The commercial strip by the river: A study of New Westminster’s urban waterfront

by

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The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

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Abstract

This research evaluates how economic changes in New Westminster’s central waterfront have influenced land uses and economic activities in the adjacent commercial strip, during the transformation from the industrial to the post-industrial era. By using a mixed method approach, I explore the mutual economic, functional and physical relationships between two geographical entities which have been studied mostly separately, urban commercial strips and waterfront redevelopments. I show that the industrial decline of the central waterfront substantially influenced the adjacent commercial strip, deepened the decline of the strip and caused an ongoing period of economic instability. The mixed-use development on the central waterfront’s former industrial lands was not able to generate positive economic influences to the nearby downtown. The long decline period of the commercial strip and decreasing rent prices resulted in the development of three main retail and services sub-sectors: alcohol related, antiques and bridal stores. My research findings suggest that physical connection between waterfronts and cities as well as their positive images are crucial factors for an economic prosperity of both areas.

Keywords: Industrial decline; urban revitalization; commercial strips; urban waterfronts; economic development; downtown
Dedication

To my parents who taught me the values of learning and inspired me to explore the world. To Tom for his love, support and amazing food.
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Chapter 1. Introduction

Throughout history, cities and ports have evolved together, forging strong functional, economic and cultural links between them. Cities and their communities grew around ports, and their economies were based on industrial activities near ports. With a shift to the post-industrial economy, relationships between port and city weakened. This weakening along with the deindustrialization process had significant negative impacts on port cities across the globe. Many cities have been trying to recover from the deindustrialization process by advancing their post-industrial economies and revitalizing the decaying urban areas that once were prosperous industrial waterfronts.

This thesis explores the transformation of port and city relationships between the industrial and post-industrial era in the central waterfront and downtown commercial strip of the city of New Westminster, BC, Canada. New Westminster is the oldest city in Western Canada and once had one of the most important ports on the Fraser River. Today the city is a suburb of Vancouver and a member of the Greater Vancouver Regional District. This thesis explores the economic relationships and land use changes between the city’s central waterfront and its adjacent commercial strip, between its post-industrial decline and the beginning of its redevelopment period. The importance of this study lies in the fact that urban revitalization is one of the essential challenges that has confronted the field of urban planning over the last several decades. Many post-industrial cities have been trying to build a new economic life cycle for city centers that are dependent upon their adjacent industrial areas. Those cities discovered that rezoning former industrial lands might be an easy task, but creating a new urban vibrancy and improving an existing and already built urban area is a much more complicated challenge. Moreover, this thesis examines together changes in two urban entities that have for the most part been studied separately from each other: waterfronts and inner city commercial strips.
1.1. Background

Ports and cities have been closely tied to one another geographically and functionally, since the early history of shipping. Many ports and cities have grown on the basis of mutual benefit. Historically, many ports were located in proximity to urban areas, most often next to the commercial center of cities. Those city centers were cities’ cores and were interrelated to the waterfronts and their related activities. Many cities were situated at sites that were conducive to ports’ establishment. In turn, ports primarily served the local area and maintained close ties with the manufacturing industries of cities and their commercial, economic and civic enterprises (Hoyle 1989). Moreover, the home and the recreation areas for the port’s employees were mainly in the commercial downtown (Hayuth, 1982; Hoyle 1989).

Port cities’ downtowns all over the world changed significantly because of the transformation in shipping technologies and transition from industrial to post-industrial economies. Port cities and their waterfronts suffered from industrial decline and deindustrialization, which led to the deterioration of urban built environments and resulted in vacancies of massive industrial facilities and buildings that were no longer in use (Norcliffe, Bassett & Hoare, 1996). The decline of urban ports and waterfronts had a negative influence on their adjacent urban areas and, in particular, their economic wellbeing. De-industrializing city centers experienced a process of deterioration which resulted in physical and economic decline as well as population loss. In many small and medium cities such as New Westminster, the main street remains the core of community life with its commercial, retail, educational, public, religious and civic institutions (Francaviglia & Franklin, 1996). The street level commercial enterprises have always enhanced the social connections within the community and are considered to be a crucial factor for livability in the downtown. City residents, former port employees, and visitors began to avoid those city centers as their main dwelling and shopping districts. Businesses and firms in those city centers began to shut down and relocate to other places (Burayidi, 2013; Hayuth, 1982; Hoyle 1989).
Urban revitalization is one of the essential challenges in the field of urban planning over the last several decades. Post-industrial port cities around the world have been attempting to respond to shifts in economic structures and market preferences, and the effect these trends have had on the physical realm. The planning practice and the academic literature from recent decades demonstrated that economic forces play a key role in the revitalization of decaying city centers and their commercial streets. Many city centers have been experiencing very slow revitalization processes and remain in the transition phase for a long period (Burayidi, 2013; Hutton, 2009). Gentrification is often associated with urban revitalization and redevelopment of inner-cities but considered an undesirable process by some. Urban waterfronts are now desirable places for gentrification and this process sometimes is stated as a policy goal of renewal (Sairinen & Kumpulainen, 2006). Gentrification involves the displacement of less affluent residents and businesses, which cannot afford to stay in the inner city due to increasing property and rent prices (Boyle, 2009). In most urban renewal plans, public and private investments, improving infrastructure and potential increases in property values are stated goals and thus, gentrification must be considered as an outcome (Boyle, 2009; Smith, 1996). The measurement and evaluation of gentrification and displacement occur when the regeneration process has reached its maturity and completion (Atkinson, 2000; Boyle, 2009; Smith, 1996). This thesis evaluates the decline and transition phases of urban waterfronts prior to gentrification and therefore the issues of gentrification and residential displacement will not be analyzed.

Urban waterfronts and ports had always been places of economic and physical change. All over the world in general, and in North America in particular, there are a significant number of cities such as New Westminster; suburban, small-sized and in the shadow of a big-global city such as Vancouver, Toronto, New York, Los Angeles and Boston. By understanding the role of waterfront land uses in the revitalization of bordering urban areas, my research draws conclusions and recommendations for similar small cities as well as for the urban economic development field.
1.2. Research question and justification

The main inquiry of this research project is as follows:

How have economic changes in New Westminster’s central waterfront area influenced land uses and economic activities in the adjacent commercial strip, during the transformation from the industrial to the post-industrial era 1975-2015?

To help address my main research question, it is important firstly to understand that economic transformations of urban areas are interrelated with changes in society and technology. Across the globe, cities have experienced the subsequent processes of growth, decline, transition, and renewal. My research concentrates on the economic aspect of the transformation process, how it played out in two specific areas in the city of New Westminster, and what were the economic relations, if any, between these two areas. Columbia Street was the main commercial, retail and service center for the Fraser Valley, and the community of New Westminster in particular, until the 1960s, and has subsequently undergone processes of decline and revitalization. One approach to examining the transformation of this street is to consider the suburbanization patterns in the region, but this is not the focus of this research. My research explores what lessons can be learned about the economic activity of commercial and businesses strips which are adjacent to an industrial waterfront, and what role, if any, the changing waterfront had in the transformation of the street. Moreover, my project aims to explore the complex array of stakeholders and capital investment which shape the revitalization effort during the transition phase. This research considers the actors who have contributed the most to the process, the period in which economic changes occur, as well as the specific factors which shape and underpin the economic climate at the neighborhood scale.

It should be noted that my interest and focus in New Westminster and the specific area of study derives from my involvement in the “(Re)Claiming the New Westminster Waterfront Project” (RNWW), as a research assistant. The RNWW project explores the changing nature of work and the cityscape on the New Westminster
waterfront, including Queensborough, from its industrial heydays until today. In addition, RNWW brings together a diverse set of community and Simon Fraser University partners to collect and share the stories of the people who worked on the waterfront in New Westminster. My research is focusing on a small segment of the RNWW project and uses a subset of its resources. This involvement in the RNWW project has provided me with a broad perspective on the changing waterfront in New Westminster, and allows me to focus on the area which I found to be the most interesting to explore.

1.3. Study Area

New Westminster is Western Canada’s oldest city, located in the Lower Mainland region of British Columbia, Canada, and is a member municipality of the Greater Vancouver Regional District. The City is located on the north bank of the Fraser River, 20 km east of Vancouver (Figure 1.1). Surveyed by the Royal Engineers and named by Queen Victoria, 'The Royal City' was established in 1859 by Governor James Douglas as the capital of British Columbia and continued in that role until the Mainland and Island Colonies were merged in 1866. The city's jurisdiction area is 6.03 square miles and had 65,976 residents in 2011 (Roy, 2013). The city was the mercantile center and the transportation hub of the Lower Mainland during and after the Fraser River and Cariboo gold rushes; NW was an important freshwater port, a major lumber producer, a salmon canning center, a commercial center for the Fraser Valley and an administrative and service headquarters with such institutions as the County Court and Douglas College (one of the largest public colleges in British Columbia). NW consists of 15 Neighbourhood Planning Areas (City of New Westminster, 2011). The areas that I examine in this thesis are both within Downtown (D) Planning Area.
Figure 1.1. The City of New Westminster- geographic location in the Lower Mainland
Source: City of New Westminster (2011).

The specific areas that I will be examining are the (1) commercial strip in the city of New Westminster from Elliot St. to 10th St. and from Columbia Av to Front St. (Figure 1.2, Area 1); and the adjacent (2) central waterfront area; from Elliot St. to 10th St., and from Front St. to the Fraser River (Figure 1.2, Area 2). These precise boundaries derive from three main factors. First, this area is considered as the downtown core of the city and it includes the significant interface area between the downtown and the central waterfront. Second, this area is included in the quantitative secondary data of the (Re)Claiming the New Westminster Waterfront Project that I have analyzed. However, my qualitative analysis expands those precise boundaries and examines issues from neighboring areas. Third, initial research found that the majority of the buildings on Front St. have two entrances: one to Front St. and the second to Columbia St. Hence one could assume that, in the spatial sense, there have been economic relationships and shared spaces between Front St. (and the waterfront itself) and Columbia St. Fourth, as many areas of the NW’s waterfront are still industrial, I focused on the area where there is no longer any industry which is likely to impact the downtown area.
1.4. The importance of the research to the urban studies field

This section presents several considerations for the contribution of this research to the urban studies field and for other cities. The research is unique in the sense that it brings together two issues that have been studied separately until now: urban waterfront change and downtown’s ‘high street’ decline and revitalization. The combination of these two issues offers a new perspective on how to strengthen the commercial aspect of the downtown area by introducing new and attractive land uses to waterfront areas. There is a likelihood that the decline of Columbia St. was related more to the development of the suburban shopping malls than to the decline of the main core cargo handling area, just as the decline in the port terminals is related to broader changes in the shipping industry. However, the significant amount of land which was cleared out created the opportunity for a new, mixed-use development which likely affected the business activity in the adjacent commercial strip. By evaluating the influence of the waterfront redevelopment on the adjacent strip and vice versa, the research offers recommendations to similar post-industrial cities facing a decline in their downtowns. Furthermore, this research can also assist municipalities without waterfronts and those with significant portions of brownfield lands to develop near their Main Streets. Those large portions of land could be in the form of old industrial areas, abandoned warehouses or even large parking lots, waiting to be developed into new uses. It is important to stress that this study will not try to explain the decline of the New Westminster port terminals and their redevelopment on the opposite bank and beyond the mouth of the Fraser River. Instead, it focuses on whether and how these processes affected the commercial strip.
There is a significant lack of literature on and understanding of the decline and transition processes and their evaluation at the level of individual merchants’ property parcels and using time series data. This assessment of the revitalization efforts and their actual effect on the economic climate on a neighborhood scale, as revealed by this data, contributes new knowledge on the appropriate methods to manage (and hopefully end) the transition process and achieve successful redevelopment outcomes. There is a possibility that in periods of recession, the local economic market reacts in surprising ways. By identifying these unique local patterns, they could be transformed into economic development tools for other cities.

1.5. Overview

This thesis proceeds with a literature review (Chapter 2) which begins with a definition of the two examined urban entities - the urban waterfront and the commercial strip - as well descriptions of processes such as urban revitalization. The literature review continues with an explanation of port-city relationships and the post-industrial economy. Moreover, the analytical framework, indicators and variables are introduced. The second chapter concludes with several hypotheses that were examined in the research. Following the literature review, the methodology of this research project is introduced (Chapter 3). A mixed method of statistical analysis of business establishments; content analysis of planning documents and archival reports; oral histories of individuals who worked on the urban waterfront; as well as semi-structured interviews were used to provide the empirical foundation for this thesis. The statistical analysis of the database is presented in Chapter 4. The research findings are presented in Chapter 5 according to the sequence in which the events occurred. Chapter 6 ends the thesis with a short discussion, reflection on the hypotheses, and conclusion.
Chapter 2. Literature Review

In this chapter, relevant literature is reviewed and discussed, providing theoretical and analytical context for my research as well as introducing the hypotheses which are examined in this thesis. First, there is a discussion of how processes of urban decline and revitalization were manifested in inner cities and their economies. Second, there is an exploration of how urban revitalization processes are related to the new economy in a post-industrial era. In this section, there is a review of indicators and variables which enable me to evaluate this economic transition in the City of New Westminster. Third, there is an exploration of commercial strips as unique urban entities which highlights the importance of commercial activity to everyday street life and economic vitality in cities. Fourth, there is further discussion of the complex and changing relationships between cities and their waterfronts. This section presents different views and models of port-city relationships on processes of decline, transition, and redevelopment. Finally, relevant studies on port-city relationships in the Canadian context are presented. This chapter concludes with a summary of hypotheses examined in my thesis about the connection between urban waterfronts and their adjacent commercial strips.

2.1. Transformation in the inner cities’ economy

2.1.1. Defining the Inner City and Commercial Strip

The terms inner city, city’s core, or downtown are mostly used in the literature to describe the same type of geographical place. A common definition of inner city is the term Central Business District (CBD) which incorporates its geographical location,
planning characteristics and urban form. The CBD and its surrounding areas contain a mix of land uses with a high density of offices and residential developments (Hutton, 2009; Ley 2000). The inner city is considered by Gad and Matthew (2000) as a place for private and public high order utilities and a majority of a city's employment.

Commercial strips are unique urban commercial entities and can be developed in urban centers as well as in suburban settings. By their nature, commercial strips encompass a combination of different uses along main access routes, and their character is derived from the nature of the establishments and their role as a main transportation route. Berry (1959) followed by Yeates and Garner (1976) differentiate between two types of urban commercial strips: the inner city strips and the urban arterial strips. In North America, the inner city strip is usually called 'Main Street.' These streets cater to convenience goods and services at the lowest level, usually including grocery stores, laundromats, drug stores, beauty salons and barber shops (Yeates & Garner, 1976). Moreover, these streets encompass all the essentials that residents in North American small and medium-sized cities require, with educational, public, and civic institutes (Francaviglia & Franklin, 1996). Main streets shape the majority of community life and daily routine; it is a place where residents come to meet each other. In the geographical sense, these strips started as a single strip and expanded their boundaries into parallel streets over the years. Yet, their linearity remains their foremost spatial development model (Francaviglia & Franklin, 1996).

The second type of strip, the urban arterial strip, categorizes a bulk of commercial strips, whose identity is built around specialty commercial products or types. Common uses are usually space intensive such as automobile repair shops, furniture stores, appliance dealers, office equipment sales outlets and lumber yards. The urban arterial strip mostly attracts customers who come to purchase a specific type of product (Yeates & Garner, 1976). Berry (1959) mentions specific types of urban arterial strips which have a negative effect on a local environment such as those with a concentration of bars and missions, second-hand stores, loan and pawn shops and flophouse hotels.
Commercial strips are a significant element of the North American urban and exurban landscapes as they established, initially, in early American settlements. In the post-industrial era, these strips were shaped, dominantly, by the automobile and increased in scale and width. After the Second World War, the commercial strips expanded to suburban areas across North America and became a popular model for retail and commercial development. The suburban commercial strips, which are not the focus of my research, are even more automobile oriented, than urban strips, and in some cases they were built on the edges of medium size highways, separating different areas of the suburbs (Wyckoff, 1992). The commercial strip is a distinct commercial entity, different than shopping centers and malls in management, automobile access and design patterns (Yeates and Garner, 1976). As in many other urban areas, commercial strips have experienced heydays as well as periods of aging and decline.

2.1.2. Urban industrial decline

In order to explain the particularity of my examined geographical area, it is vital to understand how urban areas which are adjacent to industrial areas have been influenced by the process of deindustrialization. Deindustrialization is a process of social and economic change which is caused by the decline in a share of manufacturing activities and employment, in cities, regions and countries of the developed world, since the beginning of the 1970s (Rowthorn & Ramaswamy, 1997). The other side of the deindustrialization process has been a continuous increase in the share of employment in services in developed countries (Rowthorn & Ramaswamy, 1997). Deindustrialization processes highlight the fact that technological progression and innovation generated more efficient means of production and also allowed global relocation of industrial operations and firms.

Deindustrialization has a destructive impact on industrial cities’ economy and population trends. According to Lang (2005), the term ‘decline’ in the context of urban development is used to describe undesirable changes, such as growing unemployment due to a removal of industrial activities in an area, followed by physical decay and worsening living conditions. Ley and Frost (2006) explain that in periods of decline the
local economy “collapses” and there are almost no investments in inner cities. Friedrichs (1993) states that this economic collapse results in the closing down of plants and companies which lead to high unemployment rates, among a city’s residents and, therefore, leads to residents’ migration out of the city. The workers who stay in the inner city experience a decrease in average wage levels and their purchasing power. As a result, private consumption declines and sales in retail drop. These effects cause a downward spiral - a negative signal and bad business climate which discourages companies from establishing themselves in the city.

Property values and buildings’ occupancy in the inner city are influenced severely by the downward economic spiral. The closing of manufacturing companies results in an increasing rate of abandoned buildings, structures and sometimes complete industrial areas. The retail and residential property prices decrease in industrial districts and their nearby urban areas, with increasing outward migration. Vacancy and occupation rates of buildings in the downtown area are important indicators of inner cities’ transition. Burayidi (2013) elaborates that the contraction of economic activity often means fewer businesses will be looking for space either to establish or to expand. This decrease in demand for space means decreased occupation rates and rent prices in downtown buildings (Burayidi, 2001; Fitzgerald & Leigh, 2002). The city’s major institutes and residential buildings decay and the entire attractiveness of living environments declines. This unfortunate process results in a disappearance of human activity from urban environments and increasing crime rates (Burayidi, 2001). Dense cities have more residents, businesses, and large buildings, therefore, the deindustrialization process, with its downward spiral effect, occurs faster and is more visible in urban areas than in suburban ones (Burayidi, 2001: Mah, 2012). These ideas on urban decline and decreasing rent prices enabled me to identify the first two hypotheses.

- Hypothesis 1: During periods of decline and economic transition in inner cities there is a decrease in rent prices which creates opportunities for ‘start-up’ businesses and experimentation in retail and services.
Hypothesis 2: ‘Start-up’ and experimental businesses which open due to cheap rents may have a positive effect on the economic climate at the local scale.

In British Columbia (BC), in general, and the Lower Mainland, in particular, the deindustrialization process was interrelated with the global recession during the 1980s, and came after decades of major industrial development. According to Barnes et al. (1992), the global recession started to influence BC’s economy, with staple producing industries not recovering until 1986. In BC, unemployment peaked at 14 percent in 1982 with almost 50 percent unemployment in single industry towns across the province. New Westminster, with its industrial sector mainly concentrated in primary manufacturing, was affected less than other industrial cities in BC. While both wood and paper related sectors were rather stable, other industrial sectors, such as engineering, aircraft manufacturing and food and beverage manufacturing, all experienced a reduction in total employment and the number of firms in the city (Noah, 1992). New Westminster needed to adapt to the new economic reality in the region.

2.1.3. Urban and economic revitalization

Cities constantly face a need to adjust to changing economic conditions to ensure the well-being of their residents. Urban regeneration or revitalization is a comprehensive process which leads to a resolution of urban problems and seeks to improve unfavorable conditions of an urban fabric (which are described in section 2.1.2). Urban revitalization consists of four main elements: economic, physical, social and environmental (Lang, 2005; Roberts & Sykes, 1999). Yet, economic revitalization plays a crucial role in the process of urban revitalization (Roberts & Sykes, 1999). The transition phase is a period which begins with the emergence of urban decline indicators and continues until revitalization goals are achieved (Roberts & Sykes, 1999).

When evaluating the transition period, opening, closing and persistence of firms, are important indicators of a healthy economy in cities and regions (Agarwal, 1997; Essletzbichler, 2004). By using plant-level data of the U.S. Manufacturing Sector,
Essletzbichler (2004) shows that the decline of a specific industry and a region’s economy are less about a rate at which firms are exiting the market, but more about a decreasing rate of firms entering a market and/or opening a new branch. Two main indicators reflect the regeneration phase of a region’s economy and the creation of new jobs: an increasing rate of new firms’ births and by an expansion rate of the incumbent (continuing) firms (Essletzbichler, 2004). Although this research was focused on the manufacturing industry, its conclusions and principles are widely used to measure economic resiliency and regeneration of different economic sectors in urban areas (Leigh & Blakely, 2013).

Urban regeneration is concerned with a re-growth of economic activity where it has decayed or been lost. It is mostly concerned with the existing urban fabric of the inner cities, and aims to attract more businesses and capital into urban areas, rather than developing new neighborhoods and employment areas (Hutton 2009; Lang, 2005; Roberts & Sykes, 1999). The density - a total number of businesses and firms in a specific area, is an important indicator to measure the economic regeneration process (Hemphill, Berry, & McGreal, 2004). Businesses densifying in a specific urban area creates more demand for other types of businesses (Hemphill et al., 2004; Roberts & Sykes, 1999). As a result of this increasing demand, there is an improvement of the local economic climate. In post-industrial inner cities, the economic regeneration process is interrelated with the intensification of businesses in high office towers, which are usually occupied by the ‘New Economy’ sectors.

2.1.4. The Post-industrial City and the New Economy

The post-industrial city is characterized by a few structural changes but mostly by the transition to a service based economy. Hutton (2009) states that the common model of the post-industrial city consists of three main elements: a dominant and growing service sector concentrated in a city’s corporate Central Business District (CBD); an asymmetrical metropolitan core, comprised of hegemonic CBD with high office towers; and the emergence of a ‘new middle class’ of urban professionals. In the context of my thesis, Hutton (2009) situates Vancouver as a post-industrial city in a post-industrial
region. Vancouver represents the asymmetrical metropolitan core, and its CBD’s development caused a decline in peripheral business districts. Hutton’s (2009) study on Vancouver demonstrates that the city has experienced a decline in its inner-city primary resource processing industry, manufacturing and distribution sectors. Since the 1990’s, areas within Vancouver’s inner city, which formerly inhabited mills, small factories, lumber production sites and warehousing, are now home to ‘new economy’ Industries (Barnes et al., 1992; Hutton, 2009).

The ‘New Economy’ is an economy which is based on knowledge and service sectors as well as on the development and availability of new information technology. The information and knowledge based sectors generate economic growth, new employment opportunities, and higher productivity that results in higher wages (Hutton 2009). The new economy is typically represented by the following industries: internet design and services, software design, computer graphics and imaging, and multimedia industries. The transformation to a post-industrial economy has a unique manifestation in the built and physical form of inner cities. The rise of the ‘New Economy’ entails a redesign of inner cities’ space alongside preservation of the old industrial buildings that reflect the city's legacy and history (Fitzgerald & Leigh, 2002). The levels of overrepresentation and growth are important variables to measure the emerging service industries in cities and regions, as well as to identify transitional patterns of a local economy (Sassen, 1990). By performing field surveys of business at a set point in time (Fall 2002), Hutton (2009) identified different districts of Vancouver with the agglomeration of creative economy sectors. Besides Vancouver, Hutton (2009) studied, using the same research methods, the emergence of the ‘New Economy’ in other global, inner cities, such as London, San Francisco, and Singapore. Based on the literature on post-industrial cities and economic revitalization I have drawn the following hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis 3**: During the transition period and revitalization efforts, businesses which are related to the industrial period do not fit within the new economic conditions of the inner city and, therefore, could have a negative effect on the local economy.
In the Canadian context, the majority of literature on small, mid-sized, and peripheral post-industrial cities is focused on the creative economy and cultural activities. The creative economy is a variety of cultural-production industries supplying services and manufacturing outposts such as film, music, jewelry and fashion. The creative economy is rooted in the urban economist Richard Florida's work, which emphasizes the importance of occupations in media, advertising, fashion, film, architecture, and design alongside various high technology sectors such as information and computing, which act as significant economic generators (Hall & Donald, 2012). Research on creative-led economies has been mostly dedicated to large metropolitan areas such as Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal (Hutton, 2009) and in many cases, small and suburban cities received a marginal reference (Gertler, Florida, Gates & Vinodrai, 2002; O'Hagan & Rutland, 2008). The usage of employment data was the main method to measure the creative-led economies and their locational patterns in small and medium sized cities (Denis-Jacob, 2012; O'Hagan & Rutland, 2008). This employment data measures the place of residence and not the place of work. Thus, there are major limitations in these two comparative studies.

The search for pioneers who studied issues of new or postindustrial economies in the downtowns of small cities yields a small number of results. Rich (2013) studied the revitalization of downtown Scranton, a postindustrial city in Northeast Pennsylvania, using semi-structured interviews with business owners, city and non-profit administrators, and cultural leaders. The study showed that revitalizers were heavily influenced by Richard Florida’s creative class theory in that they strongly believe that promoting arts and culture and creating a consumer-based downtown is vital for urban renewal. The focus on creativity and knowledge economies continues in the study on Greater Sudbury in Northern Ontario, Canada by O'Hagan and Rutland (2008). Greater Sudbury, once a large nickel producing region, is more recently a home for innovating mining companies as well as companies in film and digital animation. The study focuses on the creative economy as an economic development tool for the Canadian periphery and has almost no relation to downtown revitalization. Regardless, the fact that New Westminster is located in a post-industrial region, does not mean that it represents the typical model of a post-industrial city. As I will demonstrate further, the city never developed a strong base of service sector nor ‘New Economy’ establishments in its inner
city. The geographical context of my thesis is more complex than the cities mentioned in this section, due to the fact that part of New Westminster’s waterfront is still industrial. Moreover, there is a significant lack of literature which uses economic time series analysis within small cities’ downtowns. My thesis contributes to filling that gap.

2.1.5. Commercial revitalization in the inner cities

The planning practice and academic literature show that retailing, at the street level, is a key component of vital downtowns for cities at all scales. A strong retail presence is crucial for the general vitality of the downtown area and the city as a whole (Burayidi, 2001; Kent, 1997). Characteristic of this approach are the feelings expressed in 1980 by Mathias DeVito, former president of the Rouse Development Company:

But the essential glue of the city, the fuel that will truly fire the renaissance... is the strong return of retailing to the downtown. Retailing has a life and vigor night and day, seven days a week. It has universal appeal. Everyone shops – executives, workers, students, tourists. Retailing relates to every other function of the city. It stimulates and strengthens other businesses such as banking, accounting, publishing, or insurance. It provides a very broad job base...(p.198).

The decentralization of retail activity to the suburbs in North America is one of the main factors of for a decline of the commercial activity on downtown commercial streets (Burayidi, 2001; Kent, 1997). In addition, inner city retailing relies heavily on a strong residential base, usually within walking distance, and public transit. The downtowns of small and medium-sized communities were more greatly affected than those of large cities (Burayidi, 2001).

Since the beginning of the 1990’s there have been massive efforts in cities to revive their downtowns and commercial streets by revitalizing the essential “glue” of the city- retail (Burayidi, 2001; Kent, 1997). There are several approaches to revive retail in the downtown areas: district management strategies and organizations (such as Business Improvement Associations and the Main Street Four Points Program), pedestrian malls, festival marketplaces in heritage buildings, downtown indoor shopping
centers (‘galleria’), mixed use centers, tax increment financing areas, property tax abatement, low cost lawns from city funds, sales tax rebates to incoming small commercial businesses and public transit improvements (Burayidi, 2001; Kent, 1997; Roberts & Sykes, 1999; Walzer & Kline, 2001). Several case studies on downtown and commercial revitalization were done in the Canadian context. Hernandez and Jones (2005) studied the retail sales by major metropolitan downtown areas to evaluate the successes of Businesses Improvement Areas (BIA) in these large cities. Another study of BIA and downtown commercial revitalization was done by Horne (2001) on the city of Brandon, which is slightly smaller than New Westminster in population size. Horne (2001) examined the Downtown Brandon BIA and its contribution to enhancing Brandon’s downtown economy and its street vibrancy.

The issues of public safety, personal security and improvement of urban blighted areas’ poor public image are important concepts for successful urban revitalization and for an inner city’s economic growth. Burayidi (2001) states that the image of downtown and public safety go hand in hand to attract businesses and customers to the downtown. Personal security problems, high vacancy rates, and empty buildings are associated with urban decline and they all create negative images of the downtown. An important goal of urban revitalization is to bring back security and to repair the negative image of downtowns. Merchants’ organizations, such as the BIAs, are a common approach to improving negative images through marketing, festivals, cultural activities, and the beautification of public spaces.

Issues of safety and problematic retail mix were the main concerns of a downtown revitalization study in Windsor, Ontario by Lippert (2007). The economic development policy for Windsor’s downtown was grafting casinos, clubs, and bars, in order to increase tourism, diversify the city’s industrial economy and permit a gradual migration of business and residential development to the declining city center. Like New Westminster’, Windsor was heavily industrialized and was once known as the “Automotive Capital of Canada.” Windsor and its downtown experienced severe deindustrialization which had major ramifications on its economy. The goals of the revitalization policy succeeded greatly and the number of alcohol and entertainment related businesses increased by more than 50 percent, between 1996 and 2002, and
attracted many youth visitors from nearby US cities. However, the massive successes of bars and alcohol-related businesses had undesirable outcomes for Windsor’s downtown. With an influx of tourists, the downtown experienced acute security problems, noise, as well as street violence, including the breaking of windows and store fronts by drunk crowds, on a daily basis. These behaviors deterred residents, residential development, a large number of existing businesses from establishing in the area, and threatened the downtown’s economic vitality. Therefore, specific types of businesses when present in a dominant number, may have destructive effects on the economic and social vitality of inner-cities.

As a unique geographic and economic entity of inner cities, commercial strips have transformed over the years and have changed their economic and commercial structure. In many cases, the factors for change and decline were not related to a specific manufacturing industry as was acknowledged in the previous sections. Moreover, the majority of the literature on commercial strips examined those strips as an isolated geographic entity, and either as an extension of the downtown (Jakle & Mattson, 1981; Loukaitou-Sideris, 2002), or as the main strip of the North American suburban landscape (Wyckoff, 1992). The Main Street as an important element of North American landscape, culture, and architecture, is well documented in Francaviglia and Franklin (1996) and Liebs (1995). Many geographers had focused their research on the distribution of land uses and related commercial functions along urban strips at set points in time (Jakle & Mattson, 1981). The research by Jakle and Mattson (1981) signifies a shift in the study of commercial strips’ economy, by measuring its economic and business structures over a time frame of 60 years. Wyckoff (1992) continues Jakle and Mattson’s (1981) precedent in the study of a suburban commercial strip in Denver, Colorado.

In the Canadian context, Hernandez and Jones (2005) studied the change of the retail mix on Yonge Street in downtown Toronto, in order to evaluate the influence of the Downtown Yonge BIA. The authors used time series data between the years 1996 and 2003 and evaluated the success of the BIA and the major mixed-use projects to attract retail merchants and reduce the street’s vacancy rates. Hernandez and Jones’ (2005) study has similarities to the case of Columbia St. in New Westminster as they are
both downtown commercial strips, but these case studies differ in the scale of the street, and in the evaluation of economic sectors. Overall, the broad body of literature on commercial strips situates their importance in the North American settlement patterns and demonstrates that they were studied in relation to their city or suburb, but not in relation to the urban waterfront or industrial areas, which is the focus of my thesis. The next section will elaborate on the relation between urban areas and their waterfronts.

2.2. Urban waterfront change and port-city relationships

2.2.1. What is the urban waterfront?

The word ‘waterfront’ is widely used in the literature without a distinct definition, possibly because the authors think that the term is clear and means the land fronting on the water. Simultaneously, some scholars use other terms instead of waterfront to describe a particular region or part of it. Such terms include city port (e.g. in Norcliffe et al., 1996) and river edge (e.g. in Watson, 1986). According to the Oxford American Dictionary of Current English in English Dictionaries and Thesauruses, the waterfront is “the part of a town or city adjoining a river, lake, harbor, etc.” In his introductory chapter of the book *Urban Waterfronts in post-industrial cities*, Marshall (2004) defines the “urban waterfront” as a new development on the water’s edge which replaced the industrial port uses, and which acts as symbol of the post-industrial economy and architecture. In many cases around the world, waterfront districts could be self-evident because they appear as enclosed by homogeneous land uses, such as large-scale port facilities, long core cargo decks, waterfront parks, as well as massive housing developments. In other cases, the boundaries are diffused. This mainly occurs in the cases where industrial waterfronts become neglected, and only some sections of it are still active or have been revitalized (Desfor, Laidley, Stevens, & Schubert, 2010). In the context of this thesis, I use the term urban waterfront as my research examines the relationships to the adjacent downtown strip.
2.2.2. The evolution of port-city relationships

Ports and cities have been closely tied to one another economically, geographically and functionally, since the early history of shipping. Many ports and cities have grown on the basis of mutual benefit. Moreover, these physical and economic relationships between urban waterfronts, and their adjacent cities are subject to constant changes. This section presents perspectives on the relationships between cities and their urban waterfronts with respect to land use and economic changes.

One of the earliest models describing port-city relationships is the Any-Port model by Bird (1963), who studied the evolution of British ports. This five stage model presents how changes at port facilities’ affect their adjacent urban areas (Rodrigue, Comtois, and Slack, 2013). The setting stage is when the port is established close to the city center (Stage 1). In the expansion stage, the industrial revolution triggers the expansion of the port and an increase in the number of passengers and freight using the port (Stage 2). The size of ships expands and the use of massive docks and related infrastructure developed (Stage 3). The specialization stage involves the construction of specialized piers and equipment (Stage 4). Further, a port specialization is enhanced, and several ports and their facilities migrate from the original setting. Moreover, the original port site which is commonly adjacent to the city center becomes abandoned and is redeveloped for other urban uses such as residential, commercial and parks (Stage 5) (Bird, 1963; Rodrigue et al., 2013). The Any-Port model has been updated by the addition of a so-called “port regionalization” stage (Notteboom & Rodrigue, 2005).

The Port-City Interface Model by Hoyle (2000) is one of the most important and widely used linear models to explain the evolution of urban waterfronts’ (Lee, Song, & Ducruet, 2008). This is a six stage model whose descriptions and related characteristics are summarized in Figure 2.1.
In contrast to the two linear models presented above, Desfor et al. (2010) present a model that is focused on the complexities of urban waterfront transition. Desfor et al. (2010) describe their theory as such:

The use of a fixity and flow perspective captures many of the complexities and ambiguities that characterize processes of waterfront change. This perspective highlights a variety of fixities (such as built environments, institutional and regulatory structures, and cultural practices) and flows (such as processes of capital accumulation, information, labour, finance capital, energy, and knowledge) that we posit are central for understanding change, particularly on the waterfront. Fixity and flow allows us to go beyond exploring a simple dichotomy between static and shifting aspects of urban landscapes, and points toward more complex and contradictory meanings embedded in these terms. (p.5)

Both fixity and flow are fundamentally active, frequently produced, and waterfronts are shaped by balancing their forces. Ports were always the gates where the flow of goods, services, and capital made their entries and departures from the city and leave their marks on it.
The urban port’s establishment, expansion, and industrial growth are well documented in the literature. Historically, many ports were located in proximity to urban areas, most often next to the commercial center of a city (Hayuth, 1982). Many cities were located on sites that were suitable to ports’ establishment. The port primarily served the immediate area surrounding it and also maintained close ties with adjacent industries and merchants (Hayuth, 1982; Hoyle 1989). Moreover, the prosperity of a city mainly depends on the prosperity of a port; they develop or decline together. Norcliffe et al. (1996) elaborate three aspects of the economic symbiosis between ports and their adjacent urban areas. First, the interface between land and water body (sea, river, lake), enables trade related establishments and employment. This employment consists of the physical handling of cargo, and also specialty mercantile businesses such as financing, insurance trade, arranging transition for cargoes and managing shipping services. Second, some of the trade serves customers and producers in and around the city port. Third, ports are natural locations for the building, repairing and maintaining of ships. The ships are built in large warehouses and the related labor force inhabited the area (Norcliffe et al., 1996). Overall, in the urban development realm, port cities became unique human settlements based on a variety of productive sectors, both within manufacturing and in the current term ‘producer services’. From these concepts on the symbiosis between cities and ports I have identified another hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 4: during the industrial period there are strong and stable economic and service connections between ports and their adjacent urban areas.

The decline of urban ports and the separation of ports from their cities, encapsulated by the phrase “the retreat from the waterfront”, is a global phenomenon. (Hayuth, 1982; Hoyle 1989). Since the 1970’s, there has been a substantial erosion of the longstanding relationship between ports and their cities. Ports and their related industrial uses progressively loosened their grip on cities and found good reasons to leave the urban areas (Hall, 2012; Norcliffe et al., 1996). Hoyle (1989) mentions four main reasons for the disconnection of ports from their cities. First is the evolution of maritime technology. Second is the growing scale of modern ports and their related industries. Third is a notable decline in port and long-shoring related employment within
port cities. Fourth is growing environmental considerations on port industrial activities. Furthermore, increasing national and international competition in shipping and labor costs changed ports’ locational patterns in the search for more profitable operation arrangements. Due to this, ports stopped providing most of the jobs for the local urbanites and were required to expand their operations and labor opportunities to a regional scale (Norcliffe et al., 1996).

The decline of urban ports left behind enormous, empty surfaces near cities which were once loading docks or related industrial areas (Marshall, 2004; Norcliffe et al., 1996). These highly visible voids lacked activity and the deindustrialization process inevitably influenced their adjacent urban areas (Hoyle, 2000; Norcliffe et al., 1996). The negative impact of the industrial decline process on their nearby downtowns included economic decline, out-migration of businesses and residents, deterioration of the public realm, physical decay and worsening living conditions (Burayidi, 2001; Friedrichs, 1993; Mah, 2012; Lang, 2005). Based on literature on the erosion of industrial port-city connections I have drawn the final hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 5: major waterfront changes, such as industrial decline, have a transformative impact on their adjacent urban areas.

The interdependent processes of urban waterfront redevelopment and the renewal of declining port-city links have been widely described and analyzed over the last decades among scholars and practitioners. This literature helps me to further evaluate the change that has taken place at the urban waterfront in New Westminster. Hoyle (1989) states that attracting human and economic activity to the waterfront with an emphasis on new residents and tourists, is crucial for successful waterfront revitalization. Norcliffe et al. (1996) theorize that the reinvention of port cities and waterfronts is related to the postmodern emphasis on variety and individuality. Waterfronts’ redevelopment in the post-industrial era, integrates unique relationships between physical, social, and economic elements. These relationships are unique on two main dimensions. The first is the physical dimension where the urban waterfront offers a juxtaposing of three of the four elements of the Ancients (Earth, Air, and Water) and massive empty spaces for
redevelopment. The second dimension is time, where new developments on urban waterfronts are founded in their rich industrial heritage (Norcliffe et al., 1996). The voids within a city, which were once important interfaces of industrial functions, could be repaired by a redevelopment of contemporary urban functions which suit the modern image of the post-industrial city (Marshall, 2004).

Urban waterfront redevelopment consists of specific land uses and establishments. Norcliffe et al. (1996) evaluate the expressions of post-modernist culture and economy on the waterfront by analyzing five overlapping land activities: employment, housing, recreation, hospitality industries, culture, and heritage. The growing service economy, which is an integral part of the post-Fordist era, is a visible feature of the new urban waterfront. Norcliffe et al. (1996) mention two main types of service jobs on the new urban waterfront. The first type of job is in the office sector which creates a demand for bars, restaurants, convenient shops, and the second type is non-routine jobs in maritime museums, heritage centers, sailing schools, yacht and boat repair and maintenance yards, and similar waterfront operations. Residential intensification, local residents’ purchasing power and a sufficient number of public amenities are crucial to maintaining the long-term livability of the revitalized waterfront (Bruttomesso, 2004; Roberts & Sykes, 1999).

The transformation of urban waterfronts is an expression of ongoing cycles of capital accumulation and loss as well as a reflection of the changing global and local economies. Norcliffe et al. (1996) stated that the departure of port activities from the central waterfront occurred surprisingly quickly, and that the redevelopment process, facilitated by local agents and agencies, was fast as well.

The postmodern renaissance of the urban waterfront is, in a fuller historical perspective, just another round in the accumulation of capital. What we seek to comprehend is the character of the latest round of capital investment on the waterfront which has produced quite dramatic changes in the form and function of the urban waterfront. (Norcliffe et al., 1996, p.130)
As previously discussed, Desfor et al. (2010) explain that the nature of waterfront transformation lies in the relationship between the endless movement of flows and the transient moments of fixities. “Indeed, the ‘fixities’ that characterize waterfront developments are concerned as much with a constant turnover as are the ‘flows’ of waterfronts that are influenced by structure and inertia” (p.3).

Cities and their waterfronts operate within networked flows of production, distribution, consumption and information. These global flows in a post-modern society tend to homogenize places and displace local identities. As a consequence, relationships between architecture and society become blurred, and the individuality of place becomes difficult to maintain. This is certainly reflected in the global tendency of the late 1970s and 1980s design for waterfront developments to include recreation and consumption spaces as well as the monumental residential projects that Norcliffe et al. (1996) mention. While Desfor et al. (2010) interpret these places and activities, such as festivals and marine museums, as homogenized and duplicated, Norcliffe et al. (1996) emphasize their relationships to the specific history of the place. Furthermore, many of the post-modern homogenized residential and consumption developments will take the form of isolated communities, separated from the rest of the urban fabric and with a weak sense of community (Featherstone, 2007; Norcliffe et al., 1996). A homogenized and unidimensional redeveloped waterfront is at risk of being exclusively dedicated to flows of external visitors, thus creating another ‘specialized’ district in the city (Bruttomesso, 2004).

Many scholars have tried to interpret the issues of capital flows, economic sectors, and redevelopment agents with respect to urban waterfronts (Acosta, 1990; Campo, 2002; Evans, 2005; Goodwin, 1999; Vallega, 2001). Vallega (2001) provides the most comprehensive framework which evaluates specific economic sectors and their relationship to sustainable development. The author developed a comprehensive list of 12 economic sectors, and considers their relationship to economic development, heritage conservation and physical location on the waterfront. Overall, the literature on the port city relationships indicates that the period of transformation from the decline phase to the redevelopment phase is the least elaborated and researched. Urban
waterfront change has been widely explored in Canada as elaborated in the next section.

2.2.3. The study of urban waterfront revitalization in the Canadian and the Vancouver contexts

Extensive literature exists on the issue of urban waterfront revitalization in the fields of geography, urban planning, environmental sciences and political science (Hoyle, 2000). In North America, the center of waterfront redevelopment studies exists in Toronto, where a joint program in transportation research involving York University and the University of Toronto was well established by the early 1970s’ and produced useful material on Toronto and other North American waterfront cases, in the past (Hoyle, 2000). A comprehensive study of the Toronto waterfront redevelopment by Desfor and Laidley (2011) is one of the latest studies of Toronto’s complex waterfront case. Vancouver is another salient case study, which is well documented, from the perspective of post-industrial cities and brownfield redevelopment (Marshall, 2004). The deindustrialization and transformation of Victoria’s (BC) harbor, is a smaller case study, which was examined using the concept of the changing urban landscape (Hamilton & Simard, 1993).

A recent study by Hall and Clark (2010) provides useful insight into the maritime politics in Metro Vancouver, through the lens of the fixity and flow’ perspective. Contemporary infrastructure spending decisions in and around Vancouver, Canada’s busiest port, can be understood by the unfolding political processes of reconnection between the port and the city- region (Hall & Clark, 2010). The authors argue that the Vancouver port was long disconnected from the city, and the containerization process has affected the port relatively late in relation to other places. The process of reconnection to the city- region, which involved establishment of new port facilities, was facilitated mostly by the Vancouver Port Authority alongside involvement of different levels of government. The working waterfront and its proximate regional environment are a ‘space of dependence’ for a wide array of actors in the goods movement industry. Despite the local- regional character of the space that is vital to container trade, the
Vancouver case demonstrates that these politics act in the federal and provincial 'spaces of engagement'. These spaces of engagement, alongside robust private investment raise the question as to which one of these forces was dominant in the reshaping of New Westminster’s central waterfront after the city stopped being a place of dependence for the region with the decline of its port.

A study by Hall (2012) situates New Westminster’s port as small, suburban and on the edge of the Fraser River. This river has long played a key role in the economic, urbanization and transportation patterns in Western Canada. Hall (2012) traces how industrial and urban land uses connected, disconnected and re-connected to the Fraser River. Those processes are examined by concepts of governance, cargo transportation, industrial use, crossing, and redevelopment. New Westminster is located at the last point where the river could be crossed in a single boat ride. The city itself, today a suburb of Greater Vancouver, was once an important commercial center with an industrial river port, which declined with containerization and deindustrialization. The former port site has been under redevelopment for over 20 years through the formation of new land uses, such as residential, recreational, hospitality as well as a maritime museum. Marine transportation and industrial land uses along the Fraser River continue to face competition from urban land uses and related property developments.

2.3. Summary

The literature indicates that relationships between waterfronts and urban areas are comprised of a complex array of trajectories: global, local, economic, social, technological, governmental and communal. Based on this literature review I was able to draw a few hypotheses that are examined in my thesis. The next section explains my mixed method approach which consisted of descriptive statistical analysis of a time series database of business establishments, content analysis of planning and archival documents as well as semi-structured interviews. In summary, the following hypotheses are examined through these different methods:
Hypothesis 1 on the decreasing rent prices which create opportunities for the opening of other businesses was examined mostly by the statistical analysis and to some degree the interviews. The four dimensions of change: opening rate, closing rate, turnover rate and total net change (Essletzbichler, 2004) assisted me to evaluate the decline periods in the different sectors. Through the (over-) representation of sectors (Sassen, 1990) indicator, I evaluated businesses which were established during the decline and transition periods. Different interviewees provided data on changing occupation rates, rent prices and the emergence of specific sub-sectors.

Hypothesis 2 on the effect of the low rents’ on ‘start up’ businesses and their potential positive influence on the local economy was evaluated by the interviews and the content analysis. The interviewees communicated about the influence of specific businesses on the local economy during the transition period. Economic reports and city plans aided me to understand whether specific businesses had positive effects on the local economic climate.

Hypothesis 3 on the industrial related business’s negative effect during the transition period was addressed by the interviews. The interviewees elaborated on the transition period in the commercial strip and the possible effect specific businesses had on changes to the waterfront.

Hypothesis 4 on the port-city symbiosis during the industrial era relied on the statistical analysis and the oral histories. The statistics helped me to examine correlations between businesses on the waterfront and the adjacent commercial strip, using indicators of sectors’ representation and growth (Sassen, 1990). The findings chapter is partially guided by Hoyle’s (2000) port-city interface model as I believe that New Westminster’s port followed most of the stages presented in this linear model. The testimonies of the oral histories revealed more pieces of the transformation puzzle.

Hypothesis 5 about the transformative impact of urban waterfronts on their nearby urban areas was examined using all three research methods. By analyzing the database, I was able to identify changes in the economic patterns in the strip. The
interviews and content analysis aided me to draw a more detailed picture about the connection between these two areas and assisted me to evaluate the complexities and ambiguities that characterize processes of waterfront change as explained in the fixity and flow perspective (Desfor et al., 2010).
Chapter 3. Methodology

Understanding the mutual influences of the central waterfront and the commercial strip in New Westminster over the years is a complex and layered task. Therefore, the research data collection and analysis for this project were performed using a mixed-method approach. This approach includes three main streams: descriptive statistical analysis of a time series database of business establishments, content analysis of planning and archival documents as well as semi-structured interviews.

The analysis process was a triangulation among the three sources of data. Triangulation is the use of several different research methods to examine the same finding or a specific concept (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002). This is a common approach to validate the findings and to test them from different angels (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002; Sun, Kay & Chew, 2009). In the analysis process and the triangulation process I was influenced by Sun et al. (2009) who studied Hong Kong’s department stores industry. In the research the authors examined trends and concepts in the department stores industry from different angels to validate findings and present a rich perspective of the changes of this industry. Moreover, through the entire analysis process a timeline of events, decisions and developments was built. The analysis started with an initial analysis of the businesses’ database and after that continued to the documents, archival data and interview analysis. During the triangulation process, when the coding and memoing process results pointed in the same direction and correlated with the statistical analysis, I knew that I had reached a level of saturation (see Sun et al., 2009). The three methods and their data collection processes are elaborated in greater detail in the following chapter.
3.1. Statistical analysis of time series database

Historical time series data plays a key role in this study. In order to trace the land use changes in New Westminster’s central waterfront and the adjacent commercial strip, the businesses and land uses which existed in each one of the areas during the study time frame were examined. This data was extracted from an extensive business establishments database for New Westminster’s waterfront, from 1945 to 2014. The data is at the tract (Parcel) level, which basically means what types of businesses were in each parcel at any given year as seen in Figure 3.1. This data was collected through public business directories and archival research. However, due to incomplete archival data, the accuracy of individual parcel data of each establishment cannot be guaranteed.

![Parcel level map of the study area](image)

Figure 3.1. Parcel level map of the study area

In the data collection process, initially, the data for my two chosen areas (the central waterfront and the adjacent commercial strip) were separated out from the large database according to the specific parcels of each area. Secondly, the parcel data was transformed into the establishment data in each one of the areas. This means that all of the small parcels were combined in each one of the areas: 1- the commercial strip and 2- the central waterfront (see Figure 3.1). Thirdly, the businesses/uses were coded into the following categories: Industrial and Transportation, Retail, Personal services, Accommodation and Restaurant, Residential, Institutional, Office and Professional, and Recreation (for complete list see Appendix A). In Excel, the businesses were counted for any given year, in order to evaluate changes and economic trends. Each establishment was coded only in one category in a given year.
3.2. Content Analysis

Content analysis consisted of evaluating a range of planning documents, land use plans, economic reports, and oral histories. Multiple online databases, libraries, and archives were visited in search of these documents. In the online search, words that are related to the research topic/question/location were entered, such as industrial, waterfront, core cargo handling area, port, Front St., Columbia St., economy, economic development, land use, revitalization, regeneration, and renewal. The majority of the documents were found in the City of New Westminster Public Library. Due to a large number of documents that were found, only the main plans and policies and the ones which were implemented were analyzed. The most important and influential documents were chosen in consultation with the interviewees. Due to the extremely large number of planning documents that were found, it was not possible to analyze and refer to all of them in the limited context of this research.

Another type of archival data, oral history summaries from RNWW (2015) were examined in order to gain perspective from people who worked on the waterfront and the downtown areas, at different periods of time. For this purpose, the purposive sampling technique was performed, as it is explained in the book *Fundamentals of social research* by Babbie and Benaquisto (2002, p.165-166). Each oral history’s summary starts with the occupation of the individual and their relation to the waterfront. Thus, this was the first filtering principle- to identify individuals whose occupation was related to my relevant areas. Furthermore, the principal investigators and other researchers in the RNWW project recommended the oral histories which are most relevant my project. Then, the summaries’ content was examined in order to choose the paragraphs that mention the urban change. In some cases, additional segments of the oral history audio files were transcribed in order to receive more information and take quotes for the analysis.

The analysis of those historical documents was done using NVivo software. In NVivo, I performed the focused coding and memoing process as it is explained in the book *Fundamentals of social research* by Babbie and Benaquisto (2002, p.380-392). The basic coding scheme includes concepts, which were described in the literature,
such as: phases (decline, transition, redevelopment), economic development, specific indicators and variables (vacancy rates, economic sectors), locations (central waterfront, commercial strip, Columbia St.), specific decades (1970s), and actors (municipal, regional, private).

The document analysis comprised of three stages. First, each document was examined for references/sections which are related to the examined areas. Word search was also performed with the following words: waterfront, cargo handling area, port, Front St., Columbia St., downtown, and city center. Second, through the word search specific sections/ paragraphs were highlighted. Third, years or other specific dates which can support or reject my findings from the database analysis were searched. Finally, paragraphs of the highlighted text where the central waterfront and the downtown area are mentioned together were coded with themes which relate to the economic and land use issues as explained above, in this section. One of the coding themes/guidelines that were used is the evolution of the port city interface model, such as the retreat from the waterfront phase (Hoyle, 2000).

3.3. Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to broaden the perspective of the change and receive concealed information that could not be gained from the first two methods, semi-structured interviews were conducted. This wide perspective was supported by interviewees from different disciplines which related to the two examined areas, such as a former Senior Planner for the City, the City’s CEO, a Real Estate Specialist, an Architect, a Landscape Architect and a director of the Downtown BIA. The interviewees were recruited through the content analysis process. While reviewing planning documents and related archival data, I was able to identify key individuals whose names were mentioned in the documents. After a potential interviewee had been identified, I looked for their contact details online or in the Yellow Pages. All of the potential interviewees were contacted by email. In this email, I presented myself as an Urban Studies student and provided a brief overview of the thesis and the way that the interview could contribute to my research.
The interviews took place between July 5 and August 25, 2015. They ranged in length from approximately 45 to 60 minutes. All respondents agreed to have the interviews audio recorded, allowing for transcription and a more in-depth analysis. They were transcribed almost verbatim, but with the omission of words such as 'um', 'uh', 'like', and so on. This both saved time in the transcription process and allowed for easier analysis. Moreover, all interviewees gave permission to use their real names and to attribute the quotes to their names.

The interviews were conducted after an initial analysis of the establishment’s database and content analysis. This initial analysis served as a background for the interviews and generated interview questions. The questions focused on specific events and processes, clarified issues as well as filled in knowledge gaps in those processes and the timeline. Some questions were devoted to understanding specific plans or projects. Through the interview, new findings were discovered and discussed with the interviewees. Three interviewees were contacted again through the analysis process in order to clarify specific issues. During and after the interviews, I analyzed the data by identifying patterns and themes. This analysis was done using a process of coding and memoing in the manner described by Babbie and Benaquisto (2002, p. 380-388). The analysis process was done in NVivo as well. It started with the same coding scheme that is elaborated on in Section 3.2 and evolved to include more codes and themes. The coding process helped me to identify the important themes such as periods of decline and growth, direct and indirect influences of the waterfront area on the strip, vacancy rates, retail activity and key factors in the revitalization process.

The research findings are presented in the next two chapters. Chapter 4 concentrates on the database’s statistical analysis and presents the general economic trends. Chapter 5 elaborates on the statistical analysis using the two other methods and presents the findings in chronological order. Chapter 5 also discusses the mutual relationships between the waterfront and downtown, alongside reflection of the different hypostases and relevant literature.
Chapter 4. Statistical Analysis

This section analyzes key indicators from the businesses database with respect to the relation between the two examined areas: the commercial strip and the central waterfront. The statistics in this section demonstrate how the major transformation of the central waterfront caused a period of decline and instability on the commercial strip. Initially, it is important to understand the background for the following statistical analysis. In the mid-20th century British Columbia’s economy flourished and was dominated by the export of two main sectors: forest products and minerals. Both of these sectors flourished in BC after the Second World War due to ties with the US; lumber to the expanded housing market, and paper for general office activity (Barnes et al., 1992). As stated by Noah (1992) the rapid industrial expansion in New Westminster was related to the industrial growth of the Lower Mainland and focused on wood products manufacturing. The height was in 1956 when manufacturing accounted for over half of the employment in the city (City of New Westminster Planning Dept., 1990). The central waterfront included the city’s port (which opened in 1929) and its related cargo areas.

The waterfront’s post-industrial transformation included the decline of industrial activities during the 1970s which was followed by the closing of the city’s port in 1981 and subsequently its related industrial operations. After the industrial decline, the western part of the central waterfront transformed into a mixed use community with a public market as the main economic anchor (opened in 1986). This market experienced heydays as well as tough periods; it peaked in 1994 in terms of number of businesses, closed down in 2008 and reopened in 2011. This chapter examines the changes on the waterfront as a point of reference and its analysis is concentrated specifically on the commercial strip, where there was a larger number of businesses. Chapter 5 will further elaborate the overall economic trend through a mixed-methods approach.
4.1. Mutual influences and compensations

Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 present the total number of establishments by sector, on the central waterfront and the commercial strip, respectively. This forms the basis of evaluation of economic trends in this thesis (see Hemphill, et al., 2004). Examination of the total number of establishments in the two areas reveals that there is a clear correlation between the decline of industry in the waterfront area (since the mid-1970s) and overall decline in the commercial strip (Figure 4.3). However, I observe a few notable periods of compensation, which suggests that when one area was in decline, the other showed growth and vice versa. For example, between the years 1993 and 1995, while the number of establishments on the waterfront increased by 15.5 percent, the number of establishments on the commercial strip decreased by 11 percent. Between 2007 and 2010, the number of establishments decreased by 45 percent on the waterfront, and increased by 25 percent on the commercial strip. These differences in number of establishments between 2007 and 2010 can be explained by the waterfront’s Quay Public Market closing, as well as improvements to the safety and crime issues in the downtown area. The crime and lack of safety issues are further elaborated on in section 5.4. It appears that in certain periods these two areas were basically competing for the same businesses which were looking for space to establish or expand. Put another way, considering the fact that urban waterfront redevelopments depend on cities’ local economies (Desfor et al. (2010), I suggest that there is a zero-sum game between the central waterfront and the commercial strip during phases of decline. Burayidi’s (2013) theory on the decrease in demand for commercial space during recessionary periods and the migration of businesses to the near periphery supports my suggestion.

In the retail sector I identify two notable periods (Figure 4.4): in 1986, both areas have 32 retail establishments each. Between 1986 and 1994, while the number of retail establishments on the waterfront increased by 65 percent to 53 establishments, the number of establishments on the commercial strip decreased by 35 percent to 21 establishments. This trend could be explained by the growth and success of the Quay Public Market in its first years, while at the same time the crime and drug dealing issues
emerged in the downtown area, as elaborated on in section 5.2. After that period of time, between 1995 and 1999, I see an opposite trend. While the number of retail establishments on the waterfront decreased by 29 percent, the number of retail establishments on the commercial strip increased by 42 percent. This trend can be explained by the overall decline in the Public Market as well as the decline in the downtown's rent prices. This decline was influenced by crime and drug dealing issues, which are further elaborated on in section 5.2. Most of the businesses which opened during that time period were second-hand, antiques, and bridal shops, in accordance with the specialty retail trend which is described in section 5.2. After 2002, both areas experience a decline in retail establishments, although most recently there has been a small increase in the waterfront area with the reopening of the River Market.
Figure 4.1  Total number of establishments in New Westminster’s Central Waterfront 1945-2014 (Various sectors)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. This chart shows the decline of the industrial and transportation uses on the central waterfront until the closure of the port in 1981 and subsequently its related cargo areas. The jump in 1986 is the opening of the Quay Public Market - the economic anchor of the redeveloped waterfront.
Figure 4.2. Total number of establishments in New Westminster's Commercial Strip 1945-2014 (Various sectors)
Source: author's analysis of RNWW, 2015. This chart demonstrates a clear relationship between the decline of industry in the waterfront area (since the mid-1970s) and overall decline in the commercial strip, especially in the office and professional sector.
Figure 4.3. **Total number of establishments in New Westminster’s waterfront and Commercial Strip 1945-2014 (Various sectors)**

Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. This chart shows two notable periods when change in the total number of businesses in the central waterfront and the commercial strip compensated for each other: 1993-1995 and 2007-2010.

Figure 4.4. **Total number of retail establishments in New Westminster’s waterfront and Commercial Strip 1945-2014**

Source: author's analysis of RNWW, 2015 This chart shows two notable periods when changes in the number of retail businesses in the central waterfront and the commercial strip compensated for each other: 1986-1994 and 1995-1999.
4.2. Dimensions of Change

The following analysis presents four indicators which are different dimensions of the urban economic change in this thesis: opening rate, closing rate, turnover rate and net total change (Figure 4.5). As described by Essletzbichler (2004) the opening rate is calculated as the number of new establishments entering the market, divided by the total number of establishments in the market in a given year, and it represents the rate of businesses created. In the context of this thesis, the 'market' is one of the examined urban areas - the central waterfront or the commercial strip. The closing rate is calculated as the number of establishments exiting the market (they did not appear in the database in the following year), divided by the total number of establishments in the market in a given year. This represents the rate of businesses closing. Net total change is calculated as the number of new establishments entering the market, in a given year, minus the number of establishments exiting the market in a given year, this calculation is divided by the total number of establishments. The net total change represents the rate of change in total establishments between a specific year and the following year.

Turnover rate is calculated as the average number of establishments entering and exiting the market divided by the total number of establishments in the market in a given year. It represents the pace that establishments are opening or closing in the market in a given year. High turnover rates are an indication of more instability in the market, businesses are opening and closing at a fast pace, businesses endure for a relatively shorter period of time. The low turnover rate is an indication of a more stable economy, businesses last for a longer period of time (Essletzbichler, 2004). These four dimensions of change were examined in all of the sectors in each one of the areas (the waterfront and the strip). Yet, only the salient sectors and the indicators with significant results are elaborated on here. In some cases, the small sample size was not enough to generate meaningful findings.
4.2.1. Dimensions of Change in the Commercial Strip

This section evaluates the four dimensions of change only within the boundaries of the commercial strip (see section 3.1). From this point forward, all finding presented in this section will pertain to the strip, unless indicated otherwise. As Figure 4.6 demonstrates, in the years when the port and industrial areas were active on the waterfront, during the 1950s until the 1970s, the turnover rates were fairly low and below the average. However, after the closing of the waterfront's port and industrial areas, there was a reverse trend from the early 1980s until the early 2000s. Those were years of instability resulting in above average turn-over rates. The overall turnover rate in the entire examined period is clearly growing.

The net total change of establishments demonstrates a similar trend with respect to change in industrial activities on the waterfront (Figure 4.7). There is a small net decline in rate of change from the mid-1940s until the mid-1970s. However, from the mid-1970s onwards, influenced by the weakening of the port industrial activities, I observe a volatile trend, with more extreme periods of growth and decline. Moreover, even though the trend line is fairly flat for the entire period examined, the dispersion in the total change is increasing. After the examination of the coefficient of variation did not yield any significant results, I used the variance to evaluate the increase. The increase in net total change is also noted in the variance calculation, which measures how far the values of the net change are spread out from the mean. Between the years 1976 and 2014 the variance is 12 fold higher (0.172) compared to the 1945-1975 period (when it was 0.021). To reiterate, from the mid-1970s there were more years with either extreme growth or extreme decline which is another indicator of economic instability. Another side of this economic instability period is that years with extreme decline are followed by years with extreme growth. For example, 1979 is a year with an extreme decline at a rate of -0.677 (when many of the port facilities closed) followed by a year with an extreme growth rate of 0.59 in 1980. In the year 2001 where an extreme rate of decline of -1.23 as well as a high closing rate (when the crime and drug dealing issues were at the peak in the downtown area - see section 5.3) is followed by a year with an extreme growth rate of 1.27 and a high opening rate in 2002. The extreme rates of growth and
decline may potentially be explained by various businesses closing and thus, freeing up spaces for others.

To examine the relationship between turnover rates and periods of net total change each indicator is divided into distinctive periods. The net total change rate is divided into the following periods: Extreme Growth (X > 0.5), Growth (0.5 > X > 0.1), Flat (0.1 > X > -0.1), Decline (-0.1 > X > -0.5), and Extreme Decline (X < -0.5). The turnover rate is divided into the following periods: Very High (X > 1), High (1 > X > 0.5), Medium (0.5 > X > 0.25), and low (X < 0.25) (see Table 4.1). I observe that periods that are characterized with high and very high turnover rates are mostly also periods of decline/growth and extreme decline/growth. Moreover, periods that are characterized with medium and low turnover rates are periods in which the net total change is flat. A few of the exceptions to this observation are specific years that followed years of decline, in accordance with the volatile trend which was described earlier. For example, the year 2002, which is characterized by extreme growth, very high turnover rates and high opening rates, followed the year 2001 which is characterized with extreme decline, high turnover, and high closing rates.

**Table 4.1. Correlation between periods of Net Total Change and turnover in the Commercial Strip**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net Total Change</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Periods that are characterized by high and very high turnover rates are mostly also periods of decline/growth or extreme decline/growth. Periods that are characterized with medium and low turnover rates are more typically periods in which the net total change is flat.

The persistence of firms is an important indicator for a healthy economy in cities and regions (Agarwal, 1997; Essletzbichler, 2004). Table 4.2 presents the average age of businesses which opened in two distinct time periods¹. In general, businesses on the strip, in most sectors, were longer-lived prior to 1980 when industrial establishments were active on the waterfront.

### Table 4.2. Average duration of establishments which opened in two distinct time periods in the Commercial Strip (In years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial and Transportation</td>
<td>7.21</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and professional</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>4.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal services</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>5.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Restaurant</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>6.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>9.33</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>10.67</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All sectors</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>4.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. Businesses on the strip, in most sectors, were longer-lived prior to 1980 when industrial establishments were active on the waterfront.

By examining the retail sector, evidence suggests that there is a direct relation between the waterfront’s industry and the retail activities on the strip. Industrial facilities were active on the waterfront prior to the 1980s, and contributed to lowered retail turnover rates in the commercial strip (Figure 4.8). Similar to the overall trend, during the mid-1940s until the mid-1970s retail net change rates were fairly flat and around the

¹ For businesses which opened before 1980 and were still active after 1980, the average age was calculated until 1980 (end of the calculation period). The commencing of calculation periods are 1946 and 1981.
average (-0.001). From the mid-1970s onwards, I observe a volatile trend with more extreme periods of growth and decline. The net total change rate becomes much more dispersed from the mid-1970s, regardless of the flat overall trend (Figure 4.9). The overall variable retail turnover trend increased during the examined period. In addition, the average duration of retail establishments before 1980 is almost double (8.5 years) than after 1981 (4.87 years). These findings imply that many of the retail establishments on the commercial strip were interrelated with industrial activity on the waterfront and the consumers who used to work in the industry in the past. This is because the average could be influenced by a minority, not necessarily a majority of businesses.

The turnover rates of the personal service sector are presented in Figure 4.10. Evidently, this demonstrates that similar to the retail sector, before 1980 the turnover rates are lower than those after 1980. The higher turnover rates after the 1970s are not only because of the changing mix of activities within the same sector, they become much more volatile. The average duration of personal services establishments before 1980 is 44 percent higher (8.03 years) than after 1981 (5.56 years). This high percent shows how the persistence of firms in this sector was also related to the port activities and employees. Figure 4.11 shows the turnover rates of the office and professional sector on the commercial strip. The data demonstrates that this sector was characterized with a fairly volatile trend throughout the examination period and a slightly reduced overall trend line. During the 1960s, when the port and its related activities were at their peak, the turnover rates are closer to the average rather than other periods. The average duration of office and professionals before 1980 is only slightly longer (5.26 years) than after 1981 (4.87 years). These findings partially imply that the office and professional sector was related to the industrial activities on the waterfront and was more stable during the industrial era. In Chapter 5, I show that specific sub-sectors were more related to the port activities than others. Overall, this sector was apparently never stable and well established in the city.
4.2.2. Dimensions of Change in the Central Waterfront

Examination of the dimensions of change in the central waterfront reveals more pieces of the transformation puzzle. As indicated in Figures 4.12-4.14, in comparison to the commercial strip, the turnover and net total change rates on the central waterfront are fairly low and moderate during the examined period. The dispersion is very narrow in both dimensions of change. There is a minor upward turnover trend, much less dramatic and volatile than that seen on the commercial strip. The opening (1986), closing (2008) and reopening (2011) of the Quay Public Market are exceptions to the trend. After the removal of the industry and the opening of the Quay Public Market, with mostly retail businesses, I view moderate volatility.

When analyzing the turnover and net total change rates in the retail sector on the waterfront, I observe a more volatile trend than the general trend on the waterfront (Figures 4.15-4.16). The turnover rate is definitely increasing and the net total change is slightly decreasing. These are evidence of the ongoing challenges of the Quay Public Market, which are elaborated on further in Chapter 5.

4.3. Concluding remarks

The statistics presented in this chapter clearly demonstrate how the port and the industrial activities on the central waterfront contributed to the stability of the overall economy as well as to the persistence of firms on the commercial strip. With the decline of the industrial activity on the waterfront, I observe a more volatile trend in turnover and net change in the commercial strip. In some cases and sectors, there is also a more dispersed turnover trend. This volatility confirms the postmodern identity in New Westminster’s urban waterfront and the expression of ongoing cycles of capital accumulation and loss (Norcliffe, et al., 1996). Furthermore, these volatile trends are also an example of the ‘fixities’ that characterize waterfront developments and concerned as much with a constant turnover as are the ‘flows’ of waterfronts that are influenced by structure and paralysis (Desfor et al., 2010). In the next chapter, this
statistical analysis is further elaborated on alongside other methods, while explaining the changing relationships between the central waterfront and the commercial strip.
Figure 4.5. Four dimensions of change in the commercial strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. This chart shows the increasing economic instability (higher opening and closing rates) of the commercial strip due to the removal of industry from the central waterfront and downtown’s overall decline. From the mid-1970s there were more years with either extreme growth or extreme decline (net total change) as well as years with high turnover rates.
Figure 4.6. **Turnover rates in the Commercial Strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)**
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The removal of industry from the central waterfront is expressed in higher turnover rates in the strip. Business were opening and closing in a faster pace.

Figure 4.7. **Net Total Change rates in the Commercial Strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)**
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. This chart shows the increased dispersion of total net change (hence increasing economic instability) of the commercial strip due to the removal of industry from the central waterfront. From the mid-1970s there were more years with either extreme growth or extreme decline.
Figure 4.8. Turnover rates of the Retail sector in the Commercial Strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The removal of industry from the central waterfront is expressed in higher retail turnover rates in the strip. Shops were opening and closing in a faster pace after the mid-1970s.

Figure 4.9. Net Total Change rates of the Retail sector in the Commercial Strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. This chart shows the instability of the retail sector in the commercial strip due to the removal of industry from the central waterfront. From the mid-1970s there were more years with either extreme growth or extreme decline.
Figure 4.10. Turnover rates of the Personal Services sector in the Commercial Strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The removal of industry from the central waterfront expressed in higher personal services turnover rates in the strip. Personal services businesses were opening and closing in a faster pace after the mid-1970s.

Figure 4.11. Turnover rates of the Office and Professional sector in the Commercial Strip 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The office and professional sector was characterized with a fairly volatile trend throughout the examination period. This sector was apparently never stable and well established in the city.
The net change turnover rates on the central waterfront are fairly low and moderate during the examined period, except for the opening (1986), closing (2008) and reopening (2011) of the Quay Public Market.
The turnover rates on the central waterfront were fairly low and moderate during the examined period, except for the opening of the Quay Public Market in 1986.

Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015.

Figure 4.13. Turnover rates in the Waterfront 1946-2013 (in percentage)

Figure 4.14. Net Total Change in the Waterfront 1946-2013 (in percentage)

Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The net change rates on the central waterfront were fairly low and moderate during the examined period, except for the opening of the Quay Public Market in 1986.
Figure 4.15. Turnover rates of the Retail sector in the Waterfront 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The retail turnover rate trend has been increasing with the opening of the Quay Public Market. After 1986 there is more volatility which reflects the challenges that the market was facing.

Figure 4.16. Net Total Change of the Retail sector in the Waterfront 1946-2013 (in percentage)
Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015. The retail net change rate trend is slightly decreasing. The exceptions to this trend are the opening, closing and reopening of the Quay Public Market.
Chapter 5. Findings

This section describes the economic and land use changes that occurred on the central waterfront of New Westminster, their influence, and their connection to changes on the commercial strip. The story is told in a narrative form and in chronological order. In addition, this chapter adds qualitative layers of information to the ongoing economic instability and the evaluation of the dimensions of change that were introduced in Chapter 4.

5.1. The 1970s

This decade was characterized by the gradual decline of port activities on the central waterfront. This decline had started by the early 1970s due to technological changes and the establishment of new port facilities elsewhere in the region. On the Columbia Street commercial strip, the commercial and entertainment center for the Fraser Valley in the 1950s, the decline started earlier, (in the late 1950s) due to the development of Uptown New Westminster and emerging competition from suburban shopping malls. The removal of the port industries and a decrease in the number of port employees contributed further to the decline of the commercial strip. At the end of the 1970s, the Provincial Government and the City of New Westminster established a development corporation with a unique mandate and powers to revitalize the waterfront and downtown areas, and to strengthen the connection between the two.

As reported by Noah (1992), the city’s port facilities were adversely affected by a combination of technological changes in the vessel sizes and loading techniques, the age and topography of the waterfront at the port’s location along the Fraser River, as
well as modifications in transportation modes (see Bird, 1963; Rodrigue et al., 2013). The new maritime techniques required large areas of flat, accessible land in order for them to be successful. This requirement was especially destructive to New Westminster because the city is characterized by numerous steep hills with limited flat land near the river (see Figure 5.1). The opening of the Fraser Surrey Docks in 1963, on the south side of the river, underlined the city’s decreasing relevance as a port. Fraser Surrey Docks is a sixty-nine-hectare facility situated in the municipalities of both Surrey and Delta. From the beginning, it was equipped with the newest technology, and was also bigger and better suited for larger vessels, similar to the ‘Any-Port Model’ suggested by Bird (1963).

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 5.1. The central waterfront in its industrial heydays- 1960**
Source: New Westminster Archives, IHP7159. Pacific Coast Terminals (the port) is on the bottom right side. The main core cargo handling areas are further up the Fraser River.

The number of industrial business establishments in the central waterfront decreased by 83 percent over 15 years - from 12 establishments in 1967 to only 2 in 1982 (see Figure 4.1.). Moreover, the majority of the industrial businesses were
occupying very large (and in some cases, multiple) lots; thus their removal resulted in massive empty tracts of land (see Desfor et al., 2010; Marshall, 2004; Norcliffe et al., 1996). Some of the major establishments that closed down in the 1970s were: Overseas Transport Dock, CPR Freight Sheds, Canadian Government Public Works Wharf, and the Pacific Coast Terminals Warehouse.

On the commercial strip, the overall establishment count reached its peak in the mid-1950s and started to decline in the early 1960s, until the lowest point in 1980. The interviewees, oral history narrators and RNWW (2015) all reported that the Columbia commercial strip had significant retail and business diversity which provided all of the convenience goods and services for the residents in New Westminster as well as for port employees. These businesses included grocery stores, department stores, restaurants and bars, clothing stores, mechanical equipment and supplies, banking and commerce services as well as entertainment institutions such as theaters and cabarets (RNWW, 2015). The variety of establishments shows that Columbia Street matches the definition of an inner city commercial strip that provides convenience goods and services at the basic level (Berry, 1959).

The retail establishments reached their peak at the end of the 1940s when the street was a main shopping center for the city as well as for the Fraser Valley (see Figure 5.2). Therefore, during the expanding and port-city and modern industrial port-city stages (Hoyle, 2000), the Columbia strip functioned as an inner city strip (Berry, 1959) while providing many necessities for the people living and working in New Westminster. By 1980, two-thirds of the establishments had closed and the general state of the commercial strip, coupled with the volume of automobile traffic and the shopping patterns, all indicated that the downtown core was dissolving.
“The downtown had lost its anchors…both Woodwards and Eatons [large department stores] left Columbia Street and moved uptown, so the street also lost its anchors,” said Lisa Spitale, New Westminster's current CEO and former Director of Planning. Other interviewees and Noah (1992) claim that the retail decline in the commercial strip began with the development of Uptown New Westminster, where Woodwards was the main anchor, and regional development of suburban shopping malls provided free and convenient parking. The two story, massive, concrete parking ramp, which was built on Front Street in the late 1950s and early 1960s was unable to attract customers to the commercial strip. Besides the failure to attract more shoppers, the parkade changed the streetscape of Front Street. The parkade opening has deepened the physical and visual barrier between the commercial strip and the waterfront. This barrier, alongside changes in maritime technology and the deindustrialization of New Westminster’s port, indicate the beginning of the waterfront stage as explained by Hoyle (2000).
Another indicator of the downtown’s commercial and economic deterioration is the total number of automobiles parked on the Front St. parking ramp (Figure 5.3). The number of cars parked in the parkade provides an estimation of the volume of retail and office employment occurring in the downtown area (Noah, 1992). The results show that during the late 1960s, the parkade reached a peak in the number of cars parked and during the early 1970s, it experienced a steady decline. Tom Corsie, the former VP of property development at the Fraser River Port Authority and current VP of Real Estate at Port Metro Vancouver, states that the office staff of the port, the banks and other office employees downtown, were parking daily in the parkade. This drop indicates that during the early 1970s, the commercial strip struggled to attract customers, capital, and office employees thus reducing its ability to remain viable. This drop correlates to the decline of the office sector downtown which is explained further in this chapter.

![Figure 5.3. Total annual parking on Front St. Parkade 1965-1975](image)

According to Noah (1992), the decline in the vitality of the commercial strip was in tandem with its physical deterioration. The physical worsening of both Columbia and Front streets generated a negative impression of the downtown as a derelict commercial area which diminished its regional attractiveness and reduced the flow of customers and
capital. The most blighted area was along Front St. near the rail and waterfront intersection. The streetscape of Columbia St. experienced some cosmetic upgrading during the 1970s (Noah, 1992). However, they were minor and did not yield a significant change. By the late 1970s, the majority of the large department stores and motion picture theaters had closed on the strip, leaving massive empty buildings in the area. “The Downtown vacancy rate increased from 9.4 percent in 1973 to 22.8 percent in 1983, while the retailing sector declined from 38.0 percent of the floor space to only 16.6 percent over the same period” (Noah, 1992, p.215).

The office and professional sector reached its peak in the mid-1960s and was reduced by half by 1980. A closer examination of RNWW data (2015) demonstrates that the majority of the businesses that closed during the 1970s were from the finance and insurance services sub-sector. I learned from Corsie that many of the finance and insurance services were directly related to the industry on the Fraser River. Corsie states that Columbia St. had many banks in the 1960s and 1970s and that they closed down gradually: “they were bankers negotiating less commercial loans, it was moving elsewhere [the industry and the banking]”. Taken together, Corsie’s statement and the statistical analysis confirm the economic symbiosis theory between ports and their adjacent urban areas following the development of special mercantile businesses such as financing, insurance trade, arranging transition for cargoes and managing shipping services, during the 1940s and 1950s (Hoyle, 1989; Hoyle, 2000; Norcliffe et al., 1996).

Other establishments on the strip had a direct relation to the port activities such as Evergreen Mechanical Mill Engineering Ltd., G & M Derrick Services Dredging, Garrett Log Service, Hagen B Meat & Grocery & Ship Supplies, Thuveson Tugboat Co., Toronto Dominion (storage), Touche Ross & Co. Storage, the Wool Mill, and Wright Ltd. Warehouse. The number of industrial business establishments on the commercial strip decreased by 72 percent from 11 in 1967 to only 3 in 1980 (RNWW, 2015). These results affirm my fourth hypothesis on the port-city symbiosis during the industrial era in New Westminster (as explained by Hayuth, 1982; Hoyle 1989). In addition, these closures should be read as evidence for the volume of the retreat from the waterfront phase (Hoyle, 2000) in the city, and its effect on the downtown area.
The removal of the major employment anchors of the city was also reflected in a large loss of population similar to the processes described by Friedrichs (1993). I have learned from the participants that many of the people who worked on the industrial waterfront stayed in the region but left the city as the port and its related industrial areas shut down. As indicated in Figure 5.4., after decades of population growth the city experienced a sharp decline in the 1970’s of 11.2 percent, and only recovered at the beginning of the 1990s. This sharp decrease of the population becomes even more dramatic when one considers that during the 1970s Metro Vancouver's population increased by 17.16 percent and BC's population increased by 25.6 percent (Census of Canada, multiple years).

![Figure 5.4. The City of New Westminster- total population 1941-2011](image)

Source: Census of Canada, multiple years (The year 1946 is an estimate).

With the decline and aging of the commercial strip since the beginning of the 1970s, a series of revitalizations, renewal and beautification plans were drafted every year or so, in order to improve the downtown area. Many of those plans did not see the light of day; others were only partly implemented. One of the most influential plans and actions about New Westminster’s downtown, central waterfront and the connection between the two was the Livable Region Plan (1975). This regional plan suggested the
development of Regional Town Centres, or "downtowns", in Metro Vancouver's suburban municipalities. These nodal developments were planned to be built as high density mixed use developments of residential, offices, retail and recreational uses for the local communities across the region. In 1975, New Westminster's downtown and central waterfront area received the designation of the official town center (Greater Vancouver Regional District, 1975).

As reported by Mikicich (1990), a Joint Review Committee was established to formulate an "Action Program" for building New Westminster as a Regional Town Centre. The Committee was comprised of representatives from the City of New Westminster, the GVRD, and the British Columbia Development Corporation (BCDC). The Committee's Action Program Report was presented to City Council and the GVRD Board for their consideration in September 1977. The report advances initial policies and suggests that they will be adopted in an Official Community Plan. These are the main policies from the report (Joint Review Committee, 1977 as cited in Mikicich, 1990):

- Revitalization of Columbia Street as a principal shopping district;
- Providing a connection between uptown and downtown;
- Making downtown a place for people;
- Integrating housing into the downtown;
- Improving access to the downtown;
- Opening up the downtown to the river.

For the intent of this research, the most significant initial suggestion was for the connection of the downtown area to the Fraser River for the purpose of building a vibrant regional town center.

The Joint Review Committee identified three elements of the Action Program as necessary for a Town Centre development: an Official Community Plan for Downtown New Westminster; an improved development approval process; and a "vehicle" for stimulating development. The first element, the Community Plan for Downtown New Westminster, was adopted by City Council in 1978. As described by Mikicich (1990) the plan identifies a number of elements that are to act as "catalysts" in the redevelopment process and the formulation of a regional town center. The salient components are the establishment of institutional "anchors" (Douglas College and the Provincial Court of
British Columbia, which are beyond the borders of this research), development of a rapid transit system, and revitalization of the waterfront. The second element of the action program was a proposed ten-step development approval process, based on an obligatory agreement between developers and the City. The third and last element was the establishment of a public development company to implement the Downtown Plan and the waterfront revitalization, as well as overseeing the development process. In 1977, the development company was formed with the name The First Capital City Development Corporation (FCCDC).

The FCCDC was established as a joint partnership between the British Columbia Development Corporation (BCDC) and the City of New Westminster as a crown corporation to promote the redevelopment of the downtown and waterfront areas (Noah, 1992). This challenge of the waterfront redevelopment as a part of revitalizing the adjacent downtown area (Bruttomesso, 2004; Desfor et al., 2010; Marshall, 2004) is a major focus of this paper. In the next sections, I explore to what degree the FCCDC’s aspiration (to improve the downtown by revitalizing the waterfront) was successful. Under the New Westminster Redevelopment Act (1979) the FCCDC was given broad and unique development powers over properties in the Downtown and waterfront areas, including the power to expropriate (Mikicich, 1990). “According to the terms of the Provincial enabling legislation, and FCCDC’s Agreement with the City - FCCDC was given the mandate to assemble land in the designated Downtown Plan area; to service, subdivide and market that land; to coordinate redevelopment; and to construct key public improvements” (Mikicich, 1990, p.127). As a part of the Action Program, in 1978 BCDC announced that it had acquired the option to purchase the waterfront lands from Pacific Coast Terminals (PCT) Ltd., with the condition that the BCDC, through the FCCDC, would be able to rezone the land from industrial to commercial use (Mikicich, 1990). The next section elaborates on the FCCDC efforts to make the Action Program a reality, during the 1980s.
5.2. The 1980s

This decade signifies a major shift in the central waterfront from a mostly industrial area to a mixed-use residential community. This major change was facilitated by the First Capital City Development Company (FCCDC) that was responsible for the waterfront transformation as well as the revitalization of the downtown area. Despite the FCCDC’s broad mandate and powers, it faced challenges in waterfront redevelopment process and experienced delays. The resulting aftermath of closing the port facilities removed the main employment hub of the city, having ramifications on the downtown area. The Columbia Strip was in decline which worsened throughout the decade. The anticipated SkyTrain connection also arrived but brought undesirable circumstances such as drug dealing and crime to the already derelict commercial strip; and low rents were attracting specific retail and services sectors which had negative effects on the downtown.

New Westminster’s main port, Pacific Coast Terminals, closed in 1981, although the port had experienced a decline in trade volume since the early 1970s (Noah, 1992). “The port's inadequate size, poor access, and obsolete warehouses and machinery all made the city progressively less attractive to shipping companies and terminal operators” (Noah, 1992, p.212). As stated by Noah (1992) the City Council and the Harbour Commission were not willing to invest in the much needed and expensive port improvements and modernization. There had also been a slow separation forming between the port activities and the city. As the port activities gradually declined, it provided fewer jobs and the city received fewer taxes, similar to the urban decline processes described by Friedrichs (1993). The main core cargo handling areas closed in 1981 and the last cargo handling area closed in 1985 (RNWW, 2015).

After the shutdown of the port and the cargo facilities, the majority of the central waterfront was vacant for a number of years, until FCCDC got actively involved. This transition period, when the physical and economic connections between the central waterfront and the commercial strip were weakest, represents a prime example of the waterfront retreat stage (Hoyle, 2000). The vision of the FCCDC for the waterfront land
The Official Community Plan for redevelopment encompasses much more than the waterfront. It calls for a revitalization of the entire downtown core, but it depends on the waterfront redevelopment in an important respect...the [funding] process becomes self-supporting, with the neighborhood becoming increasingly prosperous, desirable and valuable. This major pedestrian access over the railway tracks to the commercial heart of the waterfront will attract a high volume of community activity. (The First Capital City Development Company Ltd., n.d.)

Despite the broad mandate and unique powers which were given to the FCCDC, the waterfront development process took a long time to execute and reach the building process. The empty waterfront lands with derelict and demolished buildings only worsened the image of the old and unpleasant industrial waterfront, as noted by several of the interviewees. During the redevelopment process, the FCCDC played a key role in attracting private investment to the downtown and waterfront areas. However, that was a challenging task due to the negative image of the old industrial waterfront and the resulting downtown deterioration as mentioned by several of the interviewees and Mikicich (1990). This evidence complements Burayidi’s (2001) perspective that a declining area not only repels businesses and customers but also private developers’ investment in the area. Therefore, it extended the transition phase and delayed the desirable redevelopment phase. Another major setback for the FCCDC vision to the waterfront redevelopment was an economic recession at the beginning of the 1980s (Mikicich, 1990). All of the FCCDC’s costs were to be covered from land sales and this plan did not work out due to the recession.

According to Mikicich (1990), in order to overcome the economic difficulties and the lagging development efforts, the FCCDC revised its development strategy. First, the waterfront site was broken into a series of smaller lots to attract a broader range of developers. Second, the FCCDC invested heavily in infrastructure, such as extensive soil preparation and improving the physical connection between the waterfront and the
downtown area. This connection included separated pedestrian and vehicular overpasses above the railway tracks. Third, the FCCDC initiated an innovative marketing scheme in order to enhance the new residential development and reduce the risk of building condominiums in suburban areas of Metro Vancouver; a phenomenon which was less common at that time. As evident in the RNWW data (2015), the first units were built in 1984 and it took eight years, until 1992, to complete the last residential units in the waterfront master plan, on the west side of the old port area.

The second component of the FCCDC revised development strategy is demonstrated by building an overpass between the waterfront and the downtown. Ken Cameron, a former New Westminster City Planner, mentioned that a future aspiration of an electrified rail system produced a rule to build overpasses 25 feet above the railway. Both of the connections, pedestrian and vehicular, had to be built before any residential construction or occupancy occurred in the Quay area (Figures 5.5 and 5.6). The fire and safety codes are the reason they “had to have the odd looking overpass” (Cameron, interview, 2015). As for the pedestrian overpass Ken Cameron says “when you look at the site... changes from port activities to urban uses, the barrier of the rail is a significant factor” and explains:

The feeling was that you got to have some kind of a pedestrian connection over the rail crossing to the market, in order to keep its viability and the city was creating what is known now as Hyack Square, near to old railway station. The city wanted it rooted there, there was no way of getting around the 25 feet. It made it completely inaccessible, and more than anything else not very pretty...you have to climb up and then down 25 feet from the ground.
Figure 5.5.  The pedestrian overpass between the downtown and the Quay
Source: taken by the author of this thesis, 2016

Figure 5.6.  The vehicular overpass between the downtown and the Quay
Source: taken by the author of this thesis, 2016
The heavy rail has been a major barrier between the waterfront and the rest of New Westminster with the growth of the industry in the mid-20th century. Even though the rail was built at the end of the 19th century, for a number of decades after that, the pedestrian connection between the central waterfront and downtown was strong, especially on Front St. The growth of industry and the terrain elevation of Columbia St. above Front St. further weakened the connection between these two areas. The separation that was vital during the industrial era became a major disadvantage for waterfront redevelopment. Both overpasses, the pedestrian and the vehicular, were not able to rejuvenate the old physical connection between the central waterfront and the downtown. As a result, the Quay development was destined to be an isolated community separated from the rest of the city as described by Featherstone (2007).

East of the Quay residential community, on the waterfront side of the pedestrian overpass, was the site for the commercial component of the waterfront development project. The development concept suggested a mix of retail, hotel and offices uses in an attempt to transform the waterfront into a real mixed-use community. But, as indicated by Mikicich (1990), it was challenging to market the commercial component of the waterfront to potential developers, due to the damaged image of the downtown area and an ongoing recession. As the project progressed, the retail section of the project evolved into a public market. With no developer interested in the market, the FCCDC took the lead on this project and hired an architectural firm to begin the design process. Later on, Laing Properties bought half of the project and purchased the adjacent commercial site for future development. In 1986, the Westminster Quay Public Market opened with 6,500 square meters of retail, restaurants and market space (Mikicich, 1990; RNWW, 2015).

The opening of the public market marked an important milestone in the redevelopment of the waterfront into a true mixed-use community and was seen as an opportunity to promote the development of the remaining commercial parcels (Mikicich, 1990). In 1988, the Westwater group built the 126-room hotel, Inn at Westminster Quay, and the first phase (5,575 m2) of the First Capital Place office complex opened in 1989 (Mikicich, 1990; RNWW, 2015). Mikicich (1990) states that two more office towers were planned to be built near the office complex for a total of 28,000 m² office space. However, these buildings were never built. Apparently due to the problematic office
market in the city combined with an overall decline since the 1970s and as noted in Chapter 4, this sector was never well established in the city. The “King Neptune crisis” was another event which impeded the development of the Westminster Quay.

The “King Neptune crisis” was a dispute between the FCCDC and restauranteur Denis Almas regarding the fate of its landmark- King Neptune restaurant, which was a famous and beloved culinary institution in the region (Mikicich, 1990). According to Mikicich (1990), and Ken Cameron, the dispute was regarding the need to relocate the restaurant due to the waterfront redevelopment plan. The restaurant location was in front of the Quay Public Market and it had been in the same location since 1967 (RNWW, 2015). For many years, this was the only restaurant on the central waterfront and served tourists from the region as well as waterfront workers. The restaurant was offered space as a key tenant in the new public market, but with a condition that it close its doors and relocate for two years during the market’s construction. Almas was not willing to relocate King Neptune to other sites which were offered by the FCCDC planning team. As the mediation failed, in 1982 the restaurant relocated to a storage site on Vancouver’s waterfront. In the end, the restaurant could have remained in its original location as a result of a sluggish progression in the waterfront redevelopment, which was delayed due to the recession and the challenges described above. As a result, there was a growing mistrust of the FCCDC within the local community in New Westminster, and the FCCDC’s image and credibility as a development agency were further damaged by this crisis.

The FCCDC, alongside the opening of the public market, was involved in more projects which opened in 1986. This year represents a key moment in terms of urban development in the city’s waterfront and downtown areas. The majority of these developments were associated with the 1986 World EXPOsition on Transportation and Communication (EXPO 86). EXPO 86 was a world’s fair held in Vancouver from May to October of that year. As a part of the fair’s regional infrastructure development, the first line of the SkyTrain rapid transit system, opened, connecting downtown Vancouver to the City of New Westminster. This line included two stations on downtown New Westminster’s Columbia St. on Fourth and Eighth streets.
Ken Cameron discussed the attempts to attract EXPO 86 visitors to New Westminster, using the new SkyTrain and to develop temporary exhibitions in order to enjoy the influx of tourists to the region. The main attraction was a car show in one of the old undemolished industrial warehouses, in the Quay area. The Warehouse belonged to the FCCDC and one of the owners had a car collection. This exhibition was more successful and lasted until the end of the fair. Cameron states that there was a feeling that some of the venues on the waterfront would stay and act as tourist attractions, but the car exhibition closed and the warehouse was demolished. This exhibition was the only time that the industrial heritage of the port facilities were used for other purposes after the removal of the industrial buildings. In other words, this temporary use of the warehouse was a single example of capitalizing on the rich industrial heritage (Norcliffe et al., 1996) of the New Westminster Quay. The only relic that remained from the EXPO was an old tug boat, which was utilized as a small playground for children where they could play with the buttons, gear sticks and wheel. This family attraction brought more families to the Quay Public Market which is located adjacent to the tug boat.

The Quay Public Market has experienced a few cycles of ups and downs since the official opening of its doors in 1986. My research shows mixed and even conflicting results from the business establishments and the interviews, regarding the first few years of its operation. The RNWW data (2015) indicates that the first decade of the Quay Public Market was fairly successful with an increase from 47 businesses in 1986 to a peak of 84 businesses in 1994 (see Appendix B). Eric Pattison, a local architect and the Quay resident who has been working on projects in the city since 1992 supports this finding, by saying that he remembers the first few years of the market as successful ones. “In 1989 it was still in its heyday, it was full, we came down here every Saturday and it was packed with people, it was like Granville Island” (Pattison, interview, 2015).

On the other hand, Ken Cameron draws a different picture: “People came to the Quay and saw many empty spaces at the waterfront, the building were all gone, it was a big construction site… For a long time, you could not see nothing rather than dirt”. Moreover, the “King Neptune crisis” left “bad taste in people’s mouth” regarding the FCCDC and the new public market at the Quay. Indeed, people saw the market in a bad light when it opened to the public (Cameron, interview, 2015). The ongoing decline of the
downtown and rates of business closure rates on Columbia St. presented another hurdle to the success of the Quay Public Market.

Throughout the 1980s, many businesses continued to close on the commercial strip, especially in the retail sector. From 1986 to 1994, while the number of retail establishments on the waterfront increased by 65 percent from 32 to 53 establishments, the number of establishments in the commercial strip decreased by 35 percent from 32 to 21 establishments. Whereas the Quay Market experienced growth as noted above, the economic situation in the strip experienced challenges as elaborated in the following paragraphs. One can assume that a person who wants to open a new retail business in the city preferred to do so in the new building on the revitalized waterfront and not in the declining and unsafe downtown area. Terry Brine, who owned a shoe store, operating on the commercial strip for 70 years, says that the closing of the port had a major effect on his family business as well as other businesses: “It was too bad…we had a lot of business, a lot of workers from the waterfront, they were very loyal, good customers. It was a loss for sure” (Brine, oral history, 2014). This quote provides further evidence for the port city economic symbiosis.

Many of the businesses that closed their doors during the 1970s were related to the existing waterfront industrial and port activities, yet a specific business sub-sector which had ties with the industrial activities, was able to survive on the strip, and eventually influenced the strip’s urban character for two and a half decades. This sub-sector was comprised of beer parlours, pubs, taverns, dance clubs and cabarets. These businesses were directed at the seamen and longshoremen who were working on the waterfront and were seeking relaxation and enjoyment after a long hard working day at the port or a long period of open ocean sailing. Dean Johnson a former port longshoreman says “The young group of longshoremen went to the Russel… it was happy drinking… you work all day and you go to the pub for a beer. You got in there at 5 and before you know it was 9 o’clock” (Johnson, oral history, 2013). Two of these beer parlours were located on the main floor of hotels which were inhabited by men who worked in the industry on the Fraser River or in the lumber industry across BC. Lisa Spitale explains the effect of those businesses on the downtown area:
When the terminals closed down, the city lost its employment obviously, that was a big change. But its relationship to the bars was…we still had the bars. And we still had people coming to the downtown to drink. The problems were… in sort of the middle 1990s, the downtown was just a place that you partied. We had the cabarets, we had the taverns, and we had many police calls from all the bars and that's all it was. People came here to party, to get drunk, to have fights, to cause problems at 2 am and nothing else! No sense of community, absolutely no sense of ownership!

The comments from Spitale indicate that these distinct alcohol and entertainment-related businesses and their destructive ramifications on downtown safety and economic vitality, are similar to the occurrences that occurred in Windsor, Ontario (Lippert, 2007). Although there is a major difference in the origins of these alcohol and entertainment related businesses. In Windsor they were established as a result of an urban revitalization policy and to provide attractions for tourists, while in New Westminster they were associated with the port employee’s lifestyle. In other words, these alcohol-related businesses were indirectly influenced by the prior economic activities on the waterfront. Even though in terms of land use, the port-related businesses were no longer in existence along the waterfront, their circuitous effect was felt along the commercial strip. Many of these alcohol-related businesses were on the strip for a long time, but after many other businesses closed, they became dominant and began generating many negative consequences. This information supports hypothesis 3 on the industrial related businesses’ negative effect during the transition period. This specific sector which is indirectly related to the port activities, alongside its destructive influence on the downtown, provide examples of the “embeddedness of unseen and foundational forces” which shape urban waterfront change. (Desfor et al., 2010, p.11). Furthermore, it illuminates another side of the transition phase and explains how occurrences in this phase can delay anticipated revitalization goals.

Crime, drug dealing, lack of safety in public spaces and other negative impacts of rowdy beer parlours and cabarets worsened with the arrival of the SkyTrain in 1986. The SkyTrain was one of the core elements in the regional plan and community plan, and was expected to revitalize the downtown area and develop the area as a regional town center. The SkyTrain has two stations on Columbia St. at Eighth and Fourth streets. Tom Corsie speaks about the change that came with the SkyTrain transit system:
The SkyTrain opened in 1986 and shortly after that we saw a very significant change on Columbia St. When there was not industry there and the SkyTrain arrived. It seems to move a very undesirable element to Columbia St. area. Suddenly there was prostitution on the street. When we parked our cars on the municipal ramp on Front St., we saw people doing drug dealing on the hood of our cars. So, the area was starting to degrade quite badly, and there were many vacancies across Columbia St... Actually, Columbia St. was in a depression during that time, the 1980s and onwards...

Lisa Spitale elaborates on the harsh drug dealing issue that happened on the streets, continuing and even worsening during the 1990s, by saying that “the worst time for the downtown was between the years of 1997 to basically 2002. The bottom of it was around 1999-2000 with the so called Honduran crisis" (named after the origin of the drugs). This crime crisis was mostly because of the introduction of drugs such as Crack Cocaine and Crystal Meth, to the streets of Metro Vancouver near the end of the 1990s. This was the first time that these two illegal drugs were seen together on the streets of Metro Vancouver. Jazz Johal, CTV News’ reporter (as cited in CTV Television, 1998) explains the complexity of the drug crisis when reporting from the Downtown East Side in Vancouver:

For the past few months throughout greater Vancouver, police have been cracking down on the city's growing rock cocaine problem. Many of the dealers have been using the city’s public transit system, selling their drugs from one suburb to the next. Police say the vast majority are Honduran nationals claiming to be refugees, who begin dealing days after setting foot on Canadian soil.

As noted above, also later in the 1990s, the SkyTrain system helped facilitate drug dealing across the region, between the base in the Downtown East Side of Vancouver to the edge of the system in the City of Surrey. The SkyTrain stations in Metro Vancouver and their immediate environments became a hub for drug dealing.

It all came together at the same time... for us, it proliferated around the 8th St. SkyTrain station. At that time, we had a very busy drug dealing at 8th and Columbia. That was where the SkyTrain got its bad name as being part of the drug route. Because people were getting on and off for free, no one was checking. Certain SkyTrain stations became drug
magnets, and 8th St. station in New West was one of the worst ones...what we had here, was by virtue of our size... that just took over the downtown and we started getting complaints from seniors, business people just say: "that is destroying our business, our customers are too scared to come and shop downtown or go to the dentist downtown or anything downtown". Seniors were feeling issues of personal safety because of the way they confronted by drug dealers...That was the worst time for the downtown. (Spitale, Interview, 2015)

The mayor at that time, Helen Sparkes (as cited in Sarti, 1998) said, "The situation is becoming unbearable in the downtown area...The drug dealers [are acting as if they] own the streets." The next quotation from Tom Corsie explains how the downtown area became a hostile environment for businesses, which had been operating in the downtown for a significant amount of time; such as The Fraser River Port Authority:

We considered ourselves as being a significant office activity and we had visitors all over the world coming to our office. So, to us, it was just unacceptable to have this criminal activity occurring on the street. The CEO of the organization just had enough! He had a bad experience, many criminals and people doing drug dealing. He got fed up and he wrote a severe letter to the city council that he wants to see a change on the street, "or else I'm moving my office to another municipality".

This harsh drug dealing issue only escalated the decline of the commercial strip, more businesses were shutting down and the vacancy rate increased. However, due to the “success” of the pubs and taverns at that time, RNWW (2015) shows that more pubs and night clubs opened their doors since 1986. I have learned from many interviewees that because of the social, economic and physical problems of the downtown, rent prices decreased, especially when there were so many vacancies in the area. The cheap rent prices could have facilitated the opening of more beer halls and night clubs that required sizeable floor spaces and low rents.

The low rent prices and an increasing number of vacancies were a suitable setting for the development of two specialty retail sub-sectors: antiques and bridal shops. While the rough and blighted Front St. was inhabited with antiques and furniture
stores, the bridal shops were located on Columbia St., leaning on its heyday as the lavish commercial street of the region. During the 1980s, part of Front St. developed as an Antique Alley with a high concentration of antiques and furniture stores in more prosperous times and pawn shops during the less prosperous periods. I learned from the interviewees that Front St. has been for many years, a street with solid infrastructure such as heavy rail tracks, a major truck route and was cast in the shade (literally) of a massive parkade structure built in the late 1950s to attract more customers to downtown. These conditions in combination with cheap rents provided a good place for locating an antique store, where old and dusty merchandise could be looked at instead of a nice view from the store.

The antique ally was established on Front St. fundamentally because of lower rents. At the back of the heritage buildings on Columbia, there were lots of entrances to Front St., and it wasn’t seen as desirable retail space, because the parkade, it is dark, there is the truck route, and the rents were quite low. So, it really attracted antique dealers; needing a lot of space at very low prices. For a very long time, it was a very successful place that way. It was just filled with antique shops. Its heyday would have been probably in the early 2000s. (Spitale, Interview, 2015)

This finding is interesting since it appears the times when the commercial strip suffered the most, Antique Alley was booming economically.

The thriving of Antique Alley could be explained by the assumption that when the strip was experiencing its worst period, rent prices were at their lowest point and, therefore, attracted more antique dealers. The architecture of the spaces along Front St. appear to suit this type of retail. For example, some of them were old warehouses that once serviced the port activities. As the architect Eric Pattison explains: “we call it the ‘bricks and beams look’, antique stores like that light industrial look”. The expansion of the antique stores at the end of the 1990s was tied to the film industry in downtown New Westminster. “It might have been in the late 90 the peak for Front St…. they did a lot of movies back then and they rented a lot of props for movies. (Johnston, Interview, 2015). In conclusion, elements that were related to the decline such as vacancy rates and cheap rent, the infrastructure-oriented streetscape of Front St., lack of daylight due to the massive parkade as well as industrial-warehouse architecture, evidently contributed
to the growth of this retail sub-sector. The recent information concerning the
development of these retail sub-sectors confirms my hypothesis 1 about the decreasing
rent prices creating opportunities for the opening of new businesses.

Figure 5.7. The streetscape of Front St. with the parkade (1972)
Source: New Westminster Archives, IHP10001-1177.

Figure 5.8. Royal City Antiques on front St (1982)
Source: New Westminster Archives, IHP10001-1164.
The domination of alcohol and entertainment related businesses over other sectors on the commercial strip had a major effect on the streets’ pedestrian traffic. While drunk club-goers and incessant drug dealing were keeping people away at night, the antique and bridal shops were not attracting many people to the street throughout the day. During the 1980s and 1990s, the population of the downtown area was small with limited purchasing power and the retail was not mixed enough to attract a large volume of people. Unfortunately, the large number of new residents living on the new Quay development was not contributing to the downtown economy. Both Eric Pattison and Ken Cameron state that the Quay’s residents have been doing their shopping in uptown New Westminster or in suburban malls such as Metrotown.

They were rarely doing their shopping downtown because of the long walking distance, for the elderly population who used to live there, to shop downtown and even at the Quay Public Market. If people used the car
they preferred shopping outside of the downtown area where parking is free like in the suburban shopping malls (Cameron, interview, 2015).

The statements from the interviewees demonstrate the challenges of waterfront developments built as isolated communities. These disconnected neighborhoods not only lack a sense of community (Featherstone, 2007; Norcliffe et al., 1996) and function as a ‘specialized’ district in the city (Bruttomesso, 2004) but also hinder capital flows (Desfor et al., 2010) from residents to the downtown area. In other words, the increase in purchasing power which is crucial for successful waterfront development (Bruttomesso, 2004; Roberts & Sykes, 1999) did not exist in the Quay development and was not contributing to the downtown’s revitalization efforts.

The changes in retail mix, since the 1980s, also transformed, tremendously, the character of the commercial strip. During the 1980s and 1990s, not one grocery shop was left on the commercial strip and many other businesses which used to provide basic services to the local residents closed down, such as banks and clinics (RNWW, 2015). “Columbia St. was not selling something that people in the Quay needed: bride dresses, things in thrift and antique stores. How often do you buy one of those?” (Cameron, interview, 2015). In 1988, a comprehensive survey was circulated regarding the downtown retail strategy among the downtown business owners, shoppers and New Westminster’s residents indicated that one of the major weaknesses of the downtown was “the perceived lack of stores, lack of variety and poor quality of stores” (Urbanics Consultants Ltd., 1989, p.14). The statistics on closures of basic services and shops, Cameron’s poignant quote, and the survey’s results, all suggest that the commercial strip was no longer functioning as the inner city commercial strip as defined by Berry (1959) – a strip which provides the basic necessities for the local community. Put another way, the commercial strip was losing its character and function as an inner city strip due to changes in its retail mix.

On the other side of this transformation, the interviewees stated a decrease in rent prices followed by the development of three specialty retail sub-sectors. I learned from the interviews that these retail sectors were well known in the region and were attracting customers to the strip in order to purchase specific kinds of products. “The
downtown was just a place that you partied... People came here to party, to get drunk...” said Spitale when talking about the cabarets and beer parlours. Johnston claims that “it [Columbia St.] became a destination for anyone looking to get married... It’s a destination shopping district in the region” when mentioning the bridal stores conglomerate. Both Spitale and Pattison state that Front St. was successful for many years during the 1980s and 1990s by drawing many visitors from the region to the special antiques and thrift stores. The commercial strip began to develop the characteristics of an urban arterial strip as defined by Berry (1959) – a linear agglomeration of businesses from the same type that consumes large space in low rent and attract customers for a specific trip. Therefore, I propose that as a result of the changes in the waterfront and the overall decline downtown, the commercial strip transformed from an inner city strip (Berry, 1959) to an urban arterial strip (Berry, 1959). This conclusion affirms my hypothesis 5 of the transformative impact of urban waterfronts experiencing industrial decline on their nearby urban areas. In the next section, issues related to these specific retail subsectors are further elaborated alongside policies to slow the decline in the downtown area during the 1990s.

5.3. The 1990s

The beginning of the decade seems positive for economic development with the completion of the residential development at the Quay in 1992, the emerging public market, the office complex and a new tug boat marina. More than a decade following the construction of the Quay area, the FCCDC vision mostly became a reality and the old PCT site was finally seen as a mixed-use community. After a few years of stability on the residential and mixed-use areas, challenges started to appear on the redeveloped waterfront. One of the main challenges the city and the waterfront were dealing with in the late 1990s and early 2000s was a leaky condo crisis. At the end of the decade, a casino boat arrived at the Quay in order to stimulate economic activity. The 1990s, until the mid-2000s indicate a period of ongoing urban decline and economic stagnation of the commercial strip with worsening issues of safety and drug dealing. The only
establishments which showed growth during the 1990s were retail establishments that benefitted from the strip’s cheap rents.

The Quay public market’s relatively short success period and ongoing challenges were obstacles in achieving its aspirations as an economic anchor and catalyst for downtown revitalization. Appendix B shows that the active businesses in the market peaked in 1995 and experienced a steady decline, with a slight increase occurring in 2001. The market faced difficulties from the beginning and was bought by the Larco Company in 1988 (Strachan, 1994). After some structural changes, the market reached its peak in 1995 under the new management and then declined while suffering from a very high rate of vacancies (more than 50%) and eventually closed in 2008 (Mclaren, 2008). Since the opening of the Public Market, it experienced volatility in the turnover rates reflecting its ongoing instability (Figure 4.15). This volatile trend and instability of the market demonstrate how the public market on the waterfront is an expression of cycles of capital accumulation and loss confirming its post-industrial identity (Norcliffe et al., 1996).

The limited success of the public market and its impact on the commercial strip also arose in the interviews. When speaking with the interviewees about the actual effects of the Quay development and the Public Market on the downtown area, the results were not positive. One blunt response from one of the interviewees was “it failed in that, completely”. Cameron said that he thinks the effect was “mildly positive”. Lisa Spitale gives a more detailed answer:

It did make an influence, but only for that part... It was successful, so people were visiting the Quay, they were visiting the esplanade, but what was happening there, just stayed on the water... What we [the City] would always say is that the level of investment was stopping at the train tracks, and it was not jumping above the train tracks to Columbia St. and the rest of downtown. There was a fundamental disconnect, and that was the issue, there was no spillover investment. And it is kind of the nature of downtown because the railway and Front St. being a truck route. They act as barriers not only for people but also for investment.
The last sentence from Spitale’s quote is very important in the context of this thesis, to help understand why the economic and physical renewal of port-city links (Hoyle, 2000) did not come to fruition. This, even after the main part of the redevelopment of the waterfront phase (Hoyle, 2000) was completed at the beginning of the 1990s. In addition, the last quote elaborates on the postmodern perspective of waterfront developments as isolated residential communities, separated from the rest of the city (Featherstone, 2007; Norcliffe et al., 1996), by indicating the fact that this physical separation was also blocking capital flows (Desfor et al., 2010) and positive economic spillovers, which are crucial for economic revitalization (Hemphill, et al., 2004; Roberts & Sykes, 1999).

The weak connections between the waterfront and the strip were embedded, initially, in the geographical character of the city. "It is a very linear city—everything is east-west orientation (Pattison, interview, 2015). I learned from the interviewees that crossing, by foot, from the waterfront side (south) to the strip (north) alongside the heavy rail tracks between them, is difficult. Thus, the commercial strip in New Westminster, of which linearity remains its foremost spatial characteristic, creates a convoluted connection to the waterfront. Clearly, the modifications and the expansion of the heavy rail lines in the mid-20th century as well as the Columbia St topography above Front St. are additional obstacles. It appears that due to spatial development patterns, the narrow ribbon of the central waterfront and the commercial strip are two geographical entities which are challenging to connect physically. Indeed, the physical disconnect of waterfronts from their respective cities is well grounded in the literature (see Bruttomesso, 2004; Featherstone, 2007; Norcliffe et al., 1996). But this case in New Westminster shows that the physical disconnect was also blocking flows of capital (Desfor et al., 2010) from the waterfront to the strip.

The disconnection between the waterfront and the strip was not the only design problem in the master plan of the Quay community as Eric Pattison explains:

So this waterfront, used to be like that, it had rail around it, it had giant warehouses and unfortunately, they tore all of that down... That was kind of the urban renewal approach of the 60s, which proved by planning to be heavy handed and not very successful...There is no commercial West of
the Quay at all, there is no corner store, no art gallery, there is no way to buy milk, there is no place to chat with your friend other than a park bench...So, it is a sterile residential neighborhood... no echo of history, nothing! And it is disconnected from the downtown...You got a couple of bridges that just meant for cars...And none of those people shopped downtown...So, it failed miserably in providing incentives for Columbia Street.

This honest description of the Quay neighborhood affirms its character as a post-modern homogenized residential and consumption development which took the form of an isolated community, separated from the rest of the urban fabric. The quote also implies a weak sense of community in the Quay, similar to the descriptions by Featherstone (2007) and Norcliffe et al. (1996). However, Pattison’s statement suggests that contrary to the consensus of successful waterfront developments (Bruttomesso, 2004; Marshall, 2004; Norcliffe et al., 1996), the Quay development did not keep much of the old warehouses and industrial structures and, therefore, is not founded in the rich industrial heritage of the working Fraser River (see Norcliffe et al., 1996).

Compounding the design problems, only a very few years after the Quay mixed-use community was fully built and residents occupied the residential buildings, the waterfront redevelopment was heavily impacted by the leaky condo crisis. This crisis was a construction, financial and legal crisis, mainly involving multi-unit-condominium buildings in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. As stated by Oord (2003), those buildings, which were built from the late 1980s until early 1990s, were damaged from rainwater infiltration and water ingress due to building envelope failure. This failure was usually discovered a few years after the construction, with affected buildings peaking in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The leaky condo problem was evident on the waterfront as well, and by the end of the decade, many new condos on the waterfront were suffering from leaks and required renovation. Eric Pattison explains the atmosphere in the waterfront and downtown in the late 1990s:

It sort of dampened the mood, let’s say... with the market going downhill and all the condos covered in tarps and scaffold, many of them redone. So, it was kind of depressing to be down here, because there were no new businesses on Columbia...condos are all getting redone, and then
the Hondurans were selling drugs on the street corners. So it’s like….gosh, how many negatives you can put into one picture.

Subsequently, many condo unit owners needed to pay for the condo renovations from their own finances (Oord, 2003). As a result, the purchasing power of many of New Westminster residents declined at that time, and the downtown area and the Public Market were affected as well. Lisa Spitalementions:

So the downturn [of the Public Market] was, around the same time as all the issues of the leaky condo crisis. What happened was the Quay, in particular, many of their customers were people who lived on the waterfront. The majority of those buildings have been caught with leaky condo assessments. A lot of people’s disposable incomes being used up in these assessments to rebuild their buildings, so they were just not shopping as much. That was one of the reasons why the market starts suffering. It was really bad around the 2000s, so that was kind of these bad things that worked hand in hand. It [the Public Market] had started declining over time.

As evident in the last quote, even though many of the Quay residents were doing their main shopping outside the city, the majority of the public market customers were the Quay residents. Clearly, the Quay residents were not doing any shopping in the downtown area. Furthermore, the limited purchasing power of the Quay residents, which was crucial for sustaining local commerce (Bruttomesso, 2004; Roberts & Sykes, 1999), decreased at the end of the 1990s. Thus, the reduced purchasing power of these residents was unable to sustain the commercial strip nor the Public Market.

Alongside the implications of the leaky condo crisis, three explanations for the market’s decline were reported: the market’s design, management, and ownership. Eric Pattison states that “the original building had clunky and heavy handed design, not an exciting design that exists in similar markets”. Other interviewees and Mcmanus (2007) claim that the market suffered from “misguided management practices”, lack of investment in the building and ongoing promotions. As a result of extremely low profit margins, the Larco Company was reluctant to invest in the market and its structure. The building became neglected and outdated in design by the end of the 1990s. The market
attracted fewer and fewer people and as a result, with many businesses shutting in succession. After only a decade, the redeveloped Quay needed a new economic anchor to attract customers.

One of the major economic development tools used to revitalize the waterfront was the Royal City Star casino boat. The visually exciting boat was docking at the Quay, in front on the public market since 1999, with its main goal to attract more visitors, tourists and economic activity to the waterfront and downtown areas. "It will increase people in the downtown area, and hopefully, businesses will be attracted to redevelop," said the Mayor at that time, Helen Sparkes (as cited by Abramson, 1999). Eric Pattison says that the casino boat provided great assistance in bringing people to the downtown; with the revenues from the casino going to heritage buildings' facades improvements along Columbia St. Archie Miller, a local historian, mentions that some of the money was invested in the waterfront park, called Pier Park, opening in 2012, and the Anvil Center—multi-functional public building on Columbia St. which opened in 2014. These testimonies show how the casino boat was an expression of dynamic relations between mobile and immobile capital (Desfor et al., 2010) between the central waterfront and the commercial strip. The profits from the mobile-floating casino were invested in building fixed elements on Columbia St. such as the Anvil Center and renovated facades.

After a few successful years, the casino began a decline and generated less revenue. Archie Miller thinks that the Casino was successful by itself but less so for the waterfront and downtown areas: “Many of the people there came only to gamble, they didn’t go to the market...they didn’t spend time on the shore...too many of them were single trips. It’s just didn’t do there what they hoped it would do” (Miller, oral history, 2014). In 2007, the casino boat shut down and relocated to Vancouver Island. The Star of Fortune Gambling Management Corp. opened instead a permeant casino on Queensborough Island (City of New Westminster, 2007).

The second half of the 1990s signified a shift in retail trends between the central waterfront and the commercial strip. Between 1995 and 1999, while the number of retail establishments on the waterfront decreased by 29 percent, the number of
establishments in the commercial strip increased by 42 percent (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). This reversal could be explained by the overall decline of the Quay Public Market and the failure of the Royal City Star casino boat to attract tourists to the market. The other side of this equation presents a contradiction - a significant retail growth at the same time was tied to cheap rents and the development of the three retail and services sub sectors which are elaborated upon in section 5.2.

The negative image of the downtown as a dangerous and unsafe place that people should avoid visiting (Burayidi, 2001) was eventually harmful to the new waterfront development and the Quay Public Market. I have learned from the interviewees that while the City and FCCDC were trying to revive the central waterfront and attract more customers and tourists despite the Quay development’s challenges, the whole area was known in the region and the Town of New Westminster, in particular, as a place that you avoid visiting and shopping within. The Quay development was not able to improve the bad image of the old industrial waterfront and act as a catalyst for the downtown revitalization (Marshall, 2004) as planned in the 1978 Community Plan for Downtown New Westminster. Conversely, the negative image of the downtown was harmful to the Quay public market and repelled customers and capital.

The Business Improvement Area (BIA) is well known in North America as an effective tool to improve the economic conditions of downtowns in decline as well as their negative image (Burayidi, 2001). In order to promote a more active and vibrant business community and to improve the harsh economic situation in the downtown area, in 1989, the city council approved the establishment of a downtown BIA. Netty Tam, the first BIA executive director (as cited in Mikicich, 1990) explains the goals of the organization: “Under the BIA program, downtown business and property owners can organize and finance effective marketing, promotional and revitalization programs”. Kendra Johnston, the current executive director at the Downtown New West BIA, and executive assistant for this BIA from 2000 to 2003 says that the first decade of the BIA operation, during the 1990s, was challenging with the continuing downturn in the downtown community and economy. The beginning of the 2000s also presented itself as a difficult period: “when the Quay market closed, and when the last major bank left
downtown in the early to mid-2000s, I think people really started to worry. It was a low point for sure” (Johnston, interview, 2015).

One of the major efforts put forward at the beginning of the new millennium was to attract more people to the downtown area according to Johnston. This attempt to attract visitors was activated by a series of events and festivals. However, the high vacancy rates of 20 to 30 percent at that time was a real obstacle promoting the downtown area according to Johnston: “We were spending a lot of time of running events but eventually showing people empty storefronts when they came down here…It was not really effective… was not necessarily attracting new shoppers into the area”. This quote from Johnston in addition to the fact that almost a third of the commercial spaces downtown were empty confirms Burayidi’s (2001) perspective on the relationship between vacancy rates and economic decline. Even though events and festivals are common approaches to attract customers to downtowns (Burayidi, 2001), they are not effective as long as the area is physically deteriorated. On the contrary, I suggest that in the case of New Westminister, showing people empty storefronts only further enhanced the negative image of the downtown in the eyes of the general public (see Burayidi, 2001). The next section expands on the efforts to improve the economic vitality of the downtown, during the 2000s, by improving safety in the area and encouraging further developments on the central waterfront side.

5.4. The 2000s

The beginning of the 2000s continued to be a difficult period on the waterfront and commercial strip with the effects of the leaky condo crisis, a decline of the public market and continuing economic challenges in the downtown area. Furthermore, the ongoing vacancies in the eastern section of the central waterfront were a major drawback in revitalizing the waterfront and downtown as a whole. In addition to decline and removal of the riverboat casino, the end of this decade signifies another shift with a development of new attractions and uses on the waterfront. This shift included openings of major recreation projects and residential intensification. The mid-2000s saw a positive
shift in urban and economic viabilities of the commercial strip in all sectors except the office sector. Active and robust resolution of crime issues, which opened a door for other urban economic development initiatives was an additional major change.

In 2008, the old Quay Public Market was purchased by ‘Take Root Properties’, in order to transform the market and advance a new business model and physical space design. The market closed for major renovations and reopened in late 2010 (Fralic, 2012, RNWW, 2015) and a new cycle of capital accumulation launched at this site (Norcliffe et al., 1996). As reported by Fralic (2012), the innovative approach to the management of the market space was centered around a cultural approach to food. While the first floor is dedicated to “food for the body” and serves as a food hall with a variety of vendors, the upper floor provides “food for the soul” with establishments such as a circus school and artisans. In 2012, 95 percent of the building was leased and since that time, it seems to be more stable and successful than its two previous cycles (Fralic, 2012). Eric Pattison states that since the reopening, the new facility functions as an urban nexus, hosting many community events (see Figure 5.10). This cycle of the public market highlights an expression of postmodernism at the New Westminster urban waterfront, with an emphasis on economies and cultures of consumption as well as the “production” of cultural activities (see Norcliffe et al., 1996).

Figure 5.10. The New Westminster’s Quay esplanade (2016)
Source: taken by the author of this thesis, 2016. The River Market is on the left side, the Fraser River Discovery Centre is at the far center, and the tug boat marina is on the right.
Maritime museums also arrived in New Westminster Quay and are another expression of the post-modernist urban waterfront (Norcliffe et al., 1996). In 2008, the Fraser River Discovery Centre, a museum, and education facility about the Fraser River history opened on the entry hall of the Royal City Star Casino boat (Ouelett-Martin, oral history, 2014; RNWW, 2015). “The facility was first built to serve as an entry hall for the Casino, but with the Centre in mind as the long-term use for the building,” said Catherine Ouellett-Martin then Executive Director of the Fraser River Discovery Centre. The establishment of this museum in the former casino foyer is another example of the flow of immobile capital (Desfor et al., 2010) on a fixed waterfront site as well another cycle of capital accumulation on the Quay (Norcliffe et al., 1996).

The Pier Park is an urban waterfront park that stretches along the waterfront from Sixth to Elliot Streets and opened to the public in 2012 (RNWW, 2015) (see Figure 5.11). The main goals of this development were to expand the amenities for the growing residential population downtown, to serve as a tourist attraction as well as to change the image of the old industrial waterfront and declining downtown. Lisa Spitale mentioned that it was only after the city purchased the land and developed the park that the residents began to witness the city’s vision to connect the old industrial waterfront with the downtown area and to emphasize the “human scale, people, and activity.” Moreover, the park is another economic development tool which was intended to attract more economic activity and offices to the downtown area; Lisa Spitale explains: “From an economic development perspective we recognized that if we want to attract office development to downtown, office tenants need things to do in the lunch hour and things like free activities, biking, jogging”. Eric Pattison mentions that in this case, the action that brought the change was the active involvement of the mayor at that time, Wayne Wright. The mayor personally called the land owner and started negotiating the acquisition.
The waterfront land spanning from the west of Pier Park to the Fraser River Discovery Center remains unoccupied (2016), more than 30 years after the last cargo container ship left the area (see Figure 5.12). I received unfavorable opinions from the interviewees regarding the issue of this massive and empty piece of land which was named by its owner, ‘Larco’. One interview said, “It is frustrating that someone sits on a property for so long… to see it empty… it is a pivotal piece of property that is sitting
there empty.” On the other hand, Lisa Spitale mentioned that design proposals from the 1980s and 1990s for this strategic location were lacking a sense of scale and human dimensions. Furthermore, those design proposals included significant above-ground parking, and substantial concrete mass which acted as a barrier to, rather than a connection between the waterfront and the city. These perspectives could explain another dimension of urban land use politics on the waterfront that emerge from tensions embedded in both spatially fixed forms of capital, such as infrastructure and more mobile forms of capital, such as financing (Desfor et al., 2010).

![Figure 5.12. The undeveloped land portion of the central waterfront (Larco)](image)


After a few decades of challenges in the original plan to revitalize the downtown by redeveloping the central waterfront, the City formulated a new plan to enhance the renewal of port city links. This plan concentrated on seamless connectivity between the city and the waterfront. The downtown plan (2010) and the city’s waterfront vision (2011) aim to connect the downtown physically with the central waterfront. This challenging goal
had been addressed poorly until this point as described in previous sections. The waterfront vision included improving connectivity of waterfront parks, as well as partially demolishing the Front St. Parkade (City of New Westminster, 2015). This vision may further improve the waterfront and downtown's negative image which developed due to the crime and drug dealing issues.

From the mid-2000s, the crime, drug dealing, and unsafe urban environment issues were slowly solved with a persistent involvement of the City and the local police force. While the police department was removing drug dealers from downtown, the planning, and services department was, systematically, closing the problematic beer parlours one after the other.

We started a series of actions which dealt with informants and zero tolerance, crime prevention, nuisance abatement, and very little economic development initiatives, because quite frankly. It was a waste of time [the economic development initiatives]...we had a lot of successes. We slowly started transitioning and introducing things like social planning initiatives around, some of the homeless issues that we had, addiction issues. All of that basically enhanced economic development initiatives later. (Spitale, interview, 2015)

Tom Corsie mentions that the aggressive police activities were successful, and the area was almost clear from criminal activities: “The city reacted to that very favorably in our opinion [the letter-see section 5.3], they hired a new police chief, and he commenced very aggressive tactics to attack this problem. In my opinion, he did that extremely successfully”. These testimonies suggest that one way to halt the downward spiral which occurs in urban decline is to solve directly undesirable outcomes that resulted from urban decline (Friedrichs, 1993; Lang, 2005) rather than re-grow economic activity where it has been lost and decayed (Hutton 2009; Lang, 2005; Roberts & Sykes, 1999). In other words, economic development initiatives have less and virtually no effect as long as urban decline problems still affect the urban environment.

Simultaneously, since the mid-2000s, there have been changes in the activity of the two specialty retail sub- sectors, which were established during the 1980s due to the low rent prices. While the bridal shops are well established and even successful on
Columbia St., the antique shops which existed along Front St. almost disappeared. The increase in rent prices could not explain this trend alone, especially since the bridal sector which also originated from low rents is still viable on the strip. The answer apparently lies in the physical location of these two sub-sectors along the commercial strip, as well as changes that this street experienced. I have learned from Kendra Johnston that according to rumors, two major events on Front Street had affected the antique stores. The first was a massive infrastructure and sewer project on Front St. that made it inaccessible to visitors. The second was the filming of the big Hollywood production, ‘I, Robot’ that closed the street and the parkade for several months. The production company compensated the businesses that had been affected by the street closure. Many antique stores took the payout money from the company and left for good. According to RNWW data (2015) in 2014, there were only two antique stores operating out of more than 20 during Front street’s heyday, at the end of the 1990s (Johnston, Interview, 2015).

Unlike the antique stores, the bridal stores are still an important part of the current economic activity of Columbia St., as Kendra Johnston explains: “they have been here for 30 years, and that was what kept the business community going for a long time….it became a destination for anyone looking to get married. It is a destination shopping district in the region”. Key policy documents regarding retail and economic development in the downtown area, such as the Official Community Plan for the City of New Westminster (1998), Downtown New Westminster Retail Development Strategy, (1989), and New Westminster Economic Development Strategy (1986) also acknowledged the speciality retail sub-sectors as one of the core issues of commercial revitalization in downtown area. “Over the last decade, complementary businesses which offer a specialized selection of products have located themselves in clusters along the City’s primary commercial corridors…the bridal shops focus for Columbia Street. The antique shop focus for Front Street” (City of New Westminster, 1998).

These records on the bridal and antique shops support my second hypothesis on the effect of low rent ‘start-up’ businesses and their positive influence on the local economy. Indeed, the bridal sub-sectors were able to survive the harsh situation of the downtown area for a long period and actually to maintain economic vitality, to some
degree, along the commercial strip. In the last decade, alongside a residential intensification of the downtown, increases in rent prices as well as a decline of the alcohol-related businesses and antique shops, there has been an increase in grocery shops, banks, and other basic services for the downtown community (Johnston, Interview, 2015; RNWW, 2015). Thus, subsequent to the economic improvement of the downtown area, the characteristics of an inner city strip (Berry, 1959) resumed along the commercial strip in New Westminster. It seems that the transformation of the commercial strip from an inner city strip (Berry, 1959) to an urban arterial strip (Berry, 1959), was tied to the urban decline and removal of the industry and residents from the area-hypothesis 5.

The office and professional sector seems to be last to recover from the overall decline of downtown and removal of the city’s main employment core- the port and its related industrial activities. “From an economic development perspective, there is very little employment here now. If we do research on office vacancies in New Westminster today, it is probably in the 20% range, has been as high as 28%” (Corsie, Interview, 2015). This quote suggests that the vacancy rates of the office and professional sector were the highest in the commercial strip. In fact, even today they are more than double, comparing to the general businesses vacancies in the downtown area which are less than 10 percent (Johnston, Interview, 2015).

The 2000s were not an easy decade for the businesses along the commercial strip, in general, and a significant recovery is evident only from 2011 (RNWW, 2015). Johnston mentions that the majority of the businesses which have been opening in the last years are eating and drinking places: restaurants, cafes, and breweries. The opening of two major public investment structures, the Anvil Center in 2014 on Columbia and 8th St. and Pier Park in 2012 along the central waterfront were milestones in downtown’s revitalization. “In 2013... we finally done with the work we were doing downtown” (Spitale, Interview, 2015). With a completion of these two major projects, downtown residential intensification, the successful River Market as well as the emerging waterfront vision, it seems that a renewal of port-city links (Hoyle, 2000) in New Westminster is closer than ever before.
Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1. Major findings

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how economic changes in New Westminster’s central waterfront area have influenced land uses and economic activities in the adjacent commercial strip during a transition from the industrial to the post-industrial era. A review of the literature on urban decline, revitalization and urban waterfront change, in addition to a case study of the central waterfront and the commercial strip in New Westminster, revealed a number of findings about the relation between these two geographical entities.

Initially, during the transition from industrial to post-industrial eras, the changes in the central waterfront substantially influenced the commercial strip. The findings confirm hypothesis 4 on the robust and stable economic and services connections in New Westminster between the waterfront and the commercial strip during industrial periods through a symbiotic relationship between ports and cities (Hayuth, 1982; Hoyle, 2000; Norcliffe et al., 1996). Port and industrial activities on the central waterfront contributed to the stability of the overall economy as well as to the persistence of firms on the commercial strip. The decline of industry from the central waterfront from the mid-1970s worsened the economic and general urban decline in the commercial strip. I observed a direct correlation between periods of waterfront economic decline and high turnover rates which is an important indicator of economic instability. The transformation to a post-industrial era was characterized by ongoing economic instability, and a volatile trend in four dimensions of change on the strip: opening rate, closing rate, turnover rate and total net change (Essletzbichler, 2004). The volatility trend and economic instability
in the post-industrial era confirm the postmodern identity of New Westminster’s urban waterfront and demonstrate ongoing cycles of capital accumulation and loss (Norcliffe, et al., 1996). Furthermore, these volatile trends are also an example of constant turnover of ‘flows’ which are influenced by structure and paralysis of fixed investment on the urban waterfront (Desfor et al., 2010).

The mutual examination of these two urban entities suggests that changes in the central waterfront which were followed by a further decline in the downtown area were able to transform the character of the adjacent commercial strip. This transformation supports hypothesis 5 on the transformative impact of urban waterfolios on their nearby urban areas. The removal of port and industry from the waterfront deepened a recession from the 1980s to mid-2000s in the commercial strip. During this time the commercial strip transformed from an inner city strip that provided necessities and services (Berry, 1959) into an urban arterial strip with homogeneous business types and customers. These businesses occupied large low-rent spaces that attracted customers for specific purchasing trips (Berry, 1959). During the transition period, the urban arterial strip in New Westminster was comprised of three main retail and service sub-sectors: alcohol related, antiques and bridal stores. Since 2010, with an improvement of the downtown and the connections to the central waterfront, this trend was partially reversed. The commercial strip evolved into an inner city strip. Major changes on the strip were therefore directly related to the period of decline which caused a decrease in rent prices. In this case it seems that this hypothesis is confirmed but a further examination is required to approve this hypothesis in other contexts.

The development of establishments in alcohol, antique and wedding sectors confirmed that many ‘start up’ businesses opened due to a significant decrease in rental cost during decline and transition periods. This seems to confirm hypothesis 1 in my study, but there is a possibility that other factors (such as wider retail industry trends) contributed to the development and expansion of these experimental businesses. As for my question of their effect on the local economy, while alcohol-related businesses were destructive to the downtown area, antiques and bridal stores had positive effects. The alcohol-related businesses which included beer parlours, pubs, taverns, dance clubs and cabarets, as well as their customers and additional street drug dealers, only enhanced
the urban decline in the downtown, during the 1980s and 1990s. The development of this retail sub-sector is an interesting finding of this thesis, due to their indirect relation to the working urban waterfront. Although the port activities were gone, the beer parlours which used to host seamen and longshoremen remained, having significant effects on the commercial strip. These findings support hypothesis 3 on industrial related businesses’ negative effect during the transition period. The activities of alcohol-related businesses resulted in violence in the urban realm and an unsafe urban environment. This negative influence deterred other businesses and economic activity from establishing in the downtown. Conversely, the antiques and bridal stores were anchors which kept the strip’s business community going in a period of transition, attracting customers from all over the region. While the alcohol-related and antiques businesses are almost gone, the bridal stores were able to persist and even expand in the downtown, despite the increase in rent prices. The expansion of the bridal stores supports hypothesis 2 on the effect of low rents on new businesses and their positive influence on the local economy. Hypothesis 2 is only partially confirmed because the development of the alcohol related businesses had negative effects on the local economy and the antiques stores have now almost disappeared.

Regardless of being an award winning development, a closer examination of the Quay development suggests that it was not very successful. The Quay construction, design, and management challenges prevented the central waterfront from achieving its original goal as a major catalyst for downtown revitalization. These challenges included slow construction, instability of the Quay’s commercial anchor- the Public Market, difficulty in attracting customers, the tendency of the Quay’s residents to perform their shopping outside of the city, and a dispute between the FCCDC with one of the region’s most popular restaurants at that time. Perhaps the most destructive occurrence was the leaky condo crisis, at the end of the 1990s, which harmed the new neighborhood’s buildings and its residents’ purchasing power. It appears that due to these ongoing challenges, the Quay mixed-use development was not able to revitalize the downtown area as described in Bruttomesso (2004); Marshall, (2004); Hoyle (2000); and Hutton (2009). On the contrary, the Quay development in New Westminster might slowed down the revitalization of downtown and renewal of port - city links (Hoyle, 2000).
As in many other cases, the physical barrier between the cities and their waterfront is a major obstacle for mutual positive economic influences (see Bruttomesso, 2004; Featherstone, 2007; Norcliffe et al., 1996). Front St., which separates the two areas, has been for many years a geographical strip of heavy infrastructure. Over the years, this barrier was deepened with additions to the existing heavy rail infrastructure, elevation of Columbia St. over Front St., and increased truck traffic. Mainly, the barrier was intensified with the building of a massive parkade structure. The pedestrian and vehicular overpasses above the rail corridor were not able to provide an adequate connection. The Quay development confirms the postmodern identity of this redeveloped waterfront, with distinctive land uses and activities as documented by Norcliffe et al. (1996). The postmodern perspective on waterfront developments is also reflected in the Quay as an isolated residential community, separated from the rest of the city (Featherstone, 2007; Norcliffe et al., 1996). Moreover, I suggest that due to spatial development patterns, the narrow ribbon of the central waterfront and the commercial strip are two geographical entities which are challenging to connect physically. It seems that this physical separation, linear geographic development, and homogenized land use pattern were not only blocking flows of visitors and customers as described in the literature but were also blocking flows of capital and investment (Desfor et al., 2010) from the waterfront to the strip. Indeed, even after a significant component of the redevelopment of the waterfront phase (Hoyle, 2000) was complete, the renewal of port-city links (Hoyle, 2000) was inadequate.

The negative public images of the waterfront and the strip were destructive to one another during different time periods. The construction of the Front St. parkade indicates the beginning of the retreat from the waterfront phase as explained by Hoyle (2000). This construction began because the central waterfront was viewed, in the mid-20th century, as an unpleasant industrial area that the city should turn its back to. By the 1980s, in an effort to revitalize the waterfront and revive the community, the City and FCCDC hoped to attract developers and investors. However, the dilapidated image of the old industrial waterfront and continual deterioration of downtown deterred many potential business interests in the area. This outcome coincides with Burayidi’s (2001) theory on destructive effects of negative conceptions of declining urban areas. The findings of this thesis elaborate on Burayidi’s (2001) perspective that a negative image
not only hinders businesses and customers, but also prevents private developers from investing in the area. Subsequently, when the redevelopment of the waterfront phase (Hoyle, 2000) was completed in the mid-1990s, the Quay Public Market’s management found it challenging to attract visitors and tourists. This was due to a poor public perception of the near downtown as a dangerous place that one should avoid visiting. Marshall (2004) claims that waterfront development is one of the most powerful tools in creating a new and improved public perception of post-industrial cities. This particular case in New Westminster sheds a different light on Marshall’s (2004) perspective and provides an example of the complexities and ambiguities of urban waterfront change (Desfor et al., 2010) and the renewal of port - city links (Hoyle, 2000).

In summary, it seems that the physical barrier which was hindering flows of residents, visitors, capital and investment from one area to the other, was not able to overcome the spillover of negative perceptions between the two places. From the public’s and developers’ viewpoints, these two areas both seemed negative. This spillover dynamic was an issue which impeded revitalization processes during specific time periods, but a further research is needed in order to fully evaluate the implications of this physical barrier. Finally, this research has contributed to the existing literature by revealing the challenges, economic instability and the vicious urban decline cycle of North American small city’s downtown and nearby waterfront lands. As with other methods of interpretation in this field, there are limitations to the study and these will be discussed in section 6.2.

6.2. Limitations and future research

Through the course of this thesis, a number of limitations have become evident, which caution me from drawing definitive conclusions or causal relationships. The limitations are common to most studies which examine a new phenomenon in a specific area and the one should acknowledge that such a limited study cannot explain all of the issues related the connection between cities and their urban waterfronts and still some questions remained unanswered. These limitations are followed by suggestions for
future research which could lead to more definite results. An important limitation to consider is the boundaries used for this study, especially in the landward portion of the examined area. Limits for the statistical analysis were set on the commercial strip between Front St. and Columbia St. and were derived from the availability of data as well as by evidence of economic and physical connections between the strip and the waterfront. The findings of this research can explain only specific issues that are evident in this place and cannot explain the relationships between the entire city and its waterfront or in other port cities across the globe. Extending the boundaries to the northern section - between Columbia St. and Carnarvon St. - could yield more accurate and potentially significant results. In fact, research on the entire, downtown area and its relationship to the waterfront would contribute directly to the validity of this study. A more complex and comprehensive case would study the relationship between the entire city and its waterfront. A Citywide comprehensive study could compare more economic sectors in the city and their change over the years, particularly changes in uptown New Westminster and their effect on the downtown area. Some interviewees mentioned the uptown development as the beginning of the downtown’s decline. Expanding the boundaries to a citywide scale could involve a border classification system, which was not examined in my thesis due to time limits and small sampling sizes of specific sectors.

In addition to boundary limitations, time and resource constraints precluded an exploration of other indicators. Data on vacancy rates and retail/office rent prices in the downtown and Quay areas could add to the results of this thesis. Statistical analysis of vacancy rates and rents alongside correlation of data used in this study could shed more light on the period of decline and the development of the three retail subsectors which were discovered in this study. Furthermore, a similar study using the same methods should be performed in a few years’ time to fully evaluate the outcomes of the revitalization and recent initiatives and policies for the renewal of the waterfront and city links. From an urban planning perspective, a loss of population and residential intensification in a downtown area are two issues which could inform more aspects of the transformation period, such as the concept of local purchasing power and its relation to urban revitalization, as well as the changing demographics in the downtown. Analysis of demographic profiles from census data, alongside additions of the businesses data that I have analyzed, could be used to explore the issue of residential and business
gentrification during periods of urban change. Supplements to the current establishment database, such as firm size, number of employees, and ownership structure, alongside a more detailed classification system, could be used to explore businesses’ displacement. For example, a gentrification study could further explain the decline of the antiques sub-sector.

6.3. Policy and planning implications

This thesis assists in the understanding of the mutual relationship between a small city waterfront and its adjacent downtown area, as well as the evaluation of economic change in a small post-industrial city’s downtown. Results from this research alongside an exploration of relevant literature have implications within the urban planning realm. It should be noted that these implications might be suitable small cities in a similar urban context and more research is needed to fully appreciate these implication in other cities. The implications are divided into three aspects: municipal governance; urban revitalization, urban economic development; and waterfront-city connections.

New Westminster’s case study highlights the importance of local government’s direct involvement in addressing urban decline, especially from an economic aspect. New Westminster’s downtown, as like many other cities, suffered from a vicious cycle of urban decline for more than three decades. Moreover, the city demonstrated most of the urban decline indicators as described in the literature and other case studies (Burayidi, 2001; Friedrichs, 1993; Mah, 2012; Lang, 2005; Lippert, 2007). I have shown that urban economic regeneration is not only a matter of re-growth of economic activity where it has been lost and decayed (Lang, 2005; Roberts & Sykes, 1999). Conversely, until core social and spatial issues of homelessness, drug trafficking and street violence were treated, urban economic development initiatives had almost no impact. Street beautification plans and public events to attract customers were not effective either, as long as the public realm was unsafe and deterred businesses and customers. In other urban contexts the beatification plans and BIA’s actions might have different and more
positive outcomes. The zero tolerance policy from the City and local police improved the downtown situation and enhanced economic development initiatives. Furthermore, the direct involvement of the mayor at that time in purchasing New Westminster’s pier land was the breakthrough in developing a significant section of the central waterfront land, which was empty for almost three decades. This portion of land which became the Pier Park had a major impact on the area’s transformation.

From an urban economic development perspective, the loss of the main economic and employment core from the central waterfront has been destructive for the downtown for more than three decades. Furthermore, the limited success of transforming downtown New Westminster and the central waterfront into a real regional town center with an office component (see section 5.1), impeded the revitalization process. This thesis and the study of downtown Windsor, Ontario (Lippert, 2007) demonstrates that a large concentration of alcohol-related businesses is harmful to the downtown economic vitality. These businesses, regardless their success in attracting customers, had negative influences on the public realm which resulted in deterring other businesses from the downtown (hypothesis 3). Unlike the beer parlours and their destructive effects, some businesses demonstrated significant resiliency and contributed to the economic vitality during recessionary periods. The antiques and bridal stores were significantly resilient to the economic decline and transition, reduced the vacancy rates and supported the business community for many years (hypothesis 2). Planners and policy makers for declining downtowns should consider attracting specialty retail to the area while taking advantage of the cheap rents. However, this specialty retail resiliency and expansion might be successful only in the context of New Westminster in the large Metropolis of Vancouver and in other places it could have different outcomes.

Finally, as suggested by the literature and shown in New Westminster, the physical connection and the necessity for a comprehensive waterfront vision are crucial for the success of waterfront developments and generating positive influences for the adjacent urban fabric (Bruttomesso, 2004; Featherstone, 2007; Marshall, 2004; Norcliffe et al., 1996). It is important that stages of re-development remain short in order to achieve successful regeneration goals. My case study demonstrated that the vast undeveloped waterfront sections only impeded the downtown revitalization due to the
lack of activity in the area. It is important to state that the physical and perceptual barrier between the central waterfront and the downtown is unique and each place requires different solutions. Convenient pedestrian access from the city to the waterfront has been well established as a key factor in maintaining the flow of visitors and tourists from the downtown to the waterfront and vice versa.
References


The First Capital City Development Company Ltd. (n.d.). *Answers about New Westminster's Downtown and Waterfront Redevelopment Program*. New Westminster, B.C.


## Appendix A.

### Coding categories for businesses/uses in the database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Businesses/uses included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industrial and Transportation</strong></td>
<td>Water transport (tugs, tie-up, fueling, dredging, marine repair, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marine terminal (cargo handling); Shipbuilding or ship repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rail (yards and lines, railway station)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Road transport  (truck/ auto related firms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warehouse / DC / Storage / Grain elevator / Moving and Storage firms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fishery/Cannery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mill (wood processing, paper, lumber, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construction and utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wholesale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail</strong></td>
<td>Places people visit to buy things (new and second hand, chains, groceries, department stores, watchmakers, newsstand, florist, drug store, auto-related that are clearly for private individuals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal services</strong></td>
<td>Places people visit to receive services (amusement, banks, credit union, barber, beauty, care, cleaning, tailor, personal repair services, travel agent, shoe repair, employment agency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodation and Restaurant</strong></td>
<td>Places people visit for food, drink and venues (restaurant, bar, hotel, accommodation, halls/facilities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential</strong></td>
<td>Places people live (also includes mixed residential with some office, retail or personal service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional</strong></td>
<td>Church, school, museum, government, chamber of commerce, board of trade, education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office and professional</strong></td>
<td>Offices that people go to work, sometimes clients visit (law, medical, engineer, accountant, real estate agent, detective, loan services, insurance, radio station, wired music, Unions, Building moving service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed commercial: places with offices, retail, personal services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recreation</strong></td>
<td>Sport, pathway or park: places people go to play / recreate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RNWW (2015)
Appendix B.

Total number of establishments in New Westminster’s Quay Public Market/ River Market 1986-2014 (Various sectors)

Source: author’s analysis of RNWW, 2015