separate spatial category from that of lived experience. It is the instinctive predisposition that assumes Chinese historically existed in isolation that requires some reconsideration. The presumption overlooks that Chinatown existed in a state of constant dynamic flux and therefore had no definite edges or boundaries.

### **1.2 Literature Review**

Although an extensive literature exists on the Chinese and Chinese communities in North America, there is only a small accompanying body of literature available on its

varied architectural manifestations.<sup>3</sup> This is a particularly salient shortcoming considering how many studies indicate that architecture comprises a vital component of Chinatown's definition as a distinct area. This is in part the result of limited research conducted on historic, vernacular and ethnic architecture within Canada.<sup>4</sup> However, a very plausible explanation may also be found in the conception that Chinatown as a spatial phenomenon is directly linked to an ability to easily recognize the physical difference of Chinese bodies and to equate it with a clearly identifiable and different social and physical space.<sup>5</sup> The conflation of concepts about body-space-architecture is difficult to avoid within racial, ethnic and identity discourse. It is evident in every study of Chinatown, yet it should be understood that as a construct, as opposed to a phenomenon, it transmits certain ideas about race, space and identity.<sup>6</sup> The following section provides a general overview highlighting some of the literature on Chinese and Vancouver's Chinatown that has been significant for this study. The literature review and my argument also give significant consideration to the underlying intellectual constructs, identified by Henry Yu in Thinking Orients (2001), regarding modernity, race and identity and their relationship to space that emerged at the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s. The problematic intellectual foundation that the literature review identifies is in part rooted in certain assumptions about Chinese architectural practice that requires critical research.

A variety of disciplines and approaches have contributed to the general subject of Chinese and Chinese communities in North America. From a historical perspective, a significant compellation of research on Chinese in Canada is found in From China to Canada edited by Edward Wickberg (1982). As a general history, this work provides invaluable historical information on the Chinese population in Canada. In stark contrast, David Li's Chinese in Canada (1998) examines the history of Chinese in Canada from the perspective of institutional racism and how the Chinese survived in the Canadian context. David Lai's *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada* (1988) accounts for one of the earliest conceptual examinations of Canadian Chinatowns as an evolutionary phenomenon. His study presents a four Stage Development Model for the growth and decline of Chinatowns, which included a hypothetical physical model showing the morphological pattern of his concept. Geographer Katharyne Mitchell has provided important political insight into the relations and repercussions of large-scale immigration on the pre-existing Chinese population in Vancouver's Chinatown. Comparing two intervals of capital investment by Hong Kong Chinese in Vancouver, she argues that the challenge to normative discourses such as heritage and tradition in the 1990s represent a micro moment or disruption. Her work suggests that, "struggle over the meaning of heritage and tradition that ensued in Vancouver provides a useful case study of how normative concepts have been called into question."<sup>7</sup> Mitchell's

work has identified how transnational movements also challenged the political structures within Chinatown and how they were in turn renegotiated by successive flows of Hong Kong immigrants.<sup>8</sup> More recent contributors like Domenic Beneventi have adopted literary approaches for the study of Chinese in Vancouver. Beneventi argues that within Chinese Canadian novels “Chinese offer their own spatial models...These spatialities of counter-hegemonic cultural practices question the spatial paradigms which seek to evacuate or otherwise contain those ethnic bodies which threaten the sameness of the body public.”<sup>9</sup> Beneventi’s study is one of a number indebted to Edward Said’s influential work, Orientalism (1987).

Edward Said’s study has been a key intellectual source for cultural critics, urban geographers and Asia America scholars that have begun to re-examine Chinatown as a social construct.<sup>10</sup> Said’s study illustrated how scholars in Europe and America created regularized knowledge about “Orientals” that became a powerful tool in the subjugation of Asian people as the exotic and inferior “other.” In Vancouver’s Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980 (1991), geographer Kay Anderson assembled a compelling argument that identifies Chinatown as “an important site through which society’s concepts about Chinese were constituted and reproduced.”<sup>11</sup> Anderson examined “the evolution of Chinatown from a western perspective rather than as an extension of an innate Chineseness.”<sup>12</sup> She looked at how “Chinatown, is in part, a European creation” born of a racialized discourse created by intellectuals, artists and bureaucrats. Anderson’s thorough documentation demonstrates how the category of race was applied legislatively and socially in an effort to marginalize the Chinese spatially, economically and politically. However, Anderson’s methodology too is not without its limitations. As Wing Chung Ng notes, Anderson’s “theoretical insights are not to be taken lightly... However, her implicit assumption concerning the erasure of Chinese subjectivity is questionable. Her approach overlooks entirely Chinese agency.”<sup>13</sup> In The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The Pursuit of Identity and Power (1999), Ng argues that to understand the post-World War II Chinese Community in Vancouver you have to understand the importance of Chinese identity. The concept of “Chineseness” and the power to determine the contours of its definition was a fundamental issue amongst the Chinese. There is, however, one intellectual constant that appears throughout these treatments of Chinatown and it is an implicit adherence to the concept that Chinatown exists as an identifiably distinct Chinese ethnic geography, a separate and exotic space within the city.

More recently, Henry Yu has argued that the underlying intellectual constructs that establish the foundation of our understanding of race, ethnicity and identity, and their relationship to space are themselves problematic.<sup>14</sup> Between 1920 and 1960 the Chicago School of Sociology constructed the intellectual foundation and considerable academic

knowledge on Chinese in North America.<sup>15</sup> The Chicago School developed some of the first ‘objective’ methodologies for the ‘systematic’ study of ethnic minorities in North America. However, this knowledge is not without its problems. Although a simplification of Yu’s argument and his considerable research in general is offered here, he proposes that one of the significant problems with this knowledge was that its Occidental authors placed themselves at the centre of an intellectual product that was itself a racialized construct.<sup>16</sup> The Chicago sociologists made themselves the objective experts on “exotic” knowledge and the ethnic “other”.<sup>17</sup> In part this was done by asserting the importance of knowledge about “place of origin, cultural and racial background and family history.”<sup>18</sup> “The importance of abstractions such as race, place, nation or culture marked how identity as a concept and a set of categories acted as a way of symbolically and imaginatively sharing memories and experiences...The categories through which we now understand ethnicity and identity are telescoped from narratives of geographic origin and migrational history.”<sup>19</sup> According to the Chicago sociologists space and racial culture were “virtually equivalent” and “geographically distinct.”<sup>20</sup>

Space itself became an important category for the Chicago sociologists because it allowed them to imagine the contours of race, ethnicity and identity within the physical area of a city.<sup>21</sup> The space of Chinatown was imaged and defined by the Chicago sociologists as isolated and discrete. Yu notes how successfully the spatial metaphor of inside/outside was equated with known and unknown and how significant it was in the process of gaining an authoritative voice about the other.<sup>22</sup> By identifying themselves as experts on exotic knowledge and the space of the other, the Chicago sociologists’ themselves created a racialized space. Although the intention was not to segregate Chinese it essentially reproduced a spatial image of racial segregation from a different viewing position.

The sociologists’ association of inside knowledge with knowing about Chinese and Chinatown was a significant intellectual construction that has had considerable ramifications. It is the establishment of special knowledge about Chinatown and the act of interpreting that knowledge for particular ends that appears so problematic in gaining an accurate historical image of Chinese lived social space. The assertion that one ‘knows’ Chinatown has often become an essential and explicit conscious act used to establish authority and control over it as a category of space, albeit socially, economically, culturally or academically.

### **1.3 Methodology**

In order to examine the relationship between Chinese architectural practice and spatial discourse I have adopted three conceptual positions for the study.

## Genealogy – Organization of the Objects

The first conceptual position is related to objects and their genealogy and typology, in particular the organization of the architecture according to a genealogy as opposed to a typology. The genealogy is intended to provide a system to identify and explain multiple points of origin from multiple sources. Considering Chinese architectural production as a genealogy has methodological and theoretical import. In a practical sense it provides a method by which architectural objects can be arranged sequentially and constitutively. Furthermore, by expanding on predominantly typology-driven research on vernacular architecture it allows for a closer examination of the “miscellaneous and discontinuous.” Alternatively a genealogical analysis, applied within the conceptual framework developed by Michel Foucault, offers a methodology that highlights and connects details (architectural, spatial, social, political, etc) that appear marginal and obscured, but that produce a different picture of Chinese lived social space within Vancouver than what is conventionally proposed.<sup>23</sup> This seems particularly important for Chinatown where notions of tradition and identity have permeated its spatial discourse over the last century and its architectural discourse over the last few decades.

## Typology - Categorizing the Objects

A typological study is not being used as the primary methodological tool because it introduces a limiting characteristic to a form's description. Rafael Manó describes typology as a system that “allows architectural objects to be grouped together, distinguished and repeated.” The ordering of architectural objects into types provides a necessary step in the understanding of the historical development of a group of objects. However, a limitation in the methodology appears as a result of determining the characteristics of a particular type. “In the process of comparing and superimposing individual forms so as to determine the type, particular characteristics of each individual building are eliminated and only those remain which are common to every unit of the series. The type, therefore, is formed through a process of reducing a complex of formal variants to a common root form.”<sup>24</sup> Establishing uniformity by eliminating individual characteristics has the disadvantage of prioritizing certain forms. The process of eliminating non-conforming characteristics and prioritizing only the most common creates an essential form that may not be culturally or episodically specific enough to be useful in this study. Although the method provides cultural legibility, it has the disadvantage of prioritizing specific elements within that culture. The



danger of misinterpreting the significance of an element relative to its application in time is always possible. Furthermore, this study's focus is, conversely, on the non-conforming characteristics that develop as a result of hybridization.

## Spatial Theory

The second position is the re-conceptualization of space. The study abandons the predominant conceptualization that equates racial culture with geographic and social isolation. To provide a more encompassing theoretical framework I have borrowed a concept of space from geographer Doreen Massey.<sup>25</sup> Massey's conceptualization focuses on a re-thinking of the dynamic relationship of space and time. Massey's argument begins with the simple proposal that we refuse the theoretical distinction between the everyday and the abstract, between place (as meaningful, lived and everyday) and space (as what? the outside? the abstract? the meaningless). By breaking with these preconceptions Massey argues that to understand space we must accept its "coeval multiplicities", "radical contemporaneity" and address its "constitutive complexity." As propositions space is the product of interrelationships and interaction; the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity, a sphere where distinct trajectories<sup>26</sup> coexist, a sphere of coexisting heterogeneity; and finally space is never finished, it is always being made.<sup>27</sup> Massey's conceptualization enables a dynamic view of how architectural production enables the evolution of space.

Furthermore, Massey argues that this spatial conceptualization has a corresponding politic that I believe may help elicit critical spatial distinctions about Chinatown's past, present and future conceptualization. First, Massey notes that politics, like space, is the product of interrelations, arguing, "that identities/entities, the relation between them, and the spatiality which is part of them, are all co-constitutive." Secondly, she asserts that the recognition of multiplicity and heterogeneity are dependant on recognition of spatiality and its political corollary is the recognition of the "simultaneous coexistence of others with their own trajectories and their own stories to tell." And finally, Massey argues that there is an insistence within political (spatial) discourses that there be a genuine openness for the future.<sup>28</sup> Massey's conceptualization provides a framework to go beyond Chinatown's current spatial discourse and suggests that the "loose ends," "missing links," the mobile, unfixed and indeterminate must be incorporated into its spatial discourse.

## Hybridity

The final conceptual position is the acknowledgement of hybridity as a cultural process, an artifact of that process and as a technique of cultural criticism.

### Hybridity as a Cultural Process

It is clear from the research for this thesis that the identification of Chinatown by means of a visible Chinese architectural practice cannot be achieved. In part this is a result of hybrid practices that can operate to create or conceal architectural difference. Duanfang Lu argues that historically Chinese in Vancouver used hybridity to “camouflage otherness so that otherness can safely dwell in sameness.” Noting, “that such a dynamic of hybridity embodies an inherently imbalanced cultural exchange, in which the margin always mimics the center, seeking to make itself into a copy of the stronger culture.”<sup>29</sup> Although Lu’s statement appears significant his argument unintentionally implied an essential Chinese architectural practice existing amongst early Chinese immigrants that this study indicates is not inaccurate. My research indicates that Chinese used a variety of visual practices that displayed an intentional diversity and sophistication in their application.

As a culturally critical practice, the research reveals that hybridized architectural practices engendered a social and spatial convergence. In addition, it provides evidence of cultural processes that call into question assumptions about the nature of cultural transactions suggested by assimilation theory. Assimilation theory suggests “the projection of a linear, sequential path for immigrant groups from a starting point of relative difficulty, discrimination and constraint within the new society, to increasing cultural knowledge, acceptance and eventual assimilation and mobility.”<sup>30</sup> The theory of assimilation relies on the assumption of a core culture and an inherently backwards world view of immigrant groups.<sup>31</sup> As a convergence, hybridity as a concept illustrates a merger that does not rely upon a core cultural model or mono-directional cultural mobility. Convergence is defined within this study as the effect or result of an intersection between two distinct entities that produces a third unique entity that is a product of the environmental (socio-economic and political) conditions in which the interaction took place. Hybridization “has been narrowly defined as the organic graphing of diversity into singularity”, but it “is better understood as the fusion of different elements, resulting in the creation of new entities.”<sup>32</sup> As a product of a dynamic cultural process, hybrid architecture provides the opportunity to re-examine our ideas of cultural isolation, resistance and dominance.

In its original scientific form, the concept of hybridity was narrowly applied to the observation and manipulation of hereditary characteristics amongst living things. The concept was subsequently extended beyond its originating discipline and practice and began to have a number of negative associations that became particularly virulent in the context of scientific racism. The rationalization for this and other negative conceptualizations were most often based on essentialist notions of race and culture that “fail to consider that all cultural practices have historically been constructed by the incorporation of extralocal influences, and in turn affected practices beyond their own boundaries.”<sup>33</sup> From this expanded conception cultural theorists were able to develop more critical applications for a theory of hybridity that incorporated and considered a matrix of external factors. The scientific experiments conducted by Gregor Mendel carefully eliminated external factors that would have tainted the results of a controlled study of hybridization.<sup>34</sup> What later cultural critics recognized and reinvested in the concept is a conceptualization of a process that is continuously taking place, with a multitude of external factors influencing its outcome.

As an analytical tool, cultural critics in recent decades have adopted the concept of hybridity as a method for examining current global trends and new cultural phenomena. Most often, the concept has been linked to a reaction to globalization and the fear of “cultural homogenization.” Hybridity has provided cultural theorists a concept with which to reconstruct our view of the intersection and interaction of local and non-local entities.<sup>35</sup> By rejecting culture’s original binary framework, hybridity demonstrates how culture can be fragmented, mobile and ambiguous.<sup>36</sup> However, this new conceptual framework has been used more frequently to emphasize models that illustrated non-local dominance and local resistance.<sup>37</sup> Within this framework, hybridity is a form of resistance used by locals to reorient dominant foreign phenomena.<sup>38</sup> The framework connects hybridity to local resistance and domination is most often characterized as a phenomena associated with an alien invader. Tracing Chinese hybrid practices over the last 130 years reveals a complex and multifaceted practice in which a single conceptual framework may not be adequate to develop a clear understanding of all the different motivations for hybridizing form. The hybrid practices of early diaspora Chinese illustrate a case in which hybridity was used to establish different socio-economic practices. It also presented a strategy that could be used to circumnavigate dominant social practices, assert political and spatial rights and negotiate internal Chinese power and identity conflicts. A more detailed study of hybrid practices provides a method with which to reconstruct our understanding of Chinese lived social space

by presenting a different understanding of its spatiality. Viewing the process of hybridity within the context of a space and time dynamic provides a critical tool and opportunity to review and rethink how architecture and space have recently been conceptualized within heritage, identity, and spatial discourses.

#### Thesis Structure: Hybridity as Artifact

This study's architectural analysis focuses on the tactical characteristics of different hybrid practices viewed as a genealogy and considered analogously with Massey's spatial concept. Massey's conceptualization binds the action of individual entities and their trajectories in the formation of space. The proposition suggests that individual buildings can be used to illustrate how space is produced through a complex weave of actions and social encounters. By emphasizing the process of continuous interaction and negotiation as opposed to the static representation of a group, the concept abandons the idea of a single identity or essentialism. This is key because it provides the material to begin to construct a spatial discourse that considers the totality of Chinese lived social space.

Archival and site drawings, in addition to historical photographs and maps have been used to document the origins of different architectural practices. The material has been contextualized in relationship to the period of construction and to the entity that produced the building. The buildings are situated on a series of maps encompassing the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) subdivision District Lot 196 and a small section of the CPR land reserve south west of Carrall Street and East Pender Street. (Figure 1.1) The maps document the trajectory of Chinese architectural practices in relation to Chinese land occupation, zoning changes and major urban planning proposals.<sup>39</sup> Although I have limited the research area, the intention is to illustrate the larger socio-spatial implication and a more comprehensive image of Chinese lived social practice in Vancouver.

The study is specifically structured around fourteen discrete case studies organized chronologically and grouped according to three general periods. The first period discusses the foundation of Chinese economic and cultural practices from the 1880s until the late 1920s. The research illustrates the foundation of a Chinese spatial density around Dupont Street (East Pender Street). The research also acknowledges a wider Chinese spatiality and presents an alternative spatial model based on observations on Southern Chinese socio-economic spatial patterns. The second period examines major shifts in the Chinese residential population and commercial activities as a result of the interruption of traditional immigrant patterns due to the 1923 Chinese Exclusion Act, interruption of transnational economy practices as a result of the Great Depression and the affect of their reintroduction

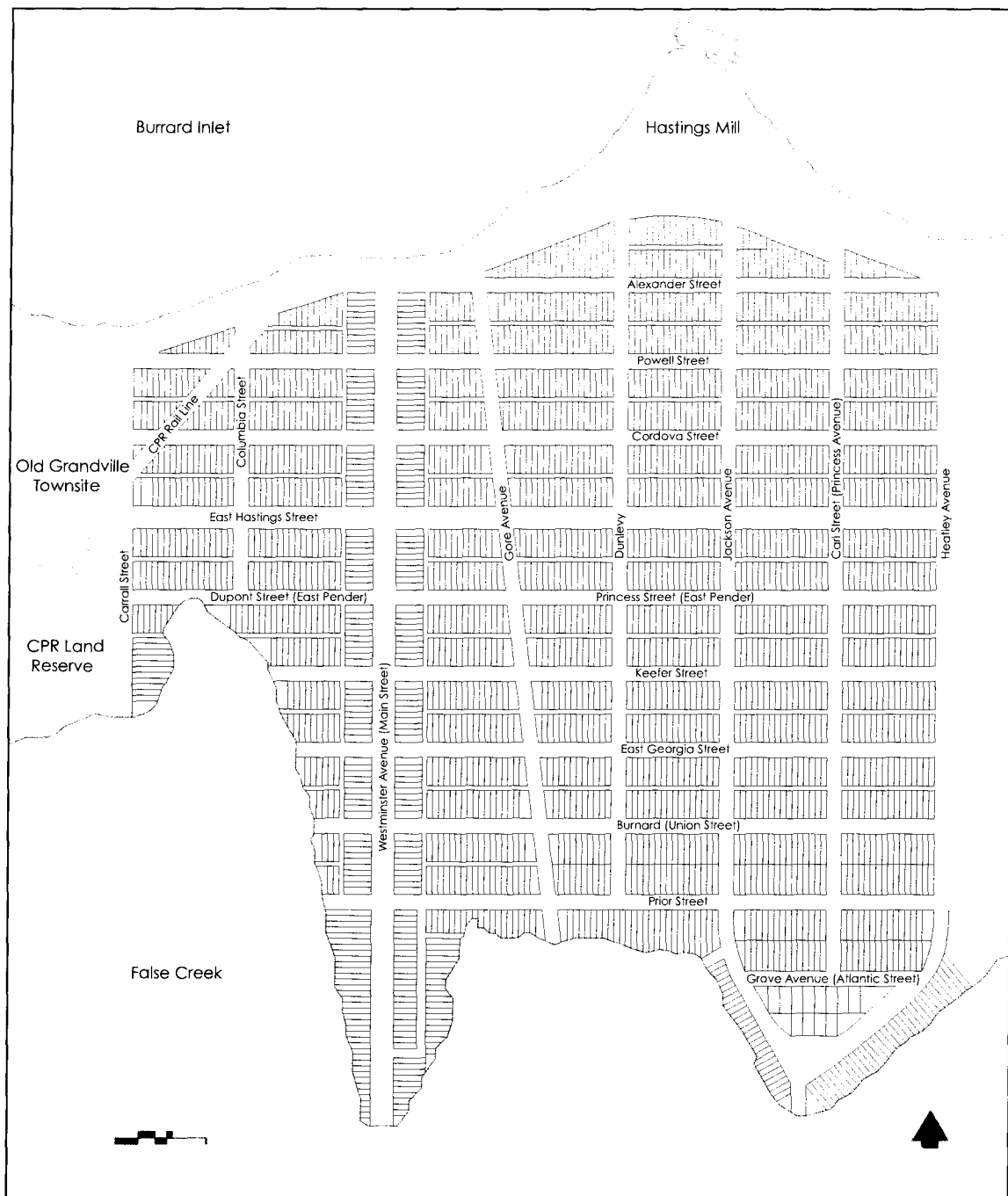


Figure 1.1 1887 District Lot 196 Subdivision Plan.

Source: City of Vancouver, Canadian Pacific Town Site. Ross and Ceperley. CVA: Map 33.

after 1947 and the repeal of the Exclusion Act. The period is highlighted by a major ideological re-conceptualization of Chinatown as an exotic ethnic enclave. The final period explores the relationship between the designation of Chinatown as a historic area in 1971, the renegotiation of Chinese heritage as a concept within the area and the reality of heritage practices.

## Tracing

Through this chronology three separate hybrid trajectories can be isolated traced. The intention is to trace the overall occurrence of a particular hybrid strategy. (Figure 1.2) The immediate visibility or identification of a hybrid form is only one strategy traced. The assumption is that some entities or circumstances are more likely to use hybridity as a visible marker (Trace 1: Hybrid representation practices). Social practice or economic circumstance may in some instances produce more nuanced and less visible hybrid forms that are no less important to or defining of Chinese lived social space (Trace 2: Hybrid planning practices). The accumulative result of changes to a building over time also reveals an important hybrid strategy. The primary trajectory traced within this study is the phenomenon of hybridization followed through a succession of buildings. As a result of a building's identification a secondary trajectory is revealed. This is the trajectory of the entity that employed hybridity as a strategy, for example the Cheng Wing Yeong Tong Society. Thus a building consists initially of an intersection between an entity and a strategy. The resulting building also becomes a trajectory. Although this marker is a static object it has the potential to be dynamic in form and meaning due to its physical alteration and subjective interpretation (Trace 3: Hybrid accretions).

The strategies can then be organized according to their tactical application and isolated along a trajectory, for example hybridized planning strategies. By their comparison a deliberate tactical rationale may be determined by their contextualization and a cultural interpretation may be possible. The trace provides a method by which to identify and analyze tactical applications that in many cases have no records to establish their historical significance.

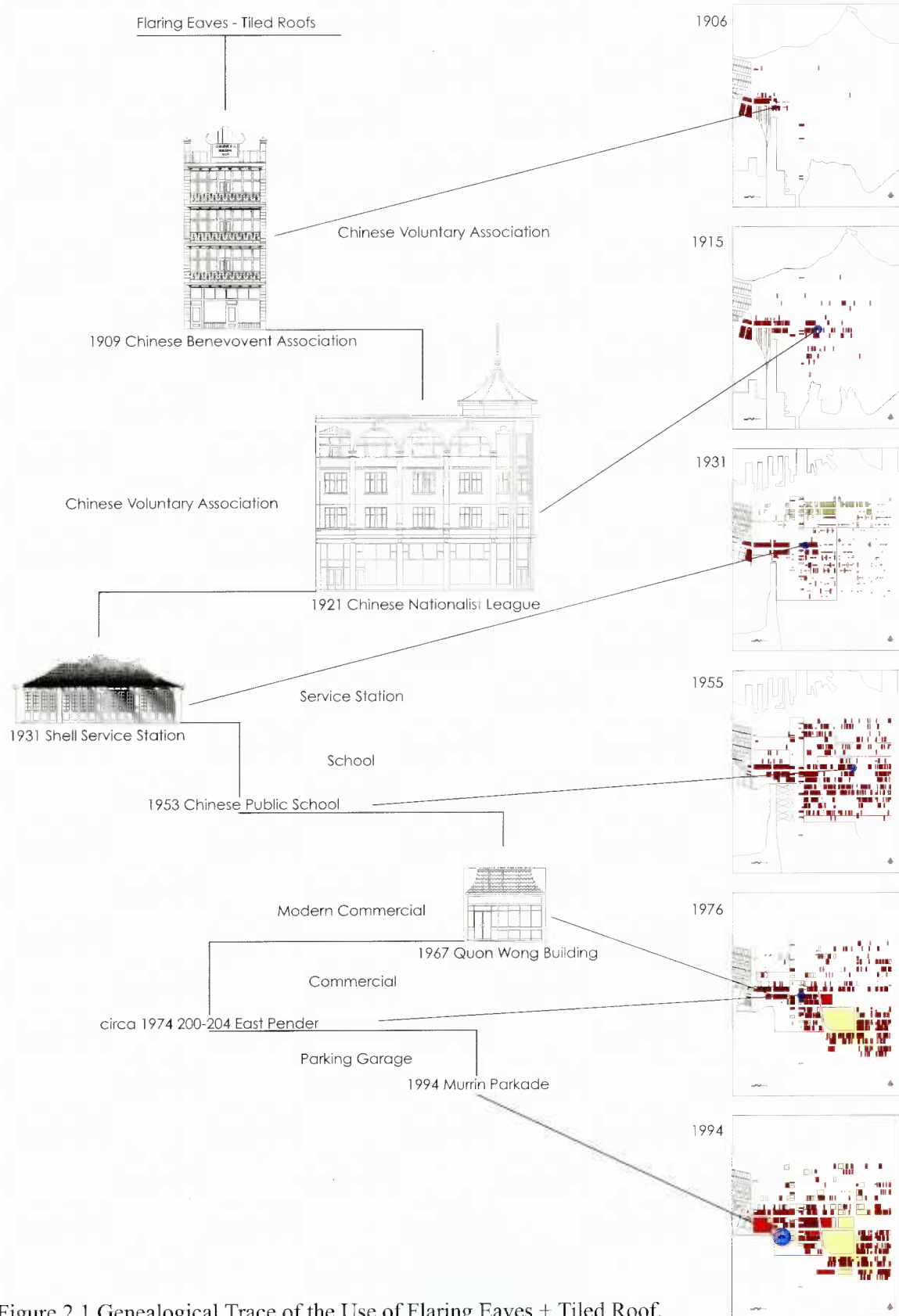


Figure 2.1 Genealogical Trace of the Use of Flaring Eaves + Tiled Roof.

The objective of the traces is two-fold. First, the traces provide a method of separating the general strategy of hybridization from a specific rationale. For example, the reason for adding a balcony on one building at a particular time may be very different from the same action at a different point in time. This is accomplished by comparing the form (plan, section, elevation and siting) to the historical circumstance that led to the building's construction. The idea is to identify how different entities and different socio-economic and political circumstances created a need for hybridity; produced and/or altered meaning for these forms and how different factors, such as government policy, influenced, the phenomenon over time. Second, the marker indicates the moment in time of deployment and gives a physical location relative to that moment. The marker then can be geographically located relative to other phenomena related to the Chinese population, such as the physical distribution of people and other trajectories. It also reveals a point of negotiation between trajectories. The trace becomes a document of hybrid practices across space and time, identifying and determining how hybrid practices operate distinctly and collectively. Tracing the incidence of hybridization along its trajectory is intended to reveal the multivalent interpretations, meanings and values that exist for "Chinatown's" architecture and spatial form.



## CHAPTER II

### Early Chinese Architectural Practices 1880 to 1929

#### 2.1 Introduction

The first Chinese immigrants to arrive in Vancouver, like all of North America, were primarily from the Guangdong and Fujian provinces of southeast China. Their migration to British Columbia and other diaspora communities throughout the Pacific Rim was motivated by economic hardship and political turmoil in China. The Chinese that arrived were comprised largely of a peasant population, but they brought with them a clear understanding of a market economy and business acumen.<sup>40</sup> Although a majority worked as labourers in the railway, logging, mining and fishing industries, other quickly began to operate small businesses catering to both a Chinese and non-Chinese clientele. As Vancouver began to steadily grow after it became the western terminus of the Canada Pacific Railway in 1885, Chinese became an integral part of its population. From the late 1880s through to the 1930s Chinese settled in density around the northern tidal flat of False Creek around Dupont Street (East Pender Street) and Carrall Street. Throughout this period Chinese also increasingly occupied property throughout District Lot 196 and operate farms and laundries as well as working as house servants and cooks throughout the city. Although a large part of Chinese social and political life centred around East Pender Street and Carrall Street, by the late 1920s Chinese business activities were well established and integrated into Vancouver's general economy and social fabric. This section examines the early physical and spatial establishment of Chinese businesses, visible political institutions and residences.

The intention of this section is to illustrate the breadth of Chinese social and physical mobility and to present an alternative spatial conceptualization than conventionally held based on an economic and social model deriving from the Southern Chinese market community. According to William Willmott, Chinese that migrated to Vancouver came in large part from an area with an agrarian economy based around market communities. The market community was comprised of a market town and its hinterland villages.<sup>41</sup> In these communities, each peasant farmer had direct knowledge of how he fit into the larger market system and some commercial experience.<sup>42</sup> The socio-economic organization of the market community and the commercial acumen it engendered was an essential export of the Chinese of this region, which had significant spatial implications. The early socio-economic spatiality of Vancouver's early Chinese population exhibits a similar socio-economic organization. What this socio-economic pattern suggests is that Chinatown cannot be completely

understood or comprehended without taking into consideration its function within a larger socio-economic local (and possibly regional and transnational) spatial network of Chinese and their relationship to their customers, employers and neighbours.

## **2.1 Wing Sang Company Building - 51 East Pender Street**

The case studies begin with an examination of the protracted development of the Wing Sang Company Building (1889-1912) as an example of the emergence of Southern Chinese socio-economic and cultural practices in the social and architectural landscape of early Vancouver. (Figure 2.1) The building's development and spatial planning are examined through the lens of Chinese merchant commercial practices and owner Yip Sang's family maturation. Research indicates that the building is a significant and rare repository of the stratum that existed between Chinese merchants and an example of how these distinctions produced opportunities for elite merchants in the arena of property development. As Yip Sang's family home, the Wing Sang Building's development also provides insight into merchant family structure and how it informed this building's spatial planning. The Wing Sang Building also provides evidence that early Chinese merchants were clearly cognizant of and responsive to the socio-economic conditions that were linking Vancouver to a larger Chinese transnational mobility. The Building and the early spatial concentration of Chinese along Dupont (East Pender Street) and Carrall Street are clearly the result of an emerging commerce linked to the negotiation and transportation of Chinese bodies and material to be employed in the development of this frontier.

As one of the earliest land purchases by Chinese in Vancouver (1892) and one of the earliest buildings (1889), the Wing Sang Building is noteworthy for its consistencies with and departure from Western architectural practices of the period.<sup>43</sup> Although the building appears visually consistent with Western practices, its planning and development pattern are atypical and should be understood as representative of an idiosyncratic architectural practice. The building's development provides an opportunity to trace the influence of Chinese commercial and social patterns on a Western building typology.

The commercial practices that were transferred with early Chinese immigrants provide an important social framework in which to contextualize the Wing Sang Building. To understand the development of Vancouver's Chinese merchant practices and their influence on the architecture (and the locating of businesses and their services) in Vancouver it is important to understand the socio-economic context of South Chinese. Although the majority of Chinese entering Canada were peasants, possibly more than any other group settling in Vancouver, commercial activity made up an integral part of Southern Chinese lived



Figure 2.1 Wing Sang Building.

Source: City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 675-17.

practices.<sup>44</sup> Most Chinese peasant farmers had a good working knowledge of their market economy and “first-hand knowledge of the commercial relations connecting his production to the world market and ...a good measure of commercial experience.”<sup>45</sup> Southern China had a “highly commercialized cash economy” where business activities and the desire to acquire wealth were of primary importance.<sup>46</sup> As Chinese arrived in Canada their business acumen became an integral part of the Chinese immigrant economy and many of these businesses were integrated into Vancouver’s general economy.

The vast majority of merchants were restaurant owners, tailors, jewelers, barbers and butchers and they were all “highly dependent on the outside community for jobs and customers.”<sup>47</sup> However, a number of Chinese merchants reached an elite status and were well diversified in the general economy. They were involved in a number of commercial enterprises that included land holdings and development across Vancouver and in some cases British Columbia.<sup>48</sup> In the Western context elite Chinese merchants’ quickly adopted Western social and legal “strategies to protect their investments.”<sup>49</sup> These strategies included hiring Occidental lawyers, professionals and tradesmen in addition they lobbied city hall for improvements to physical infrastructure around their property and challenged unfair business by-laws.<sup>50</sup>

Like many Chinese in the mid-1880s, Yip Sang traveled to North America to escape social and economic turmoil in Southern China. Yip Sang does not appear to have arrived in North America with wealth or a particular marketable skill. He did come with knowledge of commerce and trade according to family history.<sup>51</sup> However, Yip’s fortunes changed when he learned to speak English and began work as an interpreter and superintendent for the Canadian Pacific Railway, in charge of hiring Chinese contract labours and transporting them to work on the construction of new railway lines in Western Canada. Within this new and obscure mobile network linking Chinese labour to the North American railway industry, Yip obtained the capital to create the physical space for these (and other commercial) interactions.

In 1889 Yip Sang constructed 51 East Pender Street as a permanent location for the Wing Sang importing and exporting firm, an office for his role as a Chinese Passenger Agent for the Canadian Pacific Railway and Steamship Line and as his residence.<sup>52</sup> The building was modest in relative terms, but significant in the context of early Chinese architectural production in Vancouver. Stylistically, the building was consistent with the popular commercial Italianate style of the period.<sup>53</sup> The only feature that appears uncharacteristic to that popular commercial style is the second floor’s unprotected doorway that may have accommodated the loading and unloading of goods. Spatially the majority of the building was devoted to business activities with only a small section at the back of the second floor reserved for residential use. In total, the building’s program functions included a retail outlet,

ticket agency, warehouse, possibly some manufacturing and a residence. The building was inhabited entirely by Yip and illustrates how early merchants began to invest in the economy by maximizing their real estate assets.

Between 1891 and 1901 the number of Chinese living in Vancouver came close to doubling and made up around 12% of the total population.<sup>54</sup> In the context of Vancouver's continued growth and an increase in the Chinese population, Yip Sang constructed the first addition to the Wing Sang Building. Yip hired architect Thomas Ennor Julian to design the addition, which was completed in 1901.<sup>55</sup> The new three-storey section extended Yip's building fifty feet down East Pender Street with the third floor blanketing the existing structure. Close to two thirds of the addition's program was for commercial lease with the remaining space designated for Yip's family. The stacking of a new floor over an existing structure may have been uncommon, but the overall appearance of the building conformed generally to the predominant architectural style of the period. From the exterior, Thomas Ennor Julian's design betrays little of the spatial divergence observed within the particularities of the building's spatial planning.

The addition to the Wing Sang Building accommodated the further expansion of Yip's business activities, in which real estate development was clearly becoming an important part, and the maturation of his family. Programmatically, the new commercial section consisted of six separate units, three located on grade and three on the second floor with separate entry off East Pender Street.<sup>56</sup> (Figure 2.2) The number of commercial units and the unit's physical connection to the street are unique characteristics of the building. The third floor was partitioned into nine general rooms (probably sleeping quarters), three kitchens, three water closets, a large meeting hall and a classroom. An explanation for the spatial planning is directly attributable to the increase in the Chinese population in general, an increase in the number of small-scale merchants and social customs of affluent Chinese merchants.

The Wing Sang Building illustrates that as the Chinese merchant class began to expand following Vancouver's incorporation in 1886, merchant elites like Yip Sang began to envision and erect spaces that appear to be more suitable to Chinese socio-economic patterns. The commercial addition to the Wing Sang Building indicates that Yip Sang was responding to the spatial needs of small-scale merchant businesses. Spatially, all the units were self-contained with direct access to East Pender Street, via doors or stairs from grade that provided autonomy to individual lessees. In the realm of business and, in particular, real estate and property development Chinese elite merchants were making important innovations to Western typologies to satisfy the spatial requirements of Chinese.

The addition of the third floor illustrates the influence of Chinese family structures

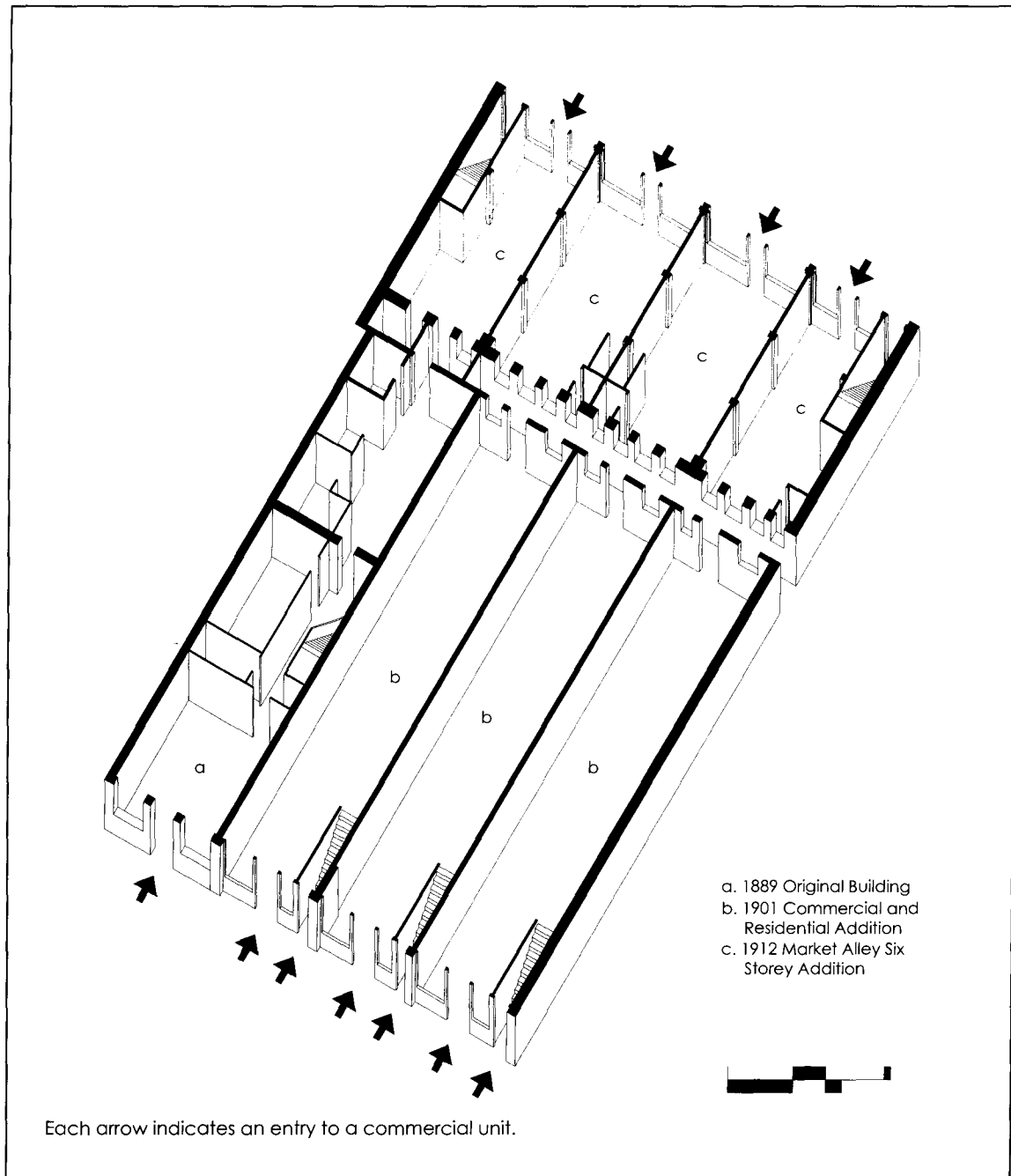


Figure 2.2 Main Floor Plan Wing Sang Co. Building, 1912.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on Graham Yip, "The Wing Sang Co. Building: A Cultural Bridge." School of Architecture Direct Studies, University of British Columbia, 1982.

and social customs on the spatial organization on the building. By the 1890s, Yip had established himself as a powerful and wealthy merchant, which in China afforded him the status to have more than one wife. In the early 1890s, Yip had returned to Canada with one of his wives and by 1901 Yip had united his entire family in Vancouver.<sup>57</sup> The third floor of the addition was made to accommodate his three wives and numerous children. The floor appears to have been divided into thirds providing each wife with a kitchen and water closet with the meeting hall and classrooms maintained as common spaces.

The final accretion to the Wing Sang Building, constructed in 1912, illustrates a similar pattern and rationale to that of the earlier addition.<sup>58</sup> The addition was a separate six-storey structure constructed adjacent to Market Alley and separated from the existing structure by a ten-foot breezeway. A bridge at the third floor adjoined the two residential sections. Programmatically the main floor functioned as a commercial warehouse. Conservation drawings indicate the floor's fenestration was consistent with typical commercial elevations found on East Pender Street, suggesting that the space may have had other commercial functions.<sup>59</sup> Market Alley had become a secondary street populated by Chinese commercial and residential buildings. Although the occupation of the lane as a secondary street is not an exclusively Chinese practice, it does appear to be predominant in Chinatown during its early spatial development that created a unique spatial characteristic of this particular area of Vancouver. The additional floors were for residential use and consisted of two kitchens, a bathroom, a water closet and six additional rooms. After construction, Yip's immediate family occupied the top three floors with the second and third floor housing new immigrants. The original family quarters became the residence of Yip's extended family. In the following years the building complex was home to over one hundred people.

The Wing Sang Company Building, viewed from an urban scale maintains a visual consistency with dominant Western patterns. The building's visual representation conceals what was spatially the repository of a Chinese economic and social sensibility. Yip maintained important parts of his cultural identity through his personal lived practices within the spaces of the Wing Sang Building. In some sense the buildings' form concealed social practices that may have come into conflict with western "social norms."

The building's combination of deliberate Chinese space wrapped in Western guise has been a predominant interest in the study of early Chinese North American space and building. Most often the focus has centred on the absence of a deliberate or self-conscious Chinese visual practice and inferences that could be derived from this discord. In some respects, the exercise of introducing ideas of racism into the reading of early merchant architecture in Vancouver is difficult. The veracity of the argument that Yip Sang or other merchants

followed predominant architectural patterns to maintain a representational consistency or sameness as a tactic to avoid coercive or antagonistic social responses to a Chinese presence in the city is difficult to determine.<sup>60</sup> Yip's intentions for the Wing Sang Building in this regard are unknown.

It must be considered that the Wing Sang Building's visual representation may simply be the response to dominant modes of product and social convention with no forethought given to the implications of its visual expression. Historically, material production and construction methods were well established prior to Vancouver incorporation and the government and Canadian Pacific Railway controlled early subdivision patterns.<sup>61</sup> Signage on the building displayed the Wing Sang Co. name and the fact that Yip advertised the business in non-Chinese newspapers indicates that Yip was not attempting to conceal his business or identity from non-Chinese.<sup>62</sup> The atypical characteristics of multiple commercial bays and stairs certainly created a visually different form, which makes a definitive reading of the building difficult. There is certainly some blurring that occurs with the divergence from typical patterns, however it is difficult to say what reading the building may have produced in the context of the turn of the nineteenth century, if any.<sup>63</sup>

What appears significant about the Wing Sang Company Building is that it illustrates the convergence and coalescing of a new social condition, not necessarily as an evasion of social conflict, but as a negotiation so as to establish new social practices. Although North America had already become part of the Chinese diaspora network by the mid-1850s, the establishment of commercial practices and a building production linked to the movement of bodies and materials within this network was a pivotal event. It tied Vancouver into the large and dynamic network of the Chinese world. Mapping Chinese land occupation using the 1895 William's Directory indicates Chinese lived in a significant concentration around East Pender Street and Carrall Street, however they were not limited to this area. (Figure 2.3) Larger mapping of Chinese in Vancouver from 1892 and 1910 both indicate a Chinese distribution beyond this area.<sup>64</sup> While the Wing Sang Company Building and other merchant businesses indicate a concentration of Chinese, the socio-economic space of Chinese clearly extended beyond this area. Although elite merchant activities produced the most tangible artifacts by which to understand the spatiality of early Chinese in Vancouver it must be recognized that small Chinese enterprises like laundries and farming existed and made up an important part of Chinese lived social space in Vancouver.<sup>65</sup>



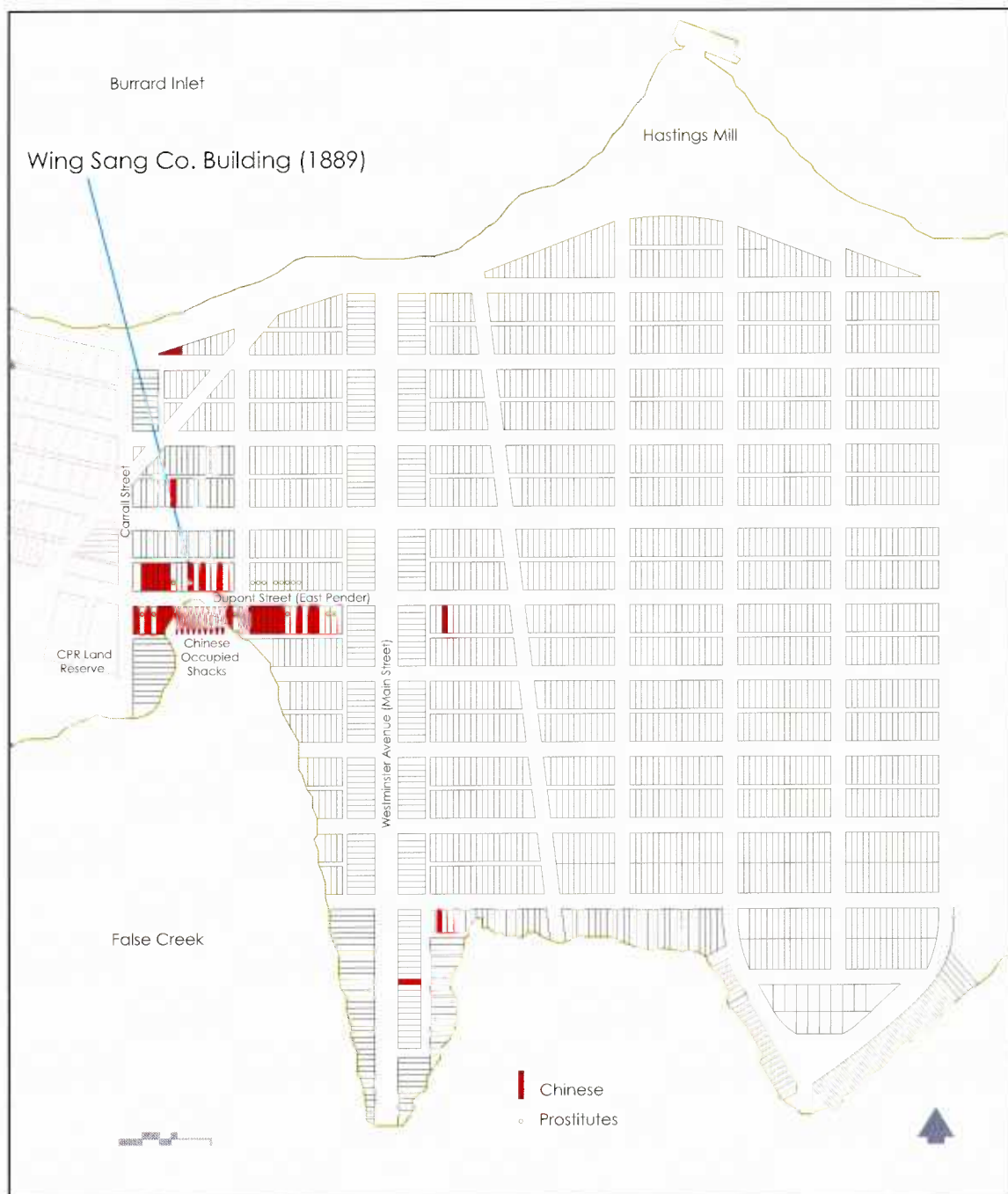


Figure 2.3 1895 Chinese Occupation Map.

Source: William's Official British Columbia Directory 1895.

### **2.3 Chinese Benevolent Association - 104 East Pender Street**

The earliest and likely first historical use of a visibly Chinese architectural representation in Vancouver was probably the flaring eaves used on the Chinese Benevolent Association Building (CBA) erected in 1909.<sup>66</sup> (Figure 2.4) This case considers the possible motives for producing what appears to be a clearly Chinese representational identity. Because the case study speculates on the rationale for employing flaring eaves and their significance at this moment in time I have contextualized the CBA Building by comparing it to the 1903 Empire Reform Association Building.<sup>67</sup> This archeological approach is being used in an effort to gain a better understanding of the form's possible meaning and implication. The CBA Building and the Empire Reform Association Building were both established by elite Chinese merchants and represent two of the first visible Chinese political institutions.<sup>68</sup> Both of these buildings exhibit similar characteristics and display architectural features that have been identified with early Chinese architectural practices in Vancouver. However the political rationale for downplaying a Chinese cultural identity on the Empire Reform Association Building in contrast to its assertion on the CBA Building is a noteworthy representational difference.<sup>69</sup> It suggests a link was being drawn between the CBA's role as a representational body for Chinese in general and flaring eaves as a Chinese cultural and political sign.<sup>70</sup> By producing a visibly Chinese representation, the merchant class established a more visible Chinese representational identity within the urban landscape than may have existed prior to this and that may have established a new form of spatial order. This case study explores how hybridity and particularly flaring eaves provided elite Chinese merchants a representational system that could both blur and construct codes of visual difference.

According to the historical records available, the earliest Chinese voluntary associations do not appear to have erected an identifiable architecture. William Willmott recounts that early Chinese political institutions were considered a threat to the dominant society and therefore were usually covert and governed without visible form.<sup>71</sup> However it is clear that by 1903, with the construction of the Empire Reform Association Building, that practice had changed. Both the Empire Reform Association Building and the CBA Building suggest that when Chinese began to erect visible political institutions they did so displaying an intentional diversity in their representations.

In many respects these two associations were similar in their commitment to provide social and cultural services to the Chinese population.<sup>72</sup> These similarities are likely the result of established social patterns and traditional roles of voluntary associations in

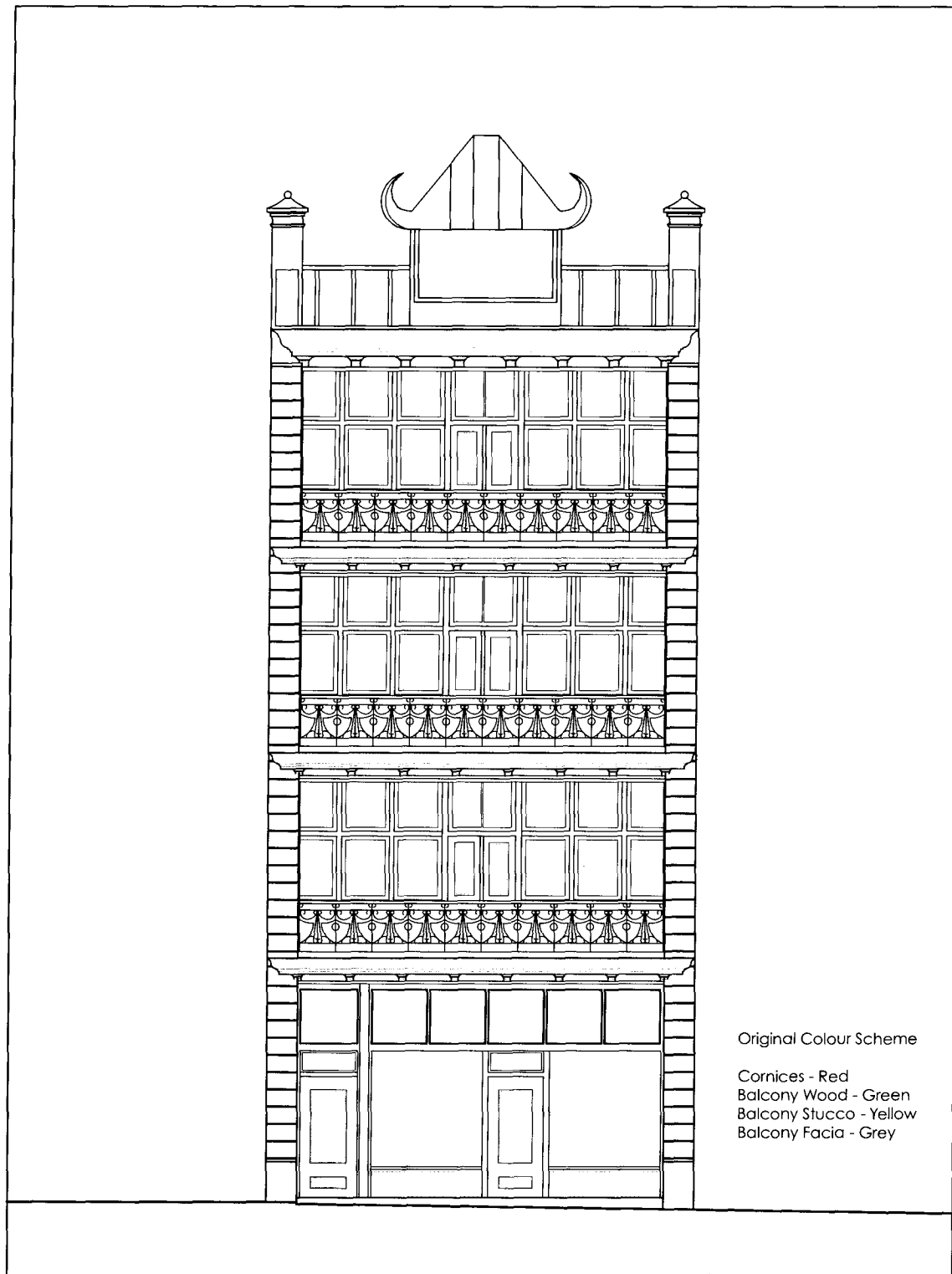


Figure 2.4 Chinese Benevolent Association Building, 104 East Pender Street, 1909.

Source: Measured reconstruction drawing of original facade by Stephen Brouwers.

Flaring eaves design based on "Pender Street" Vancouver BC, ca 1929, Stuart Thomson

Photo, CVA 99-2463, Loc. 174-A-3. Main Floor design based on study of period facades.

Southern China and the diaspora.<sup>73</sup> However, the rationale for the establishment of these two associations was markedly different. Where fraternal associations formed by merchants were centred on Chinese politics and their own commercial interests, the registering of the CBA as a society in 1906 and the construction of the CBA Building in 1909 seem to correspond to an important shift in the social role of the merchant class in the first two decades of the twentieth century.<sup>74</sup> Merchants had enriched themselves through numerous commercial activities that included providing food, materials, housing and employment for the Chinese population. In addition, they also acted as labour brokers for non-Chinese companies and sold products and services to the general population. However, as the Chinese population of Vancouver began to grow and the social climate became increasingly hostile, the merchant class also began to take on the welfare and representational responsibilities for the Chinese populations.<sup>75</sup> The need to establish different organizations and representational identities appears to reflect the complex social position held by merchants during this period.

In both buildings, the design of the façades is clearly similar and they share common characteristics identified with early Chinese hybrid architecture. However, each building appears to possess a representational emphasis that corresponds to their particular political mandate. Publicly, the political agenda of the Empire Reform Association was to garner support for the establishment of an Imperial constitutional monarchy in China.<sup>76</sup> The organization used the power and prestige of overseas merchants to garner support from diaspora Chinese as well as the Canadian government and Occidental business leaders.<sup>77</sup> The Association was positioned politically to promote the political ideals of a constitutional monarchy while advocating for better trade relations between China and Canada. For merchants the establishment of the Empire Reform Association was in large part a vehicle through which to promote the politics of trade.<sup>78</sup> The reform and modernization of the existing Imperial framework would have been a practical way of avoiding major disruptions to their business ventures.<sup>79</sup> China's stability, increased trade and better commercial relations locally were key factors in the political positioning of the Empire Reform Association. Prior to the Association's construction, a newspaper article indicated there was general public support amongst Occidentals for the construction of an association building.<sup>80</sup>

Formally the Empire Reform Association façade was a layered assemblage of Western stylistic features arranged according to established Chinese space-making patterns from Guangzhou. However, a strong part of the façade's visual character is established by the Italianate architectural details that compose the outer-most layer of the building's façade. (Figure 2.5) It is a quality that appears to be intensified by the visual effect of the shadows created by the recessed balconies contrasted against its Italianate columns and arches. The



Figure 2.5 Empire Reform Association.

Source: City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 677-580.

most discernable interpretation of the façade from a contemporary position is its relationship to Southern Chinese hybrid architectural practices.

However, it appears that in an early 20<sup>th</sup> century subject position may have produced appreciably different interpretations of the building. Chinese may have recognized the building as being representative of a modernity and Western status observed in the commercial activities and wealth of homeland merchants. In contrast, Alan Gowans provided an alternative Canadian architectural interpretation that suggests the design may have produced associations to a Western historical past for the building's non-Chinese audience.

As a sub-category of Early Victorian architecture, the Italianate style was a less restrained stylistic and symbolic category than other stylistic modes of the time.<sup>81</sup> According to Gowans, the tendency of Victorian architects was to “look on architectural forms for their symbolic implications rather than for their fitness for a particular building's needs.” The openness of the Italianate style “freed builders from pedantic criticism” and provided opportunity to indulge in the composing of picturesque forms. Gowans argues that within Canada the Italianate style “acquired subtle symbolic complexities” that were flexible and offered multiple reading / interpretations “for every taste and station in life... you could read into it whatever romantic or national or social implications you chose.”<sup>82</sup> The Italianate building could be read as either an aesthetically subtle picturesque image of the past or as a political allusion to a modern republic.

The Italianate Style's aesthetic and symbolic flexibility appear to have been appropriate for the Empire Reform Association's multi-faceted representational requirements. Gowans' assertion suggests that within this popular idiom the political representation of a minority group could be established and balanced within a dominant cultural framework. The composition ‘clothed’ the building in a guise that could be interpreted as “a nostalgic image of the past” or as an image of a materializing modernity, the building's merchant clients, and the Chinese and Occidental populations could lavish on it whatever symbolic interpretation they wanted. The style and building form were appropriate for both the political and commercial agenda of the organization. Adopting a formally and symbolically flexible representation for the first visible Chinese political association in Vancouver may also have been a coincidence or an astute political gesture on the part of the merchants who did not want to be associated with the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901).<sup>83</sup>

Although this interpretation of the Empire Reform Association façade is not substantiated by direct evidence, the building's contrast to the CBA Building, and the CBA's political mandate, suggest an awareness and intentionality in the creation of the façade's

distinct representational identities of the respective facades. The CBA was originally founded in 1889 and formally registered under the B.C. Societies Act in 1906, just as Chinese increasingly required representation to deal with conflicts with non-Chinese and the governments that were passing discriminatory legislation against Chinese. In contrast to the Empire Reform Association, the CBA was established “to be the highest organization and leader of the Chinese community. Its general goal was to provide protection and assistance to the Chinese population... the prestige of its founders and early leaders readily elevated it to the desired status of leading organization and spokesman for the Chinese as a whole.”<sup>84</sup> It was a role that became particularly relevant in the 6 years that separate these buildings. During this time span the Chinese head tax was raised from \$100 to \$500 (1903) and Vancouver had its second anti-Asiatic riot (1907). I believe the construction of the CBA Building in 1909 and the representational form it took in the aftermath of 1907 is an important consideration in its interpretation.

Two elements distinguish the building, the application of what appears to be a traditional Chinese colour palette and the use of flaring eaves on a pediment at the apex of the building.<sup>85</sup> (CBA Drawing) Architecturally these features gave the Building a decidedly Chinese character. The motivation for applying these forms and creating a more legibly Chinese representational identity is probably not coincidental.<sup>86</sup> As an umbrella organization, the CBA’s primary political role was the advocacy and protection of Chinese rights and welfare in Canada. The Building’s employment of flaring eaves provides a unequivocal link to a Chinese identity, which seems significant considering the social context and the association’s political mandate.

### Spatial Implications

I would like to speculate on the spatial implications of these actions and give an at least partial explanation for the production of visible Chinese institutions at this time. Since the 1890s both Chinese and prostitutes had coexisted in the immediate area surrounding the intersection of Carrall Street and East Pender Street. (Figure 2.6) In the decades around 1900 Occidental businessmen, labour groups and politicians began to suggest that a moral crisis existed amongst the Chinese as a justification for challenging the Chinese right to space on the grounds that they “...are inclined to habits subversive of the comfort and well being of the community.”<sup>87</sup> Anderson has demonstrated how “Chinese” as a racial category and Chinatown as a space were identified as being immoral. “Their moral and social condition is

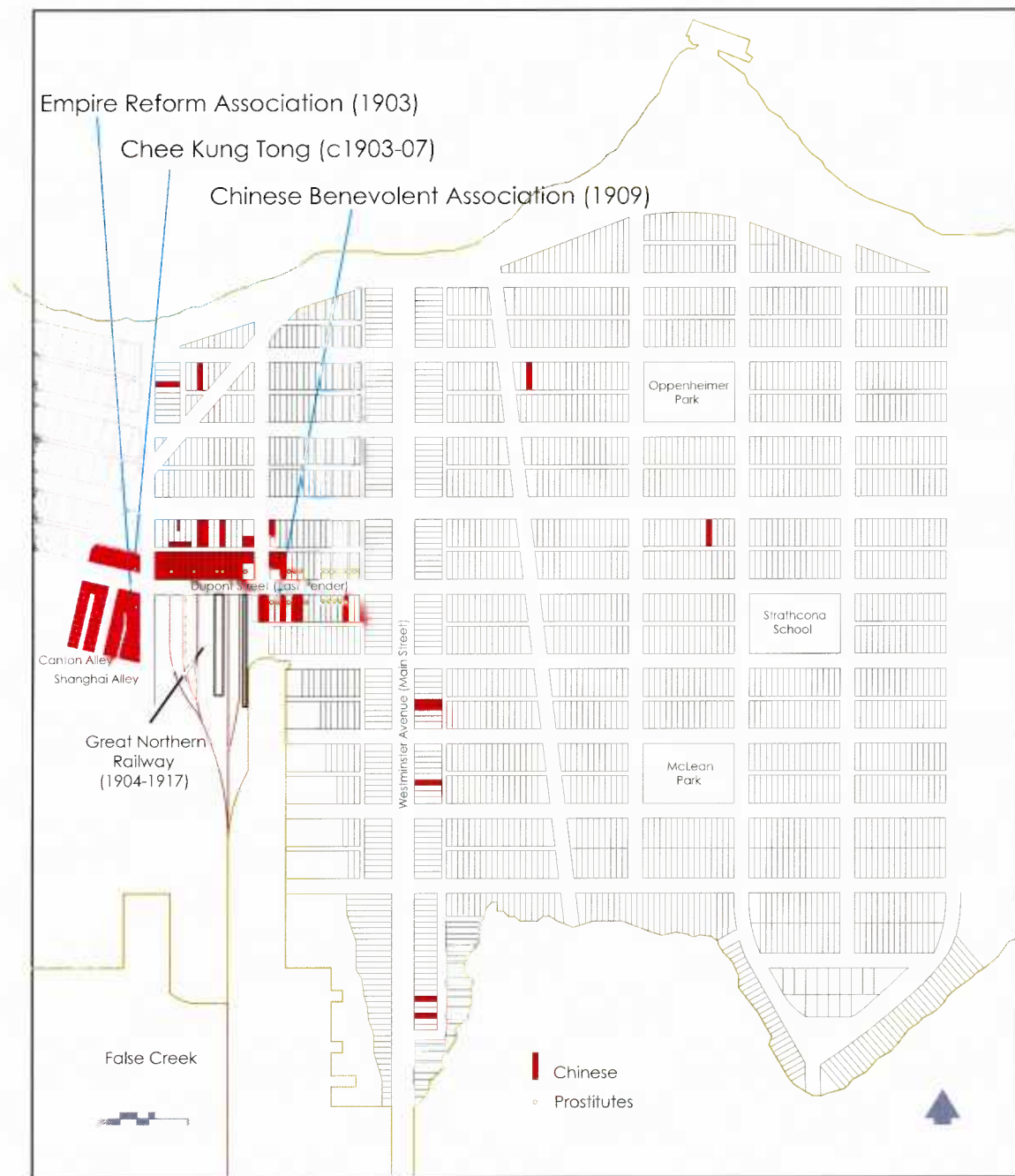


Figure 2.6 1906 Chinese Land Occupation Map.

Source: Henderson's City of Vancouver Directory 1906.



degraded in the extreme.”<sup>88</sup> “They have a system of secret societies which encourage crime amongst themselves.”<sup>89</sup> Gambling, drugs and prostitution were all social vices identified with Chinatown and therefore represented both a political and spatial crisis for merchants that were keenly aware of how this could affected their personal assets.<sup>90</sup>

The production of visibility for Chinese institutions in general and the CBA Buildings in particular would have given Chinese a discernable political presence within the urban landscape. It should be noted that both the Empire Reform Association Building and the CBA Building had their names placed in English on the pediments of their buildings. The significance of this action and its larger spatial implications might be explained by the theories of David Smith and Michael Foucault. Smith argues that, “Imposing order on the landscape is an intrinsically moral project...Michael Foucault explains that space is fundamental in the exercise of power...architecture is a means to promote the aims and techniques of government. It is therefore important to consider the ways in which a change in space also indicates a change in power.”<sup>91</sup> The relationship that is described is that of a dominant groups action to control space. However, if morality (control) of space can be established through the instrument of architecture, it seems that this action should be true for subordinate groups as well. The merchant class, by creating visible political institutions that imposed a representational order on the urban landscape and by erecting these associations would have been able to assert some power as a means of redressing some of the concerns over the moral conditions of that space identified as Chinese. To some extent they would have been able to rebut claims of immorality by creating a political order that distinguished vice from Chinese institutional power.<sup>92</sup> By erecting the Empire Reform Association Building and CBA Building (in addition to other public institution) the Chinese merchant class could have at once promoted Chinese interests, protected Chinese rights and establish representation identity built around institutional power.<sup>93</sup>

The Vancouver Directories indicate the concentration of Chinese within this area; they also supply an important picture of the extent of Chinese businesses during Vancouver’s early development. Chinese laundries in particular were located throughout the city and Chinese worked in a number of industries that required them to also move throughout the city. Although Chinese were spatial and socially concentrated around the False Creek basin, many of their early commercial practices engendered a significant spatial mobility. These movements and the commercial activities they engendered were important spatial characteristics of the city. To what extent these practices constructed particular spatial patterns is beyond the scope of this study, however, it would be difficult to suggest they were irrelevant considering the historical significance of small scale Chinese commercial activity within the city.

## **2.4 Ko Sing Theatre - 124 East Pender Street**

In the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, East Pender Street from the corner of Carrall Street east to Main Street began to be populated by increasing numbers of commercial buildings. Almost exclusively, these buildings appear to have followed common typological patterns. Standards of construction had been established by the City of Vancouver for commercial building in 1886 after fire destroyed much of the city. From that point in time, the city prescribed details of form, construction and material use that were periodically updated as new materials and building methods emerged.<sup>94</sup> Many of the commercial buildings of this period were derivative in style, with little to distinguish their common form. 79 East Pender Street, 121-125 East Pender Street and 124 East Pender Street are all examples of this form of typological consistency.<sup>95</sup> The buildings were all erected between 1905 and 1915 in an Italianate commercial style.<sup>96</sup> The buildings root form consisted of a three-storey brick exterior with a wood post-and-beam structure. Aesthetically, the façades were composed in two sections consisting of top floor articulated by arched headed windows set into a brick wall highlighted by a corbelled brick stringcourse and a completely glazed lower section containing two separate floors.

Programmatically, 79 East Pender Street and 121-125 East Pender Street appear to have followed the common typological pattern of combined commercial and residential functions.<sup>97</sup> Judging from the exterior, 124 East Pender appears to follow this same pattern, however in planning and program the building exhibits some considerable divergence. Archival drawings confirm that the building's developer, owner and theatre impresario, Loo Gee Wing, had originally made his capital investment in a building that combined a theatre and restaurants.<sup>98</sup> The plans indicate a number of commercial spaces on the main floor, restaurants on a second and third floor, a forth floor with an unspecified open plan and a theatre at the rear of the site.<sup>99</sup> In contrast to the practice of using a straight run stair from the street, a characteristic found in a number of Chinese-occupied or constructed buildings in Vancouver, the circulation path carves through the building via a hallway to a set of stairs at the back of the four-storey section. This circulation corridor had a dual function of providing access to the upper levels of the building and an entry to the theatre. The design appears to have intentionally integrated the circulation pattern to provide a higher likelihood of interaction between the restaurant and theatre patrons. Although 124 East Pender Street maintains typological consistency in general form its program and planning are unique. The building illustrates that within what appears to be a relatively common typology, Chinese were creating a cultivated convergence of interacting programs and producing new hybrid forms.

According to Wing Chung Ng's study of Chinese Theatre, Chinatown Theatre as Transnational Business, the Chinese theatre industry and Chinese Opera at its height was a popular entertainment among Chinese and garnered a great deal of business competition. Ng's study reveals the significance of the transnational mobility of Cantonese opera troupes and merchant capital for recruiting actors and paying for immigration bonds. Although Ng's study does not directly discuss how the theatre was integrated with the socio-political life of the Chinese, his research of business records and theatres as a business organization provides essential background to understanding the production of Chinese theatre houses.<sup>100</sup>

A principle factor in facilitating the theatre industry was the capital investment made by merchant elites like Chang Toy and Loo Gee Wing to construct the Sing Ping and Ko Sing Theatres respectively.<sup>101</sup> Although the exact date of construction of the Ko Sing Theatre is unknown, the Chinese Times notes both the Ko Sing and the Sing Ping Theatres were operating by 1915.<sup>102</sup> The Ko Sing Theatre space appeared to follow the physical and functional pattern of an older Shanghai Alley theatre described by J. S. Matthews.<sup>103</sup> According to Matthews, the earliest Chinese theatre in Vancouver was an informal location with general seating and audience members entering and leaving, as they desired.<sup>104</sup> The theatre was "a place for public socializing, for having a good time and escaping the drudgery of immigrant life."<sup>105</sup> The original drawings of the Ko Sing Theatre indicate that it had a mezzanine and fixed rows of undifferentiated bench seating. These drawings suggest a formal consistency with Matthew's description of the theatre's informal administration. However, the Ko Sing Theatre building is clearly distinguished by Loo's investment in a more complex and integrated program.

Loo's amalgamation of programmatic functions in relation to the planning suggests design was intended to cultivate dependency and interaction between restaurants and theatre patrons.<sup>106</sup> The hybridization of the programs may also have been a way of cross-promoting business interests and had the practical advantage of insulating his investment from changes in the market. For Chinese entrepreneurs, the theatre business came with some risks. Records of the Wing Hong Lin Theatre Company, which operated out of the Sing Ping Theatre, show consistent losses, which led to the Company's eventual closing in 1918.<sup>107</sup> Loo's building had some business advantage built into its program and planning. By internalizing the circulation between programs patrons could be enticed to spend more time and money on his premises.

As a result of an upsurge in Chinese Opera during the 1920s Loo hired architect S. B. Bird in 1921 to make alterations to the theatre consisting of the addition of a dressing room for actors, a ticket office at the entry of the theatre and box seats on the mezzanine level.<sup>108</sup> These alterations may in large part have been in response to increased social mobility of

Chinese actors and indicate how social distinction among the audience began to be manifest in the space of the theatre. (Figure 2.7)

Historically, actors were not held in high regard within traditional Chinese society. Additionally, most actors willing to travel to Vancouver during the early development of the theatre industry were considered inferior second tier performers and were subject to treatment in accordance to that status.<sup>109</sup> However, by the 1920s, production costs, political and social turmoil and a slow down in the South Chinese theatre market made travel to North America more appealing for top tier actors.<sup>110</sup> Some of these actors had gained a “superstar” status and had begun to command lucrative contracts. For these actors the conditions and standards of their predecessors may not have been adequate. The addition of dressing rooms to the Ko Sing Theatre suggests that the status of the actors performing at the theatre had changed.

The addition of a ticket office and box seating illustrates how the construction of this “public space” began to reinforce or mirror social distinctions amongst the audience.<sup>111</sup> The introduction of a ticket office indicates new controls were being introduced to the theatre that clearly revolved around the introduction of box seats in the mezzanine. The construction of separate and one can assume more expensive box seats does not appear to have been an issue of gender, but rather of class. Ng notes that a number of contemporary authors indicate women and children regularly attended performances and they give no indication that their seating was segregated. Ng speculates in his notes that the theatre may have been a site of community building and mobilization.<sup>112</sup> There is the suggestion that theatre space provided an opportunity for women to participate in Chinese public life. However, differentiated seating also indicates that the theatre was also a site that maintained some form of social distinction. Box seating suggests that Chinese able to pay higher ticket prices could and wanted to separate themselves from the labouring class majority.

The expanding theatre market during this period created demands for new venues and in 1921 the former Imperial Theatre located at 720 Main Street also began to showcase Chinese Opera.<sup>113</sup> The Imperial had originally opened in 1912 as a Vaudeville and movie house that catered to an Occidental audience, but within the decade the business had failed.<sup>114</sup> In contrast, the activity and strength of the Chinese theatre industry during this period provided the incentive to take over the Imperial.<sup>115</sup> The mobility of Chinese theatre and the Chinese population was to a large extent the result of the 1923 Exclusion Act that produced a major shift in the Chinese population towards major Chinese urban centres like Vancouver.<sup>116</sup> In large part institutional racism created conditions in which Chinese labours were easily excluded from core labour market that existed outside major urban centres.<sup>117</sup>

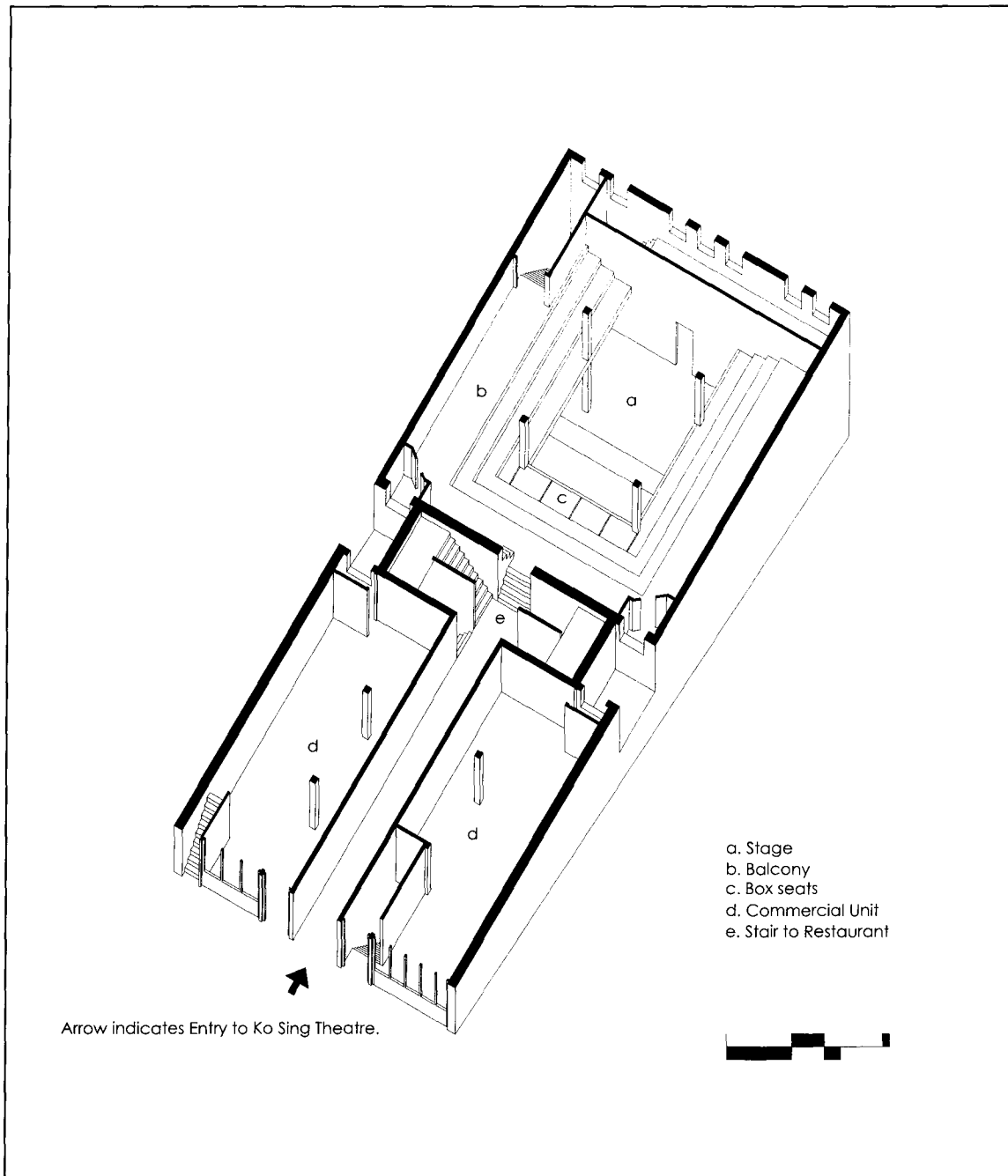


Figure 2.7 Ko Sing Theatre 124 (122-126) East Pender Street, circa 1909 (Renovation 1921).

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on City of Vancouver, Statement of Significance Research Files, Chinese Theatre 124 (122-126) East Pender Street, "1921 Renovation by S. B. Bird," Commonwealth Heritage Management, 2004-05.

## **2.5 Chinese Nationalist League Building - 525-545 Gore Avenue**

In 1920 the Chinese national party, the Kuomintang (KMT), constructed the Chinese Nationalist League Building at the corner of East Pender and Gore Avenue as its western branch headquarters.<sup>118</sup> This case study presents an analysis of the building's external expression relative to ongoing Chinese homeland and local political conflicts and persistent racial hostility. (Figure 2.8) The analysis suggests that the incorporation of conspicuous Chinese representation motifs in the design and possibly the location of the Chinese Nationalist League Building were responding to multiple political contests. The application of a visibly Chinese ornamentation on the building appears to have been an attempt by the KMT to draw an association between itself and a form of authoritative Chinese identity. The Chinese Nationalist League Building is evidence of how Chinese political contests and conflict were increasingly informing the architecture along East Pender Street, in addition, its construction debunks the notion of the existence of a contested and homogenous Chinese political centre.

Within the Chinese diaspora, chain migration, sojourning labour practices and merchant trade all created vital social ties to China. As a result of this connectivity, events in the homeland often spilled into the social and political life of Chinese abroad. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Chinese homeland political turmoil was an endless source of political friction locally as competing homeland Chinese fractions jockeyed to establish political and financial support amongst the diaspora Chinese.<sup>119</sup> Like the Empire Reform Association, the KMT emerged as a result of Chinese political instability that began after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and China's defeat by the Japanese. For homeland and local Chinese the conflict that emerged circulated on the debate over China's political future.<sup>120</sup>

The emergence of the KMT party, formed by Sun Yet-sen after the defeat of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 and the establishment of the Nationalist government in South China, did little to stabilize China or quell political conflict amongst Vancouver's Chinese. Part of the continued hostilities appears directly attributable to Sun Yen-sen's political activities prior to 1911.<sup>121</sup> Sun Yet-sen, like other charismatic political leaders emerging from China at the turn-of-the-twentieth century, understood the significance of the diaspora as a source of political and financial support.<sup>122</sup> To this end, forging political alliances locally among competing organizations became a necessity for Sun Yet-sen's power base. For Sun Yet-sen allying with the Cheekungtung, one of the earliest fraternal associations in North America, provided a large political base.<sup>123</sup> However, that base was primarily constituted from a



Figure 2.8 Chinese Nationalist League Building.

Source: City of Vancouver Archives, CVA99-3202.

labouring class whose members could not provide the financial assistance required for Sun Yet-sen's ongoing military campaigns after 1911. Sun Yet-sen's establishment of the KMT and Chinese Nationalist League was intended to provide regional headquarters that could operate as political bases in the diaspora to raise money and support for his government. Although many circumstances contributed to ongoing political conflict between the KMT and other fraternal organizations the decisions to forgo the promise to provide the Cheekungtung elite influence within the Nationalist government appears to have been a source of local political contention after 1911.<sup>124</sup> The antagonism between the KMT and Cheekungtung after 1911 locally should also be understood as a contest between fraternal organizations.<sup>125</sup>

After 1912 it appears that the KMT emerged as a political force amongst local Chinese and its members became an increasingly dominant presence in the CBA.<sup>126</sup> Between 1912 and 1920, Sun Yet-sen made the Canadian branches of the KMT one of his primary concerns and its Vancouver branch may have been of some import because of the large and established Chinese population.<sup>127</sup> When the KMT built the Chinese Nationalist League Building in 1920 the organization had become well entrenched in local Chinese politics. The conspicuous reuse of a pagoda form with flaring eaves suggests it was again being applied as a signifier of a Chinese political identity.

The Chinese Nationalist League Building conforms in many respects to the general characteristics found in Vancouver's voluntary associations however, in planning, construction and to some extent style the building show some distinction. In contrast to the common practice of organizing the planning around a single run stair the Chinese Nationalist League Building planning appear more typical of a Western commercial block. Archival drawings indicate the building's construction departed from the common wooden post-and-beam structure and employed modern concrete building techniques, which provided the building with a somewhat larger scale. Aesthetically, the building continued the pattern of mixing a recessed balcony into a western typology, however the design also reflected changing architectural tastes of the 1920s. In addition to the incorporation of a recessed balcony, a large octagonal roof ornament was placed on the building that bore the inscription of the association.<sup>128</sup> In appearance the ornamentation was similar to the top segment of a pagoda with its decorative finial. The building appears to be a self-assured blend of contemporary (modern) Western aesthetics, characteristics common to Vancouver's visible Chinese architecture production, and a decidedly modern simulacrum of the flaring eaves found on historic pagodas.

The absence of discernable Chinese representational motifs between the CBA's construction in 1909 and the Chinese Nationalist League Buildings in 1920 is noteworthy.



Three conclusions can be drawn from this observation: Chinese were discouraged from using such forms by Chinese social convention or repressive social practices by non-Chinese; the production of a Chinese visual identity may not have been important for Chinese with the means to undertake the construction of a building; or our contemporary knowledge or understanding of these practices are inadequate to identify them. What can be said with some certainty is that conspicuous application of a clearly visible Chinese representational identity appears to have been used exclusively by political organizations. Although a substantiated argument cannot be made without further evidence, I believe it reasonable to construe that the KMT was using the buildings to establish an authoritative physical and political presence amongst the Chinese population, and possibly non-Chinese.<sup>129</sup>

As a political entity, the KMT appears to have been the most aggressive fraternal organization in its attempts to establish new political/spatial territory. In their account of the early history of the KMT party in From China to Canada, the authors indicate that the KMT intentionally strove to establish new political territory and this was strategically done through the positioning of its branch locations.<sup>130</sup> This pattern can be seen in the establishment of branches across Canada.

An analysis of the particularities of the Chinese National League Building's location relative to an established visible Chinese institutional practice in Vancouver suggests the KMT may also have been using the building strategically to establishing a political constituency within an expanding spatial territory.<sup>131</sup> At the time of the Chinese National League Building's construction the only other visible Chinese political institutions were the Empire Reform Association and the CBA.<sup>132</sup> Although many other organizations existed they may not have been readily identifiable to non-Chinese. The inscription in English of the CBA and Empire Reform Association names on their building façades made the organizations clear to non-Chinese. The Chinese National League Building followed this pattern by inscribing its name in English on the frieze just below the pagoda roof ornament.

This English script appears significant considering the Canadian government had just lifted a ban on the KMT in 1919 and City Council had just petitioned the City Solicitor for advice on how to establish a system of legal segregation to "confine Asiatic retail business."<sup>133</sup> Although the building is only two blocks from the CBA Building, it appears somewhat geographically remote considering the association's prominence. The site is at the edges of the area with a well-established Chinese occupational density and beyond what was traditionally considered the Chinese Quarter (by non-Chinese).<sup>134</sup> (Figure 2.9) It suggests that the locating of the Chinese National League Building could have been intentional. Its siting may have been an attempt to impose a spatial order and identity in a manner similar

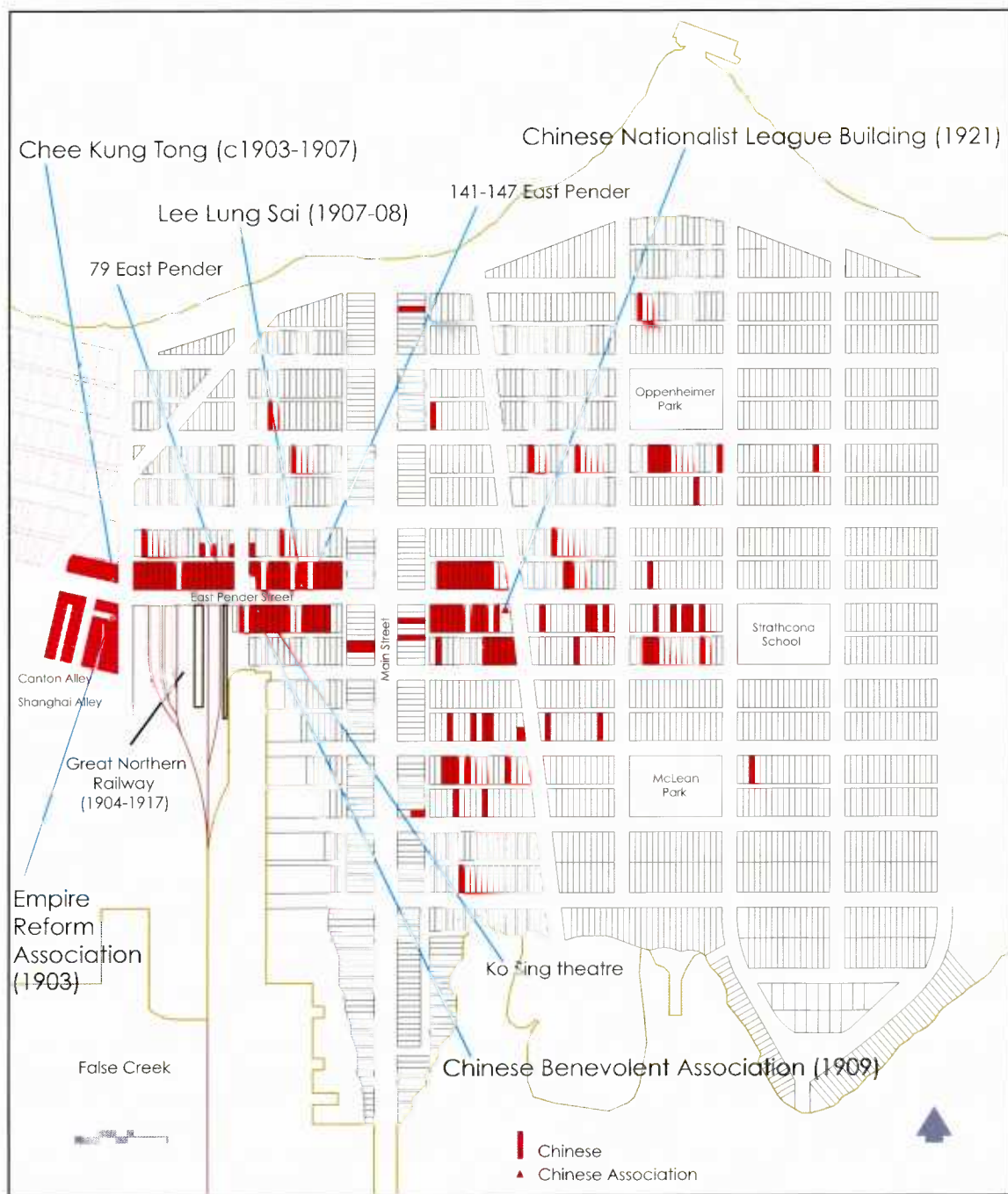


Figure 2.9 1915 Chinese Land Occupation Map.

Source: Henderson's Greater Vancouver Directory 1915.

to what I have suggested about the 1909 CBA Building. The building may have operated in both non-Chinese racial/spatial conflicts as well as internal Chinese political contests. It does not seem beyond probability that the building was part of a strategic maneuver to gain support locally by positioning the building in a manner that could have been viewed as asserting Chinese spatial rights (in particular merchants rights to conduct business where they wanted) within the city.

The Chinese National League Building is evidence that Chinese politics played a primary role in the production of a Chinese representational identity in Vancouver through the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The analysis further suggests the importance of an identity discourse in these ongoing political conflicts and contests amongst Chinese. There is clearly some notion of both modernity and tradition that is embedded in early production of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese fraternal organizations in Vancouver. However it is a subject that requires much further examination.<sup>135</sup> Although no definitive conclusions can be drawn regarding the Chinese Nationalist League Building's location, the application of a visible Chinese architectural motif had significance for the KMT.<sup>136</sup> The form's reuse suggests the organization was using the Chinese Nationalist League Building to signify an authoritative Chinese identity. The case study appears to challenge the idea that the architecture produced by Vancouver's Chinese represents some "inherently imbalanced cultural exchange" taking place between the dominant centre and the margins.<sup>137</sup> What this case suggests is that the production of a Chinese identity was complex and that it could only be completely understood within a Chinese political context. The Chinese Nationalist League Building illustrates that not only were Chinese entities differentiating themselves from the dominant culture, but they were also differentiating themselves from competing entities within the Chinese population.

## **2.6 141-147 East Pender Street**

By the 1920s Chinese had well-established strategies for obtaining venture capital for both commercial and real estate investment. This case study examines 141-147 East Pender Street as an example of how Chinese space making was facilitated in the arena of property investment and development. It appears that the arena of investment became as important a productive strategy of Chinese architecture as the "social community of families, businesses and homes."<sup>138</sup> Although real estate speculation does not appear to have been a prevalent enterprise after Chinese gained title to a property, 141-147 East Pender Street suggests that real estate ventures in the form of development provided an alternative strategy

for facilitating Chinese space making patterns.<sup>139</sup> The exact nature of Man Sing Lung Real Estate, developer of 141-147 East Pender Street, is unknown, but the building's history suggests its form evolved specifically from a capital venture operating exclusively amongst Chinese.<sup>140</sup> Comparing the building to earlier non-Chinese developments practices directed at Chinese reveals a significantly different strategy being used in the building's design and production. This is evident in both the building form and its occupation pattern. Comparing its original drawings to its occupation over a number of years reveals that the building had been designed deliberately for flexibility, a condition that may have suited the venture capitalist and the social practices of Chinese in the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Vancouver Directory indicates that by 1915 Chinese inhabited the majority of lots in the 100 block of East Pender Street, however non-Chinese businessmen had produced a significant number of these buildings. In the arena of speculative real estate and commercial development, Occidental property owners played an important early role in providing for the residential and commercial needs of Chinese immigrants. The leasing of buildings and land to Chinese formed an integral part of Chinatown's early spatial development.<sup>141</sup> However, in general the architecture produced by non-Chinese conformed to Western typologies, whether in commercial buildings, rooming houses or houses. The original, 1913, Mah Society Building and likely the 1908 Wong Association Building are examples of a Western development pattern.<sup>142</sup> There is no discernible distinction between the buildings intended for Chinese occupation as opposed to other itinerant and seasonal labours that lived in the area.<sup>143</sup> By 1921, 141-147 East Pender Street was one of a number of buildings being produced by Chinese that began to replaced or modify an earlier generation of non-Chinese-produced structures. By 1923, Chinese had produced hybrid buildings over half the lots on the north side of 100 block of East Pender Street (Block 12 DL Lot 196). In contrast to the non-Chinese buildings, 141-147 East Pender Street exhibits a spatial pattern that responded specifically to the social practices and economic circumstances of the Chinese.

In the case of 141-147 East Pender Street the building had a discernible attachment to Chinese agency that emanated from the particularities of an exclusively Chinese socio-economic and creative undertaking. The exact nature and extend of Chinese development and in particular speculative development practices in Vancouver remains largely unknown. From the research available it appears that a majority of buildings produced by Chinese in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were intended for some form of owner occupation. 141-147 East Pender Street development appears somewhat unique in the fact that it was a speculative development produced, designed and intended for Chinese. Significantly, the building's design was the product of W. H. Chow the only known Chinese architect to have practiced at this time.<sup>144</sup> According to Henderson's Vancouver Directory, Chow also worked as a

contractor, builder and timber dealer.<sup>145</sup> As such, Chow's designs came from a unique social position. Chow's combined knowledge of the building trades, business and intimacy with Chinese social practices would have provided unparalleled insights into the requirements of his client, Man Sing Lung Real Estate, and how best to achieve them.

Examining archival drawings of the building reveals that the building's design lacked any real specificity. In a sense, the design of 141-147 East Pender Street exhibits an almost diagrammatic quality due to its minimalist form. Architecturally, the building is a composite of the most common architectural features found in early Chinese hybrid buildings: recessed balconies, large bands of horizontal glazing and straight run stairwells. With the exception of three commercial bays on the main floor, the plans give no indication of use. This is somewhat expected, given that the building may not have had a clearly defined programmatic function. However, the building appears to have been designed deliberately to have minimal spatial encumbrances. This would have provided the building with maximum flexibility and the ability to be adaptively reused. (Figure 2.10) This single characteristic is interesting when the building's drawings are compared to its subsequent construction and occupation pattern.

Sectional drawings provide evidence that the building was designed for spatial alterations. The first floor ceiling height appears to have been set to accommodate the addition of a cheater storey and by 1951 one had been constructed in the building. Although no alterations to the building can be identified until 1951, it seems reasonable to assume that the cheater storey was constructed shortly after its completion. In 1951, a letter sent by the City of Vancouver District Sanitary Inspector confirms the mezzanine level was being occupied as living quarters.<sup>146</sup> Prior to the 1950s it is difficult to determine all the programmatic functions of the building. Based on historic accounts of the period however, it is probable that commercial, social and residential occupation were all part of the building's use pattern.<sup>147</sup>

Considering 141-147 East Pender Street's alterations and habitation suggests that the building's spatial minimalism served two ends. It was a suitable strategy for a real estate venture with an undefined program and it may have helped avoid restrictive design prescriptions under the Lodging By-law. The By-law regulated the spatial requirements of living quarters by dictating the overall form of the building by requiring natural light and ventilation for each dwelling unit, which was achieved by the insertion of a lightwell with the building.<sup>148</sup> By avoiding the additional cost of adding lightwells, the overall construction costs could have been reduced. The constraints of the Lodging By-law may have made the investment less economical and been too restrictive to accommodate either the potential uses or the economic realities of the majority of Chinese investing in real estate.<sup>149</sup>

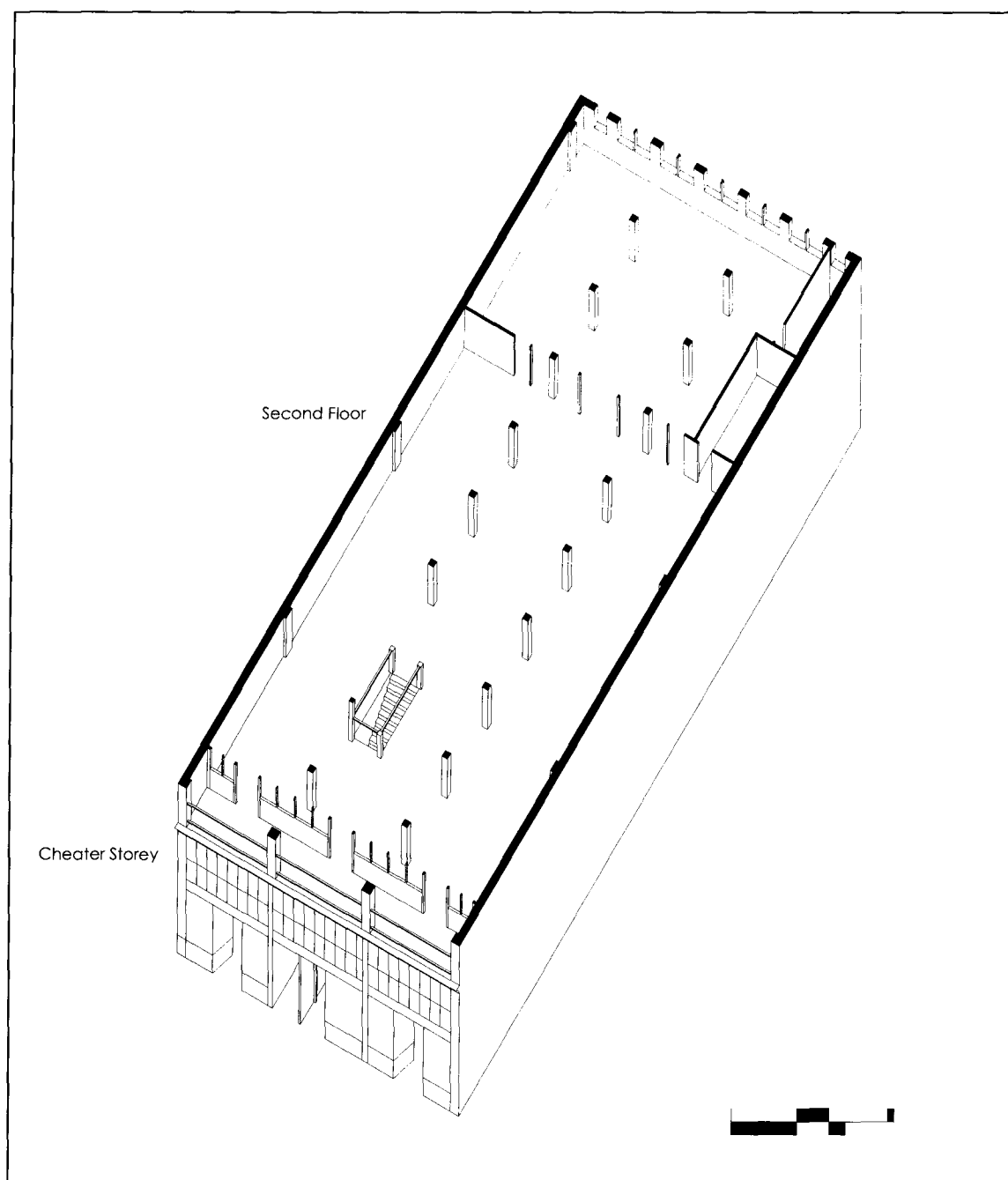


Figure 2.10 141-147 East Pender Street, 1921.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on City of Vancouver, 141-147 East Pender Street, Statement of Significance Research Files, "Drawing for Man Sing Lung Real Estate," Commonwealth Heritage Management, 2004-05.

The characteristics identified at 141-147 East Pender Street can also be seen in other buildings designed by Chow.<sup>150</sup> Chow's design strategy seems to sit in contrast to the buildings constructed for Chinese by Occidental landowners and to some of the buildings designed for Chinese by Occidental architects. There are building designs produced by Occidental architects for Chinese clients that show an undefined spatial pattern in plan. The buildings at the back of 79 East Pender and the Masons Building illustrate this phenomenon, however both have lightwells. 141-147 East Pender Street suggests that Chinese were assimilating different space-making patterns through the mechanism of real estate development for the Chinese market.

## **2.7 Cheng Wing Yeong Tong Society Building - 79 East Pender Street**

79 East Pender Street is exemplary of the dynamism seen within Chinese socio-economics and political structures through the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Disassembling the structure as an archeological excavation reveals that the building's accretions register the growth of the Chinese population, changes in business activity and the transformation of local Chinese political structures. As a site of Chinese socio-economic and cultural activity, 79 East Pender Street may be unique in the number of distinct trajectories that contributed to its production. The building's early development illustrates how the Chinese merchants built and managed their physical resources to accommodate the rapid grow and social change occurring within the Chinese population. The building's alteration also provides evidence of transformations within the political structure of Chinese voluntary organizations. The accretion of visible signifiers to recode existing buildings appears to have been an important political tactic use by clan associations. The addition by the Cheng Wing Yeong Tong Society space suggests that major clan and lineage associations were using architecture to establish a representative identity in conjunction with their attempts to establish a more prominent position within the local Chinese political structure. The shift in ownership also illustrates a diversification of the financial and physical resources of Chinese-owned buildings and a shift in resources allocation from a commercial to a social enterprise.

Through the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Vancouver's Chinese population could in part be defined by its dynamism. The population showed considerable mobility socially, commercially and spatially. Despite the head tax, introduced at \$100 (1900) and increased to \$500 (1903), Chinese immigration showed steady growth in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By 1911 Vancouver's Chinese population had increased by a quarter

over the past decade and constituted almost twenty percent of Vancouver's population.<sup>151</sup> The early history of the development and alteration of 79 East Pender mirrors Chinese immigration spikes that occurred in 1903-04 and 1911-14.<sup>152</sup>

Land Titles records indicate that Chinese purchased the lot that would become 79 East Pender Street in 1904 and the initial development appears consistent with the physical characteristics of a two-storey Italianate commercial typology.<sup>153</sup> (Figure 2.11) Between 1904 and 1913 the property was mortgaged six times. Although Title records do not indicate how the mortgages were applied, archival drawings indicate that at least one mortgage appears to coincide with related to development activity on the site.<sup>154</sup> The drawings were for Ko Wong Sang who had hired architects Campbell and Dawson to design a second building on the lot in 1911.<sup>155</sup> The following year a mortgage for 20,000 dollars was registered on Title. The original plans for the building show a three-storey structure with two small commercial bays facing Market Alley and an open plan on the second and third floor.<sup>156</sup> A later set of drawings for this building shows alterations to stair configuration and the partitioning of the upper floors to accommodate separate living quarters.<sup>157</sup> In 1915 the original building was also altered. Drawings by W.H. Chow show a kitchen and dining room to be added to an existing cheater storey for the Hoo Nin Club. The speed with which merchants were altering property appears to have been in response to the increasing number of Chinese entering Canada at this period.<sup>158</sup> Land Title and archival records of the sites provide evidence of the dynamism of Chinese merchant real estate enterprises.

The archival drawings indicate that the additions were made to provide additional commercial and lodging space. Chinese merchant business was in some respect always related to the mobility of Chinese and their needs beyond China. For merchants, Chinese sojourners were an important financial resource that could be managed directly through labour contracts or indirectly as clientele for their business enterprises. The production of living quarters for Chinese itinerate labourers provided both a means and the rationale for the construction of many early Chinese buildings. However, it also created a social system that may have placed a disproportionate amount social power within the hand of the established merchant class.<sup>159</sup> Elite merchants became the sole spokesmen for Chinese and held all of the executive positions on association boards. This power combined with the capacity to develop property appears to have given them an important sphere in which to exercise social and economic control amongst the Chinese population.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the capacity to purchase property was limited to a few individuals who could accumulate the capital for a down payment, an undertaking that was unattainable for the overwhelming majority of Chinese. However, it



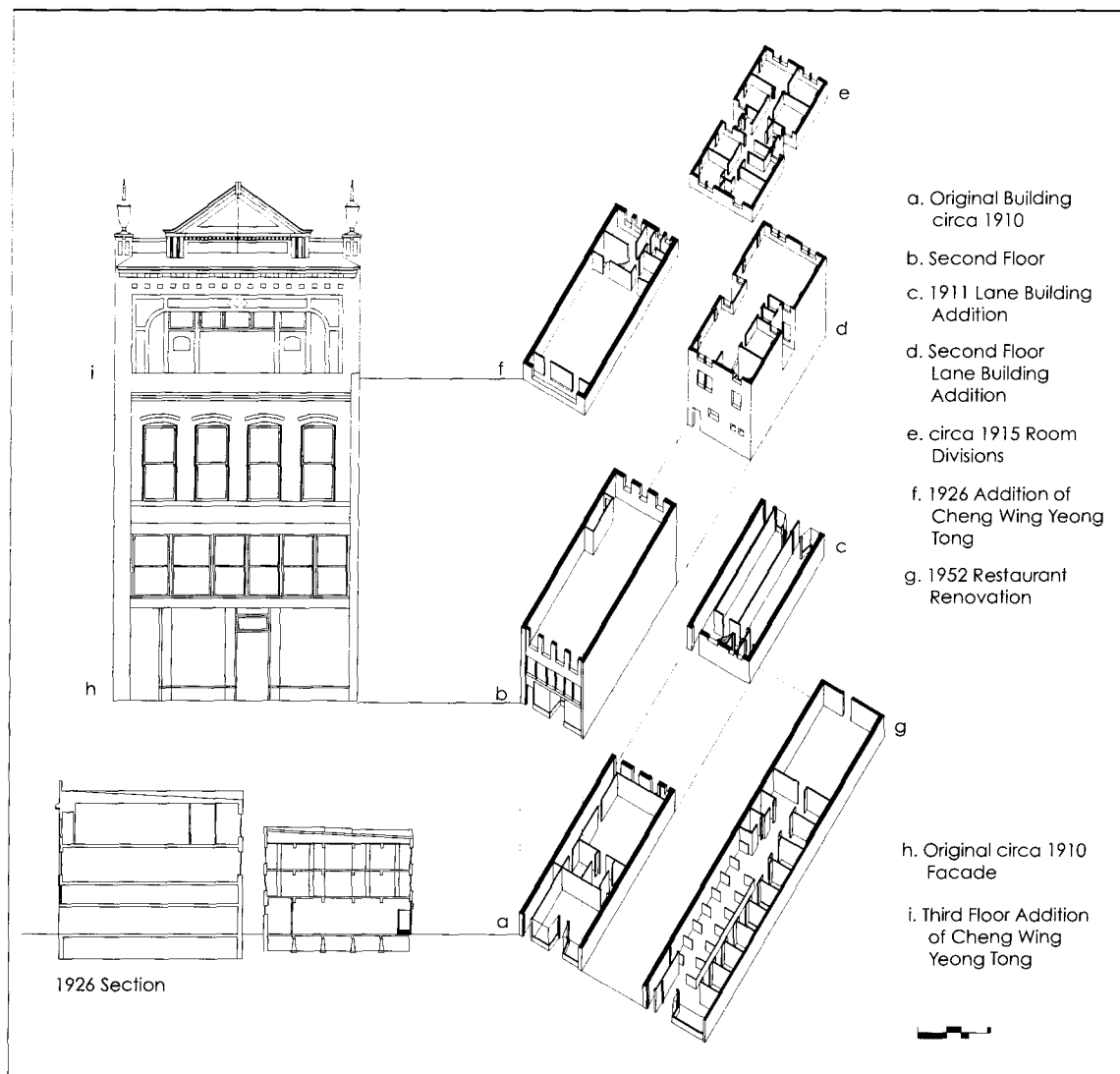


Figure 2.11 Exploded Axonometric Projection of 79 East Pender Street, 1910-1952.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393, Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, File AP-731, 79 East Pender Street.

Note: Second Floor planning of the East Pender Street building is unknown.

appears that as the numbers of Chinese in Vancouver increased more opportunities became available for property investment organized through clan and locality affiliation. The practice of chain migration provided an important social network in which new associations were formed and to which individuals could ally themselves. It also provided adequate numbers of investors to raise the required capital to purchase property. At this time both conventional mortgages and traditional lending methods like the hui system, were available to Chinese.<sup>160</sup> By the 1920s selling bonds amongst clan and lineage members became a common practice through which to raise capital for the purchase of property for associations.<sup>161</sup>

To some extent these new associations began to take over some of the important social functions that had been performed by merchants or fraternal organizations. Clan and locality associations provided accommodation, mutual aid, arranged return trips to China, returned bones to China for interment, settled disputes and collected debts for members.<sup>162</sup> It also appears that some groups began to question Chinatown's traditional power structure that had developed around merchant controlled fraternal associations. By 1918 this structure began to decline and the CBA's executive was broadened to include representatives from each of the locality associations. Additionally, new leadership criteria began to emerge throughout this period.<sup>163</sup> It is also likely that as lower tier merchants began to gain commercial and financial stability they could challenge the existing structure and may have begun to gain social status by providing their resources for the common good. Internal disputes, power struggles and the expansion of the merchant class may have all been contributing factors in the emergence of such a number of notable clan association buildings during this period.

The addition to 79 East Pender Street in 1926 may too be an example of the significance of clan association visibility during this period. By 1926 the transfer of 79 East Pender Street from mercantile to association ownership was consummated with the addition of a third floor for the Cheng Wing Yeong Tong's boardroom, office and library. The space and the association were formalized by the addition of a decorative balcony and pediment inscribed with the association's name and date of construction designed by architect H. H. Simmonds. Architecturally, the overall affect of the addition shifted the representational emphasis towards an acknowledgement of the association.<sup>164</sup> Affirmation of a clan association's identity appears to have been an important consideration in design. This pattern can be seen in a number of other clan association buildings constructed between 1921 and 1926. The Wong Benevolent Association Building (1921), Mah Association Building (1921) and Chin Wing Chun Society Building (1925) all exhibit a strong visible identity.<sup>165</sup> Prior to 1920 this practice appears to have been limited to fraternal associations.<sup>166</sup> The Wong Benevolent Association Building

appears to be one of the first voluntary associations to have the inscription of the association in Chinese as opposed to English. This seems to be an important indicator of both the establishment of the Chinese in Vancouver and the nature of clan associations locally. There appears to have been a general trend amongst more established clan associations to produce visible edifices for their association buildings. However the particularities of each association and their specific context should not be over generalized.

The rationale for producing such a strong visual identity for these clan buildings may have been politically related to developing new leadership criteria that had already been gained by locality associations. However, the rationale for producing such a clear visibility after 1923 may also have related to the Chinese Exclusion Act. Chinese had begun to express their resentment for this policy in a number of particularly public practices.<sup>167</sup> The construction of such an unambiguous architectural expression should be understood as an act of self-recognition, political affirmation and the recognition of Chinese space.<sup>168</sup>

The formal acknowledgement of the association also marked a re-adjustment of the socio-economic function of the building as a resource. Although the Cheng Wing Yeong Tong Building still had a primary function of creating profit, the resources from the building were now directed towards the social enhancement of the association's members.<sup>169</sup> The investment strategies that facilitated common ownership of association buildings in theory invested more individuals in the acknowledgement and security of a Chinese spatiality. Through their small investment, individuals gained a stake in the socio-economic maintenance of this space. The practice of group investing also had a larger social effect of politicizing individual members by providing them an agency that could be exercised through their association's power.<sup>170</sup>

The investment strategies used by voluntary associations to purchase land and erect association buildings was a significant part of the socio-economic, political and spatial development of Chinese lived social practice. As a physical and social constant, voluntary association buildings provide a valuable historical data set. Their locations viewed as a set of markers, identify an informal yet important Chinese social network and an area of activity and common experience.<sup>171</sup> Although this set excludes the vast majority of voluntary organizations active during this period, it does provide a useful image of the socio-political life of Chinese and its relationship to East Pender Street as a centre of this activity.<sup>172</sup> Mapping voluntary association property purchase and construction of association buildings provides a dynamic view of how a Chinese socio-political spatiality was negotiated through these political networks. (Figure 2.12)



Figure 2.12 Space and Time Progression of Chinese Voluntary Associations, 1903-1926.

## Observations on the Spatial Development of a centre and beyond

Examining real estate purchases and building development between 1892 and 1926 the maturation of Chinese spatial density can be observed. Using Chinese property purchases and the history of the buildings constructed in Block 12 and 13 of District Lot 196 and Block 17 of district Lot 541 as a database, a partial sequence of property transactions and building developments can be mapped.<sup>173</sup> (Figure 2.13) This information provides an image of how these discrete and fragmented actions produced an identifiable spatial assemblage and how this identification was the result of an accumulation of Chinese activity negotiating with non-Chinese interests. The following section examines the competition for real estate and how hybridity was manifested during these protracted negotiations.

From the data set available, nine lots can be identified as being owned by Chinese by 1900.<sup>174</sup> On these lots only three buildings pre-date 1900 and only the Wing Sang Building was built by Chinese. Prior to 1900, it appears that a number of additional Chinese wooden shacks and cottages existed on the foreshore of False Creek fronting both East Pender Street and Carrall Street. The removal of these dwellings and businesses appears to have been a determining factor in the increased competition for real estate in this vicinity. The foreshore structures were removed between 1895 and 1904 under orders of the city's Health Inspector. The reason stated for these demolitions was that the buildings were creating unsanitary conditions that presented a public health risk.<sup>175</sup> However, these actions also coincided with a long-standing interest by business, labour and politicians in obtaining this land from the Provincial government.<sup>176</sup>

The result of the Health Inspectors actions, according to period accounts, was that Chinese began to purchase a number of empty lots along East Hastings Street.<sup>177</sup> One account reported that these land purchases had generated some controversy amongst local Occidental businessmen who felt that established businesses would be adversely affected by Chinese presence. One of their main concerns was with the type of buildings that the Chinese might erect.<sup>178</sup> In response to the impending possibility of some unknown Chinese establishment, it was suggested that the Chinese move west to Carrall Street. The article is dated September 30, 1902 and by November 20, 1902 Chinese made their first land purchase on the west side of Carrall Street south of East Pender Street.<sup>179</sup>

In 1900, the City of Vancouver received the foreshore in a land grant from the Province and four years later the Great Northern Railway (GNR) opened a terminal on this site.<sup>180</sup> During the years that followed the opening of the GNR terminal and until its

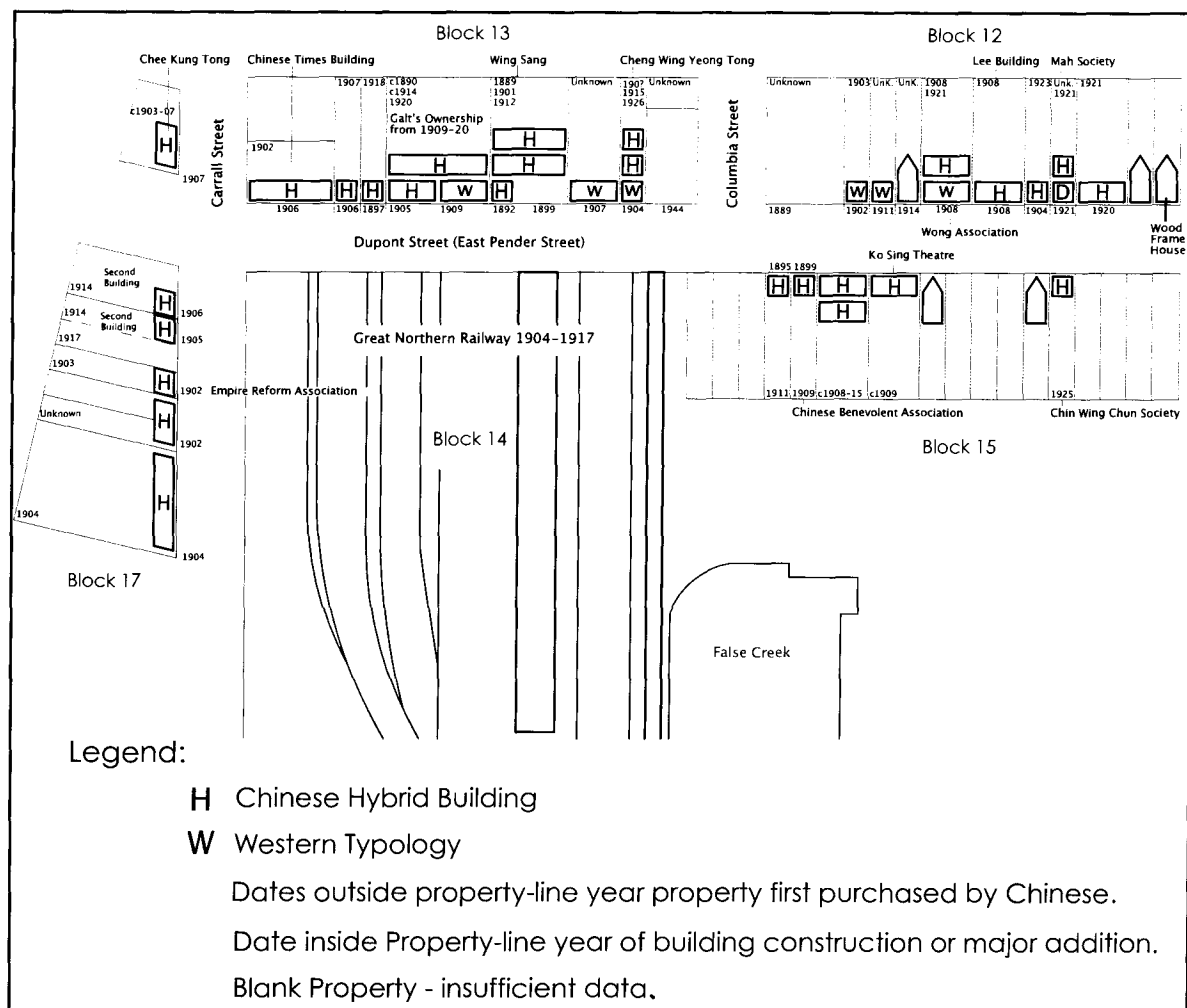


Figure 2.12 Chinese Land Purchases and Building Production, 1886-1926.

Sources: Property purchase data compiled by Paul Yee, "Chinese Business in Vancouver 1886-1914." M.A. Thesis University of British Columbia (1983) Appendix IV 138-139. and City of Vancouver, Statement of Significants Research Files. Commonwealth Heritage Management 2004-05.

eventual relocation in 1917, Chinese continued to purchase lots in the immediate vicinity.<sup>181</sup> However, so did Occidental businessmen, of particular interest are the four lots purchased and subsequently consolidated under the ownership of two cousins, John and George Galt in 1909.<sup>182</sup> The Galt's were in the mercantile business based out of Winnipeg and were the manufactures and retailers of the "Galt brand" tea.<sup>183</sup> Importing tea was a profitable business in Canada and the location may have provided invaluable business connections to Canada's leading Chinese merchant importers and exporters, and easy access to transportation.<sup>184</sup> The GNR had a well-established rail system to Winnipeg and the United States. What the property purchase seems to indicate is that as the Galt's were competing for property with the Chinese, they may also have been developing cooperative business relations with them.<sup>185</sup>

It is unclear if the Galt's produced any architecture during their ownership of the property. When they took possession, two primary buildings already existed along East Pender Street and a number of auxiliary buildings were located at the rear of the lots. Between 1901 and 1920 a three-storey tenement building was constructed adjacent to Market Alley. There is no historical record of this building's construction so it is difficult to say with any certainty when it was erected other than that it appears before 1920.<sup>186</sup>

During the period between 1909 and 1920 Chinese property owners erected seven new buildings in the 0 block of East Pender Street.<sup>187</sup> The earliest of these buildings does not show any significant outward hybrid characteristics. By 1907 this appears to change and some buildings in the block begin to show more pronounced hybrid characteristics on the exterior, in particular the recessed balcony.<sup>188</sup> This feature had been evident on a number of buildings erected along Carrall Street between 1903 and 1906, but it is difficult to characterize it as a common practice.<sup>189</sup> However, by the 1920s when the Galt's sold their property to Tong Sing, Sing quickly replaced one of the earlier structures with a hybrid building. The building was designed by H.W. Chow and exhibits the same characteristics as 141-147 East Pender Street, primarily a recessed balcony with a large glazed section and a straight run stair from the street.

This research sample indicates that hybridity was an integral part of early Chinese property development practices. It also suggests that as the density of Chinese occupation and property ownership increased so did the likelihood of hybrid buildings. Generally, it appears that prior to 1902 few buildings constructed by Chinese show any of the exterior characteristics that we associate with early Chinese hybridity. Hybridity in this phase appears to be limited to interior planning. The exception to this may be seen in photographs of the wood frame buildings along East Pender Street that show recessed balconies.<sup>190</sup> By 1904 when the Carrall Street property began to be developed most of these buildings

exhibited some form of hybridity on the exterior, with the practice becoming predominant in Block 12 from 1920 to 1923. However, research also suggests that it is difficult to generalize about these building practices. It would seem that an individual's trajectory and how they figured themselves into the larger socio-economic equation was the primary determinant of a building's form.

It is clear from the historical data that the spatial patterns that emerged around East Pender Street and Carrall Street between 1886 and 1930 were not representative of a coherent or ordered Chinese space-making process, but the product of an intermingling and negotiation between Chinese and Occidental interests. These patterns were the product of a Chinese occupational and architectural density that had begun to emerge around 1900. It is evident that the evolution and density of Chinese produced, impacted or modified architectural form and was producing a variant spatial condition in this location; and the architectural identification of this Chinese spatial centre was made tangible by the investment decisions to purchase property and erect buildings in response to Chinese socio-economics practices.

It is also evident that during this same time period, Chinese in increasing numbers were expanded beyond this area to seek new housing and economic opportunity. Kay Anderson's research indicates that by 1920 thirty of eighty-eight Chinese grocers and as many as twenty-five of thirty-one Chinese greengrocers were spread throughout suburban Vancouver and by 1926 seventy-one of seventy-four greengrocers were located outside of Chinatown. Anderson identified a line of stores created by Chinese called "greengrocers" and her research acknowledges a large number of Chinese laundries and restaurants throughout the city.<sup>191</sup> Unfortunately Anderson's argument appears to downplay the significant contribution that these businesses made to the social and commercial organization of the city.



## **CHAPER III**

### **Post 1930 Chinese Architectural Practices**

#### **Introduction**

The following cases examine the cultural re-conceptualization of Chinatown and its social function within Vancouver, a change that coincided with the expansion of Chinese commercial activity and a significant shift in Chinese residential pattern from the late the 1920s through the 1960s. Socially, the period probably is best understood as beginning with the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1923, which interrupted both traditional patterns of Chinese immigration and business that were dependant on these migrant flows. Economically, the Depression marked the beginning of a major disruption to traditional transnational business practices and the exploration of new business areas by Chinese. The period later saw a dramatic change in the composition of the Chinese population after the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1947 and the introduction of immigration policy based on the Universal Point System in 1968 that disqualified race as a category. I have isolated these general events into a period because the Exclusion Act and Depression mark the end of a relatively coherent social and economic period that by the end of the 1960s was replaced by a pronounced social and economic diversity amongst Vancouver's Chinese population.

The period is marked by the emergence of a concept of Chinatown as an exotic ethnic enclave and the decentralization of Chinese businesses and residences. As a result of the Chinese Exclusion Act, general racial discrimination and the Great Depression, Chinese began to operate increasing numbers of small commercial enterprises that catered in large part to non-Chinese. The Chinese restaurant business in particular appears to have emerged as a cultural institution during this period. The production of a number of small modern commercial buildings at this time had a dramatic affect on the appearance, occupation and land use along East Pender Street. Probably more then any other point in its history, Chinatown began to exist as a construct that contrasted dramatically to the social and physical reality of many Chinese. The research gathered within the case studies questions the socio-spatial notion that Chinatown existed as an uncontested centre in the 1960s. By the late 1960s new Chinese immigrant flows were beginning to present an increasingly socially, economically and spatially ambiguous image of the Chinese population. This reality is contrasted against the emergence of Chinatown as an ideological concept fostered by both Chinese business interests within the area and the City of Vancouver.

### 3.1 Shell Service Station - 231 East Pender Street

This case examines the emergence of identity as a marketing tool by the Shell Oil Company and discusses the socio-economic consequences of the station, its relationship to the emergence of East Pender Street as tourist destination and its ideological implications. Until the 1930s, the use of an overtly Chinese visual identity marker in Vancouver appears to have been confined to Chinese and limited in application. However, in 1931 Shell Oil employed the practice as part of an experimental marketing campaign for a service station at 231 East Pender Street.<sup>192</sup> (Figure 3.1) Generally, the idea of applying a localized identity to its stations was an attempt by Shell to lure brand loyalty by appealing to specific consumer groups. But here specifically it should also be understood as marketing tool to attract non-Chinese customers. The station drawings illustrate that a clear separation existed between the program, its function and the application of its exterior ethnic branding.<sup>193</sup> In many respects, the design methodology employed by Shell appears similar to 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial practices, a similarity that cannot be overlooked.<sup>194</sup> However, conceptually, the station is not entirely consistent with these earlier practices and may be better understood as a function and maintenance of the capitalist mode of production. The station is indicative of the complexity and confusion produced by identity practices as they began to emerge from and were applied to multiple socio-economic contexts.

In the early 1930s, as a result of the Depression, Shell Oil began to make innovations in their retail marketing. In an attempt to maintain market share, Shell introduced a number of new products and services that would be offered at their stations.<sup>195</sup> In conjunction with major functional changes that were required for the generic “fill stations,” Shell also began to make aesthetic innovations to their stations.<sup>196</sup> Shell hired an architect to produce a number of experimental design strategies that included the harmonization of a stations’ design into its specific location. In part, the intention appears to have been to identify each station with its location and by association with a specific group of customers.

However, the station’s appropriation and aestheticizing of Chinese identity in relation to this location appear to have been considerably more complex and multifaceted. Shell had established with their marketing strategies through the 1920s that the up-to-date station was an effective tool with which to attract passing motorists and “generally brought an immediate increase in business.”<sup>197</sup> It is assumed that the pastiche of a localized Chinese representational identity would have also make the station particularly appealing for local Chinese. Additionally, however, during this period ‘the Chinese community’ and the City of Vancouver began to promote Chinatown and its “quaint peculiarities”

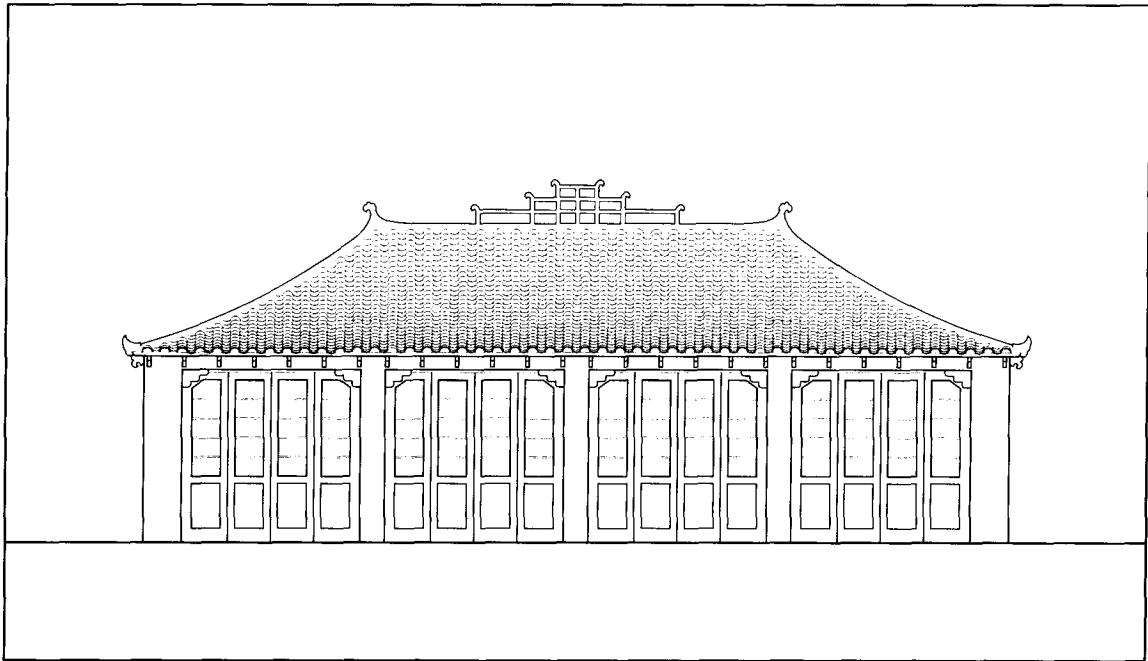


Figure 3.1 Shell Service Station No. 154, 231 East Pender Street, 1931.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on City of Vancouver, 231 East Pender Street, Statement of Significance Research Files, "Drawing of Shell Station No. 154 Shell Oil Engineering Department 1929," Commonwealth Heritage Management, 2004-05.

in an attempt to promote the area for tourism.<sup>198</sup> Part of Shell's brand appeal had been constructed by its participation in activities related to public projects that were often linked to popular tourism.<sup>199</sup> The station's appeal to some extent appears to have been related to its contribution to a visual syntax that defined Chinatown as exotic and by extension a distinctive space within the urban landscape.

In many respects Shell's appropriation of Chinese identity appears consistent formally and conceptually with Western European colonial hybrid practices. Within a colony, hybridized form was a function of colonial power and was deliberately intended to suggest the benefits of the colonizer's benevolent intervention. These practices required clear separation and visible signs of difference between colonized and colonizer to establish colonial hierarchy and order. This was achieved by representing the "other" on the exterior in contrast to the interior, which was designed according to its modern programmatic functions.<sup>200</sup> The Station's representational form in relation to the station's program and location are consistent with the strategies used to establish colonial hierarchy and order. However, it is difficult to suggest that Shell's marketing strategy was born from any true relationship to colonial practices. Although Shell's marketing strategy was not an extension of colonial administrative dependencies, its corporate strategy does appear to have some functional similarities. The operation of the station, like a colony's administration, was determined by foreign (corporate) interests and agendas.

The Station's similarity to colonial hybrid methods cannot be overlooked, however this appears somewhat more complicated when the station is contextualized within Shell Oil's business strategies and the period of execution. According to Shell's Real Estate and Archival Division, Shell did not operate the station, but supplied gas.<sup>201</sup> Thomas Chang a prominent community leader and son of merchant Chang Toy (Sam Kee) managed the station.<sup>202</sup> Chang probably had a proprietary relationship to the business that required him to sell Shell products at that location and, it seems likely, was one of the community leaders interested in promoting Chinatown as a tourist attraction.<sup>203</sup> The location and Chinese management would have guaranteed a large portion of business from Chinese merchant companies and greengrocers' that operated delivery trucks as a regular part of their daily business. However, this was clearly only part of the intended business envisioned by Chang and Shell and the application of identity was certainly part of the strategy to attract non-Chinese customers.

Socio-economically and politically Shell's commercial strategies, in regards to Chinese, are interesting considering they emerged during the Chinese Exclusion Act.<sup>204</sup> The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 was intended to construct legal barriers to prevent Chinese

immigration to Canada and to a large extent, limit Chinese socio-economic opportunity. However, the ability of Chinese businessmen to establish new commercial enterprises within a national (or international) corporate framework suggests different forms of cultural integration began to appear. Shell had by 1927 published manuals on company policy regarding discrimination among customers. "Salesmen should be careful in their attendance upon Oriental and Latin classes of customers...The Shell Oil Company will not tolerate or retain in its employ any salesmen who allows his personal opinions and prejudices to result in his being discourteous or negligent in rendering gratuitous service to a customer."<sup>205</sup> In addition to Shell Oil, the Bank of Montreal's opening of a branch in the 100 block of East Pender Street during the 1930s is also significant.<sup>206</sup> What this indicates is that Chinese were not only an integral part of the local economy, but were also becoming integrated into large-scale corporate and financial markets.

Although the station is evidence that corporations were providing new commercial avenues for Chinese, the station as an object reinforced stereotypical exotic socio-spatial notions about Chinese. Shell participation in the reproduction of this particular set of representations may not have offered a particularly progressive image of Chinese or reflect the modernity of the oil industry, it was, however, commercially effective as the expansion of the station in 1933 indicates.

By appropriating cultural identity, Shell began to displace the meaning of Chinese representational forms by shifting them in the direction of a more ambiguous sign that blurred commercial and cultural values. In previous applications, traditional Chinese representational forms had a socio-political and spatial specificity that related directly to Chinese homeland, local and racial politics. The station's claim of identity no longer had political associations, but it did have ideological intentions. Ideologically, the station functioned to perpetuate Shell's commercial interests and consequently the overall social structure that maintained capitalist modes of production. Although the station's representational identity alludes to a certain reality of Chinese lived social practice, they were limited and distorted by the stations overriding commercial function.<sup>207</sup>

Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas argue that to understand the meaning of a sign we must distinguish between what it is communicating, "the use and effect of signs" and signification, "the nature of signs and the rules that govern them."<sup>208</sup> In the case of both the CBA, Chinese Nationalist League Buildings' and the Shell service station Chinese traditional architectural forms were being applied as sign for 'Chinese' and 'Chinese space.' However, "signification depends on the particular internal structures within a given cultural system."<sup>209</sup> We can understand what the sign communicates (Chinese, Chinese Quarter, Chinatown),

but not the nature of its significance if the internal structure of the cultural system is not identified and distinguished (racism, Chinese politics, marketing).<sup>210</sup>

In some respects, the station appropriation of identity appears indicative of a symptomatic response to the economic hardship brought on by the Depression. The idea of marketing Chinese goods as exotic and foreign had always been a part of Chinese merchant practices, however, through the 1930s, Chinese identity and particularly architectural identity was increasingly exploited in the service of creating the image of an exotic tourist destination. One of the most blatant examples appeared in 1936 when the Chinese Benevolent Association erected a “Chinese Village” in honor of Vancouver’s Golden Jubilee. The Village consisted of a Bamboo Arch from Hong Kong, a pagoda, Mandarin Palace and temple, and featured Chinese scholars providing lectures to the curious on Chinese culture, literature and art. The Carnival was an ingenious tactic to introduce non-Chinese to products and services offered by Chinese businesses during a period when many traditional Chinese transnational businesses had been negatively impacted by the Depression or interrupted by overseas conflicts. It also illustrated how Chinese cultural identity could be successfully deployed in the service of commerce.<sup>211</sup> It was an innovative marketing strategy that was easily superimposed over the pre-existing Chinese institutional architecture along East Pender Street.

Mapping of Chinese occupation patterns during 1930 in relation to new zoning guidelines introduced by Harland Bartholomew and Associates revealed that class, commerce and race had all become criteria by which to categorize and identify people in Vancouver. During the 1930s the Vancouver Directories applied the term “oriental” generally to people of Asian descent. The term most often referred to people of Chinese and Japanese ancestry. However, the use of the term “oriental” was not an exclusive practice as the Directories also identified a number of Chinese and Japanese individuals, merchants and institutions by name. When mapped, Chinese and Japanese merchant interests are the most identifiable spatially and the map identifies two spatially distinct commercial enclaves. (Figure 3.2) When examined in relation to the 1929 Plan for the City of Vancouver by Harland Bartholomew and Associates a clear distinction appears between the space of Chinese merchant businesses that are included within the Central Business District and the Japanese commercial area that was placed within the Heavy Industrial District.<sup>212</sup> To what extent these zoning categories represented an advantage or disadvantage is not completely clear. Chinese-owned businesses appear to be given some advantage over Japanese businesses and residences that would not have been permitted to construct buildings or provide programmatic functions that did not conformed to the zoning. The reason for this discrepancy is unclear and Bartholomew’s Plan



Figure 3.2 1930 Chinese Land Occupation Map + Bartholomew Plan.

Sources: Wrigley's B.C. Directories 1930.

Harland Bartholomew & Associates, A Plan for the City of Vancouver 1929.

gives no explanation for the inclusion of Chinese commercial (and socio-cultural) interests in the Central Business. However, the overview of these mappings suggests that the zoning was encouraging Chinese commercial interests and the concept of an exotic Chinese enclave.<sup>213</sup>

In some sense, the station is indicative of the confusion that emerged between the set of representations and beliefs that Chinese identity practices communicated and the reality of Chinese. To understand Chinese spatiality in Vancouver it is essential that a sign's communication be separated from its signification, but it is of equal importance to separate the sign's communication from its rhetorical operations. Rhetorically, Chinese architectural identity had been deployed to construct and communicate a representation of Chinese space. This is consistent between the CBA Building, Chinese Nationalist League and Shell's service station. The problem arises because, although there is rhetorical consistency between Chinese political organization that fought racist practices, Chinese and non-Chinese commercial interests and municipal authority interested in creating a tourist destination, the description is assumed accurate and reflective of reality. The mapping of Chinese occupation and Chinese lived social practices indicates that this is not accurate. The emphasis on East Pender Street acknowledges the historic accrual of wealth, the production of a political identity and an economic centre, but it is not a complete representation of the physical reality of Chinese lived social space in Vancouver.

In particular what the Shell service station provides is a means to isolate the ideological nature of identity practices that emerged during the 1930s. It also illustrates that Chinese were participating in and not isolated from this project and that ideology is a complicating layer informing the notion of a modern Chinatown.

### **3.3 Chinese Public School - 499 East Pender Street <sup>214</sup>**

As an institutional and social marker the Chinese Public School reflects the development of new Chinese residential and institutional patterns that had emerged by the mid-1950s. This case study examines the use of identity to communicate socio-spatial patterns and compares this use to the ideological formalization of Chinatown as a zone by the City of Vancouver in 1956. The Chinese Public School appears representative of new spatial dynamism and a major spatial realignment of Chinese lived social space appearing after the repeal of the Exclusion Act in 1947. In a real sense this represents one of the single most dramatic changes to Chinatown's core and to Chinatown as a spatial phenomenon in Vancouver. Here the research focuses the methodology used to identify Chinatown as a spatial phenomenon within Downtown Vancouver 1955 – 1976 and further division and



rationalization of the Downtown Eastside in the 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study.<sup>215</sup> This case study examines the socio-spatial consequences of rationalizing Chinatown as a modern functional zone in contrast to lived social space.

In 1953 the Chinese Public School purchased and renovated the 1894 Zion Presbyterian Church located at the corner of East Pender Street and Jackson Avenue. To what extent the interior was altered is unknown, however archival photographs indicate that among a number of exterior alterations flaring eaves were added to the entry porch and bell tower. In effect, the alteration re-coded the building signifying a Chinese use and occupation and to some extent began to render a spatial image of Chinatown that was becoming increasing porous and ambiguous. It was a characteristic that appears to have developed with some momentum from 1930 as Chinese began to occupy a number of properties previously owned by Japanese.<sup>216</sup> The identification of this particularly larger Chinese residential, commercial and institutional spatial mobilization is noteworthy. It represents a significant shift in the pattern of property occupation and a major diversification in the residential patterns of Chinese.

According to research by sociologist Leonard Marsh, by 1950 Chinese occupied approximately 47% of residences east of Gore Street and 28% were families.<sup>217</sup> When the Chinese Public School opened in 1953 it was part of a small constellation of Chinese schools that began to operate around Lord Strathcona Elementary School. The first Chinese school to open in the adjacent area was the St Francis Xavier Chinese Mission (Parrish and School) in 1933. What factors lead to the school locating in this area is unknown. The 1930 Chinese occupation map indicates that in the early 1930s the Mission would have been at the edge of Chinatown's core spatial growth. However, the opening of the Chinese Public School in 1953 suggests that some realignment of Chinese educational institutions was the result of changing Chinese residential patterns. The location of the Chinese Public School would have allowed an easy exchange of students attending Chinese and public school. The proximity of the Chinese Public School to Lord Strathcona Elementary and a significant number of Chinese residences indicates that new spatial networks were forming by the re-adjustment of Chinese institutions to new residential patterns.

Historically, the production of Chinese schools made up a considerable part of the programming of some of the most prominent Chinese voluntary organizations in Vancouver.<sup>218</sup> This fact should not be overlooked; education appears to have been an important part of the socio-cultural and physical fabric of early Chinatown. The exact extent and source all of educational opportunities given to Chinese historically remains somewhat unknown. However, it is known that Chinese and public schools were available,

wealthy merchants were known to hire private tutors to teach their children and religious organizations also provided instruction for Christian Chinese.<sup>219</sup> According to historic records, the first organized educational program directed at Chinese in Vancouver was provided by a Methodist Mission under the direction of pastor Chan Sing Kai in 1888.<sup>220</sup> By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese schools began to emerge in Vancouver and by 1920 six Chinese schools were operating within Chinatown.<sup>221</sup>

The simulacrum of traditional Chinese architecture found on the portico and bell tower of the Chinese Public School may in part have been an attempt to establishment some connectivity to the traditional cultural and institutional core of Chinatown. However, it also seems reasonable to assume that the school's employment of identity references was intended to signify its priority was Chinese instruction and the maintenance of a Chinese cultural identity. The Chinese Public School suggests that emerging residential patterns were influencing and informing the location of Chinese institutions. The physical result appears to have been both an expansion and spatial blurring of the traditional cultural and institutional core. As a marker the Chinese Public School represented the spatial dynamics of Chinatown, as a sign the School communicated the social value of maintaining a Chinese cultural and physical identity and as a record of a real socio-spatial phenomenon the School sat in sharp contrast to the identification and utility of a Chinatown as a fixed spatial zoning category for the City of Vancouver.<sup>222</sup>

Under the direction of two separate policy documents produced during the 1950s, the spatial network that made up the core of Chinatown was divided into two general areas. The mandate for all the lands east of Main Street stipulated the area undergo comprehensive redevelopment to abate systemic blight. Leonard C. Marsh's Rebuilding a Neighbourhood. Research Publication No. 1, released in 1950, provided the rationale for the redevelopment of this area. Beyond being a physical and social examination, the Marsh study prepared extensive financial analysis of the area's current and future costs to the municipality. His analysis was the first of a number of studies that determined the area was a "revenue sink" that could only be remedied by a rationalized land use plan. The criteria underlying both policy mandates used to identify the value of a particular zone was its current and future revenue potential. The preceding Vancouver Redevelopment Study also asserted that the plan made fiscal sense.<sup>223</sup> The area would no longer be a tax burden and would be able to pay full municipal taxes.<sup>224</sup> In addition, the city would no longer need to maintain deficit financing for the high concentration of health services and social assistance. According to Marsh, bad housing and poverty were the vicious circle that strained the city's budget. In total, the spatial network that made up Chinatown was first rationalized according to functional use

categories (residential, commercial and industrial) that were systematically divided into five specific zones that included a “Chinatown” located west of Main Street.<sup>225</sup> (Figure 3.3)

In contrast to the land east of Main Street the lands to the west, comprising the Downtown core, only required comprehensive planning policies to maximize its revenue potential. In 1956 the Technical Planning Board released the Downtown Vancouver 1955-1976 a strategic development plan for the downtown core over the next twenty years.<sup>226</sup> The study focused on the Downtown core as a “separate problem” because of its “physical separation” and its “special function and character.” The most salient aspect of the report was found within the Land Use Analysis. It was understood that the new problems facing the Downtown core could be resolved by applying planning techniques to rationalize the pattern of land use “secured through appropriate regulations.”<sup>227</sup> By analyzing maps comparing assessed value of land, building density, and pedestrian volumes it was determined that the three factors in close physical proximity “make for high land values.”<sup>228</sup> These factors became the guiding principles for the rationalization of the Downtown core; however, the rationale for the study was the protection of capital investment and City revenue. As Downtown Vancouver 1955-1976 explicitly stated: “Central areas of cities are now experiencing severe competition from suburban commercial centres...But the Downtown Area is an essential element in the City’s business, entertainment and cultural life...Furthermore it is the source of livelihood for so many, it is an enormous investment and is a major taxpayer. On no account therefore should this heart of the city be allowed to deteriorate.”<sup>229</sup> The Technical Planning Board produced the formula for the rationalization of the core that followed the general policy that traffic patterns must be developed to encourage easy access; parking facilities should be provided around areas of high-density; and building density and functions should be linked to encourage high pedestrian volumes that would be accomplished by implementation of “more precise zoning districts.” “It is recommended, therefore, that the downtown area be divided into smaller and more selective use zones, each with more precise and positive use regulations for the protection of investors.”<sup>230</sup>

The area of East Pender Street between Carrall Street and Main Street was identified as one of nine sub-areas. Primarily, this section of Chinatown was identified because it rated high according to the Assessed Value of Land and it was a “tourist attraction.”<sup>231</sup> Although the study acknowledged that the boundary established by Main Street was arbitrary in terms of the socio-economic factors observed in the research, these facts were ignored because they were beyond the boundaries of the Core study area. The study made it clear that the remaining section of Chinatown was of no significance.<sup>232</sup> Chinatown was defined according to its current capital investment and its viability as a tourist destination. Its area was substantively determined by the methodology applied in the Land Use Analysis, the result

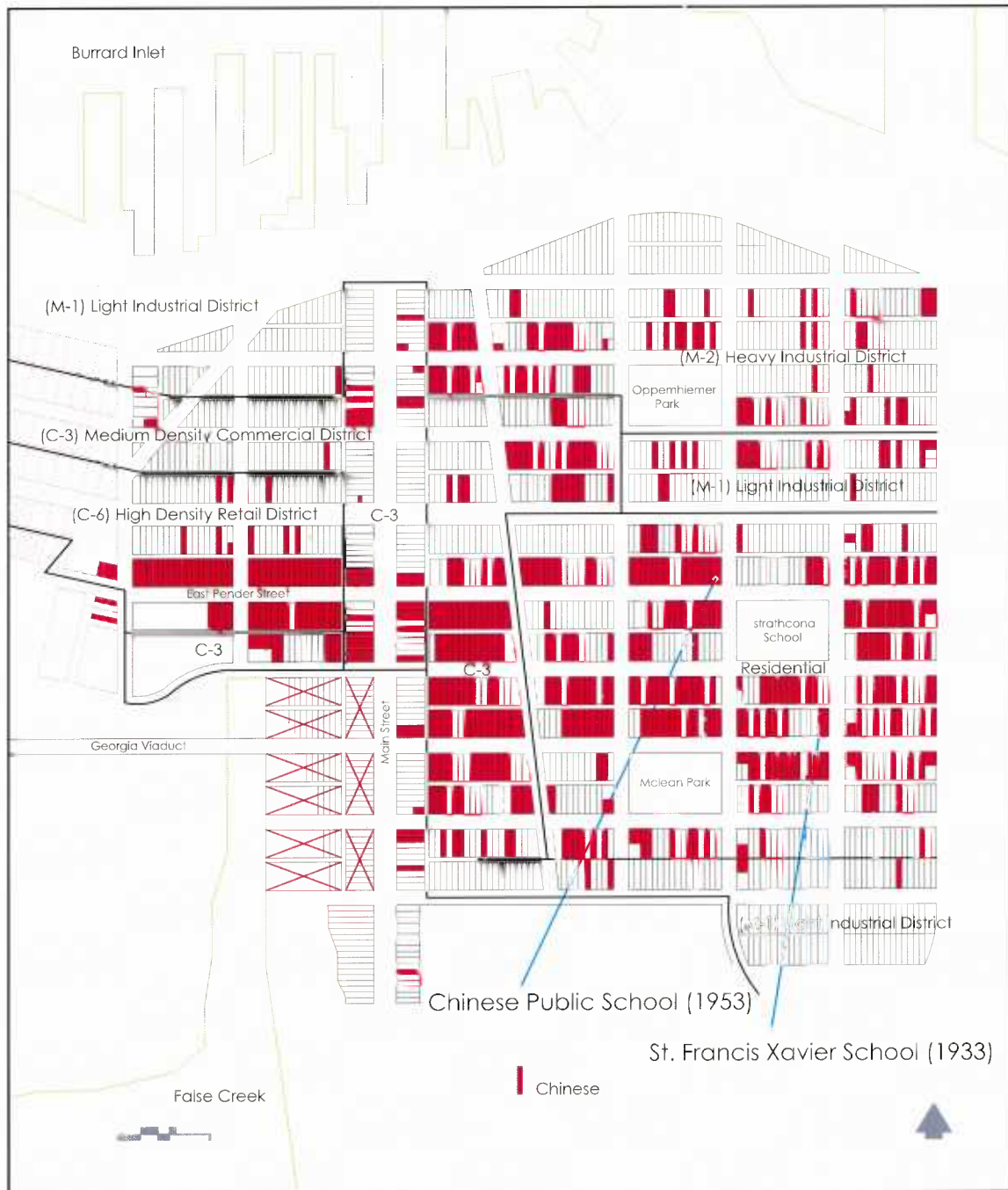


Figure 3.3 1955 Chinese Occupation Map.

Source: The Vancouver & New Westminster City Directory 1955.  
 Downtown Vancouver 1955 -1976.  
 Vancouver Redevelopment Study, 1957.

was a two-block long retail, entertainment and tourist strip with a corresponding parking lot.

The report does present a significant snapshot of a historic moment for Chinese and East Pender Street that is both accurate and elementary. The study identified the phenomenon of particularly high capital expenditures along East Pender, but its methodology did not account for the particular social factors that were creating these investments, their potential longevity, nor new socio-economic spatial trends emerging amongst the primarily Chinese business owners. There is little doubt that Chinese enfranchisement in 1947 and the emergence of new immigrant flows after 1948 were a major catalyst for capital investment along East Pender Street. However, enfranchisement also provided opportunities within new arenas of investment that conversely produced a proliferation and spatial fragmentation of Chinese business, residence and, as indicted by the Chinese Public School, institutions.

Although Chinatown had functioned within an ideological framework from the early 1930s, the Downtown Vancouver 1955 – 1976 study gave the concept a form and a mechanism to be manipulated by City authorities. The significance of the City of Vancouver identification and formalization of a ‘Chinatown’ at this moment should not be understated nor its influence underestimated. The intersection of zoning prescriptions and the pre-existing spatiality of Chinatown clearly created a disjunction between the lived social practices of Chinese and the definition of a Chinese district. (This is not to suggest Chinese were equal participants in the capitalist project the zoning represented, however, it does indicate that other values existed within this space.) As important as the debate regarding what defines Chinatown architecturally and spatially now became, what is of equal importance to consider is the disciplining notion that Chinese influence on the city was limited to Chinatown.

The spatial condition that emerged after 1956 might be partially understood within the theoretical context of Bernard Tschumi’s conceptualization of a superimposition. According to Tschumi a superimposition operates as an “autonomous system” layered over and into a preexisting condition. The identification and formalization of ‘Chinatown’ as a zone and the introduction of guidelines provide the City an autonomous system with which to manipulate and maintain Chinatown’s utility as a product with the city. In addition, Chinatown’s new description was imbedded with a set of formal operations, which had the function of linking the site to a larger economic strategy aimed at maximizing the commercial potential of the Downtown core. The resulting intersection, negotiation and conflict between systems suggest that neither system was privileged or became a predominant organizing element. The result was a heterogeneity of multiple, dissociated and inherently confrontational set of elements.<sup>233</sup>

### 3.4 136 East Pender Street – Quon Wong Building

This case examines three relationships between: the production of number small-scale modern commercial buildings, the forms of hybridization found at 136 East Pender Street and two new immigrant flows starting after the repeal of the 1923 Exclusion Act in 1947. This group of buildings appears to be the first major production of commercial space by Chinese since the late 1920s. The research suggests that the first immigrant flow facilitated the production of most of these commercial buildings and the removal of a number of residential buildings along East Pender Street. The second flow appears to have facilitated the hybridization of this type at 136 East Pender. In addition, the second flow is also closely tied to the production of a type of housing known as Vancouver Specials and a second major repositioning of the Chinese population to suburban Vancouver. This case examines these events and speculates on how they reflect a new socio-spatial layer of Chinatown and the city of Vancouver.

As noted in the previously, during the 1950s, East Pender Street saw a major increase in capital expenditures in new businesses. Both the numbers and new types of businesses opening are evidence of this activity, but expenditure is also evident in the production of new modern commercial buildings and building renovations. A significant number of these businesses and buildings were related to the restaurant and nightclub business.<sup>234</sup> Part of this phenomenon can be explained by the promotion of Chinatown as an exotic ethnic enclave by the municipality and Chinese businesses that began in the 1930s.<sup>235</sup> However, it appears that a new immigrant flow prompted by the repeal of the Exclusion Act in 1947, the accumulation of capital locally and the ability to operate businesses with the nuclear family also may have had a significant influence on the production of new commercial buildings.

In 1948, one year after the Canadian government had repealed the Exclusion Act, the Family Reunion Act was introduced.<sup>236</sup> The Act allowed for limited immigration of immediate family members of the pre-Exclusion Act Chinese already residing in Canada. The reunification of families changed the demographics of the Chinese population and that in turn changed some business practices. The immigrant flow of immediate family members appears to have had a direct influence on the restaurant business. Chinese had historically entered the service industries because they had been excluded or forced from core labour markets. Service industries presented alternative economic opportunities and the restaurant businesses in particular was “a means of creating their own employment.”<sup>237</sup> The Chinese restaurant business was a long-established practice that relied on informal partnerships, often between extended family members as a means of raising capital and controlling labour costs.<sup>238</sup> However, the reunification of the nuclear family presented new labour patterns

that facilitated the break up of many of these earlier partnership structures.<sup>239</sup> Additionally, capital was more available to individuals during this period as a result of interruptions in remittance payments that began in 1937 and the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese war.<sup>240</sup> This situation continued into the 1950s as Mao Zedong's Communist Government branded the practice antithetical to state interests.<sup>241</sup> The combination of increased available venture capital, labour and individuals with business expertise are probably all factors in the proliferation of small-scale restaurants and the production of new buildings.

The most common building type erected for these businesses was an inexpensive two-storey modern concrete block structure designed for its utility. For the majority of these buildings, the only thing that distinguished them as Chinese was their signage. In Chinatown these buildings maintained their uniformity until 1967 when 136 East Pender was constructed for travel agent Quon H. Wong. The building, designed by Townley, Matheson and Partners, was only one storey in height, but retained two commercial spaces by introducing a divided setback entry façade that gave direct entry to the basement. (Figure 3.4) Wong's located his own travel agency in the basement and used the upper level as a revenue generator. In contrast to the type, this building had Chinese architectural motifs applied to the façade. The tactic may have become more appealing after 1962 when a new immigrant flow began after the Canadian government removed most racial discrimination from immigration policy.<sup>242</sup> As a travel agent dealing with a diversifying Chinese clientele this would have been a logical way of communicating identity for the business locally, and its client's principle travel destination.

The occupation of basements was not an uncommon practice amongst early Chinese migrants to Vancouver, who used these spaces as living quarters, but the practice had been discouraged by a number of municipal by-laws. The spaces were viewed as unsanitary and unsafe for occupation because they were susceptible to periodic flooding during high tides and lacked ventilation. The city did however permit the commercial occupation of basements if egress conformed to fire regulations. Occupying the basement as a commercial space gave the building the same revenue potential as a two-storey structure. The building maintained its utility, but was given a more localized identity.

Archival evidence indicates that the production of 136 East Pender and other small modern commercial buildings replaced a number of turn-of-the-century houses. These buildings had constituted a core housing stock within Chinatown.<sup>243</sup> As is evident from a comparison of occupation Figure 3.3 to Figure 4.2 housing needs for Chinese were increasingly met by moving into the residential housing stock east of Gore Street and beyond. As indicated, this shift away from Carrall and East Pender Streets is evident as early as 1915 and well established by 1955. The continued shift in population appeared in part related to

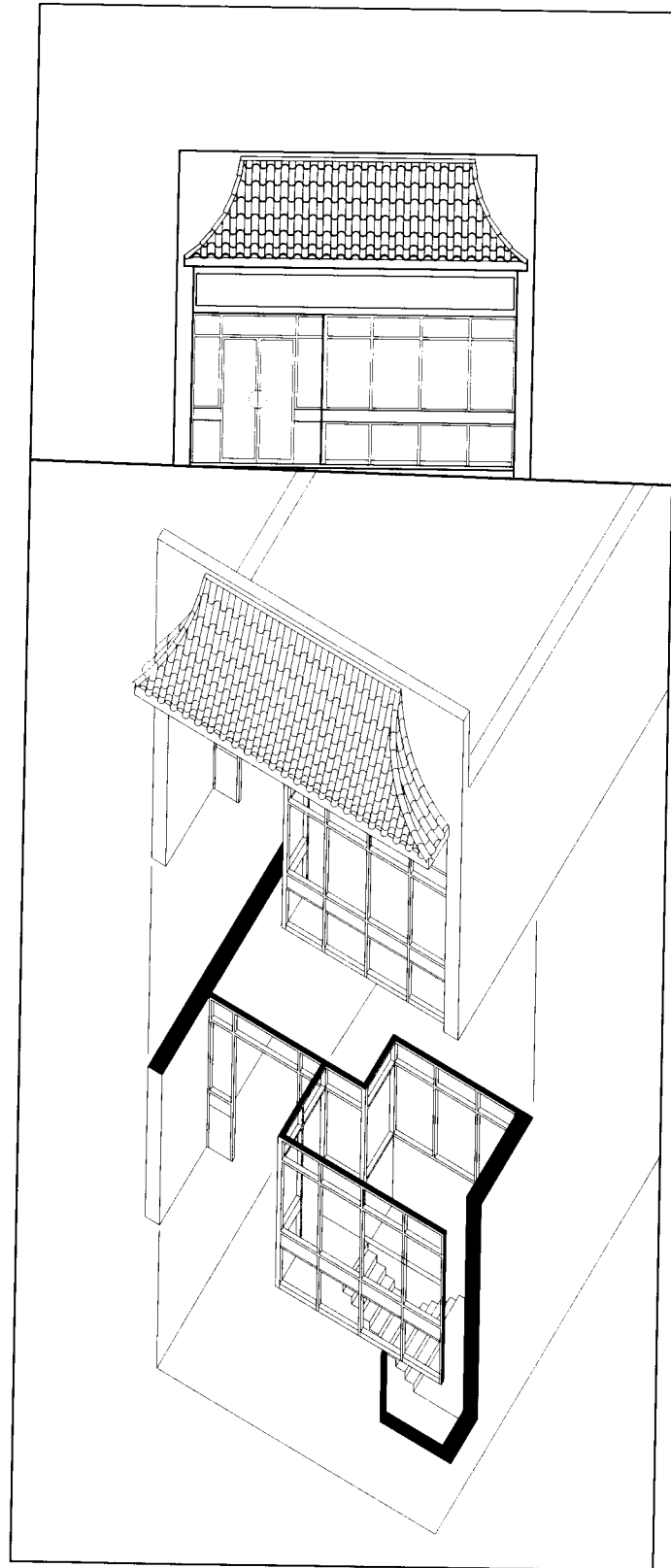


Figure 3.4 Quon Wong Building, 136 East Pender Street, 1967.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on Townley, Matheson & Partners Drawing for [130 ] East Pender Street.



the commercial intensification of the area, but also as a result of new immigrant flows.

The later immigrant flow that began in the 1960s also corresponds to the production of the Vancouver Special. The Vancouver Special is a uniquely local residential type found throughout Vancouver. The type was popular with small-scale builders and immigrant buyers, of which Chinese were a significant number. Low-pitched roofs, maximum site coverage, and slab on grade construction characterize the form. The size and main floor accessibility make them ideal for extended families or as secondary suites.

Within the study area thirty-five Vancouver Specials were constructed between 1963 and 1991, they were primarily constructed on vacant lots. (Figure 3.5) All were located within the residential area now called Strathcona and all but three were Chinese-occupied after construction. (Appendix I) In 1955 the majority had been constructed in blocks with high Italian populations and little Chinese occupation.<sup>244</sup> Occupation patterns viewed between 1955 and 1994 indicates that an increase in Chinese occupation corresponds to the production of Vancouver Specials. However, the phenomenon of the Vancouver Special was not limited to, and does not appear relational to, any predominant Chinese housing pattern. The Vancouver Special indicates that a new spatial relationship was developing between Chinese occupation patterns citywide, commercial and social activities centred on East Pender Street and new immigrant flows.<sup>245</sup> Chinatown as a spatial process appears to have expanded considerably through the production of a new type of housing.

The production of Vancouver Specials appears to have been a significant architectural and spatial accretion in the process of identifying a location understood as Chinatown. What it points out is that by 1960 it is impossible to claim that Chinatown existed as a coherent space fulfilling all the needs or desires of the Chinese population. There is no “privileged system or organizing element” to define the exact contours of Chinatown spatially. Its original centre on East Pender Street had a socio-economic and political attraction for Chinese in 1960, but its edges and direction were clearly ambiguous.

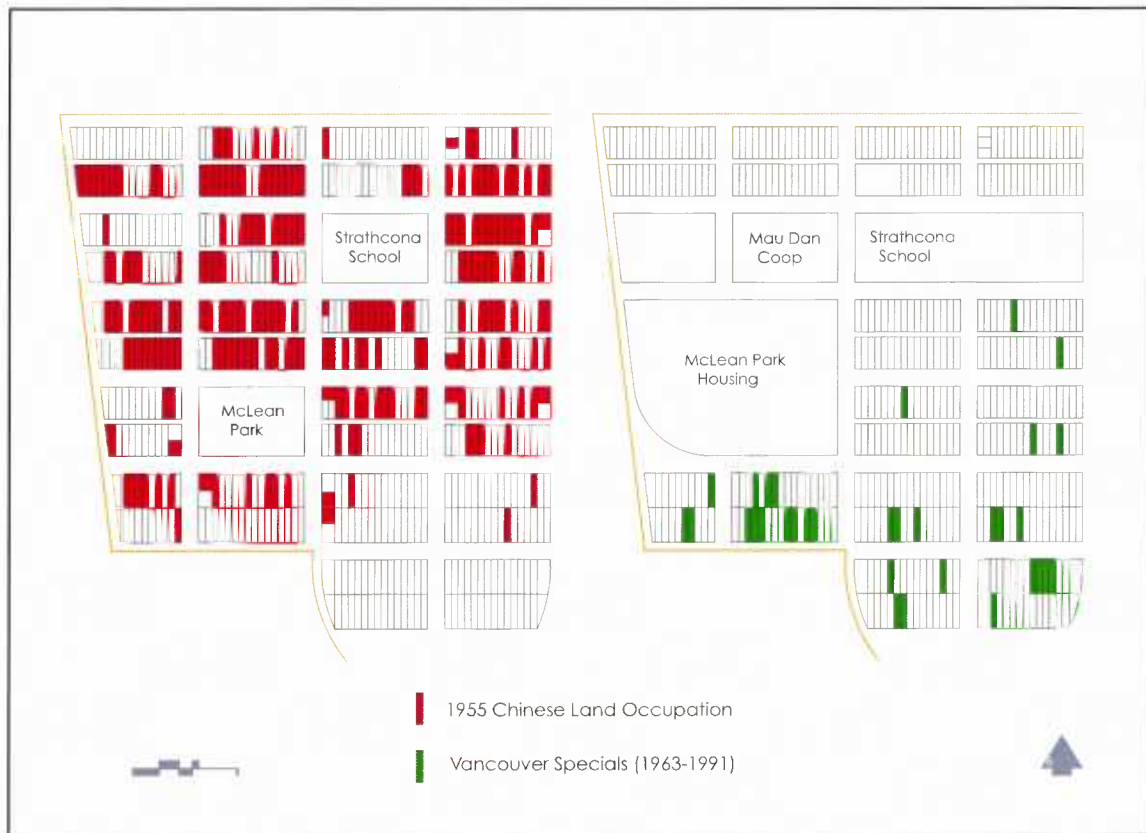


Figure 3.5 Vancouver Special as Spatial Negotiator, 1963-1991.

Source: The Vancouver & New Westminster City Directory 1955.  
City of Vancouver, Property Information Centre.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Architectural Practices after Chinatown's Historic Designation**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The final chapter examines the conceptualization of Chinatown after its designation as a historic in 1971. In contrast to the two previous sections, the cases and the spatial discussion here are limited to District Lot 196, although it is not intended to suggest that this represents an all encompassing account of Chinese spatial practices at this time. The Chinese population had become too socio-economically and spatially complex to be captured within the scope of this research.

The final examples in this case study are limited to building and property that falls within the 1971 designated Historic Area, but specifically after 1974 when Chinatown and Gastown were separated give distinct District Schedules. The case study examines both the production of new buildings and the rehabilitation of heritage designated and non-heritage buildings. In particular, the cases focus on the interpretation and application of heritage policy. The cases also consider the effect of new Business and Investor Class immigration policy on the notion of cultural identity and the production of new cultural institutions. The designation of Chinatown as a historic area produced a lasting debate over the concept of identity and how it should be represented within the area. The manifestations of this debate illustrate a major renegotiation of heritage as a concept within Chinatown. The cases also illustrate a cultivated link between heritage policy, representational discourse and the economy of the area. Although this group of cases focuses on properties and buildings that were directly affected by heritage policy, the mapping continues to examine the relationship between Chinese occupation, institutional and business patterns within the limited study area of District Lot 196.

#### **4.2 Lee Building - 127-133 East Pender Street**

127-133 East Pender Street provides an example of how representational discourse and the reproduction of Chinese culture and identity became an important rhetorical devise through which new spatial patterns were advanced in 'Chinatown' after its designation as part of the Historic Area. The building's trajectory also provides an opportunity to examine the socio-economic context of two distinct periods of spatial production in relationship to new heritage policy. The original building was a direct result of and response to the lived

practices and commercial activities of early Chinese businessmen. During the second phase of development, reproduction appears as a conceptual device devised in response to new heritage policies and building regulations. After designation, cultural identity appears as a simulacrum applied as a self-conscious rhetorical device as opposed to a social product. The reconstruction of the original building reveals that after heritage designation new hybrid practices began to emerge as architects and their Chinese clientele began to negotiate the contradictions that existed between the competing policy objectives of heritage designation and new building and fire By-laws. The response to these issues shows a conceptual dependence on reproduction as a method of negotiation.

The original 1907 building was the product of Lee Lung Sai Business Company, a traditional tong formed along clan lines. In China, tongs were a traditional form of Chinese association (partnership) often established for business purposes, to administer funds or for purchasing private property.<sup>246</sup> Tongs operated similarly to a limited partnership and were often promoted by businessmen in the interest of profit-making. The practice was well used throughout the diaspora and locally accounts for a considerable part of early Chinese spatial production. In the case of this company, the Board of Directors controlled all of its assets and was responsible for its business activities. They assured that accounts were kept and money collected in rent was applied to the company's debts prior to paying dividends to the shareholder.<sup>247</sup> Although shares were sold exclusively to individuals with the surname Lee, the exact nature of the Lee Lung Sai Company is unknown. Company records indicate one room was reserved as a clan hall and the rest of the building was rented<sup>248</sup> and the Lee Association of Canada is listed in the Vancouver Directories as maintaining a space in the building until the 1970s. However, the Lee Lung Sai does not appear to have been a traditional clan association as appeared prominent in Vancouver around the 1920s. The building's sale to merchant Lee Bick in the 1920 suggests that this particular tong was formed primarily for business rather than social reasons.<sup>249</sup>

As a material document, the building was a significant historical record of early Chinese socio-economic practices and Chinese business activities in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. No original drawings exist of the building, but a set of drawings by H.H. Simmonds in 1936 provides some indication of the building's use and planning.<sup>250</sup> The building appears to have been one of the earliest structures on East Pender Street to employ the characteristics of recessed balconies, large glazing sections and straight run stair that had began to appear in buildings constructed on the CPR land reserve in the 500 unit block of Carrall Street from 1903-1904. In 1971, 127-133 East Pender Street was declared a heritage site under the provisions of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Protection Act of 1960.<sup>251</sup> However, shortly after the building was designated a historic site it was damaged by fire.

The responsibility of reconstruction came under the direction of Lee Bick's son Robert Lee. Robert Lee was a graduate of the University of British Columbia and successful real estate broker and developer.<sup>252</sup> In contrast to the Lee Lung Sai Business Company, the Lee family business was privately ran and well established within the constitutive core of Vancouver's business elite. As an artifact the building was a repository of early Chinese business practices, the Lee family's personal history and more generally Chinese history in Vancouver. In theory, conservation was intended to preserve these relationships however, the owner also had to consider the economic implications of different conservation methods in relation to the financial viability of the building's end use. The building reconstruction had to consider all competing personal, social and economic factors. This was complicated by the fire, which created a situation in which the original building would have to be reproduced. However, it is also evident from the history of the development process that some negotiation and interpretation of what constituted a building's history within the designated area was a consideration.

During the 1970s, the City of Vancouver was also undertaking a number of actions to modernize and improve the general condition of the city (which included the creation of the Historic Area).<sup>253</sup> Important components of these actions were the revision of City Building regulations and stronger enforcement policy. In particular, the Fire By-law added exiting and fire separation regulations for both existing and new construction.<sup>254</sup> As a result, 127-133 East Pender Street became a non-conforming building. Under the new Building By-law, its present use, occupancy and the class of construction limited the building to three storeys. The existing four-storey building was deemed a non-conforming structure. These policies sat in direct contrast to heritage designation that required the building be restored to its original form. Because the building had only sustained limited damage in the fire the project was directed toward the Historic Area Advisory Board (HAAB) for comment. The HAAB members were primarily professionals in the field of conservation and architecture and they acted "as a design consultant for interested property owners and the City on matters relating to the Historic Area" and "for building alterations the Board acts as an advisory panel which criticizes plans and recommends changes to developers."<sup>255</sup> The newly appointed HAAB advised the city that they wanted the building reconstructed to its original form. And the City Building Inspector indicated he "would consider allowing the building to be restored to four stories if the entire building is brought up to the requirements of the 1970 National Building Code."<sup>256</sup>

The details of the building's design development are unknown. However, when the building came to HAAB for design review its members were asked to limit their comments to the new development being proposed. They were to refrain from commenting

on the question of restoration or demolition of the historically designated structure.<sup>257</sup> The Board's mandate may have been heritage conservation, but it became clear to its members that a conflict existed between the "principles of restoration in the historic area and the requirements of the Building and Fire By-laws."<sup>258</sup> The resulting fracture required some interpretation of heritage policy, which was provided by the project's architects Henriquez and Todd.

It is apparent that the conflict between designation and the building regulations required a flexible approach. In this case, it was determined by the architects Henriquez and Todd to retain the original façade to act as a screen, "as if it were a stage setting," in front of a new structure.<sup>259</sup> (Figure 4.1) The new building was then recessed to give the illusion of the original balconies. In massing, the architects departed entirely from the original building's form and adopted a pattern derived from a Chinese courtyard typology. However, the architects did not rely on the precedent to produce an authentic form or pattern. The traditional courtyard form is only really perceivable in model form, which is evident in the design proposal for the Planning Department and the HAAB.<sup>260</sup> The courtyard typology is not readily identified in lived experience. The fact that the courtyard form is only perceivable in model form suggests that its reproduction was in part a rhetorical device directed at planners and the HAAB.

The recognition of the distinction between architecture and building is essential to understanding spatial production after 'Chinatown' was designated part of the Historic Area. The building is the first example within the area in which an architectural representation (the model of the new building) was used as a rhetorical device to advance the idea of replacing a historic building. 127-133 East Pender Street also illustrates how representational discourse became a critical tool to negotiate competing policy objectives. The reproduction of a traditional Chinese typology provided a means of presenting new spatial patterns. The model provided a vehicle by which the rhetorical mechanism and principles were revealed and the building could be interpreted as Chinese by the reviewing bodies. Its model form reproduced an image of Chinese culture and identity that was interpreted as appropriately Chinese; regardless of the fact that the type had no historic relationship to the any Chinese architecture within Vancouver.<sup>261</sup>

The City of Vancouver designation of Chinatown as a historic site was clearly an objectification of Chinese lived social space within the city, however possible more significant was that it placed the conception of an essential Chinese space within a legal framework. 127-133 East Pender Street reveals that the reality and practice of maintaining historic buildings was a highly negotiable undertaking.



Figure 4.1 Elevation of Lee Building after Restoration.

Source: Photograph by Stephen Brouwers.

### 4.3 200-224 East Pender Street / 500-504 Main Street

The following case examines the emergence of a highly politicized and negotiable representational practice after the designation of East Pender Street as part of the Historic Area in 1972. To understand identity practices during and subsequent to Chinatown's designation it must reiterated that a clear disjunction appeared between Chinatown as a historic site, the location of Chinese businesses and residences in relation to this site and the ensuing representational practices intended to maintain the 'Historic Chinatown's' historic and cultural identity. (Figure 4.2) The following case examines the application of a tile roof cornice to an existing building at 200-224 East Pender Street / 500-504 Main Street (hereafter 500 Main Street). The case documents the implementation of heritage policy, its subsequent re-negotiation and finally its application. The intention of this study case is to identify the City's rationale for permitting alterations to an existing building that appears to have qualified for heritage protection and to determine what factors may have informed its hybridization.

According to the City's Planning Department, the purpose of designation was to protect the physical and cultural character of "Chinatown." The enacted legislation was designed to protect and maintain sites, parcels of land or structures of historical significance, as a historic site in their original state.<sup>262</sup> In accordance with the historic designation legislation, the City's Planning Department imposed development restrictions within the area. Under provisions within the legislation, the Director of Planning also appointed an advisory board whose members were mainly comprised of professionals in the field of conservation, history and architecture.<sup>263</sup> Their mandate provided them with discretionary power to criticize and make recommendations to development applicants and City Council with regards to Chinatown's future development.

Period documents indicate that the significance of the Advisory Board's power was not lost on area property owners, merchants and residents. In 1973, the Historic Area Advisory Board (HAAB) acknowledged that the Chinese community had questioned the nature of representation and requested a separate advisory board for Chinatown.<sup>264</sup> According to the Chinatown Property Owners and Merchant Association (CTPOMA), Chinatown had a "distinctive flavour" and questioned if Gastown people should "be concerned with discussions, judging and making decisions for Chinatown."<sup>265</sup> As a result of this criticism, Chinatown and Gastown were separated into two distinct heritage areas and a separate advisory board was created called the Chinatown's Historic Area Planning Committee (CHAPC or CHAPAC). In addition, local interests were successful in re-



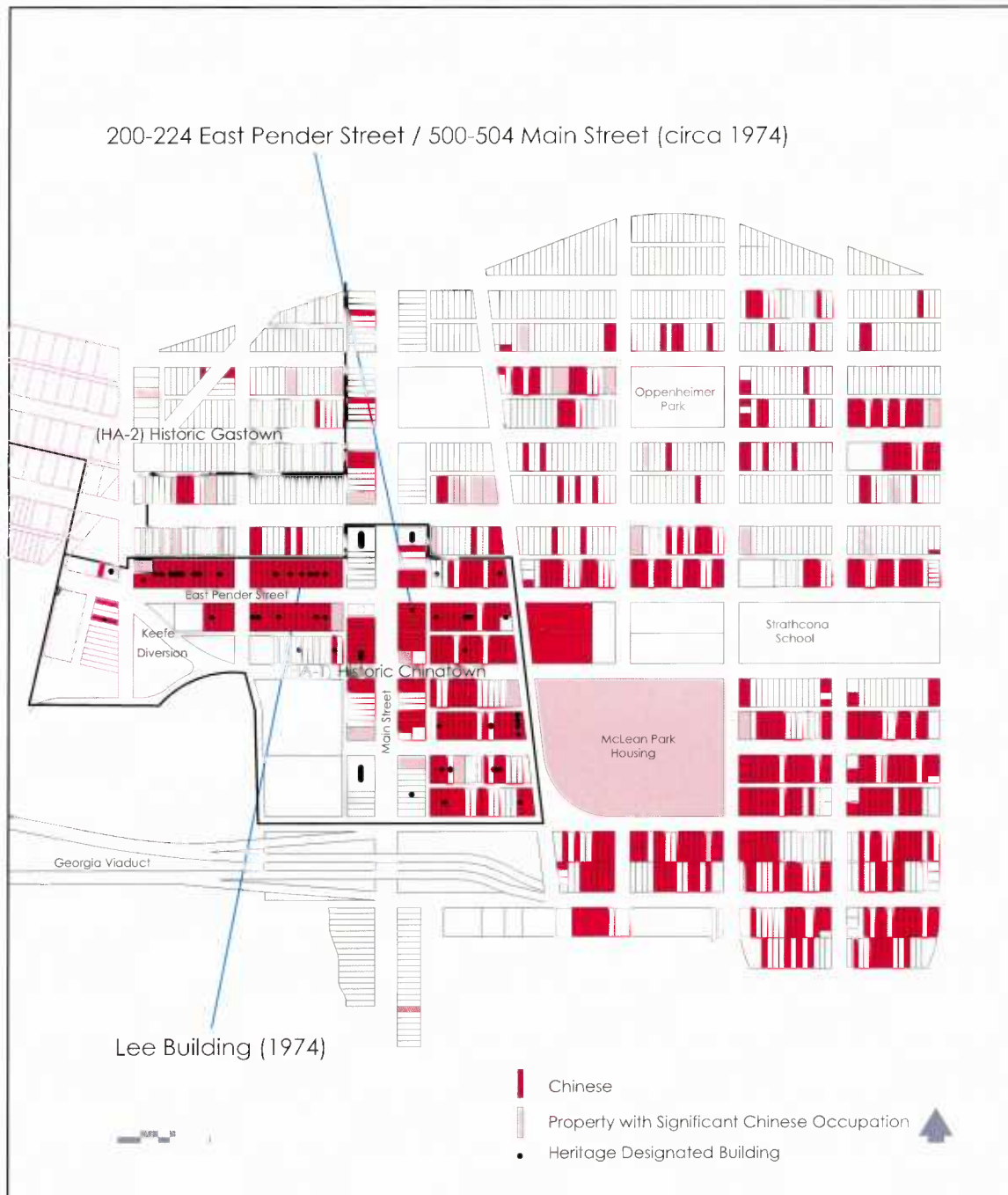


Figure 4.2 1976 Chinese Land Occupation Map + Historic Area Boundaries.

Source: BC Directories Vancouver City Directory 1976.  
 Vancouver Heritage Register 1976.  
 City of Vancouver HA-1 and HA-2 District Schedule.

negotiating the membership of the advisory board to ensure the voting majority represented “local area” interests.<sup>266</sup> Although authority was still invested in the Planning Department, CHAPAC now became a participant in the political process of land use decision-making.

An examination of the alterations made to 500 Main Street reveals that heritage designation after the creation of CHAPAC produced heritage practices with some conceptual mobility. The original building was constructed in two phases between 1895 and 1907 by a small-scale developer named James Borland.<sup>267</sup> The 1985 building itself is one of the oldest remaining commercial buildings in the area with historic ties to Chinese dating back to 1910.<sup>268</sup> However, shortly after the area was designated the building underwent a major renovation that dramatically reconstructed the original façade by adding Chinese architectural ornamentation.<sup>269</sup> (Figure 4.3) The practice of “re-signing” a building had historic precedents in the area.<sup>270</sup> However, conceptually and practically, this is clearly not how heritage conservation legislation was intended to work.

It is quite possible that the concept of heritage conservation became intertwined with the desire to create a public realm character around an idealized concept of a Chinese precinct.<sup>271</sup> Following Chinatown’s designation, the Planning Department and CHAPAC had placed a premium on the idea of constructing a public realm that would make Historic Chinatown visually distinct.<sup>272</sup> This would have been complicated by a lack of rigorous historical research on the area’s buildings and the considerable debate over the identification of what was being designated, buildings or land.<sup>273</sup> These factors may have exacerbated any real attempt to assimilate conservation practices into the area. The attention given to the single issue of creating a visually distinct area and the apparent lack of specific research coupled with questions of what was being conserved does provide some explanation for why the Planning Department permitted these alterations.

Although these factors explain why 500 Main Street alterations were permitted, they do not account for a rationale. Kay Anderson contends that Chinese participation in the representational forms of this period was the result of Chinese recognizing “their own interests in implementation of idealized notions of their district.” And, an “acceptance of European forms of racialization has been testimony to their very hegemony and part of their contemporary reproduction.”<sup>274</sup> However, the strategy of employing idealized representational forms on private buildings does not appear to have been a prevalent practice after Chinatown’s historic designation. In fact, the 1976 Chinatown Planning Newsletter, published by the Planning Department, lists 12 buildings that had applied or received development permits or were under construction and indicates that only one building employed identifiable Chinese architectural forms.<sup>275</sup> (Appendix II) The others were



Figure 4.3 200-224 East Pender / 500-504 Main Street.

Source: Photography by Stephen Brouwers.

renovations to existing structures or the designs followed formal characteristics based upon material use and contextual composition.<sup>276</sup> Anderson appears to have confused Chinatown's ideological function with a form of racialization. Although the two concepts are not mutually exclusive, it is clear from my research that Chinese had from their initial settlement been cognizant of the value of identity practices within different socio-economic and cultural contexts. The rationale for employing Chinese identity practices to individual buildings was clearly a phenomenon emerging from within the socio-economic and cultural particularities of the Chinese population.

It may be value to speculate on other possible explanations for the building's alterations. From the perspective of property owners and merchants, encrusting their buildings with a Chinese identity may have been more an attempt to affirm a spatial identity than to participate in the idealization of "Chinatown".<sup>277</sup> This would certainly have been an understandable reaction, given the 1967 attempts by the municipal authorities to place a freeway through the area.<sup>278</sup>

The alterations may alternatively have been an aesthetic response to the area by recent Chinese immigrants. Wing Chung Ng noted that in regards to various social, cultural and recreational events in Chinatown, "young newcomers may have been drawing, consciously or unconsciously, on models from Hong Kong."<sup>279</sup> This is significant, considering the Federal government had just changed immigration policy and began to accept a more diverse group of Chinese immigrants under the Universal Point System in 1967. At the time, most Chinese immigrants were arriving via Hong Kong and Taiwan. Even during the 50s and 60s, Mainland Chinese were filtered through Hong Kong. Canadian immigration policy require residency in a colony prior to entering the country. Hong Kong became an influential site for potential immigrants as it emerged as "a viable centre of Chinese cultural production in the post war years" as the Peoples Republic of China became politically and culturally isolated from the non-communist Chinese world.<sup>280</sup>

Another important factor to consider is that Canada had established diplomatic relations with the Peoples Republic of China's (PRC) in 1970. By 1971 the PRC had been assumed a seat at the United Nations that allowed both a diplomatic and cultural connectivity to the larger Chinese world. Within the Chinese world there in no doubt that the question of identity and history were being reconsidered as diaspora Chinese were able to re-connect with China.

The examination of 500 Main Street reveals that heritage designation of Historic Chinatown permitted the creation of a representational identity that distorted and erased part of a more complex history of the site. The consequence was that alterations to historic

building began to produce a misleading representational and spatial history of Chinatown. Heritage designation, in part helped to construct an essentialist Historic Chinatown.

The creation of Historic Chinatown illustrates that there were underlying attitudes that informed land use decision-making. Working with a positivist view of social science and economics, planners believed that the city, as a functioning system could be “impacted to achieve predetermined efficient ends” and that: “The myth has emerged that planning can present objective, scientific, correct solutions to some of the problems facing the city. The Planning Department in effect functioned as socio-economic engineers who manipulate the system for the public good.”<sup>281</sup> The Planning Department’s establishment of Historic Chinatown came with the presumption that designation was in the best interest of the property owners, merchants and a fledgling tourist industry. The inference was an economic benefit would incur as a result of designation and designation was directly linked to economic success.

Lawyer and policy advisor, Marc Denhez, argues that in North America “heritage programs originated for planning/economic/tactical reasons and culture was a bonus... Heritage was not an alternative to development; it is an alternative form of development.”<sup>282</sup> As an alternative it is both profitable for developers and provided extraordinary influence on the tax base. When heritage policy is supported by participation, positive economic benefits have been observed for property owners, developers and the municipality.<sup>283</sup> However, benefits from heritage policy and practice assume and require participants to have normative responses that are constant over time.

#### **4.4 Chinese Cultural Centre - 50 East Pender Street**

In 1974, the City of Vancouver was presented with a proposal for a Chinese Cultural Centre (CCC) to be located on the site of the Pender-Keefer Diversion. (Map) The proposal, written by the Chinese Cultural Centre Committee, explained the group’s approach, established the Centre’s programming and provided the Centre’s conceptual underpinning. The conceptual statement indicated that the facility would incorporate planning principles based on a traditional Chinese courtyard.<sup>284</sup> The Committee acknowledged that the CCC was both a response to the enormous threats the community had endured from municipal freeway and redevelopment schemes and an opportunity to find a “physical expression of a newly-developing cultural identity of the Chinese-Canadian.”<sup>285</sup>

The recent history of the Pender-Keefer Diversion reveals that the site had been part of a long-standing city planning initiative that began in the 1950s to improve the area’s

character and its tourist potential.<sup>286</sup> In succeeding initiatives the site's redevelopment was also linked to the area's historic preservation. The actualized Centre betrays the influence of these proposals and of their Modernist urban planning origins. The Centre also demonstrates how modern hybrid forms began to emphasize new meanings for Chinatown by constructing the concept of a universal Chinese cultural model.

A comprehensive conceptualization of a Chinese cultural complex to be located on the Pender-Keefer Diversion site first appears in 1969. The Restoration Report was part of a new City redevelopment initiative based on community participation.<sup>287</sup> The Report's focus was the development of a master planning strategy for the "old city" of which Chinatown was a part. The guiding principles of the Report focused on the retention of the area's historic buildings and character. Its rationale and argument were in a sense a cautionary tale of the negative affect of massive redevelopment schemes that were not "integrated into the existing activities of the city."<sup>288</sup> The proposal itself focused on the creation of a pedestrian network between "nodes" of significance. One of the nodes proposed was a new cultural complex that was to serve as both anchor for Chinatown and direction for its future expansion.<sup>289</sup>

The Pender-Keefer Diversion had, in fact, been previously identified as a site for re-development by the City's Planning Department in a Design Proposal for Improvement in 1964. (Map) The stated objective of this plan was, "the definition of areas of special function and special interest with a view to encouraging appropriate developments" that would "continue development of the Downtown area."<sup>290</sup> The Proposal was a continuation of a larger master planning project for the Downtown core established in 1956 by the Technical Planning Board in Downtown Vancouver 1955-76. (Map comparison) Formally, the most significant feature of the design was the redevelopment of the Pender-Keefer Diversion. At the time, in the mid-1950s, it was envisioned by planners that the area could be assembled and possibly made into an "oriental bazaar." The Proposal was met with overwhelming enthusiasm when presented to the community, however, this initial Proposal was dropped when the 1967 Vancouver Transportation Study identified this area would be used for an off ramp.<sup>291</sup>

The largely abandoned site was probably the most appropriate location for redevelopment in the vicinity. However, the rationale for maintaining a strategy and scale akin to a Modernist super-block within a Report (Restoration Report) that advocated the maintenance of the area's historic fabric is somewhat unclear.

A partial explanation for the adoption of a Modernist idiom in 1974 may be related to the need to identify a representational form that could be inclusive of the diversity that was beginning to appear amongst the Chinese population. In The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945

– 80 The Pursuit of Identity and Power (1999) Wing Chung Ng explores the issue of identity in the post-World War II Chinese population in Vancouver. Ng examined the competitive relationship of different groups and how they each constructed “competitive models of Chinese culture” in an attempt to assert authority and gain power by emphasizing their personal history.<sup>292</sup> The CCC design would have to occupy a neutral territory amongst these competing identity discourses. The CCC Committee expressed a desire to find a form that respond to the “newly-developing cultural identity of the Chinese-Canadian.”

Katharyne Mitchell argues that within Chinatown a particular Chinese understanding of the concept of democracy had come into play.<sup>293</sup> However weak Mitchell’s explanation may appear her observations of the particularities of the democratic nature that surrounded the CCC appear relevant and accurate. Mitchell’s observation of the emphasis on process, consensus and the broader societal good were probably the product of a community process being overviewed by different levels of government that were going to make financial contributions to the project. In the context of a highly politicized community process the appearance of a democratic process and the establishment of a broad consensus was a political necessity.

To resolve this dilemma, the CCC Committee proposed that the planning scheme be rooted in Chinese cultural tradition.<sup>294</sup> The Committee determined the Centre’s entry sequence should be based upon a traditional Chinese court model. A competition was then held to determine the final design and the winning architect, James Cheng, developed his conceptual plan based specifically on the Imperial Palace in Beijing.<sup>295</sup> (Figure 4.4) The design’s physical expression was not overtly Chinese, but predominantly Modern relying on the traditional alignment of its entry sequence and some general historicizing of its column and post structure to construct notions of its identity. The design formally dislocated the Centre from its actual physical and historic context of brick facades, recessed balconies and same lot patterns and conceptually relocated it within an abstracted Chinese historical past. By projecting an idealized Chinese spatiality into a Modern urban planning scale, a hybridized form emerged that could be rationalized within the framework of a universal Chinese cultural history.

The design negotiated identity by producing a culturally permeable form. In part, this was achieved by expanding and re-defining the term and definition of heritage to mean Chinese cultural heritage. Thus the physical expression could fulfill its two primary functions. On the one hand, it provided an inclusive vehicle through which individuals could maintain or produce a personal identity and on the other hand it presented a closed, coherent and objectified representation of community. In the context of freeway expansion and redevelopment schemes, the representation of a coherent community provided an important political strategy for promoting local area interests.<sup>296</sup>

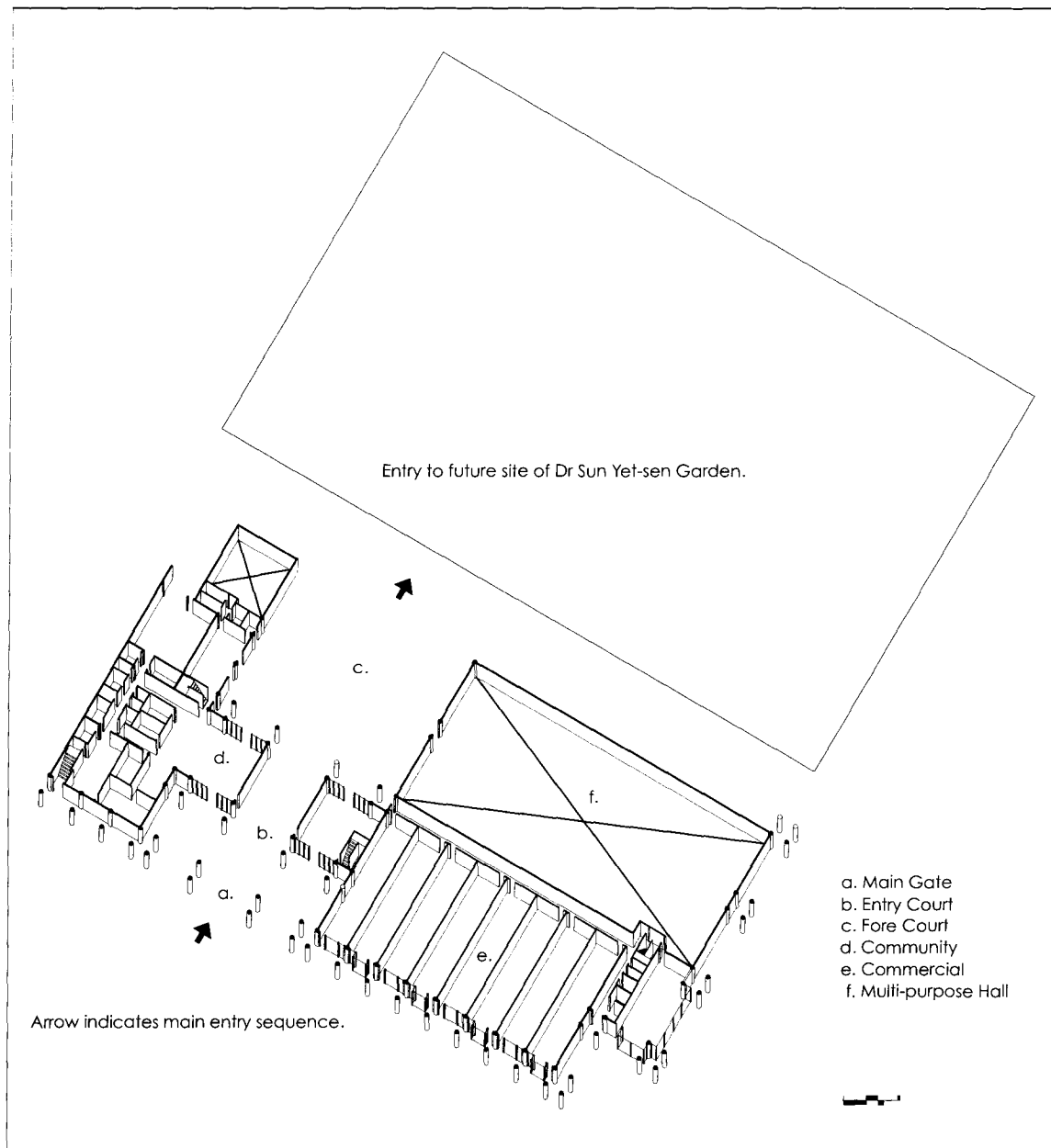


Figure 4.4 Ground Floor Plan of Chinese Cultural Centre, 50 East Pender Street, 1981.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on City of Vancouver Archives, Series 393, Loc. 74-D-4, File AP-727, 50-52 East Pender Street, James K. M. Chang Architect, 1979.



#### 4.5 Murrin Parkade - 180 Keefer Street

This case examines the introduction of Design Guidelines and revisions to Historic Chinatown's District Schedule in 1994. The intention of these policy changes was to impose stricter controls over representational practices within the area as a tradeoff for a decreasing in the overall impact of heritage designation and heritage policies that limited building scale. The policy changes allowed for the separation of the area's representational goals from competing land-use policies. In order to gain consent from the community the City agreed to remove a number of buildings from the heritage register and provided development stimulates in the form of negotiable economic incentives.<sup>297</sup> (Appendix III) The Murrin Parkade was cited by Heritage Planner's as an example of how the Guidelines could produce positive economic benefits by maintaining Chinatown's representational heritage. Formally, this was achieved by separating the parkade's external expression from its programmatic function in a manner not unlike 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial hybrid practices. Investigating the social context that produced these changes and the diverse representational practices permitted under the Guidelines presents a somewhat blurred concept of heritage conservation. It suggest, that the underlying rationale for the Guidelines was not heritage conservation, but to ensure that the City maintained controls that would continue to cultivate a link between planning and the area's economy.<sup>298</sup> The implication was that economic benefits were produced by an aesthetic reaction to representational regulations and not the conservation of historic buildings. (Figure 4.5)

The Planning Department's implementation of new Guidelines was part of a larger reconsideration of Historic Chinatown's land-use policies, which had come increasingly under fire by a diverse group of area property owners, merchants and investors. By the mid-1990s, the heritage planning policy became the focus of an intense land-use conflict within Historic Chinatown. The problem in part appeared to have been a reaction to increases in property taxes that no longer reflected the revenue potential of designated buildings in Historic Chinatown and their commercial activities. Property owners argued that heritage policy had become an unfair encumbrance by restricting the redevelopment potential of heritage-designated property and limiting the scale of new buildings. A Vancouver Sun article published 21 June 1993 records property owners' resentment towards the City for raising property taxes while forcing them to maintain heritage structures they believed had no economic vitality. Within this environment, property owners became unwilling to invest in capital improvement or new development under the existing policy framework. Then vice chair of the Chinatown Merchant Association and chair of the CHAPAC, Derek



Figure 4.5 Murrin Prakade, 1994.

Source: Photograph by Stephen Brouwers.

Chang, argued that the number of designated buildings meant that Chinatown could not be developed. Chang rhetorically suggested that limiting Chinatown's growth and potential was "reflective of a patronizing and colonial attitude towards the Chinese-Canadian community."<sup>299</sup> According to Chang, what owners wanted was "good, solid, new buildings carrying the character of Chinatown and Chinese history and Chinese architecture, instead of sacrificing just to maintain a façade which might be of no use."<sup>300</sup> (Authors emphasis.) It is noteworthy that Chang's statement identified additional representational criteria that could serve to maintain the identity of Historic Chinatown.

Conflict over development limitations within Historic Chinatown appears also to be arising as a result of competition from new Chinese urban development and changing attitudes towards the value of Historic Chinatown.<sup>301</sup> To a large extent, these conflicts were the byproduct of a large-scale Asian immigrant flow that began after the expansion of the business immigration program in 1984.<sup>302</sup> However, Katharyne Mitchell observed that although the period after 1984 represented a new flow, it was in fact part of a larger period of national opening that had connections to immigration and economic policies that began in the 1970s.<sup>303</sup> During this period there was a 'literal' opening "in terms of immigration policy, economically in terms of a more laissez-faire market, and institutionally, in terms of a major reworking of the nation's legal and judicial mandate."<sup>304</sup> By 1984 the business immigration program had been redesigned specifically "to facilitate the immigration of businesspeople who could make a positive contribution to the country's economic development by applying their risk capital and know-how to Canadian business ventures which create jobs for Canadians."<sup>305</sup> Although no data exists to confirm the amount of new Asian immigrants investment was directed into Historic Chinatown, research by David Ley indicates that "in the 1980s, between 60 and 80 percent of investment entering Canada from Hong Kong was estimated to be targeted for real estate, funds that included large amounts of capital from business migrants."<sup>306</sup> According to commentators in the local media, criticism of the current policies and the primary impetus for change in Historic Chinatown was coming as a result of an influx of Hong Kong and Taiwan-style business and a desire for a "more Asian, laissez-faire attitude in the area."<sup>307</sup> To some extent the reworking of heritage policy in Historic Chinatown should be considered as a major institutional adaptation in an attempt to connect with new immigrant attitudes and their economic power.

The problem faced by planners was that heritage designation had fixed future development in the area within the conceptual framework of conservation that had as an underlying tenet a resistance to form and scale shifts. In 1994 the City responded to these conflicts with a Policy Report on Urban Structures that had the intent of balancing heritage

and development interests in the District.<sup>308</sup> The Report's summary indicated that the existing HA-1 District would be divided into two districts, "so more stringent controls can be placed on use, height and frontage on Provincially designated sites" and less restrictive Guidelines could be established for the new HA-1A District. (Figure 4.6) To ease the encumbrance of heritage designation on some property owners the city removed a number of buildings from the Vancouver Heritage Inventory.<sup>309</sup> In addition, by increasing the maximum allowable building height, a development incentive was created.<sup>310</sup> The Report acknowledged that the new land-use controls recognized the inherent economic and social benefits of maintaining "old Chinatown" as a distinct area. It was noted that the appearance of heritage buildings and the compatibility of new development to heritage conservation goals were directly linked to Chinatown's economic vitality. "Chinatown is an historic area, and if more buildings are permitted to deviate from the unique building design of Chinatown, the area will become less historic, and will lead to a decline in Chinatown"<sup>311</sup> Accordingly, preservation had to be balanced. The new Guidelines and revised District Schedule were intended to remove uncertainty and increase investor confidence.<sup>312</sup> Formally, this was achieved by isolating a building's interior from its exterior allowing for the maintenance of the City's representational goals without encumbering the area's redevelopments.

The Report indicated that the Murrin Parkade was an example of how the Guidelines could ensure contextual responses for non-contextual structures. Planners viewed the new Parkade as one of the corrective measures that could restore economic vitality to the area.<sup>313</sup> The architect Joe Wai described it as old Chinatown built with new materials and an example of how the style could evolve following the HA-1A Guidelines.<sup>314</sup> The Parkade's formal expression was the result of the Guidelines' conscious acknowledgement and negotiation of some of the constituting factors that produced Chinatown's early character. To this end, the concept of contextual development, as prescribed by the Guidelines, focused on a compositional approach that acknowledged aspects of the area's historic land subdivision with a contemporary reinterpretation of Historic Chinese architecture.<sup>315</sup> The exact interpretation of Historic 'Chinese' architecture appears to have been given some flexibility and no distinction was made between local and non-local precedents.<sup>316</sup> This was certainly the contribution of CHAPAC's sub-committee that reviewed and suggested amendments to the policies in consultation with Heritage Planning staff prior to its adoption. As mitigation to non-contextual forms and the non-conforming scale, the Guidelines prescribe a representational formula that segmented the massing of any new building over 50 feet into a 25-foot pattern based on the original lot subdivision.<sup>317</sup> To this end, the Guidelines created a system in which the area's context could be maintained regardless of a building's representational identity, program or possible scale conflicts that could arise from new

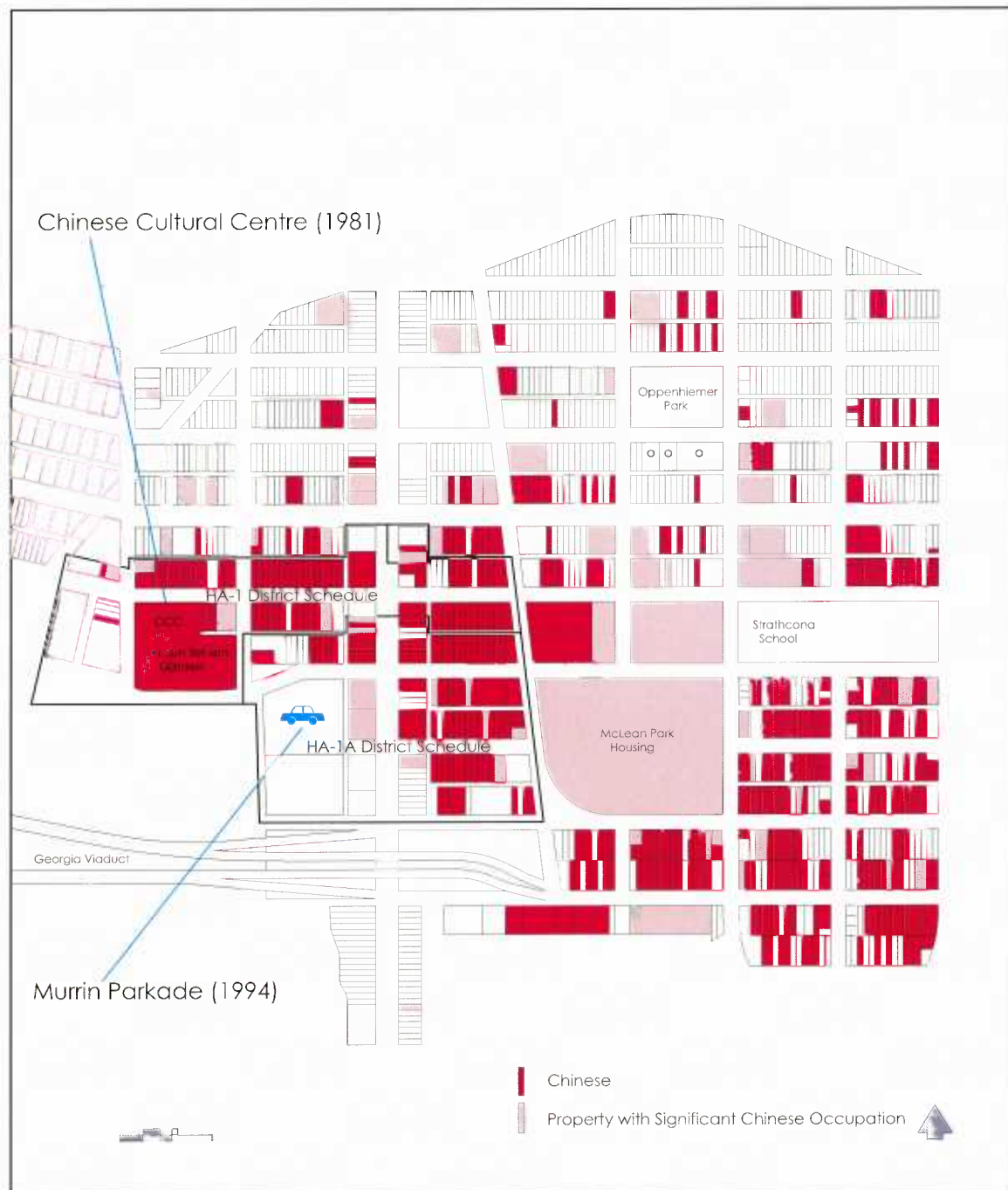


Figure 4.6 1994 Chinese Land Occupation + HA-1 and HA-1A Zoning Boundaries.

Source: Polk 1993/1994 Vancouver City Directory.

City of Vancouver, HA-1 and HA-1A District Schedule.

developments. To some extent this practice had already been applied at 127-133 East Pender Street (Lee Building) to negotiate the conflict between heritage conservation goals and building By-law requirements. However, the Guidelines ensured a means of maintaining the representational link to Historic Chinatown's architectural and cultural identity in an environment that was encouraging development.

When the design guidelines were implemented they created the unusual condition in which the City became the authoritative body approving what constituted an appropriate Chinese representational identity. However, in the policies there was still a great deal of design latitude and a great deal of ambiguity with regards to what constituted an appropriate Chinese representational form. In the context of re-using Chinese historical forms there was no distinction made between historic local and non-local architecture. Form was relational to a number of different contexts (local Chinese heritage, Chinese traditional architecture, non-Chinese local historic architecture, contemporary reinterpretation of any of the aforementioned and so on) that could each establish a form's appropriateness for the area.

#### **4.6 Rehabilitation of the Wing Sang Building and 1 East Pender Street - Chinese Times Buildings** <sup>318</sup>

The final case examines contemporary heritage rehabilitation policy in relation to Chinatown Vision Directions adopted by the City of Vancouver in 2002 as the blueprint for Historic Chinatown's revitalization.<sup>319</sup> The document was a joint product of Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) and the City of Vancouver.<sup>320</sup> Two of the major issues identified within the document were the need to encourage heritage building preservation and market housing within Historic Chinatown.<sup>321</sup> The development application process for the revitalization of the Wing Sang and Chinese Times Buildings reveal that a diverse set of new policy goals and processes began to inform the rehabilitation of designated buildings within Historic Chinatown.<sup>322</sup>

The study also contextualizes the Wing Sang and the Chinese Times Buildings within a larger set of current development proposals cultivated by the Chinatown Vision Directions and Chinese occupational trends with the study area. Mapping development applications for market housing occurring after the adoption of the Chinatown Vision to Chinese occupational patterns reveals that the majority of Chinese residences within the study area are found outside of Historic Chinatown. The mapping also reveals a significant number of Chinese residences are located in housing funded by BC Housing. The production of primarily market housing within Historic Chinatown since the adoption of the Chinatown

Vision appears not only a major renegotiation of housing patterns within the Historic area, but also represents an emerging potential site for the re-negotiation of the ethnic and class composition of the area.

The Chinatown Vision Directions was established under the administration of the Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program (DERP) in 1999. According to the Program's literature, it was designed as a multi-faceted strategy to restore "the area to a healthy, safe and liveable neighbourhood for all. Our efforts are focused on developing and implementing long-term approaches to community health, community safety, housing, and economic development."<sup>323</sup> With the key goal being increased safety and economic growth in part achieved by an extensive community engagement and building process. The Program was supported with funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre. The mandate was to implement a community development and mobilization process with community stakeholders to address safety and economic revitalization. The Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Program and Committee were formed to be an active participant in the Downtown Eastside Crime Prevention/Community Development Project. Out of this process, the Chinatown Vision was created to provide some guiding principles and general directions for the revitalization of Historic Chinatown.

In 2000 the DERP was expanded to include all three levels of government in an urban development partnership initiative under the Vancouver Agreement. "Improving the health and quality of life of Downtown Eastside residents was a significant catalyst for the creation of the Vancouver Agreement. The government partners established the Agreement to respond to a public health emergency declared in the Downtown Eastside due to epidemic drug overdose deaths and rising rates of HIV infection, primarily among injection drug users."<sup>324</sup> The Agreement committed the government partners, community and business to coordinate on promoting and supporting "sustainable economic, social and community development." The intention of the DERP and the Vancouver Agreement was to address the social issue of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside by coordinating services to prevent duplication and ensure funding was allocated towards individuals at risk. In the context of this Agreement it was understood that community stakeholders could best identify the issues that would serve to revitalize the area and it was assumed assured funds were directed towards the core initiative of improving the health and circumstances of individuals at risk.

As a result of these public health and safe initiatives, stakeholders in Historic Chinatown created the Chinatown Vision. The VCRC identified nine primary goals that included Heritage Building Preservation, A Sense of Security and A Community with a Residential and Commercial Mixture under the general heading of "A Place that Tells the History with its Physical Environment."<sup>325</sup> In order to facilitate some of the goals identified

by Chinatown stakeholders, the City of Vancouver's Planning Department undertook a feasibility study of incorporating market housings within heritage buildings specifically and more generally within the historic small lot development pattern.<sup>326</sup> The objective of the study was to "first identify typical characteristics of Chinatown buildings and to determine opportunities and challenges in accommodating market housing."<sup>327</sup> The study identified four rehabilitation scenarios that could be compared and weighted against each other. These factors included appropriate density, livability, appropriate building scale, parking, constructability and cultural identity.<sup>328</sup> However, one of the key findings identified within the study was that multi-storey concrete strata-sale buildings covering at least three twenty-five foot lots was the most feasible market housing scenario.<sup>329</sup> In summary, a financial pro forma analysis was produced for the study's information package based upon typical development scenarios that excluded heritage buildings and the projects developed by the consultant teams.

To facilitate the redevelopment of heritage buildings within the Historic Chinatown, the city established a number of financial incentives that included a Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program, property tax exemptions and increase in the Residual Density from 2 FSR to 5.5 FSR.<sup>330</sup> An additional grant was also made available by the federal government under the Historic Places Initiative program. The Commercial Heritage Property Incentive Fund was intended to, "engage...taxable Canadian Corporations in preserving Canadian heritage properties..."<sup>331</sup> Eligible projects had to be listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places and the rehabilitation had to be appropriate to the building's Statement of Significance (SOS).<sup>332</sup> The CHPIF required that the project be certified by a final review as consistent with Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and its SOS. Beyond certification, projects like the Wing Sang and Chinese Times Buildings that were eligible for these incentives also required approval from the Chinatown Historic Area Advisory Committee and the Vancouver Heritage Commission and compliance with District Schedule and accompanying Heritage Guidelines.

In 2004 a redevelopment proposal for the Chinese Times Building was presented to the Vancouver Heritage Commission (VHC) and CHAPAC for their comments. Minutes indicate that the façade would be retained and restored with the addition of two new floors, but that the interior would be removed to accommodate underground parking and realignment of the floor plates.<sup>333</sup> The rehabilitated building was to function as a residence for an extended family and their business interests.<sup>334</sup> The minutes also indicate that some disagreement appears to have existed between the BC Heritage Branch that reviewed the project for compliance with the SOS and Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places, the VHC and CHAPAC.<sup>335</sup> The issues revolved around the appearance and



location of the two-storey addition, the quality of façade restoration and retention of the interior spaces. Minutes from the VHC indicated that the project had gained general support from the BC Heritage Branch and VHC. In contrast, some CHAPAC members questioned an incentives package that was essentially built around the retention of a façade. However, by the end of the Development Permit process the project received general approval for the retention of the façade.<sup>336</sup> In principle, the project fulfilled all the policy criteria of the City of Vancouver's District Schedule and Design Guidelines and retained the heritage values identified in the building's SOS.

The Chinese Times Building, like the Wing Sang, was one of merchant Yip Sang's more recognized commercial developments.<sup>337</sup> Its design followed a similar pattern to the Wing Sang Building in which Yip hired one of the city's leading architects, W. T. Whiteway, to design a building that was visually consistent with predominant commercial architectural patterns, but conformed to Chinese socio-economic spatial patterns in plan.<sup>338</sup> Like the Wing Sang Building, the interior space represented a primary repository of the building's historical significance.

According to the Chinese Times Building's Statement of Significance (SOS):

The heritage value of the building, within the context of the physical evolution of Chinatown, lies in the use of brick to construct the building, establishing a new trend and effectively changing the character of the streetscape in Chinatown...The style for this building that was common to commercial buildings at this time adds to its heritage value by providing a good example of this type of building in Chinatown.<sup>339</sup>

Within the SOS the interior space did not register as a significant part of the building's physical heritage. The building's physical heritage value was equated only with its ability to maintain Historic Chinatown's visual identity.

This pattern is also evident in the 2005 rehabilitation proposal for the Wing Sang Building.<sup>340</sup> The proposal appears to be the first major restoration project of a Chinese historic building undertaken by non-Chinese in Historic Chinatown. The design rationale indicated that, "restoration combines...selective demolition, stabilization and reconstruction of interior spaces."<sup>341</sup> The plans show that one section of the third floor 1901 addition would be retained with the remaining area of building to undergo dramatic reconfiguration through the removal of portions of the floor plate.<sup>342</sup> Sectional drawings of the six-storey building on Market Alley specify the removal of most floors to accommodate parking and a four-storey gallery.<sup>343</sup> (Figure 4.7) In contrast, the elevation of the initial and addition to the buildings was to be restored to its 1907 appearance, including the maintenance of the six-storey

building's windows as false apertures.<sup>344</sup> Development application documents indicate that the building was going to be converted to single use occupancy as offices, showroom and private art gallery.<sup>345</sup>

Both the Wing Sang and Chinese Times Buildings' rehabilitation proposals were negotiated under a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) that entitled the owners to negotiate compensation for designation of the buildings. The HRA also established a legal agreement between the applicant and City of Vancouver that sets the standards and approach to restoration in return for financial incentives provided by the City.<sup>346</sup> In the case of the Wing Sang Building it was part of a sophisticated development scheme taking place over three sites in which heritage density transfer and bonuses were a key consideration.<sup>347</sup> (The Chinese Times proposal was not completed because compensation could not be agreed upon.) Incentives were based upon agreed heritage value established in consultation with the buildings' proposal, their Statement of Significance, Vancouver Heritage Commission, Chinatown Historic Planning Committee and City of Vancouver Heritage Planners all in relation to the over arching goals established in the Chinatown Vision Directions.

### Spatial Implication

Viewing the rehabilitation of the Wing Sang and Chinese Times Building within a larger set of development applications reveals that the Chinatown Vision and the accompanying City initiatives produced a surge in the production of market housing units within Historic Chinatown. In total 12 new development applications were received after 2002, of the 498 new dwelling units that were proposed 471 were market units.<sup>348</sup> (Appendix IV) At this moment the introduction of market housing to Historic Chinatown represents a dramatic shift in housing type and architectural production within the area. According to City of Vancouver documents there was no market housing within Historic Chinatown prior to 2004.<sup>349</sup> Housing within the area was composed primarily of Chinese Senior's housing and a number of low income Single Room Accommodations that provided housing for both Chinese and non-Chinese residents.

The research indicates that the introduction of market housing is going to produce a dramatic shift in the social composition of the area. To what extent these policies were intended to mobilize the Chinese population is difficult to determine. However, there is some indication within the study area that the Chinese population was mobilizing in relation to the production of different forms of housing.

Comparing emerging market-housing patterns to Chinese residential trends in the study area indicates some ethnic and class spatial distinctions had formed prior to 2002. One

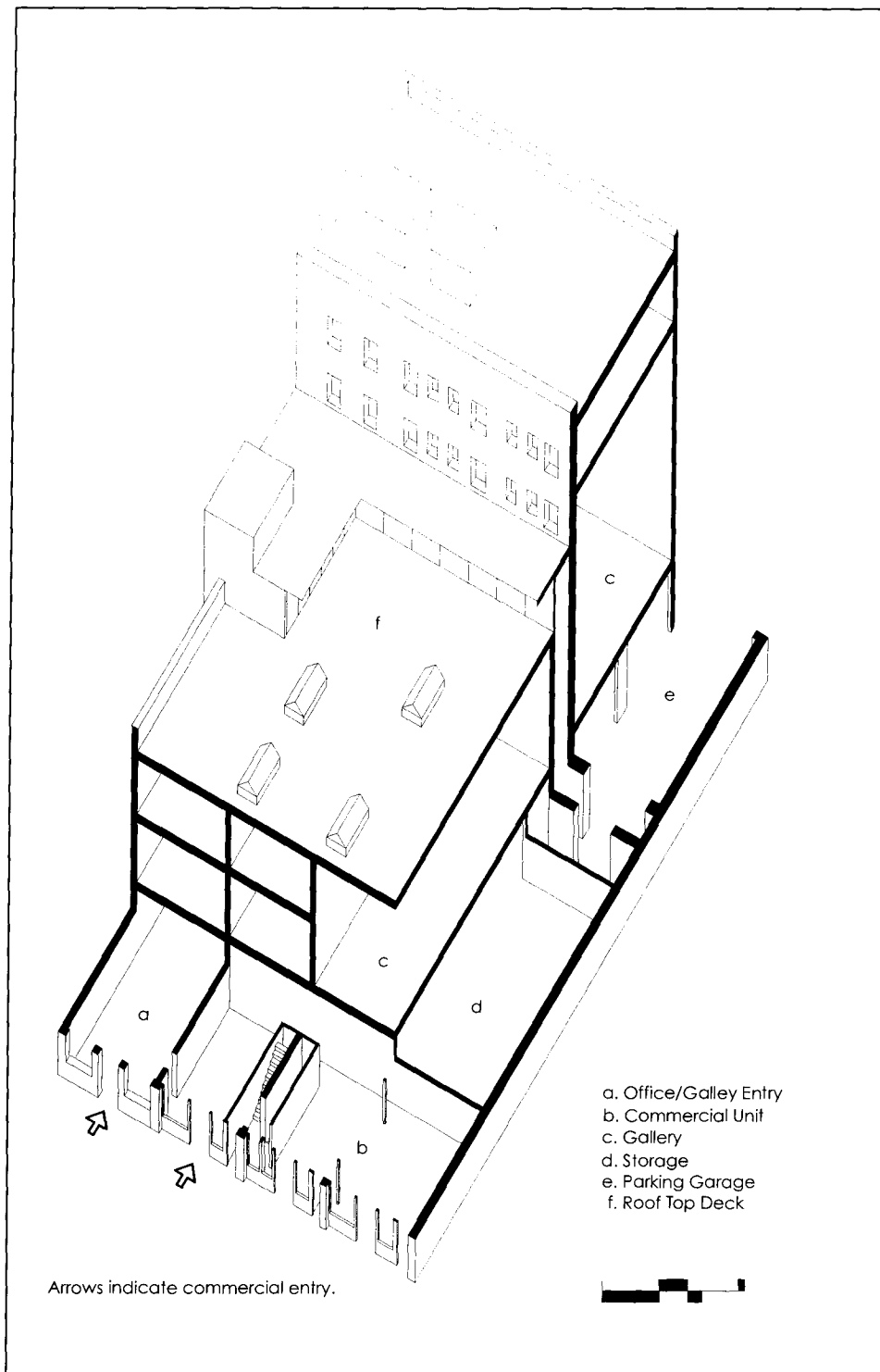


Figure 4.7 Spatial Diagram of Wing Sang Co. Building Rehabilitation, 2007.

Source: Drawing by Stephen Brouwers based on the Development Permit Application for 51 East Pender Street August 29, 2005, Prepared by Walter Francis Architect Inc.

of the most prevalent trends is the decline in Chinese residences within the market housing section of Strathcona. (Compare Figure 4.6 to Figure 4.8) I could not confirm if there was a proportional decline between Chinese occupied and owned property, but I know anecdotally this to be true.<sup>350</sup> In contrast the mapping comparison indicates an increase in the density of Chinese occupation occurring in the area along the East Hasting Street and East Pender Street corridors east of Gore Avenue.<sup>351</sup> This area is distinguished by its high concentration of non-market housing.<sup>352</sup> There is also a significant cluster of Chinese institutions and organizations located in this general area.<sup>353</sup> (Figure 4.9) In general, there appears to be a mobilization of Chinese residential, organizational and commercial activities toward this area at the same time as there is a general trend out of the Strathcona market housing stock.

It is hard to identify all the factors leading to these ethno-spatial shifts, but a few general factors may help to partially explain the trends. In the context of Strathcona, the decline in the Chinese residential population may in part be attributed to aging Chinese property owners. However, the decline in the Chinese population may also be attributable to the cost of housing in relation to zoning restrictions that prevent certain forms of building alteration.<sup>354</sup> There is no exact data to determine the number or shift in Chinese residency in BC Housing, however my research indicates that some growth may have occurred between 1994 and 2007.<sup>355</sup> It seems reasonable to assume that part of this trend is a result of resources available to Chinese within the immediate area, including the Chinese Public School, Chinese businesses as well as other social services that are concentrated within the vicinity.

There is no data available to establish a demographic profile of the individuals who have purchased or may purchase market units within Historic Chinatown.<sup>356</sup> However, an advertorial written for the 22-condominium development 'East' at 75 East Pender Street identifies one of the early purchaser's as an affluent Occidental real estate investor and the reason for purchasing is suggested. "East is unique...Pender Street is one of the most culturally interesting blocks in the city...with the advent of the Woodward's and the Koret Lofts...the neighbourhood is only going to get more dynamic over the next few years."<sup>357</sup> Then mayor Larry Campbell acknowledged that Chinatown's community leaders had "laid the groundwork for the renewal." City Councilor Raymond Louie noted that the success of crime reduction programs directed at the Downtown Eastside "means Chinatown is ready for revitalization. Through the Chinatown Vision and heritage bonus system...we are ready to welcome up to 5000 new residents to this neighbourhood while respecting the community's unique character. This is the opportunity we want to highlight for investors and developers."<sup>358</sup> To what extent this one investor may be typical of the type of residents envisioned is unknown, however, it is clear that the City's policy that was intended to address current health and crime issues was doing so by renegotiating the class composition and



Figure 4.8 2007 Chinese Land Occupation.

Source: Data was established by a visual survey to identify Chinese businesses.  
 Residential information was established by survey of residence in Strathcona.  
 Other residential information was gained by comparing residential patterns found  
 in the 1995 /96 Vancouver Cross Cross Directories to the 2005/06 Downtown  
 Eastside Monitoring Reports.  
 Vancouver Heritage Registry.  
 City of Vancouver, Chinatown Historic Area Advisory Committee, Minutes.



Figure 4.9 2007 Chinese Institutions + Non-Market Housing with Significant Chinese Occupation.

Source: Chinese Benevolent Association Mailing List.  
City of Vancouver, Housing Centre.

demographic pattern of the area.

It is difficult to predict future spatial shifts, but current trends show an increase in non-Chinese businesses in the area and a major shift in the future demographic pattern.<sup>359</sup> The projects affirm that a large re-negotiation of Historic Chinatown is beginning to take place and that many of the historic buildings' spatial idiosyncrasies may be lost as the area is re-conceptualized and re-shaped for new economic, and possibly cultural, uses.<sup>360</sup> These cases point out that not only does a major disconnect still exist between the stated goals of heritage retention and the reality of its practices, but that heritage discourse increasingly obscures the socio-cultural implications of its practice.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion

The research produced by this study affirms the social, historical and cultural import of the area identified as Chinatown, and to a large extent this was its purpose. Within this area, Vancouver's early Chinese immigrants produced a number of historically significant buildings, distinct architectural practices and a number of unique spatial conditions. However, the study also clearly refutes the conceptualization of Chinatown as a coherent or accurate historical image of Chinese lived social space within the city of Vancouver. The study identifies fundamental problems in the conception and historical description of Chinatown as a discretely defined space. The research points out that the conceptualization of Chinatown as existing in social and spatial isolation is clearly inaccurate. The mapping of Chinese occupational patterns between 1895 and 1955 indicate a dynamic spatial mobility and a complex and continuous set of social negotiations between Chinese and non-Chinese. In a very real sense, the historical mapping of Chinese architectural practice and land occupation throughout district lot 196 (and more generally the city of Vancouver) provides a vivid example of a space of coexisting heterogeneity.

The varied architectural practices identified in the study indicate something of the complex sets of social, economic and spatial negotiations that were taking place between Chinese and non-Chinese. The examination of these practices in isolation provided valuable insights into how hybrid architectural practices were used historically as a strategic device and as a means of engendering social and spatial convergences. The study also demonstrates that these interactions and negotiations were taking place over the entire city and were a significant part of the social and physical development of Vancouver.

More specifically, the method of examining Chinese architectural practices and the space of Chinese as a genealogy has been an illuminating research tool. The spatial genealogy constructed by the research provided a means of examining how different conceptualizations of Chinatown have recorded, created and often ignored the different social realities of Chinese. Furthermore, the spatial genealogy recorded less acknowledged aspects of Chinese socio-spatial history in Vancouver. Possibly the most significant aspect of the spatial genealogy is that it provides a system by which to identify and explain that Chinatown as a concept and social reality is produced from multiple points of origin that emerged from multiple sources.

At a fine-grained scale, the genealogy identifies complex and multifaceted architectural practices. The genealogy has enabled a better understanding of specific



representational practices, like those employed by Chinese political institutions. In some instances, like the discovery of flaring eaves that once adorned the Chinese Benevolent Association Building, the representation reaffirms the building's social, political and historical significance. When examined in relation to other associations, however, important intricacies within Chinese representational practices are revealed which indicate Chinese institutional architecture played a vital role in the signification of a number of social, political and commercial agendas. In the context of the 1950s and 1960s, Chinese representational practices found with restaurants identify marginal and obscure spatial patterns, yet these are important material through which to rethink Chinese spatial and social history within Vancouver. After Chinatown's historical designation in 1971, architectural practices remained varied, but there was also a more prolific use of balconies and flaring eaves as architectural elements. The genealogy provided a tool to separate the origins of these forms, place them within their constitutive context and separate what Agrest and Gandelsonas argue is the significant difference between communication and signification.

Tracing Chinese architectural practices reveals that although Chinese historically produced fewer buildings than non-Chinese they were prolific in the variety of unique spatial patterns they created. The cases examined within this research show that the Chinese in Vancouver from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century show an array of spatial patterns. The research also indicates that through this early period Chinese produced buildings that appeared to follow predominant representational practices, but which were spatially varied and unique. This historical particularity of Chinese architectural practice within Vancouver and specifically within the area of (but not coextensive with) Historic Chinatown presents some concern regarding heritage policies that focus on the preservation of visual appearance rather than the acknowledgement of a building's unique historical pattern. Tracing contemporary development patterns within Historic Chinatown shows that spatial patterns are becoming more typical of patterns seen throughout the city. This confirms that contemporarily Historic Chinatown is becoming more visually distinct at the same time that its spatial patterns are becoming increasingly more typical.

In summarizing, the research points out a number of general issues that relate to the subject and study of Chinatown and the history of Chinese lived social space in Vancouver. More specifically, the study points out how identity practices, heritage policy and spatial discourse have been conflated within the modern conceptualization of a Chinatown. The study demonstrates the discrepancy between the notion that Chinatown is an accurate historical representation of Chinese lived social space and the historic reality of Chinese in Vancouver. However, the study also acknowledges that the question is undeniably complicated by the fact that Chinatown as a racial, social and academic construct is a

significant part of Chinese socio-spatial history. That is further complicated by the fact that today's Historic Chinatown is as much a moniker of modernity and capitalist ideology as it is of Chinese history. In a very real sense, Chinatown as a concept and as an object is an artifact of modernity. The relationship between the emergence of modern spatial concepts through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the spatial description of ethnic enclaves produced by the Chicago School of Sociology cannot be discounted.

Historically, culturally and academically the relationship of modernity to Chinese spatial discourse appears to be a significant consideration that is made particularly poignant as the relationship is made increasingly tangible in heritage practice. Current municipal policy defines architectural form and the spatial boundaries of Chinatown according to the idea of racial segregation and a questionable intellectual construct that regrettably reinforces the disciplinary aspects of the discourse by its institutionalization. One of the potential problems is that the reproduction itself begins to produce knowledge. What are the underlying implications of reproducing and acknowledging only the racialized historical construct as opposed to other historical and social realities? The interpretation of these representations may not "throw reality into crisis," as Beatriz Colomina suggests, but it has certainly distorted the history of Chinese in Vancouver. The conflation of modern zoning practices with Chinese history in Vancouver (in the form of heritage designation) has been a major contributor to the distorted historic image of Chinese social life within the city.

Chinese lived social space is the accumulation of a diverse set of practices and the forms woven through the social, physical and spatial history of Vancouver. The area identified as Chinatown contains a significant and important part of Chinese social, architectural and spatial history, however the image produced by this research also shows that these representations are contradictory and in some instances ambiguous and porous. The designation of Historic Chinatown is representative of a problem with our current understanding of space. It tends to generalize and disregard the constituent complexities that produced and engender its cultural value. This is true of non-Chinese history within the space defined as Chinatown and Chinese history beyond this area. This is in part the result of biases in conceptualizations of cultural isolation and assimilation that stress the experience of individuals or groups as they enter and assimilate to a culture at the expense of neglecting how culture is reformulated by these intersections.

Although the research fortifies the architectural and social significance of this section of Vancouver to Chinese, it also points out that this is a limited and incomplete representation of Chinese architectural, social and spatial history. The study problematizes historic conceptualizations of Chinatown and outlines the difficulty in escaping them. However, the study also indicates the value of tackling the problem of cultural legibility via recourse to

alternative sources like hybrid architectural practice. The study demonstrates the potential of architectural material and practices as a research field within the study of Chinese social practices and spatial development in Vancouver.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kay Anderson, Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991): 80-81.

<sup>2</sup> The article was reporting on a hearing being held on property damage as a result of the anti-Asiatic riots in 1907. "Chinese Property Valued at Three Million." Province 27 May 1908: 1.

<sup>3</sup> (Yip 1995, 2001; Lai 1988; Yee 1989, 2005; Liu 2000) Christopher L. Yip argues that hybridity represented the only reasonable design solution for Chinese immigrants who would have found it impossible to impose their own architecture and place-making ideas in a racially charged environment. In his study of early California Chinatowns, Yip suggests that hybridization was in part forced upon new Chinese immigrants. Physical factors such as the immigrant cultural framework, demographic structure of Chinese-American communities, discrimination and legal barriers all predicated the need for hybridity in the North America urban context. Yip's studies are valuable, but also problematic as a result of generalizations made about Chinese architectural practice as a phenomenon. Christopher Yip, "California Chinatowns: Built Environments Express the Hybridized Culture of Chinese Americans" Hybrid Urbanism: On Identity Discourse and the Built Environment, Ed. Nazar Alsayyad (London: Praeger 2001): 67-82. It is particularly problematic when Yip uses American historical data to draw conclusion regarding the Chinese produced architecture in Vancouver. Additionally, some conclusion regarding the hybridization of Chinese courtyards and American commercial buildings are interesting, but are not substantiated with documents or an analysis of how he arrived at this idea. Christopher L. Yip, "Association, Residence, and Shop: An Appropriation of Commercial Blocks in North American Chinatowns." Gender, Class, and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V, Ed. Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press 1995): 109-117.

<sup>4</sup> Organizations like the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (IASTE) and its publication Traditional Dwelling and Settlement Review are producing more critical literature on the subject.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Yu, Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact and Exoticism in Modern America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Yu 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Katharyne Mitchell 2000, "Global Diasporas and Traditional Towns: Chinese Transnational Migration and the Redevelopment of Vancouver's Chinatown," Traditional Dwelling and Settlement Review Vol. 11 no. 2 (Spring 2000): 8.

<sup>8</sup> Katharyne Mitchell, "Reworking democracy: contemporary immigration and community politics in Vancouver's Chinatown" Political Geography Vol. 17 no. 6 August (1998): 729-750 and Mitchell 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Domenic Beneventi, "The Representation of Vancouver in Sky Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café* and Wayson Choy's *The Jade Peony Claiming Space*," Racialization in Canadian Cities, Ed. Cheryl Teelucksingh (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2006): 137.

<sup>10</sup> Henry Yu, "On a Stage Built By Others: Creating An Intellectual History of Asian Americans," in Millenium Series special issue on "History and Historians in the Making," edited by Valerie Matsumoto, Amerasia Journal (Spring 2000). <<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/yu/Stage.pdf>>.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson 4.

<sup>12</sup> Anderson 3.

<sup>13</sup> Wing Chung Ng, The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The pursuit of Identity and Power (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999) 6.

<sup>14</sup> Yu 2001. In the writing of the Chicago sociologists' and in Henry Yu's discussion of their work, the term space is used in the abstract.

<sup>15</sup> Henry Yu defines an intellectual construction as "a framework of theories which define who "Orientals" were, as well as their place in America" and an institutional construction as "a network of scholars who produced these ideas, and who were connected to each other through their research on the "Oriental problem" and through academic institution." Yu 2000.

<sup>16</sup> Yu argues that one of the lingering problems is that this construct not only influenced the Occidental image of Asians, but it also informed how Asian Americans imaged themselves. An example of this can be seen in David Lai's Chinatown: Towns within cities in Canada (1988). Lai developed his own "stage hypothesis" within the intellectual constructs of the Urban Ecological theory established at the University of Chicago. Surveys conducted by Lai, research undertaken for the revitalization of Victoria's Chinatown, reveal that one of the major problems identified with Victoria's Chinatown was that it had no identifiable boundaries. Lai's survey was developed in consultation with the Chinatown community. His definition of "Chinatown's community" did not mirror the "Chinese community" but was defined as all property owners, merchants, employees and residents regardless of race. More importantly, he identified five Chinatown interest groups: landlords, merchants, residents, users and tourists. It is important to note that the study was requested by the Victoria's Heritage Advisory Committee to establish the view and opinions of the Chinese community about Chinatown. The objective was to make recommendations to Victoria's City Council for the revitalization of the city's Chinatown. Lai does not identify if any differences existed between the ways he as an academic, the Chinese and non-Chinese population of Victoria and tourists view Chinatown as an area. David Lai, Chinatown: Towns within cities in Canada (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988) 252-269, 273.

<sup>17</sup> Yu 176.

<sup>18</sup> Yu 105.

<sup>19</sup> Yu 106.

<sup>20</sup> Yu 175.

<sup>21</sup> The relationship between race, ethnicity and identity was not limited to a physical area of the city. I have emphasized this spatial relationship because of the manner in which the sociologists located Chinese within the city.

<sup>22</sup> Yu 176.

<sup>23</sup> C. G. Prado, Starting with Foucault: An Introduction to Genealogy (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995) 26.

<sup>24</sup> Giulio Carlo Argan, "On the Typology of Architecture," Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995, Ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press. 1996) 243.

<sup>25</sup> Doreen Massey, For Space (London: Sage Publications, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> A trajectory is defined as the process of change in a phenomenon.

<sup>27</sup> Massey 1-15.

<sup>28</sup> Massey 10-11.

<sup>29</sup> Duanfang Lu has examined the question of hybrid form in Vancouver by comparing two historical episodes of Chinese form production in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the 1980s. His argument suggests that hybrid form in its early episode was seen as non-threatening to the dominant society because it was geographically limited. In contrast to the second episode in which the "monster house" was "located constitutively inside the core." My research is interested in a more specific study of hybrid architecture that presents a more nuanced and varied use of hybridity as a strategy. Furthermore, I would suggest the use of hybridity at the turn of the century was considerably more varied and contentious than Lu indicates. Duanfung Lu, "Changing Hybridity," Traditional Dwelling and Settlement Review Vol. XI No. 11 (2000): 19-28.

<sup>30</sup> Mitchell 1998, 730.

<sup>31</sup> Mitchell 730.

<sup>32</sup> The argument has been developed from R.J.C. Young 1995, M. Featherstone 1990, and A.

Appadurai 1996 and are noted as sources of Broudehoux's argument as is discussed later in the thesis. Anne-Marie Broudehoux, "Learning from Chinatown: The search for a Modern Chinese Architectural Identity, 1911-1998," On the Identity Discourse and Built Environment Ed. Nesar Alsayyad (London: Praeger, 2001): 157.

<sup>33</sup> Broudehoux 157.

<sup>34</sup> Mendel carefully explains in his text how the experiments were conducted to eliminate external factors that could have affected the results. Gregor Mendel, Experiments in Plant Hybridization (1866) Trans. William Bateson and Roger Blumberg. 1996. Electronic Scholarly Publishing Project. <<http://www.esp.org/foundations/genetics/classical/gm-65.pdf>>.

<sup>35</sup> The argument is developed by Massey 1994, Hall & Gay 1996, Castells 1997 and quoted by Broudehoux. 157.

<sup>36</sup> Lu 2000.

<sup>37</sup> The argument is developed by Bakhtin 1981, Bhabha 1994, in Duanfung Lu, "Changing Hybridity," Traditional Dwelling and Settlement Review Vol. XI No. 11 (2000): 19-28.

<sup>38</sup> Duanfung Lu.

<sup>39</sup> The population distribution maps were constructed using the Vancouver Directories. The mapping has methodological problems, but I believe it offers a general snapshot of the extent of the Chinese population within these boundaries.

<sup>40</sup> William Willmott, "Approaches to the Study of Chinese in British Columbia." BC Studies 4 (Spring 1970): 39-41.

<sup>41</sup> Willmott 39.

<sup>42</sup> Willmott's descriptions is based on William Skinner, "Periodic marketing and social organization in rural China, Part 1," Journal of Asian Studies, vol. xxiv no. 1 (1964) 3-43. Willmott 38-52.

<sup>43</sup> Title search indicates that Chinese first purchase Lot 25 District Lot 196 (51 East Pender Street) in 1882, however I do not know if it was by Yip Sang at this time. Yip Sang constructed his first store on this lot in 1889. Paul Yee, Chinese Business in Vancouver 1886-1914 M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia (1983) Appendix VI 138-139.

<sup>44</sup> Willmott 39-40.

<sup>45</sup> Willmott 40.

<sup>46</sup> Paul Yee, Chinese Business in Vancouver: 1886-1914, M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1993, 22.

<sup>47</sup> Paul Yee's research on Chinese business in Vancouver revealed that the Chinese merchant class could be organized according to earning and viewed as a pyramidal structure. Yee 40-43.

<sup>48</sup> Yee 40-43.

<sup>49</sup> Yee 44.

<sup>50</sup> Yee 41-42.

<sup>51</sup> Graham Yip, The Wing Sang Co. Building: A Cultural Bridge, School of Architecture Direct Studies, University of British Columbia, 1982, 71.

<sup>52</sup> Yip 76.

<sup>53</sup> The architect is unknown.

<sup>54</sup> Statistics for the number of Chinese living in Vancouver or Canada at this time should be considered general estimates. I believe it would be safe to assume that the number of Chinese living in Vancouver at this time was higher. Yee 136.

<sup>55</sup> Thomas Ennor Julian is probably best known for designing Holy Rosary Cathedral at 646 Richards Street, built between 1899-1900.

<sup>56</sup> The interior of this building made use of a number of innovative strategies to provide light and increase the livability of the spaces. A number of skylights were placed on the third floor to provided natural light to the interior. Six of the skylights cut through the entire sections of the third floor much like a lightwell that opened up to the second floor spaces below. Natural light on the second floor could be controlled by opening or closing two doors on the ceiling that opened up to a third floor skylight. Observations made during site visit to building.

<sup>57</sup> Yip 68-84.

<sup>58</sup> Fire Insurance maps from circa 1900 show three buildings at the rear of the site. City of Vancouver Archives, (hereafter CVA) Map Collection, Map 384 Sheet 11, Goad Co. Insurance Plan of the City of Vancouver, Revised to June 1901.

<sup>59</sup> Yip n.p.

<sup>60</sup> This pattern seems consistent with the 1 East Pender building – The Chinese Times Building and the tenement constructed in Canton Alley.

<sup>61</sup> Chinese were in Vancouver prior to 1886, however after the Canadian Pacific Railway



(CPR) determined Vancouver was going to be the terminus of the CPR the population began to increase rapidly. Harry Con, Ronald Con, Graham Johnson, Edgar Wickberg, William Willmott. *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*, Ed. Edward Wickberg (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982) 61.

<sup>62</sup> The Wing Sang Company had placed an advertisement in the Daily News Advertiser 6 December 1891 indicating it sold Chinese silk, utensils, trinkets, and curios and well as being an importer of opium. John Mackie, "Walking Into," *The Vancouver Sun* 7 June (2005): B-2.

<sup>63</sup> To what extent a general reading of merchant architecture can be cast on to other buildings is unknown. There does not appear to be an adequate architectural record to make the required comparisons. However, further field research may provide important data to establish a more compelling argument in one direction or the other.

<sup>64</sup> Kay Anderson did the mappings from these dates in an attempt to show the concentration of Chinese on East Pender Street, she largely disregards the location of Chinese outside of this area. Anderson 69, 76-77.

<sup>65</sup> As early as 1886 Chinese had cleared 160 acres of land for vegetable gardens. The *Vancouver News* reported that the produced was transported and sold daily throughout the Vancouver. Wickberg 61.

<sup>66</sup> The architect is unknown. Reviewing historic photographs and other archival records, I could not identify any other building in Vancouver that used flaring eaves that pre-dates the CBA Building.

<sup>67</sup> The architect is unknown.

<sup>68</sup> Its members were prosperous and influential merchants, and included Yip Sang, Chang Toy, and Lum Duck Shew who owned the major Chinese trading companies in Vancouver.

<sup>69</sup> I reconstructed the original design of the CBA Buildings using measured site drawings and historic photographs. I could not find a historic photograph that showed the entire façade prior to the 1950s. The flaring eaves' original design was established using two primary photographs, one of a streetscape of Chinatown after 1926 and a second off a CBA letterhead. "Pender Street" Vancouver BC, ca. 1929, Stuart Thomson photo, City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 99-2463 Loc. 175-A-3.

<sup>70</sup> In general, four types of voluntary associations existed (community wide bodies, fraternal, district and clan) with a variety of socio-economic and political functions. Fraternal associations were primarily political in nature, but they also provided support for members in the form of welfare and recreational needs. In some cases these organizations established schools and newspapers. Membership was not determined by kinship or place of origin, but by political and sometimes commercial interests. District (from the same county) and clan (common surname) associations have similar functions concerning the welfare of local

members and development or assistance of the overseas community. Their membership was derived from kinship or place of origin. In Vancouver the Chinese Benevolent Association fulfilled the role of the community wide body representing the Chinese population as an umbrella organization. The distinctions between these organizations should be understood as distinctions between the formations of its membership. The social functions provided by these associations often crossed, as did its membership. Individuals often belonged to a number of voluntary associations, which ensured a wider support system in times of need or crisis. Wickberg 106. Straaton notes that not all Chinese accepted that the CBA's represented them, but as a political body it had gained some authority by its recognition by the provincial government. The CBA was the sole Chinese representative to the Canadian government until 1909 when a Chinese consulate was established in Canada. Karin Straaton, The Political System of the Vancouver Chinese Community: Association and Leadership in the Early 1960's M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia (1974) 91. Merchants had requested a Chinese consulate for Canada in an attempt to secure faster settlements of claims for damage to property during the 1907 riots. The government had settled Japanese claims only three months after the riots in large part due to the fact that the Japanese consulate represented them. It was also noted that this would also help with the rising amount of trade between the two countries. "Chinese may soon secure consulate," Vancouver Daily Province 26 May 1908: 1.

<sup>71</sup> Straaton indicates that this observation was noted by Donald Willmott, The Chinese of Semarang: a Changing Minority Community in Indonesia, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960); Maurice Freedman, Immigrants and Associations: Chinese in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Singapore, In: Immigrants and Associations, Ed. L.A. Fallers, (The Hague and Paris, Mouton, 1967); William Willmott, Congregations and Associations: The Political Structure of the Chinese Community in Phnom-Penh, Cambodia, Comparative Studies in Society and History II: 282-301. Straaton 11.

<sup>72</sup> The Oikwok Hoktong (Patriotic School) and the Daily News (Yat Sun Bo) newspaper were both located in the Empire Reform Association Building. The CBA Building also provided space for the Oikwok Hoktong after 1917 and a hospital that served the Chinese population. Wickberg 77, 121-122; City of Vancouver, "The Chinese Benevolent Association," Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005) 4.

<sup>73</sup> W. E. Willmont, "Chinese Clan Associations in Vancouver" Man no. 49 (March-April 1964): 33-38.

<sup>74</sup> According to Wickberg, chambers of commerce like the Zhaoyi Gongsuo and Gongyi Gongsuo were encouraged by the Chinese government in an attempt to win favor with the merchants. Wickberg 77-78.

<sup>75</sup> Yee 53-55.

<sup>76</sup> Kang Youwei established the first Empire Reform Association branch in Victoria in 1899.

The branches were used to establish support for reform to the monarchy. Wickberg 73-79. Kang appears to have received particularly strong support from merchant Yip Sang. Graham Yip, The Wing Sang Co. Building: A Cultural Bridge, University of British Columbia School of Architecture Directed Studies (1982). Both the Empire Reform Association and the Wing Sang Building share the feature of a semi-circle at the top of the buildings with the inscription of their name and date of construction. It may suggest that the buildings were both designed by Thomas Ennor Julian, who is known to have designed the addition to the Wing Sang Company Building in 1901 or the influence of Yip Sang in the design.

<sup>77</sup> On occasion, Occidental business leaders attended and gave speeches at the Empire Reform Association. In 1899 Kang Youwei traveled to Ottawa where he attended a session of Parliament and met Prime Minister Laurier. Wickberg 75, 111.

<sup>78</sup> Wickberg 75.

<sup>79</sup> Wickberg 74.

<sup>80</sup> The article indicated support for the Empire Reformation Association Building being erected on East Hastings Street. "Extending Chinatown Limits to Hastings St," Vancouver Daily Province 30 September 1902: 1.

<sup>81</sup> Although the Italianate style had first appeared in the 1850s it was still popular in Western Canada into the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Edward Mill and Warren Sommer. Vancouver Architecture, 1886-1914 Volume I & II, Manuscripts Report Series Environment Canada, 1975.

<sup>82</sup> Alan Gowans, Building Canada: An Architectural History of Canadian Life (Toronto: University Press, 1966) 86.

<sup>83</sup> In 1900 the secretary of the Empire Reform Association Won Alexander Cumyow told the Vancouver Press that the Association was willing to send Overseas Chinese troops to help with the relief efforts. Although this appears not to have happened the intention clearly points out that the Empire Reform Association wanted to disassociate itself from the Boxers and Empress Dowager. Wickberg 75.

<sup>84</sup> City of Vancouver, "The Chinese Benevolent Association," Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown Chinese, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005): 4.

<sup>85</sup> The CBA was originally painted red, green, golden yellow and a bluish grey. The colours were determined by scraping down to the original paint layer and colour matching different areas of the building's façade.

<sup>86</sup> The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association Building (1885) in Victoria does not exhibit this form of direct visual identification. However the Chinese Public School in Victoria constructed in 1909 exhibits some similarity to the CBA Building in Vancouver.

The fund raising for the Chinese Public School in Victoria was begun under an ensuing crisis brought about in 1908 by the B.C. government's Department of Education that suggested that students should be racially segregated. Wickberg 77.

<sup>87</sup> Anderson 51.

<sup>88</sup> Anderson 49.

<sup>89</sup> Anderson 51.

<sup>90</sup> The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) of Victoria attempt to discourage migrants from China on three separate occasions before 1915. Influenced by "growing agitation against the Chinese by white labourers" and by the increasing hardship faced by Chinese itinerant labourers without work or prospects for employment, migrants began to be a burden for established merchants in Victoria. Concern for the welfare of poor migrants and growing hostility towards the "Chinese merchant to whom the white workers were not strongly antagonistic" were both contributing factors in discouraging migration. Chuen-Yan Lai, "Chinese Attempts to Discourage Emigration to Canada: Some Findings from the Chinese Archives in Victoria," BC Studies 18 (Summer 1973): 33-49.

<sup>91</sup> Cathy Van Ingen, "The moral geography of a First Nations' casino in Las Vegas North." Claiming Space Racialization in Canadian Cities. Ed. Cheryl Teeluchsingh (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006) 164. 153-172.

<sup>92</sup> Gambling is not, and never was, permitted in the CBA Building.

<sup>93</sup> The merchant's power was challenged shortly after the construction of the building. The nature of this challenge was complex and interrelated to many political and social factors within the Chinese population and will be discussed in later case studies. This set of issues is covered extensively in From China to Canada. Wickberg 101-117.

<sup>94</sup> Edward Mills and Warren Somner, Vancouver Architecture, 1886-1914, Volume I & II, Manuscript Report Series Environment Canada (1975).

<sup>95</sup> 124 East Pender Street's original design shows a four-storey building with a slightly different exterior composition and program. Although the aesthetic differences were minor in nature, they are noteworthy because they appear during the construction of the building. The inconsistency between drawings and building reveals that the building's aesthetic was produced during the building's construction. CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP-306, 124 East Pender Street, [N. Leech, Architect], Chinese Theatre, [1914].

<sup>96</sup> There appears to be some question regarding the dating of the building. The drawings do not indicate a date or architect.

<sup>97</sup> No archival drawings exist for either building and both have been altered to a point that it would be impossible to determine an accurate original plan from the existing structures. 79 East Pender will be discussed more completely in a separate case study.

<sup>98</sup> In addition to acting as a theatre impresario in both Vancouver and Victoria, Loo was active in real estate development. Wing Chung Ng, "Chinatown Theatre as Transnational Business: New Evidence from Vancouver during the Exclusion Era," BC Studies 148 (Winter 2005/06): 40. Loo had made his fortune in the Caribou Gold Rush. He subsequently diversified into real estate and other business enterprises like the theatre. His real estate investments included 100 East Pender Street and the Loo Building located at 404 Abbott Street. City of Vancouver, "124 East Pender Street," Statement of Significance Research Files, Commonwealth Resource Management.

<sup>99</sup> CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP-306, 124 East Pender Street, [N. Leech, Architect], Chinese Theatre, [1914].

<sup>100</sup> Ng's study focuses on two intervals of merchant investment in theatre companies, between 1916-1918 and 1923-1924. The first set of business records are from the Wing Hong Lin Theatre Company that includes "details of incorporation, minutes of board meetings, information on ticket sales and payroll, several actor's contracts and miscellaneous correspondence." These records pertain primarily to Chang Toy and Sing Ping Theatre. Ng 25-54.

<sup>101</sup> Chang Toy was the wealthiest Chinese merchant in Western Canada and the majority shareholder in the Wing Hong Lin Theatre. Ng 33.

<sup>102</sup> Ng 31.

<sup>103</sup> James Skitt Matthews was the City of Vancouver's first archivist.

<sup>104</sup> Matthew's description recounted a visit made in 1898 to the theatre in Shanghai Alley. The descriptions provided are useful and do conform to the physical planning of the theatre, but they are from the perspective of an outsiders gaze that did not understand the language and probably did not understand the social context of the theatre in the diaspora. Ng 30.

<sup>105</sup> Ng 32.

<sup>106</sup> This reading of the programs relationship is based on Joseph Fenton's description of a hybrid building form based upon a thematic connection between program types. Joseph Fenton, "Hybrid Architecture," Pamphlet Architecture No. 11 (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1985): 6.

<sup>107</sup> Ng 37.

<sup>108</sup> W. H. Chow had added box seats to the Sing Ping Theatre in 1914. An explanation of the

early additions of box seats in the Sing Ping Theatre is difficult to determine. The theatre's address is on Keefer Street, but was actually located on Columbia Street. CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP-308, 121-125 Keefer Street, W. H. Chow, Chinese Theatre for Sam Kee, 1914.

<sup>109</sup> Ng 36.

<sup>110</sup> Ng 44.

<sup>111</sup> W. H. Chow had added box seats to the Sing Ping Theatre in 1914. An explanation of the early additions of box seats in the Sing Ping Theatre is difficult to determine, but Ng's examination of the ticket sales of the Wing Hong Nin Theatre Company indicate that the price of admission varied. It may be possible that the Ko Sing Theatre had a single price for admission prior to these additions or that the theatre's performances were inferior quality. Ng 37.

<sup>112</sup> Ng 53.

<sup>113</sup> Ng 41.

<sup>114</sup> Dimitrios Otis, "The Death of Venus," The Vancouver Courier 7 March 2007.

<sup>115</sup> Between 1920 and 1930 four Chinese theatre houses were operating in Vancouver. Ng 48.

<sup>116</sup> Vancouver's Chinese population grew from 6,484 in 1921 to 13,011 in 1931, but by 1941 had declined to 7,174. David Chuenyan Lai, Chinatowns: Towns Within Cities in Canada (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988) 85-86.

<sup>117</sup> Li 47-59.

<sup>118</sup> William Edwardes Sproat a Scottish born architect that practiced in Vancouver between 1912 and 1922 designed the building. Donald Luxton, Ed, Building the West. The Early Architects of British Columbia, Second Edition (Vancouver: Talonbooks 2007): 483-484.

<sup>119</sup> Wickberg 74. Yun Ho Chang provides an interesting personal account of the political conflict amongst the Chinese population during this period. Daphne Marlatt and Carole Itter. "Opening Doors," Vancouver's East End Sound Heritage Volume VIII, No. 1 & 2 (Victoria: Aural History Program, 1979) 37-41.

<sup>120</sup> Wickberg 74.

<sup>121</sup> Wickberg 104.

<sup>122</sup> Like most politically minded reformers or revolutionaries, Sun Yat-sen understood the

value and power of the overseas Chinese and made repeated visits to North America to raise support and money for his forces. Wickberg 73-77, 101-106.

<sup>123</sup> Historically, membership of the Cheekungtong was made up of labourers that considered themselves politically neutral with respect to domestic and foreign politics. A set of 1882 rules found in the mining town of Barkerville BC is evidence of an interest in the internal functions of the society and its members. It established guidelines for settling disputes, forbade its members from using the court system, regulated mining sizes and set the punishment for infractions (Wickberg 31). However, by 1911, as the political climate in China began to change the Cheekungtong became an open political party in China and Canada. In 1920 the Cheekungtong renamed themselves the Chinese Freemasons and made some overtures towards the Masonic Order, however no relationship appears to have been formed between the groups. Later, a second organization developed within the Cheekungtong, the Dart Coon Club that became the fighting arm of the association, a requirement of most political associations at the time. Wickberg 111.

<sup>124</sup> It was common to belong to more than one association and some individuals belonged to both the CKT and KMT. Although, this was a practice common to its general membership its political elite generally did not follow this practice. Most of the political elite of the CKT belonged to the separate Dart Coon Club. Straaton 71-74; Wickberg 104.

<sup>125</sup> Straaton 74.

<sup>126</sup> KMT members became prominent and later dominant members of the CBA Board of Directors until the late 70s. Staaton 1974; Wickberg 1982; Mitchell 1998.

<sup>127</sup> Wickberg 109.

<sup>128</sup> Like the Empire Reform Association Building and the CBA Building the inscription was in English. "Chinese Nationalist League Building, Gore and Pender Street" (192-?), Stuart Thomson fonds, City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 99-3202. "500 block Carrall Street, looking north towards Pender Street" (190-?) Philip T. Timms, City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 677-580.

<sup>129</sup> The KMT was founded on the ideal of a modernized Chinese republic. However, over time the KMT increasingly emphasized Chinese heritage as an authoritative position as it attempted to block reforms introduced by competing political forces. Straaton 73-74.

<sup>130</sup> Edgar Wickberg notes that the KTM had established particular strategies to systematically established branches across Canada and recruited new leadership throughout the diaspora. Wickberg 109.

<sup>131</sup> Kay Anderson acknowledges the "spill" of Chinese eastward established by a mapping of Chinese occupation using the 1920 Henderson Directories and by reports by the civic health committee. Anderson 122-127.

<sup>132</sup> The Chinese Nationalist League Building bears a noteworthy architectural similarity to its primary fraternal rival the Cheekungtung. The primary feature distinguishing the two buildings is the addition of the pagoda-type form on the roof of the Chinese Nationalist League Building. Although no definitive conclusions can be drawn from the similarities between the two buildings, it does suggest that the architecture of early voluntary associations were signifiers of local Chinese political contests. The architect of the Cheekungtung Building is unknown and according to most documents the date of construction is typically indicated as 1901 or 1902. However, archival photographs of Carrall Street after the construction of the Empire Reformation Association in 1903 show the building had not yet been constructed. The date of construction is probably between 1903 and 1907. Vancouver Public Library Special Collections. Philip Timms Studio c1906, 400-500 blocks Carrall Street, VLP No: 6831.

<sup>133</sup> The request was made in 1919 to the City Solicitor who informed Council it did not have the right to restrict “Orientals” to any section of the city. Anderson 127.

<sup>134</sup> Fire Insurance maps from the period note Chinatown over the 0 and 100 unit block of East Pender Street, however no clear spatial borders are provided.

<sup>135</sup> During this period Chinese architects began to debate the use of traditional forms in the application of a modern Chinese architecture, however it is unknown if this concern affected Chinese architectural production abroad. Broudehoux 156-168.

<sup>136</sup> By the 1960s the intersection of East Pender Street and Gore Avenue had become the most vital area of Chinatown. Chinese Cultural Centre Committee, Chinese Cultural Centre: A Concept (1974). It is interesting to note that the CCC development was in part an attempt to re-centre Chinatown around East Pender Street and Carrall Street. The CCC plan was later challenged by the members of CBA Board of Directors, which was dominated by members of the KMT. Katharyne Mitchell, “Reworking democracy: contemporary immigration and community politics in Vancouver’s Chinatown,” Political Geography Vol. 17 No.6 (August 1998): 729-750.

<sup>137</sup> Lu 25.

<sup>138</sup> Paul Yee suggests that by 1914, “Chinatown became an arena of investment a [sic] much a [sic] social community of families, businesses and homes.” Yee 83.

<sup>139</sup> Paul Yee suggests that speculation in real estate amongst Chinese was less prevalent because the property ownership pattern during this time appears stable in comparison to previous Occidental ownership patterns. This assessment may be correct, however the activity of purchasing and constructing buildings for the Chinese market may have been a form of speculative development. The details of this building’s development and sale are unknown. Yee 83.

<sup>140</sup> Land Title records indicate that Shone Yee (Shon Yee) Benevolent Association had a



registered right to purchase the building, but the building was later registered to Chansee Wonfong. The exact relationship between these parties is unknown. City of Vancouver, "141-147 East Pender Street," Statement of Significance Research Files: during the 1920s, Shon Yee began to invest in property to provide welfare services to its members. City of Vancouver, "Shon Yee Benevolent Association," Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005) 1-26. Shon Yee, 7; Man Sing Lung (spelled Man Sing Lun in Ng's research) was also identified by Wing Chung Ng as a ticket agent for the Chuk Man On Theatre Troupe in 1923-24. Ng (Winter 2005/06) 40.

<sup>141</sup> Yee 45.

<sup>142</sup> The Mah Society Building's first four floors still exist in their original form except for an alteration on the fourth floor to accommodate a stairwell to a new floor constructed in 1921. This observation was made during site visits to the building and comparison of the present situation with an earlier photograph of the building found in documents in the Mah Association meeting hall. No drawings exist for the Wong Association Building and alterations made to the building make it impossible to determine the plan of the original floor above the cheater storey, but a circa 1913 photograph of the building give an indication of the original building. "[Mr. Francis (Frank) J. Hamilton standing on the 100 block East Pender Street], [1913]. City of Vancouver Archives, Bu P717.

<sup>143</sup> It may also have been that Occidental land speculators and businessmen didn't care which group occupied the buildings if they were getting a return on their investment.

<sup>144</sup> W. H. Chow designed and built this structure and a number of others in Chinatown, and possibly others throughout Vancouver. During the first decades of the twentieth century it was common for contractors to act as their own architects. Mills and Somner 315. In 1913 Chow was listed in the British Columbia Society of Architects as an architect and patron, however he was refused membership to the Architectural Institute of British Columbia. Luxton 284. However, it should be noted that Chow would not have been permitted to become a member of the architecture profession in British Columbia because Chinese were excluded from the voter's lists. Inclusion on the voter's list was a condition of membership to any professional organization in British Columbia. Wickberg 45-46; Anderson 47. However, for all intents and purposes he was an architect and designed a number of buildings in Chinatown. It is interesting that he signed his drawings submitted to the City of Vancouver's Building Permit Department "W. H. Chow Architect."

<sup>145</sup> City of Vancouver, "The Yue Shan Society," Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005) 2.

<sup>146</sup> The letter indicates that the spaces did not meet the city's standards and an order was made to "remove of all cubical walls within the premises" citing that the rooms did not provide adequate natural light or ventilation. It was a common practice within Vancouver to elevate ceiling of the first floors ceilings to a height that would accommodate a cheater storey.

<sup>147</sup> This pattern was recounted by a number of individuals how had lived in the buildings documented by the Chinese Canadian Historic Society. Chinese Canadian Historic Society, 2005.

<sup>148</sup> The earliest Lodging By-Laws (1899) appear to have been passed to control the housing conditions of the Chinese. Wickberg 65. 1911 Lodging House By-Law No. 870 included: 1. Prescriptive requirements on the size of lightwells based on the buildings height, with a horizontal intake or air duct situated at the bottom shaft: 2. Minimum room sizes: 9'-0" x 6'-0" x 8'-0" ceilings 3. Minimum cubic feet of space: 400 cubic feet per person. City of Vancouver, "Shon Yee Benevolent Association," Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005) 1-4.

<sup>149</sup> There are a number of buildings constructed for Chinese where their drawings do not have rooms or defined spaces, but include light-wells. Occidental architects designed all the buildings in which I was able to find original drawings. Both the rear Building at 79 East Pender Street and 110-120 East Pender illustrate the general massing produced by the Lodging By-Law and the spatial configuration after rooms were later added. CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP-731, 79 East Pender Street, Campbell & Dawson, Knong Sang Co. 1911; CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP-779, 120 East Pender Street, W. H. Chow, Wing Chong Yuen & Co. Stores and Rooms, Date Unknown.

<sup>150</sup> 23 East Pender Street for merchant Wong Soon King (circa 1907) and 33-39 East Pender Street (1920).

<sup>151</sup> Yee 138-184.

<sup>152</sup> I compared development information on 79 East Pender Street's to a graph prepared by Chuen-Yan Lai that indicated when the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Victoria (CCBA) sent letters to discourage Chinese from coming to Canada. It seems to suggest that although the merchants that belonged to the (CCBA) may have wanted to established better control of Chinese immigration, merchants in Vancouver were able to take advantage of the increase in the Chinese population. The spikes in immigration correspond to letters by the (CCBA) and to the building's development. Chuen-Yan Lai, "Chinese Attempts to Discourage Emigration to Canada: Some Findings from the Chinese Archives in Victoria," BC Studies 18 (Summer 1973) 41.

<sup>153</sup> Paul Yee's Appendix only indicates when Chinese purchased the property, but does not provide the name of the purchaser. Yee 138-139. Only a partial plan exists for the original building and the Vancouver Directory provides some indication of its use and occupation. CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP-731, 79 East Pender Street.

<sup>154</sup> The largest of these mortgages was in 1912 for 20,000 dollars. Yee 138-139.

<sup>155</sup> Henderson's Vancouver Directory indicates a merchant company named Kwong Sang Importers at this location in 1915.

<sup>156</sup> The first floor consisted of two 9 x 40 foot commercial spaces facing market Alley and the top two floors were identical in plan, consisting of a large open space with two water closets and what appears to be a kitchen. A number of buildings constructed by Chinese appear to follow this pattern. CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP- 779, 120 East Pender Street, W. H. Chow, Wing Chong Yuen & Co. Stores and Rooms, Date Unknown.

<sup>157</sup> CVA, Loc. AP-731, Campbell & Dawson, Kwong Sang Co. 1911. The drawings were for merchant Kwong Sang; this may be a different spelling for Ko Wong Sang.

<sup>158</sup> Peter Li, The Chinese in Canada, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985) 42.

<sup>159</sup> Karin Straaton argues that merchants drew “fairly rigid status distinctions between themselves and Chinese of the service and labouring classes.” Straaton 107.

<sup>160</sup> Yee 66.

<sup>161</sup> The Mah Society of Canada raised \$26,000 to purchase 137-139 East Pender Street. City of Vancouver, “The Mah Society of Canada,” Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005): 2.

<sup>162</sup> Willmott 46.

<sup>163</sup> Straaton 108.

<sup>164</sup> The proposed additions were to be connected by a walkway spanning the 8 feet between the structures. The East Pender Street addition consisted of a clubroom, library, secretary's office, bathroom and a balcony facing East Pender. The rear addition was a simple open plan consistent with this section's original design, however this was not built. H. H. Simmonds was the president of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia between 1948-1950. He was also well known for his theatre design (Stanley Theatre) as well as for the design of many building on the PNE grounds.

<sup>165</sup> The Mah Society Building at 137-139 East Pender Street was originally a four-storey structure designed by architect Henry Barton Watson in 1913 for owner William Dick. The original first four floors are in the form of a typical rooming house that conforms to rooming house standards and by-laws. The building was operated as a revenue property with all its tenants being Chinese businesses. In 1921, the Mah Society purchased the building

and constructed a fifth floor for its association. The new floor consisted of a meeting hall, office, three rooms, kitchen, bathroom and a balcony. In the Mah Society building the stairs are double loaded. To gain access to the meeting hall one has to enter the lodging house. This was an atypical circulation pattern when compared to Chinese built structures, which organized their plans with circulation often around a single vertical stair running from the street. This information is contained in the HSSC section on the Mah Society. City of Vancouver, "The Mah Society of Canada," Historic Study of the Societies Buildings in Chinatown, Draft, Chinese Canadian Historic Society (2005): 4. The lots on which Wong's Benevolent Association Building sits has been owned by Chinese since 1908. Yee 138-139.

<sup>166</sup> The exception to this may be the 1907-08 Lee Building, however the building may have been more a business venture directed than the establishment of what is considered a voluntary association. This building is discussed as a separate case study.

<sup>167</sup> *From China to Canada* discusses a number of Chinese public protests against the Chinese Exclusion Act. In particular July 1 Dominion Day was refer to as Humiliation Day. Wickberg 157-158.

<sup>168</sup> Karin Straaton masters thesis on the political system and leadership of Chinese Associations in Vancouver during the 1960s noted that according to Freedman the innovations of associations to fulfill increasing number of social needs effectively made them into de facto governments. Straaton 15.

<sup>169</sup> Commercially, the Cheng Wing Yeong Tong continued to operate the building following the predominant commercial patterns developing within the socio-economics of the Chinese population. This can be observed by the alterations of the building in 1952 for the Inn Chop Suey House restaurant designed by Alex Gair. As discussed previously, during the 1950s and 60s a number of small commercial buildings were constructed for restaurants and these buildings had a common form. To accommodate the common layout of these restaurants, the main floor of the existing two buildings was consolidated and the cheater storey removed. From the exterior the façade reads as a striated composition of the building's historical accretions. CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP- 731, 127 East Pender Street, Campbell & Dawson, Kwong Sang Co. 1911, F.

<sup>170</sup> Although not all members were investors, I believe general membership constitutes an important aspect of an association's power.

<sup>171</sup> Straaton thesis demonstrates that in the 1960s voluntary associations often shared directors and that these crossing directorships created an important political and social links between associations. Straaton 1974.

<sup>172</sup> According to Edgar Wickberg the exact number of associations are difficult to identify during this period, but there appear to be a substantial increase in the 1920s and 1930s. Wickberg 166.

<sup>173</sup> This is not a complete set of data. Yee 138-139. City of Vancouver, Commonwealth Heritage Resource Management, "141-147 East Pender Street" Statement of Significance Research File, 2004-2005.

<sup>174</sup> Yee 138-139.

<sup>175</sup> Anderson 84-86.

<sup>176</sup> Business leaders wanted the land and were pushing the city to get it. Robert K. Burkinshaw, False Creek, City of Vancouver Occasional Papers No. 2, 1984.

<sup>177</sup> Vancouver Daily Province 30 September 1902: 1.

<sup>178</sup> Although it is possible that the Chinese Reform Association's (Empire Reform Association) construction on the block qualified as being "a very good thing." Vancouver Daily Province 30 September 1902: 1.

<sup>179</sup> By 1906 most of the lots on the west side of Carrall Street and Canton Alley had been purchased by Chinese and a number of buildings had been erected. Vancouver Daily Province 30 September 1902: 1.

<sup>180</sup> The city received this area of False Creek in 1900 for park or industrial development. Burkinshaw 31.

<sup>181</sup> Kay Anderson also notes that between 1911-1912 the City considered moving Chinatown to another location in the city. Anderson 122.

<sup>182</sup> John Galt's father, Sir Alexander Galt, had built his fortune in the railway industry and was the founder of the Grand Truck Railway. Martin Albro, James J. Hill and the opening of the Northwest (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 288, 425.

<sup>183</sup> This connection suggests that the purchase may also have been speculative in nature.

<sup>184</sup> The records of Kelly, Douglas and Company Limited in 1913 show that alone they imported 300 tons of tea in one year. Article from Industrial Progress and Commercial Record (1913): 19. City of Vancouver, "33-47 East Pender Street," Statement of Significance Research Files, Commonwealth Heritage Resource Management, 2005.

<sup>185</sup> The oldest building standing on the four consolidated lots is 41 East Pender Street, a two-storey structure possibly built in 1889. The second building, (demolished in 1920) 33-39 East Pender Street probably dates to the first decade of the century. City of Vancouver "33-47 East Pender Street."

<sup>186</sup> There are no building permit records between 1904 and 1909, so it is possible the building

existed before the Galt's ownership. There is some discrepancy between different research files gathered on this structure. Both the Statement of Significances and Historic Study of Society Buildings (HSSB) place the building's construction in 1914. The HSSB also indicates the property was owned by Chew Kong. Land Titles records indicate that Chinese purchased the property in 1909, but sold it to the Galt's one month later. Yee's research does not note who the mortgages holder were.

<sup>187</sup> This number may be higher, but the building permit records are incomplete.

<sup>188</sup> The Building's Statement of Significance indicates the building was designed by H.W. Chow and constructed in 1913, however historic photographs of the building show a pediment over the cornice with the date 1907. Vancouver Public Library Special Collections, VPL 22643.

<sup>189</sup> "500 block of Carrall Street, looking north towards Pender Street" [190-?], Philip T. Timms photo, City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 677-580.

<sup>190</sup> Photograph of the south side of 0 block of East Pender Street incorrectly indicated as West Pender. [Unit Block of West Pender] 1904, Philip T. Timms, Vancouver Public Library Special Collections, VPL 6729.

<sup>191</sup> Anderson 116-127.

<sup>192</sup> The station was an addition to a network of 19 stations already operating in British Columbia by 1929. Shell Oil Company of British Columbia became a separate corporation in 1929, but its stocks were owned entirely by Shell of California. Kendall Beaton, Enterprise in Oil: A History of Shell in the United States (New York: Appleton-Centery-Crofts, Inc, 1957) 297-298.

<sup>193</sup> City of Vancouver, "231 East Pender Street" Statement of Significance Research Files, Drawing of Service Station No. 154 Shell Oil Engineering Department 1931 Commonwealth Heritage Management.

<sup>194</sup> Patricia Morton, Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the Colonial Exposition, Paris (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) 70-95.

<sup>195</sup> The new products and services were introduced under the marketing term "Shellubrication." In general the stations began to provide motorists with lubrications for their vehicles. Beaton 418.

<sup>196</sup> Prior to 1930 most Shell service stations were just filling stations that had a standardized design called the "Cracker Box." Beaton 279.

<sup>197</sup> Beaton 419-420.

<sup>198</sup> Kay Anderson notes that during the 1930s Chinatown began to be promoted as an exotic place within city. Anderson 155-158.

<sup>199</sup> During the 1920s Shell Oil of California began to use its Shell-shaped logo for roadside billboards dedicated to the prevention of forest fires. This style of sign was also used for the approach to many West Coast cities and was as well made popular as windshield stickers given as travel souvenirs at service stations. Beaton 1957.

<sup>200</sup> Morton 177-215.

<sup>201</sup> Land title records reveal Shell owned the property from 1929 to 1955. City of Vancouver, Commonwealth Heritage Management, “231 East Pender Street” Statement of Significance Research Files, 2004-2005.

<sup>202</sup> Toy Chang importing and exporting firm, the Sam Kee Company, was one of the top grossing Chinese companies in Vancouver through the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yee 83, 92.

<sup>203</sup> The Shell Oil Company had a number of different lease agreements for stations they owned and those owned by individuals. During the Depression Shell offered a number of different leasing schemes in order to maximize its retail opportunities. These included the “paint lease,” “two party lease,” “promoted deals” and “three-party leases.” Beaton 420.

<sup>204</sup> The United States Chinese Exclusion laws were established in 1882.

<sup>205</sup> Beaton 279.

<sup>206</sup> Merchant Lee Bick and Foo Hung Company at 107 East Pender Street had been identified as having a business relationship with the Bank of Montreal. Ng 2005/06, 45.

<sup>207</sup> I have develop this argument based on the work of Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas and their study that examined the idea of “theoretical blockades” that appear in the misuse of semiotics concepts in architecture. Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas “Semiotics and Architecture. Ideological Consumption or Theoretical Work,” Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995, Ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press. 1996) 110-121.

<sup>208</sup> Agrest, Gandelsonas 115.

<sup>209</sup> Agrest, Gandelsonas 115.

<sup>210</sup> Agrest, Gandelsonas 115.

<sup>211</sup> Kay Anderson notes that two years after the Jubilee Chinatown became an official tourist district. Anderson 155-158.

<sup>212</sup> Harland Bartholomew and Associates, A Plan for the City of Vancouver, 1929.

<sup>213</sup> One possible explanation for excluding Japanese interests from the Central Business District may have been related to American immigration policy. Harland Bartholomew and Associates was an American firm and in 1924 the United States government stopped Japanese immigration. Bartholomew and Associates may have been influenced by these policies, but this is a speculation. There is no evidence that Bartholomew knew these ethnic centres existed, however further research into Bartholomew's designs for other cities may answer the question.

<sup>214</sup> I could not get permission to reproduce any photographs of the building, nor could I find architectural drawings of the building.

<sup>215</sup> There is a great deal of research that has focused on the ensuing conflict that erupted as a result of the displacement of Chinese (and non-Chinese) residences with social housing and the attempt to construct a freeway that would have divided and destroyed part of the area. Anderson 1991; Mitchell 2000.

<sup>216</sup> These are the properties that had be confiscated by the Canadian government and later sold.

<sup>217</sup> Leonard C. Marsh, Rebuilding a Neighbourhood. Research Publication No. 1: Report on a Demonstration Slum-Clearance and Urban Rehabilitation Project in a Key Central Area in Vancouver, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1950).

<sup>218</sup> Along with the Empire Reform Association, CBA and Wong Association Buildings' the Chinese Nationalist League also contained a school. The Mong Keang School that was located in the Wong Association Building at 121-125 East Pender Street may attest the importance of Chinese schools; historically, the building was often identified by the name of the school and not the association.

<sup>219</sup> Wickberg 26-27; Lai 83.

<sup>220</sup> The church was first established on East Hastings Street and a year later moved to its new location in the 100 Unit Block of Dupont Street. The building included a residence and lodging space and was the largest structure in Chinatown. Lai 83.

<sup>221</sup> Lai 85.

<sup>222</sup> Kay Anderson covers extensively the attempts to limit or define Chinatown's size through legal and social practices. Anderson 1991.

<sup>223</sup> Cost sharing that worked for the city changes to the National Housing Act in 1956.



The National Housing Act also specified that: “renewal must be in accordance with sound planning principles.” City of Vancouver, Planning Department, Vancouver Redevelopment Study (1957) 18.

<sup>224</sup> Marsh xi.

<sup>225</sup> City of Vancouver, Technical Planning Board, “Proposed Zoning Map” Downtown Vancouver 1955-1975 (1956); City of Vancouver, Planning Department, “Proposed Zoning Comprehensive Redevelopment Area” Vancouver Redevelopment Study (1957). Harland Bartholomew had first rationalized the City of Vancouver according to zones in 1929, but to what extent this early plan had on a number of areas is difficult to determine. The affects of the Depression on the general economic climate and World War Two certainly impaired economic growth.

<sup>226</sup> The area was defined as lying between the lane east of Main Street on the east, Burrard Street on the west, Burrard Inlet on the north and False Creek on the south, with the addition of a bulge into the West End lying along Georgia Street and east of Nicola. City of Vancouver, Vancouver Redevelopment Study (1957): 19.

<sup>227</sup> City of Vancouver Downtown Vancouver 1955-1975 (1956): 21.

<sup>228</sup> City of Vancouver (1956) 4.

<sup>229</sup> City of Vancouver (1956) 2.

<sup>230</sup> City of Vancouver (1956) 44.

<sup>231</sup> “In fact, it rates more highly than most of the normal retail areas, in the amount of money spent on new retail construction and repairs to stores since the war.” City of Vancouver 1956 26; This was not the first time tourism was identified as a positive aspect of Chinatown, but it was the first time it was linked directly to it as a policy goal of the City of Vancouver. Anderson 205-206.

<sup>232</sup> The Study stated that the remaining space was “of significance only to the people who live there.” City of Vancouver, Downtown Vancouver 1955-1975 (1956): 26.

<sup>233</sup> Bernard Tschumi, Park De La Villette (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1987) i-i-viii.

<sup>234</sup> After 1950 several new Chinese supermarkets and restaurants opened. By 1956 seven nightclubs had opened within the area, the most per square block in the city. Paul Yee, Saltwater City (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1988) 109. The study indicates high capital expenditures along East Pender Street from Carrall Street to Gore Street. City of Vancouver Downtown Vancouver 1955-1976 (1956) 26-31.

<sup>235</sup> Anderson 155-158.

<sup>236</sup> Immigration was limited to spouses, unmarried children under the age of twenty-one and elderly parents. David Li, Chinese in Canada, Second Edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989) 92.

<sup>237</sup> From 1885 to 1901 the most prevalent occupations for Chinese were mining, the railway and farm labours; by 1931 it had become restaurant keepers, servants, cooks and waiters, and laundry workers. Li. 52, 57.

<sup>238</sup> Li 56-59 and Lily Chow, Chasing their Dreams. Chinese Settlement in the Northwest Region of British Columbia, (Prince George: Caitlin Press Inc, 2000) 91-98 provides a description of Chinese restaurant businesses in relation to family life.

<sup>239</sup> Li 89.

<sup>240</sup> Ng 1999, 70.

<sup>241</sup> Individuals receiving remittance were subject to harassment and in some cases torture. Chow xx.

<sup>242</sup> In 1962 the Canadian government began to permit Chinese with no relatives in Canada and in 1967 was applied to all immigrants regardless of country of origin or racial background. Li 94. These policy changes were responsible for the new immigrant flow and an increased mobility for Chinese.

<sup>243</sup> The last house standing in Heritage Designated Chinatown was demolished in 2007. The house had been formerly listed as a (B) category heritage building on the Vancouver Heritage Registry, but had been removed from the list. The site and adjoining lots has a Development Permit Application for its redeveloped into a mix-use commercial and condominium project. City of Vancouver, Development Permit Number: DE 411269.

<sup>244</sup> 400 and 600 block Unions Street, 300 and 600 block Prior Street and 500 and 600 block Atlantic Street all had a large Italian population. Vancouver & New Westminster City Directory 1955.

<sup>245</sup> This phenomenon has been identified in other studies particularly George Cho and Roger Leigh's research on changing Chinese residential patterns. Their study focused on describing the Chinese population in the 1960s from the perspective of distribution and differences between households. The studies identify the difference in residential patterns as a function of assimilation and class. Although the study is valuable, it is also problematic in its attempt to define essential Chinese cultural traits among certain Chinese groups. George Cho and Roger Leigh, "Patterns of Residence of the Chinese in Vancouver," People of the Living Land: Geography of Cultural Diversity in British Columbia, B.C. Geographical Series, No. 15, ed. Julian V. Minghi (Vancouver: Tantalus Research Limited, 1972) 67-84.

<sup>246</sup> Paul Yee's research gives a thorough account of the Lee Lung Sai Business Company and the use of tongs as a business tool. Yee 80-84.

<sup>247</sup> Yee 80-84.

<sup>248</sup> Yee 80-84.

<sup>249</sup> The sale of a clan association's primary investment to an individual or private business does not appear to have been very common. Merchant Lee Bick was part of a second generation of elite merchants to emerge in Vancouver in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lee operated the Foo Hung Company at this location from 1921, but was also involved in real estate and worked for the Bank of Montreal. Evelyn Huang, Chinese Canadians Voices From a Community, (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1992).

<sup>250</sup> CVA, Permits and Licenses Department, Series 393 Architectural Plans and Drawings, Loc. 745-D-4, file AP- 839, 127 East Pender Street.

<sup>251</sup> The Act was replaced the following year by the Archaeological and Historic Sites Protection Act of 1972. The Acts were identical with the exception that the 1972 Act required property owners be compensated if the value of their land decreased as a result of its designation as a historic site. Alderman G. Massey in consultation with the Historic Area Advisory Board and the Department of Planning and Civic Development Report on Matters Historic, City of Vancouver 12 April (1972) 1.

<sup>252</sup> Huang 49-57.

<sup>253</sup> Designation was in part a renegotiation of policy by the City to enable mechanisms to modernize and improve the general condition of the city and should be understood as part in parcel with the waterfront redevelopment schemes that began in the late 1960s with Project 200 (1966) and the Proposal for the North Shore of False Creek Vancouver, BC (1969).

<sup>254</sup> City of Vancouver, Housing Centre, Changes in the SRO Stock in Vancouver's Downtown Core, 1970-1994, (1995) 16.

<sup>255</sup> The Board was originally composed of 8 members representing the Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC), Community Arts Council, Vancouver Pioneers Association, the residents of Gastown and Chinatown, Merchants of Gastown, Merchants of Chinatown and the City Planning Department. The composition was later altered to include separate representation for merchants and property owners, increasing the number of members to 10. CVA, Loc. 18-G-3 file, 5, Historic Area Advisory Board, General Report, 1973, 10.

<sup>256</sup> City of Vancouver, Heritage Commonwealth Management, "127-133 East Pender Street" Office of Permits and Licenses, 17 October 1972, Heritage Planning Department Pink File, Statement of Significance Research Files, 2004-2005.

<sup>257</sup> City of Vancouver, 17 October 1972, HAAB Minutes “127-133 East Pender Street”.

<sup>258</sup> City of Vancouver, 17 October 1972, HAAB Minutes “127-133 East Pender Street”.

<sup>259</sup> “Restoration & Renovation: Commercial Building, Chinatown, Vancouver Architects: Henriquez and Todd, The Canadian Architect November 1975: 34-37.

<sup>260</sup> HAAB Minutes 21 November 1972: Picture of model in Canadian Architect. The Canadian Architect November 1975: 33.

<sup>261</sup> The argument was based on Beatriz Colomina. “Architecture, as distinct from building, is an interpretive critical act. It has a linguistic condition different from the practical one of building. A building is interpreted when its rhetorical mechanism and principles are revealed. This analysis may be performed in a number of different ways, according to the forms of different types of discourse; among these are theory, criticism, history, and manifesto. An act of interpretation is also present in the different modes of representational discourse: drawing, writing, model making, and so on. Interpretation is also integral to the act of projecting.” Beatriz Colomina, “Introduction: On Architecture, Production and Reproduction Architecture Reproduction,” Architectureproduction Revision 2 (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988) 7.

<sup>262</sup> CVA, loc. 17-G-6 file 3, Special Committee of Council Re: Gastown-Chinatown Historic Area, 28 July 1970.

<sup>263</sup> CVA, Loc. 17-G-6, File 3, Re: Letter of Intent Gastown – Chinatown Historic Legislation, 18 January 1971.

<sup>264</sup> This is documented in the Historic Area Advisory Board’s General Report. CVA, Loc, 18-G-3, file 5, Historic Area Advisory Board (HAAB) General Report, 1973.

<sup>265</sup> A letter was sent to the Standing Committee of Council on Civic Development. CVA, Loc. 18-G-3, File 5, Chinatown Property Owners and Merchant Association RE: Historic Area Advisory Board Gastown and Chinatown Areas, 9 April 1973.

<sup>266</sup> It is difficult to know the exact contours of the options held by different members and how these options were manifested in Chinatown’s representational identity. (Minutes from CHAPC meeting at the time do not provide a summary of the city staff position relative to its member’s options.)

<sup>267</sup> The 1895 section built along Main Street (Westminster Avenue) was part of the first phase of development along this street; the second section in 1907 running along East Pender to the lane was constructed during the Vancouver building boom prior to the onset of World War I. The building’s original appearance can be seen in a photograph of Main Street taken around 1906. “400 block Main Street” Vancouver Public Library Special Collections, VPL 3465.

<sup>268</sup> City of Vancouver, Commonwealth Heritage Resource Management, “200 East Pender Street - 500 Main Street,” Statement of Significance Research Files, 2004-2005.

<sup>269</sup> No record explaining the rationale for the alteration could be located nor could minutes from CHAPC meetings be found.

<sup>270</sup> There are a number of cases in which a Chinese association purchased an existing buildings and added Chinese architectural features to the building. This practice will be covered in the final chapter.

<sup>271</sup> Anderson 1991.

<sup>272</sup> CHAPC minutes reviewed from the 1970s indicate a disproportionate amount of time was spent on issues relating to Chinatown’s Beautification Program, signage and public realm improvements as opposed to issues that addressed historic preservation. CVA, Loc. 583-C-3 File 4, Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee 1974-1977; CVA, Loc. 136-G-2 File 4, Chinatown and Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee[s] 1975-1977; CVA, Loc. 583-C-3 File 3, City of Vancouver Chinatown Beautification, 1969-70; CVA, Loc. 77-D-2 Files 16, Gastown/Chinatown Beautification, 1969-70 and CVA, Loc. 77-D-2 Files 17 and 18, Gastown/Chinatown Beautification, 1971.

<sup>273</sup> By 1973, there was still a debate over what exactly was being designated, the land, structures on the land, or both. This factor had far reaching implications for both the City of Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia. CVA, Loc. 18-G-3, file 5, Historic Area Advisory Board (HAAB) General Report, 1973, p 15.

<sup>274</sup> Anderson 221-230.

<sup>275</sup> The only building to show these characteristics during the early period of development after Chinatown’s heritage designation was 269 East Pender Street. City of Vancouver, Planning Department Library, Chinatown Binders, Chinatown Planning Newsletter, November 1976.

<sup>276</sup> Site visits were made to each location to observe the general characteristics of the building listed. Ibid. City of Vancouver Planning Department Library, Chinatown Planning Newsletter, November 1976.

<sup>277</sup> Although the historic designation of Chinatown included East Pender to Gore Avenue, both major applications of Chinese characteristics to the façade of buildings happened to building east on Main Street. Along with 200 East Pender / 500 Main Street, 445 Gore Avenue also employed a form of Chinese character to alter the appearance of the façades. Merchant Lee Kee hired architect Samuel Bird in 1912 to design the building.

<sup>278</sup> V Setty Pendakur, City Citizens and Freeways n.p. October 1972.

<sup>279</sup> According to Ng the influence of Hong Kong was a point of contention for both

conservative elderly Chinese and young pro-Mainland Chinese. The local newspaper Da Zhong Bao “lamented the prospect of local cultural degradation” that was going to result because of new immigrant flows and the influence of Hong Kong. Ng 1999, 88-93.

<sup>280</sup> Ng 90-91.

<sup>281</sup> John Bottomley and Deryck Holdsworth, “A Consideration of Attitudes Underlying Community Involvement with Civic Issues: Community participation and the spatial order of the city,” B.C. Geographical Series no. 19 Ed. David Ley (Vancouver: Tantalus Research Limited, 1974) 61.

<sup>282</sup> Denhez 13-16.

<sup>283</sup> Denhez 13-16.

<sup>284</sup> Chinese Cultural Centre Committee, Chinese Cultural Centre: A Concept. 1974.

<sup>285</sup> “Winner: Competition for Chinese Cultural Centre Vancouver, B.C.” The Canadian Architect V. 23 n. 4 (April 1978): 18-30.

<sup>286</sup> City of Vancouver, Downtown Vancouver 1955-76 (1956): City of Vancouver, Design Proposal for Improvement (1964).

<sup>287</sup> The program began in 1968 with a pilot project for the “Beautification” of Granville Street. The following year the program was extended to include a number of projects in the downtown area. A committee consisting of owners - tenants, various City departments and private consultants determine the identification of area problems and their solution. Birmingham and Wood Restoration Report (1969): 4.

<sup>288</sup> Birmingham and Wood 15.

<sup>289</sup> Birmingham and Wood 40-50.

<sup>290</sup> City of Vancouver, Planning Department, Design Proposal For Improvements (1964): 5.

<sup>291</sup> List of letters received by City of Vancouver in support of the Design Proposal. CVA, Loc. 925-F-1 File 2, Letter in Support for Chinatown Design Proposal for Improvements, 1964.

<sup>292</sup> The pioneer settlers (old timers) who arrived in Canada prior to the Chinese Exclusions Act of 1923 controlled the associations, which they used to re-affirm their patriarchal power. The most active groups in the attempt to define a cultural perspective were the ‘Tusheng’ or Canadian-born Chinese that focused on the development and integration of the Chinese into Canadian culture and the Post-Exclusion Act immigrants that saw themselves as the proprietors of true Chinese culture. A more extreme sentiment of this latter group is found in the writings of David Lee: “We must realize that it is not at all shameful to be Chinese.

Rather, it is honourable. Our people have been residing in foreign countries for generations. However, we have not been assimilated because of our superior heritage and highly developed civilization..." Ng 89.

<sup>293</sup> Mitchell's discussion explores the reworking of normative democratic values in relationship to political challenges and institutional transformation in Chinatown. Mitchell notes that the writings of Chinese intellectual He Xin suggest that amongst the Chinese the concept of democracy "emphasizes process, consensus and broader, societal good, rather than individual rights, responsibilities and choices guaranteed by the state." Katharyne Mitchell, "Reworking Democracy: contemporary immigration and community politics in Vancouver's Chinatown." Political Geography Vol. 17 n 6 (1998): 729-750.

<sup>294</sup> CVA, City Clerk's Records, Series 20, Loc. 120-F-5, file 7, Chinese Cultural Centre, A Concept. Chinese Cultural Centre Committee (1974): 18.

<sup>295</sup> "Winner: Competition for Chinese Cultural Centre Vancouver, B.C.," The Canadian Architect V. 23 n. 4 (April 1978): 18-30.

<sup>296</sup> At the end of her summary report for the Action Research Secretary of the State Department, Shirley Chan listed twenty-one strategies employed by the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association to halt the redevelopment of Strathcona. Although spatially these redevelopments did not encompass Chinatown west of Gore Avenue, I believe the strategies identified are in general akin to the strategies employed to fight the freeway. The sixth strategy noted was; "Recognizing the need to work together to speak with a united voice. (Authors emphasis) Never neglecting any group in need and never permit what may appear to seem as favouritism to occur." CVA, Add. MSS., Loc. 583-C-3, file 2, 734, "An overview of the Strathcona Experience with Urban Renewal By a Participant" by Shirley Chan, Action Research Secretary of State Department (13 March 1971): 20. K. Anderson and K. Mitchell acknowledge the coalition to stop the freeway had a formative role in "community" building that was instrumental in the formation of organized resistance to Phase Three of the Renewal project for Strathcona. Anderson 207; Katharyne Mitchell, "Golbal Diasporas and Traditional Towns: Chinese Transnational Migration and the Redevelopment of Vancouver's Chinatown," Traditional Dwellings and Settlement Review Vol. XI No. 11 (2000) 11.

<sup>297</sup> A developer that complied with the City's representational goals could be rewarded with an increase in site density or permitted to alter a historic building.

<sup>298</sup> This was a view shared and promoted by heritage advocates that argued that the only way for Historic Chinatown to compete with "flashy new suburban" Chinatown's was via historic flavor. Michael Kluckner, "History is the key to profitability," The Vancouver Sun 28 June 1993.

<sup>299</sup> Robert Mason Lee, "Emphasis on Heritage preservation called racism in reverse," The Vancouver Sun 21 June 1993.

<sup>300</sup> Chris Wong, "ABCs of Heritage Cause Heebie-Jeebies," The Georgia Straight 18-25 June 1993.

<sup>301</sup> G. Clark, "Chinatown," The Georgia Straight 18-25 June 1993.

<sup>302</sup> Between 1986 and 1996 83 per cent of all investor class immigrants and 49 per cent of entrepreneurs class immigrants were from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Li 95.

<sup>303</sup> I believe the Chinese Cultural Centre is an early example of how these policy changes began to be reflected in emerging Canadian institutions.

<sup>304</sup> Katharyne Mitchell, "Reworking democracy: contemporary immigration and community politics in Vancouver's Chinatown," Political Geography Vol. 17 No. 6 August (1998) 736.

<sup>305</sup> The underlined section is quoted from Employment and Immigration Canada 1985, page 1 by Katharyne Mitchell. Mitchell 737.

<sup>306</sup> David Ley, "Seeking Homo Economicus: The Strange Story of Canada's Business Immigration Program," Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, Working Paper Series (May 2000) 18.

<sup>307</sup> Alison Appelbe, "Chinese community rife with change," The Vancouver Courier 6 February 1994. The Georgia Straight cover byline read, "Chinatown – Joe Wai says the city's historic neighbourhood is dying. At the very least, it is struggling to redefine itself in the wake of urban development, Asian immigration, and changing community attitudes," The Georgia Straight 18-25 June 1993: 1

<sup>308</sup> CVA, City Clerk's Records, City Council Minutes, Vol. 278, 14740-14809, Policy Report: Zoning By-law Amendments and Design Guidelines Chinatown – HA-1 and HA-1A District Schedule, 13 July 1994.

<sup>309</sup> The recommendations contained within were: the division of the City-designated historic area into two distinct districts, the first conforming to the Provincial government's historically designated area referred to as HA-1 and the remaining area would be designated a less restrictive development area referred to as HA-1A; adoption of "Rehabilitation Principles and Guidelines" for the HA-1 District; deletions to the Vancouver Heritage Inventory; a tax incentive program to be developed to assist in the conservation of heritage buildings; monitoring new land use controls; and "the Director of Planning and the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee, in consultation with the Director of Economic Development, be requested to consider actions that might be taken to improve economic vitality in Chinatown for report back." It should also be noted that CHAPC appears to have had a significant role in the development of these policies. As a part of the process all the new guidelines and land use controls were developed in consultation with a CHAPC sub-committee. CVA, Vol. 278, 14740-14809, 13 July 1994.



<sup>310</sup> A further incentive was the discretionary power given the Director of Planning to allow additional height if the development merited such increases.

<sup>311</sup> CVA, Loc. 164-D-2, file 5, Chinatown Historic Planning Committee Minutes, 21 April 1994.

<sup>312</sup> CVA, Loc. 164-D-2, file 5, CHAPAC 21 April 1994.

<sup>313</sup> This was not the first parkade constructed in the area, but it was the first under the new Guidelines.

<sup>314</sup> Joe Wai's discussion of this project was from a broadcast for GVTv. Chinatown Architecture, Episode 8, City of Vancouver, GVTv, Shaw Television, Episode 8, 12 April 2000.

<sup>315</sup> City of Vancouver, Chinatown HA-1A Guidelines for Non-designated Sites, December (1994): 1.

<sup>316</sup> The issue of discretionary review and criticism of the representational goals of the District Schedule had been identified as a major problem since the 1980s. These criticisms were expressed in the context of the redevelopment the former site of the former Marco Polo dinner club. When the design of the four-storey commercial block was first reviewed by CHAPC it was criticized for being too bulky and not "oriental enough" for the historic area. However, even in its final design, project architect Wing Leung felt the building made, "no attempt to be Chinese. To be quite honest, I would not know how to make a multi-storey building Chinese." His comments go on to indicate that semantics were the determining factor in getting approval. "The Marco Polo looks post-modern, and it would be classified as such in any other part of town. But Leung points out that its pediments and recessed balconies are historical references to the area, and therefore, the building is contextual rather than post modern." Leung's comments and the building itself make the point that the representational criteria established by policy were only relative to their location and identification with Historic Chinatown. Barbara Pettit, "Chinatown Newcomer Blends in Beautifully," *The Vancouver Sun* 10 August 1985. It is unclear why the City did not respond to CHAPC's earlier request for design guidelines. However, the explanation may be found in changes to the language of the District Schedule between 1974 and 1989. The earliest District Schedules appear to indicate that CHAPC had a great deal of discretionary power. The 1974 District Schedule directly acknowledges CHAPC as the primary reviewing body. However, by the 1980s CHAPC's authority appears to have been diminished. Although the changes in language to the District Schedule are subtle it suggests a shift towards expertise found within the Planning Department that the Planning Department may not have wanted to undermine. City of Vancouver, Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575 Consolidated to October 5, 1976 And Including Text Amendments and Official and Area Development Plan By-law up to January 17, 1978; through to December 31, 1989 And Including Text Amendments up to December 31, 1990.

<sup>317</sup> “The ground floor of all new building with widths in excess of 15.2m (50’) shall be divided into more than one shop front and with the largest shop fronts not exceeding 7.6m (25’) in width.” City of Vancouver, Zoning and Development By-law HA-1 and HA-1A, 1994 4.2.2.

<sup>318</sup> Between 2002 and 2006 I sat as a member of the Chinatown Area Historic Advisory Committee. I was present for both projects discussed within this case when they came before CHAPAC for review. I am also acknowledged as a “Client” within the 2005 City of Vancouver Chinatown Market Housing Study. I gave options during the Study’s development and work in conjunction with UBC School of Architecture and Joe Wai Architects Inc. in the design of one of the proposals.

<sup>319</sup> City of Vancouver, Policy Report Urban Structures RTS No.2783 Appendix A Chinatown Vision Directions July 9, 2002.

<sup>320</sup> I have in this case emphasized the term ‘community’ because neither the City of Vancouver nor the (VCRC) defined what constitutes community or how they enlist ‘community’ members to participate.

<sup>321</sup> Heritage building preservation was the first item listed in the document and market housing was the ninth out of eleven actions identified in the document. City of Vancouver Policy Report Urban Structures RTS No.2783 Appendix A Chinatown Vision Directions 9 July 2002.

<sup>322</sup> I am examining the Chinese Times Building because it is one of the few contemporary examples of accretion within Historic Chinatown and because it appears to be one of the few heritage redevelopment projects undertaken by a Chinese family after the adoption of the Chinatown Visions Directions. Building owner Jack Chow and his son Rod Chow were also members of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee and Chinatown Property Owners Association.

<sup>323</sup> City of Vancouver, Downtown Eastside Revitalization, 9 March 2000. 12 April 2005 <<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca:commsvcs:planning:dtes:>>.

<sup>324</sup> Government of Canada, Government of British Columbia and City of Vancouver, Vancouver Agreement, The First Five Years 2000-2005, Progress and Highlights, February 2007. 25 September 2007 <<http://www.vancouveragreement.ca/Pdfs/061031FirstFiveYearsFINAL.pdf>>.

<sup>325</sup> The complete list as it appears in the document are: Heritage Building Preservation, Commemoration of Chinese-Canadian and Chinatown History, Public Realm Improvements, A Sense of Security, Linkage to the Nearby Neighbourhoods and Downtown, Youth Connection and Community Development, A Community with a Residential and Commercial Mixture, Diversified Retail Goods and Services and A Hub of Social and Cultural Activities.

City of Vancouver Policy Report Urban Structures RTS No.2783 Appendix A Chinatown Vision Directions July 9, 2002.

<sup>326</sup> City of Vancouver, Chinatown Market Housing Study 25 June (2004): SK 2.02.

<sup>327</sup> City of Vancouver 25 June (2004): SK 2.02

<sup>328</sup> To guide consultant teams through the process of evaluating these factors, the city invited Daniel Solomon Vice Chair of the Congress of New Urbanism to review and discuss the proposals.

<sup>329</sup> City of Vancouver, Central Area Planning, Chinatown Market Housing Study Information Package (2004): 11-13.

<sup>330</sup> The Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program was awarded as a matching fund up to fifty thousand dollars. Residual density calculations were used in Chinatown and Gastown because building density was limited by a maximum allowable building height. In part, the system was established to encourage the retention of the historic discrepancy between large and small-scale buildings that formed the “saw tooth” pattern streetscape. The difference between existing and residual density calculated with density bonuses is used to ensure the profitability of a variety of heritage redevelopment projects. City of Vancouver Administrative Report, Heritage Incentive Implementation for Gastown and Chinatown, RTS No. 03222 10 July 2003.

<sup>331</sup> Parks Canada, Commercial Heritage Properties Incentive Fund, 2003, 23 September 2005 <[http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/plp-hpp/itm1-/plp-hpp2a\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/plp-hpp/itm1-/plp-hpp2a_e.asp)>.

<sup>332</sup> The purpose of the Statement of Significance is to identify “what part of history a historic place represents and how and why that is of value and important today;” the document is intended to reflect modern values and how today’s society recognizes the significance of a place; and “assesses how a community’s historic places represent an existing heritage conservation program and identified heritage value.” City of Vancouver, SOS Workshop Reviewing Statements of Significance, 10 November 2004; Berdine Jonker, Draft: Guidelines for Writing Effective Statements of Significance, 15 October 2004.

<sup>333</sup> City of Vancouver, Minutes, Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee 15 September 2004.

<sup>334</sup> CHAPAC 15 September 2004.

<sup>335</sup> City of Vancouver, Minutes, Vancouver Heritage Commission 28 June 2004.

<sup>336</sup> City of Vancouver, Minutes, Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee 14 December 2004. It would be difficult to consider the work contemplated for the façade as conservation due to the amount of alteration proposed. Drawings of Chinese Times Building Elevations included in package submitted to CHAPAC members for review. (Authors documents)

City of Vancouver Minutes, Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee, 13 July 2004; However, the project was withdrawn due to issues regarding financial compensation.

<sup>337</sup> The building is most commonly referred to as the Chinese Times Building because the paper was a long-term tenant. The building was constructed in 1902; Yip did not purchase the property until 1906. Yee 138-139.

<sup>338</sup> W. T. Whiteway was a prolific architect and projects include the 1903 Woodward's Department Store and the 1912 World (Sun) Tower, which was once the tallest building in the British Empire. He often collaborated with W.H. Chow, which he was reprimanded for by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia. John Atkin, "W. T. Whiteway" Buildings the West The Early Architects of British Columbia Second Edition Ed. Donald Luxton Vancouver: Talon Books (2007) 116-119. Originally, the building had four commercial bays on grade with exterior access to stairs leading to a cheater-storey. The second floor was divided into bays that appear to be generally consistent with the lower level spatial divisions. The spaces were leased for a mix of uses that included retail, offices, meeting halls and residences. The exact layout of the original building is unknown due to successive alterations. However, a general sense of the planning can be seen in the existing building. Field observations and documentation by author.

<sup>339</sup> Chinese Times Building, Statement of Significance, Historic Place Listing, 2005.

<sup>340</sup> Jameson Developments and Bob Rennie submitted the Development Permit to the City of Vancouver in 2005. Walter Francel Architect Inc., 51 East Pender St. Development Permit Application 29 August 2005. This was the second formal proposal by Jameson Development presented to the Planning Department. The first proposal indicated that the six-storey section was to be demolished and replaced with a new structure. This was rejected by CHAPAC and the proposal was revised. The author was a member of CHAPAC when the proposal came forward.

<sup>341</sup> Walter Francel Architect Inc., 51 East Pender St. Development Permit Application 29 August (2005) 9.

<sup>342</sup> Although the Wing Sang Building had undergone some alterations over its history a large section of the building remained largely unchanged. The commercial units on the second floor, the third floor of the East Pender structure and the majority of the residential building on Market Alley remained principally in their original condition. However, over the last forty years a large section of the building has been deemed to have non-conforming conditions and occupancy was prohibited. By the 1990s this included the entire residential section of the six-storey block and the third floor of the East Pender Street building. Field observations and documentation made by author.

<sup>343</sup> Walter Francel Architect Inc., 51 East Pender St. Development Permit Application 29 August (2005) 9.

<sup>344</sup> Francel 16.

<sup>345</sup> Local real estate marketer Bob Rennie purchased the building. According to published accounts, Rennie's purchase was emotional, based on a general fascination with the building and in particular the second floor door that opens to the street. Before the purchase Rennie recounts that he had never entered the building. However, the building also serviced an important part of the bonus density transfer to 826-848 West Hastings Street. This site is being developed by Jameson Development Corp. Rennie's partner in the Wing Sang development. John Mackie. "Walking Into," The Vancouver Sun 7 June (2005): B-2; Charles Campbell, "Chinatown Calculations," Vancouver Magazine October (2005): 56-63.

<sup>346</sup> City of Vancouver Administrative Report Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program- 51 East Pender Street DE 409639, 13 February 2006.

<sup>347</sup> City of Vancouver Policy Report Urban Structure Rezoning at 826-848 West Hastings Street from DD(B) to CD-1 and Heritage Revitalization of Agreement at 840 and 848 West Hastings Street 25 April 2005.

<sup>348</sup> Vancouver Administrative Report Chinatown Community Plan: Progress Report RTS No. 6113, November 10, 2006 p 4 and Development Permit Notification Sign posted at 221 Union Street. Two hundred and thirty-three of these units are in the 550 Taylor Street building. This project does not conform to the District Schedule as a result of a CD-1 rezoning undertaken by the City of Vancouver.

<sup>349</sup> According to the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition of the (CMR), no new market housing units were constructed in Historic Chinatown between 1994 and 2004. City of Vancouver, 2004 Downtown Eastside Community Monitoring Report: Chinatown, Gastown, Oppenheimer, Strathcona, Victory Square 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (2004) 25; The 1998 Draft Housing Plan records that no market housing existed in the area. City of Vancouver, Draft Housing Plan: Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona (July 1998): 44. There is some indication that the information contained in these documents may not be entirely correct, however, in general I believe the number of market housing units in the area was small.

<sup>350</sup> The 2005-06 Downtown Eastside Monitoring Report indicates that in the area of Strathcona there was a 17% decrease in Chinese as their home language among area residents between 1991 and 2001. City of Vancouver, 2004 Downtown Eastside Community Monitoring Report: Chinatown, Gastown, Oppenheimer, Strathcona, Victory Square 10<sup>th</sup> (2005-06): Appendix.

<sup>351</sup> Although there is no direct data the number of Chinese that live in residences funded or operated BC Housing, 1996 Vancouver Directory and City of Vancouver Housing Centre information indicate a significant population. The data used to build this map is a composite of information gathered from the 1995/96 Vancouver Criss-Cross Directories, survey of residences conducted in Strathcona in 2007 and by visual observation of buildings that had Chinese signage. Although the methodology presents problems, in particular the visual survey, I believe it gives an accurate indication of trends. The change in methodology for the

2007 mapping was required because the City of Vancouver stopped producing the Directories in 1996.

<sup>352</sup> BC Housing policy allows individuals and families to apply directly to the building where they would like to live. <<http://www.bchousing.org/applicants/apply>>.

<sup>353</sup> The map was constructed from the Chinese Benevolent Association's 2006 mailing list. Source: Chinese Benevolent Association.

<sup>354</sup> In 1992 Strathcona received heritage zoning that discouraged the removal of existing houses in favour of heritage rehabilitation. To what extent this zoning change affected Chinese interest in the area is difficult to determine, however I believe this is an important area of inquiry.

<sup>355</sup> These trends are very difficult to establish with any certainty. Although census show a general decline in Chinese speaking households within the area they use different boundaries so cannot be relied on for this study.

<sup>356</sup> The Taylor Tower could provide some indication of the demographic pattern, but there is no way of determining residency or ownership within the building.

<sup>357</sup> Michael Sasges, "C'mon Down to Chinatown," The Vancouver Sun 14 January 2006: F.

<sup>358</sup> Nick Swift, "Larry Campbell Mayor of Vancouver," World Mayor 2004, 13 March 2007 <<http://www.worldmayor.com:finalist2004:vancouver.html>>.

<sup>359</sup> This is in addition to the Wing Sang Building rehabilitation and the condominium development. East is being done by Jameson Development Corp. owned by the Pappajohn's family in conjunction with the Wing Sang Building. City of Vancouver, Minutes Vancouver Heritage Commission 12 September 2005.

<sup>360</sup> There is the vision of Historic Chinatown as a multicultural centre that is predominantly Chinese. Another example of this negotiation was Bob Rennie's attempt to have a Starbucks Coffee open a location in this same block. Charles Campbell, "Chinatown Calculations," Vancouver Magazine October (2005): 56-63.

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## APPENDIX I

### Vancouver Specials

Property Address	Date of Construction	Chinese Occupation after Construction
327 Prior Street	1973	Yes
331 Prior Street	1973	Yes
413 Prior Street	1983	Yes
419 Prior Street	1976	No
423 Prior Street	1976	Yes
445 Prior Street	1987	Yes
457 Prior Street	1963	Yes
461 Prior Street	1976	Yes
526 Prior Street	1976	Yes
527 Prior Street	1963	Yes
531 Prior Street	1963	Yes
549 Prior Street	1963	Yes
566 Prior Street	1963	Yes
609 Prior Street	1984	Yes
617 Prior Street	1971	Yes
633 Prior Street	1970	Yes
638 Prior Street	1973	No
642 Prior Street	1964	Yes
648 Prior Street	1963	Yes
650 Prior Street	na.	
356 Union Street	1974	Yes
418 Union Street	1981	Yes
426 Union Street	1981	Yes
430 Union Street	1979	Yes
645 Union Street	1974	No
675 Union Street	1983	Yes
536 Keefer Street	1984	Yes
564 Keefer Street	1973	Yes
568 Keefer Street	1979	Yes
626 Keefer Street	1976	Yes
526 East Georgia Street	1982	Yes
536 East Georgia Street	1991	Yes
663 East Georgia Street	1971	Yes
519 Atlantic Street	1963	Yes
523 Atlantic Street	1963	Yes
611 Atlantic Street	na.	Yes

Source: City of Vancouver, Property Information and Vancouver City Directories.

## APPENDIX II

### **List of Recent Developments Published in the 1976 Chinatown Planning Newsletter.**

1. 410 Main Street (Royal Bank) Office Addition (2-storey)
2. 416 Main Street (Canada Trust) Office Addition (2-storey)
3. 33-37 East Pender Street (Yue Shan) Exterior-Interior Alterations and New Office on 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. (Heritage "B" Provincially Protected Building)
4. 135 East Pender Street (Lung Kong Kung Shaw) Exterior-Interior Alterations. (Heritage "B" Provincially Protected Building)
5. 126 East Pender Street Exterior-Interior Alterations 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Office Uses.
6. Keefer and Columbia (CD-1 Zoning) Commercial-Residential Project 10-storey Senior Citizens Apartment and Retail Mall. (Not Completed)
7. \*269 East Pender (25' Lot) Retail Office Building (2-Storey)
8. 545 Gore (Chinese Nationalist League Building) Retail-Restaurant Addition (2-Storey and Basement)
9. 257 Keefer Street (25' Lot) Retail-Office Building (2-Storey)
10. 296 Keefer Street (25' Lot) Retail-Office Building (2-Storey)
11. 228 Keefer Street (50' Lot) Retail-Restaurant Building (2-Storey)
12. S.E. Corner of Main and Keefer Street Exterior-Interior Alterations and New Office Use on 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

\* Only new building to employ a clearly Chinese representation identity.

Source: City of Vancouver, Planning Department. Chinatown Planning Newsletter. 1976.

## APPENDIX III

### Heritage Designated Buildings in Historic Chinatown

Heritage Designated Buildings	Provincially Protected	Removed from VHR List 1994
488 Carrall (West Hotel)	Yes	
509-511 Carrall	Yes	
525-531 Carrall	Yes	
221 East Georgia		Yes
222-226 East Georgia		
228-230 East Georgia		Yes*
252-260 East Georgia		
255 East Georgia		Yes
291-197 East Georgia		
1-21 East Pender (Chinese Times Building)	Yes	
23-25 East Pender (Ming Wo Building)	Yes	
27-29 East Pender (Hon Hsing Athletic Association)	Yes	
33-39 East Pender (Yue Shan Society)	Yes	
41-47 East Pender		Yes (D)
51-69 East Pender (Wing Sang Building)	Yes	
78-80 East Pender	Yes	
79-83 East Pender (Cheng Wing Yeong Tong Society)	Yes	
100-102 East Pender		Yes (D)
104-108 East Pender (Chinese Benevolent Association)	Yes	
111 East Pender		Yes (D)
121-125 East Pender (Wong Kung Har Tong)	Yes	
122-126 East Pender		Yes (D)
127-133 East Pender (Lee Building)	Yes	
135 East Pender	Yes	
137-139 East Pender (Mah Society Building)	Yes	
141-147 East Pender		Yes (D)
158-160 East Pender (Chin Wing Chun Society Building)	Yes	
166-169 East Pender	Yes	
228 East Pender		Yes (D)
229-231 East Pender		Yes (D)

Heritage Designated Buildings	Provincially	Removed From VHR List 1994
236 East Pender		Yes (D)
254-262 East Pender (May Wah Hotel)	Yes	
284-296 East Pender (Chinese Nationalist League Building)	Yes	
433-447 Gore	Yes	
627 Gore		Yes*
633 Gore		Yes*
639 Gore		Yes*
135 Keefer		Yes
145-147 Keefer		Yes
218-222 Keefer (Keefer Rooms)	Yes	
239 Keefer		Yes
241 Keefer		Yes
401 Main (Carnegie Centre)	Yes	
400 Main (Royal Bank)		
501 Main	Yes	
506-510 Main		Yes (D)
507-509 Main		Yes (D)
531-537 Main		
539-549 Main		Yes
600-608 Main		Yes*
700 Main (Pacific Hotel)		
721 Main (Murrin Substation)		
730-732 Main		Yes
3-5 West Pender (Chee Kung Tong Building)	Yes	
2-14 West Pender (Sam Kee Building)	Yes	
227 Union		Yes*
271 Union		Yes*

\* Indicates Building Demolished.

(D) Indicates City of Vancouver Heritage Designation.

Source: City of Vancouver Heritage Register.

## APPENDIX IV

### Housing Developments and Applications Received for Historic Chinatown from 2002

Buildings Address	Market Units	Non-Market Units
5 West Pender Street	11 (Seniors)	
1 East Pender Street	4	
550 Taylor	233	
250 East Georgia	3	
663 Gore Street		15 Seniors
75 East Pender Street	22	
271 Union Street	6	
237 Keefer Street	18	12 Seniors
718 Main Street	78	
*221 Union Street	96	
Total	471	27

Source: City of Vancouver, Planning Department, Vancouver Administrative Report  
Chinatown Community Plan: Progress Report RTS No. 6113, November 10, 2006 p 4 and  
\*Development Permit Notification Sign DE 411269 posted at 221 Union Street.